

MIRANDA'S RIGHTS

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ACT I

FADE IN:

CLOSE ON A SERIES OF IMAGES FILLING THE SCREEN

A selfie of a girl, lips puckered in an obnoxious duck face; a drunk wedding guest, face-planting into the cake; a sorority girl, getting a tramp stamp tattooed on her back.

MIRANDA (V.O.)

We all make mistakes. It's human.
But to have to live with those
mistakes forever, in vivid color
photographs? That's the Internet.

MORE IMAGES RAMPING UP SPEED

A selfie in the back of a cop car; in the ER; at a funeral.
A penis Sharpee'd on a forehead; man buns; nip slips; stupid
people doing stupid things; until finally:

WE FREEZE ON a photo of MIRANDA COALE, 22, in bed with a man
we'll come to know as LOGAN O'SHEA, 45. They're naked,
private parts kept private by network TV BLACKOUT BARS.

MIRANDA (V.O.)

And that's me... with black bars
over my lady parts.

MATCH CUT TO:

THE SAME PHOTO now displayed on screen next to a NEWS ANCHOR:

NEWS ANCHOR

The photos released on Reddit today
depict Massachusetts Senator Logan
O'Shea in bed with Miranda Coale --

A LOCAL NEWSWOMAN:

NEWSWOMAN

The hacker known as FameWhore also
leaked texts and emails supporting
allegations that O'Shea and Coale
were having an affair --

JIMMY FALLON ON THE TONIGHT SHOW:

JIMMY FALLON

Ms. Coale is a Harvard law student
and met O'Shea at an internship in
the D.A.'s office.

(MORE)

JIMMY FALLON (CONT'D)

When asked if he plans to lawyer up, O'Shea said he prefers his lawyers lying down.

A TWITTER FEED reacts in real time:

@hannabanana: Don't take naked pictures if you don't want people to see them. #Internet101 #MirandaGate

@godislove: Sad to see another family destroyed by adultery. Shame on you, #MirandaCoale

@jt2: At least the intern is hot this time. #MillennialMonica

MIRANDA (V.O.)

Millennial Monica. That one stuck.

MORE IMAGES FILL THE SCREEN. Tabloid covers; Facebook posts; Reddit threads. FOOTAGE OF O'Shea shoving through a mob of reporters; Miranda doing the same.

MIRANDA (V.O.)

I know, it's my own fault. I slept with a married man, and I let him take pictures of it. But you wanna know my biggest mistake...? I fell in love with him.

INT. DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - DAY (2009)

Miranda walks briskly across the lobby in high-heels, perky ponytail bouncing atop her perky head. Think Tracy Flick from *Election*, if she hadn't had to cheat.

MIRANDA (V.O.)

It started at my internship.

Across the lobby, O'Shea emerges from a hallway with an army of aides. His eyes meet Miranda's and we FREEZE.

MIRANDA (V.O.)

Actually, that's a lie. It started with my dad.

INT. MIRANDA'S CHILDHOOD HOME - DAY (FLASHBACK)

10-YEAR-OLD MIRANDA watches through a cracked door as her MOM and DAD shout at each other. Finally, her dad throws up his hands in frustration and storms out of the house. Helpless, Miranda watches him go.

MIRANDA (V.O.)

The kid logic was simple. Be perfect, and he'll come back.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

The PRINCIPAL awards Miranda VALEDICTORIAN. She beams at the crowd of parents... but the seat next to her mom is empty.

MIRANDA (V.O.)

He didn't. So in a blatant display of daddy issues, I tried to win his love vicariously. Through my boss --

CUT TO:

--AN OFFICE: Miranda swoons over a MANAGER barking orders.

MIRANDA (V.O.)

My college basketball coach --

--A GYM: she gazes dreamily at a COACH shouting drills.

MIRANDA (V.O.)

Oh, and Professor Garner. He was almost age appropriate.

--A LECTURE HALL: she smiles coyly at the lecturing PROF.

MIRANDA (V.O.)

If you were a powerful, emotionally withholding father figure, chances were I had a crush on you. Obviously, not a super healthy attachment pattern, but also harmless, because no one ever reciprocated... until him.

--BACK TO WHERE WE STARTED: Miranda meets eyes with O'Shea in the hallway. Ever so slowly, he smiles.

MIRANDA (V.O.)

He wooed me -- *hard*. Flew me all over the country, put me up in swanky hotels, whispered sweet nothings while we were... *you know*.

INT. FOUR SEASONS HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Miranda and O'Shea make love under silk sheets, gazing into each others' eyes amidst romantic candlelight. He whispers:

O'SHEA

I love you, Miranda Coale.

MIRANDA (V.O.)

I mean, come on. I didn't have a chance.

EXT. HARVARD DORMS - NIGHT

Upset, Miranda paces, on her cell phone.

MIRANDA

I need to speak-- no, don't hang--!

They hang up. She deflates.

MIRANDA (V.O.)

When the photos leaked, I thought it would finally be the motivation he needed to leave his wife. We'd been talking about running away together for weeks, living happily ever after in the White House or, at the very least, in a Colonial on Cape Cod... Like I said. Mistake.

INT. DORM ROOM - NIGHT

Miranda watches TV, nervously chewing her cuticles.

ON SCREEN -- O'Shea holds a press conference, his WIFE at his side, trying to appear dignified as he reads a statement.

O'SHEA (VIA TV)

I'm deeply sorry for the disgrace I've brought upon my office and my family. My relationship with Ms. Coale was a lapse in judgment.

Miranda's hand falls from her mouth in quiet devastation.

MIRANDA (V.O.)

It was like someone stuck a hot poker in my heart. And then... the world twisted it.

CUT TO:

--THE D.A.'S OFFICE: Miranda pleads with her BOSS. He shakes his head and extends a hand. She hands over her ID badge.

--ON CAMPUS: Miranda hurries across the quad. Other students point, stare, and laugh. She avoids their gaze.

--HER DORM: Miranda moves out amidst a throng of PAPARAZZI. Her mom helps shield her face from the cameras.

MIRANDA (V.O.)

In one week, I was hacked, spread naked across the digisphere, and dumped on national TV... and everyone blamed *me* for it!

--BACK AT HOME: Miranda sits on her bed, teary-eyed, scanning her FACEBOOK FEED, which is flooded with cruel messages.

MIRANDA (V.O.)
I lost my job, my friends, my future, *everything*. And for a while, I just laid there. Like road kill. But you know what I finally realized?

Miranda closes the laptop and looks directly AT US.

MIRANDA
Lying down was never my favorite position.

OFF a wry smile tugging at her lips, we SMASH TO:

TITLE: "MIRANDA'S RIGHTS"

INT. DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES LAW FIRM - DAY (PRESENT)

Clad in a skirt suit, Miranda waits in a sleek lobby, compulsively peeling the name-brand label off a BOTTLE OF WATER. An ASSISTANT appears through the door.

MIRANDA (V.O.)
Turns out the Internet is good at lots of things. Destroying lives, getting an online law degree, adorable cat videos...

ASSISTANT
Mira Harper?

MIRANDA (V.O.)
...and applying for jobs with a pseudonym.

Miranda stands. Assistant's face flashes with recognition.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Miranda sits across from a PARTNER at the firm, who squints at her like she's some worrying breed of insect.

PARTNER
But your name, Mira...?

MIRANDA
I do that. To get interviews.

PARTNER

Not really the best way to make a first impression.

MIRANDA

At least I get to make one.

Touché.

MIRANDA

Mr. Gruber, I know I messed up, but the thing that happened to me, the way I was treated... it wasn't right. And I'm going to make damn sure that, as a lawyer, that kind of injustice never happens to someone else. Please, if you give me a chance, you won't regret it.

OFF Miranda, eyes alight with hope...

INT./EXT. MIRANDA'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Miranda plops in, defeated, and tosses her empty WATER BOTTLE into the back seat. It lands atop a pile of a dozen others like it. The detritus of her failed interviews.

Then, she spots it. Parked across the street is a windowless KIDNAPPER VAN. She sighs, slumping down in her seat.

MIRANDA (V.O.)

Paparazzi. The recurring disease I can't seem to shake. Like STDs with a zoom lens.

She covers her face with giant sunglasses and STARTS the CAR.

MIRANDA (PRELAP)

That's my fourteenth rejection.

INT. RED BARN RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A trendy DTLA eatery -- the kind of place young professionals go to drink overpriced cocktails out of mason jars. Miranda sits across from her mom, DANI, 50s, eternally supportive. She still wears sunglasses despite being indoors. At night.

MIRANDA

Fourteen. I mean, God, I had sex. I'm not a terrorist.

DANI

Maybe fifteen's the charm.

MIRANDA
Said no one, ever.

DANI
You don't have to keep doing this
to yourself, Miranda. You could
write a blog or drive for Uber --

MIRANDA
Those aren't careers, Mom.

DANI
You don't have to be a lawyer.

MIRANDA
Correction, I do. Or everything
I've been through is for nothing.

That lands like a boulder. Softening, Dani reaches out and
takes Miranda's hand.

DANI
I just hate to see you suffer.

This strikes a chord with Miranda. She shakes her head.

