

**TELL ME A STORY**

"Pilot"

Written by  
Kevin Williamson

1/29/2018 Studio Draft  
2/13/2018 Studio Revised Draft  
2/16/2018 Network Draft  
**2/27/2018 Network Revised Draft**

TITLE SEQUENCE:

An ANIMATED SEQUENCE kicks off. Conceptual. Stylized. A heavily wooded forest comes into view. DARK AND FOREBODING. Melodic, haunting MUSIC...

CHARACTERS from three popular fairy tales appear in a mirage of imagery.

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD, JACK AND THE BEANSTALK and THE THREE LITTLE PIGS are seen in various iconic moments.

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD skips through the woods on her way to Granny's house. She strays from the path to pick some flowers and encounters a BIG BAD WOLF.

Passing by is JACK traveling through the woods with his cow in tow, on the way to market...

Jack comes across THREE LITTLE PIGS who are running from a WOLF of their own. The Wolf chases them to their respective homes made of straw, sticks, and bricks. He HUFFS and PUFFS.

The sequence continues as the tales escalate until--

A GIANT STALK grows from the ground, higher and higher.

PULL BACK to REVEAL the ENTIRE FOREST. Suddenly, the tree tops transform into--

THE NEW YORK CITY SKYLINE.

Modern day. A dark, turbulent sky hangs over. A CRASH of thunder. Lightning STRIKES. Rain POURS down. And the animated world is now reality.

TITLE CARD: TELL ME A STORY.

The CAMERA ANGLES to REVEAL -- the view of the city comes courtesy of New Jersey. FOLLOW AN SUV as it makes its way down a street somewhere in Hoboken. Not the best part of town. Trash cans and trailers rule.

The SUV pulls up to--

A SHACK OF A TRAILER.

Small. Rusted. There's a small covered porch attached to it. Where broken lawn chairs and future trash live...

Bamboo shades hang from the porch, tattered -- ripped STRAW dangles...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A man gets out of the SUV. This is MITCH, 40, big guy, his muscles have softened, been blue collar all his life, resigned to it. He grabs a duffel from the backseat and starts for the trailer.

INT. TRAILER - MORNING

Rain pings and ricochets off the tin roof of a small mess of a trailer. Strewn clothes, take-out containers, beer bottles, random junk...

PLOP! PLOP! There's a steady DRIP of water coming from a crack in the ceiling. It lands in a pot that sits on the floor under it. PLOP! PLOP!

A few KNOCKS followed by INTENSE BANGING. And that's what it takes to wake the man sprawled on the mattress in the back room of the trailer.

EDDIE, 28, rises from the bed, looking like two miles of bad road. He shakes himself awake. Bad move. It triggers the hangover--

He crawls out of bed, searching for his pants and cigarettes. His tattooed body is on the scrawny side. From a heavy diet of drugs and nicotine. He goes to the door. Opens it.

EDDIE

What time is it?

Mitch pushes by Eddie and enters the trailer. He sees the liquor bottles, pills, the leaking roof... He's instantly annoyed.

MITCH

What did you do with the epoxy I brought over? Ya gotta coat the roof, it'll stop this shit.

He kicks the pot of water. Eddie pulls on his pants, looks for a shirt.

EDDIE

I'll do it.

MITCH

Ya gotta do it when it's dry, you lazy fuck. Jesus, it stinks in here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Mitch throws the door open and takes the duffel to the front porch. Eddie finds a shirt and follows.

EXT. TRAILER - MORNING

It's still raining. Mitch puts the duffel on the lawn chair. Eddie lights a smoke.

MITCH

Are you up for this? Cuz' Sam didn't want to use you but I told him, hey don't worry about Eddie, he's sober now and fucking look at you.

EDDIE

When was I sober?

MITCH

I fucking lied.  
(appeals to him)  
This is important, Eddie. I'm trying to help you, help both of us.

These two are brothers. They fight like family. Eddie opens the duffel to find a 9MM GLOCK. An intimidating piece. Then, Eddie sees something else, he withdraws a full-headed, latex--

PIG MASK

Freakishly detailed... creepy as hell.

EDDIE

Seriously?

MITCH

Put it on before you get to the park. There's too many cameras out there.

EDDIE

Just the three of us?

Mitch nods.

MITCH

You screw this up and Sam will fuck both of us, you understand?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDDIE

Yeah, I got it, Jesus...

Eddie hates the way Mitch treats him. It sucks being the younger brother. As the city looms in the distance...

EXT. NYC STREET - MORNING

Brake lights shimmer against wet pavement. Somewhere in the Village. Tree-lined with apartments and brownstones. The rain has let up. It's more a mist. The early morning hustle has begun.

FOLLOW A JOGGER, in rain gear, darting through the street and foot traffic. CLOSE ON JORDAN RILEY, 32, earbuds dangling. A lean, slight build, a result of his dedicated morning run, rain or shine. The perfect exercise for a man who lives in his head. A thinker and observer. Quiet but approachable. In that way you approach a stranger to ask directions. Jordan would be the stranger of choice. Mainly, because a) he oozes people pleaser charm, b) he's gentle and couldn't intimidate a puppy, and most importantly, c) he's certain to have the answer.

He crosses an intersection as a CAR almost ends his life. The driver SLAMS on its brakes as Jordan darts around and keeps going. A daily occurrence. It barely registers with Jordan. STAY WITH CAR--

INT. UBER CAR - MORNING

The DRIVER is nonplussed too. He's an UBER DRIVER. He maneuvers down the street, the radio BLARING NEWS -- Trump, Russia, North Korea, gun violence, immigration, climate change... the morning cacophony of issues.

IN THE BACKSEAT

Sits JESSE MERCER, 30, a young professional in the city. Sharp in every way -- mind, attitude, style... strong, defiant and so determined it's like a light that illuminates from within. It creates an energy that attracts some, scares others and confuses the rest. Cold and warm. Do you lean in? Step back? It's a moment to moment mystery. She's glued to her cell--

JESSE

Move Morgan Stanley to after lunch  
and confirm my 11.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JESSE (CONT'D)

Yes, I'll email it now... I'll be  
in by 10, on cell til then.

She hangs up and instantly starts emailing. The CAMERA  
MOVES out of the CAR, traveling up to--

EXT. WEST VILLAGE TOWNHOUSE - MORNING

A small two story townhouse. Old and in need of  
renovation but that's its charm.

The CAMERA DRIFTS up to a window where the young and  
extremely alluring KAYLA SHERMAN, 17, can be seen moving  
about her bedroom. THE CAMERA ENTERS--

INT. SHERMAN TOWNHOUSE - KAYLA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

A small bedroom. Moving boxes are stacked about. KAYLA  
digs through one. She's on the hunt for something. And  
it has her angry. But there's a lot of anger in  
everything Kayla does. Anger flows through her like the  
blood in her veins.

From the open doorway, her father, TIM SHERMAN, 38,  
appears. He watches his daughter as she slings things  
about in her search.

Tim eyes her outfit. Too low, too high, too tight -- a  
father's nightmare. Far too sexualized for her age.

TIM

I tossed it back in Oakland.

She turns to see her dad.

KAYLA

What?

TIM

The pot you're looking for.

KAYLA

That's not what I'm looking for.

(then)

Fuck you for going through my  
stuff.

Kayla holds up a makeup kit, pretends that was what she  
was looking for. She finds lipstick, applies it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TIM

Those boxes travelled cross country. I don't know what happens in moving vans, what the laws are state to state. There could be sniffing dogs--

KAYLA

They don't do that. Nobody cares but you.

TIM

Yeah, well, it got dumped in Oakland so there. Your grandmother is making breakfast.

KAYLA

I don't eat breakfast.

TIM

I told her that but she's making it anyway. Be nice, take a few bites, go easy on the fucks...

He lingers for a moment... wanting to connect with his daughter. But it's not going to happen. There's something broken inside of this girl. The same thing that's broken in him.

Both are missing something... or someone.

INT. RILEY APARTMENT - MORNING

An upscale apartment. Clean and modern. A flat screen on the wall pumps CNN. Chris Cuomo is analyzing a Trump tweet. The lock turns and the JOGGER, Jordan, enters. He removes his wet shoes and outerwear, starts down the hallway stripping as he goes...

INT. RILEY APARTMENT - BATHROOM - MORNING

At the sink stands BETH RILEY, 32, in her undies. She's reading the back of a box. Jordan enters and kisses her shoulder. She smiles. A glimpse of them in the mirror. They fit nicely together.

