

Doubt

by

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* 10202 West Washington Boulevard * Culver City, CA 90232 *

TEASER

FADE IN:

INT. DRUNK TANK -- 7 A.M.

It's a holding cell in downtown Chicago. A cop outside. And inside, benches line the outer wall, an open toilet in one corner. The place is occupied by the expected: drunks, drug addicts, bikers, brawlers; most of them sleeping off whatever brought them here. No one talks - because they all fall into two categories: those who want to pretend they were never here and those who have been here so often they're bored.

After a few quiet beats, a cop enters the outer area with a middle aged man, WARREN RAPOPORT, in a suit.

COP
Calzonetti!

No response. The cop bangs on the bars.

COP (CONT'D)
Calzonetti! I know you're in there.
Your client's here.

One of the drunks, laughs; another, 35, wearing a day old suit (VINCENT J. CALZONETTI), stirs and starts to get up...

LAUGHING DRUNK
(amused)
You mean his lawyer's here.

COP
Yeah. You've got someone else's
vomit in your hair but I'm the idiot.
(calling)
Calzonetti!

CALZONETTI
(approaching, hungover)
Come on, Matthews, inside voice.

CLIENT
(stunned)
What did you do? We're supposed to
be in court in an hour.

CALZONETTI
I know. Right upstairs.
(client's still
confused)
I was out late. Needed a wake up
call.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

And Vince smiles, a little pleased with himself.

INT. COURTROOM -- DAY

Calzonetti, tired, sits beside Rapoport at the defense table. Vince has cleaned up as best he can in the Men's Room - but his hair still isn't quite right and his suit may never be. At the plaintiff's table sits the defendant - a 22 year old RICH KID in a suit. He's represented by JANET STEWART and RODNEY DALE, both well put together, seasoned attorneys. Currently, Dale is walking a 22 year old WITNESS through his testimony. JUDGE ELEANOR FRANKLIN, 45, seen it all, heard it all, trying not to be too bored, presides.

WITNESS

I couldn't see what happened but Jim was screaming - 'Where the hell did that car come from? He cut right through the red'--

CALZONETTI

(jumping to his feet)
Objection. Hearsay.

DALE

Exception. Excited utterance.

JUDGE FRANKLIN

Overruled.

Vince accepts and sits down.

DALE

And then what happened?

WITNESS

Jim was pinned behind the wheel for like two hours until the paramedics--

He stops. Because once again Calzonetti is on his feet. But this time, he's risen hesitantly and hasn't actually said anything. The Judge follows the witness's gaze and turns to Vince, slightly perturbed...

CALZONETTI

I'm sorry. I've just been sitting here thinking I should keep my mouth shut because you've made your ruling and obviously I respect that and everything but...

(abashed)

...What's 'excited utterance' mean?

Judge Franklin is a bit surprised by the question, and slightly put off, but turns to Dale to let him explain.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DALE

(annoyed, by rote)

It's a spontaneous statement made in response to and concomitant with a startling event--

CALZONETTI

Right, right, right, I remember that now. It's one of the six exceptions to the hearsay rule--

DALE

(dry)

Seven.

CALZONETTI

Wikipedia says...

(realizing, again
embarrassed)

You went to Harvard, right?

(looks to jury, judge,
knows he's an idiot)

I'm sure you're right. Sorry to slow us down.

And Vince once again sits down beside his client who is trying to hide his horror.

DALE

(to witness)

Continue.

WITNESS

The defendant was hardly hurt at all, didn't seem to regret having blown that light and--

CALZONETTI

(processing, curious)

Why?

(off the reactions,
getting to his feet)

Why is it an exception?

JUDGE FRANKLIN

Sit down, Mr. Calzonetti.

CALZONETTI

(piecing it together)

It's because we figure people have to figure out lies, right? Plan them. People don't just blurt out lies in the spur of the moment.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALZONETTI (CONT'D)

(to Jury)

I mean, you guys have never done that right; screwed up and then just blurted something out that you knew wasn't true?

They all have; but they're not about to say anything. Vince turns back to the annoyed Judge.

CALZONETTI (CONT'D)

I mean it doesn't really matter, right; the law is the law; admissible is admissible; but it is interesting.

(off the Judge)

...I'll sit down now.

And so he does. Dale and Stewart and their client, glance to the Jury, knowing they're slightly fucked.

INT. COURTHOUSE HALLWAYS -- LATER

Vince exits the courtroom into the bustling hallways with Rapoport. The place is a beehive of activity: criminals, cops, civil litigants, attorneys all intermingling. Vince is in a hurry; his client tries to keep up.

RAPOPORT

Thank you so much. You saved my ass, my business, my life--

Vince nods and presents Rapoport with a piece of paper. Rapoport looks at it and his mood changes completely--

RAPOPORT (CONT'D)

...Bit steep, don't you think?

CALZONETTI

No. I think it's very cheap, compared to the value of your ass, business and life.

RAPOPORT

Well, yeah, but...

(delicate)

You got lucky. I mean, you were kind of an idiot and it just sort of worked out, right?

CALZONETTI

(stops, annoyed)

No. It didn't "just sort of work out". It worked out because--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RAPOPORT

Send me another bill; maybe I'll pay
it.

And the client heads off. Annoyed, Vince enters--

INT. ANOTHER COURTROOM -- LATER

A commercial landlord, MARK GILLICK, testifies. He is being led through his testimony by LIZ THOMPSON, his extremely competent, extremely well paid attorney (two more associates sit at the plaintiff's table). At the defense table, MR. AND MRS. SYD NEWMAN, early 60s, sit with Vince.

GILLICK

Commercial rental contract was entered
into on August 4th of last year.
Independent legal counsel was
declined; a waiver was signed
indicating...

As the testimony continues, the Newman's argue (sotto); Vince listens to the witness, trying to ignore the bickering couple.

MRS. SYD NEWMAN

We should just settle.

MR. SYD NEWMAN

That would be a brilliant option if
they'd offered a settlement but since
they haven't--

MRS. SYD NEWMAN

Right. Because you can't initiate
anything yourself.

CALZONETTI

(also sotto)

Decent of you guys to keep your voices
down - not disturb the trial your
future depends on.

They shut up.

GILLICK

No rent has been paid in over four
months.

CALZONETTI

(rising)

Not true.

THOMPSON

Is that an objection?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JUDGE WINTER

If it is, it should probably be made
by your attorneys.

Mr. and Mrs. Newman rise and we realize that they are the
attorneys and he is the client. But they turn to Vince and--

MRS. SYD NEWMAN

(surprised, relieved)
You paid your rent?

INT. COURTHOUSE HALLWAYS -- MOMENTS LATER

The relieved Newmans exit with Vince.

CALZONETTI

No, I didn't.
(off their stunned
reactions)
Everything's gonna be okay.

Astoundingly, he never seems to worry. Mr. Newman jerks
Vince aside into a bit of a quieter spot--

MR. SYD NEWMAN

We pay our rent. To you. For our
space in your space; so if you lose
that office, we--

CALZONETTI

I spend it. On heating and
electricity and employees and--

MRS. SYD NEWMAN

You lied in court! You could lose
your license.

CALZONETTI

As Judge Winter pointed out, I wasn't
speaking as an attorney, I was
speaking as a client. Clients are
allowed to lie all they want. A
right they never get tired of
exercising.

The Newman's have heard enough - look to each other, then
start to walk away. Vince needs them - he follows, unworried.

CALZONETTI (CONT'D)

Our whole defense here is based on
the theory that we have no defense.
Four step plan: first, we stall.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALZONETTI (CONT'D)

And then we stall, and then, when that doesn't work, we stall, until I can come up with enough money to pay the rent for real. That was step one: the "lie" got us an adjournment.

And then they're intercepted by a COP and LINDA CHAPMAN, 40, decent and honest, but with little patience for Vince. She's the D.A. and dresses the part (but with a splash of flair she can't resist).

LINDA

Calzonetti, you got a problem.

