

Empire State

Pilot

by

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ACT I

1

INT. TOPPING OFF BAR & GRILL - NIGHT

1

A BANNER over the party at this neighborhood bar reads "HAPPY GRADUATION SAM!" Rugged MEN in flannel and boots, WOMEN with too much hair and makeup. A tray of SHOTS slams down in front SAM COCHRANE, 30, and his fellow IRON WORKERS.

SAM

I think I'm calling in sick
tomorrow, fellas!

They drink to that, including Sam's older brother JIMMY, 37.

JIMMY

Quittin' already, huh? Must have a
big-ass job lined up, superstar.

SAM

No, but my foreman happens to be my
big brother and he's feeling very
charitable right now, seein' as he
didn't get me a graduation present.

JIMMY

We bought you that jacket, assbag.

SAM

Ellen bought me this jacket.

JIMMY

She's my wife!

SAM

I'll let you off the hook on this,
you let me off the hook tomorrow.

JIMMY

Four words: Rivets-hot-six-o'clock.

One burly, affable guy named DUFFY grabs his crotch.

DUFFY

I got your hot rivet right here!

Jimmy wraps an arm around Sam's neck.

JIMMY

Prouda you. You know that, right?

SAM

And that would mean so much more if
I had tomorrow off.

Jimmy kisses his brother on the face and then knuckles him in the ribs. Watching all this are Sam's PARENTS, JAMES and PATTY.

PATTY

Did you ever think you'd see the day?

JAMES

First Cochrane with a college degree. How 'bout that.

The bartender behind them, LAUREL COCHRANE, 55, cuts in.

LAUREL

Second Cochrane, thank you very much.

JAMES

I was talkin' about the boys, wiseass. Where is my niece, anyway?

LAUREL

She's in court. Said she'd probably be a little late.
(hands him a mug of beer)
Make a toast to your son, wouldja?

AT THE JUKEBOX: Sam and Duffy are putting coins in.

JIMMY

Hey Duffy, how about an E-7!

DUFFY

Too early. We're at least two drinks away from E-7.

The door opens and DAVIS COCHRANE, 25, walks in wearing a SECURITY GUARD'S UNIFORM. The TATTOO peeking out of his collar and the ill-fitting uniform hints at a whole other life. Across the room, James nudges his wife.

PATTY

Be nice. He's your son too.

Davis walks up to them.

PATTY (CONT'D)

(hug and kiss)

This is a nice surprise.

DAVIS
 (to James)
 Larry's covering for a couple
 hours. Then I'm headin' back.

JAMES
 How's that goin' down there?

DAVIS
 Good. Could do without the
 uniform, though.

PATTY
 I think you look sharp. Like a
 policeman.

DAVIS
 I'm a night watchman, ma, not a
 cop.

JAMES
 Jimmy vouched, so you better be
 showin' up.

Patty gives James a look - *give the kid a break.*

Sam walks up behind Davis, licks his finger and sticks it in
 his ear. Davis spins around.

SAM
 You made it!

DAVIS
 'course I made it.

Sam pulls him away from their parents.

SAM
 Pop bustin' your balls?

DAVIS
 Little bit.

SAM
 Come say hi to Jimmy and Ellen.

They walk over to Jimmy, now sitting on bar stool with his
 very pregnant wife, ELLEN. Ellen is sweet with Davis.

ELLEN
 Hi Davis!

As she's hugging him, he's already telling Jimmy...

DAVIS

I'm headin' back to the job in a little bit.

JIMMY

Not worried about it. Glad you could duck out for a while.

LAUREL

Hey, you gonna give your Aunt a kiss, or what?

She steps up on an apple box so she can lean over the bar and give him a kiss.

James unplugs the jukebox. He takes the KARAOKE MICROPHONE off the shelf and flips the switch on its amp. Everybody settles down.

JAMES

Nine years back, Sam tells us he got himself in Queens college, I told him it's a waste. I says, this is something you start, spend good money on, and never finish. Apparently, I was wrong. This kid...hell, he's not a kid anymore, he's thirty years old. This man, he works at night, he works weekends, works coffee break. Nine years, never quits. And so me and Patty go down there to that big beautiful lawn at Q.C. and we see 'em give our son a diploma says he's a... bachelor? I coulda told 'em that!

(laughter)

Truth is, one of the proudest day of our lives, Patty and me. You did good, kid. Real good.

Sam feels this deeply. His father is proud and Sam is proud of himself.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Hang on, there's more. Yesterday he drops another bomb, this son of ours. He's goin' to law school!

(everyone cheers)

As my father would say - may you have the hindsight to know where you been, the foresight to know where you're goin', and the insight to know when you gone too damn far!

Everyone laughs at the last line, though James was probably only half-kidding. Laurel hands Patty a tissue, as Sam walks over and hugs his father.

At the JUKEBOX - Jimmy punches E-7, turns and folds his arms across his chest as the opening brass punches of Sinatra's *NEW YORK, NEW YORK* kicks out of the speakers. A ROAR from the boys in the bar - this is a tradition with them. As Sinatra sings, THEY SING - "*Start spreadin' the news...*"

BETH COCHRANE, 38, enters the bar, in a dark wool coat over a business suit. Laurel yells over the music to Patty.

LAUREL

Hold up the roof, look who finally made it.

Beth walks up to Sam, singing into the microphone. She's sweet and contrite as hell.

BETH

Sam, I'm so sorry I'm late. I've been hung up on this case and...

Sam holds the microphone for her to sing. *Hell no!*

SAM

(into microphone)
Late-as-usual-cousin-Bethy is pussying-out!

BETH

(relenting)
I want to wake up, in a city that doesn't sleep!

2

EXT. TOPPING OFF BAR & GRILL - LATER

2

Sam, Duff, and a guy named PETEY tumble out of the bar.

PETEY

All right, fellas. What now?

SAM

I say we go up topa Maddox Hill and drop in on that party we weren't invited to.

DUFFY

I would but I left my tux at Jennifer Aniston's house.

SAM
I'm serious. We built the damn
thing.

PETEY
I'm in. Let's do it.

DUFFY
Can we even get up there?

SAM
We'll duke the nightman.

Beth walks out of the bar, buttoning her coat.

SAM (CONT'D)
Bethy! Come take a ride.

BETH
You crazy? I have to be in court
in the morning.

PETEY
You could sit on my lap.

SAM
Easy, Pete.

PETEY
Your cousin and me had a whirl
once, didn't we, Beth? Should have
another go. Times have changed.

BETH
Yeah, now they have Viagra.

OH!!! Sam and Duffy high-five. Petey gives a faux-scowl.
She kisses Sam on the cheek.

BETH (CONT'D)
Congratulations, smartypants.
(as she leaves)
'Night boys. Stay outta trouble.

3

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT

3

SINATRA FILLS THE TRACK again as WE FLY HIGH UP OVER NEW
YORK, across the river and toward the lit up SKYLINE, until
we settle on a ROOFTOP PARTY on a SKYSCRAPER on 5th AVENUE.
Sinatra's New York, New York MATCHES TO a STRING QUARTET'S...

4 EXT./INT. MADDOX HILL BUILDING - SAME

4

STREET LEVEL: The boys round the corner off 5th Avenue and look up at the building. Towering, steel and glass, the name MADDOX HILL cut into thick ivy that's been meticulously grown and groomed on the wall of the ground floor.

DUFFY

(marveling at it)

Can we cook, or can we cook?

5 EXT. ROOFTOP PATIO, MADDOX HILL - NIGHT

5

Colorful MARTINIS clink with golden CHAMPAGNE flutes, waiters in WHITE TIES and TAILS pass food and drinks on gleaming silver trays, all overlooking an exquisite view up 5th Avenue Graydon Carter drinks with Diddy, Rupert Murdoch and Senator Schumer argue, a hedge fund dick brags about how he avoided Bernie Madoff while another brags about how much he lost.

THE ELEVATOR OPENS AND SAM AND THE BOYS FROM QUEENS POUR OUT. The LASER-EYES of several of the New York-monied-fabulous are on them immediately. Duffy smirks at one of them.

DUFFY

How you doin'? Nice to see ya.

A man in a dark suit walks up to them - SECURITY.

SECURITY MAN

Can I help you gentlemen?

A woman walks by with a BLUE MARTINI.

PETHEY

Yeah, I'll take one of those blue martinis over there.

DUFFY

To match your panties?

SECURITY MAN

This is a private party.

SAM

We're the builders. Victor Maddox invited us.

SECURITY MAN

Wait here.

SAM

(to Duffy)

Really think Victor Maddox is here?

