

who Knew?

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. - PRESENT - DUSK

Over Punch's *Stay With Me*, pink skeletal fingers stretch across the horizon. We soar over the Potomac River. Zip by the Washington Monument. Dip past the White House's CHRISTMAS TREE, pushing toward...

EXT. THREE-STORY BUILDING - 'DANCE WORLD' - CONTINUOUS

A graceful, Korean GIRL is about to enter the building. She consults her phone. Fashionably dressed in Kathleen Kye sweater, skirt, scarf and signature knee-high boots, she sighs and pivots.

HOPE DONAHUE (Park So Hee), twenties is attractive, vivacious and modest. We love her.

EXT. D.C. STREETS - TIFFANY & CO - DUSK

As Hope sails past, something in the window catches her attention. Sucking in every detail of a dazzling two-carat platinum RING, Hope raises her hand toward the window.

ANGLE - ON LG PHONE CAMERA

An APP appears to place the ring on her finger. Hope allows herself a moment of satisfaction. She snaps a photo. Posts it to Instagram with the question: '*Is this a me ring?*'

Satisfied, Hope trots along the rain-soaked avenue, mounting marble steps, past Doric columns, splashing into...

INT. UNITED STATES CAPITOL BUILDING - HALLWAY - DUSK

We HEAR the clippity-clop of boots echo along the deserted corridor. Hope stops at the security desk and flips her pony tail. A natural look paints her face.

HOPE

Oh, Howard. I left it on my desk.

And HOWARD SIMONEUX, an African American grandfatherly police officer, proffers a festive grin.

HOWARD

Shhh, Hope. It's our secret.

Hope pecks Howard's cheek and breezes through the metal detector, and into...

INT. HOPE'S OFFICE - HOUSE MAJORITY LEADER - DUSK

The room resembles a disturbed beehive. Hope zips past scurrying STAFFERS. Going directly to her desk, blanketed with Post Its, she sinks into her chair. Hope's assistant, AUDRA MITCHELL, strides up. With a choppy pixie cut, Audrey is twenty and determined.

AUDRA

Sorry. Congressman wanted *you*.
Hoffman's on one.

As Hope tucks her office phone receiver under her chin, she scribbles on a Post It -- picture of efficiency. We spot a PHOTO of Hope and Venus Williams.

HOPE

(into phone)

This is Hope. Oh, I really don't care to comment on Mr. Walker. No, our policies have not changed. Congressman Duncan requires staff to attend regular ethics briefings and adhere to the same policies he does. No comment. All right, thank you.

Hope cradles the receiver, typing: 'PRESS RELEASE - House Majority Leader...' when an incoming email catches her attention. And Audra pops into frame.

AUDRA

Dan's on four.

HOPE

Okay, thanks.

With the receiver to her ear, Hope reads the email.

HOPE

(into the phone)

Hey. No, I'm beat. After I send out this press release...

Hope catches Audrey snooping and sneers. Audrey stalks off.

HOPE

(into the phone; snorts)

Well, since it's a surprise--

INT. DAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

And the front door snaps open to a cardboard figure of Richard Nixon holding a new Babolat tennis RACKET.

DAN
(imitating Nixon)
Maybe now you can beat Dan.

On DAN WARNER. He peeks from behind the figure, thirties, dapper, sportive, and tolerable.

INT. DAN'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The room is masculine with Yale tennis memorabilia. Hope reclines on the bed in a sexy nightie beside Dan. She throws a come-hither look. He misses it, and leaps up.

DAN
Chocolate, mint, or strawberry?

HOPE
Whichever.

Dan pads to the kitchen as Hope slips in Yale sweatshirt.

HOPE
I received an email from Soo Yun.

DAN (O/S)
Who? Oh. Right. LA's DA.

HOPE
She would like to meet me.

DAN (O/S)
How do you know her?

HOPE
We met at the Watergate. I mean
two Korean gals in politics...

And Dan enters the bedroom with bowls of ice cream.

DAN
You better run it by Walter first.

Right then, Dan's cell rings. Off Hope's frustration we HEAR OneRepublic's - *West Coast* and jump to--

EXT. LOS ANGELES - HOLLYWOOD - DUSK

Est. shot, setting the city's feel and that it's CHRISTMAS.

INT. MAJOR TALENT AGENCY - OFFICE - DUSK

We WATCH SOMEONE'S hand organize papers and film contract. They are stacked neatly atop a *WONDER MAN III* SCRIPT, and slid into a large white ENVELOPE marked *Grant McAllister*.

EXT. IVY RESTAURANT - PATIO - DUSK

Meanwhile, at a thriving eatery, SOPHIE RICHIE enters. We follow a WAITER balancing a tray of mojitos past Hollywood's glamour couple.

On STEPHANIE GARNER, thirties, with a Julia Roberts vibe. She is sitting across from ... GRANT MCALLISTER, twenties, handsome, bright, and hard to pin down.

Stephanie throws Grant a serious look. He catches it.

STEPHANIE

Plus, it gives them...

As Grant gazes across the street at stalking PAPARAZZI, he catches Sophie's familiar smile.

STEPHANIE

...a new stream of provocations
on the stuff that's happening.

(a beat)

Isn't that the DA waving?

Grant spies a Korean woman seated across the patio. It is SOO YUN, forties, sophisticated.

STEPHANIE

How do you know her?

GRANT

I helped with a children's charity
event -- can't we do this tomorrow?

STEPHANIE

I am *not* going.

GRANT

Is it me, or was Ischia not insane?

STEPHANIE

Mac, playtime was not our issue.

GRANT

You're just like that agent who wanted to change my name.

STEPHANIE

No, I'm a gal craving the pesky perks that come with being in a *healthy two-way* relationship with someone who believes we are built to spend our entire lives with another person. And I'm not even going to get into the cannoli incident, which any other gal would have written you off as a complete jack-ass -- sending it viral!

Grant frowns, puzzled. Reflects a beat. His phone beeps.

GRANT

(re: WhatsApp)

That's Brian. I gotta split.

STEPHANIE

We both knew this insane ride would be challenging -- it is for everyone in this fish tank.

GRANT

What is it about me and this reoccurring role?

Grant sighs heavily and rises.

STEPHANIE

Maybe audition for a new one. Speaking of, I saw Joan Wallace. She doesn't think you're right for Sam, nor does Sorensen. For what it's worth, she is looking for the last finance round.

And a warm smile plays on Stephanie's face. Grant masks his grief with a resolute grin. He kisses her forehead, snatching a BOOK: *Calling Freedom*, padding to a...

E/I. SUV - REAR SEAT - DUSK

Grant enters to a *Wonder Man* ACTION FIGURE held by BRIAN DOWNS, who is on the phone. At thirty, Brian's every move is calculated. Sporting circular tortoise-shell glasses, with an air of superiority, he points at Grant.

BRIAN
 (into phone)
 ...Agents don't take calls they
 return them. Anyway, listen,
 you're not defined by what you turn
 down.

Grant is gazing at ornaments on palm trees. Sunset Blvd. is
 decorated with snowflakes and Santas.

BRIAN
 (into phone)
 Tyler, let's rap mañana.

As Brian hangs up, cutting a *where is she?* glare to Grant.

GRANT
 I'm solo.

BRIAN
 Shit! The press needs to be 100%
 focused on this film, not your off-
 camera tryst. Cruise's shenanigans
 almost sank his career...

GRANT
 But didn't. Was that Tyler Ford?
 (Brian is caught)
 Why would you be talking to him? I
 hate that guy.

BRIAN
 Let that Super Bowl commercial go.
 You were ten!

GRANT
 You're supposed to be putting *me* up
 for parts.

BRIAN
 No, my job is fielding offers and
 I don't see Joan making one.

GRANT
 They cast in one week. I can nail
 Sam Travis.

BRIAN
 Baby, political-religious flicks
 don't bang the box or pop the
 streaming digits.

GRANT

This is a brilliant piece of work
helmed by a genius--

BRIAN

(a sharp, bitter laugh)
Sorensen. He's teetering on
psychosis. What I advise--

GRANT

--I'm over the popcorn flicks. I
wanna story that's challenging and
terrifies the shit outta me.

BRIAN

How about the studio enforcing
your five-picture deal? They'll
sue your balls off. I've seen it
happen!

Brian proffers the white envelope we saw earlier. Grant
throws a sly grin. He peeks inside. His smile runs away.

BRIAN

They are seeing you with Ana
Villafane -- the smoking Latina.
Twenty million, sweet back-end with
you helming your next project.

And Grant chunks the envelope at Brian.

BRIAN

You don't have the clout you did
two years ago. *Cocktail and Dreams*
almost sank you. The studio's
overlooking it. They want you.

At which moment, the SUV eases to a stop. Grant's viewpoint,
adorning and waving FANS. Then he snaps a look at Brian.

GRANT

I'm not doing it.

End of story. With that, Grant opens the SUV door...

EXT. CINEARAMA DOME - *WONDER MAN 3* PREMIERE - DUSK

The red carpet is jammed with CELEBRITIES and PHOTOGRAPHERS.
GIRLS shriek at the sight of Grant. ANA VILLAFANE waves.
REPORTERS are right there with--

REPORTER

Are doing *Wonder Man* three?

REPORTER TWO

What about *Calling Freedom*?

Suddenly, it is quiet as the camera captures a towering, oversized POSTER of Grant in yellow tights with the caption: *He Saves The World When The World's Not Looking.*

GO TO:

E/I. GRANT'S HOUSE - HOLLYWOOD HILLS - NIGHT

The sprawling city twinkles below the illuminated *Hollywood* sign. We push into a kick-ass bachelor-pad. Everything is top-notch. Grant enters with a bulging ENVELOPE.

GRANT

Music on.

Sinatra croons. Grant sweeps past a new-age Christmas tree, surfboard, sinking into an Eames chair. Ripping open the envelope, he reads a note: 'Break a leg, Steph.'

Holding the *Calling Freedom* script, Grant examines it in wonderment.

It's a little later and we HEAR 'Fly Me To The Moon...' Grant is reflecting, gazing out the wall-of-windows with a BOTTLE of Cutty Sark in one hand, glass in the other. Slowly he TAPS one foot, then the other. Before we know it, he's doing his own version of *Weapon of Choice*, as we dissolve...

INT. GRANT'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

Sun rays highlight the counter littered with invites, *Variety* and *The Actor Prepares*. Wearing a drenched track suit, Grant is at the open refrigerator, chugging OJ from the carton.

Suddenly, the front door snaps open. Enter MARK HOFFMAN, late twenties, quirky, disheveled, sporting a golf hat and signature funky tennis shoes.

MARK

Yo-yo. How's it hanging? Where's my grab bag?

Mark slaps Grant's butt, then pours coffee into a mug.

MARK

What, nada for me? Fuck you. Steph still snoozing?

As Mark notices Grant's dark mood.

MARK

Chin up. They give every film shitty... Oh. That sulk is not reviews. Shit! Th' cannoli. I told ya it was going to blow up in your face. Three simple words and Casanova proffers a pastry.

GRANT

This coming from a guy who gages intellect by cup sizes.

MARK

Least I know relationships are more than being a Mississippi bloodhound looking to defile a woman. They are heart-shaped minefields littered with conundrums and speed-bumps where you seek to build something -- that's your problem, there is no committed *building*.

(spots the SCRIPT)

Holy popcorn balls! How did ya score it?

GRANT

Steph convinced Joan.

MARK

You're a dumbass letting her slip away. COME ON! Let's hit Mel's and get jacked on cheap Champagne!

GRANT

Joan and Sorensen have doubts.

MARK

Because they see you in tights. You have to become Sam Travis. (claps) Know what ya do? Go to D.C. Research. Immersion. Wrap your head around this Travis cat. Friend of Harry Styles' can hook us up!

Mark eyes Grant prepare a PIMENTO SANDWICH.

GRANT

I'm not going to D.C.

MARK

Dude. You bellyache and bitch
'bout the industry not takin' your
craft seriously and now you got a
chance to show those chops and
you're cowering on the sidelines.

Mark makes a convincing argument but Grant remains skeptical.

GRANT

I turned down three.

MARK

(falls back like shot)
Double barrels to the chest. Hoho.
Did Brian piss his trousers?

GRANT

Twenty and directing. Lionel is
going to sue me. I know him.

MARK

Screw that old fart. This is your
chance to be a maverick. Travis is
Grant McAllister, like Sinatra was
Angelo Maggio -- that scored him a
gold statue. Or Pacino as Michael.
Coppola wanted Redford! This is
it. Stop overthinking it.

GRANT

Sorry, putting my entire carrier on
the line gives me pause.

MARK

While you're pausing, I also
suggest you call Steph, say 'I LOVE
YOU,' and make amends before she
leaves for Baltimore. She's a
keeper. Maybe the one. You don't
want to end up like Leo, an old man
yachting around with hot girls
cause you can commit.

(a beat)

Back to biz-o-ness. What about it?
Gold statue would look fabulous
over the mantel.

Considering his course of action, a grin slowly oils Grant's
face, as we jump to--

INT. OLD EBBIT BAR - D.C. - NIGHT

Dark, unassuming joint. On a martini. Hope steals a sip. We pull back to her parked beside ASHLEY CARR, a spirited buxom blonde chatterbox in her twenties with dangly bracelets and a revealing top.

