

TAPPED - 15 PAGE EXCERPT

WHERE WE JOIN:

Mary, an NSA analyst, has just been tasked with monitoring WikiLeaks, to prevent them from exposing the NSA's own spying program.

Her target is Steve, a man she knew in college, when they both led the ill-fated group "Students Against Petshops."

Mary sits at her desk at the NSA Headquarters listening to Steve's call. Her best friend and co-worker Lisa sits nearby. The lights on them have just dimmed.

Lights come up on Steve, far stage left, as he plays an RPG video game over the phone with HACKER, who's playing the same game.

STEVE

Ooooh, check your five o'clock, we got zombies.

HACKER

Thanks, Steve-o.

STEVE

No probs. Hey, so remember when I helped you move and you said you owe me one?

HACKER

Dude, for the last time, I'm not helping you hack SeaWorld. Don't forget to sweep right.

STEVE

No. I've got a new project. It's not even about marine mammals.

HACKER

Nazis!

(shooting someone in the game)

Oooh, you're welcome.

STEVE

Thanks. So, what do you think about helping me hack into the mainframe of the...

(looking around the ensure no one is listening)

Schmen-S-A.

HACKER  
What's a schmen-S-A?

STEVE  
You know, the schmen-S-A.

HACKER  
What is that... Yiddish?

STEVE  
(whispering)  
The NSA.

Mary and Hacker are both shocked.  
Mary looks around to see if anyone  
else heard.

HACKER  
Holy shit Steve! The National Security Agency?!

STEVE  
Yeah. I'm heading up to the bridge. Cover me.

HACKER  
Look, I was happy to help you hack into that  
animal testing database, because you know I  
love my guinea pigs, but you're talking treason-  
level shit.

STEVE  
(defensively)  
I have WikiLeaks interested. They'd help us.

HACKER  
Landmine! Didn't that Edward Snowden guy  
already expose the NSA?

STEVE  
Snowden barely scratched the surface. They're  
still running a huge top secret program that  
listens in on every single phone call in  
America.

HACKER  
(angrily)  
You mean like this phone call?

STEVE  
No. I mean, yes. But I'm using a secure  
connection. They aren't listening to this call.

Lights up on the NSA. Mary is  
listening on large headphones. She  
laughs.

HACKER

We got werewolves at 10 and 12. Steve, I already went to jail helping you once.

STEVE

They say the food is better the second time around.

Mary laughs more.

HACKER

Look, you're a nice guy, but I think you have no idea what you're doing.

STEVE

(disappointed)

Sheesh. I'm gonna need some ointment... for that sick burn.

Mary bursts out laughing again as Lisa enters carrying her bag.  
Blackout on Steve and Hacker.

LISA

Is that Steve?

MARY

No!

(rethinking her lie, embarrassed)

Yes.

LISA

Look at you. Someone has a crush!

MARY

I do not! Please. I have never "crushed".

LISA

Well there's a first time for everything!

MARY

Not for me. I am in complete control.

LISA

And yet, you're blushing!

Mary types on her computer.

MARY

That's must be... Mastocytosis. Or... menopause-  
- Menopause?

LISA

You'd rather believe you're going through early-onset menopause than accept that you might actually like a boy?

MARY

I'm just reading what WebMD tells me.

LISA

Mary Peters, you are a twisted spinster.

MARY

Goodnight Lisa.

Lights lower. Time has passed.  
It's 11pm now. Lights up on Steve,  
stage left, on his phone.

Lights up on JULIANA BURKHALTER  
(30s, severe, German accent),  
stage right, on her phone.

STEVE

Juliana, my hacker plan was a bust.

JULIANA

As I expected. WikiLeaks thanks you for your  
support. Goodbye--

STEVE

--No! Wait. I can still find a way to help!

JULIANA

Steven. I run a multinational activist  
syndicate. I have a Nobel Peace Prize. I was  
named one of GQ's top five most bangable  
whistleblowers. Do not waste my time.

