

PAPER TIGERS

Pilot

Written by

Caron Tschampion

1.22.14

Caron Tschampion
14455 Dunbar Place
Sherman Oaks, CA 91423
818.453.8753

TEASER

INT. JILL'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Camera slowly walks down the hallway of a comfortable NYC space, passing family pictures of JILL FITZGERALD in various stages of her life. For each life event, there are TWO PHOTOS: one with her father and stepmother and one with her mother and stepfather. Her younger sister, EMILY, is in every shot. Neither she nor Jill smile much as children.

JILL (V.O.)

I was conceived on a marriage counseling weekend - a failed savior from the start. My parents stayed together long enough to have my sister Emily... my mother an affair... and my father the most humiliation he's admitted to having in his pampered life. Mom and Dad embarked on a precedent-setting divorce and both remarried shortly thereafter...

CLOSE ON

SIDE BY SIDE PHOTOS of Jill in a graduation cap and gown. One photo with Mom, one with Dad.

JILL (V.O.)

...Twenty-seven years later, they have yet to be in the same room together, or a photo for that matter.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. JILL'S HIGH SCHOOL - GRADUATION DAY - FLASHBACK

A weather-perfect afternoon in Suburbia, post-ceremony. Grads and parents mill about the football field. Jill flirts with a CUTE BOY. She's giddy.

CUTE BOY

Are you gonna be around this summer? We should totally hang.

JILL

Totally.

Jill's mood is broken by a SHRILL VOICE from forty yards away. It's MARIE, Jill's mother.

MARIE (O.C.)
Jiiiiilllly. Let's get a move on.
We have lunch reservations at two!

Jill ignores her, embarrassed.

JILL
My mom is so wigged out.

Cute boy smiles at her. EMILY (12) approaches.

EMILY
Dad said we have to get going. He
made two-thirty lunch reservations.

Jill looks down the field. Her father and stepmother, HENRY
and LILLIAN, wave urgently from twenty yards in the other
direction. Jill's heart sinks.

JILL (V.O.)
And so we were - pawns in their
chess match of a divorce.

Jill takes Emily's hand in hers as Marie creeps towards Jill
and stops thirty yards away.

Lillian also inches five yards closer, pulling Henry along.

LILLIAN
We traveled all the way from
Jersey. Tell her, Henry.

HENRY
Two hours, fifteen with traffic.

MARIE
Nonsense, it's your graduation day.
You're mature enough to choose who
to have lunch with.

It's a stand off. Jill looks at each parent and then back to
Cute Boy, who is understandably freaked out.

CUTE BOY
Well, have a nice summer and good
luck in college.

He bolts. Jill wilts and holds Emily closer.

INT. JILL'S APARTMENT - HALLWAY - PRESENT

Camera pans across more photos, in which Jill gets older.
There are fewer photos of her parents and more of CHRIS,
Jill's husband.

CLOSE ON photos of Jill and Chris being goofy in college.

JILL (V.O.)

I left for college, where I met Chris and everything started changing. Emily eventually went to school herself and for the first time in my life, I had permission to walk away...

CLOSE on photo of Chris and Jill on an exotic beach being married. Just the two of them and Emily.

JILL (V.O.)

And walk away, I did.

CAMERA MOVES down the hallway where we see more photos - none with parents. We enter...

INT. JILL'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - EARLY MORNING

A large mirror reveals a bathroom straight from a Pottery Barn catalogue: clean, white, spa-like. A toilet FLUSHES.

JILL's head pops into view. She's the kind of mid-thirties that still gets carded for drinks... groggy and wearing a long tee. Just another morning.

JILL (V.O.)

It's been five years of nearly parent-free bliss. We still talk occasionally, but I consider it more research than family relations.

She snaps the cap on a stick she's just peed on waits for it to register. A LOUD KNOCK on the door hurries her along. She stashes the stick in a drawer and moves to open the door.

JILL (V.O.)

The one thing my parents more than adequately prepared me for is my career path - my calling - my personal revenge at all crap-ass parents everywhere. I became a children's therapist.

INT. HEALTHY MINDS - JILL'S OFFICE - MORNING

Jill's office is OCD neat, but comfortable. The LIGHT indicating a patient has arrived flashes. Jill stands and opens the door to ELLIOT CONNOR and his mother, HOPE.

JILL (V.O.)

Elliot Connor. Nine years-old. First time patient. Exhibits hostility at school and has shut

(MORE)

JILL (V.O.) (CONT'D)
down at home - hasn't spoken to his
parents in two weeks.

Jill ushers Elliot in. He shyly sits on the couch.

HOPE
(angry)
We've been waiting.

JILL (V.O.)
Mom's a bitch. Can we blame him?

Jill remains poised and calm and closes the door.

INT. HEALTHY MINDS - JILLS OFFICE - LATER

Elliot silently stares at his hands in his lap and Jill tries to connect.

JILL
I'm gonna go out on a ledge and
assume that this is your first time
talking to someone like me? I know
it can be seriously weird. But I
promise, if you give me a chance, I
think we can become good friends.

Elliot shuffles in his seat, MAKES BRIEF EYE CONTACT with
Jill. She gets an idea.

JILL (CONT'D)
Here's something else I bet you
don't know... I hold a few blue
ribbons in staring contests. Think
you can beat me? First one to
smile loses. Go!

Jill leans forward and Elliot makes eye contact.

JILL (CONT'D)
I went to a therapist once when I
was your age. I liked having
someone to talk to.

Elliot blinks. Assuming he lost, he's angry at himself.

JILL (CONT'D)
It's OK, it's not a blinking
contest, it's a smile contest.

Not smiling clearly isn't going to be a problem for Elliot.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JILL'S CHILDHOOD HOME - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Jill (9) Emily (4), and Marie finish dinner.

EMILY
Where's Daddy?

MARIE
He won't be coming home tonight.

JILL
Again?

MARIE
But my friend Doug is coming over.
And he's going to take us out for
ice cream!

JILL
Are you getting a divorce?

Marie dodges that question.

MARIE
Doug has to get two scoops because
a *whole* scoop ends up in his
moustache.

Emily giggles. Jill excuses herself. Marie calls after her.

MARIE (CONT'D)
Brush your hair sweetie!

INT. JILL'S OFFICE - PRESENT

The staring contest continues.

JILL
It was nice to have someone to talk
to who I knew wouldn't tell my
parents what I said. I loved that.

Elliot takes a deep breath.

ELLIOT
You won't tell my parents?

He speaks! Jill can't contain her happiness and smiles.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
Hey, you smiled. I win!

JILL
OK, winner - grab yourself a toy.

Elliot runs to the toy box, takes a pack of unicorn stickers.

ELLIOT
Why did you see a doctor?

JILL
My parents got a divorce.

ELLIOT
My parents are getting a divorce.
They don't think I know, but I do.
You can't tell them I know.

This is clearly news to Jill.

JILL
Oh. Well, you must be having some
strong feelings.

Hope KNOCKS and Elliot springs up.

ELLIOT
Not really.

Jill nods in agreement as Elliot opens the door for Hope.

JILL
Mrs. Connor, I'd really like
another fifteen minutes with Elliot
if it's alright with you.

HOPE
We're scheduled. Any luck?

Jill looks to Elliot. It's clear he's not intending to speak.

JILL
It can be... a process.

Hope is disappointed, but not surprised. Jill shuts the door
and sits down on her chair.

We watch Jill's day go by in TIMELAPSE, as patients come in
and out of her office.

- A FIFTEEN YEAR-OLD GIRL enters, sits - stoic.

FIFTEEN YEAR-OLD GIRL
Because even though it hurts, It's
better than feeling nothing at all.

- An ANGRY TWELVE YEAR-OLD BOY with a black eye sits and
punches his fist into his palm.

ANGRY TWELVE YEAR-OLD
I. Don't. Care. What. She. Says.

- A TEN YEAR-OLD BOY with a twitch sits nervously, chewing
his nails.

