

IN SECURITY

by

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&

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FADE IN:

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - MORNING

A crisp, clear day. Traffic is average, loud and slow moving. We find two vehicles worming their way along Fifth Ave. A black Escalade followed by a black stretch limo.

INT. THE LIMO - SAME

We see a body guard, MEG MACKENZIE, mid thirties, pretty but tough, dark glasses, wearing a blue pant suit. Across from her sits a Saudi Sheik, FADIL AL-SALAH, his wife, MALIKA, and an adorable 8-YEAR-OLD GIRL, SHATHA. Shatha plays with an American Girl doll while Fadil and Malika argue.

FADIL

A hundred thousand dollars in jet fuel just to fly here to fix a \$50 doll.

MAKILA

Funny, you have no problem spending twice that (she covers her daughter's ears) *on a drunken weekend in Dubai with your "girl friend!"*

SHATHA

Should I pretend I didn't hear that?

As the couple argues, Meg talks quietly into her wrist mic.

MEG

Get ready, boys. They're in rare form today.

BEN (O.S.)

(in her earpiece) Roger that.

INT. ESCALADE - SAME

On the driver, BEN EWING, 30s, African American, former secret service. Next to him, ETON MELTZER, 40s, former Israeli military. Dark suits, dark sunglasses, serious.

BEN

So, as an ex Israeli military man, doesn't it bug you to have to play body guard to a Saudi guy?

ETON

Historically, our two countries have not gotten along. But this morning he gave me a diet coke. So I'm good with this guy.

The two vehicle convoy slides to the curb. We see that we're in front of The New York City American Doll Store. Ben and Eton hop out, scan the street. Ben talks into his wrist mic.

BEN

We're set.
(Then to Eton)
Release the Kracken.

Eton holds open the door as Meg exits the limo. One more quick scan of the streets, then Meg nods to the Saudi family who climbs from the limo. Shatha holds the American Girl doll up by its ratted hair in front of her father.

SHATHA

Hurry, Bethany needs to get to the hospital!

Fadil stretches his aching back.

FADIL

Shatha, please. It has been a fifteen hour flight and your doll, Bethany Chambliss the spritely Prohibition era girl who helped her grandfather run hootch has survived. What's the rush?

SHATHA

Now! Her arm is dented! I want the American Girl surgeon to fix it!

MALIKA

Fadil, please, let's get this finished so I can shop. And believe me, I'm gonna melt your credit cards.

MEG

(cheerfully) Well, if we're all ready, let's go have some fun.

SHATHA

You think because I'm eight I don't understand sarcasm, but I do.

(MORE)

SHATHA (cont'd)
 Now make yourself useful and get
 Bethany's trunk.

Meg leans into Ben.

MEG
 (sotto) I don't really want to
 break her neck, but I would like to
 squeeze it 'til her little face
 turns purple.

Everyone heads for the door of the American Girl Building.

Suddenly, two older model vans screech to a stop.

Two GUNMEN jump from the vans, uzis drawn. Meg shoves Malika into the Escalade, as Ben pushes Shatha back into the limo. But Fadil is grabbed by a kidnapper. A black bag is thrown over his head as he's shoved into one of the vans.

Shots are fired. Words are yelled in Arabic. The van with Fadil speeds off.

Eton pulls the LIMO DRIVER out onto the street, gets in.

The limo and Escalade screech away from the store.

INT. ESCALADE - SAME

MALIKA
 Shatha! Where is my baby?!

Meg talks into her cuff.

MEG
 Who has the girl?

Eton, into his cuff.

ETON
 She's with us.

Behind Eton we see Shatha.

SHATHA
 Why is the Jew driving?

ETON
 (Fake smiles)
 Delightful.

Meg follows the van as it cuts across three lanes and takes a right onto another street.

MEG

They're east on 45th, can you still
hit 47th?

Eton spins the wheel violently, fish tailing the limo onto
47th. Cars slam on breaks, honk.

ETON

I've got them.

MEG amazingly keeps pace, speeding, weaving.

MALIKA

You drive with such anger. Do all
lesbians drive this way?

MEG

(incredulous) Why do I always get
this? I am not gay!

MALIKA

Tell that to the pant suit.

IN THE LIMO Shatha and Ben bounce around in the back.

SHATHA

Bethany's scared! (Shoves the doll
in Ben's face) Hold her!

She hands the doll to Ben who stares at it incredulously.

IN THE ESCALADE--

MEG

Turning north on 6th.

Eton floors it to the intersection of 47th Street and Sixth.

ETON

Got him.

As the van approaches, Eton pulls into its path forcing the
van to a hard left down 47th.

Meg flies down an alley headed east also, parallel with the
white van. Malika is getting nervous.

MALIKA

Let's not kill ourselves. Let's go
back to the hotel and wait for the
ransom call.

MEG
They could hurt Fadil!

MALIKA
Then I insist we go back to the
hotel and wait for the ransom call.

Meg looks at her horrified.

MALIKA (cont'd)
Sorry. We're going through a bit
of a rough patch.

IN FRONT OF THE VAN NOW, a Bekins truck backs from an alley,
completely blocking the street. The van turns up an alley.

ETON
They're going south in the alley
toward you.

Meg takes a couple of wild turns landing her in a narrow
alley. The White Van is flying toward her. It looks like a
game of chicken. The van gives up, stops. Eton has nosed
the limo into the alley, blocking them in.

BEN
(to Shatha) Stay down.

KIDNAPPER #1 jumps out of the van and starts firing at Meg.
She pushes Malika down, pulls out her weapon.

KIDNAPPER #2 leaps from the drivers seat and starts firing.

Eton calmly steps out of the limo and starts walking toward
kidnapper #2.

Ben, still holding the doll, exits the car to stop Eton.

BEN (cont'd)
Meltzer!

Kidnapper #2 aims at Ben and fires wildly.

Ben ducks, but the bullet BLASTS THE DOLL'S HEAD clean off
its shoulders.

SHATHA
(Screams, horrified) Bethany!

Eton calmly raises his weapon and fires a single shot into
Kidnapper #2's kneecap, dropping him to the ground.

Kidnapper #1 is out of ammo. Meg is moving toward him.

MEG

Stop!

Kidnapper #1, panicked, leaps up to grab the bottom of a fire escape ladder. He's surprisingly agile.

