JENNIFER FALLS

"Pilot"

written by

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ACT ONE

SCENE A

FADE IN:

INT. CEO'S OFFICE - BLAIR CAPITAL - MORNING

DON HIRSH, (50) AN EMPTY SUIT, ALL TAN, TEETH, AND A HAIRPIECE, CONFERS WITH CLAY (35) HIS UNDERLING.

DON

She's going to yell.

CLAY

We have to let her go, Don. Half of

Jennifer's clients won't work with her.

DON

I hate it when she yells.

JENNIFER DANTE, (40S) ENTERS. SHE HAS A LOT OF STRENGTHS. SHE'S BEAUTIFUL, SMART, SUCCESSFUL-- BUT ONE WEAKNESS: SHE HAS A LITTLE BIT OF A SICILIAN TEMPER. WHICH CAN BE CHARMING AND AMUSING. AS LONG AS IT'S NOT DIRECTED AT YOU.

JENNIFER

You wanted to see me, Don?

DON

There she is! You look fantastic!

JENNIFER

Thanks. I'm having a good day.

DON

Well, it's early.

JENNIFER

What?

DON

Jennifer, I respect you too much to pussyfoot around so I'm just going to say it straight out. Clay?

CLAY

We're letting you go.

DON

That was hard for me.

JENNIFER

I don't understand. Why?

CLAY

You have anger issues. Frankly, it's something that's followed you your whole career.

JENNIFER

I don't have anger issues! Who says I have anger issues!

DON

(TO CLAY) She's yelling.

JENNIFER

(COMPOSING HERSELF) Okay, I've been told, in the past, that I sometimes speak my mind too freely. But I've been working on that and I really have a handle on it.

CLAY

You called Ed Rasky a dick.

JENNIFER

He is a dick!

CLAY

Ted Dawson at Litwel complained about your attitude.

JENNIFER

Yeah, my attitude is I don't do business meetings in Ted Dawson's hotel room.

CLAY

Carter Sims at Dynaflow won't deal with you because you treat him like an idiot.

JENNIFER

Tell him not to act like one. Are you guys serious?

CLAY

The point is, you intimidate--

JENNIFER

Men?

DON

You're a good investment banker, Jennifer but you have a personality problem. You're aggressive, you're cocky, you take no prisoners--

JENNIFER

All qualities that get male VP's promotions.

DON

And you say stuff like that. I'm sorry but we have to let you go.

JENNIFER

Unbelievable.

DON

Hey, take the rest of the day off. Go to the zoo. They've got these new baby pandas that will melt your heart.

CLAY

(LEANS OVER TO DON) You're doing a great job.

DON

Thank you, Clay.

JENNIFER

I made so much money for this company.

DON

And I think I speak for all of us when I say how much we appreciate that.

CLAY

You speak for me, Don.

A WOMAN AND A SECURITY GUARD ENTER.

DON

Come on in, Guys. Jennifer, you know Connie from HR and, of course, Larry from security.

(MORE)

DON (CONT'D)

(TRYING TO BE FUNNY) They're here to make sure you don't shoot the place up. Right guys? But seriously, you should go now.

CONNIE AND LARRY START TO WALK JENNIFER OUT.

CONNIE

Sorry, Jennifer. This is hard on all of us.

JENNIFER

Little harder on me, Connie.

CONNIE

You're probably right.

DON

(TO JENNIFER, AS SHE GOES) I know it hurts now but you're going to learn from this. You'll thank me someday. (NOT SOTTO ENOUGH) Gonna miss that ass.

JENNIFER'S HAD ENOUGH. SHE TURNS AND WALKS BACK IN.

JENNIFER

Okay, if you're going to fire me for my "anger issues" I might as well get my money's worth. No one give's a rat's ass about what you shot at Pebble Beach or anywhere ever! The assistants are all creeped out by your rape-y back rubs. And that thing on your head isn't fooling anyone. It looks like road kill!

DON

What? Clay?

CLAY SHAKES HIS HEAD BUT DON'S STILL RATTLED.

JENNIFER

Sorry. I know it hurts now, but you'll thank me someday.

CUT TO:

SCENE B

EXT. MAGGIE'S HOUSE - CHATSWORTH - DAY

JENNIFER, ONE HER CELL PHONE AND HER DAUGHTER GRETCHEN (16, ENTITLED BUT REACHABLE) UNLOAD BOXES FROM A SMALL U-HAUL VAN.

JENNIFER

(ON CELL) Mom... Mom... I don't want a party.

GRETCHEN

I don't want to live at Grandma's. How can we be broke? You made so much money.

JENNIFER

(TO GRETCHEN) We spent so much more. Remember all those Christmases in Aspen and summers in Tuscany? So does the bank. (ON PHONE) Mom, you're not listening.

GRETCHEN

So we have nothing?

