

UNTITLED CUSACK/MCCABE/ELMORE/CAVELL WALL STREET PILOT

Timberman/Beverly Productions  
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TEASER

CLOSE ON A RUNNING FAUCET

A sparkling stream of New York City municipal water jets from the spigot of a distinctive FRESH NORDAQ FILTRATION SYSTEM into an equally-distinctive BLOWN-GLASS CARAFE.

WIDEN OUT to REVEAL we're in --

INT. RESTAURANT KITCHEN - NIGHT

As a KITCHEN RUNNER finishes filling the carafe, turns off the tap, fast-walks the water toward the dining-room door, bringing us through the kitchen, past various prep stations where LINE COOKS work furiously to arrange banquet trays full of hors d'ouvres. The trays are in turn grabbed by a seemingly never-ending line of WAITERS and WAITRESSES, who then hurry them out into the dining room.

We TRACK WITH OUR RUNNER, still holding his carafe, as he bursts through the dining-room door and into --

INT. TIME WARNER CENTER - PER SE - CONTINUOUS

Lavish party at the top of the world. All the men (and the crowd, we'll note, is mostly men) wear tailored suits whose subtle differences in quality reveal the job titles of their owners: bottom of this pyramid are the ANALYSTS, top are the TRADERS, and within each group there are even more subtle differences determined by rank -- nobody here would dare out-dress his boss.

Our Runner makes his way through the crowd, sets his carafe down in front of an overworked BARTENDER, who barely acknowledges its arrival. As the empty-handed Runner starts back toward the kitchen, we STAY WITH THE WATER as the Bartender pours a glassful. Almost immediately, a different hand picks up the glass and again we FOLLOW, which brings us finally to JACKSON HOLLIDAY (20s, handsome, trader-elegant) as he nods his thanks to the bartender, takes a sip.

Jackson's huddled with three other traders, SETH (early-30s, slick), the others' immediate boss, DEAN (20s, former prep-school jock), RITCHIE (20s, a Beta working to look like an Alpha), each holding a drink that's clearly not water. Seth watches the others, clearly waiting for an answer --

DEAN

Just so I'm clear -- you're asking  
how much we'd need to earn to make  
sure all our descendants'll be  
rich?

SETH

(yes)  
Your kids, their kids, their kids'  
kids...

RITCHIE

Forever?

SETH

'Til the sun explodes or burns out  
or... whatever the hell it's  
supposed to do.

JACKSON

How many kids do we have?

SETH

As many as we goddamn want.

RITCHIE

But don't you have to set some  
assumptions? What if Iran nukes  
the East Coast? What if the Feds  
eliminate the estate-tax exclusion?

SETH

Assume none of that happens.

The three junior men think for a moment, maybe doing quick  
math, maybe trying to figure the answer Seth wants.

RITCHIE

Fifty?

Seth nods seriously, turns to Jackson.

JACKSON

Fifty sounds good.

Seth turns to Dean.

DEAN

I say seventy-five.

Seth smiles, apparently satisfied.

SETH

Either way, play your cards right,  
get lucky a couple times, you can  
get there.

JACKSON

To seventy-five million dollars?

SETH  
Sure, why not? Lotta guys make  
that in a year.

JACKSON  
Conklin, for example.

RITCHIE  
Shit, maybe in a down year.

JACKSON  
Hard to see getting there on  
commission.

Seth nods as though this is what he's been getting at.

SETH  
See, that's what I keep telling  
you: no one stays a trader forever.  
(beat)  
Except maybe Bradford.

The three junior men chuckle dutifully. Seth acts as though something just occurred to him.

SETH (CONT'D)  
(to Jackson, deadpan)  
That reminds me -- have you thought  
about how it makes me look to have  
one of my guys seen drinking water?

RITCHIE  
It's all right -- anyone notices,  
they'll assume he's an analyst.

DEAN  
Or a faq.

SETH  
(deadpan)  
Isn't that the same thing?

Again Dean and Ritchie chuckle dutifully. Jackson doesn't take the bait --

JACKSON  
Tokyo's back from lunch in half an  
hour. My Japanese is bad enough  
sober.

SETH  
Jesus, you ever seen how much the  
Japs drink at lunch?

Before Jackson can respond (assuming he's even planning to), a VOICE outside the circle does it for him --

BRADFORD (O.S.)

You know one drawback to being head of trading? No more business travel. Everybody comes to you.

(to Seth)

You should keep that in mind while you're angling for my office.

All four look up at ROGER BRADFORD (50s, tired), who in turn makes a point of not watching Seth's reaction, instead rattles the ice in his empty glass in the direction of the Bartender. The Bartender steps over, pours him a refill.

SETH

Not sure I'd say I'm "angling" for it, just figure you've gotta get tired of it sooner or later--

(exaggerated innocence)

How long's it been now?

Again Bradford ignores Seth, this time because he's turned his attention to Jackson --

BRADFORD

Conklin sent me to bring you over.

This news sends a visible shockwave through the group. For a moment, even Seth loses his veneer of cool --

SETH

Him?

Bradford pretends not to notice Seth's upset, but we can tell he's loving it. He goes on as though this is no big deal --

BRADFORD

One of the Chinese used to be a general or something -- Conklin wants to trot out the war hero.

JACKSON

I wasn't a war hero, I was a battlefield intelligence officer for six weeks, then I got blown up.

BRADFORD

(deadpan)

Not certain that's the way he wants you to tell it.

Bradford starts to lead Jackson away. Seth, having recovered himself, holds out his AMBER-COLORED DRINK to Jackson.

SETH

You might not be a war hero, but  
you can at least show up drinking  
something brown.

INT. TIME WARNER CENTER - PER SE - MOMENTS LATER

As Bradford guides Jackson through the crowd --

BRADFORD

Under no circumstances do you talk  
business -- especially not business  
we have with them. He's bringing  
you in to charm them. Charm them.

We see now they're headed for a small huddle of men in the far corner of the room. At first, because of the positions, we only see four of the five: SYDNEY COHEN (60s, rich and soft), Conklin's in-house counsel; a CHINESE TRANSLATOR; former Red Army general MR. ZHANG (60, military bearing); and his junior partner, MR. LIN (40, stylish), living embodiment of the new-rich, bigger-is-better *Tuhao* style.

As Bradford and Jackson get closer, the fifth member of the group comes into view, the best-dressed man in this room of men who'd never out-dress their boss: J.D. CONKLIN (late-40s, elegantly handsome), Master of the Universe.

Conklin has clearly just made a joke -- he shares a BELLY LAUGH with Lin, while the Translator works to suppress a grin; Zhang, however, remains stone-faced. Conklin continues to laugh, but his eyes flick slightly to the side, clocking Bradford and Jackson's approach.

CONKLIN

(to Zhang and Lin)  
You gentlemen remember Roger  
Bradford, our head of trading. And  
this is Jackson Holliday, a fellow  
former military man.

Jackson's smile wavers only slightly at this introduction. Handshakes all around as the translator translates. For the first time, Zhang smiles slightly --

ZHANG

(to Jackson, in heavily-  
accented English)  
Afghanistan?

JACKSON

Iraq.

Zhang answers in rapid-fire Chinese. The Translator nods.

TRANSLATOR

Colonel Zhang says battlefields  
differ but all war is the same.

Jackson's not quite sure what to make of this.

JACKSON

I'll... take his word for it.

The Translator stares, uncomprehending. Conklin frowns.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

Tell him I defer to his experience.

The Translator delivers this message; Zhang smiles fully now. A wave of relief passes through the group.

INT. TIME WARNER CENTER - PER SE - SAME

From ACROSS THE ROOM, we watch as Jackson continues to help Conklin charm the Chinese -- we're now too far away to hear their conversation. REVEAL we're now in the POV of JAMIE MEADOWS (late-20s, smart, ambitious) as she observes the interaction, perhaps with a particular focus on Jackson. The man with her, DOUGLAS (late-20s), watches the group as well, clear disdain on his face. Because Douglas is (like Jamie) a lawyer, he's not part of the Trader/Analyst fashion hierarchy: his suit is expensive but conservative, basically indistinguishable from what everyone else in his department has on. Jamie's wearing the Wall-Street-female party uniform of a Diane Von Furstenberg wrap dress (and wearing it well). Douglas harbors a major crush on Jamie -- hard to blame him.

DOUGLAS

Look at 'em all -- like someone  
opened the cages at the zoo.

Jamie looks around the room, which is nothing but genteel.

JAMIE

Funny, I was just thinking they  
seem pretty tame.  
(off his look)  
My dad's been telling me horror  
stories, trying to talk me out of  
taking this job.

DOUGLAS

Your dad work on the Street?

JAMIE

He spent a couple years at Salie's  
after college.

DOUGLAS

He hate it?

JAMIE

Enough he decided to go to law  
school.

DOUGLAS

So this is how you're sticking it  
to him, huh? Follow in his  
footsteps becoming a lawyer, then  
take an in-house counsel job  
working for the kind of guys he  
became a lawyer to get away from.

(off her annoyance,  
scrambling)

He's right, you know: they're not  
tame. Just putting on a show for  
the rest of us -- cram themselves  
into Italian suits, chew with their  
mouths closed, hope they pass for  
human.

