

UNTITLED HEMINGSON LEGAL DRAMEDY

2.0

"Pilot"

ABC Revisions - 2nd 20th Pass

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"Pilot"

OVER BLACK - we see a single card come up: **"THE INTERVIEW"**

TIGHT ON: DYLAN HEWITT - earnest, honest, eighty percent handsome; the rest is pure anxiety.

DYLAN

Justice. That's why I went to law school. Ever since I was a kid--

TIGHT ON: ADDY FISHER, mid-twenties, Mid Western, pretty.

ADDY

...I've wanted to help people. To really help people. And becoming a lawyer seemed like--

TIGHT ON: BETH BRANFORD, mid-twenties, gorgeous, elegant, Beverly Hills born and bred.

BETH

"A practical exhibition of sympathy." That's what my grandfather called the law. He was a federal judge. Ninth circuit. It's on my resume.

TIGHT ON: LIAM PRIORY, mid-twenties, strapping, roguishly handsome and decidedly Australian.

LIAM

Why did I want to become a lawyer?
(BEAT) Mostly to meet women.

NOTE: for the rest of the scene, we will jump between the associates.

DYLAN

My biggest flaw? If I had to choose one, I'd say that I'm a workaholic.

ADDY

I'm a perfectionist. I know that sounds like a pat answer, but it actually borders on obsession. Ask my mother. (BEAT) Don't ask my mother.

CONTINUED:

BETH

Ambition. I want to be the best lawyer I can be. Better than my-- never mind. You only take the best and the brightest, right? Here I am.

LIAM

My biggest flaw. (A BEAT, THEN, SMILING) Women.

DYLAN

Do you really want to know? OK. All in, I owe about a hundred and fifty--

ADDY

--two hundred thousand dollars - excluding undergrad. If you include undergrad, it's...

LIAM

--three hundred thousand of educational debt. Wait: we talkin' American or Australian dollars?

BETH

(DAZZLING SMILE) My father endowed a chair at Stanford, so technically, they owe us.

DYLAN

Actually, I do have a question... I know that this is a huge opportunity. Gigantic. Especially in this economy. But I've been working toward this since I was eleven years old. I just need to know if it's the right thing for me.

We finally see who we've been answering to: ROWDY KAISER, thirtysomething, flamboyantly charismatic in a bespoke suit.

ROWDY

The "right thing"? Mr. Hewitt, Sterling, Huddle, Oppenheim and Craft is legendary. We are the winningest law firm on the west coast. Each year - out of a thousand applicants - we pick four of the finest graduates of the finest law schools worldwide. We nurture, shape and guide those associates into becoming the best damn lawyers they can possibly be.

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

ROWDY (CONT'D)

Now in every life, you get one lucky moment. One four leaf clover. One break in the clouds. This is yours. Only question is, are you gonna cave in and count commas close to home, or are you gonna sack up and grab Opportunity's Doorknob?

Off of the devil's smile, we CUT TO:

OVER BLACK - we see a single card come up: **"THE FIRM"**

INT. STERLING - LOBBY - DAY

PING! An elevator opens into glass and steel in perfect harmony. Dylan, suit and tied and beaming with optimism, enters and approaches the icily beautiful RECEPTIONIST.

DYLAN

Hi. I'm Dylan Hewitt, one of the new first year associates...

Out of nowhere, a hand spins him around. It's Rowdy.

ROWDY

What the hell are you doing here?!

DYLAN

Rowdy! Hey! I know, I'm a few minutes early...

ROWDY

Early? You're ten days late!

Rowdy closes in on him. Anxious associates scatter.

DYLAN

What? No. That's impossible. I--

ROWDY

This firm operates on the premise that our lawyers are responsible. Accountable--

DYLAN

I can't be late. Your note said the start date was the tenth.

Dylan pries open his briefcase and starts searching.

CONTINUED:

ROWDY

My note said the start date was the first and what kinda mouth-breathing moron thinks wandering in late is a good idea? You put stink on me, you put stink on yourself...

A relieved Dylan triumphantly produces Rowdy's note.

DYLAN

Look! Here it is! Your note! See, you wrote "See you on the tenth--"

Rowdy looks at the note, then crumples and pockets it.

ROWDY

Finger-pointing is no way to make friends. If I were you, I'd be thinkin' 'bout what I'm gonna tell the Prince of Darkness. Now I gotta get outta here. You're radioactive.

Rowdy takes off.

DYLAN

Radio what? Wait! Who's the "Prince of Darkness"?! What about Opportunity's Doorknob?!

Dylan takes off after him, just as Beth emerges from her office. He plows into her.

DYLAN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. Dylan Hewitt...

BETH

Hewitt, huh? So the top recruit has finally arrived. (EXTENDING A HAND) Beth Branford. Fellow first year.

DYLAN

(SHAKING) Rowdy accidentally misinformed me about the date.

BETH

(SCOFFING) I wouldn't be so certain it was an accident. Half of what they do here is to keep you off balance. That's how they gain control.

DYLAN

"Gain control?" That's not -- Rowdy said they would nurture me.

CONTINUED:

BETH

Right about now I bet you're getting that panicky feeling that expectation is not meeting up with reality.

DYLAN

(FREAKED) Kind of.

BETH

Welcome to the tip of the iceberg.

She stops at a door.

DYLAN

Is this my office?

BETH

When you went MIA, they turned your office into a case room. So you get to share with Mr. Personality.

Beth pushes the door open.

INT. LIAM'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

REVEAL: Liam, who is naked from the waist down.

DYLAN

Wow you're very naked!

LIAM

Don't you bloody knock?!

BETH

Liam Priory, Dylan Hewitt.

LIAM

(BRIGHTENING) Dylan Hewitt. One of our four fellow convicts. Where the hell have you been?

DYLAN

I was misinformed about the--

LIAM

(RE. NUDITY) Sorry about the wedding tackle. Just changing for court.

A LAMP CRASHES behind the door. Dylan closes it, REVEALING STACI, an attractive messenger girl. She pulls her shirt on.

CONTINUED:

LIAM (CONT'D)

And this is Staci. Staci was, um, looking for a pen so I could sign for (SEARCHING) this package. That I'm bringing to court. Thank you for the package, Staci.

STACI

I could say the same thing.

Staci winks and exits.

BETH

Pillaging the messenger girl. Very professional.

LIAM

I was on a conference call the entire time. I believe the term is "multitasking."

Liam hitches up his pants and winks at her. Beth exits. Just then, ADDY runs in, totally panicked.

ADDY

Liam - you have got to help me.

LIAM

Addy Fisher, meet Dylan Hewitt.

She pumps his hand as though she's actually glad to meet him.

ADDY

Dylan Hewitt! The fourth musketeer! I heard a rumor you decided to show.

DYLAN

I didn't "decide to show." Rowdy misinformed me about...

ADDY

(RE. BLACKBERRY) That's Robert. I'm behind on a brief for him and it has got to be perfect. Last week, I made one small mistake on an application for certiorari and he yelled at me 'til the smoke alarm went off.

LIAM

Blow this one and he'll send you straight to the Prince of Darkness.

CONTINUED:

DYLAN

Who's the Prince of Darkness?

A crowd surges down the hall. Beth sticks her head in.

BETH

Surprise meeting!

LIAM

Thank God. A meeting means food. I haven't had a meal break in two days.

Addy and Liam rush out of the room. Dylan follows.

DYLAN

Who is the "Prince of Darkness"?!

INT. STERLING HALLWAY - SAME TIME

CLIFF HUDDLE, handsome, brilliant and clearly in charge - walks with SUSAN OPPENHIEM - steely, stunning and very angry.

CLIFF

A single mother?! I don't give a rat's ass about a single mother.

SUSAN

Cliff: It's a cake walk. My friend's secretary is having a lease dispute with--

CLIFF

Translation: we don't get paid. You know the rules. You gotta earn your draw.

