

H.R.

"PILOT"

WRITTEN BY
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DIRECTED BY
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9.20.13 WHITE PRODUCTION DRAFT
9.27.13 FULL BLUE PRODUCTION DRAFT
10.09.13 FULL PINK PRODUCTION DRAFT
10.11.13 YELLOW REVISION PAGES
10.15.13 GREEN REVISION PAGES
10.16.13 GOLDENROD REVISION PAGES
10.17.13 BUFF REVISION PAGES
10.18. 13 SALMON REVISION PAGES
10.25.12 DOUBLE WHITE REVISION PAGES

1

EST. NICHOLS & QUAFF - LATE AFTERNOON

1

A Modern seven-story office building with a sleek concrete and glass facade.

We glide toward the building, under the black and stately **N&Q** looming over the entrance. The ampersand between N and Q is a tastefully rendered martini glass.

2

INT. HUMAN RESOURCES - ELLEN BELL'S OFFICE - SAME

2

ELLEN BELL sits at her desk - control in a skirt suit, corporate and precise, Tracy Flick twenty years later.

At least until BILL does his damage. Bill (43) being the guy sitting across from her staring in shock. Ellen's shelves are stacked with books about Human Resources. A copy of *H.R. WORLD* magazine sits on her desk. Her walls are adorned with framed motivational posters.

BILL

Fired? Why am I fired?

ELLEN

You sent an admin links to pornography and told a Market Manager you'd like to dine on her fish taco, both of which are in violation of article 8B of the anti-harassment policy *clearly* spelled out in the employee handbook.

Bill's eyes burn with hate. He starts to hyperventilate.

BILL

You can't fire me!

PUSH IN ON ELLEN. Ellen's snappy reply and VO happens in her head, but presently it seems she's simply responding.

ELLEN

Oh, yes I can. I'm Ellen Bell, Assistant Director of Human Resources here at Nichols & Quaff, a global alcoholic beverages company that produces, distributes, and markets beers, wines and spirits. My job is jobs, to give them, and to take them away.

(MORE)

ELLEN (CONT'D)

I'm the eyes and ears of this company, and when I see or hear of anything in violation of our employee handbook, I take action.

Ellen speaks rapid-fire in VO through QUICK SHOTS-

3 OMITTED 3

4 **INT. NICHOLS AND QUAFF - EMPLOYEE KITCHEN - DAY** 4

A WOMAN in skirt and blouse leans into the fridge. TWO MALE EMPLOYEES (20's) walk in. One simulates lifting her skirt and fucking her from behind while the other makes lewd faces.

ELLEN (V.O.)

In Human Resources we're reminded daily that you never really know who you're hiring. I like to say it's like getting married without dating first. Which you'd never do.

5 **INT. SUPPLY ROOM - DAY** 5

A mousy looking WOMAN (20's) nervously glances around as she rapidly stuffs office supplies into her handbag.

ELLEN (V.O.)

Because once you're married, it's hard to get a divorce.

6 **INT. BATHROOM STALL - DAY** 6

Outside looking in. Pants around ankles. Two sets of hands on the top of the stall, heavy breathing and hard pounding.

ELLEN (V.O.)

Because there are laws to protect workers.

12 **EXT. PARKING LOT RAMP OUTSIDE N & Q - LATE AFTERNOON** 12

The KIA motors into the street. A Buick Regal tucked by the side of the road pulls out and follows. Enough light from the dash to see Bill behind the wheel, looking unhinged.

13 **EXT. BOULEVARD - FIVE MINUTES LATER - LATE AFTERNOON** 13

Light traffic. Ellen's KIA cruises at a law abiding 35 MPH. Fifty yards behind it, Bill's Buick stalks.

Suddenly Bill's car accelerates toward the KIA. Fast. Faster. FASTER. Ellen's car slows for the red lights ahead...rolls to a stop and Bill's car rockets at it and-

SMACKS INTO the BACK OF THE KIA, SENDS it flying into the intersection...

WE THINK THAT'S IT...and then--

WHAM!!! A TRUCK *SLAMS* into the passenger side of Ellen's car and the impact force FLIPS IT INTO THE AIR and it lands upsidedown on the pavement with a dull scraping thud.

Silence. Stunned aftermath. BEAT. BEAT.

Then, in the silence, movement. KIA door slowly creaks open.

Another long beat. Then Ellen emerges. Slowly. Crawls out onto the pavement on all fours.

Gingerly climbs to her feet. Stands. Unsteady. She raises her eyes and stares vacantly.

She begins walking. People stare in shock. At this woman in shock.

A MAN races up to her, moves in front of her like he's guarding her, in case she falls, tries to talk to her...

MAN

Miss? Miss? Maybe you shouldn't
try to walk...

Ellen stops. Takes in the world around her with amazement.

Smiles a serene smile. And falls straight forward like a felled tree...but the man deftly catches her in his arms and--

BLACK

END TEASER

BARISTA

Delivery dude didn't cruise by yet.
You wanna hang, he should be here
in like twenty or something.

ELLEN

Twenty minutes?

BARISTA

You know, just chill here.

ELLEN

Can you call to see if they're
nearby?

BARISTA

Dude's not into time or anything
all uber structured like that.

God, Ellen hates the way this dude talks. A HANDSOME GUY
(28) behind ELLEN tries to help-

HANDSOME GUY

Pardon me.

Ellen turns. Handsome indeed.

HANDSOME GUY (CONT'D)

The blueberry bran muffins are
really nice.

ELLEN

So are the plain bran muffins.
(back to Barista)
Just my coffee.

Ellen slides her "GRIND KINDNESS" rewards card out of her
marked holder ("REWARDS/DISCOUNT CARDS"), lays it on the counter
directly in front of her so Barista has to reach across to
get it - passive aggressive payback for the missing muffin.

16

INT. N&Q - ELEVATOR BANK - RECEPTION - MORNING

16

Ellen EMERGES, enters a cool stylized lobby adorned with N&Q
products. RECEPTIONIST looks up.

RECEPTIONIST

Morning, Ms. Bell.

Ellen grunts in response, disappears into--

17 **INT. N&Q - INTERIOR OFFICES/BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS** 17

Glass. Sleek. Cool. Ellen WALKS past EMPLOYEES knocking back coffee and chatting.

Scattered about in the bullpen are life-sized in-store displays and promotional pieces--LIQUOR BRAND MASCOTS and OVERSIZED BOTTLES OF N&Q BRANDS: STEROIDAL CHIHUAHUAS (GRANDE PERRO TEQUILA) 1960'S CARNABY STREET DANDIES (PETE SNARKS SCOTCH) SLEEK silver MISSILE shaped BOTTLES (GUTHFLOGA VODKA) A LEERING TOOTHLESS REDNECK (BILLY'S BATHTUB GIN) AND A SEXY FEMALE PIRATE (BOOTY ISLAND RUM).

THE COMPANY MOTTO occupies an entire wall.

