

NECESSARY ROUGHNESS

"PILOT"

Teleplay by
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January 7, 2010

FIRST DRAFT
SONY TELEVISION

USA NETWORK

TEASER

FADE IN:

...FOOTBALL CLEATS grind into the turf.

Out from underneath their JERSEYS, bulging calf muscles...veins in the forearms that look like firehoses...biceps and triceps, thick SLABS of MUSCLE.

These aren't men...they're mountains on cleats.

We're inside the huddle with the New York Jets. Players are intense. It's all in their eyes. CAMERA WHIPS to...

QUARTERBACK

Round right, 687 fire hook fly on three.

CAMERA whips over to **WIDE RECEIVER TERRENCE "TK" KING** as he LICKS HIS FINGERS and we understand... ball's going to him.

Everyone claps their hands, runs up to the line of scrimmage where TK faces the opposing teams DEFENSIVE BACK.

DEFENSIVE BACK

Gonna knock you back to Jersey, TK.

TERRENCE ("TK") KING

Good. Cause that's where I'm banging your sister after the game.

The Defensive Back spits on TK's feet.

QUARTERBACK

(calls the play)

Black 80 black 80, yellow 23 yellow
23. Hut Hut Hut...

The sound of the crowd has drained away, the voice of the QB crystal clear...all sense heightened...TK shakes out his hands.

ON THE SNAP

TK runs ten yards, turns, cuts across the middle, turns to look for the ball...

...all he sees, all we see is the ball coming towards him, spinning in **SLO MO**, the Defensive Back right on him.

*Just as it's within his grasp...*the BALL BOUNCES up off his fingertips, starts bobbling...and **SLIDES RIGHT THROUGH HIS FINGERS to the ground**. And in an instant:

SMASH - the DEFENSIVE BACK slams TK from one side, two SAFETIES crush him from the other in a wicked hit.

CAMERA CLOSES IN ON the pain, the sweat, the grief as TK's body slams into the turf.

Off the cracking sounds of testosterone on testosterone, and god knows what else...

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. DANI'S BEDROOM - DAWN

AN ALARM CLOCK goes off...6:50 am.

A pair of beautiful brown eyes POP OPEN. They belong to...

DANIELLE SANTINO (39-ish) our leading lady. Sexy in a Long Island way, perfect french manicure, and a street toughness, people perpetually underestimate her fierce intellect.

She rolls over...her husband **RAY SR's**, already out of bed. Garment industry exec, makes a good living. Charming, but don't cross him.

RAY

Don't wait for me for dinner.
Client meeting.

He sweeps by, gives her a perfunctory kiss. Hustles out.

INT. DANI'S KITCHEN

Granite counter tops, state of the art kitchen. No detail overlooked. Spotless.

Dani finishes whipping up breakfast...holds a plate out for her son...**RAY, Jr.** (16, great-looking, relentlessly sunny, maybe not too swift) as he hurries in.

DANI

Egg whites and steak protein scramble.

RAY JR.

Thanks, Ma.

As he eats standing up...in rushes **LINDSAY** (14, sarcastic, defiant, but wicked smart) in sweatshirt and jeans, grabs a waiting bowl of LUCKY CHARMS. She pours them into a THERMOS. Anxious to go.

LINDSAY

C'mon, Ray Jay, let's go.

DANI

Lindsay, you're not going to school like that.

LINDSAY

Like what?

Dani unzips Lindsay's SWEATSHIRT...revealing a tight strappy tank underneath that shows a lot of BELLY BUTTON. Busted.

DANI

When you're making a living as a hooker, you can pull this out of storage, until then...

Dani points to the door. Lindsay scowls, heads out. Ray Jr. chuckles. Dani gives him a look, he stops laughing.

EXT. STREET - MORNING

We get a glimpse of the Long Island neighborhood. Big new-home constructions of various sizes, but similarly shaped.

The kids drive off in Ray, Jr's Mini Cooper.

INT. MINI COOPER - MOMENTS LATER

Lindsay pulls the tank top out of her backpack. Ray Jr. shakes his head.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Dani comes up the stairs, past the guest bedroom, something catches her eye...she doubles back.

INT. GUEST BEDROOM - DAY

It's the THROW PILLOWS. They're not quite right. She readjusts them. But something's bothering her.

FAYE'S VOICE (PRE-LAP)

(emotional)

I can't stop thinking about it.

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - DAY

NOUVEAU RICHE HOUSEWIFE "FAYE", dabbing her eyes, weepy, her Louis Vuitton bag clutched in her lap. A moment, then, she reveals her pressing problem:

FAYE

I just...have to lose those six pounds. I can't be fat at my daughter's Sweet 16.

A BOX of tissues comes into frame...

FAYE (CONT'D)

Do you think hypnotherapy can help,
Dr. Dani?

REVEAL Dani... is Faye's THERAPIST. She's empathetic on the outside (we all know what she's thinking on the inside)....

DANI

I do, Faye. But you have to realize this is not about weight loss.

FAYE

(blows her nose)
It's *not*?

DANI

No. It's about loss of control. Do you feel out of control, Faye?

FAYE

Yes.

DANI

And why is that?

FAYE

(confesses through tears)
Every time I'm near a loaf of bread...I inhale it. I don't even take time to masticate. I just swallow the damn thing whole.
(then)
Sometimes, I sneak in the closet... so my husband won't see me. But yesterday, he confronted me... with the crust.

DANI

The crust?

FAYE

(deep shame)
He found a pile of them in the garbage -- I don't do crust. The worst part -- I told him they were *someone else's*. Like I'm cheating on him or something.

Dani offers her another tissue. As she does, she FLASHES IN HER MIND to those **DAMN THROW PILLOWS** on the bed. Shakes it off...

DANI

There are different types of addictions. Things that give us comfort when we feel out of control that become...habit forming. Some people are addicted to alcohol, some to drugs.

(then)

You, Faye, are addicted to...carbs.

Faye nods, this resonates with her.

FAYE

(a liberating
breakthrough)

Carbs are my... crutch.

DANI

Okay, then. Let's focus on getting rid of your crutch so you can feel back in control in your life. Lie down, and look at a **spot in front of you....**

Dani FLASHES IN HER MIND again...to those THROW PILLOWS.

DANI (CONT'D)

As I count from one to twenty, each count you will drift deeper into a more relaxed state...yet more alert to my voice. One...

Her voice carries us into...

INT. DANI'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

DANI'S VOICE

...you are going to see things more clearly.

Dani, in bed in pajamas reading a book. Ray enters (in a SUIT, just coming home from work).

DANI

How was your meeting?

RAY

Ah, you know, clients -- impossible to please.

He heads off towards the bathroom...barely kissing her hello.

DANI

You're showering now?

She looks at the clock - 11 pm. As she registers this.

DANI'S VOICE
*Two...you're aware of your
 surroundings.*

INT. GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT

...where Dani re-examines the THROW PILLOWS. Pulls back the bedding and finds...hospital corners. And from this tiny clue, Dani knows, she just knows...

FLASH in her mind to her husband **RAY SR.**, on the bed with a FACELESS WOMAN -- as they thrash around, the THROW PILLOWS are tossed aside.

DANI VOICE
...three, your eyes begin to open.

INT. DANI'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dani SCROLLS THROUGH Ray's **iPHONE**...finds SEXUAL PHOTOS FROM A WOMAN. Her face registers shock and clarity all at once.

DANI VOICE
...four, you are wide awake.

She looks up, ashen, as Ray comes out of the shower with a towel around his waist.

RAY
 What...?

DANI'S VOICE
*...five, your mind is clear and you
 are in charge.*

INT. DANI'S HOUSE - NIGHT

CLOSE ON Dani - whose mind is clear and she is in charge as she *chucks Ray's clothes out the window.*

DANI'S VOICE
...and you no longer need your crutch.

REVEAL below the window in the...

EXT. FRONT YARD - CONTINUOUS

...where Ray tries to calm her, as he dodges clothing.

RAY SR
 Dani, c'mon, that's a thousand
 dollar suit!

DANI

If you don't want me to pull a Lorena Bobbitt, you better run like the wind, Ray. Cause I have a ginsu collection in the kitchen that's *begging* me to do some dicing.

Ray, Jr. and Lindsay pull up in the Mini Cooper. They climb out, see Dad's clothes all over the lawn.

RAY, JR.

Dad, what the hell's going on?

DANI

(shouts out)

Daddy's taking a trip, I'm helping him pack!

A SUITCASE comes flying out the window.

She slams the window shut, disappears inside. Lindsay turns to Ray Jr, quietly.

LINDSAY

Oh no, did you see Mom's angry neck vein. That's not good.

Now the FRONT DOOR opens...revealing Dani.

As the kids scurry inside exchanging looks. Ray approaches.

DANI

Next time you screw someone in the guest bedroom, remember -- I do box pleats, not hospital corners.

As she starts to close the door on him:

RAY

What the hell do you want from me Dani?

DANI

I want a divorce.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

SMACK...we're back to that image of the WIDE RECEIVER being PUMMELED by the opposing team.

MAIN TITLES

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EST. LONG ISLAND'S NORTH SHORE - MORNING

...we're in a New Money GATED COMMUNITY. McMansion's of various sizes, but similarly shaped.

INT. DANI'S HOUSE - FOYER - MORNING

DOORBELL. Dani, mussed up hair, answers the door in her robe, having just woken up.

It's a CLOWN holding BALLOONS.

CLOWN
Danielle Santino?

DANI
(confused)
Yeah....?

He smiles, hands her an ENVELOPE.

CLOWN (PROCESS SERVER)
You've been served.

As he walks off, she stares at the LEGAL PAPERS, incredulous.

DANI
You could at least leave me the balloons!

Off her SLAMMING the door too hard...she grabs the back of her neck - she's pinched a nerve.

DANI (CONT'D)
OW.

Dani walks into....

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

...scans the LEGAL PAPERS as she walks into the kitchen:

DANI
Damn clown!

Dani is startled by an unexpected voice:

VOICE
Watch how you talk about your husband.

It's Dani's mother **ANGELA (60's)**, drinking coffee and circling her picks in the Daily Racing Form. (Angela is old school Italian, no nonsense, in love with three things: vodka, gambling and Jesus.)

DANI

Jesus, Ma. What are you doing here so early?

ANGELA

I was heading over to Aqueduct for the ponies -- didn't know I needed a special invitation to check in on my only daughter.

DANI

You're the second reason I need to change the locks.

Dani throws down the legal papers on the table. As Angela scans the papers....

DANI (CONT'D)

Ray wants full custody of the kids. Not to mention the house, and everything else we own. He's already cut off my credit cards and cleaned out our joint bank account. I barely have money for groceries.

