

MY LIBERTY

Written by

Tom Stohlgren

Writer:
Email: tjstohlgren@gmail.com
(970) 217-4498
Representation:
Eleni Larchanidou, LLM
Literary & Talent Manager
GREECE: +30-690-902-0698
(WhatsApp, Viber)
USA: +1-714-702-5507
email: managerelenilllm@gmail.com
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FADE IN:

INT. SCHOOL BASEMENT - NIGHT

Four black-clad GOONS (20s-30s) in full ski masks burst into a filthy high school basement dragging a blind-folded and gagged, screaming male hostage, DAN BELLINGHAM (40s), a wimpy social studies teacher wearing tan slacks, and a plaid shirt, and thick eyeglasses. His hands are bound behind him with pink fuzzy handcuffs. The Goons are GOON #1/YU YAN, an Asian woman; GOON #2/JOSEPH, a Native American male; GOON #3/LEVI, a white Amish male; and GOON #4/ROSA, a Mexican woman. Each of the Goons wears a holster with a taser gun showing.

We see GWEN ANTONELLI (19), an attractive but frustrated college sophomore with short-cropped black hair, wearing a green ROTC T-shirt and jeans, paying them surprisingly little attention. She sits at a 3' x 8' table on the left side of the room, in a makeshift courtroom, with a cardboard seating card identifying her, as the "Prosecuting Attorney."

The Goons drag the hostage to one of two chairs at a similar table on the right side of the room. The other chair, according to the seating card, is occupied by a slumped-over (drugged) "Ellie R. Martinez, Esq., Defense Attorney." ELLIE R. MARTINEZ (40s) wears a dark-blue business suit, elegant strands of pearls, high heels, and rests her beautiful brunette head of hair on a leather briefcase. Her hands are handcuffed behind her with fuzzy pink handcuffs.

The Goons shove the hostage in the chair to the right of Ellie, with a seating card labeled, "Defendant, Mr. Bellingham."

The Goons chain the Defendant to his chair, with a padlock. Rosa slaps Mr. Bellingham around as she removes his blindfold. The other Goons pull her off.

Mr. Bellingham sees that his attorney is also padlocked to her chair. Mr. Bellingham screams into his gag to no avail.

The Defendant screams again as he looks forward to the Judge's table to see JUDGE REGGIE WILSON (60s) slumped-back (drugged) in a tailored grey suit, white shirt, and red, white, and blue tie. He has an American flag pin on his lapel. His hair is grey, and he wears glasses.

GWEN

Welcome, Mr. Bellingham. Thanks for coming. Sorry we had to do this.

We see we are in a school basement used as a science lab. One of the four tables with four chairs has a sign that reads "Jury". The four Goons sit at that table.

All tables contain several pamphlets announcing a workshop to "Keep our Schools Safe -- a conversation with Judge Reggie Wilson, Superior Court; and Ellie Martinez, Esq., Attorney at Law, Martinez and Associates, and Ms. Gwen Antonelli, School Mass Shooting Survivor."

Shelves behind the fold up chairs hold beakers for chemistry, electric meters of various types, and boxes marked "miscellaneous."

Gwen ambles over to Mr. Bellingham, and removes his gag, but his hands remain handcuffed behind with pink, fluffy cuffs.

He screams!

MR. BELLINGHAM

Help! Let me out of here! I've been kidnapped! I know you! You're that student activist from Florida! You'll never get away with this!

Before he can scream again, Gwen replaces his gag. She coldly and devilishly whispers in his ear.

GWEN

I've heard screams for help much louder than that!

The Goons in the jury seats snicker fiendishly.

INT. SCHOOL BASEMENT - NIGHT

SUPER "One Hour Earlier"

Gwen sits alone in the school basement, at one of four tables set up to form a square.

Ellie R. Martinez, the powerful Latina lawyer, staggers in, tired from a long day at work and three glasses of wine.

ELLIE

What a dump! This is their conference room?

Gwen stands and crosses the room to greet Ellie.

GWEN

No, Ma'am. Conference room and teacher's lounge are being painted. I'm Gwen Antonelli.

Ellie stares at Gwen when they shake hands.

ELLIE

You're that famous activist. Face of the anti-gun movement in Florida! Saw you on all those talk shows, year or two ago.

GWEN

All in the past, Ma'am. Just a sophomore at State now.

ELLIE

I'm Ellie Martinez, and you can quit calling me Ma'am. That means bitch.

Gwen acts shy, as she giggles and looks away.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

Call me, Ellie.

Ellie picks up and examines a flyer.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

That pompous blowhard, Judge Wilson, really showing up?

GWEN

No idea...

Judge Reggie Wilson enters very tired. He's had a few glasses of scotch.

JUDGE WILSON

We were asked to come early, but this is ridiculous!

Ellie smiles and runs up to shake his hand.

ELLIE

Hi, Judge, so good of you to take time out of your busy schedule...

JUDGE WILSON

Cut the crap, Ellie.

(looks at Gwen)

This must be Ms. Antonelli, the anti-gun media darling.

GWEN

All in the past. Call me, Gwen.

JUDGE WILSON

Cut the crap, Ms. Antonelli. You talk that anti-Second-Amendment crap tonight, and I'm leaving.

Gwen looks away like a scolded puppy. Ellie smirks.

GWEN

I won't, Sir. You have my word.

Ellie turns to Gwen.

ELLIE

Neither of us would be here if not for the five-hundred-dollar honorarium.

Gwen smiles.

GWEN

I get a hundred bucks and a free bottle of water!

JUDGE WILSON

Ain't capitalism grand! Just kidding, Ms. Antonelli. Say what you damn well please. First Amendment guarantees it!

Gwen opens her bottled water. We hear the seal break.

The Judge and Ellie do the same. They drink half a bottle each.

GWEN

Hot day out there.

They take their seats.

JUDGE WILSON

Tell us about yourself, Ms. Antonelli.

GWEN

Call me Gwen, please.

They all sip water. It hurts Gwen to tell the story.

GWEN (CONT'D)

I was a Junior in high school when that nut-job raced in with an AR-15, and killed nine students, injuring thirty. That was two years ago, April.

Gwen turns away and wipes her tears.

ELLIE

Sounds awful.

GWEN

Gun association branded me a domestic terrorist 'cause I went on camera and said I never wanted it to happen again.

JUDGE WILSON

That isn't all you said.

The Judge slumps in his chair, appearing tired. He sips more water.

ELLIE

I remember a lot of anti-gun...

Ellie yawns, and slumps in her chair.

Gwen is more hurt than ever!

GWEN

There have been over fifty mass shootings since the Columbine High School Massacre in Colorado in April of 1999. I'm sick of it! We're sick of it. It has to stop somewhere!

The Judge and lawyer pass out, and Gwen turns brave.

GWEN (CONT'D)

It stops here! You want to see a real domestic terrorist? We call ourselves The Goons of Liberty! Welcome to our Boston Tea Party!

The room goes dark. We hear tables and chairs being moved around. We hear chains rattling. We hear locks being placed on the chains.

INT. SCHOOL BASEMENT - NIGHT

The lights go on.

The four tables are arranged to look like a courtroom, with the seating cards showing Gwen to the left, Ellie and Mr. Bellingham to the right, the Judge in front, and the Jury (the Goons wearing Zorro masks) to the far right.

Gwen wears holster with a stun gun in it.

The Judge and Ellie are still out cold, but they are also gagged, handcuffed, and chained to their chairs.

Mr. Bellingham is wide-eyed and gagged.

GWEN

Time to wake the others, don't you think, Mr. Bellingham? To prove our main point?

(dark, deep voice)

Justice delayed is better than justice denied!

Mr. Bellingham's eyes open wider as Gwen takes out stun gun and ZAPS the Judge in the arm. He wakes immediately, yelps in pain, and glares at Gwen as he attempts to escape his handcuffs and chair.

Gwen wakes up Ellie in a similar manner.

Gwen warns them all as she glares at Mr. Bellingham.

GWEN (CONT'D)

The time for thoughts and prayers is over! We're taking a page from the original Sons of Liberty. They didn't play fair. They illegally boarded three ships and dumped 342 chests of tea into Boston Harbor. They vandalized private property, burned houses and businesses, and tortured Loyalists with tar and feathers! The British didn't listen, just like you're not listening now!

GOON #1/YU YAN

You tell 'em, history major!

Gwen pauses, and holsters her stun gun.

GWEN

You'll be warned once, and shocked on the second outburst. It's our version of tar and feathers! Is that understood?

The Judge, Ellie, and Mr. Bellingham nod 'yes.'

GWEN (CONT'D)

You may only speak when answering a direct question. Is that understood?

The Judge, Ellie, and Mr. Bellingham nod 'yes.'

GWEN (CONT'D)

One more thing. Any attempt to lie, provide partial truths, or evade a question, will be considered an escape attempt. There is no Fifth Amendment tonight. Get it?

The Judge, Ellie, and Mr. Bellingham nod 'yes.'

Gwen removes their gags. They grumble and glare, but do not speak, as the Jury cheers.

GWEN (CONT'D)

By the way, you will be receiving your honorariums, when we're done with you!

The Jury laughs loudly.

GWEN (CONT'D)

You know me, and we'll get to know you better...

JUDGE WILSON

(interrupts)

Kidnapping, assault, torture, and you drugged us...

Gwen jumps to the Judge and draws her stun gun.

GWEN

(interrupts)

Judge Wilson, I was very clear that speaking out of turn results in strict and immediate punishment.

Gwen ZAPS his arm! He's terrified, and shaking.

Ellie and Mr. Bellingham cry out to Gwen.

GOON #3/LEVI
We're all carefully disguised? Ha!

GWEN
One of the jurors is from Nickel Mines, Pennsylvania, where five people were killed, and five injured in a totally non-violent Amish community!

Levi turns away as Gwen moves behind the female Mexican juror.

GOON #4/ROSA
We may be recognizable, but we'll not be silenced, bitches!

GWEN
Another anonymous juror is a Dreamer. She was attending Virginia Tech when a student killed twenty-three students and wounded seventeen others. She lost her dream that day.

Gwen trudges behind Ellie.

GWEN (CONT'D)
Unlike Ms. Ellie Martinez, Esquire, our fifth-generation Mexican-American, who requests to be introduced as a Latina. Did you benefit from minority status when you applied to college and law school? Of course, you did.

Ellie shakes her head in disgust and snarls at Gwen.

GWEN (CONT'D)
But you're here tonight for encouraging and defending the rights of teachers to carry concealed weapons and storing them in a classroom. How do you plead?

ELLIE
Not guilty. Perfectly legal.

Gwen pulls out her stun gun.

GWEN

I didn't ask if it was legal. I asked if you encouraged and defended the rights of teachers to bring weapons into schools.

ELLIE

I did. But the Second Amendment of the...

Gwen ZAPS her.

Ellie yelps and shakes profusely for a few seconds.

GWEN

Yes or no question! The answer was yes. We have your statements to the press here marked Exhibit 1. Are you aware of her comments, Judge?

Gwen brings a stack of newspaper clippings to the Judge's table.

JUDGE WILSON

I'm familiar with some of Ms. Martinez's statements on legal gun ownership and use, as I am with your anti-gun statements in the press at public demonstrations and on TV talk shows as an attention-grabbing media darling.

Gwen smiles devilishly at the Judge.

GWEN

That's partly why you're here. Please let the record show that Judge Reggie Wilson referred to me as an attention-grabbing media darling.

Gwen returns to her seat, and holds up her stun gun.

She gives the Judge a quick jolt.

Mr. Bellingham holds back laughter.

GOON #1/YU YAN

This is going to be fun!

GWEN

Mr. Bellingham, you won't be laughing soon.

From the back of the room, MILES UNGSTRUM (19) enters wearing a Lone Ranger mask, wig, fake mustache, and baggy clothes. He carries a seating card with him as he takes the seat next to Gwen and displays a card that reads, "Every Student."

