

Dirty Hands
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DIRTY HANDS

1 BLACK SCREEN

1

An answering machine picks up a call.

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

You've reached Rebecca King...
please leave a message.

BEEP. Another voice whispers over the phone.

NANCY (V.O.)

Mom, it's me. I'm going. I've got to. He's a lyin', cheatin' son of a bitch. I gotta make him pay. He's gonna pull his tricky lawyer crap- but I got proof. When you see it, you'll understand. Love you. Bye.

MAIN TITLES

Fade in and out as we suddenly hear a CRACKLY RADIO ANCHOR.

RADIO ANCHOR (V.O.)

...our top story, police have confirmed that Nancy King did not have help in her escape from state prison last night. King, who pled guilty to the vicious murders of her husband and a morning jogger, was discovered missing from her cell around two-thirty AM.

2 INT. VINCE'S LEXUS - RADIO CONTROLS - DAY

2

The Anchor continues. A BLACKBERRY VIBRATES from a cupholder.

RADIO ANCHOR (V.O.)

King should be considered extremely dangerous and any sightings-

A hand turns the RADIO OFF. It belongs to the driver. He has a smart suit and tie, and dark combed hair. He is VINCE LANG. He is 46. Vince does a double take at the number. He puts on a charming smile, and taps his Bluetooth earpiece.

VINCE

Your honor, how are you? I'm great- just got out of a meeting with the DA- yeah, that's the case... Man-2. I know. They were serious! Ha ha- Oh, Judy and the kids are great.

(MORE)

VINCE (CONT'D)

Actually, Judy just got this parking ticket a few days- oh, thank you so much... Lunch? Sure, I know them. Yeah, gimme thirty, forty minutes? I just have to stop at home first.

3 EXT. VINCE'S HOUSE - ESTABLISHING - DAY 3

Tall and imposing, with a horseshoe driveway, surrounded by trees.

4 INT. VINCE'S HOUSE - FOYER - DAY 4

Light pours in from glazed windows on the door. A tall, curving staircase rises above a long hallway.

5 INT. DINING ROOM - DAY 5

Holds cases of china and silver. A table sprawls in the middle of the room.

6 INT. LIVING ROOM - PICTURE FRAME - DAY 6

Where two girls, 8 and 15, hug under a Christmas tree. A hand reaches to pick it up. It belongs to-

NANCY KING

Her other hand reaches for a gold cross around her neck.

NANCY

Damn.

Nancy wears a jacket, tank top and cargo pants. She has a grimace on her face and a thick manila envelope in her hands. She is 29. She does not belong here.

7 INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER 7

Nancy leans over the couch, her eyes fixed on the TV, where a news story plays about her escape.

TV ANCHOR 1 (V.O.)

Police are investigating a break in at a clothing store less than two miles from the prison-

She clicks the remote. A WOMAN in a car spouts her opinion.

TV WOMAN-ON-STREET (V.O.)

-even bother trying to capture her. Just bring in a SWAT team or the National Guard or something.

8 INT. STUDY - DAY 8

A dark, austere room, lined with bookshelves and a carpet. Nancy moves a tall, imposing desk chair into the center of the room, where it faces a broad oak desk. The manila envelope drops into the seat. It's thick with papers.

TV ANCHOR 2 (V.O.)
-unconfirmed reports that the body
of a police dog was found behind-

9 INT. KITCHEN - DAY 9

Nancy stares at a telephone hanging on the wall. Hesitating. She pulls out a crumpled piece of paper from her pocket.

TV ANCHOR 3 (V.O.)
-second victim, Ellen Wyler, was
jogging her usual route that
fateful morning-

10 INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY 10

Nancy's red, watery eyes stare blankly at the TV as she flips through the channels.

TV ANCHOR 1 (V.O.)
-have received tips from all over
the state-

TV ANCHOR 2 (V.O.)
-beaten so severely, the ME could
not use dental records to identify-

TV ANCHOR 3 (V.O.)
Wyler's body was found next to the
three pound rock that-

TV WOMAN-ON-STREET (V.O.)
I don't want a psycho like that
wandering around my kids.

Click.

11 INT. KITCHEN - LATER 11

Nancy chugs a glass of water. Gasping, she refills it. She clutches the cross around her neck.

12 INT. GARAGE - DAY 12

Nancy picks up an aluminum baseball bat from a pile of tools and toys. Looks at it. Swings it. WHOOSH. Dangerous. Suddenly- a MOTOR ROARS to life. The garage door opens.

13 EXT. VINCE'S HOUSE - FRONT LAWN - CONTINUOUS 13

As the Lexus rolls into the driveway.