Meg goes after him, catching him on the landing as he tries to break into the building through a window.

She horse collars the kidnapper and slams his head twice onto the iron railing, knocking him unconscious.

BACK AT THE VAN, Fadil, black sack over his head, hands tied, leaps from the side door. No idea what's happening, he runs straight ahead, directly into the brick wall of the alleyway.

Malika, out of the Escalade, chuckles, then notices Meg looking down at her.

MALIKA

I am sorry. If you ever marry, you will understand why that is funny.

And on Meg's reaction, we...

CUT TO:

MAIN TITLES

FADE IN:

INT. MACKENZIE AND ASSOCIATES - ELEVATORS - MORNING

We're outside the actual MacKenzie offices. CRICKET, early 20s, waits for the elevator doors to open with a cup of coffee and a clip board. The doors open, Meg enters.

CRICKET

Good morning, Meg.

MEG

(Taking the coffee) Morning, Cricket.

Meg moves quickly down the hallway with Cricket keeping pace.

CRICKET

Okay, here's your week. Donaldson and Peatrie are at the UN until Thursday. Andre is with John McCain at the Daily Show this afternoon...

INT. MACKENZIE AND ASSOCIATES - BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

They enter.

CRICKET

...Ben and Eton have Derek Jeeter on Wednesday, and Elsworth is with the cast of "Glee" at Letterman.

MEG

When did we take that job?

CRICKET

We didn't. He just really likes "Glee".

They pass a desk where Ben and Eton are finishing a report.

CRICKET (cont'd)

Also Donella James arrives at JFK at 5:40 on Wednesday.

MEG

Oh, hell. Is her book tour starting already?

Ben and Eton exchange a cringe, "This is not good."

CRICKET

The last installment of Pagleshim comes out next week.

ETON

The best selling young adult series ever and she's just walking away.

BEN

Those books actually got my son to read. And he's an idiot.

MEG

I don't know if I can put up with that witch this week. I swear she gets off on abusing me. (Takes a calming breath) You know what? Not this time. I'm not going to let her get to me.

CRICKET

Good for you. Be strong. (Reading from her notes) She asked me to tell you that if you're late meeting her at the airport she'll (with a British accent) "pluck out one of your ovaries and use it to play hacky sack." (Then) I just love the way she talks.

Meg rubs her temple and turns to open her office door. Ben leans into Eton:

BEN

(sotto) Twenty bucks says her crazy facial tick comes back by the end of the week.

Eton takes the bet.

CRICKET

(to Meg) Before you go in your office, I have one last thing.

MEG

More bad news?

CRICKET

I think you'll think so. Your sister is in there.

Meg sighs.

CRICKET (cont'd)

I know how you feel about Jen, but it's been two years and she seems to be really trying hard, so maybe find it in your heart to--

Meg angrily throws open her office door. It thuds against the inner wall.

CRICKET (cont'd)

Well, you'll handle it.

INT. MEG'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Meg enters and breezes past JEN MACKENZIE, early thirties, just as tough but twice as neurotic. Jen is looking at a framed NY Times article on the wall about her sister and MacKenzie & Associates.

JEN
Hey, sis. Nice write-up.

MEG
Stop reading my stuff.

JEN
You framed it and hung it up to
keep people from reading it?

MEG
Why aren't you on the road with
Chanarra right now? I thought she
was doing a big stadium tour.

Meg tosses a magazine with a cover photo of a very hot Latin
singer on stage.

MEG (cont'd)
If you're here, who's protecting
her gorgeous ass?

ETON (O.S.)
It is statements such as that one
that give people the impression you
might be gay.

Meg angrily moves back toward the open door.

ETON (cont'd)
--Plus the way you walk. (happily)
Hello, Jen.

JEN
Hi, Eton!

ETON
How are things in Los An--

Meg slams the door in Eton's face.

JEN
I'm not working with Chanarra
anymore. Not for the last few
months. I ran into a little
trouble. I relapsed. Again.

MEG
(dry, sarcastic)
I am shocked by that news.
Completely and utterly stone cold
shocked.

JEN

I deserve that. But I'm feeling better and I really think I've got it under control this time and--

MEG

Let me stop you right there. If the rest of that thought is that you want to come back to work here, forget it.

JEN

Don't make me beg, I'm not good at begging.

MEG

Oh, don't sell yourself short. I've seen you at last call. Jen, you bailed on me, you bailed on the business Dad built, you bailed on Dad! You don't care about anyone else, you're completely self-obsessed--

JEN

That's not true.

MEG

I didn't hear a single word from you when Tony left me.

JEN

Tony left?

MEG

Exactly. And while you were out in L.A. living your fancy life, keeping the nutbags away from Chanarra and Federline--

JEN

Ferdinand. Her boyfriend's name was Ferdinand.

MEG

I don't care! I've managed to build this company into one of the premier security firms in the country. And all it cost me was a husband and any kind of personal life.

JEN
I'm sorry. But you should be proud
of what you've done here.

CRICKET (O.S.)
(Over intercom) Meg, your nine
o'clock is here.

MEG
(to intercom) Thanks, Cricket.

JEN
Who's the client?

MEG
Possible client. Lorna Crawford.

JEN
The actress? Wow. She's both
adorable and untalented.

MEG
I know, but she's worth a fortune
and it's a big piece of business.

JEN
Is it something I can help with?

MEG
Sure. Oh, no wait. I just
remembered. You don't work here.

Meg is gone. Jen sits alone. Sighs.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Meg sits across from LORNA CRAWFORD, 21, an adorable young
actress with a penchant for trouble (think Lindsay Lohan) and
her mother KATHRYN, 45, a tough as nails stage mom.

MEG
Lorna, I have always loved your
work. I feel like I have literally
watched you grow up on screen.

KATHRYN
Yes, everyone has watched her grow
up. Especially recently.

Lorna gives an exasperated sigh as only a young girl can.

KATHRYN (cont'd)

The drunken public spectacles, the drug induced screaming at underlings, occasionally driving the wrong way on freeways. Lorna's reputation is in serious need of repair. So... starting this week she'll be entering Yale as a Freshman.

MEG

Good for you, Lorna. Education is a wonderful--

LORNA

It's crap. I'm not going.

KATHRYN

You are going.

LORNA

You can't force me.