MIRANDA
Thanks, but I'm way past suffering.
I'm twenty-eight, I'm sleeping in a
bed the color of bubblegum, and my
most exciting outing is date night
with my mom. I'm pretty sure this
is what rock bottom feels like.

TANNER (O.S.)
Miranda...?

Miranda looks up to see TANNER KLEIN, 30, charming,
confident, dreamy, and her eyes go wide. We FREEZE.

MIRANDA (V.O.)
Nope. *This*. This is rock bottom.

FLASH TO:

INT. DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - DAY

We're BACK IN THE D.A.'S OFFICE when O'Shea and Miranda first
met eyes. Then, we REWIND IN FAST MOTION.

Miranda marches backwards out of the lobby, down the front
steps of the building, and into the passenger seat of a car.

MIRANDA (V.O.)
Remember when I said falling for
O'Shea was a mistake?

We STOP REWINDING, RETURNING TO NORMAL TIME TO SEE:

MIRANDA (V.O.)
That's because I was already in
love with someone else.

Tanner is behind the wheel. He leans over and gives Miranda
a long, lingering goodbye kiss.

MIRANDA (V.O.)
Tanner Klein. The one who got
away. Because I dumped him. For a
dad stand-in.

SMASH BACK TO:

INT. RED BARN RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Tanner and Miranda, as before.

MIRANDA (V.O.)
This won't be awkward at all.

The SCENE UNFREEZES and Tanner smiles at Dani.

TANNER
Hi, Mrs. Coale.

DANI
Tanner.

Dani glances at Miranda, who stares, stunned. Tanner returns
his gaze to her. His face a landscape of emotion.

TANNER
Wow, it's... it's been a long time.

MIRANDA
Six years. I mean, I think. I
haven't been keeping track.

TANNER
How are you?

MIRANDA
Great! I'm so great, life is
great. I'm a lawyer now.

TANNER
Really? Me, too. Where are you
practicing?

MIRANDA

I'm, uh... fielding offers. You?

TANNER

Young Law Group. It's a firm my friends and I started last year. Down in Manhattan Beach.

She smiles at this.

MIRANDA

You always said you wanted a Manhattan law firm.

TANNER

That I did.

He smiles back. Something passes between them -- a history that's still very much alive. Tanner motions to a suited CLIENT waiting for him by the front door.

TANNER

I should probably get going. Good to see you, Miranda.

MIRANDA

You, too.

He goes. Miranda turns to Dani, who levels a knowing look.

DANI

He started his own firm...

Miranda gets what she's implying. Violently shakes her head.

DANI

C'mon, what do you have to lose?

MIRANDA

The tiny, miniscule shred of dignity I have left.

DANI

I thought you were past suffering.

Miranda looks at Tanner, considering...

EXT. RED BARN RESTAURANT - LATER

Tanner hands his ticket to the Valet.

MIRANDA (O.S.)

I'm not great.

Tanner sees Miranda standing behind him.

MIRANDA

I'm terrible, actually. I can't get a job. Today, some guy named Lou Gruber told me I'm not a "good fit" for his firm's "values," which, believe me, is not the first time I've heard that euphemism. And I know you're, like, literally the last person on planet Earth I should ask, but would you ever consider... hiring me?

Tanner studies her, something complicated playing behind his eyes. Miranda thinks better of it, shakes her head.

MIRANDA

Sorry, that was -- bye.

Mortified, she spins away. Tanner calls after her.

TANNER

Miranda. Miranda, *stop*.

She does.

TANNER

I can't promise anything... but I can get you an interview.

This does not compute. Tanner extends a business card.

TANNER

Come by tomorrow, we're having a client thing.

MIRANDA

Seriously? Why? I mean -- *why*?

TANNER

Everyone deserves a second chance, Miranda.

OFF Miranda, reeling... MUSIC RAMPS UP, and we CUT TO:

EXT. MANHATTAN BEACH - ESTABLISHING - DAY

Miranda's car drives down a hill towards the PACIFIC OCEAN, then stops outside a LOFTED WAREHOUSE mere steps from the beach. Miranda peers through her window, jaw agape.

The place pulses with the life of an EXCLUSIVE PARTY.

JAZZ PLAYS as young professionals, entertainers, business-types, techies, and entrepreneurs mingle with cocktails and hors d'oeuvres. It's a sea of beautiful people in casual-chic, dotted by the occasional bikini as a guest crosses the white sands to the sparkling ocean. For the ambitious 20- and 30-something, this is a place to see and be seen.

Which is the last thing Miranda wants. She glances down at herself. Inappropriately dressed in an uptight skirt-suit.

MIRANDA

This was a horrible idea.

EXT. YOUNG LAW GROUP (YLG) - DAY

PICK UP Tanner amidst the crowd, pitching two APP DEVELOPERS wearing identical SHIRTS with a giant MAGNIFYING GLASS on it.

TANNER

It's true, the big firms have more resources. But they're run by armies of overworked attorneys who milk their clients for every last penny so that their paycheck justifies to their neglected families why they work a job they hate. Here, at Young Law Group? We actually *like* our jobs. We don't have to rob you to feel good about ourselves. That's why we offer flat fees, no hourly billing. If you retain us as counsel, you'll get better service at a better price. Plus...? We know how to throw a party.

The Developers chuckle. Tanner spots Miranda roaming towards the Warehouse and pats the men on the shoulders.

TANNER

Think about it. We'll talk Monday.

As he heads off, the men exchange glances, impressed.

Tanner meets Miranda mid-lawn. She efforts at an easy smile.

MIRANDA

Hey.

TANNER

You can't go in like that.

The smile fades.

TANNER
You look like a spy.

MIRANDA
I left my business bikini at the dry cleaners.

TANNER
We have a strict no-suits rule here. Waived only on trial days.

MIRANDA
Somehow I don't think less clothes is a great idea.

TANNER
Nothing I haven't seen before.

MIRANDA
Nothing *anyone* hasn't seen before.

TANNER
As I recall, you swore you'd never be caught dead in a pencil skirt.

MIRANDA
(smiles at the memory)
God, that was a long time ago.

TANNER
Six years -- I think. I haven't been keeping track.

He smirks. She squints at him, then shrugs off layers until she wears only a skirt and camisole. Tanner nods approval.

TANNER
C'mon. I'll show you around.

EXT. YLG - FRONT DOOR - DAY

JACOB MIZRAHI, 32, huge, humorless, with a hairline-trigger temper and a WHISTLE dangling from his neck, stands at the door like a bouncer. He shakes his head at two insanely HOT CHICKS, 28, who for the sake of clarity we'll refer to by the color of their hair: BLONDE and BLONDER.

JACOB
You're not on the guest list.

BLONDE
But we could be...

Blonde flashes a \$50 bill. Jacob stares, unmoved.

JACOB
Bribery is a felony in California,
punishable by a year in prison.

Blonder sidles up seductively.

BLONDER
Oh c'mon... there must be something
you want...

JACOB
You're right. I want you to go.

He turns his back, and they scoff, indignant -- then freeze
when they see Miranda walking up with Tanner. What the--?

TANNER
Jacob, I'd like to introduce you to
Miranda. Miranda, this is Jacob,
our top litigator.

MIRANDA
Nice to meet you.

She extends a hand. If Jacob recognizes her, his expression
belies nothing. He shakes it formally.

TANNER
I need everyone in Homeroom.
Miranda wants to apply for a job.

BLONDER
As what, a blow-job consultant?

The Blonde Women snicker. Pissed, Jacob grabs his whistle,
places it between his lips, and BLOWS THE FUCK OUT OF IT.

They shrink at its piercing SCREECH. Jacob spits it out and
points fiercely.

JACOB
NO LIST, NO ENTRY! NOW GO!

They scurry off. Jacob exhales slowly, forcing a calm smile.

JACOB
Homeroom. See you there.

As they move away, Miranda raises a brow.

MIRANDA
Is that a rape whistle?

TANNER
It's an anger-management thing.

INT. YLG - CONTINUOUS

Tanner leads Miranda into YLG's lofted industrial warehouse, a cool combo of brick, cement, and stainless steel. The ground level houses a living room, a kitchen, and a glass-walled dining/conference room; upstairs has separate rooms/offices; and both levels overlook the ocean.

TANNER

At first, this place was about survival. None of us could find a job, so we made our own. But eventually we realized we had an opportunity to build something we believed in. We don't have any associates, hierarchies, or bosses. All five of us are equal partners, we all make the same salary, and we don't put any names on the door.

MIRANDA

So Young Law Group...?

TANNER

I wanted to call us Outlaw, LLC, but I was outvoted.

EXT. YLG - BACKYARD - DAY

EMILY ELLISON, 29, tactful, even-keeled, resident peace-keeper, listens patiently as a MOMPREENEUR, 35, rants.

MOMPREENEUR

I don't care how much it costs, I want you to bury her!

EMILY

Suing your co-founder won't just hurt her; it'll hurt your business. I know you're angry, but this isn't a decision you want to make in a moment of passion.

Emily's PHONE DINGS. She excuses herself, passing...

SHAUN RUIZ, 31, open, mischievous. He flirts with a guy whose MUSCLES are so big, they look inflatable.

