

POWERLESS

by

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Warner Bros

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COLD OPEN

EXT. A DOWNTOWN CITY - MORNING

Your standard fight between a SUPERHERO and SUPER VILLAIN.
Lots of zapping and punching and rubble.

EMILY (V.O.)
So listen, I get it. Superheroes
are great, right? They have
extraordinary abilities...

At one point the villain (male, black mask, glowing mystic lantern) fires a beam of powerful heat, blows up an elevated train line. The hero (female, blood red jumpsuit, talons) zips over and catches a plummeting EL TRAIN.

EMILY (V.O.)
They're courageous, humble. They're
the best of us!

The villain surveys his destruction, pleased. He flies away.

The hero (Okay, it's Crimson Fox. Happy now, nerd?) begins to gently put the train down --

EMILY (V.O.)
But what about the rest of us?

EMILY
Wait!

Crimson Fox stops. She glances up. The voice belongs to EMILY LOCKE (28), one of the train passengers. She is upside down, her face smushed against a window.

EMILY
Sorry to interrupt. Could you put
us back on the tracks, please?

Crimson Fox hesitates, the strangeness of the moment catching her off guard. The other passengers, twisted around in a pile inside the car, eye each other. This never happens.

EMILY
I know you saved our lives. Which I
appreciate...

OTHER SMUSHED PASSENGERS
"Me too.", "Totally!", "Thanks for
saving us, Crimson Fox!"

EMILY
And that's your job, I get that.

Crimson Fox grimaces, still holds the train over her head.

EMILY

But we have jobs too, you know. And if you don't put us back on the tracks we're going to have to de-train and catch another one and we'll be late.

ANOTHER PASSENGER

(poking his head into view)

Yeah, I didn't want to say but my shift at Orange Julius starts at nine and my boss is a total B.

OTHER PASSENGERS

"I have dental surgery scheduled",
"I teach Pilates" "I've got a brunch."

Everyone chimes in until it's just a SEA OF VOICES complaining about what they'll be late for. Crimson Fox has had enough, puts the train down (not on the tracks, crushing a Prius) and bolts away, leaping over a building --

EMILY

Oh, okay. Thank you!

EMILY (V.O.)

I don't know what I expected.
The folks with the powers? It's their world, we just live in it.

The other passengers APPLAUD. Emily joins in, then realizes something is off. They're not applauding for Crimson Fox. It's for her.

EMILY (V.O.)

But that doesn't mean we have to like it, now does it?

Off Emily, surprised and a little embarrassed ---

SMASH TO:

MAIN TITLES. We see CLASSIC PANELS FROM D.C. COMICS. Iconic heroes like SUPERMAN, BATMAN, WONDER WOMAN save the day but we quickly POP ZOOM past them, focus on the CIVILIANS in the b.g. as we introduce our cast, finally ending with our title: "POWERLESS".

END OF COLD OPEN

ACT ONE

A DOWNTOWN CITY STREET. Suddenly, a BOULDER-SIZED piece of a building lands on a STEEL-DRUM BAND and crushes them. A GRAY-HAIRED MAN, steps into view, talks to camera.

GRAY-HAIRED MAN
It can happen to you.

CUT TO:

THE SAME IMAGE, now on a t.v. It's a commercial.

GRAY-HAIRED MAN (ON T.V.)
More people every year are killed
by falling rubble than any other
super-related death. That's why you
need RetCon Life and Casualty
Insurance.

We POP wide, reveal we're on the 22nd floor, Claims Division of "RetCon Insurance". Emily sneaks in, late for work.

EMILY (V.O.)
My name is Emily Locke.

She breezes past WALL CLOCKS showing the times in various cities: Metropolis, Gotham, National City, Keystone, even Atlantis. The last clock is ours: CHARM CITY.

EMILY (V.O.)
I'm a claims adjuster for the ninth
biggest insurance company in the
world.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - FLASHBACK

Emily sits around a table with 10 CO-WORKERS.

EMILY (V.O.)
I do my job quietly, efficiently. I
rarely speak unless spoken to.

CO-WORKER
Since the damage was caused by
Wonder Woman we can deny as an "Act
of God". Right, Emily?

EMILY
I'm afraid not. Technically, she's
a *Demigod*, so...

Everyone nods, writes this down.

EMILY (V.O.)
 So what would possess me of all
 people to stand up to a Superhero
 just because of a bad commute?
 Here's the thing...

INT. APARTMENT - FLASHBACK

Emily flosses. Outside her window, a 50-FOOT TENTACLED
 CREATURE is vaporized by a laser beam. She ignores it.