STEVE

I can do this! I can! I can can can.

Steve does a can-can kick. Mary  
bursts out laughing. Then catches  
herself and looks around to see if  
anyone noticed.

JULIANA

Was that a joke? Because I don't do jokes,  
Steven. I'm Swiss.

STEVE

Please, give me another chance. I got you that  
memo!

JULIANA

The memo is a good start, but it's not proof.  
We need evidence that the wiretapping is  
happening.

STEVE

Then I'll find a mole!

JULIANA

Some advice, Steven. You're not cut out to play with the big boys. Stick with your whales.

STEVE

Saving the whales isn't good enough. Greenpeace is great, but I want to help people. I know I can do this.

Mary sighs audibly. She realizes she's swooning and quickly goes straight faced.

JULIANA

Do you even know what they'll do to you if you get caught? They'll send you to Guantanamo!

STEVE

I know. I read the Wikipedia page. They'll waterboard me, then strip me naked and hose me down. They may leave me naked and wet in my cell for days on end...

Blackout on Steve and Juliana.

Mary gasps, realizing she's turned on by the thought of a naked, wet Steve. She puts the headphones down hastily and jumps back from her desk.

A group of women (MARY'S PSYCHE) emerge and play with Mary throughout the song.

"COULD I BE IN LOVE?"

MARY

WHAT THE HELL IS HAPPENING TO ME?  
EVERYTHING SEEMS SO SURREAL.  
COULD THIS BE THAT FEELING I'VE SPENT  
MY LIFE TRYING NOT TO FEEL!

I'VE NEVER BEEN THIS WAY BEFORE.  
IT FEELS UTTERLY ABSURD.  
MY MIND IS RACING A MILE A MINUTE,  
AND MY SPEECH IS GETTING SLURRED.

MY BLOOD IS PUMPING,  
MY HEART RATE'S JUMPING,  
AND THERE'S THUMPING, IN MY BACK.  
COULD I BE IN LOVE?  
OR HAVING A HEART ATTACK?

Mary pulls out her phone and starts typing.

HOLY SHIT I JUST GOOGLED MY SYMPTOMS,  
AND I'M DEFINITELY IN DISTRESS.  
I MIGHT BE AN EPILEPTIC,  
OR HAVE RELAPSING-REMITTING MS!

WEBMD HAS AN ENTRY FOR EVERY ILLNESS,  
BUT THERE ISN'T ONE FOR LOVE.  
SO WHAT THE HELL DO YOU DO WITH SYMPTOMS,  
THAT YOU WANNA GET RID OF.

MY BRAIN IS CARTWHEELING,  
MY ARM JUST LOST FEELING,  
MY HEAD'S REELING LIKE I'M ON COKE.  
COULD I BE IN LOVE?  
OR DID I JUST HAVE A STROKE?

MARY'S PSYCHE  
You're in love!

MARY  
I'D RATHER HAVE  
MENINGITIS,  
LARYNGITIS,  
ARTHRITIS,  
BRONCHITIS,  
HEPATITIS A, B OR C.

SKIN CANCER,  
LUNG CANCER,  
BALL CANCER,  
TIT CANCER,  
OR GOOD OLD FASHIONED HPV.

GIVE ME CROHN'S,  
GALLSTONES,  
IMBALANCED HORMONES!  
OR EVEN JUST ALLERGIES.

I'D TAKE CIRRHOSIS  
FIBROSIS  
OR MULTI-DRUG RESISTANT TUBERCULOSIS!  
BEFORE I'D TAKE LOVE'S DISEASE!

WHATEVER I GOT,  
GIVE ME THE SHOT,  
I NEED A LOT OF PROZAC STAT!  
COULD I BE IN LOVE?  
I CAN'T BE IN LOVE!  
DEAR GOD, I'M IN LOVE.  
AND THERE'S NO CURE FOR THAT.

Blackout.