JAMIE

And if the rest of us weren't here  
they'd be double-fisting Red Bull  
and Patron, chanting "Greed is  
good" at a digital stock ticker?

DOUGLAS

Pretty much. Or else hunting for a  
stripper to gang rape.

JAMIE

That's a lovely image.

(glances at Jackson)

And in your mind they're all that  
way?

DOUGLAS

Spend four years at Deerfield  
learning to flush nerds' heads in  
toilets, four more at college  
learning to puke without staining  
their shirts, then the nerds grow  
up to be analysts and the flushers  
become salesmen, only they call it  
"trading" so no one'll realize  
they're just hawking used cars.



JAMIE

And how do we fit into all that?

DOUGLAS

We keep them out of jail.

Douglas stares at her for an awkward moment. From history, she knows where this is headed, tries to head it off --

JAMIE

Douglas...

DOUGLAS

Pretty sure this place has a roof deck --

JAMIE

Look, you're a sweet guy. I appreciate all the time you've spent helping me settle in --

DOUGLAS

-- of course, I know my place has a roof deck...

JAMIE

(tired of this)  
I'm gonna get myself another drink.

DOUGLAS

I'll come --

JAMIE

No. Just...

She moves away toward the bar, leaving Douglas to gaze after her, somewhere between forlorn and lascivious.

She reaches the bar. The Bartender may not remember any of the other drinks he's served tonight, but he remembers hers --

BARTENDER

'Nother Manhattan?

JAMIE

Might as well, I guess.

As he mixes the drink, Jackson walks up looking slightly dazed. When the Bartender sets down Jamie's Manhattan, she slides it over in front of Jackson.

JAMIE (CONT'D)

You look like you need this more than I do.

He looks at her for a long moment, then throws back the Manhattan in one swallow, nods at her gratefully --

JACKSON

I just spent half-an-hour talking about how Lin's considering ditching his Bugatti for a Viper.

JAMIE

A Venom. It's a super car.

(off his look)

I have younger brothers. Anyway, Lin won't drive one unless they raise the price.

JACKSON

Unless they raise it?

JAMIE

Lin's *Tuhao* -- "new money." Drives the Bugatti 'cause everyone knows it's the most expensive.

Jamie lowers her voice, signals with her eyes --

JAMIE (CONT'D)

(re: Douglas)

He still watching?

Jackson looks surreptitiously over her shoulder.

JACKSON

Pretending not to. Looks like you made another one.

(off her look)

Just assuming -- figure you trail them behind you like bread crumbs.

Before she can decide whether to be flattered or offended --

BOOM! A NOT-TOO-DISTANT EXPLOSION rattles the windows. The LIGHTS GO OUT. As the sound of SIRENS and CAR ALARMS drift up from the street below, a murmur of PANIC passes through the crowd befitting post-9/11 New York.

JAMIE

Jesus, should we -- aren't we supposed to... get out of here?

JACKSON

Whatever it was, didn't sound like it was real close to us.

Somebody nearby SCREAMS. A nervous TITTER of laughter in its wake. Jackson realizes his hand has moved reflexively inside his jacket; making sure no one else noticed, he lets his hand fall back to his side. A number of the people around him have their phones out - some trying to make calls, some trying to search the Web for news - but, as we gather from their obvious frustration, both kinds of service are down.

The RESTAURANT MANAGER appears at the front of the room, raises his hand for quiet. When he gets it --

RESTAURANT MANAGER  
Ladies and gentlemen, I'm sure  
there's no cause for alarm. So  
let's all just keep calm -- and  
keep drinking --  
(more nervous laughter)  
-- and I'll keep you updated as  
soon as there's news about...  
whatever that was.

As the crowd MURMURS, Jamie still looks very freaked out --

JAMIE  
I don't like this.

JACKSON  
It's okay, take it easy --

JAMIE  
I'm okay, I just -- can we -- can  
we get out of here?

Jackson eyes her like he's making a decision. FLASHLIGHTS coming out, bobbing about. Hear SETH'S VOICE --

SETH  
Jesus, Bradford, what did you do?

More anxious laughter. SIRENS far below, joined by MORE...

JACKSON  
Come with me.

He takes her by the arm and they hurry out of the restaurant.

EXT. COLUMBUS CIRCLE - NIGHT

BANG! The security door opens onto the street, where CROWDS are already beginning to form. Commotion, snatches of rumor, the SIRENS everywhere. Jackson turns to Jamie, sees she's freezing, puts his coat around her shoulders.

JACKSON

Better?

JAMIE

Yeah, thanks. I'm just -- not great in tall buildings, this kind of thing...

(looks at her cell)

I got no phone service at all --

JACKSON

Circuits're probably jammed, everybody calling each other, "Did you feel that?"

JAMIE

Yeah, I was thinking I should call my mom -- every time a cab jumps a curb anywhere in the five boroughs, she panics 'til she hears from me.

Jackson's worried he might have insulted her, makes a big deal of surveying their surroundings, spots a TOWN CAR --

JACKSON

That's one of our cars there. Want to get out of the cold, at least?

JAMIE

Definitely.

They head over to the town car.

INT. LIMO - NIGHT

They land inside, the DRIVER (40s, old school New York) glancing up at their entry. Already talking --

DRIVER

You guys know anything? Everything I got is dead.

JACKSON

Not yet.

DRIVER

Streets are only gonna get worse, you wanna get out of here? Now's the time.

Jackson and Jamie look at each other. Jackson shrugs.

JAMIE

Is it weird I don't want to go home?

JACKSON

I'm at Sixty-Third and York. If, that's okay --

JAMIE

Sure. Let's go.

She's still trying her phone, frustrated.

JAMIE (CONT'D)

Dammit --

At which point, Jackson's phone RINGS.

JAMIE (CONT'D)

Hold on -- you have service?

JACKSON

Guess it's one of those things...

(into the phone)

Hey, Pop... I'm fine... no, nobody knows... yeah, I'll call you back.

He hangs up. Shrugs.

JAMIE

Would you mind --

JACKSON

Of course.

He hands it over, looks out the window as she dials, watching the growing CROWDS on the oddly dark streets.

JAMIE

(into the phone)

Mom, it's me... No, I'm okay... I'm okay. Do you have power there?... What are they saying?

Off Jackson, what the hell is going on? --

INT. JACKSON'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

CLONK. Jackson tries the taps -- ominous sounds from the depths of the building, but no water. Huh.

JAMIE (O.S.)

Anything?

JACKSON

Not yet.

He steps back into the living room. She's lit CANDLES; the glow illuminates them both. She grins, a little awkward now.

JAMIE

Sorry I kind of freaked out back there. It's just... lotta people I grew up with worked in the towers --

JACKSON

Terrorists, they like to hit big, visible targets, get people scared. This feels more Act of God.

JAMIE

How do you know so much about this stuff? Got us out of the building, your phone works -- sure you're not a secret agent or something?

JACKSON

Superhero. You should see my Batcave.

JAMIE

That -- is an interestingly weird invitation.

She smiles at him, the candlelight working some magic.

JACKSON

Conklin and the Shanghai suits -- how you think they're making out?

JAMIE

Something tells me Conklin's gonna come out on top no matter what.

JACKSON

Let's hope so.

JAMIE

Well, no water. You got anything else to drink?

He smiles.

INT. JACKSON'S APARTMENT - LATER

And they're making out, starting to get a little heated. She pulls away after a second, fighting with her judgment --

JAMIE

Wait, wait. We can't do this.

JACKSON

We haven't done anything, yet.

JAMIE

Yeah, but we're getting close to it, and once we go down that road --

JACKSON

Why don't we just see what happens?

She shakes her head. Dammit --

JAMIE

You know what's about to happen.

And she presses against him once more, undoing the buttons of his shirt. As she does, and the situation gets more serious, TRACK DOWN along their legs until we reach --

JACKSON'S ANKLE. Which he carefully reaches down for, still locked up with Jamie, pulls the pant leg up to reveal --

AN ANKLE HOLSTER with a smallish GLOCK 38. He carefully RIPS THE VELCRO OPEN, removes the holster, shoves it out of sight.

And then they sink together into bliss, his covert action unnoticed by Jamie. Off these two, getting serious --

INT. JACKSON'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - LATER

Jamie and Jackson in bed, curled up close. His eyes POP WIDE as he hears his APARTMENT DOOR OPEN and CLOSE quietly.

He slides out of bed, pulls on his boxers, digs the HANDGUN out of his tangled clothes. Then he heads into --

INT. JACKSON'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

To find... Assistant Attorney General ALICIA BRYCE (40s, patrician beauty, flinty) waiting on his sofa.

JACKSON

Jesus, Bryce. Make yourself at home.

BRYCE

You forget, we're the ones own the apartment.

JACKSON

What are you doing here?

BRYCE

You turned your phone off. Needed to make sure you're alive.

JACKSON

I'm alive.

BRYCE

And that you haven't broken cover.

JACKSON

Except for getting a call on the Priority System when nobody else in the city had cell service, yeah, so far I'm clean.

BRYCE

That explain the girl in your bedroom?

(off Jackson's look)

Don't you like how I'm smart enough to keep my voice down?

JACKSON

We were together when it happened. Speaking of which, what did happen?