"QUALITY SPIRITS LIVE FOREVER" - Jonathan Quaff

Ellen heads into one of the smaller private offices and--

18 **INT. MARKUS TEAL'S OFFICE - SAME TIME** 18

MARKUS TEAL (41) CEO of N&Q. Piercing eyes, loves the sound of his own voice as much as his power. With TIM BARCOURT (37). Gay. Brilliant. Radical beneath the designer suit, general counsel for N&Q. And DANA ARTY, (33) Director of Brand Management, presently presenting ads. They're focused on Markus' FLAT SCREEN, Dana clicks a remote. A PRINT AD appears featuring a MAN (23) clad in tight leather pants astride a silver GUTHFLOGA missile bottle smolders toward a WOMAN (23). HEADLINE READS: *Wanna ride on my rocket?*

MARKUS

Nope. No way.

DANA

But why not?

TIM

It will attract attention.

DANA

Isn't that my job? To spearhead ad campaigns that get attention?

MARKUS

No, Dana, that's not your job.

TIM

When it comes to booze, bland is beautiful. Ads for N&Q products are for awareness, not attention.

MARKUS

Or we're headed for the constraints shackling the tobacco industry.

(gesture toward Tim)

The chief legal counsel for N&Q should know.

TIM

Scenario: a *Guthfloga* campaign gets a bunch of press. A week later a *Guthfloga* bottle is found in a pick-up truck that plowed into mr. and mrs. mini-van and their four foul offspring, killing them in a fiery explosion.

MARKUS

A PR nightmare waiting to happen.

TIM

A watchdog group could use it as evidence.

MARKUS

Though I like the imagery.

TIM

We have bad marriages, no jobs and a crippled economy to sell booze.

MARKUS

Life sells alcohol, Dana. Don't run ads, run the front page.

Before Dana can respond, there's a *tap-tap* on Markus' door.

MARKUS (CONT'D)

Yes?

Door opens - Ellen.

ELLEN

Markus, you wanted to see me?

MARKUS

We have news. Come in. We've almost landed Piers Moore. The sales phenomenon, the legend.

TIM

I'm sending you a PDF of his contract.

MARKUS

(like his are already)

If we can get this guy our
stockholder's pants will be moist.

TIM

Moist, great word.

MARKUS

(instantly to Ellen)

I'd like you to meet Piers for lunch at the Lamb and Frog Pub. He's flying in from Chicago.

ELLEN

Why there? Why not here?

MARKUS

That's where he wants. And it doesn't matter where, what counts is what, and what I want is his contract signed.

ELLEN

As CEO shouldn't you meet with him, or join us?

MARKUS

(fond remembrance)

Piers and I had a thing in a bar in London last Spring. Not sure he remembers and I don't want to take a chance.

TIM

Remarks were made, punches thrown.

MARKUS

(gloating)

One punch was thrown.

ELLEN

How can he not remember that?

Tim mimics drinking. Ellen scowls at that and-

ELLEN (CONT'D)

Moss Lieber and I are prepping for a staff reduction.

MARKUS

I know this, fourteen people, so?

ELLEN

We'll want to keep the Piers Moore hire low profile.

DANA
(to Ellen, surprised)
We're firing fourteen people? But
N&Q had a great year last year.

ELLEN
(ignores Dana, to Markus)
Will that be all?

Markus fake smiles. Ellen exits, closes the door. Markus
turns to Tim and Dana. Re: dealing with her--

MARKUS
It's like being water-boarded with
mouse urine.

19

INT. ELLEN'S OFFICE - NOON

19

Ellen fills in a employee complaint form on her computer
screen as she talks to TAMI CRESSBERG (23), a charming fusion
of jappy and hippie. Ellen types in Tami's answers.

TAMI
Farshid prays everyday at four.

ELLEN
What does it sound like?

TAMI
Sound like?

ELLEN
Can you describe the sound for me?

TAMI
I can DO the sound for you.

Tami does - she's a great mimic.

ELLEN
(quickly)
Okay that's enough.

TAMI
Does this go on a report?

ELLEN
Without reports HR would be a
whiner's repository.

TAMI
Does it make me look anti-Arab?

ELLEN

Have you not read the employee handbook section on discrimination?

TAMI

I'm sorry I-

ELLEN

(cuts her off, rapid fire)
-Article 16D: racial discrimination is the act of treating an employee unjustly because of nationality, race or religious background. Have you treated Farshid unjustly?

TAMI

What? No, I was-

ELLEN

-the last four people who sat there complained.

TAMI

Oh good-

ELLEN

No not good.

TAMI

(tentative)
I meant...you can move him.

ELLEN

Religion is the HR professional's kryptonite, but we can move YOU. The movers will arrive by six.

TAMI

(shocked)
Wait, I'll just deal, it's not that bad. I really like where I sit.

ELLEN

(conversation's over)
I'll send you an email regarding the location of your new office.

Tami sighs, bummed, rises to leave. Ellen turns to her computer screen and-

PIERS (CONT'D)

Shall we?

22

INT. DINING ROOM - FIVE MINUTES LATER

22

Ellen and Piers. Table for two. Piers sips from his pint. Ellen is stiff with her note pad and pen. The pace increases as they get into it.

ELLEN

Before our food arrives I'd like to ask you a few questions.

PIERS

Absolutely.

ELLEN

Just some HR questions.

PIERS

HR? What's that?

ELLEN

Human Resources, of course.

PIERS

Oh, aren't you the lot who sacks people?

ELLEN

(defensive)

HR does more than "sack" people.

PIERS

No need to get defensive.

ELLEN

I'm not defensive.

PIERS

(starts all over)

Okay. How about a drink?

ELLEN

I don't drink.

PIERS

(surprised)

And you work at Nichols & Quaff?

(then)

So, what are the questions?

ELLEN

Questions that will help make your
N&Q experience more fruitful.

PIERS

You wrote questions for me?

ELLEN

They're from an HR management book.

PIERS

Then they couldn't possibly help
you understand me.

ELLEN

How do you know?

PIERS

Aren't human beings your specialty?

ELLEN

I'm in human resources.

PIERS

Exactly.

ELLEN

We're not getting anywhere.

PIERS

Sex.

A non-sequitur. Which throws Ellen. Which is what Piers
wanted. He examines her face.

PIERS (CONT'D)

Hmmm...just as I thought.

ELLEN

What?

PIERS

I can read you.

ELLEN

Excuse me?

PIERS

You think I drink too much and I'm
arrogant and you're irked that a
boozer is brilliant at the job.

ELLEN

That's close.

PIERS

You're sober and not good at yours.

ELLEN

(shocked/angry)

I am very good at my job.

PIERS

Why haven't I signed a contract?

ELLEN

I'm not through here.

PIERS

You can't force me to sign, dearie.

ELLEN

Address me as Ms. Bell.

PIERS

Yes dearie.

ELLEN

Maybe I am through here.

PIERS

Want to know what I think of you?

ELLEN

I don't care what you think of me.

PIERS

Yes you do.

He's right. She does. And it pisses her off.

PIERS (CONT'D)

(rapid fire)

You were the tattler in kindergarten, the middle school hall monitor and the rat bitch informant in high school. You've spent your life pent up and shut down and racked with fear which you hide with a tough but fraudulent exterior. And you're still the tattler. You don't like word games, dogs, art or travel and out of control laughter makes you uncomfortable, and...

