



The Vow

by Miranda Morisette

Log Line

After a wealthy couple accidentally commits a horrific act that they vow to keep secret to protect their careers, they must navigate guilt and betrayal as their marriage struggles to stay afloat.





Synopsis

- The Vaughns are a newly married, wealthy couple living in New York. Madeline, a New York socialite and Alex, a politician running for office, accidentally commit a horrific act and vow to keep it a secret. Over time, this puts a strain on their marriage as Madeline is overwhelmed with guilt while Alex prioritizes his political career. Tensions rise as a journalist named Alice writes a story about Alex's rise to power and suspects there is more to Alex than meets the eye.

Alex Vaughn

played by Taron Egerton

Alex Vaughn is a politician from New York running for office. After the accident, he is the one who convinces Madeline not to turn them into the police. He is charming, persuasive, lacks empathy and often has hidden motives. He is career-driven and wants to protect the Vaughn family image.





Madeline Vaughn

played by Margot Robbie

Madeline Vaughn is a New York socialite. After witnessing a horrific act, Madeline has a breakdown but is convinced by her husband Alex to not call the police.

Madeline is strong-willed and follows her morals but feels conflicted over the incident. Over time, she becomes distraught with guilt and wants to turn herself in.



Alice

played by Anya Taylor-Joy

Alice is a journalist writing a story about Alex Vaughn's rise to political power. Alice is curious and determined to find out the truth but comes off across as young and inexperienced.

Conflict

The conflict that remains consistent throughout the film is the clear division between Madeline and Alex. Madeline is consumed with guilt and wants to turn herself into the police while also blaming Alex for getting them involved in the situation. Alex is focused on advancing his career by any means necessary while also trying to keep his wife from turning them into the police. They both react completely different to the crime and their differences divide them. While Madeline does feel guilty, she feels conflicted as she also does not want to give up the life they built for themselves. A journalist named Alice is also part of the conflict as she starts writing a story on Alex's rise to political power. Throughout the film, Alex finds ways to keep Madeline quiet while also trying to get rid of Alice and what she might find out.