EMILY (V.O.)
 Supers are astonishing, obviously.

INT. STARBUCKS - FLASHBACK

Emily orders a coffee. People sit around, read "Us Magazine"
 and the Sunday "Daily Planet" - both have Superheroes
 (Hawkman and Green Lantern respectively) on the covers.

EMILY (V.O.)
 They're the news makers and
 celebrities. They're awesome!

EXT. SUBURBS - FLASHBACK

Emily hands a check to A TRAUMATIZED COUPLE as a crane lifts
 a GIANT ROBOT CARCASS from their wrecked home.

EMILY (V.O.)
 But they're also incredibly
 reckless.

INT. THE OFFICE - FLASHBACK

Emily makes copies.

EMILY (V.O.)
 And recently it all hit a little
 close to home.

A frantic CO-WORKER rushes up.

CO-WORKER
 Did you hear? Joe was hit by
 falling rubble! He's dead!

Emily takes this in, a gut punch.

EMILY (V.O.)
 Joe was my supervisor. But he
 wasn't just that.

INT. "BIG BELLY BURGER" - FLASHBACK

The McDonalds of the DC Universe. Emily and Joe eat lunch.

EMILY (V.O.)
Whenever I'd get down about life,
Joe would raise my spirits.

JOE
What you do is important, Em. In
your client's darkest hour, who
comes to the rescue? You do. You
have value. And so does this
Bloomingdales gift card. Happy
birthday.

He hands her a gift card. She smiles.

EMILY (V.O.)
Joe was my mentor, my friend. And
it had only been a few weeks since
he'd gone so --

EXT. DOWNTOWN - FLASHBACK

THAT MORNING. Emily's face smushed against the train window.

EMILY (V.O.)
-- maybe I was still a little raw?
Who knows?

INT. 22ND FLOOR - OFFICE BUILDING - MORNING

Back to the PRESENT. Emily approaches Joe's old office. A
SINGLE FLOWER pokes out of an inbox stuck to his door. Emily
replaces the flower with a fresh one she's brought, moves on.

EMILY (V.O.)
Either way, I shouldn't have done
it. It was a mistake I'm never
going to make again.

Emily approaches her desk, sits down. A soothing ROBOTIC
VOICE emanates from the cubicle wall.

ROBOTIC VOICE
Good morning, Emily. Welcome to
your fabric covered box.

EMILY
Good morning, cubicle.

ROBOTIC VOICE
What are your plans for today?

EMILY

I have two hundred open claims,
cubicle. What about you?

TEDDY (29), pops his head up from the next-door cubicle. He's been doing the voice.

TEDDY

I am going to hide one salt and
vinegar potato chip in a bowl of
regular chips and watch all day
until someone eats it.

EMILY

A simple "Nothing" would have
sufficed. And thanks for the
warning.

TEDDY

Hey, you hear about that girl that
stood up to Crimson Fox this
morning?

Emily stops cold.

TEDDY

Of course you did. It's trending
all over the place. I love that she
did that! Boy I wish I knew who it
was--

EMILY

Nobody knows?

TEDDY

No, she took off before anyone
could find out. No pictures,
nothing. Finally somebody said what
we've all been thinking, you know?

EMILY

And what is it we've all been
thinking exactly?

JACKIE (O.S.)

I want to nail Aquaman so hard.

JACKIE (45), sits at her desk, reads a "People" magazine with AQUAMAN on the cover. Her cubicle is covered in beefcake magazine cutouts of D.C. SUPERHEROES. She notices Emily and Teddy looking at her.

JACKIE

Or any Super for that matter. I just want one night that's so hot the next morning my bed looks like a crime scene. You know what I mean?

EMILY

Loud and clear.

JACKIE

You guys see this by the way?

EMILY

It's a little early for Superman pants bulge photos.

JACKIE

I'm not talking about that.

TEDDY

The Crimson Fox girl?

Jackie nods. Teddy scrambles over, excited.

CUT TO:

A TMZ VIDEO: PASSENGERS from the El Train at the beginning are interviewed on the street.

PASSENGER #1 (ON VIDEO)

This girl stood up to Crimson Fox! She was like, "Put us back on the damn tracks!"

PASSENGER #2 (ON VIDEO)

Yeah, I mean it's getting old, the way the supers use our cities for their personal cage matches. She articulated that!

OFF-SCREEN CAMERA PERSON (ON VIDEO)

So you're saying she's the real hero?

PASSENGER #1 (ON VIDEO)

Oh God no. Crimson Fox is. I mean, she catches trains with her hands. But the other girl? She's cool too.

