

UNT. PAUL WILLIAM DAVIES PROJECT

"Pilot"

Written by

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Network Draft - CLEAN

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ACT ONE

FADE IN:

We open on a BLACK SCREEN. And then WORDS: "*AB INITIO: Latin for from the first act, or meaning from the start.*" When the DICTIONARY ENTRY clears we're back to BLACK and then, suddenly, a BURST OF SONG. Something LOUD and ENERGETIC and PROPULSIVE and then it STOPS. An alarm. We hear FUMBLING, then see the LIGHT of a PHONE. Time: 5:30 am.

INT. APARTMENT/BEDROOM - DAY

A few minutes later. The soft light of sunrise. SANDRA BLACK (29) sits on the edge of a small made-up bed, puts on her SHOES. Which are sensible. I don't want to comment on her clothes, except to say they're modest. Sensible. Not ostentatious. There's a point I'm making here. The room itself is lovely, but spare. A guest room. Sandra gets up, removes a SWEATER from a DUFFEL BAG by the door --

INT. APARTMENT/HALLWAY - DAY

Walks quietly down the hall --

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING/FOYER - DAY

Exits an elevator into the lobby of a GRAND New York apartment building. She beelines to the front door, but a DOORMAN spots her. Tries to help. She waves him off, opens the door HERSELF, and walks out into --

EXT. NEW YORK CITY/SIDEWALK - DAY

New York. The City. It's vibrant and vibrating and fucking AWESOME. Even at this hour. Let's hear it for New York, New York, New York. By which I mean, hopefully that wake-up SONG has kicked in again. Sandra heads towards the SUBWAY --

INT. SUBWAY STATION/PLATFORM - DAY

Exits a PACKED subway car. Hesitates. Searches for the right exit. She's still new here. Hasn't nailed it yet.

INT. BODEGA - DAY

A small, CLUTTERED bodega. Sandra grabs three CLIF BARS and two BANANAS. She checks the price of the bananas. \$1.19. Really? She puts back the second banana.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY/SIDEWALK - DAY

Sandra leaves the bodega, walks to the end of the block, turns the corner and stops. Looks up. Takes it in. This: The THURGOOD MARSHALL FEDERAL COURTHOUSE.

Ornate, majestic, formidable, resplendent. A beacon of American justice. She's here now. She's arrived.

INT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE/HALLWAY - DAY

Sandra walks down the main hallway of the courthouse, then stops in front of a courtroom. Checks her phone. Time: 6:44 am. Perfect. She sits down on a bench in the hallway, puts her phone away. Quiet. Still. Ready. We stay with Sandra for a long beat, then SMASH TO --

INT. APARTMENT/BEDROOM - DAY

Where ALLISON ANDERSON (28) has just finished having SEX with her boyfriend SETH OLIVER (27). It's not quiet. Definitely not still. Allison rolls over. Done.

ALLISON

Superb. Let's go.

She jumps up. Starts getting her CLOTHES together. Which are abundant and expensive and not in a duffel bag by the door. In other words, nothing like Sandra. This is the point that I'm making.

SETH

Superb?

ALLISON

I don't want to be late.

SETH

"Superb" sounds like a Yelp review.

ALLISON

Five stars. Is Sandra still here?

SETH

Sandra? Sandra left two hours ago. In the dark. It's Sandra.

ALLISON

You don't like Sandra.

SETH

I don't like Sandra *living with us*.

ALLISON

She's *staying* with us. It's temporary.

SETH

Steve Jobs was the temporary CEO of Apple. For three years. Then it became permanent.

ALLISON
Well, how did that work out?

Fair point. He squares up. Faces her. A little worried.

SETH
We can do this, right?

ALLISON
I'm about to take a shower. So,
yes. I hope I have that down.

SETH
I'm being serious.

ALLISON
Well, stop. It doesn't suit you.

She disappears into the bathroom.

SETH
Superb.

INT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE/HALLWAY - DAY

Back with Sandra. Still quiet. Still alone. And then,
suddenly, surprisingly, FOOTSTEPS. Who else is here this
early? Sandra looks up to see KATE LITTLEJOHN (27)
approaching the courtroom door.

SANDRA
It's locked.

Kate tries it anyway. It's locked. Kate walks to the other
side of the hallway and sits down, facing Sandra. A beat.

KATE
When the door opens, you can go in
first. I know you were here first.

SANDRA
It doesn't matter.

KATE
If it didn't matter, you wouldn't be
here first.

Sandra stares at her for a beat. Is that true? The thought
is interrupted by JAY DAWSON (26), who has come SPRINTING
around the corner --

JAY
(out of breath)
...Did...it start...?

SANDRA
It starts at 8.

JAY
It's 8.

SANDRA
It's 7.

He looks down at his watch.

JAY
Goddamn vintage hipster watch!

He flops down on the bench next to Kate, tosses the watch into his MESSENGER BAG and removes a roll of tin-foil.

KATE
What is that?

JAY
Breakfast taco. Austin-style. *Migas*.
Scrambled eggs. Crumbled tortilla
chips. Onions. If you want a bite --

KATE
You're not allowed to eat in here.

JAY
Why not?

KATE
Because you're not allowed to eat in
here. There's a sign out front.

JAY
I didn't see a sign.

KATE
Ignorance is no excuse.

JAY
You're a prosecutor, aren't you?

Yes. She is. She points across the hallway.

KATE
Maybe you should eat that over there.

JAY
Because I'm a public defender or
because of the *Migas*?

KATE
Do I have to choose?

Whatever. Too early to argue. Jay crosses to the other side of the hall, nods to Sandra, and takes a bite of *Migas*, as a few more YOUNG LAWYERS now round the corner into the hallway. And then a few MORE. And then, in some cool way that our amazing director will devise, we'll see TIME PASS, as the area outside the courtroom FILLS with new attorneys. Making introductions. Pacing. Checking the courtroom door. At the end of which, Allison arrives. She dives onto the bench next to Sandra, slips her a FANCY BAKERY BAG.

ALLISON

Banana bread from Mah Ze Dahr. I had to sneak it in.

She notices Jay, flamboyantly finishing his *Migas*.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

Or maybe I didn't.

JAY

You didn't. But careful with her.
(points to Kate; then)
Jay.

ALLISON

Allison. You're not a prosecutor.

Jay takes his last bite. Shakes his head. No. God no.

SANDRA

Where's Seth?

ALLISON

He's coming.

SANDRA

(then; realizing)
Right. Low profile.

At which point Seth appears outside the courtroom. He sees Allison. Sandra. Hesitates, then pretends he doesn't know them and sits down next to Kate. LEONARD FOX (29) now sweeps around the corner, wades through the lawyers waiting in the hall, checks the door to the courtroom, and of course it is now UNLOCKED. Perfect timing. He opens it, about to enter, when Kate suddenly stops him.

KATE

Hey! She was here first.

Sandra. Leonard stares at Kate. Then Sandra.

LEONARD

Oh. I didn't realize.

And then he walks in first. Because, fuck y'all. I'm first now. Allison looks at Sandra -- who the fuck is that guy? -- As they and the others follow him INTO --

INT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE/COURTROOM - DAY

A vast, spectacular courtroom, where lead Court Clerk TINA KRISMAN (51) and Chief Judge WILLIAM BYRNE (56) are waiting. Tina sorts the lawyers into opposite sides of the gallery --

TINA

Assistant United States Attorneys to the right. Federal Public Defenders to the left. You can sit together if you'd like but if I've learned anything after 27 years of doing this it's that you don't like to sit together.

Jay, Allison and Sandra sit on one side of the aisle; Leonard, Kate and Seth on the other. And this is where we realize Seth is a prosecutor and Allison is a public defender.

TINA (CONT'D)

This is the swearing-in for incoming AUSAs and FPDs. Please check your tickets and make sure you're on the right flight. My name is Tina Krissman, I am the clerk of court, I am on the 2nd floor of this building, and I am available everyday from 7:50am until 4:40pm to ignore your questions. I smell onions.

A beat as she stares at everyone. Who has the fucking onions? Nobody cops to it. Nobody snitches. Okay, then.

TINA (CONT'D)

I will find you. Chief Judge William Byrne.

She looks over to Judge Byrne, who now stands. Faces them.

JUDGE BYRNE

There are two great courts in America. The Supreme Court and the one you're sitting in right now. This is the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York. The oldest, most prestigious, highest profile trial court in America. This is the court that heard claims over the sinking of the Titanic.

(MORE)

JUDGE BYRNE (CONT'D)

This is the court that heard the case against the Rosenbergs. Alger Hiss. The Pentagon Papers. Aaron Burr was a lawyer in this court. Are you worthy?

Allison looks at Sandra. We're here. We are.