KATHRYN

Oh, yes, I can. The courts made me your conservator because you can't be trusted. You will go to college, you will make no less than Bs, and you'll keep your nose clean - literally and figuratively! (Then) Now, obviously Lorna will need some sort of constant protection from fans... and herself. A discreet body guard.

MEG

Well, that's why you're here.

INT. BULLPEN - SAME

Jen paces, starts to light cigarette. She thinks better of it, pinches it out and puts it back in her pocket. Ben and Eton approach:

BEN

Hey kiddo. I have a question. When you're in rehab to stop doing something, what do you do when you're not doing that thing?

JEN

You talk about not doing it, you
read about not doing it, you pray
about not doing it... and you have
sex.

ETON

Perhaps more people would go if
they knew that last part.

Meg buzzes on the intercom.

MEG (O.S.)

(Over intercom) Cricket? Will you
send Ben in here, please?

CRICKET

Yes, Ms. MacKenzie. Ben?

Ben stands. Through the window of the conference room we see
Lorna react to Ben. Meg has left the intercom on.

LORNA (O.S.)

(Over intercom) No way. Forget
it. I'm not going to college with
a big fat, jar head following me
around.

BEN

(insulted) What the hell, man.

ETON

You are looking heavier around the
face... and body.

Jen realizes this piece of business is in trouble.

INT. MEG'S OFFICE - SAME

Lorna moves toward the door.

MEG

Please, Lorna, we have many other
agents --

LORNA

Forget it. I'm outta here.

Lorna opens the door only to be met by Jen who backs Lorna up
into the room with her exuberance.

JEN

Lorna Crawford! Oh, my God, I loved you in "Rachel's Promise." I know the critics beat you up over it but I could tell it was a real work of passion for you.

LORNA

(taken aback, loving it)
It was. Thank you.

Meg seizes an opportunity. She steps into the bullpen.

MEG

Johnny! Now!

JEN

If anything, your costar was the issue. Hollywood just needs to face the fact that Matt Damon can't do everything.

LORNA

Well, I think Matt really tried. He just didn't look retarded enough to play Donny.

JOHNNY SOUTHERLAND enters. Johnny is 26 years old and young Johnny Depp handsome.

JOHNNY

Hey, Meg. What's up?

MEG

Johnny, I want you to meet Lorna Crawford.

Johnny smiles a devastating smile. Lorna's eyes widen.

MEG (cont'd)

Lorna, this is Johnny Southerland. The newest addition to MacKenzie and Associates - a former Navy Seal. He would be assigned to your case if you chose to use our services.

LORNA

("He's gorgeous") I guess he's alright.

JEN

(sotto to Meg) You owe me one.

MEG

(sotto) Help yourself to a Coke from the fridge on your way out.

KATHRYN

Well, this makes sense. Someone closer to Lorna's age. Someone who can blend in. But the question is... can I trust you?

JOHNNY

Absolutely. I'm a professional.

KATHRYN

--I wasn't asking you.

All eyes turn to Lorna.

LORNA

Nice, Mom. And you wonder why I drink?

INT. MACKENZIE AND ASSOCIATES - BULLPEN - A BIT LATER

Lorna, Johnny and Kathryn cross to the door chatting. Meg and Jen follow. Cricket stops Meg, hands her a message.

CRICKET

Meg. Shady Oaks called. Sounds like your father has gotten himself into trouble again.

MEG

Good, God. What did he do this time?

CRICKET

He hot wired one of their vans and drove a few Alzheimers patients into Manhattan for cocktails.

Jen joins them.

JEN

What's up?

MEG

Hey, acorn. Apparently the tree stole a van for a drunken road trip.

KATHRYN
Ms. MacKenzie, one more thing.

Kathryn approaches them with Johnny.

KATHRYN (cont'd)
One last thing. My daughter, as you probably know, has a habit of not wearing under garments. The Internet is full of pictures of her... bottom. Specifically, the front part of her bottom.

JOHNNY
(playing ignorant) Really? Huh.

Meg glares at him, "Watch it."

KATHRYN
It's become an embarrassment for our family. During her time at Yale, it will be your responsibility to make sure that she always wears panties.

JOHNNY
How am I supposed to do that?

KATHRYN
If I knew the answer, I wouldn't need your help, would I?

Kathryn walks off with Meg to join Lorna at the door. Jen smiles at Johnny.

JEN
So, hot shot, are you any good at getting a girl to keep her pants on?

JOHNNY
My skills in that area are kind of untested.

Jen nods and walks off.

INT. JOHNNY'S APARTMENT - THAT NIGHT

Johnny and Jen are in the final throws of a sexual marathon. They both sound like they're enjoying it.

INT. JOHNNY'S BEDROOM - A BIT LATER

They lay in bed for a moment, neither one knowing what to say. Finally...

JOHNNY

So, how smart is it to have sex with someone you work with?

JEN

I think most authorities would agree it's never a good idea. Fortunately for you, I don't work at MacKenzie.

JOHNNY

But I did just screw my boss' sister.

JEN

Yeah, that's probably not good.

As she rolls back on top of him, we...

Fade out:

END OF ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. SHADY OAKS ASSISTED LIVING FACILITY - RECEPTION AREA

Meg and Jen walk through a reception area with CASEY LOREN, attractive, late 40s, manager of the facility.

MS. LOREN

He has a bad hip, no drivers license, and I'm pretty sure he sneaks into my office at night to download porn. Frankly, I'm fed up.

Meg is a little irritated by the attitude but masks it.

MEG

(sweetly) Ms. Loren, we'll talk to Dad. I'm sure we'll be able to reason with him.

MS. LOREN

I hope so. We're reaching a crisis point. A decision needs to be made in regard to the type of facility that might best... contain him.

INT. SHADY OAKS - DAY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A brightly lit multipurpose room. ELDERLY PEOPLE sit around reading and watching TV. There's one guy in a wheel chair with his back to us in front of a bookcase. This is DICK MACKENZIE, 75, formerly huge ex marine. He's directing an ATTRACTIVE ORDERLY who is on her toes in front of him trying to reach a particular book from a high shelf.

DICK

Uh... no, not that one. The one with the blue cover.

To help the woman, he gently puts both hands on her hips.

DICK (cont'd)

The other blue cover.

His hands slide down to her butt.