(catches his breath)

(MORE)

PIERS (CONT'D)
...you don't like sex. In fact,
it's been...
(calculates under his
breath)
Seven years, three months, one week
and one day since Vagistan has been
occupied. Why?

Ellen, shocked, furious, snaps her handbag shut and slaps her
napkin on the table.

PIERS (CONT'D)
I'd have it off with you in a heart
beat.

ELLEN
(pissed)
You're in violation of article 12C
of the employee handbook.

PIERS
(to Waiter)
One more please.

ELLEN
(glaring at his empties)
And article 8G.

PIERS
(to waiter)
Make it two.

ELLEN
I'm leaving.

PIERS
You'll be back.

ELLEN
Don't hold your breath.

He does. Ellen stands, marches out, stops, whirls on him,
says this so loud the restaurant stops cold.

ELLEN (CONT'D)
I DO TOO LIKE WORD GAMES!

And as Ellen blows out of there...

END ACT 1

ACT 11

23 **INT. NICHOLS & QUAFF - RECEPTION - HALF HOUR LATER** 23

Ellen walks in, fuming from lunch. Receptionist sees her and-

RECEPTIONIST

Mr. Teal would like to see you
right away.

She sneers without stopping and--

24 **INT. CORRIDOR - SECONDS LATER - AFTERNOON** 24

Ellen approaching Markus' door, knocks, hears **"YEP!"** and-

25 **INT. MARKUS' OFFICE - CONTINUOUS** 25

Ellen walks in, Markus stands, rubs his hands together with anticipation.

MARKUS

How was Piers? You bring his
contract?

ELLEN

No.

MARKUS

Where is it?

ELLEN

He didn't sign it.

MARKUS

Why not?

ELLEN

He was inebriated.

MARKUS

(confused)
That's not an advantage?

ELLEN

(an edge)
When a potential hire is trying to
solidify a new job they don't show
up intoxicated.

MARKUS
He's not trying to solidify
anything, *we are*.

ELLEN
He was drunk.

MARKUS
Drink with him!

ELLEN
Should I sleep with him too?

MARKUS
YES.

ELLEN
Excuse me?

MARKUS
I made it clear I wanted his
contract signed!

ELLEN
And I'm doing my job!

MARKUS
(slow and vicious)
I can have your ass.

ELLEN
(outraged)
Is that a sexual overture?

MARKUS
(wholly exasperated)
Are you INSANE!?

Ellen spins toward the door and Markus explodes.

MARKUS (CONT'D)
Where are you going!?

ELLEN
I have things to do!

We stay with Ellen as she walks out and-

MARKUS (O.C.)

Yes get Piers's signature on that
contract!!

26

INT. KITCHEN - LATER - AFTERNOON

26

Ellen walks past the kitchen with JUDITH JELLIN (33). Judith is African American, sexy and tough, works with Ellen in HR.

ELLEN POV: EMPLOYEES working outside ON THE TERRACE.

ELLEN

There's something wrong with a company where employees are permitted to work outdoors.

JUDITH

I *did* read vitamin D gives you energy.

ELLEN

The sun is not a fluorescent light, Judith.

Judith rolls her eyes. They nearly run RIGHT INTO a cleavage wielding woman named TRICIA JAMES (29) who's walking while texting.

TRICIA JAMES

Oh, uh, sorry.

JUDITH

Tricia.

ELLEN

(continues walking)
She flagrantly disregards the dress code.

Ellen's phone beeps: text from Moss Lieber: *swing by asap.*

ELLEN (CONT'D)

(sighs with frustration)
It's Moss. He doesn't like to wait. Talk later.

27

INT. MOSS LIEBER'S OFFICE - MINUTES LATER - AFTERNOON

27

MOSS LIEBER (52). ELLEN'S BOSS. Curly hair. Going gray. Plays all angles. Pictures of Moss with his WIFE and TWO DAUGHTERS (15&17) on holidays, pics of Moss golfing in eye-stinging plaid. And framed awards: *HUMAN RESOURCES HERO & H.R. HUMANITARIAN.*

MOSS

This is where the job of HR is harder than anyone can imagine.
(MORE)

MOSS (CONT'D)

Fourteen people-
(finger across neck)
Lives changed, like that.

ELLEN

We're making sacrifices for the
greater good, Moss.

MOSS

We certainly are. Now, I don't
want to circle the wagons on this,
I want strategy and lock down.

ELLEN

Friday terminations are best, shall
we aim for end of this week?

MOSS

Good.

ELLEN

I actually have a one-off right
after this - sexual harassment.

MOSS

Perfect warm up for Friday.
(remembering)
Oh, I sat next to a CEO on the way
back from Augusta who said they're
moving to sexual segregation
because the last harassment suit
cost them five million plus.

ELLEN

What about same-sex harassment?

MOSS

Next big thing. Legal firms are
setting up specialty wings.

ELLEN

Makes sense.

MOSS

Are you up for this?
(meaning THIS:)
Fourteen people axed by a company
with record growth three years in a
row.

ELLEN

What's the narrative?

MOSS

The real reason: executive bonuses-

ELLEN

(she knows)
-of course.

MOSS

The excuse: a foreign office is
losing market share: we're global
everyone's affected. A scapegoat
for the embittered.

ELLEN

Nice. How should we handle Friday?

MOSS

I want you to handle this one.

Curve ball. Ellen didn't see it coming. Moss slides a document across his desk to her. He sneaks a peek to see if she's taking the carrot. She's practically drooling. It's a promotion letter.

ELLEN

The promotion to VP.

MOSS

Happy to announce it at the board meeting here in five days.

ELLEN

(dream come true)
Five days?

Moss shifts uncomfortably in his seat. His stomach rumbles. Something bleak percolates within.

MOSS

IF you've handled the reduction.
(then)
How was lunch with Piers Moore?

ELLEN

Have you met him?

MOSS

Pours more, they call him. Likes the booze, phenomenal salesman. I haven't, no.

ELLEN

It was not pleasant.

Moss's face pinches a bit, he stands delicately, somewhat hunched, like excess movement is potentially hazardous

MOSS

Men's room, be right back.

ELLEN

I've got to run as well.

Moss hurries out. Ellen stands the instant Moss's smartphone vibrates. She looks at the door. The smartphone. The door. Quickly leans over his desk: **A TEXT:** "*if you had balls you'd bang my brains out on the conference room table.*" Sender name is "*Dr. Poundit.*" Ellen's face puckers.

She takes the promotion letter off the desk, turns. Stops.

Feels eyes on her. Slowly turns. Moss's wife stares out from a framed photograph. As Ellen gazes at her, HYPER RAPID LABORED BREATHING THAT SOUNDS LIKE SEX GROWS LOUDER AND LOUDER AND TAKES US BACK TO-

28 **INT. ELLEN'S OFFICE - (THE BEGINNING) - AFTERNOON** 28

Bill. Hyperventilating. We're back at the beginning.

BILL

(spits this out)

Someone's gonna pay for this. This doesn't...just...happen.