ANGLE ON LG PHONE

Ashley takes a boomerang video of herself chugging a beer. Posts it to her Insta followers: *#FunOnTheHill*

HOPE

So you left them at Doug's?

ASHLEY

Lovey. Focus. I started the night with the congressman listenin' to him ramble about th' coin he could make on 'K' then I crashed with Jason at his pad.

HOPE

When did you lose your panties?

ASHLEY

That's another story, which, by the way, I suggest you should try. It's absolutely liberating.

HOPE

What, not wearing panties or having liaisons with strange men?

ASHLEY

So you struck out with the lingerie. How long has it been?

HOPE

The ... Senate ... gala.

ASHLEY

That explains your confectionery consumption.

HOPE

(re shirt)

Is that new?

ASHLEY

Sophie Richie's line. Face it, you were born with a need for affection and desire to give it.

HOPE

He's this close. I can feel it.

ASHLEY

I thought you'd be ginned-up.

HOPE

Lately, I've had difficulty picturing us together. I feel like the verdict is still out and yet already I'm poised to say 'yes.'

ASHLEY

What you're feeling is like when you have absolutely nothing that goes with those new eight-hundred dollar pair of Giuseppe's.

HOPE

I suppose what I'm wondering is, how do you know if it is right?

ASHLEY

I hear it's a tingling sensation.

HOPE

I have no idea why I am sharing this ... but ... last night at Dan's I tried to imagine him saying: "Hope, you're the only one who could walk out of a crowded room and make me feel lonely."

ASHLEY

Jesus. How do you come up with such crownly thoughts? You've been dating since nineteen. No matter how you feel about someone, physically or emotionally, the novelty and passion fade after a week. There's a reason porn's a billion dollar biz and Only rocks.

HOPE

But that's just it. I've never even had seven days. I'm in my mid-twenties and my entire life is already so neatly planned by others there are no surprises or tingly feelings.

ASHLEY

At least Walter and Doris are thrilled.

HOPE

Maybe I can do more.

ASHLEY

Honey, the only time a woman can change a man is when he's a baby. Your future is in your pocket. It's like shoes: I don't believe there's one perfect pair for everyone, simply one that fits better than others. Go out and be adventurous. Try on a few different pairs. Maybe there's a better fit for Hope.

HOPE

(sarcastically)

I'll start with Jeff in my office. Oh! I forgot to tell ya I'm meeting Soo Yun this week.

ASHLEY

You know she's gearing up to run for congress?

At the moment, Dan approaches.

DAN

--You're looking at number fifteen in the *Hill's* 'Top thirty-five under thirty-five.'

(to the BARTENDER)

Taz, Tom Collins.

HOPE

That is terrific!

ASHLEY

Dynamite, kil-ler.

DAN

In other news, I just learned Smith is finally with us on the Education bill. Which reminds me, there's a dinner this week with Holder; I invited your father. Also, his wife arranged *Roll Call* to do a piece on us, something like how one discovers love in this rapid-fire arena...

Off Ashley's comical look to Hope--

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. - SUNRISE

Red hues casts shadows on the city's panoramic splendor.

INSERT WhatsApp text: **Grant to Stephanie: Apologies for my behavior. I was taken off guard. I don't want to let you go. Dinner when I'm back from DC?*

**Brian to Tyler: Joan's letting you read Friday. Let's nail this! *Tyler responds: You get me this gig I sign with you. *Brian to Lionel: Mac is off the reservation. You need to rein him in.*

INT. RITZ CARLTON - LOBBY/GIFT STORE - MORNING

BELLHOP wheels a cart past the elevator where the doors open to reveal Grant. He ambles into...

GIFT SHOP

Grant browses a magazine rack, spotting Stephanie and Tyler Ford on *People*. As he reaches for *Esquire*, someone snatches it! Actually, it is Dan, eyeing a WOMAN staring open-mouthed at Grant.

WOMAN

Grant McAllister. OH! My, my daughter would kill me if I--

And Dan cocks his head and studies Grant.

GRANT

Sure. You have a pen?

The Woman turns to Dan, who clumsily proffers his PEN.

WOMAN

Her name is, a, a, Cindy!

Off Grant autographing a magazine, we jump to--

EXT. CAPITOL BUILDING - REAR STEPS - MORNING

There is the bustle of TOURIST and school CHILDREN on this bright winter's day. A sedan eases to a stop. Grant steps out wearing a CAP and SHADES. Suddenly, running toward him is a pack of exhilarated kids, ad-libbing "*Wonder Man!*"

And Grant scampers up the steps and into...

CAPITOL BUILDING ENTRANCE

...where he discovers Howard at the security desk.

HOWARD

Good morning, Mr. McAllister.

GRANT

Hello. I'm here to see...

HOWARD

I know, sir. Congressman Duncan's office advised he's in a Budget hearing. You may meet him in Room 234. Through Statuary Hall, up the stairs, first door on your left.

Meanwhile...

INT. HOPE'S OFFICE - MORNING

Hope breezes into frame. She is major tardy, and wearing only ONE EARRING. Juggling a cup of (cold) COFFEE, and folders, Hope catches JEFF. He is the red-haired intern who has no idea he's supposed to look in the mirror when he gets dressed. He is banging a television REMOTE.

Hope rolls her eyes and scampers out of the office--

INT. CAPITOL - STATUARY HALL - MOMENTS LATER

Now we're in a spectacular two-story, semicircular room littered with SCULPTURES of prominent figures.

Grant is ambling along when he hears: "THERE HE IS!" Grant's viewpoint, a pack of enamored GIRLS. His pace quickens.

At the same time, Hope comes dashing around the corner as Grant hustles past. He bumps her arm sending COFFEE SPLATTERING across Hope's white shirt.

HOPE

AH! Look at what you did! I just got this!!!

Her eyes slant into Grant with hard curiosity. He notes her lone earring, sucking in every detail of this beauty.

HOPE

And may I add, running or any form of recklessness is strictly forbidden in the Capitol.

GRANT

I'm sorry. I was-- I could wash it in the bathroom.

HOPE
Really? I would suggest in the
future to watch where you're going
and to lose the shades.

On that, Hope pivots and runs down the hall with Grant eyeing her every move. Hope barges into--

BUDGET HEARING

Where a battery of CONGRESSMEN/WOMEN are parked behind a bank of microphones. Room is packed with JOURNALIST. Hope discovers Ashley with GAIL, a Latina in her twenties, and Dan, standing against the back wall.

ASHLEY
What happened to you?

HOPE
This lunatic bumped into me.

The CHAIRMAN shoots daggers at Hope.

DAN
What happened?

ASHLEY
She was frolicking in the
cloakroom with Senator Coleman.

GAIL
Ah, I'd do him!

DAN
He's eighty!

GAIL
He's chair of Rules.

CHAIRMAN
Excuse me. Mr. Warner. I would
expect more from a senior White
House staff member.

GAIL
Busted!

DAN
(to Hope)
Gotta run. P.O.T.U.S. called.
(to Hope)
Don't forget tonight at the Grille.

And as Dan exits one door, Grant enters another sans cap and shades. Every head in the room swivels.

ASHLEY

Holy shit, it's Grant McAllister!

A child-like grin plays on Grant's face. His eyes lock on Hope. She bites her lower lip, twisting her hair around her finger.

HOPE

That's ... the 'lunatic'...

DUNCAN (V/O)

To be honest. I was surprised someone of your stature would hold interest in Sam Travis.

INT. CONGRESSMAN DUNCAN'S HIDEAWAY - MOMENTS LATER

We are in a special cloister; cozy nook with a desk and chair. CONGRESSMAN DUNCAN, fifty, is adjusting his tie.

DUNCAN

When I heard Bill Jones was penning a book, I told my wife it is bound to flop. Today, though, I'm eating crow. Sam Travis was a helluva of Chief of Staff; youngest ever. Practically made Senator McKenzie. Say.

(with paper and pen)

Mind penning an autograph?
Granddaughters love your films.
Again, I apologize for not being able to help you personally this session is th' longest in ten years and we're tryin' to beat Santa to the district.

And we track with the men along...

INT. CAPITOL BUILDING - HALLWAY

DUNCAN

I shall have a member of my staff look after you, though.

Just then, the men find Hope, Gail and Ashley, touching up their LIPSTICK. Note, Hope tosses hers into her purse, UNCAPPED. Grant cocks an eyebrow, smiles at Hope.

DUNCAN

There's who I was looking for.
 Allow me to present Hope Donahue.
 Hope, this is Mr. Grant McAllister.
 He is researching Sam Travis. I
 need you to help him with whatever
 he needs, as long as he needs.
 Grant, I'm confident you will be in
 good hands with this young lady.

HOPE

Thank you, sir. With all respect,
 I am swamped with a million tasks,
 including your Budget...

Hope's mind is working. And right then--

HOPE

Oh! One sec.

And Hope breezes from frame. A beat. She re-enters,
 presenting Jeff like a prized orchid. Ashley sinks her face
 into her hands.

HOPE

Someone like Jeff here, who has
 time to divulge the interworkings
 of the Hill to Mr. McAllister.
 Would that work?

DUNCAN

Whatever works. Take care now.

As Duncan exits, Jeff pushes his face close to Grant's and
 grins like the Joker.

JEFF

Hey! You're *Wonder Man*!
 (snatching Grant's arm)
 SELFIE!!!

INT. OLD EXECUTIVE OFFICE BUILDING - DAN'S OFFICE - DAY

WHOOSH. A copy of the *Washington Times* SLAMS on a desk.
 Headlines: 'Grant McAllister takes the Hill.' Dan glances
 below the fold to: 'Dan Warner states...'

DAN

Felicia!

The door plaque reads: 'Political Director.' The room is
 plush with MEMORABILIA with photos of world leaders and
 tennis stars.

FELICIA CARR, 20s, a high-spirited, African American spark plug, breezes into the office.

DAN

I was to be above the fold.

FELICIA

Thompson wanted to go with the big celeb. You know really must get an iPad. Papers today are just for lining bird cages.

DAN

I ran into this guy at the hotel.

FELICIA

(screaming)

Tell me you scored his sig!

DAN

Frankly, I don't see what's so great about an overpaid circus performer.

FELICIA

Because 'He Saves The World When The World's Not Looking.' Not to mention, has a butt like, although now, Tyler Ford has...

DAN

Can we move on? Decline Senator Blando's invite. Did Holder receive the tickets?

FELICIA

Yes, and Mrs. H. is a massive fan.

DAN

All set with the Ritz?

FELICIA

Yeppy.

DAN

I want a list of RSVP'S by day's end. You haven't told anyone, have you?

FELICIA

I posted to my billion followers.

And Felicia spies a Tiffany's BAG on Dan's desk and sort of punches his arm.

FELICIA
You ole smooth devil, you.

DAN
Also confer with the Agent Rogers
over at the White House.

FELICIA
I could eat him with a spoon. I'd
like him to eat me with a spoon.

DAN
Confirm all's set for Thursday.

FELICIA
That girl's going to have a heart-
attack!

JAM TO:

EXT. CAPITOL ENTRANCE - D.C. STREETS - DAY

As Battleship clouds gather overhead, we follow Grant and Jeff, padding along the sidewalk, away from us. Jeff is chattering, although we cannot hear.

Now on Ashley and Hope. From atop the Capitol steps, they watch the boys pad away.

ASHLEY
That butt is like a ripe peach.

Ashley snaps a photo and posts it with *#BestButtInDC*.

ASHLEY
We can't do this. Go save that
poor boy or I will.

HOPE
I don't have time to babysit.

ASHLEY
Honey. Listen tight. Stop seeing
it as a task and view it as a
treat. A new pair of shoes.
(Hope is tempted)
Let's make it interesting. One-
hundred bucks. You have to kiss
him -- a real kiss -- before he
leaves. This could be your last
opportunity before Mrs. Warner is
pushing out pups and ironing ties.
So, whatta you, say?

HOPE
 Make it a pair of shoes.

And like that, Hope takes the steps two-at-a-time, breezing toward Jeff and Grant.

ASHLEY
 Work it, baby. Work it.

And by now she has caught them.

HOPE
 Hi! Look, ah, I, I'll show Mr. McAllister around. You go back to the office and work on whatever it was you were doing.

JEFF
 Cool. Later, man. High-five!

As Jeff stalks away, Hope shrugs to Grant, feeling herself being lured by some power.

HOPE
 I didn't mean to interfere, but all I could think about was you -- I mean...

They share a moment, a smile.

GRANT
 So where we headed?

HOPE
 The Congressional Research Service.

GRANT
 Funny world, huh?

HOPE
 At times, hilarious.

EXT. D.C. STREETS - CONTINUOUS

It is cold. Hope is adjusting to peculiar stares from PEOPLE passing. Grant tilts his head and curiously studies Hope.

HOPE
 What?

GRANT
 Can we run a quick errand?

Hope shrugs non-comittal. Grant pulls Hope by the hand and they enter an expensive clothing store.

INT. WOMEN'S BOUTIQUE - DAY

A SALESGIRL greets our couple.

SALESGIRL
Hello. How may I help you?

GRANT
She needs a shirt.

HOPE
(snorts)
No, I don't.