ORDERLY

Dick, which one of these books would you like to have up your ass?

DICK

I'll leave that up to you, but if I
get a say in it, I'll take a
paperback.

MS. LOREN

Butt grabbing. Did I mention butt
grabbing? Add that to the list.

Ms. Loren and the Orderly exit. Dick spots his girls.

DICK

There they are!

MEG

Hey, dad.

DICK

Hi, Sweetheart...

Meg gives her dad a hug.

MEG

Dad, you remember Jen. Your other
daughter?

DICK

For Christ's sake, Meg, let me get
a hug in before you start firing
scuds across her bow--

He opens his arms to Jen...

JEN

Hey, daddy.

MEG

Dad, why can't you just commit
crimes on your own? Why'd you have
to involve Alzheimers patients?

DICK

Because they're fun to party with
and they don't remember what
happened long enough to rat you
out.

He climbs out of his chair, puts the book back on the shelf.

JEN

I take it your hip feels better.

DICK

Yeah, but I don't want the clowns around here to know that. Being more mobile than they think gives me an edge. (Then) God it feels good to see you two in the same room. And working together again.

MEG

No, Dad. That's not gonna happen--

DICK

What the hell you mean that's not gonna happen? Look, she checked herself into rehab, cleaned her act up. So get over this bickering sister crap and let her back in.

JEN

It's okay, Daddy. I'll be fine.

DICK

There's nothing fine about it. I'm still the majority owner of this company, and I say you coming back is good for MacKenzie.

MEG

(protesting) Dad--

DICK

That's it. It's done.

Meg stares daggers at her sister. Dick hands Jen an envelope.

DICK (cont'd)

Here, sweetheart. I threw in a little more than normal to help you get your feet under you.

EXT. SHADY OAKS ASSISTED LIVING FACILITY - LATER

Meg and Jen walk out the door.

MEG

A little more than normal? How long has he been sending you money?

JEN

Six months. I was broke. I don't know if you know this or not but rehab doesn't pay very well.

MEG

Really? After all the years you've been there, I'd think they'd have given you a raise.

Jen starts to respond but takes a breath and lets it pass.

JEN

Meg, thanks for the job. I appreciate you giving me a break.

MEG

Look, no offense, but--

JEN

Don't say "no offense" because that means whatever you're about to say is supposed to be offensive.

MEG

No offence but you're currently an unemployed, homeless drunk.

JEN

Well, see there? I was wrong.

MEG

Dad let you back in, I didn't. So I'm going to do something that dad taught me - (smiles) check in with the previous employer.

JEN

Why would you want talk to Chanarra?

MEG

It seems odd to me that you would just decide on your own to go back to rehab. You've never gone voluntarily before. I want to know what happened. And until I talk to Chanarra, you're at a desk answering phones, not out in the field.

JEN

Fine. God, when did you become such a bitch?

MEG

When you left me holding the bag. For everything.

INT. SHOOTING RANGE - SAME

Eton, Ben and Johnny are on the range in the middle of target practice. Johnny is at one end of the small range, Eton and Ben at the other end with Eton to Ben's right. (As they fire weapons, the spent shell casings are expelled to the right.)

Johnny tries to sound casual.

JOHNNY

So, I didn't even realize Meg had a sister. I've never heard her mention Jen.

BEN

You won't. It's not a good situation.

Ben fires. Eton flinches as Ben's discharged cartridge passes by his nose.

ETON

Watch it. (To Ben) By the way, I wanted to speak to you about yesterday. You kept your coat closed when we were guarding the Sheik and his family. It's unprofessional.

BEN

The jacket hangs better when it's closed.

ETON

But it makes it more difficult to draw your weapon. Is that what they taught you in the C.I.A.?

BEN

No, but they taught me how to use my palm to shove a guy's nose into his frontal lobe.

ETON

Ooh... Big man.

JOHNNY

So, is Jen any good? What's her deal?

BEN

Two tours in Iraq, one purple heart, four years as a cop in Philly and a long weekend in Aspen guarding Christian Bale. She's been in the shit.

JOHNNY

Philadelphia?

Something about this information is clearly bothering Johnny.

Ben fires again. Eton flinches at the flying cartridge.

ETON

Can you move down a lane?

BEN

No, I can not.

JOHNNY

So why'd she leave Philly?

ETON

You remember the District 23 scandal? Forty-one dirty cops convicted of extortion.

JOHNNY

Rings a bell.

BEN

Jen's the one who took 'em down. That's why she left the force. I think it's also why she started hitting the sauce. It's easy to be a bad cop. Hard to be the only good one.

Ben fires again. This spent cartridge hits Eton in the ear.

ETON

You're doing this on purpose now.

BEN

It's not my fault your jack-o-lantern head is easy to hit.

Eton inverts his gun. (Holding his arm out to fire, but with his thumb pointing downward so now his cartridges will discharge to the left toward Ben.)

BEN (cont'd)
 Oh, that's professional. That's
 proper use of a--

Eton fires. The spent cartridge ricochets first off the ceiling, then off a pillar and goes down the back of Ben's shirt. Flailing--

BEN (cont'd)
 Balls!

EXT. YALE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - LATER

Johnny walks with Lorna. She's wearing a skirt. They're studying a map of the campus. Students mill around. Some recognize Lorna.

JOHNNY
 This must be the building.
 Nervous?

LORNA
 A little. I don't know if you know
 this, but I'm not particularly
 smart.

JOHNNY
 I think you're plenty smart.

She smiles, then:

JOHNNY (cont'd)
 (awkwardly) Okay... Uh, look... I
 have to ask you something. And
 it's going to seem like it's none
 of my business.

LORNA
 'Kay.

JOHNNY
 Are you wearing underwear?

Lorna pauses at the base of some steps to an ivy-covered building. She laughs.

LORNA
 Are you asking, or is my mom
 asking?

JOHNNY
 Both.

She takes a step toward Johnny.

LORNA
You can't tell if I'm wearing
underwear just by looking?

JOHNNY
I don't see a line.

LORNA
It's a thong.

JOHNNY
I guess I'll have to trust you on
that, huh?

She moves closer to him.

LORNA
You don't have to...

They stare into each others eyes for a long moment.

JOHNNY
We, uh... We don't want to be late
the first day.