JUDGE BYRNE (CONT'D)

You've probably heard that some people call this the 'Mother Court.' For as long as you work here, you will call it home. It will consume you and it will be difficult for you. I assure you. The cases are hard. The stakes are high. The lawyers on the other side are better than you. And the judges are smarter than you. Some of you won't succeed. Some of you are not worthy. But for those of you who are, your time here will be the highlight of your career.

(beat)

Now please stand and raise your right hand and repeat after me --

The lawyers stand and raise their hands. Inspired. Impressed. Intimidated. As Judge Byrne administers the oath, we cut around to each of them. Jay. Seth. Kate. Leonard. Allison. Sandra. Repeating the words after him.

JUDGE BYRNE/ALL

I do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the constitution of the United States; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the Government of the United States; that I will maintain the respect due to the Courts of Justice and Judicial Officers; and that I will demean myself as an attorney, proctor, advocate, solicitor and counselor of this Court uprightly, according to law, so help me God.

(then)

Welcome to the Mother Court.

And off this new generation of justice being formed in this venerable court, we have our TITLE CARD OUT.

EXT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE - DAY

The newly sworn-in attorneys EXIT the courthouse. Sandra, Jay, Allison and a few other FPDs split off to the left;

Leonard, Kate, Seth a half-dozen other AUSAs veer right. Opposite sides. Opposite directions. As we CUT TO:

INT. PUBLIC DEFENDER/BULLPEN - DAY

Sandra, Allison, Jay and the other new public defenders are now gathered in the Federal Public Defender's office, which is bright and functional and will never be mistaken for Google. JILL MARCUS (46) hands out ENVELOPES.

JILL

Good morning, everyone. I'm Jill Marcus. I am the Federal Public Defender. Inside these envelopes is your first case. And let me warn you: You're not going to win. You're up against the United States Government and the government almost always wins. Not because they're smarter or prettier, or because they work harder. Not because they're more experienced. In most of these cases, you'll be up against junior prosecutors. New lawyers. Just like you. No, the government will win because they have all the *power* and they use all the power they have to win. Now, here's the good news: You don't need to win. You need A win. Reduce the charge. Get a piece of critical testimony thrown out. Get your client released on bail. *Get something.* 97 percent of all federal cases end with a defendant pleading guilty on unfavorable terms. If you do better than that, you've won. And I know you can do better than that. Or you wouldn't be here.

Sandra turns to Allison, in a whisper --

SANDRA

We can do better than that.

INT. US ATTORNEY/BULLPEN - DAY

Across the street, Seth, Kate and Leonard and the other new AUSAs are gathered in the US Attorney's Office, which is noticeably bigger and more well-appointed than the FPD. ROGER GUNN (46) walks through the room, handing out ENVELOPES.

ROGER

My name is Roger Gunn.
(MORE)

ROGER (CONT'D)

I am your boss. This is your first case. I expect you to win.

Good morning! As Gunn walks away, Leonard looks in his envelope, then closes it quickly, clearly unhappy with his case. He turns to Seth. Smiles.

LEONARD

Got a good one. What'd you score?

SETH

Terrorism.

LEONARD

Terrorism! Sweet. Nail it.

Leonard walks away, his face DROPPING, as we catch Kate behind them, watching the whole exchange.

INT. PUBLIC DEFENDER/SANDRA'S OFFICE - DAY

Sandra enters her office, and excitedly opens her envelope, only to discover...it's *empty*!

INT. PUBLIC DEFENDER/JILL'S OFFICE - DAY

Jill walks through her office, LOOKING for something, as Sandra enters, uninvited.

SANDRA

My envelope is empty.

Jill finds a pair of SHOES under her desk.

JILL

Because you're on "duty" today. Which means you pick up whatever cases come in the door.

Jill slips out of her shoes into the new shoes. Changes her JACKET. It's all a bit like Superman. As she does --

SANDRA

I'm sure I can handle something else, as well --

JILL

Why are you sure of that? Because you went to Yale?

SANDRA

What? No.

JILL
This job is different than anything
you've done before, Ms. Black.

SANDRA
I don't know who you think I am --

JILL
I think you're on duty.

Jill stares at her, then grabs her bag and heads out. Off
Sandra, realizing something, we CUT TO:

INT. PUBLIC DEFENDER/ALLISON'S OFFICE - DAY

A rattled Sandra stands with Allison in her office --

SANDRA
She knows.

ALLISON
Of course she knows. *Everybody* knows.

SANDRA
Everybody knows?

ALLISON
You quit a Supreme Court clerkship
six months into the term. You're,
like, *famous*. It's not a bad thing.

SANDRA
It doesn't feel good.

ALLISON
You didn't get fired. You *quit*.
For a good reason. And since when
do you care what anybody thinks?

SANDRA
Since I got duty.

Jay pops his head in, bag over his shoulder.

JAY
You got duty? Lucky you. I love a
surprise. Unless it's a Tinder date
with Margery Perlmutter.
(remembering; then)
You guys want to walk over to the
courthouse?

EXT. PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OFFICE - DAY

Jay, Sandra and Allison EXIT the public defender's office --

SANDRA
What'd you get?

JAY
(waves the envelope)
Some trumped up fraud charge. I figure I can either read the lies from the AUSA or hear the lies from my client. I trust my client more. You two know each other from law school?

SANDRA
First day. Torts. Front row.

JAY
Too close for torts. But that's cool. Where you living in the City?

ALLISON
Upper East Side.

JAY
Less cool, all of a sudden.

SANDRA
I'm looking for a place.

JAY
Try Queens. I grew up in Queens.
(beat)
Then I left. Yeah, maybe skip Queens.

He turns, looks at Sandra. Needs to say this.

JAY (CONT'D)
You quit your Supreme Court clerkship because of the Morgan case, right?

SANDRA
Everybody knows.

JAY
When I heard what you did, I was like, that's amazing. I was *moved*. Seriously. Like, somebody *believes* in something.

He hits his chest. She looks genuinely touched.

JAY (CONT'D)
I mean, I was way high, but still.

SANDRA
Thank you?

JAY
Thank *you*, Sandra Black.

Off Sandra, smiling, as they near the courthouse, we CUT TO:

INT. US ATTORNEY/KATE'S OFFICE - DAY

Where Kate is deep into her case folder -- reading, highlighting, assembling a binder of documents.

SETH
You don't mess around.

KATE
I have a bail hearing. Why would I be messing around?

SETH
No, I just meant... Doesn't matter. I heard you were a procedural guru. Can I ask you a question?

KATE
If you have to, but I don't want to be the help desk for every man in the office too lazy to look something up for himself. Were you too lazy to look this up yourself?

SETH
(yes)
I can look it up myself.

Seth starts to leave. Kate deliberates, then, feeling bad --

KATE
If it's about your terrorism case, you shouldn't waste your time.

SETH
Why not?

KATE
Because I don't think that's going to be your case for very much longer.

Off a confused Seth, we CUT TO:

INT. US ATTORNEY/ROGER'S OFFICE - DAY

Leonard stands in front of Roger Gunn.

ROGER
Why would I give you his case?

LEONARD

Because a farm animal could win *this* case, and that case actually matters. And if it matters, you should give it to me. When I was clerking on the Supreme Court, this kid was writing research memos to junior partners at a mid-tier law firm.

ROGER

Is that true?

And we now realize that this question isn't directed at Leonard, but at Seth, who has appeared in the doorway.

ROGER (CONT'D)

Leonard doesn't think you're ready for this case.

SETH

Well, he's right. Neither one of us is ready for a case like this. But I'm at least humble enough to recognize it. And I'll work that much harder because of it. Arrogance doesn't equal experience.

Not bad. Roger stares. Thinks. Then takes the folders out of their hands and switches them.

ROGER

I've never been a fan of humility.

And off a triumphant Leonard and defeated Seth, we CUT TO:

INT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE/CAFETERIA - DAY

Seth and Allison are hidden away in the far back booth of the courthouse cafeteria, looking through their folders.

ALLISON

You let him steal your case?

SETH

I didn't *let* him. I fought for it. But what am I going to do?

ALLISON

Fight harder?

SETH

Great. Right. Thank you. These people are sharks. I'm just trying to keep my head down.

(MORE)

SETH (CONT'D)

(beat)

Could you keep your head down, too.

He means this literally. Right now. Here.

ALLISON

You wanted to meet here!

SETH

Just...*low profile*. You're not good for my reputation as a tough guy.

ALLISON

That's not the reputation you're really working right now. Trust me.

(checks her phone)

I have to go. Initial appearance.

She starts to gather her things. He looks at his watch.

SETH

Me, too.

INT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE/CLERK'S OFFICE - DAY

A long counter. A few LAWYERS conferring with CLERKS at the far end. Sandra enters, a little disoriented. Not quite sure what to do on "duty". She spots Tina Krissman.

SANDRA

Ms. Krissman.

Tina stares at her. Yep.