TEN YEAR-OLD BOY
... so I told him I didn't like it
when he said mean things to me.
And he apologized.

JILL
And how did that feel?

Ten year-old boy relaxes, smiles and stops biting his nails.

TEN YEAR-OLD BOY
Really, really good.

He leaves and TIMELAPSE SLOWS DOWN to real time. Jill sits
alone at her desk, exhausted.

JILL (V.O.)
If I can help one patient a day...
it feels like a miracle.

Jill's cell buzzes, READS: "BLOODMOTHER". She presses
ignore. A KNOCK on her door startles her and JEREMY peers in.

JEREMY
You missed our meeting today,
thought I'd check in.

JILL (V.O.)
Jeremy Wilson. Colleague, Peer
Counselor, Best Friend...

JEREMY
Looks like a case struck a little
close to home today...

JILL (V.O.)
...and partially psychic.
Seriously. Nobody's *this* good.

Jill ignores his leading comment, like she does every day.

JILL
How do such little people have such
big problems?

JEREMY
Because big people treat them like
little people. Are you journaling?

JILL
Yes, I'm journaling!

Jill points to her laptop and Jeremy exits. REVEAL that Jill
is TYPING her V.O. onto her laptop.

JILL (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Did I mention he's also a slave
driver?

INT. JILL'S - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jill enters her apartment, surprised to find her sister
EMILY, (30) sitting over a glass of wine.

JILL
Jesus! Em, that key is for when
we're not home.

Emily pushes a glass towards Jill.

EMILY
I have some wedding stuff to go
over with you including something
you're *really* not going to like.

JILL
How was your day, Jill? Fine,
thanks. Sweet of you to ask.

EMILY
I brought wine.

Jill takes a sip. It is appreciated.

JILL
Does this visit have anything to do
with the eight messages, ten emails
and one very passive-aggressive
Facebook status from our parents?

EMILY
I know you don't want to deal with
them.

JILL
Yet, here you sit. Sorry Em, but if
someone's not in the hospital, or
jail for spousal homicide-

EMILY
Dad's not coming to the wedding.

Jill freezes, sits and unconsciously drains half a glass of
wine with her next sip. Clearly, this is comparable news.

INT. JILL'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Jill and Emily sit on the couch with their wine.

EMILY

He's all squirrely 'cause the ceremony is at mom's church.

JILL

Which is also your church--

EMILY

You know I would never ask you to get involved. But it's my *wedding*.

Emily is Jill's kryptonite. But she digs her heels in.

JILL

How's mom been?

EMILY

Hmmm... refuses to order pink flowers, anything but white makes me look like a whore. Hates the idea of bagpipes - they're for funerals. She's just, "*so excited!*"

JILL

Is she drinking?

EMILY

Not enough.

JILL

Emily!

EMILY

What? Three glasses in would make her so much easier to handle.

JILL

Until eight glasses in.

CHRIS FITZGERALD, Jill's husband and possibly the sexiest third grade teacher in Manhattan, enters from the gym, surprised (not in a good way) to see Emily.

CHRIS

Emily's here!

EMILY

Hey, brolaw.

Chris picks up a stack of homework he was grading from the counter.

EMILY (CONT'D)

(re: papers)

You might want to try sodoku for a real brain tease.

CHRIS

I'll bring it up to the Board of
Ed. Don't finish all that wine
before I get out of the shower.
The lambs... they're still
screaming.

Chris kisses Jill and exits. Emily takes Jill's hand.

EMILY

I shouldn't have asked you to get
involved. It's fine.

JILL

In my world, "fine" stands for
"Fucked up, Insecure, Neurotic and
Egotistical."

EMILY

We are talking about Dad here so,
yeah - pretty much.

Jill considers whether or not to jump down the rabbit hole.

JILL

Let me see what I can do.

END TEASER

ACT ONE

INT. JILL'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - EARLY MORNING

Jill, dressed for work, finishes brushing her teeth. A KNOCK on the door. She spits, rinses, and opens the door for Chris.

CHRIS
I love that you still hide your
bodily functions from me.

JILL
Our marriage will thank me one day.

Chris wraps his arms around her. They kiss. Jill disconnects.

CHRIS
How will our marriage feel about
you getting involved with Emily's
wedding drama?

JILL
Who's involved?

CHRIS
You've got that look.

JILL
What look?

CHRIS
The look you get when you keep
answering questions with more
questions.

JILL
Sorry... I'm late.

Chris' eyes drift to Jill's stomach.

CHRIS
Wow. How late?

JILL
I-have-to-take-the-subway-because-
I'll-never-catch-a-cab-in-time-in
this-rain-late.

CHRIS
Oh, late. Right.

Jill realizes the communication flub.

JILL
Oh honey, no. Just for work.

CHRIS

Yeah, got it. All cool.

Jill checks his mood. Chris covers his disappointment.

JILL

Yeah?

CHRIS

Yeah.

Jill smiles reassuringly.

INT. HEALTHY MINDS - HALLWAY - THE NEXT MORNING

Jill rushes down the hallway, followed by Jeremy.

JEREMY

That's an agitated walk if I've ever seen one.

Jill swipes at her butt as if brushing off dust.

JILL

It'd be nice if today was the day you could get OUT of my ass.

JEREMY

Definitely agitated.

JILL

Mild OCD plus tardiness tends to equal agitation.

Jeremy stops her. Inspects her face.

JEREMY

That's not it.

JILL

Your little Psychic Friends Network thing is not as charming as you think.

JEREMY

What happened with Emily?

Jill stops, shocked.

JILL

How do you do that?

JEREMY

You're secure enough with your relationship with Chris to tell me if it was him. If it was work,

(MORE)

JEREMY (CONT'D)

you'd need to tell me because,
let's face it, I'm brilliant and
your favorite peer counselor.
Emily's the wild card.

JILL

She wants my help getting my dad to
come to the wedding. It's fine.
Really. I have to go.

JEREMY

We'll talk about it in session
later.

Jill is already on her way down the hall.

JILL

No, we won't!

INT. HEALTHY MINDS - JILL'S OFFICE

Jill is mid-session with Elliot.

JILL

I think that maybe you're trying to
pretend it doesn't matter to you
that your parents are divorcing.
Can you think of any reasons you'd
be doing that? Maybe it makes you
sad, or scared?

Elliot shrugs.

JILL (CONT'D)

You can stop playing the mute game
with me. I'm onto you, remember?

ELLIOT

Maybe. Maybe I'm scared.

Jill writes "scared" on a piece of paper and takes out three
colorful boxes.

JILL

These are your feeling boxes.
Sometimes feelings get all jumbled
up and you need to sort them out.
If you don't, it leads to what we
call stress.

ELLIOT

My mom has stress.

JILL

Little boys can get it too and it
makes them do things they might not
(MORE)

JILL (CONT'D)
normally do, like getting in fights
at school and not talking to your
parents. I'd like to start today by
filling up your "divorce" box.

Jill opens one box and places the pieces of paper she wrote
on inside the box.

ELLIOT
Do you still have a divorce box?

Jill considers this excellent question.

JILL
I, uh... no. I put my divorce box
away a long time ago.

INT. NIKO'S OFFICE - HEALTHY MINDS - DAY

Jill and her coworkers, BETH, NIKO and Jeremy, sit and talk
in a CONSULTATION PIECE - a weekly meeting where the
therapists discuss issues they have with their patients.

Beth is the systemic therapist and always searching for the
"big picture" - without context, there is no truth.

BETH
You need to bring his family into
the conversation so you know every
side of this. He trusts you more
than his parents right now. Why?

JILL
Because his mother is an impatient
control freak who cares more about
her schedule than her son.

Niko is the young, hip, sexy and unapologetic Freudian.

NIKO
Sounds like your stepmother. You're
projecting feelings about your own
divorce scenario onto your patient.

JILL
Maybe if I just got my licence last
Saturday with skeeball tickets.
Jesus.