SALESGIRL
Oh, sure. Right over here.

Hope shakes her head and laughs. Grant leans on a hanging rail full of dresses, smiling. Salesgirl presents Chanel SHIRTS to Hope. Warming to the idea, Hope holds up a few shirts to her chest, striking a series of poses. Loving every moment.

EXT. D.C. STREETS - DAY

Some time has passed and now it is DRIZZLING. Grant and Hope stroll toward us along the rain-soaked sidewalk.

HOPE
So that's how you operate? Wooing girls with private shopping sprees.

GRANT
Not every. Some hang around to increase their followers and raise their profiles--

HOPE
--I'm not like that.

GRANT
I know.

HOPE
Thank you. I love it.

GRANT
Consider it an apology, thank you, and a Christmas gift.

Right then -- SPLASH! A passing taxi soaks Grant's jeans. Hope can't help but giggle. Grant cuts a glare. Hope's smile evaporates but reappears with Grant leaping into a PUDDLE, splashing and humming "Singing in the Rain."

Hope thinks he's crazy. Grant is keen on her. As they sprint across the street, Hope laughs at Grant.

GRANT

What's so amusing?

HOPE

For a super hero you run, well,
sorta like a girl.

E/I. CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE BUILDING - DAY

And Grant and Hope bound up the steps, entering...

CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE

The place is light and airy with books. PATRONS scoff and stare at our giggling couple.

Hope locates a computer terminal and begins to type with Grant looming over her shoulder.

GRANT

Is it the way I move my arms?

They share a smile. Locked in. She feels it; he feels it.

HOPE

Forget I said anything. We need
information on Travis and
McKenzie, right?

Hope moves ever-so to Grant's breath on her neck.

HOPE

Super. It's, um, in the electronic
archives. But, this is not for...?

And Hope pivots, inches from Mr. Hollywood's lips.

GRANT

No tights in this film.

They stare wordlessly a beat, then Hope motions Grant to a corner table where seconds later, she returns with papers. Hope parks beside Grant. Sheds her coat.

HOPE

What I meant was I'm not a *Wonder Man* kinda gal. No offense.

GRANT

Shirt looks good.

HOPE

Sounds like quite a leap from playing Ben Rogers or your *Cocktail* character.

GRANT

Clearly, Tom was the missing ingredient in the sequel.

(a beat)

I believe it's healthy to force yourself from your safety zone. If you don't you get lazy and stop trying.

HOPE

I totally agree. However, I must admit, sometimes it's a struggle for a nester like me. To push myself out of my comfort zone.

And Grant is caught, staring. Their eyes are very involved.

HOPE

What is it we need exactly?

GRANT

Anything to get my head around what makes this character tick. Ah. You have a pen?

HOPE

Yeah, sure.

Hope rummages through her purse, and proffers a PEN. She rakes her hand through her hair. A sly grin plays on Grant's face. He motions to Hope's forehead, and oh-so gently wipes a smudge of LIPSTICK away.

And Hope places her hand on Grant's chest. With a strange feeling of intimacy, Hope leans forward and -- KISSES him.

Hope opens her eyes. She is shocked at herself. Grant is enticed. We hold on them a long beat.

At which moment, we spy Audrey. She is peering from behind a stack of books. Off her Cheshire grin, we jump to--

INT. JUNGSIK CAFE - DAY

The place is simple and functional. A WAITRESS floats into frame. We note two GIRLS in a booth; one is JESSICA MORTIMER, thirties, other is an EXTRA.

Right then, the front door swings open to Ashley sashaying. She slides into a booth across from Hope, who is applying lipstick using the butter knife as a mirror.

HOPE

What are you doing here?

ASHLEY

Is that Chanel? He bought you Chanel?

HOPE

It's not like that.

ASHLEY

Where is he?

HOPE

He had some calls to make and by the time he returns, I would like you to be a mere thought.

ASHLEY

Still detest men in tights?

HOPE

I will admit I am intrigued.

ASHLEY

There is more simmering below the equator than curiosity.

HOPE

(a beat, then;)

Oh, my God! It's been a fun day!

ASHLEY

Did you kiss him?

On Hope, toying with confessing, but holds back.

ASHLEY

I knew you wouldn't.

HOPE

It's been three hours.

ASHLEY
Why is playing Sam Travis?

HOPE
Because it's a challenge.

ASHLEY
He better do *WM III*.

Hope is winding herself up. She's about to burst--

HOPE
I THINK I LIKE HIM!

Customers stare. Hope winces; that was loud.

ASHLEY
What?!

HOPE
Well, you said 'browse.'

ASHLEY
I didn't say 'buy.'

HOPE
I think there is something.

ASHLEY
You're a link in a chain of many;
take it from one who knows.

HOPE
Hooking up with an extra from
House of Cards doesn't make you
an expert. Besides, you said,
'work it.'

ASHLEY
Yeah, the old Hope way.

HOPE
I like what I am feeling.

ASHLEY
Babe, seductiveness is not your
color.

HOPE
Well, it's the first color I've
felt comfortable in...

Suddenly, in breezes Grant and crosses to the table.

GRANT
 Sorry. My agent...

Ashley is mesmerized. Hope shoots her a get lost look.
 Grant slides into the booth beside Hope.

ASHLEY
 I'm Ashley.

GRANT
 Nice to meet you. So my buddy Mark
 is rollin' in later. Thought we
 could grab--

ASHLEY
 --We'd love to!

GRANT
 You look right up Mark's alley.

ASHLEY
 My. I've never been up a guy's
 alley.
 (Hope kicks Ashley)
 Ouch!

Grant glances up. Ashley covers. Hope grins.

HOPE
 Aren't you late for something?

ASHLEY
 I can tell when I'm not wanted.

And Ashley leaves as the waitress delivers two BOWLS.

WAITRESS
 Enjoy.

GRANT
 What did you get us?

HOPE
 My favorite. Bibimbap. You have
 to mix it all together. They make
 the best in town.

Grant's about to tuck into his meal when Hope elbows him.

GRANT
 Oh. Yeah. Does look weird.

Grant slides into the seat across the table, and when doing
 so, KNOCKS Hope's PURSE to the floor.

Simultaneously, they lean under the table to discover Hope's birth control PILLS. Hope is ready to die.

Note Olivia Rodrigo - *All I Want* plays on the jukebox. And it is in this awkward, but salient moment, Hope and Grant fall a little. Now;

JAM TO:

INT. D.C. RESTAURANT - DAY

An old-school joint brimming with CUSTOMERS. A martini glass; bourbon is poured into it; cherry added.

And we see a gold state of Texas RING. A thick hand grabs the martini glass. Meet WALTER DONAHUE, a fairly grave, authoritative sixty. Parked across the table is Dan.

WALTER

Let's forget about th' circus performer.

DAN

Friday is all set. We have ninety-six percent RSVPs and, the President may attend.

WALTER

How 'bout the sparkler?

DAN

Tucked securely in my office safe.

WALTER

My boy, you and Hope gonna make a hell of a politically viable duo. More importantly, we're finally uniting two of the great American families. As for my end, our courting Holder has yielded results. He'll run for the senate contingent all goes as planned for the missus.

DAN

Outstanding! Jason and Dad are extremely confident Mandy's nomination will be confirmed. Senator Smith is on the fence but Dad's sure he can nudge him over.

WALTER

That's key. Now about you. As far as challengers, I don't see any. There's the DA, that Soo Yun who's coming off that big media case.

DAN

My sources tell me she's eyeing the mayor's seat.

WALTER

Welp. If all this finagling pans out by next year, we'll have a junior senator, new ambassador, Hope at the White House, and most importantly, my future son-in-law, a California congressman.

Off the men raising their glasses, we go to--

INT. CAPITOL ENTRANCE - CORRIDOR - DAY

Hope and Grant amble through a metal detector. They continue along the corridor. People pass, staring.

HOPE

I read in somewhere you were 'pretentious and arrogant.'

GRANT

As Nicholson told me, never believe anything you read in those rags.

HOPE

I imagine you have met some fabulous people.

GRANT

When Tom Hanks buys you a drink at the Polo Lounge, and Mark Walhberg makes you buy his, you know you're lucky. But I have to tell you the best was when I couldn't go home for Christmas, first time ever and mom was devastated, as was I. Kevin...

HOPE

Costner? I love him.

GRANT

He invited me over to the house. His three kids were small and he ordered forty tons of snow and all these farm animals to make the Nativity scene. It was incredible. I think I loved it more than his kids.

And Howard enters frame.

HOWARD

Hello, Ms. Hope.

GRANT

Hey, Howard.

HOPE

You know Grant? He's researching Sam Travis.

HOWARD

So I heard. Political capital aside, a hopeless romantic involved in a novelesque love affair with his biggest flaw being he drank Tom Collins' in the dead of winter. (chuckles) I have some tasty tidbits I'd be happy to partake whenever you have time.

GRANT

I would like that.

HOPE

Are you at Will's Christmas?

HOWARD

No, no. I'm saving for...

HOPE

That's right. Your Hawaii trip.

HOWARD

Novel listener she is. I best scoot. Merry Christmas.

Our couple amble past a JANITOR listening to MUSIC, who we will see later.

GRANT

Where are you from originally?

HOPE

Houston, Texas. Actually, I was born outside Seoul. My, ah, parents passed in a car wreck when my twin brother and I were one. My grandparents didn't have the means to raise us so they put us up for adoption. A man at the consulate contacted my now mother and father. Next thing I knew, Timothy and I were the only Korean kids running around Texas oil fields.

GRANT

Have you been to Korea?

HOPE

Never, sadly. My parents stopped traveling after they had us and with university and now work. How about you?

GRANT

Appleton, Wisconsin. Home of McCarthy, Houdini and Dafoe.

HOPE

Quickly, I want to show you my favorite place in the capitol.

INT. CAPITOL DOME & ROTUNDA - MOMENTS LATER

Grant is staring in awe up one-hundred-and-eighty-feet to a gold-encrusted work of art. Granite stones. Founding Fathers on canvas. The room is absolutely stunning.

HOPE

The top used to be made of wood; called 'Bullfinch Dome.' There are countless tales of phantom sightings. Matter of fact, Howard claims to have seen John Adams' ghost over there.

Hope and Grant cross to a concealed DOOR in the far corner. Hope flashes her credentials to a posted OFFICER, who allows them entry.

INT. CAPITOL DOME - HIDDEN STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS

Gulp. Grant's eyes lock on the tiny, sickly winding STAIRS that end at the tip-top of the DOME.

HOPE

Are you okay? You look peaked.

GRANT

I have a confession. I'm not the daredevil I portray in my films. I am terrified of heights and claustrophobic.

HOPE

(stifles a laugh)

Then how do you travel?

GRANT

I despise it. And not to sound snotty, but I try for a private plane or first class always. To be scrunched into tourist class, even the thought makes me nauseas.

HOPE

It is one of my most favorite spots. When I'm up there, I have this feeling all my troubles are washed away. Funny, there's a story that if you kiss someone --

GRANT

What?

HOPE

It's silly.

GRANT

Tell me.

HOPE

If you kiss someone atop the dome it's going to be the person you marry.

Awkward moment passes.

HOPE

Forget it! Let's go. We can use the congressman's 'hideaway.'

INT. CONGRESSMAN DUNCAN'S HIDEAWAY - DAY

And we are in the cozy room with a postcard view of the National Mall. Hope withdraws PAPERS from her purse. Grant is seated at a table, scanning documents.

GRANT

The script picks up at the peak of Travis' power.

HOPE

(off documents)

Says Travis was a 'kingmaker.'

GRANT

His mother left when he was seven; father raised him. Ran Republican politics from '52 to '64, close friends with LBJ?

HOPE

In the arena there are two types of politics: clash of dearly held values and buzz of gamesmanship, which after five both are drowned in whisky until sunrise. Sadly, things have changed. Now we take politics so personally.

(a beat)

It appears Howard was correct. There are tons of love letters to Josephine, a French girl who Travis married ... Oh, my. His wife, uh, died in a car accident on, uh, on their wedding day.

GRANT

Hum, a senate page caught Travis and McKenzie in a 'warm embrace.'

HOPE

I see why this story interests you.

GRANT

We're dealing with an elusive, complex creature. The difficulty I'm having is finding the best entry point so the character doesn't get away.

HOPE

Yes, you wouldn't want that to happen.

Under the weight of Grant's stare, Hope operates her phone.

GRANT

You sleep with that thing, too?

HOPE

I know, I'm terrible. Listen, would you mind terribly if I popped around the corner for a coffee?

GRANT

Go for it.

HOPE

This woman is considering a run for a congress, and, I, well, I'm hoping she asks me to be her campaign manager. It would be fabulous but also complicated. I'll go in five, and meet you in, say, an hour.

GRANT

But not here. Let's do something silly.

HOPE

Like what?

GRANT

I'll think of something.

HOPE

Listen, for what it's worth, the more I get to know you and see this story, the more, from a professional standpoint...

GRANT

Seems suicidal?

(withdrawing a LIFE SAVOR)

There's something about going after this role that revs my blood. Put is this way, trapped in every artist there's this notion, this insanity, that one day you may do something perfect. This idea stimulates your creative juices, pushing you gunning to top that unsurpassable summit.