GWEN (CONT'D)

I'd like you all to meet my assistant and key witness, "Every Student" in America.

The Judge, Ellie, and Mr. Bellingham look puzzled at the young man.

MILES

Hello.

MR. BELLINGHAM

This some kind of joke?

Ellie ZAPS him briefly.

GWEN

No. Convenience. My assistant will simply answer questions as Every Student in America would answer.

ELLIE

That's preposterous!

Gwen ZAPS her.

GWEN

There wasn't room in here for the tens of thousands of students who wanted to come tonight.

Miles stands and paces as he addresses the court.

MILES

I represent those who were gunned down, killed, injured, or survived to live in pain forever.

(beat)

Since that gunman killed 20 first graders and six adults with an assault rifle at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown Connecticut in 2012, there have been at least 239 school shootings nationwide. Society didn't listen!

(beat)

Another 438 people were shot, 138 of whom were killed. Society still isn't listening!

Ellie coughs, requesting to speak.

GWEN

Keep your comments brief and to the point, Ms. Martinez.

ELLIE

I respectfully disagree. Your voices are being heard, but society, through its executive, legislative, and judiciary branches have not yet acted to your immediate satisfaction, via the process established in our U.S. Constitution and laws!

GWEN

To that, we cry, B.S.!

Gwen ZAPS Ellie.

MILES

Every student agrees! With the stoke of a pen from the executive branch, loopholes in background checks could be eliminated, databases could be improved -- hell, Facebook knows more about us than the Federal government! Assault rifles and all semi-automatic weapons could be banned forever, as in most industrialized countries!

The Goons cheer wildly!

GWEN

Another reason why we're here tonight!

The Judge, Ellie, and Mr. Bellingham look puzzled.

Miles takes a seat, and Gwen stands and paces.

GWEN (CONT'D)

We're here to prove once and for all...

Gwen points to Miles, then unrolls and reads from a parchment copy of the Declaration of Independence.

GWEN (CONT'D)

That Every Student, and every American has inalienable rights as stated in the U.S. Declaration of Independence: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal and endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights including life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

Miles stands and chimes in.

MILES

"Personal rights held by an individual which are not bestowed by law, custom, or belief, and which cannot be taken or given away, or transferred to another person, are referred to as "inalienable rights."

GOON #1/YU YAN

Those rights belong to all of us and can't be infringed upon by the Second Amendment.

GOON #4/ROSA

Or any law proposed by human beings!

GOON #2/JOSEPH

You can't take away my right to life, liberty, or the pursuit of happiness.

GWEN

This is the crime you are charged with.

Miles stands and rolls out a second scroll and reads it.

MILES

As lead members of society, are you complicit in infringing upon our rights to life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness, by allowing weapons of war to be placed in the hands of citizens not belonging to a well-regulated Militia as stated in the Second Amendment.

GWEN
How do you plead, Judge?

JUDGE WILSON
Not Guilty.

GWEN
Ms. Martinez?

ELLIE
Not guilty.

GWEN
Mr. Bellingham.

MR. BELLINGHAM
Not Guilty.

Gwen ZAPS them all.

The Goons cheer wildly.

GWEN
You see that we mean business!

MR. BELLINGHAM
You're the ones who are gonna fry!

Gwen ZAPS Mr. Bellingham to the point where he faints.

Yu Yan checks Mr. Bellingham's pulse.

GOON #1/YU YAN
He's alive.

GOON #4/ROSA
For now.

The Judge coughs, requesting to speak.

GWEN
Keep it brief, Judge.

JUDGE WILSON
While not recognized as inalienable rights in the Constitution, there are commonly agreed upon rights: act in self-defense; own private property; work and enjoy the fruits of one's labor; move freely within the county or to another country; freedom of religion; to be secure in one's home; and to think freely.

Gwen gets feisty!

GWEN

We'll get to those, so long as you agree that those rights can never supersede our rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Gwen ZAPS the Judge very briefly.

JUDGE WILSON

What was that for?

GWEN

We know that shit, Judge! We're not children!

Ellie smirks and looks away.

Gwen ZAPS Ellie.

MILES

She sees everything!

GWEN

Let's recess for ten minutes. The Goons will escort you to the rest rooms and water fountain down the hall.

Ellie and the Judge signal they have to go.

GWEN (CONT'D)

One at a time. Four goons, two enter the stalls with 'em. Take Ms. Martinez first.

GOON #3/LEVI

It would be indecent of me.

The Judge shakes his head in disbelief at Levi.

JUDGE WILSON

Seriously? After kidnapping, assault, and torture?

GWEN

Watch it, Judge! And don't try to escape or your get a full taser treatment. Barbs and volts!

The four Goons unlock Ellie, and begin to escort her toward the back of the dark room. The handcuffs are still on Ellie.

Ellie makes a break for it, pushing through Yu Yan and Joseph in front of her. Levi yells.

GOON #3/LEVI
Got a runner!

Everyone in the makeshift courtroom turns to look.

JUDGE WILSON
Call the police!

Gwen ZAPS the Judge.

Levi and Rosa chase down Ellie, and soon the four Goons are dragging Ellie back to her seat, and chaining her back to the chair.

GWEN
Someone has lost bathroom
privileges for everyone.

Once Ellie is secure, the Goons take their seats.

Gwen ZAPS Ellie who suffers more this time.

JUDGE WILSON
Oh, my God! Save us!

Gwen ZAPS the Judge then approaches him in anger.

GWEN
Your all-powerful and all-loving
God proved He didn't exist, as He
sat and did nothing as 20-year-old
Adam Lanza, killed twenty first-
grade children aged six and seven,
along with four teachers, the
principal, and the school
psychologist.

Gwen turns ugly, like demonic possession.

GWEN (CONT'D)
What kind of God, by His Will,
allows innocent children to be
slaughtered?!

Levi squirms uncomfortably in his seat.

SILENCE

Gwen returns to her seat, and turns to Miles, who still has his disguise on.

GWEN (CONT'D)
Every Student, please present
Exhibit 2 to the judge.

Miles carries a plastic freezer bag containing a pistol to the Judge's table.

Mr. Bellingham freaks out.

MR. BELLINGHAM
Where'd you get my pistol!

GWEN
Let the record show that Mr.
Bellingham correctly identified his
pistol.

MR. BELLINGHAM
I had a legal permit to conceal and
carry!

GWEN
'Had' is the operative word there.

MR. BELLINGHAM
You stole it! From my house!

GWEN
Did you keep it in a gun safe? Add
a trigger lock? Or did you store it
in your nightstand, next to your
bed, loaded, and easily
confiscated?

MR. BELLINGHAM
You stole it!

MILES
It's estimated that a quarter to a
half a million guns are stolen each
year from good, law-abiding
citizens. Recent studies showed
that 8 out of 10 crimes are
committed by people who did not own
the gun, and over thirty percent of
guns found at crimes scenes had
been stolen!

The Goons gasp!

ELLIE
Immaterial and irrelevant, Your
Honor.

Gwen spins to address Ellie.

GWEN

Is it? Weak gun-control laws are indirectly arming the bad guys who commit robberies and murders. They are now armed to the teeth, because many gun owners are too stupid or too negligent to lock them up!

ELLIE

We don't blame car owners when their cars are stolen.

GWEN

Insurance companies do just that when owners leave the keys in the cars, and the cars running, or for DUIs!

Gwen ZAPS Ellie!

MR. BELLINGHAM

I did nothing wrong!

GWEN

Mark Twain said, "Never argue with an idiot. They will drag you down to their level and beat you with experience."

Mr. Bellingham looks away.

MR. BELLINGHAM

Damn. I use that quote in my social studies classes!

Gwen ZAPS him!

GWEN

Idiot!

The Goons cheers.

Miles slaps a stack of Scientific Studies on the Judges table.

MILES

Another scientific study by Johns Hopkins found that fifty-four percent of owners reported not storing all their firearms safely.

GOON #1/YU YAN
Increasing the risk that they'll be
used unintentionally.

GOON #2/JOSEPH
Or by the bad guys who steal them!

GOON #4/ROSA
Inexcusable.

GOON #3/LEVI
But perfectly legal!

GWEN
And directly infringing on our
inalienable rights to life,
liberty, and the pursuit of
happiness.

Gwen returns to her seat and holds up her stun gun.

GWEN (CONT'D)
Wouldn't you agree, Judge?

The Judge nods yes.

GWEN (CONT'D)
How about you, Ms. Martinez?

She nods yes.

GWEN (CONT'D)
And you, Mr. Bellingham?

Mr. Bellingham shakes angrily in his seat.

MR. BELLINGHAM
You broke in and stole my pistol!

Gwen ZAPS him. The Goons cheer!

JUDGE WILSON
(mumbles)
Adding breaking and entering and
robbery to your list of crimes.

Gwen points harshly to Mr. Bellingham.

GWEN
Just to prove a point, Judge! Let's
put it to the jury of my peers!
(MORE)

GWEN (CONT'D)

Jury, do you think that keeping a loaded weapon without safe storage is the desperate act of a paranoid, deeply disturbed person?

The Jury unanimously gives Mr. Bellingham a "thumbs-down" sign, and jeers.

GWEN (CONT'D)

It's simple: stolen guns, by definition, end up in the hands of criminals, who use them against law-abiding citizens, which directly infringes on their inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

The Goons stand and cheer wildly!

The Judge coughs, signaling that he wishes to speak.

GWEN (CONT'D)

Keep it brief, Judge.

JUDGE WILSON

Citizens have a right to defend their family and property -- to protect their lives, liberties, and pursuit of happiness.

Ellie and Mr. Bellingham nod their heads in agreement, and the Jurors agree with the Judges logic.

GOONS

Oooooow!

GWEN

John Lock suggested, "Murderers forfeit their right to life, since they act outside the law of reason." We argue that irresponsible gun owners should forfeit their rights to gun ownership for the same reason!

ELLIE

Who will protect their lives?

Gwen remains calm, logical, and holds up her stun gun.

GWEN

Security systems, non-lethal forms of self-defense, and calling 9-1-1 for policeman, sheriffs, the well-regulated militia we call the National Guard, or the entire Department of Defense if need be! All these options, together, did not exist when the Second Amendment was passed!

The Goons cheer wildly!

Gwen ZAPS Ellie.

GWEN (CONT'D)

Even you knew the answer to that one! I thought you were smarter than that!

(beat)

Which brings us to Mr. Bellingham.

Mr. Bellingham sits up, attentive.

GWEN (CONT'D)

We apologize for borrowing your loaded weapon, stored unsafely.

MR. BELLINGHAM

Not okay.

GWEN

We understand. You're bitter about losing your Concealed Carry Permit.

Mr. Bellingham looks away.

MR. BELLINGHAM

Maybe.

GWEN

You were a big man on campus two and a half years ago, isn't that right, Mr. Bellingham?

MR. BELLINGHAM

I was a dedicated social studies teacher, nothing more.

GWEN

Don't be modest, Mr. Bellingham. You were a self-proclaimed "good guy with a gun!" Weren't you?

Ellie perks up, as if by instinct.

ELLIE
Objection. Leading, Your Honor!

JUDGE WILSON
Over-ruled.
(pouts)
Not that it makes much difference!

Miles approaches the bench.

MILES
Here's a copy of the school
newspaper, Your Honor.

JUDGE WILSON
Read the pertinent sections.

Mr. Bellingham squirms in his seat.

MILES
(reading)
"That's right. I'm your social
studies teacher, a good guy with a
gun, and the first line of defense
against a whacko school shooter
like in Colorado, Connecticut, and
Florida!"

MR. BELLINGHAM
All I meant was...

MILES
"I'd kill 'em before they had the
chance!"

GWEN
Is that what you said, Mr.
Bellingham? Word for word?

MR. BELLINGHAM
I don't recall.

GWEN
You had two copies of the article
posted in your Social Studies room.

MR. BELLINGHAM
I don't recall.

GWEN

They are there now. One right behind your desk for all the students to see looking forward, and one on the back wall for you to see. Every day!