SUSAN

Earn my draw?! I'm the top biller here. I have the Mickelson thing...

CLIFF

--which you split with Robert.

SUSAN

The asbestos litigation...

CLIFF

Firefighters with cancer won't pay for my Bentley.

SUSAN

Clifford, what do you want from me?

CONTINUED:

CLIFF

What any good managing partner wants:
for his firm to run like a business -
not a soup kitchen.

SUSAN

(A BEAT, THEN) Oh, I get it. You're
worried because Hart's coming back.

CLIFF

Worried? I'm expecting a ticker tape
parade. When Hart left, we were
running on fumes. We are now three
times as profitable as the day he
threw me the keys.

SUSAN

True. But he is the senior partner.
A castle can't have two kings.

CLIFF

Said the lawyer who was seeking to
sway me by stoking my insecurity.

He smiles ruefully and thrusts the file back at her.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

No favors. No freebies...

SUSAN

No conscience. (BEAT) Which must make
it that much easier to cheat on me.

CLIFF

Susan, for the hundredth time: I'm
not cheating on you. (BEAT) I don't
have the energy.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The First Years walk. Dylan finishes reading Addy's brief.

DYLAN

You're golden. This totally tracks.

ADDY

Thank you. I so needed a pair of
fresh eyes.

LIAM

So why the fire drill? Any guesses?

CONTINUED:

BETH

Are you kidding? There's blood on the street. My money's on layoffs.

ADDY

(SUDDENLY PANICKED) Layoffs? Who-- who would they be laying off?

BETH

Junior people. Especially those who've shown a lack of partnership potential.

LIAM

You know, you really shouldn't bust on Addy like that.

BETH

Actually I was talking about you.

KATIE CAMPBELL - pretty, harried, twenty-something, arms crammed with work - catches up with them.

KATIE

(TO ADDY) Sorry. You paged me?

ADDY

Katie - I have a revised motion to dismiss. I need this proofed, copied--

KATIE

--and brought to you yesterday.

LIAM

Dylan Hewitt, meet Katie Campbell - our senior paralegal.

ADDY

(HANDING OVER MOTION) Try savior.

KATIE

Just doing my job. Dotting the i's crossing the t's...

DYLAN

(SMILING) So you're the one who makes us look good.

KATIE

Oh you don't need any help with that. (REALIZING) I mean, because of your legal brilliance. Not because of anything else. I have a boyfriend.

CONTINUED:

The First Years enter the conference room. Katie doesn't.

KATIE (CONT'D)
(TO HERSELF) Way to embarrass
yourself in front of the cute one.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Cliff stands at the head of the huge conference table. Beth, Dylan and Addy rush in and sit. Liam discretely crosses to the buffet, where he flirts shamelessly with the coquettish CATERING GIRL.

CLIFF
Now that we're all here...

Cliff stares daggers at Liam, who is loading up a plate.

CLIFF (CONT'D)
And seated.

Liam drops his plate, smiles at the Catering Girl and sits.

CLIFF (CONT'D)
We can get started. (BEAT)
Commitment, courage, character:
these are the guiding principles here
at Sterling. Nobody embodies those
principles more than legendary legal
luminary - Hart Sterling. As you may
know, Hart's been absent these past
three years attending to personal
matters. And while I join him in
mourning his recent loss, I am
delighted to announce his return.

HART STERLING, early fifties, imposing, stands.

HART
Every generation has its great
lawyers. Its best and its brightest.
It's one thing to be part of a
legacy. It's another thing to be
part of the future, which is why I am
honored to be here with you today.

CLIFF
(BEAT) Very nice.

Cliff leads the lawyers in a round of applause.

CONTINUED:

CLIFF (CONT'D)
(TO THE LAWYERS) Back to work.

The attorneys surge for the door. ROBERT CRAFT, Sterling's slick entertainment partner, turns to Addy.

ROBERT
Fisher!

ADDY
(STARTLED) Robert!

ROBERT
I assume you have my brief?

ADDY
Yes. I, um, it's in my--

Terrified, Addy digs through her briefcase, knowing she doesn't have it, just as Katie, fighting the outgoing tide, manages to slip it into her hand without Robert seeing.

INT. LIAM'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Liam, Addy, Dylan and Beth are debriefing.

DYLAN
Hart Sterling is back. I can't believe it.

ADDY
I think I saw a mistake on the cover page. Do you think Robert will notice a mistake on the cover page?

BETH
I don't see what the big deal is.

DYLAN
Are you kidding? I virtually memorized his Supreme Court amicus brief on the Bakke case.

ADDY
He's everything I want to be. Brilliant litigator, civil rights champion...

BETH
I hear he can kill opposing counsel at fifty yards - with mind bullets.

CONTINUED:

LIAM

You know, you are so completely cynical it boggles the brain.

BETH

Look: law stopped being a profession long ago. It's a business now. There are no heroes any more.

INT. HART'S OFFICE - LATER

Hart sits at his desk, examining the firm's accounts. Photographs and mementos already sit on his desk. Cliff picks up an engraved artillery shell.

CLIFF

"To Lt. Hart Sterling - our coach, mentor, and fighting XO - from the soldiers of cold steel."

HART

It's a HEAT round. We used them in Desert Storm.

CLIFF

(BEAT) Of course you did.

Hart closes the books.

HART

Looks like we had banner year.

CLIFF

I always make money for my partners.

HART

Evidently. I just have one question. Do we represent people any more?

CLIFF

We have some individuals, yes. Mostly of the high net worth variety. The Sultan of Brunei, for example--

HART

People. Regular people. People with a grievance. People with a problem.

CLIFF

Hart, with all due respect, there is no money in people.

CONTINUED:

HART

(LOOKING AT SPREADSHEET) Not the kind of money to be found in multinational corporations, sovereign wealth funds--

CLIFF

What is your point, exactly?

HART

My father built this place on an ethical foundation. Where are the ethics in the thousand black boxes you've been pouring our talent into?

CLIFF

Your father built this place on big money clients - clients you let slide when Jessica took ill...

HART

(DEADLY) I'm sorry that my wife's MS was an inconvenience for you.

CLIFF

I didn't-- (THEN) Look, you had your priorities. I respect that. But you can't come swanning back in here like King Richard home from the Crusades and expect everything to be what it was. It is not.

HART

It will be. (THEN, POINTEDLY) So start working on your people skills.

INT. CLIFF'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Rowdy stands in front of a furious Cliff.

CLIFF

"People skills"? Where the hell does he get off? I build this firm into an unbeatable winning machine and he slaps the taste out of my mouth. Well screw him. That was his last mistake.

ROWDY

What are you gonna do?

CLIFF

Buy back some loyalty, for starters.

CONTINUED:

Cliff spots Susan in the hallway. He calls out to her.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

Just out of curiosity: did we leave
on speaking terms?

SUSAN

Depends on what we're speaking about.

CLIFF

That case you wanted to take. That
favor for your friend's secretary.
I'd like to take a run at it.

Cliff smiles. Susan hands him the file.

SUSAN

What's your angle?

CLIFF

No angle. You got to me.

She smiles despite herself and leaves. Cliff turns to Rowdy.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

Burn it off on a first year. I'll
swan in at the closing.

ROWDY

Any preferences?

CLIFF

We got any Boy Scouts with a savior
complex?

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Rowdy and Dylan walk hastily down the hall.

DYLAN

My first case? All on my own?

ROWDY

You can thank me later. You do have
a working knowledge of California
property law?

DYLAN

Absolutely. In theory. Yes.

Rowdy thrusts a file into his hand.

CONTINUED:

ROWDY

The client's waiting for you at Ten
One Hundred Santa Monica Boulevard.
Just drive down--

DYLAN

Actually, I don't have a car yet.

ROWDY

Lucky for you it's walking distance.
You got just enough time to get a cup
of coffee.

DYLAN

Oh, I don't drink coffee.