ANGELA

Well, there's only one thing to do...

(then)

Take him back.

DANI

Mom!?! He cheated on me. More than once.

ANGELA

But less than Tiger Woods. Your father was a cheater, too.

(beat)

But it was always with good clean Catholic women...

She goes back to her Racing Form.

DANI

That's what he told you.

ANGELA

Hey! Don't make crap of your
father, god rest his soul.

(then)

Tough call in the fourth...Winter
Wonderland at three to one or
Charlie's Angel at five to one.

Off Dani's annoyance...

INT. HIGH END BAR - NIGHT

CLOSE ON TWO APPLE-TINIS deposited in front of...

Dani and her best friend since childhood, **JEANETTE FIERO**,
straight out of real housewives of Long Island, sitting at the
bar. The crowd features a lot of sexy women and hunky ATHLETES
(this is a jock hangout).

As Jeanette points out hunky guys across the bar --

JEANETTE

...that guy with no neck, linebacker.
And chisel chin over there -- he's an
Islander. Ooh, and hot butt -- I
think he just got traded to the Mets.

But Dani's distracted...

DANI

Jeanette, I don't need a man. I
need a job. Part-time hypno-
therapy practice in the back house
doesn't even cover my car payments.

(then)

It's like I'm waking up from the
Matrix -- I just discovered my
husband's a complete and total
prick.

JEANETTE

So what...Leo was a prick, too.
Thank god he died so I didn't have
to divorce him. Salud.

She slugs back some of her drink. Dani joins in.

DANI

(sips her drink, winces)
Uck. You ordered me an...

JEANETTE

...Apple-tini.

DANI
 (rubbing her NECK)
 Why can't I just get my Vodka
 Martini double olives?

JEANETTE
 Because Apple-tini says "fun!"
 Vodka Martini says "bitter." And
 those double olives...
 emasculating.
 (re Dani's "pain" face)
 And don't make that scary face.

As Dani rolls her shoulder around in pain.

DANI
 I pinched my neck when the clown
 showed up. I can barely lift my
 Greenie Teenie or whatever the hell
 it's called.

An unfortunate tipsy GUY IN A SUIT swaggers over to Dani.

SUIT
 (his best pick up line)
 Hey, anyone ever tell you that you
 look like Barbie?

DANI
 You mean that I look like an
 anorexic bimbo? Or are you saying
 that I love shopping and think math
 is hard? Or that my boobs are too
 big for my freakishly tiny waist?

He's like a deer in the headlights.

JEANETTE
 You should see her when she's on
 the rag.

He retreats, wisely. Jeanette makes eyes at a **HUNKY, ATHLETIC GUY** across the room.

DANI
 Jeanette, I've been separated for
 six weeks. I'm not ready for this.

JEANETTE
 (takes her hand)
 Dan, who told you the truth when
 Susie Magliocco was talking trash
 about you in Girl Scouts?

DANI

You did.

JEANETTE

Exactly. I've been telling you the truth since we were seven, and I always will. And truth be told...you need to pop your cherry into the next life. The rest will follow.

Jeanette eats some NUTS from the a jar on the bar.

DANI

You should really be writing for Hallmark.

A WAITRESS approaches.

WAITRESS

Ladies, that gentleman over there...
(indicates Hunky Athletic Guy!)
...he wanted me to give you this.

The waitress hands the NOTE to... Dani.

DANI

(reads, surprised)
"I think I can help...with the
pinched nerve."

Dani looks up. Jeanette's already waving him over.

DANI (CONT'D)

Jeanette!

JEANETTE

Too late -- it's on, baby.

MATTHEW (hunky athletic guy) approaches, drink in hand, flashing a smile. He exudes an irresistible, boyish charm.

MATTHEW

Hi, I'm Matthew. Hope that wasn't too forward...

JEANETTE

It wasn't. I'm Jeanette, this is Dani.
(before Dani can scare him off)
So, what do you do, Matthew? Are you a doctor?

MATTHEW

Actually, I'm a trainer. For the Hawks.

JEANETTE

(the motherlode)

A trainer. For the NFL?

MATTHEW

How about yourself?

JEANETTE

I help friends transition to the afterlife.

(then, spots a CUTE GUY)

Well, I've got some work to do. Wish me luck.

She drains her drink...gives Dani a "JACKPOT" look behind Matthew. Disappears.

MATTHEW

I don't think she's going to need it.

Dani has to laugh. Matthew takes her bar stool.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

So, how'd you get that pinched nerve...

DANI

Oh...uh. From a clown. Don't ask.
(making small talk)

Look, I'm sorry if Jeanette lead you on...for me. Or something. I'm...recently separated. I haven't even talked to a guy in a bar in 17 years. I'm not sure I'm ready to start tonight.

MATTHEW

(not hitting on her)

I was just offering...you look like you're in a lot of pain.

DANI

(suddenly embarrassed)

Jesus. It has been a long time. I don't even know when a guy's hitting on me anymore.

MATTHEW

To be fair, it's tempting.

Beat. She smiles...

DANI
So, a trainer for pro football
players.

He nods, thinking she's impressed.

DANI (CONT'D)
I hate football.

MATTHEW
(amused)
Okay. I suppose you have a good
reason... to hate.

She sips her APPLETONI...which she hates. Winces.

DANI
...what little I know of the game
involves my ex-husband not mowing
the lawn and not taking out the
garbage. Not to mention my son
getting a broken leg, fractured jaw
and mild concussion.

MATTHEW
What about the poetry of the game,
the seductive mystery of intense
competition, the thrill of watching
men pushed to their limits and
beyond.
(then, aware of his own bullshit)
Tight men's butts in spandex pants?

DANI
(she laughs)
That part - tolerable. But, like I
said...I'm just not interested
in...*sports*... right now.

She makes a painful face again, re the pinched nerve.

MATTHEW
Okay, message received. But I'm
still offering my professional
services, free of charge.
(she's confused)
I can make that... *clown injury*
disappear in a few seconds.

She looks at him, admittedly intrigued.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)
 May I...(touch her?)

She nods. He stands behind her, feels her shoulders...

MATTHEW (CONT'D)
 It's all about your shoulders...
 your muscles are out of alignment.
 Feel how tight you are in there.
 (as he uses magic healing
 fingers)
 Your deltoid, front rear deltoid,
 going into your trapezius muscle,
 all ties into your rhomboids.

DANI
 (this feels awesome)
 Sounds like geometry.

MATTHEW
 Geometry of the body. Need to
 loosen the pressure here...

DANI
 Ohhh.

MATTHEW
 Releasing the pressure there,
 should take the pressure off the...

DANI
 Yes.

Suddenly embarrassed. She looks at him, much looser, a
 little flush. Amazed, almost to herself:

DANI (CONT'D)
 Pain's... gone.

MATTHEW
 Bartender...can we get my friend
 here a...
 (susses her out)
 Vodka Martini. Straight up. Double
 olives. Put it on my tab.

DANI
 (surprised)
 How'd you...?

MATTHEW
 (shrugs)
 I've always been good at knowing
 what a woman needs.

Dani doesn't know whether to blush or to fall off her chair. He downs his drink, sets it on the bar.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)
 (then, with a smile that
 could kill)
 You take care of yourself...Dani.

Matthew shakes her hand, and starts to walk away, when suddenly...he feels a hand on his shoulder...

It's Dani. Surprising even herself.

Seems he is pretty damn good at knowing what a woman needs.

INT. MATTHEW'S BEDROOM - MORNING

CLOSE ON Dani...as she opens her eyes in a bedroom that is clearly not hers -- a sleek modern loft decorated with SPORTS PARAPHERNALIA.

As the memory of last night's activities flood back, Dani is simultaneously appalled with herself and yet flush.

The sound of the shower running draws her attention...she sees the clock 9:30 a.m. and suddenly jumps up...as in "what the hell did I do!"

INT. BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

QUICK SHOTS as she pulls on her bra, grabs one of her SHOES...where the hell is her dress?

MATTHEW O.S.
 Was it something I said?

REVEAL Matthew, dripping wet, towel wrapped around his waist.

Suddenly self-conscious, Dani instinctively grabs the SHEET from the bed, wraps it around her bra and underwear.

DANI
 No, no. My husband...ex
 husband...is dropping the kids off
 in an hour. I gotta get home.
 (then)
 Look, last night was...great. But,
*this (one night stand thing) isn't
 me....*

MATTHEW
 (calm as always)
 Well, whoever it is, tell her I had
 a great time.

He HANDS HER her clothes from off the bed (they were under the sheets). He kisses her gently...disarming her. She has to smile.

His cellphone rings. Takes it off the dresser. Recognizes CALLER ID.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

Sorry.

He answers the phone, motions for her to wait a sec.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

Yo, this is Matthew.

She slips into the...

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

...where Dani throws on her clothes, adjusts herself in the mirror...smiles, liberated...did she really just do this? She peeks out into the bedroom, sees Matthew pacing, catches bits of his conversation.

MATTHEW

(on the phone)

Hey, he's got a bad wheel, got nothing to do with him going offsidess...

(listens)

...TK's wrist is fine, it's been X-rayed, no broken bones or contusions.

(then)

I have no *idea* what his problem is, Coach. I put him through all the stress tests...he's been clean for years.

(then)

I understand. I'll handle it.

Clicks the PHONE OFF. She slips out of the bathroom.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

Sorry about that. Coach's daily chew out.

DANI

What's he so grumpy about?

MATTHEW

On paper, our guys are a playoff caliber team, but on the field, it's been a little like watching the Three Stooges.

(MORE)

MATTHEW (CONT'D)
 Fumbles, dropped passes, bone-
 headed penalties...mental mistakes.

DANI
 Maybe your guys need therapy.
 (re her dress)
 Zip.

He zips her up.

MATTHEW
 (has to laugh)
 What do you know about therapy?

She turns back to him.

DANI
 Allow me to introduce myself. Dr.
 Dani Santino. Licensed
 Hypnotherapist.

She fumbles on her OTHER SHOE, offers him a hand as if "to
 shake." Off his look...

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Matthew sets some coffee down for Dani on the counter.

MATTHEW
 Hypnotherapy? Sorry, I just
 picture some creepy guy swinging a
 watch back and forth: "*you are
 getting sleepy...very sleepy.*"
 (susses her out)
 Milk, no sugar?

DANI
 (nods, impressed)
 Hypnosis is just a reduced state of
 consciousness -- you're awake, but
 highly susceptible to suggestion.
 Works wonders for phobias. Weight
 loss. Anxiety. Even sports
 performance. And you don't need
 years of therapy to see results.

MATTHEW
 (game)
 Okay.

DANI
 (confused)
 Okay...?