Ellen picks up the phone as Bill glares at her.

ELLEN

May I have security?

29 **EXT. PARKING LOT - LATER - LATE AFTERNOON** 29

Ellen walks through the parking lot, chirps her KIA unlocked with her keys and slides behind the wheel.

30 **INT. KIA - LATE AFTERNOON** 30

Ellen carefully navigates her KIA out of the parking lot.

31 **EXT. PARKING LOT RAMP OUTSIDE N & Q - LATE AFTERNOON** 31

The KIA motors into the street. A Buick Regal tucked by the side of the road pulls out and follows. Bill behind the wheel, looking unhinged.

PRE-LAP BLARING AMBULANCE SIREN WHICH DISSOLVES us to-

A32

EXT. STREET- DUSK

A32

The Ambulance racing toward us and ZOOOOM it blows past and
we are--

32

**INT. AMBULANCE - MOVING - MINUTES AFTER CRASH - LATE
AFTERNOON**

32

The world flashes by outside the windows as we pan down to ELLEN'S FACE. Light is incandescent around her, like we're inside her experience. The gurney sways as the ambulance hits bumps and Ellen sways with it. Monitors beep. We see a PARAMEDIC abstractly as he works. He and the PARAMEDIC behind the wheel CALL OUT TO EACH OTHER. Their voices sound sharp, or distant, or filtered, but always understandable...

PARAMEDIC # 1 (O.C.)

Twenty-two angio...we'll need to
check for internal bleeding.

PARAMEDIC # 2 (O.C.)

(DRIVER)

She doesn't have a scratch on her
entire body.

CAMERA PANS to the RED-PURPLE LUMP jutting out of her hair on
the side of the top of her head.

PARAMEDIC # 1 (O.C.)

Her temporal lobe took it for the
team.

32A

OMITTED

32A

33 OMITTED 33

34 **INT. HOSPITAL - ELLEN'S ROOM - NIGHT** 34

Low hum and intermittent beep of hospital machinery. Ellen in deep sleep. A MALE NURSE enters, examines the bandage on her head, walks out.

35 **INT. HOSPITAL - ELLEN'S ROOM - NEXT DAY** 35

Ellen's eyes open. She looks around at her foreign surroundings. Blinks against the light pouring in the window, wondering where she is...

36 **INT. HOSPITAL - ELLEN'S ROOM - LATER - DAY** 36

Ellen propped up in her hospital bed. Vital sign monitor beeps next to her bed. She's with DR. ROBERT FALEN, brain trauma specialist. Swelling on her head has decreased. They're mid-conversation.

ELLEN
How long have I been asleep? *

DR. FALEN
Nineteen hours. *

ELLEN
(slight groan and-)
That's probably why I'm stiff. *

DR. FALEN
(lightly)
It might have something to do with
what you've been through. *

ELLEN
(so he doesn't get the
wrong impression)
But it's not like I feel bad,
it's...
(she trails off) *

DR. FALEN
(a beat, and--)
Ellen, if you don't want to talk
about it yet, we can wait. *

(MORE)

DR. FALEN (CONT'D)

But do you remember anything about
the accident?

*
*

A sense of wonder fills Ellen's eyes.

ELLEN

I was thinking about that when you
walked in. I remember being aware
something had drastically shifted.

FLASHBACK

37 **EXT. BOULEVARD - SCENE OF THE ACCIDENT - LATE AFTERNOON** 37

Ellen crawls out of the KIA, climbs to her feet, dazed.

ELLEN POV: Distant music, barely audible. Ellen's synaptic connections post-impact stutter and speed shift. The street, the truck, Bill staring from next to his car, all off-balance.

 ELLEN (V.O.)
 ...it was like I opened my eyes for
 the first time...and I was setting
 off on a fantastic journey...

END POV: Ellen staring wide-eyed at millions of shards of glass from the car's shattered windows sparkling on the pavement that create a pathway. She begins to follow...hands out, balancing, a slow shimmy that looks oddly stylized...

END FLASHBACK

38 **INT. HOSPITAL - ELLEN'S ROOM - AS BEFORE** 38

Dr. Falen's response is more restrained than he feels.

 DR. FALEN
 That's a...very interesting
 description.

Ellen's eye is caught by one of the small shiny metal instruments protruding from his pocket.

 ELLEN
 What is that?

 DR. FALEN
 (looking down)
 Which one?

 ELLEN
 The one in the middle.

 DR. FALEN
 It's called an ophthalmoscope.

 ELLEN
 May I?

DR. FALEN

(passes it to her)

It's used to determine the health
of the retina and vitreous humor.

ELLEN

Do you like vitreous humor, Doctor?
Or are you more of a bathroom humor
kind of guy?

DR. FALEN

Pardon?

ELLEN

When can I go home?

DR. FALEN

I want to observe you another
night.

ELLEN

(crestfallen)

Why?

DR. FALEN

I want to make sure there's no
bleeding below the dura mater, so
I've ordered a cat scan.

Dr. Falen doesn't notice Ellen absentmindedly unscrewing the
top of the ophthalmoscope - she barely does.

ELLEN

May I have a glass of water?

DR. FALEN

Of course.

He turns, moves to the sink, returns with the glass. She
takes it, washes something down with it, then looks around.

ELLEN

Hospitals are absurd.

DR. FALEN

Excuse me?

ELLEN

They signify illness and project
loss of hope.

(MORE)

ELLEN (CONT'D)

If they had music and bars and good food and books and games, people would visit more and patients would be reminded how great life is and be motivated to stay alive and get healthy.

DR. FALEN
(considers and-)
That actually makes a lot of sense.
(then, gently)
May I have my ophthalmoscope back?

She passes it to him. Headpiece is missing. He looks between the ophthalmoscope and Ellen's lap.

DR. FALEN (CONT'D)
It seems the top has come off.

Ellen shrugs. Dr. Falen searches another beat. Then he stops. His eyes dart between Ellen. The glass of water. And his headless ophthalmoscope. Long beat.

DR. FALEN (CONT'D)
I'll...uhm, see you this afternoon.

Off Ellen nodding goodbye to Dr. Falen we-

DR. FALEN

...and that's where the rest of the damage is.

Ellen glances at the screen on the scan. Dr. Falen now focuses entirely on Ellen.

DR. FALEN (CONT'D)

Anyway, I'd like to talk about the implications of what we're seeing, if you're feeling up to it.

ELLEN

I feel fine. Shoot.

DR. FALEN

Ellen, there's a syndrome called Klüver-Bucy, which occurs when there is damage to the medial temporal lobes, precisely where we have located cerebral contusions on your MRI. The symptoms are varied, from acutely increased sex drive, a loss of fear, and hyperphagia, which is a compulsion to eat odd objects-

Ellen's eyes flick to the NEW ophthalmoscope in Dr. Falen's pocket and back.

DR. FALEN (CONT'D)

-and visual agnosia, an inability to recognize people they know.

ELLEN

Like I said, I feel fine. Better than fine.

DR. FALEN

I understand. However, with your condition, there is a need for surgery.

ELLEN

Surgery? I don't know...