(MORE)

GRANT (cont'd)

Then if you do become one of the fortunate, th' big agents and studios tell you to 'do this for the bank and this for the power.' And when you're fresh you can't say 'no' so your artistic self suffocates. Now here I am. Putting it all on the line that I don't fall on my face. AND scene.

On Hope. She is struggling with confessing about Dan.

HOPE

I salute your confidence.

GRANT

Wanna see something really cool?

Grant tilts back his head, blows a Life Savor into the air and catches it with a cheesy grin.

HOPE

On that, I'll ping you. Now study.

Hold on Grant's smitten grin before we move to--

INT. DAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Dan sails into frame with his phone pressed to his ear.

DAN

(into phone)
...They are incapable of governing that's why they're dusting off their old playbooks.

Dan sinks into his chair behind his paper-littered desk.

DAN

(into phone)
We need him on the Indecency bill. If he goes, so do six others and we can't afford that. Now handle it or I'll have the president.

Dan hangs up. Felicia has entered the room.

DAN

Get me Tony in the Whip's office. See if we have the votes to get HR 2345 out of committee. What?

FELICIA

You're cranky about something.

(a beat)

I can always tell because your ears turn purple.

DAN

Jason called and said Jessica saw Hope sitting in this actor's lap.

FELICIA

Will you stop? I'm sure it's exaggeration. You know Hope, she would never do something fun like that. She's a prude. Not that there's anything wrong with it.

DAN

I am this close to popping the question and this guy shows up. He could derail everything. I'd like you to do some poking around. See if you can't dig up something prosecutorial on our actor friend.

FELICIA

What? Where are you doing?

DAN

It's called being proactive.

FELICIA

It's called controlling and waste of my time.

DAN

I'm paying you.

FELICIA

Fair point. Just controlling.

DAN

Be nice to have insurance. Anything. Drugs, sex, rehab-- those people live licentious, unprincipled lives.

FELICIA

Those lucky bastards.

Back on Dan, his mind is operating on something, but what?

EXT. CITY STREETS - LATE AFTERNOON

The sun is low in the indigo sky. Everywhere you look are festive twinkly lights. PEOPLE carry Christmas gifts.

EXT. ICE SKATING RINK - CONTINUOUS

Two KIDS glide into frame and pass Grant and Hope, skating. They look relaxed, natural together.

HOPE

Anyway, she said they are putting together an exploratory campaign and wants my answer by Friday.

GRANT

And you'd be running it?

HOPE

I would. I don't want to get too excited. I'm sorta trapped in my current job, my life.

Grant is happily astonished -- and knows how she feels. Hope spins in a circle. Grant imitates.

HOPE

Hey, you're not half-bad.

GRANT

I am a Wisconsin boy. Plus, remember in *WM2* my skating across the Antarctic?

(she shakes her head)

You didn't miss much.

HOPE

(laughs to herself)

Picturing my father's face if he could see us.

GRANT

No fan of the blades, huh?

HOPE

Of anything except politics. He lives and breathes it. Which is fine with me, however, with my brother that's a different story. He and Timothy go round and round. Walter Espy Donahue is a cantankerous cocktail of 'Bear' Bryant, Trump and LBJ.

GRANT

Ouch. Timothy in politics, too?

HOPE

Supposed to be. Daddy sent him to Yale whereupon after graduation he passed on a White House offer and instead fled to Seoul to open a restaurant. They haven't spoken since. In fact, dad wanted State to revoke his passport, thankfully mother intervened.

GRANT

If politics wasn't in your blood, what would you be doing?

HOPE

Easy. A dance instructor.

GRANT

(grins big)
Who's your model?

HOPE

Bill Robbins.

GRANT

I'll stick with a fella 'hooper.'

HOPE

Let me guess, Kelly.

GRANT

(with a British accent)
Perhaps one of these days my lady would allow me the honor.

HOPE

(similar accent)
Now would that be a request for a spot on my dance card, dear sir? Fantasy aside. I love being on the campaign trail. It's constant motion, never boring, as opposed to spinning politico stories.

Right then -- Grant FALLS. Goes splat on the ice!

HOPE

Oh-my-gawd! Are you okay? Here. Maybe we should sit down.

The waning winter solace. Hope and Grant sink onto a bench. We see two GIRLS (eight; Cara & Wilker) in bg, whispering about Grant.

HOPE

How is your knee?

But Grant is grinning at Hope's disheveled hair. She moves to adjust it. He stops her.

GRANT

May I?

Grant unfastens her ponytail. Hope's mane flows freely.

GRANT

There. Looks sexy.

HOPE

That's one I haven't heard. Tell me about your parents.

GRANT

Simple. Dad finally retired from the factory and mom, teaching. Now they fish. Only been apart once. They're as madly in love today as they were thirty years ago.

HOPE

So there are couples who spend their lives being happy. Hum.

GRANT

Finding that one. Now that's the trick. For me it's more challenge akin to skating up Everest. Living in a fishbowl with the constant intrusion of social media, trying to meet expectations. Not to mention, every girl I date is disappointed when they don't wake up with Ben Rogers.

HOPE

(playfully)

Is he that good?

(a beat)

I imagine the folks are proud.

GRANT

Pop was slow to come around, but mom, yeah, she's been supportive from the get-go. Helped me book my first commercial.

HOPE

Which one?

GRANT

Remember 'Tummy Be Gone?'

HOPE

That was you asking the lady if she was pregnant? Hilarious.

GRANT

By far my folks have been the biggest influences, and grounding.

HOPE

So the 'biz' has changed you?

GRANT

There's an adage, 'Money doesn't buy you happiness, but it buys you a big enough yacht to sail up to it.' No doubt it has. Sure, part of me wants the yacht while the other half that tacky gold statue.

HOPE

If you want my opinion then I say embrace the art. Personally, I believe it depletes your value by talking about it yet continuing to position yourself inside the money-making machine.

Hope takes Grant's hand, pressed with the desire to explain her relationship with Dan.

HOPE

There's something...

Her confession is interrupted by the autograph-seeking girls.

GRANT

Hello there.

WILKER

(pointing to friend)
She loves you!

With that, the giggling girls zip off, leaving Hope realizing it is 7:10! She leaps up -- and as she does -- slips -- landing directly into Grant's arms.

HOPE
(unlacing her skates)
Oh, my gosh!

GRANT
What's happening?

HOPE
I'm late. I have a reception...

GRANT
Any chance you can cancel?

HOPE
God, I would love to.

GRANT
Any chance I see you later?

HOPE
Don't take it personally. Here's
my card with Ashley's number.
Call her.

GRANT
Left with the understudy, am I?

HOPE
Only for tonight's performance.
See you tomorrow!

Dashing off, Hope throws one last look over her shoulder. Grant's eyes are dark and watchful, and full of hope.

EXT. TOWN HOUSE - NIGHT

And we trail Hope bounding up steps of a stately home. She snatches a flask of PERFUME from her purse and spritzes her wrist.

INT. TOWN HOUSE - FORMAL PARLOR - MOMENTS LATER

It's a cocktail reception in full swing. Priceless art line the black walnut walls. POLITICOS congeal in circles. Hope is struggling from her coat when Dan strides up.

DAN
Where the hell have you been?

Hope jumps like a cat on lit stove.

HOPE
I apologize. Work was...

Dan attempts to kiss Hope as she struggles from her coat.

DAN
What's up with your hair?

In the process of 'fixing' Hope's hair, Dan accidentally KNOCKS over a passing WAITER'S tray of drinks. Glasses scatter; some fall to the floor.

As the waiter scrambles to collect glass, Dan states:

DAN
Another Tom Collins here.
(Hope shoots daggers)
I want you tip-top with Holder.

HOPE
He gives me the creeps.

Making an effort to keep his patience under control.

DAN
Kips, I'm aboard the Holder train.
It would behoove you if you think
of *our* future and hop on, too.

As Hope sneers, Dan sweeps her into the...

CLOAKROOM

Pulling Hope close, growling with a whisper:

DAN
What is it with you?

HOPE
I have a lot on my plate.

DAN
Meaning that actor.

HOPE
Tsk. He's here for research.

DAN
On whom?

HOPE
Can we get outta here?

DAN
(grabs her arm)
I do not care for him.

Hope scowls and KICKS Dan. He releases his grip.

DAN
Hope, for my future wife to be
flaunting with one of low
scruples, is utterly unseemly.
Tell Duncan you don't feel
comfortable--

And CONGRESSMAN HOLDER, forties, peeks through the curtain.

HOLDER
Peek-a boo. I'm looking forward
to the seven-course meal.

Off Hope's forced smile, we jump to--

EXT. REAGAN NATIONAL AIRPORT - SERVICE SEDAN - NIGHT

The bustle of TRAVELERS. From Grant's viewpoint we watch
Mark daintily race across the street and climb...

INSIDE THE SEDAN

Now Mark and Grant are tucked into the rear seat.

GRANT
What took you so long?

MARK
I was disputing with the captain
which *Godfather* was best.

Mark takes a BEER from his pocket and chugs it.

MARK
Bad news. Lionel and the studio
are livid. He called you a 'snot-
nosed brat' and threatened Joan.
Sorensen's not sold on you grasping
the Travis' romantic vein. Heard
he's being pitched someone.

GRANT
My bet it's Tyler Ford.

MARK

Oh, and get this: bitch Brian's having attorneys line-by-line your contract. He wants to sue you.

GRANT

Idiot!

MARK

We still got one shot. Joan is looking for the last five. Plus, you do it for scale...

GRANT

Five's tough.

MARK

I'd even toss in a read. I know, I know you're past that. Hey, what if you shoot a scene and send it to Joan? Something to show Sorensen.

GRANT

You know you run like a girl?

MARK

Jackass, my left hip's off-kilter from the motorcycle accident.

GRANT

You were on an e-scooter and it was your finger.

INT. RITZ CARLTON - LOBBY - NIGHT

The elevator doors slide open to reveal Mark in a funky plaid jacket, straightening his cuffs. Next to him is Grant, sporting a leather jacket. He is adjusting his collar, as our swingers stroll out the door in SLO-MO where they discover...

EXT. RITZ CARLTON - SEDAN - CONTINUOUS

... Ashley and her voluptuous figured poured into a LBD. The BELLMAN swings open the sedan's door... Meanwhile, at the...

INT. TOWN HOUSE - DINNING ROOM - NIGHT

It is a decadent affair with candles and elegant formal place settings for twenty GUESTS seated at tables.

Hope is seated beside Holder, bored to tears. She secretly consults her LG, readying a Snap: 'He digs you!' Hope melts. Then: 'LOW BATTERY.' She frowns, as we sweep across town...

INT. DANCE CLUB - ADAM'S MORGAN - NIGHT

Dua Lipa blares as hip PARTIERS in eclectic attire eye Grant, Ashley and Mark trailing the MANAGER to a private table topped with liquor bottles.

MARK

This place is maddening.

Mark and Grant tuck into the booth.

ASHLEY

If you boys will excuse me, I need to powder my nose.

MARK

Dude! She could kick start a 747. Got this mistress of the naughty riff thang going on. Oh. Two o'clock. Gaga eyes.

And Grant spots Jessica from the cafe with a sensuous stare.

MARK

Guess who I ran into at Formosa? Vanessa. Steph's friend. Anyhoo, I told her ya were goin' through a major transition and that you are a 'nesting creature' with sparks for Steph--

GRANT

--Why would you say that? I may like this gal.

MARK

Are you insane? You texted Steph about dinner and not losing her and know you're hung up on a new bird?

GRANT

She's different.

MARK

If I had a dollar every time I heard that! What makes you think that the feelings are mutual or that she's even available?

As Grant's eyebrows go skyward. Ashley pads into frame, slides into the booth beside Mark.

MARK

What's your poison?

ASHLEY

I'll do bubbly. Hard liquor blurs my judgement.

MARK

Double Jack coming up. Say, maybe you can tell me why pizza is so unhealthy. I mean you have cheese, vegetables, meat...

On Grant, checking his phone, thinking of Hope.

FADE TO:

INT. TOWN HOUSE - DINNING ROOM - NIGHT

WAITERS are clearing salad plates while others serve the next course. Across the table, Dan winks at Hope, who returns a look of bitter pleasure -- dying inside.

BACK TO:

INT. DANCE CLUB - DANCE FLOOR - NIGHT

The joint is off-the-rails. Grant is a few drinks in, feeling loose. He is gyrating with the crowd. Stealing a look at his wristwatch, he sulks, then;

Grant spies the answer to every man's private fantasies moving like a jungle cat toward him. It is Jessica.

JESSICA

Hello there. I saw you at the cafe earlier. Mind if my girls and I get a photo?

GRANT

Sure.

Jessica and GIRL 1 and GIRL 2 encircle Grant. And just as the photo is snapped, Jessica KISSES Grant.

JESSICA

Take my card in case you get *bored*. You can ring me any hour, anytime.

She slips her CARD into Grant's back pocket, stealing a squeeze of his famous asset.

JESSICA

And unlike others, I'm unattached.

It takes a beat for Jessica's words to soak in. Then, Grant with a stricken expression -- hit with infantile jealousy. He staggers, threading through the crowd, and...

