

# COURTHOUSE

"PILOT"

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2ND NETWORK DRAFT

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WB  
SKYEMAC  
LEN GOLDSTEIN

**TEASER**

**INT. COURTHOUSE - BASEMENT BULLPEN - MORNING**

CLOSE ON: a German Shepherd's face. Smiling. That's BLACKJACK. Then - another smiling dog, a Rottweiler. That's HARLEY. Then - the SOUND of man's voice -

MAN (O.C.)

*Thank you for committing your  
crimes in Los Angeles County.*

Blackjack and Harley watch as PRISONERS file out of an LASD transport, into the basement of the LA County Courthouse. Men and women, mostly men, *cuffed*. Heading to separate lock-ups.

MAN (O.C.) (CONT'D)

*I don't care if you haven't eaten  
all week or made a phone call all  
day. Not my problem -*

The voice is coming from a rough-looking Deputy Sheriff named BILLY WITZ. Think Denis Leary with a crew cut.

WITZ

*You don't scare me, you don't  
intimidate me, you sure as hell  
don't impress me.*

CLOSE ON: the sweet, nervous face of one of the prisoners, DAPHNE IRVING (19). Then -

A SCARY-LOOKING PRISONER flinches like he's gonna make a move on Witz. The dogs LUNGE VICIOUSLY. Daphne SCREAMS as -

**EXT. COURTHOUSE - PARKING LOT - MORNING**

Two CUPS OF COFFEE are placed on top of a car.

A striking-looking woman, Deputy District Attorney LOLA LAWSON (37), fights with a MASSIVE BRIEFCASE and FILES. Lola's LAPTOP and some files FALL TO THE GROUND. Then -

A BLUR of a man GRABS THE COMPUTER and takes off.

LOLA

*HEY. Oh for - Really?*

Lola watches the thief RUN and RUN and RUN as -

RIA (PRE-LAP)

*Victoria's Secret. It's a big go-  
see -*

**INT. GRAND CHEROKEE - MORNING**

MARK COLLINS (35) is on SPEAKER PHONE in his parked Grand Cherokee. Looking over some FILES as -

MARK

What's wrong with your own car?

RIA (ON PHONE)

*It's ugly and it's old -*

Reaching into the back for his briefcase, Mark sees - The Laptop Thief running, Lola yelling in the distance.

MARK

So take an Uber.

Mark turns to the DRIVER'S SIDE MIRROR. Waits as -

RIA (ON PHONE)

*They'll think I'm drunk. And poor.  
Leave the keys with security -*

Mark opens his door with PERFECT TIMING - the Laptop Thief runs into it, goes down HARD, as -

MARK

Ria, I have to call you back -

**EXT. COURTHOUSE - PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER**

Mark and Lola stand over the Thief. He's fourteen, as tough looking as a *sock drawer*.

MARK

His lawyer's gonna make the case that putting this delinquent in jail now would be like locking an egg up before it is hatched. But I say, a laptop today, a car tomorrow, a bank next Friday. Lock him up.

Lola looks to Mark, then the Thief. Then - takes her laptop.

LOLA

Go. Just - Go.

Mark and Lola watch the kid TAKE OFF as -

MARK

A small taste of Lola Lawson's upcoming tenure as LA County's newest Superior Court Judge.

LOLA

Shut up.

On the MOVE, Lola grabbing her coffees as she goes.

MARK

People gonna walk all over you,  
Lawson. You've gone soft.

LOLA

Tell me again how much you spent on  
your girlfriend's new couch?

(then)

And when do I get to meet this  
Reena anyway?

MARK

It's not Reena, it's *Ria* - is one  
of those coffees for me?

LOLA

Nope, need `em both to fight crime.

Great friends these two: sexy, smart, and - because they're  
lawyers - if they find themselves in an argument, they have  
to win. They head toward the Courthouse as -

**INT. COURTHOUSE - BASEMENT BULLPEN - MORNING**

Blackjack and Harley lie at Deputy Witz's feet. He calls over  
an Old Bailiff, REX SCULLY (63) -

WITZ

Scully. Another customer.

Scully has all the menace but none of the charm of a Deadwood  
Ian McShane. Witz, not looking up, hands him a FILE.

WITZ (CONT'D)

Daphne Irving. Courtroom 302.

Scully walks over to the Bullpen where Daphne is kinda hiding  
in the crowd as -

**INT. COURTHOUSE - GRAND HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS**

In the Grand Hallway, Mark and Lola power through the CROWD -

MARK

You're gonna be a terrible judge,  
you know that, right?

LOLA

And when I'm gone, you're going to need to find another DDA to remind you what a bad lawyer you are -

MARK

It's not too late to back out. You don't start for a couple weeks.

LOLA

Counting the days -

MARK

You hate judges -

LOLA

No you hate judges -

MARK (CONT'D)

You think most of them are out of touch with the real world -

\*

LOLA (CONT'D)

Because none of them look like me.

Lola points to the DIVERSE people swirling around them --

LOLA (CONT'D)

Or her or him, or her or her. Also I get parking, my chambers will have a private bathroom -

Mark cuts to the chase, what's *really* bugging him -

MARK

Don't leave me to fight this new DA alone. All he wants is for us to keep our heads down, stay out of the press. At least between the two of us, if we wanted to go after a case we could pressure him together.

Lola stops. Looks at her friend, then -

LOLA

Alright, just this once, you can have one of my coffees.

MARK

Really?

LOLA

If you stop talking.

SARA (O.C.)  
*50 bucks, 50 bucks, 50 bucks.*

SARA PRATT (30), Court Reporter, approaches. STENO MACHINE under one arm, LAPTOP under the other.

LOLA  
Morning Sara -  
(to Mark)  
I'll see you at lunch, Counselor.

MARK  
Hey, my coffee -

LOLA  
Gotta go -

Lola smiles, splits off, taking both coffees with her, as -

SARA  
Pay up.

MARK  
Sorry. No cash.

SARA  
I'm hosting another game on Friday.  
Texas Hold 'Em -

MARK  
Can't make it. Take the fifty out  
of the 200 you owe me.

SARA  
Right. Forgot about that.  
(she didn't)  
I can work it off by transcribing  
for you on the weekend?

Sara might be flirting or it might be her natural charm, but we're not going to find out right now, because -

**INT. COURTROOM 302 - DAY**

Public defender EMILY LOPEZ-BERARRO (33) is fighting her way through knots of LAWYERS, CLIENTS, WITNESSES, FAMILIES and FRIENDS that fill the gallery of Courtroom 302.

Emily sees DEV (40s), a large man in a loud shirt.

DEV  
Emily Lopez-Berarro. Public  
Defender to the stars -

EMILY

Dev. You're here. Good. Ok.

DEV

To the wannabe stars -

Emily searches through her briefcase as -

DEV (CONT'D)

To the losers who can't even get  
non-union extra work in  
exploitative work environments -

EMILY

To the men who drink too much, put  
their cars into drive instead of  
reverse, pinning seventeen year-old  
skateboarders to the wall.

DEV

Emily Lopez-Berarro. Not all double  
barrel names work, but yours does.

EMILY

Are you high?

Dev smiles. Emily immediately gets in his face - she's small,  
but way tougher than she looks.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Ok, listen up, you're not Seth  
Rogan and I'm not your sidekick. I  
got your plea. You only have to say  
the magic words in that courtroom,  
can you remember what they are?

Dev think's about it for a sec. Then, heartfelt -

DEV

*I'm sorry, your Honor.*

EMILY

Good. Now sit down, wait until your  
name is called and for the record,  
my name is Emily Lopez.

DEV

Where'd the Berarro go?

EMILY

To live with his mother.

Emily steps away - almost BUMPING INTO MARK, who just came  
into the courtroom.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Oopsy.

MARK

All good.

Mark keeps going. Em turns around and Sara is RIGHT THERE.

SARA

Are he and Lawson sleeping together?

EMILY

Sara -

SARA

It's just a question.

EMILY

Mark is dating a lingerie model and Lola is married to an FBI agent who looks like Bradley Cooper - so no.

For some reason, that cheers Sara up.

SARA

Thanks. Any trouble last night?

EMILY

All quiet.

Em doesn't want to talk. Not here. Not now.

EMILY (CONT'D)

I need to find another client.

