

FALSE PROFITS

By

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In the midst of chaos, there is also opportunity.
—Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*

The best revenge is massive success.
—Frank Sinatra

ACT ONE

INSERT VIDEO: IN VARIOUS SHOTS around a Las Vegas hotel, we see WOMEN: running, laughing, hugging, guzzling cocktails, jumping in the pool. They're different ethnicities, ages, religions— some in bedazzled sweaters, others in hijabs— but they're all relentlessly happy. Are they on drugs, in Scientology... part of Oprah's underground army?!

ONE WOMAN (30s), Chico's separates, contour makeup, dolphin tattoo-- turns to the camera and smiles;

AMBER

It's 2018's *Brava Natural* cosmetics national sales training powwow... and sister-warriors, it's IN-credible! Hashtag BEST-FEELING-EVER!

They're all sales reps for multi-level-marketing cosmetics giant *Brava Natural*... and they fucking love it!

QUICK POPS of their testimonials, to the camera:

YAZMEEN

With *Brava Natural* in my life, I can see a million, endless possibilities!

AMBER

Hashtag BELIEVE-IT-2-ACHIEVE IT... Hashtag DON'T-QUIT-YOUR-DAYDREAM...

MIN-JEE

I said yes to *Brava Natural* a year ago and now I'm an Associate District Vice-Chief-in-Training!

AMBER

Hashtag LOOK-LIKE-A-BABE-ROLL-LIKE-A-BOSS... Hashtag BUT-FIRST-COCKTAILS!

SELENA

It's a wild ride... and I'm not stopping 'til I reach the top!

She waves from the driver's seat of a brand new *Brava Natural* Signature Blush RANGE ROVER... which we pull back to see is rotating on its display platform in the hotel lobby.

MUSIC CUE: the *Brava Natural* original theme song "SAY YES TO YOU" kicks in.

A parade of WOMEN lip-synch and dance their hearts out. Both rhythm and dignity vanished two days and 43 cocktails ago!

VARIOUS WOMEN

(lip-synching)

*Create your own life, make your
dreams come true/If I can do it,
sister, you can too...*

The theme song continues as we pull back to REVEAL:

INT. ARENA - MGM GRAND, LAS VEGAS - SAME

The video is playing on a JUMBOTRON at the powwow's main event-- a million-dollar extravaganza with DANCERS, ACROBATS, NEON LIGHTS, 20K batshit WOMEN... and TWO OF THE ORIGINAL SPICE GIRLS!

GERRI HALLIWELL

(with audience)

*...SAY YES!/Gonna lift you
higher!/SAY YES! Set your heart on
fire... LEMME HEAR YOU SAY YES!*

The audience shouts "YES!" as Mel B. takes the mic.

MEL B.

(rapping)

*Get woke!/No need to be broke!/Our
future is calling and destiny
spoke./Work in pajamas, vacay in
the Bahamas/Be an inspiration to
our sisters and our mamas!*

GERRI

(announcing)

Give it up for *Brava Natural's*
CEO... Kirsten Odelfelt!

Brava's frost-tipped, self-tanned CEO, KIRSTEN ODEL FELT (50s), runs on stage. She does a "booty-bump" with Gerri and Mel B. and the crowd GOES WILD! The song climaxes and the Spice Girls cross off. A beat as Kirsten milks the applause then... shit gets real.

KIRSTEN

*Dream-makers, trail-blazers, life-
changers, star-reachers-- each and
every one of us. But together,
we're even more powerful... which
is why *Brava Natural* is the number
one network-marketing cosmetics
company in all of North America!*

(MORE)

KIRSTEN (CONT'D)

(crowd roars!)

Each year, we honor one exceptional warrior in our tribe who stops at *nothing* to make her dreams come true...

INT. BELOW STAGE - MGM GRAND - SAME

Dark, cramped, almost silent-- only the shallow breaths and staccato footsteps of a WOMAN who paces like a caged tiger. She wears a gown but we never see her face. Overhead, the ceiling begins to open.

KIRSTEN (O.C.)

(on stage)

...And now, the winner of 2018's "Most Valuable Chief" and recipient of the \$250,000 "Say Yes" bonus...

She turns her head up to the light, ready to ascend when suddenly there's a GUNSHOT! She CRUMPLES to the floor.

Emerging from the shadows, the FEMALE SHOOTER crosses over the victim and flees. All we see are her PINK STILETTOS.

INSERT CARD: **ONE YEAR EARLIER**

INT. TJ MAXX - STRIP MALL - SUBURBAN ARIZONA - MORNING

Fluorescent lights, shelves overflowing with discount goods, A/C pumped to max. Muzak plays on the overhead speakers.

LAURA HAZELTON, late 30s, drags an industrial-size mop and bucket across the floor. She wears a uniform polo, jumbo "Ask me about our E-Z Credit!" pin and a stoic grace. Laura's the kind of levelheaded woman who makes the best of a bad situation-- she's certainly put in her 10,000 hours. She places a hazard sign at the head of an aisle and stares:

REVERSE ANGLE -- a BRIGHT ORANGE LIQUID oozes across the linoleum. It's Pumpkin Spice Bath Gel, spilled from an upended display. Several SHOPPERS drive their carts through the puddle, leaving neon tracks in their wake.

A customer, PAM (37), approaches Laura, cleaning the spill.

PAM

Where can I find girls' sheets?

LAURA

Bedding's in aisle six. But we have some amazing flannel holiday sets in clearance. They're so soft the only problem will be getting your kids out of bed--

PAM

Laura? Laura Hazelton?

Startled, Laura looks up at Pam for the first time.

PAM (CONT'D)

Pam Denby. We were on student council together senior year.

The memory hits Laura like a sucker-punch. Forcing a smile;

LAURA

Pam Denby. Wow. How are you?

PAM

Pam Stringer now. Just moved back from Phoenix. The renovation took ages-- but we're finally settling in... How 'bout you?

LAURA

I'm good. Things are good. *Busy*.

PAM

I bet. Class president... "Most Likely to Succeed"... we all thought you were gonna take over the world. Did you end up marrying Brad Robart, from the football team?

LAURA

Nope.

PAM

He was the cutest. We were all so jealous.

LAURA

Not him.

PAM

Well, I'm sure you married someone equally great!

LAURA

Not really! Divorced, so...

Pam grimaces, uncomfortable. So does Laura. An excruciating beat as they search for something to say.

PAM

So... where are those amazing flannel sheets you mentioned?

INT. CHECKOUT COUNTER - TJ MAXX - SAME

PARVUN CHATTORAJ (20, Indian-American), a soft-spoken, whip-smart employee, patiently rings up an IRATE OLD LADY, who holds a ceramic frog and thick stack of coupons.

OLD LADY

I know my rights as a citizen!
Where's the manager?! Do you even speak English?!!

PARVUN

(polite smile)
I was born here in Scottsdale.

Dumb, beefcake manager TRAVIS PITTS (25) saunters over.

TRAVIS

Parvun. What's the prob here?

OLD LADY

(waving her coupons)
She's trying to rip me off, that's what!

PARVUN

The system won't accept all her coupons so I have to do manual override. I just need your manager key--

TRAVIS

Alright. I got this.

He makes a big show of taking over the register and inserting his manager key. As he starts typing;

TRAVIS (CONT'D)

Hang on, system's not loading...
(pounds monitor; no luck)
The hell--?! The register's been hacked. These guys can get in anywhere now!

Parvun quietly slides in and takes over.

PARVUN

You have to hit "Escape" first then
Control-F1 like I showed you...

(looks up)

Your passcode still "6969"?

TRAVIS

(reddens)

Management passcode is strictly
confiden--

PARVUN

(typing)

And... fixed.

Just then, an announcement comes over the P.A.

HILARY (O.S.)

(on P.A. system)

Attention, shoppers. We got a brand
new shipment of irregular shapewear
on aisle seven. These bras and
panties will mold, tuck and suck
even the most challenging piece of
business. Ladies, shape your
abnormal parts into something
beautiful. Aisle seven.

Travis turns red and marches to the back of store to find..

INT. BACK OF STORE - TJ MAXX - SAME

HILARY JENKEL (31), former beauty queen turned smart-ass
employee. Her mantra is "Zero Fucks Given" evidenced by her
tight uniform and how much she enjoys riling up Travis.

HILARY (CONT'D)

You told me to be more "pro-
active."

TRAVIS

That's it, Hilary. I'm writing you
up to corporate.

HILARY

Well, don't forget to tell them how
I mismarked all those Susan Lucci
handbags. And how I steal jalapeno
chocolate balls-- I got at least
five pounds in my locker right now.

TRAVIS

You what--?!

Hilary does her winning "pageant" smile and wave.

HILARY

'Course corporate might not be so
keen on firing a local celebrity.

She gestures to an autographed headshot of her as "Miss
Arizona 2006" hanging on the wall with other local
"celebrities" who may or may not have visited the store.

