

MATLOCK

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INT. COFFEE SHOP -- NYC --DAY

OPEN on a guy who is clearly one of the most charming people in the world. Vintage TOM CRUISE. Right now -- on the phone.

VINTAGE TOM CRUISE

Alright, Timothy. Yes, I am calling you by your full name because it is go time, brother.

OUR CAMERA is taken with his smile.

VINTAGE TOM CRUISE

I have to be upstairs in five --
(checks his watch)
Make that three minutes --

He glances at the WOMAN in front of him who is fussing with her credit card, apologizing to the Barista.

WOMAN

Sorry, it's this darn chip, I don't know if I should swipe it or tap it or wave it --

VINTAGE TOM CRUISE

Which means I need to know the ceiling --the *absolute ceiling* -- your guys are willing to pay.

WOMAN

Y'know? I'll just get cash --

VINTAGE TOM CRUISE

Hers is on me, plus a tall drip, keep the change.

WOMAN

Oh! You don't have to do that.

There's that smile again. He hands the Barista a hundo --

VINTAGE TOM CRUISE

My pleasure.
(into phone.)
23? Got it. I'm gonna close at 19 Timothy, so remind your bosses how much I saved them when they try to fight my bill.

The Barista hands him his coffee, and Tom Cruise is on his charismatic way. But strangely our camera doesn't follow him. In fact, it PUSHES PAST him to FRAME our WOMAN.

Finally, we get a good look at her: 70's white, someone you'd pass without a second glance. She smiles at the Barista.

WOMAN

Well, isn't that a nice way to start the day. And they say this world is going to poop!
(re: coffee)
Oooh. A schosche hot.

She takes a few heavy creamers and opens her purse. But instead of putting them inside, she starts taking more things out of her purse: tissues, a lipstick, a compact, a few Werther's Butterscotch candies - her hands are full as she heads out of the coffee shop, CAMERA FOLLOWING...

EXT/INT. 1650 5TH AVENUE -- NYC

She ENTERS the very next building. Fancy schmancy. Security cards swiped before turnstiles, but our Woman's hands are full so a NICE GIRL hurries to swipe--

NICE GIRL

I got you.

WOMAN

Well, this is the day of kind gestures, I can't thank you enough.
(re: Werther's)
Want one?

Our Nice Girl is tickled. They are now walking together.

NICE GIRL

Aw, my grandma loves these.

Now they are entering the elevator. Our Woman removes a candy wrapper with one hand, coffee in her other --

WOMAN

It's biological. We hit a certain age, we start buying them. Believe you me, I tried to resist but I turned 65, next thing I know I'm at Costco with a four pound bag, 21st floor please.

The Nice Girl laughs as she swipes again --

WOMAN (CONT'D)

I guess that's the thing -- lots of times in life we become exactly who people expect us to be.

INT. LAW FIRM OF JACOBSON MOORE - RECEPTION

The elevator doors open and our Woman exits into a law firm. But not just any law firm -- Jacobson Moore -- founded in 1948 with an emphasis on taking over the world and making money. This floor is primarily litigation.

She now has her phone to one ear, coffee in her other. She passes a 27-year-old HARVARD GRAD at reception--

HARVARD GRAD

Checking in for my interview.

WOMAN

Good luck! Can you buzz me in,
Donna, hands are full.

DONNA (the Receptionist) looks confused, but our Woman is walking like she knows where she is going, plus she knew her name, so Donna buzzes her in...

INT. LAW FIRM - HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

Now inside, she straightens up a little. Looks at the hallway maze ahead, then takes out a small piece of paper on which she's drawn a crude schematic. She studies it, then puts on her reading glasses to be sure.

Yes. She's sure. Reading glasses off, and she makes a left, soon falling in line with a big group of people, entering...

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

She makes her way to the back where support staff gather as various partners settle into the seats around the table. There's chatter amongst the 30-40 people until ELIJAH OWENS (40, Black, high energy, high intellect) enters.

ELIJAH

Hello and happy Monday! And before
we dive in, my deep condolences...

Groans in the room, they know where he's going --

ELIJAH (CONT'D)

Truly. In fact, my deepest
condolences to all you Mets fans.
And to my fellow Yankee fans, I
mean this: let's not gloat, let's
keep it respectful, let's --
(hits a button)
All rise!

Music from an iPhone as 8 lawyers stand up in tandem, put on powdered old-timey judge Aaron Judge wigs and do an eight count home run inspired tiktok dance.

The rest of the firm is laughing, including Julian (39, white, born rich but don't hold it against him. Yet).

JULIAN

Alright, very funny, did you have an early meeting for that?

ELIJAH

Team building! Good for morale! It shows that even though I'm an equity partner now, I'm still one of you. A regular partner at heart. If not in salary.

(over more groans)

Here we go! Olympia, I heard you got a two million dollar offer to settle the Kingston Civil action.

All eyes on OLYMPIA LAGOSTIN (40, Black, laser-focused). Right now, coiled tightly because she knows what's coming.

OLYMPIA

Yes. And I rejected it.

The air in the room changes; now Elijah looks upset.

ELIJAH

The trial is slated to start tomorrow and you cannot go to trial.

ELIJAH (CONT'D)

You've spent enough time on this case.

OLYMPIA

I'm clear on that. And I will be closing.

OLYMPIA (CONT'D)

But two million is not enough. Roland Kingston lost 26 years of his life. I need four million -- minimum. Twenty if I can just find the smoking gun that proves there was police corruption.

JULIAN

You've been looking for six months.

Olympia stiffens- clear *and particular* tension between them.

OLYMPIA

Well, I haven't been allocated the proper resources --

JULIAN

You have two associates working round the clock --

OLYMPIA

Two very junior associates who equal one mediocre associate.

JULIAN

That your way of building morale?

OLYMPIA (CONT'D)

(to Elijah, Hail Mary)
Look, I might have a new lead. A sketch of the prostitute who--

ELIJAH

It's over, Olympia, close the case. Julian, talk to me about Peabody.

Olympia's pissed...and out of runway.

JULIAN

We back-channeled last night and I got them up to 19 million.

A few impressed whistles from the group. And that's when --

WOMAN

Actually, you can get quite a bit more out of Peabody!

Did you forget about her? Don't worry, it happens!

JULIAN

Um...who are you?

MATTY

Oh! Sorry, got a little ahead of myself in my excitement. I'm Matty -- informally. Formally Madeline Matlock. Yes, Matlock like the old TV show. Which was pretty much all I heard between 1984-1992. 'You're a lawyer like Matlock, you're a lawyer like Matlock.' I started off correcting them, 'No, he's a lawyer like ME, I was one first.'

(MORE)

MATTY (CONT'D)

But there's only so much you can protest before you start seeming like you've got a big ol' pole up your heinie, so I stopped saying no, and started to say yes. I'm a lawyer just like Matlock.

Stunned expressions.

ELIJAH

A lawyer working for...?

MATTY

You hopefully! You have an associate position open, but it's been really hard to get an interview. I almost think it's because of my age but that would be violating discriminatory protections so I'm sure you're just swamped with emails, I know I am and about a quarter of my friends have keeled over...

(smiles)

The point is I had to figure out how to break through the noise.

The other lawyers are starting to look amused. Except for Olympia.

ELIJAH

Well, you certainly did. And you've definitely earned yourself an interview --

MATTY

Well thank you for that, but I don't want an interview, I want a job. And as a reminder I do know the number Peabody is willing to pay and it is significantly higher than 19 million. Of course, you don't want to overplay your hand either -- I always say, negotiations are an art...

(a sniper)

...and a trap.

Julian is on the hook now, curious and enjoying this.

JULIAN

Let's avoid traps then. How do you know the number?

MATTY

See, there's this funny thing that happens when women age. We become...well, damn near invisible. Not that I'm complaining, I had my moment in the sun. Plus, it's useful -- because no one sees us coming. Which is how I got past your security. Several times. And how I knew Peabody's counsel always grabs coffee and updates his client between 8:15 and 8:25, and it's also why - after waiting there every morning for a week - said counsel *finally* talked about his ceiling right in front of me.

JULIAN

What's the number?

MATTY

Am I hired?

MAN'S VOICE

No one's hired without a two-week trial.