She moves off, Sara moves to her place as -

**INT. COURTROOM 302 - MOMENTS LATER**

SHERRI TURKLE, the Judicial Assistant, stands at her desk beside the bench.

SHERRI

The State of California vs. Daphne Irving. Charge of Petty Theft.

Scully walks Daphne in, deposits her beside a LAWYER - whose head's buried in her files. Then Scully takes a seat near Sara, who is ready to "record".

Sherri puts Daphne's file in front of JUDGE ELEWYN WHITE (70) who's deeply engaged with BOX SCORES on his smartphone as -

JUDGE WHITE  
Deputy District Attorney Mark  
Collins are the People ready?

Mark, at the Prosecutor's table -

MARK  
Yes your Honor -

SUDDENLY, at the back of the room, Lola BURSTS in, coffees in hand. Everything stops. Sherri's unimpressed.

SHERRI  
Ms. Lawson?

Lola sees Emily. Now she's confused -

LOLA  
Emily?

EMILY  
Hi.

Then she sees Mark, then Sara - the court reporter.

LOLA  
Crap. I - Sorry. Wrong courtroom.

SHERRI  
Counselor, a lawyer who can't find  
a courtroom is like a bus driver  
who can't find a steering wheel.

LOLA  
Directionally challenged this  
morning. Apologies to the Court -

Lola's about to leave when she sees - *Daphne*. Looking awkward, vulnerable. Something's not right.

LOLA (CONT'D)  
Permission to approach the bench.

Lola doesn't wait - she MOVES toward the judge, handing Mark her coffees as she goes. Judge White covers his mic as -

JUDGE WHITE  
What the hell is going on.

LOLA  
Your Honor, the defendant is not  
wearing pants.

It's true. Daphne's pants-less. She's wearing *little underwear* but that's it. Everyone's stunned. Everyone, Lola sees, *except* Scully.

LOLA (CONT'D)

You. Did you bring that woman into this courtroom with no pants?

Scully shrugs. Lola grabs Sara's coat, passes it to Daphne -

LOLA (CONT'D)

Wrap this around your waist.

JUDGE WHITE

We can take it from here, Ms. Lawson.

LOLA

(to Daphne)

Did anyone hurt you - are you ok?

DAPHNE

Yeah. Was arrested like this. Kept saying they'd get me sweatpants. But they never did.

Daphne's Lawyer chimes in -

LAWYER

I didn't know Your Honor, I was, I didn't, I wasn't -

LOLA

Your client is in her underwear and you're covering your ass?

Mark, drinking one of Lola's coffees, is enjoying the show -

LOLA (CONT'D)

(to Daphne)

You need another lawyer.

(to the Judge)

Your Honor -

Lola points to the people in the gallery, RECORDING it all -

JUDGE WHITE

BAILIFF. Seize those phones.

A young bailiff we'll very soon get to know as LUKE WEILAND (28) is ON THE MOVE as Emily reaches over and takes Dev's phone from him. Meanwhile - Lola approaches Scully -

LOLA

Did you even notice that she was half naked? Did you even see her?

SCULLY

She came out of the box like that -

LOLA

What if that was your daughter?

SCULLY

You know what, GO TO HELL.

SHERRI

(into phone)

We're going to need more security -

SCULLY

HOW ABOUT THIS, HOW ABOUT INSTEAD OF GETTING THAT ONE SOME PANTS, HOW ABOUT WE JUST BURN THE PLACE DOWN?

*Meltdown.* Not good. Mark moves to grab Scully's arm as -

MARK

Ok, come on, you gotta go.

SCULLY

I'M NOT THE DAMNED PROBLEM. HOW ABOUT WE ALL LEAVE AND LET THE LOWLIFES TAKE OVER THE WHOLE GODDAMNED CITY.

Scully pulls his GUN, POINTS IT AT LOLA as Sara DIVES under a table. Emily stays put as, around her, people SCREAM and RUN.

Lola. Is. Perfectly. Still. Mark approaches Scully *carefully* -

MARK

You don't want to do this.

Luke, who has snuck in closer, pulls his firearm as -

JUDGE WHITE

GET THAT MAN OUT OF MY COURTROOM.

Scully SPINS toward the bench, past Sherri, who's hiding behind a chair. Scully SHOTS at Judge White - MISSES. Luke SHOTS Scully. He goes down as -

ON Lola, Mark, Emily, Sherri and Sara, in the CHAOS as -

**END OF TEASER**

**ACT ONE****INT. COURTHOUSE - GANGBANGER CAFE - MORNING**

Emily has a BANANA, a YOGURT and a MISSION - to get to the FRONT of the long line she's currently at the BACK of.

EMILY

Sorry do you mind? I'm so late -

CHYRON - **TWO WEEKS LATER**

She's in the courthouse cafeteria - affectionately known as the Gangbanger Cafe. It's PACKED with sketchy looking DEFENDANTS, their FAMILIES, LAWYERS, COPS and WITNESSES.

EMILY (CONT'D)

I swear to you, it's such good Karma if you let me go first -

DIRTY LOOKS. No-one in line wants to move. Em keeps trying.

EMILY (CONT'D)

I represent some very dangerous people. They won't like it if you make me late.

LUKE (O.C.)

Ms. Lopez.

Luke Weiland, in uniform, is near the front of the line. Waving. Emily hustles up to Luke, where -

LUKE (CONT'D)

You can have my spot.

That's when Emily recognizes Luke.

EMILY

You, you're the bailiff who -

LUKE

Luke. Weiland. Yeah.

EMILY

You shot the - Emily.

A moment, then -

EMILY (CONT'D)

You should go first.

Luke pays the CASHIER for his bagel. Em makes conversation as the cashier makes change -

EMILY (CONT'D)

So. Luke. How long you been a Bailiff?

LUKE

As long as I've been a law student. Four years. Night school. Almost done.

Emily's turn - she pays for her breakfast, then -

They step away. Luke's not just quarterback handsome, he has a farm boy decency about him. There's a SPARK between them -

EMILY

Thanks for letting me jump on. *In.* Line. Cut in line. I mean.

LUKE

You're welcome.

EMILY

And for the. What you did. That day. It could have been a lot worse.

LUKE

I missed.

EMILY

Pardon me?

LUKE

I was aiming for the center of his chest. I hit his shoulder. I missed.

EMILY

Oh. Oh. Then I guess he got lucky.

LUKE

Or I did.  
(then)  
What's on your hand?

A stain of BLACK MOTOR OIL. Em covers it up as -

EMILY

I'm late I should go.

Em leaves. ON Luke as -

MARK (PRE-LAP)

*Your Honor* -

**INT. COURTHOUSE - GRAND HALLWAY - MORNING**

Lola, two coffees in hand, hustles toward the Judges Elevator as, behind her -

MARK (O.C.)

*Your Honor*. YOUR HONOR -

Lola steps into the elevator with a BURLY DEPUTY, as -

BURLY DEPUTY

I think he means you.

Lola, surprised, turns and sees Mark approaching. Holds the elevator as -

MARK

Day one advice: Be a Sphinx. Sphinx-like inscrutability is a judge's superpower. Use it.

LOLA

(smiles)

Got it. What's up for you today?

MARK

Quick trial - Robbie Brooks, my Pro Per. Exercising his constitutional right to self representation and to wasting my time and the tax payers money. Judge Liptak - AKA The Punisher - presiding. Done by noon, then I can get back to my murder case before the DA re-assigns me to Traffic.

BURLY DEPUTY

(interrupting)

*Your Honor*.

MARK

I think he means you.

LOLA

Right. I need to -

MARK

Yup. Go good.

LOLA

Thanks.

Lola lets the DOORS CLOSE. Mark moves off, as -

**INT. COURTHOUSE - BENNER'S CHAMBERS - DAY**

Lola steps into the Supervising Judge's Chambers. Still holding two coffees. Inside, mostly WHITE MALE JUDGES drink coffee and chat. Lola - *stranger in a strange land.*

Supervising Judge JUDITH BENNER (50s) approaches. Sigourney Weaver type. Firm handshake as -

LOLA  
Judge Benner.

JUDGE BENNER  
Judge Lawson. Welcome. Nervous?

LOLA  
Not really - only been dreaming of  
this day since -

JUDGE BENNER  
RBG.