JEREMY
No, she is. Projecting... and
regressing.

JILL
Am not!

JEREMY

Jill's Dad just chose not to come to Emily's wedding.

JILL

Irrelevant!

BETH

Your unaccompanied descent into the bowels of your family dysfunction is *irrelevant*? You need us to guide you through this.

JILL

("blah, blah, blah")
Mom and Doug are codependent, Dad and Lillian are insecure and selfish. They're all infantile narcissists- it's nothing I haven't handled before.

NIKO

One might argue how capably you've "handled" all your issues with them if they're still coming up now.

JILL

"All" my issues?!

Jill stands. She's one comment away from leaving.

JILL (CONT'D)

It's called compartmentalization. The *wedding* situation is safely put away in it's own little box of crazy. Boundaries drawn, top sealed. Let's open up the box of "help me with my patient" and, I don't know - help me help my patient, OK?!

NIKO

(skeptical)
Compartmentalization? Forming boundaries and running away are two distinctly different things.

And there's the comment.

JILL

Riddle me this, Freud, is this running away or boundary?

Jill FLIPS THEM OFF and slams the door shut.

INT. JILL'S OFFICE - HEALTHY MINDS - DAY

Jill enters fuming. Jeremy follows her in.

JILL

That weekly meeting is bullshit.
If there's no drama, we just make
up the drama.

Jill checks her voicemail on speaker.

VOICEMAIL (O.C.)

You have seven unsaved messages.

JEREMY

We'd be less concerned if you just
talked to us.

HENRY(O.C.)

Hi Jill, it's your father. Calling
for the third time this week.

Jill begins to organize her desk. She deletes the message.

VOICEMAIL (O.C.)

Message one delated. Message two-

JEREMY

We knew you before you put up the
great wall of "screw off Mom and
Dad."

MARIE (O.C.)

... you won't believe what your
father--

Jill deletes. Returns to organizing.

JILL

You're over-reacting. There's
nothing to talk about. But thank
you.

Jeremy shrugs and exits as the machine plays a final message.

HENRY (O.C.)

...we'll be positively outnumbered
by your mothers "people." Please
let Emily know how humiliating...

The door closes, just as Jill picks up the machine and flings
it across the room.

VOICEMAIL (O.C.)

End of final message.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREET - EVENING

It's raining as Jill makes her way to the subway, carrying a big stack of magazines. She stops under a store awning. Her phone is buzzing. It READS "BLOODMOTHER." Jill presses ignore. She gazes in on the perfect window display of a home store... neat, clean and happy.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HENRY'S APARTMENT - EVENING - FLASHBACK

Sparse holiday decorations adorn the walls of Henry's small, post-divorce apartment. Henry and Lillian (both 30) watch Jill and Emily rip into their presents. Lillian will soon be Jill's stepmother. Currently she's the lady that consistently makes her feel like her mother's child.

It's after five o'clock, so they sip cocktails.

EMILY
(re: a gift)
Open yours, Daddy!

Emily excited to find out what's inside.

LILLIAN
Did you wrap that yourself, Emily?

Emily looks down, guiltily.

JILL
Mom did.

LILLIAN
("oh, her")
How nice.

JILL
Mom said it's for your new apartment.

Henry rips into the packaging to find... ROACH TRAPS. Humiliated, he makes no attempt to hide it from the girls. Jill flushes with embarrassment. Emily is unaware.

LILLIAN
Well, I never...

HENRY
She must be drinking again.

Lillian pats Henry on the knee, drains the rest of her old fashioned and rattles the ice toward him.

HENRY (CONT'D)
(to Lillian)
I'll freshen you up.

EMILY
Can I put the cherry in?

Henry takes the glass and heads to the kitchen. Emily follows, leaving Jill with an uncompassionate Lillian. Jill stares at the kitchen door, praying for her father and sister to reenter.

EXT. EMILY'S NYC APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Jill breaks out of her memory, and finds herself at Emily's front door. She takes a deep breath and enters.

INT. EMILY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jill enters with a stack of magazines, shakes off her emotionally trying day. Ten women fill the room, along with a treasure trove of crafts: glitter, markers, feathers, and stacks of magazines. Each woman has a space of floor and they're all diligently working on their projects.

JILL
Happy bachelorette!

Emily comes running up to Jill.

EMILY
Jilly! You're here.

JILL
What did you do to make Martha Stewart so very, very angry?

EMILY
Crazy right? Just wait till the wine starts flowing.

JILL
Please make that happen. Now.

Emily directs her to the kitchen.

EMILY
Right this way. Everyone, you know my big sister!!

Some faces rise from their projects, smiles and waves thrown. These women are deep into their task. Serious.

EMILY (CONT'D)

OK, so what you're going to do is cut out pictures, words, anything inspiring, and arrange them on your board.

Emily hands Jill a giant piece of oak tag. She points to her own board, which has a picture of a wedding dress, flowers and a huge photo of a shrimp tower.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Include everything you want to happen to you in the upcoming year. See? WEDDING! Yay!!!

JILL

(a little less enthused)
Yay!

EMILY

(re: her board)
Chocolate fountain, shrimp tower--

JILL

Doing your part to balance out the national debt, I see.

EMILY

I know you'll pull through with Dad. You always do.

JILL

Wine?

Emily fills her wine glass to the rim and hands Jill a glass.

EMILY

So, we've got glitter, markers...
(in a gypsy voice)
Ask the universe and it will come to you...

JILL

(same voice)
Oookaaaay.

Jill finds a spot on the floor. She picks up a magazine and starts leafing through it, noticing lots of PHOTOS OF BABIES. She closes it, looks at the cover: *Parenting Magazine*. She picks up another one. Next to Jill sits ANDIE, late thirties, serious, driven, and very intent on her board.

JILL (CONT'D)

OK, the world is my oyster? I'd love a pair of these Christian Louboutins.

Andie sniffs in Jill's direction.

JILL (CONT'D)
Is that wrong?

ANDIE
Not everyone takes it seriously.

JILL
I don't really get it, to be honest.

ANDIE
The law of attraction states: "That which is like unto itself is drawn."

JILL
("say what?")
Oh yeah?

ANDIE
If you're maintaining a vibration that matches what you want from the world, those things will come your way.

JILL
Build it and it will come.

ANDIE
Like I said, some people don't take it seriously.

Jill looks at Andie's board. It's got a picture of a shark in the middle of it.

JILL
So, what's with the shark?

ANDIE
The shark signifies life. If you don't keep moving forward, you die. Surrounding it are my plans for moving my life ahead this year.

JILL
Cool. I always thought sharks moved around in circles. Not that the metaphor works any less...

Andie has stopped paying attention to Jill, so Jill gets down to work. She reopens *Parenting Magazine*, rips out a small picture of a baby and glues it to her board, patting it a couple of times - possibly to convince herself of something.

INT. EMILY'S APARTMENT - PRESENT - LATER

Everyone is pretty buzzed by now, especially Emily.

EMILY
Who has the zig zaggy scissors?

Someone throws them over to her. She barely catches them.

EMILY (CONT'D)
Thanky. Okay it's sharing time!

Jill looks down at her board. It's half blank.

EMILY (CONT'D)
I'm starting. But first I want to
thank you all for coming. You're
all so special to me and--
(choking up)
You're my girls, you're my fami--

Emily, full on tears now, can't get the word out. Jill stands to comfort her. As Jill, glass of red wine in hand, moves to hug her, Emily shrinks back-

EMILY (CONT'D)
No, I'm fine, really--

Emily's hand knocks the glass, the wine SPILLS all over Jill's vision board. It lands on the photo of the baby she pasted in the corner.

EMILY (CONT'D)
Oh my god! Your board!!

JILL
It's not anthrax, we're all fine.

But Emily is not fine. She runs out of the room in tears.

INT. EMILY'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Jill enters. A tear-streaked Emily sits on her bed, fondling her engagement ring. Jill picks up a hairbrush, sits on the bed and starts brushing Emily's hair.