SHAUN

I wanna touch them, but I'm afraid they'll pop.

MUSCLES

Only one way to find out.

Muscles flexes for Shaun's benefit as Emily checks her phone. It's a text -- from "SNUGGLES": *You look so sexy right now...*

Emily's head snaps up in alarm. She scans the party, furiously typing: *Are you crazy? You can't be here!*

Jacob lumbers over. Emily pockets her phone; Shaun looks up.

JACOB
Homerom. Now.

EMILY
What's going on?

JACOB
Miranda Coale's applying for a job.

EMILY
What?

Jacob leaves. Emily looks at Shaun. He grins, delighted.

SHAUN
Lana's going to lose her mind.

INT. YLG - KITCHEN

Tanner leads Miranda towards the kitchen, where PAUL, 23, YLG'S intrepid intern, mixes fancy drinks.

TANNER
You want anything? Water?
Signature cocktail?

MIRANDA
(seriously?)
Job interview.

Tanner shrugs, flags down Paul.

TANNER
Any sign of Xara?

Paul shakes his head, and Tanner takes this in stride, starts walking again. Miranda follows, brow raised.

MIRANDA
Xara? As in the pop star?

TANNER
Haven't you seen the tabloids?

MIRANDA

They sorta lose their charm once you're in them.

TANNER

She's a prodigy, right? Released her first album at nineteen? Well, her birth certificate leaked last week, and it turns out she's twenty-nine. Her record label's suing for fraud, and we want the case. So... we set a meeting.

He gestures to the party. Miranda realizes:

MIRANDA

This is your client thing?

With a grin, Tanner pushes through glass-doors into Homeroom.

INT. YLG - HOMEROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A farm table runs down the center of what the partners call HOMEROOM -- a dining/conference-room surrounded on all sides by glass walls. A work bubble in the middle of the party.

LANA (O.S.)

Are you insane??

LANA HARRIS, 30, confident, alpha-female, gapes at Miranda, whose gaze ping-pongs nervously between the other partners: Tanner, Jacob, and Emily stand around the table; Shaun sits, feet up, watching amusedly as the drama unfolds.

TANNER

We've been looking for someone to replace The Traitor for weeks.

LANA

And this is your solution. A walking disaster.

MIRANDA

Should I go?

LANA

Yes.

TANNER

No.

EMILY

Maybe we should do this later --

LANA

No, he brought her here, we're doing it now.

(MORE)

LANA (CONT'D)

(to Tanner)

I know you two have history, but this is a bad idea. Objectively. What'll people say if we hire Millennial Monica?

TANNER

They'll be *saying things*. That's the point.

Lana scoffs.

TANNER

Right now, when people hear Miranda's name, they think *sex scandal*. But if we hire her, *they'll think of us*. We could pay the best PR firm in the country and never get that level of exposure. She's a lawyer who needs a job; we're a firm that needs PR. It's a perfect fit. Her specialty is criminal law, which we need. And I promise you, she's gonna work her ass off for us -- because we're her only shot.

LANA

What about our reputation? She could damage our credibility.

TANNER

Not if she does well.
(smiling at Miranda)
Everyone loves a redemption story.

The partners exchange looks, swaying.

TANNER

Let's vote. Yay.

Tanner looks to Shaun. He gives Miranda a once-over.

SHAUN

No one would ever wear a cami with that skirt, which means she showed up here in a suit. She's desperate and has a lot to prove.

(with a grin)

I like that. Yay.

EMILY

If her reputation will allow us to help more clients, I'm in.

TANNER

Jacob?

JACOB

Undecided. Abstain.

All eyes on Lana.

LANA

We don't even know if she's a good lawyer!

MIRANDA

So give me a case.
(off their looks)
Any case. If I lose, I'm out.

Lana squints at her, challenged... smiles at Tanner.

LANA

Fine. Whitney Carver.

TANNER

Lana...

LANA

She said any case.

TANNER

The D.A.'s got a total hard-on for that one.

MIRANDA

I'm good with hard-ons.

Crickets.

MIRANDA

Sorry. I make bad jokes when I'm nervous.

Lana and Tanner face off.

TANNER

It's unwinnable.

LANA

Then we'll see what she's made of.

TANNER

Two out of three.

LANA

Her terms. One case.

TANNER
Fine. But she second-chairs.

LANA
First chair, with Emily as backup.

Tanner considers this...

TANNER
Deal.

They shake on it. And then, to Miranda's horror, Tanner uses Lana's hand to pull her in close. He grabs her hips.

TANNER
You're so sexy when you negotiate.

Tanner leans in... AND KISSES LANA ON THE LIPS. Miranda's eyes go wide. What the--

BANG BANG! It's Paul, rapping his fist on the glass wall.

PAUL THE INTERN
(muffled through the wall)
Xara's here!

TANNER
Coming.

He kisses Lana one more time, exits. Miranda looks at Shaun.

MIRANDA
Are they...?

SHAUN
Gross? Yes.
(off her look)
He didn't tell you? Tanner and
Lana are engaged.

Oh fuck. OFF Miranda...

MIRANDA (V.O.)
Well, this should go well...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT I

ACT II

FADE IN:

INT. MIRANDA'S CHILDHOOD HOME - BEDROOM - MORNING

Overachiever paraphernalia litters the walls. Miranda combs through her closet as Dani sits on a bubblegum-pink twin bed.

DANI

I distinctly remember you saying, on multiple occasions, that you regret dumping him.

MIRANDA

I say a lot of things after a pint of Häagen-Dazs.

DANI

I just think you should be careful. He's engaged.

MIRANDA

Why are you lecturing me? You told me to ask him for a job.

DANI

I'm not lecturing. I'm cautioning.

MIRANDA

I appreciate it, Mom, but I destroy marriages, not engagements.

She whips a dress off its hanger.

EXT. YLG - MORNING

KNOCK KNOCK! Now in that dress, Miranda raps on the front door. Tanner answers, shirtless and sweaty from a workout. Miranda tries (and fails) not to stare at his gleaming abs.

MIRANDA

Did you... run here?

TANNER

I live here.

Miranda double-takes. *What??*

TANNER

We all do. Most young lawyers live at the office anyway, we figured we'd make it official. If you get the job, you'll move in, too.

MIRANDA

Whoa, Tanner, I realize I'm not an authority on healthy relationships, but should we really *live together*?

TANNER

We'll be working together.

MIRANDA

Different.

TANNER

Not here it isn't.

He heads inside. Miranda blinks, stunned.

LANA (PRELAP)

Whitney Carver...

INT. YLG - HOMEROOM - MORNING

Lana drops a huge box of case files in front of Miranda. Tanner, Jacob, Emily, and Shaun gather at the table, which displays an impressive breakfast spread.

LANA

Driving while intexticated. Enjoy.

With that, Lana heads for the door. Tanner calls after her.

TANNER

Aren't you going to eat?

LANA

Not hungry.

She exits.

TANNER

She's moody this morning.

SHAUN

Yeah, it's almost like we're interviewing your ex or something.

Tanner squints at him. Miranda picks up a file from the box.

EMILY

It's a sad case. Seventeen-year-old honors student hit a kid crossing the street because she was texting her boyfriend. The kid lived, thank God;

(MORE)

EMILY (CONT'D)

and she swears she wasn't texting at the time of the accident. But the D.A. doesn't care. He's charged her with negligence.

MIRANDA

A *felony*? She's a kid.

TANNER

It's a political stunt. Westen's up for reelection, and he's losing in the polls. He needs a big win.

JACOB

He'll get it. Unless you convince the jury it wasn't her fault.

MIRANDA

What does Whitney say happened?

JACOB

The boy darted in front of her car, and she couldn't stop in time. Presumably because she was texting.

SHAUN

She wasn't.

Jacob shoots an annoyed look at Shaun.

SHAUN

I talked to her. She's not lying.

JACOB

You cannot know that with certainty.

SHAUN

I can. It's a gift.

Jacob sticks his WHISTLE in his mouth threateningly. Tanner ignores them, continuing:

TANNER

Our sixth partner was originally handling the case, but he dropped it when he quit.

MIRANDA

Sixth partner?

TANNER

The Traitor. Emily was second chair, so she can help transition when you meet the clients today.

MIRANDA

Today?

Tanner pats Miranda on the arm, nodding at the case files.

TANNER

Hope you're still a speed reader.

INT. YLG - BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

SPLASH! Miranda sloshes water on her face.

MIRANDA (V.O.)

You'd think that after a scandal, a heartbreak, and a digital whipping, nothing would phase me anymore.

She dries her face and looks at her reflection in the mirror. Her mascara runs everywhere.

MIRANDA (V.O.)

You'd think.

INT. YLG - HALLWAY

Miranda emerges from the bathroom right as Lana strides past, brushing by coldly. Miranda calls after her.

MIRANDA

There's nothing between Tanner and me anymore.

Lana halts.

MIRANDA

In case you're worried.

LANA

I'm not.

MIRANDA

Really? Because it doesn't seem like you like me very much.

LANA

I don't.

Oh.

LANA

Miranda, I don't care if you've slept with my fiancé, a married man, or the damn pope.