BETH

I was thinking pasta tonight.  
It's easy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JORDAN

Someone's gluten-free. Rita or Mark, I can't remember--

BETH

They'll be punished with salad.

Jordan has turned on the shower. Lets it warm up. That's when he sees the box in Beth's hand is an EPT KIT. The test stick rests on the counter. He says nothing. He steps into the shower, lets the water wash over him.

BETH

Are you going to be late tonight?

JORDAN

Shouldn't be.

He watches Beth. She's the engine in their relationship. Where Jordan is the soft-spoken thinker, Beth can be impulsive and vocal. Quick with her opinion but also quick with an apology. She's incredibly fair and evolved. And Jordan loves every inch of her.

He soaps up, his eyes glued to the test stick on the counter. He watches, waiting...

Just then, Beth's cell BUZZES with an alarm. She checks the EPT stick. Jordan wipes the steamy glass for the result. She turns to him. Instant relief.

BETH

Negative.

She tosses it in the trash and exits, not seeing Jordan's face. The disappointment...

INT. RILEY APARTMENT - KITCHEN - MORNING - LATER

A small kitchen. Sleek and shiny. CNN still blasts from the living room TV. Kate Bolduan is now discussing the latest test missiles courtesy of Kim Jong-un.

Beth is packing her work bag, watching the news--

Jordan enters, dressed for work, hipster casual. Goes to the kitchen, makes an espresso pod.

JORDAN

What's happening in Trump America?

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

BETH

Rocket Man is testing more  
missiles.

JORDAN

Oh good.

BETH

And there was a shooting in  
Kentucky, 2 dead, 18 injured.

Jordan shakes his head. Jesus.

BETH

I think Lance and Harry drink  
merlot.

JORDAN

I'll pick some up.

BETH

Are you coming with me tomorrow?  
You'll be at work by noon I  
promise.

JORDAN

Of course, I'm coming.

(then)

Would a baby really be so bad?

Beth stops -- what? She wasn't expecting that. In the  
interest of time and drama, she keeps her answer light.

BETH

(re: TV)

It's not exactly a kid friendly  
environment right now.

JORDAN

It's never going to be.

She gathers her things, goes to him for a quick kiss.

BETH

I'm late this month, I messed up  
with my pill so I took the test to  
make sure. That's it.

She gives him another kiss. Longer. Sweeter.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JORDAN

Yeah, but we're in a good place with work and the company is blowing up. The plan was to start a family by now.

BETH

The plan was marriage first, then babies. I don't see a ring on this hand.

JORDAN

Let's change that. We can fly to Vegas this weekend. Have lots of sex and gamble.

Oh my god, he's serious. Beth is not having this conversation now.

BETH

I'm walking out the door. I love you.

And she's gone -- leaving Jordan bothered by their exchange.

INT. ASSISTED LIVING - BEDROOM - MORNING

A CAREGIVER helps an elderly man, ABE MERCER, 70's, into a sitting chair. A stroke has left its mark. There's paralysis on one side of his body. And he struggles slightly with his speech and response time.

ABE

(looks to the door)  
Look who's here--

Abe lights up to see Jesse (from the taxi cab) enter, a shopping bag in her hand. She erupts in a smile. The all business professional instantly becomes daddy's little girl. She races to him, giving him a hug.

JESSE

Hey daddy.

ABE

So good to see you, honey. It still raining out there?

JESSE

A little. Look what I got--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She pulls a shoebox from a shopping bag.

JESSE

I picked up those shoes you wanted  
with the cushion soles.

She puts the shoebox on his lap. He opens the box and  
finds new shoes. He inspects them.

ABE

I like these. They're fine.

JESSE

Let's try them on.

She kneels down in front of him and removes his slippers.

ABE

How are you doing? How's work?  
You out there making your daddy  
proud?

JESSE

I'm trying.

Jesse nods, smiling through any stress and pressure she's  
feeling. She looks to the doorway where a suited woman,  
MRS. CARTER, 50's, all business, stands, waiting. She  
wants to talk--

INT. ASSISTED LIVING - HALLWAY - MORNING - LATER

A long hallway. NURSES, wheelchairs, etc. Jesse and  
Mrs. Carter have moved away from her father's room to  
have a private conversation.

Jesse stares at an invoice, confused...

JESSE

Did you submit this to his  
insurance company?

MRS. CARTER

That's how I found out about the  
change in your father's policy.

JESSE

What change? It's Medicaid. They  
cover 70 percent and his  
supplemental covers the copay to  
100 percent.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MRS. CARTER

The new laws went into effect at the start of the year. The CSR regulations no longer require a private provider to subsidize housing through the CMS.

Jesse's eyes glaze over.

JESSE

I have no idea what any of that means.

MRS. CARTER

The cost sharing reductions of your father's policy are no longer regulated by the Affordable Care Act so housing is now an out of pocket expense.

She refers to the invoice in Jesse's hand.

JESSE

I don't have thirty-seven thousand dollars.

Mrs. Carter isn't without heart but she has a job to do.

MRS. CARTER

We'll need to make different arrangements for your father immediately--

This terrifies Jesse. Her armor cracks... she begins to falter...

JESSE

He's recovering from a stroke. Where would he go?

MRS. CARTER

What can you pay today?

There it is -- money. It always comes down to money. Jesse has been here before. She quickly does the math.

JESSE

I can put six thousand on my Visa...?

That seems to appease Mrs. Carter for the moment--

INT. SHERMAN TOWNHOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

Standing at the stove, scrambling eggs is COLLEEN SHERMAN, attractive and sexy in her 60's -- a woman who never stands at a stove. But here she is, attempting to cook breakfast.

Tim sits at the kitchen counter where food is laid out. Bacon, toast, juice... Kayla enters. Tim looks up from his coffee.

TIM

Your grandmother is making eggs.

COLLEEN

I'm making an effort, not sure they're eggs.

Colleen eyes Kayla's revealing outfit.

COLLEEN

Don't you look nice. Very sexy.

Tim looks at his mom. Really?

TIM

Here sit, eat something.

Kayla takes a seat, picks at some bacon. Colleen serves up the eggs.

COLLEEN

I was slutty when I was your age too.

WTF? Tim looks at his mother, surprised. So does Kayla.

COLLEEN

Well, I was.

TIM

Let's not talk about it.

Kayla rethinks her look. She readjusts her top, buttoning up her cleavage. It's instantly more modest.

COLLEEN

The truth is in the breakfast, son. Have you tried the eggs? The Sherman women were not made for the kitchen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TIM

Mom. Stop.

Then, he sees Colleen looking at Kayla -- he looks too, realizing Kayla has buttoned up her shirt. Colleen returns to the stove -- that was easy.

KAYLA

I'm not really a breakfast eater... Grand...mother.

COLLEEN

Then I won't make it again and if Grandmother is as hard to say as it is to hear, you can call me Colleen.

TIM

(to Kayla)

Do you have everything you need for school? That lady in the office has my number if--

KAYLA

(cuts him off)

It's all taken care of. I should go.

(to Colleen)

Thank you for breakfast.

Kayla looks to her dad as if to show that she can be polite, sweet even... just not to him. She gets up and starts out.

COLLEEN

Do you have a raincoat? It's wet out there.

KAYLA

No, I'm good.

COLLEEN

No, no, I have a slicker you can wear.

Colleen races to the hallway where coats hang on hooks.

She finds a SLICKER -- BLOOD RED. She holds it up. Kayla takes one look at the HOODED RAINCOAT -- oh hell no. There is no way Kayla is putting that on her body.

KAYLA

I'll be okay. Thanks anyway.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Kayla quickly races out. Colleen turns to her son. They share a look.

EXT. WEST SIDE HIGH SCHOOL - MORNING

An old structure tucked between buildings on a quiet street in the Village. Signage indicates it's the West Side High School. STUDENTS arrive, loiter... the morning norm.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - CORRIDOR - MORNING

A crowded New York City charter school. In all its urban glory. STUDENTS push and shove their way down a locker lined hallway. Kayla appears in the sea of students. She's trying hard not to look overwhelmed. She makes her way to her locker.

ETHAN HUGHES, 17, watches her from his locker nearby. He's a cute kid, tries too hard, overly cool, not as tough as he appears. He sees Kayla struggle with her combination lock. He watches her a moment. Then, he walks over with faux bravado.

ETHAN

You new?

KAYLA

Yeah.

ETHAN

I'm Ethan.

KAYLA

Kayla.

ETHAN

You live around here?

KAYLA

Just moved here. From California.