LOLA  
Yeah. 5th grade teacher talked  
about her in social studies.  
(then)  
How's Judge White doing?

JUDGE BENNER  
The shocking discovery of his  
mortality enticed him to retire.

LOLA  
Yeah, things kind of escalated that  
day. Not the ideal way to end your  
career - getting shot at.

JUDGE BENNER  
*Please.* Terrible judge. Bailiff got  
off with a flesh wound. The Gods  
smiled and Justice marches on.

Lola smiles, relaxes a little. It won't last, because -

JUDGE BENNER (CONT'D)  
Quickly, before introductions - you  
requested Lisgar as your Judicial  
Assistant, but I've put you with  
Turkle instead.

LOLA  
*What?* Your Honor, with respect -

JUDGE BENNER

She's the most experienced JA in the building and you are the least experienced judge -

LOLA

Sherri Turkle and I aren't exactly -

JUDGE BENNER

I know. My advice - she controls your calendar, witness lists, flow of paperwork and evidence. She makes the trains run on time. As far as Sherri is concerned, she is Oz and the rest of us can fight for who gets to be Dorothy. Ok?

LOLA

...Sorry, what's the advice?

JUDGE BENNER

Don't piss her off.

ON Lola as Benner moves into the room -

SARA (PRE-LAP)

*I thought it was really scary.*

**INT. COURTHOUSE - WOMEN'S RESTROOM - DAY**

Emily SCRUBS the oil from her hand. Sara's in a STALL as -

SARA (O.C.)

I was right there and I saw his gun. It went, like, *whoosh* right past me. I had another nightmare about it last night. It didn't freak you out?

EMILY

It was upsetting, but it wasn't any more traumatic than having a serial rapist stare at you for a three month trial -

Sara comes out, heads to the sink as -

EMILY (CONT'D)

Judge Lawson's first day. Watch - every former prosecutor who makes judge is always eager to prove they're tough on crime -

SARA

I thought you liked her?

EMILY

I do, she's cool. But the bench does funny things to people. Could be a blood bath. And if it is, my clients will get the worst of it.

Emily can't get the oil off her hands. Still SCRUBBING as -

EMILY (CONT'D)

How do you get oil off your hands?

SARA

Oil?

Emily reaches for a towel - *empty*. Into a stall for TP as -

EMILY (O.C.)

Michael pulled the carburetor from my car and threw it through my apartment window.

SARA

*What?*

EMILY (O.C.)

I threw it back.

SARA

EMILY -

Emily comes back out, wiping her hands.

EMILY

I called the police. It won't happen again. Gotta go, I'll see you later.

Emily leaves. ON Sara as -

**INT. COURTHOUSE - LOLA'S CHAMBERS - DAY**

Sherri Turkle is standing in Lola's chamber's - surrounded by BOUQUETS OF FLOWERS and a few BOTTLES OF BOOZE. Lola enters, still carrying both coffees, as -

LOLA

Sherri.

Sherri takes one of Lola's coffees.

SHERRI

Thank you. Nice gesture.

Sherri drinks. Lola looks a little sad - she'll miss that coffee. Then -

SHERRI (CONT'D)

Bouquets are from your pals in the DAs office and various Defense Attorneys of your acquaintance. You can keep the flowers but the liquor is a grey area. I'd lose it.

(then)

You and me. Wasn't my choice either.

LOLA

Ok well. We should probably get on the same page about a few things -

SHERRI

Totally agree, Your Honor. Rule number one - avoid trials. Save those for the important stuff. Today is light. Fifteen defendants. Some are carryovers from Judge White, some are brand new. Lawyers will update you on the case status, you'll give them another court date. *Boom.*

LOLA

I've been in court before, I know how it works.

SHERRI

You *think* you know. But you don't. Not yet.

(then)

With any luck we'll get some plea deals and live to fight another day. We're on the same team now and the name of the game is speed -

Lola feels like she's being hazed -

LOLA

And where does justice fit in?

SHERRI

A close second. Suit up.

Sherri leaves. On Lola as -

**INT. SMALL COURTROOM - DAY**

JUDGE JONAS LIPTAK (50'S) - aka *The Punisher* - watches Mark, who's IN THE MIDDLE OF HIS OPENING STATEMENT to the JURY.

MARK

The State will provide evidence that Robbie Brooks is guilty of robbery at an electronics store. Five thousand dollars of merchandise. Gone. We all agree it was stolen. What we will provide is the surveillance video that shows Mr. Brooks committing the crime.

Mark moves past Sara Pratt toward the defendant's table where ROBBIE BROOKS (30s), a tough-looking guy with a MASSIVE beard, sits - alone - in an ill-fitting VINTAGE SUIT.

MARK (CONT'D)

It features a clean-shaven Mr. Brooks but as you can see, he's grown a big bushy beard. Now, Mr. Brooks has chosen to represent himself, as is his right, but I'm worried he so doubts your intelligence, that he believes you will not be able to see through that beard and recognize the man underneath. But I trust that you'll see what I see, what any reasonable person would see. The man in that video is Robbie Brooks.

The Jury looks to Robbie, who strokes his beard like it's a cat wrapped around his face, as -

SHERRI (PRE-LAP)

*Pull on your earlobe if you have to pee -*

**INT. COURTHOUSE - CHAMBERS HALLWAY / COURTROOM 302 - DAY**

Lola's in her BIG BLACK ROBE, following Sherri as they MOVE down the Chambers Hallway -

SHERRI

Touch your nose if you need time to look at evidence. If I think we need to talk in chambers, I'll sneeze twice.

LOLA

You'll sneeze.

SHERRI

*Twice.*

LOLA

I always thought you had allergies.

SHERRI

Nope. And I haven't had a cold in five years.

(then)

Be careful not to trip on the robe when stepping up to the bench. And I'd suggest in future, wear as few clothes as you can under it. Gets hot up there -

They're about head in when, suddenly, Lola stops.

SHERRI (CONT'D)

Your Honor?

LOLA

This is a big moment for me. I want to be present for it.

A moment. Then -

SHERRI

We have a nickname for you. The Judicial Assistants. There's this little coven where we drink blood and stick pins in lawyer dolls. We call you... *The Lola-coaster.*

LOLA

Are you serious?

SHERRI

Hell yeah. Can we go now?

ON Lola - taking a deep breath, preparing to launch into the unknown, as -

ROBBIE (PRE-LAP)

*Ladies and gentlemen, I salute you.*

**INT. SMALL COURTROOM - DAY**

Mark watches from the prosecutors table as Robbie Brooks paces in front of the jury box -

ROBBIE

These storied halls of justice are not built for the likes of you and I. Nay, this building is designed to intimidate us, and to mock us down to the hair on our very face. I am an innocent man who is facing the fight of his life.

(sweeping gesture)

My defense will expose this sordid system riddled with class bias and corruption. My defense MAY have surprise witnesses. My defense will provoke the scales to fall from your eyes even as the scales of justice will, with your help, fall in favor of the innocent...

ON the JURY, wondering what the hell they're in for. On Liptak, looking forward to this trial. ON Mark, horrified as -

**INT. COURTROOM 302 - DAY**

Luke, in front of the bench, brings Lola's court to order -

LUKE

ALL RISE. Department 61 of the Los Angeles Superior Court is now in session. Judge Lola Lawson presiding.

The crowded courtroom watches as Judge Lawson makes her entrance - graceful, poised. Then - TRIPS and STUMBLES. Then - POPS back up like Alison Janney at the Emmys.

LOLA

Physical comedy. It's my life.

The courtroom LAUGHS nervously. Sherri. Doesn't. Even. Smile.

**INT. COURTROOM 302 - MOMENTS LATER**

An 18 year-old African American named JUSTIN stands beside Emily, who speaks with fire and conviction -

EMILY

Your Honor, He broke a law, he has been convicted. But I'd like to remind the court that African Americans are incarcerated at more than FIVE TIMES the rate of whites -

Lola is trying to keep the train running on time as -

LOLA

Ms. Lopez -

EMILY

And black offenders were 75% more likely to face a charge carrying a mandatory minimum sentence than -

LOLA

MS. LOPEZ. It's a misdemeanor traffic violation. But point taken. Sentence is hereby suspended.