14 INT. HALLWAY - DAY 14

Nancy slides into a crouch behind a corner. She squeezes the handle of the bat. She waits. And waits...

15 INT. GARAGE - DAY 15 *

Where Vince leans against the back bumper of his car and puffs on a cigarette. He drops it on the ground and snuffs it with his foot. *

16 INT. HALLWAY - ON NANCY - DAY 16

Rolls her shoulders. Sets her grip on the bat. She's ready.

17 INT. GARAGE - DAY 17

Vince walks past his car, toying with a silver lighter. He heads straight toward the door to-

18 INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS 18

He closes the door to the garage, and starts down the hall. Doesn't get far before - WHAM! Nancy appears out of nowhere. She SMACKS him into the wall. Jams the bat into his back. THUD! With a groan, he's down.

BLACK

19 INT. STUDY - DAY 19

Vince flutters his eyelids and gradually comes to. A purple goose egg is festering on his forehead.

He's sitting in the chair in the middle of the room. Tries to move his arms. Can't. They're tied down to the arm rests. Another rope runs around his chest. He strains against it.

NANCY (O.S.)

Vincent Lang. Bigshot defense attorney. Used to be at the D.A.'s office. Do you know who I am?

He glares at her, his eyes full of frustration and rage.

VINCE

You tell me. What the hell are you doing in my house?

Nancy seethes. She grabs his mouth.

NANCY

Didn't see the news? I'm Nancy King! I'm dangerous! Or don't they call you when one of your convictions escapes?

She steps back. Glares at him. Vince backpeddles. The rage is gone.

VINCE

Okay. Okay. Let's hold on for a minute. Nancy- I had a job to do. It was nothing personal.

NANCY

You made it personal- when you hid the report that proved me innocent.

Vince swallows. He notices the envelope sitting on the desk.

VINCE

I'm very sorry... I don't remember your case.

She grabs his finger. Bends it back. Too far. He cringes.

NANCY

Does this jog your memory? I had to plead guilty. Even when I told you about the guy I'd been seeing. Spencer was the one who did it.

*
*

She stalks away.

VINCE

Why would you plead guilty if you didn't do it?

NANCY

Don't you remember? You had everything you needed. What choice did I have?

VINCE

If there was evidence that this guy-

Nancy snatches the envelope and rips it open. She pulls out a small stack of papers.

NANCY

That jogger heard Craig and me shouting two days before. She saw Spencer outside! She even called the cops!

Nancy shakes the police report in Vince's face. He flinches.

VINCE

Nancy... I understand you're upset.
I'm very sorry this didn't turn up
sooner.

NANCY

It did turn up sooner. The cops
gave it to you with the rest of my
file. But it would ruin your case.
So you made sure that I never got
my hands on it. That's why I'm
here, you little rat bastard!

WHAM! She punches him in the face. WHAM! Again. He cringes in
pain. Looks up at her.

VINCE

What do you want? Money? I can-

NANCY

I don't want your filthy money.

Nancy pulls another piece of paper from the envelope. She
leans the bat against her shoulder.

NANCY

If you do what I say, I won't kill
your girls... just you.

She jams the bat handle into Vince's wrist. He cringes.

VINCE

Please... don't hurt my family.

NANCY

Then you're gonna have to plead
guilty. Just like me.

She reads from the second paper, chewing around the legalese.

NANCY

"I, Vincent Lang, being of sound
mind and constitution, admit to
falsely imprisoning Nancy King. I
withheld exculpatory evidence from
her defense so she could not
contest the charges. And once she
was in prison, I did nothing to set
her free."

VINCE

That's not how you write a confession. It's inadmissable- it has to be in my own words.

NANCY

You wanna change something? Isn't this exactly what you did?

Vince is quiet for a long time. Stares at the floor. Finally-

VINCE

I'm entitled to consult with a lawyer before I-

NANCY

Uh-uh. Not here. This ain't court.

Vince is shaking, as much as he can while tied up.

VINCE

Nancy... I am so sorry. I was just out of law school. I was stupid. I'd already lost so many cases... I needed a conviction-

NANCY

For what? A new job? A new house? What was I worth to you?

VINCE

I wish I could take it back, but-

NANCY

You gonna sign this?

VINCE

Yes! Yes! I'll sign it!

He glances at the bat against the desk.

VINCE

I... I can't move my hand, though.

His wrist flexes under the rope. It's true. A beat.

She turns to the desk. Slips the confession onto a clipboard. Vince looks at the bat. If his arm were free he could-

NANCY

Don't do anything stupid.

VINCE

Of course not.

Nancy puts the pen in his hand and slides the clipboard under his wrist. The bottom of his arm is flat on the arm rest.