JENNIFER

No, no. We still have mountains of debt. (ON CELL) Mom, this is just temporary. I don't want you to make a fuss.

THEY ENTER THE HOUSE, CARRYING BOXES.

RESET TO:

INT. MAGGIE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

THERE'S A "WELCOME HOME" BANNER OVER THE MANTLE AND A ROOM FULL OF PEOPLE. JENNIFER'S MOTHER, MAGGIE (60S, NARCISSIST, BOUNDARY ISSUES), GREETS THEM WITH OPEN ARMS, BEAMING.

MAGGIE

You're back!

JENNIFER

I thought we agreed, no party.

MAGGIE

It's just close family and friends.

Very low key.

JENNIFER

Is that a mariachi band?

WE HEAR MARIACHI MUSIC DRIFT IN FROM OUTSIDE.

MAGGIE

Yes! Aren't they wonderful? This close

to Cinco de Mayo I was so lucky to get

them.

JENNIFER LOOKS TO HER DAUGHTER.

GRETCHEN

You're on your own.

SHE PUTS HER IPHONE EARBUDS IN AND PLOPS DOWN IN A CHAIR. THE MARIACHI MUSIC GETS LOUDER THROUGH THE FOLLOWING.

JENNIFER

Coward. (THEN) Mom, I so appreciate

you taking us in but this is not

really a party day for me. I can't

find a job, I'm upside down on my

house, I burned through all my savings

and-- Seriously, if they don't stop

playing La Cucaracha they won't live

to see Seis de Mayo.

MAGGIE

I understand, sweetie. I'll have them play La Bamba.

MAGGIE CROSSES OFF.

JENNIFER

Mom, no. That's not the-- (BUT SHE'S GONE) Aaaaand, I'm home.

JENNIFER AD LIBS "THANKS FOR COMING" AND "NICE TO SEE YOU" AS SHE MAKES HER WAY THROUGH THE GUESTS. SHE STARTS TO EXIT TOWARDS THE HALL BUT RUNS INTO HER SISTER-IN LAW, STEPHANIE (23, BEAUTIFUL, SHALLOW, PASSIVE/AGGRESSIVE AND OPINIONATED).

STEPHANIE

(WAY TOO CONCERNED) Jennifer.

(WHISPERS) How's your anger?

JENNIFER

(WHISPERS BACK) Great, Stephanie.

How's your passive aggression?

STEPHANIE

What? (THEN) You're so funny.

JENNIFER

Where's Wayne?

STEPHANIE

Who knows? You know your brother. We were both sick about what happened to you. You lost everything?

JENNIFER

Yep.

STEPHANIE

Your beautiful house in Santa Monica?

JENNIFER

Yep.

STEPHANIE

Your gorgeous condo in Maui?

JENNIFER

Yep.

STEPHANIE

Your incredible--

JENNIFER

You know “everything” pretty much covers it, Stephanie.

STEPHANIE

I admire your courage.

JENNIFER

It’s mostly Xanex. Excuse me. I have to put this stuff in my room.

STEPHANIE

Of course. (GRABS HER BY THE SHOULDERS) You are not a failure, Jennifer Doyle.

JENNIFER

(BRIGHTLY) Bite my ass, Stephanie.

STEPHANIE

You’re hilarious.

CUT TO:

SCENE C

INT. JENNIFER'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

JENNIFER ENTERS. THE ROOM LOOKS JUST THE WAY IT DID THE DAY SHE LEFT. HER BROTHER WAYNE (40S, BOYISH, BASICALLY GOOD NATURED BUT MALLEABLE) IS SITTING ON HER BED, DRINKING A BEER AND WATCHING A FOOTBALL GAME ON JENNIFER'S OLD TV.

WAYNE

Hey, Sis.

JENNIFER

Wayne!

SHE HUGS HIM, THEN LOOKS AROUND.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

God, my old room. It's like a time capsule from 1985. (OFF A POSTER) Why was Pat Benatar so angry?

WAYNE

(SHRUGS) Love is a battlefield. How'd it go with Mom?

JENNIFER

One step in the door and she was already driving me crazy.

WAYNE

You just have to remind yourself that your relationship with Mom has nothing to do with you.

JENNIFER

(LAUGHS) Right. I always forgot.

WAYNE

And the job search?

JENNIFER

Horrible. I'm basically being blackballed by my industry because they say I have anger issues. Can you believe that?!

WAYNE

(HE CAN) That's... crazy.

JENNIFER

Guys in my business yell all the time but I can't. I have a vagina!

WAYNE

(UNCOMFORTABLE) Are we going to talk about your vagina?

JENNIFER

And now my stupid doctor thinks I should change careers because my work is so stressful. Does he have any idea how stressful it is to change careers?!

WAYNE

Whoa, did that vein in your temple always throb like that? Look at that sucker go.