Emily's shocked. Justin's LARGE FAMILY cheers. **BOOM**. Then -

**INT. COURTROOM 302 - SEQUENCE - DAY**

A SCAR-FACED PRISONER openly weeps. **BOOM** - an OLD DRUG ADDICT spins around like Michael Jackson. **BOOM** - somebody's GRANDMOTHER is taken away in CUFFS. Then, **BOOM** -

Daphne Irving stands beside Emily. Wearing pants this time.

SHERRI

The State of California vs. Daphne Irving. Residential Burglary.

Lola's stunned.

LOLA

Daphne? What's she doing back here?

EMILY

Your Honor, the charge Ms. Irving faced the day of the courtroom shooting were dismissed 1385 -

LOLA

In the "interests of justice" -

EMILY

This is a new charge.

Lola turns to DDA CLAYTON BAKER (40), a shrewd prosecutor who can channel his inner Trump after a half glass of bad wine -

LOLA

Deputy District Attorney Baker?

BAKER

It's in the file Your Honor. The defendant broke into a private home, was in the process of robbing it when Detective Jackie Leyton -

LOLA

What was a *detective* doing there?

EMILY

Your Honor, I was just appointed Ms. Irving's PD this morning. Her previous public defender, he actually got *gout* which I thought was, I mean, who gets *gout* -?

LOLA

*Ms. Lopez* -

EMILY

Yes, Your Honor. We're prepared to enter a plea of No Contest.

Lola turns to DDA Baker -

CLAYTON BAKER

Two years in county jail, your Honor.

LOLA

That seems generous, considering her prior charge -

EMILY

Ms. Irving is currently five months pregnant, your Honor -

LOLA

She's *pregnant*?

That slows Lola down. Everyone waits, then -

LOLA (CONT'D)

(to Daphne)

Ms. Irving. Daphne?

That raises eyebrows - Judges don't usually talk directly to the defendant.

LOLA (CONT'D)

I'm surprised to see you back here.

DAPHNE

I guess. I don't know. I didn't do it so.

Lola shifts back to Emily -

LOLA

Does your client understand what she's about to plead to? That she will be in jail for the birth of her child?

EMILY

We discussed that, yes.

LOLA

I'd like to hear it from her.

DAPHNE

I just want to get this over with.

Sherri, not liking where this is going, SNEEZES twice. Daphne turns to the gallery, looking for someone as -

LOLA

Has anybody forced you, threatened you, or made any promise to you to get you to plead guilty?

DAPHNE

No matter what I'm saying it's not gonna go in my favor.

LOLA

Daphne, have you thought about what will happen when the baby's born?

Daphne starts TEARING UP, looking again to the gallery -

DAPHNE

Didn't do nothing. I didn't do it.

Sherri SNEEZES again, as -

LOLA

Is that your mother? MOM?

From the back of the courtroom -

CONSUELA

Yeah. Yes. That's me.

CONSUELA IRVING (36) steps up. Sherri sneezes. All she gets from Lola is a TISSUE.

LOLA

What's your name?

CONSUELA

Consuela Irving, ma'am.

LOLA

Do you think Daphne understands she's pleading to a serious felony charge? And what the consequences will be to both her and her child?

CONSUELA

She didn't do it. But she's not stupid. The prosecutor said he'd go for four years if we went to trial.

This is way off the rails. Lola looks to Daphne again as -

LOLA

Daphne listen to me. I know it must be weird being back in this room. But this is important. Did you do what you're accused of?

Daphne's face is wet with tears -

DAPHNE

No. I wasn't even in the house. But no one would listen.

A long moment, then -

LOLA

This plea is set aside. I need to see the evidence. We're going to trial.

**BOOM.**

**END OF ACT ONE**

ACT TWOINT. COURTHOUSE - LOLA'S CHAMBERS - DAY

Lola pulls her robe off as Sherri closes the door.

LOLA

Oh my God. So hot.

Lola's drenched in sweat. Sherri, *furious* -

SHERRI

Your Honor -

LOLA

That young woman is pregnant. If I'm going to take away her freedom and her child, I'd like to know if she's guilty first.

A KNOCK. Sherri opens the door. It's Emily and Clayton Baker. Em is wary, concerned for her client...

LOLA (CONT'D)

Counselors.

(to Em)

Ms. Lopez, have you talked to your client about a bench or jury trial?

EMILY

Bench. Ms. Irving wants this over as quickly as possible.

LOLA

How fast can you get your witnesses together?

CLAYTON BAKER

We're good to go, Your Honor. And congrats on your first day.

(sucking up)

The Johnnie Walker Blue is from me.

LOLA

Ms. Lopez?

Doesn't want Lola to think she forgot -

EMILY

I think the Bird of Paradise in the corner is mine, but I'd have to check.

LOLA

Will you be -

EMILY

I... I'll be ready. In the morning.

LOLA

Daphne's released OR until then.

(to Sherri)

Put it on the calendar.

ON Sherri, as -

**INT. COURTHOUSE - GANGBANGER CAFE - DAY**

Emily sits at a table with Daphne and Consuela, in the Gangbanger cafe. Consuela's worried -

CONSUELA

You're gonna win this, right? Ms. Lopez?

Daphne looks a little ill.

CONSUELA (CONT'D)

I can't take care of that baby if she goes to jail -

EMILY

Daphne, I know you don't want to testify, but we may need you to.

CONSUELA

I got my own problems -

EMILY

OK, thank you, Consuela -  
(to Daphne)

If we put you up there, it's a chance for us to talk about your struggles, and being pregnant. Win some sympathy from the court -

CONSUELA

You sound like you think we're going to lose.

Daphne really does look like she's gonna throw up.

EMILY

I think we need to paint a picture. Of an innocent, vulnerable, young woman who wouldn't risk her baby's life by breaking the law.

(MORE)

EMILY (CONT'D)

Which is the truth.

(then)

Daphne if you need to be sick?

CONSUELA

She's ok, I think -

DAPHNE

I don't want to have this baby in jail.

EMILY

I understand. I do. Daphne, I need you to tell me if you saw anyone coming out of that house, that day -

CONSUELA

Maybe we should get her some water -

EMILY

I need to create doubt in the court's mind. If you saw anyone, anyone at all, that would help.

A moment, then - Daphne THROWS UP as -

**INT. SMALL COURTROOM - DAY**

A baseball bat SMASHES an electronics store window.

REVEAL a large VIDEO SCREEN in the center of the courtroom. It's CCTV footage of Robbie, beardless, ROBBING THE STORE. Mark uses a remote to ZOOM IN on a frame as -

MARK

You can see the distinct shape of the man - the height, weight, hair color. Now look at the defendant -

The jury turns to the defense table. Robbie smiles with the confidence of LeBron James with a 30 point lead.

MARK (CONT'D)

Beyond the impressive beard, the features are not just similar, they are identical. It's the same man.

The jury squints to make sure as -

MARK (CONT'D)

The State rests Your Honor.

Mark heads back to his seat as -

ROBBIE (PRE-LAP)  
*The State has no right to mock my  
God given appearance -*

**INT. SMALL COURTROOM - LATER**

Robbie's turn. Loving the spotlight -

ROBBIE  
Having a beard is no crime the last  
time I looked. In fact, THE STATE  
is the one wearing the BEARD.

He shifts to a CONSPIRATORIAL STAGE WHISPER as -

ROBBIE (CONT'D)  
They are disguising the fact they  
have no clothes. And to prove that  
the defense will call a special,  
surprise witness -

Mark stands as -

MARK  
Objection.

JUDGE LIPTAK  
We haven't heard who it is yet.

ROBBIE  
My Lord -

JUDGE LIPTAK  
*Honor.*

ROBBIE  
My Honor, without malice  
aforethought, I wish to examine  
Mark Collins.

Mark's frustration is rising -

MARK  
OBJECTION. Mr. Brooks is mocking  
the court -

ROBBIE  
As a representative of the State of  
California District Attorney's  
office, Mr. Collins has insight of  
the events leading to my arrest  
that prove that I am, in fact, the  
victim of vicious bias, resulting  
in said circumstance.

MARK

This is *insane*.

ROBBIE

OBJECTION.

JUDGE LIPTAK

Sustained.

Liptak seems to be enjoying himself.

JUDGE LIPTAK (CONT'D)

We'll resume tomorrow with Mr.  
Collins' testimony.

