# B BELMONT PLACE

And as they are thorough people, they leave no stone unturned in the debauchery department

"Just Another Day In The Neighborhood"

Pilot by Antoine Verglas

# Belmont Place

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# TEASER

FADE IN:

INT. NOLAN APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

KAREN NOLAN is on her knees talking to her son COHEN J. NOLAN very firmly. In the background the father and husband JAMES C. NOLAN enters from his bedroom. He is wearing a white kimono wrap robe.

KAREN

(firmly)

Cohen J. Nolan, you get into that kitchen right now, and you finish your breakfast.

Cohen turns around in disguise and goes through the kitchen door. At five, Cohen is well proportioned and built to a generous scale.

**JAMES** 

If you're angry with me, you shouldn't take it out on the Cohen.

A beat.

KAREN

I'm not.

(beat)

The only person in this family who has an anger-management problem... is you.

(beat)

You know, it's the same routine every time you see Adam.

(beat)

You're ready to fight, James.

**JAMES** 

You're right about that, 'cause every time I see him, he's got his hands on my daughter. And every time, it's the same alibi -- "It's not what you think." Well, it is what I think.

#### KAREN

Did you ever think it was Michelle who wants you to think it?

#### JAMES

Did you happen to see how unhappy she was last night? She was crying. And she said, "It's not okay." Now, what do you think that means?

#### KAREN

James, how many times do we huge someone and say to them, "It's all right, it's all right"? Did you ever think that maybe that's what Michelle was responding to, that it's not all right that James and Eva are her parents and it's not all right she is feeling sad about Kyla's father dying?

#### JAMES

How about, "it's not all right that you get your hands on me, Johnson"?

#### KAREN

Yeah, why didn't you ask Michelle what she meant when you had the chance? Oh, what was I thinking? And I'm your wife. You would rather fight with Adam, punch each other lights out. That's what you want, right?

Karen picks up her percé from the sofa. She is wearing a pale purple lavender rose print and a shaped, ruched bodice create the satin trimmed slip dress. At forty, Karen is a human luxury item, without the expensive price tag.

CLOSE on James's face. We slowly ZOOM IN as he stands there angry and going into deep thought. At forty, James has what in the twenties used to be called "It": good old-fashioned sex appeal combined with a seeming accessibility, an approachable fantasy figure.

WHITE FLASH TO:

FLASHBACK: EXT. NOLAN APARTMENT - NIGHT

ADAM JOHNSON is walking down the course with his arm around MICHELLE. From behind, James comes into sight and pushes Adam and Michelle apart. He makes sure his daughter Michelle is standing behind him.

**JAMES** 

(angry)

Johnson, get your hands off my daughter.

Adam confronts James.

ADAM

(angry)

Why don't you get out of my face, James?

JAMES

(angry)

What if I don't? You gonna fight me? Come on, Boy George. Do something.

Karen rushes over.

KAREN

James, stop the madness. What are you doing?

PRESENT: INT. NOLAN APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

James is still in deep thought. Karen gets him out of it.

KAREN

Hey.

(beat)

Adam didn't do anything wrong. But you did. You're a cop, for God's sake. You can't walk up and assault someone.

**JAMES** 

I was looking out for my daughter.

KAREN

The only thing Adam is guilty of is making sure your daughter is all right.

(beat)

If you keep this up, you're going to be pushing her right into his arms. Is that how you want it to go down?

James stares into his wife's eyes with concern...

INT. EVA'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

EVA JONES enters the kitchen drinking a cup of coffee. MICHELLE MARQUETTE enters the kitchen angry. She is wearing a dramatic, corseted gown detailed with leopard look velvet flocking on a vivid red satin ground. She also has an attitude about herself this morning.

**EVA** 

Hey. Thanks for making the coffee.

Michelle ignores her and sits at the table.

EVA (CONT'D)

What are you doing up so early?

MICHELLE

I couldn't sleep last night. All I could think about was Kyla and her dad.

EVA

Yeah. I'm sorry, Michelle. I know it must make you think about losing your own parents.

MICHELLE

(angry)

Well, it's not like I ever forget, Eva.

EVA

You're right. You're right.

MICHELLE

(angry)

But knowing that you and James are my biological parents...

EVA

Yeah?

MICHELLE

(angry)

Just makes it so much worse. I mean, I'm always comparing it to the way things use to be. And you'll never understand what it is like because you never had two parents that cared about you.

EVA

(shakes her head "Yes")
That's right. I never did. And I
never had anyone to ask me
questions -- like that sexy gown
you're wearing -- for one thing,
they must have been very expensive.

MICHELLE

I got them on sale.

Michelle gets up to pour herself some coffee. Eva follows behind. She is wearing a brown nylon Indonesian print mesh dress that has a beautifully draped neckline that suspends from beaded, jewelry straps. At thirty, she is a flintly cobblestone of a person. A mixture of the cozy concrete and the cynical concrete, whose main aim in life is independence and peace-keeping.

EVA

Uh-huh. And where did you get the money to pay for them?

MICHELLE

(sarcastic)

Oh, I just went down to the, uh, the corner of Belmont Place and turned a couple of tricks. You know, lets here it for genetics.

EVA

Michelle.

MICHELLE

(angry)

Oh, come on, Eva. The other night when I went out, you were complaining about my dress being cut to low in the front. Can't you just be cool with this?

**EVA** 

That dress was way to revealing for a girl your age. And as a matter of fact, so is that gown, considering there is a man living in this house with us. Please go put on a robe.

Michelle sighs and turns around and sees ADAM JOHNSON entering. At sixteen, Michelle is strikingly beautiful; with perfect even features, wavy, rich hair, and a nobile young body, she's the archetypal American dream girl.