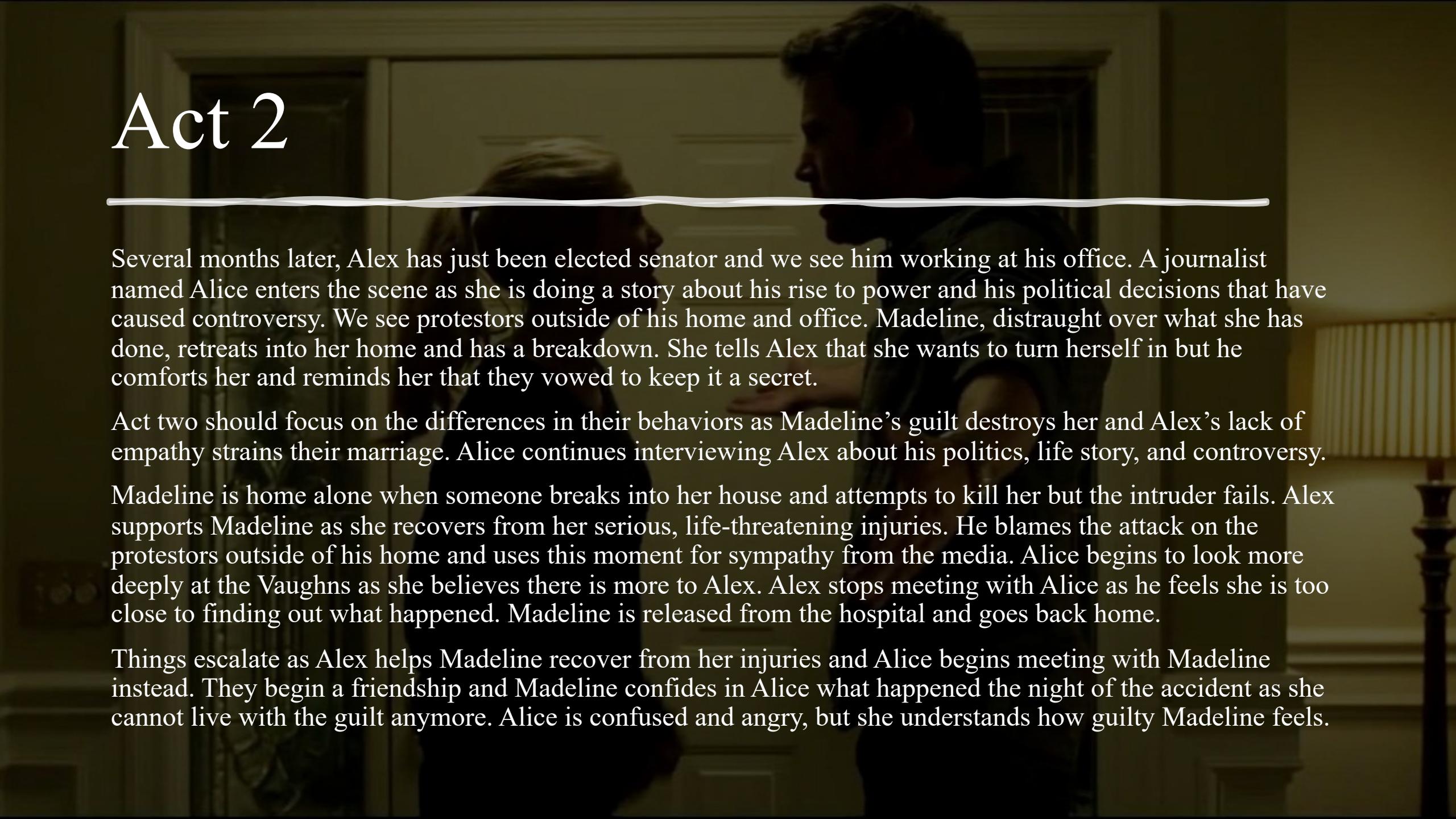


Act 1

Alex Vaughn is at a fundraising gala with his wife Madeline. They are socializing among people when an older gentleman makes a toast to Alex and congratulates him on his run for office. He describes Alex as an honest and ruthless man who will stop at nothing to get his way. The Vaughns leave in their car and are driving through a dark forest on the way home when they accidentally commit a horrific act which results in a death. Madeline wants to call the police, but Alex convinces her not to. They argue but Alex convinces Madeline not to call the cops as he does not want to ruin his chances for running for office. They drive back home where Madeline freaks out. Alex gives her a sleeping pill while he goes downstairs to the car to get rid of any evidence.



Act 2

A man and a woman are in a formal setting, possibly an office. The man, seen from the side, has dark hair and is wearing a dark suit. The woman, also seen from the side, has blonde hair and is wearing a light-colored dress. They are both looking towards each other, suggesting a conversation. The background is slightly blurred, showing what might be a hallway or another room.

Several months later, Alex has just been elected senator and we see him working at his office. A journalist named Alice enters the scene as she is doing a story about his rise to power and his political decisions that have caused controversy. We see protestors outside of his home and office. Madeline, distraught over what she has done, retreats into her home and has a breakdown. She tells Alex that she wants to turn herself in but he comforts her and reminds her that they vowed to keep it a secret.