Lawyers part like the Red Sea to REVEAL: the man known as SENIOR -- 70's, white. More later but know he's so powerful, he can sit with support staff and wear jeans and cowboy boots -- a nod to his Texan upbringing. He's staring at Matty.

SENIOR

What's their ceiling?

MATTY

23 million. Which means I just made you 4 million dollars. Do I still need a two week trial?

SENIOR

Yes.

MATTY

Alright, fine I'll start today.

He smiles a little, holding her gaze.

SENIOR

Tell me, Ms. Matlock. Why do you want to work here?

She knew she'd be asked this, came prepared.

MATTY

You have business with 15 of the top Fortune 500 companies. And there is a time in life when you make decisions based on what you think is right. And there's a time when you make decisions based on money. I did what's right all my life...

She stops for a beat. There is clearly more to that story, some pain underneath... But Matlock gathers herself.

MATTY (CONT'D)

Now, I need to make some money. And I figure I have about 7 years of earning power left before I experience significant cognitive decline beyond where did I put my keys, which is a problem, but that's not age related, I was asking the same question in 1979.
(some laughter)
But for the next seven years, I need to make it rain. So point me to a case and put me to work!

Grinning, Julian indicates Olympia:

JULIAN

She did ask for extra resources...

INT. LAW FIRM -- HALLWAY -- SHORTLY AFTER

Matlock scrambles to keep up with Olympia who is walking very quickly, hoping to lose her new charge...

MATTY

We seem to have gotten off on the wrong foot -- wow that is quite the pace! -- I truly just want to be useful, anything you need --

OLYMPIA

Competence. I need basic competence. When was the last time you practiced law?

MATTY

Well... that was in 1991.

Olympia quickens. Matlock hesitates, then takes off her shoes to keep up.

MATTY (CONT'D)

And yes, I understand that 30 years seems challenging, but I assure you I have remained pretty... nearly up to date.

OLYMPIA

To clarify: Pretty nearly? Or almost sorta?

MATTY

Just let me prove that I can be useful. Tell me how to do that.

Olympia eyes her for a beat, then makes a decision.

OLYMPIA

Get me Christmas.

MATTY

I'm sorry... I'm not following.

OLYMPIA

I charge 1200 dollars an hour. Clear it up with someone whose time you can afford.

They have now landed at the entrance to her office - BILLY RAMOS and SARAH CHANG are waiting. He is 28 and has an easy charm. She is 24 and does not. They're both green.

OLYMPIA (CONT'D)

Youtwo. Anything?

SARAH

(overeager)

Nothing, no, not yet.

OLYMPIA

Remember what we talked about, that should have been one word. The call's coming any minute, meet me in the conference room. And bring the new lawyer with you.

Sarah and Billy look confused as Olympia walks past them and enters her office. Then, they turn to find --

MATTY

Hi there, Madeline Matlock, yes like the TV show--

SARAH

What TV show?

MATTY

Exactly! Call me Matty. First day on the job, thrilled to be part of the team--

SARAH

Okay, this is a nightmare --

BILLY

Be nice --

SARAH (CONT'D)

Nice? Don't tell me to be nice, I need to be trained by senior partners, not senior citizens, no offense Perry Mason.

MATTY

Ha! Matlock --

BILLY

If you say no offense, it doesn't make you less rude --

SARAH

We just got demoted to a third!

With that, Sarah storms down the hall away from them.

BILLY

In Sarah's defense -- she's a raging bitch -- excuse my language.

MATTY

No excuse needed -- I'm old, not a child, though sometimes people confuse the two -- why's she so pissy?

BILLY

We've been on this case for six months and Olympia still calls us "youtwo". One word. So, you're not exactly joining the A-team.

MATTY

Another old show you never heard of?

BILLY

My abuela and I watched telenovelas, know any of those?

MATTY

No. Fair! Oh, before I forget, Olympia mentioned I should get her Christmas, any idea what she's talking about?

BILLY

Probably a custody thing. Word is their divorce is almost finalized.

(re: vending machine)

Fyi, great vending machine. It's got salty, sweet, and access to a back patio if you need to cry.

MATTY

I'm salty for the record and I'm hoping not to cry! You said "their divorce" - who's Olympia divorcing?

BILLY

Julian.

MATTY

Ohhhhhh! Well file that under things I'm-never-gonna-get-involved-with-nowaynohow-nosireebob. I will win her over the old fashioned way. Catch me up on the case!

BILLY

Yup. Roland Kingston spent 26 years in jail as a convicted serial rapist/murderer, but he was recently exonerated through DNA evidence. The police department was definitely dirty back then, tons of misconduct. But to get the payout he deserves, we need to find the smoking gun.

MATTY

Why is everyone so sure there is one?

BILLY

Because we got a tip from a guy who got a tip from his dead uncle who was a retired cop --

MATTY

Oh lord --

BILLY

Yeah. Anyway, apparently a prostitute escaped a really similar attack *while Roland was in custody* - - stocking around the neck, the whole nine. Word is, she came down to the station to file a complaint.

(MORE)

BILLY (CONT'D)

Only there's no record. Which means if it exists, it was buried.

MATTY

But I'm guessing you can't find the prostitute from 26 years ago?

BILLY

Don't know her name, much less if she's alive.

MATTY

Lots of invisible people in the world. In the partner's meeting, Olympia mentioned a new sketch?

BILLY

Well, that's complicated. How'd you get in the partner's meeting?

MATTY

Long story, I'll tell you next time we eat salty vending machine food. Anything else I need to know to get on Olympia's good side?

BILLY

Never give your opinion to a client. Leave that to her.

And with that he enters, Matlock following...

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

- His demeanor instantly more somber as he greets ROLAND KINGSTON (50's, hard life) and his daughter JORDAN KINGSTON (30's, serious as a heart attack). We notice a formality between father and daughter. A stiffness. Though Jordan is taking charge, determined to help.

BILLY

Hi Roland. Jordan. Got one more lawyer as we bring this home.

Jordan pushes forward her phone, presses record.

JORDAN

Please state your name and whether you have ever had an affiliation with the police department or anything to do with my father's case either directly or tangentially.

BILLY

Jordan likes to record everything.

JORDAN

I don't *like* to record everything. I have to record everything. To hold people accountable. My father was locked up for 26 years because people lied. So if it happens in this room - I keep a record.

MATTY

I understand. I wish I had a record of things that happened in my life, a way to look back, make sense of it all...

She reaches for Jordan's hand -- but Jordan pulls it away.

MATTY (CONT'D)

Apologies.
(into phone recorder)
Madeline Matlock and I have no affiliation with the police department and never have.

Olympia enters - everyone looks up. And it's immediately clear from her expression that something is very wrong.

JORDAN

What is it, what's wrong?

OLYMPIA

I don't know how to say this. We got their final settlement offer. And it's 241,280 dollars.
(off their shock)
It's the bare minimum, derived from an equation known as the Value of Statistical Life -- insurance companies use it... And at this point, I have to ask if you want to settle.

JORDAN

Settle?

ROLAND

We wouldn't settle for 2 million, what the hell makes you think we'll settle for 200,000?!

Jordan puts her hand on his shoulder. He looks, embarrassed.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

Sorry, sorry --

JORDAN (CONT'D)

No, no -- don't be sorry --

An awkward beat. Jordan turns back to Olympia.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

I don't understand, what happened?

OLYMPIA

(hates this)

I don't know. But the trial starts tomorrow. And something changed. They feel like we can't make our case anymore. And...I'm worried. Without the smoking gun, given your father's... criminal history.

JORDAN

You said past ten years they can't bring that up --

OLYMPIA

He got into a fight in jail nine years ago. And since he confessed to the crime --

ROLAND

Under duress! I took it back --

OLYMPIA

I know. But that initial confession means the state isn't obligated to pay you anything.

A beat. Jordan looks at her phone, scrolling through.

OLYMPIA (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, Roland. We've just...run out of time.

Jordan presses play. We hear Olympia's voice come through...

OLYMPIA'S VOICE

So...you have a very big decision to make, Roland.

JORDAN

Remember this? From our first meeting? I listen to it a lot.

Olympia realizes what she's hearing.

OLYMPIA'S VOICE

Probably the biggest decision you've had to make in a while.

(then, kindly)

Roland, look at me. Please.

In the present he looks at her. So does Jordan.