TRAVIS

Yeah, well... consider yourself "on
notice." And staff meeting in 15.

INT. BREAK ROOM - TJ MAXX - A LITTLE LATER

Laura, Parvun, Hilary and a few OTHER EMPLOYEES gather as
Travis hands out paychecks, goes over corporate policies.

TRAVIS

Just a reminder: everyone's
required to punch out for breaks--
coffee and bathroom.

(everyone grumbles)

Hang on. I got some good news.

HILARY

You can finally bench-press your
dog?

TRAVIS

Our location topped district sales
for the *third* quarter in a row...
and I wanted to give a special
shout-out to our September employee
of the month, two years and
counting... Laura Hazelton!

Light applause as Travis brings out a large SHEET-CAKE
embossed with an unflattering work photo of Laura.

LAURA

Thank you. It's an honor just to be
nominated.

As the employees dig in, Laura looks at her paycheck.
Something's off. She approaches Travis, shows him.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Hey, Travis. I worked the whole
holiday weekend-- you said all of
those are double-pay...? I need
that money this week.

TRAVIS

Say no more. I'll get you the fundage asap if I have to go down to headquarters and whoop some butt.

(notices)

Guys. Punch out if you're planning on eating the cake.

EXT. HANGOUT BENCH/LOADING DOCK - TJ MAXX - A LITTLE LATER

ANGLE ON: A jacked-up pickup truck newly outfitted with chrome rims and "black magic" lights. Travis shows it off to several bored employees. Laura, Hilary and Parvun stare in disbelief.

HILARY

That diptard got a *five hundred dollar bonus*?

PARVUN

I saw it when I was doing payroll for him.

LAURA

Now we know how far a steady diet of Creatine and Whitesnake videos can get you.

They plop down on the bench, dig into the cake.

HILARY

Man, if I made real money, I'd buy Lila all new clothes for pre-school - the good stuff. Then I'd hire a plane to skywrite "Suck it, other moms" over drop-off.

PARVUN

(teasing)

And they didn't make you room parent?

HILARY

Believe me, those mothers are vicious. It's like being back on the pageant circuit only I can't drown my rage in Percocet.

LAURA

Speaking of higher education...

(turns to Parvun)

(MORE)

LAURA (CONT'D)

Did you hear from Arizona State yet?

PARVUN

They sent me a letter yesterday.
(grins modestly)
I got an interview.

Laura and Hilary cheer: *Awesome! Good for you!*

HILARY

So your parents are cool with it?

PARVUN

Er, I haven't told them yet.
(off their looks)
I had to stay late to help Travis with the budgeting software then "Wheel of Fortune" had a celebrity edition. I just get so nervous... I wish I had your confidence. Or Laura's...

LAURA

(flattered)
Emotional compartmentalization?
It's a gift.

HILARY

(to Laura)
C'mon, you're not a lost cause. All you need is a trouble-shooter...

JAKE (O.C.)

Hi, ladies. Somebody call about clogged pipes?

Laura turns to find JAKE AMATO (late 30s), the hot building manager, heading towards them. She flushes red, tries to bolt but her friends immediately block her.

PARVUN

It was Laura.

HILARY

Yeah, Laura, tell Jake all about those filthy, dirty pipes you've been moaning about.
(to Jake)
You got something strong to *churn* things up in there?

Laura shoots daggers at her friends, then turns to Jake.

LAURA
I...uh, they're fine.

JAKE
(notices the cake)
Your birthday?

LAURA
(a little embarrassed)
Employee of the month.

JAKE
Nice. If you and your friends want
to celebrate later, Finnerty's has
hot beer and cold music?

Laura practically melts: *Damn, he's cute.* But then;

LAURA
I... can't. Sorry. Working late.

JAKE
Maybe another time.

Jake walks off. Hilary turns to Laura.

HILARY
What the hell was that? He's
totally into you.

PARVUN
For a great salesperson, you always
sell yourself short.

LAURA
You guys are right. What man
wouldn't want to "get" with this?
(sexy dance)
Yeah, baby, check out these grey
roots and Skechers... we can do it
on my mom's sofa-bed...

The women bust out laughing, then;

LAURA (CONT'D)
Actually, I'm looking at a place
this week.

Hilary and Parvun swap looks-- this is a big deal.

LAURA (CONT'D)
It's not in the best neighborhood--
and it's a stretch financially--
but... I'll have my own bedroom.

HILARY

You sex-starved, irresponsible
little tramp-bag... we're so proud
of you!

They hoot and laugh when they're interrupted by Travis, who
blares Kid Rock's "American Bad-Ass" on his truck's horn. The
women, disgusted and deflated, stare for a beat, then;

PARVUN

C'mon. Break's over.

HILARY

I didn't punch out anyway.

They toss the cheap cake into the dumpster and head inside.

INT. STORE WINDOW- TJ MAXX - LATER

Laura puts the final touches on an autumn-themed front window
display: sweaters, backpacks, school supplies. Travis
approaches with a box.

TRAVIS

Yo, we need to push swimwear.
Corporate just sent a huge shipment
of stars-and-stripes bikinis.

LAURA

In September?

TRAVIS

Make it for Columbus Day.

Travis dumps the huge box at her feet and crosses off. Laura
sorts through the tangled swimsuits when a WOMAN approaches.

SUZANNE (O.C.)

(wryly)

Those should fly off the shelf.

Laura turns to find SUZANNE HUGGLER, 40s, an impeccably
dressed customer who radiates confidence, style and the
ability to pay retail-- a rare sighting in these parts. She
smiles warmly at Laura-- she's on her side.

LAURA

Can I help you?

SUZANNE

I'm throwing a luncheon tomorrow
and the one thing I forgot is an
ice bucket. Do you have anything?

INT. HOMEWARES AISLE - TJ MAXX - A LITTLE LATER

Laura expertly leads Suzanne through the jumbled array of housewares, filling her cart with party goods.

LAURA

Ice buckets. We have gold-plated, silver-plated, brass-plated-- if they plate it, we got it...

(spots one)

Bingo! Pure sterling. This exact one retails for \$200 at Williams-Sonoma-- and at \$24.99, it comes with its own stand and sense of self-satisfaction. Obviously you'll want the matching cheese platter and knives... Oh, do you have chalk markers to personalize your guests' wine glasses?

SUZANNE

No... do I need them?

LAURA

If your party guests are anything like my kids, they'll use seventeen different glasses over the course of ten minutes.

Suzanne nods, amazed, as Laura hands her the markers.

SUZANNE

Genius. I stand in awe.

LAURA

Yeah, I hate doing dishes--

SUZANNE

I mean, you.

(explains)

I came in for one item... and now I I can't live without any of these things. Where have you been my whole life?

Suzanne smiles admiringly. Laura shrugs, embarrassed.

LAURA

I'm just doing my job.

SUZANNE

Well, I hope you work on a commission.

LAURA

Are you kidding? This place made me pay for my own uniform.

SUZANNE

That's exactly why I started my own business.

She hands Laura an embossed business card from her purse:
"Suzanne Huggler, Executive National Chief, *Brava Natural*.
#SayYes" Impressive.

SUZANNE (CONT'D)

I represent the *Brava Natural* cosmetics and skincare line.

LAURA

I'm not sure I know that store.

SUZANNE

Oh, no, I sell directly to my clientele. From wherever I want-- home, beach, iPad-- on my own time.

LAURA

Wow. Last time I did anything on "my own time" was...
(checks watch)
Two decades ago.

SUZANNE

You should think about doing it.

LAURA

Me? No. I'd be the last person...

SUZANNE

Why's that? You've clearly got talent, drive, great people skills... And I'm going out on a limb here but I'm guessing you'll never run this company.

LAURA

(long pause)
I wouldn't even know how to start my own business.

SUZANNE

You don't need to. You have me.

(then)

I lead the largest sales team in Southeast Arizona.

(MORE)

SUZANNE (CONT'D)

Why don't you come to my luncheon
and see for yourself?

LAURA

(surprised)

Oh, um... Ms. Huggler--

SUZANNE

Suzanne.

LAURA

Suzanne. I'm so flattered... but
between this job and my kids, I can
barely find time to breathe.

SUZANNE

I'm sure you can come up with a
million excuses for why you can't
come. But I have one reason why you
should; because you deserve more.

Suzanne heads to checkout. Off Laura, considering this.

EXT. SCHOOL/INT. LAURA'S CAR - A LITTLE LATER

School's closed. Laura's son, BRAYDEN (9), waits on the curb
with a JANITOR (CARLOS) when Laura's old Corolla pulls up.
She hands Carlow a TJ MAXX bag with an apologetic smile.

LAURA

Thanks for waiting, Carlos. We
finally got your favorite hazelnut
coffee back in.

(as Brayden climbs in)

Sorry I'm late, sweetie. How 'bout
we pick up Cassidy and go out for
pizza? I'll even let you play that
zombie video game?