ROWDY

Yeah, but I do. Cream, two sugars.

INT. 10100 SANTA MONICA BOULEVARD - LATER

A secretary's cubicle. A placard reads "MOLLY PIERSON".
Dylan and Katie approach. They notice a heartbreakingly cute
six-year-old boy, WILL, sitting in the desk chair, drawing on
a notebook.

DYLAN

Hey buddy. (RE. DRAWING) That's cool.

WILL

It's a robot. With flames. (THEN)
I should really be working on my
numbers. Don't tell my mom.

DYLAN

Where is your mom?

WILL

She has to work.

DYLAN

My mom had to work too. But I used
to love visiting her because I got to
do this.

Dylan spins Will in the chair. Will laughs. MOLLY PIERSON,
thirties, pretty but tired, approaches and stops the chair.

MOLLY

(WARILY, TO DYLAN) I'm sorry. Can I
help you?

CONTINUED:

DYLAN

Dylan Hewitt from the Sterling firm.
This is Katie Campbell, my paralegal.

MOLLY

(RELIEVED) The lawyer? Thank God.

LISA, a co-worker, walks by. Molly flags her down.

MOLLY (CONT'D)

Lisa (GESTURING TO WILL) Could you?
(TO DYLAN) My nanny fell through.

INT. BREAK ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

DYLAN

If I'm reading the case correctly,
you are seeking relief from a lease
that you signed with a Mrs. Graham.

MOLLY

I got into a nursing program in San
Dimas. When my husband Jeff died--

DYLAN

Jeff is the co-signer on the lease...

MOLLY

He had cerebral hemorrhage. It was
devastating. I'm just trying to make
a fresh start.

DYLAN

And your landlord - Mrs. Graham -
you've tried reasoning with her?

MOLLY

That won't work on my mother-in-law.

DYLAN

Your landlord is your mother-in-law?

MOLLY

And since Jeff's death she's been
impossible - demanding, intrusive...
I just need to get some distance. To
start again. (RE. FILE) So do you
think that's possible? Can we win?

DYLAN

There are a number of factors...

CONTINUED:

MOLLY

Mr. Hewitt, my mother-in-law is very rich and very powerful and she has a history of getting what she wants. I'm trying to build a new life and she's completely hijacking that.

DYLAN

I understand, but I need to review--

Lisa appears in the doorway with Will... and the SUPERVISOR.

LISA

Molly, I'm sorry. I tried to--

SUPERVISOR

(INCREDULOUS) Molly: first the kid
(RE. DYLAN) now this?

The Supervisor angrily exits with Lisa, leaving Will.

MOLLY

Look, I'm kinda on the bubble here, so if you're gonna give me more pain, I need to have it now. (FIGHTING TEARS) Just tell me: can we win?

Dylan looks over at Will. Will smiles hopefully at him.

DYLAN

(BEAT) We can absolutely win.

Molly smiles, takes Will and leaves. Dylan turns to Katie.

DYLAN (CONT'D)

Well, how was that?

KATIE

(A BEAT, THEN) Honestly?

DYLAN

Please. Dot my i's and cross my t's.

KATIE

OK. (BEAT) The merger clause makes the lease totally unbreakable and you just promised total victory. I'd say we're completely and totally screwed.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. LOS ANGELES STREET - MORNING (DAY 2)

Dylan, his arms crowded with files, sprints down the sidewalk toward an idling MTA bus.

DYLAN

No, no, no, no--

It pulls away just as Dylan runs up. He turns... and a black Porsche nearly mows him down. The window rolls down. Elvis's "Burning Love" pours out of the CD player. It's Rowdy.

ROWDY

Hey sailor! Need a lift?

INT. ROWDY'S PORSCHE - MOMENTS LATER

Rowdy rockets through West LA, singing along with The King.

ROWDY

So how was the first day? Everything OK?

Dylan ejects the CD and tosses it out the window.

DYLAN

No, it's not "OK"! Did you get my text messages? I sent you seven--

ROWDY

Yeah, I disregarded those.

DYLAN

(INCREDULOUS) You dis-- (THEN) OK, I'll summarize: I ran into a hitch with that single-mother lease case.

ROWDY

What? Word is you told the client we would "absolutely win".

DYLAN

Yes, well, there were complications.

ROWDY

Complications? What kinda complications?

CONTINUED:

DYLAN

(A BEAT) I may have accidentally over-promised for emotional reasons.

ROWDY

Overpromised? Ouch. You gotta watch that.

DYLAN

I've gotta watch--?! What about you? "Nurture", you said. "Guidance" you said. There is no volleyball team. You lied to me, Rowdy!

ROWDY

I love the shelf-life on your idealism! Shall we go over the cast of characters? I'm the recruiting associate. My role is to reel in the best and the brightest. The integrity part is up to you.

DYLAN

Look, it's just... I've only been a lawyer for one day. I don't think I can do this alone.

ROWDY

Well the good news is, you're not alone. You got your fellow first-years to help you out. Plus, I'm gonna be your mentor.

DYLAN

(BEAT) Do you really mean that?

ROWDY

Of course I do.

Rowdy slams on the brakes.

ROWDY (CONT'D)

Here we are.

DYLAN

The firm is like two blocks away.

ROWDY

I can't be seen with you. You're still radioactive.

DYLAN

I thought you were my mentor.

CONTINUED:

ROWDY

I am your mentor. I'm your secret mentor. I support you secretly. With my mind. Now get outta my car.

INT. BEVERLY HILLS MANSION - SAME TIME

Susan and Liam stride purposefully toward the door.

LIAM

Susan, how long will this take?

SUSAN

Why do you ask?

LIAM

It's just... I've been working for eleven days straight, and you kind of promised me a day off.

SUSAN

You misheard me. First years don't get a day off. I promised you a day out - as in a day out of the office. The Adler bris definitely gets you out of the office.

AN ORTHODOX WOMAN hands Liam a yarmulke. He flashes a smile. Susan checks her Blackberry, oblivious to the flirtation.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Liam, look this as a learning opportunity. If you ever want to make partner, you have to get and keep clients. Which means you do whatever it takes to woo them, win them and make sure they stay won. In law - as in life - everything is political.

Susan finally clocks the flirtation, swats him gently and aggressively bobby-pins the yarmulke to Liam's head.

LIAM

What is a bris, anyway?

SUSAN

It's an ancient Jewish ritual wherein they take the foreskin and--

They walk out of frame. A beat. Then a BABY SCREAMS.

CONTINUED:

CROWD (O.S.)

Mazel tov!

LIAM (O.S.)

WOW!

INT. STERLING - CONFERENCE ROOM

Beth and Cliff sit with a throng of businessmen.

BETH

So that, in a nutshell, is it.
As soon as Mr. Douglas signs the
required resolutions, Mr. Ollerman
will be the new CEO.

A seventy-something CEO with a wide smile looks over the
papers in front of him. This is MR. DOUGLAS.

MR. DOUGLAS

Very impressive. Speedy too. What
do you say, Tim? Are you ready to
replace me in the big chair?

He pats the back of the company CFO, TIM OLLERMAN, thirties.

MR. OLLERMAN

No one could replace you, Hal.
You've been my teacher and my friend.

CLIFF

And there's a bonus, gentlemen. Due
to the way Ms. Branford timed the
takeover, the deal should net you a
cool eighty million - each.

MR. DOUGLAS

(RE. BETH) Wait - she did this? No.
(TO BETH, FLIRTATIIOUSLY) How did
Cliff lure in a lawyer who is both so
beautiful and so brilliant?

BETH

(HUSHED) Can you keep a secret?

MR. DOUGLAS

Yes.

BETH

So can I.

Douglas and Ollerman laugh. A beaming Cliff pulls Beth aside.

CONTINUED:

CLIFF

You're a natural. Keep it up and you have quite a future here.

INT. ROBERT'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

Addy stands before Robert, who half-watches a basketball game.