ACROSS THE ROOM - VICTOR MADDOX. 60 years old, striking, handsome, confident, broad shoulders, impeccable suit, a flash of color tucked into the pocket. He's in a deep conversation with MAYOR BLOOMBERG.

The security man waits alongside them until Victor indicates he can step forward. He whispers in Victor's ear. Victor looks, expressionless, across the room at Sam and friends.

Duffy and Petey chat up the beautiful WOMEN tending bar. But Sam wanders through the crowd. He straightens his hair, buttons an extra button on his shirt, and almost blends. He walks out to the edge of the rooftop, looks over the skyline before him. There's only one thing missing...

A WOMAN steps up next to him. She's beautiful, 28, in an impeccably tailored, black & white dress cut at the knees, dazzling black & white heels to match, and a formidable brain behind a gorgeous face. Her name is ANNABELLE.

ANNABELLE

Are you the reason the windows
whistle on the forty-seventh floor?

He turns and looks at her. She's gorgeous.

SAM

Forty-seventh? No, you'll want to
talk to that guy right there.

He points to Duffy, still flirting with the bartender.

SAM (CONT'D)

So let me guess. They don't want a
scene so they sent you over.

ANNABELLE

And why would that make a
difference? You think I can't take
you?

SAM

It'd be a good fight, but I think
my weight would eventually win out.

ANNABELLE

Overconfidence will be your
undoing.

SAM

You know, we have a name for this
kinda party. "The Topping-Off," as
in, finishing the top floor.

ANNABELLE

You upset you weren't invited?

SAM

That guy I just pointed out to you? Ray Duffy? Broke his leg on this building when we were still on the third floor. By the time he was back on the job we were on the twenty-sixth. In the intervening months, his cousin Derryberry...

ANNABELLE

Derryberry?

SAM

Derrick Berringer. He's on the seventeenth, takes a fall down the hole. Don't worry, he landed on the fifteenth. He'll walk again, but he'll never run.

ANNABELLE

That's awful.

SAM

He was a meathead before, now he's impossible.

(he made her smile)

Listen, I promise we'll leave in a few, but don't boot 'em. I think the Maddoxes can chill for a minute, don't you?

ANNABELLE

Fair enough.

SAM

Thanks. Now, are you upset you weren't invited to my party?

ANNABELLE

What were you celebrating?

SAM

Cash City.

He pulls a lottery ticket out of his pocket - it's a "scratch off the numbers" kind of card, called "Cash City!"

ANNABELLE

It's not scratched off yet.

SAM

I'm an optimist. When I win I'm gonna take you for a nice dinner.

ANNABELLE

You are an optimist.

Sam notices something back by the bar. His friends are in a tussle with a man in a sharp suit and a sharper attitude. The man is WESLEY MADDOX, 32, and he suffers nobody lightly.

SAM

Would you excuse me?

Sam heads over to the ruckus, where Duffy's had enough.

DUFFY

You threatening me, Maddox? Cause I'll throw down with you, right here, right now!

WESLEY

While that would enthrall our guests, this happens to be my favorite face and I wouldn't want it damaged.

(POLICE arrive)

But you can *throw down* with them.

SAM

Hey, hey! We're leaving. Call 'em off.

WESLEY

They're policemen, they don't answer to me.

SAM

You want us on the job tomorrow or sitting in the tank?

Wesley nods to the police to hold their ground. Sam quickly moves his boys to the elevator. As he passes Annabelle...

SAM (CONT'D)

Hey, I'm Sam. Can I call you or something?

ANNABELLE

I don't think so.

SAM

I just thought we had a little thing going on over there. No?

She shakes her head no as he continues to move his drunk friends toward the elevator. He looks back at her one more time. He knows he was right, they definitely had a *thing*.

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE PARTY:

Victor is busy glad-handing when he's approached by AL DEVECHCIO, 50, in a sharp, perfectly tailored suit. He reaches out a hand to say hello, which Victor takes.

AL DEVECHCIO

Hey Vic, congrats on the building.
Real beauty. Now if you can do
something about that stock price.

VICTOR

Everybody's taking a licking, Al.
We just have to ride it out.

AL DEVECHCIO

It's all Vegas to me.

Victor quick-glances to another man, GORDON SEAVER, 47 - a cue for Gordon to step in and rescue him, which he does.

GORDON SEAVER

Hello Al.

VICTOR

Would you both excuse me a moment?

Victor walks away from them - he spots Wesley and waves him over. When they're out of earshot of everyone else.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

Explain to me why Al Devechio's
here. The mayor is over there, for
God's sake.

WESLEY

We had to invite him, considering.

VICTOR

Considering what? We don't do
business with him anymore. And,
frankly, I don't need a mindless
thug asking me about our damn stock
price.

Wesley nods to his father and walks over to talk to Al. Victor smiles and waves at someone, back to business.

Back at the balcony, Annabelle takes in the lights of the city. She's thinking about Sam, somewhere down there.

WIDEN to the SKYLINE at her feet. DISSOLVE TO:

6 EXT. MADDOX PARK CENTER - SUNRISE 6

The SUN peeks through the skeleton frame of a new building. Steel girders and corrugated metal decking, a crane up top, an elevator cage to carry the workers up. And a sign out front that reads, "FUTURE SITE OF MADDOX PARK CENTER."

7 EXT. MADDOX PARK CENTER - SUNRISE 7

6am, as ordered, Sam and the boys practically limp onto the job site. As they arrive, Davis is just coming off the job in his NIGHT WATCHMAN'S UNIFORM. He hands Sam a THERMOS.

DAVIS

Had a feeling you'd be under the weather, so I stopped home for a sec after the party and ran this through a blender.

SAM

(sips it - YUCK!)
Hell's in there?

DAVIS

Aspirin, Vitamins, banana, OJ, milk, salt and *cysteine*. That's the real champ. Attacks the acetaldehyde in your blood. I had some left from the old days.

8 INT./EXT. CONSTRUCTION TRAILER - SAME 8

Jimmy sees Sam and Davis talking. He takes a last sip of his coffee, crosses to the door, grabs the worn LEATHER WORKBELT from the hook on the wall - the leather is stamped with the WORDS "COCHRANE 1928." As Jimmy opens the door, he yells out to Davis, who's leaving.

JIMMY

Hey Davis, Ellen said if you come Sunday she'll make that lemon thing you like.

DAVIS

You sure?

JIMMY

Noon. See ya there.

Jimmy walks with Sam to the ELEVATOR CAGE with 20 other IRON WORKERS. The GATE screeches closed and they head up.

The ELEVATOR CAGE CLANGS ITS WAY up the side of the gridwork, the sun beginning to blaze behind it.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Heard you crashed a Maddox party.
Duffy's braggin' cops were called?

SAM

It was no big deal. Really.

JIMMY

Pop's got the federal mediation
with them today, dickhead.

SAM

So?

JIMMY

So, you're going with him.

SAM

Me? What the hell for?

The CAGE STOPS with a thud. The ELEVATOR OPERATOR SHOUTS.

ELEVATOR OPERATOR

Twenty-sixth floor, Welding Gang!

Jimmy pulls open the accordion door and the WELDING GANG peels off. One of the WELDERS slaps Jimmy on the back.

WELDER

Whatdaya say, Jimmy? Gonna be a
strike, or what?

JIMMY

Hell should I know?

WELDER

Your father's head of the union.

JIMMY

You know him. Tight as dog's ass.

Jimmy closes the cage, leaving the welder behind.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

(quiet, to Sam)

Pop says Maddox is asking for a
wage cut. Ask me, it's time we
show some balls.

ELEVATOR OPERATOR

Twenty-eighth floor! Decking Gang!

The rest of them get off, leaving Jimmy and Sam alone with the operator.

JIMMY

You're a peacemaker, like him.
Probably thinks, now you got that
degree, could put it to good use.

Sam knows very well what his father is up to.

ELEVATOR OPERATOR

Derrick floor! Raising gang!

JIMMY

(to the operator)
Joe, we're the only guys here.

A CANDY WRAPPER SKIDS across the TOP FLOOR in the STRONG WIND as Jimmy and Sam step off the elevator. The view is breathtaking - no walls, no ceiling, just the wind, the sun boiling up on the horizon, and the sound of metal-striking-metal as the building comes alive with IRON WORK.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Gonna be a windy one.

SAM

Jimmy, you pissed?

JIMMY

That he's taking you and not me?
Nah, I'm the last person he should
bring to a mediation.

SAM

I mean, are you pissed about
the law school thing? You know I'm
gonna have to leave the job, end of
the summer. I gotta go all-in this
time. It's Columbia, man.

JIMMY

No, I'm not pissed, I just think
it's weird.

SAM

Weird?