BRAYDEN

Cassidy's at her dance competition.

LAURA

What competition? That's next
month.

BRAYDEN

I heard her talking about it with
Jill last night.

LAURA

What? No. I'm sure I didn't get an
email from her coach...

While driving, Laura scrolls through her cellphone: there are 648 unread emails. She SWERVES... someone HONKS. Fuck!

INT. CHATTORAJ HOME - SAME

Parvun eats dinner with her parents, AMEET and MIRA (50s), Indian immigrants who've adopted some American habits: Ameet wears a track suit, Mira serves Pillsbury rolls with her curry. "Wheel of Fortune" plays in the background. Always.

AMEET

I spoke to Dani today. He's thinking about a double-major. Applied math and engineering.

PARVUN

Good for him.

MIRA

I bet he would love to hear from his sister.

PARVUN

I've been busy. We got a new shipment of bacon-scented candles today. I had to tag each one.

Parvun's tone is neutral but her parents know her too well.

MIRA

It's a good, respectable job, Parvun. And it's close to home.

PARVUN

(gingerly)
So is Arizona State.

Ameet clenches his jaw, clutches his utensils tighter.

AMEET

You with this college business again?

PARVUN

ASU has one of the top software engineering programs in the country...

Ameet starts CURSING to himself in Bengali.

MIRA

Ameet, *please*.

(trying to distract)

Who wants another crescent roll?

PARVUN

Can't we discuss it like normal people?

AMEET

What's to discuss? Even with your paycheck, we only have enough money for your brother's tuition.

PARVUN

Dani wouldn't even have gotten into M.I.T. without my help...

MIRA

(ignoring that)

Lucky for you, your father and I are going to find you a good husband.

PARVUN

And what about what *I* want?

Ameet drops his fork, looks serious.

AMEET

So tell me, Parvun, what kind of life do you want? Our friends' children-- your peers-- are all getting married now. Your cousin is one year younger than you and my brother already has a grandson.

PARVUN

So I'm supposed to give up on my education because Roopa had a baby?

AMEET

You're lucky to be smart, Parvun-- a good man will appreciate that. But if you wait too long, there will be no good men left.

PARVUN

Or maybe I'll meet someone at college... or I won't ever get married--?

Ameet, upset, starts to SPUTTER AND CHOKE. Parvun and Mira jump up to help him. As he settles, Mira looks to Parvun.

MIRA

You have to understand, Parvun-- we just want the best life for you.

Parvun takes this in-- there's no convincing them.

PARVUN

Yes, *ma, baba...* I know.

INT. PARVUN'S BEDROOM - SAME

Parvun stares at the INTERVIEW REQUEST LETTER from Arizona State, then shoves it under her mattress.

INT. HILARY'S APARTMENT - LATER

"DORA THE EXPLORER" plays on a small TV. Numerous toys litter the threadbare apartment. Hilary gazes at her daughter, LILA (6), asleep on the sofa, cuddling a new "American Girl" Doll. Also there: Lila's baby-daddy CLARK STEEDLER (30s).

CLARK

(re: "American Girl" doll)
I don't wanna even ask how much you spent on that thing.

HILARY

Who cares? She loves it.

CLARK

You're spoiling her, Hil.

Hilary turns to Clark with a wicked look.

HILARY

Jealous?

INT. HILARY'S BEDROOM - A LITTLE LATER

"DORA" continues to play in the other room as Hilary and Clark go at it, hot and heavy (door closed).

INT. HILARY'S BEDROOM - A LITTLE LATER

Clark and Hilary in bed together, post-coital. Clark gets up and starts getting dressed.

HILARY

Why don't you stay the night this time?

CLARK
(she knows this)
It's confusing to Lila.

HILARY
Says who?

CLARK
The court. Supervised visitation,
limited to five hours a week.

HILARY
I've been clean for a year, Clark.
You want me to post my urine test
results on the fridge?

CLARK
(kisses her)
Come on. Don't be mad.

She kisses him back, pulls him into bed. He moans, turned on.

HILARY
See, we're good together. Why don't
we give "us" a real try?

CLARK
(still kissing her)
This feels pretty real to me...

HILARY
(as he's heading south)
I mean it. I'm ready to settle
down. Be a real wife and mom. I was
even thinking I could join the PTA
at Lila's school...

Clark stops and looks up at Hilary, then bursts out laughing.

CLARK
You had me there for a minute. You
really had me.

Hilary, dead serious up until now, cracks up. Clark hops out
of bed, zips up. He starts to head out, Hilary follows.

CLARK (CONT'D)
That's what I like about you.
You're always up for a good time.

HILARY
(grinning)
That's me.

CLARK

See you at the park on Thursday.

As Hilary watches Clark take their sleeping daughter into his arms and leave, we see the heartbreak wash across her face.

INT. REGISTRATION HALL - DOUBLETREE HOTEL - SAME

The place is packed with DANCERS (glitter makeup, sparkly costumes) and their FAMILIES. Laura speaks with an OFFICIAL at the ticket table. His name-tag reads: "Mr. Richard".

MR. RICHARD

We're completely sold out. All the other parents bought their tickets *months* ago.

He turns to help another PARENT but Laura leans in;

LAURA

Please. Mr. Richard, I missed the last few shows so I could pay for the crystal-embossed costume with matching headpiece. And tonight I spent two hours in traffic and thirty-six dollars on hotel parking so I could watch my daughter do what she loves.

Laura smiles nicely but there's fire behind her eyes. Mr. Richard considers this.

INT. AUDITORIUM - A LITTLE LATER

Laura and Brayden sit on folding chairs in the back, watching Cassidy and her team "DIVA THUNDER" compete. They're great.

INT. BACKSTAGE - A LITTLE LATER

Laura and Brayden find CASSIDY (13) with her TEAMMATES and MOMS. The girls, giddy, hold a trophy. Cassidy spots them.

CASSIDY

Mom, you made it?!

BRAYDEN

She forgot and then we didn't have tickets but we got in any--!

LAURA
(cutting him off)
You were fantastic, Cass. I'm so proud of you.

CASSIDY
We made it to semi-finals! We're gonna hire a special choreographer and get all new costumes-- and this year, the competition's in *Orlando*!

Everyone squeals. Only Laura's smile wavers.

INT. KITCHEN - LAURA'S HOME - LATE NIGHT

A modest ranch house with "old lady" decor. Everyone's asleep except Laura, who struggles to balance her checkbook.

JUNE (O.S.)
I heard about Cassidy's big win. You must be so disappointed.

Laura turns around to find her mother, JUNE (60s), fuzzy pink robe and tough AF. Laura visibly tenses.

LAURA
I'm happy for her, mom. Just figuring out some financial stuff.

JUNE
If you were willing to use your credit card once in a while...

LAURA
No credit cards. Remember, I'm trying to dig my way out of the hole?

June pours herself some cheap wine and starts to pace.

JUNE
I think you should find a better shovel and I'll tell you why.

LAURA
Mom, I said I was figuring it out.

JUNE
First, you work all hours at that job. Two, they never promote you. And at your age, it's not like the offers are pouring in. They have you dressing like a gym teacher.

(MORE)

JUNE (CONT'D)

When I was your age, I wore high heels--

LAURA

And went to the beauty shop once a week... I know.

JUNE

That's how I kept your father interested, may he rest in peace. Now I've tried to be supportive-- through your divorce and moving back in with the kids-- and that unfortunate home-waxing incident...

LAURA

My eyebrows grew back.

JUNE

(not listening)

But maybe if you took better care of yourself, you wouldn't be in this mess?

LAURA

(snaps)

I'm fine.

June stops, a little stung. Laura takes a breath.

LAURA (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, mom. It's been a long day.

June gently smooths Laura's cheek.

JUNE

It's my fault, sweetheart-- I can't help worrying about you. I know how hard you've been working...

(then; softly)

Just see someone about the moustache.

Laura stifles her matricidal urges as June pads back to bed. Then Laura checks her upper lip in the mirror. Oh God-- her mom's right.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LAURA'S HOME - SAME

The sofa, one of those 1980s Jennifer Convertibles. Laura struggles to pull out the bed when her cellphone buzzes:

**It's Suzanne Huggler! Luncheon is tomorrow at noon, 14566 Sunset Mirage.
You deserve it. #BravaNatural #SayYes #Dreambigger**

EXT. SUZANNE'S HOME - "SUNSET MIRAGE" ESTATES - NEXT DAY

An upscale "Southwestern" stucco in an immaculate gated community. Laura, nervous, stands by the front door. She checks her dress, hair, not sure any of it works. She rings the doorbell, then reconsiders. But before she can walk away, Suzanne answers.

SUZANNE

Laura, so glad you could make it.

LAURA

Thanks.

(notices)

Great shoes.

