THE MOTHER
Feature film starring Jennifer Lopez

SELF-TAPE INSTRUCTIONS: ROLE OF ZOE

** ALL TAPES & SIDES MUST REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL **

** NO POSTING OF AUDITIONS ON YOUTUBE, TWITTER, INSTAGRAM, FACEBOOK or any other public Social Media outlet **

Tapes should be COMPLETELY uploaded before the deadline on the Open Call link – Uploads are cut off by Breakdown Services AT the deadline, even if they are partly uploaded. Please do not miss the deadline. Earlier tapes are very likely to be noticed (before the last-minute rush) so please submit as soon as you can.

PLEASE SUBMIT ONLY VIA ECO CAST – Not via email.

QUESTIONS:

You can email any questions to mothercasting@nancynayorcasting.com

ZOE CHARACTER DESCRIPTION:

Zoe is a 13-year-old girl, the cherished adopted child of a loving couple. Zoe’s life has been ordinary in the very best way. A stable home, school, gymnastics - she’s a regular kid on the cusp of teenage hood, which means she can seem like a little kid one moment, and a young woman the next. She can be smart and instinctive, then childish and emotional. She’s a regular thirteen-year-old girl. This regular life ends when her identity is discovered, and she is violently kidnapped in an attempt to draw out her real mother. Separated from her adopted parents, Zoe is thrown into a relationship with her birth mother who is ill-equipped emotionally, but who has a primal need to love and protect her. And teach her how to survive...

STORYLINE:

After ten years hidden in the Alaskan wilderness, a deadly female assassin, THE MOTHER, must come out of hiding to protect the young daughter she had to give up at birth.

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS ON TAPING:
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ELEMENTS OF AUDITIONS:

1. SLATE
   • Shoot a wide shot (full body, head to toe)
   • Please shoot a close-up of you holding a large piece of PAPER under your face with the following information clearly written on it:
     o NAME, DATE OF BIRTH, HEIGHT, CITY, STATE and COUNTRY,
     o PARENT OR REPRESENTATIVE FULL NAME, PHONE NUMBER, and EMAIL
   • In this close-up, please also SAY your NAME, HEIGHT, AGE and the CITY, STATE and COUNTRY in which you live. Please also tell us where you heard about this opportunity!

2. PERSONALITY CHAT
   • Shoot a 1 to 2-minute video looking into camera talking about yourself. Please be sure your phone or camera is positioned HORIZONTALLY. Please shoot this as a medium shot (waist to top of head).
   • Tell us about:
     o your family, if you have brothers and sisters, grandparents?
     o your hobbies and things you love to do,
     o your favorite physical activities.
     o If you have any previous acting experience (could be film, TV, school plays) tell us here. If you don’t have prior experience, that’s okay too.

3. AUDITION SCENE
   • Instructions on how to tape the scene:
     o Be sure your phone or camera is positioned HORIZONTALLY.
     o Shoot this as a close up (chest to top of head).
     o Make eye contact with your reader, do NOT look into the camera during these scene.
     o Please make sure the reader is not on camera - right next to the camera is perfect!
     o Please do not have anyone read the stage directions out loud.

4. PHYSICAL SCENE
   • Shoot a 1 to 2-minute video of running in a park or other outside space, pretending you are running away from someone who is chasing you and trying to get in a position where you can attack them. If possible, let us see you jump over things, duck behind a tree, etc.
   • If you participate in any individual sports (dance, gymnastics, martial arts, etc.) and have short clips of you participating, please include that as well.

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS ON TAPING:

5.6.21
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TAPPING GUIDELINES:
- Be sure your phone or camera is always positioned HORIZONTALLY.
- Please make sure the camera is steady (use a tripod if possible).
- Be sure your face is well lit – we need to be able to see you!
- Keep the background simple (nothing distracting).

Always position your phone or camera HORIZONTALLY:

WIDE SHOT (full body, head to toe)

MEDIUM SHOT (waist to top of head for Personality Chat)

CLOSE UP (chest to top of head – for Audition Scene)

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR UPLOADING INSTRUCTIONS:

UPLOADING AND SUBMITTING YOUR AUDITION:

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• Please review tapes before submitting - make sure the video and audio are clear.
• Upload the audition through Eco Cast.
• Upload the SLATE, PERSONALITY CHAT and SCENE as SEPARATE CLIPS if possible. With labels (ACTOR’S NAME SCENE 1).
• Please include your age, location and how you heard about the open call on the Submission Notes when you send in your audition.
• Please send self-taped auditions as soon as possible.