He tosses a pack of NICORETTE on the counter.

MATTHEW

I been trying to quit smoking on
and off for years.

(then)

Heal me.

Off her look...

INT. BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

...where Dani props some pillows on Matthew's bed.

DANI

It's not presto-chango. You have to
be serious. And you have to want
to quit. And you'll probably need
some *follow up visits...* to make it
stick.

MATTHEW

I think that can be arranged.

He kisses her.

DANI

Okay...lay down.

She lays him down on the bed.

MATTHEW

I think I'm going to like this...
therapy.

DANI

(smiles, then serious)

Focus your eyes on one spot.

He's playfully staring at her chest...she tilts his chin up.

DANI (CONT'D)

Not that one.

Off Matthew, as he stares at a spot on the ceiling...

INT. DANI'S LEXUS - MORNING

Dani rides home, Jeanette's on SPEAKER PHONE.

JEANETTE'S VOICE (ON THE PHONE)

*Geometry, bitch: I want shapes,
sizes and relative position of the
figures.*

DANI
Put it this way. I was in bed by
eleven. But I didn't go to sleep
til six fifteen.

JEANETTE (ON THE PHONE)
Oh my god, I rule! I am a goddess!

Dani's whole demeanor changes...

DANI
(shit)
Goddess, I gotta call you back.

DANI'S POV: In her DRIVEWAY...RAY, Lindsay and Ray, Jr., get
out of his car. She looks at the clock - 10 a.m. And she's
wearing her CLOTHES from the NIGHT BEFORE. Shit!

She presses the garage door opener...

...SPEEDS past Ray, nearly running over his foot. Into the
garage, hits the GARAGE DOOR BUTTON...

INT. GARAGE - MOMENTS LATER

As the GARAGE DOOR LOWERS, Dani jumps out of the car, Ray's
FOOT breaks the safety beam... the garage door goes back up.

Revealing Dani in her post-one night stand glory.

RAY, JR.
Mom...? What are you wearing?

RAY
(pointed)
Work out clothes?

DANI
Go inside, kids.

Lindsay and Ray, Jr. disappear inside.

RAY
Where the hell were you last night?

DANI
Selling tupperware.
(then)
What do you want, Ray?

RAY
I want to come home.
(approaches her, gently)
I miss you, Dan.

DANI

You miss me so much you froze my credit card and threatened to take the kids?

RAY

That's just gamesmanship with the lawyers. You know that.

(he takes her hand)

Take me back, and all that stuff goes away. No financial worries. Poof. Everything goes back to normal.

DANI

Normal?

(pulls away, disgusted)

I'd rather work at Starbucks.

RAY

Suit yourself...I hear they're hiring.

As she heads inside, he calls after her:

RAY (CONT'D)

Everything you have I gave you. And I can take it away.

She stops, turns to him:

DANI

You try to take my kids, Ray, I'll kill you.

She smiles, pushes a BUTTON...SLAMS THE DOOR.

The garage door starts COMING DOWN ON Ray's head!

He scoots out from under it. Bitch! As the GARAGE DOOR ROLLS DOWN...Ray on the outside now:

RAY

Fine, you want the house and the kids? Good luck supporting them, cause you're not getting a dime!

Garage door closes... everything goes to BLACK.

INT. HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Dani looks out the window as Ray drives off... her demeanor has gone from firm, to shaky. She knows she's in trouble.

INT. HAIR SALON - DAY

...where Long Island Ladies Who Lunch get their hair bleached and highlighted.

CAMERA FINDS Jeanette talking to two WOMEN with foils in their hair, looking over a BUSINESS CARD she's handed them.

JEANETTE

I used to weigh in around 200. A couple of sessions with Dr. Dani--voila.

She motions that she slimmed way down.

JEANETTE (CONT'D)

So, if you want to lose those ten pounds, Shirley, or in your case twenty...

The woman is insulted, but then re-thinks, surreptitiously takes Dani's card.

EXT. HAIR SALON - DAY

Jeanette jumps in Dani's waiting Lexus, Dani in the driver's seat.

JEANETTE

I think I drummed up some interest.

DANI

(feels horrible)
This feels wrong, like you're my pimp or something.

JEANETTE

Well, I did get you laid. We already have a working relationship.

Dani gives her a look...

INT. DANI'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

As they drive through affluent suburbia, nice shops, expensive cars....

JEANETTE

I think we've hit the whole drag. Should we go over to Massapequa?

SHOTS OF:

Jeanette and Dani at boutiques...pet shops...handing out cards, shmoozing.

INT. HIGH END BOUTIQUE - DAY

...where Dani drops off cards at the CASH REGISTER, she nudges Jeanette as she spots a BLEACHED BLONDE CLERK helping a customer.

DANI
Ohmygod, Jeanette...that's Mandi.

JEANETTE
Sheesh. How the mighty have fallen.

Mandi spots them...approaches. Chip on her shoulder.

MANDI
Hey Dan, Jeanette.

DANI
Hey, Mandi. How long have you been working here at.... Fuzzy?

MANDI
Welcome to my post-divorce cold shower. Eddie claimed we were broke. The judge believed him.

Off Dani's freaked out look--

INT. DANI'S CAR - EVENING

...as Dani drops Jeanette off in front of her MCMANSION.

DANI
You're so lucky Leo died.

JEANETTE
I know.

As Jeanette hugs her and jumps out of the car....

INT. DANI'S CAR - DAY

...where Dani is rock-bottoming in her Lexus. Reveal she's parked in front of...STARBUCKS. With a big sign that reads BARISTAS WANTED.

Just as we wonder if she's going in for a coffee or a job application...her cell phone rings. The Caller ID reads **HAWKS.**

Off her look...

EXT. PRACTICE FACILITY - DAY

Establishing...Dani drives up to the SECURITY GATE. The guard checks his register, then raises the gate...

INT. PRACTICE FACILITY - DAY

Dani cuts across the practice field, where PLAYERS and COACHES run drills. A few players stop to scope out the hot lady. Watching her ass. Dani is directed by a COACH over to...

...Matthew spotting a huge LINEMAN on a weight machine. Matthew sees her, waves.

INT. PRACTICE FACILITY HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

...where Matthew and Dani stride down the hallway, towards the offices.

DANI

...what was so urgent that it couldn't wait?

MATTHEW

Patience, Doctor.

INT. MATTHEW'S OFFICE - DAY

...where Matthew closes the door to his office.

DANI

(serious)

Matthew...I like you. But I can't just drop everything for some afternoon booty call.

PURNELL (O.S.)

I totally agree.

The DESK CHAIR swivels AROUND revealing **COACH PURNELL**...a meaty, red faced charmer with a Southern twang.

MATTHEW

Dr. Dani Santino...meet Pat Purnell. Head Coach. My boss.

Dani's speechless as Purnell moves to shakes her hand.

COACH PURNELL

Pleasure.

(then, to Matthew)

(MORE)

COACH PURNELL (CONT'D)
Well, she's certainly easy on the
eyes. That's good.

DANI
(her back up)
Good for what exactly?

COACH PURNELL
Have a sit.

Matthew tosses her a PACK OF MARLBOROS off his desk.

MATTHEW
(totally professional)
I explained to Coach that since our
first...*session*, I haven't had a
single smoke.

DANI
(thrilled)
Really?

Matthew nods.

COACH PURNELL
I've known this fellow seven years.
And that's damn near a miracle. And
I don't know if you're aware of it,
but this team needs some miracles
right about now.

DANI
(still confused)
Okay...what's that got to do with
me?

COACH PURNELL
(down to brass tacks)
Dr. Dani...how would you like your
very first NFL client?

As she exchanges a Holy Shit look with Matthew....

END ACT ONE

ACT TWOINT. DANI'S OFFICE - DAY

...where Dani seems to be in a therapy session, taking notes.

DANI

Now the *back-half* does what?

UNSEEN PATIENT (O.S.)

You're not even listening.

DANI

I am listening, it's just a lot of information for me. All right??

REVEAL unseen patient is... Ray, Jr. with a white board covered in X's and O's...Football 101.

RAY, JR.

It's a Half-Back. Not a back-half.
(then, suspicious)
...why are you suddenly so interested in all this, Mom?

DANI

Ten bucks an hour does not include answering *your* questions. Now, do your mother a solid, continue with the line up.

Off Ray Jr's suspicion....

CUT TO:

INT. DANI'S OFFICE - DAY

...where Dani fluffs pillows, moves knick-knacks on her desk so they are just so. Double checks her hair, puts on a quick slash of lipstick. Heads out through the door connecting the office to the main house....

INT. FOYER - CONTINUOUS

...where she finds Lindsay and Ray Jr. at the window, peeking through the drapes.

DANI

What are you doing?

LINDSAY

Waiting for Terrence King.
He's coming, right?

RAY JR.

Big mouth.

Beat. Realizing...

DANI

RJ, you looked in my *book*?!

RAY, JR.

You left it open on the desk. You obviously *wanted* me to look.

DANI

And *you* obviously want to be grounded. You know the rules - I expect complete privacy for my patients!

VOICE (O.S.)

So...TK wants to lose some weight?

She turns around, it's...Angela, holding a LARGE CUTTING KNIFE. Dani looks at Ray Jr - you told her, too?

RAY JR.

(defensive)

She overheard.

ANGELA

(waving the knife)

You need protection. Haven't you heard about 'roid rage?

The DOORBELL RINGS. Dani grabs the KNIFE from Angela.

DANI

Okay, Mom... all of you, I am a PROFESSIONAL, he is a professional, and *this*...(the knife, the eavesdropping) is completely UNprofessional. Now scatter, before I get a case of roid rage myself.

ANGELA

(sotto)

It's the angry neck vein, kids, duck and cover.

...as everyone scatters.

Dani deep breathes, opens the door to find...

Wide receiver **TERRENCE KING**, a tower of a human...wearing **leather shorts, a leather vest** (nothing underneath it) and a medallion around his neck that sports his number -- 32.

Dani is speechless...he sure doesn't look like he's here for therapy.

TERRENCE

Hey, Pretty Lady, my name's TK, but you can call me M.O.S...

DANI

MOS?

He moves in real close, whispers in her ear.

TERRENCE

Master. of. Seduction.

As Dani gets a WHIFF OF HIS COLOGNE...

DANI

Terrence, I'm Dr. Dani Santino. And I'm not a hooker...I'm a *therapist*.

Terrence drops his seductive demeanor, pissed.

TERRENCE

Say *what*?

On Dani, doing her best to remain utterly professional here.

TERRENCE (CONT'D)

They want me to tell some white barbie doll my -- junk? This here is some crazy shit.

He has to laugh as he heads for the door....