JIMMY

You just never really came off that
smart, is all.

SAM

Eat me.

JIMMY

No, really. When you were, like, four or five, mom and dad thought you might be retarded.

SAM

When you were sixteen all my friends thought you were my sister.

Sam grins and heads off to join the rest of the gang.

JIMMY

Did you actually have any friends?
And put on your damn hardhat!
Gotta protect that brain!

SAM

Whatever you say, sis!

9

EXT. MADDOX PARK CENTER - LATER

9

9am - SUN is up and work is in full gear. Steel-on-steel. The men work in tandem, connecting beams to columns. Not much has changed since the first days of this kind of work.

Duffy defies his heft as he balances on a cross beam only 6" wide, with no safety wire holding him. Below them, other men are "decking" the floors they've already finished, welders coming in behind them to finish it off. Despite the often deafening noise, there is a kind of ballet in this, an organized chaos that combines brute strength and athleticism with extraordinary balance and synchronization.

Sam climbs up the side of a 30 foot vertical column, agile, adept and fearless, using his arms and legs like a raccoon up a tree. The wind whips his hair as he reaches up high for a piece of steel that swings precariously from the giant crane.

Suddenly, A LOUD SCREECHING SOUND as the CRANE HALTS SUDDENLY - the STEEL SWINGING PAST Sam's reaching hand. Everyone looks up - this isn't normal. A moment later, the steel swings back, like a pendulum. Jimmy calls into his WALKIE to Petey, who's the crane operator.

JIMMY (WALKIE)

Petey?

PETEY (ON WALKIE)

I don't know, damn thing froze up.

JIMMY (WALKIE)

Let's get it moving, huh?

PETEY (ON WALKIE)
Workin' on it.

JIMMY
Sam! Your ride is here!

Jimmy points down to the ground - A PICKUP TRUCK PULLS IN.

10

INT. PICKUP TRUCK - DAY

10

James waits as Sam gets into the truck, then pulls away.

JAMES
What's going on up there?

SAM
Crane's stuck. Pop, you gonna tell me what I'm doing here?

JAMES
You're helping me out.

SAM
We talked about this. I'm short-timing. You know that.

JAMES
There are all kinds of ways to be an iron worker.

SAM
And there are all kinds of ways to not be an iron worker.

JAMES
(smiles)
You think you're too good to follow in your old man's footsteps?

SAM
I think I'd like to make some footsteps of my own, if you don't mind.

JAMES
Humor me, huh?

11

INT. FEDERAL MEDIATION AND CONCILIATION SERVICE - DAY

11

The hallways are filled with the conversations of both sides as they mill around, waiting to start.

James and Sam walk in and are immediately greeted by several of the union leaders. They're all very glad to see Sam here.

A hush in the hall as the Maddox team enters. Sam turns to see the throng of LAWYERS approaching. In the midst of the group are Victor and Wesley Maddox... AND ANNABELLE. Sam straightens up immediately as Victor stops and offers his hand to James.

VICTOR
James. It's nice to see you.

JAMES
Victor.

They shake hands, but there is no love between these two.

VICTOR
Say hello to my youngest...

Sam reaches a hand out to Annabelle first.

SAM
Sam Cochrane.

ANNABELLE
Annabelle Maddox.

SAM
That so?

VICTOR
Annabelle has just joined us from our London office. Thought we'd get her feet wet today.
(to James, re Sam)
I see you had the same idea.

JAMES
Sam is actually off to law school. Columbia.

Victor is surprised and impressed, as is Annabelle. But Wesley cuts in before anyone can say anything else.

WESLEY
Good to see you last night, Sam. Annabelle wanted to deduct the drinks from your paychecks, but I talked her out of it.

Before Sam can answer, the CHIEF MEDIATOR calls them all to come inside. James looks at Sam - *what was that about?!*

SAM
Yeah, the boys and I mighta stopped by their topping-off party.

JAMES
Hellsamatter with you?

12 EXT. MADDOX PARK CENTER - SAME 12

Work's stopped. The crane situation's getting worse. The STEEL BEAM swings in the air, BLOWN BY THE HIGH WINDS.

13 EXT. 32ND FLOOR, MADDOX PARK CENTER LATER - SAME 13

Jimmy is now up on the crane with Petey, about fifty feet above the deck of the 32nd floor. The WIND'S picked up, making the situation more dangerous. They exchange looks. DUFFY'S VOICE comes over the walkie.

DUFFY (WALKIE)
Maybe we should try again to grab the swinger, sash it down.

JIMMY (WALKIE)
Moving too fast. Whoever grabs it is gonna go right over the edge.

DUFFY (WALKIE)
What do you want to do?

JIMMY (WALKIE)
Clear the building. Get everybody downstairs. You too, Petey.

PETEY
You imagine the crap I'll take from Duffy if I climb down, leave you up here? Hell no.

14 INT. FEDERAL MEDIATION ROOM - DAY 14

20 CHAIRS ON EACH SIDE of a conference table, with more against each wall. About eighty people in here in all. Gordon Seaver addresses the table.

JAMES
I represent five thousand men and women who have a contract they expect you to honor.

GORDON SEAVER
No one is escaping this economy. Our share price has plummeted, revenue is down, and further frustrating our cash flow are the exorbitant legacy costs to retired and injured union members.

JAMES

Are you asking us to cut back on that too?

GORDON SEAVER

I'm merely explaining how we arrived at our offer. Asking your members to take a twenty percent pay cut is not something we take lightly.

Annabelle takes notes on a yellow legal pad. She flips to the next page and stops - SAM'S "CASH CITY" TICKET is stuck between the pages. It's still not scratched off, but a PHONE NUMBER is on the back. She looks at Sam - he shrugs - and once again it's a no. But when he's not looking, she smiles.

JAMES

You're basically saying that your situation is our fault, yet labor only accounts for a fraction of your costs.

WESLEY

The fraction is a third, a significant portion. And we don't have a *situation*, you do. We're more than happy to go non-union on Maddox Park Center.

JAMES

Is that what we're going to do now? Sit here and threaten each other?

MEDIATOR

No, it's certainly not what we're going to do. I'd like to hear from Mr. Victor Maddox. Do you have anything you'd like to add, sir?

VICTOR

Let's be honest here. I'm not interested in mediation and I'm not interested in making a better deal for you. As far as I'm concerned, the unions have outlived their usefulness. You're pricing your people out of the marketplace.

(beat)

Maddox Park Center is the largest construction project in New York. Your people will be employed for years. Unless you continue asking for more than I can give you.

JAMES

Asking? You think I'm some boy who walked in your office with his hat in his hand? We've had a deal for three years that you want to break. I'm not the one *asking* for a thing.

VICTOR

It's a contract, James, not a suicide pact.

15

EXT. MADDOX PARK CENTER - SAME

15

ON THE CRANE: Jimmy and Petey watch as the steel beam continues to swing from the whipping wind - the pendulum effect making it pull hard on the crane with each pass. The BEAM BEGINS TO SLIP through the cables looped around it.

Jimmy opens the MANUAL CRANK panel - inside is a LEVER.

PETEY

Moving too fast to do it manually.

JIMMY

We catch her on the upswing. Drop her quick before she speeds up on the way back down. We time it right, we're golden.

(beat)

Watch the beam. Tell me when it's at it's most center.

Petey climbs out the door of the cab and watches the beam. It SWINGS UP, peaks, and now is coming back.

PETEY

Almost....get ready...Now! Pull!

Jimmy PULLS and the BEAM COMES DOWN QUICKLY - TOO QUICKLY! It SLIPS out of one of the two loops, TURNING ON END.

JIMMY

Aw, hell...

It happens fast, the weight shift pulls the crane over, toward the hole (the interior of the building's frame). Down on the ground the crowd screams in horror as the unthinkable happens - CRASHING METAL, the CRANE - ALONG WITH JIMMY AND PETEY - TUMBLING TOWARD THEM!

THE CROWD RUNS, IRON WORKERS TAKE COVER BEHIND DUMPSTERS AND THE CORNERS OF THE SURROUNDING BUILDINGS.

END ACT I

Sam looks over at the MASSIVE PILE OF TWISTED STEEL. He rushes toward the spray of hot SPARKS coming off the welders torches but DUFFY HOLDS HIM back.

SAM

Get outta my way, Duff!

DUFFY

Sammy, your father...

He looks. James stands frozen at the police barricade, staring at the impossible image before him. Sam doesn't have to say anything; James sees it on his face. James trembles, stumbling backward into the police officer.

On the other corner, the Maddoxes push their way through the police line. Through the smoke and debris, Annabelle watches Sam catch his father. Victor closes his eyes, pained, and turns his head.