JENNIFER

Crap. I'm supposed to avoid that. Shove over.

SHE LIES DOWN ON THE BED, TAKES A DEEP BREATH AND STARTS A SORT OF MANTRA.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Calm place, calm place, calm place... Where's my stupid clam place?! Oh, okay, there it is. Better. Better. (LOOKS UP AT THE CEILING) How did my life turn out like this? I was going to be the first American woman in space.

WAYNE

'Til Sally Ride beat you to it.

JENNIFER

Yeah. I know she was a hero and a role model who died too young but I kind of hate her.

SHE GETS UP AND STARTS PUTTING THINGS AWAY.

WAYNE

You could always come work for me at the bar.

JENNIFER

(TOUCHED) Aww, thanks, sweetie.

WAYNE

I know you used to buy and sell companies a ten times bigger than ours, but--

MAGGIE (O.S.)

Jennifer! Charades! You're a team captain!

JENNIFER

(BLURTS OUT) I'll take it!

MAGGIE

You serious?

JENNIFER

I gotta get my own place. I'll take it. If you don't mind me working there while I look for a real job. Sorry, not a "real job." I mean...

WAYNE

It's okay, Jen. I know you didn't get your MBA to push rum bombs on Jamaica Me Crazy Tuesdays. You can stay as long as you want. No pressure.

JENNIFER

Thanks, bro. (HUGS HIM) That's what I need. No pressure.

WAYNE

Stephanie's going to be thrilled to work with you.

JENNIFER

(REALIZING) Oh, God.

WAYNE

Hey, there goes that vein again.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

SCENE D

FADE IN:

INT. MAGGIE'S LIVING ROOM - MORNING

GRETCHEN IS ON THE COMPUTER. JENNIFER COMES IN.

JENNIFER

I have to go into the bar early to train so Grandma's picking you up from school. What's that?

GRETCHEN

My Facebook "In Memoriam" page.

JENNIFER

Your what?

GRETCHEN

I don't want my friends to know what my life is like now. This is way easier.

JENNIFER

Telling them your dead?

GRETCHEN

Of a wasting disease, yeah. My skin was looking horrible, they'll totally buy it.

JENNIFER

Take it down. Tell you what. We'll go clothes shopping tomorrow. That always makes you feel better.

(MORE)

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

(OFF PAGE) Since when were you an accomplished pianist?

GRETCHEN

I'm dead, who's going to quibble.

RESET TO:

KITCHEN

JENNIFER ENTERS AND FINDS MAGGIE MAKING BREAKFAST.

JENNIFER

Morning, Mom.

MAGGIE

Morning! It's so good to have you back, honey.

JENNIFER

Thanks. You know I'm not "back" back. It's just for a few months.

MAGGIE

A few months. For ever. Whatever you need, honey.

JENNIFER

Mmm, bacon waffles? Okay, I may stay forever.

THEY SHARE A SMILE. JENNIFER POURS HERSELF SOME COFFEE.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

So, any one left in the neighborhood from the old days?

MAGGIE

Let's see. Seth Dorfman is living in his Mom's garage--has it fixed up real cute. He runs his own computer repair business and he's still single.

JENNIFER

It's like something out of a fairy tale.

MAGGIE

Oh, and I ran into your old friend Dina Simac at the grocery store last week.

JENNIFER

(BRIGHTENING) Dina?!

MAGGIE

I asked her over for dinner.

JENNIFER

Awesome! I love Dina. We have that kind of relationship where, no matter how long it's been, we can just pick it up again without missing a beat.

MAGGIE

She doesn't want to see you.

JENNIFER

What? Why?

MAGGIE

I'm not sure.

JENNIFER IS CRESTFALLEN.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Are you okay, honey?

SHE STARTS TO REACH FOR HER DAUGHTER'S FACE.

JENNIFER

Mom, don't grab my face. Do not grab my face. You know I don't like it when you grab my face.

SHE GRABS HER FACE.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Mom!

MAGGIE

You're angry.

JENNIFER

Yes! Because you grabbed my face.

MAGGIE

Jen-Jen, talk to Mommy. What's going on?

JENNIFER

Let go! It drives me crazy when you infantilize me.

MAGGIE

(LETS GO) Oh, please. You're my baby girl and you always will be. If you want to call that infantilizing...

JENNIFER

Everyone calls that infantilizing. It's what infantilizing is. (CALLING OUT) Gretchen, breakfast!

JENNIFER GOES INTO THE LIVING ROOM.

RESET TO:

LIVING ROOM

JENNIFER RETURNS TO FIND GRETCHEN STILL ON THE COMPUTER.

JENNIFER

You're not still on that creepy memoriam page, are you?