BRYCE

Explosion below ground, collapsed the water tunnels leading into the city. It's a mess. Could be weeks getting the water back on.

JACKSON

An attack?

BRYCE

Not sure yet. Either way, it's gonna get busy here, next few days. Get your game face on.

JACKSON

Clearly, you know where to find me.

She gets up, heads for the door. Opens it, turns --

BRYCE

And Jackson -- from now on? Keep your damn phone on.

She heads out. Off Jackson --

**END TEASER**



**ACT ONE**

INT. CONKLIN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT - TRADING FLOOR - DAY

The FURY OF THE TRADING FLOOR -- FIFTY OR SO TRADERS, each occupying his own six-foot-wide section of an enormously long table, each with three or four FLAT-SCREEN COMPUTER MONITORS fanned out in front of him like playing cards. This is where the magic happens, the center of Conklin's universe. The world is shaped based on the calls made in this room and those like it, ghost in the machine of the global economy.

On the walls, LCD TVs show VARIOUS BUSINESS-NEWS CHANNELS, news tickers under the bobbing heads blaze with headlines referring to the previous night's accident -- CITY REMAINS WITHOUT WATER; DAMAGE ONLY BEGINNING TO BE CALCULATED...

Here at the firm, despite the gravity of the situation, nobody's watching -- these guys (and they are virtually all guys) are here to fucking work, not catch up on current events. This place is a slaughterhouse if you're not down with the program. And these boys are all kinds of down.

FIND JACKSON at his work station, talking into his BLUETOOTH. At the stations beside of him, Dean and Ritchie do the same. Behind them, zooming up-and-down the line in a wheeled office chair that he propels with his feet like Fred Flinstone's car, Seth watches over their shoulders. Behind Seth, Bradford stalks the room, watching over everyone's shoulder.

Still concentrated on his Bluetooth conversation, Jackson glances up as Jamie makes her way along the walkway on the edge of the trading floor, headed toward the lawyers' offices. She's careful not to return his look.

Bradford, too, has noticed Jamie, moves to intercept her. She doesn't break stride as he falls into step beside her --

BRADFORD

You're late. That's not like you.

JAMIE

Don't believe I've worked here long enough to establish what I'm like.

BRADFORD

(lowers his voice)

Something I want to show you.

(off her look)

Not like that -- papers, a legal thing. Need help connecting dots.

JAMIE

Sydney's the in-house counsel.

BRADFORD

And you're his latest fair-haired boy -- or girl -- which means next time some "irregularity" turns out to be a cancer and the regulators come around looking for someone to hang, Sydney'll be the one slipping the noose over your head.

JAMIE

Are you saying you think Sydney's doing something illegal?

Bradford looks around to make sure nobody's eavesdropping.

BRADFORD

You have an email you never use?

JAMIE

I don't see what --

BRADFORD

Something from college maybe, or something that came free from a service provider, been collecting junk mail the last few years.

JAMIE

My undergrad alumnae one, but it's mostly a forwarding service --

BRADFORD

Text it to me. I'll be sending you something there. Don't check it from your work computer.

He veers off back toward his traders. Jamie opens her mouth to object, but she's cut off by the appearance in front of her of a well-dressed FEMALE EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT.

ASSISTANT

Ms. Meadows?

JAMIE

Yes --

ASSISTANT

They're waiting for you upstairs.

JAMIE

Upstairs?

ASSISTANT

Executive conference room.

JAMIE

What? Who's waiting? I don't --

ASSISTANT

(polite but forceful)

This way, please.

Jamie's caught off-guard -- is she in trouble? Did the Assistant hear any of what Bradford just said? -- no choice, Jamie lets the Assistant out of the trading floor.

INT. CONKLIN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Jamie enters to find the room full of maybe a dozen people -- half of them RISK-MANAGEMENT NUMBER CRUNCHERS, half LOW-LEVEL LEGAL ASSOCIATES, including Douglas (Jamie's love-struck companion from the party), all led by Sydney Cohen (Douglas and Jamie's direct boss, whom we also glimpsed at the party).

SYDNEY

Ah, good, you're here.

JAMIE

I'm so sorry, Sydney, the subway --

SYDNEY

I'm the one should be apologizing.

(off her confusion)

For what's about to get dumped in your lap -- although I suppose it's what one's always told about crisis and opportunity.

JAMIE

I'm not sure I'm following.

SYDNEY

(re: the assembled staff)

They'll get you up to speed.

Before Jamie can ask anything else, Sydney's out the door. She looks around, realizing she's now in charge of this room, changes her manner from "employee" mode to "command" mode.

JAMIE

All right -- get me up to speed.

As she settles in, CAMERA pulls away from her, until we've slipped THROUGH THE WINDOW and we're OUTSIDE THE BUILDING.

And now we're TRACKING down along the building. At the ground, we don't stop but CONTINUE below the surface, past the SUBWAY tunnel, down further, until we come to rest on...

INT. DEEP WATER TUNNELS

No day or night down here, deep below the bedrock, where clean water's drained from the aquifers upstate and poured into Manhattan. Pinch point of the unfolding crisis, a violently COLLAPSED TUNNEL -- SANDHOGS everywhere, the men who dig and blast these tunnels, now scrambling to fix them.

TRACK ALONG these grizzled men, almost all either Irish or, oddly, Grenadian -- so much so they've taken on each other's characteristics, odd mashup of verbal cadence, until...

We land on TWO MEN in heated disagreement. One of them is PHILIP SHAW, 52, hard, seen it all -- his shark eyes at the moment fixed on TOMMY RYAN, 50s, grizzled SANDHOG foreman.

RYAN

You kidding me with this, Shaw?  
Let me tell you what I've got here--

SHAW

I saw the news, Tommy. It's bad, I get it. Look, not like I need you to break anything -- tunnel went on its own, just like you boys've been warning it would for fifty years -- all I need's for it to stay broke 'til the pressure builds enough we can all get what we want.

RYAN

Christ, I got kids. What if they find out I did what you're asking?

SHAW

What if they find out how much you owe, who you owe it to?

Ryan grabs him by the shirt, backs him up against a stone wall. Other Sandhogs NOTICE, but nobody moves to intervene; it's between these two. Shaw gives him a humorless smile.

RYAN

You threatening me? Think about where you are, how many guys we've lost down here over the years -- sometimes never even find a body.

SHAW

This is my point, Tommy -- your boys're the ones on the front line. System fails, everyone else goes a few days without a shower, but you're the ones who die.

Ryan's angry, but his resolve is slipping. Shaw presses.

SHAW (CONT'D)

Ana know you're back at the tables?  
(off Ryan's angry silence)  
I'm not the problem, Tommy, I'm the  
guy offering you a chance to get  
square with the Shys and do right  
by your boys, put the system in the  
hands of people who get things  
done, instead of a bunch of civil-  
servant bureaucrats who won't piss  
on a burning man 'til he fills out  
the proper form.

Ryan chews on this a moment, finally lets him go. Shaw  
straightens his shirt, then pats Ryan on the cheek. A  
blessing and a warning.

SHAW (CONT'D)

Good choice, kid. I'll be in touch.

Off Shaw walking away, leaving Tommy to stare after him --

INT. CONKLIN'S LIMOUSINE - DAY

That supremely awkward car ride with a boss you barely know,  
the hellish intimacy of it. Conklin's on the phone, forcing  
Jamie to stare out the window, sun in her eyes.

CONKLIN

(into phone)

No, we gotta dump 'em.

In the domelike silence of the car we can HEAR the other  
person on the line, almost SHOUTING. The only thing Jamie  
hears clearly from that voice is one word: **ALDRICH**.

CONKLIN (CONT'D)

(into phone)

I know we're gonna take the hit. I  
told you we'd take the hit. Just  
do what I tell you, all right?  
That's what's worked so far.

He hangs up, looks at Jamie.

CONKLIN (CONT'D)

You haven't asked why you're here.

JAMIE

My mother always taught me not to  
ask questions I don't want to know  
the answer to.

CONKLIN

What if I asked you?

JAMIE

Sir?

CONKLIN

If I asked you to explain why I might choose to bring a junior associate to my meeting with the Mayor, instead of my house counsel, what would you say?

JAMIE

Well, if I were opposing counsel, I'd say, "Objection, calls for speculation."

Conklin smiles in appreciation of her joke.

CONKLIN

You're not opposing counsel. You're my counsel. And I'm asking for your opinion: why am I bringing you today?

Jamie's well aware this is a test, thinks quickly --

JAMIE

This proposal is a daring move, maybe even unprecedented, on this scale. Sydney's made a career out of being conservative in terms of what he does and doesn't view as "compliance" -- the reputation that's allowed him to build is a big part of his value to you, but in this case... Also, the speed at which circumstances can change in this age of instant information might demand someone whose definitions are more... flexible.

(beat)

How'd I do?

CONKLIN

Only thing you left out is His Honor's got a wandering eye -- I'm assuming that's not news?

JAMIE

I read Page Six from time to time.

CONKLIN

It bother you, that's part of the reason you're in this car?

JAMIE

Long as it's not all of the reason.

Again, Conklin smiles --

CONKLIN

You know why I hired you?

JAMIE

Sydney hired me.