SANDRA (CONT'D)

I'm Sandra Black, from the FPD. I'm on duty today.

(beat)

So, if any cases come in, I'll be right here --

She starts to walk to a chair against the wall --

TINA

That's not a great place to be. Because when cases come in, I EMAIL them to you. Which is what I did 15 minutes ago.

SANDRA

(checks her phone)

I don't have any service here.

TINA

Then you probably don't know that your hearing starts in eight minutes. Courtroom 610. Avoid the elevators and take the stairs. And be grateful you called me Ms. Krissman.

Off Sandra, thankful for the tip, we CUT TO:

INT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE/HALLWAY - DAY

Seth and Allison leave the cafeteria and walk down the hallway --

INT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE/ELEVATOR - DAY

Where Seth presses the fifth floor. He looks at her. Floor?

ALLISON

I'm on five, too.

They share a brief look. No way. Not possible. There are a lot of courtrooms on the fifth floor. The elevator DINGS.

INT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE/HALLWAY - DAY

They exit. Seth turns right. Allison left. *Thank God.* They both look back. She mouths "Good luck." Low profile. He smiles, takes a few steps, and then his face FALLS. Wrong way. He turns and pulls up next to Allison in front of Courtroom 505. Yes, this is happening. Same case. Opposite sides. Holy shit! They enter, as we WHIP across the hall --

INT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE/COURTROOM ONE - DAY

A different courtroom. Where Jay is conferring with his client, PETER JOSHUA (40s). Kate enters, wheeling a BIG BAG and clutching two BINDERS. She unpacks the bag, which has more binders, lays everything out perfectly, takes a sip of water, then sees Jay standing next to her.

JAY

Ignorance is no excuse.

He points to a SIGN behind Kate: "NO PLASTIC WATER BOTTLES."

INT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE/COURTROOM TWO - DAY

Sandra DASHES into another courtroom. And this courtroom is more CROWDED than the other two. And there are a dozen highly-armed FEDERAL MARSHALS spread around the room. Which is weird and alarming. Sandra walks quickly down the center aisle looking unnerved...until she sees her client, MOHAMMED FAYED (19). A KID. Wiry, big-eyed, scared as SHIT. She inhales. Straightens up. Can't afford her own nerves. Because he needs her. She's the adult. Has to be. Always.

SANDRA
I'm Sandra Black. I'm your attorney.

FAYED
Thank you, Ms. Black. Mohammed Fayed.

She looks over to see...Leonard Fox. Ugh.

SANDRA
What's the charge?

LEONARD
18 USC 2332a3. You picked this up
on duty?

SANDRA
Yes.

LEONARD
Tough day to be on duty.
(starts to mansplain)
2332a3 is --

SANDRA
Attempted use of a weapon of mass
destruction, against any property
that is owned, leased or used by the
United States or by any department
or agency of the United States. I
know. What was my client allegedly
attempting to destroy?

He stares at her. How the fuck did you just do that?

LEONARD
Leonard Fox.

SANDRA
Sandra Black.

LEONARD
Sandra *Black*. *The* Sandra Black?

CLERK
All Rise!

LEONARD
Your client tried to blow up the
Statue of Liberty, Sandra Black. He
better hope you don't quit on him.

And as the Judge enters, we're off Sandra, her first case,
defending a man charged with trying to destroy Liberty
herself. And that's how we END ACT ONE.

ACT TWO

INT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE/COURTROOM THREE - DAY

Seth and Allison stand at their respective counsel tables, pretending like they don't know each other. MADELINE LOCARNO (40s) sits next to Allison. Judge Byrne is on the bench.

SETH

Your Honor, as alleged in the complaint, Madeline Locarno was an administrative assistant at Alaria Pharmaceuticals, and illegally traded on inside information regarding a merger between Alaria and Biogene --

ALLISON

Excuse me, Your Honor, but the complaint actually does NOT allege that. It alleges that Ms. Locarno passed on insider information to her *ex-husband*, who executed the trades, facts which we deny. The *true facts* are that Ms. Locarno is a dedicated Alaria employee, with no record --

SETH

She's a *temporary* employee at Alaria.

ALLISON

So what? Steve Jobs was the temporary CEO of Apple, Your Honor. Nobody questioned his loyalty.

Seth turns towards Allison. *Really?*

JUDGE BYRNE

What is the maximum sentence?

SETH

20 years, and a fine of \$5,000,000.00.

Madeline looks up at Allison, worried. Allison puts a reassuring hand on her shoulder.

JUDGE BYRNE

And what was the value of the trades?

ALLISON

\$6,325.54, Your Honor.

JUDGE BYRNE

20 years and 5 million dollars for a *six thousand dollar trade*? This is
(MORE)

JUDGE BYRNE (CONT'D)
 what Roger Gunn is prioritizing in
 the US Attorney's Office nowadays?

ALLISON
 Tough guys.

Seth looks over at her. Come on! As we SMASH TO:

INT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE/HALLWAY - DAY

Seth and Allison, exiting the courtroom. On the walk --

ALLISON
 I thought that was...*fun*.

SETH
FUN? We have to get out of this.
 It's a huge conflict of interest.

ALLISON
 So talk to Gunn. Get off the case.

SETH
 Why do *I* have to get off the case?

ALLISON
 Because you're the one who wants to
 get off the case. And you don't
 really want to prosecute this case
 anyway. Do you? I mean, *really?*
 So, lots of reasons.

Allison walks away, and off an annoyed Seth, we CUT TO --

INT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE/COURTROOM ONE - DAY

Another courtroom. Where Jay and Kate stand at their
 respective counsel tables, addressing JUDGE FORD. Peter
 Joshua sits next to Jay. He's earnest, overwhelmed, nervous.

JAY
 Your Honor, this is a minor fraud
 charge, and we're simply asking for
 reasonable bail so that my client,
 Peter Joshua, can continue to care
 for his twin brother who is dying of
 cancer. The two are very close.

Jay sits down, squeezes Peter's hand, as Kate stands up.

KATE
 I find myself unexpectedly moved by
 defense counsel.

Jay nods in her direction. Mouths "Thank you."

KATE (CONT'D)

To indignation. Peter Joshua's brother isn't dying of cancer. Because he doesn't exist! Nor, really, does "Peter Joshua," which isn't that man's name. His name is Matthew Ormond. Or, wait, no: It's Baron Heinz Geinecke. I'm sorry, did I say Baron Heinz Geinecke? I meant *Samantha Konogo*. It really depends on what con he's running. They're not hard to track down if you do a little WORK. As for this con, it's not minor at all. Mr. Joshua is charged with creating the absurdly named and entirely FAKE "United States Bureau of Organization" to issue FAKE governmental purchase orders with which he swindled hundreds of thousands of dollars of very real money from small businesses all over the New York area. It's enough to, well...make you sick.

Boom. Kate sits down. Round one to the fluorescent tabs.

INT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE/COURTROOM TWO - DAY

Sandra and Leonard stand at *their* respective counsel tables. Sandra is clear, strong, a reassuring presence for the plainly still-terrified Fayed, who sits next to her.

JUDGE REED

I assume you're not contesting detention, Ms. Black.

SANDRA

No, Your Honor. Without Prejudice.

JUDGE REED

Of course. Please advise the Court if there are any plea discussions.

LEONARD

We're already talking, Your Honor.

The Judge gavels the hearing closed. Sandra turns to Leonard.

SANDRA

Talking? What are we talking about?

LEONARD

I'm offering you 20 years, as opposed to life. See. *Talking*.

SANDRA

I haven't seen all the evidence yet.

LEONARD

Once we get bogged down in discovery, it's harder to get a deal done. This is a good deal. Get yourself off to a strong start, Sandra Black.

Sandra turns to see Fayed being escorted away, as we CUT TO:

INT. PUBLIC DEFENDER/BULLPEN - DAY

Sandra follows Jill through the offices, nipping at her heels --

SANDRA

A deal like *that* in a case like *this*? It doesn't make sense. *Unless* there's a problem with the government's case. Which I won't find out about until I get the discovery, which I won't get unless I reject the plea deal --

Jill stops, spins, exasperated.

JILL

You're not going to get the discovery and you're not going to reject the plea deal. You're not going to do *anything* on this case anymore. I'm giving it to someone senior.

Jill starts walking away, but Sandra catches up to her.

SANDRA

You stay with the cases you get on duty.
(then, off her look)
That's the rule in this office. I got the case. I want to stay on it.

Jill stares at her.

JILL

In 1993, the San Francisco Giants won a record *103 games*, but they still had to win the final game of the season to make the playoffs. Do you follow baseball?

SANDRA

Yes.