19 INT. KOREAN MARKET - DAY

19

The CLERK is watching a Korean TV station when Davis walks in. He walks down a long row of glass refrigerators, opens one, grabs a Coke and walks up to the counter.

He can't see the TV from where he stands but he can hear the Korean language blaring from it's tiny speaker. As he digs for change in his pocket, he hears the VOICE on the TV say, "MADDOX PARK CENTER..."

DAVIS

Let me see that?

The sales clerk has no idea.

DAVIS (CONT'D)

The TV! Turn it around.

The clerk turns it around so Davis can see. He drops his change on the floor.

20 EXT./INT. ENTRYWAY, COCHRANE HOME - LATER

20

A POLICE CAR pulls up. James and Sam get out. The front door opens, Patty and Laurel step out on the front steps, both waiting for the news they've been dreading. James's eyes tell them everything.

James takes his sobbing wife in his arms. Laurel brings her hand to her mouth and Sam catches a glimpse of Ellen behind the screen door, disappearing into the darkness of the house.

SAM
Without a father?

Beat

BETH
How are you doing?

SAM
Probably same as you.

BETH
He wasn't my brother. I can't even
imagine...

SAM
How was he not your brother?

BETH
I mean, technically...

SAM
I don't know from *technically*,
Bethy. We never thought of it as
the three of us and you. It was
always *the four of us*.

She's struck by that, not because it's surprising, but
because it's not.

BETH
That's how that baby's gonna make
it without a father. Same way I
did.

Sam looks over at her.

24

INT. BLARNEY STONE BAR - NIGHT

24

Sam and Beth walk in. As Sam suspected, he finds his brother
alone at the end of the bar, a bottle of WHISKEY and a SHOT
GLASS in front of him. Sam is furious.

BETH
You were right.

Beth stays behind while Sam walks to Davis and sits.

DAVIS
You're not my father. If I want to
have a drink, I'll have a drink.

SAM

Your father doesn't care if you have a drink. He stopped caring when you stole his car to pay your drug dealer.

DAVIS

And I stopped caring when he turned me in and watched his own son go to prison.

SAM

You're right, Davis. You can have a drink, you can suck a crack pipe, you can put a damn bullet in your head and nobody can stop you. Except today. Because if I have to put a beating on you to sober your selfish ass up so you can be presentable to our mother, then that's exactly what I'm gonna do.

Davis stares down at the empty shot glass.

SAM (CONT'D)

How much have you had?

A long beat passes before he answers. Finally Davis looks up at Sam, his eyes clear and sober.

DAVIS

None.

Those clear eyes suddenly fill up, his lip begins to quake, and all at once Sam sees how much pain he's in. He grabs Davis in a deep hug - full of grief and contrition and love. At the other end of the bar, Beth closes her eyes.

25

INT. MADDOX INTERNATIONAL OFFICES - DAY

25

Secretaries gather to watch the TV coverage. A NEW YORK POST on a desk has a front page PHOTO of the WRECKAGE with a giant headline which reads, "ANOTHER ONE?! -- City's third crane collapse in two years."

Down the hall, the BOARD ROOM. A plush view of their city, Victor sits with Annabelle, Wesley, ATTORNEYS and EXECUTIVES. He turns to RANDI JASON, the VP of Public Relations.

VICTOR

What's the PR department doing?

RANDI JASON

We've issued a statement, we've sent flowers to the funeral homes as well as condolence cards from the Maddox family personally.

ANNABELLE

I'd like to sign the cards.

Wesley rolls his eyes. Victor turns to Gordon.

VICTOR

What about legal?

GORDON SEAVER

In terms of liability, we're well insured, obviously. There are no severe injuries, which is a plus.

ANNABELLE

Two people are dead.

WESLEY

We got lucky.

ANNABELLE

Lucky?!

WESLEY

You can't parade the dead before a jury. A guy with a tube in his throat adds a zero or two.

GORDON SEAVER

What Wesley means is that any settlement with the family of the deceased will be a finite number, as opposed to the ongoing payments to someone in a wheelchair.

ANNABELLE

I know what he means, Gordon. It's just that he enjoys it.

WESLEY

I just thank heaven for small favors.

VICTOR

(scolding)

People are dead, Wesley. Show some respect.

(to Gordon)

What about the mediation?

WESLEY

No more mediation. We give them our final offer, take it or leave it. The only people screaming louder than our shareholders will be the jobless iron workers.

GORDON SEAVER

It's a little cruel, considering...

WESLEY

Considering what? We have a moment here. Yes, tragedy tragedy etcetera, but the truth is this is good for us. With Park Center down, that's a million a week we're not spending, insurance will cover the fixed costs, and in the meantime we can find a new line of credit. We spin this right, we're back up in four weeks with a twenty percent cut in overhead and we're heroes.

ANNABELLE

The head of the union lost his son in the accident. How do you spin that?

WESLEY

Do you have any actual ideas?

ANNABELLE

How 'bout an olive branch?
("writing" aloud)
Though the financial cost to Maddox is substantial, it pales in comparison to any human loss. To ease the pain, we will continue salary payments while we conclude an agreement with the union, and get everyone back to work and avert any further hardship.

WESLEY

How about we throw in a *rub-and-tug* for each iron worker?

VICTOR

I've heard enough. We have a responsibility...

(looks at Annabelle)

To our shareholders. I'm sorry, Annabelle.

Meeting is over. Victor puts a hand on Annabelle's shoulder as he walks out, leaving her shaking her head.

26

INT. HALLWAY/GUEST ROOM, COCHRANE HOME - NIGHT

26

Patty knocks lightly as she enters. Ellen sits in the window seat looking out at the grey day. Patty sits next to her.

PATTY

You've been up here all day.

Ellen can't look at her. She presses her fists on the bed beside her legs.

ELLEN

I'm not thinking about him. I know I'm supposed to be, but I'm not. And it's not because I don't miss him, because you know I do.

PATTY

It's okay...

ELLEN

It's not okay! What kind of person am I? All I can think about is myself, about how this baby doesn't have a father now. We're alone and I don't know what I'm gonna do, Patty! I'm so sorry, I don't know what's wrong with me....

PATTY

Hey, look at me. Young lady, look at me right now!

It's the authoritative tone of a woman who raised three boys. Ellen looks at her, fear and guilt and grief on her face.

PATTY (CONT'D)

You're wrong! You're not alone. You have us. You will always have us.

Out in the hallway, standing in the shadow of the partially closed door, SAM WATCHES them and feels the weight of it all.

27

INT. VICTOR MADDOX'S OFFICE - EVENING

27

A large, opulent, walnut-panelled office. Victor sits alone, staring out the window at the city. Annabelle appears in the door. He turns at the sound of her knock.

ANNABELLE

I think you should go to the funeral.

VICTOR

Absolutely not.

ANNABELLE

You've known James Cochrane since you were in grade school...

VICTOR

For thirty-eight years I've lived fifteen miles from the place I grew up and I haven't once crossed that bridge to go back. I'm not starting now.

ANNABELLE

Fine. But if it's all right with you, I think I'll go.

VICTOR

It's not all right with me.

ANNABELLE

Why not?

VICTOR

Because we're not welcome there.

ANNABELLE

Your issues with the Cochranes, what do they have to do with me?

VICTOR

I'm telling you not to go. That's the end of the discussion.

She waits for an explanation to that but he's not offering one. He looks down at the papers on his desk and gets back to work. The discussion is over.

END ACT II

ACT III28 EXT. CHURCH - DAY

28

Hundreds gather, funneling into the church. Patty walks carefully between Laurel and James. Beth has her arm cuffed around Ellen's elbow. Duffy and the rest of the iron workers greet Sam and Davis with hearty handshakes.

29 INT. CHURCH - DAY

29

PRIEST

*...Requiem æternam dona eis,
Domine, et lux perpetua luceat eis.*

The Priest crosses himself and steps up to the podium.

PRIEST (CONT'D)

I would like to offer our heartfelt prayers to the family of Petey Conklin, whose family is holding a service tomorrow in his hometown in Newfoundland. Eternal rest grant unto him, oh Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him.

The Priest nods to James. James kisses Patty, squeezes her hand, and walks to the podium to deliver a eulogy.

JAMES

I asked Patty to marry me during what some folks called the summer of love. We didn't call it that, but I guess we could have, cause nine months later we had a little boy.

In the back of the church, the door opens slightly and ANNABELLE SLIPS IN, sitting in the back pew.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Patty was real bent on naming him after me. My family didn't do that kinda thing but she said one day we'd both be gone...

(voice cracking)

...and she'd want to know there'd still be a James Cochrane walking around...