(MORE)

LANA (CONT'D)

I care that you make bad choices,
and that when you do, you bring
down yourself and everyone around
you. This firm is too important to
me to let you do that here.

She keeps walking. Miranda watches her go. *Great.*

INT. YLG - HOMEROOM - DAY

A hand outstretches jauntily.

MIRANDA (O.S.)

It's nice to meet all of you.

Miranda offers her hand to MR. and MRS. CARVER, 40s, and
their daughter, WHITNEY, 17. Mr. Carver stares, incredulous.

MR. CARVER

Is this a joke?

Miranda drops the hand. Mrs. Carver gapes at Emily.

MRS. CARVER

Our daughter's life is on the line,
and you want to put it in the hands
of that... that...

MIRANDA (V.O.)

Slut, mistress, tramp --

MRS. CARVER

Harlot?

MIRANDA (V.O.)

Oh, good. Victorian-era insults
are my favorite.

MR. CARVER

I want Marcus's number. Wherever
he went, we'll follow him.

EMILY

He dropped your case when he quit,
Mr. Carver. I hate to say it, but
he didn't think it was winnable.

This gives him pause.

MIRANDA

Your reservations are totally
reasonable. Healthy, really. But
I know what it's like to be in your
daughter's position --

MRS. CARVER
Whitney is *nothing* like you.

MIRANDA
No, but she's about to have her
life ruined by a politician.

MR. CARVER
And what're you gonna do? Sleep
with him?

WHITNEY
Dad!

MIRANDA
If there's anything unwanted fame
has taught me, it's that the media
is a weapon -- and the fact is, I
can help you use it. My
involvement will draw attention to
this case and allow us to expose it
for what it is: a witch-hunt. You
wanna win this thing in court? Win
in the court of public opinion.

The Carvers look to Emily. She nods. Mr. Carver sighs.

MR. CARVER
I hope you know what you're doing.

INT. YLG - GROUND FLOOR

Miranda emerges from Homeroom with the box of case files.

WHITNEY (O.S.)
Miranda?

Whitney hangs back as Emily leads her parents to the front
door. Miranda clocks Whitney's uneasy expression.

MIRANDA
Everything alright?

WHITNEY
I don't want to take a plea deal.

MIRANDA
What...?

WHITNEY
My parents keep talking about it,
but I don't want to. I know nobody
believes me, but I didn't hit that
kid because I was texting.

MIRANDA

I believe you.

Whitney scoffs -- *yeah, right*. Miranda puts down the box, leveling with her.

MIRANDA

People said a lot of stuff about me too, Whitney. What I did, why I did it... I didn't have anyone to defend me. You do.

Whitney takes this in, moved.

MIRANDA

I'm probably not what you had in mind. But I've got your back.

OFF Whitney, finally feeling understood...

INT. YLG - PRIVATE ROOM - DAY

Sparse with a desk and office chair. The door opens, and Tanner leads Miranda inside. She lugs the box of files.

TANNER

You can work here temporarily. If you get the job, then permanently.

MIRANDA

Thank you, Tanner. You have no idea how much I appreciate this.

He waves a dismissive hand.

MIRANDA

No, really, I feel like I've been stranded, all alone, on Whore Island, and... well, I was starting to worry I'd never get off of it.

TANNER

Are you saying I picked you up on Whore Island?

MIRANDA

No, I -- that came out wrong. What I mean is, I've been drowning, Tan, and you really threw me a lifeline. And the fact that you were willing to do that *for me*, of all people... it means a lot.

He reaches out to touch her shoulder, and that familiar chemistry passes between them. A whisper of the past.

TANNER
You're welcome.

With that, he heads for the door. Miranda surveys the room.

MIRANDA
Hey, Tan? Why'd he quit? The
Traitor.

TANNER
(matter-of-factly)
Money.

CUT TO:

INT. KLEIN & ASSOCIATES - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

MARCUS REED, 32, thinks money and power will make him happy (because it will), sits beside KAREN KLEIN, 50s, a whip-smart, formidable career woman. Across the table, a middle-aged RICH DUDE, 40s, is having an apoplectic fit.

RICH DUDE
Leaving me! For her *yoga teacher*!
That bitch is doing this to screw
me. She knows my IPO is next week!
(to Karen)
Say something!

KAREN
Are you finished?

He stops short -- he's not used to being talked to like that. He crosses his arms, settling.

KAREN
First. Your prenup is iron clad.
I know this because I wrote it.
Which means the only thing this
divorce can do is bruise your ego.

He opens his mouth to protest, but she holds up a stern hand.

KAREN
Second. I realize you're under a
lot of pressure, but if you call a
woman a bitch in my office again,
you'll have to find another lawyer.
And we both know there is no one
out there as good as me.

This shuts him up. Karen stands, guiding him to the door.

KAREN

Now. Go enjoy your hundred-million-dollar public offering and let me take care of this.

RICH DUDE

Thanks, Karen. And -- I'm sorry.

She nods, he exits. Karen shakes her head at Marcus.

KAREN

That is why I never got married.

INT. KLEIN & ASSOCIATES - HALLWAY

Karen and Marcus walk and talk through a huge mega law firm.

KAREN

Draft the papers. I want this done quickly.

Marcus nods, keeps matching her pace. Karen glances at him.

KAREN

That's your cue to go, Marcus.

Instead, Marcus produces his phone, pulling up a PHOTO of an Adele-esque diva at a party -- YOUNG LAW GROUP'S PARTY. Karen pauses, intrigued.

MARCUS

That's Xara, the pop star that's being sued by Highline Records. Every civil litigator in town wants the case... Young Law Group's the only one who's gotten a meeting.

KAREN

So far.
(off his look)
Make the call.

INT. YLG - MIRANDA'S ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE ON a legal brief, FADING IN AND OUT OF FOCUS.

REVERSE TO Miranda, reading the brief or, more aptly, trying to stay awake long enough to read the brief.

EMILY (O.S.)

How's it goin'?

Miranda looks up to see Emily leaning against the doorjamb.

MIRANDA

With the case? Or my ex's fiancée?
When you're dealing with me, you
have to be specific.

Emily sits beside her.

EMILY

Lana doesn't speak for us, you
know. I don't have a problem with
you working here.

MIRANDA

I won't be working anywhere if I
lose this case.

EMILY

You're not going to lose.

MIRANDA

They have phone records, police
statements, and an army of expert
witnesses lined up to prove that
Whitney was texting when she hit
that kid.

EMILY

And you have you.

Miranda snorts a laugh.

EMILY

It's not a bad idea, using yourself
to get the media's attention.

MIRANDA

It's starting to feel like one.

Emily takes this in. Something on her mind.

EMILY

It's hard, isn't it? Hiding?

MIRANDA

It was at first. But then I got
Netflix streaming.

They share a smile as -- Shaun hurries in.

SHAUN

Miranda... you're going to want to
see this.

INT. YLG - UPSTAIRS COMMON ROOM - NIGHT

Tanner, Lana, and Jacob gather in front of a flat-screen TV.
We HEAR WHAT THEY'RE WATCHING BEFORE WE SEE it:

MAN (VIA TV)

I believe that, despite our
differences, we, the American
people, must come together to fight
for freedom, equality, and justice.

Shaun arrives with Miranda and Emily at his heels. When
Miranda sees the screen, she stops dead.

ON TV -- SENATOR LOGAN O'SHEA stands at a podium once again,
his Wife by his side, as a gathered crowd roars with support.
O'Shea smiles charmingly, an American flag pin on his lapel.

MIRANDA

What's going on...?

Lana, Tanner, and Jacob turn.

LANA

Your boyfriend's running for
President.

OFF Miranda, color draining from her face...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT II

ACT III

FADE IN:

INT. YLG - KITCHEN - MORNING

CLOSE ON a laptop, displaying a TWITTER FEED for #OSHEA2016:

@CODwarrior: Hell yeah, O'Shea 4 Prezident! #PimpInChief.

@dem4life: He couldn't keep his affair secret, and we're gonna hand him the nuke codes? #OSUCKS

@kevinr257: If @LoganOShea loses bc of #MirandaCoale, the next photos to leak will be of her dead body.

REVERSE TO Miranda sitting at the counter, reading the feed.

MIRANDA (V.O.)

I know. I shouldn't look. People always say that to the cyber-bullied: ignore it, stay away, unplug. But I keep hoping it won't be as bad as I think.

(beat)

It's always worse.

Shaun strides past, arm around a hot blonde...

GIRL? She wears post-coital yoga pants and clearly spent the night. Miranda gawks -- *well that's unexpected.* Shaun kisses Girl goodbye and saunters into the kitchen, smiling.

SHAUN

Morning. Latte?

(off her look)

I was a barista in law school.

MIRANDA

Sure. Thanks.

Shaun gets to work at a fancy espresso machine, glancing at Miranda's laptop. He clocks the Twitter feed.

SHAUN

Screw O'Shea.

MIRANDA

I did. That's the problem.

Miranda shuts the laptop with a heavy sigh. She looks exhausted. Like she's aged a hundred years in a second.

MIRANDA
 Maybe I should withdraw from
 Whitney's case.