Lights up, the next morning at the NSA. Mary sleeps at her desk, hair frazzled, when Lisa arrives.

LISA  
Morning Mary.

MARY  
(waking up suddenly)  
Wha-- naked waterboarding.

LISA  
You okay?

MARY  
Oh yeah I'm fine. I came in early to get some work done.

Mary fake types on her computer dramatically, still half asleep.

LISA  
In your clothes from yesterday.

MARY  
I can explain... So, I'm a genius.

LISA  
Are you? Because you look like a crazy person!

MARY  
I figured out that I'm not in love with Steve. I just have a super rare strain of... Nothin, I got nothin.

LISA  
You're in love!

MARY  
Your face is in love!  
(suddenly switching)  
Sorry, I'm feeling very defensive.

LISA  
You romantic you.

MARY  
I can prove it. I'll meet Steve for dinner and then I'll be able to confirm that I'm not in love, I'm just dying.

LISA  
Great idea. I usually prove I'm not in love with someone by going on a date with them.

MARY

It's not a date. It's evidence gathering.

LISA

All dating is evidence gathering.

MARY

I'm gonna do it. I'm doing it.

Mary takes her phone and dials.

LISA

You're insane. You're an insane person now.

Lights up far stage left as Steve  
picks up his phone.

STEVE

Hello.

MARY

Hi, Steve? Wow, it's been awhile. This is Mary.

(silence)

Mary Peters...

(silence)

From college...

(silence)

We founded Students Against Petshops together.

STEVE

Oh Mary! Of course! God it's been awhile. How  
did you get my number?

Mary looks at Lisa, panicked.

MARY

Uhhhh... I uhhhh...

Lisa frantically tries to hand  
gesture "face" and "book".

MARY (CONT'D)

Face... Open. Book. Facebook.

(frantically)

Facebook! I got it from Facebook!

STEVE

Oh I didn't realize my number was public on  
there! I really gotta re-check my privacy  
settings.

MARY

Yeah...



STEVE

Oh not that I mind you calling. Honestly it's nice to hear from you. Are you a big fancy lawyer now?

Mary looks at Lisa. She can't tell the truth.

MARY

Oh no. I uhhhh...

Lisa holds her hand like a phone close to her face, with the thumb and pinky outstretched.

MARY (CONT'D)

I'm... a... surfer.

LISA

(covering the phone)

A surfer!?!?

MARY

You were doing cowabunga.

LISA

I was doing telephone!

STEVE

Oh that's cool. I never thought of you as the outdoors type.

MARY

Well, I am. Surfing all day long.

(assuming a faux surfer voice)

Some killer waves over at the beaches in... Maryland.

STEVE

Oh, you're still in the DC area too!

MARY

Of course... Surfing capital of the world.

Mary makes an "I don't know why I said that" face at Lisa.

STEVE

This might seem forward but... something fell through and I suddenly have some free time. Would you wanna catch up over dinner?

MARY

That'd be great. How about Thursday? At Cooper's Grill?

STEVE

I love that place! Sure. How's seven?

MARY

Great! I mean...

(switching back to the faux surfer voice)  
Cool, bro.

Lisa hangs up the phone.

Blackout on Steve.

LISA

Do you know anything about surfing?

MARY

Did anything on that call make you think that I do?

LISA

Well, congrats. Got your date!

MARY

It's not a date!

LISA

Totally is!

Lisa walks out. Mary leans back and smiles.

Blackout.

### SCENE 3

SILVER SPRING, MD. COOPER'S GRILL.

Steve is seated at a center table with a two glasses of wine. An anonymous couple is dining, stage left. Steve is on his phone.

STEVE

Hey dad, it's me. Steve. Your son. I just wanted to say hi. That project I told you about fell through... as you predicted. So, I guess you were right. Anyway... call me back sometime. I love you.

Steve hangs up as Mary enters.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Mary!

Steve gets up to hug Mary.