MR. BELLINGHAM

Posted them more than two years ago, I guess.

GWEN

We found a copy posted in your bedroom, next to the drawer with your loaded pistol. Isn't that right?

MR. BELLINGHAM

No law against that!

GWEN

How did you lose your Concealed Carry Permit, Mr. Bellingham?

MR. BELLINGHAM

Do I have to answer that, Judge?

JUDGE WILSON

You do, if you don't want to be zapped.

MR. BELLINGHAM

Pistol went off accidentally.

GWEN

At home? In the car? A crowded theatre? Grocery store? Where?

MR. BELLINGHAM

My classroom.

(yells)

On a Saturday. No kids around!

GWEN

Good thing. How did it go off?

MR. BELLINGHAM

Practicing how I would respond to a school shooter, that's all.

GWEN

You didn't lose your job?

MR. BELLINGHAM

No.

GWEN

Why?

MR. BELLINGHAM

I'm well-loved. I was trying to improve my skills to save lives.

GWEN

Law enforcement saw it differently.

Mr. Bellingham comes unhinged. He shakes, and his chains rattle.

MR. BELLINGHAM

State took away my Concealed Carry Permit. Assholes! Putting lives in danger. Outlaw guns, and only outlaws will have guns! Idiots! No more first line of defense for school kids! That's where I lose sleep at night!

Mr. Bellingham calms himself down.

GWEN

Not your fault, Mr. Bellingham. Calm down!

Miles approaches Mr. Bellingham.

MILES

Things weren't the same for you at school after that, were they Mr. Bellingham?

Mr. Bellingham looks away.

GWEN

Answer the question.

MILES

Students laughed and called you names behind your back. But you heard them, didn't you?

MR. BELLINGHAM

A few.

MILES

What did they call you?

Silence.

Gwen ZAPS Mr. Bellingham.

ELLIE
Objection, Your Honor?

The Goons howl with laughter after each name.

MR. BELLINGHAM
They called me Danny Dangerously.
Mr. Last-line-of-defense. Premature
E-jerk-ulation. Names like that!

GWEN
(sarcastic)
Careless children can be so
insensitive.

Mr. Bellingham gets angry.

MR. BELLINGHAM
Wanted to transfer schools, but no
one would take me. Almost quit!
Almost...

GWEN
Almost what, Mr. Bellingham?

The Goons whisper to each other.

MR. BELLINGHAM
Not saying.

GWEN
I respect that! One tiny accident
shouldn't label a person for life.

MR. BELLINGHAM
That's what I'm saying.

GWEN
But, then there's the issue at your
shooting range. Want to tell us
about that?

Mr. Bellingham squirms, and turns angry.

MR. BELLINGHAM
I was sick of it! All you kids in
Florida, the protests, the
walkouts, trying to take our guns
away! You won't rest 'til they
confiscate them all!

GWEN

What does this have to do with your shooting range?

MR. BELLINGHAM

I wasn't the only one!

GWEN

Not the only one who did what?

MR. BELLINGHAM

I don't recall.

Miles strolls up to the Judge and shows him a video on his phone.

The Judge examines the video.

JUDGE WILSON

The video appears to show Mr. Bellingham shooting at targets with Ms. Antonelli's face, and the faces of the student protestors from Florida. But it's a poor quality video.

GWEN

Ask him yourself, Judge?

JUDGE WILSON

Mr. Bellingham, is this you in the video.

GWEN

It went viral. He received many positive comments, by name, from other members of his shooting club.

MR. BELLINGHAM

I couldn't see the photos on the targets. I don't recall how they got there?

GWEN

Couldn't see well? Great quality in a first responder! What kind of weapon were you using that day.

MR. BELLINGHAM

Ruger American with .308 Cartridges.

GWEN

Good recall there. Legally purchased?

MR. BELLINGHAM

Yes, gun show, but it was legal.

GWEN

Background check?

MR. BELLINGHAM

I don't recall.

GWEN

Not for that weapon. We checked. How many firearms do you own, Mr. Bellingham?

MR. BELLINGHAM

I don't recall.

Gwen ZAPS him.

MR. BELLINGHAM (CONT'D)

The exact number. 'Tween twenty-five and thirty, I guess. Mostly for huntin'. No law against them.

Gwen turns to Miles.

GWEN

Until last week, when Mr. Bellingham added one more. Fetch it, will you?

Miles walks slowly to the dark, back part of the room.

SILENCE

He returns with an AR-15.

Everyone gasps.

Miles places the AR-15 on the Judge's table.

JUDGE WILSON

Not loaded, is it?

GWEN

Don't know. Never handled one before we found it in Mr. Bellingham's dirty clothes hamper.

ELLIE

Illegal search and seizure, Your Honor. Inadmissible!

GWEN

Over-ruled. If we found it, so could a fifteen-year-old meth addict or a younger child!

The Judge glares at Mr. Bellingham.

JUDGE WILSON

Hunting?

GWEN

Squirrels? Quail? Rats? What do you hunt with a military weapon designed to kill thousands of enemy soldiers?

Mr. Bellingham looks away.

ELLIE

Jesus, Mr. Bellingham!

GWEN

This is why we're here tonight, everyone.

MILES

This AR-15 was purchased illegally from a nineteen-year-old college student, at the flea market closest to Mr. Bellingham's home, for eight-hundred dollars cash. No receipt. No background check. With one clip of ammo! Ready to shoot!

MR. BELLINGHAM

You can't prove any of this?

MILES

Yes, we can.

GWEN

Reveal yourself.

Miles removes his disguise, except for the Lone Ranger mask.

The Judge, Ellie, and Mr. Bellingham shrug. They don't recognize him.

Miles smiles at Mr. Bellingham.

MILES

Do you recognize me yet? I was a junior in your Social Studies class two and a half years ago. You bullied me.

MR. BELLINGHAM

All bullshit. Can't prove a thing.

Ellie points to Miles.

ELLIE

I've never seen you before.

Ellie looks away.

MILES

My parents came to see you. "Case was too small," you said. "Circumstantial evidence against a popular teacher. Maybe he pointed a pistol at you, maybe he didn't. No winners in a case like that," you told them.

ELLIE

I can't recall every consultation I have...

Miles confronts Mr. Bellingham.

MILES

No winners? After they took his Concealed Carry Permit, I guessed he'd want to buy more guns, but he might not pass a background check.

GWEN

This is the good part.

MILES

I bought the AR-15 from a private party. Legal, but no record or background check. I disguised myself as an older, Gun Association member, American Flag pins, Second Amendment fliers, the works! I took it to the flea market closest to Mr. Bellingham's house. A week ago, he took the bait.

MR. BELLINGHAM

Can't prove a thing.

GWEN

We got video of the transaction,
your signature and date on a bill
of sale. You're screwed! When the
school board sees this...

Mr. Bellingham loses control. He screams, as the Goons, Gwen,
and Miles high-five each other and dance around happily.

MR. BELLINGHAM

You'll go to prison longer than I
will! You people are crazy! You're
insane! That's what you are! You're
insane! What are you so happy
about?

They stop cheering.

GWEN

We think we stopped another mass
school shooting and suicide Monday
morning! We have evidence to
suggest that Mr. Bellingham planned
to prove that teachers need to be
armed to save lives.

Miles is furious!

MILES

In the process, the scumbag was
prepared to disavow the rights of
life, liberty, and the pursuit of
happiness of hundreds of innocent
students!

GWEN

He was gonna kill 'em, then shoot
himself.

Mr. Bellingham looks away, and slumps in his chair. The
Judge's eyes, and Ellie's eyes open widely as they glare at
Mr. Bellingham.

INT. SCHOOL BASEMENT - NIGHT

Gwen paces, as she recaps, the evidence presented to date.

GWEN

Your Honor, thus far, we have demonstrated that Mr. Bellingham, a self-proclaimed 'good guy with a gun,' unsafely discharged his pistol at school and his Concealed Carry Permit was revoked.

The Judge coughs indicating he'd like to speak.

GWEN (CONT'D)

Yes, Judge?

JUDGE WILSON

When do you plan to release your hostages?

The mood sours immediately.

Gwen holds up a flyer for the event, and reads it loudly.

GWEN

"Keep our Schools Safe -- a conversation with Judge Reggie Wilson, Superior Court; and Ellie Martinez, Esq., Attorney at Law, Martinez and Associates, and Ms. Gwen Antonelli, School Mass Shooting Survivor." I'd like to thank you all for coming.

ELLIE

(yells)

We may have driven here, only to be handcuffed, chained to our chairs, and tortured with high-voltage electricity!

Gwen ZAPS Ellie.

MILES

Let's not forget that aside from the hundreds of students who have died in our schools from senseless gun violence, we have right-wing lunatics who mistakenly believe their man-granted rights to bear military weapons trumps our God-given, inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

JUDGE WILSON

Yes, yes. You've shown Mr. Bellingham, was careless with a firearm on one occasion, but you haven't demonstrated an infringement of your rights.

The smiles on the Goons' faces disappear, as they squirm in their seats.

MR. BELLINGHAM

That's right!

Gwen angrily points at Mr. Bellingham.

GWEN

What if we were to prove a direct relationship to the mere threat of school gun violence and the inalienable rights of students?

JUDGE WILSON

The direct loss of life is rather obvious, but proceed.

MILES

Survivors' psychological disorders, counseling, cost of new security systems, memorials, or new schools.

Ellie gives the Judge the evil eye.

GWEN

Couple months ago, an 18-year-old in Vermont was released from a center for troubled teens across the border in Maine. The teen suffers from hyperactivity and depression, but he's never been diagnosed as mentally ill. He'd pass a background test with flying colors, but in his journal, he describes himself as an active school shooter. He buys a shotgun and shells, perfectly legal.

JUDGE WILSON

Oh no!

GWEN

No. A close friend turns him in before he goes on his mass-shooting rampage.

MILES
Saving dozens of lives.

GWEN
But guess what? So traumatized are
the students at the school that two
months later, attendance is down
twenty-five percent!

The Goons gasp. The Judge sits back in his chair.

GOON #2/JOSEPH
Worse after a real shooting!

GOON #1/YU YAN
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

GWEN
Show of hands?

All the Goons, and Gwen raise their hands.

ELLIE
Atypical?

GWEN
Afraid not.

Miles marches up to the Judge with three additional
scientific papers.

Mr. Bellingham turns away in disgust.

MR. BELLINGHAM
More damn numbers.

GWEN
Ms. Martinez wanted to know if PTSD
is typical of school mass shooting
survivors.

Miles address Ellie.

MILES
Between 10% and 36% of school mass
shooting survivors have been
diagnosed with PTSD.

JUDGE WILSON
Didn't know that.

MILES

That's as high as U.S. soldiers returning from the tours of duty in the Middle East and Vietnam, respectively.

GWEN

No one talks about those numbers in gun association membership drives!

MILES

Or about young school kids who are terrified to go to school!

GOON #4/ROSA

Ninety percent of public schools now conduct active shooter drills. They freak out kids every time!

MR. BELLINGHAM

If more teachers carried guns...

Gwen ZAPS him.

GWEN

Miles, read Mr. Bellingham the facts you just handed the Judge, and slap him around if he doesn't listen.

MILES

The Judge?

Gwen points to Bellingham.

GWEN

No! Bellingham!

Miles gets in Mr. Bellingham's face.

MILES

Three-fourths of U.S. teachers do not want to carry guns in school! They overwhelmingly favor gun control measures over security steps meant to turn schools into high-security prisons!

GWEN

Most just want to be teachers.

GOON #3/LEVI

You don't pay them enough to be security guards too.

GOON #1/YU YAN

What if they miss the shooter and
hit a student?

Miles backs away from Mr. Bellingham and sits down.

Gwen approaches Mr. Bellingham.

GWEN

Teachers have a bunch of problems
as it is, don't they, Mr.
Bellingham?

MR. BELLINGHAM

What do you mean?