**ADAM** 

Morning.

At forty, Adam is unique and mysterious. He is self-seeking but manage to hide this under a semblance of congeniality and even wit.

**EVA** 

Morning, Adam.

MICHELLE

Hi, Adam.

ADAM

How are you today, Michelle?

MICHELLE

(angry)

How do you think I'm doing after what happened last night?

**EVA** 

What -- what happened last night?

MICHELLE

(angry)

Oh, my father picked another stupid fight with Adam. You know, what is it with him, anyway? Why does he think he can control my life? Both of you -- you're driving me crazy.

EVA

(to Adam)

Why did you and James get into a fight?

(to Michelle)

And what did you do to upset your father now?

Michelle angrily shakes her head like "I can't believe you're questioning me."

INT. AIKMAN APARTMENT - MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

We SLOWLY ZOOM IN on TROY and CHARMAINE AIKMAN. They are sound asleep in their bed.

The door quietly swings open. KYLA AIKMAN enters wearing her pink robe. She stares at her father with a concerned look. At sixteen, she is very wholesome with a good girl appearance.

Charmaine eyes slowly come open. She notices Kyla standing there so she rises up and stares at her daughters concerned eyes. She then slowly gets out of bed making sure she doesn't wake up her husband and goes over to Kyla. Troy's eyes pop open without them knowing it. At forty, he is a conservative yet silver-tongued and magnetic human being.

CHARMAINE

Honey, what are you doing?

KYLA

I just want to make sure that dad was all right, that he didn't die or anything during the night.

Charmaine caresses the side of Kyla's face and hair. At thirty, she is strikingly beautiful. Troy listens in on the conversation without them knowing it...

INT. CATHLEEN'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

CATHLEEN HEARST enters the living room wearing a silk robe. She takes a sip of her cup of coffee. At forty-one, she can be cold and analytical, emotionally erratic and capricious.

CATHLEEN

(looks at watch, to self)
Well, Orlando is starting his new
job at Etheric today.
 (beat)
I should call him and wish him
well.

She walks over to the telephone.

CATHLEEN (CONT'D)

(to self)

Although I know he is going to be rude to me.

She puts her cup down and dials a number.

INT. ORLANDO'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

ORLANDO HEARST is in bed having sex with a CALL GIRL that's on top of him. Her name is ANGELA. At twenty-five, she is strikingly beautiful; with perfect even features, wavy, rich hair, and a nobile young body. On a night stand next to the bed a phone rings. The Call Girl answers the phone.

INTERCUT WITH CATHLEEN STANDING IN THE LIVING ROOM:

ANGELA

Hello?

CATHLEEN

(beat)

Well, hello. Who's this?

ANGELA

My name is Angela.

CATHLEEN

Angela. Hi, Angela. Um, I'm not sure I have the right number. Is Orlando there?

ANGELA

He's right under me. Hold on.

Angela gives Orlando the phone and then lays on his chest. At twenty-six, he is attractive and boyish-looking.

ORLANDO

Hello?

CATHLEEN

Hel-lo. Well, congratulations -- you have finally moved on from Charisse.

INT. CHARISSE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE on a hand picking up a newspaper. We pull back and see BRIAN JONES. He reads something off the newspaper and puts it down on the table he's siting at and then starts typing on the laptop. CHARISSE NOLAN enters the living room.

CHARISSE

Good morning.

BRIAN

Good morning. I hope you don't mind me borrowing your laptop.

CHARISSE

Oh, of course not. How'd you sleep?

BRIAN

Like I said, it's a comfortable couch.

CHARISSE

Well, you could have slept in Tamar's bed. What are you doing?

Charisse leans down and looks at the computer screen as Brian types. At twenty-seven, Brian has a quiet kind of charm and a very mellow exterior. Underneath he may be emoting heavily.

BRIAN

Checking out Real Estate.

CHARISSE

Why?

BRIAN

I'm looking for a place to live.

CHARISSE

(happily surprised)
Are you staying here in Belmont
Place?

BRIAN

Looks that way.

Charisse is excited with the wonderful news. At twenty-six, although she has a wholesome good girl appearance, she is known for her dark and devious side.

CHARISSE

(excited)

Brian, that is tight. But, you know, you don't have to find a place to live. You can stay here with me.

Brian gives Charisse a surprised stare...

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

# ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. ORLANDO'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

ORLANDO is standing next to the night stand that the phone sits on having a heated conversation with his mother, Cathleen, over the phone.

ORLANDO

(angry)

What are you talking about I finally moved on from Charisse? I was supposed to marry the woman less than a week ago. What kind of person do you think I am, huh?

INT. CATHLEEN'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

CATHLEEN is on the phone with her son Orlando.

INTERCUT WITH CATHLEEN STANDING IN THE LIVING ROOM:

CATHLEEN

(chuckles)

A woman is answering your phone early in the morning because...

ORLANDO

(angry)

Mom, that's none of your business. How about that? Why the hell are you calling me?

CATHLEEN

Are we really gonna let Charisse win?

ORLANDO

(angry)

What are you talking about? Win what? She hasn't won anything thanks to you. Look, Tamar would have been perfectly happy living with both his parents by now. But you -- you've ruined Charisse's life, my life, even your own grandson's.

CATHLEEN

You know, on the contrary, I think I've spared you, years of misery.
(MORE)

# CATHLEEN (CONT'D)

But Charisse's just not accountable for anything, is she? Is that what you're saying?

ORLANDO

(angry)

What I'm saying is you can't accept that I want you out of my life, for good.

CATHLEEN

Well, I was just calling to wish you good luck with your new job.