Falen allows the idea to settle, and then-

DR. FALEN

Ellen, I don't think there's any avoiding it.

ELLEN

Maybe the tests are wrong.

DR. FALEN

I assure you they're correct.
(brightening)
There's a new procedure that-

ELLEN

(cuts him off)
-will I still feel this way?

DR. FALEN

You'll be healthy.
(trying again)
There's a new procedure that-

ELLEN

-you didn't answer my question.

DR. FALEN

You will feel like you did before.

Ellen's expression reads, *no way*.

DR. FALEN (CONT'D)

We can't do anything without your
consent, but this is the correct
course of action. Otherwise we're
playing with a loaded gun.
(trying to close the deal)
Is there someone you can call who
can care for you during your
recovery, Ellen?

This innocent question. Fucks Ellen right up. Because she
doesn't. Her emotions swell. She pushes them down.

ELLEN

No.

DR. FALEN

We can certainly arrange for-

ELLEN

-No.

DR. FALEN

-someone here to take you home...
(trailing off as-)

Ellen stands. Walks out.

DR. FALEN (CONT'D)

Ellen? Ms. Bell?

Falen stands, hurries to the door, looks down the corridor.

DR. FALEN (CONT'D)

Ms. Bell?

But she's gone.

40

OMITTED

40

44 **INT. NICHOLS AND QUAFF - INTERIOR OFFICES - CONTINUOUS** 44

EMPLOYEES chat and knock back coffee as Ellen walks by, but instead of going back to work, they stare or double-take as she passes.

Half way to her office, Ellen pauses in front of a life-sized promo stand-up of the PETE SNARK SCOTCH MAN. Her eyes drop to his enhanced package. She nods cool approval, continues to her office, leaving a sea of shocked faces in her wake.

45 **INT. ELLEN'S OFFICE - LATER - LATE MORNING** 45

Ellen removing framed motivational posters "endurance" (a turtle) "diplomacy" (kittens eyeing each other) "leadership" (conductor with a baton) from her wall. Judith walks in. Not even sure it's Ellen--until she turns around.

ELLEN

Judith, hey!

Judith. A beat of mild shock.

JUDITH

I can't believe you're back...this fast.

Or you're dressed like that. Or you sound so different. Or-

ELLEN

A little cerebral contusion isn't the end of the world.

JUDITH

But...they said your car...

ELLEN

(sly wink)
Air bags, Judith.
(then)
So what's been going on around here?

JUDITH

(slowly recovering)
Well...Farshid's at it again.

ELLEN

Praying?

JUDITH

Praying slash chanting. The guy who took over Tami's office complained. And you know we have the global meeting tomorrow.

ELLEN

That's right.

JUDITH

Moss said to remind you there's fourteen people you need to deal with.

ELLEN

He didn't do it while I was gone?

JUDITH

Nope. And he wants it done asap.

ELLEN

Ever notice that "Moss" and "pussy" both have double s's?

Judith. Shocked. Never heard this kind of thing from Ellen.

ELLEN (CONT'D)

However I'm glad he's a gutless swine. Firing hard working people to give bonuses to high ranking executives is greed-based short-sighted idiocy.

JUDITH

Who's...gonna tell Moss that?

ELLEN

The pleasure will be mine.

JUDITH

Are you on painkillers, Ellen?

ELLEN

No, got any?

Ellen laughs. So does Judith, delayed and uncomfortable.

46

INT. I.T. FLOOR - CUBICLES - NOON

46

Ellen approaches FARSHID (27), a Middle Eastern fellow, who looks up with unblinking brown eyes.

ELLEN
Hello, Farshid.

FARSHID
Hi.

She's holding what looks like a floor plan in her hand. She moves into his cubicle and sits in an empty chair, which makes him instantly suspicious.

FARSHID (CONT'D)
What is wrong?

ELLEN
We have a problem, Farshid.

FARSHID
(thinks a beat, and-)
The new guy has complained.

ELLEN
Like everyone else who has ever sat across from you. So we want to move you.

FARSHID
But I like my office.

ELLEN
Your praying distracts people from work, which is the first order of business here at Nichols and Quaff.

FARSHID
That is religious bias. I stay in my office.

ELLEN
I call bullshit Farshid.

FARSHID
You have used profanity against me. This is grounds for lawsuit!

ELLEN
(blazing)
The legal team here would have you out on your ass faster than you can say fatwa.

FARSHID
(shocked)
Fat-

ELLEN

(cuts him off hard)

-do your parents know you work for
the largest liquor company in the
world?

FARSHID

What are-

ELLEN

-do they know you use your job in
I.T. to front an international
pornography ring?

FARSHID

That's not true!

He's shocked. Speechless. Ellen smiles a killer's smile.

ELLEN

It is if I say it is. I'm in Human Resources, baby, I'm the last word in credibility.

Farshid wilting before our eyes until--

ELLEN (CONT'D)

But...I don't want you to stop praying, Farshid, I just want you to do it where it doesn't bother people. Look.

Ellen brandishes the floor plan, indicates one of the rooms.

ELLEN (CONT'D)

See this office? The window faces Mecca, that's in the East, right?

He looks at Ellen, stunned...

FARSHID

An office...with a window?

ELLEN

Are we good?

FARSHID

(his first smile)
We are real good.

47

INT. ELLEN'S OFFICE - LATER - NIGHT

47

Ellen reads about the history of alcohol online. Her eyes dart to a shelf in her office lined with N&Q products. She moves to them, runs her finger over GRANDE PERRO TEQUILA, PETE SNARK'S SCOTCH, GUTHFLOGA VODKA, BILLY THE BOOTLEGGER BATHTUB GIN, CASTLE OF GNOME SCOTCH, BOOTY ISLAND RUM. Her finger slides back to the bottle of Vodka. She lifts it, opens it, sniffs. Takes a pull. The instant liquid touches her tongue her eyes light up. WHEW, STRONG! Phone buzzes, RECEPTIONIST'S VOICE on speakerphone--

RECEPTIONIST

(on speaker)
Ms. Bell.

(MORE)

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

Dr. Falen called again and said
it's important he speaks with you
as soon as possible.

ELLEN

(still focused on the
bottle)

Thank you.

Ellen caps the bottle and replaces it on the shelf.

48

INT. JUDITH'S CUBICLE - LATER - NIGHT

48

Ellen leans over Judith's cubicle wall. Judith looks up in surprise. Ellen has never done this before.

ELLEN

Hey, I'm finished for the day and I
was thinking about grabbing a
drink. Want to join me?

JUDITH

(stunned)

You're asking me if I want to go
have a drink? After four years
working together? I didn't even
know you drank.

ELLEN

Well?

JUDITH

(long beat and-)

Hell yes I wanna go for a drink.

49

INT. BAR - NIGHT

49

Judith and Ellen at a table - they've had a few. Bar teams
with post-work BUSINESS CROWD. Ellen sips a Martini and
Judith nurses a Daiquiri.

JUDITH

Just *hooold* on, girl. You can't
get in a car accident and say you
liked it. That's just weird.

ELLEN

I didn't say I liked it.