JILL

The Giants had two experienced, 20-game winners on their staff, but the manager decided to start Salomon Torres, a 21-year old rookie, who had only been pitching in the major leagues for a *month*. He got *destroyed*. Gave up 3 runs, 5 hits and walked 5 in three innings. The Giants lost, didn't make the playoffs for 4 more years, and Torres went on to a forgettable career. He never lived that game down. Do you want to start *your* career like that?

SANDRA

I quit a Supreme Court clerkship. I already started like that.

Jill takes a beat. Okay.

JILL

You want to stay on the case, talk to your client about taking the plea. It's a good deal.

Jill walks away, and off Sandra, knowing what she has to do --

INT. FEDERAL CORRECTIONS CENTER/SECURITY SCREENING - DAY

Plastic tubs. The whir of hand scanners. Dead-eyed MARSHALS. Sandra goes through the protocols, still learning but covering. PHONE, KEYS and CLIF BARS in a LOCKER. Sensible SHOES off. ID out. She walks through the metal detector, all clear, and then the MARSHAL suddenly shakes his head. Nope. Not coming through. He points at her shirt.

MAN (O.S.)

No sleeveless shirts.

Sandra spins around to see Jay behind her in line. He hands her his BLAZER. It's BIG -- but it's this or go home. So --

SANDRA

Thank you. You here to see your client? How is he?

Off Jay, unsure exactly how to answer that, we CUT TO:

INT. FEDERAL CORRECTIONS CENTER/MEETING ROOM - DAY

Jay sits across from Peter Joshua.

JAY
You're a LIAR!

PETER
I don't think we need to get into
name-calling.

JAY
Interesting coming from someone
with...SO MANY NAMES.

PETER
Look, I can see you're upset. But I
was just following Bureau protocol.
If we're ever confronted, we're
supposed to protect our identity.
People have a lot of hostility about
the work that we do.

Jay stares at him. Is this guy insane? Because he's saying
all of this very flat and matter-of-fact.

JAY
You really believe the Bureau of
Organization exists?

PETER
What do you mean? Of course it
exists. I work there. I've worked
there *for 17 years*. These purchase
orders were for a technology upgrade.
We haven't had an upgrade since 2009.
Aren't we entitled to an upgrade?

Off Jay, with an idea, we CUT TO:

INT. FEDERAL CORRECTIONS CENTER/MEETING ROOM - DAY

A different meeting room. Sandra sits across from Mohammed.
It's quiet. He's thinking.

FAYED
10 years?

SANDRA
The offer is 20. I'm not saying I
can get to 10. But if I can.

FAYED
10 years in jail, right?

He's a *kid*. Still not getting this.

SANDRA
Yes. Jail.

Another beat. He nods. Okay. She gets up to go.

FAYED
What are the others getting?

Sandra spins around, startled.

SANDRA
Others? What others?

FAYED
The team.

Off Sandra, leaning in to hear more, we CUT TO:

INT. US ATTORNEY/LEONARD'S OFFICE - DAY

Leonard. At his desk. His phone RINGS.

LEONARD
The Sandra Black.

EXT. FEDERAL CORRECTIONS CENTER/MEETING ROOM - DAY

Sandra exits the correctional center, on her phone --

SANDRA
Send over the discovery.

LEONARD
You know what that means.

SANDRA
It means you send over the discovery.
Right now. We're done "talking."

Sandra hangs up. Takes a beat. Exhales. And it is something that NOBODY would ever see, because she would never ALLOW anyone to see, but we see it: her hands are SHAKING. Ever so slightly. Because this is a big move in a big case.

INT. US ATTORNEY/ROGER'S OFFICE - DAY

Leonard stands in front of Roger. Less bluster --

LEONARD
I can't give her the discovery. You know what's in that discovery.

ROGER
You know what *I* know? I know you wanted this case. So, time to man up and make the case. Or I can always give it back to *him*.

Leonard spins, sees Seth standing behind him the doorway.
Tables turned. Leonard leaves, annoyed. Seth turns to Roger.

SETH

Actually, sir, can we talk?

INT. US ATTORNEY/BULLPEN - DAY

On the walk.

SETH

It's about opposing counsel in the
insider trading case. She's my
girlfriend.

ROGER

Does this story get even mildly
interesting at some point?

SETH

We live together.

ROGER

Apparently it doesn't.

SETH

I need to be reassigned.

ROGER

Because of your boo? Her client can
waive the conflict, if that's the
problem. Is that the problem?

SETH

I just don't understand why we're
prosecuting a case like this. Against
a *secretary*? For a \$6000 trade?

ROGER

Well, that *is* a problem. That you
don't understand that. So let me
spell it out for you. You're
prosecuting the case because I told
you to. I told you to prosecute the
case because that secretary broke
the law and every now and then
regular, everyday people need to be
reminded that there are *serious*
consequences to breaking the law.
Whatever the law. Insider trading.
Taxes. Stop signs. If people just
start doing whatever the hell they
feel like, our whole system breaks
down. Cars crash. Markets crash.

(MORE)

ROGER (CONT'D)

People get hurt. Do you understand *that*? I know you think this is a crap case, but there is no more important case in this office. Now, have I solved all your problems?

Off Seth, nodding, yes, we SMASH TO:

INT. APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Allison in the apartment, facing Seth, shaking her head --

ALLISON

NO!

SETH

It's a huge opportunity for me.

ALLISON

You're asking me to get off a case I was NEVER going to get off because you think you have a huge opportunity?

SETH

It doesn't sound great the way you say it.

ALLISON

It sounded worse when you said it. I'm not getting off the case.

SETH

Neither am I.

They stare at each other. Take a beat.

SETH (CONT'D)

So, this is it, then.

ALLISON

This is it.

SETH

Passing the last exit.

ALLISON

There it goes.

They stay locked in. Intense. Close. And, then they LUNGE towards each other. And it's hot and gropey and maybe a little angry and, in the end, probably superb. Five star.

INT. PUBLIC DEFENDER/SANDRA'S OFFICE - NIGHT

The office is now filled with BOXES. Sandra reads through a FILE, as Allison sets her bag down --

SANDRA

Really? Just now? That seems weird.

ALLISON

Yeah. Not the weirdest thing we've ever done. You find anything yet?

SANDRA

Not yet. But I have 26 boxes to go.
(she nods to a laptop)
I tagged some apartments before this came in, if you want to look.

Allison grabs the laptop, starts scrolling through. Then --

ALLISON

Do you think I'm making a mistake staying on this case with Seth?

SANDRA

Why would it be a mistake?

ALLISON

I don't know. Just. Yeah, nothing...

SANDRA

Oh. I know. You're worried you're going to beat him. I mean, you KNOW you're going to beat him. You're worried he's going to feel bad and then you're going to feel bad and --

ALLISON

I really don't think that's it, Sandy.
(beat)
That could be it. That is it.

SANDRA

Look, if you believe in the case, you're NOT making a mistake.

ALLISON

I believe in the case. And you know what else I believe? I believe you searched for the smallest, most disgusting apartments in New York.
(then, reading)
"You will share HALLWAY with one other female" "Probably you don't sleep much" "Slope" --

SANDRA
Park Slope is nice!

ALLISON
Not *Park Slope*. *Slope*. There's a
slope in the room. It says "Slope.
20 degrees. Nothing on wheels."

Sandra pulls out a banana.

ALLISON (CONT'D)
No bananas! We're going to go eat.
Blue Ribbon is open until 3 and before
you say no: it's on me.

SANDRA
Everything is on you, Al. And you've
been *incredibly* generous. But I
can't squat in your place and let
you buy me dinner every night. I
need to be my own girl.

ALLISON
There is NO girl in the world more
her own girl than you.

She shuts the computer. Grabs a FOLDER out of her bag.

ALLISON (CONT'D)
So here's what we're going to do.
We're working. For two more hours.
Then we're going to go walk across
the Brooklyn Bridge. Have you ever
walked across the Brooklyn Bridge at
night? Amazing. And then we're
going to Blue Ribbon and I'll
massively over-order and you can eat
half my food and we'll figure out
how to find you a place with a level
floor. Or we can go now...*What?*

Because Sandra is up and walking quickly over to Allison --

SANDRA
That "team" Fayed was working with!?
They were UNDERCOVER FBI AGENTS!!!!

Sandra shows Allison a surveillance PHOTO of Fayed with THREE
YOUNG MEN. And then a SECOND PHOTO of the same three men
after Fayed's arrest, huddling with uniformed FBI AGENTS.

SANDRA (CONT'D)
This was a SETUP!!!

And off this shocking revelation we END ACT TWO.

ACT THREE

EXT. PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OFFICE - DAY

Jill and Sandra exit the Public Defender's Office --

SANDRA

There was a team of *three* agents.
They had been working on him for 18
months. Fayed was supposed to carry
what he thought was a "bomb" to the
crown in a camera, but he was
mistakenly arrested by a National
Park Service Ranger before he could
get there. What is this?

She takes a bulging FILE FOLDER from Jill.