CALZONETTI

You're gonna divorce me again? That would require that you re-marry me which--

(realizing, like an excited bride to be)

Oh my God, yes, yes, a thousand times yes.

She nods to the cop who... puts Vince in handcuffs...

CALZONETTI (CONT'D)

I'm getting nostalgic.

COP #2

You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say...

MR. SYD NEWMAN

What are the charges?!

As the cop continues reading Vince his rights.

LINDA

Aggravated assault under Section 12-2 B 4 of the Illinois--

MRS. SYD NEWMAN

B 4? That's hitting a cop; Vince wouldn't--

They look to Vince who just looks back at them, and over their shoulders. They turn to see another cop watching, Officer SCOTT FELKER, a small grin, and a black eye.

Mrs. Newman looks to Vince, personally disappointed... Vince just shrugs, annoyed but unworried, as they lead him away.

FADE OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. BAR -- NIGHT

Late, late at night. After hours. Pretty empty. Vince is out drinking with his friend STEVE, similar age, fit, stable. Although they snap at each other at times, it comes from a long and deeply caring history.

Note: the days are hectic, running from place to place, putting out fires. The nights, wherever we may find Vince, have a different feel, a feeling of time standing still - like someone pressed pause in the midst of chaos.

STEVE

Quit bitching. You should be thrilled you got bail.

CALZONETTI

I'm wasn't bitching. I was stating facts.

STEVE

You were stating depressing facts. We call that "bitching".

CALZONETTI

I was stating amusing facts.

STEVE

"Amusing" because of the amazing "coincidence" that so many crappy things happen to one person in one day? I'm surprised eight crappy things don't happen to you every day.

CALZONETTI

You're blaming me?

STEVE

Who didn't pay his rent?

CALZONETTI

Temporary setback; only practicing for a year; another year, I'll own the place and--

STEVE

Who slugged a cop?

CALZONETTI

He swung first--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEVE

For no reason at all?

Vince knows that's not the case. He considers, then smiles, the we FLASHBACK TO:

INT. COURTROOM -- DAY

Scott Felker (the cop we saw at the end of the teaser with a black eye) is on the stand (but with no black eye). He is being questioned by TRACY LANG, a young, smart assistant DA. Vince is at the defense table with his CLIENT (a slightly cleaned up drug dealer).

LANG

And on the night in question--

CALZONETTI

(rising)

Objection.

LANG

I haven't even asked a question.

CALZONETTI

I was anticipating.

JUDGE MURPHY

(tired, doesn't want
'cleverness')

Please don't.

CALZONETTI

I understand. And I get why Your Honor wants this to go in an orderly way. And I get why Ms. Lang doesn't want to be interrupted but I thought the witness might be grateful.

LANG

My witness? My witness might appreciate me not asking him any questions.

CALZONETTI

Sort of. It's just that if you ask him questions, then I have to ask him questions too. And I remember what it was like when I was a cop. Testifying was scary. You had to be calm and cool but inside, you were petrified, because you know you have things you want to talk about - and you know you have things that you definitely don't want to talk about.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He's looking at the witness now - and the witness is looking back, suddenly uncertain.

LANG

I'm pretty sure that's not a grounds for objection. Usually they're pithier; like 'argumentative' or--

CALZONETTI

(plowing on)

And so when you're testifying all you're thinking is: what does the defense lawyer know that can make me look like an ass? How could he know it? Well I guess he could know it if he worked out of the same precinct I did and even knew me and all the people--

LANG

Objection. Argumentative.

CALZONETTI

I haven't even asked a question.

JUDGE MURPHY

That's what argumentative means. Sit down.

CALZONETTI

When I was a cop, I had this trick where I'd--

JUDGE MURPHY

Sit. Down.

CALZONETTI

I really think the witness would like to know what I have to say before he testifies.

JUDGE MURPHY

Well then you're both gonna be disappointed.

Felker glares at Vince. Is Vince warning him? Or is he bluffing? Vince shrugs as if to apologize, then sits down.

INT. BAR -- NIGHT

Returning to the PRESENT--

CALZONETTI

That's not exactly--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEVE

I have the transcripts.

CALZONETTI

Okay, it's exactly. And it was fantastic.

STEVE

For eight years that guy trusted you--

CALZONETTI

For eight years that guy was a lying scumbag.

STEVE

What cop doesn't lie?

CALZONETTI

The odd one isn't a scumbag. I just assumed he hadn't decided to quit being a scumbag while I was in law school. And it seems I was right since he wound up refusing to testify; safe bet he either beat a witness or planted--

STEVE

You really didn't expect him to come looking for you and take a swing?

CALZONETTI

I expected him to take it like a man when he missed and I didn't--

PETER

Wah, wah, wah. Shut up already!

They look to see the sole other patron in the bar, mid-30s, middle class and fully drunk, PETER BROWN, staring at them.

PETER (CONT'D)

Quit bitching. We've all got problems--

CALZONETTI

(annoyed)

I wasn't "bitching".

(almost a mantra)

Everything's gonna be okay--

PETER

My job sucks; my commute sucks; I'm a drunk--

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PETER (CONT'D)

(takes a swig)

This bartender sucks; everything's watered down; my wife's a pain in the ass succubus; I'm pretty sure I murdered her; and construction on the 55 sucks.

But obviously Vince and Steve have had their interest piqued by...

CALZONETTI

(forced calm)

What was that second last one again?

INT. PETER'S BROWNSTONE -- NIGHT

TIGHT ON Vince and Steve and Peter. Vince and Steve are stunned. Peter is distressed but resigned.

REVERSE TO REVEAL they are in the middle of the living room of a tastefully furnished brownstone. The usual furnishings: comfy couch, nice TV, art on the walls, plus a pool of blood - some of it smattered on the furniture and on the wall.

STEVE

What did you do with the body?

PETER

I don't know.

(off their looks)

I remember drinking, a lot, I remember arguing, a lot, then I remember waking up on the sofa and the place looked like this. And I needed a drink.

STEVE

You don't remember killing her?

PETER

(no, feels like crap)

I just remember hating her.

CALZONETTI

Here's what you need to do: 1, shut up; 2, go to the bank and make as large a withdrawal as you can - that's my retainer; and 3, continue to shut up. Everything's gonna be okay. I'm gonna take care of this.

PETER

We gotta call the cops I assume.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALZONETTI

That's the first thing I'm gonna
take care of.

(turns to Steve)

I'd like to report a possible crime
at 2302 Polk.

And thus we learn that Steve is a cop.

INT. VINCE'S LAW OFFICES - BACK HALLWAY -- MORNING

The office is really a house. A bungalow on a main street. Some partial walls have been added but it's a house. The living room has been rearranged to serve as a reception area. In the back, Vince's office was formerly the kitchen (and plenty of evidence is still there) and the Newman's work out of what was once a nearby bedroom.

But right now we're in the hallway that leads from the living room (reception) past the kitchen (Vince's office) toward the rear bedroom (the Newmans' office). And as the Newman's pass through at the start of the day--

MR. SYD NEWMAN

What does that even mean? "I can't
initiate anything"--

MRS. SYD NEWMAN

Can we move on? It means whatever
you want it to--

MR. SYD NEWMAN

Obviously it meant something to you
or--

And then they hear a CORK POP. They turn to look into Vince's office, where he has just popped a bottle of champagne and is pouring it into three plastic cups.

CALZONETTI

All is well. All is always well.

(showing, proud)

Check for twenty thousand dollars.
Rent will be paid by close of
business.

Mr. Newman snatches it from him, takes a look...

MR. SYD NEWMAN

This is a retainer.

CALZONETTI

I like to call it a 'check made out
to me' but why quibble.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MR. SYD NEWMAN

It's made out to you. In trust.
You do understand what that word
means, right?

CALZONETTI

This is called the Socratic method,
right? I saw it in law school. I
hated it. Get to your point.

MRS. SYD NEWMAN

You can't spend that money. Except
on expenses for this client.

MR. SYD NEWMAN

Have you been spending money out of
your trust account?

CALZONETTI

(maybe)

...No.

(then quickly)

Do my bills count as expenses?