GRETCHEN

No. I found this awesome e-funeral site. It's a cyber funeral your friends and family can click on and "attend." I can pick my own music and flowers and write my own eulogy. See, I even get to design my own avatar priest.

JENNIFER

Is that Johnny Depp?

GRETCHEN

Yes! Captain Jack Sparrow is saying my funeral mass. What do you think of the *Twilight* coffin? I know it's a little douchey but--

JENNIFER

You’re not having an e-funeral. Come and eat or you’ll be late for school.

GRETCHEN

I hate public school. I hate my life. It’s not fair. None of my friends’ parents lost everything!

JENNIFER

Good. My plan succeeded. I destroyed your life.

GRETCHEN

And now you’re ruining my funeral!

JENNIFER

Let’s go.

GRETCHEN

Fine. (OFF COMPUTER) Oh, hey, check it out. Maroon 5 are my pallbearers.

CUT TO:

SCENE E

INT. OVERTIME SPORTS BAR - CHATSWORTH - EVENING

THE PLACE IS A LOT LIKE CHILI'S. WAYNE IS WORKING BEHIND THE BAR. JENNIFER COMES OUT OF THE BACK ROOM WEARING A LOW CUT, BLACK AND WHITE STRIPED REFEREE SHIRT AND BLACK SHORTS.

JENNIFER

Wow, I'm not used to seeing this much

of my boobs at home.

WAYNE

Sorry, Sis, franchise policy.

Besides, you totally look hot. If I

weren't your brother--

JENNIFER

Not a sentence I want to hear the end of.

WAYNE GOES TO SERVE A CUSTOMER AT THE END OF THE BAR AS STEPHANIE ENTERS FROM THE BACK.

STEPHANIE

Hey, sexy. Here. (ADJUSTS HER

CLEAVAGE) Let the girls out a little.

It'll jack up your tips. (THEN) Oh,

they are out. You know what, just

smile bigger.

STEPHANIE STARES AT JENNIFER.

JENNIFER

What?

STEPHANIE

Nothing. It's just, you used to

babysit me and now I'm your boss.

Isn't that crazy?

JENNIFER

So crazy.

STEPHANIE

Okay, ready to try pouring a draft?

First thing you need to do--

JENNIFER

Stephanie, I was a senior VP for a

Fortune 500 company. I can pour a

beer.

SHE POURS A DRAFT, TAKES IT DOWN THE BAR AND SERVES IT TO THE CUSTOMER, ETHAN (40S, GOOD LOOKING, SMARTER THAN HE LOOKS).

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Here you go. One... (LOOKS AT GLASS)

Glass of foam. Sorry. That one's on me.

ETHAN

So, you're Wayne's sister?

JENNIFER

Jennifer.

ETHAN

Ethan. When did you start working here?

JENNIFER

Oh, no, no, no. I'm not working here.

I'm just helping out. I'm not a bar maid.

ETHAN

O-kay.

SHE HAS TO BEND OVER TO WASH A GLASS AND HER BOOBS HANG OUT.

ETHAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Hello, girls.

JENNIFER STANDS UP, PISSED.

JENNIFER

Hey, just because I have to wear this little sports-whore outfit doesn't mean I have to take crap from jerks like you.

ETHAN

Got it. And these are my girls, Abbie and Lily. It's our weekend together and we're having dinner here.

TWO PRETEEN GIRLS WALK UP TO THE BAR.

JENNIFER

Oh. It's very nice to meet you.

ETHAN

(TO GIRLS) I'll be right there.

THEY GO.

JENNIFER

I'm sorry. Your girls are adorable.

ETHAN

Thanks. Yours are too.

ETHAN GRINS AND LEAVES.

JENNIFER

Cute. (CALLS AFTER HIM) Real cute.

ETHAN (O.S.)

It's a little cute.

WAYNE COMES OUT OF THE BACK ROOM WITH A BLOCK OF ICE AND STARTS CHIPPING IT INTO THE BEER COOLER WITH AN ICE PICK.

JENNIFER

Hey, Bro, can you give me an advance on my check? Gretchen's kinda' bummed and I told her I'd take her clothes shopping. Just like a hundred bucks.

WAYNE

You know what? This feels good. I have to admit all those years you were so successful it was hard being your older brother. It feels nice to have some power. Let me just check with Stephanie.

STEPHANIE (O.S.)

About what?

STEPHANIE ENTERS.

WAYNE

Jen wants an advance.

STEPHANIE

Oh. Well, there's no shame in that, Jennifer.

JENNIFER

I didn't say there was.

STEPHANIE

We're happy to give you an advance.

JENNIFER

Great.

STEPHANIE

And this can be a teachable moment.

JENNIFER

I'm sorry, what?

STEPHANIE

It's a great opportunity to talk about money management. Now, I don't know about you, but the way Wayne and I manage our money is we don't spend money we don't have.