She gestures to Suzanne's PINK HEELS-- identical to the ones the SHOOTER wore in the teaser. Suzanne smiles, then;

SUZANNE

Welcome to the tribe.

Off Suzanne ushering Laura in, we;

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. SUZANNE'S HOUSE - DAY

An elegant luncheon. FEMALE SALES REPS mingle over *Whispering Angel* rosé in the cream-colored-everything living room. The crowd is well-dressed but diverse: an equal smattering of Chico's, Hot Topic, Eileen Fisher, even a few Dashikis-- but many of the women are in PINK HEELS.

A crowd of women sample new *Brava Natural* products at the center table; another group take selfies by the signage; the rosé is flowing as are the air-kisses.

IN A CORNER-- Laura anxiously checks her phone. Suzanne approaches with a glass of rosé.

SUZANNE

Laura! There you are.

LAURA

Sorry, work issues. I'm looking at an apartment later and my boss forgot to change my shift...

SUZANNE

You see all these women? They're working, too.

Laura glances around, then takes the wine and smiles.

LAURA

I'm not accustomed to-- how do you people call it?-- enjoying myself.

SUZANNE

I have a feeling you're a quick study.

(calls to one woman)

Bridget, can you show Laura around? I have to replenish the mini-crabcakes before there's a revolt.

Suzanne crosses off as Bridget sweeps Laura into the party...

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

Laura chats with BRIDGET and OTHERS. The women all friendly: sipping wine, passing products, trying them on each other.

BRIDGET

Before I joined *Brava*, I was a dental hygienist... Ming worked at *Curves*... and Donna and Fernita were both stay-at-home moms.

DONNA

Brava Natural completely changed my life. I've got financial freedom, a sense of purpose... I won a cruise.

FERNITA

(agreeing)

Now I make more money than my husband-- and he's on diaper duty.

MING

(nods and smiles)

If I had to teach one more cardio-funk class, I was going to kill myself. And the products *really* work.

Bridget shows a red lipstick to Laura.

BRIDGET

This is our best-selling organic lip-glaze. Charlize Theron wore a similar color to the Oscars last year.

LAURA

Oh, yeah, I'm not going to the Oscars anytime soon...

Bridget applies it to a reluctant Laura then holds up the mirror. Laura stares at herself, almost surprised by the transformation.

LAURA (CONT'D)

I... love it.

INT. SUZANNE'S HOUSE - LATER

Laura joins Bridget and others on a karaoke machine, singing (what else?) the *Brava Natural* theme song;

LAURA/WOMEN

(off-tune)

Create your own life, make your dreams come true...

A LITTLE LATER - the karaoke continues. Laura's really getting into it.

LAURA/WOMEN (CONT'D)
*SAY YES! Gonna lift you higher!/SAY
YES! Set your heart on fire...*

INT. SUZANNE'S HOUSE - LATER

Laura, Bridget, and others surround the food table where they devour a beautiful spread of mini-appetizers -- mini-crabcakes, mini-quiches, mini-salads.

LAURA
So how does it work? You make a commission on every product you sell?

BRIDGET
Plus a commission on the sales of any tribe member you recruit-- and on *their* recruits, and so on and so on...

LAURA
(realizing)
And Suzanne recruited all of you?

SALLY
She was a regular at my Starbucks.

CHRISTA
My aunt cleans her house.

JANELLE
I met Suzanne when we were both getting mammograms. I was still wearing my gown when she signed me up.
(pops in a mini-cupcake)
She is *such* an inspiration.

INT. SUZANNE'S HOUSE - LATER

Laura is cornered by TRACY, 40s, heavy makeup, "statement jewelry" and deep into the wine.

TRACY
Can we be real for a moment, Lisa?

LAURA
It's Laura.

TRACY

Lisa, you wanna know the worst part of this whole *Brava Natural* business?

(dramatic pause)

Having to try on makeup, hang out with our girlfriends and drink wine all day... *said no one ever!*

She bursts into laughter. Laura chuckles, relieved. They're interrupted by the CLINKING of a glass. It's Suzanne, standing by the picture window. Everyone gathers around.

SUZANNE

Thank you all for coming today. Nothing inspires me more than spending time with this tribe. I'd like to give a special shout-out to rising star Bridget Rico who just became an Associate Area Vice-Chief. Next time, you and me on the karaoke, Bridge!

(polite laughs)

We've had a great quarter so far. Sales are up seventeen percent...

(light applause)

But we still have two more weeks. We can do better. *Fifty thousand dollars* better.

The room GRUMBLES, GROANS. Suzanne waves her hands.

SUZANNE (CONT'D)

I know, 50k in two weeks sounds intimidating. But if your dreams don't scare you, you're thinking too small.

(then)

You know who told me that? Chief Janet Iverson-- sixteen-time winner of the MVC at the National Pow-Wow who led her tribe to become the top earners in *Brava* history. Well, Janet just joined corporate and her tribe disbanded... which means there's an opening for a new winner at Nationals.

There's an excited buzz among the women.

SUZANNE (CONT'D)

You want it, you work for it. I'm talking trunk shows, makeup parties, social media.

(MORE)

SUZANNE (CONT'D)

Make your list of your one hundred contacts then add a hundred more. And next weekend, I need every single warrior geared up for our biggest and richest battlefield yet...

She nods to Bridget, who passes out FLYERS, including to Laura. The women read it carefully, almost solemn; they know this is serious business.

SUZANNE (CONT'D)

"BRIDE-CON"-- Scottsdale's premiere Bridal Expo.

(then)

We have the passion, the drive, the talent-- and we will get the numbers. Because every tribe dreams of winning... but we make it happen!

She pulls open her drapes to reveal:

IN HER DRIVEWAY - a brand new *Brava Natural* signature blush RANGE ROVER. The women freak out. Laura is astonished.

There's a mad rush as the women pull out their cellphones and run outside to see it. On her way out, Suzanne clocks Laura's amazed expression. She smiles knowingly;

SUZANNE (CONT'D)

Call me. When you're ready to *win*.

INT. CHILI'S RESTAURANT - A LITTLE LATER

Ameet and Parvun approach the hostess stand. Parvun's quiet, still stewing from the previous night.

PARVUN

We're going to be late for Aunt Gita's Scrabble game...

AMEET

She always cheats anyway.
(smiles)

We can get the guacamole they make at the table. I know how much you like it.

PARVUN

I thought you didn't even like Mexican food.

AMEET

I heard you the other night,
Parvun. You think I don't care
about what you want. But I do.

Parvun nods, touched. As the Hostess leads them to their table, Ameet spots SOMEONE in a booth. He acts surprised.

AMEET (CONT'D)

(makes a big show)
Ramesh? What are you doing here?
(to Parvun)
Ramesh works with me at the
Courtyard Marriott. He's in the
management training program at ASU.

Ramesh, 23, a bit geeky, sports a hotel uniform blazer and thick mustache. Parvun tightens: so *this* was Ameet's plan.

PARVUN

Hi.

RAMESH

Hey.
(as if on cue)
Would you like to join me?

Before Parvun can reply, Ameet is sliding into the booth.

AMEET

That would be super!

Parvun, awkward smile, slides in after him.

EXT. CLARK'S APARTMENT - LATER

A nice complex. Families live here-- there's a swing-set, a few KIDS ride bikes. Hilary, wearing a tight dress, apron and five-inch heels and holding a casserole, rings the bell of an apartment. Clark answers. She does a sexy "pivot-and-pose."

HILARY

Somebody order a hot dish?

He's surprised to see her-- and not entirely pleased.

CLARK

Hil, what're you doing here? It's
not your day.

HILARY

I made this homemade casserole. I
can't eat the whole thing so I
figured--

CLARK

(nice but firm)
You need to go home.

Hilary blinks, stung. He starts to close the door but she
jams her foot in it.

HILARY

I've changed, you know. If you'd
just give me a chance--?!

Before he can answer, Lila comes running from inside. She
hugs Hilary, who's still juggling the casserole dish.

LILA

Mommy! You're here?!

HILARY

Hi, baby! I missed you too much.

LILA

Can I show you my room? We're
putting stickers on the ceiling
that look like stars!

Just then, a WOMAN steps out to the doorway.

WOMAN (O.S.)

Lila-sweetie, let's finish up
before dinner--

This is KIM (31), not Hilary-level gorgeous but with the
grace and class of someone who grew up with a canopy bed and
orthodonture. Hilary stares at Kim. Barely able to speak.

HILARY

Who the hell are you?

Clark steps in, with a tight grimace;

CLARK

Hilary, this is Kim, my fiancée.

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - MOMENTS LATER

Hilary, furious and still clutching the casserole, storms
over to her car with Clark close on her trail, pleading.

CLARK

... Let's *talk* about this!

HILARY

About what?! How we did it on Monday? How we've been doing it the past *three months*?! In my bedroom, your car... the Chuck E. Cheese bathroom?!