ADDY

Robert, I swear I gave you the brief. You must've--

ROBERT

I must have what? Are you accusing me of incompetence?

ADDY

No. I would never--

ROBERT

Then it's got to be you. Strike two.

ADDY

Please give me another chance.

ROBERT

Fine. Susan and I share a client. Phil Mickelson. Get Susan to stop slacking off and approve this document, then bring it back to me ASAP. It involves crossing the hallway. Think you can manage that?

INT. STERLING LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

As Addy races toward Susan's office, Liam enters, fresh from the bris. Hart approaches with a thirtysomething prospective client - AVI BLAU.

HART

Liam. I'd like you to meet Avi Blau. Liam's one of first years. BA from Oxford, JD from Cambridge.

AVI

(TO LIAM, RE. HART) He's big on brand-name advertising.

CONTINUED:

HART

In addition to being a certified genius, Avi heads a foundation that's seeking a peaceful resolution to the crisis in the Middle East.

LIAM

I like a man who dreams large.

AVI

A kindred spirit. (TO HART) I already feel at home.

HART

Well then, you should sit together. Young men like Liam are the future of this firm.

They shake hands. Hart leaves and Avi heads for the elevator. Liam spots Beth, who is exiting the conference room.

LIAM

Hey. You're not the only one who can make rain. Hart introduced me to--

BETH

Israeli tech entrepreneur Avi Blau, in from Tel Aviv and hunting for a stateside litigation team. Word is it's down to us and one other firm.

LIAM

And he says I'm a kindred spirit. I make him feel at home. Look who has partnership potential after all.

BETH

What you have, Rabbi Dingo Breath, is a major, major head gear problem.

Beth reaches up and removes Liam's yarmulke, which he forgot to remove after the bris.

BETH (CONT'D)

I think this would fit the definition of deceptive advertising.

INT. SUSAN'S OFFICE - LATER

Addy stands in the doorway. Susan works without looking up.

CONTINUED:

SUSAN

"ASAP"? He actually said "ASAP"?
(LAUGHING, THEN) He can suck it. I
don't OK anything without reading it
first.

ADDY

I completely understand. (BEAT) So...
could you...maybe... read it now?

SUSAN

Ms. Fisher, I am in the midst of a 23
(b) (3) spurious class action
relating to the Dow chemical suit.

ADDY

The asbestos litigation?

Susan nods and tosses a file with a picture on it to Addy.

SUSAN

Now do you want to tell a fifty-three
year old firefighter who just
finished his sixth round of chemo
that I can't get him justice because
I need to read an agency agreement?

ADDY

No. But Robert said--

SUSAN

Robert is a diamond-encrusted moron
who cares more about money than my
husband does, if that is possible.
I'll get to it when I get to it.
Meanwhile, I need you to get Mr.
Mickelson's signature on a different
matter. He's just across town.

Susan thrusts a file into Addy's hand without looking up.

ADDY

You know, I did my law review note on
recent developments in toxic tort
theory. I could help you with--

She shuts the door on Addy, who stands there, crushed.

INT. LIAM'S OFFICE - LATER

Dylan and Katie are working. Dylan's phone rings. It's
Molly.

CONTINUED:

MOLLY

My mother-in-law got your letter. She wants to meet.

DYLAN

OK. (TO KATIE) Let's book a conference room for--

MOLLY

It doesn't work that way with Grace Graham. Forty-four Bel Air Terrace - ten minutes.

DYLAN

Wait. I don't have a car--

She hangs up. A beat. Katie holds up a Mercedes key ring.

KATIE

Beth's Mercedes. (INCREDULOUS) She actually asked me to get it washed. (WHISPERING) I won't tell if you won't tell.

DYLAN

You... are full of surprises.

INT. BEL AIR MANSION - LATER

Opulence incarnate. GRACE GRAHAM, fifties, sits regally in a room lined with pictures of her son and grandson.

MRS. GRAHAM

I don't like being threatened, Mr. Hewitt.

DYLAN

I'm not threatening you, Mrs. Graham. I was hoping we could reach a reasonable compromise--

MRS. GRAHAM

I'm not interested in compromise. We're talking about a contract.

MOLLY

We're talking about my life.

DYLAN

As you know, Molly has been admitted to a nursing school. She feels that a new career would benefit Will.

CONTINUED:

MRS. GRAHAM

If Molly needs money, she can come to me.

MOLLY

What I need is to move on, Grace.

MRS. GRAHAM

And what about Will? First he loses his father and now you're making him move? How much more does he have to endure?

MOLLY

"Endure"? Grace, I'm doing this for Will. He - we - need to start over.

MRS. GRAHAM

And you think you're uniquely qualified to make that decision?

MOLLY

(POINTEDLY) I am his mother.

MRS. GRAHAM

I am so sick of you playing the victim card. You made an agreement. I have spent my entire life honoring my commitments. Why should you be magically relieved of yours?

A SERVANT enters with Will. Mrs. Graham gently kisses Will on the head. Molly takes his hand and leaves without saying goodbye. Dylan follows Molly. Mrs. Graham stops him.

MRS. GRAHAM

You're new to Sterling, yes?

DYLAN

I'm a first-year associate.

MRS. GRAHAM

Then consider this a heads up. Don't push me, Mr. Hewitt. It won't end well.

EXT. BEL AIR MANSION - CONTINUOUS

DYLAN

Molly, I'm sorry. The document is iron-clad. Your only option is to break the lease.

CONTINUED:

MOLLY

I'll lose my student loan. I barely have any credit as it is. All the cards were in Jeff's name.

DYLAN

She did offer financial help...

MOLLY

I don't want her help. There are always strings attached. She's never approved of me or my choices for Will. She doesn't like the food I feed him, the school I send him to-- she took away his coloring book and enrolled him in math camp because she thought I was "squandering his genetic potential". She did it without even telling me!

Molly takes out a photo of her late husband.

MOLLY (CONT'D)

Getting to this point wasn't easy - medically. Jeff and I moved heaven and earth to have Will. After all I've been through, I just want the freedom to provide my boy with the best life I can - on my own terms.

INT. FACTORS DELI - SAME TIME

Avi and Liam each wrestle with an enormous corn beef sandwich.

LIAM

Mr. Blau, I think Sterling would be a fantastic fit for you. We have a top-flight litigation teams in eleven countries poised to serve your every--

AVI

So you're a recent transplant, yes?

LIAM

Um, Yes.

AVI

Have you found a good temple? I know a great place for kosher Chinese.

CONTINUED:

LIAM
(NERVOUSLY) I'll have to take my
mother there. On Christmas eve.

Avi smiles. Liam just keeps eating nervously.

INT. LOS ANGELES COUNTRY CLUB - GOLF COURSE - SAME TIME

A crowd stands silently. Addy argues with a SECURITY GUARD,
as, in the background, PHIL MICKELSON lines up a putt.

SECURITY GUARD
You're not allowed on the green -
especially pre-tournament.

ADDY
Look, I'm his lawyer, OK? Well, one
of them, anyway. (GETTING PISSED)
C'mon: all I need is a signature--

Phil Mickelson hits the ball just as Addy raises her voice -
and it swings just wide of the cup. The crowd groans.

SECURITY GUARD
OK. That's it. Time to go.

Phil Mickelson gets in a golf cart and starts to drive away.

ADDY
No! You cannot stop me!

She runs toward Mickelson as the Guard dives after her.

EXT. LOS ANGELES COUNTRY CLUB - MOMENTS LATER

Two LARGE LOS ANGELES POLICE OFFICERS slam Addy onto the hood
of a squad car and cuff her roughly.

ADDY
Really? Two of you? I'm one tiny
person!

INT. LIBRARY - MOMENTS LATER

Dylan is reviewing some documents that Katie has brought him.

DYLAN
So there's nothing in the restatement
that will get her out of the lease?

CONTINUED:

KATIE

Nothing. I hate it when the weaker party gets exploited. I'm in a similar situation with my boyfriend.