GWEN

I mean, teachers have a hard job
already, don't they?

MR. BELLINGHAM

Very hard job!

GWEN

I'm sure it is. And teachers who
witness a school shooting have high
rates of depression, divorce, and
suicide.

Gwen turns to the Judge.

GWEN (CONT'D)

It's all in the scientific papers,
Judge.

(to Mr. Bellingham)

Were you ever bullied in school,
Mr. Bellingham?

Mr. Bellingham looks away, and mumbles.

MR. BELLINGHAM

Didn't always carry a gun, you
know.

GWEN

Of course not. I mean in grammar
school, middle school, or high
school?

MR. BELLINGHAM

No more than most kids, I suppose.

GWEN

Really? Hard to believe.

Mr. Bellingham gets angry at Gwen.

MR. BELLINGHAM

I had poor eyesight from an early age. Not good at sports. Shy with girls, and my mom was a poor single-mother, so I didn't have designer clothes, or the latest tennis shoes! Okay? So what?

Gwen hugs his shoulders. The Judge and Ellie look on Mr. Bellingham with pity.

GWEN

Lots of kids have some of those issues. You hit the jackpot.

MR. BELLINGHAM

Past that all now!

GWEN

Makes me sorrier about the way we had to treat you tonight.

ELLIE

I'm calling B.S.!

Gwen is startled by Ellie's comment.

GWEN

What?

ELLIE

You heard me! B.S.! We haven't seen an ounce of remorse for your criminal activity, or the way you've treated us!

Gwen paces while she thinks. The Goons watch every step.

GWEN

I see. You think you're the victims here?

ELLIE

I think it's obvious. We're your bound, and chained hostages. We're being tortured and denigrated.

Gwen paces, getting angrier with each step.

GWEN

Judge, do you feel the same way?

The Judge nods, 'yes.'

JUDGE WILSON
I think any reasonable person...

GWEN
That's enough.

MR. BELLINGHAM
Didn't ask me?

MILES
Shut up, Mr. Bellingham.

Gwen ignores Miles and Mr. Bellingham, and turns to the Goons.

GWEN
Who are the real victims here?

GOONS
(yell)
We are!

MILES
And future generations, if we don't
fix this soon!

Gwen stumbles to her chair and collapses into it. Tears form in her eyes. She wipes her eyes to hide the tears.

GWEN
One night! One short night you've
felt persecuted.
(looks up)
Know what my life has been like
since the school shooting?

Mr. Bellingham looks away, but the Judge and Ms. Martinez establish eye contact.

MILES
Tell 'em.

GWEN
The first week, I stayed in my room
and wept, except to attend
seventeen funerals, where I wept
more!

GOON #4/ROSA
That's fucked up.

GWEN

Second week, I visited twenty-three classmates in the hospital or at physical therapy. Couldn't go back to school yet, but every time I stepped out of the house, TV reporters descended like vultures.

GOON #2/JOSEPH

Four stages of grief. Pissed, sad, sorry, and tired of all the bullshit!

GWEN

Something like that. So, I started talking to the TV cameras, and it felt like I was doing some good. Trying to prevent the next one.

GOON #3/LEVI

(unconvinced)

Uh huh!

GOON #1/YU YAN

Exactly!

GWEN

I was speaking, but no one was listening.

Gwen gets up to pace, sad and angry at the same time, and wiping tears occasionally.

MILES

Talk shows.

GWEN

When you see your two best friends get cut in half by an AR-15, you never want to see a gun your entire life!

ELLIE

I'm so sorry.

JUDGE WILSON

Me, too.

GWEN

Then, those assholes on FBC News started calling me a deranged publicity hound, looking to get famous after a terrible tragedy.

(MORE)

GWEN (CONT'D)

They'd show me crying, split-screen next to a hardened, sleazy lobbyist for the gun lobby!

MILES

Then the death threats!

GWEN

Hundreds of them. Thousands! I quit counting. Would you like to see them all, Judge?

The Judge shakes his head, 'no.'

GWEN (CONT'D)

You, Ms. Martinez?

Ms. Martinez shakes his head, 'no.'

GOON #4/ROSA

You still get 'em?

GWEN

Every day!

MILES

Videos and social media?

GWEN

I'm plastered all over it. Not in a good way! Go to private browsing and Google me. See for yourselves!

MILES

Most kids when they're seventeen are going to movies, going to prom, going to the beach. Gwen had to wear a disguise, go out after dark, and avoid crowds.

GWEN

My parents had to move two towns away for their safety.

(beat)

My point is, that my only crime -- before tonight -- was surviving a school mass shooting, attending non-violent marches and school walkouts, and talking about it!

JUDGE WILSON

Expressing your First Amendment rights.

GWEN

Yep.

ELLIE

While others are expressing their
Second Amendment rights!

GOON #4/ROSA

Their interpretation of the Second
Amendment.

GOON #2/JOSEPH

We can't own hand-grenades or
bazookas!

MILES

Times change. When the Second
Amendment was passed, you could own
slaves and deny voting rights to
everybody but white men.

GOON #2/JOSEPH

(yelling)

Some states had bounties to kill
Native Americans!

(sarcastic)

Nothin' the matter with those laws,
hey, Judge!

ELLIE

Our system of laws is self-
correcting. Our Amendments testify
to that, as do all the laws and
interpretations that follow.

Gwen hops up on her table, angry!

GWEN

And all the loopholes! Mr.
Bellingham avoided background
checks by buying an AR-15 at a flea
market, but he could have bought it
a gun show or from a private party
too!

MILES

And nothing stopping him from
adding a bump stock to make it
fully automatic.

ELLIE

Objection. Bump stocks are illegal,
now.

GOON #1/YU YAN

Like marijuana in many states, but
easy to get!

GOON #3/LEVI

Mr. Bellingham can buy as much ammo
as he wants; easier than
stockpiling allergy meds or
opioids!

GWEN

Some states allow you to buy an AR-
15 at age 18, but you have to be 21
to buy a pistol!

ELLIE

We heard all these rants and raves
before! Laws aren't perfect! Takes
time and votes to improve them.

GWEN

That's why we're here! No one is
listening! Lobbyists and special
interests make sure of that!

(yells)

It all ends tonight!

JUDGE WILSON

Gonna wave your magic wand?

Ellie laughs.

The Judge sits up, proudly.

Gwen jumps off the table and races over to the Judge.

GWEN

You ever take money from the gun
lobby to help win an election?

The Judge looks away.

JUDGE WILSON

Am I on trial here?

GWEN

Only if you took their money!

Ellie perks up.

ELLIE

You don't have to answer that!

Gwen slaps the Judge in the face!

The Goons gasp.

ELLIE (CONT'D)
Just added another felony to your
night of bad decisions!

Gwen races over to Ellie.

GWEN
What do you mean?

ELLIE
Every assault or threat of assault
on federal judge or prosecutor is a
felony.

Ellie turns to the Goons and snickers.

ELLIE (CONT'D)
Denver businessman was sentenced to
six years in prison, just for
sending two judges threatening
letters about gun-control.

Gwen races back to the Judge.

GWEN
That true, Judge?

JUDGE WILSON
And he had to pay over eight-
thousand dollars in restitution.

Ellie laughs.

ELLIE
Cha-ching! Your bill just went way
up.

MILES
Can't be right.

Ellie stares at Miles.

ELLIE
And you're all willing accomplices.
Same penalties. Just so, Ms.
Antonelli can get back on the TV
talk-show circuit, as she throws
you five Goons of Liberty under the
bus!

The Goons and Miles look frightened.

Gwen paces wildly, noticeably upset.

MR. BELLINGHAM

This is getting better by the minute.

GWEN

Shut up, Mr. Bellingham.

(beat)

Meeting. Back of the room! Stat!

Gwen stomps to the back of the room. Miles and the Goons struggle to keep up.

From the back of the room, we hear loud whispering, complaining, but we can't make out what they're saying.

At the Defendant's table, Mr. Bellingham is whispering to Ellie, and pointing to his right ankle.

We SEE the slight bulge of an ankle holster and small pistol.

Ellie's eyes open widely.

Mr. Bellingham smiles devilishly.

The conversations abruptly end in the back of the room.

Gwen races up to Mr. Bellingham.

The Goons and Miles take their seats.

Levi looks very unhappy. He spends minutes controlling his anger, which the others see.

Gwen threatens to slap Mr. Bellingham, but refrains. Instead she sounds extra evil.

GWEN (CONT'D)

We have your emails to your ex-wife!

Mr. Bellingham's eyes open widely.

MILES

Sent her the video of you buying the AR-15 and she got a little worried.

GWEN

Sent us everything. Torn about keeping the alimony rolling in, and turning you in.

MILES

We talked.

GWEN

Happy to share certain threats against her, and threats against the school board, principal, and students over the past two-and-half years!

ELLIE

Unless she shares the emails with authorities directly, they'll never be able to use any of them in a court of law!

Gwen races over and ZAPS Ellie again.

GWEN

Quit being a Debbie-Downer! Let us have our day in court, Ms. Martinez!

Ellie turns away.

MR. BELLINGHAM

I got nothing to say without my lawyer present.

GWEN

That right?

MR. BELLINGHAM

That's right!

GWEN

Fine! But here's what worried us, Judge!

Gwen picks up several printed pages of emails.

MILES

Just the juicy ones.

GWEN

"I can't live like this. All your fault! Those girls were lying."
(to the Judge)
We don't know what girls he's talking about.

MR. BELLINGHAM

None of your business! Those emails are private!

MILES

The gun ones. Read the gun ones.

GWEN

"I'd love to give you half my gun collection. One bullet at a time."

MR. BELLINGHAM

Was a joke! Taking it out of context.

GWEN

Fine. Here's the entire email.

(reads)

You lying, stealing sack of shit. You want me to sell all my guns and give you half the money! I'd love to give you half my gun collection. One bullet at a time. Let's set a time and place!"

JUDGE WILSON

Sounds like a direct threat to me.

MR. BELLINGHAM

Just after the divorce. Got angry!

JUDGE WILSON

(to Gwen)

Any threats regarding the school.

GWEN

(to the Judge)

Let's ask him.

(to Mr. Bellingham)

First, what did you mean when you said you wanted to give your wife half your gun collection one bullet at a time?

MR. BELLINGHAM

(sarcastic)

I wanted to hand it to her one bullet at a time. Of course? What did you think I meant?

GWEN

Well then what did you mean by you next email a few seconds later? It read, "BAM BAM BAM BAM BAM BAM!"

Mr. Bellingham looks away.

ELLIE
You don't have to answer.

MR. BELLINGHAM
Being childish, I guess.

Ellie looks away in disgust.

GWEN
Your next email a short time later
is filled with swear words and name-
calling.

MR. BELLINGHAM
That's how we typically
communicated at the end.

The Judge is upset with Mr. Bellingham.

JUDGE WILSON
Straight answer please? Did you
ever threaten the school or any
students, teachers, or staff at any
time?

Silence.

Gwen walks slowly to the judge with a printed copy of an
email, while Mr. Bellingham babbles on.

MR. BELLINGHAM
Gonna take the Fifth on that one,
Your Honor. I get mad sometimes.
Never mean anything by it. The
school community knows I wouldn't
hurt anyone! And, I resent the
accusation!

The Judge reads the email to himself.

JUDGE WILSON
The more I see and hear, the more
confusing this entire night is. I
don't know who to believe.

Gwen becomes irate, uncontrollable.

GWEN
(to the Judge)
Believe the potential victims.
Miles was scared to come to school!
(to Ellie)
Why?

(MORE)

GWEN (CONT'D)

Maybe because, one or two students out of ten students, and God knows how many teachers, have the potential to go crazy sometime, like they do in other countries. But unlike other countries like Australia, Japan, the UK and many others, military-style weapons and ammo are freely available here. Guns are everywhere.

(to Mr. Bellingham)

We've armed our own time bombs. Three bad days in a row is all many people need to light the fuse!