We hear a dial tone. Orlando has hung up the phone. Cathleen just holds out the phone, looks at it, and hangs it up. She slowly walks away from the phone and stops in her tracks.

CATHLEEN (CONT'D)

(to herself)

Damn you, Charisse. Because of you, I lost Orlando.

(beat)

But I don't care how good your intentions are, Brian. I'll be damned if I lose you to Charisse, as well.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. AIKMAN APARTMENT - MASTER BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

CLOSE on TROY still listening in on a conversation going on as he pretends to be asleep in bed. We PAN over to CHARMAINE who is putting on her robe and KYLA standing a few feet away from the bed. Charmaine glances back at Troy for a moment and then turns her attention back to her daughter.

KYLA

I -- I didn't mean to bother you
and dad.

CHARMAINE

Oh, it's all right, sweetie. I was, ah, I was gonna get up in about four hours anyway.

KYLA

You're -- you're playing, right?

CHARMAINE

Yes.

They chuckle at Charmaine's comment.

KYLA

This is the third time I've been in here since last night, you know?

CHARMAINE

(concerned)

Oh, honey.

CLOSE on Kyla's face. We slowly ZOOM IN as she loses herself in deep thought.

WHITE FLASH TO:

FLASHBACK: INT. AIKMAN APARTMENT - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

ANGLE on Troy asleep in bed. Kyla sits beside him. She leans in close to see if he's still breathing.

KYLA (V.O.)

I sat next to daddy on the bed and just listened for him to take a breath.

(pulls back)

And when I couldn't hear anything, I got scared. I wanted to put my hand over his heart, but I didn't want to wake him up.

PRESENT: INT. AIKMAN APARTMENT - MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING

Kyla and CHARMAINE are still standing in place a few feet away from the bed Troy sleeps in. Kyla drops her head. She's still hurt as she continues to think about her dad.

# CHARMAINE

Honey, listen, your dad is very sick. But Jessica promised me he has months to live...

(takes her daughters
hands)

Not just days or hours. Not yet.

## KYLA

I don't know who or what to believe. What are we gonna do without him? What's gonna happen to our family? At least I got to know dad growing up. He was -- is the tightest dad in the world. But as much as I tell Troy Jr. about dad, he'll never remember him, will he, mom?

Charmaine glances back at Troy who is out of the camera's focus and then turns her attention back to her daughter.

KYLA (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. I'm only making this harder for you.

(sighs)

I let you down when we lost him before. I was a total ass. I mean brat.

CHARMAINE

No, you weren't, sweetie.

KYLA

I was. And I just want to tell you that I'm never gonna treat you like that again. You can count on me -- you and Troy Jr.

A beat. Charmaine stares into her beautiful daughters eyes and then gives her a hug.

CHARMAINE

Oh, thank you, honey. Oh, I'm so proud of you. Do you know that?

We focus on Troy who is still listening in on the conversation. Troy starts to breath hoarsely.

KYLA

(concerned)

Daddy?

Kyla breaks from the hug and goes to her fathers aid. Troy pulls away from the covers and sits at the side of the bed.

TROY

Oh, Kyla.

(rubbing tears away from

eyes)

Oh. Are you all right? (sniffles)

KYLA

Yeah.

(beat)

I mean, I'm sorry for getting upset with you last night. I was just so shocked.

TROY

No, no. I'm sorry. I-I-I-I should have told you about the illness before. I really should have. I just...

(sighs)

I just wanted to spare you -- any pain, you know.

KYLA

I know.

TROY

(beat)

Do you?

**KYLA** 

Yeah, and I promise I won't bother you anymore. I'll let you get back to sleep. I know you need your rest. And when you get up, um, I'll have breakfast ready for you.

TROY

You -- you don't have to do that.

KYLA

No, it's no trouble. I want to. Unless you're not hungry.

TROY

No, no, no, no. I'll -- I'll eat anything you put in front of me, especially if you made it.

KYLA

That's true love, daddy. I just hope it doesn't make you sicker.

CHARMAINE

(laughing)

Hey, come on, you know what your gram says.

KYLA

If it's made with love, it'll taste great.

TROY

Right.

KYLA

Or at least edible.

(chuckles)

I'm gonna go get Troy Jr., and I'll meet you guys downstairs.

Charmaine happily watches her daughter leave out closing the door behind.

TROY

(beat)

She came in three times, huh? (sniffles)

Charmaine sits at the edge of the bed with her husband.

CHARMAINE

You were awake.

TROY

Yes, I was.

CHARMAINE

You heard everything that she said.

TROY

Yeah, I did.

CHARMAINE

I'm sorry. That must have been so hard, Troy.

TROY

It was, uh -- it proved something to me that I've know all along.

(beat)

It's those Aikman women -- the strongest... most caring, wonderful, loving, beautiful mother and daughter any man could have ever asked for.

CHARMAINE

Well, right back at you.

TROY

Beautiful or...?

CHARMAINE

All of them.

TROY

Oh, thank you.

A beat.

CHARMAINE

Oh, what are we gonna do without, you Troy?

Charmaine goes into her husbands arms and begins to sob.

TROY

I've got it all worked out.

Charmaine quickly comes out of her husbands arms.

CHARMAINE

(shocked)

What? What are you planning, Troy?

We slowly ZOOM IN on Troy as he just sits there not knowing what to say...

INT. NOLAN APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

JAMES enters the living room from the kitchen holding a cup of coffee. He is followed by his wife KAREN who is also holding a cup of coffee. They continue to argue.

**JAMES** 

Adam is the last person I want my daughter to be with.

James sits in the sofa chair that's next to the sofa. Karen sits on the sofa.

KAREN

James, she's living with him, for heaven's sakes.

