

SCRIPT TITLE

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PETRIFIED

EXT. CANAL TOW PATH OUTSIDE PUB - DAY

A houseboat is moored up against the tow path near the pub. It is a beautiful, tranquil setting on a crisp December day.

On top of the roof, close to one end of the boat, stands RUBY, wide eyed and stressed out, petrified. She is a pretty girl of about seventeen. She clutches a heavy rocking car seat in which a sleeping baby lies, covered in a shawl.

At the other end of the boat, on the small deck, stands the baby's mother, CLOTHILDE, an woman of around 30 with dreadlocks. She keeps shaking her head as if in disbelief.

Beside her is a uniformed police officer. PC Smith is sitting down, trying to keep out of sight of Ruby whilst attempting to calm Clothilde.

On the tow path stands DI LIZZIE JONES, aged around 40. She has an iphone in her hand.

In the pub car park behind the tow path is a police car and an ambulance.

DI LIZZIE JONES

I've spoken to your sister Ruby,
and her baby is safe and sound.

RUBY

No, she told me Kyle had taken her
and gone off with this cow.

CLOTHILDE

No way! This is my baby. Who is
Kyle? Give her back.

Ruby moves a step further away from Clothilde. The car seat seems heavy and Lizzie sets it down in front of her.

She looks around, then bends down to move the car seat to the side of her, further away from Clothilde and the tow path where Lizzie stands.

The baby still sleeps, doesn't move. Ruby puts her foot on it, but it is precariously close to the edge of the roof, nearly dangling over the water.

Clothilde's pent up anger spills out as she watches her sleeping baby being rocked by Ruby's foot. Ruby shakes here head and rocks the car seat faster.

Clothilde turns, looks wildly at PC Smith and Lizzie in turn.

CLOTHILDE (CONT'D)
she's going to kill her. Get my
baby back.

Clothilde moves to get up on the roof, but the uniformed police officer pulls her back. Ruby pushes the car seat and moves it to an even more precarious position.

RUBY
You're lying. Both of you. Fucking
bitches.

Lizzie holds up her phone in Ruby's direction.

DI LIZZIE JONES
Look Ruby. She's here. See.

Ruby is rocking the car seat quite violently now and the baby stirs and whimpers.

Ruby looks down. Then she looks back at Lizzie eyes blazing.

RUBY
You always fucking lie.

The car seat is slipping further towards the edge of the roof.

A narrow band of water lies below the car seat between houseboats. It would be hard to retrieve the baby if the car seat fell.

PC Smith talks into his radio.

PC SMITH
Baby is still out of reach. Subject
might need tasing.

RADIO RESPONSE
DI Jones, do you agree.

Lizzie shakes her head at the message but doesn't reply.

Lizzie steps forward towards Ruby.

DI LIZZIE JONES
I've always been straight with you
Ruby. I've never lied to you. You
know that. Now look, just look.

Ruby shakes her head. She moves the car seat back a few inches with her foot. The baby is crying more now.

DI LIZZIE JONES (CONT'D)
We got through that time last year,
when the school was going to expel
you? Remember? I trusted you and
you told me the truth about the
fire. And you trusted me to fight
for you.

Ruby stares at Lizzie. The crying baby makes her glance down
more and she rocks the car seat more with her foot. It
starts to move back towards the edge of the roof again.

RUBY
You lost your job didn't you. Maybe
that's why were on my side.

DI LIZZIE JONES
Ruby. You know that's not true.

Ruby is still rocking the car seat with her foot.

RUBY
No I fucking don't.

DI LIZZIE JONES
Ruby, I got too angry with your
teacher. Miss Pollard.

RUBY
She lied, just like the rest of
you.

DI LIZZIE JONES
Yes she did lie, which is why I got
angry and suspended. I'm like you
in some ways I think.

Ruby smirks.

But it did also made the school
look into your case and you got
justice. Didn't you. You have to
get angry sometimes.

RUBY
Well I've seen that bitch with
Karl. I thought she'd taken Kia.

DI LIZZIE JONES]
And you got angry. And that is so
understandable Ruby. But now you
know this isn't Kia. So..

RUBY

You got your job back. Man I don't know why you went back to it. You were quite cool making those music videos.

Ruby laughs a little. Then she bends forward a little to look at the screen that Lizzie is still holding up. Her foot is still resting on the car seat. She seems calmer.

On the screen is a photo of a young woman, her sister, with a baby. Lizzie smiles at Ruby.

DI LIZZIE JONES]

Thanks Ruby. That means a lot. I came back because of you though.

At that moment, a man rushes from the tow path towards the house boat and fires at Ruby. Ruby staggers backwards with a bullet in her forehead, and falls into the canal behind the boat. The car seat is sent flying over the side of the boat into the canal in the small gap between houseboats. The scene is confusing. Clothilde is screaming.

The man who shot Ruby runs away along the towpath. He is chased by a police officer who was standing close.

Lizzie, who is closest to the incident, leaps into the water, close to the where the baby has landed. She grabs the car seat handle, pulling it up above the surface of the water. The baby, still strapped in the car seat, is spluttering.

The shooter vaults over a wall onto a road and into a car. He drives off at speed.

Lizzie half swims, half drags herself to the tow path where hands reach down and grab the car seat. PC Smith now puts the car seat down on the ground and starts unbuckling it the safety harness. Clothilde is beside her

The baby is silent for a few seconds, then starts screaming.

Clothilde grabs her baby and hugs her dripping wet body. A police officer provides a jacket.

PC SMITH

Get inside, get her warm.

Clothilde walks her baby into the house boat with PC Smith.

Lizzie swims round the side of the houseboat. There is no sign of Ruby. Two police have climbed onto the top of the houseboat and are looking down. A man from the pub has also waded into the water

DI LIZZIE JONES

Ruby, Ruby.

Lizzie looks aghast. There is no sign of Ruby.