Reveal Emily, Teddy and Jackie watching, having been joined by OTHER CO-WORKERS including MARVIN & WENDY (28), fraternal twins who finish each other's sentences, usually incorrectly.

JACKIE

Love it.

WENDY

You know what *I'm* sick of? When --

MARVIN

-- you unsubscribe from an e-mail
and then they send you another e-
mail telling you that you've
unsubscribed?

WENDY

No. When Supers break into the
airwaves to threaten each other.

JACKIE

I'm sick of that too! It's like,
exchange digits already. Threaten
via text like the rest of us.
Sidenote: As twins shouldn't you be
finishing each other's sentences
correctly?

WENDY

Not --

MARVIN

-- cool, Jackie.

WENDY

-- necessarily.

TEDDY

Em, you take the Green Line. Did
you see anything? Were you there?

EMILY

No, I... I must have just missed
that train.

JACKIE

Too bad. You could have witnessed
greatness.

INT. CANDLE SHOP - LATER

Emily and Teddy are on a claims call, shown around a candle
store by the owners, MR and MRS LENNOX.

MRS. LENNOX

(through tears)

Then the scary one with the black
mask --

MR. LENNOX

Jack O' Lantern.

MRS. LENNOX

-- shot fire from his orby thing
and the heat from the blast outside
melted our entire candle inventory.

Indeed the entire place is covered in melted wax.

TEDDY

(aside, to Emily)
Why'd you lie about not seeing the
girl who stood up to Crimson Fox?

EMILY

(to the couple)
Can you excuse us a minute?

She pulls Teddy aside.

TEDDY

When I asked you if you were there,
you twisted your hair with your
finger. You always do that when
you're lying.

EMILY

(twisting her hair)
No I don't.

Emily catches herself. Busted, she pulls Teddy closer.

EMILY

Okay, I just didn't want anyone to
know it was me.

TEDDY

Wait. You're her!?

TEDDY

Shh!
(whispers)
No.

TEDDY

But you just said --

EMILY

It was me but it wasn't me.

TEDDY

I'm totally confused. And what's
that lovely scent you're wearing?

EMILY

It's called soap. It was me but I don't normally do things like that. So I don't want people to know because then they might expect me to do stuff like that all the time.

TEDDY

(getting worked up)
Yeah, like badass David and Goliath stuff. You are so frick-fracking cool! I can't believe I work with --

Emily puts her hand over his mouth to shut him up. The Lennox couple look over, eye them with concern.

EMILY

Listen carefully, Teddy. We are going to finish up here and go back to the office. And if you tell anyone about this, I will tell everyone the secret office nicknames you have for them.

TEDDY

(fearful)
Even Milk Breath?

Emily nods, gravely.

TEDDY

(disappointed)
Fine.

INT. OFFICE - LATER

Emily and Teddy enter the office to a slight commotion.

EMILY

(to a passing co-worker)
What's going on?

CO-WORKER

They're finally gonna announce Joe's replacement.

EMILY

Who?

The co-worker shrugs, moves on. Outside the office GARY FROM LEGAL (40's, sadsack-y) is visible along with MARCO (25, buff, handsome, glasses).

EMILY

(to Teddy)

Ooh. You think they're transferring
Marco Detwiler down here??

(intrigued)

I could be working under him. And I
don't mean "under him" in a dirty
way. Unless I do!

TEDDY

Who?

EMILY

Marco Detwiler. He's the Sup for
the Sales division.

TEDDY

That's why I don't know him. I
don't visit the Sales floor ever
since I got a skin disease from a
high five.

EMILY

You think he knows I exist?

TEDDY

No idea and why are you talking
like a girl from a nineties Rom-
Com? You stood up to Crimson Fox
for Pete's sake.

EMILY

(annoyed)

I told you --

TEDDY

Yeah, yeah. That wasn't the "real
you". Except it was. It's just laid
dormant, like my skin disease.

EMILY

You're wrong.

TEDDY

I'm right. You'll see. And all
it'll take is another powerful
person to come along and throw
their weight around.

SMASH TO:

DELBERT "DEL" HELLER (45) as he's introduced to the assembled
office by Gary from H.R.

GARY FROM H.R.
 Meet Del Heller, your new Claims
 Supervisor. He'll be supported by
 Marco Detwiler who's been
 transferred to this floor as well.

People applaud as Del steps forward to address the office.

JACKIE
 Oh my God.

TEDDY
 What?

DEL
 Thanks, Gary. Hi everyone.

JACKIE
 This is not happening.