DANI

I'm told this is not a voluntary visit. And I'm guessing *Coach Purnell* is someone you *don't* want to piss off.

That stops him. Off his look...

INT. DANI'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Terrence is seated on the couch now. Dani's got pad and paper.

DANI

So, they tell me you've had eight dropped balls and two fumbles in the last couple of games.

TERRENCE

How are you going to help, by catching the ball for me?

DANI

I use hypnosis....

Terrence bursts into laughter.

DANI (CONT'D)

(tries to hold her ground)
It's very effective.

TERRENCE

(still laughing)
Sorry, lady, this is just... a real trip all right.

DANI

(continues, undeterred)
Here's the ground rules. You're honest with me and honest with yourself. In return, I promise complete confidentiality. Coach, girlfriend, god himself -- under no circumstances will I divulge to anyone what's said here. This should feel like the safest place in the world. Like a quarterback when he's in the pouch.

TERRENCE

(amused by her)
The *pocket*. Not the pouch.

DANI

Okay, admittedly, I don't know much about football. What I do know is that at your level, sports is mostly mental. Maybe this is about your junk.

TERRENCE

Hey, sometimes a fumble's just a fumble.

DANI

True, but you've had several.
(scans his file)

(MORE)

DANI (CONT'D)

Along with two drug suspensions,
one assault case...

TERRENCE

...dropped.

DANI

...and a charge of drunk and
disorderly for running naked
through Central Park.

TERRENCE

(with a shrug)

It was St. Patrick's Day.

(flashing annoyed)

What do you want me to say? My dad
whipped me upside twenty years ago
and that's why I coughed up the
ball.

DANI

Is it?

TERRENCE

Yes! My eyes have been opened!
Look at that, I feel better
already. I'm cured.

He starts pacing, cocky with a juiced up energy that seems
almost threatening:

TERRENCE (CONT'D)

Let me tell you something. My
mother died when I was a kid.

DANI

I'm sorry to hear that--

TERRENCE

Father disappeared. Eight foster
homes in ten years. I was a
throwaway. No one wanted me. And
now look at me. Last year I made
eleven million bucks, plus bonuses.
I signed with Nike...and I slept
with thirty-nine different women.
Life is good.

DANI

But you keep dropping those balls.

That shuts him up.

DANI (CONT'D)

What do you say we give this a whirl, worst case scenario...it doesn't work. Best case...it does. Unless, you're *afraid*...

TERRENCE

(flash of anger)

Look at me, Lady. I'm not afraid of *anything*.

DANI

Good. Then lay down.

Reluctantly, he swings his legs up onto the couch.

DANI (CONT'D)

Stare at a spot on the ceiling...

CUT TO:

INT. DANI'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Lindsay pulls open the pantry door, only to find... Gramma Angela, ear to the wall.

LINDSAY

Gramma...what are you doing?

ANGELA

If TK is too messed up in the head to play, I'll lay a few bucks against the team this week. Then, Gramma can get that new love seat she wants. Shut the door.

INT. DANI'S OFFICE - DAY

...where Terrence is now on the couch, eyes closed, in a relaxed hypnotic state.

DANI

...when did this all start?

TERRENCE

It started with... a roll of toilet paper.

Off Dani's look, we go into Terrence's...

INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

...where Terrence is on the TOILET.

TERRENCE (V.O.)
It was right before the Cowboys
game...I ran out of T.P.

He realizes there's no toilet paper. He spots a pair of
FAMILIAR SHOES a few stalls down. Calls out...

TERRENCE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I called out to my man Enrico a
couple stalls over...

FROM THREE STALLS OVER

...the player tosses the toilet paper over three stalls and
as it flies through air, SLO MO, Terrence puts his hands out
to catch it...and it literally just *slips through his
fingers*, hits the floor,

...ROLLS OUT from under the stall, all the way out across the
bathroom floor.

Off Terrence's look of horror...

INT. DANI'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

As Dani writes this down on her pad...

DANI
(genuinely confused)
Okay...so it's because you missed
the toilet paper?

TERRENCE
There's more...

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - FLASHBACK

...where mid game, Terrence runs down the field to receive a
pass...(THIS IS THE SAME SHOT OF HIM FROM THE TEASER).

TERRENCE V.O.
*Now, every time the ball is coming
towards me, all I see is...*

TERRENCE'S POV on the field: **A BIG ROLL OF TOILET PAPER
COMING HIS WAY...**

...as it slips through his hands we come back to

INT. DANI'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Dani...taking this in.

DANI
How do you feel when you drop the
ball, Terrence?

TERRENCE
(calm)
I want to rip someone's head off
their shoulders.

Yikes. That was...angry. Dani clocks this, moves on:

DANI
Terrence, the ball is not toilet
paper. It's a baby. Your baby.
No one can take your baby away; you
won't drop the baby because you
love that baby, you have to protect
that baby.

TERRENCE
No one gets near my baby.

DANI
Good. You have become SO deeply
relaxed, SO sensitive, SO receptive
to this suggestion...this will make
SO deep and lasting impression that
NOTHING will erase it. And you
will catch your baby.

TERRENCE
I will catch my baby.

Off Terrence, still hypnotized, smiling at the mere
suggestion of it....

EXT. DANI'S HOUSE - DAY

Dani watches from her doorstep as TK climbs into the back of
a waiting TOWN CAR.

As the car drives off, Dani spots a **BLACK BMW** with deeply
tinted glass parked across the street from her house. What
the...?

She boldly crosses over, knocks hard, the window rolls down.

REVEAL the driver: **NICO CARELES**. Cool, a little dark. Don't
fuck with this guy. Former FBI? Mossad? Hard to tell.

DANI
Can I help you?

Nico points up to the upstairs of her house.

NICO
Tell your kids to lay off the
binoculars.

She looks up in time to see the blinds settling.

Dani doesn't know who she's more pissed at -- her kids or
this asshole invading her space.

DANI
Excuse me, are you staking out my
house?

NICO
I work for the team.

DANI
(confused)
Doing...?

NICO
Whatever needs doing.

DANI
So you're security?

NICO
Something like that.

DANI
(firm)
What happens here needs to be
completely confidential....

NICO
Tell that to your kids, Dani.

He puts the car into gear.

DANI
Wait, what's your--

Too late. He speeds off. Dani looks up to the bedroom
window -- those kids are so gonna get it.

INT. LINDSAY'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

She storms upstairs, goes into Lindsay's room - no one in
there. She wheels, goes into

Ray Jr.'s room - no sign of the kids.

DANI
 (out loud)
 That's right, you better hide.

She gathers up the dirty clothes piled next to the bed, when something catches her eye in a half-closed drawer.

She pulls out...SOMETHING IN THE TRASH CAN...A REPORT CARD with Lindsay's name on it, crumpled up.

She looks at it, her jaw hits the floor...

INT. GUIDANCE COUNSELOR'S OFFICE

...where Dani meets with **JOANNE**, Lindsay's guidance counselor. Lindsay slouches in a chair, looking like she'd rather be having dental surgery.

DANI
 Straight D's, except for an F in gym and math....? And eighteen unexcused absences this semester. Why am I only hearing about this now?

JOANNE
 Her teachers sent a note home each time. And each one came back with your signature on it.

LINDSAY
 (playing it)
 With my Mom and Dad separating... it's just been really...*difficult*.

Lindsay tries to work up some tears. Joanne, suddenly sympathetic...

JOANNE
 I'm sorry...I had no idea.

Joanne hands Lindsay a box tissue, hand over her heart. Dani has to refrain from rolling her eyes. Puts an arm around Lindsay...

DANI
 She's a very sensitive girl.

INT. DANI'S LEXUS - LATER

...where Dani's polite demeanor has, er, evaporated. As they STRAP THEIR SEATBELTS on...

DANI
 (steaming)
 I am not playing with you! If you
 ruin my days...I will ruin your
 nights.

LINDSAY
 Loud and clear, Mom. I get it.

DANI
 I don't think you do. Miss one more
 class this semester and you will be
 grounded forever.

LINDSAY
 What if I have a 105 degree fever?

DANI
 I'll pack you on ice and drive you
 there myself.

As Dani hits petal to the metal...

INT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT - NIGHT

CLOSE ON CHAMPAGNE on ICE...POP goes the cork.

The bubbly is poured into two GLASSES by a WAITER.

REVEAL Dani and Matthew at dinner....as he hands Dani a glass
 of champagne.

MATTHEW
 (to the waiter)
 Thank you, sir.

DANI
 I thought this was going to be a
 business dinner.

MATTHEW
 It is. Should we get down to
 business....?

As he leans in to kiss her, she pulls back....

DANI
 Matthew. I appreciate you sending
 me a client. But I hope you didn't
 expect...

MATTHEW
 I expected you to be my sex
 slave...wasn't I clear?
 (MORE)

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

(then)
I'm joking, Dani.

DANI

What happened between us was...good. Really good. But we have a professional relationship now. And I can't do anything to compromise that. I need to draw a line in the sand....

MATTHEW

(understands)
...we can see each other. But we can't see each other...naked.

DANI

Bingo.

MATTHEW

Look...I'd be lying if I said I'm not disappointed. But my priority is my players, and if you tell me the line needs to be drawn....

Matthew puts a BREADSTICK on the table.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

Nobody crosses this breadstick.

She smiles. Wishes he had fought a little harder...

DANI

Good.

MATTHEW

(switching gears)
So, how's it going with our problem child TK?

DANI

We've had two sessions. So far, he seems receptive enough. But, has he ever been evaluated for...*anger* issues?

Matthew laughs.

MATTHEW

Pro football is all about controlled anger -- harnessing that explosive power. The last thing we want you to do is make him soft. TK's got bigger problems than that.

(MORE)

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

Fact is...he's been bounced from so many teams, had so many drops, he's in danger of being dropped. Permanently.

(then)

You're his last best hope.

This is news to Dani - she suddenly realizes this guy's fate is in her hands. Matthew raises his GLASS...

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

A Toast -- to our man TK having a good game. His career depends on it.

As they CLINK GLASSES...off Dani's uneasy look.

INT. SILVER TOYOTA CAMRY - ACROSS THE STREET

A **WEASLY-LOOKING GUY** uses a long lens snaps a PHOTO of Matthew and Dani through the restaurant window clinking glasses. Hmm.

Who the hell is *this* guy?

END ACT TWO

ACT THREEINT. DANI'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

...where Dani's in bed, in pajamas, her laptop on her lap. She clicks through various NEWS ARTICLES with blaring tabloid headlines:

TK ARRESTED IN ASSAULT, DRUGS FOUND

"KING" OF ALL SCREW UPS

TK SUSPENDED FOR VIOLATION OF LEAGUE DRUG POLICY...AGAIN

TK TRADED...AGAIN.