JILL

Extra paper. Stuff it in your bag.
You should always have a lot of paper.
They get worried you have something
they don't know about.

(then)

*The FBI didn't coordinate with the
Park Service about the operation?*

SANDRA

They did, but one of the regular
rangers on duty that day called in
sick and his back-up wasn't briefed.
Fayed was only arrested because he
looked "suspicious."

JILL

He was profiled.

SANDRA

Which ironically stopped him from
getting to the crown.

JILL

Which might be what saves him.

(beat)

You know what we're doing here, right?

SANDRA

No.

JILL

Then watch.

They head into a building, which we can now see is "OFFICE
OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY," as we SMASH TO:

INT. US ATTORNEY/ROGER'S OFFICE - DAY

Jill and Roger stand in the middle of the office, facing off. Leonard and Sandra sit off to the side. Leonard looks at Sandra's bag. Sees all the paper. Hmmmm.

JILL

It's bad for this *office*! It's bad for the *FBI* --

ROGER

See, alarm bells go off for me when Jill Marcus is worried about what's good for the FBI!

JILL

It's bad for you!

ROGER

And now you're worried about *ME*?!

He looks at Leonard and Sandra.

ROGER (CONT'D)

Don't be scared kids, your parents love each other even when they fight.
(then)
You can't win on entrapment, Jill!

JILL

And we're not *trying* to. This case is about *attempt*, and you can't prove attempt because he was arrested before he got to the crown.

LEONARD

Attempt only requires the defendant take a "substantial step" towards the commission of the crime. He was on Liberty Island with a *bomb*!

SANDRA

Then why was the plan always to wait to arrest him *until he got to the crown*? Because *that's* what you thought you needed to prove attempt.

ROGER

(to Jill)
They're young. They're hungry. They're *smart*. Let *them* fight it out. Are we done here?

JILL

No. We're *not* done.

She stares at him.

ROGER

Right.

He grabs an ENVELOPE off his desk. Hands it to her.

EXT. US ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - DAY

Jill and Sandra exit the building. Jill opens the envelope.

SANDRA

Yankees tickets?

JILL

Third-base line.

SANDRA

You're going to the game with him?

JILL

We don't go together. We meet there.

(beat)

Sometimes we go together.

SANDRA

He's the enemy.

JILL

No, the *Red Sox* are the enemy. He's the *adversary*.

SANDRA

So, we came to pick up *tickets*?
That's what we were doing here?

JILL

You weren't watching. They now think you're going to argue attempt -- and they're going to direct a lot of resources in that direction. But that's a loser. This is an entrapment case. So make sure you have one.

Off Sandra, knowing what that means, we CUT TO:

INT. FEDERAL CORRECTIONS CENTER/MEETING ROOM - DAY

Fayed. Sandra. She slides a PHOTO of one of the young men we saw in the earlier surveillance photo across the table --

FAYED

Abdul. Is he...did he take the deal?
Is he okay?

A beat. This is hard.

SANDRA

Abdul was an undercover FBI agent.

FAYED

I don't understand.

SANDRA

Abdul. Shareef. Khalid. They all work for the FBI. You were set up, Mohammed. How did you meet them?

FAYED

Facebook. Abdul messaged me. I didn't know anything about him, but he was into *League of Legends*. That's all that really mattered to me. We started hanging out. We mainly talked about games. He introduced me to Shareef and Khalid. Khalid was cool. Funny. But Shareef was crazy. He was always raging about Syria and Iraq, that Muslim brothers were under attack. That it would happen here. He kept saying, "We got to DO something!" I never took it seriously, but then they started making plans, and...I don't know.

He looks away. Still confused how he got here.

FAYED (CONT'D)

I...just...I can't explain it. It didn't seem real. And I trusted Abdul and when he started going along, I... Shareef *scared* me. I said one time I wasn't sure about it and he put a gun on me, "YOU KNOW OUR PLANS!"

(beat)

Am I going to be able to go home now, Ms. Black?

SANDRA

Not right away.

FAYED

Why me? Why did Abdul contact me?

INT. HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - DAY

The modest, suburban living room of a modest, suburban house. Sandra sits across from MONIFA FAYED. This is why.

MONIFA

His father died two years ago. They were close. He was on his computer all the time after that. He withdrew. He was angry. I tried to talk to him, but that didn't seem to make any difference. School was hard. It was all...*hard*. I mentioned it to a colleague, Alice. I guess --

She pauses. Still in total disbelief.

SANDRA

Alice's husband contacted the FBI.

MONIFA

Because they thought my son might be a terrorist?

(then, furious)

A terrorist? A *TERRORIST*?! I never, EVER thought that about him. I WAS LOOKING FOR HELP!

Her eyes well. Maybe the hardest part.

MONIFA (CONT'D)

When he started spending time with these boys...these *agents*.

(beat)

I was happy he had made some friends.

And off Sandra, heartbroken and resolved, we CUT TO:

INT. US ATTORNEY/KATE'S OFFICE - DAY

Kate. At her desk. Jay enters. Slow. Purposeful. Still obviously catching his breath, but hiding it.

JAY

Am I too early?

KATE

You're late. What did you want to talk about?

JAY

Well, look, Kate. Here's the problem. For you. My client, and let's keep it simple and call him "Peter Joshua", couldn't have committed the alleged "fraud" because -- as you probably have tabbed there in one of your binders -- fraud requires an intent to deceive, and Peter didn't *intend*

(MORE)

JAY (CONT'D)

to deceive anyone. Because he actually believes all this is real. Crazy? Possibly. But the upshot is: No intent. No crime. So let's work something out here.

KATE

You done?

JAY

I had some other cool points to make, but yeah, sure.

Kate casually hits a couple of keys on her computer, then spins the MONITOR around so Jay can see it. On the monitor is a GRAINY SECURITY FEED, on which we can now see Peter Joshua, talking on a JAILHOUSE PAYPHONE.

PETER

...Yeah, he's buying the whole thing...yeah, *everything*. That's what I'm saying. Cancer. The *Bureau*. I've gone full *Primal Fear* on him...

She hits another key. Stops it. Then holds up a binder.

KATE

Tab 4 of my discovery guide. "Request jailhouse recordings." Did you still want to make one of those cool points?

Off Jay, sinking into his chair, we CUT TO:

INT. PUBLIC DEFENDER/ALLISON'S OFFICE - DAY

Allison sits across from Madeline Locarno. Working class, modest, getting by. She's prideful, but clearly emotional about what has happened --

MADELINE

I knew about the merger. We all did. Everybody in the company was talking about it. I told my ex-husband, David, that I might be losing my job, because I know a lot of time when these companies merge, we lose our jobs. That happened to me a few years ago. I was worried about that. Yes, ma'am. He's never paid enough child support and if I lost my job --

She trails off. Her face still aching with worry.

MADELINE (CONT'D)

I did tell him about the merger for that reason. I admit that.

ALLISON

And your ex-husband traded on that information without your knowledge?

MADELINE

I guess so. I never knew anything about it. Do you not believe me?

Allison stares at her.

ALLISON

Of course I do. How is the relationship between you and David?

MADELINE

Terrible. It's always been terrible.

ALLISON

I'm sorry. But it also might help us. An insider trading conviction requires that someone who allegedly provides inside information -- that's you -- receive a *benefit* for it.

MADELINE

A *benefit*? Does it look like I'm benefiting from any of this?

Off Allison, with a plan, we CUT TO:

INT. US ATTORNEY/SETH'S OFFICE - DAY

A CLERK enters. Hands Seth PAPERS. He SCANS them --

SETH

Are you kidding me?

INT. US ATTORNEY/ROGER'S OFFICE - DAY

Seth, standing with Roger, as Roger FLIPS through the papers.

ROGER

Motion to Dismiss. It's good. And I'm not just complimenting your girlfriend. If she convinces the judge there was no benefit to Ms. Locarno, we lose the case. By which I mean you lose this case.

SETH

I don't have a response to this.

ROGER

First, don't ever say something like that to your boss. Second, you don't need to respond. You need to make it irrelevant. Raise the stakes. Apply the pressure.

(then)

You want to win, don't you?

Off Seth, nodding, I want to win, we CUT TO:

INT. PUBLIC DEFENDER/ALLISON'S OFFICE - DAY

A CLERK enters. Hands Allison PAPERS. She SCANS them.

ALLISON

Are you kidding me?

INT. PUBLIC DEFENDER/JILL'S OFFICE - DAY

Allison, standing with Jill, as Jill FLIPS through the papers.

JILL

A superseding indictment.

ALLISON

With three new charges, that together carry a maximum of 50 years in prison.