JENNIFER

Uh huh.

STEPHANIE

Does that make sense?

JENNIFER

Excuse me. Wayne, can I talk to you over by the Slim Jims.

JENNIFER TAKES WAYNE A FEW STEPS AWAY.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

I just needed to step away from your wife for a minute because if I didn't there was a very strong chance I would stick an ice pick in her skull. I don't know about you guys, but the way I manage my anger is, I stick an ice pick in someone's skull. Does that make sense?

WAYNE

Uh, you're kinda' freaking me out.

JENNIFER

Oh, come on. You don't actually think I'm going to stick an ice pick in your wife's head on my first day of work.

(THEN) Okay, better now.

JENNIFER COMES BACK TO STEPHANIE.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

(FORCED GOOD CHEER) That makes a lot of sense, Steph.

STEPHANIE

Great. This is going to be fun!

JENNIFER

Super fun!

STEPHANIE GOES INTO THE BACK. JENNIFER STARTS CUTTING LIMES BUT STOPS SHORT WHEN SHE SEES A CUSTOMER WHO'S JUST SAT DOWN. SHE'S CUTE, KIND OF TOM BOYISH, FORTIES.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

(DELIGHTED) Dina!! Oh, my God, you look exactly the same!

DINA

That's depressing. I spent a lot of money trying to look better.

JENNIFER

(LAUGHS) I've missed you so much.

DINA DOESN'T SEEM TO SHARE THE SENTIMENT. IT'S AWKWARD.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

How's Jeremy?

DINA

Happy. Loving life. We're divorced.

JENNIFER

Oh. I'm sorry. And Jacob?

DINA

Sixteen now. It's a magical age. He yells at me to leave him alone, then yells at me for ignoring him. There's a lot of yelling.

JENNIFER

And how are you?

DINA

Okay. Still working for UPS. Still pitching for my women's softball team, the L.A. Lesbians--the ladies like to put it out there. It's great for me, though. Keeps the a-holes away when we're having beers after a game.

JENNIFER EXPECTS DINA TO ASK ABOUT HER LIFE BUT SHE DOESN'T.

JENNIFER

So I'm still single. I got fired at Blair for scaring the men folk. And I'm back at my mom's. Temporarily. With Gretchen, who's beautiful, and complicated, and scares me.

DINA

Your mom didn't tell me you were working here.

JENNIFER

It's just 'til I can figure out what to do with my life. God, remember when we used to hang out in my backyard and smoke cigarettes and talk about boys and what we were going to do with our lives? I was going to be the first woman in space. Until Sally Ride--

DINA

You gotta let that go. Okay, well, see ya'.

JENNIFER

What? Don't you want a drink? It's on the house. I'm not sure if I can do that but what the hell I'm doing it.

DINA

I forgot I had something I had to do.

SHE STARTS TO GO.

JENNIFER

Dina, wait. Let's make a plan. Let's get together. I have a lot of free time and--

DINA

Yeah, I really don't.

JENNIFER

What's going on? I thought we were

friends.

DINA LOOKS A LITTLE EMOTIONAL, BUT STUFFS IT BACK DOWN.

DINA

That was a long time ago.

DINA GOES.

JENNIFER

Wait, Dina. Dina!

JENNIFER IS DEVASTATED. STEPHANIE AND WAYNE COME OUT OF THE BACK. STEPHANIE HAS A CHECK AND A PEN AND PAPER.

STEPHANIE

Okay, here's your advance.

SHE HANDS IT TO JENNIFER.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

And, this'll be fun. We're going to

make a no-no list of all the things

you spend money on you don't need.

JENNIFER TURNS AND STARES AT STEPHANIE. WAYNE REACHES OVER AND MOVES THE ICE PICK OUT OF HER REACH.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

SCENE H

FADE IN:

INT. MAGGIE'S HOME OFFICE RECEPTION ROOM - (THE NEXT) DAY

LORNA (30S, EFFICIENT-LOOKING), MAGGIE'S ASSISTANT, IS AT A LITTLE RECEPTION DESK. JENNIFER ENTERS.

JENNIFER

Is my mom in?

LORNA

No. Sorry.

MAGGIE COMES OUT OF HER OFFICE.

MAGGIE

Hi, sweetie. Come on in.

JENNIFER GOES IN WITH HER MOTHER AS LORNA STARES AT HER.

RESET TO:

INT. MAGGIE'S HOME OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

MAGGIE AND JENNIFER ENTER.

JENNIFER

(RE: LORNA) Are you hiring your patients again?

MAGGIE

Isn't Lorna great?!

JENNIFER

She just lied to my face.

MAGGIE

(LAUGHS) It's a coping mechanism. She only does that when she's feeling threatened. Her family was a mess.