Very, very slowly, she loosens the rope. Doesn't remove it. Vince rotates his wrist ninety degrees to use the pen. He scribbles his name on the paper.

The moment he's done, she pulls on the ends of the rope and does up the knot. His arm is still rotated on its side. Nancy snatches back the pen and clipboard.

She stares down at the signed confession. Her eyes are wide. She bites her lip. She's done it.

Vince swallows. He watches Nancy as she picks up the bat. Sets her fingers around the grip. All the anger she has for him is written in the scowl of her mouth.

She lifts the bat above her head. Vince flinches.

VINCE

Nancy! Think... please... you don't have to do this. You have options.

Nancy lowers the bat to the floor. She seethes.

NANCY

I coulda gone with Spencer after he smashed Craig's face with that golf club. But I stayed with my husband til the cops got there. I made that choice and I haven't had another one since.

CLOSE ON - VINCE'S WRIST

Where his arm rotates again, back to being flat on the chair. There's a slight amount of slack in the rope. He pulls.

VINCE

You have that police report- and my confession. You can appeal. Get a new trial.

NANCY

I tried! But pleading guilty makes it almost impossible!

*

VINCE

I can help you. I'm sure someone at my firm would take your case- pro bono, even. Let's just take this one day at a time.

NANCY

I'm not spending another night in that cell.

Vince works the rope around his arm even more.

VINCE

Nancy, you need us. Unless we do something, the police are going to-

NANCY

I don't care. Everything I ever wanted to do with my life- I can't. Everyone I ever knew thinks I'm some kind of monster. My own mother can't even bear to look at me. I might as well be dead. And it's all thanks to you.

Her cross glitters from around her neck. Vince notices.

VINCE

You religious?

Her hand clutches the necklace. Hides it from him. Vince's hand slides around under the rope.

VINCE

You think God is okay with this?

Nancy pauses. She lifts the bat again. Vince shudders. Tears flow down his cheeks. He sobs.

VINCE

Oh God... Don't do this. Please.

His arm turns completely under the rope.

Nancy stops. Lowers the bat slightly. Vince shakes.

NANCY

Stop it. I don't want to hear your sobbing.

Vince cries even harder.

VINCE

I love you Judy, I love you Robin, I love you, Cassie...

NANCY

Shut up. Shut up. Shut up!

Vince's chest heaves. Nancy's arms shake.

NANCY

You're right, aren't you?

Nancy drops the bat to the floor.

NANCY

I got everything I need. This's
only gonna make things more
difficult.

Vince slips the rope over his palm. Nancy turns and puts the police report and the confession back in the envelope.

NANCY

God's gonna hurt you like I never
could. I'll bet someone'll be home
soon. So I'll be on my way.

She starts toward the door. Stops. Turns back to him, a smirk on her face.

NANCY

You'll be hearing from my attorney.

She disappears into the hall. Vince stops sniffing and immediately begins pulling at the ropes around the chair.

20

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

20

Nancy walks through the room and stops. Stares at the phone on the wall. Her fingers slip into her pocket and pull out the crumpled piece of paper.

She steps up to the phone. Puts the envelope on the counter. Nancy hesitates. She reaches for the receiver. Suddenly- the PHONE RINGS.

21

EXT. VINCE'S STREET - DAY

21

A grizzled SWAT CAPTAIN, surrounded by his heavily armed SWAT TEAM, holds his cell phone to his ear. They're across the street from Vince's house.

22

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

22

Nancy gapes at the phone. It STILL RINGS. Doesn't see-

VINCE

Behind her. Pounces. Throws her to the ground. The phone is knocked off the hook. It swings back and forth on the cord.

23

EXT. VINCE'S STREET - DAY

23

The Captain's eyes widen as he hears the SCUFFLE on the other end.

MUFFLED VOICE (V.O.)
Stop! Please! Umph!

He hangs up and turns to the Team next to him.

24 INT. HALLWAY - DAY

24

Vince pulls a knot tight around Nancy's wrists. He shoves her away, onto the floor. She struggles to stand, but he grabs her arm and drags her down the hall.

NANCY
I'm sorry, Mr. Lang. I didn't mean
to hurt you- or anyone else. I
swear.

VINCE
Yeah. Right.

He snatches a doorknob and swings it open. Dark stairs dive into an abyss. Nancy drags her feet as he pulls her arm.

NANCY
Don't! Please!

He gives her a violent heave and throws her through the doorframe. Nancy topples down the stairs with a CLATTER.

25 EXT. VINCE'S HOUSE - DAY

25

The SWAT Team prepares. Two OFFICERS block off the street with crime scene tape. An approaching CAR has to turn around. The Captain spreads out a blueprint of the house on the hood of a car, pointing out rooms to the cops around him.