JILL

It's good. Clever. Cruel. Vintage Roger Gunn. He's forcing you into a deal. This is what they do. They overcharge. They make the risk of trial unbearable. That's how they win.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A crowded Chinese restaurant, where we find Leonard sitting at the counter, staring up at a wall filled with pictures of noodle dishes. A woman sits down next to him. He turns, she turns. It's...Kate. They're surprised to see each other here. A waiter arrives. Leonard gestures to Kate.

LEONARD

She was here first.

(beat)

I owe you one.

KATE

(to the waiter)

Spicy lamb-cumin hand-pulled noodles.

LEONARD
 I'll have that, too.
 (then, to Kate)
 Is that the thing to get?

KATE
 No idea. But it's two blocks from
 the courthouse and it's lamb.

LEONARD
 You know you're part of an important
 tradition in my life.
 (then, off her look)
 I'm going to trial tomorrow, and my
 tradition is now to eat with you at
 Hand-Pulled Noodle House Number 3
 every night before the first day of
 trial. Can you commit to that?

KATE
 My dad took me to Frimple's Diner
 before every high school swim meet.
 I like a tradition. Yes.

They sit there for a moment, in silence. There's an
 interesting chemistry between these two. They're very
 dissimilar, and it is NOT romantic, but they seem weirdly
 at ease. She stares up at the board.

KATE (CONT'D)
 Are you nervous?

LEONARD
 Is it that spicy?

KATE
 The trial. Are you nervous about
 the trial?

LEONARD
 No. I'm not. I'm going to win.

KATE
 That's what I would be nervous about.

Off Leonard, taking that in, we CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT/SANDRA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Sandra at her desk. Sifting through PHOTOS of Fayed.
 Surveillance photos of him with the FBI agents, planning the
 attack. Then older ones. Of Fayed as a kid. She stares at
 the photos, clearly struggling with the weight of all this,
 when suddenly she hears raised VOICES out in the living room.

INT. APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Seth and Allison. Face to face. Things are not superb.

SETH

I was never going to prosecute the additional charges.

ALLISON

This is supposed to make me feel better about you?

SETH

We needed to pressure you to make a deal. And it's not a bad deal. This is business. And you'd do the same thing if you had the leverage.

ALLISON

I'd never *have* that leverage. And that's what's wrong with the system.

SETH

We're not here to fix the system. I'm just trying not to lose my job. I did what I had to do.

ALLISON

No, you did what your political, diabolical boss *told* you to do. You want to keep your head down, "low profile", but that means you can't see everyone running over you.

She STORMS out of the room, and we follow her into --

INT. APARTMENT/BEDROOM - NIGHT

Allison THROWS open the door of the guest room, SLAMS it shut and FLOPS down on Sandra's bed.

ALLISON

I'm right, right? Don't pretend you didn't hear.

SANDRA

You're right.

ALLISON

But I'm screwed. I have to plead.

SANDRA

I'm sure there's another move.

ALLISON
The thing is, the deal *is* good.

SANDRA
Good for *who*? For her? Or for you?

ALLISON
What does that mean?

SANDRA
Six months in jail and a record as a convicted felon is never good, for anyone, and especially a working class single mother.

ALLISON
The only other move is risky and ethically questionable and it *destroys* Seth. I don't just beat him, I *destroy* him. It's the nuclear option.

SANDRA
If it was anybody but Seth, I don't think you'd hesitate.

ALLISON
I would, Sandy. But it *is* Seth. And I like him. Sometimes.

Sandra stares at her. Can see how hard this is for her. She walks over and lies down next to Allison. A beat.

ALLISON (CONT'D)
You're going to trial tomorrow. Big ol' trial lawyer you.

SANDRA
I hope I can do this.

ALLISON
If you screw it up, we can always open that hat store in NoLita. It's never too late for a hat store.
(beat)
I believe in you Sandra Black.

She takes her hand, and they lie there together on the bed, quiet, staring up at the ceiling, a bright New York moon streaming through the window, beyond which we can see, in the distance, the outstretched arm of the Statue of Liberty. And off these two friends, supporting each other under the pressure of the Mother Court, in the shadow of Lady Liberty, we END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE/COURTROOM TWO - DAY

Sandra walks down the center aisle of an empty courtroom. Stops at counsel table. Takes a deep breath, as we TIGHTEN on her, closer and closer, and then, after a few beats, we begin to hear MURMURS, VOICES, A DIN, as we PULL OUT to see that the courtroom is now PACKED. Leonard is across the aisle, Jill sits next to Sandra. Judge Reed is on the bench.

JUDGE REED

Ms. Black. Are you ready to proceed?

SANDRA

Yes, Your Honor.

JUDGE REED

Mr. Fox. You may call your first witness.

LEONARD

The people call National Park Service Ranger Lou Palamad.

INT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE/COURTROOM TWO - DAY - LATER

LOU PALAMAD (20s, cleancut) is on the stand. Mid-testimony.

LEONARD

Please tell the jury what happened that morning.

PALAMAD

Well, I saw a young man come off the ferry carrying a camera. And he stuck out, because you don't see kids with cameras very often nowadays. Just phones or whatever. Anyway, I kept an eye on him, and saw that he kept fidgeting with the camera and he just looked *suspicious*, you know? I decided to ask him a few questions and when I talked to him, I could tell he was nervous. Sweating. Jittery. I asked to see his camera at that point and that's when I realized it was...a *bomb*.

INT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE/COURTROOM TWO - DAY - LATER

Sandra. Facing Palamad.

SANDRA

A *fake* bomb. Made by the FBI.

PALAMAD

I didn't know that at the time.

SANDRA

Were you aware at the time that in addition to making fake bombs, the FBI had been recruiting Mr. Fayed for *18 months*?

PALAMAD

No, ma'am.

SANDRA

That Mr. Fayed had no criminal record prior to his arrest in this case?

PALAMAD

No, ma'am.

SANDRA

That he had no history of violence? No history of terrorist affiliation? That the government has no evidence indicating he's ever had ANY interest in terrorism prior to his being recruited by this team of agents?

PALAMAD

No, ma'am.

Sandra returns to her chair, crosses Leonard, who suddenly looks a little flustered.

LEONARD

You're not arguing attempt. You're arguing entrapment.

SANDRA

Oh. I didn't realize.

A callback to their first meeting. She sits down next to Jill, as we launch a STYLIZED SEQUENCE OF TESTIMONY: WITNESSES, in and out of the witness chair; MAPS, DIAGRAMS, PHOTOGRAPHS loaded and unloaded from EASELS in front of the jury. Leonard and Sandra POINTING, GESTURING. Jill and Sandra and Fayed CONFERRING. The Judge calling ORDER. A trial. Finally, we resume again with ABDUL, aka AGENT RAHMANI. Fayed's "friend." Mid-testimony.

LEONARD

And what was Mr. Fayed's response to you when you said, "Let's blow up the Statue of Liberty"?

AGENT RAHMANI
He said, "Let's do it."

LEONARD
Were you surprised?

AGENT RAHMANI
No. I wasn't. I spent a lot of
time with Mohammed. I knew him. I
knew how he thought. What he wanted.
It didn't surprise me at all.

INT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE/COURTROOM TWO - DAY - LATER

Sandra. Rahmani.

SANDRA
How much money did the United States
Government spend on this operation,
Agent Rahmani?

AGENT RAHMANI
I don't know.

SANDRA
Ballpark.

AGENT RAHMANI
\$1.5 million.

SANDRA
Could it be more?

Jill throws Sandra a look. Sandra ignores it.

AGENT RAHMANI
It's possible.

SANDRA
Possible? I want to show you a
spreadsheet, Agent Rahmani --

Jill leans over to Sandra, as we SMASH TO:

INT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE/HALLWAY - DAY

Jill and Sandra tucked away in the hallway.

JILL
You're going to lose.

SANDRA
What are you talking about? I'm
about to confront him with the budget --

JILL

SO WHAT? The jury doesn't care about the BUDGET! If the jury thinks Mohammed is actually a terrorist, the budget for this operation could be 5 trillion dollars. It wouldn't matter. This is *emotional*. This was Fayed's friend. He's told the jury Fayed wanted to BLOW UP the Statue of Liberty. Now you have to turn the emotions around. *Why is the government pretending to be his friend? Why is the government manipulating a child? Why is the government MAKING a terrorist?* They need to hear your outrage. Where is your OUTRAGE?

(beat)

When did you know you wanted to be a lawyer, Sandra?

Unexpected question. Sandra freezes. Jill senses something.

JILL (CONT'D)

When did you know you wanted to be a lawyer?

SANDRA

We need to get back inside --

JILL

This is what happened at the Supreme Court, isn't it? I know that case. Morgan. A 14 year old girl sentenced to life without parole for killing the man who abused her. 14 years old! I know how hard that must have been to see your justice vote the wrong way. I know how much that must have hurt. Just like I know how much it's going hurt when you lose this case. This job is HARD. This job HURTS. And the more you FEEL the outrage, the MORE it hurts. But that hurt is the ONLY chance you have. You're so smart and talented, and I think you've gotten by your whole life using this --

(points to her head)

Because you're scared of *this*.