DYLAN

What did you just say?

KATIE

I think he's just using me for sex, even though he says he's serious...

DYLAN

No, about exploitation. This case is about exploitation. We're going to file a motion to void the lease as a contract of adhesion.

He hugs her and exits. She stands there, stunned and happy.

INT. HALLWAY - SAME TIME

Robert grills Addy. An ASSOCIATE stands nearby with a box.

ADDY

No! No, Robert I'm not slacking off!

ROBERT

There are two ways to answer this question: "Robert, I have succeeded" or "Robert, I have failed". Which one is it?

ADDY

How about "Robert, it's in progress"?

The Associate hands Robert the box.

ROBERT

Fisher, here at Sterling this is what we call "A Goodbye Box". Because this is where you will place your belongings just before I say "goodbye".

He smiles, hands her the box, turns and goes. Liam emerges from his office and spots her.

ADDY

I will get the job done! You'll see!
I will not need the box!

CONTINUED:

INT LIAM AND DYLAN'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Beth is talking to Liam, who is still wearing his yarmulke.

LIAM

Look, I didn't pretend to be Jewish.
He just, you know, assumed--

BETH

Oh I get it. (RE: YARMULKE) So this
is just a wardrobe malfunction.

LIAM

Fine. I'm misleading him. But for
the right reasons. This firm can do
so much good for him and his cause.

BETH

Lie to yourself. Lie away. But you
won't pull it off. You know why you
won't pull it off? 'Cause you don't
have the *cajones* to pull it off.

LIAM

Oh, I have the *cajones*. I totally
have the *cajones*. I am Mr. Cajones.

Addy enters, stricken, box in hand.

LIAM (CONT'D)

Addy, what are *cajones*?

BETH

Wait. Is that "A Goodbye Box"?

ADDY

Liam, he's going to fire me. And
I've only been here ten days. I just
joined a gym. (STIFLING TEARS) This
is the worst day of my life.

Dylan comes charging in.

DYLAN

It worked! The judge voided the
lease. And I was totally on the
bubble. Can you imagine getting
fired this early on? Man, you cannot
come back from that. (OFF ADDY'S
SHATTERED EXPRESSION) What?

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. BLUE VELVET - LATER

Beth and Addy talk as Dylan paces outside.

ADDY

So I've got to get Mickelson to sign the thing for Susan and Susan to OK the thing for Robert by noon tomorrow or I'm fired. Why does stuff like this always happen to me?

BETH

Because you ask for it.

ADDY

Excuse me?

BETH

You think it's a coincidence that the partners grind you the way they do? That you're never the bat and always the ball? You invite abuse.

ADDY

(APPALLED) I do not "invite abuse".

BETH

The only one who's making you a victim is you. If you see something you want, just take it.

ADDY

That's a pretty depressing way of looking at things.

BETH

Sorry, sweater-set, but that's the way it is. And stop looking for a white knight. They don't exist.

Dylan enters.

DYLAN

(RE. BLACKBERRY) One down. (TO ADDY) Mickelson will sign the thing for Susan at the hotel tonight.

ADDY

You're a genius! How'd you do it?

CONTINUED:

DYLAN

I mentioned the Goodbye Box to the hotel concierge. Apparently there's a lot of that going around.

ADDY

You are awesome! (HUGGING HIM) I love you!

DYLAN

What?

ADDY

(INSTANTLY COVERING) I said "thank you"!

Beth shoots Addy an "oh please" look. Liam enters.

LIAM

Stand back - I'm starving.

DYLAN

Where have you been?

LIAM

(TO BETH) Pulling it off. (THEN) I've been wooing and winning a certain client - namely Mr. Avi Blau.

BETH

'Til eleven on a Friday night?

LIAM

Of course not. It's Shabbat! (RE. APPETIZERS) Wait - are these crab cakes, because I am definitely off shellfish.

Two HOT GIRLS glide by and smile at Liam. He smiles back.

LIAM (CONT'D)

Shalom, ladies.

INT. CLIFF'S OFFICE - THE NEXT MORNING (DAY 3)

Cliff is talking on the phone. His door is open a crack.

CLIFF

Look, don't get excited. This is a negotiation. You've got to be willing to compromise if we're ever going to make any progress.

He's cut off. He turns away from the door.

CONTINUED:

CLIFF (CONT'D)

I never said the word "divorce."
Because I can't cash flow a divorce
right now, but I'm making moves. Yes
I care about you. "Love" is a very
strong word. (BEAT) What did you--?
Don't you dare hang up--

Susan walks by and smiles at him. Cliff waves nonchalantly.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

(INTO PHONE) --on me.

INT. MR. DOUGLAS'S OFFICE - LATER.

Beth is presenting documents for the MR. DOUGLAS to sign.

MR. DOUGLAS

I can't believe it's nearly over.

BETH

You've built a legacy to be proud of.

MR. DOUGLAS

Thank you. Still, handing over the
reins after a lifetime, that's a
tough thing. The numbers seem to make
sense, but I don't know...

BETH

Don't know what?

MR. DOUGLAS

About Tim. Honestly, I'm not so sure
about him. He is smart, driven...

BETH

Sounds like an excellent candidate.

MR. DOUGLAS

Maybe. But leadership means putting
the good of the enterprise before
your own desires. You gotta have the
right stuff. Kinda like you, Joley.

BETH

(BEAT) I'm sorry?

MR. DOUGLAS

Remember when you broke the lamp in
my study?

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

MR. DOUGLAS (CONT'D)

You stood right up and told the truth. I gave you a cupcake. You always loved cupcakes.

Mr. Douglas's SECRETARY enters.

SECRETARY

Mr. Douglas? You have a meeting with the compliance committee.

Mr. Douglas leaves.

BETH

Mr. Douglas mentioned a Joley...

SECRETARY

His late daughter. She died in an auto accident fifteen years ago.

INT. JONATHAN CLUB - SQUASH COURT

Cliff plays squash with PHIL GROSS, forties.

PHIL

(WINDED) OK: You work for me. You're not supposed to kick my ass.

CLIFF

Well you know what they say: rules are made to be broken.

PHIL

Speaking of which, thanks for finding a place to put the bail out money.

CLIFF

Just 'cause your bank had a bad year, doesn't mean you have to, right?

Phil laughs.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

Listen, we need to discuss a bit of housekeeping. From now on, I need all the fees to go into a separate account - for tax reasons...

PHIL

I totally get it. You're packing a parachute. Not a bad idea, given your Grace Graham problem.

CONTINUED:

CLIFF

(BEAT) What "Grace Graham problem"?

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM B - LATER

Dylan and Molly enter. Mrs. Graham is there with her LAWYER.

DYLAN

I see you brought your lawyer. I have execution copies of the termination agreement--

MRS. GRAHAM'S LAWYER

We're not signing anything.

DYLAN

Your client's intransigence regarding the lease rose to the level of actionable conduct. (TO MRS. GRAHAM) You're exploiting her. The judge agreed...

MRS. GRAHAM

How dare you try to take my son away?

DYLAN

I think you mean your grandson.

MRS. GRAHAM'S LAWYER

So your client didn't tell you. (PRODUCING FILE) As you may know, due to a uterine abnormality, your client had trouble conceiving.

DYLAN

She mentioned that she experienced some difficulty having Will, yes.

MRS. GRAHAM'S LAWYER

"Difficulty" is one way of phrasing it. Another way is that she didn't actually have Will.

MRS. GRAHAM

I told you I didn't want to air my dirty laundry. It's unseemly.

MRS. GRAHAM'S LAWYER

Mrs. Graham, it's the only way to get what you want. (TO DYLAN) After the fourth miscarriage, surrogacy became the only option.

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

MRS. GRAHAM'S LAWYER (CONT'D)

Your client and her late husband made the decision to use my client as the surrogate.