SHAUN
 Why?

MIRANDA
 You want the whole list?

Shaun stops what he's doing.

SHAUN
 Miranda, I'm a half-black, half-
 Mexican bisexual from small-town
 Texas. You know who my childhood
 best friend was? The pastor's son.
 (off her look)
 If you act like who you are is this
 shameful secret, people follow your
 lead. But if you don't care? No
 one else does. And if you own it?

He offers her the latte with a smile.

SHAUN
 You could be the best thing going
 for Whitney Carver.

OFF Miranda, wheels spinning...

EXT. YLG - MORNING

BANG BANG! Miranda's fist pounds on the window of a familiar
 KIDNAPPER VAN parked out front, startling awake the paparazzo
 inside: WADE, 40s, a lovable loser with the charm of a drunk
 uncle. He grabs for his camera. Miranda covers her face.

MIRANDA
 Put it down, Wade, or you lose the
 exclusive.

That gets his attention. He slowly lowers the camera.

MIRANDA
 I assume you're following me again
 because of O'Shea?

WADE
 Yep. Miss me?

MIRANDA
 Like the herp.

WADE

That hurts my feelings.

MIRANDA

How much would a photo of me go for right now? Considering.

WADE

Depends how naked you are.

Gross. Miranda extends a post-it note with an ADDRESS.

MIRANDA

I need press on me -- not *on me* on me, *about me*. My client is being charged with a crime she didn't commit, and I need to get the word out. So be there at noon, and you can take all the pictures you want. I suggest a headline like "Miranda Coale Crusades For Justice," but I'll let you paparazzify it.

Wade takes the note. As she strides off:

WADE

Hey, Miranda. You really want to get people's attention?
(off her look)
Wear a short skirt.

Ugh. She strides off.

EXT. L.A. COUNTY CRIMINAL COURTHOUSE - DAY

A 20-story monolith rises into a clear blue sky. Miranda and Emily step into the frame, striding towards it -- but as they near the lobby, Miranda slows, gazing up at the courthouse with a mixture of reverence, fear, *hope*. Emily hangs back.

EMILY

You okay...?

MIRANDA

I've been dreaming about this moment for so long, I never thought it would actually happen.

Emily smiles, nods at the doors -- *let's go*.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

Twelve average CITIZENS sit in the jury box.

WESTEN (O.S.)

On May 6th, at 3:17 PM, twelve-year-old Owen Green crossed the street when the defendant, Whitney Carver, hit him with her Honda Civic.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY VINCENT WESTEN, 45, ruthless, motions to Whitney, seated beside Miranda and Emily. The Jury and JUDGE QUINN, 50s, look on. In the back, we SEE WADE.

WESTEN

She broke his femur, two ribs, and sent him to the ER. All because she was texting and driving. Now, the defense is going to argue that Ms. Carver wasn't texting at the exact moment of the accident. That it wasn't the reason she hit Owen Green and that she therefore doesn't deserve to go to jail. But texting and driving is against the law. Ms. Carver knew it. She chose to do it anyway, knowing full well the danger it posed. The question is: will you decide her negligence is okay? Or will you keep our streets and children safe?

As Westen sits, Miranda stands. WHISPERS peel through the room as people realize who she is. Wade uses the opportunity to furtively snap some photos. Quinn bangs her gavel.

Silence falls. Miranda squares off with the Jury.

MIRANDA

It's true. Texting and driving is against the law. And my client did that -- but not when Owen Green was crossing the street. And that matters. The D.A. wants you to believe that this Yale-bound honors student got in her car, turned on her phone, and made a negligent choice to disregard human life. But that's not what happened. She's a teenage girl who got in a car accident. *Accident.*

With that, she turns to her table, smiling proudly. *Nailed it.* But to her surprise, Whitney and Emily's faces are wan.

Miranda follows their gaze to the JURY. Glowering at her.

MIRANDA (PRELAP)
They hate me.

EXT. L.A. COUNTY CRIMINAL COURTHOUSE - GRAND PARK - DAY

Miranda and Tanner lunch on the sweeping lawns.

TANNER
They don't hate you.

MIRANDA
They do. Full-on, deep-seated. If they could shoot hate lasers out of their eyes, I'd be dead.

TANNER
Odd example, but I get your point.

MIRANDA
What am I gonna do? My main job is to be likable, and *no one in that room likes me*; not even my clients!

TANNER
I like you.

This softens her.

MIRANDA
Really?

He nods, and they share a smile. It's a total moment... until Tanner's PHONE CHIRPS AN ALARM. He checks it.

TANNER
I gotta go. Xara's coming at 2:00.
(stops, doubles back)
Hey, Miranda -- next time the jury stink-eyes you, try that thing where you picture them naked.

MIRANDA
Not sure that works if they're all picturing *me* naked.

TANNER
Worth a shot.

INT. YLG - KITCHEN - DAY

A TEA KETTLE SCREAMS, spewing steam in a steady stream. Lana shuts off the stove, pouring the kettle into a cup of tea.

TANNER (O.S.)
Since when do you drink tea?

Lana startles, spilling the tea down the front of her neatly pressed, button-up shirt. She sighs, annoyed, and begins unbuttoning her shirt. She faces Tanner.

He raises a roguish brow at her now-exposed bra and torso.

LANA
Don't even think about it.

TANNER
I'm thinking about it.

LANA
We're about to have the biggest client meeting of our careers.

TANNER
And my fiancée is topless in my kitchen.

He advances. She swats at him playfully.

LANA
Stop. We need to prep!

TANNER
I can multitask...

He picks her up, kissing her neck. She laughs, tickled.

O.S., a THROAT CLEARS. It's Paul the Intern, peeking into the kitchen. Tanner puts Lana down, covering.

TANNER
Tell Xara we'll be right in.

PAUL THE INTERN
Actually... her office called.
She's not coming.

Tanner and Lana balk.

PAUL THE INTERN
She went with a different firm.

TANNER
Who?

INT. KLEIN & ASSOCIATES - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

BOOM! Tanner bursts through the doors, storming in on Karen and Marcus as they meet with another CLIENT.

TANNER
First you poach my partner and now
this??

MARCUS
What're you --

TANNER
Shut up, Traitor.

Karen smiles coolly, nods at Marcus.

KAREN
Please take Mr. Lin to my office.
I'll be there in a minute.

Reluctantly, Marcus leads Lin out of the room. As he passes, Tanner taps his nostrils.

TANNER
You've got some brown on your nose.

Marcus glares, exits. Tanner whirls on Karen.

TANNER
That's the third client you've
stolen from us in the last year.

KAREN
Xara wasn't your client yet.

TANNER
Whose fault is that?

KAREN
She told me about the strategy you
pitched her at the party. Not bad.
Settling would quiet the scandal,
and it's not as if she doesn't have
the money. Unfortunately... Xara
wants to go to trial. With us.

TANNER
What?

KAREN
The label can't sue her for being
twenty-nine. That's ageism.

TANNER

They're not suing her for her age!
They're suing her for *lying* about
her age! *Which she did!*

Karen doesn't say anything. It dawns on Tanner:

TANNER

You advised her to take it to
court. To screw me.

KAREN

Every firm in L.A. wanted this
case, Tanner. It isn't personal.

TANNER

I know you don't get it, but I'm
doing something special at Young
Law Group. We all are.

KAREN

Before or after you throw parties
in the house I helped you buy?

His gaze narrows. Karen leans forward, her eyes tender.

KAREN

I admire your idealism, Tan.
Honestly, I do. But that law firm
is amateur. If you really want to
make a difference, you need power,
resources, a *name*. And here...?
Yours is already on the door.

TANNER

I see -- I should kill myself a
hundred hours a week so I can end
up rich and lonely.

(shaking his head)

Sorry, Mom. I don't want to be
you.

He storms out. As the door slams behind him, we:

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT III

ACT IV

FADE IN:

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

Whitney's trial. One major change: the courtroom is PACKED WITH PRESS. Miranda's infamy at work.

Miranda is tense as Westen interviews an EXPERT witness.

EXPERT

Studies show that texting and driving is more dangerous than driving while intoxicated.

WESTEN

Why?

EXPERT

It creates something called inattention blindness. The driver's mind is so distracted by their phone, they literally become blind to the road in front of them.

WESTEN

So theoretically...

MIRANDA

(on her feet)

Objection! Calls for speculation.

WESTEN

Your Honor, I haven't even posed the question yet.

MIRANDA

He wants the witness to theorize.

WESTEN

I want him to illustrate an example of the science we're talking about.

JUDGE QUINN

I'll allow it.

MIRANDA

Your Honor!

JUDGE QUINN

Overruled, Ms. Coale.

Miranda wilts, plopping into her seat.

WESTEN

Dr. Stall. Does a driver have to be in the middle of texting to experience inattention blindness?

EXPERT

No.

Westen suppresses a satisfied smile. Miranda hangs her head.

MR. CARVER (PRELAP)

We're getting killed in there!

INT. COURTHOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

Whitney and her parents gather with Emily and Miranda.

MIRANDA (V.O.)

He's right. Like serial-axe-murdered-in-the-face, killed.

MR. CARVER

We want a new lawyer.