MARVIN & WENDY
 (butting in)
 "What's wrong?" "Who is he?"

JACKIE
 He used to come in when I worked in
 payroll. You don't recognize the
 name? Del Heller?

- POP to the T.V. Commercial we've seen. The GRAY-HAIRED MAN
 talking to the camera now has "SHEPPARD HELLER - CEO" under
 his face as he talks. We then POP BACK TO --- Emily, Teddy,
 Jackie, Marvin and Wendy who watch as Del introduces himself.

DEL
 So a little about me. I've been
 employed by this company for most
 of my life...

JACKIE
 (aside, to the others)
 He draws a salary but doesn't work.

DEL
 ...I've held a variety of
 positions...

TEDDY
 His dad lets him make up whatever
 title he wants. When he was eight
 he was "VP of Pee Pee".

DEL

...But this is the first time I've ever been a boss. I'm excited. But I promise I won't let it go to my head.

(to a random co-worker)

You're fired.

The CO-WORKER, (30's, male, with a Polo shirt he got free from a tech conference) laughs. Del doesn't.

DEL

I'm not kidding.

The co-worker stops laughing.

CO-WORKER

But --

DEL

Actually I *was* kidding initially. But you just met me so how could you have known for sure? The fact that you laughed means you thought I was a pushover and I can't have people think that on my first day which is why you're fired for real.

CO-WORKER

(desperate)

Please --

DEL

But *now*, based on your new reaction, I can tell you believe I mean business so you just turned it around. You're unfired.

Del turns to everyone else. They look terrified.

DEL

Folks!

He claps his hands together.

DEL

I'm so excited to be here!

The co-worker vomits into a trash can.

TEDDY

(aside, to Emily)

You know, there's only a few
letters difference between
Supervisor and Super Villain.

EMILY

Bit of an exaggeration, don't you --

Emily stops, notices Del, entering his office (Joe's old
office). Del takes the flower from the door's inbox, tosses
it in the trash. Emily recoils, upset.

WENDY

(to Marvin)

We are *so* --

MARVIN

Getting raises?

WENDY

Screwed.

Off Emily, eyeing Del --

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. 22ND FLOOR - OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

The office is bustling. People make copies, phone calls. Meetings are in progress. Emily stirs tea in the kitchen.

Suddenly the LIGHTS FLICKER. Everyone stops.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - SAME

The city's electricity SHUDDERS. On the downtown Jumbotron, STATIC is followed by the large FLAMING HEAD of JACK O' LANTERN, the super villain from the opening fight.

INT. 22ND FLOOR - OFFICE BUILDING - SAME

Jack O' Lantern now appears on every computer and t.v.

JACK O' LANTERN

Citizens of Charm City. This is
Jack O'Lantern with a personal
message for Crimson Fox. You can
run but ---

Someone MUTES him. Everyone continues what they were doing as if this happens all the time. Emily stirs her tea.

EMILY (V.O.)

In his first week, Del made big
changes...

INT. OFFICE - FLASHBACK

The bathrooms are demo'd by a construction crew as Del talks to frustrated office co-workers, including Emily.

EMILY (V.O.)

First, he took the bathrooms away.

DEL

I got the idea from Steve Jobs. Now
that you have to go down to the
nineteenth floor to pee, you will
have unplanned interactions with
Sales and Underwriting. Unexpected
creative sparks will fly!

INT. BATHROOM - LATER

Del washes his hands at a sink.

EMILY (V.O.)
It turned out he just wanted a
private bathroom for himself.

A bathroom attendant sprays Del with cologne.

DEL
And a cinnamon Altoid, Ivan.

INT. DEL'S OFFICE - FLASHBACK

Del talks to a nervous Jackie.

EMILY (V.O.)
Then he made Jackie his personal
assistant and told her he wanted --

DEL
That thing in movies where the boss
arrives at work and their assistant
is waiting at the elevator with
coffee. That thing.

INT. OFFICE - FLASHBACK

Del steps off the elevator where Jackie waits, hands him a
coffee. He stops.

DEL
This coffee is cold.

JACKIE
(panicked)
I've been standing here an hour. I
didn't know when you'd show up, I --

INT. OFFICE - FLASHBACK

FACILITIES WORKERS replace everyone's desks.

EMILY (V.O.)
And in the most reviled decision,
he bought us all standing desks...

Everyone watches as their chairs are hauled off.

EMILY (V.O.)
...while taking away our chairs.

INT. OFFICE - LATER

People struggle to stand at their new desks all day.

EMILY (V.O.)
 You want to see an office go
 bonkers? Take away everyone's
 ability to sit.