(beat)

You've got to get use to it. In fact, you should be grateful he's giving her a ruff over her head.

**JAMES** 

Well, I'm the one that should be doing that.

Karen sits her coffee mug on the coffee table in front of her.

KAREN

Is that what this is about? You feel that Adam stepping on your toes, somehow taking your role as Michelle's father?

(MORE)

KAREN (CONT'D)

If that's what it is about, that I can definitely understand.

**JAMES** 

This is about Johnson taking advantage of a teenage girl. He shouldn't be hugging someone my daughter's age. She -- she was fighting him off when I got there. That's what I saw.

Karen shakes her head and scratches it like "what are you talking about."

KAREN

I'm sorry. I, um -- maybe I just wasn't listening, so correct me if I'm wrong, all right? I don't remember Michelle screaming, "daddy, daddy. Thank God you're here. This crazy man is attacking me."

James starts to chuckle "like what."

KAREN (CONT'D)

James, in fact, it kind of looked to me like she was kind of pissed off you came along at all, like you were interfering.

**JAMES** 

Interfering?

KAREN

Interfering.

**JAMES** 

What do you think they were doing?

KAREN

Nothing romantic. Remember what Charmaine said? Michelle was with Kyla when Kyla found out that Troy was dying. When Adam came along, I'm sure she was probably very upset about the fact that Kyla's father's dying.

JAMES

Yeah, and went flying into his arms. Isn't it strange how he always just shows up at the right time?

KAREN

You know something?

Karen gets up and sits at the edge of the coffee table facing James.

KAREN (CONT'D)

Instead of focusing on the negative, you should be very proud your daughter was there for Kyla, because quite honestly, before last night, I thought she was a pretty self-centered individual.

**JAMES** 

You were wrong.

KAREN

Maybe you were wrong, too. Hey, I don't want to argue with you. Our problems are nothing compared to Troy and Charmaine's. Come here.

JAMES

That's true.

Karen gets up and lays on top of James and gives him a passionate kiss. She lays her head on him and they cuddle up.

A long beat.

KAREN

I'm so grateful we have our health.

**JAMES** 

Mm-hmm.

KAREN

And we have each other.

**JAMES** 

Thinking about Troy and Charmaine, that really puts things into perspective.

KAREN

I want to do something for Charmaine to lift her spirits.

**JAMES** 

You think that's possible?

KAREN

I don't know.

(sits up)

But I certainly want to try. I want to do something special for Charmaine.

**JAMES** 

Good for you.

KAREN

Which means stretching the budget a little.

**JAMES** 

Hey, it's only money.

KAREN

Exactly. It's just money. We can make more.

**JAMES** 

Mm-hmm.

KAREN

I know exactly what we're gonna do.

Karen looks off with a smile...

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

BRIAN is still sitting at the table with the laptop in front of him. CHARISSE is sitting at the table leaning towards Brian.

BRIAN

Charisse, your couch feels good, but it doesn't feel that good.

Charisse pushes the laptop closed to make Brian pay more attention to her.

CHARISSE

Oh, come on. I have two other bedrooms.

BRIAN

Yeah. One is filled with stuff, and the other one is Tamar's.

CHARISSE

Well, I can empty out some of my stuff. I should anyway.

BRIAN

No. I don't think it's a good idea. People would think we're having sex with each other, and... we're not.

Brian opens the laptop back up. Charisse pushes it back closed.

CHARISSE

Who cares what people think, Brian? We're just two friends who've decided to live together as roommates. And, anyway, it's been really lonely here for me without Tamar.

BRIAN

(beat)

I don't know, Charisse.

CHARISSE

I think you'd be really making a difference for me. You'd have your own bedroom. You'd be helping me with the rent. I know it's not a big deal to you, but money's really tight for me. I haven't been able to find a job. And you'd be doing me a huge favor. Will you at least think about it?

BRIAN

(hesitant before speaking)
I just don't think it would work.

CHARISSE

I think it would work. What made you come back to Belmont Place anyway?

BRIAN

Well, I've been giving it a lot of thought for a while, and I decided that my future is here.

Brian gets up and goes into the bathroom. Charisse rests her elbows on the table and stares off into space thinking of her next move...

INT. EVA'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

MICHELLE is standing near the table between EVA and ADAM with her arms folded looking down with a mean face. They continue to argue.

**EVA** 

I'm waiting. And I don't care who answers. How did the fight start last night?

Adam walks over to Eva.

**ADAM** 

Okay, okay, I'll tell you. James ran into me and Michelle down at that restaurant called Ethereal I was comforting her.

**EVA** 

What was it this time?

Michelle turns her attention back to Eva and looks her up and down.

MICHELLE

I don't like the way you said that.

Michelle steps aside and looks off screen in the short distance angry.

ADAM

Michelle was upset about Kyla's dad. But, of course, James misinterpreted the whole thing. He came at me, accusing me of taking advantage of Michelle... again.

MICHELLE

Adam's right. And they would have gotten into a bigger fight if it hadn't been for Karen showing up and making James see how dumb--

**EVA** 

(interrupting)

Hey. Don't talk about your father like that. He only wants what's best for you. And if anybody looks stupid here it's you.

MICHELLE

Me?

EVA

How many times are you going to throw yourself into Adam's arms?

MICHELLE

(angry)

I was really upset. Damn, you're just jealous because I don't feel right talking to you or James, and you know what? I'm never going to, because you're both clueless. Damn, no matter what I do, it's always my fault. You don't think I can do anything right.

**EVA** 

That is not true at all, Michelle!