A few KIDS look at them. Clark tries to remain calm.

CLARK

Hilary, *please*.

She shoves past him, puts the casserole on the car roof. Then digs through her purse for her car keys.

HILARY

God, I'm so stupid! This whole time, you were just using me...

CLARK

We were using each other. You wanted it as much as I did. You *started* the whole thing!

HILARY

My bad. I can't help myself around pasty-faced Kia salesmen with skinny dicks and Nickelback tattoos!

Clark, insulted, stops and looks at her;

CLARK

You really thought this was going somewhere?

(off Hilary's look)

C'mon, Hil. You're not exactly "marriage material." You've been to rehab, what-- three times? You stole your grandmother's jewelry to buy drugs. Your own mom won't even speak to you anymore--

Hilary SLAPS him across the face. Clark rubs his cheek. Not angry-- he knows he went too far. Hilary gets into her car but Clark grabs the door from closing. He looks contrite.

CLARK (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, Hil.

She nods, her voice cracking with emotion;

HILARY

Just tell me one thing: was any of
it real?

Clark, silent, looks away. Hilary takes this in, then slams
the door and drives off. The casserole flies off the roof and
splatters on the ground.

INT. APARTMENT - LATER

Laura tours the available apartment with the LANDLORD (60s),
a gruff Armenian in a grimy t-shirt. She's polite but the
place isn't getting featured in *Elle Decor* anytime soon.

LAURA

What a lovely view-- I can see
right into the 7-11. The ad said
there was a *third* bedroom?

LANDLORD

Over here.

He leads Laura to a small room, formerly a closet but big
enough to fit a bed. She starts to see the possibilities.

LAURA

There's a move-in special, right--
no security deposit? Just first and
last month's rent...

LANDLORD

(nods)
You want it or not?

LAURA

Yes. I just need another day or two
to get you the money... *please*?

LANDLORD

Yeah, alright. Tomorrow but that's
it.

Overcome with emotion, Laura HUGS him, smelly shirt and all.

EXT. STREET - LATER

Laura, exhilarated, heads home. She passes "Finnerty's Pub"
and sees Jake's van parked out front. Huh.

INT. FINNERTY'S - LATER

An Irish honky-tonk. Laura and Jake drink beer at the bar.

JAKE

So what are we celebrating?

LAURA

I finally found my own apartment,
down in Pairut.

JAKE

Where the sewage plant is?

LAURA

Oh, no, that's the nice part of
Pairut. I'm not made of money.

She smiles, flirty. He laughs.

JAKE

I'm not one to talk. You should see
my place...

LAURA

(boldly)

Is that an invitation?

(then, embarrassed)

Oh my god, I don't know why I said
that. I don't want to see your
place-- I don't even know you!
Please stop me anytime.

JAKE

I think it's kinda sexy.

LAURA

If that turns you on, boy, do I
have a story for you.

JAKE

Okay, hit me.

LAURA

You sure you can handle it?

Jake nods. Laura takes a long, drawn-out sip of beer and
then, in her sultriest voice:

LAURA (CONT'D)

I'm almost forty, in a dead-end
job, my ex-husband hasn't paid
child support for years...

(MORE)

LAURA (CONT'D)
and I can't remember the last time
I had sex or shaved my legs. Those
last two things are generally
connected.

Jake takes this in, then smiles.

JAKE
That's hot.

LAURA
Well, don't leave a lady hanging.

JAKE
You want me to--?
(she nods)
Alright, but you might need a cold
towel.
(sexy voice)
I'm just past forty, my
construction business went bust
about the same time my wife passed
away...

Laura lets this sink in, softly;

LAURA
I'm sorry.

He smiles, appreciative, but he's not quite done.

JAKE
... And I clip my toenails over the
kitchen sink.

A loaded beat as they look into each other's eyes-- they
shared more than they meant to. Finally;

LAURA
The toenails? Very hot.

He laughs-- there's a genuine connection here.

JAKE
You know, there is one more thing
that gets me going...

He nods to the dance floor. Laura puts her hand in his then
Jake leads her to...

INT. THE DANCE FLOOR - FINNERTY'S PUB - LATER

A live Irish band plays as Jake and Laura tear up the dance floor. Finally, Jake spins her around then pulls her close. Their faces are now inches apart, his arms wrapped around her. Laura sucks in her breath: the tension is *thick*.

LAURA
Those your best moves?

JAKE
Nope.

INT. JAKE'S VAN - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Laura and Jake MAKE OUT, passionate and hungry, ripping off their clothes, stumbling over gear...

LAURA
I take it back... this is way
hotter.

EXT. JAKE'S VAN - SAME

The van shakes and rumbles. The windows are steamed up. And Thank God.

INT. LAURA'S HOUSE - LATER THAT NIGHT

The house is dark. Laura stumbles in, tangled hair, disheveled dress, clutching her heels-- only there's no shame in this walk. She falls back on her couch... elated, renewed.

She sees her cellphone spilling out of her purse. She thinks for a beat, then texts Suzanne:

Sign me up!

Off Laura, on top of the world;

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. PARKING LOT - TJ MAXX - A LITTLE LATER (MORNING)

Everyone's arriving at work. Laura pulls up in her Corolla to find Suzanne's Range Rover parked next to Travis' truck. Suzanne's waiting for her. A *little* weird.

SUZANNE

I got your text. I'm so excited!

LAURA

Oh, thanks. But you didn't have to come this early...

SUZANNE

With Bride-Con coming up, we can't afford to waste another minute. Besides, there's a "Say Yes" sign-up special that expires at midnight. Takes the cost of the starter kit from \$3500 down to two thousand...

As Suzanne pulls out her iPad... it dawns on Laura.

LAURA

Two *thousand* dollars?

SUZANNE

It's a *great* deal.

LAURA

I didn't realize-- I don't have that kind of money lying around.

SUZANNE

A lot of women put their first payment on a credit card.

LAURA

If there's one thing I learned from my ex-husband's mistakes: I never mess around with credit cards.

Suzanne looks up from her iPad.

SUZANNE

It's an investment in yourself, Laura. You can afford it.

(then)

You said you were ready *now*.

LAURA

Look, I'm sorry... I just can't spend that kind of money.

SUZANNE

Can't or won't?

There's an edge in her voice that sends a chill through Laura. Suzanne continues, her "soft" sell turning harder...

SUZANNE (CONT'D)

I'm offering you a chance to improve your life.

LAURA

It's good enough as is.

SUZANNE

Good *enough*?

Suzanne takes this in, sizing Laura up with a sympathetic grimace.

SUZANNE (CONT'D)

The poly-blend uniform... the stale coffee... the five-minute break stolen between double-shifts to check in with your kids for the day. Surely you're worth more than this? At least, say, two thousand dollars. Hell, I spent that on my hair last month. Way I see it, you have two choices: you stay right here and keep fooling yourself into thinking it's good *enough*... OR you say *yes* to me. Think about it...

Hilary and Parvun approach. They've overheard a little of this-- or at least, they sense the tense vibe.

HILARY

Laura, you coming?

LAURA

(to Suzanne)

I gotta go.

Suzanne tucks her purse under her arm and smiles.

SUZANNE

Well, I'm glad we had this talk. And don't forget-- man up before midnight or the sign-up special runs out!

BOOP BOOP! She unlocks her Range Rover and she heads off.
Laura looks troubled.

INT. SALES FLOOR - TJ MAXX - A LITTLE LATER

Laura, Hilary and Parvun tag inventory, catch up.

HILARY
...that's like, a \$70,000 car.

PARVUN
She makes all that money from
selling *makeup*?

LAURA
Not entirely. Suzanne makes a
commission from all of her reps'
sales, too.

HILARY
No wonder she wants you to sign up.

LAURA
Maybe a little *too* much.

PARVUN
(checks her watch)
Hey. I gotta go to my interview.
Can you guys cover for me?

LAURA
Yeah. Good luck!

PARVUN
Thanks. And Hil, you have a
customer...

As Parvun crosses off, Hilary turns to see A MALE CUSTOMER
checking her out. He looks up at her photo on the wall, then
back at her. Hilary grins to herself; she knows what's coming
next...

MALE CUSTOMER
Miss Arizona 2006, right?

HILARY
(busted)
Guilty as charged.

MALE CUSTOMER
I knew it! Man, I was in love with
you in high school.
(MORE)

MALE CUSTOMER (CONT'D)
(holds up his cellphone)
You mind?

Hilary leans in for a picture-perfect pose and they take a selfie. Then he hands her some papers from his jacket.

MALE CUSTOMER (CONT'D)
Thanks. And you're being served.

Hilary turns ashen as she reads it, then turns to Laura.

HILARY
Clark's suing me for full custody
of Lila.

INT. PROFESSOR'S OFFICE - COLLEGE CAMPUS - LATER

Parvun interviews with a PROFESSOR (40s, male), the head of ASU's software engineering department.