James lets out an audible sob. Ellen looks away, it's too hard for her. Beth clasps her hand, as James looks down at the podium, trying to steady himself.

Sam looks at Davis and gestures for him to come help. They walk up to their father. Davis takes James by the arm and walks him back to Patty, leaving Sam at the podium. Sam waits a beat and then begins.

SAM

Thought a lot about what I'd say
today. What I learned from Jimmy,
how he loved Ellen and that baby,
all the steel he tossed up... But I
don't think I'd make it through
either. So I have a better idea.
Maybe Jimmy can talk through me...

Sam looks at Duffy and the boys with a mischievous twinkle in his eye. He leans into the microphone and begins to recite.

SAM (CONT'D)

Start. Spreading. The news. I'm
leaving today.

They all begin to smile as he continues reciting (not singing), and the words of the timeless song seem to take on a brand new meaning.

SAM (CONT'D)

I want to be a part of it. New
York, New York.

In the back pew, Annabelle finds herself smiling, too.

SAM (CONT'D)

These vagabond shoes are longing to
stray. Right through the very
heart of it. New York, New York.

Some people mouth the words along with him, their spirits somewhat lifted. Even the Priest seems to enjoy it.

SAM (CONT'D)

I want to wake up in a city that
doesn't sleep. And find I'm king
of the hill. Top of the heap.

(pause)

These little town blues are melting
away. I'll make a brand new start
of it, New York.

Sam ends his recitation, looking at his mother, his father, his brother, and Ellen and makes a slight and reassuring alteration to the lyric.

SAM (CONT'D)

If he could make it here, he'll make it anywhere. He was A-number one. Top of the list. King of the hill. And he always will be.

30

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

30

Everyone exits and walks up the street toward Laurel's bar.

He shakes a few more hands, then turns and is shocked to find Annabelle standing there.

ANNABELLE

I liked your eulogy.

SAM

Were you afraid I'd start singing?

She smiles.

SAM (CONT'D)

This is a surprise, you being here.

JAMES (O.S.)

Yes it is.

James comes up next to them, waiting for Annabelle's answer.

ANNABELLE

I just wanted to express my condolences. On behalf of our family. I'm so sorry for your loss.

JAMES

Thank you.

The pause is awkward and lasts forever. Patty walks up.

SAM

Mom, this is Annabelle Maddox.

PATTY

Oh? Very nice of you to come.

SAM

Listen, we're all going back to my aunt's bar. Right up the road...

JAMES

I don't think that's a good idea.

PATTY

Nonsense. You came all this way,
the least we can do is feed you.

ANNABELLE

I wouldn't dream of intruding...

PATTY

We'll see you there.

Patty puts her arm through James' and begins to walk.

JAMES

And how do you think Laurel's gonna
feel about that?

PATTY

We bury our son today, James. Your
blood feud can wait until tomorrow.

31

INT. TOPPING OFF BAR & GRILL - DAY

31

AT THE POOL TABLE: Food is laid out buffet-style all over the table. People reach in, fill up their plates. Laurel replaces an empty tray of cold-cuts with another.

AT THE BAR: Annabelle makes her way to the bar, uncomfortable, wondering what the hell she's doing here. She finds an empty stool at the end, against the wall, and parks herself there. She scans the room til she spots Sam.

ACROSS THE ROOM: Sam is talking to Duffy and a couple of the other guys. Every few seconds somebody stops to shake his hand and express their condolences.

BOOTH: Beth and Davis maneuver through the crowd, each carrying plates of food. They make their way to a booth near the jukebox, putting the plates down in front of Patty and Ellen.

PATTY

Thank you. I'm going to go to the
ladies room. I'll be back.

BETH

You want me to go with you?

PATTY

I want you to sit and eat
something.

Patty leaves. Beth and Davis slide into the booth.

ELLEN

(to Beth)

You know what she just told me?
Victor Maddox's daughter is here.

BETH

Really? Where?

Ellen indicates the bar. They all look.

Over at the bar, Annabelle sees them look at her. She straightens herself. Takes a deep breath, then walks over.

ELLEN

We're about to meet her.

Beth turns and looks just as Annabelle arrives. She shakes their hands as she introduces herself.

ANNABELLE

Hi. We don't know each other. I saw you all sitting in the front row at the funeral. I'm Annabelle Maddox.

BETH

Beth Cochrane, Jimmy's cousin. This is Ellen, his wife. And his brother Davis.

ANNABELLE

On behalf of my family, I'd like to express our sincerest condolences. If there's anything I can do...

ELLEN

You can pay for the funeral.

Beth and Davis turn to Ellen, surprised. Not as surprised as Annabelle, but she recovers quickly.

ANNABELLE

You're absolutely right. That should be our responsibility. I'll take care of it right away.

ELLEN

Just like that?

ANNABELLE

It's the least we can do.

SAM (O.S.)

You get something to eat?

Annabelle turns, relieved that it's Sam.

ANNABELLE

Not yet, no.

SAM

Come on. Let's get you set up.

Ellen, Beth and Davis watch, quizzically, as Sam Cochrane and Annabelle Maddox walk together to the buffet. And they're not the only ones...

Over at the bar, Laurel watches, too. Laurel walks down to where James is sitting with some friends.

LAUREL

Did you see who was just talking to my daughter?

JAMES

Yeah.

LAUREL

What's she doing here?

JAMES

Hell do I know.

AT THE POOL TABLE: Annabelle and Sam fill their plates. Annabelle looks over at Duffy and some other guys dropping shots of whiskey into mugs of beer and downing them. Sam notices Annabelle watching them.

SAM

We're Irish. Funeral ends at the Church door.

They walk with their food over to the end of the bar, where she'd been sitting earlier. They sit down together.

ANNABELLE

You don't have to sit with me.

SAM

I know.

Beth sidles up next to them.

BETH

Annabelle, I wanted to apologize for before. Ellen didn't mean to be rude. She's just...

ANNABELLE

Completely understandable. And she's right.

AT THE JUKEBOX - a HAND UNPLUGS IT, PICKS UP THE MICROPHONE, flips it on. IT'S DAVIS. He talks into it, tentatively.

DAVIS

Hello? Excuse me, everyone?

They all quiet down. Sam stands to watch, surprised. James steps through the crowd so he can see.

DAVIS (CONT'D)

I didn't get to say anything at the funeral before.

Everyone waits while he gets his bearings. Sam is visibly nervous, hoping and hoping this goes well. Finally...

DAVIS (CONT'D)

When I was about eight, I was in the house alone, messin' around, plowin' through a closet, you know the way kids do. I look up high on the shelf and I can see this metal box up there. I drag a chair in from the kitchen so I can reach it.

Davis looks at his parents, takes a breath.

DAVIS (CONT'D)

Had a combination lock, so I put in my birthday. Don't open. Put in Sammy's. Nothin'. Then Jimmy's. Bam, thing pops. Inside there's this bright, shiny gun. I pull it out, turn the cylinder, feel the trigger under my finger. Suddenly, I feel something grab my hair, yanks me back, gun ripped from my hand, and I'm pinned to a wall before I knew what the hell.

(pause)

Jimmy seen me there on the floor, musta known if he yelled, it woulda spooked me and the gun mighta gone off. Instead, he moved like the wind, 'fore anything could happen.

(to James)

Pop never kept it loaded. But when Jimmy checked the cylinder, he found a live round was left inside.

(MORE)

DAVIS (CONT'D)

Jimmy starts yellin' at me, not cause he's mad, but 'cause he's scared. He starts shakin'. His eyes all red and full and that gets me cryin'. He's holdin' on to me so tight I can't breathe. And so, there me and Jimmy are, in the hallway sobbin' like a coupla babies, cause I got a hair's-breath away from dead. Jimmy saved my life.

(looks at his father)

For what it's worth.

And as abruptly as he started, Davis puts the microphone back on the shelf. Everyone's quiet, nobody knows what to do. But when Davis turns back around, he finds his father stepping up to him and offering a hand. Davis looks at it for a second, then takes it and James pulls him in for what's probably the first embrace between these two in years.

Patty holds back her tears as she watches them. Somebody claps. And then everybody claps.

Annabelle whispers to Sam.

ANNABELLE

I should probably go.

32 EXT. TOPPING OFF BAR & GRILL - SAME 32

Sam walks Annabelle out to to a waiting TOWN CAR, the DRIVER gets out and opens the door for her.

SAM

Thanks for coming.

She surprises him with a kiss on the cheek, then gets in the car. He watches as the car drives away. At the last moment, she looks back out the window and their eyes connect. Sam watches as she disappears into the night.