ON Mark, pissed off, as the gavel comes down -

**INT. COURTHOUSE - LOLA'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT**

A BOTTLE OF IRISH WHISKEY sits in front of Lola. She's on the phone, leaving a message for her husband Robin -

LOLA

Hey hon. I just found the Irish -  
you're sweet. I'll be late tonight.  
Probably late every night for the  
next ten years. I love you.

Lola hangs up as Emily appears at her door.

EMILY

You wanted to see me?

LOLA

Come on in. Don't worry, it's not  
ex-parte about the trial.

(beat)

I got a message from Sara. About a  
carburetor and your window?

EMILY

It's nothing -

LOLA

It's not nothing, Emily - It's a  
restraining order -

EMILY

And I appreciate you helping me get  
it, but I - He was just, Mike's  
dealing with a lot, he knows he  
screwed up.

LOLA

He could be dangerous. You're not seeing things clearly right now.

A moment. Then -

LOLA (CONT'D)

If he shows up again, take pictures. Proof of violation.

EMILY

I will. Thank you. And... congrats. On your first day.

Em's about to leave. Then -

EMILY (CONT'D)

Daphne Irving.

LOLA

What about her? You need more time?

EMILY

No. No no. It's. I was hoping - I'd like to reassure my client that she's not going to be "taxed" if you find her guilty.

Legal MINEFIELD - and they both know it.

EMILY (CONT'D)

It's just that the plea deal did limit the amount of time Daphne would be incarcerated. Convicted at trial, the prosecution will go back to demanding four years -

LOLA

Emily you need to stop *right now* -

EMILY

She'll never get that kid back.

Silence. Lola waits, until -

EMILY (CONT'D)

Good night, Your Honor.

Emily leaves, passing Mark on her way.

MARK

Hello, Your Honor.

He takes the bottle of JW Blue from her desk as -

LOLA  
(re: the bottle)  
Mark. *Boundaries*.

MARK  
Never my strong suit - Do you have glasses or should we drink straight out of the - Judge White kept his stash over here...

Mark SEARCHES for glasses as -

MARK (CONT'D)  
My Pro Per case - Robbie Brooks - Esquire, wants to put me on the stand to prove personal and institutional bias. Or something. And the judge is going to let him.

LOLA  
Who is it again?

MARK  
The Punisher -

LOLA  
You need to stop calling him that.

MARK  
Two weeks ago at breakfast you were ranting about what an idiot he was -

LOLA  
Two weeks ago he wasn't next door.

MARK  
Lola, I don't hate this judge, he hates me because I kicked the crap out of him a few weeks ago.

LOLA  
Wait *what*? What case are we talking about?

MARK  
No, I mean I *actually* kicked the crap out of him. We play in the same Men's Hockey league. Liptak ran our goalie - cheap shot- and ruptured the guy's discs L4/5, L5/S1. So the next time we played Liptak's team, I dropped the gloves.

LOLA  
How bad was it?

MARK  
Four game suspension.

LOLA  
I mean how bad did you -

MARK  
Liptak said I broke his ribs but I think he's exaggerating.  
(then)  
This is payback. He's forcing me to take the stand in a case *I'm prosecuting*. It's Alice in friggin Wonderland.

LOLA  
Except that he's right.

MARK  
*Excuse me?*

LOLA  
Liptak's right. The State has to be more lenient when people are defending themselves -

MARK  
It's a waste of everyone's time -

LOLA  
They're not lawyers, Mark -

MARK  
I have *real* cases to work on - Murder, sexual assault, an honest to God kidnapping and I'm going to be trapped in a courtroom, forced to answer nonsensical questions from the Mad Hatter with the OVERGROWN FACIAL HAIR.  
(then)  
If there are no glasses I'm gonna drink straight out of the bottle.

LOLA  
Ok, as a friend, maybe, *maybe* I'd be sympathetic if it was two o'clock in the morning and we were into the tequila, but as a *judge* -

MARK

As a *judge* - ok?

LOLA

I'D SAY IT'S *ROBBIE BROOKS'* DAY IN COURT, NOT YOURS. SO SUCK IT UP.

Mark takes that in, then -

MARK

Wow. That didn't take long.

LOLA

Mark -

MARK

Yes, your *Honor*?

LOLA

Speaking of cheap shots.

MARK

Oh come on, Lola -

LOLA

NO. When you're a prosecutor, the buck doesn't stop with you. As judge the responsibility is. Different. A man's *freedom* is at stake, Mark. And that's important. Not everything is about you.

Silence. Then - Mark puts down the bottle, unopened. Takes a bouquet of yellow roses.

MARK

These were for my friend. Not the judge.

Heads out. ON Lola as -

**EXT. COURTHOUSE - CHAMBERS HALLWAY - NIGHT**

Mark moves down the Chambers Hallway. Drops the flowers in the GARBAGE as he steps into the elevator. Turns around.

DOORS CLOSE ON Mark, as -

**END OF ACT TWO**

**ACT THREE****INT. COURTROOM 302 - DAY**

Lola watches from the bench as Deputy District Attorney Clayton Baker MOVES toward the witness box -

CLAYTON BAKER

Detective Leyland, isn't it unusual for a highly decorated officer such as yourself to reply to a burglary?

Detective JACKIE LEYLAND (37) has a Hilary Swank vibe about her. She likes the question -

DET. LEYLAND

It is. But I was the closest unit. You go where you're needed.

Luke, in the bailiff's position, looks at Daphne and Em sitting at the defendant's table. Consuela is in the gallery.

CLAYTON BAKER

What happened when you got there?

A MAP and POLICE PHOTOS reinforce Leyland's testimony -

DET. LEYLAND

I entered the house from the rear, when I saw the suspect -

Pointing to Daphne -

CLAYTON BAKER

Let the record state Detective Leyland identified the defendant -

DET. LEYLAND

She was near the front door, holding jewelry, some clothes. I pulled my firearm, issued a warning, the suspect dropped the items and ran out the front door.

CLAYTON BAKER

And then?

DET. LEYLAND

I pursued the suspect out the door, where I saw her run between these two house here.

Pointing to the map -

CLAYTON BAKER  
And then what happened?

DET. LEYLAND  
The suspect was apprehended by  
uniformed officers five blocks  
away.

CLAYTON BAKER  
And did Ms. Irving leave anything  
behind at the scene?

DET. LEYLAND  
One red running shoe.

Baker goes to his desk and picks up an EVIDENCE BAG, walks  
back and hands it to Sherri as -

CLAYTON BAKER  
Please mark this Exhibit 1.C for  
identification. Is this the shoe  
you're talking about detective?

DET. LEYLAND  
It is. She lost it when she was  
running through -

EMILY  
Objection -

LOLA  
Sustained -

DET. LEYLAND  
It was found in the path between  
the houses, after our pursuit.  
(pointing to the map)  
And there's a picture of it.

A CLOSE-UP PHOTO of the shoe in between the houses. Luke's  
watching and something isn't sitting quite right with him as -

CLAYTON BAKER  
And it belonged to Ms. Irving?

DET. LEYLAND  
It matched the one she was wearing  
when she was arrested. Just like  
Cinderella.

Leyland smiles at her own *funny*. Then -

DET. LEYLAND (CONT'D)

We followed up with a DNA test on the sweat inside the shoe, confirming Ms. Irving as its owner.

Baker holds up a FILE as -

CLAYTON BAKER

The State respectfully submits Exhibit 1.D, DNA sample and testing as described by Detective Leyland.

ON Leyland, smiling smugly as -

**INT. SMALL COURTROOM - DAY**

Mark's on the stand. Not happy. Robbie's having a field day. Sara's there, getting it all down as -

ROBBIE

Mr. Collins, kindly inform the court of the number of falsely accused cases in this courthouse every year -

MARK

Objection. The phrase 'falsely accused' is speculative -

JUDGE LIPTAK

Sustained.

Fine by Robbie, he's on a roll -

ROBBIE

Yes, however the system we currently inhabit contains within it overzealous and dishonest actors at all levels of the -

MARK

Oh my God OBJECTION. Your Honor, he's not even asking a question -

JUDGE LIPTAK

Overruled. Let him finish.

ROBBIE

A QUESTION, then, since the counselor is so anxious for one. Have you, Mr. Deputy District Attorney, have you or any of your immediate family EVER been involved in organized crime?