JUDITH

But you're talking about it like it was a good thing. You're supposed to be upset and nervous and scared to get behind the wheel of a car.

ELLEN

Judith, I actually think being in the accident saved my life.

JUDITH

Ellen, this thing, I get it, some of it's good, but you gotta see someone. This is some serious Post Traumatic Stress shit.

Ellen removes two speared olives from her spent Martini, locks eyes with A MAN (30's) at the bar, slowly and salaciously slides the olives over her tongue, then swallows them. Judith looks at Ellen in shock and sees Ellen smile as the Man swaggers over. Ellen looks up, their eyes lock.

ELLEN

I've been watching you. I know I would take pleasure indulging your darkest desires, and I would open up to you and expose the ravenous soul of my wanton need. However, I haven't seen my friend in awhile, and I want to be with her.

Ellen reaches out, rests her hand on his cock. He's frozen by her grip and audacity.

ELLEN (CONT'D)

I look forward to meeting him.

Judith spits up a mouthful of Daiquiri. Ellen releases the Guy's unit. He stares dumbly, stumbles away in an aroused stupor. Judith looks at Ellen like she's her new God.

JUDITH

Do not go to the doctor. Do not change ONE THING! You are the *shit*, girl!!

Judith throws her arms around Ellen and...

A50

EXT. NICHOLS AND QUAFF- LATE MORNING

A50

Ellen strides toward the entrance...

50 **INT. HALLWAY - NEXT DAY - LATE MORNING**

50

Ellen walks toward Moss's office in casual clothes, studying the letter of promotion he gave her. An EXPLOSIVE CACKLE OF FEMALE LAUGHTER snaps her. A beat later Tricia James emerges from Moss's office, walks in the opposite direction. Ellen pauses outside Moss's door, thinking as she watches Tricia walk away. She knocks on his door and heads--

51 **INT. MOSS'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS**

51

Ellen walks in. Moss looks up from his laptop.

MOSS

Ellen. Welcome back.

ELLEN

Same to you. How was Pebble Beach?

MOSS

Flawless.

(re: her attire)

Get properly dressed, the bigwigs are prowling the halls and the old man is here.

ELLEN

Jonathan Quaff?

MOSS

Affirmative.

ELLEN

Are they here for the executive meeting?

MOSS

Ellen, I'm planning a vacation to Scotland and I'm trying to decide if St. Andrews or Turnberry has the better course - meaning I'm under some pressure here. What's up?

She places her letter of promotion in front of him.

ELLEN

I was hoping you'd sign this.

MOSS

When you do what I asked you to do.

ELLEN

I calculated that if we reduce executive bonuses by just four percent we could keep everyone.

He turns back to his laptop, talks as he surfs the net.

MOSS

Don't grow a conscience because you bumped your head.

ELLEN

I was hoping we could put a little human in human resources.

MOSS

I'm sure the soup kitchen downtown needs volunteers. Trust me, they'll live, even if it's on unemployment. FYI Markus is not pleased about the Piers Moore debacle.

ELLEN

(beat re: that, then-)
What's on the meeting agenda?

MOSS

Send those fourteen employees packing before the meeting and I'll add your promotion to it.
(checks the time)
You've got about five hours.

She takes the letter of promotion, nods, and walks out.

END OF ACT 111

ACT IV

52

INT. ELLEN'S OFFICE - HALF HOUR LATER - LATE MORNING

52

Ellen stares at her computer screen with concern.

THE MONITOR: Liquorworld.com - THE trade mag for the booze business. Headlines scroll - then we see what Ellen sees:

**SUPERSTAR SALESMAN PIERS MOORE COURTED BY EURO SPIRITS
CONGLOM PAGET-ROCHELLE.**

She turns to the window and we see her mind going to work.

55 **INT. LARGE HOTEL ROOM - DAY**

55

An incredible room. Piers, shirtless, propped on pillows, dead sleep. Cell rings. He wakes, looks round. He hears it but can't see it. He sits up, revealing a FEMALE FIGURE under the covers. Ring is happening at the foot of the bed. After he finds it---

PIERS (O.C.)

Hiya.

56 **EXT. N&Q - TERRACE - DAY**

56

Ellen dialing her phone as she walks out on the terrace, absently twirling a paperclip in her free hand.

ELLEN

Piers?

INTERCUTTING-

Piers as he emerges from under the sheets with his cell to his ear and props himself back up.

PIERS

Christine?

ELLEN

(that stings but she
forges on)

No, it's-

PIERS

-Antonia?

ELLEN

No, it's-

PIERS

-I know who this is.

ELLEN

I'm sure you don't and I don't
blame you.

PIERS

No need to get defensive.

Ellen stops cold. He *does* know. She smiles, slips the paperclip into her mouth and swallows it.

ELLEN
How did you know?

PIERS
How about a drink?

ELLEN
Yes.

PIERS
That's more like it.

ELLEN
Better make it two.

PIERS
Now you're talking my language.

ELLEN
Sex.

PIERS
Maybe I don't know who this is.

ELLEN
Yes you do.

PIERS
What happened?

ELLEN
I banged my head.

PIERS
You should never bang alone.

ELLEN
(a shift, serious now)
Piers?

PIERS
Ellen?

The Woman slides out from under the sheets and heads off. We see a glimpse of her naked body as she slips into the ladies.

ELLEN
Would you reconsider coming to work
at Nichols & Quaff?

Piers is silent.

ELLEN (CONT'D)

My colleague Judith is landing in an hour with the new contract.

PIERS

I'm meeting with Paget-Rochelle in two hours.

ELLEN

I've doubled our offer.

PIERS

So have they. Plus a signing bonus.

Ellen thinks. Hard. There's a BEEP on the other line.

PIERS (CONT'D)

I've got to take this. Can you hold?

ELLEN

Of course.

But Ellen doesn't. She hangs up, types in Paget-Rochelle in her search field. We leave her as she dials the number--

57

INT. LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM - AFTERNOON

57

TWENTY MEN AND WOMEN IN SUITS around a long sleek table. JONATHAN QUAFF (70) coolly scans. Contrary to Moss's description of him as "The Old Man," he looks like he still pitches a tent in testosterone rain amidst the morning wood.

MARKUS

Thanks for flying in from our offices around the U.S., and welcome to the leadership meeting. We're going to announce new titles, discuss sales data and get updates from each office. I'm sure you all noticed that the founder of this great company, Jonathan Quaff, has joined us today. An honor, sir.

Markus takes a seat as Quaff somberly scans the room, taking in the polite applause, and Ellen sweeps in at the end of it slightly giving the impression that the applause is for her.

ELLEN

Good morning, everyone.

She's still wearing casual clothes and holding her promotion letter. Moss triple takes with confusion and then finds a way of covering his ass for his underling's attire-

MOSS

As you may know, Ellen was in a
terrible accident. She's back
today.

(eye-fucks her here)

For a little while.

Now the clothes are okay. There's some polite *oh my gosh*
welcome back glad you're okay murmurings. Ellen

ELLEN

Thank you.