Johnny and Lorna start up the steps of the building. They pass a LITTLE ASSHOLE sitting on the steps reading. From his low angle, he apparently has a view worth remembering. He grabs his camera phone and snaps a memento. Click.

INT. MACKENZIE AND ASSOCIATES - BREAK ROOM - LATER THAT DAY

Meg is rummaging through cabinets looking for a cup. She's on edge and irritable. Jen appears in the doorway behind her and watches for a beat then:

JEN
Hey...

MEG
Is it too much to ask to have a
clean coffee cup around here?

JEN
Donella gets into town today, huh?

MEG
She's somewhere over the Atlantic
and I can already smell the sulfur
and brimstone.

During the following, Jen locates a mug and pours a coffee for her sister.

JEN
I'm leaving, Meg.

MEG
Leaving?

JEN
I guess I kind of hoped the agency would be struggling a little more. You'd be desperate to have me back. But it's pretty clear you're doing great.

MEG
Well, yeah... I guess I'm doing okay.

Jen opens another cabinet full of booze. She pours a shot of Irish Whiskey into the coffee and adds a little sugar.
(Note: This isn't an easy thing for Jen to do.)

JEN
Plus I don't want to drag Chanarra into this whole thing. I'm just going to go.

MEG
Where to?

JEN
D.C. maybe. I've got some possibilities there. Listen... I meant what I said the other day in your office. Leaving here was the biggest mistake I ever made.

MEG
You never said that.

JEN
Yeah, well, I meant to.

Jen finds a canister of whipped cream in the fridge, shoots it on top. She hands the Irish coffee to Meg.

JEN (cont'd)
Here ya go. Remember the family reunion where we got lit on Irish coffees... and you were talking to Aunt Martha?

(MORE)

JEN (cont'd)
 (They start to laugh just thinking about it) Oh my God. You actually tried to pull that stray hair off her cheek until you realize it was connected to a mole.

Meg does a shiver, but starts laughing too now.

MEG
 It was almost like the mole was pulling back.

JEN
 (Laughing harder) Uhh! That's disgusting!

They laugh together for a moment. A beat, then...

MEG
 Thanks for the coffee.

CRICKET (O.S.)
 Meg!

MEG
 What?!

CRICKET (O.S.)
 Better take a look at this.

INT. MACKENZIE AND ASSOCIATES - BULLPEN

Meg enters with Jen following her. A few people including Eton and Ben have started to gather around Cricket's desk. Jen watches from the door but doesn't exit.

MEG
 What is it?

BEN
 We got a bogey at Yale.

MEG
 What kind of bogey?

CRICKET
 A Brazilian one.

Cricket spins her monitor around. Meg reacts to the picture.

MEG
 Oh. Whoa, hey... (Averting her eyes) Are we sure that's Lorna?

BEN

Yeah. You can tell by the beauty mark. (Off everyone's look) Oh right, like I'm the only one with the internet.

CRICKET

I called our attorneys. They contacted the web site and threatened them with legal action if the page isn't taken down.

MEG

Alright, I don't know how many people it takes to keep a girl in her underpants but apparently the answer is more than one. We're gonna have to give Johnny some help. Who's available? Ben?

CRICKET

Ben and Eton are headed out to cover Derek Jeter's visit to Lenox Hill Hospital.

ETON

With our coats open.

BEN

Eat me.

CRICKET

Everyone's booked.

Meg thinks for a second, then looks at Jen.

MEG

This is only a one time thing.

Jen smiles at Meg.

JEN

One time. Got it.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT II

EXT. LARGE CHAIN BOOKSTORE - LATER THAT DAY

A limousine pulls to the curb amid barricades and a high level police presence. A line of PAGLESHIM FANS stretches around the corner. Some carry signs, some are dressed as their favorite forest nymph characters. They scream with excitement when they realize this must be their beloved author, Donella James in the limo.

INT. LIMO - SAME

Meg sits next to DONELLA JAMES, 55, pretentious and surly, as she puffs on a cigarette and does her best Cruella de Ville.

DONELLA

(with disgust) My God... A thousand people in that line and not one with a life worth living.

MEG

Donella, these are your fans.

DONELLA

These are adults dressed as elves and wood nymphs. I am so happy to be finished with this kiddie crap. My next book begins with a vivid description of venereal warts.

EXT. BOOKSTORE - SAME

Meg hops out and meets Donella at the curb as the driver opens her door. She emerges to the SCREAMS from the freaks and fanatics. "Donella, please don't stop writing Pagelshim!" Donella takes it in, her lip curling in disgust. She forces herself to walk toward the crowd.

DONELLA

(over then din) Yes, yes, I know. I know. But one day you must all get lives. Let that day be today.

A creepy male FAN squeezes to the front, approaching Donella.

CRAZY-EYE FAN

You can't stop writing Pagleshim. You have to write it forever.

DONELLA

When you write your billion dollar franchise, you can do whatever the hell you want. But this is mine.

She moves to the bookstore.

MEG

You know, if you piss off a group like this, they may come after you.

DONELLA

Half of them have paper swords. Bring 'em on.

INT. BOOKSTORE - CONTINUOUS

Donella glides in cigarette first. Meg takes it from her and flicks it out the door. Donella sits at an elegant carved wood table with stacks of her books.

DONELLA

Coat and Coke, Meg. Coat and Coke.

MEG

Excuse me? What does that mean?

Donella, irritated, points to her back indicating her coat.

DONELLA

It means that for some odd reason I'm still wearing my jacket, and that a delicious refreshing beverage is not yet in my hand.

Meg goes to remove her coat.

DONELLA(cont'd)

(re: Meg) Completely brainless yet still functional. Proof that God has a sense of humor.

Meg's left eye starts to subtly twitch.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BOOKSTORE - LATER

The line of fans stretches from the hem of Donella's garment out the door. An eager EIGHT YEAR-OLD BOY with his MOTHER stands in front of Donella holding a stuffed Pagelshim character. He smiles eagerly.

DONELLA

Do you have a name?

BOY

Jared.

DONELLA

Hmm. (To the mother) Good one.

Scribbles something inside a book cover.

BOY

Thank you.

Jared moves off. Donella motions for Meg.

DONELLA

Meg, that child over there is wearing a counterfeit Pagelshim shirt. I know every design of every legitimate line. I'd like you to remove her.

