

Small, cozy, cluttered with papers and psychology journals.

GLORIA

Want tea? I still do peppermint the way you liked it. Or maybe that was just your mama's thing...

MICHELLE

Peppermint's fine.

They sit across from each other at a small table. Michelle keeps her bag close.

MICHELLE

You didn't leave much of a goodbye.

GLORIA

Twenty-five years under your mother's microscope? I figured slipping out was my right.

Michelle offers a polite smile.

MICHELLE

So the tapes... that was part of slipping out?

Gloria's hands pause mid-pour.

GLORIA

I was cleaning out. Things got mixed up. I was tired. And she was... her usual self.

Michelle tilts her head, not buying it.

MICHELLE

I don't think you mailed private recordings just because you were tired.

A long silence.

Michelle reaches into her bag and slides a folded newspaper clipping across the table.

Gloria looks down at it. Her eyes lock on the headline:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

"COUPLE SUSPECTED IN MULTI-STATE MURDER SPREE - STILL AT
LARGE"

SHE STARES. NO REACTION. THEN SHE SPEAKS SOFTLY.

GLORIA
How's Tyler doing?

Michelle stiffens. She wasn't expecting that.

MICHELLE
What?

GLORIA
How is he?

MICHELLE
How do you know Tyler?

GLORIA (CALM)
Your mother controlled everything that
happened to you, Michelle. The
schools. The friends. And yes - the
people you met.

Michelle's breath catches.

MICHELLE
Are you saying... she arranged us?

GLORIA
Nothing around you has ever really
been by accident.

Michelle leans in.

MICHELLE
Tell me what you know.

Gloria stands and walks to the window. She pulls the curtain
back slightly, like checking for something.

GLORIA
Gallego.

MICHELLE
What?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GLORIA

That's all I'm going to say.

Michelle rises.

MICHELLE

What does that mean?

Gloria doesn't answer. She walks back toward the kitchen.

GLORIA

You should go now. It's not safe for
you to be here long.

Michelle watches her - unsure if the warning is for her
safety... or Gloria's.

A long beat. Then Michelle turns and leaves.