MRS. SYD NEWMAN

Yes, but you have to actually do
something to--

CALZONETTI

So all I have to do is win the case
and write a bill.

Vince grabs his file, gets up and exits. The Newmans never
cease to be amazed at Vince's optimism; they follow--

INT. VINCE'S LAW OFFICES - BACK HALLWAY/LOBBY -- CONTINUOUS

MRS. SYD NEWMAN

...Yes. That's all. All you have
to do is build up twenty thousand
dollars in billable time and win a
murder trial in a day or two.

CALZONETTI

Easy Peasy.

And in the lobby he's greeted by a room full of neighborhood
losers. Behind the desk is MARK CALZONETTI. Mark is 39,
Vince's brother, and developmentally disabled as a result of
a childhood accident. He's high functioning - can answer
phones, more or less take care of himself and reception -
he's just a little dim.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALZONETTI (CONT'D)
 Morning everybody. Who here has a
 promising lawsuit?
 (bunch of hands go up)
 And who here has money?

Hands go down.

CALZONETTI (CONT'D)
 (re Mark)
 He'll take your statements.
 Everything's gonna be okay.

And he leaves--

MARK
 (worried)
 Does Vince seem alright to you guys?
 (off their curiosity)
 I think he's about to snap.

They're slightly amused (and touched) by his protectiveness.

MRS. SYD NEWMAN
 No. Your brother's okay.

MR. SYD NEWMAN
 He's actually way too okay. He should
 be panic stricken.

INT. COURTHOUSE HALLWAYS -- MORNING

OPEN CLOSE ON PHOTOS of Peter's home - the bloody crime scene.

MONICA (O.S.)
 What do you need to know?

Then one of the photos drops and we GO WIDE to reveal that Vince is walking, quickly as always, through the courthouse. He's with MONICA, early 20s, pretty, eager, smart and currently struggling to keep up while simultaneously going through a large file filled with statements and photos.

CALZONETTI
 Everything.

MONICA
 (glancing at photos)
 What do you think I'll find in the
 crime scene photos?

CALZONETTI
 Nothing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MONICA

(confused)

But you must have a theory or a--

CALZONETTI

Here's what I want to find: billable hours, lots of them. I know they're in there. I need you to interview our client, interview his friends, his co-workers, his family. I need you to do work, lots and lots of completely justifiable but completely futile work that I can charge for when I settle this in the next 24 hours.

MONICA

(even more confused)

...You're being cynical.

CALZONETTI

...You're being naive.

MONICA

But you do think he's innocent, don't you?

CALZONETTI

Yes, I do. And damn it all, I'm going to fight to make sure justice is done.

MONICA

You're making fun of me, aren't you?

CALZONETTI

I'm making fun of the question that most people outgrow by the second week of law school; which puts you at least a year behind schedule. If I was making fun of you I'd probably make a comment about your haircut.

MONICA

(plows right through)

But you do think he's innocent.

Vince stops walking, annoyed that she won't let this drop--

CALZONETTI

Because this discussion is fully billable, I will spend the time to answer that question. In a Socratic fashion. Do you know why that's a stupid question?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MONICA

(yes I do)

Because it's not your job to judge.

(on the other hand)

But you can't help but have an opinion. And if you're a decent human being, you can't help but be influenced by that opinion; you can't help but be motivated by that--

CALZONETTI

(hit a nerve)

Yes! And when you're motivated by irrelevencies, what do you think happens?! Good things? Justice? Or, by definition, do you just make stupid, ill-conceived choices?

And he walks on, leaving her to think about that--

INT. COURTHOUSE HALLWAYS -- DAY

Elsewhere in the courthouse, Vince pursues Linda as they exit the courtroom.

CALZONETTI

Assault; he does twelve years.

LINDA

(not a chance)

He killed his wife.

CALZONETTI

You're mad because he got bail. I'm offended.

(off her look)

Either you're actually worried that he'll take advantage of his freedom and, between now and trial, get remarried and murder again. Or you're just mad because you lost to me. Aggravated assault. Fifteen years.

LINDA

How far do I have to walk before he does life?

CALZONETTI

Or... you're mad because you think I hit that cop--

LINDA

There's a lot of things you've "hit" that have made me mad.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LINDA (CONT'D)

Right now I'm just refusing to give a slap on the wrist to a murderer.

CALZONETTI

You have no body; you gotta admit, murders usually come with--

LINDA

"I cleaned up" is not a defense.

CALZONETTI

How about aggravated spousal assault; eighteen years--

LINDA

That's not even a real crime. You did go to law school, right? I mean, I paid for it, I hope you attended the odd class--

CALZONETTI

So find a real crime; I don't care what you call it; the eighteen years will take just as long.

LINDA

(annoyed)

It was her blood, their apartment, no sign of forced entry, robbery, sexual assault. And...

(the real reason)

I settle today and they find the body tomorrow I look like an ass.

He nods. Sees the logic and, perhaps surprisingly, accepts.

CALZONETTI

Okay. ...Do you want to get a drink?

She stops, looks at him for a long beat and--

INT. VINCE'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Vince and Linda are in bed. Post coital. Blissful. But...

LINDA

...It doesn't change anything.

CALZONETTI

...It never does.

Off Vince, wishing it changed everything...

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. OLD FOLK'S HOME - RECREATION ROOM -- NIGHT

Much later that same night (3 a.m.), Vince plays bridge with a group of octagenarian widowers (MARVIN, JULIO and JIMMY). They're in the middle of a fairly large, completely empty recreation room. It's a semi-regular game that Vince depends on - who else is up at this hour? who else plays Bridge? Vince has known Marvin all his life, Julio for a couple of years, and Jimmy is new to the game.

JIMMY

Two hearts. Why does she keep sleeping with you?

MARVIN

Two spades. Who cares? When tail is offered, you take it, you don't conduct an inquiry.

CALZONETTI

Two no trump. She sleeps with me because she likes me.

JULIO

Pass. The divorce filing, the year of nasty litigation, that was all just foreplay, huh?

Julio and Jimmy laugh. Marvin defends Vince.

MARVIN

So maybe she just likes having sex with him. I could live with that.
(then a little smug)
And I do.

JIMMY

Here we go.
(to Vince)
He's telling everyone he nailed Berniece Finkelstein. And pass.

MARVIN

Pass. I can't pee, I can't sleep, but I can still--

JULIO

Lie?

The others chuckle and they start playing out the hand. After a few cards are played...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JIMMY

I think she sleeps with you because she's punishing you.

The game stops - the others turn to Jimmy.

MARVIN

(then to Vince)

Jimmy's a virgin. He hasn't yet learned that sex feels good.

(then adds)

Berniece has no teeth you know.

JIMMY

Shut up.

(then to Vince)

Vince can get sex, anyone can get sex. Even Marvin can get sex. Just not with Berniece. But this is Vinnie's ex. Assuming Vinnie has any sort of heart, that's gotta be confusing. If that's supposed to be the past but it's not the past then what is it? She wants him to not move on. Not because she loves him anymore - but because she needs to punish him.

The others consider this - it does seem to make sense - until:

CALZONETTI

...That would make sense if I wasn't sleeping with a half dozen other women.

Julio and Jimmy react - like kids on a stoop, pleased for their bro. But not Marvin...

INT. LINDA'S OFFICE -- NIGHT

Linda works. Or tries to work - she's distracted. After a beat, Tracy Lang (from the Felker trial, young assistant DA; smart, views Linda as a mentor and can't quite control her mouth) walks past the open doorway. Then steps back, surprised to see Linda in at this hour.

LANG

Linda?

LINDA

Couldn't sleep tonight.

Lang nods, suspicious for some reason...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LANG

(entering)

And you couldn't just drink some warm milk and turn on the TV? You had to bury yourself in work because it's something you feel you're in control of, whereas your personal life...

(off Linda's look)

You slept with him again, didn't you?

LINDA

(I'm an idiot)

Why the hell would I do that? What is wrong with me? How screwed up is my judgment that I make the same mistake, over and over and over again? How can I do this job if I can't even--

LANG

I don't care.