Mr. Bellingham struggles to break loose of his handcuffs and chair to assault Gwen, but he can't get free.

JUDGE WILSON

Enough theatrics for one day, Ms. Antonelli? Let us go! That's an order!

Gwen turns coldly to the Judge.

GWEN

I don't know! Are you listening yet?

ELLIE

(to Gwen)

Give it a rest.

Gwen shrugs, and taunts Mr. Bellingham.

GWEN

Deaf ears, Mr. Bellingham. You're being spared by deaf ears. We won't bother to divulge any more of the other threats you made with your password-protected email, with your computer-specific IP address, and date and time stamp to your ex-wife's computer.

MILES

But we will turn them over to the domestic terrorism branch of the FBI.

Mr. Bellingham is defensive and angry as ever!

MR. BELLINGHAM

And what are they gonna call this?
This is worse. Like a posse! A mob!
Violent anarchists! We talked about
them in my social studies classes.

GWEN

Like the KKK? Only we're after the
KKK. Like our resurgent white
supremacists. Like those whack-jobs
threatening us during our peaceful
marches and walkouts with their AK-
47s, AR-15s, and holstered Colt
45s? Only we're after them too!
Those are the real anarchists of
our day! They see themselves as
well-regulated Militias working for
a state!

JUDGE WILSON

We agree, they are not!

MILES

What have you done about them?
Nothing!

GWEN

But our attention is here! You see,
our highest priority is to red-flag
potential school mass shooters like
Mr. Bellingham!

MR. BELLINGHAM

Got nothing more to say.

GWEN

We do!

Gwen faces the Judge.

GWEN (CONT'D)

Mr. Bellingham is one of more than
two-hundred individuals we have
flagged as immediate threats to a
student body.

JUDGE WILSON

You're kidding?

ELLIE

You plan on doing this again?

GWEN

As often as we can. 'Til we get caught, I guess.

Levi turns his head in disgust.

MILES

'Til our schools are safe, or safer, like they are in other industrialized countries.

GOON #2/JOSEPH

We signed on to help.

Levi stands and shouts.

GOON #3/LEVI

But not to spend years in prison!

Yu Yan glares at Levi, as Rosa looks away.

GOON #1/YU YAN

There are others. We don't need you.

Gwen charges up to Levi.

GWEN

Never had what it takes. You're free to go!

Levi looks around the room. He glares at Mr. Bellingham, then sits back down.

ELLIE

Vigilantes! Outside the law. You'll pay for your crimes!

GOON #4/ROSA

Batman had to be a vigilante because the officials in Gotham City were too corrupt.

JUDGE WILSON

You serious? Batman isn't real!

GWEN

The Sons of Liberty were real!

The Goons snicker, but they have worried looks.

ELLIE

You'll be torn away from your families and friends.

(MORE)

ELLIE (CONT'D)

Ripped from your communities.
Forgotten as domestic terrorists!

Levi's body starts to shake in fear. He stands, races to the back of the room, and exits.

The other Goons stare at each other and Gwen.

Gwen strides across the room to whisper to the Goons. Miles follows her.

Gwen begins to whisper too loudly.

GWEN

Look, guys...

Gwen pulls Miles and Yu Yan to the dark, back of the room. Joseph and Rosa follow.

The group's discontent can be heard in the makeshift courtroom.

GWEN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Keep your shit together, and we'll get through this!

GOON #2/JOSEPH (O.S.)

Felony after felony? Didn't sign up for prison, either!

MILES (O.S.)

Shhhh! Keep it down!

The Judge, Ellie, and Mr. Bellingham hear Gwen.

GWEN (O.S.)

Only one dude who participated in the Boston Tea Party, Francis Akeley, was jailed. They let him go. He was a militiaman who died at the Battle of Bunker Hill. A true patriot!

GOON #4/ROSA (O.S.)

You want to be labeled a felon?

Gwen speaks loud enough to be heard by the Judge, Ellie, and Mr. Bellingham.

GWEN (O.S.)

It's not what you're labeled that's important. It's how you're remembered!

Moments later...

In the makeshift courtroom, Ellie is using her eyes, expressions, and "mouthing the words" to tell the Judge that Mr. Bellingham has a pistol in an ankle holster.

The Judge doesn't understand her, and is shrugging his shoulders when Gwen leads the team back.

GWEN (CONT'D)
What's going on in here?

The Judge, Ellie, and Mr. Bellingham look away in different directions.

JUDGE WILSON
Wondering when we'll be released.

GWEN
After Miles has his case heard.

Miles waves and smiles.

MILES
Then we can go.

GOON #1/YU YAN
That's our promise.

The other Goons nod 'yes.'

GWEN
Judge, can you humor us for a few minutes more?

JUDGE WILSON
If it will bring this nightmare to an end.

Gwen turns to Ellie.

GWEN
Ms. Martinez, will you represent Mr. Bellingham again?

Ellie is defensive.

ELLIE
Again? I don't recall ever representing Mr. Bellingham?

Gwen glares at Mr. Bellingham. She sounds coldly professional.

GWEN
That's why you're here, isn't it,
Mr. Bellingham?

MR. BELLINGHAM
I got nothing more to say.

GWEN
We'll see about that! If you want
to be released, and you want these
fine people to be released, you'll
answer a few questions.

Mr. Bellingham glances at Ellie and the Judge, who are
pleading with their eyes.

GWEN (CONT'D)
Miles, will you please take the
stand?

Miles grabs a chair and sets it in front and slightly to the
left of the Judge's table.

ELLIE
(yells)
I refuse to participate unless I'm
unbound.

GWEN
You're a flight risk!

ELLIE
Just the cuffs, then!

JUDGE WILSON
Me, too! Shoulders are killing me!

Gwen nods to Yu Yan, who unlocks the cuffs on Ellie and the
Judge.

MR. BELLINGHAM
What about me?

MILES
You're the defendant for a reason!

GWEN
Not yet, Mr. Bellingham. Answer our
questions, and we'll reconsider.
(turns to Miles)
Promise to tell the truth?

MILES
Yep.

The Judge snickers.

GWEN

What is your name?

While Gwen asks Miles questions, Mr. Bellingham tries to get Ellie's attention with his eyes staring alternately at her and his ankle. She pretends she doesn't see him signaling her.

MILES

(whispers)

Do I have to?

GWEN

(whispers in his ear)

You and I are screwed either way.
We made a deal. We're in this
together.

MILES

My name is Miles Ungstrum.

GWEN

How do you know these people?

MILES

Never met the Jury before tonight.
Part of the plan.

GWEN

Mr. Bellingham? How do you know
him?

Mr. Bellingham's eyes shift from Ellie to Gwen, trying to appear innocent.

MILES

I was in his social studies class.
We all had to take it.

MR. BELLINGHAM

I've never seen this kid before.
I've had almost two-thousand
students in ten years of teaching,
but I remember every one.

Miles removes his Lone Ranger mask, and Mr. Bellingham's eyes open widely.

GWEN

You remember Miles now, don't you,
Mr. Bellingham.

MR. BELLINGHAM

May have been in my class. Don't recall.

GWEN

And, Ms. Martinez. Did you have any interaction with her?

MILES

Not directly. That was my parents.

Mr. Bellingham squirms in his chair, and avoids eye contact with Miles.

Bellingham again tries to signal Ellie with his eyes, but again she ignores him.

ELLIE

Objection. Second-hand testimony.

JUDGE WILSON

I'm going to over-rule here. I want to know the story.

Ellie and the Judge exchange mean glares.

GWEN

Miles, please recall a memorable afternoon you had following Mr. Bellingham's class in April, two and a half years ago. And what happened afterward.

MILES

I left sixth period, last one in the afternoon for both me and Mr. Bellingham, but I had to go back, 'cause I left my backpack under my desk.

ELLIE

Tells me he's forgetful, Your Honor. How can we be certain...?

JUDGE WILSON

Give it a rest, Counselor.

GWEN

Go on, Miles.

MILES

I came back, and saw Mr. Bellingham showing his pistol to two girls in my class, Sasha Fleming, and Amanda Rice. Two hotties.

MR. BELLINGHAM

They begged me to see it.

Ellie glares at Mr. Bellingham, who smirks.

ELLIE

Jesus!

MR. BELLINGHAM

They did.

GWEN

Did you say anything to Mr. Bellingham?

MILES

I yelled at him. I reminded him that a teacher accidentally shot a student in Northern California doing the same thing.

GWEN

How did Mr. Bellingham respond?

MILES

He pointed the pistol at me and told me, "You'd better leave."

GWEN

The two girls witnessed this?

MILES

They did, but they didn't want to get involved, because they liked Mr. Bellingham. I saved their texts.

Mr. Bellingham's eyes open widely.

GWEN

Did you bring a copy of them today?

MILES

Yep.

Miles gets up and retrieves Four Pages of texts from the girls from a backpack below his table.

He hands them to Gwen, who takes them to the Judge, who reads them.

Again, Mr. Bellingham tries to signal Ellie with his eyes, but again she ignores him.

JUDGE WILSON

Have these been altered in any way?

MILES

Nope. My folks forwarded the original texts to Ms. Martinez, who concluded that my written statement, and the texts would damage Mr. Bellingham's good reputation, along with the reputations of the principal, school, and school board.

JUDGE WILSON

Did Ms. Martinez put that in writing?

Silence.

GOON #4/ROSA

Shit! Kids versus adults.

GOON #2/JOSEPH

Lower-class citizen versus a fancy lawyer.

MILES

Our word versus hers.

GWEN

Life's winners versus life's losers.

MILES

In the next six weeks, my grade went from an A to a D. Sasha's and Amanda's grades went from Ds to Bs. My parents were asked by the Principal not to attend school functions.

GWEN

What happened after Mr. Bellingham's pistol was fired accidentally two Saturday's after you reported the incident?

MILES

School tried to keep it quiet. But they had to do the police report. And Mr. Bellingham got his Concealed Carry Permit revoked.

MR. BELLINGHAM

Suspended. I can get it back after five years. Two and half years from now.

Ellie shakes her head in disgust.

ELLIE

Jesus!

GWEN

Did Mr. Bellingham's behavior toward you ever improve?

MILES

Worse. He seemed to blame me. Looked at me threateningly. Pretended to shoot me with his fingers when no one was looking. Made me uncomfortable. Couldn't wait to graduate.

GWEN

Any evidence of his animosity toward you?

Miles fetched his yearbook from his backpack. He opens it to his photo. We see that someone has drawn three concentric circles on his photo like a target.

Gwen sadly walks the yearbook to the Judge.

The Judge looks upon Miles' photo with a sad face.

He quickly scans other comments from students and faculty.

The Judge shows Miles's photo to Ellie and Mr. Bellingham.

Ellie looks appalled, as Mr. Bellingham looks away.

MR. BELLINGHAM

I never did that. No proof!

MILES

Nobody saw who did it -- crowded cafeteria, and yearbooks were flying.

GWEN

We have no way of proving Mr. Bellingham did that. The ink on the photo looks the same as the color and thickness of the ink used by Mr. Bellingham used to sign Sasha's and Amanda's yearbooks, but we didn't get the ink analyzed.

ELLIE

Motion to strike the evidence.

The Judge hands back the yearbook to Gwen, who sulks as she carries it back to her table.

JUDGE WILSON

Sustained.

(to Gwen)

I'm sorry.

GOON #4/ROSA

We're screwed. I'm out of here!

Rosa stands and begins to march out.

GWEN

Wait!

GOON #4/ROSA

Nothing good is going to come of this same ol' shit!

MILES

Can't quit now!

Rosa turns in anger.

GOON #4/ROSA

No! You and Gwen are in this together. I don't know why or how we let it get this far! The voting booth, man. Only shit they understand!

GWEN

Not while corporations, special interests, and the gun lobby are buying elections! That ain't right!

GOON #4/ROSA

This ain't right. Chaining people to chairs. Gagging 'em! Handcuffs. Shocking 'em. It's wrong! And I quit!