Off Dani...processing this about her client.

INT. DANI'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Sunday. Dani watches the FOOTBALL GAME on TV with Jeanette, who's decked out in a Hawks cap.

JEANETTE

C'mon, you know I won't tell
anyone.

DANI

That's what you said about me and
Cesar Fontanini. And then you
blabbed to the Brizzolara twins.

JEANETTE

They got me trashed on Long Island
Iced Teas! I was defenseless.
(then)
Those Brizzolara girls were bad
news.

On TV: Terrence catches a tough pass, breaks a tackle, scampers into the open...no one's gonna catch him!

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

TK's broken one tackle, he's at the
fifty, the forty...one man to beat!

Jeanette leaps to her feet.

JEANETTE

(shouting)
Go GO Go!

Jeanette stops yelling when she realizes that Dani has leaped to her feet, too, yelling at the TV:

DANI
HOLD THAT BABY! HOLD THAT BABY, YOU
SONOFABITCH!

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
Touchdown! *Incredible catch by
Terrence King.*

Dani spontaneously hugs Jeanette...elated.

DANI
Holy crap. He did it!

JEANETTE
(gets it)
Holy crap...it's TK. *Terrence King
is your client.*

Before Dani can protest...

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
*Always some kind of antics with TK.
Look at that...he won't give the
ref the ball.*

INT. STADIUM - CONTINUOUS

...where Terrence ROCKS THE BALL LIKE A BABY -- the crowd loves it. The REF tries to take the ball back from Terrence, but he won't let go. Not gonna give up his baby.

Finally the ref coaxes it out of his arms.

INT. DANI'S HOUSE - DAY

Lindsay opens the front door -- a DELIVERY MAN has a MASSIVE FLOWER arrangement.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

...where Lindsay carries the flowers to Dani, who is preparing some LEFTOVERS for dinner.

LINDSAY
Mom...these came for you.

RAY JR.
You have a boyfriend?

Dani opens the card: *Dr. Dani, You're a GENIUS. Consider this a retainer. -- Matthew*

Inside the card, Dani finds a CHECK FROM THE HAWKS...

DANI
No. I have a job.

...for TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS. Dani looks up, big smile.

DANI (CONT'D)
Kids - get your coats.
(then, smiles)
We're going out for steak.

Off Lindsay and Ray Jr's look....

INT. BAR/CLUB - NIGHT

...where SHRIEKS of victory pierce the bar, as Terrence enters the jammed club, on a high, victorious. A SEXY GIRL on each arm.

People give him props, high-five...it's all good. Until...

A big DRUNK GUY at the bar starts mouthing off:

DRUNK GUY
Yo, it's TK! Congrats, dude. Bout time you had a decent game cause you have been suckin' ass and collecting checks the whole season.

Terrence tries to laugh it off --

TERRENCE
Why don't you give it a rest, my man. We're all just celebrating.
(to his ladies)
World's filled with fools.

Drunk Guy's PHONE RINGS. He answers.

DRUNK GUY
(way too loud)
Dude, guess who just walked in.
Terrence Freakin' King.

As Terrence starts walking away, the Guy calls out to him.

DRUNK GUY (CONT'D)
Hey, TK, my friend wants to know what's your favorite candy bar -- Butterfingers or Payday?

As the Drunk Guy laughs...

ON TK's face: he does a slow burn, starts walking back towards the Drunk Guy...

ON Drunk Guy...as he sees TK coming towards him. In an instant, TK grabs the guy's phone...

DRUNK GUY (CONT'D)

Hey...

And as TK smashes the CELL PHONE into the GUY'S HEAD...

We slam to BLACK.

INT. DANI'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

...where Dani is startled by the sound of her PHONE. Caller ID: **Hawks**.

DANI

(groggy)

Hello...?

INT. DANI'S OFFICE - DAY

Dani has Faye on the couch under hypnosis.

DANI

You're listening to my voice only,
blocking out all other sounds...

Interrupted by a KNOCK on the door. She goes to check, assumes it's one of the kids but it's...Nico.

DANI (CONT'D)

..you are relaxing your body,
feeling safe and secure. All
negative thoughts and feelings
leave your body.

They whisper (Faye is hypnotized/oblivious):

DANI (CONT'D)

I'm in with a patient.

NICO

Get rid of her.

DANI

(irritated)

That's not how it works.

NICO

(calm but intense)

I have Terrence in the car.

DANI

His appointment is in *two hours*...

NICO
Did you get the check?

She nods.

NICO (CONT'D)
You deposit it?

The message is clear -- she's on their time now. Not one to be bullied...

DANI
Five minutes.

Dani shuts the door. Starts bringing Faye out of her hypnotic state...while dashing around turning the clocks ahead five minutes so she'll think her session is over.

DANI (CONT'D)
Okay, Faye, I'm going to count backwards from five and when I get to one you will be perfectly relaxed and feel an urge to eat high protein, low carb foods....

EXT. DANI'S DOOR - DAY

Dani escorts Faye out...Faye hugs her.

FAYE
Three pounds down, only three more to go, Dr. Dani!

DANI
You go girl! Go. Go.

As she shuts the door...she looks for Terrence... no sign of him. She hears whooping coming from the....

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Dani comes in to find Ray, Jr. playing MADDEN NFL FOOTBALL with....

DANI
Terrence...?

Ray Jr. is over the moon hanging out with a FOOTBALL STAR.

RAY, JR.
Hold on, Mom. It's fourth and goal from the nine. Here's where I stuff him hard.

TERRENCE
 Dream on, little man. I'm gonna
 pass to me and me can't be stopped
 on a straight post.

As Terrence and Ray madly push buttons on their X-Box
 controllers, REVEAL Terrence is a CHARACTER in the VIDEOGAME.

TERRENCE (CONT'D)
 Touchdown!!!!

JOHN MADDEN (V.O.)
*Touchdown! Terrence King cannot be
 stopped by mere mortals.*

VIDEO GAME TERRENCE does a showboating end zone dance.

TERRENCE
 That's right! Look at me go!

RAY, JR.
 You did that exact same end zone
 dance in a game against Cleveland
 last year.

TERRENCE
 That don't touch the real thing.
 Not enough shake and too much bake.

Terrence leaps up, demonstrates the 'real' dance.

DANI
 (firm)
 Terrence....?

Terrence shoots Ray, Jr. a look: Mom's mad.

RAY, JR.
 (sotto)
 Uh oh, that's her angry neck vein.
 You better go.

TERRENCE
 Catch you later, Ray, Jay.
 Remember what I told you...when
 you're being rushed, shock 'em with
 two hands out like this.

Terrence demonstrates.

TERRENCE (CONT'D)
 Buys you a couple of yards of space
 to make your move.

RAY JR.
 (beaming)
 Will do, TK.

Terrence bumps fists with Ray, Jr., heads off with Dani who is NOT smiling....

EXT. DANI'S HOUSE - DAY

...where Nico's in his car, when, in his rear view mirror he spots the **SILVER CAMRY** that was watching Dani and Matthew at dinner.

Parked down the block from Dani's house. Hmmm.

INT. DANI'S OFFICE - DAY

...where Dani closes her office door, livid, gets up in Terrence's face.

DANI
 Boundaries, Terrence. I'm your therapist, not part of your posse. You show up at your appointment times -- not before, not after.

TERRENCE
 Hey, you don't want your son getting free advice from a four time Pro Bowler, that's fine...

DANI
 I don't. But I would like to know why you smashed that cell phone into that guy's head.

TERRENCE
 How else do you turn off a cell phone?

DANI
 Is this...funny to you?

TERRENCE
 You just like the rest of 'em. People always want to blame the famous guy.

DANI
 No. People always want to blame the guy who gave someone 12 stitches and a concussion.

He's not used to being handled like this. She's engaged him.

DANI (CONT'D)

Anger is a defense mechanism,
Terrence -- a response to being
hurt. Who hurt you?

TERRENCE

Who didn't hurt me?

(then)

My Mom OD'ed when I was eight. My
Dad put me in foster care. I was a
throw away. You know what that's
like?

She does. But never mind that.

DANI

So let's start with Mom.

TERRENCE

She's dead and buried. How the
hell is that going to help?! How
the hell's any of this gonna
help??!

DANI

Acknowledging where our pain comes
from is the first step to freeing
ourselves from it.

TERRENCE

Freeing myself from pain? My whole
career is about pain.

DANI

Do you care about that career?
Because from what I can tell, one
more fumble -- on or off the field,
and that's more than toilet paper
slipping through your fingers....

TERRENCE

(erupts)

It's my career. I'll trash it if I
want! Hell, I'll trash your whole
goddamn office.

He towers over her as he smashes a picture frame against a
wall. Dani doesn't FLINCH. SHOWS NO FEAR.

DANI

Fine. But make sure you tear down
that wall. I've been wanting to
expand for a while.

He's approaches her FRUSTRATED...GLOWERS DOWN AT HER.

TERRENCE

Oooh, TK's crazy, TK can't control himself. What makes you think I won't go all TK and pop you one right now?

Is he going to hit her? Dani holds her ground.

DANI

Way I look at it, you've got millions, I have shit. You hit me, I've got millions and you've got shit. So I'm in a can't lose situation.

He tears open the door and storms out. She stops him...

DANI (CONT'D)

Terrence...it doesn't have to be this way. You're better than this.

TERRENCE

No, I'm not.

And he's gone.

She closes the door, only then realizes... she's shaking.

Holy shit, that was scary.

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUREXT. PRACTICE FACILITY - DAY

The guard waves Dani through.

INT. PRACTICE FIELD - DAY

Players run drills on the field. In another area, Matthew helps a huge linebacker with stretches. Sees Dani approaching.

Whacks the player on the head to keep going, then heads over to Dani. As they walk...

DANI

You going to tell me what's going on?

MATTHEW

Not here.

They disappear into a tunnel.

INT. HALLWAY/MEN'S LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Matthew pushes into the locker room. Dani stops dead.

DANI

Um...that's the men's...

They push into...

INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

He leads her through the locker room -- just as a couple of naked players come out of the shower. Oh, shit.

MATTHEW

(amused)

Don't worry, they're used to it.

DANI

Yeah, but I'm not.

(to herself)

Eyes up. Eyes up.

They go back into...

INT. MEDIA ROOM - CONTINUOUS

...where they find **COACH PURNELL** watching game films. Nico seated alongside him. Purnell pauses the video.

COACH

Welcome to the inner sanctum, Dr. Dani. Can I interest you in a coffee, soda, scotch?

She sits down at the table.

DANI

No, thanks. I'm good.

MATTHEW

You've met Nico, I assume.