ON Mark - stunned. Robbie BANGS a table with his fist, startling Sara - sounded like a gun shot. Robbie continues -

ROBBIE (CONT'D)  
HAVE YOU OR ANY OF YOUR IMMEDIATE FAMILY, ARE YOU NOW OR HAVE YOU EVER BEEN INVOLVED IN ORGANIZED CRIME?

MARK  
NO. OBJECTION.

ROBBIE  
Your Honor I believe that Mr. Mark Collins father - known as Mr. Victor Collins - is understood to have been agreeable with what is common parlance for organized crime.

(beat)  
The Mafia, sir.

MARK  
OBJECTION. THIS IS RIDICULOUS -

JUDGE LIPTAK  
(smiles as -)  
I'd like to see where this goes, Counselor.

ON Mark, glaring at Liptak, who smiles back, as -

**EXT. STREET - FOOD TRUCK - DAY**

Emily WOLFS down a MESSY TACO near a line of FOOD TRUCKS as -

LUKE (O.C.)  
Emily -

Luke approaches.

EMILY  
Oh hi, um -

LUKE  
Luke -

EMILY  
I know, it's my mouth. Is full.  
(swallows)  
Oh my God the Boba truck. Do you know Boba? Come on.

She leads Luke across the street to the Boba food truck as -

EMILY (CONT'D)

So. Bailiff by day, law student by night. Impressive. What do you do with all your free time?

LUKE

Can I ask you something -

EMILY

How much does a Public Defender make a year?

Dodging TRAFFIC -

LUKE

It's actually not a question. I saw an inconsistency in Detective Leyland's testimony.

EMILY (CONT'D)

After student loans? There's just enough left over for the used car of your dreams - What? \*

Safely on the other side of the street - Luke hesitates. Not sure if he should proceed.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Luke? What kind of inconsistency?

LUKE

The evidence photo of where the shoe was found... it looks like it might have been. Enlarged.

EMILY

Oh. They do that. Especially with small objects like shoes, weapons. Come on -

Emily's MOVING again, toward the Boba truck. Luke follows. They pass Billy Witz, CURBING Blackjack and Harley, as -

LUKE

Except the picture of that shoe wasn't taken where she said it was. Detective Leyland blew it up to hide that fact.

The Boba LINE is HUGE. Near the front - Supervising Judge Judith Benner.

LUKE (CONT'D)

I think the detective may have been mistaken - or maybe even lying.

ON Em. No Boba for her.

EMILY

We can't talk here.

MARK (PRE-LAP)

*Next time I see him on the ice -*

**EXT. COURTHOUSE - ALLEY - DAY**

In the alley behind the Courthouse, Mark is pacing. Lola hovers nearby, eating a take out salad as -

MARK

I'm gonna drive Liptak right through the boards -

LOLA

Stop - before we go any further - where are my flowers?

MARK

What?

LOLA

You threw them out, didn't you?

MARK

NO. Yes. Ok - I'll replace them, I promise.

LOLA

You better. I love yellow roses.

Satisfied, Lola returns to the topic at hand -

LOLA (CONT'D)

Ok, so - the DA knows about your dad, right? You told them?

MARK

Yeah they know. I told them when I originally got the job.

(then)

Robbie probably heard it on the street, or Googled it or something.

LOLA

Ok and you told me that your dad -

MARK

Fixed races, ran poker games. He was a stringer. A wannabe.

LOLA

And this is the first time it's  
come up in court?

MARK

Yeah. You wanna know why? Because  
it's the first time a *judge* has  
made me testify in a case that I'm -

LOLA

Mark, there is *no way* that Judge  
Liptak could anticipate this -

MARK

I'll challenge him on the  
admissibility of not only the line  
of questioning, but my entire  
testimony - which he should never  
have allowed in the first place -

LOLA

Mark -

MARK

I'll highlight how staggeringly  
vulnerable to appeal the entire  
proceeding already is -

LOLA

How long has it been since you've  
seen your father?

A moment, then -

LOLA (CONT'D)

You act like your dad is dead,  
eventually you can start to believe  
it.

MARK

Meaning?

LOLA

I think Robbie touched a nerve.

Silence. The expression on Mark's face says she's right.

LOLA (CONT'D)

Hey. Is this Robbie guy guilty?

MARK

Uh - Yeah.

LOLA

Then *get your verdict*. When that's done, deal with the rest.

Lola heads off. ON Mark as -

**EXT. EAST LA - STREET - DAY**

Emily and Luke are MOVING around the house featured in Daphne's trial.

LUKE

Detective Leyland testified she found the shoe *there*. Where the suspect ran between the houses.

He points between the houses.

LUKE (CONT'D)

But if you look at -

EMILY

Wait, I have the -  
(searches iPad)  
This is the picture they submitted as evidence.

Luke leans over her shoulder to have a look. So close she can feel his breath...

LUKE

See the *background* has a *downspout* in it. But there's no downspout between the houses.

Emily looks at the PICTURE on her iPad. Then at the houses.

EMILY

She cooked the evidence.

That hangs in the air. Emily is shaken.

EMILY (CONT'D)

God how did I not see that?

LUKE

You have, what, like 90 cases to keep in your head? And you weren't even supposed to try this case.

EMILY

Or maybe I just don't -

LUKE

What?

EMILY

I'm not seeing things clearly right now.

(then)

I need to take pictures.

Em gets to work.

**INT. COURTROOM 302 - DAY**

Lola watches from the bench as Daphne testifies. Emily's nearby. Consuela's in the gallery, chewing her nails as -

DAPHNE

I was in front of the house, I was waiting for my ex-boyfriend who lives on the street to get home from work.

EMILY

Ok Daphne, and then what happened?

DAPHNE

Then I heard the yelling from the house, and I was, like, I turned around and saw this yelling woman come running out and she had a gun.

EMILY

So what did you do next?

DAPHNE

I ran.

EMILY

Why? Did you do anything wrong?

DAPHNE

You see a gun, you run. Like, you don't wait around.

EMILY

And where did you run?

Daphne points to the map -

DAPHNE

Toward the street there.

EMILY

Daphne, the Detective said that you ran between the houses - here - and she found your shoe here.

A moment. Then -

DAPHNE

I didn't, I mean, I was never there. I ran the other way.

EMILY

So your shoe walked there all by itself?

At the prosecutors desk -

CLAYTON BAKER

OBJECTION.

LOLA

Sustained.

EMILY

Your Honor, I'd like to submit into evidence some digital photographs of the scene that will not only support my client's version of events, but also indicate that Detective Leyland's testimony and evidence have been intentionally -

CLAYTON BAKER

OBJECTION -

LOLA

SUSTAINED.

(then)

In my chambers. Now, please.

Everyone's on the move as -

CLAYTON BAKER (PRE-LAP)

*The defense's little field trip is a fabrication and she's trying to put the LAPD on trial.*

**INT. COURTHOUSE - LOLA'S CHAMBERS - DAY**

In Lola's chambers, Clayton Baker is in red-faced umbrage -

CLAYTON BAKER

Ms. Lopez-Berarro knows she can't win the case on the evidence, so she's spinning some ridiculous conspiracy theory to -

As Emily pulls up photos on her iPad, Lola corrects Baker.

LOLA

Lopez. No Berarro.

CLAYTON BAKER

Ms. Lopez, sorry, whatever -

EMILY

The pictures are right here, why don't you look at them -

LOLA

Can I see those?

Emily hands her iPad to Lola, who swipes through the pics as -

CLAYTON BAKER

Photos on a defense attorney's personal tablet can hardly be called credible evidence -

LOLA

I like a good personal tablet. I mean, it's no pad of paper but it's light, it's sleek, I bet you can play games on it like *Hangman*, and these pictures look pretty credible to me.

Lola hands Emily her iPad back. Temperatures are rising -

CLAYTON BAKER

Your Honor, it makes no sense. Why would a high-ranking detective risk doing something like this on such a trivial case -

LOLA

Good question. Ms. Lopez?

EMILY

Detective Leyland made a mistake in her identification and she doesn't want to admit it.

CLAYTON BAKER

WE HAVE DNA.