MOSS

Hello everyone. Before I share my HR overview, I'm pleased to be making a surprise announcement. None other than our survivor here, Ellen Bell, has been promoted to VP Director of Human Resources.

Polite clapping. Moss shoots Ellen an ugly smile. BITCH.

Ellen stands. She's moving to the podium. Moss's face flashes *WHATTHEFUCKYOU DOING?* Takes everything to conceal his rage. As she nudges him out of the way...

ELLEN

(under her breath)

I was only guessing, but now I know.

His eyes bulge with dumbfounded rage as he goes back to his chair. Ellen doesn't speak for a beat. Then another.

ELLEN (CONT'D)

Over the last week, I had time to think. Time to think about my life. About this world we live in.

Audible sighs. Facial expressions which say *oh no, not another windbag in a conference room. God help us.* They pretend to listen as their eyes furtively flick between Ellen and the smartphones in their laps.

ELLEN (CONT'D)

I also had time to think about this company. Ladies and gentlemen, we sell booze. *Do it fluid.* Giggle juice. *Firewater.*

(eyes raise from smartphones)

We're the reason thousands of deals get made around the world, the reason people laugh and sing and dance and get laid on the nights they otherwise wouldn't.

Suits lean forward, attitude and posture shift - *wait, what?*

EXCEPT MARKUS. His eyes ping-pong between Ellen and Jonathan Quaff, trying to read Quaff's blank slate reaction. Ellen gathering steam with each new line...

ELLEN (CONT'D)

I used to come here and try to control the employees and keep them down. Now, I want to celebrate them.

(MORE)

ELLEN (CONT'D)

I want to build an army of loyal workers who spread our products all across the globe.

LEGAL TEXT FADES UP BOTTOM SCREEN - the kind we see on every TV Alcohol Ad:

ALWAYS DRINK RESPONSIBLY

This text appears in the series whenever the content / comedy calls for it.

ELLEN (CONT'D)

Do not get me wrong, I'm aware there are people with alcohol issues, who need help, and I respect that. We need to make an extra effort to help them. In fact, we will help them. But is there hatred for donut companies when a gluttonous scale-breaker goes morbidly obese on Bavarian creams and chocolate Eclairs? NO. And don't forget that people who abuse alcohol and draw attention to themselves are in the *minority*. The rest of us, the *majority* of drinkers, we don't get press. I don't see headlines with 'Jane Smith got home safe after having a glass of wine with dinner' or 'Bob chilled out with an ice cold beer' or 'Carol and her husband played hide the swizzle stick after having dry martinis' or 'Steve came out of the closet after shots of Tequila.'

Somebody claps. A few more. It's almost involuntary. Moss stares at Ellen like a stupefied mannequin. Markus. Spring-loaded. About to make a move.

ELLEN (CONT'D)

Let me ask you: when we look at the world today isn't it painfully clear we need a drink now more than ever? It SUCKS out there! People feel ripped off and pissed off and who the hell put the embargo on having a good time?! We want our booze back!

Applause and cheers and MARKUS, within earshot of Jonathan, hisses toward Ellen.

MARKUS

Sit down and shut up--

An icy look from Quaff, and coolly delivered words.

JONATHAN QUAFF

Let her finish.

Markus. Shut down. Ellen continues without missing a beat.

ELLEN

Let me leave you with this: the way to higher stock prices and big bonuses is not through firing hard working people, it's taking the people we employ and empowering them to get the finest booze available to mankind into the hands of each and every human being who's old enough to belly up to a bar.

Murmurs of impressed assent.

Jonathan Quaff looks like he wants to speak. Raises a finger - it's all he needs to silence the room.

ELLEN (CONT'D)

Mr. Quaff?

He narrows his eyes at Ellen. Hard to read his poker face.

JONATHAN QUAFF

What did you say your name was?

ELLEN

Ellen Bell.

Quaff nods coolly, an amused glint in his eye.

JONATHAN QUAFF

Interesting.

To put an end to the madness Markus stands and--

MARKUS

Thank you everyone.

Everybody rises to leave, excitedly talking under their breath as they file out.

Moss has Ellen locked in his death gaze. She passes him on her way out and gives him a Clint Eastwood glare.

61A **EXT. CONFERENCE ROOM- SAME TIME**

61A

Jonathan Quaff walks away from the conference room followed by the rest of the suits. Stops when Markus accosts him.

MARKUS

(hushed tones)

I'm so sorry about what just happened in there. I'll have her fired by the end of the day.

JONATHAN QUAFF

That's not necessary.

Two seconds later Ellen appears.

ELLEN

How about we all go out for drinks later? I'm buying.

(directly to Quaff)

I bet that's a first for you.

JONATHAN QUAFF

(so cool)

I've got some time.

Upon Quaff's agreement the others follow suit.

Everyone wanders off leaving Markus standing there, baffled.

64

INT. FARSHID'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

64

Ellen steps in. Armed with heartfelt apologies for such a rude interruption. However.....

The chanting VOICE. Emanates from speakers. Not Farshid. He's far too busy mowing people down in some DYSTOPIAN FPS landscape on his computer. PFFFFFFT! Music and gunfire pumps through his headphones. His socks and shoes are strewn over the floor. A fresh vodka and tonic sits on his desk.

Ellen creeps up behind him. Stands utterly still. Beat.

IN A BLUR Farshid spins and jumps up and rips off his headphones and unleashes a **WAIL OF SURPRISE** and then, slowly, a dazzling shit-eating grin appears on his face. His accent is completely gone.

FARSHID

I was just, you know, protecting my job behind a shield of religion. It was either that, or a medical malady. It's not my fault the economy sucks.

Ellen is stunned.

FARSHID (CONT'D)

Can I pack up my stuff and then leave or is this one of those you're fired get out I'm calling security situations?

Ellen stares at him in wonder.

ELLEN

Completely and utterly brilliant.

FARSHID

What?

ELLEN

YOU.

He doesn't comprehend she's totally fucking impressed.

ELLEN (CONT'D)

Want to save your job, Farshid?

FARSHID

Yes...I definitely do...

ELLEN

This has to stay between us.

Eye contact. He reaches out. They slap five. Sealing it.

ELLEN (CONT'D)

Can you look at text messages of an employee?

FARSHID

If they use a company phone. Who?

ELLEN

Moss Lieber.

FARSHID

Oooooo.

Farshid moves to his desk, works the keyboard.

FARSHID (CONT'D)

Are we good?

ELLEN

We are real good.

FARSHID

There's vodka in that computer behind you.

She turns. Looks down. The top of an old desktop computer sits askew. She lifts it and reveals a bottle of Guthfloga on ice.

65 **INT. NICHOLS AND QUAFF - HALLWAY - NIGHT**

65

Ellen holds a printout, quickly peeks in an office, nobody there, continues walking, sees who she's looking for out on the terrace--walks toward it and--

A 66 **EXT. TERRACE - NIGHT**

A 66

Ellen steps out, sees Tim Barcourt talking on his cell as he looks out at the city, catches the end of his conversation.

TIM

...you just wait until you taste my pasta Puttanesca!

In one motion, Tim clicks off, turns and sees Ellen, brightens.

