

SELF-TAPE LAB - NOTES

- Choose just one role to work on
- If there are multiple scenes for a character, choose just one of them to work on (unless very short).
- When choosing a role, feel free to ignore gender, pronoun, age or ethnicity references and make the role your own.

MAYA HARTMAN

FADE IN:

INT. CRISIS CENTER - PRIVATE OFFICE - NIGHT

Fluorescent lights buzz. MAYA HARTMAN (30s, composed but fierce) sits across from JAYLEN (16, guarded, frayed). DET. CORTEZ (40s) stands near the door, silent but watching.

START



MAYA
(measured)

No tricks here, Jaylen. Just three people and the truth.

JAYLEN

You say that, then I talk – and I get jumped the next day.

DET. CORTEZ

Not if we act first. But we can't do that unless you tell us what happened.

MAYA

I know you didn't mean for Marquez to get Hurt. I know that.

JAYLEN

You don't know anything.

MAYA

(a beat, adjusts)

Okay. You want honesty? I've sat with too many kids who thought staying quiet would protect them. It didn't. It just buried them deeper.

JAYLEN

(snaps)

What do you want from me?

MAYA

The truth. Not to punish you – to protect you. And to stop this cycle from grinding you down like it did him.

Beat. Jaylen breaks eye contact. Fidgeting.

JAYLEN

Rico had the gun. But it was mine. Marquez went for his phone – Rico freaked. Pulled the trigger.

MAYA

And you?

JAYLEN

(barely audible)

I didn't stop him. I froze.

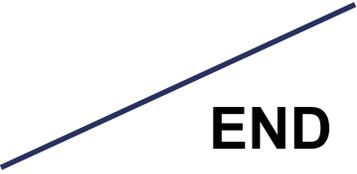
DET. CORTEZ

You came in. That counts. Now we keep you safe.

MAYA

But only if you keep telling the truth.
All of it.

Jaylen nods, reluctant but real.



END

MARK & RIYA

INT. CAFE - MID-MORNING

A sleek, over-designed café. Slack notifications ping softly in the background.

At a corner table, RIYA (caffeine-fueled Gen Z operator, half hoodie/half authority) scrolls her tablet. Across from her sits MARK (mid-40s, self-aware, a little tired, a lot sharp), watching the latte art dissolve.

START



RIYA

So... MARK. Six job titles in eight years.

MARK

That's what reinvention looks like when no one wants to call it ageism.

RIYA

You've said that before.

MARK

I've lived it.

RIYA

We don't *not* hire older people.

MARK

You just don't keep them.

RIYA

My team says you read as... caution tape.

MARK

I've handed out severance boxes. I know what implosion looks like.

RIYA

And you still want in?

MARK

While I still have something to give. Yes.

Beat.

RIYA

Didn't expect you to say something I hadn't heard.

MARK

And?

RIYA

You surprised me. That's rare.

MARK

Then maybe I've still got use in this "flat, fluid" ecosystem.

RIYA

There's a strategy-side contract. Low-key. High friction.

MARK

Not nothing.

RIYA

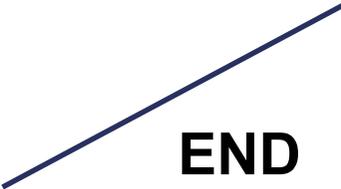
Logic quiz first. If the owl screams, not my fault.

She slides the tablet toward him.

MARK

I've been yelled at by worse.

FADE OUT.



END