(off Linda's look,
pulls way back)

Sorry. No offense. You're my hero; you're the reason I work here; you're the person I want to be in twenty years.

(pushes forward again)

But you've got to shut up. Please don't fire me.

LINDA

You're the only one I've told and I am starting to regret--

LANG

This is what drags women down--

LINDA

This?

LANG

This and ten thousand other things.

(explains)

It felt good, you're still in love, force of habit, there are ten thousand reasons you might have slept with him and not one of them affects your professional judgment. You're smart, incisive, capable and a personal screw up - you think that makes you any different than any man who's

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LANG (CONT'D)
 ever held your job? Only in one
 way: they never lost two minutes of
 sleep wondering "oh lordy, why did I
 sleep with that woman?"

Off Linda, thinking that makes a lot of sense--

INT. OLD FOLK'S HOME - RECREATION ROOM -- NIGHT

Back with the boys, still playing cards--

MARVIN
 ...You slept with her out of guilt.

The others look to him.

MARVIN (CONT'D)
 Everything Vince does is about guilt.
 It's why he can't ever sleep--

CALZONETTI
 (annoyed but
 uninterested)
 You know I got hurt on the job--

MARVIN
 It's why he can't pay his rent but
 can pay his brother's rent, his
 brother's occupational therapy, his
 brother's--

CALZONETTI
 (snaps)
 My brother's got nothing to do with
 this.

Marvin gives him a look...

MARVIN
 (gentle)
 Your dad forgave you.

CALZONETTI
 What did I just say?

JIMMY
 (dubious)
 So you figure he feels guilty about
 screwing around on Linda so he owes
 her a few orgasms?

MARVIN
 He's sleeping with Linda now because
 he owes her fidelity.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

This confuses the other guys.

JULIO

...He just said there were half a dozen--

MARVIN

I know.
 (looks to Vince)
 I don't believe him.

After a beat, Marvin begins to deal the next hand. Finally...

CALZONETTI

I can still pee.

MARVIN

Show off.

INT. LOVELY BOARD ROOM -- DAY

Vince sits at the beautiful oak table. This is the Landlord's attorneys' offices. A sharp contrast to Vince's. Vince is checking out the table.

MR. SYD NEWMAN

By the way, we can make your assault on a cop case go away.

CALZONETTI

So can I.

They give him a skeptical look...

CALZONETTI (CONT'D)

Felker's a hot tempered idiot. All I have to do is prove that. By getting him to do what he does best - take a swing. At me. Anywhere public. You know this is one piece of wood; they'd have to build this entire building around it.

MRS. SYD NEWMAN

Our way is simpler.
 (off Vince)
 You say you're very, very sorry.

MR. SYD NEWMAN

Officer Felker is embarrassed. By what happened at the trial, by what happened after the trial; he needs to save face. Which means he will completely walk away from this if you apologize.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALZONETTI

And how is this simpler than my plan?

MR. SYD NEWMAN

Okay, maybe 'simpler' was the wrong word. Perhaps a better word would be 'smarter'. Or 'saner'.

MRS. SYD NEWMAN

Or 'more effective'.

MR. SYD NEWMAN

Two words.

MRS. SYD NEWMAN

I was supporting you.

(to Vince)

Vince, I get it. You're a man of principle; you don't--

CALZONETTI

No I'm not.

MRS. SYD NEWMAN

(plowing on)

You don't want to apologize to a guy you don't like, to a guy you have no reason to like. And I support that. If, on the other hand, you like not being in jail, or you like not being bankrupt, or you like practicing law--

CALZONETTI

It'll be okay.

MRS. SYD NEWMAN

No it won't.

And Gillick (the Landlord) enters with Thompson (his attorney and her associates).

THOMPSON

So sorry we're late.

CALZONETTI

(without acrimony)

We completely get it. You're more important than us and you had to make sure we understood that.

(moving on)

I'm ready to cease all defense against your eviction proceedings immediately, on one condition:

(beat)

You hire me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Vince pushes his resumé across the table--

CALZONETTI (CONT'D)

This place is gorgeous. This table cost more than you'd have to pay me.

Thompson doesn't even pick up the resumé.

MRS. SYD NEWMAN

We're prepared to pay fifty cents on the dollar now and work out terms for the repayment of the remainder.

THOMPSON

No.

MR. SYD NEWMAN

(long beat, before)

We were expecting either a 'yes' or a counter-offer.

Thompson nods to her associates who start placing large boxes on the table. A lot of them.

THOMPSON

My client's bank records. Proving that, contrary to what you said in court, you did not pay your rent.

CALZONETTI

(surprised, to Gillick)

Hmm. Interesting. Based on the IRS work I did for you last year, either you're willing to go to jail just to get rid of me. Or you cooked those books just to get rid of me. Either way, it's a bit insulting.

GILLICK

Or I'm not stupid enough to admit to either of those things in front of my attorney. What I will admit is: you're a smug pain in the ass whose loser clientele drives the value of every property on that street down ten percent.

Vince absorbs this.

CALZONETTI

Fair enough.

(then)

My bank records.

And he pulls one small piece of paper out of his pocket - places it on the table, in contrast to the boxes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALZONETTI (CONT'D)

Proving that I did pay my rent.

(explains)

A canceled check from Vincent J. Calzonetti, that's me, to Gillick Property Management, that's you, in the amount of \$8,500, that's my rent, processed August 28th, 2013, that's just six weeks ago.

(rising)

You might want to put off tomorrow's hearing while you try to figure this one out.

And the Newmans rise to the exit. But Vince grabs his resumé and hands it to Thompson again--

CALZONETTI (CONT'D)

Seriously. I can start Monday.

INT. VINCE'S OFFICE - LOBBY -- NIGHT

Middle of the night again. Vince is meeting with Peter - a broken, sad man. They are using the lobby as a de facto conference room (pales compared to where we just were). The file is spread out.

CALZONETTI

No honeymoon pictures?

PETER

(only half listening)

Camera broke. I told Monica all this.

CALZONETTI

And now you're telling me.

Peter looks off - distracted, depressed--

CALZONETTI (CONT'D)

Peter, please focus. The DA has a room full of blood and a drunk husband. I'd like to be able to prove that while your case sucks, your marriage didn't.

PETER

It did.

(sadly)

There wasn't one type of food we both could stomach; not one movie we both could tolerate. She's a nurse; I'm a mortician. She thought I liked dead people more than living people. She thought I drank too much, blacked out too often.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PETER (CONT'D)

(stops, reminisces)

Aside from the sex... She made me so miserable.

This strikes a chord with Vince. But...

PETER (CONT'D)

...You know how I spent my day today?

(off Vince)

Looking for her body.

(off Vince's surprise)

The river, the rail yards, construction site on 134th, everywhere I ever imagined burying it. If I couldn't find it, I figured maybe... I didn't do it...

And he stops. And he thinks. And he fights back tears...

PETER (CONT'D)

My life is over, isn't it?

CALZONETTI

There's a decent chance you'll walk. Without a body, they've got serious proof problems.

PETER

(it's not about that)

But... She's not coming back.

(off Vince, emotional)

I miss her. ...She was right. I was a lousy husband, a creep and a drunk.

(breaking down)

That evil bitch was the best thing that ever happened to me.

Vince is surprised and weirdly touched... And can relate. He watches Peter cry for a beat. Unsure how to deal with it...

CALZONETTI

...Audrey Ford.

(off Vince)

Steve and I would get calls from her twice a week. And twice a week we'd show up at her house and twice a week we'd offer to press charges and twice a week her husband would start crying and twice a week she'd change her mind.

(beat, then)

We should have pressed charges anyway. Or... we should have killed him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PETER

(affected, but...)

Why are you telling me this story?

CALZONETTI

Because... I knew. After a few hundred domestics, you know. You can tell when it's just a guy blowing off steam - which isn't cool, but I never lost sleep over one idiot marrying another idiot. And you can tell when...