ETHAN

Never been.

KAYLA

Well, you should.

ETHAN

I don't have a good mental image of California.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ETHAN (CONT'D)

My cousin lives there and he says  
it's all fires, mudslides and  
fucked up people.

KAYLA

Sounds like your cousin lives in  
LA. I'm from the Bay area where  
we look down on LA.

ETHAN

I look down on my cousin.  
(awkward)  
Anyway, I'm Ethan.

KAYLA

I know, you said that already.

Did I? Shit. Ethan covers. His nerves poking through  
his coolness.

ETHAN

I just want it to sink in.

Ethan strolls away. Nice save. Kayla smiles. He's  
actually cute when he's nervous.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

STUDENTS take their seats. Kayla enters, navigates  
toward a desk in the back when LANEY REED, 17,  
approaches. Laney oozes with bad girl cool. She doesn't  
have to try -- she's the real deal. And real trouble.

She stops and inspects Kayla from head to toe, making a  
show of it.

LANEY

Where did you come from? You.  
It. This. First impressions, I  
like it. I'm sitting next to you.

Ethan approaches, hearing this, sitting nearby.

ETHAN

Watch out, this one bites.

Kayla shrugs.

KAYLA

It's okay, I bite back.

Laney likes this answer. She flicks Ethan off.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

LANEY  
(aside to Kayla)  
He's a tool.

ETHAN  
I heard that and yes, you are  
correct, I have a big tool.

LANEY  
First impressions, Ethan, you blew  
it. No class whatsoever.

ETHAN  
(apologizes)  
I was joking.

KAYLA  
Which part was the joke?

Ethan misses it.

ETHAN  
What?

Laney is loving Kayla. It's a bad girl meets bad girl  
moment.

LANEY  
I'm Laney.

Kayla smiles. The feeling's mutual.

INT. CLAYTON WEALTH MANAGEMENT - MORNING

A glass conference room. Stark. Sterile. Deliberately  
cold. Like money. On the table sit sample products of a  
drink -- SPURT MILK. Jesse passes out binders to her  
FOUR COLLEAGUES. She's the only woman.

JESSE  
With an initial 14 million  
funding, Spurt has been successful  
with their Series A rollout, Whole  
Foods and Target being their major  
distribution channel and they've  
secured a 30 million Series B  
launch this fall.

She continues pitching to the men in the room. They  
consist of:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MASON -- 28. Money smart. Life stupid. A pretty boy. Lives in the gym and has a very special relationship with mirrors. Can be a dick if his insecurities are ruffled. Not a bad guy but far from a great guy.

PETER -- 45. Smart. Stressed out. It's early in the morning and he already looks wrinkled. Reeks of high cholesterol.

DEREK CLAYTON -- 50. Chief adviser and the most important person in the room. Seasoned. Total pro. A nice guy. Extremely likable but beware. He knows how to be your best friend, even when he's fucking your wife and stealing your wallet. Derek has power and wealth but can't enjoy it. He's too hungry for more.

Mason and Peter flip through the binders Jesse has handed them. Both are skeptical and competitive.

MASON

Who's backing?

Mason and Peter test sip the milk. Mason pours some in his Starbucks.

JESSE

Tao Capitol.

PETER

And they want out. I don't blame them. It's too niche.

MASON

I don't see it scaling.

JESSE

Look what Kream did in its first three years. Spurt has already surpassed that in one.

MASON

Who cares? Cow milk is not going anywhere. It's still the top choice globally.

JESSE

(points to data)  
You can't ignore the dairy decline. It's because of alternative markets. Spurt tests higher than any other plant-based milk.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JESSE (CONT'D)

It's nut, soy, gluten, and lactose free, specially harvested from a fully patented black bean blend. We can take this public. I believe it's the first alternative milk that can truly ding the dairy market.

MASON

The cows must be terrified.

Peter moos. Jesse's eyes say, "fuck you both." She looks to the only man who matters -- Derek. He's looked up from his phone -- he's intrigued.

JESSE

Is it niche? Sure. But dairy is a 350 billion dollar a year industry, I'm telling you, this product is prime to go to market.

She's done. Derek flips through a binder, absorbing the data. He's heard enough. He likes it. Jesse can tell.

DEREK

Silk Almond worked for WhiteWave. Let's take the meeting.

Decision made. Derek is up and out. And now Mason and Peter know it too. Jesse has scored.

INT. CHOPPING BLOCK HEADQUARTERS - OFFICE WAREHOUSE - DAY

Minutes later. A huge empty warehouse space. CONSTRUCTION WORKERS can be seen working. SIGNAGE reads CHOPPING BLOCK.

Jordan gives Tim a tour of the facility. They walk and talk mid-conversation.

JORDAN

Construction will take us through June.

TIM

This place is huge.

JORDAN

We need it. With Oakland shutting down and you here now, we have to expand. Success sucks, doesn't it?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JORDAN (CONT'D)

Look at this, we made this happen.  
Two kids with a dream. The cover  
of Forbes, it will happen.

Jordan hits Tim in the shoulder. They're not just partners, they're old friends. They continue through an empty warehouse.

JORDAN

At this speed, Chopping Block is going to surpass Blue Apron's numbers by December.

TIM

But no stress.

JORDAN

Lots of stress. But we're gonna do it. Now that I have you here full time. It was tough with you in Oakland.

TIM

It was time to consolidate. That traveling back and forth got old.

JORDAN

This living with your mom, is it temporary or are you gonna get your own place?

TIM

Unclear. I'm hoping she can help out with Kayla so we'll see...

JORDAN

How's Kayla doing?

TIM

She's had a rough go of it and she hates me for moving her here but we needed a change.

Jordan takes this in -- respectful not to pry too much.

JORDAN

What's it been? A year now?

It, it, it... For Tim the "it" hangs there.

TIM

Fourteen months.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Jordan sees how quickly Tim's face turns. His grief still holds power over him.

JORDAN

Well, I'm glad you're here. The boys are back together.

Jordan feels for his friend, tries to lighten the moment.

INT. WALL STREET BAR - NIGHT

An upscale bar in the financial district. Full of TRADERS and the like. Where they come to drink and shake off the day. The bar is packed. In the crowd are--

Jesse, Mason and Peter. They drink and talk shop.

PETER

They now have genomic heifers with laboratory embryos that make these monster cows that produce super milk, not some pea puke--

JESSE

Black bean--

PETER

It tastes like shit. You can't compete with Frankenstein cows is all I'm saying.

Peter guzzles his drink. He's had one too many. Mason eyes a woman nearby.

MASON

What do you know about Trina Donahue?

JESSE

Commodities, Goldman Sachs, please don't sleep with her. She's a friend. I Soul Cycle with her. I'll have to hear every detail.

Peter's eyes go to the door, pointing.

PETER

Derek's here with Connor Price.

Jesse looks to see her boss, Derek, enter with CONNOR PRICE. A big deal in the finance world judging by the glancing eyes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Connor is 40 but looks younger. Probably due to the hoodie he shouldn't be wearing. Or the high tops. Connor's a bit of a man/boy -- the perfect mix of shrewd businessman and overgrown frat boy. Has a tendency to overuse the words "awesome" and "like" but there's no denying he possesses some kind of financial genius. Connor Price is the 37th richest man in the country.

MASON

Are we signing Connor Price?

JESSE

Derek's trying. They had a meeting at five. Looks like it's going well.

PETER

Why do all tech billionaires wear hoodies?

MASON

Look at that Franc Mueller on his wrist, 400k, fucking twat. I want that watch.

JESSE

Don't go there. Envy is an endless free fall.

MASON

He just bought La Reve from Steve Cohen for two hundred million.

Jealousy, hero worship, it's all wrapped up into one for Mason.

Derek and Connor approach.

DEREK

Hey guys, I want you to meet Connor Price. Connor, this is my team, Peter West, Jesse Mercer and Mason McDonnell.

Mason is pumped. Throws out his hand. They all greet him. "It's a pleasure." "Nice to meet you."

DEREK

This will be your advisory team if you decide to work with us.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CONNOR

I hear great things about you guys. I'm not promising anything but I'm listening.

JESSE

It's still a pleasure.

Connor locks eyes with Jesse -- holds her stare. A tad longer than one normally would.

MASON

It would be awesome. I'm a huge fan.

DEREK

We're gonna grab a drink with the Bridgewater guys and I'm going to woo some more.

Stupid laughter.

JESSE

Enjoy your evening.

Derek leads Connor away. Jesse and Peter turn to Mason.