33 EXT./INT. MADDOX HILL - NIGHT 33

The DOORMAN greets Annabelle, as she enters the beautiful Maddox Hill building.

34 INT. ANNABELLE'S PENTHOUSE - NIGHT 34

Annabelle enters the enormous penthouse. Moving boxes are still stacked on the floor. She HEARS A TELEVISION. She walks in to the LIVING ROOM to find Wesley sitting on her sofa, watching her TV and drinking her wine.

ANNABELLE

How did you get in here?

WESLEY

Not too hard. We own the building.

(pours her a glass)

Why are you so jumpy? Is it because you went to the funeral after dad told you not to?

(hands her the glass)

Relax, we're on the same side.

ANNABELLE

Same side of what?

WESLEY

You're going to want to drink that.

ANNABELLE

Wesley, what is going on?

WESLEY

Let me start by saying that nobody knows this. Including her. And it should stay that way.

ANNABELLE

Who?

WESLEY

Not long ago, I found a file in dad's things. A settlement agreement. With Laurel Cochrane. Probably how she bought that bar of hers.

ANNABELLE

A settlement? For what?

WESLEY

Paternity. We have a half-sister, Annabelle. Beth Cochrane.

Annabelle is speechless. Wesley takes a sip of his wine.

WESLEY (CONT'D)

Don't worry, I'm not about to let her inherit.

That's the last thing Annabelle is thinking about.

END ACT III

ACT IV

35

INT. VICTOR MADDOX'S HOME - MORNING

35

Annabelle storms into her father's stunning triplex, marches past SERVANTS, onto the outdoor terrace where she finds him having his breakfast over a stack of morning newspapers.

ANNABELLE

How could you not tell me I have a sister?

Victor stares at her, expressionless.

VICTOR

You don't have a sister.

ANNABELLE

I met her yesterday.

VICTOR

You went to the funeral.

ANNABELLE

Don't worry, she doesn't seem to know about you. Were you married to Laurel?

VICTOR

Where did you get this information? Did Laurel tell you?

ANNABELLE

What happened, she got pregnant and you left?

VICTOR

You had no right to go to that funeral without my permission.

ANNABELLE

I don't need your permission. I'm not a teenager.

VICTOR

I'm not speaking as your father, I'm speaking as your boss.

ANNABELLE

This has nothing to do with Maddox International and everything to do with Victor Maddox!

VICTOR
They're one and the same!

She's taken aback by both the statement and the thundering voice behind it.

ANNABELLE
No, dad, they're not.
(disgusted)
No wonder they hate us.

She walks out, leaving Victor alone.

36

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM - DAY

36

Wesley stands at a podium before HUNDREDS OF SHAREHOLDERS, most of whom are very upset. Behind him, on the dais, sits the eighteen-member BOARD OF DIRECTORS, including Victor, who sits next to Gordon Seaver. Annabelle sits at the end of the dais, again in a room she doesn't feel she belongs in.

A SHAREHOLDER is at the mic.

SHAREHOLDER
The stock was already off by sixteen percent before the accident. Now it's dropped another nine percent. We're entitled to know your plan for the company, for the future of Park Center, and the status of the union talks.

WESLEY
Please, take your seat, sir.

SHAREHOLDER
Mr. Maddox, I am a stockholder in this company...

WESLEY
Do you own fifty-one percent?

SHAREHOLDER
You know I don't.

WESLEY
Oh, that's right. We do. Sit.

SHAREHOLDER
I assure you there are better ways to do business than to condescend to your investors. You would do well to refrain from...

WESLEY

Actually, I do quite well either way. This way just happens to feel better. Sit. Down. Now.

Gordon leans over and whispers in Victor's ear. But Victor shakes his head, he wants to see what's going to happen. A moment later, the shareholder backs down and takes his seat.

WESLEY (CONT'D)

Now, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to discuss a topic that is near and dear to my heart. Apes.

(off their confusion)

I just love 'em! They're so human. They use their hands, they have families, they work and play. And they have sex for reasons besides procreation.

A few scattered laughs from the perplexed crowd.

WESLEY (CONT'D)

There has even been talk of providing them with rudimentary computers. I predict, when the day comes that a monkey is given access to the internet, the first thing he will do is open a Schwab account and start buying stock.

The angry shareholder stands up again.

SHAREHOLDER

Are you calling us apes now, sir?!

A ROAR OF ANGER from the crowd. Gordon leans over to Victor.

GORDON SEAVER

You need to put a stop to this.

Again, Victor shakes him off. Wesley continues, undeterred.

WESLEY

Apes are governed by two primary instincts. Hunger and fear. What better way to describe the average investor? Market goes up, hunger kicks in, everybody buys. Market drops, fear kicks in, everybody sells. Warren Buffet drinks soda, everyone buys Pepsi. A bomb goes off at Heathrow, everyone sells Delta.

(MORE)

WESLEY (CONT'D)

Why do most people lose money in the market? Because they lack the very thing that separates us from the ape. Reason.

He lets it sink in.

WESLEY (CONT'D)

So, if our share price has you wetting your pants, I suggest you sell your stock immediately, get yourself a diaper and move into the Monkey House at the Central Park Zoo. If that insults you, I don't care. For the rest of you who trust the leadership of this company, a company that has consistently trounced its competitors as well as the broader market, congratulations on walking upright. That ends today's meeting. See you all next year.

Wesley turns to the board - and his father. They all wait to see what Victor is going to do. He stands, nods almost imperceptibly at his son, and leads them all out.

37 INT. ELEVATOR VESTIBULE - SAME

37

The board of directors wait silently for the elevators. When the elevator door opens, Victor and Wesley step in.

VICTOR

(to the rest of them)

Take the next one.

Annabelle is made to wait with everyone else.

38 INT. ELEVATOR - SAME

38

Victor and Wesley are now alone.

VICTOR

Do you think that was clever?

WESLEY

They were loud and now they're quiet.

VICTOR

And if they start selling, our stock drops and we will have a very difficult time re-capitalizing. Did you think about that at all?

WESLEY
They won't be selling anything.

VICTOR
And how do you know that?

WESLEY
They won't sell Maddox because they want to be a Maddox. And I just told them that if they sell they can't be.
(elevator opens at lobby)
That doesn't sound familiar to you?

VICTOR
Should it?

WESLEY
The day I left for college you said, "Remember, they all want to be you. Use it to your advantage."

The elevator doors open and Victor walks out.

39

INT. COCHRANE HOME - DAY

39

Sam walks in the house, finds his mother in the kitchen.

SAM
Where is he?

PATTY
Upstairs getting dressed. He won't listen to me.

JAMES
(entering)
I did listen. It doesn't mean I have to agree.

PATTY
Why do you have to be at the mediation? You said they could handle it without you.

JAMES
I can't sit around staring at the walls anymore.
(to Sam)
C'mon. You drive.

James kisses Patty on the cheek and walks out.

SAM

Maybe it's a good thing. Keep him
busy.

Sam kisses his mother and follows James out the door.

40

INT. MEDIATION ROOM - DAY

40

James and Sam sit on the union side. The room is full, except for four empty chairs opposite them. The mediator looks at his watch. The DOOR OPENS and Victor, Wesley, Annabelle, and Gordon enter.

VICTOR

I'm sorry we're late.

Sam and Annabelle look at each other as she sits.

MEDIATOR

Ladies and gentlemen, before we begin, it goes without saying that everyone here feels the deepest sympathy for the tragedy...

As the mediator continues to express his condolences, Victor looks at James, surprised he's here, glad he's here. Then...

VICTOR

I'd like to speak with Mr. Cochrane in private, if he would agree.

Wesley and Annabelle both turn sharply at their father's surprising request. James is equally as surprised. He nods his acquiescence.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

Can we have the room please.

Everyone stands and funnels out. Annabelle looks at her father one last time before she leaves the room. Victor waits for the door to close.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

I should have come to the funeral.

James doesn't know what to say.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

It was pure cowardice that I didn't and I'm sorry.

JAMES

Are you really gonna sit there and use my son's death as a negotiating tactic?

Victor's face sinks, genuinely hurt.

VICTOR

I was there when Jimmy was born, remember? I sat in that waiting room with you at the hospital.

JAMES

That was a long time ago.

VICTOR

And we're both a lot older now. Older and hopefully wiser than we were when we first started that company together.

JAMES

The one you screwed me out of?

VICTOR

Yes.

JAMES

I've never heard you admit that before.

41

INT. HALLWAY, MEDIATION SERVICE - SAME

41

All the people from the mediation room mill around the hallway, wondering what the hell is going on. Annabelle and Sam make eye contact. She walks up to him.

SAM

Know what's going on in there?

ANNABELLE

I was as surprised as you.