PROFESSOR
We don't get a lot of female
candidates for this program. And
your application was one of the
strongest.

PARVUN
For a girl?

PROFESSOR
For the entire pool.
(then)
Acceptance letters go out in a
week. And while I'm not allowed to
say anything official at this
point... check your mailbox.

PARVUN
Oh, wow, thank you.
(then)
And what about the financial aid
package I applied for?

PROFESSOR
We do have limited financial aid, a
few scholarships. But even then,
there are additional costs: books,
lab fees, housing...
(off her look)
Is that a problem?

PARVUN

(pause)

Yes. We don't have the money.

A beat as the Professor takes this in;

PROFESSOR

Ms. Chatteraj, you realize this is one of the most competitive programs in the state?

PARVUN

I do.

PROFESSOR

Good. Because if you want this badly enough, you're smart enough to find a way to pay for it.

Off Parvun, taking this in;

EXT. COLLEGE CAMPUS - A LITTLE LATER

Parvun walks through the lively college campus; young people heading to class, playing hackey-sack, riding bikes, making out. It's an exciting new world she wants to be part of. She stops at a bulletin board covered in FLYERS, advertising all kinds of events: French club, an improv show, a COSPLAY gathering... Then ONE FLYER catches her eye. She looks closer, then grabs it down.

EXT. CAMPUS CAFE - LATER

Parvun double-checks the flyer-- this is the place. She enters to find...

INT. CAMPUS CAFE - SAME

A live "HALL & OATES" TRIBUTE BAND, "THE MANEATERS" plays on a small stage. A "DARYL HALL" LOOKALIKE sings lead and on guitar as "John Oates" is... Ramesh. And he's crushing it.

Parvun watches, shocked, when he spots her. *Busted*.

A LITTLE LATER - Parvun and Ramesh catch up over coffee.

RAMESH

My parents don't know.

PARVUN

Really?

RAMESH

Studying hotel management was their dream, not mine. You wouldn't understand.

PARVUN

You think I'm here 'cuz I like Hall & Oates?

Parvun rolls her eyes, confessing;

PARVUN (CONT'D)

I just interviewed for the software engineering program at ASU. My dad doesn't know either.

Ramesh, surprised, looks up from his latte; they have more in common than they realized.

RAMESH

Wow. I had no idea you were so smart.

PARVUN

Smart, yes. *Cojones*-- not so much.
(then)
I'm thinking of withdrawing my application.

Ramesh looks Parvun in the eye.

RAMESH

Hey. I'm sure being in this band must seem lame to you... but it reminds me of who I really am.
(then)
That's the thing-- don't lose yourself, it's not worth it. Sometimes you gotta be a dutiful son-- or daughter...

PARVUN

...And sometimes you gotta rock a jean vest?

He winks with a cheesy "John Oates"-style gun-finger-point. They share a laugh. Maybe there's something more here...?

INT. BREAK ROOM - TJ MAXX - LATER

Laura, with her jacket and purse, finds Travis finishing the rest of the "Laura" cake in front of the fridge.

LAURA

Hey, Travis, I gotta go sign my apartment lease. I need the holiday pay I'm owed.

TRAVIS

Oh yeah. I spoke to corporate. Turns out they don't pay double-time on holidays anymore.

LAURA

I was counting on that money to get my new place. You *said*...

TRAVIS

How was I supposed to know they changed their policy?

LAURA

Because you're the boss.

TRAVIS

(shrugs)

Yeah, well... my bad. Sorry.

Travis goes back to eating cake. Laura, stunned, blinks back a few tears.

INT. LAURA'S HOME - NIGHT

Laura enters to find Cassidy and Brayden, eagerly waiting up.

BRAYDEN

When are we moving?! I'm painting my room red and black like the Cardinals.

CASSIDY

Yeah, and Jill's giving me these really cool floor pillows--!

Laura's quiet for a beat, then shakes her head;

LAURA

I- I'm sorry.

The kids, crushed, take this in. Cassidy looks up at Laura, not mad. Worse-- she's been *expecting* this.

CASSIDY

I knew it. I told Jill it wasn't gonna happen.

Cassidy crosses to her room.

LAURA

Cass, please...! Brayden?

But Brayden just gives Laura a hug.

BRAYDEN

It's okay, mom. We're used to disappointment.

Brayden crosses out. Laura looks distraught. June approaches.

JUNE

Honey, it's just one apartment. And the neighborhood was no good...

LAURA

It's not the apartment. It's *me*.

(then)

No matter how hard I try-- how many shifts I take... or how hard I work... or how much money I scrimp and save and *cling to like my life depends on it*-- it will never be enough. My dreams are *never* going to happen because I will never be enough!

Laura throws the mirror onto the floor. It SHATTERS into a million pieces. June takes this in, then;

JUNE

Is that what you think-- that it's *your* fault. That you're a failure?

LAURA

Just look at me, mom. Call it like you see it-- you always do.

JUNE

I am. And that's not what I see.

Laura, surprised, looks up at June.

JUNE (CONT'D)

I see someone who never gives up, who's not afraid to dream big and stand up on her own two feet-- even when the odds are against her. I see "employee of the month" at a job she hates. I see a class president.

(MORE)

JUNE (CONT'D)

I see a determined eight year-old Brownie who sold more cookies than all the other Girl Scouts, even that cheating Senior-Cadette bitch Debbie Lewenda who tried to steal your customers and take all the credit.

(then)

You don't think you're that person anymore, Laura, but you are. I never stopped believing in you.

Laura's eyes fill with tears as they hug. When June heads upstairs, Laura takes a beat, then moves to the freezer. She reaches past the ice cream to pull out a SMALL BLOCK OF ICE wrapped in a handwritten note:

ONLY IN CASE OF EMERGENCY! (This means you, Laura!)

She cracks it open with a knife to reveal: A CREDIT CARD-- their last (and only) one. She pulls out the laptop and logs onto a website: **the Brava Natural home page**. She stares at the website's main image: **the signature blush RANGE ROVER--** the same one Suzanne has.

After a beat, she clicks on: "**Sign up Here!**" Off Laura, taking the leap of faith, we;

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. LAURA'S HOME - MORNING (TWO DAYS LATER)

Kids are getting ready for school. Laura enters with a large box. June approaches, still in her bathrobe.

JUNE

Where were you? Cassidy's holding the bathroom hostage again--

LAURA

Sorry, I went down to FedEx to pick this up before the kids left.

(calls out)

Hey, guys-- great news!

The kids run out, see the box.

BRAYDEN

Did we get the apartment?!

CASSIDY

(eye roll)

Yeah, the apartment's in a box, dummy.

LAURA

Guys. This is important.

Laura sets the box on the kitchen table and opens it. It's filled with *Brava Natural* cosmetics. Little reaction.

Makeup?

CASSIDY

BRAYDEN

Why does Cassidy get *everything*?

LAURA

It's my new business. I'm going to sell these. *Brava Natural* is the number one direct-sales company in the entire country.

BRAYDEN

Whoa. Are we gonna be rich?

JUNE

If your mom sets her mind to it, I bet you will be.

LAURA

Thanks, mom. Look, it's gonna be tough at first. I'll be working more and we'll have to cut a few more corners. But once I get this off the ground, the sky's the limit!

Brayden hugs his mom. June gives Laura an affectionate squeeze. Only Cassidy is unimpressed.

CASSIDY

How'd you pay for it?

Laura's silent. Cassidy walks over to the freezer and checks: no emergency credit card. She stares accusingly at Laura.

CASSIDY (CONT'D)

You used our one precious credit card for some stupid makeup business instead of an apartment?

Laura takes a beat, then explains;

LAURA

I don't want an apartment.

They all look at her: what's she talking about?

LAURA (CONT'D)

I want more. A house-- a real one. With nice bedrooms, a yard for Brayden-- a den where you can hang with your friends. I want to be able to buy all your dance costumes, go to Brayden's soccer games... take you guys out for dinner without worrying about how I'll pay for gas the next week. This isn't just some "business". This is my chance to make my dreams-- all our dreams -- come true.

A beat as they all take this in, then;

CASSIDY

And what if it doesn't work?

LAURA

That's not an option.

INT. LAWYER'S OFFICE - MORNING

An upscale office. Hilary sits across from lawyer ROBERTA FINE (50s) who wears a designer suit and serious expression. Roberta glances at Hilary's court summons.

ROBERTA

Your ex-boyfriend is suing for full custody of your daughter?

HILARY

(nods)

That's why I need the best lawyer. My last one was next to a nail salon.

She laughs nervously. Roberta pulls out a legal pad and pen.

ROBERTA

Why don't you fill me in a little on your background?

HILARY

Okay, well, I used to be on the pageant circuit. Actually, I was Miss Arizona 2006.