(nasty memory)

Standing in the living room, or the bedroom, or usually the kitchen, you could tell if you were looking at a future killer and a future corpse.

Vince recovers his composure, looks to Peter, hates himself for what he's about to say, but says it anyway...

CALZONETTI (CONT'D)

...You're a drunk, a loser, and an awful husband. But I think you're innocent.

Peter nods his intense gratitude. And then Vince gets a phone call and we cut to:

EXT. OUTSIDE PETER'S BROWNSTONE -- NIGHT

Police tape blocks the entrance. Monica is sitting on the stoop waiting as Vince walks up.

MONICA

I need to get in. I found something.

CALZONETTI

You found something in a place you haven't been in?

MONICA

I think so. Your ex-partner will be here in ten minutes to let us in. He's gonna pick up our client.

CALZONETTI

He was with me.

MONICA

I know.

He gives her a look, considers...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALZONETTI

So you wanted to be alone with me.
Should I be getting you to research
restraining orders?

MONICA

(calm, but this is
fundamental)
Why did you hire me?

Vince sits down beside her.

CALZONETTI

(matter of fact)
You had a crush on me when you were
eleven years old that you obviously
haven't outgrown. Didn't mean a lot
to me at the time. But now...

He sizes her up.

CALZONETTI (CONT'D)

So... unlike most of the other
applicants for this crappy paralegal
job, I figured if you work for me
long enough, you'll sleep with me.

She doesn't rise to the bait. Instead...

MONICA

That's not true.

CALZONETTI

And the fact that your first reaction
is disbelief rather than the threat
of a lawsuit just proves my theory.

MONICA

You know why I had a crush on you
when I was eleven years old?

CALZONETTI

Because I had cute hair.

MONICA

Because you saved my life.
(off his look)
You really don't remember?
(off his shrug)
I was waiting for my brother at your
school to drive me home. And a bunch
of boys, your age, your friends,
grabbed me, and dragged me behind
the bleachers.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MONICA (CONT'D)

Maybe they weren't going to kill me, probably they were just going to scare the crap out of me for awhile. But I thought I was going to die. And you saw what was going on and you stepped in, and you stopped them. You threw a punch at one of your friends. And those guys never spoke to you again. Doing the right thing was more important to you than your friends.

(beat, then)

I don't have a crush on you. I believe in you.

CALZONETTI

...You believe in what I was twenty years ago. Before I realized...

(turns away)

Life doesn't suck, it's even worse... Life is neutral. Life doesn't give a crap. Good things happen, bad things happen and there's nothing you can do to stop any of it. So the one thing you can do is get what you can and not make yourself miserable worrying about that fundamental truth.

MONICA

(smiles, then)

And the fact that your first reaction is to deny just proves I'm right.

(off Vince)

Because if you were as cynical as you want me to think you are, if you just wanted to sleep with me, then you'd just lie to me, tell me you do want to change the world and we'd be making out right now.

Okay, now it's Vince's turn to be stunned. And now it's her turn to turn away--

INT. PETER'S BROWNSTONE -- LATER

Monica and Vince enter with Steve and Peter.

CALZONETTI

So what's here?

MONICA

(pleased with herself)

Nothing. Just like you predicted.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

And with that curious statement, Monica heads for the dining room. Vince and Steve exchange a look - what's with her?

MONICA (CONT'D)

There was a police photo of the crime scene, and it was a bad angle, but I'm pretty sure I saw... nothing.

She looks around - studies a large cabinet and smiles. Then she hands them a photo.

MONICA (CONT'D)

I spoke to a whole bunch of friends of the couple, asked for stories, asked for photos; Mr. Calzonetti wanted me to get the whole story.

Steve gives Vince a look, curious about that. Vince shrugs. She hands them a photo.

MONICA (CONT'D)

They had another couple over for a birthday dinner two days before the incident.

PHOTO - shows Peter and his wife - yelling at each other in front of a birthday cake. In the background is the cabinet. The room looks identical.

Except... she points to the 'nothing' - in the cabinet.

MONICA (CONT'D)

In the picture, there's a silver tea service in the cabinet. But in the cabinet, there's...

She indicates the empty spot where it once was.

MONICA (CONT'D)

Nothing.

PETER

I don't care about it; it was a gift from my in-laws.

STEVE

Worth how much?

PETER

(doesn't care)

I don't know; about five thousand dollars.

The others react - this is huge.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALZONETTI

(explains to Peter)

Congratulations. Someone, other than you, now has a motive. Your dear departed wife was the unfortunate victim of a robbery that went wrong.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. COURTHOUSE HALLWAYS -- DAY

Vince hurries through the halls with Monica. They're pumped.

MONICA

This is fantastic.

CALZONETTI

Yes. You said that. And I believe
I said "good work" once already.

MONICA

It's not about the praise, it's about
the work. It's about justice.

CALZONETTI

And the American way. People always
forget the American way.

MONICA

(not even listening)

This could lead us to the real killer.

And with that, Vince stops.

CALZONETTI

No it won't.

MONICA

Whoever stole that silver, has it;
if we find it--

CALZONETTI

We already have everything we want.

(off her look)

We have "reasonable doubt". "Doubt"
is a beautiful thing; "doubt" is our
friend; "doubt" is where we make our
money.

MONICA

But we could know--

CALZONETTI

"Knowing" is dangerous. The truth
does not, in any way, set you free.
The truth kills. People need three
things to live. Air, food and hope.
And "hope" is just a nice way of
saying "doubt".

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALZONETTI (CONT'D)

We all suspect our parents didn't love us as much as our sibling, we all suspect our loved one would trade it all for another fifteen minutes with her first love; you suspect I'm not the same guy I was at eighteen. But we hope it's not true - and as long as we hope it's not true, we can go on. ...Knowledge is the death of hope.

This is not who she thinks Vince is - and it kills her.

MONICA

You don't believe that. I know you think he's innocent.

He looks at her - how does she know that? And what does that say about him...?

CALZONETTI

...If you took this job because you believe you could save the world through me, then you're fired. If you took the job for any other reason, then do not go looking for the truth.

And he sits down on a bench, across from a courtroom. Monica considers for a beat, then walks away, leaving Vince apparently waiting for something--

AND WE CUT TO:

INT. PAWN SHOP -- DAY

We see Monica in a pawn shop showing a photograph to the proprietor. He shakes his head, she thanks him, crosses a name off a list, then moves on.

INT. COURTHOUSE HALLWAYS -- LATER

ON VINCE, still sitting on the bench. Finally, we hear a courtroom door open and Vince gets up because...

CALZONETTI

Hey Felker!

Officer Felker has just emerged with attorneys and spectators. Vince approaches.

CALZONETTI (CONT'D)

You're an idiot. And your sister's very fat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Felker wants to take a swing - but he knows that's the point. He walks away. But, of course, Vince follows.

CALZONETTI (CONT'D)

Or am I getting her mixed up with your wife? Which one's the one that slept with your second partner? And which one's the one that slept with your third partner.

Felker spins on Vince but sees people looking - somehow keeps it together.

CALZONETTI (CONT'D)

Just so it's clear, because I know how easily you get confused, you've only got three choices here: one: you publicly admit you swung first; two: you publicly prove it by swinging first right now; or three: I keep on publicly humiliating you.

Felker walks on. Vince picks up.

CALZONETTI (CONT'D)

Don't get me wrong, you're a competent cop. Everyone says so. "Felker's completely competent" they all say. A human cop, with human flaws, flaws like... stupidity. I sympathize; it's genetic, it's not your fault. Your love of the Cubbies on the other hand--

And the Cubs are the straw that broke the camel's back and, rounding a corner, Felker rears back and swings. And misses. And Vince swings back. And connects.

And Felker goes down. And then...

Vince realizes they've apparently rounded a corner into a fairly vacant hallway - and no one saw the first punch (a few saw the counter-punch).

Felker rises, in pain, steps up to Vince, smiles, and whispers in his ear...

FELKER

You're never practicing law again.