MARY  
Oh, we're hugging...

They both sit down.

STEVE  
Gosh, it's been so long!

MARY  
I know, you look great.

STEVE  
So do you! Must be all that surfing!

MARY  
Oh yeah, for sure... man.

STEVE  
How'd you get into that?

MARY  
Oh that's boring. Tell me, how's life on a  
GreenPeace boat.

STEVE  
They don't let me go in the field. I mostly run  
letter-writing campaigns to Congress.

MARY  
Well that's important.

STEVE  
Yeah, you learn a lot doing it. We had one  
Senator who kept returning our letters,  
unopened. So I came up with an idea to re-label  
them "campaign contributions."

MARY  
(laughs)  
You were always quick on your feet.

Mary's comment exhilarates Steve.  
She thinks he's smart.

STEVE  
I really shouldn't say anything, but I'm  
working on one thing right now that's kind of a  
government secret, but it's really cool.

MARY  
Oh yeah, you shouldn't tell me.

STEVE  
Naw, it'll be fine.

MARY

Probably won't. Better not.

STEVE

So you know the NSA?

MARY

(chugging her glass of wine)

Mmmmmhmmmm.

STEVE

Well it turns out that they're listening to everyone's phone calls right here in America-- and I'm gonna expose them.

MARY

Should you really be telling me--

STEVE

I found out about it when I was delivering letters to the Senate Majority Leader's office and I saw this on his desk. It's a top-secret memo from the head of Homeland Security authorizing wiretapping on all U.S. citizens!

Steve hands Mary a document.

MARY

And you're just handing it to me like this?!

STEVE

It's cool, I have a copy.

(leaning in smugly, as if giving a pro-tip)

I always make a copy.

The waiter finishes refilling Mary's wine glass when she grabs it and takes a huge swig.

MARY

Isn't telling me a bit reckless?

STEVE

Why would you say that?

MARY

I popped up out of nowhere. What if I was an FBI agent?

STEVE

But you're a surfer!

MARY

(muttering under her breathe)

Oh my God.

(MORE)

MARY (CONT'D)

(speaking up)

How do you know the NSA isn't listening to your calls?

STEVE

Oh, I got this secure burner phone from WikiLeaks. They can't tap it!

MARY

But what if they could.

STEVE

They can't!

MARY

Hypothetically speaking, what if the NSA had a classified program that had already infected your phone and was pulling data from it in real time.

STEVE

Well that would be crazy. Why?

MARY

Because the NSA has a classified program that has already infected your phone and is pulling data from it in real time.

The waiter walks by to pour more wine into Mary's empty wine glass. She grabs the bottle by the neck.

MARY (CONT'D)

(to the waiter, somewhat losing it)

Just leave it!

STEVE

Wait a minute! You're not the real Mary Peters.

Steve stands up. Mary stands after him.

MARY

No, I am. But I'm not--

STEVE

--Prove it. What's Mary's birthday?

MARY

March 2, 1981. But you don't know my birthday.

STEVE

(pause)

Nope. That one's on me. OK, something only the real Mary Peters would remember.

(MORE)

STEVE (CONT'D)

What's the last thing I said to you before we released those puppies at Petsmart?

MARY

(horrified at the memory)

"There's no way this could possibly go wrong."

STEVE

(wistfully)

It was like a puppy Jonestown.

MARY

You can't blame yourself. It's like they were drawn toward the interstate.

STEVE

Mary, it is you.

MARY

Yes, it's me. And I... work for the NSA.

STEVE

Shit.

(the reality setting in)

Shit. Shit! You're here to arrest me.

MARY

No. I... I don't know why I'm here. But honestly, you're being really sloppy. If I hadn't taken over your case when I did, you'd already be in prison.

STEVE

Wait. You're here to help me!

MARY

No, I--

STEVE

Mary Peters! I could kiss you right now! You're my NSA mole! You're the key to taking down the entire spying program.