WHITNEY

No!

Mr. and Mrs. Carver snap a look at Whitney, surprised.

WHITNEY

She's doing what she said -- look at all the people in there!

MRS. CARVER

Honey, the media isn't the one deciding if you're guilty.

WHITNEY

I trust her, okay? I don't want a new lawyer!

She stalks off. The Carvers glare at Miranda, then scramble after their daughter. Miranda and Emily watch them go.

MIRANDA

I am so screwed.

EMILY

No. You're grounded.

OFF Miranda, no idea what that means...

INT. YLG - HOMEROOM - NIGHT

Paul distributes Chinese takeout containers to Miranda and the partners. Lana shakes hers off -- *not hungry*. Tanner circles the room with a bowl, collecting cell phones.

SHAUN

Dude, Tan. Your mom's the worst.

TANNER

Yep. Heartless.

Lana kisses Tanner kindly. Much to Miranda's discomfort.

LANA

There'll be other clients.

TANNER

Not multiplatinum ones.

SHAUN

I used to date one of Xara's security guys. I'll see if he can get us a sit-down.

Tanner approaches Emily with the bowl. She hurriedly types a text into her phone to "SNUGGLES": *Grounded. Call u tomorrow*. Hides the text and dumps her phone in.

TANNER

Is that everyone's?

OFF their looks, Tanner places the bowl outside Homeroom.

TANNER

Ladies and gents, we are grounded.

Shaun hoots. Everyone takes a seat.

TANNER

We've got court transcripts, jury profiles, evidence lists. No one leaves this room until we crack the Carver case. Let's get to work.

INT. YLG - HOMEROOM - LATER

Photos of the accident, papers, and juror profiles litter the table. Miranda listens as the partners rapid-fire.

JACOB

Westen's strategy is unbeatable. By showing that *when* the texts were sent is irrelevant, he's eliminated Whitney's only real defense.

EMILY

What if we put her on the stand?
Let her tell her own story?

JACOB

His cross could do a lot of damage.

EMILY

Not if we humanize her. Make it so
the jury doesn't want to convict.

SHAUN

All we need is one, right? To hang
the jury, force a mistrial?

Shaun picks up the head shot of JUROR #10, a bleached blonde who looks like she probably chews gum with her mouth open.

SHAUN

This chick definitely texts and
drives. If there's a way to make
her feel like she could be Whitney,
she'll never vote to convict.

LANA

Force a mistrial? That's our play?
(shaking her head)
We should start talking plea deal.

Miranda bristles at this.

MIRANDA

No. I promised Whitney she
wouldn't have to do that.

LANA

Miranda, you can't win this case.

MIRANDA

I can't? Or you don't want me to?

Burn. Lana darkens.

LANA

I would never sacrifice a teenage
girl to get what I want. Some of
us have lines we won't cross.

She huffs out. Tanner shoots Miranda an apologetic look and follows. Miranda sighs, dropping her head in her hands.

And that's when something on the table catches her eye -- the corner of a PHOTO, sticking out from beneath a mess of papers and file folders. She cocks her head, withdraws it.

It's a PICTURE chronicling the injuries OWEN GREEN sustained in the accident. There are bruises, wounds, abrasions... but her gaze narrows on his LEFT WRIST.

MIRANDA

Are those scars?

She lifts the photo. Emily, Jacob, and Shaun lean in, squinting. But the image is too small to tell.

EMILY

Here.

She pulls out her phone, tapping on a MAGNIFYING GLASS APP.

SHAUN

Nice work, Nancy Drew.

EMILY

Our clients created it, smart ass.

They huddle up as Emily holds the phone over the PHOTO. There it is, under the magnification -- THREE HORIZONTAL SCARS marring Owen's wrist.

OFF Miranda and the partners, exchanging glances...

EXT. SUBURBAN HOME - DAY

Miranda KNOCKS on the front door of a California bungalow, Emily by her side. The door opens to reveal Owen's mother, MRS. GREEN, 40s, heavy-set, no-nonsense.

MIRANDA

Mrs. Green, I'm Miranda --

MRS. GREEN

I know who you are. If you're trying to get us to drop charges --

EMILY

This isn't about our client, Mrs. Green. It's about your son.

The slightest thaw in Mrs. Green's eyes. Miranda sees it.

MIRANDA

Please. We're here because it's important. For Owen.

Mrs. Green considers them... then steps aside to let them in.

INT. SUBURBAN HOME - OWEN'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

An adolescent collection of movie posters, action figures, and video games. OWEN GREEN, 12, homely, very overweight, with a cast on his right leg, reads a COMIC BOOK in his bed. Mrs. Green leads Miranda and Emily inside.

MRS. GREEN

He hasn't left his room much since the accident.

MIRANDA

I wouldn't want to leave if this was my room. It's pretty cool.

The compliment gets Owen's attention. She smiles at him.

MIRANDA

Hey, Owen. My name's Miranda. What're you reading?

OWEN

Spider-Man.

MIRANDA

Ooo, he's my favorite. I really relate to the part about him being bullied.

OWEN

You do?
(off her nod)
Why? You're pretty.

She pulls up a chair, sits.

MIRANDA

I did something kinda stupid when I was younger. People were really mean to me about it. Sometimes, they still are. It makes you feel sad and alone, being bullied. All you want to do is hide until it goes away. And then, when it doesn't...? You feel like you'd do anything to make the pain stop.

(gently)

You know what that's like, huh?

She eyes his LEFT WRIST. He recoils instinctively.

MIRANDA

I went on your Facebook. I saw the mean things those boys said.

Mrs. Green looks to Emily, confused. Emily nods, reassuring.

OWEN
They were just kidding.

MIRANDA
I don't think you believe that. I think it hurt you a lot. And I think you wanted to make the pain stop... so you cut your wrist.

MRS. GREEN
What're you talking about?? My son would never --

OWEN
I only tried it once, okay?

Mrs. Green stops dead.

MRS. GREEN
What...?

OWEN
It was stupid, it didn't even work.

Mrs. Green's eyes well with tears. Miranda leans forward.

MIRANDA
The day of the accident, those boys posted messages on your wall saying they were going to beat you up after school. Did that have anything to do with what happened?

OWEN
I wanna finish my comic book now.

Miranda knows she's hit on something. She presses.

MIRANDA
Are you afraid to tell me? Because you won't get in trouble.

He doesn't answer. Mrs. Green watches him, emotional.

MRS. GREEN
Owen...?

OWEN
You don't understand, okay?? I'm too big, they're faster than me!

MIRANDA

What do you mean, who's faster?

OWEN

I... I can't say.

MIRANDA

You can't hide in your room
forever. Trust me, I tried.

His lip trembles. And then... the levies break.

OWEN

They said they were gonna choke me
with my double chin. They chased
me, and... I had to run into the
street, or they would've caught me.

MRS. GREEN

Oh my God, why didn't you say
something?

OWEN

They said they'd kill me if I told.

MIRANDA

That's what bullies do. They make
you feel like you can't stand up
for yourself, but you have to.
It's the only way to make it stop.

She takes his hand.

MIRANDA

It took me six years to figure that
out. But you? You can do it now.
I'll even help you if you want.
(with a smile)
We'll be like Spider-Man.

Owen looks at her. Suddenly, he throws his massive arms
around Miranda's neck. It startles her at first, but then...
she hugs him back.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT IV

ACT V

FADE IN:

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Lana sits in a nondescript office, across from an empty desk, when her CELL PHONE RINGS. She answers.

LANA

Hello?

TANNER (V.O.)

She did it. She broke the case.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. COURTHOUSE - HALLWAY - AT THE SAME TIME

Tanner stands in a crowded hall, finger pressed to his ear.

TANNER

Owen Green just testified that he ran in front of Whitney's car. You should see how many people are here, Lana. This is huge for us.

Inexplicably, Lana's eyes well with tears.

TANNER

Babe, everything we wanted for the firm, for our careers... it's happening. And all it took was a walking disaster.

Lana laughs despite herself.

TANNER

We should celebrate. Where are you?

The door to the office opens.

LANA

My meeting's starting. Gotta go.

She abruptly hangs up, wiping her eyes as a WOMAN wearing a crisp white DOCTOR'S COAT enters. She smiles at Lana, sits.

DOCTOR

Well, Ms. Harris, your suspicions are correct. Congratulations. You're pregnant.

Lana pales.

INT. JUDGE'S CHAMBERS - DAY

Miranda and Westen stand across from Judge Quinn, mid-fight.

MIRANDA

My client wasn't being negligent.
Owen darted in front of her car!

WESTEN

It doesn't change the facts of the
case. If Whitney Carver hadn't
been texting, she would've seen him
and stopped in time.

MIRANDA

That's not true. Your Honor, the
family wants to drop charges!

WESTEN

It's not their call. Or were you
so busy with O'Shea that you missed
that day in law school?

JUDGE QUINN

Enough.

Miranda and Westen glare at each other. No love lost here.

JUDGE QUINN

Sorry, Ms. Coale. If his office
wants to proceed, we're going to
have to let the jury decide.

OFF Miranda, fuming...

INT. COURTHOUSE - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Miranda stalks down the hall with Emily.