And he walks away. And Vince stands there, alone. And then his phone rings--

INT. COURTROOM -- DAY

The courtroom is largely empty. Vince is with Linda, speaking quietly at the lawyers' tables. Peter sits waiting in the second row of the gallery.

LINDA

In view of the new evidence...
Spousal assault and failure to report.
He does five years.

Vince considers - it's a very good offer.

CALZONETTI

...Are we okay?

Linda is too smart and too capable to let this b.s. make her fall apart - but it does hit a nerve that she rises above.

LINDA

...Are you seriously asking if it's okay if we slept together? In what regard? Am I okay professionally? Personally? Am I okay with it never happening again? With it happening every day? With it meaning nothing? With it meaning you're still in love with me? Exactly what are you asking me?

CALZONETTI

(covering)
...Professionally. Do we need to report--

LINDA

The judge is aware of our pre-existing relationship; we're fine. And he'll be in here in five minutes. Talk to your client.

Vince nods and moves to Peter who is still shell shocked from all that's happened in the last few days--

CALZONETTI

Five years.

PETER

(surprised)
In jail?

CALZONETTI

Probably that's what she meant. Do you think I should clarify?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PETER
That's a good deal, right?

CALZONETTI
It's a great deal.

PETER
(considers, for a
long beat)
So I should take it? I should go to
jail?

He looks to Vince, desperately needs his guidance. Vince looks back for a long beat, amazed that he's actually uncertain...

INT. COURTHOUSE HALLWAYS -- MOMENTS LATER

Vince and Peter emerge from the courtroom, and see Monica walking toward them--

MONICA
Did you make a deal?

CALZONETTI
(dour)
No.

She reacts, also not happy. They walk right past her, both men a little nervous about the decision they just made. But--

MONICA
--I found the silver.

They turn back.

INT. COURTHOUSE MEETING ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Monica explains to Vince and Peter.

MONICA
The guy who bought it gave me a
description of the guy who sold it.
Early 30s, white he thought, fairly
tall--

CALZONETTI
Well I guess we've got three million
suspects to interrogate.

MONICA
And there was a security camera.

She pops the disc in a player and we see the transaction. The seller is facing away from us as the silver is handed

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

over, cash is counted out and returned. And then the seller turns...

And Monica freezes the image.

It's Peter. Selling his own silver.

Vince, stunned, turns to Peter...

PETER
(feels ashamed, but:)
It's your fault... I needed money
for your retainer.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

INT. VINCE'S LAW OFFICE - VINCE'S OFFICE -- DAY

Vince and Monica. Vince is angry. Monica is nervous, but--

MONICA

(sort of proud of him)
 You did what you thought was right.
 Just because this time it didn't--

CALZONETTI

(snaps at her)
 I don't want your opinion. I didn't
 want mine. I could have pled this
 moron out; I'd be sitting here right
 now, cashing a check...

MONICA

What are you going to do?

CALZONETTI

The plan is... This never happened.
 And, oh yeah, you're fired.

MONICA

(ignoring the firing)
 That's not really a plan. It's more
 of a... lie. You have a clear ethical
 duty to report relevant evidence--

CALZONETTI

And you had a clear ethical duty to
 listen to your boss and not find
this to begin with - I'm just trying
 to make things right. Hopefully I
 can resurrect that deal and--

MONICA

You're going to turn the dvd over.

CALZONETTI

(dubious)
 Because it's the right thing to do?

MONICA

Yes.
 (off his look)
 But you're going to say it's because
 no client is worth risking your career
 for.

Vince reacts to that notion. But before he can say anything,
 the Newmans enter - with a concerned Mark.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MRS. SYD NEWMAN

We lost.

MR. SYD NEWMAN

The landlord's attorneys traced your so called rent check - apparently it was deposited, and then withdrawn, from an account opened in the landlord's name by someone whose signature looks suspiciously like yours--

CALZONETTI

(not overly surprised)

Judge Winter threw the evidence out; we expected that--

MRS. SYD NEWMAN

No. We lost.

CALZONETTI

(bit thrown)

...We haven't had a trial.

MRS. SYD NEWMAN

He issued a directed verdict for eviction.

Mark looks to Vince - worried about how he's going to react - the others do as well - they are genuinely upset by this. And Vince does seem to be lost (in thought?)...

MARK

I told you not to tell him. He's destroyed.

(to brother)

They're teasing, it's not true--

CALZONETTI

--This changes nothing.

MR. SYD NEWMAN

It sort of does. For example, we need to vacate these offices by Friday. That's sort of different.

CALZONETTI

What was our plan?

(off their looks)

Winning was never part of our plan. Our plan was to stall. That was our only plan. So we file an appeal. They can't throw us out while we have an ongoing appeal.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MRS. SYD NEWMAN
 Since we had no real evidence to
 defend the suit, we also have no
 grounds for appeal.

CALZONETTI
 ...Judicial bias. Judge Winter hates
 me.

There's a long beat before.

MRS. SYD NEWMAN
 I buy that.

INT. COURTROOM -- DAY

ON A WOMAN CRYING on the stand. This woman is Stella McNeil,
 43, Peter's wife's best friend and Linda's witness. Vince
 is at the defense table with Peter. Monica is in the gallery.

MCNEIL
 He said he wished Susan was dead.

CALZONETTI
 (rising)
 Objection. Hearsay.

LINDA
 Exception. Admission contrary to
 interest.

CALZONETTI
 That's a lame exception. If what
 she said was in my client's interest,
 I obviously wouldn't have objected.

LINDA
 (seriously?)
 Excellent point. I wonder what the
 judge's ruling will be?

JUDGE GOLDBERG
 The objection is overruled.

Linda shoots Vince a look, feigning shock. Vince sits and
 we--

Launch into a short MONTAGE - two additional witnesses (both
 women, different ages, types - but both emotional, both loved
 the deceased):

WITNESS #2
 He told her the world would be better
 off without her; that she should
 kill herself.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WITNESS #3

He threw her out. I spent the night
with her; while she cried.

And we see Peter, the world seemingly focused just on him
and how evil he is.

INT. COURTHOUSE HALLWAYS -- DAY

Peter sits in the hallway, lost in depressed thought. After
a beat, Vince sits down beside him...

CALZONETTI

No more surprises, right?

Peter nods. But...

PETER

...Have you ever been sued?

CALZONETTI

Every lawyer's been sued.

PETER

(affected)

And this is what happens? People--

(even worse)

Friends-- take the stand and say
what an asshole you are?

CALZONETTI

First they say what an asshole you
are and then we say what a saint you
are. It's a beautiful system.

PETER

(worried)

And the jury has to decide which
one's right?

CALZONETTI

Relax. You notice the juror in the
back on the left - been biting his
nails all trial; which normally I'd
think meant he was a smoker getting
the shakes but his nails aren't
yellow, so I'm thinking he's just
feeling guilty because he's thought
the same things, said the same things,
and as long as we have one vote--

PETER

--I want a plea deal.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALZONETTI

Your silverware kind of reduced our chances of--

PETER

(lost soul)

I don't care how much time I have to do. I can spend the rest of my life in jail; I can handle that. But... I never want to sit somewhere and listen to people talk about me like that... And know it's the truth.

And he heads back into court, leaving Vince, annoyed that he feels even a greater pressure to help this guy--

EXT. RAILWAY YARDS -- NIGHT

It's late at night. Vince walks through the rail yards, looking tired and disheveled after a long day. No one is here except for homeless people - and not too many of them. Vince heads for a dumpster that a homeless man lies against, using it for shelter from the wind. Vince sits down beside the guy.

CALZONETTI

...How's the family?

STEVE

You do know I'm undercover.

And at this point we realize that this "homeless" person is Vince's ex-partner, Steve.

CALZONETTI

(offering)

I brought a sandwich.

STEVE

How'd you find me?

CALZONETTI

Figured it was only a matter of time before your wife wised up, tossed you out, your life spiraled out of control and you wound up homeless and alone. I look for you here every night.

(off Steve's look)

You weren't home, you weren't answering your phone, means you're undercover and there's been a rash of homeless people getting rolled by teenagers.