MARY

Wait, I--

STEVE

You believe in me enough to take that risk.

Steve touches Mary's hand. Mary can't look away.

STEVE (CONT'D)

You are the most amazing woman in the world!

Mary doesn't have time to think.

MARY

Yup. That's me. I'm your mole.

STEVE

I was wondering why you'd called me up out of the blue. Now it all makes sense! Mary, together, we are going to make history.

MARY

Yeah, about that. So let's say I decided to help you... and feed you a few documents. I could do that anonymously, right?

STEVE

Why wouldn't you want people to know?

MARY

Uh, because they'd kill us!

STEVE

With kindness!

MARY

With drones.

STEVE

They couldn't. We'll have too many supporters!

MARY

Are you kidding? People will think we're traitors. We'll be eviscerated in the media.

STEVE

That's ridiculous. People will love us! People always love people who tell the truth.

MARY

Since when?!?

STEVE

Jesus? They loved him.

MARY

They crucified him.

STEVE

Yeah, but now he's in almost every church.

MARY

Steve, people are gonna hate us!

STEVE

Mary, people are gonna love us!

"PEOPLE ARE GONNA LOVE/HATE US"

STEVE (CONT'D)

PEOPLE ARE GONNA LOVE US,  
ONCE THEY GET TO KNOW ME AND YOU.  
WE'LL BE LIKE THAT GUY FROM THE MATRIX,  
WHO TOLD EVERYONE THEY WERE LIVING IN GOO!

EVERYBODY LOVES A WHISTLEBLOWER,  
SOMEONE WHO ROCKS THE BOAT.  
PEOPLE ARE GONNA LOVE US,  
JUST LIKE PEOPLE LOVE TO VOTE.

MARY

PEOPLE ARE GONNA HATE US,  
TREASON IS HARD TO DEFEND.  
AND I DON'T THINK YOU FINISHED THE MATRIX,  
BECAUSE THAT GUY DIES IN THE END!

EVERYBODY HATES A WHISTLEBLOWER,  
JUST LIKE EVERYONE HATES THE SWISS.  
PEOPLE ARE GONNA HATE US,  
CAUSE THEIR IGNORANCE IS BLISS.

STEVE

LIKE PAUL REVERE'S FAMOUS WARNING.

MARY

LIKE BENEDICT ARNOLD'S BETRAYAL.

STEVE

WE'LL USHER IN A NEW MORNING.

MARY

OR GET RENDITIONED TO A TURKISH JAIL.

STEVE

WE'RE GONNA CHANGE THE WORLD FOR GOOD.

MARY

OR JUST PISS OFF THE CIA.

STEVE

WE'RE GONNA BE UNDERSTOOD!

MARY

THE WAY A LION "UNDERSTANDS" ITS PREY!

STEVE

PEOPLE ARE GONNA LOVE US.  
THEY'RE GONNA SEE US AS THE  
GOOD GUYS.

MARY (CONT'D)

PEOPLE ARE GONNA HATE US.  
THEY'RE GONNA SEE US AS THE  
BAD GUYS.

MARY (CONT'D)

THEY'RE GONNA VILIFY US ON CNN!

STEVE

THEY'RE GONNA GIVE US THE NOBEL PRIZE!  
I DON'T SEE HOW, THEY WON'T THINK WE'RE THE BEST!



MARY

THEY'LL THINK WE'RE THE ABSOLUTE WORST!

STEVE

PEOPLE ARE GONNA LOVE US.  
OH, PEOPLE ARE GONNA LOVE US.  
YES, PEOPLE ARE GONNA LOVE  
US.  
AS LONG AS WE AREN'T KILLED  
FIRST.

MARY (CONT'D)

PEOPLE ARE GONNA HATE US.  
OH, PEOPLE ARE GONNA HATE US.  
YES, PEOPLE ARE GONNA HATE  
US.  
AS LONG AS WE AREN'T KILLED  
FIRST.

Blackout.