CONKLIN

All right. You know why I let Sydney hire you? Because you grew up in Scarsdale, but your father spent his career chasing ambulances around Suffolk County -- figure that means you ran with the rich girls but you weren't a rich girl.

Jamie's flushed crimson at this. She clears her throat --

JAMIE

So you're assuming I'm hungry?

CONKLIN

I'm counting on it.

(beat)

I'm about to make one helluva bet on you, Ms. Meadows. Prove me right.

INT. STATE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE - DAY

Public sector conference room, a jarring contrast to the swank digs of Conklin's firm. Cheap coffee and decades-old nicotine stains on the walls.

Around the table sit a bevy of law enforcement personnel; federal, state and local, all in cheap-adjacent suits with ID badges -- FBI, FEMA, etc. -- all looking like they could use a little sleep.

FRANK GRIGGS, 40s, Bryce's immediate boss, heads up the meeting. Among the faces there, we see BRYCE. Tommy Ryan (Shaw's Sandhog foreman) briefs the assembly --

RYAN

Those tunnels've been down there since the city was built, haven't been updated since.

(MORE)

RYAN (CONT'D)

We've been saying since the '60s  
this was only a matter of time.

FEMA ASSHOLE

Saying it, but not actually doing  
anything to address it.

RYAN

You ever try to get a city council  
to raise taxes to fix something  
nobody'll ever see? Just be happy  
we finished Tunnel Number 3, or we  
might be looking at two years  
before we got water back into all  
the boroughs.

SOME FED

So, no chance the tunnels were  
blown on purpose?

Griggs intercedes, tired --

GRIGGS

There's a chance Godzilla smashed  
them on his way through the harbor.

(to Ryan)

You're the expert. We just want  
your best guess based on the  
available evidence.

RYAN

Most likely scenario? They just...  
crumbled into sand.

Silence as they all take this in. NYPD GUY looks over at a  
GUY WHOSE BADGE SAYS "DWP."

NYPD GUY

Time frame on the subway?

DWP GUY

Obviously it's down until we deal  
with the power surges --

GRIGGS

(cutting him off)

Subway's municipal -- you can  
sidebar on that when we're  
finished. The focus of this  
meeting is our approach to the  
investigation. Bureau'll continue  
to run point until we can rule out  
terrorism.

(MORE)



GRIGGS (CONT'D)

Once that's done, you guys from  
FEMA, EPA, DWP can fight about who  
takes it from there.

A lot of voices at once shouting over one another at this.  
Briggs holds up his hands for peace.

GRIGGS (CONT'D)

Hey. This is the way it's gonna  
be. What I want right now is to  
know how this could've happened if  
it wasn't an accident.

BRYCE

What I want to know is, are we  
looking at the Street on this?

GRIGGS

(exasperated)

You all know Ms. Bryce, from my  
office. Bryce --

BRYCE

We've seen speculating on this very  
thing happening over the last three  
years --

GRIGGS

If Wall Street's gonna bet on this  
thing, then so be it. Capitalism  
in action. Meantime, we don't have  
the resources to chase down wild  
speculations that lead nowhere.

BRYCE

Frank, you formed my task force  
because the old ways of policing  
Wall Street gave us Enron and Bear  
Stearns. How can you expect the  
task force to do any better if you  
won't even consider --

GRIGGS

(shutting her down)

I'll consider it once we've got the  
goddamn water back on and the Governor  
isn't screaming at me on the phone.  
Anyone else?

As the voices start up the shouting again, taking us to --

INT. ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE - HALLWAY - DAY

Bryce speed-walks toward the exit, phone to her ear --

BRYCE

I need you to get something  
concrete that shows he's behind it.

INTERCUT:

INT. CONKLIN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT - TRADING FLOOR - DAY

Jackson working to look like this is another trading call --

JACKSON

I'm not sure he is behind it.

BRYCE

You know where he is right now?

JACKSON

The Mayor's.

BRYCE

You know why?

JACKSON

Rumor is he's gonna make a bid to  
privatize, get in front of this  
thing while it's still hot.

BRYCE

Question is how far in front is he?

JACKSON

Conklin's been working some secret  
project the past six months, hasn't  
granted me access, or anybody else  
I know. So you tell me.

BRYCE

Anybody you can talk to?

JACKSON

I know the lawyer he took with...

BRYCE

Talk to him, see what you can find  
out without setting off alarms.

JACKSON

(not correcting her)  
I'll call you tonight.

EXT. GRACIE MANSION - DAY

Storied grounds of the New York mayor's mansion alive with activity today -- reporters baying outside the gates, SECURITY armed with assault rifles. CONKLIN'S LIMO is waved in, parks near the front. Conklin and Jamie exit. Jamie's a little overwhelmed as she's ushered towards the portico.

At the front door, they're greeted by HADEN SYKES, Mayor of New York City. Looks like he hasn't slept in days, but still projects an air of heartiness as he shakes Conklin's hand.

CONKLIN

Tough day to be Mayor, huh?

SYKES

This is nothing, J.D. Wait'll the Mets win the Series.

CONKLIN

Not gonna hold my breath. Mr. Mayor, this is Jamie Meadows, she's on my staff counsel.

Sykes eyes light up at the sight of Jamie, but he keeps it buried under that winning smile. Shakes her hand.

SYKES

(to Conklin)

No Sydney?

CONKLIN

Ms. Meadows has his full confidence.

SYKES

(to Jamie)

Welcome to Gracie Mansion.

JAMIE

Your honor.

CONKLIN

Jamie was just telling me in the car, she doesn't see any legal impediments to the proposal I'm bringing you today. Right, Jamie?

Jamie's taken aback, having said no such thing. Recovering --

JAMIE

Uh, yeah -- not so far, anyway...

SYKES

Let's take this party inside, before somebody takes a shot at me.

INT. GRACIE MANSION - DAY

Walking up the hallway towards the office.

SYKES

J.D., I hope you know what I've had to move to get you on the books.

CONKLIN

You'll be glad you did.

Jamie's PHONE RINGS, loud in the hall. Conklin shoots her a look. She grimaces, looks at the ID -- **BRADFORD CALLING**. Irritated, she ignores the call, follows Conklin and Sykes toward the mayor's private office.

INT. GRACIE MANSION - MAYOR'S OFFICE - DAY (TIME CUT)

Sykes, Conklin and Jamie. Conklin's just finished his pitch, and he waits expectantly. Sykes lets him wait a beat.

SYKES

Well, it's a compelling pitch, J.D., I'll give you that.

CONKLIN

It's more than a compelling pitch, it's the answer, and you know it.

SYKES

That's a little presumptuous.

CONKLIN

Haden, not only does this city have no water, we have no guarantee when the taps will come back on or how long they'll stay on when they do. You're buried in red tape, the unions are killing you and they don't care if nobody ever showers again, 'cause they know you'll be the one everyone blames.

SYKES

I think you're underestimating my team a little. And, you're ignoring the federal implications --

CONKLIN

I'm not ignoring anything. My counsel believes the hurdles can be cleared. But now is the time.

Sykes sighs, loosens his tie. Lights a cigarette.

SYKES

Christ, what a day.  
(to Jamie)  
You've signed off on this?

Jamie, deer in headlights, looks to Conklin. He raises his eyes. She adjusts, better this time.

JAMIE

Um. It's... doable...

Sykes thinks.

CONKLIN

Three billion a year in revenue for the city. Three billion. This is an opportunity beyond any that's ever come across your desk. Maybe that ever will. But Haden --  
(leaning in)  
-- it's an opportunity with a limited shelf life. You wait too long... I can't help you anymore.

Conklin sits back, satisfied. Off Mayor Sykes, stewing...

INT. TAO - NIGHT

Swank Asian fusion shit, a little played but still viable, where Jackson waits alone, looking good.

BOTTLES OF WATER all over, he can see them using big JUGS in the kitchen to cook and clean with. Scoping the effects of this disaster everybody's trying to muddle through.

Then -- JAMIE arrives, looking good herself, a little flushed with transit and maybe a little excitement. Jackson stands, takes her coat, they kiss lightly, then laugh. Not giddy exactly, but these two definitely have promise.

JACKSON

You look, wow.

JAMIE

(acting)  
This old thing? I only wear it when I don't care how I look.

Off his happily confused face --

JAMIE (CONT'D)

"It's a Wonderful Life"? Violet says it, right before she -- sorry.

(MORE)

JAMIE (CONT'D)

I have a movie thing, when I'm nervous I guess I --

JACKSON

No, I love it. Says it to Jimmy Stewart, right before she about causes a car accident.

JAMIE

She's no Donna Reed.

JACKSON

Sweet, sweet Donna Reed...

JAMIE

Wow, you just made that dirty.

They smile.

JACKSON

Ordered you a Manhattan. No ice, sorry.

JAMIE

I'll get by. What are you having?

JACKSON

Amstel Light.

JAMIE

Wow, I didn't realize it was 1998.

JACKSON

Shut up.

JAMIE

Should we go to an internet cafe after this? Do some Jager bombs?

JACKSON

Funny.

She looks up as her drink arrives. Gets more serious.

JAMIE

So, here's the thing -- I can't start seeing you.

JACKSON

Wait, what? Just like that?

JAMIE

I mean, I like you, I like, this, but I can't...

JACKSON

Can't what?