TIM (CONT'D)

Is that Ellen Bell walking toward me?

ELLEN

Yes it is.

TIM

The question is, which one? I mean, that was so refreshing. What's up with you?

ELLEN

I feel great.

TIM

I can see that.

ELLEN

(suddenly distressed)
Except for this.

TIM

What's wrong?

She hands Farshid's print-out to him.

ELLEN

I.T. just sent it to me -- it's from a random communication review. These came up for Tricia James. From Moss Lieber.

Tim reads. Eyebrows raise.

ELLEN (CONT'D)

I feel awful. He just promoted me.

Tim looks at her closely. As though he might suspect she's up to something.

ELLEN (CONT'D)

But, as head of legal I thought you should know.

TIM

(reading aloud)
'If you aren't in my office by 12:45 with your clothes off you're fired.'

ELLEN

Clearly it's part of some game they play, not a real workplace threat.

Tim looks at Ellen. Silently communicating something.

TIM

I'm not so sure.

ELLEN

You mean it's potentially serious?

TIM

Better to be safe than sorry.

ELLEN

(almost a question)

Tricia's well being is at stake.

TIM

(satirically grave)

The very foundation of this
company's reputation is at stake.

ELLEN

Then something must be done.

TIM

Let me kick it over to corporate in
New York.

ELLEN

Do I sense some anti-Moss
sentiment?

TIM

He's lazy and arrogant.

ELLEN

You're being too kind.

TIM

To be cruel. And I really like
what you said in there.

ELLEN

You're coming out tonight, right?

TIM

Uh, *yeah*.

She smiles goodbye and walks off and--

67 OMITTED

67

68 OMITTED

68

69 OMITTED

69

QUAFF ASSISTANT

Ms. Bell? Mr. Quaff would like a word.

He passes the phone to Quaff, who stops. Assistant stepping back to give him privacy and-

JONATHAN QUAFF

Ellen?

74

INT. NICHOLS AND QUAFF - RECEPTION - LATE MORNING

74

Ellen walks toward the terrace.

ELLEN

Mr. Quaff.

INTERCUTTING

JONATHAN QUAFF

Call me Jonathan.

ELLEN

Jonathan.

JONATHAN QUAFF

I wanted to answer your question.

Ellen thinks. Hard. Last night is foggy. Her eyes widen and we-

FLASHBACK BACK TO-

END POV: Ellen heads toward the elevators and we're--

78 OMITTED 78

79 **INT. N&Q - HALLWAY** 79

The Terrace door pushes open and Ellen walks with purpose toward the elevator banks.

79A **INT. N&Q - ELEVATOR BANK - CONTINUOUS** 79A

Ellen arrives at the elevator as the doors open. Piers and Judith emerge, looking a bit hung-over.

ELLEN

Am I glad to see you.

PIERS

You almost didn't.

JUDITH

Someone threatened to bomb their corporate offices and Paget-Rochelle had to cancel their meeting last minute.

ELLEN
You're kidding, how terrible.

Ellen secretly smiles to herself. She'll never tell...

ELLEN (CONT'D)
(to Judith)
You have his contract?

Judith passes it to him.

PIERS
Not even a hello?

Ellen kisses Piers - a quick peck on the lips.

ELLEN
Hello handsome.

JUDITH
Can I go home and sleep?

ELLEN
Call me later.
(eye contact)
Thank you, Judith.

JUDITH
Stay crazy.

Judith heads off. Ellen pulls Piers by the coat sleeve.

PIERS
Where we rushing to?

ELLEN
Markus is leaving in ten minutes
for New York.

PIERS
(name recognition)
Markus?

80

EXT. MARKUS' OFFICE - SECONDS LATER - DAY

80

Ellen stops by Markus' office door, has Piers wait.

ELLEN
Just one sec.

Ellen knocks, walks right in.

81

INT. MARKUS OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

81

Markus is on the phone, near a window. His coat and briefcase are on a chair by the door. He turns and sees Ellen.

MARKUS

(in headset)

Dougy, let's circle back later and
bleach the numbers.

(hangs up, to Ellen)

Yes?

She crosses to him, gives him Piers's contract.

MARKUS (CONT'D)

You did it.

(doubletakes the contract)

Whew, that base salary is high.

ELLEN

(recalling Moss earlier to
persuade)

We've had record growth three years
in a row.

MARKUS

(hitches on that, shrugs
it off, then--)

When can he start?

ELLEN

Ask him.

On cue, Piers walks in. Markus is shocked. Ping-pongs between Ellen and Piers and--

MARKUS

Piers Moore?!

ELLEN

Piers, Markus Teal, CEO of N&Q.

PIERS

Nice to meet you.

Markus walks around in front of his desk to greet Piers, hand extended to shake, Piers steps to Markus and THIS HAPPENS SO FAST IT TAKES US A BEAT TO PROCESS as Piers punches Markus in the face and Markus flips over his desk and crashes to the floor. LONG beat. Holy shit.

PIERS (CONT'D)

Again.

Ellen turns to Piers. She knows why he did it.

ELLEN

Payback for London.

PIERS

I never forget a fist.

Markus's head slowly rises up from behind his desk. Blood streams from his lip. He wipes it with his sleeve and-

MARKUS

Call it even?

PIERS

(surprised and then-)
Absolutely.

MARKUS

(bloody smile)
Welcome aboard, Piers.

Piers touches his knuckles and grimaces - he's no brawler, then looks directly at Ellen, who meets his eyes.

PIERS

Ellen made it happen.

ELLEN

I'll leave you to get acquainted.

PIERS

I'd rather go to Vagistan.

ELLEN

You need a special visa for that.

A slight smile out of Ellen on that and she turns to the door and heads out.

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EXT. MARKUS TEAL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

82

Ellen walks out. We're in front of her so we can read her.

We stay on her face as she turns INTO A LONG HALLWAY AND WALKS PAST MASSIVE BACKLIT N&Q PRODUCT SHOTS. The color shifts on her face a little as she passes by.

If we could read her mind it would say this: *so this is what it feels like to be human - frightening, exhilarating, challenging.....sure beats being a shut down uptight withdrawn cold-hearted robot.*

She walks on down the hallway and--

OUT OF NOWHERE (a doorway) MOSS LIEBER STEPS OUT IN FRONT OF HER AND STOPS HER COLD.

They are eye-to-eye. His voice is wrath personified.

MOSS

I don't know what you think you're up to, but you're not getting away with it. Want to know why?

(dramatic beat, Ellen waits, then, vicious)

I am going to bury you.

She stares at him. Digesting his words. Then slowly reaches toward his silver tie clip and deftly plucks it from his shirt & tie.

She raises it front of his eyes, holds it a beat, then pops it into her mouth and swallows it.

Moss. Eyes widening. This whole new level of WTF?

Ellen watches his stunned face a beat. Then heads off.

Moss looks between where his tie-clip was and Ellen walking away and we are on--

ELLEN. Striding back to her office. All business.

She BURPS. Oops! Covers her mouth. Hope nobody heard that.

Then Ellen Bell walks off with determination in her eyes and gets ready for the battle.

END OF PILOT