OLYMPIA'S VOICE (CONT'D)

You've met with a lot of lawyers
and I'd like to say everyone's
qualified, and there's no wrong
decision -- but you know what?
Everyone is not qualified and there
is a wrong decision.

(then)

But that also means there's a right
decision. And I am that right
decision. Because I believe in you
Roland. And I am angry for you.
And I don't care what you did in
the past, I care that this corrupt
police department stole your
future. And I know a lot of people
have said trust me -- and they
haven't come through. But that is
not me. Trust me.

(almost whispering)

Trust me.

See, this is why Jordan has her tape recorder; she holds
people accountable. Tethers them to their words forever.
Matlock is moved. Olympia notices. So does Jordan.

JORDAN

What do you think?

Billy is subtly shaking his head, "no". But Olympia presses
Matlock with purpose. Even... daring her?

OLYMPIA

Go on. If you have an opinion, give
it.

Matlock takes a beat, then decides to be honest.

MATTY

Their offer is insulting. Go to
trial.

Jordan nods, satisfied. Then, she turns to Olympia.

JORDAN

I agree. You said you'd come
through. So come through.

And off the weight of the challenge and Matlock on the hook,

END TEASER

ACT ONE

INT. LAW FIRM -- HALLWAY -- SHORTLY AFTER

Matlock looks in the window; Senior and Olympia talk inside.

MATTY

Think Olympia's blaming me?

PULL BACK to REVEAL Billy and Sarah just behind her.

BILLY

Probably not.

SARAH

100 percent, yes.

SARAH (CONT'D)

I mean, I would.

INT. SENIOR'S OFFICE -- SAME TIME

Senior is not pleased.

SENIOR

You saying Ms. Matlock convinced them? And one upped you? What else you sellin' me? An electric pickup truck and a tofu scramble?

OLYMPIA

She didn't one up me. Now I'm a step closer to firing her for cause. And frankly, I didn't want to convince Roland to settle --

SENIOR

Unacceptable. The firm needs you back on cases that actually make money. And I know that's not a popular thing to say - but the fact remains. This is a business.

OLYMPIA

And I billed more than any other junior partner for three years--

SENIOR

Hard to remember when you've been hunting goose eggs for six months --

OLYMPIA

Because I'm trying to establish a whole new revenue stream!

(MORE)

OLYMPIA (CONT'D)

With no support. I fought off three separate attempts to have the venue changed. By myself. Which meant the whole jury pool knows there's been extensive police corruption. And the whole jury pool knows that because I've kept the story in the paper. Which is why the city was settling --

SENIOR

"Was" being the operative word --

OLYMPIA

Exactly! And without a private investigator, or at the very least a jury consultant, I have no idea what changed, I'm just guessing...

We become aware of Matlock's image on the glass. RACK TO:

INT. LAW FIRM -- HALLWAY - SAME TIME

MATTY

Well, the firm isn't going to pump money into a pro bono case --

BILLY

Ideally, this isn't pro bono. It's a test case. Olympia was burned out after defending big pharma --

MATTY

Oooh -- big pharma is big money, that's where I want to be --

SARAH

Okay, check yourself, Grandma, really bad look.

BILLY

She's right. Even if money's your motive, you gotta seem like you care about more or you're just straight up Martin Shkreli --

MATTY

Got it, good advice. So what do you mean, this is a test case?

BILLY

If Roland gets a number higher than the national average -- the firm takes a cut. Olympia's argument to him is that she'll get a much higher number. And her argument to the firm is that social justice can mean real money. So they can do good, and do well. That's the noble version, anyway.

MATTY

What's the non noble version?

SARAH

She's figuring out yet another way to monetize misfortune. Because she's a freaking genius.

Matty looks back towards Olympia --

INT. SENIOR'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

SENIOR

Look, you're coming up for senior partnership. I don't have to remind you what's at stake.

OLYMPIA

Then why are you?

SENIOR

Because I'm still your father-in-law.

Ah. Now we understand. Senior is Julian's father.

OLYMPIA

The divorce is almost finalized.

SENIOR

You think I give a rat's ass? Father-in-law is a lifetime position, I have made that clear on multiple occasions in multiple jurisdictions in front of multiple witnesses.

For the first time, she smiles. There's a lot of affection here, clearly. And mutual respect.

OLYMPIA
 (passionate)
 I know what's at stake. But I want
 to make this work.

SENIOR
 I know you do. But that doesn't
 mean it will...

INT. HALLWAY/ OLYMPIA'S OFFICE -- STRATEGY SESSION

Olympia is now walking quickly. As she passes Matlock --

OLYMPIA
 You're on notice, overstep again
 and you're fired -- hurry up
 youthree --

As they hurry after, Sarah leans into Billy.

SARAH
 "Youthree." See? We've been
 demoted.

And they quicken their pace, leaving Matlock to scramble --

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - STRATEGY SESSION

Olympia arrives first, begins talking to the empty room.

OLYMPIA
 Okay, the biggest question we have
 to tackle --

Billy and Sarah enter --

OLYMPIA (CONT'D)
 --is should Roland be called to the
 stand. What we need is a jury
 consultant, so we can --

Matlock enters, slightly out of breath.

OLYMPIA (CONT'D)
 -- audition his testimony, see how
 the jury would respond to him, but
 unfortunately we can't afford that.

MATTY
 So you need the off-brand model,
 huh?

Olympia looks at her in disbelief. Sarah -- slack-jawed.

MATTY (CONT'D)

Or better yet, the freebie! Which I am used to looking for since my circumstances changed. For instance I stopped buying ketchup and just started bringing ketchup packets home every time I went out. And this firm definitely has a lot of people... who like ketchup.

Before Olympia can respond, Elijah enters. She turns, immediately defensive --

OLYMPIA

Senior knows we're moving ahead so give me space.

ELIJAH

Gotcha. I actually came to help. So these six months haven't been a colossal waste of time. But if you want space --

OLYMPIA

No. I don't. Sorry. Thank you.

She's grateful. Something passes between them. Then:

OLYMPIA (CONT'D)

Can you look around the building and find me two Black men in their 40's, a 50 something Latino man, a 20 something Asian woman, and two white ladies in their 50's... go to maintenance, food services, IT...
(off his surprise)
Free ketchup packets.

She looks at Matlock with a small nod. The *tiniest* affirmation, but Matlock will take it. Olympia continues --

OLYMPIA (CONT'D)

Let's preview Roland's testimony with people already on the clock here. They have opinions. We'll match the demographics of the jury.

Olympia turns to Matlock, Billy and a shocked Sarah:

OLYMPIA (CONT'D)

And youthree --

SARAH
You can actually separate us --

OLYMPIA
Ssssh! Go to Sherleen's and get
her "sketch".

Olympia clearly doesn't have high hopes. After she and
Elijah exit --

MATTY
Who's Sherleen?

BILLY
An old ho.
(off her look)
That's what she calls herself. I
said aging prostitute once, she
corrected me. 'I'm an old ho.'

MATTY
Copy that.

INT. LOWER EAST SIDE - SHERLEEN'S APARTMENT

Sarah, Billy and Matlock wait at the door --

SARAH
I'm just saying, Macgyver does a
whole ketchup monologue, and she
doesn't get ssshed--

MATTY
Matlock, ha!

BILLY
Because the ketchup monologue
was useful, get over
yourself!

BILLY (CONT'D)
(to Matlock)
FYI, Sherleen's kind of a nut job.
But she's worked the streets a long
time, and she says she remembers
the prostitute we're looking for.
Just not her name. Or anything
useful.

MATTY
Got it. And Sarah --

SARAH
Ssssh!

BILLY

So petty!

But Sarah indicates -- SHERLEEN waiting there. Vintage Betsey Johnson vibe, with her ass crack showing and a bow in her hair; Sherleen's seen it all and she's fucked it all. And she's ready to tell you all about it. She eyes Matlock.

SHERLEEN

Who's she?

MATTY

Matty, nice to meet you-- love the place.

Sherleen's home is part sex shop, part cam-girl setup, part Madonna Inn, by way of a hoarder. As they enter --

SHERLEEN

Thanks, I did the art. That over there is a useful map. You know where your clitoris is? Lots of women your age don't.