MICHELLE

(angry)

Come on, Eva. Damn, it's no wonder I never felt a connection to you as my birth mother. You lost me the day I was born. You never even loved me. And all of sudden you act like you got this big maternalinstinct thing going on, and really it's just an excuse to make my life miserable.

CLOSE on Eva's face. We slowly ZOOM IN as she just stands there not knowing what to say...

INT. ORLANDO'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

ANGLE on the bathroom door. ANGELA comes out with a towel wrapped around her body. Her hair and body is wet like she just came out of the shower.

ORLANDO (O.S.)

Hey, Angela, you want some coffee?

We open to a wider view and see Orlando in the kitchen pouring coffee.

ANGELA

Uh, sure.

ORLANDO

Coming up.

ANGELA

Have you seen my purse? I need my makeup.

Angela walks towards the sofa and looks around. Orlando comes out of the kitchen with two cups of coffee.

ORLANDO

Uh, no, no, I haven't seen it.

ANGELA

Ah. There it is.

Angela picks up her purse from the sofa.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Thanks again for the sex. I owe you big-time.

ORLANDO

No, it's -- it's fine. My pleasure, really. Thank God my son Tamar is at his friends house.

Orlando gives Angela a cup of coffee.

ANGELA

Thanks.

ORLANDO

Yeah.

ANGELA

(beat)

Orlando, can I ask you a question?

ORLANDO

Yeah.

ANGELA

Last night I got up to get a drink of water, and I heard you talking in your sleep.

ORLANDO

What was I talking about?

ANGELA

Your ex-fiance, Charisse.

CLOSE on Orlando's face. He looks concerned as we slowly ZOOM  $\ensuremath{\text{IN}\dots}$ 

FADE TO BLACK.

# END OF ACT ONE

# ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. EVA'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

EVA and MICHELLE are still in place standing a few feet apart from the table. ADAM is standing in the background.

ADAM

Well, I think you two need some privacy here, so, uh, I'm gonna find something to do.

Adam heads for his bedroom. Eva steps up to Michelle who is still angry.

EVA

Michelle, I would never deliberately do anything to make your life miserable. Your father and I just want what's best for you. And someday hopefully when you grow up, you can look back on this and realize that.

MICHELLE

I do know what I want, Eva. And I am grown up. But every time I turn around to try to get what I want, you're standing in my way, making sure I don't.

Michelle storms away leaving Eva standing there with a concerned look...

INT. EVA'S APARTMENT - MICHELLE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Michelle picks up her cell phone from the dresser and quickly dials a number.

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

CATHLEEN is fully clothed this time as we pickup on her coming into the living room to answer the phone as it rings.

CATHLEEN

Hello?

INTERCUT BETWEEN CATHLEEN & MICHELLE

MICHELLE

Hi, Cathleen.

CATHLEEN

Is this my granddaughter?

MICHELLE

Yeah. Um, hi, grandma. God, I feel so crazy calling you that... Mainly because you just seem too young and too beautiful to be a grandmother.

CATHLEEN

(chuckles)

Well, honey, flattery will get you everywhere.

MICHELLE

Great, um, 'cause I really need you right now.

CATHLEEN

All right. Well, I'll be right over, then. Are you at home?

MICHELLE

Yes.

CATHLEEN

All right. I'll be there in a few minutes.

MICHELLE

All right, thank you.

CATHLEEN

You're welcome, sweetie. Bye-bye.

Michelle clicks off her cell phone. Eva enters her room.

EVA

Hey. Who were you talking to?

MICHELLE

See, Eva? That's what I mean. It's none of your business. Can't I just have my privacy?

EVA

Whoa, wait. No, no, no. It's not like that. I-I wasn't demanding an explanation. I was just being curious.

MICHELLE

Curious. Is that the same thing as being nosy?

**EVA** 

All right. Whatever.

Eva is about to walk away...

MICHELLE

Okay, fine. I'm going to work at Oh Drama with Grandma Cathleen. She's on her way over.

F.V.A

Gee, I guess I wouldn't dare to ask why.

MICHELLE

I need to ask my new boss for an advance on my salary. I need a new wardrobe for work.

EVA

What? What about all the new clothes my mother just bought you?

MICHELLE

Those are mainly dresses. I mean, there for going out. They're too formal. I need work clothes, like two-piece outfits, pantsuits, stuff for fall and winter.

**EVA** 

Well, Michelle, I mean, why -- why did you not come to me about this?

MICHELLE

Because you would expect me to make it up to you forever. And I don't want to have to owe you a damn thing...

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

BRIAN comes out of the bathroom wearing a suit. CHARISSE comes out with him as well drinking coffee.

CHARISSE

Brian, um, what did you mean when you said your future is here in Belmont Place?

BRIAN

I'm gonna start my own company. I don't need to live in Washington anymore.

CHARISSE

You don't?

BRIAN

No. I could be based out of Belmont, live here, be my own boss.

Brian picks up a bed cover from the sofa.

CHARISSE

Wow. Brian, I think that's tight.

Charisse puts down her cup of coffee on the coffee table and helps Brian fold the bed cover.

BRIAN

Yeah. I decided it's time for me to make my move in business. Coming back home for the wedding got me thinking. Life is way to short to not go for what you want.

CHARISSE

Yeah, I agree.

Awkward beat.

BRIAN

I'm sorry. Um, it was dumb. I shouldn't have brought up your wedding. I'm sorry.

CHARISSE

It's all right. I think about it all the time, anyway. I think it's time for me to move on with my life.

(clears throat)

BRIAN

I'm glad to hear you say that. Anything I can do to help...

CHARISSE

Thank you.

BRIAN

Well, I'm happy to be back here in Belmont. My family and all the people that I care about are here.