MASON

Did you see his Macklemore high tops? Made to order, you can't even buy them.

Jesse laughs. She doesn't see Connor look back. His eyes lingering.

INT. RILEY APARTMENT - NIGHT

The sound of PEOPLE -- LAUGHTER and COCKTAIL CHATTER. A dinner party in progress. Beth and Jordan entertain TWO COUPLES:

RITA and MARK -- 30's, downtown, cultured and artsy, they watch a lot of foreign films and Netflix.

HARRY and LANCE -- 30's, Upper West Side, over educated, have a kid, no time for movies, foreign or otherwise, just CNN in bed.

This crowd went to college together and have remained friends despite their different paths in life.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The CAMERA bounces about the evening, eavesdropping on various conversations, as dinner is prepared, served, and enjoyed. Such as...

A BETH WORK MOMENT:

HARRY

How's the foundation?

BETH

It's a hard year for non-profit.  
Fundraising is down. Rage  
America. Nobody cares.

HARRY

Will you be at the protest  
tomorrow?

Beth nods, yes.

MARK

What protest?

BETH

Police brutality.

HARRY

Those boys that were killed in the  
park last week.

Mark nods, oh yeah...

THE JORDAN WORK MOMENT:

LANCE

I saw that piece on Squawk Box.  
They were talking Chopping Block.  
Are you really going public?

JORDAN

We'll see. We're talking to our  
investors.

RITA

When you get mega-rich, will you  
buy a yacht for Mark and me?

A FAMILY MOMENT:

Harry shows them CELL VIDEO of Lance helping their toddler on a potty chair.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (2)

HARRY

Here it comes, here it comes... he  
poops and scores.

JORDAN

Hysterical.

RITA

A proud moment.

Much LAUGHTER.

HARRY

Potty pooping is a big deal. He's  
very advanced for his age.

The CAMERA LINGERS on Jordan's face a moment. He glances  
across the room at Beth.

THE POLITICAL MOMENT:

MARK

It's ridiculous. It costs  
taxpayers 3.6 million dollars  
every time Trump goes to Mar-a-  
lago to golf--

LANCE

I wish they'd indict him already.

JORDAN

Can we not ruin another dinner  
talking about Trump?

Others chime in. "Please."

BETH

Don't silence our guests, honey.  
If they need to vent, this is a  
safe place.

RITA

No, it's not. I hate liberals.

MARK

You're a liberal.

RITA

Self loathing. I blame CNN.

Laughs. Jordan gives Beth a wink. She smiles back. A  
private moment across the table.

INT. SHERMAN TOWNHOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Tim is at the table eating. Colleen pours a glass of wine for herself. Actually, it's a refill. Colleen likes to drink.

TIM

Where's Kayla?

COLLEEN

She went to bed.

TIM

Did she say how it went today?

COLLEEN

She did, she said it was,  
"whatever."

Tim sighs.

INT. SHERMAN TOWNHOUSE - KAYLA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Kayla lounges on the bed with her cell. She face-times with a FRIEND -- TISHA, from California.

KAYLA

High school is another world here.  
There's no campus, just the  
sidewalk and street and you take  
elevators to class. It's weird.

This is a different Kayla. Softer. More at ease. Tisha is a good friend and Kayla has lowered her walls.

TISHA

Don't be so down on New York.  
It's the greatest city in the  
world.

KAYLA

Says who? Cite your source.

TISHA

Um...Expedia? Hamilton? I'm  
trying to be positive, Kayla.  
Have you met any friends? Hot  
guys?

Kayla makes a bug face. Shakes her head. Big fucking no. This Kayla even has a sense of humor. Tisha laughs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TISHA  
Gotta give it time.

A GROUP OF GIRLS are heard OFF CAMERA. "C'mon, Tisha."  
"Let's go." She looks at them--

TISHA  
I gotta go. I love ya. Smooches.

KAYLA  
I miss you. Bye.

The call disconnects. The silence penetrates. It turns to sadness real quick. But Kayla shuts it down. She refuses to hurt. The wall goes back up.

She throws the phone down, starts to get up when it DINGS. She quickly grabs it. Who is it?

CLOSE ON CELL. FACEBOOK FRIEND REQUEST. She taps it. LANEY REED. She accepts. She begins to scroll Laney's FACEBOOK page when she gets an INSTANT MESSAGE.

LANEY -- WHAT'S UP?

Kayla types back -- BORED. U?

LANEY -- DO YOU HAVE A FAKE ID?

Intrigue, intrigue. Off Kayla's face--

INT. SHERMAN TOWNHOUSE - STAIRCASE - NIGHT

A barefooted Kayla comes down the stairs, holding her heels. She wears a hot club dress. Sexy is an understatement.

She peeks into the kitchen, sees her Dad and Colleen. She tip toes out the front door without a peep. Once outside the door, she slips into her heels and takes off down the street.

INT. WALL STREET BAR - BACK OF BAR - NIGHT

The bar is in full swing. Mason has made his way to Trina and they're drinking and laughing. Nearby, Jesse and Peter drink.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PETER

It's probably just a screw up.  
Did you call your Dad's insurance  
company?

JESSE

Oh yeah, it's confirmed plus  
interest. I don't understand how  
I can make 200k a year and be  
broke?

PETER

You're a good kid. Your Dad's  
lucky to have you. I hate my Dad.  
He's an asshole.  
(looks off)  
Where'd Derek go?

Jesse looks to a table across the room. Connor Price  
sits all alone, nursing a drink, and texting away.

PETER

I think someone needs company.

Peter starts over.

JESSE

Where are you going?

PETER

To make a good impression.

JESSE

Wait, wait, wait. Will you hold  
this for a second?

She means her drink. Peter takes it. Then, Jesse takes  
off for Connor's table. She looks back. Sucker. Peter  
scoffs. Oh fuck you. Jesse smiles.

AT CONNOR'S TABLE

JESSE

Mr. Price?

Connor looks up. His lips spread into a smile. He's  
more than a little tipsy.

CONNOR

Call me Connor -- Jesse.

Jesse is impressed he even remembered her name.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JESSE

Where's Derek?

CONNOR

He left. What are you drinking,  
Jesse?

He's still texting on his CELL. Jesse considers. She looks to Peter at the bar -- he shoots her the finger.

JESSE

White wine. But I'll go to the  
bar, what are you drinking?

CONNOR

Please, sit down, I got it.

Connor finishes his text. He puts his phone down.

JESSE

Are you sure?

CONNOR

Did Derek send you in? Are you  
the second team?

JESSE

I'm only a junior analyst.  
Signing clients is Derek's job.  
What happened? Did he strike out?

CONNOR

No, I'm sleeping on it.

Just then, LOUISE, 40's, maternal, laced up, appears with drinks. She places a white wine in front of Jesse.

CONNOR

Jesse, this is Louise, she works  
with me.

And was who Connor was texting for drinks.

JESSE

Hi, Louise. Thank you.

Louise smiles and then quickly disappears. As she goes Jesse sees Mason and Peter watching her at the bar. They make faces at her behind Connor's back. She ignores them.

CONNOR

How long have you been with Derek?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JESSE

Two years on his advisory team.  
Before that I spent a year in  
commodities.

Connor downs his drink in two big gulps. Jesse watches.  
Was that necessary? He was already half-drunk.

CONNOR

I wanna sleep tonight, I had like  
ten Rockstars today.

Connor nods, staring at her, taking her in. It gets  
awkward. Jesse breaks the silence.

JESSE

The Acorda data is strong. I  
think you could have a good year--

CONNOR

Are you single, Jesse?

Connor turns the conversation to personal. Jesse goes  
with it, albeit cautiously.

JESSE

At the moment.

CONNOR

Dating?

JESSE

Not at the moment.

CONNOR

Why not?

JESSE

That's a good question.

CONNOR

You're very beautiful.

Jesse is disappointed. She was hoping he wouldn't go  
there. But, alas...

JESSE

I'm smart too.

Connor shakes his head, smiling -- she shut him down. He  
appears untethered, amused even.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

CONNOR

So tell me about Acorda.

JESSE

With a market cap of 1.3 billion  
and Biogen exploring offers, if  
you want to make a splash in  
biotech, then Acorda could be it.

Jesse salvaged the moment. She turns it on, talking a mile a minute. Nothing fuels her more than her work. As Connor listens--

EXT. BLACK ROSE - NIGHT

A cool club downtown. An edgy crowd stands in line, showing their ID's as they enter. Kayla approaches to find Laney waiting for her in line.