EXT. DANCE CLUB/SEDAN/TAXI - LATE NIGHT

...into his waiting sedan just as--

--Hope emerges from a taxi. She breezes expectantly past a queue of PEOPLE to the DOORMAN.

DOORMAN

Sorry, doll. Line's there.

Doorman dismisses Hope with his clipboard. Hope stares at her dead cell. Crestfallen and lovelorn, she shuffles along the street CROSSFADING into Grant, stalking into...

INT. RITZ CARLTON - GRANT'S SUITE - MOMENTS LATER

And Grant enters. He paces, reeling a bit. Is he overreacting? He stewes a beat before an idea strikes him.

-- Grant flips through the *Calling Freedom* script.

-- Grant sets up his phone. He paces, looks out the window; he's not going to audition. He starts for the bedroom, changes his mind. Circles the phone. He's too big a star.

-- Fuck it. Grant hits 'record' and delivers a naked performance of Sam Travis. In the meantime...

INT. HOPE'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT

A slice of light falls across Hope's bed. She is in her nightgown, staring out the window. She goes to the bed and turns it down, climbing under the covers. She watches a film clip of Grant in *WM2* ice skating and this makes her happy.

FADE TO BLACK:

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. - DAWN

It is early morning the following day. The sun casts shadows across the Washington Monument. We hear...

INT. DAN'S OUTER OFFICE - MORNING

Shrieks and shrills. Felicia and GIRL #3 are at GIRL #4's desk relishing, social posts. Dan strides past camera and into...

DAN'S OFFICE

Dan pitches his briefcase atop his desk. Felicia looms in the doorway with a smirk and a FOLDER.

FELICIA
Good morning!

DAN
What's with them?

FELICIA
Juvenile gossip.

DAN
Send Holder a bottle of J.W. Blue and Mandy some flowers, something Caribbean.

FELICIA
Copy that. Here's the intel you requested.

Dan snatches the folder from Felicia.

DAN
This is it? You're telling me the kid's only debauchery is underage drinking.

FELICIA
I take you haven't checked WhatsApp this morning.

DAN
Some of us have a life.

At that moment, the NEWSPAPER catches Dan's attention. He scoops up the paper and goes British pale staring at Hope and Grant skating. Off Dan's unsettled look, we go to--

INT. HOPE'S OFFICE - MORNING

Hope breezes into frame and to her desk. As she checks her phone/social media her eyes go wide as saucers -- there is Grant kissed by Jessica. Hope is hit with sharp disappointment.

Audra enters with a NEWSPAPER.

AUDRA
Morn-ing. Sweet photo.

Hope catches the paper's photo of her and Grant.

AUDRA
Dan's on one. (smirks) I told him
you were in.

Hope sneers and picks up the receiver like dirty underwear.

HOPE
(into the phone)
Yes. It's not how it looks.
Will you forget about the stupid
interview? I refuse to do this
now. I am hanging up.

And CLICK. Hope is struggling to fight off a panic attack. She sighs. Even thinking about Grant perturbs her. Hope snatches her coat and sails out the door.

EXT. CAPITOL COFFEE KIOSK - STREET - MORNING

We see parents taking kids to school, people on their way to work. And then--

Grant rushes into frame. He is sweating, running hard; trying to get the girl out of his stream. Suddenly, a runaway DOG bolts in front of him. As he sidesteps the leash, wouldn't you know it -- he bumps into Hope.

They stand an awkward moment -- staring at each other, a competition, neither wanting to blink first.

HOPE
Nice photo.

GRANT
Nice engagement ring on Insta. I
should just get my papers.

HOPE

If that's what you want. Stop by
the office later.

Their eyes are very involved for a long time. Then;

GRANT

Terrific.

At that moment, Hope's phone rings. It startles her.

HOPE

I have to take this.

GRANT

Good-bye then.

And Grant stalks away. Off Hope's defeated face...

INT. RITZ CARLTON - HALLWAY - GRANT'S SUITE - MOMENTS LATER

A hand is resting on a doorknob. Grant is about to open
the door when suddenly a WAITER does, and breezes past.

WAITER

Good morning, Mr. McAllister!

Grant finds Mark slouched on the sofa in his undies. He is
savoring the hotel's entire breakfast menu.

MARK

This girl is a box of dynamite.

GRANT

Spare me th' x-rated tales.

MARK

Actually, they're Disney. We
didn't even get bombed. Not even
under the shirt over the bra. We
conversed. Can you believe it?
Kissed a little. She's not bad.
Doesn't use her tongue enough.
And listen to me, Mac and listen
tight -- her friend digs you.

GRANT

Mean the one with a kickstand.

MARK

Some White House yo-yo. Don't
freak. You are freaking. She may
not love Dan.

(MORE)

MARK (cont'd)

You're always bitchin' 'LA' chicks this and 'LA' chicks that, well, this gal ain't an 'LA' chick.

GRANT

No, she's a chick with a dude who she neglected to mention.

MARK

Whatta you ten? When you hit on a bird is your first lines, 'I'd love to fondle your melons but I'm dating someone?'

GRANT

What about all this stuff last night about Steph and not letting her get away?

MARK

I don't want to get bogged into details. My suggestion is roll the bones, stay clear of Italian deserts, and get past your little word phobia.

GRANT

Shut up! Okay? I mean it.

Mark throws up his hands and rolls his eyes.

GRANT

A'right I'm gonna share something with you. Ya wanna know the problem, why the cannoli thing occurred? Because I've never said *IT!* There.

MARK

Whoa, whoa, whoa. Let me get this straight. You have never said 'I love you?'

GRANT

Yeah, too my parents or my dog.
(chuckling)
The few instances I have had the urge I felt clumsily foolish like I'd be leading them on or worse, committing to a relationship I knew I couldn't guarantee, much less, live up to.

MARK

The words don't lock you into a jail sentence. They're an expression of emotions.

GRANT

But what if being unable to say it means I'm incapable--?

MARK

--Bull-shit. I've seen you with Steph. Your problem, and I've vocalized it countless times; you're scared shitless of commitments. And this fear has somehow gotten wrapped up and associated with failure. You're a daredevil in all aspects of life but yet in the match of romance you're a fraidy-cat who not only avoids particular words, but the actions required to build a healthy relationship.

Suddenly, Mark's phone buzzes.

MARK

(into the phone)

Yo. Uh-huh. Yeah. Shit! I'll be there!

(to Grant)

I gotta callback for the cop pilot! I'm back, baby! I am back!

Mark stumbles over the ottoman.

GRANT

I'd shower.

Mark blasts a shot of cologne under each armpit.

GRANT

About Joan. Tell her I'll cover the final capital.

MARK

Yipes! We're past dollar slots.

GRANT

I had some money set aside to buy that lake property for the folks.

MARK

When you have an Oscar you can buy
the damn lake.

Mark shoves clothes into his valise and flings open the door.

MARK

Stop being cynical and cut that
girl some slack.

Grant looms in the threshold.

GRANT

Break a leg, pally.

Suddenly, Mark cups Grant's chin and kisses his lips. MWAH!

MARK

I LOVE YOU!

GO TO:

INT. CAPITOL BUILDING - LADIES RESTROOM - MORNING

On Hope, staring at her reflection in the mirror. She is
applying lipstick while Ashley powders her cleavage.

ASHLEY

I am totally into him.

HOPE

(sighs heavily)
Do you realize how many times I
have heard those exact words?

ASHLEY

This is different. He is a good
kisser. Not great. His tongue
is like a probing device, but
nothing we can't remedy.

HOPE

See, there is more.

ASHLEY

We were kissing on the dance floor
and he had me pushed up against the
wall really hard...

HOPE

I get it!

ASHLEY

Someone hasn't had her second cup
of coffee.

Ashley is now trailing Hope into...

CAPITOL BUILDING HALLWAY

CONGRESSMEN pass. Hope forces a smile, trotting forward
with Ashley scanning social media.

HOPE

Someone passed two, five cups
ago. Ash, my picture is splashed
on every social media site. It's
not a red-letter day for Hope.

ASHLEY

Are you insane? Of course it is!
Your social profile is raised.
Did you see how many likes you
got?

HOPE

Now he thinks I'm one of those
girls.

ASHLEY

That you set up a pap to snap you
skating. Right. It's your
Hallmark romance...

HOPE

Yeah, for Jessica.

ASHLEY

Oh, she's a slut from the Senate
side who had a fling with Dan.

HOPE

Really? When?

ASHLEY

On Romney's campaign when you were
on a break. I tell you who you
should be concerned about, that
little doe-eyed vixen in your
office.

HOPE

Audra? Oh, stop.

ASHLEY

The scandalous scuttlebutt is rampant.

HOPE

They are? It's best if he gets his papers tonight and then we end this.

ASHLEY

Your jealousy is humourous.

HOPE

I'm not jealous.

ASHLEY

Honey, don't you see the way Hollywood looks at you? He's completely gaga. You don't realize how lucky you are. Simply to have a guy look into my eyes would bring me climaxing -- these babies are fun to play with but a burden to get past.

HOPE

Okay, look, this sounds horrible. I confess I've thought of him more in the last twenty-four hours than I have Dan the last year.

ASHLEY

That's because you can't fit a square peg into a round hole.

HOPE

But I love... Dan...

ASHLEY

Do you? Or do you love the idea and ever-ready tennis partner?

On Hope considering this.

ASHLEY

I saw we rub him out.

HOPE

Tsk. If I break up with him, people will think I'm a bitch. My parents would disown me. Not to mention, the scandal...

ASHLEY

Not listening. What's with Soo Yun?

HOPE

Still working up the courage to tell daddy.

ASHLEY

You better hurry. She met with Jason yesterday.

HOPE

She did!

Hope is now standing at her office door...

HOPE

(screams)

I'm going bonkers!

Hope enters...

INT. HOPE'S OFFICE - DAY

...to ringing phones, scurrying staffers, and Audra.

AUDRA

There you are!

Hope shoots a suspicious glance, really studying her.

AUDRA

AP's running a story on Duncan and the hunting trip with Judge Walker, who, as we speak, is accused of judicial impropriety.

HOPE

When did it hit?

AUDRA

Six minutes ago.

Hope checks her phone. Sinks. She glances to Jeff, still 'working' on that remote, then to Audra.

HOPE

First, hold all my calls unless press related. We'll go with Duncan is still anti-gun and did not participate in any of the hunting activities.

(MORE)

HOPE (cont'd)

As for Walker, say at the time of scheduling Duncan's case was not before the bench and that we are extremely concerned and disturbed by...

Off Jeff, discovering the REMOTE has no batteries.

CUT TO:

WE SEE VARIOUS SHOTS OF GRANT RESEARCHING TRAVIS

1.) Grant at Travis' grave. 2.) Grant reading political books. 3.) Grant lunching with Howard.

EXT. GEORGETOWN HARBOR - OUTDOOR CAFE - DAY

The Watergate hotel in bg. Few CUSTOMERS dot the tables. Grant is seated, sifting through papers, re-examining Travis' mother left his father. The *Variety* headline on his iPad: 'Sorensen in D.C.'

Grant receives a MESSAGE from Stephanie. 'Hi. In Baltimore. Happy to pop into DC for dinner. Let me know. XO S-'

Suddenly, Grant's phone RINGS - it's Lionel. He reacts as if a collection agency. He doesn't answer it. Hold on Grant's tension-filled ... Then;

EXT. CAPITOL BUILDING - NIGHT

Lit up and serene under the bright stars.

INT. CAPITOL ENTRANCE - SECURITY DESK/CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Grant enters to a moon-faced POLICEMAN, who smiles.

POLICEMAN

You looking for the film group?

GRANT

Actually, Hope Donahue.

POLICEMAN

Go ahead, sir.

Grant sweeps us through the shadows. His every step echoing: TAP, TAP. He hears music. It is coming from the janitor's radio. A happy thought strikes him.

INT. HOPE'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

We find Hope. Her head is resting in her hands. There is a knock at the door. She looks between her fingers to find Grant. She beams.

GRANT
Am I interrupting?

HOPE
I tried calling you.

GRANT
Was on another call. You look--

HOPE
--We were hit hard today.

GRANT
Same.

HOPE
Care to share?

GRANT
Not much to report except it appears Travis got away.

HOPE
Oh, no. That's dreadful. What happened?

GRANT
Director's looking at Tyler Ford.

HOPE
I'm sorry. Is there anything we can do?

GRANT
You have a sec?

And Grant's finger is stretched, beckoning.

HOPE
What, now? I look atrocious.

GRANT
You look hot.

HOPE
You're sweet. Ok, but first let me say I'm sorry...

Grant places his index finger gently on Hope's lips.

GRANT

I'm the one who should be
apologizing for behaving like a
petulant child.

And Grant smiles really big. Hope unfastens her hair. Grant takes Hope's hand and looks at it as if it were the eighth wonder of the world.

INT. STATUARY HALL - CONTINUOUS

The room is dimly lit. Streaks of light fall on the STATUES. Our couple steps into view. Grant points to the janitor, who cues a sensuous SONG.

Grant kisses Hope's hand, eyes never leaving hers. And now they begin. This dance is hot. Grant dips Hope, pulls her close. She gasps at the contact -- then returns it, sensually. They become more bold, more erotic.