CHARISSE

Um, I think it's really tight that you're starting your own company. You know, I had some trouble finding a job, but maybe this is perfect. Brian, I could work for you.

CLOSE on Brian. We slowly close in on his surprised face...

INT. EVA'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

EVA enters as she drinks her cup of coffee. MICHELLE enters holding her purse. She is wearing a figure-carving scoopneck tank dress, in black ribbed knit framed with white. Low-cut, lace up back and subtle side slits.

**EVA** 

Oh! See? Now, that is beautiful. And it's not too dressy for work. Looks like you've got something new to wear for the next two weeks.

She still has that angry expression on her face.

MICHELLE

Yeah, but everybody's already seen me in the clothes grandma Cathleen gave me.

**EVA** 

How many of those people are gonna be walking into Oh Drama, hmm? You know? Really. And, I mean, all those dresses that you have in your closet -- those are brand-new. Look at me. I've worn this at least a dozen times, and people have seen me in it, but who cares?

MICHELLE

Yeah, you've worn it 50 times. It's starting to get old. I mean, I don't want to dress like you. I don't want to look like my mother.

Eva turns away with concern.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

Listen, I didn't mean that as an insult. It's just -- I need to start looking more fashion-concious. I mean, after all, I'm gonna be working at Oh Drama.

**EVA** 

Well, at least you called me your mother.

MICHELLE

Yeah, but we're about as different as mother and daughter can be. I mean, you wanted to work in law enforcement, an FBI agent. I wouldn't want that kind of lifestyle, dressing up like an detective on a stakeout. I'd rather make a fashion statement, go to clubs, parties, discos.

**EVA** 

All right, you don't think I wanted that when I was your age? I did. I really did. And trust me -- it'll get you into a lot of trouble.

MICHELLE

Well, since everyone in this family is either an addict or a prostitute or both, considering my genes, I don't think it really matters what I wear, does it?

**EVA** 

(serious)

I resent that, Michelle. When I shared that information with you, I never thought you would ever throw it back in my face.

A beat. Michelle just stands there and sighs.

The doorbell rings.

MICHELLE

I'm gonna go get that. It's grandma Cathleen.

INT. EVA'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Michelle opens the front door. CATHLEEN is standing there with a smile on her face.

MICHELLE

Hi, Cathleen. Come on in.

CATHLEEN

Thanks.

Cathleen enters.

CATHLEEN (CONT'D)

So, what's up? What can I do for you?

Eva enters the living room.

EVA

Hey, mom. Can I just talk to you for a second first, alone?

CATHLEEN

Sure.

(to Michelle)

Why don't you give us a few minutes, Michelle, all right?

MICHELLE

Okay.

Michelle goes into the kitchen.

**EVA** 

All right, I know I said this to you before, but I feel the need to say it again. I don't want you spoiling Michelle anymore. No more cash or gifts.

INT. EVA'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Michelle is standing by the kitchen door listening in on the conversation. She's pissed.

INT. NOLAN APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

The front door swings open. JAMES enters and closes the door behind. KAREN is talking on the phone.

KAREN

Yeah, that's great. Oh, perfect! Block six hours. All right, see you soon. Thank you so much.

Karen hangs up the phone.

**JAMES** 

Got Cohen to the bus stop in time so I didn't have to drive him to school.

Karen is excited. She claps her hands together one time and jumps on the sofa facing James.

KAREN

Great. And I am good to go with Charmaine's surprise.

**JAMES** 

Oh, great, 'cause I got something for you.

James reaches under the sofa and pulls out a box. He stands there holding it.

KAREN

When did you have time to buy me something?

**JAMES** 

I didn't buy it I made it.

KAREN

You made it?

**JAMES** 

Mm-hmm.

KAREN

(excited)

Oh, my God.

Karen opens the box and removes the wrapping. The wrapping reveals a car.

KAREN (CONT'D)

Bo, oh, my God--. Look at this model. It's beautiful. When did you have time to do this?

**JAMES** 

Late at night, while you were sleeping. It's to remind you of the ride we're on together for the rest of our lives.

A beat. Karen stares at James with a smile and then the car.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Excuse me.

KAREN

Yes.

James leans in and kisses Karen.

JAMES

Tell me something. How much time do we have until you leave?

KAREN

Well, I'm not leaving yet.

Karen puts the car back in the box and places it on the coffee table.

KAREN (CONT'D)

And Cohen is at school.

Karen pulls James close to her and they fall back onto the couch.

KAREN (CONT'D)

And I think we are alone.

They start to have sex.

INT. AIKMAN APARTMENT - MASTER BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

CHARMAINE is sitting at the edge of the bed continuing to have her conversation with TROY who is sitting up in bed.

TROY

I'm not planning anything.

CHARMAINE

Troy.

Troy quickly pushes the covers away and gets out of bed. Charmaine gets up.

TROY

I'm not.

CHARMAINE

I said, "what are we gonna do without you?" You said you had it all worked out.

Troy picks up his robe and puts it own.

TROY

I just meant that I'm gonna be watching out over you and Kyla and Troy Jr. forever and ever, amen. Don't ever forget that, all right?

Troy gives Charmaine a kiss and then they hug.

CHARMAINE

(sighs)

We gotta make the most of the time we have left, Troy. We have to make it last as long as we can. Do you understand me?

TROY

Mm-hmm.

CHARMAINE

I'm gonna go downstairs. I'm gonna help Kyla with the breakfast.

TROY

Okay.

Charmaine heads for the door.

TROY (CONT'D)

I'll be right down.

Charmaine closes the door behind.

TROY (CONT'D)

(to himself)

I'm sorry, Charmaine. Afraid I'm gonna be leaving you a little sooner than you think...