She points at her chest. To that big beating organ that scares the shit out of a lot of us.

JILL (CONT'D)

I understand. I do. But you can't afford to leave it all in there anymore. You're here for a reason. You took this job for a reason? What's the reason? *When did you know you wanted to be a lawyer?*

Sandra stares at her. Doesn't answer. Or won't. Or *can't*. A beat, and then Jill walks away, as we CUT TO:

INT. PUBLIC DEFENDER/ALLISON'S OFFICE - DAY

Allison sits across from Madeline Locarno.

MADELINE

You want me to plead *guilty*?

ALLISON

No, but I don't want you to go to jail for years, which is the risk if we reject the deal and go to trial.

Madeline stares at her. Confused. Scared.

MADELINE

I have a daughter, Ms. Anderson.
(then)
I knew you didn't believe me.

INT. PUBLIC DEFENDER/JAY'S OFFICE - DAY

Jay sits in his office. A freeze frame of Peter Joshua's jailhouse conversation on a television. Allison enters.

ALLISON

My client hates me. I hate my boyfriend. My best friend is in trial. Please tell me you'll drink with me.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

A tiki bar on the Lower East Side. The kind of place Jay knows about. And likes. And Allison is on her third Zombie Punch, so she's happy to be anywhere.

ALLISON

Let's say you didn't go to law school.

JAY

Easy. NBA point guard. That was always the plan. Still the plan, but looking trickier. You?

ALLISON

Professor of English. Or Botany.

(beat)

That's plants, right? I always thought I should be better at science. My mom hated science. Thought it was a waste of time. But I don't think she believes in the value of any education.

JAY

What does she do?

ALLISON

She's the President of Princeton.

JAY

My mom is the President of Middle Village Dry Cleaning. She believes in the value of clean clothes.

ALLISON

Can I tell you a secret? I like being a lawyer.

JAY

Can I tell you a *bigger* one? So do I. But what I don't like is Kate Littlejohn. I want to steal all of her tabs and binder clips and throw them in the East River.

ALLISON

Why? You should be *thanking* her. She didn't have to show you that tape. She could have just sandbagged you in court. And you would have been in serious trouble because you probably didn't tell Baron Heinz Geinecke not to talk on the jail phone, did you?

(off his look)

That's ineffective assistance of counsel. Kate probably saved your job.

Jay looks surprised. Realizes he might have Kate all wrong.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

Maybe she likes you. I wish I liked opposing counsel in *my* case.

INT. APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Seth. Sitting on the couch. The door opens. It's...Sandra.

SANDRA

Hey.

SETH

Hey. Have you seen Allison?

SANDRA

No, but I've been in trial all day.

She starts down the hall. He catches her.

SETH

Look. Sandra. I know you don't want to be in the middle of this, but could you just tell her I want to talk to her. *She listens to you.*

Some envy there. Resentment. Respect. All truth. Sandra takes a beat. Nods. Okay. Then:

SANDRA

I'm not in the middle. I'm on her side.

INT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE/COURTROOM TWO - DAY

Closing arguments in the trial of Mohammed Fayed. And it's again PACKED. Allison and Jay slip into the gallery to watch. Leonard stands at the jury box.

JUDGE REED

Mr. Fox. You may proceed with your closing argument.

LEONARD

Thank you, Your Honor.
 (then, to the jury)
 We live in a dangerous time. I don't need to tell you that. Our enemies used to be overseas, and we could see them in tanks and airplanes. They wore uniforms. We fought them on battlefields. But now? We're *living* on the battlefield, and we can't see the enemy. They look like us, they talk like us, they live down the hallway from us. We only find out who they are and the damage they want to do after they've done it. After they've shot up a nightclub. Or blown up a marathon. Or brought down a building.

(MORE)

LEONARD (CONT'D)

Or two. The only chance we have to fight these enemies is to find out who they are *before* they do these terrible things and that is what these fine agents did here. They found a dangerous man who was willing to commit an unspeakable crime and they stopped him. Ms. Black wants you to believe that our government did this, but ask yourself. How much money, how much time, would it take to convince YOU to blow the head off the Statue of Liberty?

Leonard sits down, as we SMASH TO:

INT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE/HALLWAY - DAY

Sandra paces in the hallway, running through COLORED NOTE CARDS, practicing her closing. Jill approaches.

JILL

I'm going to do the closing.

Stares at her. Sandra doesn't say anything. Okay, then. Jill starts to leave.

SANDRA

*When I was in 6th grade. You asked me when I knew I wanted to be a lawyer? 6th grade. Right after my mom died. We had a little house in West Sacramento. My dad missed a rent payment because he was dealing with my mom's funeral and the landlord evicted us. We went to court to fight it, but we didn't have a lawyer, and... I remember sitting in that courtroom, and there were all these tenants without lawyers. The lawyers were all on the *other* side, with the landlords. And these guys were walking around like they owned the place. Because they did. They were laughing with the judges, and the clerks, and then every time a case got called, the tenant would stand up and face the lawyer and the lawyer would talk and the tenant would lose. One. After another. After another. And then our case got called, and we lost. We lost our house that day.*

She stares at Jill. Still BURNING. Because it still hurts.

SANDRA (CONT'D)

I was angry. I was *outraged*. But outrage didn't help. Outrage didn't save our house, and it didn't save Rochelle Morgan in the Supreme Court. I don't want to be outraged. I want to be a lawyer.

JILL

You can be both, Sandra. If you want to be a great lawyer, in this great court, you *have* to be both. The life of the law has not been logic; it has been experience. Your life. Your experience. Show it to them.

INT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE/COURTROOM TWO - DAY

Sandra looks at Jill, who nods. Sandra stands up. Starts to pick up her note cards, then puts them down. No notes.

SANDRA

The function of law enforcement is the prevention of crime and the apprehension of criminals. Manifestly, that function does not include the manufacturing of crime.

(beat)

Chief Justice of the United States Earl Warren wrote that sixty years ago, in a case that came out of *this* very courtroom, decided by a jury sitting in the same seats you're sitting in today. That jury got it wrong, but I don't think you're going to make the same mistake. Because we all now recognize the essential truth of Justice Warren's words:

(then, again, slowly)

The function of law enforcement is the prevention of crime and the apprehension of criminals. It does NOT INCLUDE the MANUFACTURING of crime. THAT MAN is not a criminal and law enforcement prevented NO CRIME here! They MANUFACTURED a crime. Instead of hunting actual terrorists, *your government* tried to MAKE a terrorist! *THEY* contacted *HIM*. *THEY* befriended *HIM*. *THEY* trained *HIM*. *THEY* offered *HIM* money. They put a *GUN* to his head. They picked out a *TARGET* for him. They made a *BOMB* for him. They made *HIM*.

She holds up a POLAROID of Mohammed as a child, with his mom and dad visiting the Statue of Liberty.

SANDRA (CONT'D)

This is Mohammed Fayed. THIS. Is
Mohammed Fayed.

She waves the polaroid again, then puts it down and points to Mohammed in the courtroom.

SANDRA (CONT'D)

And THAT is what *they* made.

(beat)

I agree with Mr. Fox. We live in a dangerous time. When the United States government systematically targets and manipulates and incarcerates American citizens because of their religion, their nationality, their ethnicity, their color. When the United States Government deploys institutions of TREMENDOUS force and power against the innocent and the vulnerable. When time after time after time, the system is brought to bear against those without resources or redress. That's not fighting the enemy. That is the enemy.

It is epic and raw and badass and when Sandra concludes, she turns around and sees Allison, who is watching her. *Listening to her.* Allison stands up, exits QUICKLY, inspired by her friend to go NUCLEAR. Sandra sits back down, as Jill puts her hand on Sandra's arm. You showed it to them. And off *the Sandra Black,* we END ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

INT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE/COURTROOM THREE - DAY

Allison enters with Madeline Locarno. Sees Seth, but avoids looking at him.

JUDGE BYRNE

I understand that the parties have reached a deal. Is that correct?

Seth starts to answer, but Allison cuts him off --

ALLISON

No, Your Honor.

SETH

Allison -- ?

ALLISON

I have firsthand knowledge that the AUSA handling the case filed the additional claims in the superseding indictment for the *sole purpose* of pressuring Ms. Locarno into a deal --

SETH

The AUSA handling the case-- ?

ALLISON

-- Which is an ethical violation.

SETH

That's ME! What are you doing?
That was a personal conversation --

ALLISON

Oh. I thought it was business.

JUDGE BYRNE

Mr. Oliver? Is this true?

A beat. Apparently it is. Byrne thinks.

JUDGE BYRNE (CONT'D)

I'll keep it off the record if you dismiss the case against Ms. Locarno.