JUMP TO: SOMEONE'S POV. It is PHIL SORENSEN (director), sixties with two CONGRESSMEN. They observe from a dark corner of the hall.

BACK TO: Grant folds Hope into his arms. They float around statues, through light beams.

JUMP TO: Sorensen witnessing a side of Grant he doubted.

BACK TO: Hope twirls, spins into Grant's arms. He nuzzles her throat; both swept away by the sexual undercurrent. Their lips are millimeters apart. Carefully, unblinkingly, Hope curves her back, pushing herself toward Grant's body, caressing his lips with her finger.

They are about to kiss, when--

WE HEAR CLAPPING. It is coming from a dark emerging FIGURE. Hope squints and grimaces, recognizing it is Dan. He sees the way Grant is holding Hope -- and doesn't like it. Hope disengages from Grant.

DAN

That's not happiness to see me.

The men are now face-to-face. Any remark by Grant would be futile. Nasty moment passes. Dan regards Hope coldly. Her eyes blaze into his. Dan holds his hand out imperiously.

DAN

Your father and I are in the car.

Hope sneers and returns Dan's gaze levelly -- nodding reluctantly. Dan pivots and exits. Hope squeezes Grant's hand, shrugs. On Grant watching Hope fade from sight.

I/E. CAPITOL - FRONT STEPS - NIGHT

Moments later. Grant stalks past Howard at the security desk, wrapping Christmas gifts. He rises and follows Grant outside.

HOWARD

Hold up. Listen, I gotta tell ya, you two were absolutely first-class. (chuckles) I have never witnessed anything quite so romantic in all my life, and I've seen a lot. It would be neglect on my part if I failed to say she doesn't give looks like that to everyone.

GRANT

Wasn't quite th' finale I had scripted.

HOWARD

Precisely why, my son, there are rewrites and recast.

Off Howard's huge grin, we dissolve to...

E/I. HOPE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

We WATCH a service sedan jolt to stop in front of a six-story red-bricked job. Hope is out like a shot. She storms inside the building with Dan quick at her heels.

The APARTMENT door snaps open.

The flat is quaint, cozy, conservative with Korean artifacts. Hope flicks on lights, stalking to the bedroom. Dan closes the door behind him. He is typing on his phone.

DAN

We don't want to give the impression something is amiss.

Hope sails from room-to-room, undressing.

HOPE

Something is! And if you can see that you need glasses.

Hope struggles into a Yale tennis sweatshirt.

DAN

There's nothing wrong with my vision. I see *everything*. And I believe I am being extremely understanding, considering--

HOPE (O/S)

--Considering what? That I danced with some guy.

Hope strides into...

KITCHEN

...and flings open the refrigerator.

She is preparing a PIMENTO SANDWICH. Then she sees it -- Dan and his beloved phone.

And -- Hope reacts.

She HURLS an ORANGE toward Dan. It soars across the room. Dan ducks just as it SPLATTERS against the wall!

HOPE

THAT! It drives me absolutely insane. You fondle it more than you do me!

DAN

Is that the reason you kissed him?

Hope's face drains. Is he being serious? *Hard to tell*. She keeps watching Dan. He keeps staring at her.

DAN

Well. Is it?

Hope is absolutely mortified. She stops looking angry, starts looking guilty.

DAN

I know about the research center. And, I'm willing to overlook it in order for us to move forward.

HOPE

It was--

DAN

--I needn't an explanation. Kips,
this guy is linked to fifteen women
in the last six months...

Scooping up a MAGAZINE, Dan reveals photos of Grant with various conquests. Hope glares at the photos through narrow eyes.

DAN

I'm only saying this to save you
suffering, and us further
embarrassment. He's an actor.
That is what he does, Hope. He
masquerades.

Hope sees Dan is genuinely concerned. She begins collecting her strewn clothes. Dan toys with a tennis racket.

DAN

Sweetheart, you are my girl. The
most amazing woman I've ever
known. Who else possesses your
incredible strategic sense and
political prowess? Nobody. I
apologize if I don't light
candles or send flowers. I
assumed you knew my feelings.
From the moment I laid eyes on
you in Poli Sci., I couldn't
imagine anyone more compatible to
invest my life.

(Hope is drawn in)

Remember my dad's '20 election? We
were focused in the trenches while
others were losing their marbles.
We pulled together then like we
must now. I apologize for
overreacting. I admit I was
jealous. But for a legitimate
reason; I don't want to lose you.

Hope reflects a moment. Then;

HOPE

I suppose I, I have been somewhat
distant lately with Timothy
leaving, and Duncan's workload.

DAN

Completely understandable.

Dan folds Hope into his arms. She hugs his neck.

HOPE
I forgot to tell you I met with--

DAN
--I know.

Dan catches himself. Hope recoils and stares. He tries to regroup. Hope wrinkles her forehead, and cocks her head.

HOPE
You know?
(Dan's caught)
Do you have people spying on me?

DAN
Don't be silly.

HOPE
Do you?

DAN
The Hill's a small place; people talk.

HOPE
I find it peculiar you are aware of two recent incidences regarding me and I only learned about you and Jessica Mortimer!

DAN
God, that was an Arizona campaign fling.

HOPE
And what about Audra?

DAN
(scoffs)
She has a sophomoric crush on a White House senior advisor. Happens all the time.
(Hope is fuming)
Anyway. What did Soo Yun want?

Hope cleans up orange pieces. She parks her hands on her hips, shooting daggers at Dan.

HOPE
Who told you?

Waving the idea off, he begins to remove his shoes.

DAN
Come on. It's getting late...

HOPE
I want to know.

DAN
Stop. Will ya. Is Soo running for
mayor?

Hope scowls and marches to the BEDROOM. She stomps into
frame, shoving a BLANKET and PILLOW toward Dan.

HOPE
She's running for congress!

And slam bam! The door closes on Dan's stunned face!

EXT. D.C. STREETS - MORNING

It is a glorious, sunny morning. Festive Christmas music
plays. The streets are teeming with SHOPPERS. Drifting
toward us is Grant, toting shopping BAGS.

EXT. TIFFANY & CO - CONTINUOUS

Grant detours inside. A moment passes. He exits, carrying
that fabled little blue BAG.

EXT. LOCAL COFFEE SHOP - CONTINUOUS

Grant disappears inside. A moment. Exits with a COFFEE.

INT. HOPE'S OFFICE - MORNING

Meanwhile, Hope is padding for the door.

HOPE
Anyone care for a coffee?

AUDRA
Jeff made a java run.

Hope notices Audra leaving the Congressman's office and cuts
a curious look.

HOPE
I need some fresh air.

Breezing from the office and into...

CAPITOL BUILDING - HALLWAY

Hope's viewpoint Jeff fumbling up the stairs, carefully balancing COFFEE trays. Hope shakes her head and stalks in the opposite direction, when she hears a WHISTLE.

Scanning the deserted hall, Hope spots Grant, peering from the janitor's closet; his finger is stretched, beckoning.

INT. JANITOR'S CLOSET - CONTINUOUS

Hope pops inside. Okay, she is slightly amused.

HOPE

What are you doing?

They are inches apart. Grant shows symptoms of claustrophobia.

GRANT

It's the janitor's 'hideaway.'

HOPE

You are crazy.

GRANT

How are you?

HOPE

Terrible. I apologize for the drama last night. This is totally my fault.

GRANT

How so?

HOPE

If I would have been forthright from the onset we wouldn't be in this insane mess.

GRANT

What were you supposed to have said? 'I'm Hope. I have a boyfriend?'

HOPE

My kissing you. God, talk about misleading.

(Grant with a big grin)

Oh, don't take me wrong, I relished our time together.

(MORE)

HOPE (cont'd)

We have to face it, though this has catastrophe written all over it. It was an impetuous move that not only has complicated matters, but also hurt those involved.

Grant withdraws a small Tiffany's BOX from his jacket pocket. He presents it to Hope. *What is this?* Her eyes twinkle.

GRANT

Go ahead. Open it.

Hope strips away the white ribbon and opens the box to REVEAL ... wait for it -- a coffee GIFT CARD?

GRANT

It's good for a year's supply.

Hope lights, and wraps her arms around Grant's neck.

HOPE

I suppose you expect me to think of you whenever I have coffee.

GRANT

I've never met anyone who makes me so comfortable. There are no pretenses. I can be myself. All the walls I have constructed seem to crumble when you're around. Considering the amount of hours we've known each other, it's absurd the magic and tingly sensation I feel. I'm taken by your smile, your innocence...

HOPE

I'm prude?

GRANT

Endearingly. I adore the way you bite your bottom lip when you're anxious. How you twirl your hair around your finger. That you're the only person in the world who hasn't wanted my autograph. You are what I have always dreamt of but doubted I would ever find.

HOPE

While I am extremely touched, I can't help but wonder how a man who could have any woman in the world would select Hope Donahue?

Grant wraps his arm around her waist and looks into her eyes.

GRANT

Because she's the feature and
they're only the trailer.

Hope's heart slams to a stop. They stare at each other for a moment, letting it all sink in. Hope's lip begins to quiver.

GRANT

Have dinner with me tonight.
(she shakes her head)
Come on. Something simple. We lay
out our cards see what comes up.

HOPE

I can't.

GRANT

Throw me a bone (puppy-eyes) If
something were to happen to you
that has never before; if a switch
suddenly flipped on inside you
thought was broke, wouldn't you
want to know how it got turned on?

It's a difficult moment -- defining where they stand.

GRANT

I made reservations at eight.

HOPE

Rather presumptuous.

GRANT

Optimistic. I heard Markant has
killer pasta.

Right then, the door SNAPS open to Jeff!

JEFF

Hope. I need a mop!

Without missing a beat, Grant proffers the mop. Jeff grabs it, says "thanks" and slams the door behind him.

GRANT

See you tonight.

HOPE

Thanks for my treat, silly.

INT. HOPE'S OFFICE - SECONDS LATER

As Hope enters, her ebullient mood instantly dissipates. Because there is Walter, wearing this real stern look. We catch Audra observing in the bg.

HOPE
Daddy. What are you doing here?

WALTER
We need to talk.

HOPE
Oh, sure. We can, uh, use the conference room.

WALTER
(to Audra)
Young lady, advise me of Duncan's arrival.

CONFERENCE ROOM

There's a table and chairs. Walter motions Hope to sit; she does. The tension is ratcheted a notch.

WALTER
Last evening I made an observation.

Walter studies Hope. She grows uneasy.

WALTER
Something is amiss between you and Dan.

HOPE
Tsk. Everything is fine.

WALTER
My bet it has something to do with that actor fella.

HOPE
Congressman Duncan asked me...

WALTER
Duncan's behind this?

HOPE
He is here researching a role for a movie. It's nothing sinister.

WALTER

Your mother and I have worked hard to provide you and your brother a comfortable life.

HOPE

Not again with Timothy.

WALTER

Dan is an upstanding man--

HOPE

--Daddy.

WALTER

Let me finish. I wanna share something with you I've never told ya. (a beat) Before getting you and Timothy, your mom and I tried two years for children. We had almost given up when she got pregnant. After three months, though, she lost the baby.

This revelation floors Hope.

WALTER

We were devastated. Adopting never crossed our minds until Burton Warner. He sat on the Senate Foreign Affairs with a sub on Korea and his contact knew your granddaddy. Your mother's dad worked for the government. After his mother's demise in a car accident, your dad fell on hard times and not capable to raise you two. Burton shared the story with your mother and me. We flew to Seoul and drove to Jeonju.

(a beat)

Burton fast-tracked all the documents. If it hadn't been for his swiftness, we'd lost you two. Your mother, Burton, and I returned to Houston with two of the cutest Korean kids Houston had ever laid eyes on. Your mother and I have always felt in debt to the Warners for giving us our kids. The icing on the cake was when you and Dan started courtin'.

Hope catches a delivery MAN depositing FLOWERS on her desk. She is gearing up -- to tell Walter about the job offer.

WALTER

We'd like nothing to derail the continuation of that relationship.

HOPE

Thank you for telling me this, daddy, albeit I wish you would have sooner.

(a beat)

I also have something to share.

WALTER

Just one minute. You hold a substantial position at the center of power here with Duncan. As you know, he controls the RNCC's purse strings to all congressional races.

HOPE

I know, daddy. Before you say anything, I would like you to listen, and understand this is something I have thought about and have desired for the longest. Soo Yun has asked me to run her congressional campaign!

On Walter. His face pales. He glares at Hope sternly. Hope's words hang there. It's hellishly awkward.

WALTER

She's running for congress? Now, snow pea, listen. That's great. However, I'd like you to not get involved in the 27th district.

(belittling)

Next cycle, we'll find you a local election to run.

HOPE

That is so condescending!

WALTER

I mean--

HOPE

--Soo has faith in my ability and I would expect you to have the same.

WALTER
Decline the offer.

HOPE
No.

And Audra appears at the door.

AUDRA
Sir. The congressman is here.

As Audra exits, Hope stares at Walter.

WALTER
Take care of it. See you Sunday.

Walter exits. Hope slumps on the table, buries her head in her hands. Finally she lifts her head, and looks around, questioning, still unsure. She rises and strides into...