(no reaction)

Anyway, I used to take these diet pills-- all the girls did- but I kind of... spiraled out of control. When I got pregnant, I stopped using... mostly. Lila's fine- she's healthy and really smart. But once she was born, I-- I started using again and it got... bad.

Roberta stops writing, looks up at Hilary.

ROBERTA

How bad exactly?

HILARY

You think I don't love my daughter- I don't deserve her.

ROBERTA

I'm here to make your case.

HILARY

I've been judged my whole life. I know what it looks like.

(then)

It was Kimberly's idea-- Clark's fiancée.

(MORE)

HILARY (CONT'D)

She thinks I'm a "bad influence"...
and Clark's uncle's some hotshot
lawyer in Phoenix.

ROBERTA

Well, I can help you... if you let
me.

HILARY

Yeah, okay.

ROBERTA

Good. Now here are my fees.
(hands her a contract)
I charge \$300 an hour plus any
additional court costs. And I'll
need \$1500 as an initial retainer.

Hilary, queasy, stares at the contract.

INT. PARVUN'S ROOM - CHATTORAJ HOME - MORNING

Parvun, dressed for work, enters to find Mira sitting
silently on the bed. Next to her is a laundry basket.

MIRA

I changed your sheets.

She holds up the college interview letter-- the one Parvun
stuck under the mattress. Parvun tightens.

MIRA (CONT'D)

You went ahead and applied--
without telling us?
(Parvun nods)
Do you think you will be accepted?

PARVUN

Yeah.

Mira nods, more hurt than angry, which makes it worse.

PARVUN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, *ma*. I know I'm a
disappointment... but this is who I
really am. If I lose that-- no
matter who I marry-- I have
nothing.

Mira looks up at Parvun, her eyes moist.

MIRA

You will never be a disappointment
to me.

PARVUN

What?

MIRA

I knew a young girl in India who
also had her own mind and her own
dreams.

Mira gestures for Parvun to sit beside her.

MIRA (CONT'D)

When I was your age, I wanted to
study-- literature, actually. I
hoped to be a teacher or even a
professor. But then my parents
introduced me to Ameet...

Her voice trails off. Parvun asks gently;

PARVUN

Do you ever regret your choice--
giving up your dream?

Mira smiles, strokes Parvun's cheek.

MIRA

I didn't give up my dream. I
exchanged it for another. You.

(then)

I love you, *Parvun-mishti*. And I
don't want you to give up yours.

Mira gives Parvun back the letter. Parvun takes it then
EMBRACES her mom. The two women hug and cry at the same time.
From downstairs, we hear the TV;

PAT SAJAK (V.O.)

(on TV)

Jimmy Kimmel would like to buy an
"O"... Is there an "O"?

MIRA

(laughing through tears)

You stupid girl, we're missing
celebrity edition.

INT. CHECKOUT - TJ MAXX - LATER

Laura speaks with Travis, who looks irritated.

TRAVIS

You wanna give up *nine* shifts? Once I change the schedule, I can't give 'em back...

LAURA

I'm starting a cosmetics business.

TRAVIS

You're what? It better not interfere with this job.

(then; quietly)

But if you do want those shifts back, I can work something out.

Travis crosses away. Parvun and Hilary turn to Laura.

PARVUN

You signed up for *Brava Natural*?

HILARY

How? I thought it cost two grand.

LAURA

I used my credit card.

Hilary and Parvun exchange surprised looks.

LAURA (CONT'D)

I finally realized: the cavalry isn't coming.

(explains)

No soldiers, no knights... nobody is coming to rescue me-- any of us. So we can keep waiting-- or we can take our chances and go fight for ourselves.

They're interrupted by Suzanne, carrying a bottle of *Whispering Angel* rosé.

SUZANNE

Congratulations, Laura! I just heard the good news.

Laura turns ashen.

LAURA

Suzanne. What're you doing here?

SUZANNE

I'm so excited you're a sister-warrior now. But it seems there's been a little *mistake*.

(MORE)

SUZANNE (CONT'D)
(delicately)
You forgot to sign up for my tribe.

A beat as Laura gathers her courage;

LAURA
It wasn't a mistake. I'm doing it
on my own.

Parvun and Hilary are shocked- WTF?! Suzanne shakes her head,
not quite understanding...

SUZANNE
That's not how this works. I have
the *best* tribe in Southeast Arizona-
- the *only* tribe.

LAURA
I know. But I wanted to try this
myself, on my own terms. No boss,
nobody telling me what to do or how
to do it. Maybe I'm crazy or
stupid... or maybe it's the best
decision I've ever made... I just
know I'm flying solo.

Suzanne takes this in with a cool smile, pulls out her iPad.

SUZANNE
And I'm telling you, you can't do
this alone-- you will never
survive.

Suzanne holds the iPad up to Laura, trying to entice her.

SUZANNE (CONT'D)
Don't make this hard for yourself,
Laura. I've got all the best
people...

Laura starts to waver. Hilary and Parvun shoot each other a
look. But before Laura takes the iPad, Hilary steps up.

HILARY
(to Suzanne)
I was Miss Arizona 2006. Until
you've survived on diet pills, butt
glue and my mother's Drambuie-
fueled rage, you don't know what
throw-down looks like, honey. So
you don't have all the best people.
'Cuz I'm signing up with Laura.

Laura, astonished, links arms with Hilary. Parvun watches, then-- fuck it-- joins them.

PARVUN

Me too. We're starting our own tribe.

(re: Suzanne's iPad)

And we won't be using an outdated OS system.

Laura's both touched and excited.

LAURA

You guys really wanna do this with me?

PARVUN

Yes.

HILARY

Yeah.

Laura smiles at them, then turns to Suzanne.

LAURA

Looks like there's a new chief in town.

Suzanne sizes up her new competition with a bemused Clint Eastwood smile.

SUZANNE

Okay, ladies. You really want to do this? It's on.

(then)

And here's some rosé. You'll need it.

Suzanne hands Laura the wine, then marches off. Parvun and Hilary, nervous-bordering-on-terrified, turn to Laura;

HILARY

How in cat-breath hell are we going to sell all this stuff?

Laura takes a beat then pulls something from her pocket to reveal: the FLYER she got at Suzanne's party.

LAURA

BRIDE-CON.

Off Laura, Hilary and Parvun, we;

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

EXT. PARKING LOT - CONVENTION CENTER - MORNING

Laura, Hilary and Parvun meet up, armed with their new *Brava Natural* starter kits. They're nervous but excited.

LAURA

You guys sure about this? 2000 bucks is lot of money...

PARVUN

I skimmed it from my brother's college fund. My parents won't notice 'til next semester.

HILARY

And I sold my state crown on Craigslist.
(rueful smile)
It was just gathering dust.

LAURA

Okay. Let's do this.

"Reservoir Dogs" style, the women head to the convention center. Above the entrance, a sign reads "BRIDECON 2018!"

INT. "BRIDE-CON" CONVENTION CENTER - MOMENTS LATER

Vendor check-in table. The women speak with an EXPO OFFICIAL.

EXPO OFFICIAL

Booths start at fifteen hundred but they're all booked...

Fuck. Laura leans into the Official, with a plaintive smile.

LAURA

Is there *anything* you can do? See, I pulled my friends into this whole *Brava Natural* business--

EXPO OFFICIAL

You're with *Brava Natural*? They're right over there, in our VIP-Gold section.

The women peer into the main hall where they see...

REVERSE ANGLE: Suzanne and her tribe have a premium booth: professional signage, elaborate tablescapes, mirrors and chairs. And massive tubs of "Whispering Angel".

EXT. CONVENTION CENTER - MOMENTS LATER

Laura bursts out of the exit door, now in a full-blown panic. Parvun and Hilary follow quickly behind.

LAURA

...We can't do this! Did you see Suzanne's booth-- it was like something out of a Gay Pride parade. What the hell was I thinking--?!

HILARY

Knock it off. We came here to do a job and we're not leaving 'til we do it.

Hilary's command snaps Laura back. Even Parvun takes notice.

HILARY (CONT'D)

Whenever I faced tough competition, my pageant coach would tell me three things: smile through the pain. Keep your eyes on the prize. And never let your enemy determine the grounds for battle.

PARVUN

I'm pretty sure that last one was Nelson Mandela.

HILARY

Point is, if we can't compete with Suzanne's booth, we find our own battleground. I used to model at these events. We need to go where the *real* action is-- crying, fighting, puking... where the brides are at their most desperate, *vulnerable*...

(off their looks)

The bathroom.

INT. WOMEN'S BATHROOM - BRIDAL EXPO - A LITTLE LATER

Laura, Hilary and Parvun look around; cracked tile, beige paint and the kicker: *fluorescent lights*. It's grim.

HILARY

I didn't say it was *nice*.

LAURA

(thinking)

These women don't just want products, they want an *experience*. We can make this over-- we just need some outside help.

PARVUN

Who's gonna help us?

Laura turns to Parvun and smiles.