JAMIE

You know what the male-to-female ratio is at work?

JACKSON

I have some idea.

JAMIE

You have no idea. Even if you know the actual figure, which you totally don't, doesn't mean the same to you because you don't have to prove you belong on the floor in the first place. If it's perceived I'm in a relationship with you... they'll eat me alive.

JACKSON

How about we talk business? Then we're just having a drink, talking about business.

JAMIE

I can live with that.

He smiles. Tension broken.

JAMIE (CONT'D)

So why would Roger Bradford be calling me every five minutes trying to get me to look at figures?

JACKSON

Oh, okay, you were serious. We're talking about work.

JAMIE

(laughs, but --)  
Sorry, yeah, I mean... he's your boss, I just wondered if you had some idea what's got him so lit up. I haven't had a chance to go over the stuff yet --

Jackson hedges, not anxious to go down this road --

JACKSON

Bradford's been a weird fit, last ten years.

(MORE)

JACKSON (CONT'D)

Conklin knows their strategic ideas're too different, but Bradford's been with him from the beginning, so there's blood there... I dunno. You want me to take a look at it?

JAMIE

It's probably nothing. I dunno.

JACKSON

God, you are just completely stunning. Sorry, that had nothing to do with work.

She smiles, sips her Manhattan, avoiding his eyes.

JAMIE

You know, I'm serious. After tonight, we totally can't keep doing this. Like, at all.

JACKSON

So, then -- are we still eating, or just --?

INT. JACKSON'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jackson and Jamie in bed again, hard light of the city at night lighting them up as they make love -- deeper intensity this time than before, there's a SPARK here that seems to almost scare them both as they revel in it. On a break --

JACKSON

(breathless)

You still want to talk about work?

JAMIE

Actually, I did have some questions about the figures from --

He cuts her off with a kiss. She loves it, embraces him harder, pulling him in as they make a return trip...

INT. CONKLIN'S HOME - STUDY - NIGHT

Lights dim, Conklin behind his home desk, dressed casual while popping edamame, across from --

SHAW, a little rumpled and out-of-place in Conklin's domain.

CONKLIN

You're sure this union Sandhog of yours -- he can deliver?



SHAW

Tommy Ryan. He can. He will.

They break off as Conklin's statuesque wife MOLLY steps in.

MOLLY

Honey, I need you to --

She falls silent at the sight of Shaw. Not exactly a shudder, but he's not a person she likes to find in her home.

SHAW

Mrs. Conklin. I'm seconds away from being out of your hair.

MOLLY

Don't be silly. Get you anything?

SHAW

No thank you, ma'am.

MOLLY

(to Conklin)

The disposal. It's making that sound. Carlos said he'd send up one of his guys, but --

CONKLIN

Five minutes, love.

MOLLY

Sure.

She leaves, giving Shaw a perfunctory half-smile.

SHAW

I think she's warming up to me.

Conklin half-smiles, still on point.

CONKLIN

We need three days. Three days with dry taps, Sykes either pulls the trigger on privatizing the water, or this city'll have his head on a stick. Shaw -- I can't afford to be blindsided on this. You understand?

SHAW

J.D. -- when've I ever let you down?

Off Conklin, mulling this...

**END ACT ONE**

**ACT TWO**

INT. THE HALLIGAN BAR - DAY

Firefighter's bar in deepest Brooklyn, only there's no firefighters here today. Just a few regulars, among them TED STRADER, 40s, unprepossessing on his bar stool in a ratty tan overcoat, well-brand Scotch amber in the glass before him.

The bar's OLD-SCHOOL TV shows the news with its endless coverage of the water crisis. On the screen, SEVERAL ADORABLE, OVERHEATED DOGS and their WORRIED OWNERS. The headline scrolling below them reads, "WATER SHUT-OFF HARDEST ON FURRY FRIENDS." Ted, watching, looks sour.

TED

Jimmy, is there anything else on?  
A game, something?

JIMMY WAKE, tough 50s, the bartender, breezes over. An easy and long history between these two.

JIMMY

How many times you gonna ask me,  
Ted?

TED

Many as it takes.

JIMMY

I gotta keep current with events.

TED

But why? I mean, what are they  
telling you you don't already know?

JIMMY

Maybe they'll tell me when the  
water comes back on.

TED

You can find that out at the tap.  
Come on, anything. Hockey.  
Swimming. Honey Boo-Boo.

JIMMY

How 'bout I freshen you up on the  
house, you stop breaking balls  
about my TV?

TED

Deal.

Jimmy does so, Ted sips.

JIMMY

What's your take on all this?

TED

Act of God. What's to have a take on?

JIMMY

Please. You always got a take. My money's on, this is all gonna bite us in the ass, and when it does, you're gonna say "I told you so."

TED

Unless you've been able to wash glasses today, I'd say it's already bitten us in the ass.

JIMMY

See? There it is.

(beat)

Anyway, glasses're the least of my problems. Bar with no working men's room ain't gonna last long.

At which point, who but BRADFORD steps in, furtive as ever, out of place as he can be in this aggressively blue-collar dive. He moves over to a spot right next to Ted, sits.

BRADFORD

Can I get a Seven-and-Seven?

JIMMY

Long's you don't mind no ice.

BRADFORD

Not a problem.

As Jimmy moves off, Bradford turns to Ted. Ted ignores him.

BRADFORD (CONT'D)

Ted. It's me. It's Bradford.

TED

Roger, it's been six years, we're not like, Korea veterans.

BRADFORD

I know, I just --

TED

What's less clear to me is, what could possibly bring you here.

BRADFORD

History.

TED

Which I've heard, teaches us nothing. Think it was maybe Sting said that, after he left The Police and started to suck.

BRADFORD

You're gonna make me work for this, aren't you?

TED

Depends. What is it you're working towards?

BRADFORD

I need your help with something, understanding it all, connecting the dots. Deal's got so many layers, I figure you're one of maybe twenty people on Earth who can unravel it.

TED

Bet I can guess one of the others.

Jimmy arrives with Bradford's drink. He takes it directly from Jimmy's hands, sips greedily. Ted notices.

TED (CONT'D)

Still got that Battery Park thirst.

BRADFORD

And you, you got no demons, I suppose.

(off Ted's shrug)

I should've listened to you, should've ducked out when you did.

TED

Nobody listened to me. And I should've kept my mouth shut, anyway.

BRADFORD

What I got now -- Ted, I could take him down. Put him in a hole deeper than Madoff, I'm this close.

TED

That sounds like a lonely and frightening place to be, Roger.

(MORE)

TED (CONT'D)

(sighs, can't resist --)  
So, tell me -- what's our friend  
doing now that's so different from  
what he's always done?

BRADFORD

He's getting sloppy. Greedy.  
Betting his personal stake against  
the fund. Not just a little, I  
mean across the board.

TED

You got the math to back this up?

BRADFORD

Got the trades, my guys buying shit  
from this shell corp --

TED

(getting it)  
-- but you can't prove he owns the  
shell corp.

BRADFORD

I can if you'll help me. Plus I  
got an in with counsel. Girl  
they're grooming, Jamie Meadows,  
only been with us a few weeks so  
she hasn't started drinking the  
Kool Aid...

TED

Pulling another victim into this.  
Besides yourself, I mean.

BRADFORD

Come on, Ted. You used to --

TED

I used to think you had better  
sense. You know how many people've  
been "this close" to getting  
Conklin? And yet somehow he never  
gets gotten -- how 'bout that?

(Bradford's got no answer)

You sure this isn't about you  
topping out as a trader, never  
taste the real sweetness, like  
Sydney and Conklin even though you  
were with them from the jump?

BRADFORD

(nodding toward the TV)  
It's different now.

Ted can't believe what Bradford's intimating --

TED

You saying he did this?

(Bradford doesn't deny)

Far be it from me to accuse anyone of sounding paranoid, but I think the tinfoil in your helmet might be leaching into your brain.

BRADFORD

All I know is, he sat with Sykes today, pitched him on privatizing the City's water.

(as this hits Ted)

That's what I'm trying to tell you, Ted -- he's off the reservation, thinks he can't be touched.

TED

That's because he can't be touched.

(breaks off)

I say, let Conklin be Conklin. Might as well be him doing it. You remember '08? Silicon Valley? S&L's in '87? Those guys were clowns. Least Conklin's a pro.

(beat)

My question is this: when he pulls you in for the conversation that he will very soon be pulling you in for -- what are you gonna say?

BRADFORD

What do you mean?

TED

I mean, you gonna turn your back and walk away, wind up on a barstool living out of an RV? Or are you gonna take what he'll offer, use what you got to get what you want? Which we both know is not to destroy Conklin. Conklin made you.

BRADFORD

I'm gonna fix the mess we made. If nobody does anything, assholes like Conklin are going to continue to rape and pillage until there's no economy left to destroy. Who's gonna stop them, the SEC? SEC can't find its own dick with both hands and a flashlight.

Ted smiles, sad.

TED

Have another drink, Bradford. You sound like you could use it.

INT. CONKLIN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT - BREAK ROOM - DAY

Jamie pouring coffee -- as she's set upon by Dean and Ritchie, both in high spirits.

DEAN

Junior counsel, looking correct.