There's a moment between them. Part of it is just a growing and deep attraction, and part of it is that she knows something he doesn't - about Beth, about her father...

WESLEY (O.S.)

Annabelle?

She turns to find Wesley there. He gestures for her to walk over to him.

ANNABELLE
 (to Sam)
 Sorry. One sec.

She walks over to Wesley. He whispers, angry.

WESLEY
 What are you doing?

ANNABELLE
 Talking. Is that a problem.

WESLEY
 Depends on what you're talking
 about.

42

INT. MEDIATION ROOM - SAME

42

Victor thinks about what he's about to say. Then he starts.

VICTOR
 My people want me to give you a
 final offer today.

JAMES
 That so.

VICTOR
 It's not designed to get you to say
 yes.

JAMES
 You want us to strike?

VICTOR
 We need time to put together some
 new financing. The company is in
 pretty bad shape, more so than
 we've made public. The commercial
 real estate market has been
 decimated in this economy.

JAMES
 I've heard all this before.

VICTOR
 But this time I'd be willing to
 open the books to an audit if
 that's what it takes.

That one gets James' attention.

JAMES
 Why? Why now?

VICTOR

I don't want to go non-union and I don't want a strike. It's not good for me, it's not good for you.

(beat)

We've known each other for a long time, James. We've fought bitterly but we've also changed the skyline of this city together.

(beat)

The offer was to be a twenty-five percent pay cut across the board. My attorneys would be very angry at me for telling you this, but I know we can do it at seventeen. There's no room for negotiation on that. That's the number.

JAMES

Seventeen percent?

He thinks about it, stares at Victor for a moment.

VICTOR

Take the deal, James.

43

EXT. MADDOX PARK CENTER SITE - DAY

43

A TV REPORTER is doing a stand-up in front of the site when she SEES a GROUP OF IRON WORKERS, led by James and Sam cross the street to the police barricades. They're all dressed for work, their tool belts over their shoulders. Davis marches proudly with them.

REPORTER

(to camera)

It looks like James Cochrane, head of the union is just arriving...

(yells out)

Mr. Cochrane! Why are you here?

JAMES

Someone's gotta clean up this mess.

REPORTER

Will the accident effect the contract talks?

JAMES

They made a good faith offer and this our good faith response.

The POLICEMAN stops the crew from crossing the barrier.

POLICEMAN
Sir, only authorized people can...

JAMES
Can I speak to your supervisor?

Two MEN cross the street to meet the iron workers.

JAMES (CONT'D)
(offering his hand)
James Cochrane, Local 4601. If you
call Mr. Maddox's office, he'll
tell you that we're authorized to
get to work cutting and scrapping
that pile...

The first MAN introduces himself. He's DETECTIVE MARKS.

DETECTIVE MARKS
Mr. Cochrane, I don't work for Mr.
Maddox. I'm Detective Steve Marks.

JAMES
Detective?

DETECTIVE MARKS
Mr. Cochrane, the crane was
tampered with. This is a murder
investigation now.

James is frozen. Sam and Davis look at each other - both
stunned.

44 EXT. CENTRAL PARK - SAME

44

Annabelle and Victor walk down Cedar Hill in Central Park,
toward 5th avenue and Maddox Hill.

VICTOR
By the time you were born, a lot of
years had passed since I'd had any
contact with Laurel. We'd all
moved on. I moved on.

ANNABELLE
You think Beth moved on?

VICTOR
As far as I know, Beth doesn't know
any of this.

ANNABELLE
But she knows she never had a
father.

VICTOR

It's not as simple as you'd like to believe. Laurel didn't want me around either. It was better this way. You'll just have to trust me on that.

(stops her)

But, I should have told you.

It's not often that Victor apologizes and Annabelle knows it.

45

INT. MADDOX HILL - SAME

45

As Victor and Annabelle walk in, the GUARD behind the counter calls out to Victor.

GUARD

Mr. Maddox? Sir, I think you're going to want to come see this...

Victor and Annabelle look at each other, then walk around the counter to where the guard is watching a small TELEVISION.

ON TV: JAMES talks to the reporter in front of Park Center.

JAMES (ON TV)

So help me God, I'm gonna find out who murdered my son!

REPORTER (ON TV)

Do you know who might have done this?

JAMES (ON TV)

Just look at who benefited from it and you'll know who did it!

REPORTER (ON TV)

Mr. Cochrane, are you suggesting that someone in the Maddox company might have...

Sam steps into frame before James can say anything else, putting his hand up in front of the camera.

Annabelle turns to Victor, who closes his eyes.

ANNABELLE

Dad? I need you to tell me we had nothing to do with this.

He looks at her, expressionless, revealing nothing.

END ACT IV

ACT V46 INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

46

Wesley has a HOOKER pinned against the wall, her legs wrapped around his waist. He plows into her with everything he's got.

HOOKER

Oh, yeah, you're so big...

WESLEY

Shut up.

His CELL PHONE RINGS. He keeps going, pounding away at her until he finally climaxes. He lets go of her almost immediately. His CELL PHONE rings again. He ignores it, toweling off.

WESLEY (CONT'D)

If the sex is going to be this banal, you could at least come up with some decent dialogue. I hear there's an excellent whoring class at the Learning Annex.

THE HOTEL ROOM PHONE RINGS. Wesley frowns, then walks to the phone and answers it.

WESLEY (CONT'D)

Hello?

VICTOR (PHONE)

Get rid of the girl.

47 INT. HOTEL LOBBY - SAME

47

Victor is talking to him from the house phone.

VICTOR

I'm coming up.

48 INT. WESLEY'S HOTEL ROOM - MINUTES LATER

48

Wesley opens the door and Victor walks in. He looks around.

WESLEY

She's gone. How the hell did you know I was here?

SLAM! Victor explodes in anger, PINS WESLEY to the wall.

VICTOR

What did you do?!

WESLEY
What are you talking about?

VICTOR
The accident at Park Center! What
the hell did you do?

WESLEY
Nothing!

VICTOR
Don't lie to me!

WESLEY
I'm not lying. I don't even know
what you're talking about.

Victor looks in his eyes, sees that he might be telling the
truth. He lets him go.

VICTOR
Someone sabotaged that crane.
They're calling it a homicide!

WESLEY
And you immediately suspect me.
Nice.

Wesley composes himself.

WESLEY (CONT'D)
How do I know you didn't do it?

VICTOR
Excuse me?

WESLEY
We both know what Al Devechio has
done for you in the past.

VICTOR
He never killed anyone for me!

WESLEY
I'm not saying that a collapse
would have been the intention. But
a broken crane is an eight to
twelve week shut-down that we
desperately needed.

Victor glares bullets at him.

WESLEY (CONT'D)

Of course you didn't do it. But five or ten years ago, I wouldn't have been surprised if you did.

VICTOR

Then you clearly don't know me.

WESLEY

And you don't know me. If you did, you'd know that I would never do anything to hurt you or this company. And I wouldn't lie to you, either. If anything, I'd come to you right away. It hurts me that you don't know that.

Wesley looks pained. He means it. Victor finally softens.

49

EXT. BACKYARD, COCHRANE HOME - DAY

49

Sam sits with Ellen in the backyard.

ELLEN

Do they know who did it?

SAM

If they do, they're not saying.

She stares off into the gray sky, processing it all.

ELLEN

I can't stay here forever. I'm going to have to go back to the house at some point.

SAM

I'll go with you. I can stay there as long as you need me.

ELLEN

You have your own life, Sam. You have school soon, don't you?

SAM

Yeah, I don't know about that anymore.

ELLEN

What do you mean?

DAVIS
You told me you were stealing
copper pipe!

WIFEBEATER
Get in here. Now!

DAVIS
I know what you did! You messed
with that crane and you killed my
brother!

DAVIS RAISES HIS ARM and REVEALS THE GUN IN HIS HAND.

WIFEBEATER
Are you crazy?!

Before Davis can pull the trigger, Wifebeater KNOCKS his arm
against the open door, the GUN FALLING on the floor.

He PUNCHES Davis in the side of the head, knocking him
senseless. He steps out on the porch, takes a look around,
then STOMPS on Davis again.

53

EXT. GRAY'S PAPAYA - NIGHT

53

Al DeVechio and a coupla GOONS stand around a newspaper stand
with their sodas on top while they eat their chili dogs. A
LIMO pulls up and Wesley gets out. They start to walk.

WESLEY
Is there any other way your people
could possibly screw this up? Two
people are dead and my building
looks like Ground Zero.

AL DEVECHIO
Have a hot dog.

Wesley stares at the dog, finally succumbs and takes it.