DYLAN

Wait. You mean--

MRS. GRAHAM

(MATTER-OF-FACT) My late son's sperm was used to fertilize her egg which was later implanted in me.

MOLLY

Jeff never wanted to do it this way. She insisted--

MRS. GRAHAM'S LAWYER

Technically Will has two mothers - your client - his genetic mother - and my client - his gestational mother.

Cliff enters.

CLIFF

Mrs. Graham. I had no idea you were involved in this.

MRS. GRAHAM'S LAWYER

Oh she's more than involved in this. Your client's son is also my client's son - and she wants him back.

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM 1 - CONTINUOUS

Dylan is staring, gobsmacked, at Mrs. Graham.

MRS. GRAHAM

It didn't have to come to this. But you pushed it. You and this firm.

CLIFF

I'm sure we can work something out.

MRS. GRAHAM

(TO MOLLY) I carried that boy.

MOLLY

That doesn't mean you can take him!

MRS. GRAHAM'S LAWYER

California courts may say otherwise.

Mrs. Graham storms out. Dylan turns to Molly.

DYLAN

Mrs. Pierson, why didn't you tell me--

MOLLY

Tell you what?! I'm his mother. I'm his mother. (BEAT) And if I told you what she'd done - given who she is - would you have even taken the case?

CLIFF

(TO DYLAN) My office. Ten minutes.

INT. BEVERLY HILLS RESTAURANT - LATER

Beth sits with Mr. Ollerman, who sips a martini.

MR. OLLERMAN

Lunch with our company counsel. I think this is the definition of combining business and pleasure. (TOASTING) Here's to the big chair.

BETH

Mr. Ollerman, perhaps you shouldn't start celebrating just yet.

CONTINUED:

MR. OLLERMAN
(TAKING A BIG SIP) Chill out. I'm
sure it's five o'clock somewhere.

BETH
I think Mr. Douglas has Alzheimer's.

MR. OLLERMAN
What?

BETH
My aunt had it, so I recognize the
symptoms. I mean, I can't say for
certain, but if we move up the
medical exam we can definitively--

MR. OLLERMAN
So the old man's car finally fell off
the jack. Have you told the board?

BETH
Not yet.

MR. OLLERMAN
Then don't.

BETH
I have to. In order for the CEO to
select his successor he has to be of
sound mind and body. I'm pretty
certain Mr. Douglas is not of sound---

MR. OLLERMAN
I have been biding my time, licking
his loafers for last eleven years. I
was guaranteed this job. (RISING
ANGER) Your firm made assurances.

BETH
Mr. Ollerman, Mr. Douglas trusts me.

MR. OLLERMAN
Beth: I doubt you've ever drawn a
stupid breath. Don't start now.

INT. MEN'S ROOM - SAME TIME

Liam, still wearing his yarmulke, crosses to a urinal and unzips. Avi enters and goes to an adjoining urinal.

AVI
Did you enjoy the *seder* last night?

CONTINUED:

LIAM

It was lovely.

AVI

I loved your enthusiasm. Like it was the first time! (THEN) Listen, I've been reviewing your work, and I think it's time I asked you, would you rep--

Avi leans forward and his sunglasses slide off his head.

AVI (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. Would you excuse me?

Avi bends down to pick them up... then he rises quickly, clearly shaken. He leaves. Liam stands there, perplexed. Then he glances down. Horror breaks across his face.

INT. CLIFF'S OFFICE - LATER

Dylan is standing in "the hot spot" in front of Cliff's desk.

CLIFF

She's suing us - for defamation, malicious prosecution -- you pissed off the most powerful woman in Los Angeles. This is a nightmare!

DYLAN

I'm sorry. I thought I was zealously representing the client...

CLIFF

You mean the client who dropped us down a well by failing to disclose a vital piece of information?

DYLAN

Maybe she was too terrified to speak.

CLIFF

See, that's where you and your expensive degree come in.

DYLAN

You think I should've seen it coming.

CLIFF

Yes! That's what associates are supposed to do - "see it coming!" If not, then why bother having them?!

CONTINUED:

DYLAN

Maybe to teach them a thing or two?!

CLIFF

You want a lesson? Listen up. Grace Graham sits on the boards of several major corporations which are clients of this firm. She told me she'll destroy our business unless she gets what she wants. So you're going to take the boy's deposition - the outcome of which will favor Mrs. Graham. Then you'll draft a settlement giving Mrs. Graham custody.

DYLAN

What about Will?

CLIFF

He gets to grow up with a woman who'll give him everything rather than one who's either extremely naive or criminally stupid.

DYLAN

I thought we were supposed to get Molly justice. Where's the justice in that?

CLIFF

Hewitt, welcome to the real world. This is about power. Justice is just a parasol in a hurricane.

DYLAN

I'm not sure I can do this.

CLIFF

You better. Or I'll make sure you never practice law again.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

EXT. STERLING SKYSCRAPER - DAY

Dylan sits on a bench, staring into a shallow reflecting pool. Katie approaches.

KATIE

Hey.

DYLAN

Hey. (THEN) They say a person can drown in as little as three inches of water. Do you think that's true?

KATIE

I don't know. But if you're curious, I'd be glad to go first.

DYLAN

Why? What's wrong?

She brandishes a letter.

KATIE

I failed the bar exam. Again.

DYLAN

(SHOCKED) Wait - the bar exam? I had no idea you went to--

KATIE

Whittier Law School, class of '06. (HOLDING UP LETTER) I don't advertise it for obvious reasons. Of course, as if being a two time loser isn't bad enough, my boyfriend just broke up with me.

DYLAN

Well he just didn't know what he had.

KATIE

What did he have? Somebody who can dream large but can't close the deal. I just... I get in there and I freeze up. I might as well face it. I'm never gonna be one of you guys.

Dylan's Blackberry blows up.

CONTINUED:

DYLAN

I would love to sit here and talk,
but I have to go make a six-year-old
choose between his mother and his
grandmother.

KATIE

(SNIFFLING) OK. Good luck with that.

INT. SUSAN'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

Susan is engrossed in an oral argument. Addy comes in.

ADDY

I was wondering if you'd had a chance
to review that arbitration clause--

SUSAN

(WITHOUT LOOKING UP) Did you get Mr.
Mickelson's signature like I asked?

Addy stares at her, groping for an answer.

ADDY

Yes. Well, technically, no, but--

Susan hold up an envelope.

SUSAN

Allow me to answer that for you.

Susan produces an envelope.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

I hold in my hand one fully executed
loan-out agreement, signed and
notarized - in an interoffice
envelope listing Hewitt as sender.
When I give you a task, I expect you
to complete it. We're done here.

Susan resumes her work. Addy stands in the doorway.

ADDY

No. We are not done here.

SUSAN

(BEAT) Excuse me?

CONTINUED:

ADDY

Nobody takes me seriously here. I get batted back and forth like a ping-pong ball. Maybe it's because I'm small, or polite, or because I'm still figuring out make-up...

SUSAN

Ms. Fisher...

ADDY

But I did graduate first in my class from Case Western Reserve Law School and I am damn good lawyer - good enough to know that the law you're citing for your toxic tort case has been superseded and will sink you.

Addy takes a step forward. Her blood is up.

ADDY (CONT'D)

So if you actually care about substance and serving the client instead of some petty power struggle between you and Robert, you will take thirty seconds to review this document and then I will do whatever it takes to help you win your case for the firemen. Unless of course I'm fired, which would mean somebody should be standing behind me with a Goodbye Box right about... now.

Addy slowly turns around. No box. Susan smiles at her.

SUSAN

I knew you were smart, but I wasn't sure you had the stones. Well, you just passed the test. Gold star, Fisher. Welcome to Team Fireman.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

Dylan sits with Will. A stenographer sits with them.

DYLAN

Will, we're here because your mom and your grandma have been talking about who you should live with.

WILL

My dad.

CONTINUED:

DYLAN

What?