JAMIE

(easy)

Are you really commenting on my appearance, Dean?

DEAN

Just saying, you look different today. Like, lit up, or whatever.

JAMIE

I'm on a juice cleanse.

RITCHIE

More like on a high, being Conklin's prom date for the Mayor's ball.

DEAN

Handsy Haden Sykes, swordsman extraordinaire.

RITCHIE

How about it, Meadows, he make the big move?

JAMIE

He's leaving his wife, actually. We want to keep it quiet until we can control the media announcement.

She finishes doctoring her coffee, heads out into the hall. They follow her like pilot fish, out into --

INT. CONKLIN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

As she walks, she meets eyes across the bullpen with BRADFORD, who still may be wearing the suit he had on yesterday. Dean and Ritchie don't notice.

DEAN

So, what was it like?

JAMIE  
Gracie Mansion?

DEAN  
No, not Gracie Mansion, the pitch.  
Sykes gonna bite?

DEAN (CONT'D)  
Jackson says it looks good.

RITCHIE  
Speaking of Jackson, little bird  
told me he swooped you out of the  
party when the shit went down.

DEAN  
Player's gotta play, right?

RITCHIE  
Actually, they'd make a cute  
couple. See 'em in one of those  
profiles in W magazine, where the  
wedding's gonna be...

DEAN  
See, this is exactly how I know  
you're gay.

RITCHIE  
What, I'm secure enough to admit  
he's a catch -- 'specially once he  
takes over the team after Seth gets  
made head of trading.

DEAN  
You mean after they come for  
Bradford with the butterfly nets --  
you see he's wearing the same suit  
he had on yesterday?

RITCHIE  
What, again?

They've reached Jamie's door. She stops, turns, dismissive --

JAMIE  
Gentlemen. A pleasure as always.

DEAN  
Okay, well. You need anything --

She shuts the door on them. After a beat, they turn to go.



DEAN (CONT'D)

She's mine.

RITCHIE

Keep dreamin', stud.

INT. CONKLIN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT - JAMIE'S OFFICE - DAY

She settles behind her computer, but instead of starting to work she glances out at the bullpen, pulls out her SMARTPHONE, logs into the OLD EMAIL ADDRESS she mentioned to Bradford, sees that there is, indeed, a message waiting with an attachment marked, "JAMIE\_EYES\_ONLY.PDF". She hesitates --

She checks once more to confirm nobody's eavesdropping, then surreptitiously opens the file, starts paging through it. Some kind of legal document, pages and pages of it. On every one of them, we see the word **ALDRICH** sprinkled liberally.

As Jamie reads this, her brow furrows. But before she really gets into this, she's startled by the sound of voices approaching. She hurriedly shuts off her phone, puts it away. She takes a breath to calm herself, turns her attention to her computer screen as though this is what she's been doing all along...

INT. CONKLIN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT - BOARD ROOM - DAY

Conklin in the middle of addressing the senior staff. Powerpoint slides on the wall behind him. A power table of New York finance's best and brightest, all eyes on Conklin.

CONKLIN

Bottom line, gentlemen -- this deal will happen. Sykes has tacitly agreed to the terms, it's a question of when the call comes.

ONE SUIT

Yes, but -- J.D., even if he agrees, which, unless I misunderstand you, he has not actually done yet --

CONKLIN

He will.

ONE SUIT

-- even then, the Feds are gonna tear this to pieces.

CONKLIN

The Feds won't bark as long as we commit to completing the Groton upgrade. Which we will do.

One Suit looks at Another Suit, both dubious. Conklin looks around, like he's the only guy in the room who gets it.

CONKLIN (CONT'D)

Guys, I'm not gonna lie, I expected a little more enthusiasm here. This deal stands to make the firm an unholy shit-ton of real money. It's there for the taking, getting nibbled away at piecemeal by the piranhas. We're just consolidating who controls it. It's good for the city, good for the economy, and it's good for us. City had two hundred years to fix its water situation, and they fucked it up every step of the way. Now, it's our turn. So, I ask you: are we in, or are we in?

Off the board members, watching Conklin, who already knows what the answer is going to be...

**END ACT TWO**

**ACT THREE**

INT. JAMIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A beautifully-kept but Manhattan-small two-bedroom apartment, the perfect starter home for a single woman on her way up. Everything first-class immaculate, framed artwork lining the hallways. The windows have a high view of lit-up cityscape.

Dressed in her home-alone uniform of sweatpants and old T-shirt, hair pulled back away from her face, Jamie sits on the couch with her legs tucked underneath her and her LAPTOP AND TV SCREENS lighting up her face.

On the TV, we see another NEWS BROADCAST, this time featuring a FAMILY (FATHER, MOTHER, THREE KIDS, all with tear-streaked faces) looking on as their HOUSE BURNS. SEVERAL FIREFIGHTERS stand nearby, angry and powerless. The headline on the screen reads, "LACK OF WATER HAMPERS FIREFIGHTING EFFORTS."

REVERSE to find Jamie's still poring over the documents Bradford sent her, the word ALDRICH prominent in the text.

A CHIMING SOUND snaps Jamie out of her work reverie. She moves to the HOUSE PHONE on the wall nearby, picks up.

JAMIE  
(into phone)  
*Hola, Ignacio. No, no te preocupes. Yes, late night visitor, don't judge me. Quien es?*

As she listens, the anticipatory smile she trying on fades. Becomes more businesslike, as she sighs, intones --

JAMIE (CONT'D)  
No, it's okay. Send him up.

TIME CUT TO:

MOMENTS LATER,

As she opens the door to behold -- BRADFORD, starting to look like he's at the end of his rope, eyes wild. You can't smell it, but he reeks of alcohol, to which Jamie reacts.

JAMIE (CONT'D)  
Bradford, Jesus.

BRADFORD  
We have to talk.

JAMIE  
You smell like a distillery.

BRADFORD

I'm sorry. Haven't had a chance...

JAMIE

Never mind, just come in.

She pulls him inside, shuts the door behind him. He surveys the place, rightly feeling he doesn't belong. That tottering gait of a veteran drunk trying to cover, almost succeeding.

JAMIE (CONT'D)

Can I get you something? Coffee?

BRADFORD

Drink'd be nice.

JAMIE

(merest hesitation)  
Seven and Seven?

BRADFORD

Please.

She moves into the kitchen to make it, as he leans against a tall stool nearby, looking beat.

JAMIE

I don't have any ice.

BRADFORD

Nobody has ice. Did you read it?

JAMIE

Some of it.

BRADFORD

And?

JAMIE

And I'm still trying to make heads or tails.

BRADFORD

Exactly. Layers, that's Conklin's thing. You think you've peeled it all back, but there's always one more. Man is a genius.

She returns with his drink.

JAMIE

Didn't have Seagrams, you'll have to make do with bourbon.

He takes it, drinks greedily.

JAMIE (CONT'D)  
(not harsh)  
Easy, cowboy.

BRADFORD  
Been that kind of day.

JAMIE  
You want to sit?

BRADFORD  
I want to know you'll help me.

JAMIE  
Bradford --

BRADFORD  
Jamie, I picked you because you  
have a soul, it's not too late for  
you. I can see these things.

JAMIE  
Don't go ascribing me too many  
attributes. I may disappoint you.  
People don't become counsel at  
hedge funds for the sake of  
community service.

BRADFORD  
I have records showing Conklin  
unloading the same stock as the  
fund is buying. But only if I can  
link him to the shell company.

JAMIE  
Okay...

BRADFORD  
Only somebody in legal can pull  
those documents.

JAMIE  
That's privileged information --

BRADFORD  
I know.

JAMIE  
I could be disbarred. Bradford, I  
could be arrested.

BRADFORD

You don't know what he's capable of. If I told you, you'd say I was drunk and paranoid.

JAMIE

You are drunk and paranoid. Now let's get you home, okay?

She starts to usher him to the door. On their way --

BRADFORD

Jamie. You have a light coming from you. You know that?

He stumbles on the step to her door. She catches his arm before he takes a header.

JAMIE

Go see your wife and kids. I'm sure they're worried about you.

He gives a bitter half-laugh, steps out the door and wordlessly walks off down the hall. She watches him a beat, then softly closes the door behind him.

INT. CONKLIN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT - TRADING FLOOR - DAY

It's a frenzy today. The ubiquitous monitors alight with activity, TRADERS working phones. Find JACKSON --

JACKSON

(on phone)

No, it's up four percent, last ten minutes. The hell is happening?

(beat)

No, you tell those Beijing pricks they can wait on the...

Jackson sees Jamie, working to catch his eye. When it works, Jackson smiles. Jamie makes an "I need to talk to you" gesture/face. Jackson wraps up business --

JACKSON (CONT'D)

I gotta go. Call you back.

He heads over towards her, his smile widening.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

Hey. Kind of surprised to see you gunning for me in here, after all you said the other --

JAMIE  
(cutting him off)  
Come with me.

She takes him by the arm, starts hauling him off away from the floor. Jackson surprised --

JACKSON  
Okay, then.

INT. CONKLIN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT - WOMEN'S ROOM - DAY

WHAM! The door slams open as she drags him inside, locks the door behind them. A theory of what's happening starting to dawn on Jackson as he takes in the surroundings --

JACKSON  
Wow. This is, okay. You're serious? Because I can --

She hits him.