EMILY
I shouldn't be getting married.
That's why dad isn't coming, that's
why mom has been such a nightmare-

JILL
Stop!

This silences Emily.

JILL (CONT'D)

Stop... this nonsense with mom and dad has nothing to do with you. It never has. They're insane!

EMILY

This is why you eloped, isn't it? Must have been nice.

JILL

Yeah... it was.

EXT. HAWAII RESORT - DAY - FLASHBACK

Jill and Chris lie in a hammock watching the sun set post wedding ceremony - content. Jill still wears her veil though both are casually dressed.

CHRIS

Do you have enough room?

JILL

I do. I do- I do- I do. I can't stop saying it. I... Do!

CHRIS

I like the way it sounds.

JILL

I know you always wanted a big wedding with lots of family and-

CHRIS

It was perfect. You're perfect. We'll have our own family one day.

JILL

A somewhat normal one, let's hope.

CHRIS

I'd like to get to know them better. Someday.

JILL

Someday. Maybe.

Chris allows the conversation to drop.

INT. EMILY'S BEDROOM - PRESENT

Jill continues brushing Emily's hair.

JILL

It wasn't just about escaping the drama of the wedding day - everyone
(MORE)

JILL (CONT'D)
has that. It was about letting it
all go. Cutting bait. Moving on.

Jill puts Emily's engagement ring back on her finger.

JILL (CONT'D)
When you see Mark at the end of
that aisle, that's all that's going
to matter. You don't need Dad.
Take care of one another.

They hug. Emily's tears now dry.

EMILY
Ever wonder how maladjusted we'd be
if we had *really* messed up parents?

Jill's eyes widen, "*what do you mean really?*"

JILL
(covering her feelings)
I try not to think about it.

INT. JILL'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - LATE NIGHT

Jill tip-toes so she doesn't wake Chris and quietly brushes her teeth. Suddenly, Chris grabs her from behind, kisses her neck.

CHRIS
Have fun tonight?

JILL
My brain hurts a little.

CHRIS
Shut it off.

Chris kisses her neck. She loves it.

JILL
How did I get so lucky with you?

CHRIS
Karma.

Chris' hand slides up Jill's shirt. Jill turns a bit icy.

JILL
I'm wiped, honey - think we can-

CHRIS
Take a rain check?

JILL
Yeah.

Chris pulls an OVULATION TEST STICK out of his pocket.

CHRIS
Of course I mind! That was less
gross when I put it in my pocket.

JILL
Chris, how..

CHRIS
I had a bloody nose and I thought a
tampon might -nevermind- you didn't
tell me you monitoring your
ovulation. Could have saved me a
lot of detective work. Anyway, it's
baby time!

Chris beams, he's beside himself. Jill on the other hand...

JILL
Uh...

CHRIS
Just saying you could have
mentioned you were testing, but I
get it. Keep the sexy alive. I'm
just so happy you're not totally
freaked out by the whole baby
thing. Whatever, you're ovulating -
Let's DO IT!!

Chris grins.

JILL
Sexiest sentence ever.

Jill looks terrified. Chris notes this. His face falls.

CHRIS
This was in your tampon drawer
because you were hiding it.

Jill wants to say something but can't.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
You're trying... *not* to get
pregnant?

Chris walks out the bathroom door.

INT. BEDROOM - JILL'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Jill follows Chris, who sits on the bed and picks up the
glass of wine, put out as a romantic gesture. Will he drink
it? Throw it at her head? He drinks it.

JILL

I love you. Sooo much.

Chris can't hear this. He stands and starts packing a bag.

CHRIS

This is the most fucked up birth control I've ever heard of.

Jill follows him around the room, unpacking what he throws in a bag.

JILL

Chris, stop and listen to me - you're overreacting! It wasn't birth control!

CHRIS

Really?

JILL

Well, technically, I guess, but not like "goalie in the net" birth control. Just like "referee watching from the sidelines". And it's only been this month--

CHRIS

I thought something was wrong with me!

JILL

Well, maybe there is-- not helping. Sorry.

CHRIS

You're so much more screwed up than you EVER let on.

The sheer *mean* in Chris' face silences Jill.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

You couldn't just tell me?!

Jill is grasping at anything that will make Chris sit and talk.

JILL

Tell you what? That I'm terrified of the prospect of parenthood?

CHRIS

Yes! Exactly that! I should have listened to you a long time ago. You're parents clearly fucked you up a lot worse than I ever could've imagined.

The truth burns. Chris grabs his bag and leaves.

JILL

Chris!

Jill rushes to get dressed so she can run after him.

INT. NYC STREET - NIGHT - LATER

Jill races down the street looking for Chris. She pulls out her phone and dials - straight to voicemail. She redials. Rain soaks her through. She enters...

INT. CORNER BAR - NIGHT

Jill searches through a crowd of awkward and disgusted glances as she drips toward the bar. As the BARTENDER approaches, Jill brushes her hair with her fingers, trying to appear more presentable or even slightly pulled together.

JILL

Shot of Jack and a beer, please?

Bartender pours a shot as he sizes her up.

BARTENDER

On me.

Jill slides into a bar stool, thankful for the unspoken understanding and downs her shot. It feels good. She looks at her phone - no word from Chris yet.

JILL

One more?

Bartender pours. Jill contemplates the drink in front of her. Sips it.

EXT. NYC STREET - NIGHT - PRESENT - LATER

The rain has stopped, but you wouldn't know it from looking at Jill. She sits on a bench next to a news stand. She's DRUNK. Her good eye spots the NEWSSTAND GUY.

She stands up, walks over to newsstand.

JILL

Pack of Parliament Lights, please?
And matches. Thanks.

They make the dirty deal and Jill goes back to her bench, lights a cigarette and inhales deeply.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JILL'S CHILDHOOD HOME - BEDROOM - EVENING - FLASHBACK

The decade that Goth lived. Jill, sixteen, in headphones, sits in the middle of her floor, angrily sifting through photos of her and a recent ex-boyfriend with a pair of scissors in her hand. She's mad. She cuts, she tears, she finds one picture that stops her: Jill and her boyfriend with his giant and seemingly very happy family.

Jill contemplates the photo, puts it down, removes her headphones and makes her way out of her room.

INT. HALLWAY - EVENING - FLASHBACK

Jill passes the living room, where her mother is asleep on the couch. A half-empty glass of wine next to her.

INT. KITCHEN - EVENING - FLASHBACK

Jill rummages through all of her mother's hiding spots for booze, siphoning off various bottles into a water bottle. Before making her way back up to her bedroom, she takes a TV dinner out of the freezer and pops it into the microwave.

EXT. NYC STREET - NIGHT - PRESENT - LATER

Jill slowly comes back from her flashback looking slightly more self-aware. She takes out her phone and dials.

JILL
(into phone)
Jeremy? I need to talk. Yeah -
super-drunk. No, I'm not smoking!

She inhales another drag.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. PENN STATION - DAY

Jill carries a dry cleaning bag containing a wedding veil as she dodges commuters. She considers the veil, dials her cell, waits, presses one and finally leaves a message.

JILL

(into phone)

Hi, Dad. I just wanted to let you know I think you're making a huge mistake not going to Emily's wedding. It's time for you to grow up, put your own feelings aside and be there for us... for her. I'm not getting in the middle of this and I most certainly won't relay your messages. So, there it is.

Jill is about to hang up, and reconsiders.

JILL (CONT'D)

Love-you-bye!

Jill hangs up. Another box sealed. Another boundary built.

EXT. JILL'S CHILDHOOD HOME - DAY

Jill slowly approaches a Tudor house on a tree lined street and tries the handle. It's locked. She rings the bell and waits. A DOG BARKS from inside. Voices rally.

MARIE (O.C.)

Doug! Is that the door?

DOUG (O.C.)

I've got it, Dear!

MARIE (O.C.)

Can you get it? I'm on the pot.