A DESPERATE EMPLOYEE builds a chair from reams of paper, sits
 on it - it collapses.

EMILY (V.O.)
 I hated watching my co-workers
 suffer.

On Emily. She works silently, focused.

EMILY (V.O.)
 But I did my best to block all that
 out and focus on my work, on the
 fact that I was helping people in
 their darkest hour. As long as I
 did that everything else seemed to
 just be a weird distraction.

Teddy approaches in a blood-soaked shirt --

TEDDY
 Okay, so I filled a trash can with
 pig's blood. All you have to do is
 prop it against Del's door so when
 he opens it, his shoes are soaked.

Emily takes earbuds out of her ears.

EMILY
 I missed that whole run.

TEDDY
 Enough's enough, Em! You're the
 only one in this office with the
 guts to do something. But I can
 help. I have spent years perfecting
 pointless, time-wasting pranks. And
 now I have a reason to use them in
 a laser-focused way - as your
 sidekick!

EMILY
 Teddy, I'm really just trying to
 focus on my job.

TEDDY
 You're in denial is what you are.
 The signs are all around you -
 literally. Look at the bumper
 sticker in the twin's cubicles.

Emily eyes Marvin and Wendy's ADJACENT CUBICLES.

EMILY

"God Bless Johnny Cash"?

TEDDY

No. The other one.

Emily looks again, sees a bumper sticker that says: "PUT US BACK ON THE TRACKS".

TEDDY

Don't act like you haven't seen those all over the city. You're a folk hero, like Joan of Arc or that Jet Blue flight attendant who slid down the inflatable exit with a pocket full of Heinekens!

Emily's phone rings. She moves to answer it.

EMILY

I'm not a folk hero. I'm just a claims adjuster who's trying to help people who --

Emily STOPS, notices something O.S.

MR and MRS LENNOX, the candle shop owners, have entered the office. They look upset. They spot Emily. Off Emily's RXN --

MOMENTS LATER - Emily approaches Del's office. Jackie stands at her desk, which is now right outside.

EMILY

I need to talk to Del.

JACKIE

He's in a meeting. Hey, do you think Plastic Man can elongate every body part?

EMILY

Jackie, this is urgent.

INT. DEL'S OFFICE - SAME

Del and Marco are here. Del hears Emily outside, peers through a glass window set into the door.

DEL

(to Marco)

What's her name again?

MARCO
(honest)
I've never seen her before.

Jackie opens the door.

JACKIE
Emily Locke to see you?

DEL
I know who she is. Emily, get in here!

Emily enters, cautious. Walks past bios on a shelf of Donald Trump and Lex Luthor.

DEL
Can I get you something? Mexican Coke? Tastycake?

Del opens a fridge which is packed with a variety of odd beverages and snacks from around the world.

DEL
One of the benefits of being a rich, overeducated globetrotting wastrel for most of your life is that you learn the world's best junk foods. Cold Ljósmöoder?

EMILY
No thank you. Del, Mr. and Mrs. Lennox are here. They own the candle shop for which I approved a damage claim?

Del nods.

EMILY
What happened? Joe usually rubber stamped those.

DEL
What happened is Joe was crushed by rubble and now I'm here. And I denied it.

EMILY
But it's an no-brainer approval. They're fully covered.

DEL
Actually they could use some more "Villainous Intent" coverage.

EMILY

That's a bit of a stretch, isn't it?

DEL

It's a huge stretch.

EMILY

Then why do it?

Del looks at her strangely. Then slowly forms a pleased grin.

EMILY

What?

DEL

You get me.

Emily doesn't understand. Del moves to a glass wall that looks out into the office.

DEL

I thought you were like the rest of them out there. They all assume my dad forced me to take this legit job and I'm just finding random ways to amuse myself. But you don't think that.

EMILY

(twisting her hair)
Of course not.

DEL

No, you suspected the truth. That I asked for this job. That there's a reason why I'm here doing what I'm doing. You sensed the larger idea.

EMILY

(afraid to ask)
Right. Which is what, Del?

DEL

I denied those claims for the same reason I took away the bathrooms and the chairs, the same reason anyone in the building who wants parking validation now has to go through me. Because I can.

EMILY

Okay but... you can approve claims just as easily as denying them, right?

DEL

I'll let you know if I ever try it.

Del laughs to himself.

EMILY

Why are you here?

Del stops laughing. Souring on Emily quickly.

DEL

I just told you.

EMILY

No, but why now? What made you stop jetting around, looking for the world's greatest root beer?

DEL

If you must know, even though I don't appreciate the tone, it was that girl who stood up to Crimson Fox.