EMILY

NOT FROM *INSIDE* THE HOUSE.  
Detective Leyland did not see  
Daphne in there committing that  
crime -

CLAYTON BAKER

If it wasn't your client, who was  
it? You haven't presented ONE  
credible theory -

Lola's heard enough. She's angry -

LOLA

She doesn't need to now. We have a  
cop who *may* have lied under oath.

CLAYTON BAKER

Your Honor -

LOLA

And you brought this evidence into  
my court -

CLAYTON BAKER

Jackie Leyland is an outstanding  
police officer, with an impeccable  
reputation -

LOLA

Which no-one would have ever  
questioned if a young pregnant  
woman went to jail for two years,  
like she was supposed to.

Silence. Then - Lola turns to Emily -

LOLA (CONT'D)

Ms. Lopez, those pictures are  
inadmissible.

Emily. Can't. Believe it.

CLAYTON BAKER

Thank you.

Lola's not done yet -

LOLA

Both of you, arrange for the scene  
to be photographed by your  
investigators. We'll use those  
pictures to determine the veracity  
of the detective's testimony.

(MORE)

LOLA (CONT'D)

(beat)

Until then - We're in recess.

Em is thrilled, Baker is reeling as -

**INT. COURTHOUSE - BENNER'S CHAMBERS - LATER**

Lola steps into Supervising Judge Judith Benner's chambers.

LOLA

Judge Benner. You wanted to see me?

JUDGE BENNER

Missed you at the Boba truck.

LOLA

Yeah. Full day.

Benner smiles.

JUDGE BENNER

Next time.

(then)

I asked you to come by because I got a surprise visit. Someone who wanted to be introduced to LA's newest Superior Court Judge.

REVEAL - JACK HEALY (50s). Full LAPD dress uniform. He's been standing at the other end of the room.

JUDGE BENNER (CONT'D)

Los Angeles Assistant Police Chief  
Jack Healy. Lola Lawson.

Healey advances - all firm handshakes and winning smiles as -

HEALY

Good to meet you Judge.

LOLA

Chief.

HEALY

My detectives speak very highly of the cases you handled when you were a prosecutor.

LOLA

Yes, well. Team effort.

Lola flashes a look to Benner - *This. Is. Weird.*

JUDGE BENNER

I'm sure that Judge Lawson has a full day ahead of her, so -

HEALY

Of course.

(to Lola)

Judge, if you ever have an issue about any of my people, please call me directly.

A moment. Then - Healy turns to Benner.

HEALY (CONT'D)

Judge Benner. As always.

JUDGE BENNER

Jack.

Healy nods to Lola, leaves. Lola turns to Benner -

LOLA

What the hell was that about?

JUDGE BENNER

Hard to say. A message. Maybe?

LOLA

Which is?

JUDGE BENNER

Jackie Leyland is one of LA's most high profile detectives. If you allow a PD to accuse her of manipulating evidence and perjury, if you do that, this little trial will throw every case she has ever worked on into doubt and disarray. That's the sort of thing that can end a lot of careers.

(beat)

Maybe. That's the message. I'm just guessing.

Benner moves behind her desk. On Lola, shaken, as she walks out the door...

**END OF ACT THREE**

ACT FOURINT. LOLA'S CHAMBERS - DAY

Sherri, carrying a file, is with Lola in her Chambers.

LOLA  
(re: Sherri's file)  
Is that the DNA report on the  
Daphne Irving case?

SHERRI  
Can I be blunt, Your Honor?

LOLA  
Finally. Because I never know what  
you're thinking.

Sherri hands Lola the DNA file as -

SHERRI  
Being a judge is not an open  
invitation to hunt down and punish  
bad actors in the system -

LOLA  
I'm not going to let Leyland's  
testimony go unchallenged -

SHERRI  
She's not on trial -

LOLA  
I can make it so she will be -

SHERRI  
Your Honor, with respect - YOU'RE  
NOT A PROSECUTOR ANYMORE.

That lands right between Lola's eyes. A moment, then -

LOLA  
Daphne Irving's freedom is at  
stake. And it doesn't seem to  
matter -

SHERRI  
It's the only thing that matters to  
me. The *only* thing other than my  
kids, well, two of them anyway, and  
it's the only thing that should  
matter to *you*.

LOLA

And Leyland?

SHERRI

Starting a war *in court* with the LAPD isn't going to help *Daphne*. They'll dig in. Then attack. If you're still a judge at the end of it, you'll be presiding over traffic court in Palmdale.

(beat)

Look at the accused standing right in front of you - not who you wish was there, or believe should be there. Daphne Irving - find a way to give that young woman the justice she deserves. *That's* your responsibility. *That's* your job.

Sherri leaves. ON Lola as -

INT. SMALL COURTROOM - DAY

The Bench is empty, the Jury is out. It's just Mark on his side, Robbie Brooks on the other.

Mark talks to Robbie like a Patriots fan talking to Tom Brady

-

MARK

Mr. Brooks. You missed your calling - you're a natural. You've done a great job.

ROBBIE

Gracias Muchacho.

MARK

I've seen a lot of juries - you had them right from the opening statement and never lost them.

ROBBIE

Merci mon frere.

MARK

They were charmed, impressed, *beguiled*. We all were.

ROBBIE

We shall see.

MARK

Oh God, no. You won. It's done.

Robbie looks to Mark, curious now.

MARK (CONT'D)

The thing about my dad? Talk about reasonable doubt. It's over. Final statements and you're out of here.

Mark holds up a BLANK PAD OF PAPER as -

MARK (CONT'D)

I actually didn't write a closing. No point. I blew it. And you were almost flawless. Congrats.

Robbie can't help himself.

ROBBIE

Almost.

MARK

What? Yeah. There's one thing the jury might seize on, but other than that, you're good.

(then)

Sorry, I've been a lawyer for *ten years* and *not one* attorney has been smart enough to mention my father in court. Brilliant. *Brilliant*.

ROBBIE

You've perked my interest, Counselor. About this one thing.

MARK

*Right?* Worst part of the job - one juror seizes on your one mistake and then they start talking about it when everyone's deliberating, and then before you know it - you're client's in prison.

(then)

I mean, if you can catch your mistake before that, you can fix it in closing. But I think you're good.

Robbie can't stand it, he's dying to know -

ROBBIE

I'd be grateful, sir, if you could share your wisdomly insight. My mistake?

MARK

I thought you knew. It's the beard.

Robbie touches his face, as -

MARK (CONT'D)

Makes you look guilty. Like an innocent man who refuses to come out of the house when he's surrounded - the longer he stays in there, the more people imagine he's a serial killer covered in blood and guts. They think he's hiding something. Juries hate that. They think - *If he's so innocent, why won't he show me his face?*

(then)

Other than that, you threw a perfect game. You could shave for the closing but I think -

(long beat)

Yeah, I *think* you're gonna be fine.

ON Robbie, as -

**INT. COURTROOM 302 - DAY**

Luke stands in front of the bench.

LUKE

All rise. Department 61 of the Los Angeles Superior Court is now in session. Judge Lola Lawson presiding.

Lola takes her seat on the bench, looks out and sees -

Judge Benner; Consuela; Detective Jackie Leyland, flanked by other COPS; Daphne Irving and Emily; Luke and Sherri.

Everyone settles. Then -

LOLA

In the interests of time, I think we can forgo closing arguments. Daphne Irving. Please stand.

A surprised rumble through the courtroom as Daphne checks over her shoulder to her mom. Then nervously STANDS. Lola chooses her words *very carefully* as -

LOLA (CONT'D)

For the record, the police photos entered as evidence suggest...

Lola looks at Detective Leyland as -

LOLA (CONT'D)

A version of events that is not consistent... with some testimony we have heard in this trial.

Luke is on the edge of his seat -

LOLA (CONT'D)

Under those circumstances it creates doubt in this court's mind regarding the whole set of facts. Therefore, the court having said that, the defendant is found...

(beat)

Not guilty.

After a long moment, Daphne says simply -

DAPHNE

Thank you.

Sherri has just the hint of a smile on her face as -

LOLA

Detective Leyland. I'd like to see you in my Chambers please.

The smile disappears from Sherri's face as -

**INT. SMALL COURTROOM - DAY**

Judge Liptak is on the Bench, the Jury is in their seats.

JUDGE LIPTAK

Ok, gentlemen. Final minutes of the third period. Let's do closing arguments, shall we? Deputy District Attorney Collins.