OPEN CALL LINK: https://breakdownservices.com/index.cfm/opencall?oc=z8755

If you do not have an Actors Access account already, you can register for free on the link by selecting the button that looks like this:

Actors Access for Actors:

Register Now for FREE!

Includes 2 photos, a profile, and a résumé at no charge.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

You do NOT need to pay anything to submit your audition. If you are asked to pay anything, please contact Breakdown Services immediately for help in uploading your audition for free. Their phone number is 310-276-9166.

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN – AUDITION SCENE ARE ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES
To all actresses auditioning for the role of ZOE,

The director of our project, Niki Caro (MULAN) prefers a very natural style of acting. Very real, very grounded. Less is more. She is looking for someone to bring their natural spirit to the part, not put on a pretend persona. Great references for the style she appreciates are the leading performances of young actresses in the following films: WHALE RIDER, DAYS OF HEAVEN, and LEON THE PROFESSIONAL.

I look forward to seeing your reading!

All the best,
Nancy Nayor
Casting Director
INT. ALASKAN CABIN - NIGHT

Candles burn in bottles around them as The Mother and Zoe sit across from each other at a plain wooden table. The Mother serves two bowls of stew.

THE MOTHER

Eat.

ZOE

I can’t.

THE MOTHER

Yes, you can.

ZOE

I’m not eating Bambi’s Mom.

THE MOTHER

It’s not venison. The deer has to hang for a while, to tenderize the meat.

(chewing)

Besides, that was a stag. So it would be Bambi’s dad.

ZOE

What is this then?

THE MOTHER

Rabbit. Thumper.

ZOE

I don’t want to eat a rabbit either.

THE MOTHER

Listen to me -- that rabbit had a better life than any cheeseburger you ever ate.

ZOE

He probably had a better life than me. I still don’t want to eat him. Maybe he had a family, you think of that?

The Mother keeps eating. She doesn’t even pause anymore.

ZOE

He had a beautiful life until you shot him.
THE MOTHER

CONTINUED:

THE MOTHER
I trapped him.

ZOE
Much better.

THE MOTHER
Let me tell you something, kid. There’s nothing you ever ate in your whole life that didn’t come from violence.

ZOE
Tofu.

THE MOTHER
Half of Paraguay has been burned and deforested for soy plantations.

Zoe didn’t think of this. She reloads.

ZOE
Cheese.

THE MOTHER
Those cows are impregnated just so they can get yanked on all day.

ZOE
Gross.
(thinking)
Cashew cheese.

THE MOTHER
I knew a mercenary soldier from the Ivory Coast. They fought a brutal civil war over cashews.

Zoe looks ready to cry.

ZOE
I want to go home.

THE MOTHER
I know you do. Eat.  

END
CONTINUED:

The Mother stops. Rifle halfway up. Mother instincts kicking in. Protect the offspring at all costs.

Industrial strength TENSION, then -- The Mother backs up towards Zoe. Never taking her eyes off the She-wolf. Retreating just like the She-wolf last time.

Another low GROWL escapes the She-wolf. Her Cubs SCRAMBLE. And The Mother understands.

THE MOTHER

Run.

A simple command. As simple as the one the She-wolf gave her cubs. Zoe takes off in a flash. The She-wolf gives CHASE.

The Mother loads a GREEN SHELL, raises her Rifle. Lines up the shot. She's only going to get one --

BANG!

She appears to MISS, but SHE-WOLF cuts off in the other direction.

The Mother catches up to Zoe, eyes wide with panic, but catching her breath. Suddenly, she breaks into tears.

THE MOTHER

It’s alright, shhhh, it’s fine.

ZOE

You shot the mom.

THE MOTHER

No. No. Look.

The Mother breaks the breech of her shotgun and shows Zoe -- A GREEN SHELL. She reloads it and -- BOOM! -- fires it at the door of the house where --

-- SALT SPRAYS all over the wood like a blizzard.

THE MOTHER

The green ones are salt shells. Just for scaring something off.

INT. ALASKAN CABIN - DAY

ZOE sulks at the table. An unappealing bowl of plain oatmeal in front of her. The Mother loads shells.

ZOE

Am I ready yet?

(a beat)

To go home.

The Mother sets the SHOTGUN down, stoically facing her.
CONTINUED:

Zoe slams her hands on the table, rattling the bowl.

ZOE
I need to go home! Now! Enough of this! Every day is the same! What else do I have to do?

Calmly, The Mother takes apart her rifle, placing the pieces in a case.

Zoe reaches her limit. She grabs the SHOTGUN and raises it, aiming right at THE MOTHER across the close, hot cabin.