JAMIE  
I didn't bring you in here for sex, idiot. What do you take me for?

JACKSON  
Oh. What are we doing in here?

JAMIE  
I need to talk to you.

JACKSON  
In here?

JAMIE  
Yes, in here. There's like six girls working at this place, this is basically my private domain. What do you know about a holding company called The Aldrich Group?

JACKSON  
Aldrich? I've been buying from them all morning, why?

JAMIE  
(sighs, gathers --)  
Bradford says it's Conklin's personal shell corp.

Jackson's face tells us this is HUGE. And bad.

JACKSON

That'd mean Conklin's having our investors buy from him directly -- how many laws does that violate?

JAMIE

Pretty much... all of them. And it gets worse.

JACKSON

How can it get worse?

JAMIE

If something were to go wrong with the Chinese *tuhao* deal, Conklin's portfolio would be damaged, yes?

JACKSON

It'd take like, a rhinoceros-sized dump. He's deeply leveraged with the Chinese.

JAMIE

Okay. So, what if he's planning to torpedo the Chinese deal so he can buy back those same shares for pennies once it all falls apart?

JACKSON

(does math, then --)  
You're saying Bradford can prove Aldrich is Conklin?

JAMIE

I'm saying he wants me to help him prove it.

Jackson hedges, pretends to think. This is exactly what his investigation is about; she's awfully close to some dangerous truths, and he's got to decide how to handle it. For now --

JACKSON

You're not actually considering this?

JAMIE

The stuff he sent me is tangled as hell. But I know enough to know when something's not right, and I'm telling you -- something about Aldrich is not right.



JACKSON

(careful)

There're lots of ways of looking at these deals, they're complicated --

JAMIE

Forget it. Forget I said anything. I knew it was a bad idea to talk to you about this.

JACKSON

Jamie, wait. Hold on --

But she's already turned and fled the room, leaving the door open behind her. He sighs, what a fucking mess. Starts to follow her out, only to run into a FEMALE ASSISTANT heading into the Ladies'. She looks at him askance.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

Sorry.

He edges out past her into the fray, looking for Jamie. But she's already gone, as we hear --

JACKSON (CONT'D)

(pre-lap)

It's coming to a head. We need to do something.

Taking us to --

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

Circling Bethesda Fountain, now parched and still, are Jackson and Bryce.

BRYCE

Relax. It just means keep your head down and focus.

JACKSON

It's blowing up beyond my department. Bradford spouting off to counsel is a big deal. And now she's got her teeth in it --

BRYCE

She. She who?

JACKSON

Jamie Meadows, the junior counsel.

BRYCE

You mean the one you're banging?

JACKSON

Jesus, Bryce!

BRYCE

You keeping your eye on the ball?

JACKSON

What if we approach Bradford directly?

BRYCE

Jackson, you know as well as I do there's no way we'd ever prove Conklin owns that shell corp. Whole reason we have you in there is 'cause he's too good at dead-ending the paper trails.

(Jackson can't deny)

Here's what you're gonna to do: you're gonna go to Conklin with the information about Bradford.

JACKSON

What?!

BRYCE

You're concerned, you love the man and want to help him -- but you're worried about his discretion, and don't know where else to turn.

JACKSON

So what, we just burn him down?

BRYCE

He's too unreliable to reach out to, and he's jeopardizing a federal investigation. You burning him helps Conklin know he can trust you, and it clears space for you to move up.

JACKSON

There's gotta be another way...

BRYCE

Jackson, do you have any idea how much we've spent on you the last three years, training you, building your cover?

(MORE)

BRYCE (CONT'D)

When we put you under, you knew you'd be getting close to the people we're investigating for fraud and market manipulation -- what'd you think was gonna happen when we caught them at it?

JACKSON

But Bradford's on the right side...

BRYCE

There are no good guys here, Jackson.

(softer)

These guys are breaking the law. We're not the SEC, pussyfooting around after a cut of the bad trades, we're here to put Conklin behind bars for all day. That's the stakes.

Jackson stays still, gazing at the parched fountain. Bryce moves on, leaving him there.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

I expect to hear from you tomorrow.

INT. CONKLIN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT - TRADING FLOOR - NIGHT

End of the day's trading, the day traders packing up, the hardcore closers working it to the last second.

As it draws to a close, Sydney comes to Bradford -- puts a friendly arm around his shoulder, at which Bradford JUMPS --

SYDNEY

Bradford. You got a minute? Big Guy wants a word.

Bradford sweats under Sydney's arm. See the OTHER TRADERS glance over, marking what's happening without really looking.

BRADFORD

I was hoping to get across the bridge before traffic --

SYDNEY

Won't take long. Come on.

Bradford lets himself be steered off, into --

INT. CONKLIN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT - CONKLIN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

-- where Conklin is making drinks at his bar.

CONKLIN

There he is. You managed to drag him in, huh Sydney?

SYDNEY

He was trying to duck out, you believe that?

CONKLIN

Bradford. We never see you anymore, you don't call, you don't write -- drink?

BRADFORD

(nervous)

Sure.

CONKLIN

D'Asombroso Reserve tequila, tastes like caramel heaven. Ice?

Conklin holds up a CUBE from a mountain of ice cubes nearby. Bradford MARKS the fact that it even exists here.

BRADFORD

Please.

Conklin drops in the cube. The liquor looks delicious. He hands it off to Bradford, keeps one for himself.

CONKLIN

To getting it done.

They drink. Conklin pours another.

CONKLIN (CONT'D)

You tell him why he's here, Sydney?

SYDNEY

Figured that's for you to do.

CONKLIN

You want to sit?

BRADFORD

No thank you.

(accepting another drink)

What's this about?

Conklin sighs.

CONKLIN

I messed up, Roger. It's a damn shame, but there it is.

(MORE)

CONKLIN (CONT'D)

I've overlooked your value to this firm. I'm usually pretty good about that kind of thing, but lately -- well, sometimes it's like I've lost sight of what's important. The fact is, you've been here since the beginning. You took the leap with me, didn't have to -- you did it because you believed. And we as a firm would not be where we are without your instincts, your talent -- your honesty.

Conklin bolts his tequila. Looks at Bradford. Bradford does the same, hands off his glass. Conklin refills it.

CONKLIN (CONT'D)

As a trader, I know there's only so high you can rise. One of the flaws of the system. Once a trader, always a trader, pinned to that bonus at the end of the year, always behind the 8-ball. Never a real, meaningful cut of the action.

SYDNEY

It's time for all that to change, Bradford.

BRADFORD

Wh -- how do you mean?

CONKLIN

We're offering you a full partnership. From now on, should you accept -- your voice is equal to ours on company matters.

SYDNEY

You're off the floor and where you belong, Bradford -- making decisions that affect the future of this firm and all its funds.

CONKLIN

I can only apologize for waiting this long, that was my bad. But I won't take a chance on losing you to some bunch of assholes with whom you share no history or fealty. That is unacceptable, given what we've been through. So. What do you say?

Bradford says nothing for a long moment. His mouth works soundlessly, but he stops. Tears in his eyes, he wordlessly shakes Conklin's hand, face breaking into a grateful smile.

CONKLIN (CONT'D)  
Beautiful! Now we really do have something to celebrate. Sydney?

SYDNEY  
No, thanks. Congratulations, Roger. Long overdue.

He claps Bradford on the back as Conklin freshens him up yet again. Handing over the drink, he holds his shoulder --

CONKLIN  
One thing. You might want to drink up, enjoy the spirits -- because as part of this deal? You're going to get the help you need. Understand?

Bradford, in the act of swallowing, looks caught. Guilty.

BRADFORD  
It's just -- it's been hard, since Karen got sick and, then all this --

CONKLIN  
I understand. It's a crappy thing, and I hate having to do it. But we can't have your judgment affected. I need you to be the angel on my shoulder. Here on out, we keep each other out of trouble. Okay?

BRADFORD  
(struggling)  
Sure, J.D. Of course. Thank you.

Off Conklin, raising a glass, looks like problem solved...

INT. CONKLIN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT - CORRIDOR - LATER

They've been drinking it up pretty good as they pour out of Conklin's office onto the near-deserted floor. Bradford is clearly soused at this point, laughing and clinging to Conklin like a lifeboat.

BRADFORD  
You comin'? It's late.

CONKLIN  
I gotta stay. Heavy hangs the head, all that crap.

BRADFORD

You're such an asshole, you know  
that? I mean seriously.

Bradford gently pats Conklin's face, nodding, sincere.

BRADFORD (CONT'D)

Thanks, J.D. I won't let you down.

CONKLIN

Go home, Roger. Sleep it off  
tomorrow, we'll see you on  
Thursday, decide how to move ahead.

BRADFORD

Love it. Night, gents.

Bradford heads to the elevators, presses the button, sways as  
he waits. The car arrives, doors open to reveal -- PING! --

SHAW, against the back wall. Bradford looks up, sees him --

SHAW

Going down?

-- breaks into a grin, steps inside. The doors close.

INT. CONKLIN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT - CONKLIN'S OFFICE - DAY

The next morning, Sydney follows Conklin in.

SYDNEY

Should I shut it?

CONKLIN

Leave it open. You ready?