STEVE

How's business?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALZONETTI

Super. Interesting cases. Might be nice if I had a few more where I wasn't also, you know, the defendant, but... super.

They sit in silence for a beat, chewing on their sandwiches...

STEVE

...You ever miss the job?

CALZONETTI

Sometimes. But I think that's just 'cause of all the glamour.

Another long beat.

STEVE

I'm between partners...

Vince shoots him a look...

CALZONETTI

I think your wife might be upset when we both get killed because no back up showed up because everyone on the force hates me.

STEVE

There is a solution.
(off Vince)
You could apologize.

CALZONETTI

I know what I did wrong. And I won't do it again.

STEVE

Good. Now just say that to Felker.

CALZONETTI

What I did wrong was... I ducked.

Steve is frustrated - he's seen this type of behavior over and over again from Vince.

STEVE

You always get like this. Personally, professionally; every time you get in trouble, you start digging - down. You can't solve your problems by making people angry.

Vince thinks about that for a long time.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALZONETTI

...That might work.

STEVE

I have to assume you completely misinterpreted what I just said.

CALZONETTI

I was thinking you meant: if I can't get Felker to take a swing at me, maybe I can get Linda to take a swing at me.

(disingenuous)

Was that wrong?

And they sit there in silence; Vince, pleased, Steve, disappointed but not surprised...

CALZONETTI (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Objection: boring.

INT. COURTROOM -- DAY

Another day, another distraught witness testifying about Peter's propensity to threaten to kill his wife. Linda and Vince are both on their feet. Linda's looking at Vince, somewhat stunned--

CALZONETTI

Come on, it was. 'He wanted her dead'; how many times do we have to hear the same thing?

LINDA

How about I handle my case; you handle yours?

CALZONETTI

Okay, that one's just too easy. Objection; you're not my wife anymore, you can't tell me what to do.

JUDGE GOLDBERG

I can. Sit down.

CALZONETTI

You want to hand me a mistrial? I have a right to object, I have a right to be ruled on--

LINDA

(growing pissed, to Vince)

This is stupid. You always get like this; when things aren't going your way, you lash out--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALZONETTI

(moving closer to her)

You on the other hand...? It's not enough that you win, you gotta make sure the loser gets humiliated.

LINDA

That's so not true.

Jurors, spectators are taking note; this isn't normal--

JUDGE GOLDBERG

Counsellors--

CALZONETTI

Your mother knew every one of our arguments - except the two I won.

LINDA

(embarrassed, upset)

This is not the time. This is stupid even by your standards.

CALZONETTI

(almost right in her face)

I'm billing by the hour; this is the perfect time--

LINDA

You're making an idiot of yourself.

CALZONETTI

I move for a mistrial, if the de-balling witch is right, then the jury can't possibly be impartial--

LINDA

(anger growing)

Sit down and shut up you idiot.

CALZONETTI

Objection: you're a bitch.

LINDA

(snaps)

Shut up or so help me I will--

She stops, suddenly realizing something. And she smiles.

LINDA (CONT'D)

You're trying to get me to lose it.
You're trying to get me to say I wish you were dead...

Vince reacts, busted. And as the jurors make notes--

INT. COURTHOUSE HALLWAYS -- DAY

Vince sits on a bench, contemplating his latest setback. Linda steps up.

LINDA
I'm recalling one witness. She just remembered another story. Then we're done.

CALZONETTI
Thank you.

But she doesn't leave. She studies him for a beat and then, reminiscent of Vince joining Peter a few scenes ago, she sits down beside him.

LINDA
...What you did in there just now...
(almost in awe)
It was especially stupid.

CALZONETTI
Apparently.

LINDA
Even if it had worked... I wouldn't have spoken to you for a month. I'd never sleep with you again.

CALZONETTI
Probably.

LINDA
...But you did it anyway. To save a client.

This is why she loved him. This is why she sleeps with him.

She gives him a sweet little kiss on the cheek and then walks away. Off Vince, feeling just slightly less lost--

INT. COURTROOM -- LATER

Stella McNeil, 43, is back on the stand. She's no longer crying; just quite nervous.

MCNEIL
We went to the movies - Skyfall; she loved it; he said she was an idiot. He said he wanted her dead.

LINDA
We've heard that a few times. Anything more specific?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MCNEIL

He said he wanted her to... to bleed
to death.

There's a reaction. We haven't heard this specificity before.
Vince turns to Peter who shrugs, uncertain.

MCNEIL (CONT'D)

He said that after their next fight,
he was going to stab her. He said
he was going to make her bleed
literally the way she made him bleed
figuratively. He said she would die
in a pool of her own blood and then
he'd dump her body and drink to his
future happiness.

LINDA

...No more questions.

It's damning. Stunned, Vince looks to Peter, they speak
sotto but urgently.

CALZONETTI

You said no more surprises. Tell me
she's lying.

PETER

(equally stunned)
I don't remember saying those
things... To her.

CALZONETTI

But you did say it?!

Peter won't meet his eyes. Finally, Vince rises... And
stands there. And he waits. And we wait. For a long time.

And then Vince turns and walks up the aisle and out of the
court room.

Stunned silence. Then Monica nervously stands in the gallery.

MONICA

Your honor, I'm a second year law
student slash paralegal. Am I legally
qualified to request a recess?

INT. VINCE'S LAW OFFICES - LOBBY -- LATER

Vince enters and walks through the typically semi-busy lobby
without making eye contact with anyone - he's virtually
catatonic. Mark recognizes something's off even before Peter
and Monica follow him in--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALZONETTI
 (to the lobby at large)
 Go home.

But--

CLIENT
 I've been waiting here since this
 morning.

Vince stops and looks back.

CLIENT (CONT'D)
 You said I'd come to the right place.
 You said you could help me.

Vince considers the person for a beat, then kneels down and
 calmly explains...

CALZONETTI
 ...I know. I'm sorry. But I can't
 help you because... You're an idiot.
 (turns to Peter)
 You're an idiot too; you killed your
 wife; you're going to jail; and I
 don't care. Or you didn't kill your
 wife; you're still going to jail;
 and I still don't care. Because
 you're an idiot.
 (to whole room)
 You're all idiots. You know how I
 know you're all idiots? Because
 we're in this room. If we weren't
 idiots, we wouldn't be here because
 we'd have options. Better options.
 Because all options are better
 options. Luckily, for all of us, as
 of tomorrow, this option will cease
 to exist.
 (one last look)
 Go home. I'm going to pack.

And he exits, leaving a stunned crowd in his wake. And more
 specifically, Peter, Monica and his stunned brother, the one
 who predicted that Vince cared enough to break.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

INT. VINCE'S LAW OFFICE - VINCE'S OFFICE -- DAY

Vince packs up - it's over. After a beat, Mark appears in the doorway, worried about the brother he loves, respects, protects and is a little intimidated by. After awhile, Mark gets up the nerve to say:

MARK

...You can help them.

CALZONETTI

I know you think I'm some sort of great lawyer but--

MARK

No I don't.

(off Vince)

I know you win a lot of cases but maybe they're easy cases.

CALZONETTI

Okay. Valid point.

Mark isn't sure what else to say.

CALZONETTI (CONT'D)

That's it?

MARK

No.

But it seems to be. Vince returns to packing. Until--

MARK (CONT'D)

...I watch you in court sometimes. I watch you make speeches. I want to make one of those speeches. I want to say something to make you want to keep fighting. I owe you--

CALZONETTI

You don't owe me anything.

MARK

But I'm not you. I don't know what to say. I just know... This place matters. You listen to those people. You care. Or you act like you care. They don't get that anywhere else. This place gives them hope.

(beat, then)

Or at least... It does that for me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The depth of Mark's feelings land...

CALZONETTI

That's a good speech, Mark.
 (but ultimately, gentle)
 But... there is no hope. The idea
 that gosh darn it, if we just try
 hard enough long enough everything
 will be okay... it's just not
 supported by reality. And the longer
 we pretend that's not true, the longer
 we waste our lives. So... this is a
 good thing.