Mark stands as -

MARK

Your Honor, the State has nothing further. We believe the evidence... speaks for itself.

Mark turns toward the Defense as he sits.

JUDGE LIPTAK

Mr. Brooks?

REVEAL - Robbie's beard is gone. His face is covered in tiny bloody pieces of toilet paper. Robbie stands, throws a wink to Mark, then -

ROBBIE

Your Lord. My honor. Please the Courtship. The face of innocence, is not always familiar. But a clean human can see I did not steal said stereos. I would not. I surmise we all know that by now, and we also know that this system of justice, while benevolent in it's intention, remains stolid and sickly on the inside. And that the sins of the father remain stuck to the son. Perhaps forever. I remain, not guilty. And I thank you.

(beat)

Thank you.

The entire Jury stares at Robbie, gobsmacked. He sits, supremely satisfied, as -

JUDGE LIPTAK (PRE-LAP)

*Ladies and gentlemen of the jury thank you for your service and swift verdict.*

**INT. SMALL COURTROOM - A LITTLE LATER**

Liptak wraps it up -

JUDGE LIPTAK

The defendant is remanded into custody, pending sentencing at a future date. Mr. Collins, approach the bench.

Mark steps up. The judge covers the mic, as-

JUDGE LIPTAK (CONT'D)

Nice job. You're a better lawyer than a hockey player.

Liptak smiles, brings down the Gavel as -

JUDGE LIPTAK (CONT'D)

Court is adjourned.

He leaves the bench as a bailiff moves to take Robbie back to jail. Before he goes, Robbie turns to Mark -

ROBBIE

Counselor Collins. Thank you for the honorable battle.

MARK

Thank you, Mr. Brooks.

ROBBIE

If just two things had gone differently in my life, we would have been best man-friends and avowed colleagues instead of bitter rivals. *Alas.*

Mark watches as Robbie's taken away in irons as -

**INT. COURTHOUSE - LOLA'S CHAMBERS - A LITTLE LATER**

Lola's behind her desk, the DNA report open in front of her, typing something into her computer. ON THE SCREEN - a MUGSHOT of Consuela Irving. Then -

Leyland arrives at her door -

LOLA

Detective. Thanks for coming.

Leyland steps in as -

LOLA (CONT'D)

Get the door would you?

Leyland shuts it.

LOLA (CONT'D)

I'd offer you a seat but I have to be somewhere.

DET. LEYLAND

Your Honor. Does it strike you as odd when a person who is found not guilty shows no emotion?

LOLA

If that was the oddest thing about this case, I'd be thrilled.

DET. LEYLAND

She wasn't acting like the falsely accused is what I'm saying.

LOLA

And you manipulated evidence. Is what I'm saying.

DET. LEYLAND

I saw Daphne Irving, in that house,  
with my own two eyes.

LOLA

I think you rushed in, saw someone  
who *looked* like her, and she got  
away from you. Then you found a  
shoe. It fit. Work that photograph  
a little bit, sign off on a plea,  
you're done.

Leyland smiles.

DET. LEYLAND

You were a prosecutor. Surprised we  
never crossed paths -

LOLA

Detective, if someone looked at  
your other cases, how much of this  
kind of police work would they  
find?

DET. LEYLAND

Your Honor, how many women judges  
are there?

LOLA

Not enough.

DET. LEYLAND

So you're already feeling the  
pressure.

LOLA

Answer my question.

DET. LEYLAND

My cases are solid. This one. Was a  
mistake, a big one. I shouldn't  
have even taken the call in the  
first place. I do think she's  
guilty though.

LOLA

You didn't have the evidence to  
support your case. But you still -

DET. LEYLAND

Convictions are everything and I  
have a perfect record. And I needed  
to protect that.

(then)

(MORE)

DET. LEYLAND (CONT'D)

In the LAPD, it takes women longer to get where we want to go. And if the boys think we screwed up, even once - we don't get another chance.

LOLA

She's pregnant.

Leyland takes that in. Then -

DET. LEYLAND

Anything else, Your Honor?

LOLA

Try that again in a courtroom and I'll make sure you have nothing left to serve and protect.

(then)

Thanks for coming in.

Leyland leaves. ON Lola, as -

Sherri steps in.

SHERRI

All good? Nobody shot?

Lola manages a smile.

LOLA

Lola-coaster? I don't get it.

SHERRI

Because none of us knows where the ride is taking us, and nausea is likely to set in at some point.

(then)

Good night.

Sherri leaves as -

**EXT. COURTHOUSE - STEPS - DAY**

Emily joins Daphne and Consuela outside the Courthouse.

CONSUELA

You did it.

EMILY

I'm not sure what happened, but yes. We did it.

(to Daphne)

Daphne. Don't break any laws. Baby needs you.

DAPHNE

Ok. Thanks.

EMILY

You're welcome.

Hand shakes, then Em heads off. She's joined by Luke - out of uniform and into jeans and a T. Looks good.

LUKE

That was great.

EMILY

Not that great. Lawson gave Leyland a pass.

LUKE

We got an innocent person free.

EMILY

Luke -

LUKE

Can I ask you for a drink after work?

EMILY

(smiles)

After work is two in the morning.

LUKE

Good for me.

Suddenly, Em stops. Luke waits. Then -

LUKE (CONT'D)

Hello?

Her mood has shifted.

EMILY

It's not a good idea.

LUKE

Oh. Ok. I thought. Ok.

EMILY

I mean, it's not a good time. But, it's sweet. You're... sweet.

Luke waits for more, but that's it. Em's done.

LUKE

See you tomorrow?

EMILY

Sure.

ON Em as Luke walks away. Then - REVEAL, in the distance, Em's ex-husband, MIKE (33) sitting in a car, staring at her.

Emily, unaware she's being watched, moves on -

**EXT. COURTHOUSE - NIGHT**

Lola's driving out of the JUDGE'S SECURE PARKING. She turns on to the street and sees -

Daphne, standing at a BUS STOP. Lola pulls over, gets out of the car and walks over -

LOLA

Where's your mom?

DAPHNE

Went to her boyfriend's.

As the BUS PULLS UP -

LOLA

I was looking at the evidence in your case. Your DNA connected me to your mom's record, through the family DNA in the database. Any new conviction for her, it's a parole violation.

Daphne says nothing, suddenly looks nervous.

LOLA (CONT'D)

If it was your mom, in that house, while you were just waiting outside on the street. Maybe even she wanted to help you out with the baby? Well, I think maybe... you don't need that kind of help.

Daphne struggles with how to respond. Then, emotional -

DAPHNE

The baby. I can't. Do it without her.

Daphne steps onto the bus.

LOLA

We can all do way more than we think we can.

A moment as Daphne takes that in. Then - a smile. DOORS CLOSE. The bus pulls out as - Mark appears behind Lola.

MARK

Ria took my car. And didn't bring it back.

LOLA

Can't wait to meet her.  
(then)  
Need a lift?

MARK

I was calling a -

LOLA

Robin's in DC. I got nowhere to be. Where we going?

ON Mark as -

**EXT. THE SHORTSTOP BAR - NIGHT**

Lola's car pulls up in front of The Shortstop Bar.

MARK

Thanks for the lift.

LOLA

What happened the last time you saw him.

MARK

He punched me in the face.

LOLA

You want me to come in with you?

MARK

Nah. I'm good.  
(then)  
Boundaries.

Mark opens his door.

MARK (CONT'D)

Maybe you're not going to be such a terrible judge after all.

LOLA

Maybe.  
(then)  
(MORE)

LOLA (CONT'D)

It's a lot harder to judge people,  
when you actually have to *judge*  
people.

Mark gets out of the car, heads into the bar, where -

**INT. THE SHORTSTOP BAR - MOMENTS LATER**

Mark cuts through the crowd at The Shortstop. Looking for someone. Then he sees - VIC COLLINS (late 50s). Vic's started to lose his looks, his charm's worn thin from overuse. When Vic sees his son, he opens his arms wide. BIG SMILE.

VIC

My boy. The Prodigal.

ON Mark. Immune to his father's charms. After a moment -

Mark throws the first PUNCH.

**MOMENTS LATER**

Mark gets "escorted" out. It's the beginning of a long personal journey for him as music takes us out...

**END OF PILOT**