She's clearly trying to shock Matty. But Matlock smiles:

MATTY

I certainly do! Though my husband didn't. And I never said anything. Imagine that. Thirty-eight years and I never said move your hand to the left and go twice as fast. Well, he never told me he was sleeping with other people and had a massive gambling problem that would leave me in debt, so I guess we're even.

Sherleen looks at her for a beat, then breaks into a smile. Turns to a shocked Billy and Sarah.

SHERLEEN

I like her!

MATTY

I like you too! Thanks again for helping us!

SHERLEEN

Oh, I've always been a helpful bitch. Let me find my sketch.

Sarah and Billy are a little stunned at their connection.

MATTY

Take your time. So much to look at here. A life well lived, clearly. Not me, trusted the wrong man---

SHERLEEN

I've been in the business long enough to know that most people lead a double life, so don't beat yourself up.

MATTY

Well, I am going to try not to, Sherleen. Because honestly, the deception really threw me. I'm paranoid these days - always double checking things. Speaking of double checking, it says here you remembered a prostitute who said she was attacked by this guy who tried to tie her up with pantyhose. That right?

SHERLEEN

Yup. She was spooked, said she was getting out of the game. Didn't think of her again either -- til these two showed up. And then the other day, after one of those "see God" orgasms -- bam! I remembered what all she looked like! Oh, here's the sketch - actually it's a painting.

She smiles, proudly showing...a wild Picasso-esque painting. Billy and Sarah exchange looks -- annoyed. But Matlock is studying it, takes it seriously.

MATTY

Lots of orange up top. Her hair color?

SHERLEEN

Exactly!

MATTY

It's all very chaotic isn't it?

SHERLEEN

Drugs make people chaotic.

MATTY

They certainly do.
(to Sarah and Billy)
(MORE)

MATTY (CONT'D)

And you ran the names of all the prostitutes arrested within the year by Sherleen? To see if anyone rang a bell?

BILLY

Yup. Sure did.

MATTY

Nice, that's a heck of a lot of work! And double checking -- you also checked for people with narcotics charges? Since our prostitute had a 'chaotic' drug problem...per this sketch.

Billy and Sarah stare.

BILLY

We... did not.

MATTY

Yeah, probably too big a pool there. Sherleen, was there a drug dealer the other hos favored?

SHERLEEN

Oh yeah. I could paint the guy right now.

INT. "MOCK COURT" PREP ROOM -- DAY

PANNING ACROSS: a 12 person "mock" jury. REVEAL Roland: on the "witness" stand. Elijah questions him, acting as Opposing Counsel while Olympia observes.

ELIJAH

Mr. Kingston, why would you confess to a crime you didn't commit?

ROLAND

Because they said they had two eye witnesses, and one was a cop. Which wasn't true, but that's what they said. And also... they had me on other stuff.

ELIJAH

What other stuff?

Roland looks over at Olympia. She nods.

ROLAND

Robberies. And they said they would cut my time if I confessed otherwise I'd get death. And I was in there 11 hours. But I took it back. I'm not a violent person --

ELIJAH

You say you are not violent and yet there is a record of a fight in prison --

ROLAND

26 years and I got in one fight--

ELIJAH

The other guy had a broken nose and required 36 stitches --

ROLAND

He was coming at me, okay? I was defending myself --

ELIJAH (CONT'D)

With a piece of glass. When you said you were not violent --

ROLAND (CONT'D)

Look, just because I wasn't perfect, that doesn't mean I'm not a human being who lost 26 years of my life! For something I didn't do.

Olympia studies the faces of the "Jury"...

INT. "MOCK COURT" PREP ROOM -- AN HOUR LATER

The last of the Mock Jurors files out of the room. Olympia turns to Elijah; they both look relieved.

ELIJAH

Okay, great feedback! Lots of sympathy for Roland.

OLYMPIA

Hallelujah. Because we need him --

WHITE WOMAN (O.S.)

Excuse me?

They turn to find -- one of the White Women Mock Jurors.

WHITE WOMAN (CONT'D)

Hi. Sorry. I didn't want to say this in front of everyone...

OLYMPIA

Of course, what's up?

WHITE WOMAN

It's a little... awkward but you said you wanted our true opinions.

(off Olympia's nod)

Well with the fight and the robberies...I feel bad saying this but the fact that he was in jail probably kept him off the street, doing worse things. So, I don't think he should be rewarded.

Olympia is careful not to show her reaction.

OLYMPIA

I really appreciate your candor.

But as she turns, she locks eyes with Elijah. Not good.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE OLYMPIA'S OFFICE

Olympia is typing, when Matlock appears at the door. She doesn't look up.

MATTY

We might have a lead on our missing prostitute.

(Olympia looks up)

Sherleen remembered a guy named Big Vinnie who used to supply all the girls so we did a little digging and his real name is Vincent Padusa. In prison at Wallkill. We'll go first thing tomorrow.

OLYMPIA

Okay. Some good news...finally.

She goes back to typing. Matlock lingers for another beat --

MATTY

The thing is, I was the one who figured that out. Which hopefully means you're finding me useful, because I've thought about it, and I really don't think it's a good idea for me to get involved in your custody dispute with Julian. Over Christmas.

OLYMPIA

Oh. Okay, no problem.

Matlock is relieved. She turns to go, when --

OLYMPIA (CONT'D)

I only asked because you wanted to know how to get on my good side.

Matlock looks back. Olympia smiles. PRELAP: KNOCKING

INT. JULIAN'S OFFICE - SHORTLY AFTER

Matlock stands in the doorway, Julian looks thrilled.

JULIAN

Come on in! Been meaning to find you, Peabody closed at 23 million, just like you said, drink scotch?

MATTY

Not unless I'm getting laid and I'm guessing that's not on the table.

A beat, then he bursts out laughing --

JULIAN

Where did you come from, Madeline Matlock?

MATTY

Naples Florida originally, then a detour through Georgia before my ex husband dragged me up north. Not that I'm bitter and broke. You specialize in pharmaceuticals, right? That is where I need to be. Cute kids, how old?

JULIAN

Twins. Eleven.

MATTY

Aw. Great age. 14 is tougher. I'm raising my grandson. Don't ask for any advice, he hates me.

JULIAN

Oh, I sincerely doubt that --

MATTY

You're kind. But kids are complicated. Got Christmas plans?

(MORE)

MATTY (CONT'D)

Because Olympia mentioned she'd love to take them away and the one thing I do know is that vacations benefit everyone!

JULIAN

(beat, slight shock)
Did Olympia send you here? To ask about Christmas vacation?

Matlock takes a beat, decides to come clean.

MATTY

Yes. And I'm not sure why, but I do know that you seem like a very reasonable person and like I said vacations are universally beneficial.

JULIAN

They sure are. And I'd be happy to give Olympia Christmas.

Matlock smiles, in a little disbelief. And relief!

JULIAN (CONT'D)

Here's what I need in return.

INT. OLYMPIA'S OFFICE - SHORTLY AFTER

Matlock wants to be anywhere else.

MATTY

And so then Julian explained that you are currently 'nesting' which I understand to mean the kids stay put in the apartment and you two shuttle back and forth, so he says he would be more than happy to let you have Christmas if you leave within the month and cede the deed to the apartment to him *in pleno*.

Olympia is glaring. And now Julian enters --

JULIAN

So? Do we have a deal?

OLYMPIA

You're being ridiculous! You don't even have plans for Christmas vacation!

JULIAN

As a matter of fact I do. And I'm being ridiculous? You already have Easter, and Thanksgiving and --
 (to Matlock)
 I'm sorry, will you excuse us?

MATTY

Yes I will, thank you!

With that, she exits -- leaving them alone.

JULIAN

Ridiculous is sending Matlock --

OLYMPIA

I thought she'd have more luck, you seemed to like her in the meeting--

JULIAN

You're pissed, because I undercut you in the meeting --

OLYMPIA

Yeah, because it was personal, you were upset because of what I said at dinner --

JULIAN

Not true. I don't think you're acting in the firm's best interests--

OLYMPIA

Well, you could have emailed me. Because you and I are under a microscope right now --

JULIAN

Yeah, well you could have not blown up our life. But we all make choices.

And with that, he leaves. Off Olympia, taking this blow.

INT. SENIOR'S OFFICE - SHORTLY AFTER

Senior's at his desk when Julian enters.