Meg looks. A LITTLE GIRL IN A WHEELCHAIR is in line.

MEG

The girl in the wheelchair? She's probably been waiting for hours.

DONELLA

She's stealing money from my pocket. I want her gone.

MEG

What? You can't kick her out.

DONELLA

Meg, that little girl is raping me! You're job is my protection. Protect me! Get rid of her.

Meg hands Donella a book from one of the stacks.

MEG

Here. Just sign your name, I'll explain it to her mother.

DONELLA

No. No book. It's time that child learn that life is full of disappointments.

MEG

She's in a wheelchair!

DONELLA

They wheeled her in, they can wheel
her out!

Meg looks toward the kid.

EXT./INT. FRAT HOUSE - YALE FRATERNITY ROW - NIGHT

It's a wild, party. Music blasts. A few COEDS grind on a makeshift dance floor. In the middle of it all - naturally - is the drunken Lorna Crawford. She shakes her ass against FRAT BOY #1 who can't believe his ridiculous luck.

Johnny is off to one side, sullen, irritated. He watches Lorna getting nasty until he's had enough. He squeezes between the dancing coeds, grabs Lorna by the arm.

JOHNNY

Hey, hey. Lorna. I think we should get out of here. You've got an early class in the morning.

LORNA

(whiney) I don't want to leave. Let's dance, Johnny. Dance with me for one... no, two songs, then we'll go. 'Kay? Woooo!

JOHNNY

No. Not okay. You've already gotten me into trouble with Meg once today because I was stupid enough to believe you knew how to dress yourself. We're leaving.

Frat Boy #1 grabs Lorna by the arm, tries to pull her away.

FRAT BOY #1

You want to leave with this guy?

LORNA

Not for the reason he wants to.

Frat Boy #1 starts again for the floor with Lorna.

JOHNNY

She has to go home.

FRAT BOY #1

Dude, you're ruining this young girl's college experience. Get lost.

Frat Boy #1 is immediately joined by FRAT BOYS #2 and #3.

FRAT BOY #2
Maybe you should come outside with
us.

JOHNNY
You're making a very bad decision
here. I'm not going outside.

FRAT BOY #1
Move.

He shoves Johnny toward the door.

JOHNNY
(to Lorna) Stay put.

Johnny follows the three frat guys out the door.

Lorna immediately starts grinding on ANOTHER GUY.

FRAT BOY #4, a refrigerator-sized jock, is watching Lorna dance. He pulls out his cell phone and holds it up to snap a picture of the dirty dancing Lorna when--

A HAND grabs FRAT BOY #4's wrist. Camera whips up to reveal JEN. She playfully snatches the phone from his hand.

JEN
Oh, my God, I have this same phone.
Know what I hate?

Jen slips the back off and pops the SIM card.

JEN (cont'd)
Every time you want to take a
photo? There's never enough
memory.

FRAT BOY #4
What the hell, lady. (Yells) Hey,
whose mom is this?!

He reaches for the phone, but Jen grabs his wrist, twisting it in an impossible direction. He crumples to the floor, catching a knee to the throat on his way down.

JEN
Oops. Soldier down!

Jen grabs Lorna and pulls her to a nearby bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jen spins the drunken Lorna into the room.

JEN

You need to grow the hell up!

LORNA

(realizing) Oh, hey... You're the lady who liked me. How come you don't like me anymore?

JEN

I know you don't think you get enough adulation, but grinding your ass on half the population and flashing it to the rest isn't exactly gonna win you a Golden Globe (then, thinking) although it might get you nominated.

LORNA

Hey. You know who's cute? Johnny. Don't you think Johnny's cute?

JEN

Yes, very.

LORNA

I think I might do him.

JEN

Do him? No, no. That would be a very bad idea.

LORNA

Why?

JEN

Because... Johnny is your employee. If you sleep with him that would be like sexual harassment. And Johnny is very litigious. Put these on.

Jen thrusts a new pair of panties at Lorna.

LORNA

I'm already wearing underwear.

JEN

Well... Double bag it!

LORNA

'Kay, but you're just making twice the work for Johnny.

She stumbles trying to step into the panties. Jen helps her.

JEN

Lorna, honey, you need help. You've gotta figure out what's causing you so much pain you have to act this way.

LORNA

You met it in the office the other day.

JEN

Your mom, yeah. But drinking isn't going to fix it. You'll look around one day and realize that everything you love and everything that's important to you is gone. Trust me, I've had quite a bit of training in this area. Now is there anything I can do to help?

LORNA

Yeah. Hold my hair while I barf.

Jen sighs but obliges as Lorna ducks out of frame to vomit.

INT. FRATERNITY HOUSE - A MOMENT LATER

Jen enters doing her best to support Lorna who has passed out. Johnny approaches, pissed off.

JOHNNY

(to Jen) What are you doing here? I told Meg I was fine. I don't need your help.

Johnny slings Lorna over his shoulder in a fireman's carry.

JEN

Okay, first of all. It's nice seeing you, too. Second, there's a picture on the Internet that suggests you could use a little assist.

JOHNNY

Go home. I've got it handled.

EXT. FRATERNITY HOUSE

Johnny exits with Lorna over his shoulder as Jen follows.

JEN

If you've got it handled, why weren't you watching Lorna?

JOHNNY

I had a problem to take care of.

They pass the three Fraternity Guys who picked the fight with Johnny earlier. One is out cold in the grass. The second is trying to help the third pop his shoulder back in the socket.

FRAT BOY #1

You dislocated his shoulder. Not cool, Man! Not cool!

JEN

Johnny, what the hell'd you do to those guys?

QUICK CUTS:

-Johnny punches Frat Boy #1 in the face...

-Johnny spin kicks Frat Boy #2 into a fence...

-Johnny flips Frat Boy #3 to the ground...

JOHNNY

They fell. (Then) Look, I know who you are.

JEN

What does that mean?

Johnny stops and squares off with Jen.

JOHNNY

Peter Southerland. Name ring a bell? Detective Peter Southerland.

JEN

What about him?

JOHNNY

He's my dad and because of you, he's been in jail for the last ten years.

JEN

I don't know what to say. I didn't know.

JOHNNY

Well, now you do. Congratulations, you've screwed us both.