SETH

I can't do that.

JUDGE BYRNE

Then I'm going to expedite a ruling on the motion to dismiss. The case is going away either way, young man.

Madeline reaches up and takes Allison's hand. Grateful.
And off a defeated Seth, we CUT TO:

INT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE/HALLWAY - DAY

Kate sits in the hallway outside a courtroom. Jay approaches.

JAY

I need to say thank you.

KATE

You don't.

JAY

I don't believe you would have done
what you did for just anyone.

KATE

If it had been just anyone, it would
have been easier. You made it harder.
Because I don't like you.

JAY

You're kind of ruining the moment.

KATE

We're not having a moment.

She hands him a DOCUMENT. He scans it.

JAY

A *64 month* sentence? That's *5 years*.

KATE

He's a habitual, unrepentant con
man. He's ruined lives --

JAY

He's a flawed human being who tricked
money out of *businesses*. Prison
isn't the answer to everything.
Have some compassion.

KATE

I have compassion for people who
follow the rules --

JAY

Did YOU ever break a rule? In your
whole life? For which you didn't
pay the appropriate price? Has that
EVER happened? Did you ever get the
benefit of compassion and generosity
for mistakes YOU made? Did kindness
and mercy ever change your path?

It's a different Jay. More intense, persuasive, invested. And he's clearly hit on something. She stares at him.

KATE

You could be a good lawyer. If you tried. You're just not trying.

They stare at each other. Is *this* a moment?

KATE (CONT'D)

54 months. I'm not going any lower.

Kate walks into the courtroom. Jay stands up, turns and nearly RUNS OVER Tina Krissman. Looking unhappy.

TINA

It's you. With the onions. It took me a while. But I don't give up. No more onions in the courthouse.

She leaves. Off Jay, caught, smiling, we CUT TO:

INT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE/COURTROOM TWO - DAY

The verdict. Sandra, Jill and Fayed stand at defense table; Leonard and Roger are across the room. It's crowded. Humming. Judge Reed turns to the jury box.

JUDGE REED

Has the jury reached a verdict?

The JURY FOREMAN stands. Dead quiet. Then:

JURY FOREMAN

Yes, Your Honor. We the jury in the above entitled action, find the defendant, Mohammed Fayed...GUILTY of one count of attempted use of a weapon of mass destruction.

Shuffling. Breathing. The faint SOBS of a mother. Sandra is calm, expressionless. She reassures Fayed, crosses to Leonard, shakes hands. Leonard looks over at Fayed, being led away, as we CUT TO:

INT. US ATTORNEY/BULLPEN - NIGHT

A small, but spirited, impromptu celebration. Leonard, Roger, a few dozen other US Attorneys. Roger Gunn BEAMS...until he spots Seth entering the room, looking glum. He crosses to Seth, furious, as we stay with Leonard, looking for something. *Someone*. As we CUT TO:

INT. US ATTORNEY/KATE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Kate. In her office, putting away binders. Cleaning up.
Leonard enters. Smiles tightly.

LEONARD

Hand-Pulled Noodle House Number 3.
(then)
You're not celebrating.

KATE

I don't celebrate people going to
jail.

Honest. Matter of fact. Unadorned. Kate.

LEONARD

Do you mind if I sit here?

She shakes her head. Go ahead. He sits down. Kate keeps packing, as he just...sits there. He suddenly seems like a different person, or like a *real* person. Less animated. Less swagger. Less of an asshole. The weight of what he did in his face. It's what Clint Eastwood says in Unforgiven: "It's a hell of a thing, killing a man. You take away all he's got. And all he's ever going to have." Kate keeps packing. Leonard sits. All silent, as we CUT TO:

INT. PUBLIC DEFENDER/SANDRA'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Allison looks into Sandra's EMPTY office. Not there.

INT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE/COURTROOM TWO - NIGHT

Because she's here. Sitting in the empty courtroom.

JILL (O.S.)

I told you you were going to lose.

Sandra turns, see Jill. Can't respond.

JILL (CONT'D)

That's the way it is. I told you.
This isn't TV. You don't get a Muslim-American kid off charged with trying to blow up the Statue of Liberty. You're going up against the government, the media, the culture. Everything. Everybody. The question is, what do you do now? Do you look for a way out? Do you QUIT? I don't think that's you.

SANDRA
 (realizing)
 You knew this case was coming up on
 duty that day, didn't you?

JILL
 I wanted to see if you have the fight.

SANDRA
 And now I'm Salomon Torres.

JILL
 May 25, 1951. A promising 20-year
 old rookie starts for the then *New
 York Giants* in center field. He
 goes 0 for 5 in his first game. 0
 for 4 in his second game. 0 for 4
 in his third game. He can't hit.
 He cries in front of his manager.
 His manager tells him to go home,
 come back and play tomorrow. Next
 game. First inning. He hits a home
 run. And then he doesn't stop.

SANDRA
 Willie Mays.

JILL
 Greatest baseball player of all time.
 The first game doesn't always tell
 you where you're going to end up.

She turns to leave. Sandra stops her.

SANDRA
 What did I get?

JILL
 What?

SANDRA
 You said, on the first day: '*Get
 something.*' What did I get today?

Jill stares at her.

JILL
 You got *beat*. And now you got to
 get up.

INT. APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Allison enters, on the phone.

ALLISON

Hey, I heard about the verdict.
Give me a call, or just come...home.

She hangs up. A beat. Then HEARS someone in the hallway.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Sandra stands outside the apartment door. Gets out her KEYS.
Takes a deep breath. Opens the door, and steps into --

INT. TINY APARTMENT - NIGHT

A tiny apartment! Not Allison's place!

INT. APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Allison stands in the open door of *her* apartment facing Seth.

INT. TINY APARTMENT - NIGHT

Sandra. Sits down. Looks at a MENU. Dials her phone.

INT. APARTMENT/DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Seth stares at Allison. Enters.

SETH

You *tanked* me...

ALLISON

Yes. I did. And I'm sorry...but,
you know what? I'm NOT sorry. At
all. Because that's my JOB. And
the only thing I'm ACTUALLY sorry
about is that I hesitated for ONE
SECOND to do my job because I wanted
to protect you --

SETH

PROTECT ME? I'm on PROBATION because
of you. The only reason you could
go in there and "do your job" was
because I trusted you enough to tell
you my strategy. My mistake.

ALLISON

Yes. It was. And I had the leverage.
I did what I had to do.

SETH

Right. And now I'm going to do what
I have to do. I'm leaving.

Whoa! He turns down the hall.

ALLISON
You're not leaving.

SETH
(spins)
I'm leaving. I. Am. *Leaving*.

A long beat, as they stand there in the hall, facing each other. It's intense. Emotional. Until...

ALLISON
Where's Sandra?

SETH
What?

She points into the guest room. The duffel is gone.

ALLISON
Her stuff is gone.

SETH
Are you SERIOUS? I tell you I'm
leaving and you're asking about
SANDRA?! I'M LEAVING!!!

He marches down the hall, as we hold on Allison.

INT. TINY APARTMENT - NIGHT

A KNOCK. Sandra opens the door, expecting a delivery man. It's Allison. She charges in. Looks around. Takes a pen out of her bag. Puts it on the floor. It rolls. *Slope*.

ALLISON
Okay? Now, let's go. Come on.

But Sandra slides back down on the floor, not going anywhere.

SANDRA
I'm staying here.

ALLISON
You're NOT staying here. You're
staying with me. Not "staying" with
me. *Living* with me.

SANDRA
What? No. I can't do that.

ALLISON
Why not?

SANDRA
Because I don't want to.

ALLISON

That's not true. You're here because you lost today and you're in shock and I understand that. We didn't know what we were up against with this job. Now we do.

SANDRA

You don't have to worry about me.

ALLISON

I'm worried about *me!* *Without* you. I need you, Sandra.

SANDRA

I can't afford your place.

ALLISON

It's FREE! It's my parents'! But, fine, pay the rent you were going to pay here, and I'll use the money to stock the kitchen with bananas.

SANDRA

Seth doesn't want me to live there.

ALLISON

I told Seth he can be cool with it, or he can leave, and no matter what he says, he isn't leaving. Trust me.

INT. APARTMENT/BEDROOM - NIGHT

Where Seth is furiously throwing clothes into a BIG BAG. He zips it up. Exits. He is *definitely* leaving.

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE - NIGHT

Sandra and Allison. Walking at night. And it *is* amazing.

ALLISON

You have good grounds for appeal --

SANDRA

I don't want to talk about work.

ALLISON

Shut up. Yes, you do. And I have a thought. Okay? If you argue --

And as these two friends walk across the bridge, we pull back to see the skyline, the Mother Court, in the distance. This is just the beginning. *Ab Initio*. And that's our...

END OF SHOW