DANI

Nico, nice to put a name to the friendly face.

NICO

I'm not good with introductions.

DANI

Clearly. Does 'Nico' come with a last name? Or are you like Cher and Madonna.

NICO

(amused by her)
Careles. It's Greek.

As Matthew and Coach takes their seats, Matthew clocks this interaction with Dani and Nico (is it flirting? Hmm)

DANI

So, full court press here, what's going on?

COACH

We've run into a little bit of a *hitch* with our man TK.

DANI

I thought assault with a cell phone was a big hitch, but...

MATTHEW

He's disappeared, Dani.

Surprises her.

DANI

What? When?

COACH

Last seen he was coming out of your office.

DANI

Okay...so Nico lost him?

NICO

No...he jumped out of my car. While it was moving.

DANI

Wow.

COACH PURNELL

(cuts right to the chase)

So, now, what all did you and TK talk about in your last session?

DANI

Look, I can tell you he has anger management issues, but that would be insulting your intelligence. If you're asking me where he went...I have no idea.

COACH PURNELL

What the hell did you say to him?

DANI

What did...I say to him? Fellas, my conversations with Terrence King are privileged and confidential. I can't disclose the content of our sessions without violating TK's privacy, not to mention breaching my ethical obligations...

Purnell rises up, irritated.

COACH PURNELL

What the hell is this horse shit. Who pays the bills young lady?

DANI

(taken aback)

You do...

Getting in her face:

COACH PURNELL

That's right. And he who pays the piper calls the tune.

Averse to intimidation, she stands up, too.

DANI

That might work if I were actually a piper...but I have a PhD in psychology and I have taken an oath not to rat out my clients regardless of who pays their tab. My job is to...

COACH PURNELL

Your job is to help my guy play better.

DANI

I thought that was *your* job.

Close talking her:

COACH PURNELL

Are we gonna have a problem you and me, little lady?

DANI

If you're sending players to therapy to spy on them, then yes, we are going to have a problem. Big man.

They are nose to nose in a stand off. Nico and Matthew watch...enjoying this spectacle.

COACH PURNELL

(yelling at her)

Are you always this pigheaded?!

DANI

(yelling back)

Only when it comes to protecting my clients and my children!

Her phone rings. She glances at the caller ID.

DANI (CONT'D)

(coach yell)

I have to take this! It's my daughter's guidance counsellor!
Hello...?

She storms out. Long beat. Purnell clicks his tongue.

COACH PURNELL

You telling me she knows what she's doing?

MATTHEW
Haven't had a smoke in weeks.

INT. SCHOOL - DAY

...where Dani meets with Joanne and Lindsay...again.

DANI
How many?

JOANNE
Two unexcused absences.

LINDSAY
It was PE, Mom.

DANI
I don't care what class it was.

LINDSAY
You don't?

DANI
Nope. Because after looking
through your grades and test
scores, Joanne here has determined
that none of this is your fault.

LINDSAY
(relieved, but frightened)
It's not...?

JOANNE
According to your standardized test
scores, you have a bona fide
learning disability.

LINDSAY
What?

DANI
Yeah, Linds. You know what that
means...you qualify for an IEP.

LINDSAY
IEP? That's...

JOANNE
Special Ed.

LINDSAY

WHAT? The only reason I do bad on tests is I get bored and fill in the blanks randomly. Not because I'm a retard!

DANI

Of course you're not, honey. But Joanne here has made arrangements so that you get all the assistance you need, god bless our tax dollars at work.

LINDSAY

What kind of assistance?

There's a KNOCK ON THE DOOR...

JOANNE

(spots someone in the hall)

Oh, perfect timing. Lindsay, meet Wally Sharp. Your new shadow.

Enter **WALLY SHARP**, (50) a short, sweaty, nerdy public ed lifer with halitosis.

LINDSAY

(horrified)

Shadow?

JOANNE

Mr. Sharp will escort you to each and every class, and he'll go over each and every assignment with you.

WALLY

Don't worry. I'm very low key, the other kids barely notice me.

Wally takes a hit off his INHALER. Off Lindsay's look of abject horror....

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

As Lindsay and Dani push down the hallway, through throngs of teens...

LINDSAY

This is humiliating! You can't do this to me!

DANI

Get your grades up, we'll talk
about rescinding your sentence.
You'll thank me for this one day.

LINDSAY

I'll thank you for classifying me
as a retard? In your dreams.

WALLY

(wheezing)

Lindsay...wait up! If we hurry we
can catch the end of sixth period!

He runs to catch up with her. Lindsay stalks off mortified.

Dani feels bad...but only a little. CUT TO:

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL FIELD - NIGHT

...where Dani is walking towards a lit up FOOTBALL FIELD,
talking on her CELL.

DANI

Terrence, this is Dr. Dani. Again.
I'm concerned about you...your
whole team is. Please, call me
back. Or call...someone...just to
let them know you're okay.
Okay...?

She snaps her phone shut, exhales. She's clearly worried.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL FIELD - NIGHT

A football is snapped, players collide.

REVEAL we're not at a pro game -- this is high school
football. In some ways even more intense.

Cheerleading squad (which includes Lindsay) cheers....

CHEERLEADERS

BE...AGGRESSIVE! BE-BE-AGGRESSIVE!

ON THE FIELD: Ray, Jr. catches a pass for a first down.

IN THE BLEACHERS

Dani and Angela cheering.

DANI

Way to go, Ray!

ANGELA
Let's go, Syosset! Run up the
score!

DANI
Please tell me you didn't.

ANGELA
Just a friendly wager with a woman
from church.

DANI
(appalled)
Ma!

Ray, Sr. appears next to Angela...

ANGELA
Look who's here!

RAY SR
Hey, Ma.

Angela gives Ray a big HUG. Dani wants to slap her mother.

DANI
You don't get to sit here. And you
don't get to call her Ma, either.

ANGELA
It's fine, Danielle. Sit.

She gives her mother a look...how could you??

RAY SR
Don't make a scene, Dan. We're all
cheering for the same team, right?

Before Dani can respond, her CELL RINGS. She checks caller
ID. It's...

DANI
Terrence? Ohmygod, where the hell
are you?

TERRENCE (O.S.)
Right behind you.

She turns around...

A LARGE MAN with popcorn, wearing shades and a baseball cap
pulled down low, is sitting in the BACK ROW. He waves, no
one sitting next to him on either side the wiser.

INTERCUT BETWEEN THEM ON THEIR PHONES

Dani trying to keep anyone from hearing her call...

DANI

What are you doing *here*?

TERRENCE

I told Ray Jay I'd pop by the game.
He texted me the info.

DANI

You're texting with my *son*?
Terrence....?

TERRENCE

Boundaries, I know. But did you
catch that two handed chuck on the
last play -- I taught him that.
Good trick to put some space
between him and the DB. Boom.

Off Dani's frustration...she nods for him to meet her.

EXT. BLEACHERS - MOMENTS LATER

Dani meets with Terrence behind the bleachers.

TERRENCE

Sometimes a man needs to get up
into the wind, do some thinking.

DANI

I appreciate that, but you can't
just disappear like that.

TERRENCE

I've been thinking about what you
said...

...a TEENAGE BOY passes:

TEENAGE BOY

Hey, Mrs. Santino.

DANI

Hey, Joey.

The boy keeps going, but then turns back. His look says it
all -- was that Terrence King?

TERRENCE
 (quiet, just for her)
 -- about making peace with my
 mother. I'm ready.

DANI
 (genuine)
 That's great, Terrence. Good for
 you.

TERRENCE
 I never went to her grave. She's
 buried near Newark.

DANI
 That would be a big step, and it's
 not far at all.

TERRENCE
 Cool. We'll be back in a couple of
 hours.

Dani looks at him... Did she hear right?

DANI
 'We'll?'

TERRENCE
 You'll have to drive. I can't
 really drive. I mean I can, but I
 had my license yanked for a couple
 of DUI's last year.

She looks at him like he's nuts....

DANI
 Terrence. I can't take you to
 Newark right now...

TERRENCE
 (like a child)
 Okay.

She sees the look on his face...he's vulnerable. This
 opportunity may never arise again.

EXT. BLEACHERS - MOMENTS LATER

Ray Sr watches her as she grabs her PURSE and COAT from the
 bleachers...

DANI
 Work emergency, Ray you got the
 kids covered?

RAY
Yeah...sure.

As she rushes off...

EXT. PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

...where Ray Sr has clearly followed Dani to the parking lot. He watches as Terrence King gets into Dani's car with her. Kids begin to mob the car as Terrence is SPOTTED. Terrence happily signs some quicky autographs before getting in.

KID
That's Terrence King!

Some more kids go running by...

RAY SR
What the hell's he doing with my wife?

Off Ray's perplexed look...

END ACT FOUR

ACT FIVEEXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

On the road: Dani driving. Terrence fiddles with her radio -- her preset buttons are all oldies rock or news.

TERRENCE

You mind?

DANI

Sure. Just nothing with pimps and hos.

He spins the dial to a station playing Miles Davis cool jazz.

TERRENCE

Now don't you feel stupid.

(then)

Jazz and football are the same. There's a rhythm, a tempo and a plan, but you gotta be ready to improvise on the fly. Seat of your pants. Never boring.

DANI

Nobody ever tore their ACL playing bebop music.

TERRENCE

True, dat.

They listen to the music.

TERRENCE (CONT'D)

So what's your deal, Dr. D?
Where's the pain in your past?

DANI

Why do you assume there's pain?

TERRENCE

(undeterred)

The only person I know more pissed off than me is you. According to you, where there's anger there's pain.

DANI

I'm happy to share my pain...with my shrink.

TERRENCE

That's all right, I know the drill.
Ray was a dog, you kicked his sorry
ass out, and now he wants to screw
you on the cheese. Why any man
would cheat on a fine looking lady
like you I don't get.

She shoots him a look: how do you know that?

DANI

(peevied)

Ray Jay's gonna be in the Guinness
Book for world's biggest mouth.

Beat. Then:

DANI (CONT'D)

We got married very young... and
very stupid. Dad drank. Mom
gambled. I...ran. Ray rescued me.
Took care of me...and a few other
women along the way, apparently.

Terrence clocks that.

TERRENCE

I guess we're both throwaways.

DANI

(realizing he's right,
painful as that is)

Guess we are.

As they pull off the expressway in Newark....

EXT. CEMETERY - DUSK

A small headstone: Loretta King. Born 1963. Died 1990.

Terrence stands over the grave, unsure how to proceed. Dani
bundles up against the cold wind.

TERRENCE

How am I supposed to feel?

DANI

There's no playbook for this.