JULIAN

Hey dad. Thought I'd bring the girls to Aspen over Christmas.

SENIOR

I thought you wanted to spend the holiday here? As a family?

JULIAN

Honestly -- I just need some space from Olympia right now.

Senior suspects that's not true, but nods.

SENIOR

You know. Going after her in public makes you look weak. Are you?

A beat as Julian absorbs the toxicity of the question.

JULIAN

No. I'm fine.

As he turns to go, we can see - again - that Senior does not believe him. He turns to his computer, refreshes the screen.

SENIOR

Well, this is not good.

Julian turns.

Close on: A computer screen. "Study Reveals Police Corruption Not as Widespread as Initially Reported." PULL BACK TO REVEAL we are now:

INT. OLYMPIA'S OFFICE -- SAME TIME

Olympia is reading on her computer; Matlock, Sarah and Billy read on their phones. We see snippets: "Overblown"... "While there were three documented incidents in a ten year period," "Part of a political smear campaign." Elijah enters.

ELIJAH

The policeman's union must have known this was coming, that's why they dropped the number --

OLYMPIA

Known? They orchestrated it, clearly. And held the article for the night before the trial so they could inflict the most prejudice. My entire jury will read this --

ELIJAH

You're going to have to file for a change of venue --

OLYMPIA

I'm the one who argued three times
to keep the case local -- dammit!

She looks over to Matlock.

OLYMPIA (CONT'D)

Let's hope your dealer remembers a
drug-addicted prostitute from 26
years ago. How'd you get a prison
visit scheduled so quickly? It
usually takes 48 hours.

MATTY

(beat)

Well, we found a workaround. Come
on, guys.

And with that she heads out, Sarah and Billy trailing.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE OLYMPIA'S OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

Once they are out of earshot --

SARAH

Did we find a workaround?

MATTY

No! In my day you just showed up.
You guys got any ideas?

SARAH

Sure, we'll just pull from all our
past experience...

BILLY

Yeah, we're like 9 months out of
law school, we got nothing. Which
I guess is why the youtwo thing
kind of makes sense.

MATTY

(smiles, then)

Well, it's youthree now. So let's
figure it out.

And off Matlock, determined... but a little nervous.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

ESTABLISHING A COURTHOUSE

During the following, we INTERCUT with Olympia describing what will happen in court and that event actually unfolding -

INT. COURTROOM HALLWAY

On Olympia, prepping Roland and Jordan as they walk...

OLYMPIA

First, I'll make a motion *in limine* to try to get the location moved...

INT. COURTROOM - SHORTLY AFTER

IN LIMINE MOTION. Olympia valiantly trying --

OLYMPIA

-in light of the *highly* prejudicial article that came out last night.

Opposing Counsel EZRA RADCLIFF battles back --

EZRA

Two months ago you argued that the Jury could handle the publicity!

We hear Olympia's voice, telling Roland --

OLYMPIA (O.S.)

It won't work but we need it on record for appeal.

Judge MAURICIO SUAREZ (40's, tightly wound) rules.

JUDGE

Motion denied.

BACK TO COURTROOM HALLWAY

As they turn a corner, Elijah catches up and joins.

OLYMPIA

After that, the Jury will be seated. This will sound crass, but look sad. Not angry. Sad. Both of you.

Roland nods. Jordan is not thrilled...

INSIDE THE COURTROOM

The Jury files in. Roland looks sad. So does Jordan.

BACK TO COURTROOM HALLWAY

OLYMPIA

Then we'll move into opening arguments. That's my first chance to tell your story --

INSIDE THE COURTROOM

Which Olympia is now doing.

OLYMPIA

And it's a horror story, frankly. Roland Kingston spent 26 years in a 6 by 9 cell, knowing he was innocent, but also knowing that no one cared. And now that he's out, the city is still saying they don't care -- by using the coldest metrics to try to account for his life. They have offered a sum to cover the *earnings* he lost. Not the *life he lost*. But you can show him you care about that life.

BACK TO COURTROOM HALLWAY

OLYMPIA

And that's when I'll try to get in an explanation for the reason you're not taking the stand.

INSIDE THE COURTROOM

OLYMPIA

You can show him you care about those 26 years away from his family. That you care about his trauma... the fact that he still can't sleep. He has a crippling fear of public speaking and -

BILLY (CONT'D)

Okay tiktok, now we're talking,
here we go Wayne...

INT. WALLKILL VISITOR'S CHECK IN - SAME TIME

Matlock is coughing. Really hard! At the desk, WAYNE
COULTER (28, white) looks uncomfortable.

MATTY

Sorry Wayne! You look so good
honey, I like your hair longer.

(off his confusion)

Ha! I told your mom yesterday you
were gonna pull this on me because
it's been so long.

(coughs again)

Sorry, my emphysema is kicking up.

WAYNE

I'm sorry to hear it.

(digging)

You were with mom yesterday?

MATTY

At the Church clothing drive.
Dragging her oxygen around with her
bible, you can not keep Jeannie
Coulter down.

(off his smile)

Anyway, she asked me if I saw you
recently, and I said as a matter of
fact, I was comin' tomorrow. Mind
if I sit down while you check me
in, honey, not feelin' great.

Without waiting, she turns and sits, coughing very hard.
Wayne stares. Not sure what to do. She is still coughing.
But she gives him a thumbs up. He stares at the sea of names
on screen. He makes a decision and gives a thumbs up back.

INT. WALLKILL - VISITING DAY - SAME TIME

Matlock, Sarah and Billy sit in front of BIG VINNIE. 50's.
He is surprisingly small. Unsurprisingly skeptical.

BIG VINNIE

You came here to ask me to remember
a crackhead from 20 years ago?

MATTY

26. And not necessarily crack. And we'd be happy to put a hundred dollars into your canteen account if you'd just try to recall her.

BIG VINNIE

If I can't, you still gonna put the money in?

MATTY

Of course! I know how tricky memory can be. I mean, I do all those games the AARP recommends: "Look around the room and name five things you can put in your pocket."

He's staring at her. Confused.

MATTY (CONT'D)

But what really triggers my memory are specifics. So here's what I can tell you to help you recall 1996. It was an election year. Clinton's second term. Bob Dole was his opponent. Before his Viagra commercials.

(Vinnie has no reaction)

Dolly the sheep was the first mammal to be cloned, that was a big deal.

Crickets. Sarah and Billy are looking at their phones.

SARAH

Macarena! Everyone was doing the Macarena.

BIG VINNIE

I wasn't doing the Macarena!

SARAH

Sorry --

BIG VINNIE (CONT'D)

Other people were and I remember thinking it's good I don't carry or I'd blow their brains out...

MATTY

Great! So remember back to when the macarena was making you angry...

BIG VINNIE

(thinks, then)

This redhead -- you know if the curtains matched the drapes?

MATTY

I'm guessing yes -- as the sketch we're working off suggests a natural shade.

Billy and Sarah stare. It does?

BIG VINNIE

Okay, look. I do remember this junkie with red hair who just up and disappeared one day. Thought maybe she OD'd so I looked into it, if I had a bad batch I had to know right? But nah - rumor was she got spooked and got out of the game. Could be her... Not Carla!

MATTY

Okay, do you remember her name?

BIG VINNIE

Nah, that's what I called her! "Not Carla." See, I used to love the show Cheers, you know it?

MATTY

I do, but I'm guessing these kids don't.

BIG VINNIE

Yeah, probably right. Anyway, I'd always say "Cheers, Carla!" And she used to get pissed off and say that's not her name. Whatever, it was close. Eventually I just called her "Not Carla." Which pissed her off too, probably the drugs.

BILLY

But it's *like* Carla? Carly?
Caroline? Carolina?

SARAH

Carlina, Carlotta, Carlin --

BIG VINNIE

Carlin! Yes! Yes! How was I supposed to remember Carlin?!

And off this exciting development...

INT. LAW FIRM BULLPEN -- SHORTLY AFTER

A series of quick cuts of Matlock, Billy and Sarah searching--

BILLY

Okay, driver's license-- 1993-1998,
first name Carlin, spelled with
"in", "en," "on" "yn" - ages 18-32
might as well cast a wide net--

MATTY

Yes, well that's very wide. It
might take too long to --

BILLY

Okay! 214 hits!
(off Matlock's shock)
Let's look them up. Eliminate
anyone who was out of state in 1996
either for college or otherwise.
We're looking for redheads, people--

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

Olympia is questioning retired cop DENNIS O'HARA (68, white).