LANEY

Kayla, over here.

Kayla joins her. Laney has sexed up her look. Unique and all her own. They move to the doorman guarding the entrance.

INT. BLACK ROSE - NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

There's a bar along one wall with a dance floor in the rear. Heavy on the lighting show and its "black rose" theme. Neon lit roses are everywhere.

Kayla and Laney enter and push their way to the bar. The place is crowded. Laney waves the bartender over.

LANEY

Do you have cool parents? Will  
you get in trouble if you go home  
wasted?

KAYLA

It's just my dad and no he's not  
cool and yes I'll get in trouble.

The bartender approaches. REVEAL it's EDDIE (from the first scene).

EDDIE

What'll it be ladies?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAYLA

Tequila!

LANEY

I love you so much right now.

KAYLA

What about your parents?

LANEY

Only if they catch me. Do you like Molly?

KAYLA

I love Molly. She's my best friend.

LANEY

Open up.

Kayla opens her mouth and Laney pops a pill in her mouth. Then, she does the same. Eddie returns with two shots complete with lime and salt. Fuck the salt. Kayla tosses it back when...

Her eyes locks with a HANDSOME MAN at the end of the bar who watches her down the tequila. He gives her a nod of approval. She shrugs. He smiles. He's sexy as hell. He mouths "hi." She mouths "hi" back.

LANEY

He's hot.

Laney sees him now too. Kayla looks away. Whatever.

INT. RILEY APARTMENT - NIGHT

Everyone is gone. Jordan and Beth are cleaning up. A successful evening. Jordan moves behind her and gives Beth a kiss. He's feeling relaxed--

JORDAN

It was a good evening.

His hand finds its way inside her pants.

BETH

Are you drunk?

JORDAN

More horny.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

She presses against his crotch. Hmmm...

BETH

Drunk and horny. Kitchen comes first.

Jordan grabs dishes and carries them into the kitchen.

JORDAN

Did you see Lance and Harry's video of little Harry pooping?

BETH

No.

Beth's mood shifts.

JORDAN

That kid is friggin' adorable.

BETH

Please don't.

JORDAN

What?

BETH

You know what. This morning is what -- I know where you're going with this and let's not.

He's busted. Beth knows him too well. Silence. They continue to clean but Jordan can't help himself.

JORDAN

I don't get it, is all. The plan was to get married last year and be pregnant this year. That was the plan.

BETH

Plans change.

JORDAN

Can we talk about a new plan?

BETH

Why do we have to have a plan?

JORDAN

It's called family planning.

Beth hates this discussion. She's suddenly pressured.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BETH

What's the hurry?

JORDAN

What are we waiting for? It's  
still what you want, right?

(beat)

Right?

Silence. Then--

BETH

I don't know anymore...

Boom. Bomb. WTF? Jordan stares at her.

JORDAN

Wait. You don't know? Or you do  
know and don't want to say it?

BETH

Okay -- I don't think there will  
ever be a time for children.

Jordan can't even process this thought.

JORDAN

The world may not be perfect but  
we're far from an apocalypse.

BETH

Are we? Because I think we're in  
the middle of it. We just don't  
see it because we're so busy  
normalizing the daily insanity.

JORDAN

It's a crazy time but it'll get  
better. You're the one who quotes  
Gandhi all the time. Be the  
change, right?

Beth loads the dishwasher.

BETH

I don't think he applies anymore.

JORDAN

You're starting to scare me.

BETH

Do you know what I did at work  
today?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BETH (CONT'D)

We had a practice drill -- not a fire drill, a terror drill. What to do if a shooter enters the office and starts blowing people away. Do you run, find a stairwell, barricade yourself in your office? That is what I did today at work.

She looks at Jordan as if she's made her point. Case closed. Jordan considers.

JORDAN

You barricade yourself in, right?

Beth sees red.

BETH

Why are you making fun of me?

JORDAN

I'm not, I'm trying to bring some levity to this conversation.

BETH

The world is falling apart around us. Terrorism is not going away. There's only going to be more guns and more mass shootings. I'm not bringing a child into this world just to be shot dead in a classroom. Or blown up by a bomb--  
(before he objects)  
Yes, there will be a nuclear bomb in our lifetime. That is our reality.

JORDAN

Oh Beth--

Beth is resolute. Jordan is floored.

BETH

Don't look at me like I'm crazy. I'm very sane.

And she is -- intense but extremely calm and rational.

JORDAN

I don't think you're crazy but I do think there's something else going on here. If you're having second thoughts about us--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

BETH

You think this is cold feet?

JORDAN

It's exactly what I think.

BETH

You don't get it.

JORDAN

You're right, I don't.

BETH

It's not responsible to bring a child into this world.

JORDAN

Then let's adopt. I'm happy to have that conversation but we're not, we're having this one so yes, I think something else is going on.

BETH

I'm going to bed.

Beth is at loss. She heads to the bedroom. But Jordan is fast on her heels.

JORDAN

Don't keep walking away from this conversation.

INT. RILEY APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jordan enters the bedroom to find Beth at the closet, staring into the hanging clothes. A moment of calm.

JORDAN

I love you, Beth, but if you don't want to marry me, you need to let me know because everything I'm doing, everything I'm working for is moving toward that.

A long moment. Finally, she turns. Her face is flushed, there are tears in her eyes.

BETH

I wish I didn't feel this way. I wish I didn't hate this world so much...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Beth exits to the bathroom. Off Jordan, terrified his life has just fallen apart.

INT. BLACK ROSE - DANCE FLOOR - NIGHT

CLUB MUSIC plays to a crowded dance floor. A dizzying light show. Dark NEON LIGHTS and LASERS illuminate ROSES, projecting them along the floor, walls and faces.

A FIELD OF FLOWERS.

Kayla and Laney are on the floor, feeling the MUSIC. The tequila, the Molly... it's all working. They dance together, apart, with others, solo... It's sexy and fun.

Kayla sees SOMEONE in the crowd... the same man from the bar. He moves toward her, taking Kayla's full attention. Flower lights dance across his face. He circles the floor, moving around her, stalking his prey. (No subtlety here. The wolf reference should hit hard... a fun and playful wink.)

Laney sees Kayla has made contact. She watches as the man and Kayla come together. He's delicious. Laney approves, moving away, letting it play out.

Kayla continues dancing for him. She reaches out, pulls him to her. He shakes his head. No. He doesn't dance. He's just going to stand there and be intoxicating.

Kayla spins around seductively, tripping, almost falling over. He LAUGHS at her. She LAUGHS at herself. Makes a clumsy face. She's keeping it real.

They begin to sway together, feeling the moment. It's hypnotic. Kayla closes her eyes and spins around. When she opens them, he's gone.

Where did he go? Kayla goes in search of him... moving through the dance floor, turning left, right, pushing through the crowd then... now she's on the hunt...

She finds her prey at the bar, drinking. She goes to him. He smiles a perfect smile REVEALING PERFECT TEETH.

NICK

I'm Nick.

KAYLA

Hi Nick.

Then, she takes his drink and sips from it.

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A small dark apartment. It's on the cheap. There's no money here. A lock turns. A door opens and Kayla and Nick enter. He shuts the door--

NICK

You wanna drink--

Kayla jumps him. She throws her arms around him and pulls him into a kiss. It turns heated quick.

MOMENTS LATER. Sexy MUSIC PLAYS. Kayla and Nick are on his bed. They take turns as the aggressor. Clothes shed quickly. Flesh on flesh. Their bodies find an instant groove. It's heated and hungry.

Kayla loses herself in the act. Escaping in it. A freedom takes over -- the world falls away.

EXT. WALL STREET BAR - NIGHT

Later, Jesse exits the bar with Connor and his assistant, Louise. Connor is a fun and lively drunk.

CONNOR

Where's our ride?

Louise points to the limo in front of him. If it were a snake...

LOUISE

Right here, sir.

CONNOR

Let's go.

Jesse is on her phone--

JESSE

I'm fine, I'll Uber.

CONNOR

We can take you. Louise, we're taking this woman home. Okay?

Jesse feels obliged. Also, more face time with the big shot.

JESSE

Okay, why not?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Louise holds out the door for her. Jesse crawls inside. Before Connor gets in he looks to Louise.

CONNOR  
You can cab it, right?

LOUISE  
Sure, seeya tomorrow.

And just like that Louise is gone. Connor hops inside and shuts the door.

INT. LIMOUSINE - NIGHT

Jesse sits on the reverse seat, facing Connor. The limo starts to move before Jesse realizes--

JESSE  
Where's Louise?