Gwen and Miles stare at each other. Yu Yan and Joseph jump in to restrain Rosa.

In the confusion, Ellie looks down at Mr. Bellingham's ankle.

Ellie slowly reaches down Mr. Bellingham's leg.

GOON #4/ROSA (CONT'D)
Really? Gonna hold me hostage, too?

Gwen slaps Rosa across the face.

Miles, Yu Yan, and Joseph are stunned.

MILES
From victim to bully?!

GOON #4/ROSA
Got outta hand. Way outta hand!

Ellie's hand moves slowly down Mr. Bellingham's leg toward his ankle-pistol.

Gwen points to Elli in a rage, and races over to her.

Ellie pulls her hand up just in time.

GWEN
All Ms. Martinez's fault. If she believed Miles and his parents, none of this would have happened!

Gwen grabs Ms. Martinez by the collar.

ELLIE
Unhand me!

GWEN
It's true. If the complaint on Mr. Bellingham goes forward, he gets red-flagged as a potential safety threat. He doesn't become a gun- hoarder. He doesn't use a photo of my face for target practice, drawing our attention on social media, and he doesn't buy an assault rifle!

ELLIE
You can't be serious!

Gwen lets go, and grabs the AR-15 from her table. She pleases with everyone, while she looks like she's ready to fire the weapon.

GWEN

Skirting the background checks and registration requirements!

(beat)

Because it all got outta hand! It always gets outta hand. More guns. More craziness. More school shootings. More victims. It spirals out of control.

Miles tries to comfort her, with a hug.

MILES

And, now you?!

GOON #2/JOSEPH

Seeing it every day.

GOON #4/ROSA

I know it ain't right. But neither are you right now.

Gwen points the AR-15 down.

GOON #1/YU YAN

Put down the rifle.

JUDGE WILSON

Yes, put it down.

Gwen looks sadly at the Judge, before setting the rifle on the table.

GOON #4/ROSA

I just can't do this no more.

GOON #2/JOSEPH

I'm out, too.

GOON #1/YU YAN

Me, too. Sorry, Gwen.

The Goons hug.

GWEN

Go on, then. Get outta here. Take the toys with you. Get rid of 'em.

GOON #4/ROSA

Good idea. Now, we're hiding evidence!

Rosa begins to exit.

GOON #1/YU YAN
Want the handcuffs on 'em?

GWEN
Just Mr. Bellingham. Leave me the
keys, will ya?

GOON #2/JOSEPH
Sure thing.

Yu Yan and Joseph load a duffle bag with two sets of pink fluffy handcuffs, and four stun guns and holsters. They grab the bottled waters from earlier.

GWEN
All fake. Only my taser was real.

JUDGE WILSON
Felt real. Sentence will be the
same as if you gave us two-twenty
volts!

GWEN
We're not animals. Just wanted your
attention. Adults never listen!

ELLIE
Still torture!

MILES
Humiliation, not torture. Again, to
get your attention.

Gwen, Miles, Yu Yan, and Joseph smile and pack the evidence in the duffle bag held by Yu Yan.

GOON #1/YU YAN
They'll never find this.

Yu Yan and Joseph continue to load the duffle bag of evidence. Gwen and Miles sit at their table. No one looks happy. The AR-15 rests menacingly on Gwen's table.

GWEN
Should have been a simple workshop
on school safety.

MILES
Too late, now.

GWEN
Yep. Too late. There's no way we
can convince you to listen!

Gwen picks up the AR-15 and pretends to be a school shooter, walking around the room, picking off innocent victims including Ellie, the Judge, and lastly, Mr. Bellingham.

Ellie stares at Mr. Bellingham's ankle and decides against going for the pistol.

Mr. Bellingham's eyes roll in frustration.

GWEN (CONT'D)

Let me put this dangerous, fully loaded, weapon of war in the back of the room for our own safety.

Gwen walks the AR-15 to the back of the room. Once in the dark, she wipes off her fingerprints with a waiting rag.

She returns, and sits down calmly.

GWEN (CONT'D)

Judge Wilson, honestly, how would it make you feel to witness someone charge into a school with a semi-automatic or automatic weapon of any kind?

JUDGE WILSON

Until tonight, I didn't realize what you as a victim of such a horrible crime would go through. I get it now. The perpetrator killed and injured your friends and classmates robbing them of their rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. They stole your childhood memories of school as a safe place. They stole your young adulthood, and turned you into an activist instead of a kid. Society left you with severe psychological problems, in a way, forcing you act out because your pleas for help, and those of your colleagues, were not heard.

Gwen smiles at the Judge, and turns to Ellie.

ELLIE

The ends never justify the means. Do you know what I mean?

Gwen nods in agreement, and weakly smiles.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

I should have seen the signs that Mr. Bellingham might have been more of a threat to students than a protector.

Ellie turns to Mr. Bellingham sharply.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

Did you have any formal firearms safety training? I know it's offered around here. I've taken it.

Mr. Bellingham gets more defensive with each question.

MR. BELLINGHAM

No, but I can fire many types of weapons including an AR-15!

ELLIE

I'm sure you can. Do you generally store your firearms safely at home? Trigger locks? Gun safe?

MR. BELLINGHAM

No. And, no law says I have to!

ELLIE

Are all your firearms properly registered and licensed?

MR. BELLINGHAM

Some are! Get off my back, lady!

ELLIE

My point is, you had you Concealed Carry Permit revoked for being careless, and your response was to begin purchasing and stockpiling weapons from gun shows and flea markets, and even if you're a well-liked high school teacher, it's just plain scary, and I should have seen it long ago.

Miles and Gwen cheer, and the Judge chimes in.

JUDGE WILSON

You've given your self-proclaimed 'good guy with a gun' status a bad name. You've given me more reason to think we don't want our schools to become a set up for good guys to battle in out with bad guys.

(MORE)

JUDGE WILSON (CONT'D)

We don't bring our children into war zones. We shouldn't bring our war zones to our children!

Again, Miles and Gwen cheer, and Mr. Bellingham reaches a boil.

MR. BELLINGHAM

Look, I didn't ask to be a security guard. Busy enough teaching the ungrateful idiots. Every teacher is three paychecks away from the poorhouse, and three bad days in a row from suicide!

JUDGE WILSON

You're making our point!

Mr. Bellingham screams louder. He's deranged.

MR. BELLINGHAM

My ex-wife has everything: the power, my money, and half my future earnings. Sure, I sent her a few threatening texts and emails. She won't get off my back. When they took my Concealed Carry Permit, that was the last straw. Got the AR-15 and the other firearms cause it's my right!

Ellie scoots her chair away from Mr. Bellingham.

Gwen gets in Mr. Bellingham's face.

GWEN

Desperate act of revenge?

Mr. Bellingham looks away, and mumbles.

MR. BELLINGHAM

I'm not talking to you.

GWEN

Like using my photo on your shooting range targets?

Ellie shakes in her seat. Anger builds.

ELLIE

Your plan won't work. Doomed to failure. Sorry.

Gwen, Miles, Yu Yan, and Joseph look puzzled.

GWEN

Why?

Ellie looks away.

ELLIE

This is not a court of law. And
make no mistake, we are a nation of
laws!

JUDGE WILSON

I'm sorry. She's right.

Gwen, Miles, and the Goons stare at each other sadly. Gwen waves them to the back of the room, where they meet and whisper in the darkness.

They return.

GOON #1/YU YAN

We're letting you two go.

MR. BELLINGHAM

What about me?

GWEN

No!

The Judge and Ellie stand and stretch. They are angry and threatening.

JUDGE WILSON

I should turn you all into the
police immediately. Charges of
kidnapping, torture, illegal search
and seizure, are now your best-case
scenario.

GOON #3/LEVI

Huh?

ELLIE

Judge Wilson is right. Worst-case
scenario, kicked in when Ms.
Antonelli gave Mr. Ungstrum orders
to bring in the AR-15. Assault with
intent to kill.

Gwen is defensive, and worried.

GWEN

We had no intent to kill you!

GOON #1/YU YAN
We didn't know about the AR-15
ahead of time.

Gwen is more defensive.

GWEN
Happened in the past week. We
pledged communication silence!

JUDGE WILSON
The kidnapping, torture, and threat
of armed conflict...

MILES
Threat of armed conflict?

The Judge looks sad.

JUDGE WILSON
I've decided to be merciful. You're
well-intentioned, naive, misled,
and mischievous, cruel, and twisted
youths. You took the law into your
own hands, and failed. Your voices
will never be heard, because your
whimpering, sniveling, spoiled
little children. You'll come to
understand that an occasional
school shooting is worth the price
of the rights guaranteed by our
Second Amendment!

The youths are stunned. Their chins drop.

ELLIE
Worst-case scenario?

Gwen looks nervous.

GOON #2/JOSEPH
Sure!

ELLIE
We could turn you in tonight, and
ask them to hold you as terrorists;
indefinitely in Guantanamo, without
a trial, without recourse.

JUDGE WILSON
Means you can't fight it. Or worse!

MILES
What could be worse?

ELLIE

Military tribunal decides your punishment.

GWEN

This is America! They can't do that!

JUDGE WILSON

I'm afraid they can. And might. But I think I can convince Ms. Martinez to take the five-hundred-dollar check and call it a night!

ELLIE

A bad night. A blight on America's youth.

The Judge and Ellie storm out.

MR. BELLINGHAM

What about me? See! I told you! You'll never get away this you, you anti-gun domestic terrorists!

Gwen moves to unlock Mr. Bellingham, but she notices the gun and ankle holster bulge. She stops.

GWEN

What's this?

MR. BELLINGHAM

None of your business.

Gwen lifts Mr. Bellingham's pant leg, takes out her phone, and photographs Mr. Bellingham with a leg holster and pistol.

GWEN

Carrying a concealed weapon without a permit is a serious offense. I'm texting this photo to several friends. If you talk about anything that went on here tonight, my friends and I will turn all our evidence in. Is that clear?

MR. BELLINGHAM

Assholes! I have my rights.

GWEN

This isn't one of them.

Gwen removes the small pistol.

She inspects it.

GWEN (CONT'D)
I'll put this in the back of the
room with the AR-15. You can pick
them up as you leave.

Gwen carefully carries the pistol.

In the back of the room, in the dark, she grabs a bottle of liquid solder and pours it down the barrel. She then squirts epoxy down the barrel, and wipes off her fingerprints.

She returns to Mr. Bellingham.

GWEN (CONT'D)
Do we have your assurance that you
won't say a word about tonight?

MR. BELLINGHAM
You have my word! Assholes!

GWEN
Least you're getting out of here.
We told the school we'd clean up
and put everything back to the way
it was before we can go home.

Gwen unlocks the handcuffs and chain binding Mr. Bellingham to the chair.

He swears as he storms out with his weapons.

Gwen looks at Miles with a great sadness.

GWEN (CONT'D)
Didn't turn out like I hoped. We
can't let the bad guys win!

Gwen has a sinister look. The others look puzzled.

INT. SCHOOL BASEMENT - NIGHT

Gwen paces around the room like a Film Director.

Goons #1 and #2 are rearranging the tables into a square, like an actual "workshop."

GWEN
Hurry with those tables!

GOON #2/JOSEPH
Think they bought our internal
discontent?

GWEN
Only way to get them to let their
guard down and speak honestly.

GOON #1/YU YAN
I think we fooled 'em.

Miles is editing a VIDEO of the night's activities on a
laptop computer.

GWEN
Miles, I want full body shots of
the Judge and lawyer entering,
opening dialog, then only their
heads when we chained them in!

MILES
You got it. Should we ditch the
cameras?

GWEN
Not yet. We'll need filler clips
inserted.
(laughs)
Seamlessly inserted!

Miles doesn't look up, as he edits the video.

MILES
Those two semesters at Film School
are coming in handy.

There's a KNOCK on the back door.

GWEN
Let 'em in. We have to hurry.
Probably only have thirty minutes.

Yu Yan races to the back door, and opens it.