The Mother stares back across the barrel. She almost looks proud of her daughter's gumption.

But Zoe's hands begin to shake.

ZOE
I'm going home. You're not stopping me.

THE MOTHER
Look at you shake. You're not ready.

ZOE
Yes I am ready!

THE MOTHER
Prove it!

ZOE
Don't make--

The Mother rips the Shotgun from Zoe's grip. In one fluid motion she breaks the breech and drops the shells, facing Zoe as they roll loudly across the wooden floor.

ZOE
(the verge of tears)
Why are you such a bitch!?

THE MOTHER
Don't you call me that. Don't you EVER call me that.

The tone scares Zoe and she backs down.

THE MOTHER
And I'm not a bitch. Keeping you safe doesn't make me a bitch.

ZOE
Lying to me does.

THE MOTHER
How am I lying?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (2)

ZOE
I know who you are.

THE MOTHER
So what? I’m not lying. I’m just not talking about things that don’t matter.

Zoe blinks away the tears, hiding them.

THE MOTHER
You have a good mom.

ZOE
I miss her so much. I miss her and I miss my dad.

The Mother nods to this, looking away from her tears.

ZOE
And I’m not allowed to talk to you about anything if it’s not -- how to gut a fish or... how to field dress a duck.

The Mother can’t help herself. She starts laughing at the sound of this.

ZOE
What? I’m serious.

THE MOTHER
Field dress a duck?

ZOE
Well, cutting all the feathers off... and... whatever that thing was. A pigeon or something.

The Mother can’t keep from smiling. Zoe starts to laugh too, still through the fumes of tears.

ZOE
I can’t talk to you.

Now The Mother is deadly serious and meets her eyes.

ZOE
I can’t ask any questions.

THE MOTHER
Maybe I’m trying to teach you all the answers first. Then you can figure out the right questions later.

← END

FADE TO:
CONTINUED:

Here’s the moment... where she changes from The Mother to something more. Zoe touches her fingertips to The Mother’s. Just a brush, but the connection is there.

And The Mother? She doesn’t flinch or pull away. She allows the touch, feels it.

THE MOTHER
All I know how to do is survive. And so do you now. Being scared doesn’t mean you’re weak. It means you’re alive. It means you’re still fighting.

INT. ALASKAN CABIN - DAY


Zoe does her exercises... Methodical. Rep after rep...

EXT. SNIPER’S NEST - DAY

12 TARGETS. Different sizes. Tacked to trees at varying distances. BANG!

THROUGH THE BINOCULARS: TARGET 8. The Mother missed it before. The bullet slices through it.

THE MOTHER
9 O’clock.

TARGET 9. Further away. BANG!

THE MOTHER
10 o’clock. 11 o’clock. 12.

BANG! BANG! BANG! Bulls-eyes.

The Mother’s eyes drop from the binoculars to... Zoe at the rifle scope. Tiny finger on the trigger. The length of the rifle the size of her...

She looks at The Mother and smiles, proud of herself.

INT. ALASKAN CABIN - DAY

The Mother is surrounded by OLD RADIOS, disassembled and scattered. She rips more components from them.

Across the table, Zoe paints LUNCH BOXES, primary colors disappearing under matte white. They work in familial silence.

ZOE
Do you ever miss Cruise?

The Mother thinks for a minute.
CONTINUED:

THE MOTHER

Yeah. I do.

ZOE

Did you mean what you said? That he wasn’t worth a bullet.

THE MOTHER

No. I just wanted Alexei to believe that.

ZOE

Did you love him then?

THE MOTHER

(a sigh)

We didn’t get a chance to find out.

She knows Zoe wants more and looks up from painting.

ZOE

But maybe?

THE MOTHER

Maybe.

ZOE

Maybe is something.

The Mother smiles slightly, nodding.

THE MOTHER

For me, “maybe” is a lot.

There’s a sweet, comfortable moment between them.

Zoe stands. Accidentally knocks over boxes of shotgun shells. GREEN and RED shells roll across the floor. She scrambles to pick them up.

THE MOTHER

Don’t mix those up.

ZOE

I know.

END

EXT. ALASKAN FOREST - DAY

Zoe has the Shotgun strapped to her back. Covers her tracks with deliberate steps. Double-timing to keep up with The Mother. But keeping up.

She carries two of those matte WHITE LUNCHBOXES. The Mother carries a PICK AXE. Sweat beads their brows. Whatever they’re up to, it’s hard work.

CRRRICCK! They FREEZE. Ears straining.