MIRANDA

I want to punch him in his smug
face.

EMILY

You will. With your words.

MIRANDA

Not as satisfying.

EMILY

If you nail your closing argument,
you're gonna win this thing.

MIRANDA
That's a big "if."

EMILY
Not with some coaching...

Miranda raises a curious brow as THE PRELAPPED BONG OF A TIBETAN SINGING BOWL BRINGS US TO:

INT. YLG - JACOB'S ROOM - AFTERNOON

Jacob sits on a zafu pillow, striking a wooden mallet against a Tibetan singing bowl with a BONGGGG. He breathes deeply.

KNOCK KNOCK! It's Miranda. She sees the zen and backpedals.

MIRANDA
Sorry, I can come back.

JACOB
No, please.

He motions to a sheepskin rug on the floor. Miranda sits as Jacob BONGS the bowl again. OFF her look:

JACOB
It helps control my anger.

MIRANDA
So you get mad sometimes. Yelling never killed anybody.

JACOB
I once got so angry driving on the 405, I bit my steering wheel.

MIRANDA
Okay, yeah, probably best to control that.

JACOB
I will lose my temper at you someday. It is a certainty.

MIRANDA
I'll probably deserve it.

A whisper of a smile flicks across Jacob's humorless mein.

JACOB
How may I help you?

MIRANDA

Emily thought I should have you listen to my closing argument. You know, to give me tips.

JACOB

Go ahead.

MIRANDA

Oh -- now? Okay, uh...

She takes to her feet, composing herself.

MIRANDA

To commit felony negligence, you must do three things --

BONG. Jacob hits his bowl, and Miranda recoils in alarm.

JACOB

You're not a legal professor.

MIRANDA

Right, okay...

(trying again)

We know that Owen Green darted in front of my client's car --

BONG.

JACOB

Don't victim blame. He's twelve.

MIRANDA

Jacob, the fact that Owen ran into the street means texting didn't cause the accident. It disproves negligence.

JACOB

Stop trying to win the case. Win the jury.

MIRANDA

How? I'm like this giant, naked elephant in the room.

JACOB

So address it. Put yourself into your argument.

MIRANDA

I should let Emily close.

Jacob hurls his bowl at the wall. It lands with a THUNK-BONG.

JACOB

You know why people don't like you, Miranda? You don't like you. O'Shea gets to run for President, and you won't even let yourself be a good defense attorney. So you screwed up. Get over it. Or no one else will.

He grabs his bowl and goes. Miranda reels.

EXT. MANHATTAN BEACH - WALKING STREET - DAY

A ginormous SECURITY GUARD stands outside a limousine parked at the mouth of one of Manhattan Beach's walking streets. PICK UP Tanner and Shaun, striding towards him.

TANNER

What'd it take to make this happen?

SHAUN

A date with Humongor.

He means the Security Guard. Tanner arches a brow.

SHAUN

I'm a desirable commodity, Tanner.

The Security Guard opens the limo door. Tanner gets in.

INT./EXT. LIMO - CONTINUOUS

Tanner slides in the back seat next to a zaftig Aussie. We RECOGNIZE her from the photos on Marcus's phone as XARA, 29.

TANNER

Thanks for meeting me, Xara.

XARA

I'm afraid it won't do you much good. I've made my decision.

TANNER

(nods, then:)

When I was six, I got in a fight at school. I don't remember why, but I do remember throwing the first punch. And when my mom came to get me at the principal's office, she was furious: not because I started the fight. Because I admitted it.

Xara cocks her head, not sure where this is going.

TANNER

Our society has become so afraid of admitting fault, we waste millions of dollars and hours litigating things that aren't even worth fighting over. I get why you did what you did, but it was wrong to lie. It's not wrong to admit it. And big firms like Klein & Associates don't believe that. If they did, they couldn't get rich.

Xara considers him. Tanner extends a business card.

TANNER

Call me if you change your mind.

INT. YLG - KITCHEN - EVENING

A neon plastic spoon plunges into a cup of FROZEN YOGURT. Miranda sits alone with her laptop, watching a familiar YOUTUBE VIDEO OF O'SHEA at a press conference:

O'SHEA (V.O.)

...My relationship with Ms. Coale was a lapse in judgement.

Lana pads in, and Miranda quickly closes the video. Lana opens the refrigerator, staring numbly at its contents. Miranda clocks her shell-shocked expression.

MIRANDA

You okay?

LANA

I'm fine.

No, she isn't. She shuts the fridge.

MIRANDA

Is this because of last night?

LANA

You know, Miranda, not everything's about you.

It's the last straw. Miranda snaps her laptop shut.

MIRANDA

What is your problem with me?

LANA

I told you. I don't respect your choices.

MIRANDA

I made one mistake. ONE. When I was twenty-two-years-old. How much do I have to pay for it before people will decide I've suffered enough? I mean, God, have you never done anything you regret?

This hits Lana right where it hurts. She doesn't answer.

MIRANDA

Of course you have. Yours just aren't all over the Internet.

She stalks out. OFF Lana, feeling worse than ever...

INT. YLG - MIRANDA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Miranda scribbles on a legal pad. Frustrated, she crumples the paper and tosses it at the trash can. Miss. *Ugh.*

TANNER (O.S.)

Long day?

Tanner enters, holding beers. He offers her one, sits on the edge of her desk.

MIRANDA

If you and I get in an argument right now, I'll have managed to fight with half the house.

TANNER

I'm game. Pick a topic.

MIRANDA

Your fiancée hates me.

TANNER

She doesn't hate you.

MIRANDA

No, that's not the topic. That's a thing I'm saying.

TANNER

I know.

Miranda sighs, thoughtfully sips her beer.

MIRANDA

Why don't you hate me?
(off his chuckle)
I'm serious. You have every reason
to, after what I did.

TANNER

We've all done things, Miranda.

MIRANDA

See? That's what I mean. I hurt
you, get myself spread across the
web with the guy I *hurt you for*,
and you act like I forgot to send
you a thank you note for some lame
Christmas present. Like socks.

TANNER

Do you *want* me to hate you?

MIRANDA

No, I... I just don't understand
how you can forgive me.

Tanner gently touches her shoulder.

TANNER

Miranda, I tried to stay mad... but
I couldn't. Yeah, you hurt me.
But only because I loved you.

MIRANDA

I loved you, too.

They gaze into each other's eyes. Miranda realizes things
are getting too close and pulls back.

MIRANDA

Thanks for the beer.

Tanner nods, gets up. Pauses in the doorway.

TANNER

Lots of people have affairs. You
were just an easy scapegoat. The
same thing's happening to Whitney.
Remember that.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

The place is full. Spectators, journalists, the Carvers, and
all of YLG's partners sit in the back. Miranda inhales
deeply, stands. Reads her notes.

MIRANDA

To commit felony negligence you must do three things. Engage in reckless activity. Show disregard for human life. And act in a way that another person wouldn't.

The Jury stares, unmoved, when -- BONGGG! Jacob strikes his Tibetan Bowl. Miranda glances at him, and he nods curtly. She looks back at the Jury... and makes a decision.

She abandons her notes.

MIRANDA

My name is Miranda Coale, and I slept with a married Senator. I'm sure you all know this, which is why when you look at me, you see a manipulative homewrecker. But here's the truth: I was twenty-two, and I was in love. Was it a mistake to have an affair? Yeah. But did I deserve to have my life destroyed for it? The worst part is... I was so ashamed of what I'd done, I didn't stand up for myself. I allowed a powerful politician to tell my story, and I lost six years of my life. But I'm not going to let that happen to my client.

The court listens, riveted. Even Lana is moved.

MIRANDA

Did Whitney Carver text at some point during her drive? Yes, she admits it. But it's not why she hit Owen Green. *He ran into the street in front of her car*, and there was nothing she could do. But this powerful D.A. wants you to believe a different story. And if you do? It'll destroy her life. Is that justice? I mean, how many of you in this room have never made a mistake? How many of you have never sent a text while driving?
(looking at Juror #10)
This was not negligence. It was an accident.

OFF the Jury, impossible to read...

EXT. L.A. COUNTY CRIMINAL COURTHOUSE - DAY

Young Law Group bursts outside.

SHAUN

You. Were. Amazing.

JACOB

Excellent closing, Miranda.

LANA

That was a ballsy move.

Miranda eyes Lana cautiously. Tanner watches, unsure what's coming. Finally... Lana extends her hand.

LANA

Good choice.

They shake. Respect earned.

A COMMOTION O.S.: REPORTERS race towards Miranda like a flock of camera-armed vultures. She puffs with pride.

MIRANDA (V.O.)

Finally. The media's interested in me for doing something *good*.

REPORTER #1

Ms. Coale! Why did you decide to speak out after all these years?

REPORTER #2

Is it true that you were in love with Senator O'Shea?

Miranda deflates.

MIRANDA (V.O.)

Figures.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT V

ACT VI

FADE IN:

EXT. L.A. COUNTY CRIMINAL COURTHOUSE - DAY

Lana sits alone under a tree, lost in thought, as the partners and Miranda hang out. Emily clocks Lana, crosses.