HOPE'S OFFICE

Hope beams at the colossal arrangement of the most gorgeous WILD FLOWERS. She rips open the ENVELOPE to: 'Kips, you're the greatest! Love, Dan.'

Hope frowns, about to have a nervous breakdown. We watch the card flutter to the floor...

AND THERE IS A PASSAGE OF TIME

It is now evening. Hope is seated at her desk rehearsing Grant's rejection speech, when suddenly the door swings open. Her eyes almost pop out of her head because there -- looming in the doorway -- you guessed it -- is Dan.

DAN
Hello, gorgeous!

HOPE
Whatta you doing here?

DAN
Came to see you.

HOPE
I thought you had the VP's social.

DAN
I canceled.

HOPE

Well, ah, unfortunately, I was about to leave for dance class.

DAN

Haven't we had enough dancing this week? Besides, I have a surprise. Did the flowers surprise you?

HOPE

Today's been full of them.

DAN

And the show has only begun. Come on.

Dan extends his hand to Hope, who is dying inside.

EXT. CAPITOL BUILDING - SIDEWALK - NIGHT

The moon sits atop the Lincoln Memorial. Happy COUPLES stroll past Hope and Dan. Hope checks her phone.

DAN

No, no. No communication gadgets. See. I even have mine on silent.

Off Hope's troubled expression, we dissolve to--

INT. MARKANT RESTAURANT - NIGHT

We HEAR a buzz of conversation and SEE WAITERS hustle past chic CUSTOMERS. We're in the city's hip eatery where Grant is parked at an intimate two-top. He checks his watch. Hope's absence speaks volumes. Meanwhile...

EXT. D.C. STREETS - PENNSYLVANIA AVE. - NIGHT

A LIMOUSINE slowly turns into...

EXT. WHITE HOUSE - FRONT GATE/PORTICO - NIGHT

The magnificent building is lit up and shimmering. Uniformed OFFICERS wave the limousine through. It eases to a stop under the portico. SS AGENT #1 opens the limousine door.

On Hope and Dan, exiting the limousine, following Agent #1 through a door held by AGENT #3.

INT. WHITE HOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The hall is dimly lit and quiet. Hope's viewpoint AGENT #1 speaking into his shirt cuff. As the group rounds the corner they are met by AGENT #2. The four stride toward the double doors at the far end of the corridor where they stop.

AGENT #1
(to Dan)
You got three minutes.

Hope is clueless. Agent #2 pushes open the door. Dan, with an oversized grin, gestures Hope inside the...

OVAL OFFICE

Hope is speechless and overwhelmed. She notices the Resolute Desk; Seal of the President of the United States; bust of Abe Lincoln. Dan with his best smile.

DAN
Walter gave his approval.

Hope looks at Dan. Dear God, is he about to propose?

Things move quickly now--

Dan drops to one knee on the Presidential Seal. He gazes up at Hope. A TEAR slips down her face.

Dan withdraws a Tiffany's RING BOX. Hope gasps.

Dan reveals the RING you saw at the top of the story.

DAN
Hope Donahue. Will you marry me?

Dan with expectant eyes. Hope's heart does a flip. She nods, albeit, not convincingly, yes. Dan slides the ring onto Hope's finger. It is most spectacular.

DAN
Ah-hhaaahaa. You're looking at
D.C.'s new power couple.

On Hope. Something about the way Dan said that is like a sledgehammer to the chest. Suddenly, the door SNAPS open. Agent #1 leans in:

AGENT #1
Clock's up.

On Hope, wondering -- *What the hell just happened?*

Meanwhile...

EXT. MARKANT - NIGHT

VALETS hustle past a Suburban. Security AGENTS in suits escort a DIGNITARY past a dazed Grant. Because there, across the street, dizzy with laughter, he eyes Hope and Dan.

Right then -- Grant's phone rings. It takes him a moment to answer it. When he does we INTERCUT with Mark, who we surmise, Ashley rang. He is editing VIDEOS, allowing us a glimpse of Grant's MONOLOGUE.

On Grant in a sea of people, absorbing the impact.

EXT. PENNSYLVANIA AVE. - NEWSSTAND - NIGHT

And it's later. A cab speed past Grant, pulling his coat around his neck. His phone pings. He reads the text: 'He's a boy in tights, Sorensen.' A light rain falls on Grant.

INT. REAGAN NATIONAL AIRPORT - CONTINUOUS

Grant pads through security and toward the boarding gate, taking us onto...

INT. AMERICAN AIRPLANE - FIRST CLASS - CONTINUOUS

A bottle of WATER. Grant lifts it to his mouth and when he brings it down, he is in--

INT. SERVICE SEDAN - LOS ANGELES - DAY

The SUN brightly shines. Through the window, we see palm trees and the Hollywood Hills. Grant is in the rear seat, listening to his messages. His spirits crushed.

GO TO:

INT. CAPITOL BUILDING - STATUARY HALL - DAY

Hope strides across the 'dance' floor, replaying last night's events. We hear *All I Want* as she drifts past the Daniel Webster statue, and...

EXT. LOCAL COFFEE SHOP - D.C. - CONTINUOUS

In a tangled mess of emotions, Hope drifts out the door, gazing at her COFFEE. She trudges along the festive sidewalk and past...

EXT. ICE SKATING RINK - CONTINUOUS

We hear laughter. Hope studies the faces of happy KIDS. There is no sign of Grant, but to her, he is everywhere.

INT. CYNTHIA HARDING'S BRIDAL STORE - DAY

On Hope's gloomy expression. We pull back to find her wearing a fabulous Vera Wang dress. Throughout the scene, Hope tries on dress after dress while Ashley accessorizes.

ASHLEY

Leave it to your dad to book a dress fitting less than twenty-four hours after your proposal.

HOPE

It all happened so quickly. One minute I'm in the Oval Office and the next swept to dinner with his parents and the vice president.

ASHLEY

Who'd have thought Dan could reach into his old magic hat and pull out such a rock?

HOPE

It's a really good ring.

ASHLEY

It is a *you* ring.

HOPE

(admiring the ring)
Isn't it? Oh, jeez. What have I done?

ASHLEY

Allowed your father to screw up your life and force you into an arranged marriage.

(re: dress)

That looks hideous.

HOPE

I was the one who said, *yes*. And there is nothing wrong with Dan.

ASHLEY

(proffers a Life Savor)
Want one?

HOPE

Where-did-you-get-those?

ASHLEY

Mark.

(a beat)

Here's a question. If he was so wrong for you why won't your heart and head stop saying he was so right?

HOPE

I'm a bitch, aren't I? Here I am thinking, not about my future husband, but a guy I met three days ago!

ASHLEY

Love is a crazy, whacky drug.

HOPE

How was I supposed to know I would fall for *Wonder Man*?

ASHLEY

So you do admit it.

HOPE

Was he really upset?

ASHLEY

A wreck. Turn around.

HOPE

Is that what Mark said?

ASHLEY

Actually, he used *complete fucking wreck*.

HOPE

I'm going to hell.

ASHLEY
 (tugging at the dress)
 Pull it down some. Let those
 puppies breathe.

HOPE
 I should've been honest from the
 beginning.

ASHLEY
 Oh, right. Guys love right when
 they meet a gal for them to say,
 'I'm Hope I have a boyfriend.'

HOPE
 He said I was the 'feature.'
 (sotto)
 All this because of a kiss.

Wait. *What was that?* Ashley thrusts back Hope's VEIL.

ASHLEY
 YOU KISSED HIM?!

Hope winces and bites her lower lip.

ASHLEY
 You kissed him? Oh-my-gawd!

HOPE
 (softly)
 You owe me a pair of shoes.

ASHLEY
 This totally changes everything.

HOPE
 It does?

ASHLEY
 Can you see painting a kitchen with
 him? (Hope nods) Having kids? (Hope
 nods) Did it feel tingly?

HOPE
 Very.

The SEAMSTRESS enters.

SEAMSTRESS
 How is everything?

From her viewpoint Hope is slumped in a chair while Ashley is
 spread-eagle on the floor, groaning.

ASHLEY
Disastrous.

JAM TO:

EXT. BEL AIRE GOLF COURSE - DAY

WHACK! We watch a golf BALL soar through the air. Plops down inches from the hole. Over the crest appear three silhouettes. Drifting closer, we notice Mark, NICHOLAS HOULT, and a tall, chiseled-faced kid whom we'll call BRONSON.

NICHOLAS
That's two-hundred, Hoffman.

MARK
I said *in* the hole.

NICHOLAS
Bronson.

BRONSON
Pretty certain you didn't.

Mark scoffs. He withdraws a wad of CASH from his lemon/flamingo trousers and slaps it into Nicholas' hand, who gives it to Bronson.

NICHOLAS
Now we're squared.

And Mark reads a text on his phone from Grant.

MARK
Shit. We got a problem.

NICHOLAS
What's that?

MARK
Sunofabitch! Brian poached Tyler from CAA and pitched him to Sorensen. We gotta do something. Grant has to have that role. He's put it all on the line and now Brian fucks him over.

BRONSON
Aren't you tight with Tyler?

NICHOLAS
We used to be roomies.

MARK

Any chance you could give him the rundown? See if he'd reconsider.

NICHOLAS

I can give it a shot. But no promises. He's not a fan.

BRONSON

We'll take care of him.

MARK

What's more concerning is Lionel. Hundred-bucks Brian's talked him into suing Grant.

BRONSON

Lynn exercises with Joan. I can see if she knows anything or can help.

MARK

Let's see what we can do!

CUT TO:

INT. SUNSET TOWER HOTEL - POOL - DAY

The pool is alive with gorgeous PEOPLE. Sophie Richie strides past frame. She waves at Grant, seated at a table with CHRIS MCDONALD.

CHRIS

So you lost a girl and role. Name me a fella in this town who hasn't.

GRANT

What are my options?

CHRIS

The way I see it you fire Downs and read for Sorensen tomorrow.

(off Grant's look)

I called in a favor to Joan. She booked you a slot.

GRANT

Ha, ha! Man, you're the greatest!

CHRIS

Now about the girl. You have a good one here in Stephanie.

(MORE)

CHRIS (cont'd)
 (Grant shakes his head)
 But this one's special.

GRANT
 Sadly yes. And one I doubt will
 renege on a proposal.

CHRIS
 There's two types of couples; the
 happy ones and the not. Do you
 think you can make her happier than
 this political cat?

GRANT
 That's tough. We did connect.

CHRIS
 Clearly, if she was happy with him,
 she wouldn't have kissed you,
 right?

GRANT
 Fair point. She's having a big
 engagement party tomorrow evening.
 I'd think after that ... well, I
 have not shot.

Right then Sophie waltzes up...

GRANT
 Hey you.

SOPHIE
 You boys mind if I join you?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GRANT'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A Christmas tree twinkles in the corner. We see Grant on the sofa sorting through BOXES. Something catches his eye. He withdraws a faded ENVELOPE, reads the LETTER inside. It is a note from his mother to his father.

The stark reality is blinding. And Grant sinks back with the dawning revelation his parents didn't have a *perfect* marriage; his mother temporarily left Grant and his father when he was five.

Now ... we hear a shrilling PHONE.

INT. MARK'S BEDROOM - DAWN

As a hand comes into frame, fumbling across the nightstand. It snatches the phone and disappears under the covers.

MARK
(into phone)
This better be Spielberg.

ASHLEY (V/O)
We have a problem.

MARK
(into phone)
Ash?

Mark sits upright and turns on the lamp. We see movement under the covers, and see a GREAT DANE peek out his head.

INT. GRANT'S HOUSE - DAY

Grant pads past camera sporting ripped jeans, and untucked western shirt; looks a dreadful mess. Right then, Mark sails through the front door in an *Elvis is King* shirt.

MARK
And the Oscar goes to...
(off Grant's sullenness)
Hey, I have damn good news. Joan is on board for you doing it for scale!
(does a jig)
Does the Hoff deliver of what? Now let's pray ole Sorensen likes Mac.

Grant slouches against the counter.

GRANT
I don't feel the read.

MARK
You what?!

GRANT
I'm not in the mood.

MARK
You're not in the mood? WELL, YOU GET INTO THE MOOD! I busted my nuts to arrange this. Now get on the horse!
(Grant is pondering)
(MORE)

MARK (cont'd)

Your little dancing stunt sold Sorensen on the love story. More importantly, Steph said they haven't made an official offer to Tyler. CAA's going after Downs. Let's get this screen test in the can. We still have a chance, baby. Put your arms up! Put 'em in the air.

(snatches a beer)

Y'know what I think? Me thinks Mac is bogged down on a bird he knew for four days gettin' hitched to a dandy in a button-down. See? I'm right. You got the love bug.

(Grant shrugs; frowns)

Alrighty. I wasn't going to do this. Com'ere.

Mark flops down on the sofa and pats a cushion.

MARK

Here. Time for a father and son pow-wow. Listen. If it weren't for me and Ashley's bet you wouldn't know this kitten.

GRANT

Bet?

MARK

Yeah. The one she made with Hope. Y'know? To kiss you.

GRANT

That was a bet?

Mark's caught and covers.

MARK

Come on, let it go.

GRANT

No. That kiss was under false pretenses.