CONNOR  
It's fine. She took a cab.

JESSE  
I can take a cab.

CONNOR  
Too late. Where do you live?

Jesse is suddenly uncomfortable. She turns to the driver, through the partition.

JESSE  
52nd and Tenth Avenue.

As she says it, Connor presses a button and the partition quickly closes. Jesse turns back to him -- now they're really alone.

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Later. On the bed, Nick and Kayla lay in the dark, naked amongst rustled sheets.

NICK  
Want something to drink? Or eat?

KAYLA  
I'm good.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They lay there in the silence. His finger traces the tattoo that curves around Kayla's back and hip.

NICK

What is this symbol?

Kayla doesn't answer. Nick explores it with his lips. Then, he truly examines it--

NICK

It's tribal.

Kayla nods. He continues to trace it until he sees the outline of a mouth, teeth...

NICK

It's a wolf. I see it now.

Kayla puts her finger to her nose. Ding, ding, ding... It took a second but it's visible to him -- the face of a wolf, teeth exposed, stares at him.

NICK

Any personal meaning behind it?

KAYLA

I thought it was cool. I haven't had it that long.

Kayla looks down at her tattoo, touches it.

KAYLA

My mom was Native American. She believed in spirit animals--  
(off his look)  
Don't laugh.

NICK

I'm not.

KAYLA

It was her thing. Spirit animals. So stupid. Except for the wolf. I always liked the wolf. They're usually pack animals. But, sometimes a wolf is separated from their pack. They're all alone and have no one but themselves to rely on. So, it's important for them to develop great strength and intuition. They have to if they wanna survive.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (2)

KAYLA (CONT'D)

A lone wolf is a symbol of power  
and perseverance...

Kayla gets lost in this moment. Or is it a memory? Her  
mind is a million miles away. Nick pulls her close.

NICK

I like that.

But before emotions begin to surface, Kayla's  
perseverance surfaces and pushes all feelings away. She  
leaps up.

KAYLA

I have to go.

NICK

No, stay--

KAYLA

I can't.

Kayla gets up, searching the dark for her clothes.  
Begins to dress.

NICK

Can I get your number?

KAYLA

Why?

NICK

We could go for food or a movie.

Kayla's demeanor has changed. She's back to steely cool.  
Her focus is only on leaving. She dresses faster.

KAYLA

Tell you what -- you give me your  
number.

NICK

You're not going to call me.

KAYLA

Probably not.

Kayla refuses to engage. Nick gets out of bed. Naked.  
He slips his pants on and goes to her.

NICK

I'd really like to see you again.

KAYLA

I had fun tonight but you're  
missing the point of a hook up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

NICK

We could hook up again.

KAYLA

I had fun, okay, but I gotta go.

He pulls her close and kisses her. It lasts longer than she would like but it's a really good kiss so she gives in. They break. She starts for the door. Nick does his best to shrug it off but he's genuinely bummed.

EXT. NYC STREET - NIGHT

A black limousine travels uptown.

CONNOR (O.S.)

Wanna go for another drink?

INT. LIMOUSINE - NIGHT

Connor is slumped on the back seat, his legs spread wide, his crotch staring at Jesse who sits opposite him. Perched. Her hands clutching the bag in her lap.

JESSE

No, I have an early morning.

Connor is drunk. But an endearing drunk.

CONNOR

Sorry if I'm making a bad impression but I'm pretty sure I'm drunk and you're super pretty.

Jesse doesn't respond. She just counts the city blocks as they pass by, wishing the limo would go faster.

CONNOR

And I work all the time and I never get to meet pretty women except in work situations and now that's a big no-no. Let's have one more little drink. That would be, like, the perfect night.

JESSE

Thank you for the ride but no. If you want to schedule a lunch--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CONNOR

I don't wanna eat lunch.  
Borriring. Why did you come over  
to me in the bar and plop down?

JESSE

You're Connor Price. I want to  
work for you, not sleep with you.

CONNOR

Whatever happened to workplace  
romance?

JESSE

Good question. You should go home  
and ask your wife.

Connor chuckles.

CONNOR

You're feisty.

JESSE

My favorite word.

CONNOR

We separated a month ago. It's  
not public knowledge.

JESSE

Was she too feisty?

CONNOR

What's wrong with feisty?

JESSE

Are men feisty?

Jesse is getting annoyed. She's finding it hard to hide.

CONNOR

Who says I want to have sex with  
you? That's presumptuous--  
(cracks up)  
I can't sell that, I'd totally  
have sex with you right now.

He eyes her, hoping she'll bite but no such luck.

JESSE

(out window)  
Here we are.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The limo comes to a stop. Jesse maneuvers to the door as the driver hops out and races around the car to let her out, but Connor places his hand on the glass -- a cue that signals the Driver to wait.

The Driver turns away from the limo and does exactly that. He waits. Jesse looks to Connor -- what the hell? She goes for the door anyway -- he blocks it with his foot.

It's unnerving. Jesse looks him squarely in the eye.

JESSE

Good night, sir.

Connor pauses, drunkenly evaluating the moment, considering, weighing his options. What will he do? Then, he moves his foot out of her way and smiles.

CONNOR

It's Connor. Call me Connor.

Jesse opens the door and exits.

EXT. NYC STREET - LIMOUSINE - NIGHT

Jesse steps out of the limousine and walks quickly to her building's entrance, refusing to look back.

The limo disappears down the street, only then does Jesse stop -- realizing she's holding her breath.

INT. SHERMAN TOWNHOUSE - LATE NIGHT

The house is dark. Silent. Kayla enters quietly. In the hall, she stops to remove her heels then proceeds.

As she starts up the stairs she finds her DAD standing in the shadows. Eerie in silhouette. He startles Kayla.

Silence. It speaks volumes. Kayla waits for the lecture, the fight, the you-know-better... But it doesn't come...

She continues up the stairs, passing by her father. She avoids eye contact. Mostly because she's scared if she looked in his face, saw his hurt, she might crumble.

Kayla makes it all the way up the stairs, quickly disappearing into her room. CLOSE on her father's face -- wracked with pain.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY SKYLINE - MORNING

A mass of steel, glass, and everything else that makes up this forest of urban life.

INT. RILEY APARTMENT - BEDROOM - MORNING

Beth lays in bed, wide awake, last night weighing heavily on her. She turns to Jordan sleeping next to her.

A quiet moment as the morning light frames him just so. He looks peaceful... perfect. Just then, his eyes flutter open. He looks at her a moment. Hey...

BETH

Still wanna come with me today?  
To the rally?

JORDAN

Do you still want me too?

Beth nods. Yes, please. Jordan smiles. Okay, then. Tension... trepidation could cut the air but at least they're both trying.

INT. SHERMAN TOWNHOUSE - MORNING

Kayla dresses for the day when Colleen appears in the doorway.

COLLEEN

Rough night?

Kayla shrugs. Whatever.

COLLEEN

You put your Dad in a tizzy.

KAYLA

He'll get over it.

Colleen watches Kayla fuss with her hair in the mirror.

COLLEEN

You're so pretty. Just like your mother.

KAYLA

You hated my mother. She told me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COLLEEN

I did not hate your mother, I just didn't like her. Something about her I didn't trust. And I was right. The minute she married my son she took him away from me, all the way to California.

KAYLA

You could have visited.

COLLEEN

I did.

KAYLA

You came to the funeral.

COLLEEN

I visited when you were little but the damage was done by then. We never clicked, your mom and me. That was my fault. I blamed her for making my son happy and I punished her for it.

A very honest admission. Kayla stares at her, trying to make sense of it.

COLLEEN

Here's some helpful information about me. I'm not a great person. I was never a good parent. Your dad has this stupid idea that I'm going to be a good influence on you. That my parental guidance will magically get you back on the right path. We both know that's not going to happen.

KAYLA

He's clueless.

COLLEEN

Can be. He's like his father. He only sees what's wrong and wants to make it right. Not a horrible quality, just a useless one. He doesn't understand that most of us live in between right and wrong.

(then)

I really fucked things up with your mom. I'm sorry about that.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Colleen exits. Silence. Off Kayla -- her grandmother's words lingering.

INT. CLAYTON WEALTH MANAGEMENT - BULLPEN - MORNING

Jesse arrives for work. She's instantly met by Mason.

MASON

You went home with Connor Price?

JESSE

No, he gave me a ride. Who told you that?

Derek is there as well. A face of confusion.