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT TWO

# ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. AIKMAN APARTMENT - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

KYLA is at the stove stirring pancake mix in a bowl. Charmaine enters the kitchen.

CHARMAINE

Hey, there. Need any assistance?

KYLA

No, I think I got it.

Kyla goes over to the counter and picks up a bowl that has blueberry's in it. She then brings it back over to the stove and pours it in the pancake mix.

CHARMAINE

Oh, blueberry pancakes? Your dad's favorite.

KYLA

That's why I made them.

CHARMAINE

Oh, remember, honey, how you fold the blueberries in.

KYLA

Oh, right. Or else they will break.

Kyla continues to stir the pancake mix.

CHARMAINE

Just right. There you go. Very good.

Troy enters.

TROY

Homemade pancakes... made by my beautiful daughter with the careful guidance of my perfect wife. Can't get much better than that, huh?

Charmaine smiles at Troy and turns to smile at her daughter who also lets out a pretty smile.

TROY (CONT'D)

(sighs)

Tell you what.

(MORE)

TROY(CONT'D)

I'm gonna go back and check to make sure that Troy Jr.'s all right. We'll go play with the trains until everything is ready. All right?

Troy goes back to the bedroom.

**KYLA** 

Mom, isn't there anything we can do to help dad get better?

CLOSE on Charmaine. She stares at Kyla with a concerned look.

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

ORLANDO who is holding a cup of coffee and ANGELA who still has a towel wrapped around her and holding a cup of coffee are still having a conversation.

ORLANDO

What was I saying about Charisse in my sleep?

ANGELA

I was trying not to listen. But, um, it sounded kind of romantic.

ORLANDO

(beat)

Romantic? Don't tell me that I was...

ANGELA

Oh, it's nothing embarrassing.

ORLANDO

Are you sure?

ANGELA

I mean, I didn't hear you groaning or anything, but, um...

ORLANDO

Good.

ANGELA

Maybe you're not as over Charisse as you think.

CLOSE on Orlando. He stares at Angela with a concerned look...

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

CHARISSE and BRIAN are standing a few feet away from each other still having a conversation.

CHARISSE

So, what do you say, Brian? You're gonna hire me, right? When you get organized?

BRIAN

Charisse, I just don't think it would work.

Brian tries to pick up some files off the desk.

CHARISSE

Oh. Oh! Let me get that for you.

Charisse quickly picks up the fils from Brian's desk.

CHARISSE (CONT'D)

Come on, it would work great. I'm really good at filing papers and taking messages and running errands. Come on. I - I could even finish your sentences for you, I know you so well.

BRIAN

Is that a plus?

CHARISSE

Brian...

BRIAN

I'm not saying that you're wrong. I just don't think it's a good idea. We do have a history.

CHARISSE

Yeah, but no one else will give me a job.

Charisse stacks the files on the desk.

CHARISSE (CONT'D)

It's just like Orlando. He couldn't find work until Amir made that offer. And it's worse for me. Everybody knows that I was Damon.

BRIAN

You were cleared.

CHARISSE

Yeah, well, thanks to you. And I'm not in jail, but everyone still thanks the worst of me. My reputation is totally ruined in this town. The only way that I will find work is if someone who actually cares about me and knows me will give me a chance.

BRIAN

I don't know, Charisse. If your reputation is that bad, I mean, it could really mess with my credibility, my business.

CHARISSE

Oh.

(beat)

You're right. I didn't think about that.

Charisse sits down at the desk with disappointment.

BRIAN

I was just playing. I was just playing.

Brian sits at the desk facing her. She starts to lighten back up.

CHARISSE

You're playing right? You don't care about your credibility?

BRIAN

No, I mean, yes. Listen, I just don't think it's a good idea.

CHARISSE

Aside from the credibility issue, I think it's a great idea. I think we would make a great team. But don't answer me yet. Have you thought about all the space? Rents have gone through the roof since you have left Belmont Place.

BRIAN

Start-up costs can be steep, yeah. But actually I was thinking about starting the business out of my home.

They both get up.

CHARISSE

(excited)

Well, see? See how perfect this would be? Think how much money you can save if you lived and worked out of this apartment.

BRIAN

All right, I will admit that it sounds tempting. But have you thought this through?

CHARISSE

What is there to think about?

BRIAN

Orlando. What he might think. What he might say...

INT. EVA'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

MICHELLE is still standing next to the kitchen door listening in on the conversation going on in the living room.

EVA (O.C.)

I can't believe you bought her all those new dresses.

INT. EVA'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

EVA is standing face to face with her mother CATHLEEN having an argument.

CATHLEEN

Eva, I've never had a granddaughter before. I missed your entire childhood. Come on! I just got a teenager. Let me spoil her just a little.

**EVA** 

Mom. Mom, you gave her a job.
That's terrific. She's got a roof
over her head. I think she's doing
just fine, all right? So please...
(MORE)

# EVA(CONT'D)

no more cash or clothes until further notice. All right?

INT. EVA'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

MICHELLE is still listening in on the conversation going on in the living room. She is pissed.

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

ORLANDO and ANGELA are still having a conversation.

# ORLANDO

Well, to be honest with you, uh, Angela, it's -- it's probably gonna be a long time before I can get over my feelings for Charisse. (beat)

But I'll tell you this -- Charisse and I will never have a future together.

INT. AIKMAN APARTMENT - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

KYLA is still standing at the stove. She turns the pancakes over in the frying pan with the spatula. CHARMAINE is still near as they continue their conversation.

# CHARMAINE

Honey, listen, we are doing everything that we can to keep your dad alive, and I'm gonna work closely with the Aikman foundation to make sure that nothing has been overlooked. We are not giving up.