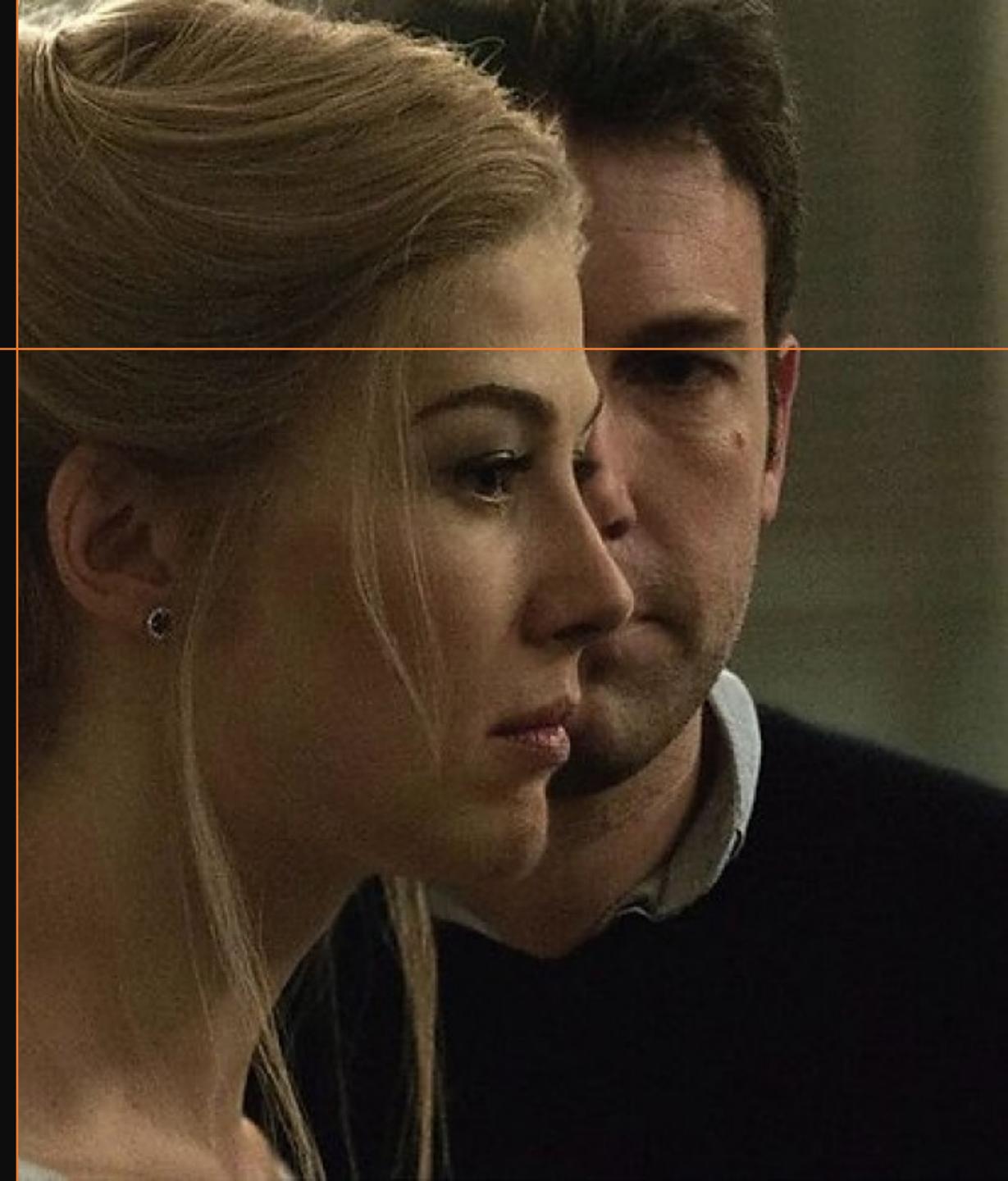
Act two should focus on the differences in their behaviors as Madeline's guilt destroys her and Alex's lack of empathy strains their marriage. Alice continues interviewing Alex about his politics, life story, and controversy.

Madeline is home alone when someone breaks into her house and attempts to kill her but the intruder fails. Alex supports Madeline as she recovers from her serious, life-threatening injuries. He blames the attack on the protestors outside of his home and uses this moment for sympathy from the media. Alice begins to look more deeply at the Vaughns as she believes there is more to Alex. Alex stops meeting with Alice as he feels she is too close to finding out what happened. Madeline is released from the hospital and goes back home.

Things escalate as Alex helps Madeline recover from her injuries and Alice begins meeting with Madeline instead. They begin a friendship and Madeline confides in Alice what happened the night of the accident as she cannot live with the guilt anymore. Alice is confused and angry, but she understands how guilty Madeline feels.

Act 3

At a party, Alice provokes Alex and hints that she knows what he is capable of. She continues her investigation and makes a shocking discovery. She goes to visit Madeline and tells her what happened. Alice gives Madeline a folder and a box. Alex comes home from work and Madeline confronts him about what happened, revealing that she knows he hired someone to kill her. He denies the claims but then gives in, saying it was him or her. He turns his back when Madeline reaches into the box Alice gave her and shoots him, killing him. At the very end of the film, we see Alice's scars and it is revealed that Alice was the victim they supposedly "killed" that night.



Style



Color

The film should use the colors blue and yellow to create contrast in scenes. Blue is used in calmer, quieter scenes while yellow is used to emphasize a moment or create an unsettling feeling.



Location

New York City

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Manhattan, New York

Manhattan is where Madeline and Alex spend most of their time. It is also where Alex's office is and where the Vaughns attend all their fundraising and charity events.



Upstate New York

As Madeline becomes consumed with guilt, she isolates herself from everyone she knows and starts spending more time at their 2nd home, a cabin in upstate New York. This is also where she is attacked by 'protestors' later on in the story.

Sound

The film should not be dialogue heavy and should instead rely on what is *not* being said. I want the action to speak for itself, especially in moments where characters act in anger like throwing items or speeding down a street, etc.

For the film, bass-heavy music should be present throughout the dark and intense emotional scenes. Dark blue and lowkey lighting should pair with the creepy, unsettling music that plays. Some artists and bands I use for musical inspiration include Massive Attack and Portishead.