MOMENTS LATER - Laura and Hilary stand over Parvun, who reluctantly speaks on her cellphone.

PARVUN (CONT'D)

(on cellphone)

I-- I need all these things delivered to the convention center today-- in an hour.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. TJ MAXX - SAME

Travis, annoyed, speaks with Parvun.

TRAVIS

(on phone)

You need *what*? No way. That's against corporate policy...

INT. BATHROOM - SAME

Laura and Hilary look at Parvun, who finally grows a pair.

PARVUN (O.S.)

(on phone)

Screw corporate policy. If you ever want help with the payroll software, budget spreadsheets or the scheduling board again, you'll bring everything I tell you. Now.

Travis, cowed by Parvun, grabs a cart and starts shopping.

EXT. PARKING LOT - LATER

Travis unloads his truck-- bags filled with candles, bathmats, decor-- and hands it to our three ladies. Next, Laura doles out the jobs...

LAURA

Hilary, you hand out the flyers.
Parvun, you set up the payment system.... I'll go work my magic on the restroom, display-wise.
Godspeed.

INT. CONVENTION CENTER - LATER

Hilary, wearing her old pageant sash, passes out flyers.

HILARY

Free makeovers by 2006's Miss Arizona... Get all the insider beauty tricks...

She stops at a booth with elegant BRIDAL GOWNS. A BRIDE exits the dressing room, her BRIDESMAIDS "ooh" and "aaah." It's Kimberly, Clark's fiancée. A tense beat as she and Hilary lock eyes.

KIMBERLY

What are you doing here?

HILARY

My friends and I are doing bridal makeovers...

KIMBERLY

(gracious smile)

Oh, wow. We'll have to check it out.

Hilary nods, crosses out. As she leaves;

BRIDESMAID

Who was that?

KIMBERLY

Nobody. Just that piece of trash Clark once screwed. She'll be out of our hair soon.

But Hilary hears this. Crushed, she starts to walk away then takes a beat. Turns back around to the group.

HILARY

It's true. I didn't grow up in a nice house or go to a fancy school. God knows my daddy didn't buy me a new car every time the ashtray got full.

(then)

No. I had to *fight* for anything I wanted. And I ate girls like you for breakfast-- and vomited you out by lunch.

KIMBERLY

I guess we'll see about that in court?

HILARY

That little girl is a part of me. And nothing will ever change that.

Hilary throws one last grenade on her way out.

HILARY (CONT'D)

And if you're wondering why Clark came home so late Monday night? He was calling out my name.

(smiles)

Four times.

Off Hilary, triumphant;

INT. CONVENTION CENTER - LATER

Parvun speaks with several TECH-ASSIST DUDES who work at BRIDE-CON. She holds an iPad.

PARVUN

The guest wifi is too slow-- all the vendors are using it. I need something faster or we could lose sales.

TECH GUY

Well, you could use the main office's account but you'd need to crack the WEP encryption--

PARVUN

(typing)

And... done.

(off their amazement)

Watch and learn, fellas.

INT. SUZANNE'S BOOTH - LATER

Suzanne works the Brava booth, straightening the display, pouring rosé, but mostly pushing her SALES REPS.

SUZANNE

Warriors, five hours to reach our 15k. Where are our brides? I paid a fortune for this spot. We can't let other vendors steal our clients.

She heads out...

INT. HALL - CONVENTION CENTER - SAME

Suzanne marches down the aisle, checking out the other booths. Busy but nothing unusual. Then something catches her eye...

EXT. WOMEN'S BATHROOM - SAME

There's a line of BRIDES outside the bathroom door. Suzanne rolls her eyes and keeps going. At the front of the line, one stressed out BRIDE enters to find...

INT. WOMEN'S BATHROOM - SAME

Laura, who ushers her in with a cup of herbal tea.

LAURA

Welcome to the *Brava Natural* suite. We're offering you the chance to transform yourself.

The bathroom now resembles an Oscar suite thanks to Laura's expertise: scented candles, soft lighting, even a plush red "carpet" (bath mats). A row of WOMEN sit on upholstered chairs in front of the mirror, getting makeovers.

As Hall & Oates "You Make My Dreams Come True" kicks in, we show QUICK BEATS of Laura, Parvun and Hilary working their magic:

ON HILARY -- giving expert makeovers to a range of women: Brides, Bridesmaids and (tricky) Mothers-of-the-Bride. She signs autographs, takes selfies with fans. Hilary makes over one OVERWEIGHT BRIDE who looks gorgeous.

OVERWEIGHT BRIDE

I look just like... Tyra Banks.

HILARY
Spitting image.

The Bride starts to tear up. Hilary jumps in.

HILARY (CONT'D)
Whoa, whoa, whoa- no tears, it
ruins the smoky eye! Keep your chin
up and think of dead kittens. I
learned that at State.

ON PARVUN -- master on the till: swiping credit cards on her
iPad, keeping track of inventory, never breaking a sweat. She
rings up a huge Bridal party, all with separate credit cards.

PARVUN
(rapid-fire)
That's seven tinted moisturizers,
one oil-free bronzer, three blushes
in coral, four glimmer sticks...
plus the five dollar-off coupons
and two-for-one hashtag BRIDE-CON
BATHROOM special... divided by nine
bridesmaids... that's \$56.78 each,
including tax.

ON LAURA - in her element. Working the room, giving out free
samples. She tries to encourage a reluctant MOTHER-OF-THE-
BRIDE into a makeup chair.

MOTHER-OF-THE-BRIDE
I don't really need anything.
Nobody will be looking at *me*...

LAURA
Hey. You've been there for all the
big moments in your daughter's life-
- every birthday, holiday, the
first time she rode a bike or had
her heart broken. Well, this is her
most important day-- and you
deserve to look your best.
(softly)
Also, I just did her mother-in-law
and she's a real See-You-Next-
Tuesday, so...

MOTHER-OF-THE-BRIDE
(smiles)
You're right. Let's do this.

The woman takes her seat and Laura gets to work. Our team
isn't *perfect* but they're kicking some ass.

INT. SUZANNE'S BOOTH - LATER

The expo is almost over, crowd is thinning. Suzanne, stressed, checks in with her SALES REP (BROOKE).

SUZANNE

Thirty minutes to go. How are the numbers?

BROOKE

(checks iPad)

We're doing well but we're still about 6k short of our goal.

SUZANNE

I don't understand. I've had this booth the past five years and we've always earned more.

She approaches a BRIDE passing by.

SUZANNE (CONT'D)

Hi! Would you like to try our organic bronzing gel that won't streak or stain? And I'd love to throw in some under-eye anti-puffery cream.

BRIDE

Thanks, I already bought some at the other *Brava* booth.

SUZANNE

What other booth?

BRIDE

The one in the bathroom.

Suzanne, furious, marches over to find...

INT. WOMEN'S BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

It's back to normal. A few brides linger... but no trace of our team. Suzanne looks puzzled. Then she sees a stray flyer under the sink.

EXT. PARKING LOT - A LITTLE LATER

Laura, Parvun and Hilary head out with their stuff.

PARVUN

We *killed* in there!

HILARY

I haven't felt this high since I took Mexican diet pills at Junior Miss.

LAURA

So how'd we do?

PARVUN

(calculating on cellphone)
Well, we sold out our starter kits *plus* a few future orders... *minus* expenses, discounts, free samples... so after our initial investment, we made... \$864.

(pause)

Each.

The women WHOOP and HUG when they're interrupted;

SUZANNE (O.S.)

Congratulations. You sold your first kit.

They turn to find Suzanne flanked by her entire sales tribe.

LAURA

We sold three, actually.

SUZANNE

And I've sold ten thousand. You have *no* idea what it takes to keep this business going. The hustling and legwork, the sample sales and trunk shows-- and the social media. You know how many goddamn *posts* I have to make?! It is non-stop!

(then)

You got lucky this time-- they all do at first. But I *own* this town. So I will give you one last chance to make this right. You NEED me.

She holds out her iPad, her hands trembling with rage. By now, a crowd has gathered. Laura takes a deep breath, then;

LAURA

No, I don't. For the first time in a long time, I believe in myself. It may not be easy, but it'll be worth it. These are my dreams-- and my dreams belong to me.

Suzanne composes herself.

SUZANNE

Well, good luck then.

(unlocks her Range Rover)

Just know, I will crush you and
enjoy every minute of it.

Laura watches Suzanne drive off. And with a newfound
determination;

LAURA

See you in Vegas, bitch.

EXT. VEGAS OUTSKIRTS - DAY - ONE YEAR LATER

CLOSE ON: A GUN sails through air... landing in a dumpster by
the side of the road. We hear the screech of tires across the
hot desert pavement...

We PULL BACK TO REVEAL: A Brava Signature blush Range Rover
speeds off past the sign: **"You are now leaving Las Vegas."**

END OF PILOT