Emily takes this in. He's got to be fucking kidding.

DEL

When I heard what she did, in that moment, I realized the key to true contentment. It's not to do what she did - yelling into the wind about how Supers abuse their powers. The key is to get your own power. So that's what I did. I called up my dad right away. By that afternoon I was standing here...

(re: the office)

...on the twenty-second floor, Claims Division of RetCon Insurance as Supervisor. Where I am all powerful.

A SHOT of the Office: Dinky, sad.

EMILY

So I, I mean she, inspired you to do the opposite of me, I mean her?

DEL
Yeah. You kind of remind me of her.
Your general complainy-ness.

Emily's heard enough. She turns to leave --

DEL
Heads up!

Del throws something at her. She turns, catches it right before it hits her in the face. It's a bottled beverage.

DEL
World's greatest root beer.
Bundaberg. Australian.

She leaves. Del and Marco step into the doorway, watch Emily as she approaches the Lennoxes, leads them out.

MARCO
She's interesting.

DEL
She's dangerous is what she is.

A WIRY MAN approaches Del with a parking ticket.

DEL
Ah!

Del pulls some stickers from his pocket, takes a moment to look the man over, properly judge him, then validates him.

DEL
That covers you for ten minutes.

WIRY MAN
I've been in the building two
hours.

Del takes the sticker back.

INT. OFFICE - LATER

Teddy approaches Emily's desk.

TEDDY
Em?

He finds her sitting underneath it with a beverage.

EMILY

Life is meaningless. Every day brings yet another reminder that I can't fly or teleport or turn invisible... I can't even speak a foreign language.

TEDDY

Me neither. You wanna do Rosetta Stone together?

EMILY

(not listening)

But what always kept me going was the fact that I was helping people. And Del just took that away.

TEDDY

Are you drinking out of a coin cup from the MGM Grand?

EMILY

I washed it.

MARCO (O.S.)

Emily?

Marco approaches. Emily, possibly shocked that he knows her name, stands up abruptly and HITS HER HEAD on the underside of the standing desk, knocks herself unconscious.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

Marco holds an ice pack to Emily's head.

EMILY

Where am I?

MARCO

Third floor. Underwriting. They have a doctor on staff here.

EMILY

A *retired* doctor who looks over medical records remotely from his houseboat in Key West.

MARCO

Yeah, I didn't know that when I carried you down here.

Marco refers to a computer behind them where an ELDERLY DOCTOR is visible on Skype.

ELDERLY DOCTOR (ON SKYPE)
I can't see or hear you!

EMILY
Wait, you carried me down here?

MARCO
Teddy tried first. But then he dropped you and broke his arm somehow. He's at the hospital. So you don't see the point of working here anymore?

EMILY
How'd you know that?

MARCO
You were talking in your sleep.

EMILY
(worried)
What else did I say?

MARCO
You repeated "Keep doing that, Marco". So I kept sitting here. I'm assuming that's what you meant.

EMILY
Yep. Speaking of segues, you must understand why I wouldn't want to work here anymore. I mean they demoted you from Sales Sup to being right-hand man to a guy whose only previous work experience was probably batboy at a celebrity softball game.

MARCO
I guess. But I don't know, there's so many other things about this job that make it worth while. Like the view for the Thanksgiving Day parade!

EMILY
That's true. You can see Santa's bald spot.

MARCO
Or the weird euphemisms for death that the Sales reps use. Like they'll say "In the event you get hit by the donut truck..."

Emily smiles, thinks this is funny.

MARCO

Or that person you work with, the
one you never noticed before but
should have?

This silences Emily. Her heart beats a bit faster.

MARCO

And now you've definitely noticed.
And she's all you can think about?

EMILY

(beat)

You're talking about that busty ex-
Pharma rep that Marketing just
hired, aren't you?

Marco shakes his head, 'No'. A phone sitting next to them
gets a TEXT. Emily reaches for it.

MARCO

No that's my phone ---

Emily already has it.

EMILY

Oh, sorry. We have the same --

She stops. She's seen the text already. It's from Del: "Is
she PLANNING anything?"

INT. UNDERWRITING - DAY

Emily moves through a massive room filled with UNDERWRITERS
at desks, followed by Marco.

MARCO

I can explain!

Ahead, Teddy steps from the elevator, shakes his arm.

TEDDY

Hey, Em! Turns it out it was just a
sprain.

She moves right past him, gets onto the elevator.

MARCO

Emily!

Teddy turns, sees Marco approaching quickly.

TEDDY

What did you do, pretty boy?