(MORE)

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Poor thing. Bipolar father, domineering mother, toxic brother. Wet her bed until she was fourteen. Now she acts out sexually with men she barely knows. I can't really talk about it.

JENNIFER

Can you take Gretchen shopping for me after school? I promised I would take her but I have an interview.

MAGGIE

Sure, honey. What's the interview?

JENNIFER STARTS WRITING OUT A CHECK.

JENNIFER

The unemployment office. None of those headhunter places have found me work. I thought I'd give the government a shot at disappointing me.

SHE HANDS HER MOTHER THE CHECK.

MAGGIE

Are you okay?

JENNIFER

I'm fine. Why?

MAGGIE

(RE: CHECK) You made this out to, "Clothes For Gretchen."

JENNIFER

Oh. Sorry. Give me that.

SHE RE-WRITES THE CHECK BUT FEELS HER MOTHER'S EYES ON HER.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Please don't ask me if I'm okay again.

MAGGIE

Are you okay?

JENNIFER

No, I'm not okay! Do I look okay?!

MAGGIE

You need to be in therapy. You have anger issues.

JENNIFER

Why does everyone keep saying that?!

MAGGIE

I know you can't afford therapy right now but I think I have a solution. I'm willing to see you for free. Or maybe a little yard work.

JENNIFER

Are you nuts?

MAGGIE

Just some light weeding.

JENNIFER

No. I'm not having my own mother as my therapist. I think Freud would back me up here.

MAGGIE

(DISMISSIVE) Freud. Who knows you better than your mother? And you know I can be objective. Have I ever judged you for the disastrous life decisions you've made or your failed relationships with men?

JENNIFER

You're not listening, Mom. I said no.

MAGGIE

Give me one good reason why I can't be your therapist.

JENNIFER

You. Don't. Listen. To. Me.

MAGGIE

See? You can't.

JENNIFER STARES AY HER MOTHER, IN AWE OF HER SELF-ABSORPTION.

CUT TO:

SCENE J

INT. UNEMPLOYMENT OFFICE – AFTERNOON

THERE ARE SEVERAL EMPLOYMENT COUNSELORS TALKING TO JOB SEEKERS. JENNIFER SITS IN A CHAIR ACROSS THE DESK FROM RONNIE WILKES, A LIFER CIVIL SERVANT IN HER FORTIES.

RONNIE

Two hundred fifty thousand dollars?

JENNIFER

(A LITTLE EMBARRASSED) I can work for less. Way less.

RONNIE

(TO OTHER COUNSELOR) Doreen, she made two hundred and fifty thousand dollars at her last job.

DOREEN, ANOTHER LIFER, LOOKS OVER.

DOREEN

Damn. I wouldn't lose that job.

RONNIE

No, you can't lose that job.

DOREEN

That's the job you keep.

RONNIE

I'm afraid I'm fresh out of two hundred and fifty thousand dollar jobs.

DOREEN

You check in the two hundred fifty thousand dollar drawer?

THEY BOTH CRACK UP. JENNIFER CAN'T HOLD IT IN.

JENNIFER

It's not funny!!

THEY BOTH STARE AT HER.

DOREEN

Someone has an anger problem.

RONNIE

Look at that vein on her temple.

JENNIFER

I lost everything! I had to move back in with my mother. I'm working at my brother's bar with his bitch of a wife. My best friend hates me and my daughter is planning her own funeral.

RONNIE

Wow. That sounds pretty rough.

JENNIFER

Yeah, well, it is.

RONNIE

I'm so sorry. Hey, Doreen, when you're through there, come on over. Jennifer's throwing a pity party.

JENNIFER

What? That's not fair.

RONNIE

Nothing's fair, Jennifer. I'm supposed to feel sorry for you, 'cause you have to work for your brother? You're working. You had to move back in with your mother? She took you in!

JENNIFER

You don't understand!

RONNIE

No, I don't understand. You're family loves you and they're trying to help you. What's your problem?

JENNIFER

(GETS UP) This was a waste of time.

SHE WALKS AWAY.

RONNIE

(CALLING AFTER HER) Wait. I found the two hundred and fifty thousand dollar jobs. I was sitting on them.

RONNIE AND DOREEN CRACK UP.

CUT TO:

SCENE J

INT. OVERTIME - EVENING

STEPHANIE AND WAYNE ARE BEHIND THE BAR. THE PLACE IS PACKED. JENNIFER RUSHES IN, TIEING ON HER LITTLE WORK APRON.

WAYNE

Mom called. Gretchen won't do her homework because she's mad at you for making Mom take her shopping.

JENNIFER

Of course.

STEPHANIE

You want my advice?

JENNIFER

Advice from a twenty-three year old about raising a teenager? By all means.

STEPHANIE

Okay, first you have to be firm. You have to show her who's boss.