MARK

Grow a pair. Listen. I've known ya a long time and I see a difference in you this week. I like the new Grant. He's not as cynical. Which is why I'm telling you: Ms. D.C. may be in L-O-V-E. That got your attention.

(MORE)

MARK (cont'd)

Now if she goes through with this engagement gig ... What I am saying is if something, or someone, were to interrupt the proceedings...

GRANT

Break up her party? No deal.

MARK

Dude, neither of you are victims of unsynchronized desires.

GRANT

It's a waste of time. She left a message apologizing and that was it.

MARK

She doesn't know what to say, which is why she had Ash call me.

At that moment -- the door SWINGS open. Brian enters; his anxiety covered by over confidence.

BRIAN

Fellas.

MARK

I'm gonna look at the sun.

Mark exits.

BRIAN

I'm here. What's up?

Grant narrows his eyes and stares at Brian a beat.

GRANT

After all we've been through.
After all the money we made.
Tyler Ford. Really?

BRIAN

Nature of the business.

GRANT

The nature of my business isn't screwing friends or clients.

BRIAN

I thought you wanted 3.

GRANT

I've been telling ya.

BRIAN

I ran into Tyler at the Polo Lounge one night. He mentioned his agent wasn't pushing him in the direction he wanted and could I help. That day I had received the coverage on *Calling Freedom* and thought it the perfect role for him. Still do, to be honest.

GRANT

There could have been a better way to go about it. Anyway. It's done.

BRIAN

What's done?

GRANT

Us.

BRIAN

WHAT? You fucking outta your mind? Who's gotten to you? Is it Jay Rosenthal? Becky Lassiter?

(explodes)

Lionel's going to hit the roof! We are talkin' mega bucks; profits of the world franchise, and you -- I saw the stats this morning with you and Anna. They are off the fuckin' charts! They are going to sue you! We are going to sue you.

GRANT

That's why I have a good lawyer. Good luck. See ya.

Grant opens the door, and gestures Brian farewell. Brian growls. He stands for a long moment, staring -- the full impact of the situation, settling.

Mark breezes inside. Brian scowls and stalks out.

MARK

Bye-bye Brian.

And on that, Mark slams the door.

MARK

Seems he took it well.

GRANT

I gotta say that was easier than I thought. Feel like a burden's been lifted.

MARK

Good, cause we gotta get swingin'.

Mark stands there with an anticipatory look.

GRANT

I know her. She's a nester.

MARK

So the role it is. Ya wearin' that?

GRANT

Duds are in the car.

MARK

Then away we go!

JAM TO:

EXT. 405 FREEWAY/SIDE STREET - DAY

We are following a CAR WEAVING through traffic. But it's not just any auto, it's a '74 Jensen Interceptor 3. Grant is behind the wheel charging down the 405.

As Mark works the radio dials, he whizzes by *All I Want*.

GRANT

Ho. Stop. Turn that back.

Grant is lost in reverie. Mark knows that look, and directs Grant onto the next off-ramp.

The Jensen zips down a side street--

EXT. LAX TERMINAL - DAY

The Jensen jolts to a standstill. PEOPLE stare. Grant leaps out with newfound gusto.

MARK

You land at 7:10. Soirée kicks off at eight. Got fifteen to hit the gate. I'll send Sorensen the video.

(MORE)

MARK (cont'd)
 (pointing) There's the guy to
 escort you through VIP. Go get
 her. Oh, one tiny detail.

Grant whips his head around. Mark shrugs.

MARK
 Forget it. You'll see.

Off Mark's smirk, watching Grant race into the airport....

INT. AMERICAN AIRLINES PLANE - TOURIST CLASS - CONTINUOUS

And it looks like a sardine can. It takes us a moment to
 locate Grant. And when we do, he is wedged between two
 beastly LADIES. We feel sympathetic.

CAPTAIN (V/O)
 Welcome aboard. Our flight to
 D.C. will be five hours...

Grant is about to die. Meanwhile, at...

INT. RITZ CARLTON - GRAND BALLROOM - SOIRÉE - DUSK

The room is spectacular. An ORCHESTRA plays festive music.
 Inside the beltway's crème de la crème sport tuxedos and
 shimmering gowns. Some people clustered in knots, engaged in
 serious discussions.

On MANDY HOLDER, fifty, elegant. She is watching JASON ROE,
 forties, meet Dan, nursing a Tom Collins at the BAR.

DAN
 Jason C. Roe. Glad you could
 make it. Cocktail?

JASON
 I will for the children. The way
 I see it, every drink I have is
 one less that will fall into the
 hands of a child.

DAN
 And they say you are one of the
 worst people in the world.

JASON
 Are Ashley and the twins present?

DAN
 They are and they look
 stupendous.
 (to the BARTENDER)
 Jack on the rocks.

And Jason and Mandy exchange glances across the room.

JASON
 Congratulations on Holder. It's
 difficult to beat a congressional
 seat and missus in one swoop.

DAN
 Couldn't have done it without you.
 (re: Mandy)
 Ambassador to Barbados.

JASON
 There are worse gigs.

DAN
 She is ideal for the post.

JASON
 I already have her set up to pay
 courtesy calls on St. Kitts and
 Nevis' Prime Minister.

At that moment DORIS DONAHUE, Hope's mom, elegant, sixty,
 bejeweled, enters. She and Walter float into frame and to
 Dan and Jason.

WALTER
 (to Dan)
 Only a fool drinks Tom Collins in
 winter. Barkeep, four Jacks
 rocks. Jason.

JASON
 Mrs. Donahue, you're looking
 splendid as always.

WALTER
 Jason, thanks for your leg work on
 this. I'll make certain something
 swings your way in the not-too-
 distant-future.
 (to Dan)
 Where are your folks?

DAN

Having drinks at the Observatory.
VP had something to run by Dad,
they'll be here.

And we see Hope. She is peering through a side door.
Suddenly, she is grabbed by Ashley, and pulled into...

INT. RITZ CARLTON - LADIES RESTROOM - NIGHT

Hope has her hair done up. She looks elegantly sexy in an
exquisite evening gown and pearls.

HOPE

Well, how do I look?

ASHLEY

I'd do you. Ya wanna hear
something hilarious? I let the
Chief Justice touch my boob.

HOPE

I'm not wearing panties.

And Hope and Ashley study themselves in the mirror.

ASHLEY

Look at my girl.

HOPE

Yes, look at her. She can't get
Hollywood out of her mind.

ASHLEY

Good. Because he's on his way.

HOPE

WHAT?! He's coming here? Are
you're nuts?

ASHLEY

You said if he came before--

HOPE

--That was locker room talk!

ASHLEY

Sounded like a game plan to me.

HOPE

And I certainly didn't mean two
minutes before. Oh-dear-lord.

ASHLEY

Next time, be more specific. Listen, if you don't do this now you will go through your entire life wondering... OH! I got the scoop from Jason last night. Senator McMillan's going to State. Mandy Holder will become Ambassador to Barbados. Audra wants your job and snitched the kiss. And lastly. Are you ready for this? Dan plans to run for Holder's seat!

Hope looks at Ashley carefully and unblinking; a contradictory mess.

ASHLEY

This means--

HOPE

--Soo Yun will challenge Dan in the primary. That's why he and daddy were behaving so strangely. I feel betrayed.

ASHLEY

You're either marrying a congressman or putting one into office. Oh, yeah, *The New York Times* reporter is here. The society, wedding chic.

HOPE

I need a drink.

ASHLEY

Oooo, me, too. Back in a sec.

And Ashley breezes out the door while Hope tries to come to a decision. Meanwhile...

EXT. REAGAN NATIONAL AIRPORT - NIGHT

The SNOW is really coming down. Huge flakes coat Christmas TRAVELERS zipping past frame. We see Grant. He glances his watch: 7:16. Grimaces. Then disappears into a waiting sedan. (Note: we could play up traffic to build tension)

CUT TO:

INT. RITZ CARLTON - LADIES RESTROOM - NIGHT

On Hope. She is composing her thoughts, trying to convince herself and come to some conclusion. Ashley floats in with a box of TISSUES and MARTINIS.

ASHLEY

Jason's here. Don't fret. I swore to Mark to be a good little Catholic girl. I think we're dating.

HOPE

What am I going to do?

Tight on Hope's watch: 7:53. She is staring at her reflection, as Ashley attempts to tuck tissues into her bra. Hope slaps her hand. Ashley shrugs. Now--

INT. RITZ CARLTON - GRAND BALLROOM - NIGHT

Sometime later. Dan is all smiles on stage. He is encircled by happy GUESTS. Meanwhile, Ashley is in the corner with an anxious Hope.

DAN

And now I am proud to present to you Mrs. Dan....

And Dan stops. He swallows, hard. Guests murmur. Dan's face goes fire-engine red. Because there, at the entrance, looms Mr. Hollywood in a western shirt and jeans.

ASHLEY

This just got exciting.

And now Hope sees Grant. She is stunned. Slack-jawed shock.

Grant pauses a beat, then weaves his way toward her.

On Dan and Walter's bewildered faces.

Guests move aside for Hope making her way toward Grant. They stop in the middle of the ballroom, directly under the chandelier. They are face-to-face, smiling.

GRANT

Seems my timing is off.

HOPE

Slightly.

GRANT

I had to give it a shot.

WALTER (O/C)

Can someone tell me what the hell
is going on?

HOPE

(biting her lip)
I'm glad you did.

Dan is walloped by the stark reality of losing everything.

WALTER

Dan, do something.

Doris cuts Dan a hard look. He catches it. Grant takes
Hope's hand into his.

GRANT

I realize my coming is totally
insane and completely out of line.
These last four days, though have
been the most insanely enjoyable
ones of my life.

Hope feels herself being lured by Grant's power, but surely,
a decision like this can't be made so hastily.

DAN

I think you need to leave now!

GRANT

What I'm trying to say is you're
the person who I think together
we'd make each other happy for a
lifetime.

Everyone is waiting, holding their breath. Walter's anger
nears a tipping point.

HOPE

I'm touched. I truly am. But, I
mean all this has happened so
suddenly and so unexpectedly...

WALTER

Hope, you know what to do.

Grant looks at the guests, hanging on his every word.

GRANT

Hope, you are the only woman who could walk out of a crowded room and make me feel lonely -- and I never want to be lonely again.

And Hope's heart does a cartwheel. The tears come. Hope is not alone either, others in the room are moved.

A little pause. Then Hope turns to Dan.

Slowly, gingerly, Hope slips the engagement ring off her finger. She returns it to Dan. He takes it. Yes, he's hurt, but for some reason there is no bitterness here.

Then Hope finds Walter.

HOPE

I'm sorry, daddy for not marrying who you wanted.

WALTER

Let's fix this.

HOPE

I have. I'll be the one running the campaign against you and Dan.

And now Hope is grinning and Grant likes that a lot. She throws her arms around his neck. He runs his fingers through her hair, cascading across her shoulders.

HOPE

I thought I lost you.

GRANT

Never. (a beat) When does Howard leave?

HOPE

In ... fifteen minutes. Why?

Grant snatches Hope's hand.

HOPE

Where are we going?

We watch our couple race out--

JAM TO:

EXT. CAPITOL BUILDING - SEDAN - NIGHT

A sedan shutters to a halt. Grant and Hope exit. Hope is wearing a bellman's coat. They bound up the steps and into...

INT. CAPITOL BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Where Howard is at the door ready to lock up.

HOWARD

Oh, my.

GRANT

We need ten minutes.

HOWARD

Yes. By all means.

Howard makes a triumphant little double-fist gesture to himself as Grant leads Hope into the...

ROTUNDA

...And to the concealed DOOR. Grant snaps it open. He gazes nervously up at the stairway. Hope begins climbing the tiny steep stairs with Grant nervously trailing.

EXT. TOP OF CAPITOL DOME - BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF D.C. - NIGHT

As Hope pushes open the door, a freezing wind greets her. Grant creeps into frame behind her. They stand on the iron-grate walkway encircling the dome. Grant takes a moment to steady himself.

The moon has just punched a hole in the clouds. Grant's eyes light at the Instagrammably picturesque view of the nation's capitol blanketed in freshly-fallen snow.

HOPE

I told you it was awesome.

Grant digs in his jacket pocket, withdrawing a coffee store ENVELOPE to Hope. A coltish grin plays on her face. She opens the envelope, and suddenly, tears swell in her eyes.

Hope's eyes light up like a child on Christmas morning. She is staring at a spectacular pair of two-carat Tiffany diamond EARRINGS.

GRANT

When we met, you were only
wearing one. Figured a girl
should have at least have a
complete pair.

Grant folds her into his arms. He kisses her. She does not
resist. Their lips part, as we sweep over the city.

ONE YEAR LATER

EXT. CINEARAMA DOME - *CALLING FREEDOM* PREMIERE - DUSK

An SUV rolls to a stop. The red carpet is jammed with
CELEBRITIES and PHOTOGRAPHERS.

The SUV door opens to Mark and Ashley, stepping out. They
are happy, in love. Now, we see Grant. Flashbulbs pop. He
steps out, looking dapper as hell.

GIRLS shriek. FANS applaud.

And now there is Hope in a glittering gown. She is stunning.
Grant takes her hand. This makes us smile. Hold on our
glamour couple as they pose for photos, and we...

FADE OUT:

THE END