DOUG, Jill's stepfather and the man for whom Marie left Henry, ushers her inside without a how-do-you-do. He's grumbly and lacks a social filter.

INT. JILL'S CHILDHOOD HOME

Jill doesn't quite enter the heavily knick-knacked foyer, before their Bijon, SID, jumps all over her, barking. There isn't an inch of this residence that doesn't scream chaos.

JILL

Hey, Doug, how are you?

DOUG

If drowning in estrogen won't kill me, then middling to fair. Nothing I won't put up with for my girls, unlike some fathers in this family. Did your mom know you were coming? You know her memory.

MARIE (O.C.)

Who is it?!

DOUG

(calling upstairs)
It's Jill! Did you know she was coming?

JILL

(under her breath)
Probably told her when she had chardonnay on the brain.

MARIE enters with a hug.

MARIE

OK, OK, let her in already.

DOUG

(grumbles)
Guess I'll go get my things out of the guest room.

JILL

Oh, I'm not staying--

Doug isn't listening. He starts to walk away.

MARIE

And can you put your pants on right side in?
(to Jill)
That man could fuck up a wet dream. Come with me, let me show you everything.

JILL

Everything?

Marie leads Jill to...

EXT. JILL'S CHILDHOOD HOME - BACKYARD - DAY

Marie has chalked off areas of the yard for Emily's wedding.

MARIE

We're going to put the DJ there, and the tables scattered--

JILL

The wedding is going to be here?

MARIE

I've always thought the backyard would make the perfect wedding venue. Of course the planning is enough to drive me to drink. I've ordered twenty pounds of shrimp--

JILL

Mom, do you think this is really going to help the whole Dad situation? Or your state of mind, for that matter?

MARIE

Can you believe that bastard? I mean of all days.

JILL

My point is, this wedding is becoming another predictable battle between you and Dad, and this one can end with Emily starting out her new life with some serious emotional scars.

MARIE

You and your psycho-worry. You're too stressed. Let me get you a drink.

JILL

That's not how normal people deal with stress--

MARIE

The backyard bathed in white is going to absolutely delicious.

Jill grows increasingly impatient with Marie's deflection.

JILL

And all this set up will be pointless if you put too much on your plate just to prove a point to Dad and then end up drunk for it!

MARIE

Honestly, Jill. Where is all this coming from? Your dad is the bad guy here. I won't drink at the wedding. Will that make you happy?

JILL

Not drink like you didn't drink at my Girl Scout induction or Emily's Sweet Sixteen?

MARIE

Emily didn't have a--

JILL

Exactly.

Emily enters the backyard.

EMILY

Jill! Did you bring the veil?

Jill, shocked silent. Not realizing Emily was there already.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Is everything OK?

JILL

Yeah, of course.

MARIE

Goodie, we're all here. Let me get you girls a glass of wine. None for me, though. Right, Doctor?

Marie exits to the house, leaving an awkward Jill and an ecstatic Emily. Jill sits on the step of the deck.

EMILY

Isn't it perfect?

JILL

It's really nice.

Jill strokes a flower, nurtured to perfection by Marie.

EMILY

I took your advice. Dad clearly wasn't going to come through for me, but Mom kills for this shit. I should have thought of this right off the bat.

Jill surveys the meticulously planned out backyard, Emily's joy. Marie enters with two wine glasses and a glass of water.

MARIE

Bottom's up my beautiful girls.

JILL

Everything is really beautiful, mom. I wish I could stay, but I have a patient in crisis. I think

(MORE)

JILL (CONT'D)
that corner right there would be
perfect for the shrimp tower.

EMILY
I thought you could help us--

JILL
Oh god, I know nothing about this
stuff. Love you, though!

Jill kisses them both goodbye and exits through...

INT. JILL'S CHILDHOOD HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

Jill walks through the kitchen. Marie follows.

MARIE
Jill, I know you're feeling-

JILL
What, mom? What am I feeling?

MARIE
Weddings stir up so many emotions.
I wish I could have done this for
you.

Marie takes a big sip out of her water glass. Her eyes are
glassy, something Jill already noted.

MARIE (CONT'D)
You've always been so admirably
independent.

Jill sips from Marie's water glass. Reacts. Nope, not water.

JILL
(re: the drink)
Yeah, that's what I thought. I'll
take this conversation as a big
fuck you to that admiration. Drink
up, Mom. See you at the wedding, if
you're in a state to show up.

EXT. NYC PLAYGROUND - THAT EVENING

Jill and Jeremy sit on a bench watching his son in the
sandbox. The sun sets behind them.

JEREMY
Don't beat yourself up.

JILL
I should have listened to you guys.
I can't fix them. Now my husband is
(MORE)

JILL (CONT'D)
gone, and the quicksand of my
family dysfunction is slowly
dragging me under.

JEREMY
The wha-?

JILL
Jesus... I think that was from a
poem I wrote when I was sixteen.
I've completely regressed. You were
right. How'd I let things go this
far?

JEREMY
You didn't. Not present you,
anyway. That nutball Jill from
years ago? She's the one you need
to beat down.

JILL
She sucks.

Jeremy puts his arms around Jill.

JEREMY
He knows and loves you. He just
needs time. You can't blame him.

JILL
You're supposed to be on my side.

JEREMY
I'm pointedly not taking sides so
that I can support you, psycho. If
you forced my hand -

JILL
(considers)
Yeah. Me too.

JEREMY
You're childhood is over, J-bird,
and these are the cards you were
dealt. Giving Emily a stress-free
wedding isn't going to make that
damage go away anymore than having
a kid is going to make you relive
it.

Jill swallows this.

JEREMY (CONT'D)
Maybe there's something to be said
about getting them all in the
backyard together and letting them
figure it out themselves.

JILL
You sound like Beth.

JEREMY
She doesn't suck at this.

This sparks an idea in Jill.

JILL
No, she doesn't.

INT. HEALTHY MINDS - BETH'S OFFICE - THE NEXT DAY

Jill lies on Beth's couch, scrolling through emails on her blackberry while Beth preps the room for her next patient. The office is filled with dozens and dozens of stuffed lions - tokens from patients past and present.

JILL
Has there ever been bloodshed in one of your sessions? With my family, there would be bloodshed.

BETH
They don't call me "The Lioness" for nothing.

JILL
I'd like your help with Elliot. This compartmentalization thing I'm doing with him isn't working. To be honest, I don't think it's working for me either.

BETH
Does this mean you'll think about bringing your own family in?

JILL
No.

BETH
Come ON! I'm dying to get my hands on them.

JILL
Not a chance.

BETH
Yet. Not a chance yet.

Beth looks at Jill with the utmost sympathy.

BETH (CONT'D)
I'd be happy to help.

INT. JILL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jill walks into her apartment. Something is askew. She places her keys between her fingers, in case she needs to stab someone, and walks slowly down the hallway and into...

INT. JILL'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM

A CREAK from the other room. Jill drops her keys, quickly picks them up and places them back in attack mode.

She's about to continue down the hallway toward the bedroom but thinks better of it: that's where every horror movie turns bad. She backs up into the living room and turns the TV on. She sits with her back to the other room, so the "criminal" can walk out without being noticed.

CLOSE on Jill's petrified face, watching the reflection in the TV. SUDDENLY with a THUMP, something is beside her. Jill SCREAMS. The something starts licking her face. She SCREAMS more. Until she realizes it's a SMALL DOG.

Chris enters. He can't help laughing - unintended revenge?

CHRIS
Sorry, I didn't expect-

Jill tries to process everything as she recovers.

JILL
You're back. Oh, what is, who-

Jill wants to hug Chris, but the dog won't let her up.

JILL (CONT'D)
Does this mean you forgive me?

Chris sits next to her. Wipes some dog slobber off her lips and kisses her.

CHRIS
I thought this little guy could maybe get you used to the idea of taking care of something, besides me. And your clients. And your entire family, and-

Jill scratches the dog's belly. The bond is instant.

JILL
He's ours?