EMILY
Something wrong?

Behind her, a burst of LAUGHTER. Tanner cracks up at something Miranda just said. Lana regards them.

EMILY
You don't have anything to worry about, you know. Tanner loves you.

LANA
Why does everyone assume I'm threatened by her?

EMILY
...Because you've been in a horrible mood since she got here?

Lana looks away. Emily senses something is amiss.

EMILY
What is going on with you, Lana?
(off her silence)
You can talk to me. Whatever it is, it'll stay between us.

LANA
I'm pregnant.

SHOCKWAVE. Tears well in her eyes. Emily touches her back.

EMILY
Whoa, hey, it'll be okay. Tanner's a great guy, he'll support you --

LANA
Not if it isn't his.

Emily recoils, like she touched fire. Lana sees Shaun waving at them as the others head into court. She wipes her eyes.

LANA
We should go. Jury's back.

She walks off. Emily gapes after her, stunned.

JUDGE QUINN (PRELAP)
Will the defendant please rise?

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

Whitney, Miranda, and Emily stand. Westen folds his hands confidently. Whitney's parents hold each other. Tanner, Lana, Jacob, and Shaun watch tensely.

JUDGE QUINN
Has the jury reached a verdict?

FOREMAN
We have, Your Honor.

JUDGE QUINN
What say you?

FOREMAN
The State versus Whitney Carver, on the charge of felony negligence, we find the defendant... not guilty.

The room explodes. Miranda slumps with relief. Westen fumes. Whitney embraces her parents, beaming at Miranda.

WHITNEY
Thank you.

MR. CARVER
We should never have doubted you.

MIRANDA
Honestly? It would've been weird if you hadn't.

IN THE BENCHES

The partners cheer. Tanner beams at Lana, but she seems far away. He pulls her into his arms.

TANNER
Hey -- you okay?

LANA
(forces a smile)
I'm fine.

CUT TO:

A TELEVISION SCREEN

As shaky, CELL-PHONE FOOTAGE of Miranda's CLOSING ARGUMENT PLAYS. A serious-looking NEWSCASTER elaborates.

NEWSCASTER

The video has already been viewed a half-a-million times on YouTube. Joining us now is the man who recorded it, freelance journalist Wade Pack. Hello, Wade.

Wade appears, looking like he actually took a shower.

WADE

Thanks for having me, Alan.

NEWSCASTER

Why do you think Ms. Coale decided to go public now, after six years?

WADE

Well, Alan, we can't say for sure, but it may be in response to O'Shea's presidential announcement.

THE TV MUTES and we REVERSE TO:

SENATOR LOGAN O'SHEA, watching a flat-screen in a patriotic office. He looks to his AIDE, eyes narrowed.

O'SHEA

I think it's time Ms. Coale and I have a talk.

INT. YLG - AFTERNOON

MUSIC BUMPS. Drinks flow. The partners, the Carvers, and a handful of others gather for an intimate celebration.

Emily talks to the Carvers when her PHONE DINGS. It's a text from "SNUGGLES": *I'm here*. Emily excuses herself, passing...

Miranda and Dani, who carry a moving box.

INT. YLG - MIRANDA'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Miranda and Dani heave the box onto a growing stack.

DANI

Feels like college.

MIRANDA

Yeah, well, I'm hoping things end a little differently this time.

KNOCK KNOCK. It's Lana, toting a brown doggie bag.

MIRANDA
Lana, hey... this is my mom, Dani.

DANI
Nice to meet you.

LANA
You too.
(to Miranda)
Could we...?

DANI
I'll go get another box.

Lana watches Dani leave.

LANA
It's cool that you're so close.

MIRANDA
When your mom's your best friend,
it doesn't feel cool.

LANA
You have other friends.

With that, she offers the doggie bag. Miranda eyes it.

MIRANDA
Is this some kind of acid bomb
that's gonna blow up in my face?
'Cause I like my face.

LANA
Just open it.

Tentatively, Miranda obeys. She opens it to find FRO-YO.

LANA
I like you.
(off her stunned look)
I know. Surprised me, too.

Miranda smiles, withdraws a carton, and offers it to Lana. She reaches to take it, stops abruptly.

LANA
If you go near Tanner, I will kill
you. And I won't need acid.

MIRANDA
Got it.

Satisfied, Lana takes the carton. And then, ex-girlfriend and fiancée settle in to share some froyo.

INT./EXT. CAR - LATE AFTERNOON

Emily sneaks towards a tinted-windowed car parked down the street from YLG. As she slides into the passenger seat...

MAN (O.S.)
I missed you.

REVEAL Marcus behind the wheel. That's right. Marcus Reed, the Traitor, is Snuggles. Emily gives him a reproving look.

EMILY
Are you trying to get caught?

MARCUS
Laid, actually.

Emily swats at him. He grins.

EMILY
I'm serious, Marcus. If they find out about us --

MARCUS
We're not doing anything wrong.

EMILY
They won't see it that way.

MARCUS
You can't avoid this forever, Em.

EMILY
I'll tell them, okay? But not yet.

He takes this in, resigned. Lifts her hand to his lips.

MARCUS
Well, you can say a lot of things about sneaking around... but at least it's sexy.

He kisses her hand. Emily smiles.

INT. YLG - LATER

Shaun chats up Muscles. He spots Miranda and Lana descending the stairs and raises his glass.

SHAUN
Our new partner, Miranda Coale!!

Cheers and claps all around. Miranda smiles happily.

Paul hurries up, breathless with excitement.

PAUL THE INTERN
Xara's here.

What? Everyone stops, floored. Paul looks at Miranda.

PAUL THE INTERN
And she wants to talk to you.

INT. YLG - HOMEROOM

Xara looks up as Miranda and Tanner enter.

TANNER
Xara, this is a surprise. I
thought you'd made your decision.

XARA
We all make mistakes.

Said with an impish twinkle. Xara addresses Miranda.

XARA
I knew Highline Records would be
more likely to sign me if they
thought I was a teen prodigy. So I
lied. But I don't want to anymore.
I wanna own what I did. Like you.
(beat)
Will you be my lawyer?

OFF Miranda and Tanner, sharing a smile...

EXT. YLG - ROOF - SUNSET

POP! A cork rockets out of a bottle of bubbly. Tanner pours
into two red Dixie cups as he and Miranda take in a 180-
degree view of the ocean. Miranda raises her cup.

MIRANDA
To second chances.

They clink plastic. As Miranda drinks, her eyes smile at
Tanner over her cup. It's infectious. He smiles back.

MIRANDA
I feel good. I can't remember the
last time I felt good.

TANNER
Miranda's got her mojo back.

MIRANDA

Yeah, because of you.
(sincerely)
Thank you.

Tanner nods. They gaze at the setting sun.

MIRANDA

I think I want to get him.
(off his look)
Famewhore. The hacker who leaked
the photos, I want to sue him.

TANNER

Miranda, no one ever finds these
guys. And even if you could, it's
a hard case...

MIRANDA

I don't care. I don't even need to
win. I just want him to know what
he did to me.

Tanner studies her, his face an enigmatic mask. He raises
his Dixie cup in another toast.

TANNER

Then let's get him.

A SERIES OF SHOTS

--Downstairs, Shaun dances with Muscles at the party.

--Lana sits at the kitchen counter, contemplative. Jacob
offers her a drink, which she considers. She lifts a bottle
of water to her lips instead.

--KAREN KLEIN sips a glass of WINE as she dines solo at a
restaurant. Her PHONE CHIRPS with an email. The subject:
XARA. The message: *Fired us for Young Law Group*. Karen stops
chewing... and smiles proudly.

--The same EMAIL hits Marcus's phone, which lies abandoned in
the front seat as Marcus and Emily make love in the back.
It's passionate, steamy... and just when things start to get
too graphic for network, we GLIDE OUT the fogged-up windows
to the car's exterior, which DISSOLVES INTO:

--Miranda's car pulling up to a RECYCLING CENTER. She gets
out with a bag of her EMPTY WATER BOTTLES -- fourteen total.

MIRANDA (V.O.)

About now, you're expecting me to say something deep and meaningful, about life, the universe, and my place in it.

Miranda feeds the bottles into the recycling machine.

MIRANDA (V.O.)

The truth is, I don't know the moral of this story yet. Because for the first time in six years...

The machine spits out a ticket: *REDEMPTION* -- \$.70.

MIRANDA (V.O.)

It's not over.

Miranda pockets the redemption with a smile.

INT. YLG - TANNER'S ROOM - NIGHT

Tanner lies in bed, staring at the ceiling. He glances to Lana sleeping soundly beside him, then carefully slips out from under the covers.

He opens his laptop, steals another look at her. Then unlocks the top drawer of his desk and removes a FLASH DRIVE from a hidden spot underneath. He loads the drive into his computer, and the file appears.

Its name: FAMEWHORE.

Tanner opens the file to reveal JPEGs and PDFs of every NUDE PHOTO, EMAIL, AND MESSAGE released to the press. He highlights all files... and wipes the drive.

Tanner Klein is FameWhore. He's the hacker who leaked the affair and destroyed Miranda's life.

OFF his face, twisted with guilt, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF PILOT