Rosa races in the back door with six "Extras" (various ages
and types).

GOON #1/YU YAN
Where do you want the extras?

Gwen looks flustered.

GWEN
Where's Levi?!

GOON #2/JOSEPH
Don't know. Wasn't at the meeting
place.

She looks hurt, betrayed.

GWEN
If he ditched us for real, it means
I was a bad leader.

MILES
He'd never talk. He knows we'd find
him!

GWEN
I'm so sorry! 'Bout everything.

GOON #1/YU YAN
Can't do anything now! Where do you
want the extras?

GWEN
I'll talk to 'em, and pay 'em.

GOON #1/YU YAN
Extras, you all know Gwen Antonelli
from TV. Listen up. We don't have
much time.

Gwen hands the Extras an envelope each. They smile.

She points to seating cards on the tables.

GWEN
Thanks for being on time. Here's
the set up. You're listening to
either me in Seat 1, Miles in Seat
2, the Judge in Seat 3, Ms.
Martinez in Seat 4, or Mr.
Bellingham in Seat 5.

The Extras nod 'yes'.

GWEN (CONT'D)
Your emotions are either smiling,
intently listening, puzzled, or
horrified, on cue. Got it?

The Extras nod 'yes'.

GWEN (CONT'D)
Good. Take your seats.

Yu Yan and Joseph stand back as the Extras take seats around the tables.

GWEN (CONT'D)
 (to Goons #1 and #2)
 I need one of you on Camera 2.

GOON #1/YU YAN
 Neither of us...

GWEN
 You heard me!

Joseph is on a ladder with his new Smartphone. On the opposite side of the basement, Yu Yan struggles to climb a ladder with her new Smartphone.

GOON #3/LEVI
 Check.

GWEN
 Background video. Take one. Seat one, smiling.

On cue, the Extras look toward Seat #1 smiling.

GWEN (CONT'D)
 Good! Seat 3, intently listening.

The heads of the Extras turn and respond on cue toward Seat 3.

GWEN (CONT'D)
 Good! Seat 4, horrified.

LATER

GWEN (CONT'D)
 Cut! Get that to Miles!

Joseph and Yu Yan take their phones to Miles, while Rosa folds and removes the ladders.

MILES
 I know right where these clips go.

GWEN
 Make it quick. We have to create the fake timeline on the reel, before the cops get here.

The Extras stand around in a corner.

GWEN (CONT'D)

Good work with your makeup and disguises. We'll keep your faces fuzzy and in low light. Your remaining task is to look at the video we post later, over and over, until it becomes fact in your brains, if you're questioned. Same story is important here.

(yells)

Okay, go on, get out of here, all of you.

The Goons hug Gwen and Miles before exiting.

Gwen hugs Miles from behind as he edits the video.

MILES

You think they'll buy it?

GWEN

I don't know. If they don't, we're looking at hard time. And where the hell is Levi?!

MILES

I don't know!

Gwen kisses miles on the neck.

GWEN

If this goes wrong, I'd wait for you 'til the end of time.

Miles stops editing, turns, and kisses Gwen softly and long on the lips.

MILES

You are my reason for living!

They hear a pounding on the main door, and the voice of a big POLICEMAN (40), in uniform.

POLICEMAN

Open up! Police! (O.S.)

Gwen and Miles panic. They whisper

MILES

Not done yet. I need to complete the edits, and upload it to the Internet.

GWEN

They can't find you here. Quick!
The ladders in the back. Get on top
of 'em.

POLICEMAN (O.S.)

I said, open up! Police!

GWEN

(yells)

Coming! Just a minute!

Gwen and Miles race to the dark, back corner of the room.

They open the two ladders, and Miles, climbs them and lays
atop them, covering himself with an old painting tarp.

GWEN (CONT'D)

Coming! Just wiping down the
tables!

Gwen answers the door with a cleaning rag in her hands, and a
smile on her face. She faces the Policeman, the bright light
of a small video camera, and KERRY BRIGGS (early-30s) a perky
blonde, snarky news reporter from FBC News.

The Policeman and Kerry push their way in the door, as Gwen
leads them past the ladders (and Miles) in the back to the
well-lit front of the room.

GWEN (CONT'D)

What's this about, Officer?

POLICEMAN

Report of kidnapping of a teacher,
assault on a federal judge, and
electrical torture of three law-
abiding citizens.

KERRY

I'm Kerry Briggs of FBC News with
an exclusive and live report from
the sordid basement of J.F. Kennedy
High where unspeakable acts of
liberal terrorism occurred.

Kerry pans her camera.

GWEN

I'm Gwen Antonelli...

KERRY

We know who you are! The school shooting survivor turned anti-gun protester and darling of TV talk-shows. Anarchist, if you ask me! Leading all those student walkouts! Disgusting! I'll cut that out later.

POLICEMAN

What went on here tonight?

Gwen distracts them as Miles descends the ladder quietly.

Gwen shows them the flyer to the Workshop on School Safety.

GWEN

See for yourself. We held a small workshop on improving school safety. Judge Reggie Wilson and attorney Ms. Ellie Martinez were invited to share their thoughts.

KERRY

Where they were handcuffed, chained to metal chairs, and shocked repeatedly. Horrifying. Informant said he had video!

Gwen looks puzzled, as Miles disappears out the door.

GWEN

Video? From somebody here?!

Gwen is worried.

KERRY

It's what the man said.

GWEN

I don't know what you're talking about. This was an open forum to exchange ideas. Nothing more?

Kerry examines a metal chair, as the policeman looks around the room.

KERRY

Are these the old metal chairs you chained your victims to?

GWEN

They sat in them. Who called in the tip? The Gun Association?

POLICEMAN

Anonymous caller. Said he knows all about kidnapping the teacher!

Gwen's hands shake nervously as she takes out her phone and shows them the photo of Mr. Bellingham's ankle holster and pistol.

GWEN

Mr. Bellingham? Ha! Some teacher! Yeah, he was here! Bragged about buying an AR-15 at a flea market to avoid a background check, and then showed us he was carrying a concealed pistol, despite having his Concealed Carry Permit revoked after he shot his pistol off at school by mistake. What a nut-job!

POLICEMAN

You take this photo tonight?

GWEN

Yep. All photos from a phone are stamped with date, time, and location. Total nut-job. Nobody felt safe around him.

Gwen walks over to the seat that Levi was sitting in. She VISUALIZES him in his seat, upset.

She VISUALIZES him stomping out of the room.

KERRY

Where did you hide the handcuffs and chains?

GWEN

I'm sorry? I still don't know what you're talking about.

POLICEMAN

Will Judge Wilson and Ms. Martinez corroborate your story?

Kerry searches frantically around the room, taking video of the workshop area, looking under the tables.

GWEN

Hope so. They both took their five-hundred dollar honorariums. Ask 'em.

POLICEMAN

I'm not waking them up this late.
Maybe tomorrow morning.

KERRY

I don't get it! Who else was here?

GWEN

Locals, I guess. We didn't have a
sign-up sheet. Should have, I
guess. We're just kids, lady. We
can't think of everything!

KERRY

People in masks?! Goons in
disguises?!

GWEN

Have you been drinking? I noticed
when the Judge came in, he smelled
of scotch, and Ms. Martinez may
have had more than a few glasses of
wine.

POLICEMAN

And they each drove here on their
own?

GWEN

Yes, Sir. They left earlier than we
hoped, but they still took their
honorariums.

Kerry turns on the Policeman.

KERRY

How the hell did they let a high
school teacher, whose Concealed
Carry Permit was revoked, buy an AR-
15 and conceal and carry a pistol
on school grounds?

GWEN

That's your real story, if you ask
me. We were just holding a workshop
to make our schools safe.

The Policeman hands Gwen a business card.

POLICEMAN

Send me that photo, will ya, kid?

GWEN

Yes, Sir. Will there be anything else?

POLICEMAN

I'm going to get to the bottom of this. If someone is filing false police reports, there will be hell to pay!

KERRY

Can't believe I fell for some stupid anonymous tip.

GWEN

Check the number. I bet it was that nut-job of a teacher, Mr. Bellingham.

KERRY

Maybe I will.

GWEN

But I wouldn't approach him if I were you. He's armed and demented!

POLICEMAN

You mean armed and dangerous?

GWEN

No. Armed and demented. Worse type!

Kerry shuts off her camera, and begins to exit with the Policeman. The Policeman hesitates.

POLICEMAN

I want a list of names of anyone you know who was here. Don't leave town. I may have other questions.

GWEN

Yes, Sir.

The Policeman and Kerry exit.

Miles races back in the door moments later.

Gwen shakes as she takes out her phone. She phones Joseph.

GWEN (CONT'D)

We have an Amish problem.

(beat)

It's not impossible.

(MORE)

GWEN (CONT'D)

He must have borrowed a phone, and has video of tonight.

(beat)

No, I don't have his number! He tipped off a TV news reporter, Kerry Briggs.

(beat)

That's her. We have to find Levi! If he uploads that video before we find him, we're screwed. Pick him up. Bring him to me. Use force if necessary.

Gwen hangs up, and paces angrily, as Miles works feverishly on the film editing.

LATER

Levi is dragged into the basement by Yu Yan and Joseph, with Rosa lagging behind.

GOON #1/YU YAN

We found Levi, but we think we were followed.

GWEN

Barricade the door.

Levi shakes, fearing for his life.

GOON #3/LEVI

I'm sorry, Gwen. What we did was wrong.

Gwen slaps him.

GWEN

What you did was worse. You betrayed us.

No one sees Levi glaring at Rosa.

MILES

Video is ready.

GWEN

Show it! Hurry.

Gwen stands right behind Miles, and Yu Yan and Joseph force Levi to watch it. Rosa nervously stands behind them.

The video shows only the faces of the speakers (no restraints or torture), as if at a workshop of school safety.

BEGIN MONTAGE [cut and sliced from previous scenes, and editing in the faces of the Extras]

-- Gwen welcomes the Judge and Ellie.

GWEN (CONT'D)

"Keep our Schools Safe -- a conversation with Judge Reggie Wilson, Superior Court; and Ellie Martinez, Esq., Attorney at Law, Martinez and Associates, and Ms. Gwen Antonelli, School Mass Shooting Survivor." I'd like to thank you all for coming.

-- Gwen smiles at Mr. Bellingham, the Judge, and Ellie.

GWEN (CONT'D)

Welcome, Mr. Bellingham. Thanks for coming.

ELLIE

You're that famous activist. Face of the anti-gun movement in Florida! Saw you on all those talk shows, year or two ago.

GWEN

All in the past, Ma'am. Just a sophomore at State now.

-- Judge Wilson is fiery.

JUDGE WILSON

I'm familiar with some of Ms. Martinez's statements on legal gun ownership and use, as I am with your statements in the press at those public demonstrations, on the talk shows as an attention-grabbing media darling.

-- Gwen states her case.

GWEN

Just as John Lock suggested, "Murderers forfeit their right to life, since they act outside the law of reason," we argue that irresponsible gun owners should forfeit their rights to ownership!

-- Miles smiles at his part in the video.

MILES

My name is Miles Ungstrum.

(beat)

I represent those who were gunned down, killed, or injured.

(beat)

Since that gunman killed 20 first-graders and six adults with an assault rifle at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown Connecticut in 2012, there have been over 240 school shootings nationwide. Society didn't listen!

(beat)

Another 438 people were shot, 138 of whom were killed. Society still isn't listening!

-- Gwen confronts Mr. Bellingham.

MR. BELLINGHAM

Pistol went off accidentally.

GWEN

At home? In the car? A crowded theatre? Grocery store? Where?

MR. BELLINGHAM

My classroom.

(yells)

On a Saturday. No kids around!

GWEN

Good thing. How did it go off?

MR. BELLINGHAM

Practicing how I would respond to a school shooter, that's all.

(beat)

State took away my Concealed Carry Permit. Assholes! Putting lives in danger. Outlaw guns, and only outlaws will have guns!