OLYMPIA

Detective O'Hara, do you remember
Mr. Kingston's confession?

O'HARA

I do. It was a big case.

OLYMPIA

Agreed. A real resume builder --

EZRA

Objection --

OLYMPIA (CONT'D)

Withdrawn. Looking back
now, with the benefit of
hindsight, why do you think
Mr. Kingston confessed to a
crime he didn't commit?

EZRA (CONT'D)

Objection, speculation --

OLYMPIA

From an expert witness who worked
in law enforcement for 40 years
before retiring.

JUDGE

Sustained, move on --

OLYMPIA

Okay. Was Roland Kingston held in a room for over 11 hours while he was interrogated?

O'HARA

I believe that's right.

OLYMPIA

And was he given a glass of water and a pack of saltines?

O'HARA

I don't remember, but there was no catering ok? We were investigating a serial rapist and murderer and his story wasn't adding up.

OLYMPIA

The story that he didn't kill her?

O'HARA

The details of it --

OLYMPIA

How many times did Mr. Kingston say he didn't do it?

O'HARA

I have no idea.

OLYMPIA

Approximately. More than 100?

EZRA

Objection, asked and answered. He says he doesn't know.

OLYMPIA

Your honor, I'm trying to establish a course of conduct. The officers interaction with the witness to establish pretextual pattern.

JUDGE

I'll allow it.

OLYMPIA

Thank you. Is it your best estimate that he told you he was not guilty more than 100 times?

O'HARA
Probably, yeah.

OLYMPIA
Okay, so more than 100 times Mr. Kingston says he's not guilty. And after 11 hours and a pack of saltines he says he's guilty. How long after Roland confessed, did he retract that confession?

O'HARA
About... ten minutes later.

OLYMPIA
Eight. What did he do in between?

O'HARA
I can't remember.

OLYMPIA
He went to the bathroom. Detective O'Hara, after Mr. Kingston retracted his confession, did you investigate further?

O'HARA
No.

On Jordan, who looks increasingly upset.

OLYMPIA
Was there anything to link Mr. Kingston to the crime other than the fact that he was seen in the area by one eyewitness who was, admittedly, intoxicated?

O'HARA
Well yeah, he matched a description we'd put out.

OLYMPIA
Right. Here's that description, admitting this in evidence as plaintiff's exhibit 4B. Would you read the description aloud, please.

O'HARA
(reads)
Black man. No facial hair. 5'10-6'.

OLYMPIA

Well. I can see why you thought it was Roland Kingston. No more questions, Your Honor.

Olympia returns to her seat. Elijah pushes a note towards her. #6 is skeptical. Olympia eyes #6. An OLDER WHITE WOMAN. Just like the skeptic in the mock trial. Meanwhile, Ezra approaches the witness.

EZRA

Thank you again for your service. Let's go right to that last point, Detective O'Hara. Why didn't you investigate further after Mr. Kingston retracted his confession?

O'HARA

Because people take confessions back all of the time. The reason we didn't keep looking is simple: most of the time -- the most believable explanation for what happened is exactly what happened.

Olympia eyes Juror #6. She is nodding. Fuck. Meanwhile, Jordan turns and leaves, upset...

INT. COURTROOM HALLWAY -- SHORTLY AFTER

Olympia finds Jordan alone, shaky, taking deep breaths.

OLYMPIA

Jordan --

She startles, drops her phone, goes to get it --

OLYMPIA (CONT'D)

We broke for lunch --

JORDAN

I have to turn this on, just wait --

She turns it on. Olympia recognizes her fragility...

OLYMPIA (CONT'D)

It's okay...

JORDAN

No, It's not okay. My father was innocent and they locked him up anyway. And that guy is defending it!

(MORE)

JORDAN (CONT'D)

And we have to prove that his life is worth more than the bare minimum?! How is that okay?

OLYMPIA

It's not. And trials are really difficult --

JORDAN

My whole life is difficult! Can I be angry here? Is that allowed? Because my father -- who I loved, who I trusted - *who now I hardly know* - was convicted of rape and murder when I was 13 years old! Which is why I'm 32 years old now and I've never even had a relationship! Because I thought if my dad was capable of this, how could I trust anyone?

(breaking down)

But he wasn't capable of it. He wasn't. He wasn't...

Just then, Elijah comes barreling towards them.

ELIJAH

They found the prostitute.

EXT. TEANECK NEW JERSEY HOME - SHORTLY AFTER

Matlock, Billy and Sarah are staring at a SUBURBAN MOM. Her red hair in a bun. Yoga pants. Two TEENAGERS grab groceries as they all head into the house.

HOLY SHIT. It's her.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. TEANECK NEW JERSEY HOME - MOMENTS LATER

Matlock knocks on the door. Suburban Mom - CARLIN - opens it and smiles. We see and hear her kids in the bg.

MATTY

Hi there, I'm from the botanical gardens, do you have a minute for a question about your flower beds?

Carlin smiles, stepping out, following Matlock.

MATTY (CONT'D)

Apologies for the deception, but I saw your kids inside. Can we talk somewhere in private? It's about a night 26 years ago.

Carlin's face changes...

INT. HOLE IN THE WALL DINER -- LATER THAT AFTERNOON

A place Carlin clearly never goes to. Matlock, Sarah and Billy are somber, letting her speak.

CARLIN

I haven't thought about that night for a long time. I was... I knew I was going to be murdered. And I knew no one would care.

(then)

So I just fought. And because of God or whatever higher power you believe in -- I got away. And I shouldn't have. And so after that, I changed my life. Got sober. Which was the hardest thing I ever did...

ANGLE ON: Matlock, who is emotional. She can't help it. She reaches forward and takes Carlin's hand. And unlike Jordan did earlier, Carlin does not resist.

CARLIN (CONT'D)

But I did it. And I went to college, and I have a life I never imagined I could have. But my family doesn't know about my past. Not my husband, not my kids --

MATTY

You can testify in closed court --

CARLIN

(getting more upset)

It will get out. They're teenagers.
I'm sorry, I can't.

Sarah and Billy look to Matlock but she's... unexpectedly quiet. Emotional even. Shit. Sarah tries to close it --

SARAH

We can subpoena you --

And now Carlin really loses it. She appeals to Matlock --

CARLIN

No, please! It will destroy my
family. You don't understand what
I went through, please, please...

Something is hitting Matlock deep down, we can feel it,
though we don't quite know why. When she speaks, she's quiet.

MATTY

We can't actually subpoena you. To
get you added to the witness list
this late we'd need to submit an
affidavit with your cooperation.

Sarah and Billy react, WTF?

CARLIN

Well, I won't give it.

Sarah stares daggers at Matlock. Billy looks down...

INT. OLYMPIA'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Olympia's pissed. Matlock looks somber, upset.

MATTY

I'm sorry. I couldn't lie to her --

OLYMPIA

Well you also didn't have to give
her a roadmap on how to get out of
testifying!

MATTY

I know --

OLYMPIA (CONT'D)

That's lawyering 101 --

MATTY (CONT'D)

You're right. And it's been a while, so maybe --

OLYMPIA

Maybe what? Maybe you shouldn't have come back to work? I agree. Which is why I didn't want you hired from the moment you brought up "discriminatory practices" and ageism, which is an offensive manipulation of a law that was established primarily to keep workers from getting pushed out prematurely. Whereas you getting blocked was likely because it has been 30 years since you practiced law. Which best case scenario: you just proved is a recipe for disaster.

(the heart of it)

Worst case scenario: you gave that woman a way out because you felt sorry for her. Because you saw her - living in suburbia - and she reminded you of yourself. But you know what? Those people who remind you of yourself have generations of advantage over the people who remind me of myself. You know who I identify with? Roland and his family. Who you just screwed over.

It's true. And it hits Matlock like a ton of bricks.

EXT. PATIO - SHORTLY AFTER

Matlock, emotional. Knows she fucked up. She calls her grandson, tries to keep things together.

MATTY

Hey Alfie, it's Grammy - I'm so sorry I won't be home for dinner again... What do you mean I sound weird, I'm fine, just busy, I'm getting called in. Talk later.