DEREK

You certainly made an impression. He wants to see you. What happened last night?

JESSE

Nothing happened. He offered me a ride, I accepted. I would never sleep with him.

MASON

I would.

Derek is bothered... suspicious.

DEREK

Well, he wants to see you now. What's going on?

JESSE

I don't know.

Jesse is confused by it all. Derek presses.

DEREK

Connor Price is a game changer for us.

JESSE

I understand.

DEREK

Is there something I need to know? Do you want me to go with you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JESSE

I can handle myself.

Fine. Derek lets her go. Jesse heads out.

EXT. SKYSCRAPER - DAY

Jesse approaches the tallest building on the block. She looks up. Sunlight blinds her as the building appears to disappear into the sky...

Jesse enters the building.

INT. SKYSCRAPER - ELEVATOR BANK - DAY

Jesse waits at the elevator bank with a SECURITY GUARD. It opens. SEVERAL PEOPLE get on and off. Jesse steps onto a crowded elevator. The GUARD reaches in and SWIPES his ID and hits the PH button.

SECURITY GUARD

Top floor, ma'am.

Jesse smiles. Thank you.

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY

A few floors DING by as the elevator rises. DING. It stops again. The doors open. SOME get on, MORE get off. Chatter, small talk... A few more floors go by.

The doors open and close several times as the elevator climbs higher and higher...

One last stop and Jesse is all alone... ascending up... climbing all the way to the top when...

DING. The doors open.

A clear blue sky. It's all Jesse sees. When she steps out it's as if she could free fall through the OPEN SKY.

It's an illusion.

INT. PENTHOUSE FLOOR - RECEPTION - DAY

Jesse is really looking through floor to ceiling WINDOWS that overlook the NEW YORK BAY and LIBERTY ISLAND... The view is breathtaking.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

The reception area is insanely appointed. An interior designer went to great lengths. No cost spared.

The reception area is empty. A quick look around, there's no one in sight. Jesse sees TWO MASSIVE DOORS that lead to the only office on the floor. They're open so she moves toward them. Peers inside.

JESSE

Hello?

She steps into--

INT. PENTHOUSE OFFICE - DAY

The biggest penthouse office she's ever seen. Modern and sleek. A huge desk and sitting area, a second sitting area, a pool table, bar, large sculptures...

There's even a model train caboose complete with track that runs along one side of his office. It's an adult's playground.

Jesse almost laughs at it all but it's too impressive. She moves to the desk. Eyes a GOLDEN BAUBLE. It looks like an egg. She picks it up, admiring it when she hears LAUGHTER. She spins around to see--

Connor enter with a SMALL CHILD atop his shoulders. His son, CALEB, 3. Louise trails as always...

CONNOR

Hi there. Where did you come from?

JESSE

I didn't see anyone so I went exploring--

LOUISE

Terry stepped away from reception.

Louise clearly doesn't approve and quickly tries to explain to Connor.

CONNOR

It's all good.  
 (to Caleb)  
 Hey, Caleb, this is Jesse. Say hi.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jesse is surprised to see Connor with his son. A sweet faced little boy, with rosy cheeked innocence. Connor pulls Caleb from his shoulders and swings him through the air. Caleb GIGGLES.

It's obvious this kid is at the top of Connor's priority list. Father and son are both laughing as he turns Caleb upside down and around, tickling him--

JESSE

Hi Caleb.

But he's too busy laughing. Jesse finds this sight unexpected, refreshing. Her tense stance relaxes and she laughs along with them.

CONNOR

Thanks for coming, Jesse.  
(to Caleb)  
You wanna choo choo?

Connor takes Caleb across the office to where the train caboose sits. Okay, now the train makes sense. Caleb climbs in and Connor TURNS it on.

CHOO! CHOO! It's an electronically powered train that moves along the train track. The kind of toy that mere mortal children will never play on. Caleb is in heaven.

CONNOR

Gives us a few, Louise.

Connor wants to be alone. Louise exits. Connor goes to his desk, reaches under the lip of it and PRESSES A BUTTON. CLICK. The massive double doors close electronically.

Jesse can't hide her reaction.

JESSE

A secret button? That's a real thing.

CONNOR

It's not a Matt-Lauer-button.  
It's a long-walk-to-the-door-button. A necessity.

JESSE

I think you mean luxury. You might wanna get rid of that. The optics alone--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Connor chuckles.

CONNOR

You don't hold back. You just say what you think.

JESSE

I'm feisty, remember?

CONNOR

No, bad word, we don't say that. Look, yesterday was a difficult day and before you hashtag me too, can I please explain? I got in a big fight with my wife about--  
(motions to Caleb,  
lowers his voice)  
--"things" and, well, that's not your problem, but I wasn't myself yesterday and then I had four boiled shrimp and five Moscow Mules for dinner then more at the bar. Last night, was not my best self. My behavior was wrong and I'm sorry.

Connor smiles. It's not his charming boyish smile. It's very adult and sincere. Jesse finds this side of him quite appealing.

JESSE

I appreciate that. Thank you.  
(then)  
Is that all?

Connor pulls a file from his desk. He holds it up.

CONNOR

No, it's not. There's a company I've backed since its inception six years ago. It's gaining traction and I'd like an evaluation on it. I think it's ready to go public but you tell me.

Jesse is floored. Holy shit. Is he hiring her?

JESSE

Well, yes, I'm happy to take it back to the team. Derek will be thrilled.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CONNOR

Great but I want you to run point.

JESSE

That's Derek's call.

CONNOR

Not if he wants me. This a trial run for him.

JESSE

I'm a junior analyst. Why don't I have him call you?

CONNOR

Your clients have a 2.3 gain on your team's average. Your top six accounts consistently outperform Derek's top six accounts. I think that's a little more than junior status, don't you?

He knows his stats. Jesse considers. There's no denying this is a huge opportunity.

CONNOR

C'mon, opportunity is knocking. I'd ask "where's your moxie?" but I'm certain that word is a no-no too.

(then)

What about ambition? Or good old fashioned greed. Those are gender neutral, aren't they?

He's not being sarcastic. He's truly encouraging her.

JESSE

Why are you doing this?

CONNOR

I think you have it. The smarts, the fight. And your resume backs it up. It couldn't have been easy growing up in Harlem, but you worked hard, got a scholarship to Fordham, graduated top of your class.

JESSE

You know this how?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

CONNOR

Your company profile is online.

Duh. But Jesse is still surprised he took the time.  
CHOO! CHOO! Jesse turns back to Caleb as he moves  
around the train track. Connor watches her.

CONNOR

I'm really sorry about last night.  
Please accept my apology.

He holds out the file. Jesse doesn't like the strings  
attached, but she takes it, accepting...

JESSE

Let me review it, speak to Derek  
and I'll get back to you.

CONNOR

Your call. You're in control.

She starts out but stops. Still bothered. She turns  
back to him, eyes little Caleb, then quickly marches to  
Connor, under her breath--

JESSE

I think you're aware of the  
climate in this country right now.  
So that bullshit last night can't  
happen again. You fuck with me,  
you fuck yourself.

Jesse's eyes are intense. The threat penetrates. Connor  
swallows. Tries to smile it off but the moment is real.  
Jesse glances to Caleb. He didn't hear a word. She  
looks back to Connor.

JESSE

It had to be said.

CONNOR

And I heard it.

And with that, Jesse turns and goes to the door. She  
pulls on it to leave. She can't open it. It's locked.  
She turns to Connor. He leans to his desk and PUSHES the  
hidden button.

The office door CLICKS, swaying open. A moment. *You're  
in control.* The irony of his words... Jesse quickly  
exits.

A moment. Then, Connor turns to Caleb.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

CONNOR

My turn.

He goes to his son and climbs on top of the train.  
Instantly, they're LAUGHING again.

EXT. PENTHOUSE FLOOR - RECEPTION - DAY

At the elevator bank, Jesse presses the button. She  
stares at the file in her hand. A mix of emotion.

EXT. NYC STREET - SIDEWALK - DAY

The morning sun reflects all around. A beautiful day.  
Jordan and Beth walk down the sidewalk. Side by side.  
She puts her hand in his. She's really trying. It's  
appreciated. She leads him around a corner.

They can hear the rally up ahead. PEOPLE cheering,  
PROTESTING, megaphones, etc.

BETH

Sounds like a big turnout.