He nods, kneels in front of the grave...Dani takes a few
steps back to give him his space, watches as he mumbles
something barely spoken to his mother/to himself.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Dani watches from a respectful distance, moved by the sight of this HUGE HULK, kneeling over this worn, untended stone.

After a moment, she realizes...Terrence is sobbing.

TERRENCE

Couple of mistakes and the team's
just gonna throw me away. Just
like they all do.

Finally it all makes sense.

She quietly puts her hand on his shoulder, supportive.

Something he's just not used to. He wipes away his tears, pulls it together. And throws his arms around her.

Dani embraces him with a maternal hug. Something he's probably never had.

Off that breakdown/breakthrough tableau....

INT. SCHOOL - DAY

Lindsay and her cheerleader friends are hanging out on the lawn with boys. Lindsay is talking to a CUTE GUY when...

MALE VOICE

Lindsay Santino...yoo hoo.

Lindsay turns around, mortified to see Wally Sharp, looking for her.

CUTE GUY

Who's that guy?

LINDSAY

Oh...I have no idea.

Lindsay goes over to her friend MAXINE...

LINDSAY (CONT'D)

Maxine...quick, cover for me.

Maxine goes over to Mr. Sharp.

MAXINE

Are you looking for Lindsay? She
went that way....

On Lindsay, going in the opposite direction.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

...where Lindsay moves through crowded hallway...only to realize Mr. Sharp is in hot pursuit. He sees her, she ducks quickly into the...

INT. GIRL'S BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Lindsay enters, several girls are SMOKING.

GIRL
Hey, Linds. What's up?

LINDSAY
(casual)
Hey, Charlene. Not a whole lot.

And with that, Lindsay jumps up onto the WINDOW LEDGE.

EXT. DANI'S STREET - DAY

...where Dani's drives, on the phone, excited.

DANI
I think Terrence had a big
breakthrough last night....

INT. TRAINING FACILITY - DAY

...where Matthew talks on the phone, TK working out with the other players in the background.

MATTHEW (ON THE PHONE)
Well, he showed up for practice.
So that's good. We'll call it a
victory if he can stay out of
trouble for more than five
minutes...

INT. DANI'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Speaking of staying out of trouble...Dani's adrenaline surges as she sees: a **SQUAD CAR** in the driveway of her house.

DANI
Jesus. I gotta call you back.

She jams the CAR into PARK...jumps out of her car, sees

Lindsay in the squad car backseat, looking hangdog.

DANI (CONT'D)
Lindsay??

A COP approaches.

DANI (CONT'D)
Officer, I'm her mother, what's
going on??

COP
Your daughter here took the speaker
off a McDonald's drive through box.

DANI
With what, her bike?

COP
Her car.

DANI
She doesn't have a car.
(slow boil)
Or a license.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - NIGHT - LATER

...a tow truck sets down a MINI COOPER, driver's side
thrashed, broken side mirror dangling sadly.

Ray Jr. gets out of the TOW TRUCK passenger side.

TOW TRUCK DRIVER
That'll be two hundred dollars. We
take cash or check.

Dani looks to the upstairs window. Lindsay ducks out of the
way, but not fast enough. Dani burns.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

A ball of fire, Dani yanks open the front door, storms
through the foyer. Ray, Jr. tries to slow her down.

RAY, JR.
Mom, think twice before doing
anything crazy. Judges frown on
parents killing their kids.

...and Dani wheels on him.

DANI
And YOU! Since when did you become
the town crier? Is there anyone
you don't blab my business to?

As she motors upstairs, Ray Jr calls up to her:

RAY, JR.

Teenagers feel a loss of support as
the result of divorce and turn
outwards to fill that gap!

DANI (O.S.)

Stop reading my psychology books!
You don't understand them!

INT. LINDSAY'S ROOM - NIGHT

...where Dani bursts into Lindsay's room.

DANI

What are you some kind of idiot?!
You could have killed somebody!

LINDSAY

That shadow guy chased me into the
girls bathroom, Mom, he followed me
out the freakin' window! I
couldn't take it anymore, so I...
got the car keys from Ray Jays
locker and went to Mickey Dees for
some fro yo. To clear my head.

To clear her head?? Dani's heard enough. She calmly takes
LINDSAY'S CELL PHONE from her.

LINDSAY (CONT'D)

What are you *doing*?

DANI

Well, you're never leaving the
house again, so you won't be
needing this.

Lindsay is outraged, leaps out of bed.

LINDSAY

Mom! What about cheerleading?? You
can't do this!

DANI

Unless you're out feeding the
homeless or helping disabled nuns
across the street, grounded means
you are at home! And you're going
to help pay for the damage! And
the court costs!

As Dani starts to exit...

LINDSAY

Fine! I'll just fail out of school. You can't make me learn.

...she turns back to Lindsay, genuinely sad:

DANI

Why does such a smart girl refuse to take herself seriously?

LINDSAY

I had you as my role model.

Bulls eye -- Dani snaps, picks Lindsay up by her BRA STRAPS, eyes burning mad:

DANI

For 17 years I was the perfect wife, the perfect mother. I packed lunches, went to PTA meetings...I sacrificed everything for this family. And all I get in return is a bunch of LIES.

They're nose to nose....

LINDSAY

(defiant)

You talking to me... or Dad?

Dani raises a hand to slap Lindsay, when:

ANGELA (O.S.)

Danielle!

Her mother has appeared in the DOORWAY.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Go to your room!

Off Dani shaking... she's just pulled a TK.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dani sits on the floor under the window, head in her hands. Angela comes in. Waits.

DANI

(shakes her head)

Seventeen years, I never raised a hand to my kids.

As maternal as Angela can muster:

ANGELA

It happens.

A long beat.

DANI

I remember that.

After a beat, Angela backs out, shuts the door.

Off Dani, tearing up for the first time.

INT. LAWYER'S OFFICE - DAY

...where Dani and her LAWYER sit across from Ray and his lawyer. It's tense.

DANI'S LAWYER

My client is entitled to half the money your client has earned during their seventeen year marriage, plus alimony.

RAY'S LAWYER

She would be entitled to quite a bit of my money, if my client still had any, but most of it sadly was lost in the economic downturn.

RAY

(with a shrug)

Bad times in the garment business.

DANI

You are so full of it, Ray, the city should charge your mouth a sewer tax.

Ray just smiles.

RAY'S LAWYER

Additionally, we will be asking the court to consider your client's fitness as a mother, given the dangerous nature of the patients coming into the home for hypnotherapy...

DANI

The nature of my patients?? Is this a joke?

RAY'S LAWYER

Terrence King is a known drug addict, currently charged in a felony assault. And finally, we will be asking for limited alimony due to your client's disregard for the sanctity of the marital relationship.

Off Ray's smug smile, and Dani, fuming....

INT. MEN'S BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

...where Ray is taking a leak. Dani BARGES IN.

RAY

What the hell...?

DANI

Do you have a tail on me, Ray?

RAY

Should I?

GUY IN A SUIT

(also at the urinal)

Hello, this is the *men's* room.

DANI

(eyes down)

More like the little boy's room.

The Guy in a Suit zips up, high tails it out of there.

DANI (CONT'D)

You're challenging my fitness as a mother?

Ray zips up, turns to her.

RAY

Stop playing the wounded wife card, all right? Fact is...you were a rescue mutt, I turned you into a show dog. Gave you everything. When you got bored with manicures and shopping for shoes, I let you go back to school, set you up with your little therapy practice...

DANI

You condescending cheating sonuvabitch.

RAY
You've always known who I was, Dan.

DANI
I knew you were ruthless in
business...

RAY
(pointed)
Well, now you've become business.

As Dani takes that ominous reality in...he walks out of the bathroom.

As some other MEN walk in...they do a 180, confused, leaving Dani staring at her own reflection.

CUT TO:

INT. DANI'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

...where Dani's asleep, but a SOUND causes her to open her eyes. A CAR DOOR opens and closes. What the hell? **It's 4 am.**

She jumps out of bed, looks out the window, sees... Nico in the driveway. He motions hello with a two finger salute.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Irritated, Dani opens the front door, robe, hair mussed, finds Nico waiting.

DANI
Nico, it's four in the morning.

NICO
Your patient is in a crack house
and he's got the Monday night game
in fifteen hours.

DANI
(omg, confused)
Terrence...? I don't understand,
we had a major breakthrough.

NICO
Fine line between breakthrough and
breakdown.
(then)
You're the only one he'll talk to.

DANI
Okay...put him on the phone.

NICO
He's not picking up.

Now she realizes what he's asking.

DANI
No. No. No. You don't
understand...I'm in the middle of a
nasty custody battle here - if my
husband finds out that I left my
kids alone in the middle of the
night to go to a crack house...

NICO
I would never ask you to do that.

He motions to the CAR -- out steps **XENO**, a huge Ving Rhames
looking character.

NICO (CONT'D)
That's Xeno. He has a degree in
early childhood development...

DANI
You're joking.

NICO
Yes. He's ex-special forces, but
he loves kids.

Dani tries to process her choices here.

NICO (CONT'D)
(serious, quiet)
We're talking about a man's *life*.

Dani exhales...yes, they are.

DANI
What do you wear to a crack house?

END OF ACT FIVE

ACT SIXEXT. DANI'S HOUSE - NIGHT

...where Dani quietly exits the house (dressed down -- jeans, tennis shoes and sweatshirt.) She climbs into Nico's car.

DANI

I need to be back by sun-up. I can't have my kids wake up and find Xeno in the kitchen....

NICO

Not a problem.

DANI

Is that a promise?

NICO

When you know me longer you won't have to ask that question.

As they drive away, they pass that **SILVER CAMRY** up the block from her house, the Weasley Guy **firing pictures with a long lens**. Suddenly, Dani puts it all together...

DANI

That's how he knows...Ray has that guy tailing me.
(panics)
Ohmygod, I can't do this. Turn the car around.

NICO

I can't do that.

DANI

Fine, I'll just pull a TK, do a jump and roll...

She opens the door...he never slows down.

DANI (CONT'D)

DAMN IT NICO!

NICO

That guy's not going to cause you any problems.
(looks her in the eyes)
You have my word.

Nico says it with such authority that she can't help but believe in him. Frankly, at this point, she has *no choice*.

EXT. RUN DOWN HOUSE - NIGHT

A run down house with bars on the windows, two scary pitbulls at the backyard fence barking.

At the curb in the car...Nico kills the engine.

Dani realizes how deep in she is in this moment.

DANI
(gallows humor)
I've never been to a crack house,
is there a special handshake?

NICO
Start by getting out of the car.

She girds herself, climbs out of the car. Strides up the walkway -- freaking on the inside, but never showing it.