WILL

My mom and my dad. I want to live
with my mom and my dad. Like before.

DYLAN

Will, sometimes things don't work out
the way you want them to.

WILL

My mom says we can go away. She says
we'll be happy somewhere else.

DYLAN

Will--

WILL

I want her to be happy. She's been
sad for so long.

DYLAN

But if you had to stay, and you had
to stay with your grandma, would that
really be so bad?

WILL

(BEAT) Will you tell me what to do?

Dylan glances at Will's work-book. There's a drawing of a
family of three - mother, father, son - which has been
aggressively scratched out. Dylan is visibly devastated.

INT. BETH'S OFFICE - LATER

Beth enters to find Addy at her desk, eating a cupcake. A
large gift basket overflowing with cupcakes sits nearby.

BETH

What are you doing in here?

ADDY

Celebrating my victory. I'm
officially off Robert's leash and
working for Susan now! Whoo-hoo!

BETH

(RE. CUPCAKE) Were those meant for
me?

CONTINUED:

ADDY

No idea. I was walking by and I saw them. I wanted them, so I took them.

Beth examines the card on the gift basket.

BETH

Great. They're for "Joley".

ADDY

Who's "Joley".

BETH

Evidently I am.

Liam enters, looking white as a sheet.

LIAM

I knew it. I knew pretending to be a member of a religion I didn't belong to was a mistake, ethically, morally - and now I have destroyed my career.

ADDY

(HOLDING OUT GIFT BASKET) Cupcake?

LIAM

Sure. Thanks.

BETH

No. They're not--

Liam takes a cupcake and dives in.

LIAM

Anyway, I was in the mens room, standing at the urinal...

BETH

Over-share.

LIAM

And Avi came in and stood next to me, in, you know, close proximity and I think he... saw.

ADDY

Saw? Saw what? What did he see?

BETH

(INSTANTLY) That he's not circumcised.

ADDY

Oh. (THEN) Wait - how would you--

CONTINUED:

Addy looks at Beth, puzzled. Then she puts it together.

ADDY (CONT'D)

(BLOWN AWAY) Oh my God.

BETH

(COVERING) I mean, I'm assuming that he's not because he's not, you know--

ADDY

(DELIGHTED) Oh. My. God. That's why you're always so weird around each other. You guys DID IT!

BETH

No we did not--

LIAM

Guilty as charged.

ADDY (CONT'D)

This is awesome!

BETH

It was the biggest mistake of my life.

ADDY

But from a gossip stand point: awesome.

BETH

Addy. Please. You can't say anything to anyone, I'll-- (HER BLACKBERRY BLOWS UP) I have to go.

Beth leaves hastily. Addy smiles a chocolate smile at Liam.

ADDY

(GIGGLING) Awesome.

INT. HART'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

Hart continues to unpack. Rowdy enters.

ROWDY

You wanted to see me?

HART

I realized that we haven't had a chance to catch up since I got back.

ROWDY

We have missed you.

CONTINUED:

HART

Oh, I seriously doubt that. (LOOKING HIM UP AND DOWN) Nice suit. Brioni?

ROWDY

Hart--

Hart pulls a picture out of a moving box. It's him and Rowdy.

HART

Remember this? It was taken when you were fresh out of Tulane, working at the Southern Poverty Law Center. Capital cases...

ROWDY

(NODDING) The Innocence Project. DNA exonerations.

HART

I convinced you to become our recruiting associate. You promised to bring me more just like you, remember?

ROWDY

A lot has changed since then.

HART

I know about changes. I spent the last three years taking care of my wife. And when I lost her, I started believing nothing would ever be good again. And then I remembered the work that I've done - that we were able to do - here.

Hart looks intently at Rowdy.

HART (CONT'D)

Look, I know how the world works. You get used to cashing checks and not asking questions. But at the end of the day, there is one question you can't avoid asking: did I use the talent I had - the time that I had - in the service of something greater?

He drapes an arm around his old friend.

CONTINUED:

HART (CONT'D)

The choice is simple, Rowdy: we can be part of the greed and corruption or we can die with our armor on.

INT. CENTURY CITY BAR - LATER

Beth approaches a HANDSOME OLDER ATTORNEY sitting at the bar.

HANDSOME ATTORNEY

So what's this about? You ready to jump ship and join a real law firm?

BETH

Actually, I need some advice. I know something about a client. A sweet old man who's... slipping.

HANDSOME ATTORNEY

All right.

BETH

If I keep silent, I stand to gain personally - but the client's company may suffer. If I speak up, I'll be fulfilling my duty of care, but the CFO will take his revenge...

HANDSOME ATTORNEY

You want to bottom line this for me?

BETH

I'm having a crisis of conscience.

HANDSOME ATTORNEY

Screw your conscience. If the board doesn't know, keep your mouth shut.

BETH

Yes, but on the other hand--

HANDSOME ATTORNEY

There is no "other hand". You know, this has always been your problem. You're not ruthless enough.

BETH

That is really unfair--

HANDSOME ATTORNEY

Is it? I'll let you in on a little secret.

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

HANDSOME ATTORNEY (CONT'D)

When you chose Sterling over my firm
I was hurt - initially. But now I
realize there really is no place for
you on my team.

For the first time, Beth's steely demeanor melts.

BETH

Daddy. You don't mean that.

HANDSOME ATTORNEY

Oh yes, Elizabeth - I do. And now
you get to pick up the check.

He drains his martini and grabs his coat.

HANDSOME ATTORNEY (CONT'D)

Weak. Unreliable. Just like your
mother.

INT. LIAM'S OFFICE - LATER

Dylan is proofing a document. Rowdy appears in the doorway.

ROWDY

Did you text me?

DYLAN

You actually responded. I was
wondering if you'd look at something
for me. It's the motion granting
Mrs. Graham full custody of Will.

Rowdy stares at the document... then drops it in the trash.

DYLAN (CONT'D)

Great. I blew that, too.

ROWDY

No. Your work is excellent.

DYLAN

Then why did you--

ROWDY

Because you can't help take that boy
away from his mother.

DYLAN

But it's what Cliff wants. You said--

CONTINUED:

ROWDY

I've said a lotta things - many of which have been motivated by my love of cashmere and corn liquor. But every man has a "Come To Jesus" moment when he asks himself not what's gonna get him paid or get him laid but what he knows to be true. What do you know to be true?

DYLAN

I know that Molly loves her son. I know that, judging from her bank statements, she's still paying off the fertility treatments she had to endure before she opted for surrogacy. And I know that she has to keep Will - or I won't be able to live with myself.

ROWDY

Then that's the advantage you gotta press.

DYLAN

Advantage? How is that an advantage?

ROWDY

You gotta win or die. Opposing counsel has other options.

Rowdy places a hand on Dylan's shoulder.

ROWDY (CONT'D)

Dylan, you ever think that all this crap you been wadin' through - comin' out here, being given this case - was fortune's way of turning you into the lawyer you were meant to be? The man doesn't choose the moment. The moment chooses the man.

Rowdy leaves. Dylan sighs: what the hell is he going to do? Then he glances at the bank statements. He sees something. A smile spreads across his face. He's got it.

END ACT FIVE

ACT SIX

INT. MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

Mrs. Graham's Lawyer and Mrs. Graham sit across from Dylan and Molly. Cliff sits stonily at the head of the table.

MRS. GRAHAM'S LAWYER

Why are we here? I thought this matter was settled.

DYLAN

I think Will's future merits a discussion.

MRS. GRAHAM'S LAWYER

There'll be no discussion. You will assent completely to our demands, or--

DYLAN

You may want to take a look at this first.

Dylan hands Mrs. Graham's Lawyer a cancelled check.

MRS. GRAHAM'S LAWYER

A cancelled check?

DYLAN

For thirty dollars. To cover a filing fee. Relating to this.

He hands Mrs. Graham's Lawyer a document.