SYDNEY

What.

CONKLIN

Sykes's in.

SYDNEY

We're doing it?

CONKLIN

Called me five this morning, agreed  
to fast-track the privatization  
pitch, run interference with the  
unions, the whole shebang.

SYDNEY

Holy crap.

CONKLIN

Says he'll grease the right federal  
wheels, get us set to knock down  
any resistance. We did it, Sydney.  
(Sydney's speechless)  
Let's bring in the boys. We got  
celebrating to do.

And now Conklin waves in the traders, backslapping,  
congratulating one another, they're all fucking geniuses.  
Conklin smiling over them all, shaking hands, laughing.

While, unnoticed by all -- the TV MONITORS now have a NEW  
STORY they're covering. Under the headline "TOP TRADER TAKES  
A PLUNGE," we MOVE IN ON THE SCREEN as we hear the anchor --

TV ANCHOR

...trader Roger Bradford's Audi S8  
apparently broke through the guard  
rails and plunged off the Tappan  
Zee bridge early this morning. A  
search of the river nearby turned  
up Bradford's body. While  
toxicology is still pending...

STAY ON THE SCREEN, as it bridges us to --

INT. THE HALLIGAN BAR - DAY

MATCH CUT of the same news broadcast brings us to the T.V.  
behind the bar in Ted's old haunt. Find Ted in his usual  
spot, going through bills with a cup of bar coffee.

JIMMY

'Nother coffee, Ted?

TED

How can I say no?

JIMMY

Where'd you sleep?

TED

RV.

JIMMY

You need to get a place.

TED

Got a place. Just happens to have  
wheels...

(notices the TV)

Hey, turn that up?



Jimmy finds the remote, turns up the TV. Ted watches --

TV ANCHOR

Bradford got his start at Salomon Brothers, but was recruited by visionary hedge-fund guru J.D. Conklin to head trading for what would quickly become one of the...

TED

Son of a bitch.

JIMMY

What, you know that guy?

Ted, shock on his face forming into something harder, gulps a last sip of coffee, gathers his shit and heads for the door.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Just put that on your tab, then?

TED

I'll see you later! I gotta go --

And he's out the door, leaving Jimmy shaking his head.

**END ACT THREE**

**ACT FOUR**

EXT. CONKLIN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT - DAY - ESTABLISHING

Sleek modern shard of glass housing our trading floor. Over which, we hear --

SYDNEY (O.S.)

I know we're all a little bit in shock this morning. It's been a rough couple of days.

INT. CONKLIN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT - DAY

The Conklin group assembled for a rare -- and brief -- moment away from the business of trading, as Sydney addresses the troops about Bradford's passing.

SYDNEY

Roger Bradford was a brilliant trader, a consummate family man, and a very dear friend. My heart today is broken along with all of yours.

VARIOUS ANGLES on traders, lawyers, analysts. TEARS in Jamie's eyes. Jackson watching, eyes hard on CONKLIN, who is behind glass in his office on the phone.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

I would encourage you not to pay too much heed to what you hear on the news. They'll try and drag his name through the mud; don't let it get to you. Bradford was working on the greatest deal this firm has ever brokered when he passed, and he believed in it with everything he had.

JAMIE meets eyes with JACKSON. They hold a glance for a beat, marking the falsity of this -- then he looks away.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

I know that, above all, Roger would want us to get back to work, and not linger over his passing. The man didn't miss a day of work in twenty years, sick or well, family crisis, you name it. Let's honor his example by getting out there and kicking some ass. Okay?

MURMURS of assent. Sydney looks them over, nods.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Okay. Back to work.

As they disperse, back to the phones and computer monitors. Jackson moves over to Jamie. Awkward for a beat.

JACKSON

You all right?

JAMIE

You hear that business about Bradford believing in the deal?

JACKSON

Pumping up the troops. I wouldn't read too much into it.

JAMIE

(unmoved)

Yeah.

SYDNEY (O.S.)

(hailing --)

Jackson.

Jackson turns to see Sydney at Conklin's office door.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

A word?

JACKSON

Sure.

(to Jamie)

Talk later, okay?

She nods, distracted. He breaks off from Jamie, follows Sydney, heading into --

INT. CONKLIN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT - CONKLIN'S OFFICE - DAY

Jackson enters, finds Conklin behind his desk. Sydney flanking nearby. With no preamble --

CONKLIN

We're making you interim head of trading in Bradford's absence.

Jackson looks surprised. Looks to Sydney.

SYDNEY

Congratulations.

JACKSON

Thanks...

CONKLIN

Sound a little unsure, Jackson.

JACKSON

No, it's just -- I mean, isn't Seth next in line?

SYDNEY

Seth's a good trader, but he's a climber. Always politics with him.

CONKLIN

I want to see how you handle it. We're headed into a turbulent period, I need somebody who's not afraid to shake things up. You seem like a straight shooter. Doesn't matter whether you are, perception is half the game. Clients feel like they can trust you. So that means, I'm going to trust you.

SYDNEY

You'll have access to all areas of our business, no secrets. You'll be signing a nondisclosure-noncompete of my own creation. Short version is, you fuck with us, we kill you.

CONKLIN

So. You in?

Jackson, reeling, pulls it together.

JACKSON

Absolutely.

CONKLIN

Great. Now get the hell out of my office and go make me some money.

Off Jackson, about to do just that...

INT. ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICES - NIGHT

Bryce burning the midnight oil at her desk, single lamp to work by. After a beat, JACKSON storms in, glares at her. She returns his gaze evenly over her glasses.

BRYCE

Congratulations, head trader.

JACKSON

You proud of yourself?

BRYCE

What is your problem?

JACKSON

The man is dead, Bryce.

BRYCE

You think I had something to do with that?

JACKSON

I think you went behind my back, outed Bradford to Conklin.

(beat)

I don't hear you denying it.

BRYCE

Jackson, you're my inside man. How could I have told Conklin anything without your involvement?

JACKSON

Still trying to figure that out.

BRYCE

How about this -- you have my word that I didn't.

JACKSON

I've been a trader long enough not to put much stock in peoples' word.

BRYCE

I didn't do this to the man, Jackson. Conklin did.

(softer)

You signed on for this because you were a believer, want to help stop the rape and pillage of our country at the hands of this asshole and assholes like him. This is the way.

He's still pissed. Bryce won't let him evade her eyes.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

I need you, Jackson. Let's get this thing done.

After a beat, he shakes his head, walks out. Bryce exhales.

EXT. JAMIE'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Jamie headed up the sidewalk towards her apartment.

VOICE (O.S.)

Jamie.

She turns to see whence it came, beholds -- TED, some down the street from her. Rumpled in his overcoat. She hesitates at the sight of him, uncertain.

JAMIE

Do I know you?

Ted steps forward, shakes his head.

TED

No. But I knew Roger Bradford.  
And I know J.D. Conklin. And we  
both know that Conklin killed  
Bradford. So there's that.

The seriousness of this taking hold in her --

JAMIE

Who the hell are you?

TED

My name is Ted. And what I know  
about Conklin is enough to get us  
both killed. I won't tell you it's  
a good idea to talk to me -- it's  
probably not.

JAMIE

I have to go.

She starts onward towards her waiting door. Ted follows --

TED

Bradford came to see me the day  
before he died. Said the only  
person he felt like he could  
trust... was you.

She holds again, looking at Ted, unnerved.

JAMIE

What do you want?

TED

Doesn't matter what I want. If you want to find out who you really work for, we have a lot to talk about. But I'd rather not do it here. Too many eyes.

Off Jamie, confused, on guard -- but intrigued...

INT. CONKLIN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Conklin steps in from the cold, the house sumptuously acquitted, warm of light even in its opulence. Coat and scarf hung by the door, then he steps into --

INT. CONKLIN'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

To find Molly making dinner with his kids TARA (13) and SAM (9) -- the picture of upper-crust domestic bliss, just a wealthy, happy family living the American dream.

MOLLY

Look who's back from the salt mines.

TARA

Hey, dad.

CONKLIN

I could use a drink.

TARA

I'll make it.

MOLLY

In your dreams, sweetheart.

TARA

I know how!

MOLLY

Finish your homework. I'll make the drink, thank you.

She moves up, kisses Conklin. Tenderness --

MOLLY (CONT'D)

I heard about Roger. You okay?

CONKLIN

It's been a tough day. I need to call Joyce.

MOLLY

You haven't done that yet?

CONKLIN

Wasn't sure what to say.

MOLLY

Drink first, but then, call her.  
It'll make her feel better to hear  
from you.

CONKLIN

Okay.

MOLLY

Meantime, you hear the news?

CONKLIN

What news?

MOLLY

Watch this --

She moves over to the sink -- turns on the faucet -- WATER  
springs forth from the spigot, clear and steady and cold.  
She turns proudly towards him, exhibiting like Vanna White.

MOLLY (CONT'D)

We're back, baby. Isn't that  
great?

THE WATER, pouring endlessly into the stainless steel sink.  
Pushing slowly in on this, we match to --

PUSHING IN ON CONKLIN. As he watches the water once again  
moving in his home, there is just a trace of enigmatic SMILE  
touching his face. And off this image, we...

FADE OUT.

**END OF PILOT**