# KYLA

I'm really happy to hear you say that, mom. But -- I-I know Jessica's our friend and all, but she's not a specialist in this rare disease, right? What does she really know about this?

# CHARMAINE

Sweetie, you know what? She has dozens of second opinions and consultations. It's just that the news is not good.

#### KYLA

We just need to keep him alive until they find a cure.

The kitchen door comes open just a little. TROY appears in the background listening in on the conversation.

CHARMAINE

You're right. We do. We need to keep your dad alive, because miracles can happen. And we cannot stop praying for a miracle. Do you understand me?

They hug.

KYLA

I know. Thanks, mom.

Troy comes on in.

TROY

Yeah. Thanks, mom. Just don't -just don't get your hopes up too
high, Kyla. Despite what your
mother is saying, I really don't
think we can find a cure in time.

We close in on the concerned faces of Kyla and Charmaine...

INT. EVA'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

EVA and CATHLEEN sit at the kitchen table to continue their conversation.

CATHLEEN

I can't help worrying about my kids, all right?

EVA

Coffee.

Cathleen passes a cup of coffee over to Eva.

CATHLEEN

Brian is living with Charisse. I mean, give me a break.

(sighs)

I got Charisse away from Orlando. And believe me -- I'm going to do the same thing with Brian.

EVA

Mom, come on. Your kids are all adults, right? We've asked you a thousand times not to interfere in our lives.

(MORE)

EVA(CONT'D)

I appreciate you giving Michelle a job. But please let me raise her.

Cathleen sighs and squirms in discomfort of the comment...

INT. NOLAN APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

JAMES and his wife KAREN have just finished up having sex on the couch. She lays her head on his chest.

KAREN

We're so fortunate.

(beat)

We have everything to look forward to, James. Cohen growing up, Anfernee finally getting his life back on track and going back to school.

**JAMES** 

Mm-hmm.

KAREN

Hey, and who knows? Maybe, um, maybe you and I will get the chance to go all over the world one day.

**JAMES** 

Mmm. That would be great.

KAREN

Yeah.

(beat)

Not that the future is anything we should ever take for granted, though. Troy and Charmaine have so little time.

**JAMES** 

Yeah. That's why we have to spend as much time as we can with the people we love. You think about it, we... really don't have a heck of a lot of time. The older we get, the faster it seems to go by.

(sighs)

I lost years and years with Michelle. How can I make up for not being there during her child hood?

KAREN

You can't change the past.

(beat)

(MORE)

KAREN (CONT'D)

But you can change your entire future... just by being there, just by loving her, James.

**JAMES** 

That I can do.

They kiss...

INT. AIKMAN APARTMENT - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

KYLA and CHARMAINE are still standing near the stove as they continue to have a conversation with TROY.

**KYLA** 

(controlling her emotions
with difficulty)

Daddy, please don't say that. Even if it's true, we don't want you to take our hopes away.

Charmaine puts her arm around her daughter for emotional support.

TROY

I mean, it's a fact.

(beat)

And the truth is, I'm not going to be here for a lot more... a lot more breakfast. I'm just not.

Kyla is controlling her emotions with difficulty.

TROY (CONT'D)

I'm not. You can make -- I'm not --

Kyla goes into Troy's arms and hugs him tight as she cries.

TROY (CONT'D)

Sweetie, I'm sorry. I'm just not.

Charmaine hugs them all as they come together for emotional support...

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

CHARISSE and BRIAN are still standing by the desk that the computer sits on as they continue to have a conversation. Charisse starts to put the files in a briefcase.

#### CHARISSE

I am not worried about what Orlando thinks or says because he has made himself perfectly clear. He doesn't want to have a future with me, which means that I have to make my own future. And the best way for me to start my new life would be working for you. Just think how great it would be. You would have your own assistant available to you 24/7.

#### BRIAN

(sighs)

That's another problem. That's a lot of time for us to spend together without a break from each other.

#### CHARISSE

Mmm. You're right. Well, we could agree on one day a week that we don't see each other at all, like Sunday.

Brian turns away and tries to put on his tie.

BRIAN

(chuckles)

Ohhh.

#### CHARISSE

Brian, starting a new business is gonna be really challenging. So -just think -- you can save money on apartment rent and office space, and once your company is hugely successful and doing really well, you can afford a -- oh -- you can afford a great office space in one of those really cool corporate towers downtown.

Charisse pulls Brian around to face her as he continues to put on his tie.

CHARISSE (CONT'D)

And think how much money you'll have for a really nice place of your own at that point.

A beat. Brian just stares at her as he thinks about her comments.

BRIAN

All right. All right. I'll move in. And you're hired.

CHARISSE

Brian! Thank you.

Charisse is so excited she hugs Brian tight...

EXT. EVA'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

ADAM and MICHELLE are having a conversation outside. She is still angry.

**ADAM** 

Whoa, whoa. Where you going? What's wrong?

MICHELLE

(angry)

I've had it with Eva.

**ADAM** 

Oh, of course. Why didn't I know that? What happened this time, Michelle?

MICHELLE

(angry)

She told grandma Cathleen to stop giving me money and buying me clothes.

**ADAM** 

(sarcastically)

Oh, that's a real stinker. Hard times ahead, huh?

MICHELLE

(angry)

I don't need that, Adam.

ADAM

Well, maybe you should stop acting like a spoiled little hoe. You know your mom only wants what's best for you.

# MICHELLE

(angry)

No, she doesn't. And I'm not gonna let Eva Jones get in my way. I'm gonna get exactly what I want, and nobody is gonna get in my way. Mother or not, she's gonna learn a lesson that she'll never forget.

Michelle storms away...

END OF SHOW