She gets off before she becomes more emotional. A beat.

BILLY (O.C.)

Something salty?

She turns to find Billy, holding chips. Sarah's there too.

SARAH

I'm not one for pep talks but I'm here so you understand I support whatever Billy is about to say.

MATTY

No need to say it. I was wrong. Let my emotions get in the way. Something I wouldn't have done when I was younger, by the way. Back then, I could keep things separate. But now -- with the life I've lived, and the mistakes I've made...

(shakes her head)

How naive. To think I could focus on the one thing...

BILLY

Money?

She looks at him for a long beat. A raw beat. Looks like she wants to say more. But then, she nods.

MATTY

I didn't take into account the fact that I could have lives in my hands again. And that pressure...

(realizing)

I just can't take on more people who I let down. Not at this moment in my life. I can't do it.

A beat, then --

BILLY

Okay, time to get over yourself.

She looks at him, surprised.

BILLY (CONT'D)

This is totally normal. You're on the crying patio, remember? Everyone ends up here at some point. But c'mon! We were nowhere on this before. We've learned more from you than we've learned all year --

SARAH

I mean, that's not entirely true.

(off Billy)

What? Hyperbole helps no one. But you've obviously been useful.

(MORE)

SARAH (CONT'D)

So stop feeling bad for yourself,
pull up whatever... granny panties
you wear, and fix it. Okay?

Matlock looks at her for a beat. Then she smiles. And nods.

INT. OLYMPIA'S OFFICE - LATER THAT NIGHT

Elijah and Olympia are discussing strategies when Julian enters. Olympia is surprised.

JULIAN

Thought you could use some fresh
blood. Plus, optics. For the good
of the firm.

She nods. Will take the (small) gesture.

OLYMPIA

Thanks. The prostitute angle is
over, so we have to figure out how
to eke out the most money without
opening up a line of questioning
into Roland's past.

JULIAN

The daughter's testifying?

OLYMPIA

Yup. But she keeps herself pretty
tightly coiled, doesn't want to let
anyone in. Understandable, she has
been through trauma.

JULIAN

Yeah. Fathers cast big shadows.

History passes between them; something softens. A beat, then -

OLYMPIA

This isn't a shadow. It's her own
wound now. The poor woman carries
around a tape recorder because she
trusts no one, has no life...

JULIAN

(wheels turning)
So... she's a victim too?

OLYMPIA

Yes. Oh my god, yes...
(off Elijah, confused)

(MORE)

OLYMPIA (CONT'D)

She can join the case. As an intervener. And sue for *her own* damages...

And off the excitement of this new idea...

INT. JUDGE CORTEZ'S CHAMBERS - THE NEXT MORNING

Olympia's laid out her argument to Judge Cortez. Opposing counsel, Ezra, is outraged --

EZRA

That's ridiculous!

OLYMPIA

Jordan's interests are separate and are not adequately represented --

EZRA

Because the basis of the lawsuit is false imprisonment --

OLYMPIA

No, the basis of the lawsuit is trauma *created* by false imprisonment. And Jordan is qualified to join based on her lack of consortium and the fact that there was a direct impact on her. So give me a chance to prove that impact in court. Otherwise I'll be forced to bring a separate case which seems like a pretty big waste of the Court's time and resources.

INT. COURTROOM - SHORTLY AFTER

Success. Jordan is now on the stand --

OLYMPIA

And can you explain to the Jury why you decided to join your father's lawsuit?

JORDAN

Because when they locked up my father, wrongfully, they harmed me too. We lost our housing. I had to change schools. And everyone knew my dad was convicted of rape and murder. So you know who wanted to hang around me?

(MORE)

JORDAN (CONT'D)

The people that thought that was cool. I was scared all the time. Still am. But the worst part is... the worst part...

(fighting emotion)

Me and my dad used to be close. And I don't know how to get that back, I can't get that back...

As she starts to cry, Roland starts to tear up too...

EXT. CARLIN'S HOUSE - SAME TIME

Carlin opens the door to find Matlock, immediately goes to close it, but Matlock implores --

MATTY

Just five minutes. Please. I helped you yesterday.

INT. CARLIN'S HOUSE - SHORTLY AFTER

Matlock sits at the kitchen table with Carlin.

CARLIN

Look, I understand what's at stake--

MATTY

And I understand why you said no. More than you know.

She takes a beat. And then she opens up, more raw than we've seen her. More emotionally honest, certainly.

MATTY (CONT'D)

I had a daughter. And she died after a long battle with drugs. A battle that destroyed...everyone around her, really. And...I carry the weight of that loss every day. And usually I can handle it, right? But once in a while, and it's always unexpected -- it becomes the only thing in the room.

(then)

And yesterday...that happened. Because when you were talking about how hard you worked to get clean, and how far you'd come, I thought about what I'd do for my daughter. And the answer is anything. Everything.

Carlin softens a little, feeling the truth of this.

MATTY (CONT'D)

But this isn't about that. This is about Roland Kingston. And his family. And they've been destroyed.

CARLIN

I know. But I can't blow up my life. Plus, there's no guarantee they will even believe me. People don't care about prostitutes. Even back then, I knew it would go nowhere. That's --

She stops herself. Matty sees --

MATTY

What?

(off her hesitation)

Carlin, I promise *on my daughter's memory*, I will not betray you. But I need to know what you know.

A beat. And then, Carlin decides to trust her.

CARLIN

The owner of this Greek restaurant saw me fight the guy off. And...he walked me to the police station.

(off Matlock's surprise)

But even if he remembered that night, doesn't that still mean you'll need me to testify?

MATTY

No. But there might be some detail he remembers that could be useful. Do you remember the name of the restaurant?

ESTABLISHING - PAPA CRISTO'S GREEK RESTAURANT

INT. PAPA CRISTO'S GREEK RESTAURANT - SHORTLY AFTER

Matlock is talking to a Waitress (40's, over it).

MATTY

Hi there. I was wondering if Papa Cristo still works here?

WAITRESS

Nah, he sold the restaurant years ago to his kid.

Matlock reacts, disappointed. Until --

WAITRESS (CONT'D)

Still eats here though. Every single day. Careful though.

(off Matlock)

You're his type.

She points and Matlock looks over. ANGLE ON: PAPA CRISTO. He gives a wide, gummy grin as Matlock approaches.

PAPA CRISTO

Hiya hot stuff.

INT. COURTROOM - SHORTLY AFTER

Jordan's cross-examination. Ezra questions her.

EZRA

While I appreciate that it was hard, having a father in jail -- you'd experienced that before, right? Earlier in life?

OLYMPIA

Objection! Can we approach?

The Judge nods; Olympia is outraged at Ezra--

OLYMPIA (CONT'D)

That was clearly prejudicial--

EZRA

As prejudicial as suggesting your client isn't testifying because he's afraid of public speaking?

JUDGE

Enough! Objection sustained and if that happens again, you're both looking at a mistrial.

Olympia nods, then turns pissed. And that's when she (and we) see Matlock entering. With a big grin. Giving a thumbs up! Off Olympia's confusion... we

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. JUDGE'S CHAMBERS - DAY

Matlock, Olympia, in chambers with the Judge and Ezra.

EZRA

No! You can not introduce a new witness this late in the case. Not to mention, without the prostitute it's hearsay from 23 years ago --

OLYMPIA

Which qualifies as an "excited utterance," Papa Cristo was on the phone when he witnessed the attack.

EZRA

And what? He screamed to his friend? C'mon, 26 years have passed, how can anyone testify with clarity to a conversation that took place 26 years ago?!

MATTY

Ah. Got it. So I know for the future -- if the friend taped the call, then that would be okay? You'd admit the tape this late?

EZRA

Did a friend tape the call?

MATTY

Well, no. But hypothetically.

EZRA

Hypothetically, if a friend taped the call, we'd admit it.

MATTY

Gotcha. Here's the thing: Papa Cristo didn't call a friend. He called 911. So we requested the audio recording which wasn't at the station but was luckily backed up by the state's server, so we'll go ahead and admit that into evidence. With your blessing.

And off Ezra, realizing this woman is a sniper...and Olympia smiling at Matlock, despite herself.