-- Miles gets in Mr. Bellingham's face.

MILES

Three-fourths of U.S. teachers do not want to carry guns in school! They overwhelmingly favor gun control measures over security steps meant to turn schools into high-security prisons!

-- Gwen lifts Mr. Bellingham's pant leg, takes out her phone, and photographs Mr. Bellingham with a leg holster and pistol.

GWEN

Carrying a concealed weapon without a permit is a serious offense.

-- Ellie confronts Mr. Bellingham.

ELLIE

My point is, you had you Concealed Carry Permit revoked for being careless, and your response was to begin purchasing and stockpiling weapons from gun shows and flea markets, and even if you're a well-liked high school teacher, it's just plain scary, and I should have seen it long ago.

-- Judge Wilson sums up his feelings.

JUDGE WILSON

Until tonight, I didn't realize what you as a victim of such a horrible crime would go through. I get it now. The perpetrator killed and injured your friends and classmates robbing them of their rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. They stole your childhood memories of school as a safe place. They stole your young adulthood, turned you into an activist instead of a kid. Society left you with severe psychological problems, in a way, forcing you act out because your pleas for help, and those of your colleagues, were not heard.

-- However, the Judge threatens the kids.

JUDGE WILSON (CONT'D)

Your voices will never be heard, because your whimpering, sniveling, spoiled little children. You'll come to understand that an occasional school shooting is worth the price of the rights guaranteed by our Second Amendment!

-- The Judge and Ellie walk out on their own.

-- Kerry races in behind the policeman.

Kerry pans her camera.

GWEN

I'm Gwen Antonelli...

KERRY

We know who you are! The school shooting survivor turned anti-gun protester and darling of TV talk-shows. Anarchist, if you ask me! Leading all those student walkouts! Disgusting! I'll cut that out later.

END MONTAGE

Levi smiles.

GOON #3/LEVI

Video makes us look like heroes.

GWEN

That's our story, Levi. Post it to the Internet, Miles, and delete the other clips of tonight.

MILES

And destroy the computer?

Miles types away furiously. Gwen pulls in a five-gallon bucket marked "10% H2SO4" (sulfuric acid), and takes off the lid.

GWEN

Obviously. And, fast!

Gwen turns angrily to Rosa.

GWEN (CONT'D)

Who else took video tonight? Who ratted on us to the TV news lady? I know it wasn't Levi. Amish don't use smartphones as a rule.

Rosa shakes, as Gwen, Yu Yan, and Joseph tug Rosa toward the sulfuric acid.

GOON #4/ROSA

I was worried they'd deport me! You don't understand!

GWEN

So you'd rat us all out? Make the world a more dangerous place so you'd be safer?

Rosa hands over her phone to Gwen.

GOON #4/ROSA

I got scared. But I never sent her the video.

GWEN

I hope not, because we'd find you.

Gwen drops Rosa's phone in the sulfuric acid. It sizzles.

GOON #4/ROSA

I'm sorry, okay. I'm so sorry!

Gwen looks at the other Goons.

GWEN

Let her be.

(looks away)

Non-violence is the way to go! I've made the biggest mistake of my life tonight.

GOON #3/LEVI

Rosa, you bullied me for the last time. I'm shunning you.

Levi turns away. Rosa hugs him.

GOON #4/ROSA

I made a mistake, too. Okay? I'll never do it again. Don't shun me.

Levi still has his backed turned, as he pulls out a smartphone. He smiles.

GOON #3/LEVI

Okay, if you don't shun me. How does the video thing work?

They smile, as Rosa begins to show Levi how to record video by pressing the "record" button for Levi.

Suddenly, Mr. Bellingham breaks down the door, and bursts in aiming his AR-15 at Gwen.

MR. BELLINGHAM

Had this planned for a long time!

GWEN

No! Wait, Mr. Bellingham. Don't shoot. I'm the anti-gun advocate. Let the others go!

We see that Levi is recoding the action.

Miles has his laptop closed and tucked under his arm as he slides his feet closer to the bucket of sulfuric acid.

Gwen tries to distract Mr. Bellingham, by shuffling away from the group.

GWEN (CONT'D)

This workshop on school safety was all my idea. I won't tell anyone about your concealed pistol.

MR. BELLINGHAM

I got more where that came from. Lots more. And after I clean you out tonight, I'm going to greet the kids at school tomorrow morning for the last time! BAM BAM BAM!

Miles moves closer to the bucket. The others shake in fear.

MILES

You're going to shoot students?

Mr. Bellingham points the AR-15 at Miles.

MR. BELLINGHAM

Damn right! Many as I can before the cops get here!

GWEN

Over here, Mr. Bellingham! It's me you want! Not them!

Gwen inches toward the light switch.

Miles drops his computer in the sulfuric acid.

Mr. Bellingham spins to the sizzling sound.

MR. BELLINGHAM

What was that?

Gwen yells.

GWEN

Let them go, Mr. Bellingham! I beg you!

MR. BELLINGHAM

Take my guns away, now, you
domestic terrorists!

The Policeman, holding a Taser, enters the back of the room. Kerry Briggs, the TV Reporter is right behind him, rolling video as she walks.

The Policeman sees Mr. Bellingham, aiming the AR-15 at Gwen.

POLICEMAN

Drop your weapon.

Mr. Bellingham turns with the AR-15 and attempts to shoot the policeman, but the AR-15 jams.

MR. BELLINGHAM

You jammed it. Idiots!

Mr. Bellingham tosses it aside and pulls out a snub-nosed .38 pistol from a shoulder holster. He spins to shoot Gwen first, but Gwen shuts off the lights and dives to the floor.

It's chaos. Mr. Bellingham fires three shots. BAM BAM BAM.

Miles, Yu Yan, Levi, Joseph, and Rosa dive under the tables.

Rosa screams. Then, Levi screams.

The Policeman charges at Mr. Bellingham with his Taser pointed. [The only light comes from Kerry's camera.]

Mr. Bellingham turns toward the light and fires two shots at Kerry and the Policeman. BAM BAM.

Kerry screams.

The Policeman fires his Taser toward the gunfire.

MR. BELLINGHAM (CONT'D)

Son of a...

Gwen grabs the bucket of sulfuric acid and throws it at Mr. Bellingham, who screams, and fires his last shot at Gwen.

The policeman fires a second Taser shot at Mr. Bellingham, but misses.

Two more heavily armed Police Officers (30s, male and female, in SWAT gear) race in the door with headlamps.

Mr. Bellingham's hands shake from the burning sulfuric acid, but he reaches down to his ankle holster and grabs his small pistol. He goes to fire it at his own temple and it explodes in his hand.

MR. BELLINGHAM (CONT'D)

No!!!!

Mr. Bellingham looks horrified and defeated. He drops what's left of the small pistol, and raises his hands in defeat.

The Police Officers fire several bullets into Mr. Bellingham, who screams and jerks as he is shot. He falls back with his arms above his head, surrendering like a coward. He dies.

The lights turn on.

POLICEMAN

On the floor! Everyone. Hands out where we can see 'em.

Miles, Yu Yan, Levi, Joseph, and Rosa comply. Levi's right leg is bleeding, and Rosa's left arm is bleeding from gunshot wounds. The right side of Kerry's face is bleeding.

We see a badly acid-burned Mr. Bellingham holding a small pistol that is shattered.

Gwen lies face-down in a pool of blood, struggling to speak her last words.

Miles races to comfort her, as the Policeman turns his body-camera in their direction, capturing it all.

MILES

Call an ambulance! Gwen, are you okay? Gwen?!

They share a moment.

GWEN

Must be non-violent.

(coughs up blood)

As long as even one of us fears walking into school, none of us are truly free. Don't let them take away our rights to life, liberty, and our...

Gwen dies.

Miles cries out.

MILES

No!

Yu Yan, Levi, Joseph, and Rosa slowly stand and surround Gwen.

The Policeman pushes in to check Gwen's pulse, but doesn't find one. His body-camera catches it all.

POLICEMAN

Thirty-eight through the heart.

Miles, Yu Yan, Levi, Joseph, and Rosa cry in anguish and surround Gwen.

We hear sirens.

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

Kerry is being filmed by a Camera Operator (30s, female). Kerry has her head bandaged, with one eye completely covered. Her voice is filled with hatred and revenge.

KERRY

I witnessed it all. Last night. A planned workshop on school gun safety ended tragically when a well-respected social studies teacher, Mr. Dan Bellingham, a "good guy with a gun" was allegedly kidnapped, hand-cuffed, chained, and tortured by six domestic terrorists, bragging about surviving school shootings around the country.

(beat)

Police are sorting out details now, but what I can tell you is that eye-witness testimony from the honorable Judge Reggie Wilson and greatly admired attorney, Ms. Ellie Martinez, Esquire, corroborated the harsh treatment they received at the hands of five young adults who have been taken into custody and held without bond. One thing is certain, Ms. Gwen Antonelli, the mastermind, terrorist, and gun-control advocate, is dead! Here, with me now is attorney Ellie Martinez. In your own words, what happened here last night?

Ellie is nudged into to camera frame. She is sad and soft-spoken.

ELLIE

I'm afraid I'm still sorting through the events of last night. A video has surfaced and gone viral, as I understand it. The tragic shooting of Ms. Gwen Antonelli...

Ellie tears up.

KERRY

Certainly, you weren't coerced or tortured into believing...

ELLIE

The ends, may in fact, sometimes justify the means. The Sons of Liberty and the Boston Tea Party broke many laws. And, the courage that young woman showed...

KERRY

The terrorist who wanted to take the teacher's guns away?

ELLIE

She was completely dedicated to being heard. To reduce the number of guns in society. To make children feel safe at school...

KERRY

(interrupts)

Is it true she and her gang members sabotaged Mr. Bellingham's private gun collection?

ELLIE

She wanted us to listen. To act. To become civilized.

Kerry pushes Ellie aside, and pulls Judge Wilson into the camera scene. Kerry is angrier by the minute.

KERRY

Judge, you've seen the so-called video that's gone viral. It's pure propaganda! Edited to reflect the terrorist agenda to destroy the Second Amendment. She ruined my career. I'll never get a network job with a fake eye!

JUDGE WILSON

You were shot by Mr. Bellingham, the self-proclaimed good guy with a gun. He purchased a military-style weapon at a flea market and was preparing for a mass shooting at this very school... nobody but Ms. Gwen Antonelli and these Goons of Liberty saw it coming. They red-flagged him. No one else did!

KERRY

Judge, you're not yourself. You were handcuffed, chained, and tortured. You said so yourself. Five domestic terrorists were taken into custody! I hope they get the death penalty!

Kerry pushes the Judge away, but we still hear his sad voice. Kerry talks louder in an angry voice.

JUDGE WILSON (O.S.)

They just wanted to be heard. We've diminished their inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness! For what? So a few can bear arms. They wanted action on gun control, like many civilized nations, that's all.

KERRY (CONT'D)

(to the Judge)
I heard you and the lawyer cashed your honorarium checks already!
(into the camera)
The police haven't released their body-cam videos, but I heard it clearly shows Gwen Antonelli dowsing Mr. Bellingham with sulfuric acid! These are terrorists in custody, that's for sure! More good teachers with guns! That's what we need! Well-trained, well-armed teachers in every school. Those loud-mouth kids will never get away with this! Disrespectful protestors! Walking out of classes! Attention-grabbers, all of them! I'm Kerry Briggs, FBC News!

The Camera Woman shakes her head in disgust.

KERRY (CONT'D)

My career is over! Finished! A one-eyed freak! That's all I'll ever be!

DARK SILENCE

We hear the upbeat voice of a National Newscaster (50; male).

NATIONAL NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

Voting registrations have skyrocketed across America, and voter turnout is at an all-time high. In addition, there are also reports of massive non-violent protests against gun associations, and the makers and sellers of firearms across the country. Gwen Antonelli, dead at nineteen years old, has ignited the "My Liberty" movement for gun control.

FADE OUT.

THE END