The elevator doors close. Marco takes the stairs. Teddy chases after.

INT. 22ND FLOOR - OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

Del stands outside his office, eyes his phone.

EMILY (O.S.)

Del!

Del looks up. Emily is across the office, yells to him.

EMILY

We need to talk!

He looks around, self-conscious that everyone has stopped and is watching this.

DEL

Is this about the Bundaberg? Best root beer in the world, admit it.

EMILY

It was sublime but it's not what I'm here for and you know it! I want the Lennox claim approved!

She starts walking toward him.

EMILY

Further, I want all new claims be given a proper review from now on. And I demand our bathrooms be given back to us! Yesterday I peed a little in my pants trying to get to nineteen - Haven't done that since I was five and it wasn't a good feeling! And finally...

Marco runs in from the stairs. He stops. Emily regards him, then ignores him, turns back to Del.

EMILY

...I want our old desks and chairs back. And you're going to give me everything I want because I'm the girl who stood up to Crimson Fox.

Everyone reacts to this, says nothing.

EMILY

That's right. And now I'm standing up to you, Del. And so is everyone else in this office. And you can't do anything if we're united. We are standing up to you, Del...

Emily sits on the ground, legs crossed. A sit-in.

EMILY

...by refusing to stand anymore.
(to the office)
Join me.

She waits. Nobody joins her. Crickets.

EMILY

Guys. Little help here.

JACKIE

(aside, whispers)
Uh, Em? We know you're not the girl from the train.

MARVIN

Yeah, the real girl just came forward and took credit.

WENDY

She actually works in this building. It's that busty ex Pharma rep from Marketing?

EMILY

That little...

JACKIE

Plus, I mean, come on, Em. There's no way you could be her.

DEL

Clearly. I think we're done here. Everyone, don't just "stand" there. Get back to work!

Del enters his office. Everyone turns back to their jobs. Teddy suddenly exits the stairs, out of breath. He sees Emily on the ground, sits down next to her.

TEDDY

(through big heaves)
I miss anything?

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

BETHANY (27) a perky ex-Pharma rep, now in Marketing, is interviewed on "The Today Show". Next to her is one of the male PASSENGERS from the train incident.

BETHANY

I just said to put us "Back on the tracks" which is also the title of my memoir that Doubleday just purchased for seven figures.

PASSENGER

It was her. It's true.
(to Bethany)
You're so pretty.

CUT TO:

EMILY, watching this with disgust over Teddy's shoulder from a booth at BIG BELLY BURGER. Teddy polishes off a huge meal.

EMILY

Can we swap seats? Her face is hurting my eyeballs.

Emily and Teddy switch seats. Teddy, now sitting in front of Emily's food, starts eating that too.

TEDDY

Listen, Em. I know you're depressed. But even though you stood up to Del and it failed and even though Crimson Fox didn't put that train back on the tracks...

Teddy just trails off. Says nothing else.

EMILY

You didn't get to the positive part.

TEDDY

I can't think of one. I'm sorry.

Emily, frustrated, takes her food back. Teddy GASPS.

EMILY

They're my fries, Teddy.

TEDDY

No, look.

He points over her shoulder at the TV. She turns. It's a news report. At the bottom it says "BREAKING NEWS: CRIMSON FOX DEAD."

REPORTER (ON T.V.)
We were right here moments ago when
Jack O' Lantern blasted the
building and a tremendous pile of
rubble crashed down onto Crimson
Fox.

They REPLAY the moment. By now everyone has stopped what they're doing to watch this.

REPORTER (ON T.V.)
Wait! Bring us back live. It looks
like... There's movement under
there!

The TV CAMERA ZOOMS in as Crimson Fox wrests herself out of the rubble with incredible strength --

REPORTER (ON T.V.)
It's her! She's alive! Crimson Fox
is up and moving!

The Big Belly Burger customers CHEER. People are crying with joy. Emily exhales relief. Another CUSTOMER grabs Emily's arm and says something to her in Spanish.

EMILY
I'm sorry. I don't speak --

TEDDY
He said "She never gives up."
(off Emily's look)
Rosetta Stone. You gotta try it.

Emily turns back to the TV where Crimson Fox can be seen LEAPING AWAY. Emily watches, suddenly inspired.

EXT. CHARM CITY - MORNING

The sun rises over the RetCon building.

INT. 22ND FLOOR - OFFICE BUILDING - MORNING

Jackie waits by the elevator with a coffee. She checks the coffee's temperature, tosses it in the garbage, refills it from a carafe hidden behind a plant. DING! Del arrives. She hands him his coffee and they walk together.