Just then, THREE MEN IN PIG MASKS fall in behind Beth and  
Jordan as if following them. It's eerie. They walk fast  
behind them, gaining on them and then--

They push by Jordan and Beth -- "Excuse me." They move  
ahead of them -- CAMERA FOLLOWS -- REVEALING:

EXT. WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK - DAY

A huge rally is taking place to protest POLICE BRUTALITY.  
PIG MASKS are everywhere. Various groups demonstrate.

SIGNS READ: STOP KILLER PIGS! DON'T SHOOT ME! BLACK LIVES  
MATTER! ETC.

There are groups there to protest the protestors. It's  
chaos. Loud and messy. POLICE OFFICERS stand at the  
perimeters, in case the peaceful protest takes a turn.

Jordan and Beth move through the crowd, through a sea of  
pig masks. It's eerie... ominous.

ON A STAGE -- a PIG-MASKED ACTIVIST SCREAMS INTO A  
MICROPHONE.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ACTIVIST

Act now. We must stop police  
brutality...

CHEERS from the crowd. Harry appears wearing a STOP  
POLICE BRUTALITY tee shirt. He gives Jordan and Beth a  
hug.

HARRY

You made it. Lance is here  
somewhere.

Just then, FIGHTING breaks out between TWO GROUPS. The  
POLICE flock the scene, breaking it up. Beth looks to  
Harry.

BETH

We're gonna go. Text me later.

Harry nods, dodging the outbreak. Beth pulls Jordan to  
an exit.

JORDAN

We just got here.

But Beth has other plans. She leads Jordan from the  
park.

EXT. NYC STREET - SIDEWALK - DAY

Jordan and Beth walk down the sidewalk. The rally can be  
seen in the background. PEOPLE come and go with signs.

JORDAN

Why are we leaving?

BETH

Come on, this way.

Beth directs him across the street. She pulls him to the  
inner sidewalk next to a storefront. She's got something  
on her mind. When she speaks it's soft and thoughtful.

BETH

I'm sorry about last night.

JORDAN

It's okay.

BETH

No, it's not. I know I've been  
weird lately.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BETH (CONT'D)

It's just, this world is so screwed up, it messes with my head. Everyone is so angry all the time--

JORDAN

I get it. It feels futile.

BETH

Don't excuse me. You don't deserve my bullshit. I can't let it take over my life. It kills me that you thought I didn't want you.

(beat)

You're all I want, Jordan. You've always been what I want. So...

Beth points to the storefront. The windows are lined with WEDDING RINGS. It's a JEWELRY STORE. Beth's face says "surprise." And, yes, Jordan is surprised and appreciates the gesture but...

JORDAN

You don't have to do this. You won't lose me.

BETH

I'm scared I'll lose myself. We are the best part of me. There is not a day I want to wake up without you. That is my reality. Please marry me, Jordan Riley?

Silence. He stares at her in wonder.

BETH

Are you going to answer? I can get down on one knee?

JORDAN

Yes, yes, yes...

Jordan kisses her. Elated. Crazy in love.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY

Students chatter before class. Kayla enters to find Laney waving her over.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

LANEY

Get over here. Where did you go last night? You ditched me.

Kayla plays it cool. Not sure how much to divulge. She takes a seat next to Laney.

KAYLA

I'm sorry, my phone died, I looked for you.

LANEY

Were you that drunk?

Kayla shrugs... Maybe? Just then, a TEACHER walks in, goes to the front.

TEACHER

Hi, everyone, I'll be taking over for Mr. Hiller while he's out.

CLOSE ON KAYLA'S FACE -- STUNNED at the teacher standing in the front of the room.

IT'S NICK.

TEACHER

I'm Nick Cutler. Let's keep it casual. Just call me Nick.

She stares at him. No way. She quickly turns to Laney who is staring at him too. Laney turns to Kayla -- holy fuck.

Kayla looks back to Nick. He's now staring directly at her. They lock eyes. He's equally stunned.

INT. JEWELRY STORE - DAY

A nice-sized store. With lots of glass counters encasing jewelry. The DOOR BUZZES.

It's not busy, a COUPLE are being helped by the STORE MANAGER, an older man. There's a young SECURITY GUARD, and a young sales clerk, VICKI, 20, who approaches Jordan and Beth.

VICKI

What can I help you with today?

BETH

Wedding rings.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VICKI

Oh, well, right this way--

An excited Vicki leads Beth and Jordan to a display.

BETH

I bought some earrings here once,  
maybe a year ago and I saw these  
gold twined bands I loved--

Jordan enjoys watching Beth get into wedding mode. Just then, through the door--

TWO PIGS APPEAR -- MEN WEARING MASKS HOLDING GUNS.

The FIRST PIG is EDDIE. The SECOND PIG is Mitch. He quickly disables the door's lock. They burst in announcing themselves--

MITCH

Everyone on the floor now.

The GUARD goes for the ALARM. Eddie COLD-COCKS him with his gun.

EDDIE

On the floor or you die.

Jordan grabs Beth, shields her. Vicki, the sales clerk, races to the back when--

A THIRD PIG -- SAM -- ENTERS FROM THE REAR -- a SMITH & WESSON .45 aimed at her face.

SAM

On the floor now.

Eddie shoves the gun in Jordan's chest.

EDDIE

You heard him. Down. Now.

JORDAN

Okay, okay--

The other couple, the guard, and Vicki join Jordan and Beth on the floor, arms raised. All are terrified. Beth looks to Jordan.

JORDAN

Go along, just go along.

Sam grabs the STORE MANAGER.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SAM

You -- the safe.

Sam drags him to the office in the rear. The CLERK opens the safe.

MITCH

Everybody stay down.

EDDIE

Hurry, let's go.

Eddie is getting nervous. Twitchy.

IN THE BACK -- The safe is open -- Sam finds a tray of RAW DIAMONDS. He dumps them in a bag.

ON JORDAN -- he eyes the GUARD reaching for the gun he has tucked in a holster inside his jacket. Jordan eyes him. "Don't do it." Just then--

A CELL PHONE RINGS.

The PIGS look around. It's coming from Jordan's pocket. Mitch rushes him.

MITCH

What the fuck?

JORDAN

It's my phone.

He SLAMS the gun in Jordan's face. Beth lunges at him. Mitch turns the gun on her.

JORDAN

No, don't. It's my phone.

It keeps RINGING. The moment escalates quickly.

JORDAN

I'm going to reach for it.

MITCH

Turn it off. You wanna fucking die?

Jordan reaches for his CELL. He turns it off, throws it on the floor. He looks to Mitch--

JORDAN

All good.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Suddenly, the GUARD rises, grabs Eddie, SMASHES his head against the wall, he drops his gun--

The GUARD whips out his GUN, holds it to Eddie's head--

Jordan grabs Beth, shielding her--

Mitch aims his gun but doesn't have a clear shot. Eddie is blocking the guard.

GUARD

(to Mitch)

Put your gun down.

(to Jordan)

Call the police.

Jordan reaches out for his phone lying on the floor. He begins to dial.

MITCH

We have a problem.

He yells to Sam--

IN THE BACK OF THE ROOM -- Sam has gotten what they came for. He starts back to the front--

THE NEXT MOMENTS HAPPEN IN RAPID FRENZY.

Sam has no hesitation. He sees the GUARD holding Eddie -- gun to head. He walks straight up to them and FIRES.

His first bullet STRIKES the guard in the head. He falls back, FIRING his gun as he drops.

Eddie drops out of the way and Sam unleashes more BULLETS into the GUARD. Blood sprays.

HE'S DEAD BEFORE HE HITS THE GROUND.

But a bullet caught Mitch in the arm. He WAILS, dropping to his knees, clutching a bleeding arm.

EDDIE

Let's go.

Eddie races to Mitch and helps him up. They race out the front door followed by Sam.

EXT. JEWELRY STORE - DAY

The THREE LITTLE PIGS explode out the door, racing off.

INT. JEWELRY STORE - DAY

Jordan goes to the GUARD who is bleeding out on the floor. The blood spreads and pools around his body. His eyes are lifeless. He's dead. Jordan turns to Beth.

She's still perched on her knees, frozen. Terrified. He goes to her when her BLOUSE begins to BLOSSOM RED.

She was struck by a BULLET.

JORDAN

No, no, no, NO, NO!!!

Beth looks down, clutching a bloody stomach--

She tries to speak... no words come--

Jordan grabs her body as she slumps to the floor.

JORDAN

Beth.... NOOOOOOOOOOO!

Jordan holds her, looking down, watching as the life leaves her body. She's dead one second later.

Jordan cries out -- gutted. His world ripped from him.

END OF PILOT.