CHRIS
You crave order and control. But life, it's messy, and sometimes
(MORE)

CHRIS (CONT'D)
it's so messy you can't clean it
up. Consider him a stepping stone.

Jill looks the dog up and down.

JILL
A trial kid. Only fuzzier. And one
would think much more hung.

Chris watches Jill take in the sight of the new puppy.

JILL (CONT'D)
Seriously, I feel like we need to
put pants on him. Right?

CHRIS
That's a good name.

JILL
Pants?!

CHRIS
It's a good name.

Jill nods. Is she really going to argue? Instead:

JILL
I have a doctor's appointment
tomorrow. Just a check up. Maybe
you should come, so we can talk to
the doctor together... about
starting to think of possibly,
maybe trying...

Chris wraps his arms around Jill as she battles her fears.

INT. JILL'S APARTMENT - HALLWAY - NEXT MORNING

Jill clips on the dog's leash and walks toward the elevator.

JILL
Senor Puppy Pants, welcome to the
first walk of the rest of your
life.

Jill waits by the elevator doorway until it opens. Her
NEIGHBOR walks out, starts chatting her up.

NEIGHBOR
Such a cute dog.

JILL
Thanks, he was a surprise from my
husband.

NEIGHBOR

I haven't seen Chris around lately.

JILL

Oh yeah, he was traveling... for work... Teacher's retreat.

As she's talking, the elevator doors close. Jill feels a pull on the leash, looks down and notices the dog is IN THE ELEVATOR on the other end of the leash, which Jill IS STILL HOLDING. Shit.

JILL (CONT'D)

Shit!

Jill presses the button and runs down to...

INT. JILL'S APARTMENT - STAIRWELL

Jill runs down the stairs.

JILL

Omigod, Omigod, Omigod, Omigod.

INT. JILL'S APARTMENT - THE NEXT FLOOR DOWN

Jill enters and urgently presses the button.

JILL

SHIT!!!!

INT. JILL'S APARTMENT - THE NEXT FLOOR DOWN

Jill arrives at the bottom floor, where a NEIGHBOR is standing in front of her, looking confused. The doors open and out comes Pants, no worse for the wear, still attached to his extending leash. Jill shakes uncontrollably.

INT. JILL'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Chris is in the middle of making an elaborate breakfast when Jill walks in, still shaking.

JILL

He pooped!

This news makes Chris happy.

INT. DOCTOR LANSING'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Jill and Chris sit in the doctor's personal office.

DOCTOR

So you want to have a baby.

JILL

(unsure)
Yeah?

CHRIS

(totally sure)
Yup!

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Well thirty-five is the *magic age*
where you're considered high risk.

JILL

Risk?

DOCTOR

It's a good thing. It means your
insurance pays for all the special
bells and whistles.

JILL

Whistles. Honey - there are
whistles... and bells.

DR. LANSING

The blood we took today should give
us an idea what your egg quality
looks like, and here's some
information on genetic testing. We
have a counselor on hand who will
go over everything.

Jill and Chris look over the pamphlets.

DR. LANSING (CONT'D)

Does your family have a history of
genetic disease that you know of?

Chris shakes his head. Jill considers.

JILL

Are we calling alcoholism a
disease, 'cause I've got a ton of
those fermented fruits hanging off
the family tree. Acute Narcissism -
both sides. ADHD, Antisocial, and
maybe Bipolar Personality Disorder,
but he's water not blood.

Chris is getting worried. Dr. Lansing holds his hands up.

DR. LANSING

Downs Syndrome, Cystic Fibrosis...
these are the types of things we're
looking for. Personality disorders,
tragic as they are, are not
detectable with DNA. Yet.

Jill and Chris both look disappointed.

DR. LANSING (CONT'D)
(delicately)
Anything genetic that parents-to-be
might consider grounds for
termination.

Jill laughs nervously.

JILL
Can't kill crazy, huh?

This does not land well... for anyone. A NURSE enters, hands the doctor a note. Doctor smiles nervously.

JILL (CONT'D)
What is it? Oh my God, we're going
to have inside-out babies.

DOCTOR
Not necessarily... but you are
going to have a baby.

JILL
Excuse me?

DOCTOR
You're pregnant! Now, that wasn't
hard, was it?

CHRIS
Are you kidding me?

JILL
She looks pretty serious, Honey. I
guess Xanax is out of the question
for Em's wedding.

DOCTOR
This changes things a bit. If you
haven't been taking pre-natals...

All SOUND FADES as Jill watches the doctor speak. All she can hear is her own HEARTBEAT. Or is that two heartbeats?

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. HEALTHY MINDS - JILL'S OFFICE

Jill is furiously deleting messages from her email when Beth walks in.

BETH
I'm going to prep the room, okay?

JILL
Have at it.

Beth calmly sits on the couch, inspects the room, gets up and starts rearranging furniture.

JILL (CONT'D)
Oh! A message from Dad-slash-Stepnazi. That was fast. Inviting me to go away with them on an expense-paid trip to Savannah this weekend instead of the wedding.

Beth moves an armchair across the room. Perfects the angle of a tabletop knick knack.

JILL (CONT'D)
And one from mom making sure Dad isn't going to change his mind at the last minute, "like he did with her alimony checks."

Beth sits back down, inspects and gets up again.

JILL (CONT'D)
God forbid she wasn't able to redecorate her kitchen for the eighth time while I sucked my state college education up a six foot bong. What are you doing?

Beth is jolted out of her zone.

BETH
Placement of the participants is very important. Now would you say Elliot has more of a connection to his mother or--

JILL
You're not even close to listening to me.

BETH
I didn't realize you were talking to me.

The "patient indicator" light goes on.

BETH (CONT'D)
Watch and learn.

Jill opens the door to Elliot, Hope and NATHAN CONNOR, Elliot's dad, a youthful forty-two.

JILL
Come on in. Mr. Connor, it's a pleasure to meet you. How was your week, Elliot?

Elliot shuffles past Jill without a word. Again.

BETH
I'm Jill's associate, Beth Ramsey. My expertise is systemic family therapy and I think opening up this conversation to the whole family as a unit will shed a new light on what Jill and Elliot have been discussing. Mr. and Mrs. Connor-

NATHAN
Please, I'm going to be bearing my soul to you, call me Nathan.

Hope nods a hello and sits.

BETH
I promise it won't hurt a bit.

HOPE
Our daughter couldn't make it today. She's home sick.

BETH
Oh, I'm sorry to hear that. We can proceed without her for now. Jill tells me that your family is going through a pretty serious transition right now. The divorce?

Nathan and Hope look to one another. Then to Elliot. Elliot stares daggers at Jill, who mouths, "I'm so sorry."

NATHAN
We're not getting a divorce.

Jill is shocked. She takes in Hope and Nathan holding hands, their confused expressions, Elliot's face pointed at his lap.

JILL
Are you sure?

Hope and Nathan react.

JILL (CONT'D)

What I mean is, sometimes children are able to intuit situations, emotions, before adults are able--

HOPE

Is that what he said to you? Has he spoken to you and you didn't tell us?

Beth jumps in.

BETH

Elliot, why don't you sit in between your parents here.

Elliot does so. Nathan puts his arm around his son. Hope places her hands in her lap.

BETH (CONT'D)

Can you tell us why you think your parents are getting a divorce?

Elliot doesn't speak.

HOPE

Nathan's been coming home very late.

NATHAN

Work has been busy lately. Hope hasn't been entirely patient--

HOPE

I practically run the household myself.

Elliot doesn't say a word.

JILL

Elliot, please say something.

But Elliot simply breaks down in tears.

HOPE

Elliot, oh sweetie... we're not getting a divorce.

(to Jill and Beth)

I think this was a bad idea.

JILL

Please, Hope. If you'll just-

Hope stands to exit. Nathan and Elliot follow suit.

INT. HEALTHY MINDS - JILL'S OFFICE - LATER

Jill is tidying up her office, somewhat frantically when Beth enters.