JACKIE
No meetings, no calls. Everyone's
very happy, by the way.

DEL
(concerned)
Why?

He turns a corner and stops: Everyone works at their old
desks and chairs.

DEL
Who did this?

JACKIE
You signed the work order.

Marvin and Wendy see Del, applaud. The entire office follows
suit. Emily arrives for the day behind Del and Jackie.

EMILY
Oh. They weren't supposed to
deliver these until later. I --

Off Del's angry look ---

INT. DEL'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Del pulls Emily inside, closes the door.

EMILY
I know. Forging your name is bad,
it's a fireable offense and I am
willing to go down for it but just
know that I did it for them and --

DEL
They think I did it.

Emily stops. Del eyes her, confused.

DEL
And they like it. Why? Shouldn't
they be mad at me still?

EMILY
Admitting mistakes is the sign of
good leadership. It's powerful.
"Wrong equals strong". At least
that's what Joe used to say.

Del considers this.

EMILY

Anyway. I'll clean out my desk.
Wait, it's already been cleaned out
for my old desk so --

DEL

I can't fire you.

EMILY

You can't?

DEL

No. Because you didn't forge my
name.

EMILY

But --

DEL

I'm taking credit for bringing back
the desks and chairs. If you try
and take credit I'll take them away
again.

Emily eyes Del. Can't believe this.

EMILY

I'll go along if you approve the
Lennox claim.

DEL

Deal.

Emily nods, walks out.

DEL

Wait.

She stops, turns back.

DEL

Are you playing me? Was this whole
desk thing just a way to get the
Lennox claim approved?

EMILY

Del, I'm just like the girl on the
train, remember? All bluster, no
results. You think I'm playing some
subtle game, designed to win a tiny
victory in hopes of one day winning
the war? That's not me.

Del eyes her suspiciously. He's interrupted by a Sparklett's guy who needs parking validation. By the time he looks back, Emily has walked away.

INT. OFFICE - LATER

Emily grabs her jacket, starts to leave. Marco approaches.

MARCO
Heading out?

EMILY
I'm delivering a claim check. It's
the best part of the job. You
should try it sometime.

Emily tries to move past Marco. He stops her.

MARCO
Listen, Emily. I'm sorry. Give me
another chance. I have tickets to a
charity thing at the Museum of
Natural History?

Teddy pipes up from his cubicle. We can't see him.

TEDDY (O.S.)
Are you kidding? Do you want to be
attacked by supervillains?

MARCO
Do you mind?

TEDDY (O.S.)
I mean why not just go to an
abandoned amusement park?

Marco pivots away from Teddy's cubicle.

MARCO
(to Emily)
I was wrong. I should have stood up
to Del better. I'm going to try.
But I'm not as strong as you.
You're so... impressive.

EMILY
So everything you said before?

Teddy's head rises from his cubicle, concerned.

TEDDY
What did he say before?

MARCO
(to Emily)
It was all true.

Emily eyes Marco, betrays nothing.

EMILY
We'll see.

She heads off. Marco nods, backs away, quitting while he's ahead. We stay with Teddy who is left alone.

MOMENTS LATER - Teddy approaches Jackie's desk. She's kicked back, her feet up, very comfortable.

TEDDY
Jackie, lemme ask you something. Do you think there's ever been a superhero that's dated their sidekick?

JACKIE
I assume they all have.

TEDDY
I was hoping you'd say that.

Teddy runs off. Jackie eats a potato chip from a bowl, coughs violently. Spits it out.

INT. LOBBY - RETCON INSURANCE BUILDING - DAY

Emily walks toward the revolving front doors.

EMILY (V.O.)
I guess it's ironic that Crimson Fox, of all people, inspired me. But what can I say?

INT. 22ND FLOOR - DAY

EMILY (V.O.)
She stands up for what's right.

- Marvin and Wendy re-tack their "PUT US BACK ON THE TRACKS" bumper sticker.

EMILY (V.O.)
She's humble, never taking credit, only blame.

- Del walks through the office, to thanks and appreciation on his way to his private bathroom.

EXT. STREET - THE CITY - DAY

Emily walks up the street. Behind her Teddy exits the building, sees her.

EMILY (V.O.)
And she never quits until right is
done.

Emily throws her jacket on in SLO-MO and for a moment it catches air and resembles A CAPE.

EMILY (V.O.)
I mean, come on. She's a superhero.
She's awesome!

Teddy runs after her. O.S. we hear EXPLOSIONS and ZAPPING and FIGHTING. But we stay focused on our two heroes.

END OF PILOT