JEN

Johnny, I'm sorry if your father was a part of that mess, but what was I supposed to do? Just look the other way when cops are shaking down pimps and prostitutes? You can't blame me.

JOHNNY

Yes, I can.

JEN

Fine. Be angry. But my sister asked me to do her this favor and that's what I'm going to do. So until you can get a handle on this idiot, wherever she goes and you go, I go.

We see that Lorna, who's been silently laying over Johnny's shoulder - seemingly passed out - is actually texting.

LORNA

Johnny, guess what. Tomorrow night we're going to a party in Manhattan. My friend got invited to Jay-Z's birthday party and wants me to come.

JOHNNY

(shit) Who's your friend?

LORNA

Chanarra.

JEN

(sotto) Oh crap.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - THE NEXT MORNING

Meg stands outside the door. Her head is down, eyes closed. After a long beat she opens her eyes, raises her head and then does the sign of the cross. She knocks...

INT. DONELLA'S HOTEL SUITE - CONTINUOUS

Donella, on the phone. Motions with her head to come in.

DONELLA

(into phone) I am still waiting for my pot of coffee. It should have been here minutes ago. (To Meg) Light me a cigarette, would you, Meghan?

MEG

Um... I quit smoking eight years ago. Haven't had a puff.

DONELLA

Oh, stop whining and light it. (Back to the phone conversation) Perhaps next time it would be faster for me to simply have sex with an illegal immigrant, raise our love child, send him to South America with a pack mule and hope to God that growing coffee is in his blood.

Meg has lit Donella's cigarette but holds it at arms length.

DONELLA (cont'd)

(to Meg) Smoke it down a few millimeters. I don't like the first part of a cigarette in the morning.

Meg glares at Donella but eventually, during the following, takes a drag and swoons.

DONELLA (cont'd)

(into phone) Well, I'm sorry that what I said sounded racist to you. I didn't realize you were Colombian. But now I *really* don't understand why you can't get me coffee.

Donella hangs up. Turns to Meg. Takes the cigarette.

DONELLA (cont'd)
Your blouse is hideous.

MEG
(lets that go) The Katie Couric
interview is at noon so we should
probably leave soon.

DONELLA
First I'm going to need you to
perform some light surgery. I hope
you're up to the challenge.

MEG
Light surgery?

Donella kicks off her slippers, props a foot on the table.

DONELLA
I have a callous on my heal the
size of a small fetus. Don't make
that face, take these scissors and
remove it.

Meg's eye twitch starts acting up again.

DONELLA (cont'd)
My God, you still have the eye
twitch. I can't believe you
haven't gotten that fixed.

MEG
Donella, I'm not cutting a callous
off your foot.

DONELLA
Oh fine... "please."

MEG
Donella, I don't know why you feel
you have the right to abuse me, but
I'll tell you something. I'm done.

DONELLA
(skeptically) Really?

MEG

Yes, really. I will finish out this tour with you, but the next time you're in this city, I think you should find yourself another security company.

DONELLA

I've never seen you like this, Meg. I must say this glimpse at your impotent rage is adorable.

MEG

I'm sick of being pushed around by you. You are without question the most horrible human being I've ever met in my entire life.

DONELLA

You know, it has never occurred to me until just this second how very much you and I are alike.

MEG

How dare you?

DONELLA

We both express our affections for another person by demonstrating the opposite. When we have feelings for people we tend toward the abusive.

MEG

You're insane! I am not showing affection for you--

Donella kisses Meg on the mouth.

MEG (cont'd)

And I am not gay!

DONELLA

Tell that to the pant suit.

MEG

Why did you kiss me?!

DONELLA

Just doing what needed to be done. You clearly don't have the balls to do it, in spite of the way you walk.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - A MOMENT LATER

Meg exits, slamming the door behind her and stamps up the hallway, face twitch in full gear.

MEG

I gotta get a make-over.

She passes a ROOM SERVICE WAITER pushing a cart with a large urn of coffee. He lets Meg pass then stops outside Donella's door and looks back to see that she's gone.

We see that it's the CRAZY-EYED FAN from the book store.

EXT. TRENDY MANHATTAN CLUB - NIGHT

It's full of ridiculously cool people. Lorna walks in with Johnny and Jen at her side. All three are dressed very hip, Lorna in a short skirt.

JEN

So, we've got to ask the question,
Lorna. You wearing underwear?

LORNA

Yes, but only one pair. Is that
enough for you, Grandma?

Jen chuckles, pulls Lorna in for a hug, puts her hand on Lorna's ass, then pulls away and looks to Johnny.

JEN

We're good.

Lorna gives Jen an incredulous look, then sees someone she knows and prances off to say hi.

JEN (cont'd)

(to Johnny) Before you ask, it was
like a rock.

Jen smiles. Nothing from Johnny.

JEN (cont'd)

You know, eventually, you've got to
talk to me.

He starts to move toward Lorna but Jen stops him.

JEN (cont'd)

Listen, you think that whole thing was easy for me? You think I didn't lay awake at night wondering what my obligations were to the force? To the other cops? And once it was done, I couldn't show my face around the precinct. Even the clean cops couldn't look at me. (Then) I know as a kid it has to be hard to see your dad taken off to prison. But you're a man now.

Jen gently puts her hand on his shoulder.

JEN (cont'd)

You have to understand why it happened.

Long beat...

Lorna's moved back to them and has obviously been listening.

LORNA

Oh... My... God. You guys did it! (To Jen) That's why you didn't want me to sleep with him.

JOHNNY

You were gonna sleep with me?

JEN

No, she wasn't.

LORNA

I was thinking about it.

JEN

But she decided against it.

LORNA

No. You decided against it.

JOHNNY

(To Jen) Boy, you just keep making my life better and better.

CHANARRA (O.S.)

Lorna!

LORNA

Chanarra!

Lorna bounds off to play with CHANARRA, a beautiful Latin woman, 20s. Jen immediately turns her back to them.

JEN

You know, I think I'll step outside for a minute.

JOHNNY

What's the matter?

JEN

Nothing. You keep an eye on our girl.

Johnny watches Jen slip out to a small patio.

EXT. TRENDY MANHATTAN CLUB - PATIO - CONTINUOUS

Jen starts to light a cigarette.

MEG (O.S.)

Hey, what's going on?

Jen jumps. We reveal Meg. She's obviously taken her own advise, bought a few new clothes, did something different with her hair.