Mark stares at him for a long beat. How is he going to react to this harsh life lesson? It's a lot for anyone, let alone, someone with Mark's limitations, to take in. But he loves and honors his brother. But...

MARK

...You're wrong.

He reacts by refusing to accept it. Vince smiles. A supportive but ultimately condescending smile. And then he rises to finish packing.

And then the Newmans are at the door - each with a packed box. They've heard about Vince's outburst but are still surprised to see him packing.

MR. SYD NEWMAN

Vince. We're fully packed but...
 (his speech)
 We wanted you to know: you're an
 ass. Specifically, you're a stubborn
 ass. And... that's why we came to
 work here. You never gave up; you--

Emotional, Mrs. Newman suddenly interrupts her husband by throwing herself at Vince, hugging him desperately.

And she holds on. And holds on. Finally:

MR. SYD NEWMAN (CONT'D)

Let go of him.

MRS. SYD NEWMAN

(crying)
 No. I need a hug; I'm gonna miss
 this place. I'm gonna miss this
 idiot.

MR. SYD NEWMAN

You were hugging him fifteen seconds
 ago, now you've moved onto foreplay.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MRS. SYD NEWMAN
When I grab his ass, you can speak
up. Until then...

CALZONETTI
(confused by something)
You're crying.

MRS. SYD NEWMAN
No I'm not. I'm just--

And then Vince disengages and walks out of the room - then
he turns back--

CALZONETTI
Everything's gonna be okay.

And off his confused co-workers--

INT. COURTROOM -- DAY

Stella is back on the stand. Vince is back at his seat.
Everyone is back where they should be. Vince rises...

CALZONETTI
Why weren't you crying?

MCNEIL
(confused)
I was.

CALZONETTI
The first time you testified, you
cried. The second time, you were
more...
(looks for right word)
Nervous.

MCNEIL
I don't know. You can't cry forever.

CALZONETTI
My mother died fourteen years ago.
I don't cry nearly as often, but I
still cry when I talk about her.

LINDA
(rising)
Is counsel trying to prove that he
loved his mother more than this
witness loved the deceased? We're
prepared to stipulate--

CALZONETTI
Why replace tears with nervousness?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MCNEIL

I'm sorry. I don't know how to answer that. I'm testifying. I'm nervous.

CALZONETTI

And it makes sense. And crying makes sense. They both make sense. But you've got to pick one.

JUDGE GOLDBERG

Counsel. Is there a question coming soon?

CALZONETTI

No, your honor.

Judge Goldberg reacts - surprised by that answer.

CALZONETTI (CONT'D)

(to witness)

My client admits that all those damning things you said he said, he actually did say.

The jury reacts. Peter reacts. Everyone reacts.

JUDGE GOLDBERG

Counsel, are you sure you want to--

CALZONETTI

(to witness)

But not to you. He said it to his wife. Terrible things to say to her, but he said them. So his wife must have told you. Which makes it hearsay, but big deal. I'm more curious about why you didn't remember it the first time you testified. How do you take the stand, testify about what a bastard he was and forget about the most damning things he said?

MCNEIL

I don't know. I guess I blocked it out or something.

CALZONETTI

Sorry. You didn't really need to answer. I certainly wasn't expecting an answer; at least not an honest one. Because I think you didn't forget. I'm thinking as soon as she told you that particular story, you testified about it. I'm thinking you know where her body is because it spoke to you.

There's a gasp from the courtroom--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JUDGE GOLDBERG

Mr. Calzonetti, if you're trying to introduce doubt about whether there even was a murder, please do that in the traditional form of question and answer.

CALZONETTI

No, your honor. Doubt's not good enough today. I want to know.

Monica, in the gallery, reacts to that. Vince turns back to the witness.

CALZONETTI (CONT'D)

You hated him. His wife hated him. You both had reason to hate him. We all do. He deserves to go to jail. But do you...?

(off the witness)

How long do you think Susan can stay hidden; how much cash does she have; does she have a fake ID, good enough to get a credit card, get government aid, social security? Because the day she shows up is the day my client gets out of jail. And you go in, for perjury.

A long beat as everyone in the courtroom hangs on her answer.

MCNEIL

(racked with guilt)

I'm so sorry...

PETER

Oh my God.

INT. COURTHOUSE - JUDGE'S CHAMBERS -- LATER

All parties wait anxiously and silently. After a few moments, the door opens and a BAILIFF enters--

With Susan, Peter's very much alive wife. He races to her, hugs her--

PETER

It's a miracle!

And the hug ends because-- She slaps him.

SUSAN

It's not a miracle - the messiah wouldn't have married an idiot.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

And she slaps him again. And the bailiffs get control of her before she kills him. After order is established--

LINDA

(stunned)

You faked your own death?

Susan betrays nothing.

CALZONETTI

All it took was a fair amount of nursing training and a whole lot of anger.

PETER

(also stunned)

You hate me that much? Enough to want me in jail forever?

SUSAN

Oh come on? Seriously?

(angry, and emotional)

You ignored me. You screamed at me; never a kind word. So I screamed back! And nothing! My yelling didn't touch you; my silence didn't touch you; nothing I did mattered to you.

(then softer)

You never acted like it mattered if I was alive. So I figured maybe... it would matter to you if I was dead.

(she lets that sit)

I wanted you to feel pain; I wanted you to feel something, because of me.

Everyone is stunned into silence by the depth of her emotion. After a long beat, Linda looks to the Judge who shrugs.

LINDA

Peter Brown, you are free to go.
Susan Brown, you're under arrest for obstruction of justice. The officer will read you your rights.

And as the Officer begins to escort her away.

PETER

Wait--

(they stop)

...You care that much?

She looks back, filled with hate. But also with love. She can't answer. A long moment before...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALZONETTI
 (to his client)
 Say something, you idiot.

PETER
 ...I love you too. ...I'm sorry.
 For everything.

She fights back tears as she's taken away. Her husband urgently follows, has to be with her--

PETER (CONT'D)
 I'll make sure you get the best lawyer there is. Everything's gonna be okay--

Leaving Vince and Linda. They look to each other from across the table - thinking how screwed up love is.

And then... Vince realizes the importance of two words "I'm sorry". But unfortunately he's thinking of them in reference to a case. To Linda he just says...

CALZONETTI
 You want to get a drink...

INT. COURTROOM -- LATER

Vince sits at the defense table with the Newmans, awaiting the arrival of Judge. Mr. Newman is looking at his phone. He smiles.

MR. SYD NEWMAN
 Looks like we're going to have to unpack. The check just cleared.

MRS. SYD NEWMAN
 Just one outstanding issue.

Vince looks uncomfortably to Officer Felker at the other table...

MR. SYD NEWMAN
 (reassuring)
 It'll be over before you know. You get up, you stipulate to Officer Felker's version of the story and you say the words "I'm sorry".

MRS. SYD NEWMAN
 (studying Vince)
 ...You're sure about this, Vince?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALZONETTI

(long beat before:)

...It's the smart thing to do. Which makes it the right thing to do.

MR. SYD NEWMAN

We prepared notes.

He hands Vince a piece of paper. He glances at it and nods.

BAILIFF

All rise.

They all do. The Judge enters, takes a seat and everyone follows suit.

JUDGE MURPHY

I understand we have a resolution of this matter.

The Newmans and the prosecutor rise.

MRS. SYD NEWMAN

Yes, Your Honor.

And the lawyers nod to their respective clients who stand while the lawyers sit.

Vince looks at the cop. Then looks back at his notes. Then looks back at the cop. Others react - this is taking too long for their comfort.

Finally...

CALZONETTI

...Before I apologize, I just have a couple of questions...

And off the various reactions, we CUT TO:

EXT. BUS BENCH -- DAWN

Vince is finally asleep (first time in the episode). A bus pulls up, he stirs awake, rolls over, revealing... a black eye.

He just couldn't help himself.

He climbs on the bus to head home and as the bus pulls away, we see, on that bus bench, an advertisement, a picture of Vince, smiling...

FADE OUT.