AL DEVECHIO (CONT'D)
At the risk of upsetting you some
more, do you know the name of your
nightman down at Park Center?

WESLEY
Do you have any idea how many
people work for us?

AL DEVECHIO
Davis Cochrane.

Wesley turns sharply.

AL DEVECHIO (CONT'D)

Yeah, Cochrane. And as you might imagine, kid didn't like finding out he had a hand in his brother's death. Shows up heavy at my guy's house, they scuffle, kid goes down.

WESLEY

Dead?

AL DEVECHIO

Not yet.

WESLEY

This was supposed to be simple!
Like a hot dog. Heat it up, throw it on a bun. Not you, though...

He throws his dog at a passing bus, splatters on the window.

AL DEVECHIO

I would've eaten that.

WESLEY

And now you're asking me what to do with the unstable, revenge-seeking witness to your screw up?

AL DEVECHIO

I'd watch my tone, I was you.

(beat)

Look, what's the kid gonna do? This thing comes out, he's back in the box twenty-to-life. Not to mention, he doesn't want his family to know he was in the soup on this. We'll put the scare on him and keep tabs. Won't be a problem.

Wesley is fuming but he's too smart not to back off.

END ACT V

ACT VI54 EXT. COLUMBIA LAW SCHOOL CAMPUS - DAY 54

Sam stares up at Rodin's THE THINKER on the beautiful Columbia Law School campus.

He walks past the columned facade of the domed library and looks down at the great lawn beneath him. He may be in New York, but he's a long way from home.

55 INT. COLUMBIA LAW SCHOOL FINANCIAL AID OFFICE - DAY 55

Sam walks in to the busy office and up to the counter. A young WOMAN approaches from the other side.

SAM

I'm starting my first year in the fall. I'm supposed to fill out some paperwork?

WOMAN

(her phone rings)
Sorry. I'm the only one here.

She picks up the phone. He wanders to a bulletin board - everything from financial aide to internships.

He stares at a poster on the wall advertising an upcoming speech by "COLUMBIA GRADUATE and SUPREME COURT JUSTICE RUTH BADER GINSBERG!"

56 INT. DINING ROOM, COCHRANE HOME - NIGHT 56

The NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE is meeting. Empty beers scattered across a table full of paperwork. James sits at the head of the table. Sam sits next to him.

JAMES

You all know I've been the moderate on this committee for some time. But, as they say, events on the ground have changed.

Sam doesn't like what he's hearing but he keeps his mouth shut for now. One of the other MEMBERS speaks out.

MEMBER

You told us that you felt the offer was the best we could get.

JAMES

That was when I thought they were dealing in good faith.

(MORE)

JAMES (CONT'D)

But now my son's blood is twisted
up in all that steel and, sure as
I'm sittin' here, somebody in that
company is responsible.

Sam speaks up, surprising everyone.

SAM

We don't actually know that yet.

James stares bullets at Sam.

JAMES

I'm sayin', you shake hands with a
man and you give him your trust.
You shake hands with the devil and
you give him your soul.

SAM

And what *I'm* saying is...

JAMES

You're not saying anything. You're
a guest at this table.

TIMECUT:

James is at the front door, saying goodbye to the last of
them. Sam still sits in the NOW-EMPTY dining room. James
walks back in.

SAM

You asked me to join the
negotiating committee, remember?

JAMES

And you didn't want anything to do
with it, remember?

SAM

I still don't!

JAMES

Then go be a lawyer or whatever the
hell but do me a favor and don't
shoot your mouth off. It
embarrasses both of us.

SAM

This committee has a responsibility
to five thousand members of this
union!

JAMES

Don't tell me what my
responsibilities are!

SAM

Those guys worship you, Pop! You
can't ask them to reject a contract
because your son died!

JAMES

(thunders)

He didn't die. He was murdered!
And he was a member of this union
too!

At last, the truth. James walks out. Sam sighs. A moment
later his CELL PHONE RINGS. He stares at the Caller-ID -
surprised at the number. He's not sure he should answer.

58

INT. VICTOR MADDOX'S OFFICE - NIGHT

58

Gordon sits down with Victor.

GORDON SEAVER

I'm hearing that the union is going
to reject your offer.

Victor thinks about it, frustration and anger in his eyes.

VICTOR

Let 'em.

Victor is angry, but he's conflicted.

59

INT. MET-LIFE BUILDING - MAGIC

59

Sam walks in the lobby and up to the SECURITY GUARD.

SAM

This is gonna sound strange but...

SECURITY GUARD

Are you Sam?

The Guard walks out from behind the counter, waving for Sam
to come with him. Sam is completely confused but follows.
The Guard gestures for Sam to get in the open elevator, then
leans in and uses his key to light up the button that says
ROOF. The Guard leaves and the doors close.

60

EXT. MET-LIFE BUILDING - MAGIC

60

Sam emerges onto the empty roof of the MET-LIFE building,
into the horizontal light of the setting sun.

He looks around, then spots Annabelle. She's staring at the most perfect view of the Chrysler Building, all lit up by the sunset. He walks over to her.

ANNABELLE

I wasn't sure you'd come.

SAM

Me neither.

ANNABELLE

I'm glad you did. I love it up here.

She gestures toward the stunning crown of the Chrysler.

SAM

I don't think I've ever been this close to it. I feel like I could reach out and grab the spire.

ANNABELLE

My father used to bring me here when I was a kid.

SAM

You guys own this building?

ANNABELLE

No, but we use the helipad.

She points to a BLACK HELICOPTER on the other side of the sprawling roof. Emblazoned on the side of it is MADDOX.

She turns back to the Chrysler Building, glowing in the setting sun.

ANNABELLE (CONT'D)

Sam... I need you to believe that I don't know anything about the accident, and if I did I would tell the police. Even if it was someone in my own family.

He looks at her. She's telling the truth.

SAM

Maybe we don't have to talk about it right now. That be all right?

She nods. It's more than all right. They both stare at the changing colors on the Chrysler for a moment or two.

ANNABELLE

Walter Chrysler and William Van Alen. One a titan of industry and the other an architect. Different in almost every way. In 1928, they set out to raise the tallest building in the world. Meanwhile, the builders of Forty Wall announced that theirs would be the tallest. For the next two years each builder would revise their plans in order to go higher and higher until, finally, Chrysler had enough. Forty Wall was finished and declared the winner at two feet taller. But Chrysler and Van Alen had one more trick up their sleeve. Inside the elevator shaft they'd been hiding the spire. They raised it up from within and immediately surpassed Forty Wall by three hundred-sixteen feet, thus becoming the tallest building in the world.

SAM

The victory was short lived, because that baby over there...
 (The Empire State)
 ...went up a year later. My grandfather worked on both.

ANNABELLE

So you knew my story?

SAM

Nope. Just mine.

He looks down and he sees that their hands are touching.

POV - From the Chrysler looking back at them - tiny, up on top of a skyscraper, the city sprawled out around them.

CAT POWER'S HAUNTING "NEW YORK" FILLS THE TRACK, continuing to play through the following MONTAGE:

61 EXT. QUEENSBORO BRIDGE - NIGHT 61

A BLACK MERCEDES drives over the bridge.

62 INT. MERCEDES - SAME 62

Driving alone, crossing from Manhattan to Queens, is Victor.

James pulls a KNIFE out of his pocket. He flips the blade open. He puts his beer down and reaches for a box on the workbench.

He turns it around - and WE SEE the NYPD SEAL. He breaks the seal with the knife. He looks at Sam, waits a beat, then takes the lid off the box.

A deep breath. He reaches in and pulls out a WRIST WATCH. The glass face is SHATTERED. He puts it down, reaches in and pulls out a set of keys, tosses them on the bench.

Then he pulls out something much bigger. A LEATHER TOOL BELT, the words "COCHRANE - 1928" STAMPED into the leather.

James loses his breath for a second. He braces himself on the bench. Sam moves to help him, but James waves him off, steadying himself as he sits down in the old, worn chair. Sam sits opposite him and watches as his father holds the leather tight, rubbing his thumb along its grain, feeling almost a century of blood and tears in it.

JAMES

I'll give it to Ellen for the kid.

Then Sam places his hand on his father's, GENTLY TAKING THE LEATHER BELT FROM HIM.

SAM

If you don't mind, Pop, I think I'd like to wear it.

JAMES

What do mean?

SAM

There are all kinds of ways to be an iron worker.

JAMES

I thought you said you want to make your own footsteps?

SAM

I do. Right next to yours.

James Cochrane looks up his boy and finds that the eyes looking back are those of a man. Sam holds out his beer bottle and James holds out his - they knock together, both men drink to it, and we...

FADE OUT.

END