JENNIFER

Whoa, whoa, slow down. Let me write this down. (WRITES ON A NAPKIN) "Firm." What was that other thing? "Boss." Brilliant. Why didn't anyone tell me this stuff.

STEPHANIE

I know it's none of my business--

JENNIFER

Are you kidding? You know nothing about it and I didn't ask you. Of course it's your business.

WAYNE

(JUMPING IN) Okay! Here, Jen, take these pitchers over to table seven.

SHE LOOKS ACROSS THE ROOM. IT'S DINA AND HER SOFTBALL TEAM.

JENNIFER

You've got to be kidding me. Please don't make me do this right now.

STEPHANIE

I'm sorry, but you have to get over your fear of lesbians.

JENNIFER STARES AT HER, THEN GRABS THE TRAY AND TAKES IT TO DINA'S TABLE. SHE SLAMS THE PITCHERS DOWN.

JENNIFER

Here!

DINA

(WEIRDED OUT) Thanks.

JENNIFER

You're welcome! (SOFTENING A LITTLE) Can't you find another bar?

DINA

I like it here. Can't you find another job?

JENNIFER

No!!

DINA

Whoa. Calm down, crazy.

JENNIFER

Calm down?! Calm down?!

DINA

Yeah. You're being ridiculous.

JENNIFER

I'm being ridiculous. I'm being ridiculous.

DINA

Stop that. Stop saying everything twice.

JENNIFER

You want to make me?

DINA

"Make" you? What are you twelve?

JENNIFER

Shut up.

JENNIFER PUSHES DINA.

DINA

(SHOCKED) You pushed me.

JENNIFER

Yeah, I did. What are you going to do about it?

DINA PUSHES HER BACK.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Hey!

JENNIFER PUSHES DINA AGAIN.

DINA

Hey!

DINA PUSHES BACK. THEN THEY BOTH GO AFTER EACH OTHER AND JENNIFER ENDS UP GETTING DINA IN A HEADLOCK.

DINA (CONT'D)

Let go!

SANDY, A TOUGH LOOKING TEAMMATE OF DINA'S, STARTS TO GET UP.

SANDY

You need some help, Dina?

DINA

I got it. (TO JENNIFER) Let go of me!

JENNIFER

No! I won't! I'm not going to let you go until you tell me why you're so emotionally unavailable to me!

SANDY

(SHAKES HER HEAD) Wow, that's a chick fight.

DINA

I can't breathe!

JENNIFER

Oh, sorry.

SHE LOOSENS THE HOLD AND DINA YANKS HER HEAD AWAY AND QUICKLY PUTS JENNIFER IN A HEADLOCK.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Hey, no fair!

DINA

You're so easy. (THEN) You want to know why I'm mad at you?

JENNIFER

Let go of me!

DINA

Remember when I was going through all that stuff with Jeremy and I was flipping out?

JENNIFER

Yeah! I gave you a two hundred dollar gift certificate for my massage therapist who's like a miracle worker at targeting stress and you never even thanked me.

DINA

I didn't want a massage therapist, I wanted my best friend.

JENNIFER

You never used it?

DINA

No, I used it. Still pissed me off.

JENNIFER

Did he do the "hands of fire?"

DINA

Oh. Yeah. Incredible. (THEN) That's not the point!

WAYNE COMES OVER AND SEES DINA HOLDING JENNIFER IN A HEADLOCK.

WAYNE

(CALMLY) Hey, Dina.

DINA

Wayne.

WAYNE

Jennifer, you have orders up.

JENNIFER

I'll be right there.

WAYNE GOES.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Do you mind?

DINA LETS JENNIFER OUT OF THE HOLD.

DINA

You used to be such a good friend to me, Jennifer. Then you turned into some stranger who just threw money at people.

JENNIFER

That's not true.

DINA

When my Mom got sick you texted me your shrink's number and said he did great grief work.

JENNIFER

Oh, God, I did, didn't I? I loved your mom. I should have visited her.

DINA

It's too late now.

JENNIFER

No. When did you lose her?

DINA

Lose her? She's healthy as a horse now. Running triathlons. It's too late to visit her in the hospital. (THEN) What happened to you, Jennifer?

JENNIFER

I don't know. I started making all this money and I thought everything would be great but after a while I didn't know what I was doing anymore or who I was. People say I have anger issues but I don't feel angry inside, I just feel scared. And I don't think I like myself much.

DINA

Yeah, well that I get.

JENNIFER STARTS TO REACT BUT SEES DINA GRIN A LITTLE. A RAY OF SUNSHINE?

JENNIFER

Look, Dina, I can't change the past but I can change the future. Well, I can't change the future. Nobody can. The future hasn't happened yet. Forget the future. I really just want to go back to the way things were. We used to have fun. Remember?

(MORE)

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

And I can't throw money at you. I don't have any money. Can't you give me another chance?