She knocks tentatively on the door. No response. Turns back to Nico (who's leaning against the car) for guidance.

NICO (CONT'D)
Louder.

She knocks louder. She hears noises, tries to see through the front window, spots what might be Terrence.

DANI
Terrence, I know you're in there.
Unlock the door so we can talk.

Nothing.

DANI (CONT'D)
Don't do this, TK. You're better
than this.

The eastern sky begins to get light. Her frustrations with family, divorce, life boil over... she starts banging on the door now:

DANI (CONT'D)
TERRENCE. I dragged myself out of
bed, left my kids home with a
complete stranger who probably is
scaring the crap out of them right
about now.

Nothing.

DANI (CONT'D)

I gave up my goddamn beauty rest for you, you selfish sonuvabitch! Fine...you're not coming out, I'm washing my hands of you...don't call me at 4 am, don't show up at my son's football games, and lose my freakin' number.

She starts walking towards Nico when...

...the sound of the locks being undone, the door cracks open, Terrence comes out...all the bravado gone.

Dani walks towards him slowly. Holds out her hand...he doesn't take it. He sits down on the STOOP.

TERRENCE

I'm not better than this.

She sits down next to him. Deliberates carefully before choosing her words. These words may be the difference between TK coming home with her...or not.

DANI

Terrence, I know what it's like to come from the wrong side of the tracks... what it's like to finally have something worth having, and to believe deep down, in a place you never look...that you don't deserve it. But Terrence, the people who threw us away, they're the ones who fumbled. Our pain is our fuel, like it or not. People like us either kick some ass, or get our asses kicked. The choice is ours.

Terrence nods a smile of recognition.

DANI (CONT'D)

If you walk away with me right now, I promise I will never, ever give up on you, whether you like it or not. But if you go back inside...

She shrugs as if to say...*nothing I can do for you.*

A moment, then...he stands. What's he going to do?

He reaches down for her hand. He lifts her up.

And they walk towards the car...this giant man and this tiny woman.

EXT. NICO'S CAR - NIGHT

They drive home. Dani glances at Terrence, curled up asleep in the back seat of the car.

DANI
I don't think he can be left alone.

NICO
I'll sleep at his house. He won't be out of my sight until the game.

DANI
Then he goes straight to rehab.

NICO
I will drive him there myself.

DANI
I'll go with you.

They drive in silence.

NICO
I couldn't do what you do.

She looks at him, surprised by what appears to be a compliment.

NICO (CONT'D)
Never understood what kind of person would want to be a shrink.

She hadn't thought of it quite like this...

DANI
We've all got our addictions. Some people it's alcohol. Some it's... bread. I guess...I'm addicted to being needed. What about you?

NICO
I'm addicted to not being needed.

She has to laugh. They exchange a smile for the first time.

And we suspect that Nico and Dani have more of a spark or connection than we might have initially surmised.

EXT. DANI'S HOUSE - DAWN

The sun is just peeking over the horizon as Nico pulls into her driveway. Dani climbs out of the car.

INT. DANI'S HOUSE - DAWN

As she opens the front door, Xeno passes her...

XENO
(really deep voice)
I made banana pancakes.

DANI
(doesn't know what to say)
Thanks.

XENO
So long, Angela.

He shuts the door on his way out. Beat.

DANI
(confused)
Angela...?

REVEAL, standing in the kitchen doorway, eating a plate of pancakes....

DANI (CONT'D)
(weakly)
Mom...?

ANGELA
Good morning, Danielle. Can I have
a word with you?

And she's not happy with her daughter right now.

Off Dani's look...

END OF ACT SIX

ACT SEVENINT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Dani lays on the couch, a wet cloth on her head. Jeanette brings her over some TYLENOL and a GLASS OF WATER.

JEANETTE

So Angela read you the riot act,
huh?

DANI

(imitating her mother)
"A crack house! In Brooklyn! What
kind of mother leaves her kids in
the middle of the night?!"

JEANETTE

Hey, she's one to talk. She bet
all your sweet sixteen money on the
horses.

DANI

Yeah...and won. That's how we got
that microwave.

They laugh.

JEANETTE

How's the headache?

DANI

Mezzo mezzo.
(then)
I promised myself I'd make a better
life for my kids. What'd I end up
with...a cheating husband, ugly
divorce, and a custody battle.

JEANETTE

Hey, you're living the American
Dream.

DANI

(she chuckles, then)
I can't be expected to drop
everything and leave my kids in the
middle of the night. Lindsay needs
me. I don't want to ever look back
and say I didn't do everything I
could to help her.

(then)

I have to give the money back, Jen.
Find another way to make ends meet.

JEANETTE

I hear you.
 (bummed, but supportive)
 Maybe Fuzzy has another opening.

The DOORBELL RINGS.

Dani gets off the couch (careful to put the wet cloth in an ashtray, not on the wood table).

REVEAL around the corner...Lindsay, who has overheard this whole conversation. And we see the guilt in her eyes.

INT. FOYER - CONTINUOUS

A DELIVERY MAN holds a large FED EX BOX.

DELIVERY MAN

Dani Santino?

Off Dani's surprise....

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Jeanette watches as Dani opens the box... it's filled with Hawks paraphernalia -- Hawks cap, jacket, sweatshirt, cold weather toque, even a Hawks blanket.

JEANETTE

Whoa this is some serious swag.

Taped to the top of the box is an envelope marked DANI SANTINO. Dani reads the NOTE:

DANI

(oy, reading)
*"See you at the game. This is not
 a request. Coach Purnell."*

She pulls out some TICKETS. Jeanette's jaw drops as she examines them.....

JEANETTE

Jesus, these are SEASON FIELD
 PASSES. This is like the golden
 Wonka Ticket times a thousand, Dan.
 The holy grail.

Jeanette rubs the PASSES against her skin...smelling them.

JEANETTE (CONT'D)

If you quit, can you at least keep these.

Lindsay and Ray Jr enter...see all the paraphernalia.

RAY JR

Whoa...what do you got there?

JEANETTE

(in pain)

Field passes. For the game today.

RAY JR

(beyond psyched)

You're kidding?! We're going to the game?!!

Sees the look on their expectant faces...

JEANETTE

(so quiet)

We gotta go.

Off Dani's look...

EXT. HAWKS PRACTICE FACILITY - DAY

Cold, blustery fall afternoon. The parking lot is crowded with players, coaches, family, friends, equipment bags all being loaded.

Dani parks nearby, Jeanette in the passenger seat. Kids in back. They all get out of the car. She spots Matthew, loading players onto the bus. He spots her, waves her over.

DANI

I'll just be a minute. Wait here.

As Dani crosses towards Matthew...Lindsay pulls out her confiscated CELLPHONE from her pocket.

INT. SILVER CAMRY - CONTINUOUS

...where Weasly Private Eye, parked nearby, takes pictures of Dani. Suddenly, the PASSENGER DOOR OPENS, NICO slides in.

NICO

Hey, scumbag, how are you?

PI reaches for a GUN under the seat. Nico gently stops him.

NICO (CONT'D)
 You don't want to do that.
 (then)
 Besides, I brought you a gift.

He dumps some PHOTOS onto PI'S LAP. PI's face turns ashen...

NICO (CONT'D)
 Last time I checked, hookers were
 still illegal in New York.

PI
 What do you want?

NICO
 It's more about what you want.
 Here are the options: I could get
 your license suspended for some
 illegal wiretaps - the Callum
 divorce you worked on, particularly
 nasty. Or I could send your wife
 some potentially embarrassing
 photos.
 (nods re the photos)
 Or, I could just offer you these...

He pulls out a pair of TICKETS from his breast pocket.

NICO (CONT'D)
 Rest of the home games this year.
 50 yard line. Comes with parking.
 In return...you disappear. Along
 with any unflattering photos you
 might have of a certain woman.

The PI thinks long and hard about how to play this... then
 snatches the tickets out of Nico's hand.

NICO (CONT'D)
 Pleasure doing business with you.

Nico slides out of the car. And we know Nico's kept his
 promise to Dani - she will not be hassled again.

BACK ON DANI

As she blows on her COLD HANDS, waiting for Matthew, Dani
 gets a TEXT on her PHONE. She pulls it from her pocket.

It reads, simply: "DON'T QUIT."

Taking Dani by surprise, because it's from....

DANI

Lindsay?

Before she can even process this, Matthew approaches.

MATTHEW

Hey, we have a rehab facility all set up to receive TK after the game today. Coach thanks you. We all do.

(senses her trepidation)

I hope last night wasn't too much for you...because we'd like to send you some more clients. If you're up for it.

She pauses, looks back at Lindsay, leaning against the car, watching, they exchange a brief smile. And Dani realizes in that instant: Lindsay is PROUD of her.

For maybe the first time.

And she realizes...that opportunity to send a message about taking yourself seriously, that opportunity is right now.

DANI

I am. Up for it.

MATTHEW

Good.

He gently takes her FIELD PASS from her, hangs it around her neck.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

Hold on to your tights. That there's a pass to a whole new world.

She smiles. He smells her hair.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

Guess I'm gonna be needing a lot more of those bread sticks.

DANI

(nods, smiles)

For now.

They have a moment. Then, he gets up on the player's bus and the door closes behind him....

A light, dusty snow has begun to fall, the kind that freshens the world.

Dani spots Terrence, on the players' bus, looking out the window. With a haunting sadness, he puts his hand up to the WINDOW.

Dani responds by putting her hand up as if to meet his hand. He nods ever so slightly, appreciative. A powerful moment broken by...Dani's PHONE RINGS...she sees the caller ID.

DANI (CONT'D)
Faye? Everything okay?

FAYE (ON THE PHONE)
I did it, Dr. Dani. *I lost the six pounds!* You're a total lifesaver.

As Dani watches Terrence drive off...she doesn't know whether to laugh or cry.

DANI
(almost to herself)
Congratulations. You should feel proud.

FATBOY SLIM'S "PRAISE YOU" kicks in.

FATBOY SLIM
We've come a long, long way together, through the hard times and the good...I have to celebrate you, baby. I have to praise you like I should.

QUICK SHOTS OF

-- TK's face in the window.

-- Dani shuts her phone, watching him go.

-- Lindsay watching her mother...proud.

-- Nico watching Dani from his car...a small trace of a smile on his face.

As the bus disappears from sight, she pulls her knit Hawks toque out of her pocket, pulls it down tight, heads back toward her car. A beat, then:

DANI
(re Lindsay)
How the hell did she get her cell phone back?

She smiles ever so slightly. The MUSIC CARRIES US OUT

FATBOY SLIM

*...I have to praise you. I have to
praise you. I have to praise you
like I should.*

And we....

SMASH TO BLACK.

END OF PILOT