BETH
Knock, knock.

JILL
Who's there? Disaster who? Sorry,
did I kill the punch line?

BETH
We'll get them next time.

Jill turns around, revealing some serious tears.

JILL
There won't be a next time. I can't
believe we got them to agree to
this session. I betrayed Elliot.

BETH
You had to. Go home, relax. You've
got a big weekend ahead of you.

JILL
At least at the wedding I'll be
faced with a strain of family
dysfunction I'm used to failing at
fixing.

Beth walks up to Jill, completely invading her personal body space, and speaks directly into her face.

BETH
You did well today. You let them
be. I'll see you at the wedding.

Jill nods. Beth exits.

EXT. JILL'S CHILDHOOD BEDROOM - EMILY'S WEDDING DAY

Jill puts the finishing touches on Emily's makeup. Marie watches them through her champagne glass.

MARIE
My two beautiful daughters. God I
did well with you. I remember the
day each one of you was born.

Emily and Jill share a look: "Here we go again."

MARIE (CONT'D)

Of course Jill, you were born during the war. Those were tough times with your dad always away.

JILL

Mom, I was born on an army base in '71. Dad came home every night.

Marie ignores this. Begins to tear up.

MARIE

And now Little Emily is all grown up. So beautiful. If only your Grammy could've held on this long.

Emily's BRIDESMAID shakes her head sadly. She had no idea Emily's grandmother just passed away.

JILL

(whispers to bridesmaid)
She died fifty years ago.

Jill takes Marie's champagne glass out of her hand.

JILL (CONT'D)

Mom, why don't you go sit... somewhere else.

Marie exits, attempting to take the champagne bottle with her on her way out. Jill grabs it away from her, sets it down next to four clean champagne glasses. Emily watches as Jill goes back to work on the veil.

EMILY

Oh. My. God.

JILL

What?

EMILY

You haven't had a sip to drink all day.

JILL

Wanna save some for the rest of the guests before Mom cleans us out.

EMILY

You're fucking pregnant!

JILL

Shut up.

EMILY

Not stealing my thunder? You're the best sister ever!!

Jill straightens Emily's veil.

JILL

I love you. Now if you'll excuse me, I'm going to puke, eat some saltines and see you up here in an hour all ready to go! Not a word.

Emily locks her lips. Jill exits.

INT. JILL'S CHILDHOOD HOME - BATHROOM

Jill has just finished retching and washes out her mouth when her phone rings.

JILL

Hello? Oh hi Hope. You do? You did? What did he say? Well, I'm not sure he's really ready to make that sort of decision. No, I understand that her method... yes. I'm really sorry to hear that. Please let me know if I can be of any assistance in the future.

Jill hangs up, near tears and overwhelmed with suck. She exits the bathroom. Beth is waiting for her.

INT. JILL'S CHILDHOOD HOME - STAIRWAY

Jill and Beth sit on the staircase.

BETH

Nerves?

JILL

Something like that.

Beth smiles and nods knowingly.

JILL (CONT'D)

Elliot isn't coming back. His mother thinks I'm a quack.

BETH

Give them time.

JILL

Most parents really suck, huh?
(Jill sucks back tears)
I'm angry. I really hoped my dad would show and my mom would be sober. I thought they would just once pull it together for us.

BETH

They spent a long time building these walls. It's going to take a big force to break them down.

JILL

What's more of a force than your children? Jesus.

BETH

Grandchildren?

Jill drops her head in dismay, but toughens up. She wipes away her tears. Beth puts her arm around her.

JILL

Please don't say a word. I just - I just can't--

BETH

Jilly, you're going to be an amazing mother.

Beth seals her lips. Jill smiles.

INT. JILL'S CHILDHOOD BEDROOM - LATER

The door is closed. Jill hears laughing from outside. She stops, enjoying the sound for a moment before entering to find Emily, her bridesmaids and a tuxedoed Henry.

JILL

Dad! I didn't-

HENRY

My Jill, you look exquisite. You're simply *glowing*.

Jill stares daggers at Emily over his shoulder.

JILL

Thanks, Dad.

HENRY

I'll see you two out there.

Henry exits, Jill rolls up on Emily. Emily spits out an explanation.

EMILY

I had to have someone walk me down the aisle. It was the only way to get him here.

JILL

You used my fetus to manipulate
Dad. Nice. Does Mom know?

EMILY

I couldn't let her hear about it
from Lillian. I don't want
bloodshed on the most important day
of my life.

Jill is seething, but relents.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Jill... when's the last time you
even remember them in a room
together?

Emily's eyes begin to water. This really means a lot to her
and Jill isn't about to spoil it.

JILL

Well, let's get you married.

Jill kisses Emily on the head and takes her hand.

INT. WEDDING RECEPTION

Tinkling of forks on crystal. Emily and Mark are seated at a
dais in the middle of the party. Jill walks through the
tables with a microphone in hand, up to a family member.

JILL

Have you seen Dad?

Family member points to the other end of the yard, where Jill
sees ALL FOUR OF HER PARENTS sitting at a table together in a
huddle. She rushes over to the table before there's
bloodshed. She approaches them cautiously.

JILL (CONT'D)

Dad, it's about time for your
speech... and Mom, your table is
aaaaalllll the way over there.
We're using real knives today.

LILLIAN

Don't be silly, Dear, we were just
talking. In fact... Marie, should
we share our news?

MARIE

We've decided to rent an apartment
in the city - all four of us.

LILLIAN

We found a darling peit de terre
down the block from you. Didn't
want to impose on you and the baby.

HENRY

But of course, we need to be
present in our grandchild's life.

LILLIAN

Weekly.

MARIE

Daily.

The moms laugh. Suddenly, the SOUND DROPS OUT and Jill's past flashes in front of her eyes in a series of QUICK CUTS to the PHOTOGRAPHS at the open:

- Jill and Marie at her graduation.
- Jill and Henry before her prom.
- Jill, Emily and Marie at Emily's graduation.

SOUND RETURNS. Jill recovers from her shock.

JILL

Are you all insane?!

At the word "insane" we realize that the MICROPHONE IS STILL ON. Some heads turn in the background. But Jill and the parents are behind a GIANT PLANT and DON'T REALIZE it's on.

MARIE

We want to be there for you.

JILL

You'll forgive me for not
predicting this tectonic shift in
behavior when, for the last thirty
years, you've been nothing
resembling parents, or grown ups
for that matter.

MARIE

Dear, you shouldn't get all worked
up - the baby.

JILL

Oh please, you drank throughout
your pregnancies - I'll get as
worked up as I see fit, Mother.

Murmurs can be heard from the crowd. Emily has now caught wind of the scene, but is stuck talking to guests.

JILL (CONT'D)

It's not that I don't appreciate
the effort now, I do. But could you
for a second remember that this is
Emily's big day?

Emily is slowly making her way toward Jill who still doesn't
know she can be heard. She whispers apologies to the guests:
"That's not true." "So sorry." "I'll just--"

The parents are too shocked to say anything.

JILL (CONT'D)

You all want to be the perfect
grandparents so badly? Maybe you
can back the Ford up a second and
start by being normal, functional
and not completely embarrassing
PARENTS to your youngest daughter.
Who, I'm sure, on the most
important day of her life, would
really appreciate it if you could
get your collective minds *out of my*
uterus for long enough to shine
some of your interest on her.

Jill hands Henry the microphone.

JILL (CONT'D)

Dad, I believe you have a speech to
give. Perhaps you can talk about--

Emily finally makes her way to Jill and grabs the microphone.
She's got tears in her eyes.

JILL (CONT'D)

--Emily.

Emily runs off, crying.

Jill looks up and realizes that the entire wedding is STARING
at them.

Shit.

END ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

INT. JILL'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT.

Jill hides under a blanket on the couch. Pants (the dog) sits nearby. Chris, now dressed down, enters with a cup of tea.

CHRIS
Honey, you and the silence thing
scares the shit out of me.