26 INT. BASEMENT - DAY

26

Nancy lies in a heap at the bottom of the stairs. Slowly, she leans against the wall and stands up.

She limps into the middle of the room. It's dark, half finished. A closet in one wall. The floor is concrete. Shelves line the walls.

The STAIRS CREAK behind her. Vince descends, one by one. He has the envelope. And the baseball bat.

He stares at her from the bottom step. Swings the bat.
WHOOSH. WHOOOSH. Dangerous.

She tries to run- THUD! The end of the bat hits her shoulder. She falls into the corner of a shelf. Grimaces on the floor.

NANCY'S HANDS

Catch the rope on the corner of the shelf. Unseen by Vince, she starts sawing her bonds against the sharp edge.

NANCY

Our Father... who art in Heaven...

VINCE

Should've done it when you had the chance. I'm gonna bash your fucking brains in.

He smashes his knee into her face. Her nose bleeds.

NANCY

Thy will be done...

VINCE

You were right, Nancy. This isn't a courtroom. No one's gonna care if I do this.

He pulls out his lighter and holds it under the envelope. The flame quickly chews through it. The ropes on her hands fray.

NANCY

And forgive us our trespasses...

VINCE

They won't care what I did or didn't do to your case.

He shoves the papery fireball into her face- she recoils.

NANCY

...deliver us from evil...

Vince turns away and drops the envelope into a wastebasket. A puff of smoke rises up as the flame is snuffed out.

VINCE

They're gonna thank me for taking a dangerous killer off the streets.

NANCY

...Amen.

ANGLE ON - HER HANDS

As they twist free.

Nancy charges at Vince- his elbow flies into her face. He swings the bat. THUD! It slams into her side. His free hand pummels her jaw. WHAM! WHAM! She stumbles away.

He grabs her from behind and jams the bat into her throat. She struggles and tries to pull away. Nancy scratches and hits as hard as she can, but he won't let go.

Her legs are giving out. Little strength left. She grabs his hand. Claws at the fingers. Lifts his pinky- and pulls his palm up from the bat.

It clatters to the floor. Vince dives for it. Nancy lunges at-

THE WASTEBASKET

Splashes ash into his face. He drops the bat- flails his arms. WHAM! Nancy smacks the wastebasket into his face.

He stumbles away- with a giant SHOVE, Nancy pushes him into the closet. She SLAMS it shut and wedges the bat under the knob. Vince SCREAMS and BANGS from inside. He can't get out.

Nancy steps back. Chest heaving. She catches her breath.

27 EXT. VINCE'S STREET - ACROSS FROM HOUSE - DAY 27

The SWAT Team double-checks their weapons one last time. The Captain waves them forward with a blur of violent gestures.

28 INT. BASEMENT - DOWN THE STEPS - DAY 28

Nancy climbs the stairs, limping. She shakes uncontrollably.

NANCY (V.O.)

Mom? Are you there? It's me.

29 INT. KITCHEN - DAY 29

Nancy scrubs at the blood on her face. Under her nails. Tears mixing with the tap water.

NANCY (V.O.)

Yeah... I'm safe. I'm okay... I hope you haven't been watching too much TV.

30 EXT. VINCE'S HOUSE - DAY 30

The SWAT Team splits up and surrounds the house. A flurry of hand signals. Weapons glistening.

NANCY (V.O.)

Mom... I'm fine. What are you so sorry for?

31 INT. BASEMENT - ON THE CLOSET - DAY 31

Vince ROARS inside and SHAKES THE HANDLE.

NANCY (V.O.)

It's okay. Everything's okay now.

32 INT. KITCHEN - DAY 32

Nancy wraps the cord around her finger as she speaks into the phone. Her eyes and face are still wet. We've been hearing her conversation.

NANCY

I need you. I want help. I want to beat this.

33 INT. KITCHEN - LATER 33

Nancy hangs up and leaves the kitchen. Her VOICE CONTINUES.

NANCY (V.O.)

Can you meet me somewhere? I want to tell you everything. I want to come home.

34 EXT. FRONT STEPS - DAY 34

The Captain signs a cross over his chest.

NANCY (V.O.)

I want to come home, Mom.

35 INT. FOYER - DAY 35

Nancy strolls toward us, headed for the front door. She smiles. Lifts her arms over her head. Her face is clean, cheeks wet with tears.

NANCY (V.O.)

Okay. I'll be there. Yes. I love you, Mom. I'll see you soon.

The PHONE CLICKS. Off screen, the door opens, and the sunlight bathes over Nancy. She looks up. And smiles.

FREEZE FRAME.

BLACK. Sudden MUSIC. As the credits roll.