INT. COURTROOM - SAME TIME

O'Hara -- the retired Cop from earlier has been recalled to the stand. The 911 call plays. We hear Papa Cristo's voice:

PAPA CRISTO

Yeah, look I just saw some girl
escape this guy's car --

(calls)

Hang on honey, I'm on with 911 -

(back to phone)

--she's got like a stocking or
something around her neck and - oh
she says she's ok, I'm gonna walk
her down to the station though.

Silence all around.

OLYMPIA

Detective O'Hara, using your metric
-- what is the most believable
scenario for why this call was not
logged in your precinct?

O'HARA

(beat)

Someone got rid of the record.

And off this revelation, reverberating... Olympia eyes Juror #6 who is now shaking her head, upset.

INT. OLYMPIA'S OFFICE - LATER THAT NIGHT

Julian enters; Olympia looks up.

OLYMPIA

Thank you again. For helping out.
For the good of the firm.

JULIAN

(beat)

Well, it wasn't just that. You were
right. What I did in that meeting,
it was personal. I was pissed
because of dinner. Like you said.

OLYMPIA

I know. But thanks for admitting
it.

JULIAN

You've always been the worst person
to apologize to.

OLYMPIA

(smiles, then)

I know that too. And look, about the dinner thing -- I just meant we need some boundaries. Between working together and coparenting, sometimes it doesn't feel like we're divorcing. Which is hard. In terms of moving forward.

JULIAN

You're right. And there's no way to keep things separate. So, we shouldn't work together anymore.

(off her surprise)

Coparenting is the important part, right? Our family dinners.

OLYMPIA

(nods, touched)

Yeah. Exactly. Where will you go?

JULIAN

I'm not going. I want you to go.

OLYMPIA

That's ridiculous. I was hired here first, we met on the job.

JULIAN

And I've known the managing partners my whole life.

OLYMPIA

Agreed. Nepotism wasn't a factor in my hiring.

JULIAN

(beat, then cold)

It's funny. I keep trying to pinpoint the reason. You know, why you left. I mean sure, the case sucked. We were burned out, arguing, all those things. But maybe it's because fundamentally, you never respected me.

Olympia absorbs this accusation. Wants to respond. But her phone rings. So she answers it...

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

The JURY FOREMAN hands the paper to the Judge who reads it.

JUDGE CORTEZ

Does the city of New York owe a duty to Roland Kingston? The answer is yes. Please state the total amount of money that you would compensate the plaintiff, Roland Kingston.

FOREMAN

20 million dollars.

Holy shit! Celebrating amongst our team--

JUDGE CORTEZ

Does the city of New York owe a duty to Jordan Kingston. The answer is yes. Please state the amount of money that you would compensate the plaintiff, Jordan Kingston.

FOREMAN

5 million dollars.

Jordan looks at Roland. He pulls her into a hug. Then --

ROLAND

We have time. To build back.

She closes her eyes, tears roll down her cheeks. Olympia watches, emotional as well. Matlock is awash in relief.

INT. OLYMPIA'S OFFICE - LATER THAT NIGHT

Matlock enters to find Olympia working.

MATTY

I'm sorry again. About losing sight of the client's best interest. It won't happen again. And I really hope you will support my bid for permanent employment.

OLYMPIA

Did you get me Christmas?

MATTY

No. Then again, I'm guessing you didn't want Christmas, because if you did you wouldn't have baited your ex-husband into booking a trip, the same way you baited me into giving my opinion on the case early on.

(MORE)

MATTY (CONT'D)

Which makes me wonder why you want him out of the city over the holidays. But maybe I'm overthinking, maybe it's not that you're dating someone new - someone he'd be unhappy about - which is where my paranoid mind went.

Their eyes meet. Olympia's look is inscrutable. Then:

OLYMPIA

You've been assigned an office. And I look forward to working together again.

And off this victory and the promise of more, the theme from the original Matlock begins to play.

EXT. 1650 5th AVENUE - SHORTLY AFTER

Billy is holding up his phone, playing the theme, as Matlock exits. Sarah is laughing.

MATTY

Please, turn it off...

SARAH

No way. I'm gonna watch a few episodes, Angela Lansbury.
(off her smile)
Now come get drunk with us. We need to celebrate! Olympia actually called me Sarah!

MATTY

If only I was 40 years younger and didn't have a surly grandson at home. I'll see youtwo tomorrow. Gotta catch the bus...

They wave as she walks towards it, the music still playing...

INT. BUS - SHORTLY AFTER

As the bus starts moving, Matlock looks out the window and we **FLASHBACK TO: Earlier in the pilot. When Matlock said: "I came here for one thing only..." Billy asks: "Money?" She hesitates.** In the PRESENT, The bus stops. Matlock gets up.

BUS DRIVER

Just the one stop?

MATTY
Just the one.

EXT. BUS STOP - CONTINUOUS

There's a black town car waiting, with a UNIFORMED DRIVER. He tips his hat to Matlock:

UNIFORMED DRIVER
Good evening, Mrs. Archer.

Wait what? Who? **And we FLASHBACK TO: "That's the thing about old ladies," Matlock says. "You never see us coming."**

EXT. WESTCHESTER ESTATE -- ARCHER RESIDENCE - NIGHT

The car pulls up to an enormous estate and we **FLASHBACK TO Matlock: "There's a time in your life when you work for what's right, and there's a time you work for money."**

EDWARD ARCHER (70's, erudite, ebullient!) greets his wife, with a kiss.

EDWARD
There she is! Our conquering hero!

MATTY
You'd be less cheery if you heard what I said about you at work. Gambling, cheating... not to mention dead.

INT. WESTCHESTER ESTATE -- LATER

The enter the house. Here, Matty is a little less "bubbly old lady." More centered. Direct. Blunt. Way more sarcastic.

EDWARD
Oh my! Well, as Shakespeare said: "When my love swears that she is made of truth I do believe her, though I know she lies."

MATTY
You really think Shakespeare's that good, huh?

EDWARD
My point being... Madeline Matlock can desecrate my false memory! As long as Madeline Archer loves me.

She rolls her eyes a little, but there is real love here. And now 14-year-old GRANDSON ALFIE is barreling down the stairs! **We FLASHBACK TO her saying her grandson hates her.** But here he is, flying into her arms!

ALFIE

Grammy! See? You were upset for nothing last night. You won --

MATTY

Well, Olympia won. I just... didn't ruin the case because I haven't practiced law in ten years.

ALFIE

Hey, it's just like on Matlock. They almost lose, but then they win. Was I right? Perfect name? Fits with Matty, reminds us of mom...

Her memory passes between them all.

EDWARD

I can see her clear as day, glued to the TV, saying she was learning to be a lawyer, like her mother.

He looks at his wife. A beat, then Alfie pulls everyone back:

ALFIE

I assume you got the job? Because there's been traffic to the LinkedIn I made, plus I rerouted an HR reference check to Pops --

EDWARD

I was fair, if extremely partial.

MATTY

Yup. I'm officially an employee at Jacobson Moore.

ALFIE

Amazing. So when do you get to work on drug cases?

And we FLASHBACK to Matlock: "you specialize in pharmaceuticals right? That's where I want to be."

MATTY

Gotta build up some trust first.

And that's when she enters her home office...

INT. MATTY'S HOME OFFICE

...and we see her wall. Everything laid out. The entire structure of the law firm, all the players, even Donna the receptionist. And at the center. Senior. Julian. Olympia.

MATTY

But I'm hoping soon. And I will figure out exactly who knew what.

She puts down her briefcase, a few Werthers fall out.

MATTY (CONT'D)

Ugh, I can't look at those, I'm going to barf. But they really sell harmless old lady. I want to write down some thoughts real quick, go wash for dinner, Alfie.

He heads out. Once he's gone, Edward rubs Matty's shoulders.

EDWARD

You look tired, darling. Are you sure you can do this?

She looks at the pictures of Olympia, Julian, and Senior:

MATTY

I have to. One of those three hid documents that would have taken opioids off the market ten years earlier. Think of how many lives that could have saved. Including our daughter's.

FLASHBACK TO Matlock saying, "I thought about what I would do for my daughter and the answer is anything. Everything."

MATTY (CONT'D)

So I'm going to figure out who knew what, when. And then? I'm going to put them in jail.

And off Matlock, eyes blazing...

END OF PILOT