DYLAN (CONT'D)

It's a "pre-birth certificate" - also known as a pre-birth order.

Mrs. Graham's Lawyer examines it.

DYLAN (CONT'D)

The Ninth Circuit was smart enough to recognize that having children is an emotionally charged process, so it created a mechanism to definitively establish paternity in the case of surrogacy.

Dylan slides the document across the table.

MOLLY

I never filed a pre-birth order.

CONTINUED:

DYLAN

I know. But your husband did. Mrs. Graham, your son understood you all too well. That's why he had you execute this document regarding Will.

MOLLY

Why didn't I know about this?

DYLAN

Your husband died before he could tell you. But Mrs. Graham knew. And she concealed the existence of this agreement in order to control Will.

MRS. GRAHAM'S LAWYER

That is pure conjecture.

DYLAN

So if I file a discovery motion I won't find any related correspondence between you and Jeff?

MRS. GRAHAM'S LAWYER

You're treading on dangerous ground--

DYLAN

You will drop all attempts at wresting control of Will or we'll sue - for fraud and intentional infliction of emotional distress.

MRS. GRAHAM'S LAWYER

(A BEAT, THEN TO DYLAN) I am asking you to be generous in understanding what my client has been through.

Dylan looks at Mrs. Graham. All of her armor is gone.

DYLAN

Mrs. Graham. I know that you loved your son. But Jeff is gone. You can't replace him with Will.

MRS. GRAHAM

So what am I supposed to do?

DYLAN

What's best for Will. And I think that starts with making peace with Molly.

Mrs. Graham looks at Molly. Finally, she breaks down.

CONTINUED:

MRS. GRAHAM

When Jeff died, I lost everything. I
couldn't lose Will too. I just
couldn't--

Mrs. Graham breaks down. Molly embraces her. Cliff offers
the faintest of smiles. Victory.

EXT. BLUE VELVET - LATER

Dylan stands by the pool, a drink in hand.

DYLAN

I rock!!!

Rowdy and Liam shove him into the water.

INT. BLUE VELVET - MOMENTS LATER

A drenched but beaming Dylan enters with Liam and Rowdy.

DYLAN

Was that really necessary?

LIAM

Aren't you supposed to get baptized
when you're born again?

ROWDY

Plus, let's be candid: you were
gettin' kinda cocky.

They spot as Addy (who has finally figured out make-up).

ADDY

Hey boys - watch the dress!

The guys all "ooh" and "aah" appreciatively. She looks hot.

ADDY (CONT'D)

You like it? My gift to me.

She does a sexy sashay turn. Rowdy checks out her ass.

ROWDY

Dig Little Miss Heartland. She got
quite a porch to go with that swing!

She swats him playfully. A WAITER arrives, collects the spent
bottles and drops a check. Rowdy grabs it immediately.

CONTINUED:

ROWDY (CONT'D)

Up-up-up. As your official mentor, I'm picking this one up. It's the least I can do. You guys have come through with flying colors. I just gotta get my wallet out of the car.

Rowdy heads toward the valet. Just then, a HOT DUDE passes by and winks at Rowdy. Rowdy changes course and gives chase.

DYLAN

He's not coming back, is he?

ADDY

Not for five or six hours, minimum.

LIAM

Enough fun. Time to pay the piper.

DYLAN

What's that supposed to mean?

LIAM

You don't want to know.

Liam grabs his coat and goes. Dylan turns to Addy.

DYLAN

I guess it's just you and me.

ADDY

Actually, it's just you. Susan's taking me out to Mozza for a hundred dollar pizza. Now that I have balls, she's decided that I'm her protege. (OFF DYLAN'S LOOK) You OK?

DYLAN

Addy, I became a lawyer so I could do the right thing.

ADDY

And you did. You saved a family--

DYLAN

Barely. And I had to fight my firm to do it.

ADDY

But you won.

DYLAN

(MATTE-OF-FACT) Today.

CONTINUED:

Addy nods.

DYLAN (CONT'D)

(BEAT) So are we supposed to love
this job or hate it?

ADDY

(SMILING) Both.

INT. BEVERLY HILLS COUNTRY CLUB - LOCKER ROOM - SAME TIME

Liam stands talking to Hart, who is wearing tennis whites.

LIAM

I'm not Jewish. Never have been.
And although I deeply respect the
religion, it's history and practice -
and now it's cuisine - I had no right
to mislead a potential client.

HART

That's what you came here to say?

LIAM

Yes. Because I respect you - and you
trusted me. You trusted me, and I
exploited that trust, and I can't
live with the guilt. I'm not even
Jewish and I have Jewish guilt.

HART

Thank you for being honest.

Liam leaves. Avi rounds the corner, also dressed for tennis.

AVI

Nice kid. He didn't have to come
clean, but he did.

HART

How long did it take you to figure
out he wasn't--?

AVI

Jewish? About a nanosecond.

HART

Then why did you let it go on?

AVI

I like watching him squirm.

INT. MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

Cliff enters to find Susan collecting her papers.

CLIFF

Congratulations. I hear you won your motion on the asbestos litigation.

SUSAN

And I heard you handed off my case to Hewitt.

CLIFF

Did you know that Grace Graham was involved?

SUSAN

I knew that a woman and her son were in trouble. And that's what matters to me. You got a problem with that?

CLIFF

Susan, c'mon. (WRYLY) As much as I like money, if we don't have our integrity, we don't have anything.

A beat. Is she going to buy this? Finally, she kisses him.

SUSAN

Care to convince me you've grown a conscience over champagne and caviar?

CLIFF

Room 264 at the Beverly Hills Hotel in two hours. I have one quick thing to do.

EXT. APARTMENT HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Dylan rings the doorbell. KATIE answers.

KATIE

(SURPRISED) Hey...

DYLAN

I'm sorry for dropping by unannounced but I know you had a bad day and I was on the bus and I saw this guy by the freeway on-ramp, so I got off and got you these.

He produces a bunch of flowers.

CONTINUED:

KATIE

Freeway flowers. That's so sweet.

DYLAN

Look, you are one of us. And I know you just went through a break-up, so this is not me trying to make the most of a vulnerable moment, but if you want to take a walk, talk, hang out-- you know, totally nonsexually --

She grabs him, kisses him, and pulls him into the apartment.

INT. BETH'S OFFICE - LATER

Beth enters. Liam's there, drinking a bottle of champagne.

BETH

(RE. CHAMPAGNE) That's mine isn't it? Why do people keep stealing my shit?!

LIAM

Sorry. I needed a drink.

LIAM (CONT'D)

"Silence is golden. You made a wise choice. Enjoy, Tim Ollerman."
(OFFERING BOTTLE) Want some?

BETH

Nope. Finish it. Honestly, champagne would just sour my mood.

LIAM

And what mood is that?

BETH

Triumph, undercut with self-loathing and just a dash of insecurity.

LIAM

Interesting.

They look at each other... then she tackles him hungrily.

BETH

You know this is just a release, right? It means nothing.

LIAM

Absolutely nothing.

INT. KATIE'S APARTMENT - LATER

Dylan and Katie lie, exhausted, on the floor.

KATIE

I told you not to worry. It's not how you start, it's how you finish.

DYLAN

I think we've both just proven that.

They laugh and kiss.

DYLAN (CONT'D)

You know, for the first time since I moved out here, I'm beginning to think that Rowdy wasn't lying. Maybe this is my break in the clouds. My four leaf clover. My lucky moment.

EXT. STREET - SAME TIME

TIGHT ON CLIFF: as he climbs out of his Bentley, twirling his keys, a dozen roses in his other hand. He hits his Bluetooth.

OPERATOR (O.S.)

Beverly Hills Hotel.

CLIFF

This is Cliff Huddle. I reserved room 264. Tell my wife that I've been slightly detained.

As he passes us and gets further away, it becomes clear he's walking toward Katie's door. As he rings her doorbell, we...

FADE OUT:

THE END