JILL
It's called apoplexia.

CHRIS
I had no idea they were--

JILL
I know! I'm so. Very. Sorry. So-

Chris takes Jill in his arms so she really listens.

CHRIS
Brave.

JILL
I want a drink, I want a smoke. I
want to die!!! So not brave.

CHRIS
Hey... if you survived those
people? You can do anything. And
I'll be right here. We're your
family now.

Jill gazes thankfully at Chris while Pants licks her tears. There's a KNOCK on the door. Chris opens the door while Jill hides under the blanket with Pants.

It's Marie. She's holding two big bags.

MARIE
I come in peace and sobriety.

Chris lets her in, shares a look with Jill and exits.

Marie walks into the apartment with leftover food and a big bag of books. She's sobered up.

MARIE (CONT'D)
I know you hate me. Or worse...
couldn't care less about me.

JILL

No, mother, you raised me to be completely dependent on caring what kind of mood you're in.

MARIE

I know.

JILL

Your sobriety is your deal. I'm not boarding that train with you. Again.

Silence.

MARIE

There were lots of wedding leftovers. After you left, well-

JILL

I ruined Emily's biggest day.

MARIE

You can't take responsibility for that.

JILL

Is somebody else going to?

Marie stands, uncomfortably.

MARIE

I found some books in your bedroom - books I read to you when--

Jill stands up, takes the bag of food and brings it to the kitchen.

MARIE (CONT'D)

Remember we were reading "James and the Giant Peach" and I asked you why the centipede had so much trouble putting his shoes on, and you said-

JILL

Because he had so many feet.

MARIE

Because he had so many feet.

JILL

Never got the answer to that question.

Marie, still cavalier, tries to apologize.

MARIE

Your father and I have been a bit destructive over the years. I want to take responsibility for that.

JILL

Whoa, slow your roll. Amends? Isn't that like step nine?

MARIE

I do things at my own pace, just like a certain daughter of mine.

Marie opens another book and begins to read...

MARIE (CONT'D)

(reading)

You'll look up and down streets. Look'em over with care. About some you will say, "I don't choose to go there." With your head full of brains and your shoes full of feet, you're too smart to go down a not-so-good street. And you may not find any you'll want to go down. In that case, of course, you'll head straight out of town.

Jill clears some emotion from her throat, steadying herself against the counter.

MARIE (CONT'D)

(reading)

It's opener there in the wide open air. Out there things can happen and frequently do to people as brainy and footsy as you.

Jill touches her stomach - for possibly the first time.

MARIE (CONT'D)

I never blamed you for cutting yourself out of our lives. I did the best I could with what I had, Jill. You're a much stronger person than I ever was. I think that's why I have so much trouble being around you sometimes. But I'm going to try to show up. I am. If you'll still have me.

Marie turns to leave. Jill, still faced away from her, gives her nothing. Marie sees this, but turns toward her-pursues.

MARIE (CONT'D (CONT'D))

There was one perfect moment in my life. When the nurse put you in my arms. I looked at you and at that

(MORE)

MARIE (CONT'D (CONT'D)
moment, everything was possible.
Once you leave that hospital, all
you can do is disappoint. And I'm
sorry. We... I... I did that in
spades. But we are your family and
we'd like to be here for you now.
And that comes from the whole *crazy*
bunch of us.

JILL
They made you emissary?

MARIE
Lillian's a big wimp, and your
father, well--

Jill cracks a small smile.

JILL
Thanks for the books.

Marie kisses Jill and exits. Chris comes out of hiding as
Jill collapses on the couch.

CHRIS
That certainly wasn't in the plan.

JILL
We plan, God laughs, right? There's
no order or sense to any of this.
And truth be told, I just don't
know how to deal with that. Utter
chaos? I mean--

Jill stops, struck with an idea. She whips out her cell phone
and dials.

JILL (CONT'D)
Hi Hope, it's Jill Fitzgerald. I
hope I'm not bothering you, but I'd
really like to have you come back--

Jill's voice fades away.

INT. HEALTHY MINDS - JILL'S OFFICE - DAY

Hope, Nathan, Elliot, and Jill sit around a table, on top of
which are Elliot's "feelings boxes."

JILL
Thank you for giving me another
chance. I feel I've been
instrumental in the lack of
communication that's been going on
within your family.

Hope indicates the boxes.

HOPE
What are those?

JILL
I think maybe Elliot should explain.

Hope shoots Jill a look. Elliot clearly still isn't talking.

JILL (CONT'D)
Elliot? I thought we were buddies and we trusted one another. You're kind of making me look bad here.

Elliot sighs. And, he SPEAKS.

ELLIOT
These are my feelings boxes.

Hope reacts. Tears fill her eyes.

HOPE
Oh my.

ELLIOT
There's a box for my feelings about school. There's a box for my feelings about-

Elliot looks up sheepishly.

JILL
...about the non-existent divorce?

Elliot nods.

JILL (CONT'D)
My advice to Elliot was that we should concentrate on one thing at a time. So one day, we would take the top off one box...

Jill does so.

JILL (CONT'D)
And then another day we would take the top off another.

Jill does so, without putting the top back on the other box. Elliot notices this and looks slightly off-put.

JILL (CONT'D)
But in real life, sometimes all of the tops come off at the same time.

Jill takes the tops off all of the boxes. She tosses all the pieces of paper on the table. Elliot looks at them, concerned and a bit overwhelmed.

Hope breaks the silence.

HOPE
Is there a Haley box?

JILL
Haley?

NATHAN
Our daughter.

JILL
Is there a reason she would have her own box?

HOPE
She's ill. Leukemia. She was in remission for the last year, and it's come back. It's been - hard.

Jill considers the amount to which she misunderstood.

JILL
And that's why you wanted your parents to get divorced?

Elliot pushes the boxes away. Jill pushes them back.

ELLIOT
My friend Jake has two families.

Jill understands. Hope and Nathan are confused.

JILL
Did you think having another mom and dad would make it easier on your parents?

ELLIOT
Kind of.

JILL
That's not always the case, but I understand your reasoning.

Jill fights back tears as they continue the session.

INT. HEALTHY MINDS - BETH'S OFFICE

Jill knocks and stands in Beth's doorway, admiring the trophies of Beth's career - dozens if not hundreds of stuffed animals.

JILL

I like the little one that looks like it's humping your Zubin Award.

BETH

Celia Sweeney. Fell into a pool when she was four and for no known reason became paralyzed.

JILL

Latent abuse manifesting in control issues?

BETH

Needy mom. Grandma was a pill popper. When she died, Celia thought mommy needed someone to take care of.

JILL

Oh.

BETH

No family is without their issues-

JILL

I know. And none are out of the realm of being helped.

Jill sits on Beth's couch.

JILL (CONT'D)

So long as my family can miraculously stand under the same roof for right now, what do you say about getting them in here? I can't think of any other way of keeping this little one from being the next victim of the cycle.

BETH

You're going to make a great mom.

Beth stares admirably at Jill, as Niko busts in, followed by Jeremy. Niko folds Jill up in a huge hug. Jeremy stands back by the door. Jill notices.

NIKO

You're pregnant!?

JILL

You're an eavesdropper?!

NIKO

I have a great book. You can help baby conquer mommy issues *in utero*!

JILL
(To Jeremy)
Like you didn't know...

JEREMY
I didn't. Start talking.

Jill gives Jeremy a huge hug and they exit together.

JILL (PRELAP)
If you want to be a part of my
life, we need to establish some
rules.

INT. HEALTHY MINDS - JILL'S OFFICE

Camera is tight on Jill's face as she stipulates.

JILL
Number one, you do not have rights
to this baby, but you may work for
privileges.

Camera floats down to Jill's orderly desk.

JILL (CONT'D)
And the first step is a weekly
meeting here. All of us.

Camera stops on the patient indicator light, blinking. Jill is alone in her office. But not for long. She opens the door and her entire family shuffles in for their first family meeting.

END PILOT