JEN

What are you doing here? You look great.

MEG

Thanks. I left the bitchweasel at the hotel, spent the rest of the day on me. Then I thought I'd come down, hang out. Meet Chanarra.

JEN

(nervous) Oh. No, don't waste your time. It's crazy in there. Johnny's got it handled.

MEG

Did you even get to say hi to her?

JEN

Naw...

MEG

Have you spoken to her since you got out of rehab? I'm sure she'd like to know how you're doing.

JEN
We'll catch up--

CHANARRA (O.S.)
You?!

JEN
--Chanarra!

Chanarra and a small entourage, as well as Johnny and Lorna, spill out the side door. Chanarra isn't happy.

JEN (cont'd)
Hi, sweetie!

CHANARRA
You are violating the restraining order!

MEG
Restraining order?

JEN
Long story. (To Chanarra)
Technically, I was abiding by the one hundred foot rule but you messed that up by coming out here.

MEG
What's going on, Jen?

JEN
Nothing.

CHANARRA
Nothing? Is that what you call stealing my boyfriend? (To Meg) I found her with Ferdinand in my own jacuzzi!

MEG
Okay, well, now things are making some sense.

JEN
Chanarra, it wasn't all my fault. I told you what happened.

MEG
What did happen?

CHANARRA

Ask her. And make sure she tells
you everything! For now leave!
Anyone with this whore, leave!

MEG

Hey, don't talk to my sister like
that.

CHANARRA

(Pointing at Jen) You, Whore! Go!
(Pointing at Johnny) You!
Handsome man! Go! (At Meg) You!
I love your dress! But Go!

Meg's scowl turns to a little smile. Then girlishly:

MEG

Thank you so much!

Jen pulls Meg away.

MEG (cont'd)

She seems really nice.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT IV

FADE IN:

INT. PUB - LATER THAT NIGHT

Meg and Jen sit at the bar. Jen is in mid confession:

Jen

...So, a crew guy sees me limping, offers me a Vicodin. Then later, Ferdinand corners me in the kitchen after Chanarra goes to bed. We talk, he offers me a beer. Figured I'd already had a Vicodin so what the hell. Next thing I know I'm in frickin' Narnia. I went totally koo-koo for Cocoa puffs. And apparently in there somewhere Chanarra caught us in the Jacuzzi kind of... getting at it.

MEG

Well, on the up side, I've seen pictures of Ferdinand, he's pretty hot. I'd have done it sober.

DICK (O.S.)

Hey, come on now... Do I really have to hear this?

WE WIDEN NOW TO REVEAL DICK sitting to Meg's right.

MEG

Sorry, Dad.

JEN

There's more... After Chanarra found us and lots of yelling and screaming, I took off, drunk, high, speeding... in her Porsche. I took a curve too fast on PCH. Lost control, took out three parked cars. That's when the cops showed up.

Meg sighs and puts her arms around her sister.

DICK

So... You weren't just in rehab.

JEN

No. Five months in a women's facility first.

(MORE)

JEN (cont'd)

Which was good because it gave me time to dry out before I had to go to rehab and dry out. (Then) I'm so lucky no one was in those cars. If I'd hurt someone, I wouldn't be able to live with it.

MEG

I'm just glad you're okay.

JEN

I'm sorry for being such a big screw-up.

MEG

I've known bigger ones.

JEN

But not in our family.

MEG

No, in our family, you're the biggest.

Jen chuckles. Meg kisses her on the head.

DICK

Listen, girls. I shouldn't have to remind you of this, but I'm going to. Our business is about discrete private security. When we become the news by - oh, let's say having shoot-outs in alleyways or messing around with celebrity boyfriends and then crashing their Porsches - we're screwin' the pooch. The business is gone. Understand me?

JEN

Yes.

MEG

You're right.

Meg's cell phone rings. She looks at the caller I.D.

MEG (cont'd)

It's Cricket. Nine, one, one.

JEN

Go take it.

Meg steps away from the bar with her cell phone.

JEN (cont'd)
I'm sorry, Daddy. It won't happen
again.

DICK
Of course not. You're a MacKenzie.
We learn from our mistakes.

A CAB DRIVER enters.

CABBIE
Someone in here call a cab?

Dick raises his hand.

DICK
That'd be us.

Dick turns to the table behind them.

DICK (cont'd)
Drink up, boys. Time to go home.

We see the table of SIX ALZHEIMERS PATIENTS.

PATIENT #1
We're not home?

DICK
That's why I love you guys.

Dick starts herding the guys toward the door as Meg returns
with a concerned look on her face.

JEN
What's wrong?

MEG
Donella didn't show for the Couric
interview. I've got to go to her
hotel and find out what's going on.

She starts for the door, then turns back.

MEG (cont'd)
You coming with me or not?

Jen smiles.

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE DONELLA'S HOTEL SUITE - LATER

Meg and Jen approach the door. On the handle is a "Do Not Disturb" sign. Meg pounds on the door.

MEG
(yells) Donella?

Nothing from inside.

MEG (cont'd)
God, this woman's a pain in the
ass.

Meg pulls out her own key to Donella's room, swipes it and pushes the door open.

INT. DONELLA'S HOTEL SUITE - CONTINUOUS

Meg and Jen enter. The place is a mess. An overturned chair, a coffee urn on the floor, etc.

MEG
(taking it in) Oh, God...

JEN
Well, you said she hated this book
tour. Maybe she pitched a hissy
fit and flew to Paris or something.

Meg is looking at something on the door jam.

MEG
Blood...

JEN
Okay, you know the drill. Do you
remember anyone or anything that
was out of the ordinary this
morning?

Meg thinks...

QUICK FLASHES - MEG'S MEMORY

- In front of the book store. Meg walks behind Donella. The creepy fan pleads with her to keep writing.

- Hotel Corridor as Meg storms out of Donella's room after the kiss, passing the Room Service Person pushing the cart.

- From her POV now, a quick glimpse of the Room Service guy's face. Could it be the Creepy Fan?

BACK TO SCENE

Jen watches Meg as things start to become clear to her. Her client Donella James has been kidnapped.

MEG

Well, good news, kiddo. You're not the biggest screw up in the family anymore.

As Meg and Jen absorb what this means, we...

FADE OUT:

END OF SHOW