DINA

I don't know.

JENNIFER

You have to. I need you. And I will totally be there for you whenever you need me. I promise.

DINA

It's not that easy, Jennifer.

JENNIFER

You have to forgive me or I'll do something crazy. I'll, I'll tell your team you hate Birkenstocks.

DINA

(LAUGHS) Shut up. Don't even kid like that. (THEN) Okay, okay. One more chance.

JENNIFER

Yes! (HUGS HER) I love you, Dina.

OVER DINA'S SHOULDER JENNIFER SEES DINA'S TEAMMATE SANDY SMILING AT HER AND GIVING HER THE THUMBS UP. AFTER HER MOMENT WITH DINA, JENNIFER CROSSES BACK TO THE BAR TO FIND ETHAN SITTING THERE.

ETHAN

Hey.

JENNIFER

Hey.

ETHAN

Still just helping out?

JENNIFER

(CONSIDERS) No. No, I work here now.

ETHAN

Cool. Can I see a foam list?

JENNIFER

Hey, I've got it down now. Watch.

SHE POURS A PERFECT GLASS OF BEER.

ETHAN

Very nice.

JENNIFER

Wait, I've always wanted to do this.

SHE SLIDES IT DOWN THE BAR TO HIM BUT HE'S REACHING FOR HIS WALLET AND IT FLIES RIGHT BY HIM AND OFF THE END OF THE BAR.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

(BEAT) Pretty good, huh?

ETHAN

You really are a natural.

SHE POURS HIM ANOTHER ONE.

JENNIFER

I'll just hand you this one.

ETHAN

No. (PUTS HIS HAND OUT) Come on.

SHE TRIES AGAIN AND HE CATCHES IT. THEY SHARE A SMILE.

CUT TO:

SCENE J

FADE IN:

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

GRETCHEN'S ON HER COMPUTER. JENNIFER COMES IN.

JENNIFER

Okay, for a long time you've been mad at me for not paying enough attention to you and I've felt guilty about it and bought you a lot of crap you don't need. Well, that's over. If I'm going to be poor, the least I can do is spend more time with you. Now shove over, I want to show you a kitty-flushing-a-toilet video.

GRETCHEN

Um, okay.

JENNIFER SITS WITH HER. THEY WATCH FOR A MOMENT, GIGGLING.

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)

You'll still buy me crap I don't need?

JENNIFER

Probably.

GRETCHEN

I love you, Mom.

JENNIFER

I love you too, honey.

GRETCHEN

Will you write my eulogy?

JENNIFER

If you pick up your room.

END OF ACT THREE

CUT TO:

TAG

EXT. MAGGIE'S BACKYARD - NIGHT

JENNIFER AND DINA ARE KICKING BACK ON THE PATIO FURNITURE, HAVING BEERS.

DINA

It's so weird to be at your Mom's house drinking beers that we didn't swipe from her.

JENNIFER

No, I swiped them. I'm totally broke. Hey, you know what I have?

SHE LOOKS AROUND THEN PULLS OUT TWO CIGARETTES.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

You smoke?

DINA

No. Do you?

JENNIFER

God, no. I just want to be bad.

DINA

I'm in.

THEY LIGHT UP AND COUGH, LAUGH AT THEMSELVES. THEY DRINK THEIR BEERS, LOOKING OUT INTO THE NIGHT SKY.

JENNIFER

How did I get so angry?

DINA

"Get?" You were born angry. You've been yelling at people since you were three years old.

JENNIFER

No, I haven't.

DINA

You made Zoe Lee cry in pre-school.

JENNIFER

Bitch ate my paste!

DINA

And Seth Gorman in sixth grade.

JENNIFER

He snapped my bra strap!

DINA

Couch Gunderson. Tenth grade.

JENNIFER

Do you have a life of your own?
(THEN) Gunderson made me dress for gym when I was bloated.

DINA

Just saying. You have issues, girl.

JENNIFER

Okay, okay. You're right. I have issues. I'm working on them. (BEAT)
I looked like a friggin' bratwurst!
Gunderson didn't care.

DINA

Let it go. (SITS UP, ALARMED) What was that?

JENNIFER

What?

DINA

I heard a noise. Are you sure your mom went to bed?

JENNIFER

Oh, my God, you're not still scared of my mom, are you?

DINA

No, it's just, you know, it's her house, we're smoking...

JENNIFER

(LAUGHS) What is she going to do, tell your mom? Jesus, Dina, you're forty years old.

THEY HEAR THE SLIDING GLASS DOOR OPEN.

GRETCHEN (O.S.)

Mom?

JENNIFER

Run!

THEY RUN OFF INTO THE DARKNESS, THEIR CIGARETTES GLOWING IN RETREAT.

GRETCHEN

Mom, I can totally see you.

FADE OUT

END OF SHOW *