

BIG

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“Pilot”

Written by

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ACT ONE**SCENE A**

FADE IN:

EXT. DONNA'S FRONT PORCH - MORNING
(Will, Jane, Hannah)

A STATELY HOME, BORDERED BY AN EXPANSIVE OAK-SHADED LAWN, SITS BACK FROM THE STREET. JANE DUPREE (EARLY THIRTIES) STANDS ON THE FRONT STEPS WITH HER HUSBAND WILL AND THEIR FOUR YEAR-OLD DAUGHTER HANNAH. JANE IS ATTRACTIVE BUT NOT GIRLY. SHE IS BY NATURE A WORRIER AND A FIXER; HER NEED FOR ORDER IS BALANCED BY WILL'S MORE RELAXED ATTITUDE. HE IS A GUY WHO WANTS TO ENJOY LIFE; HE'S HAPPY TO GO ALONG TO GET ALONG, AND WILL GO TO GREAT LENGTHS TO AVOID CONFLICT. HE REACHES FOR THE DOORKNOB, THEN LOOKS TO JANE.

WILL

You ready for this?

JANE

Yes. Wait. Will, my hair. How's my hair?

WILL

Attached to your head. Check.

JANE

Your mother respects big hair.

(MUSSES HAIR) How's it look now?

WILL

It really sets off the terror in your eyes. (THEN) Jane, relax. My mom loves you.

JANE

That is a stinking lie. She's had it in for me since we got married. (A LIST) I'm from New York so I'm a "Yankee"; we live in New York instead of here in Dallas which she definitely thinks is my fault.

WILL

Well, that is your fault. And I told her that. I also told her you make me eat TV dinners and vote Democrat.

JANE

I do do that.

HANNAH

(POINTS OFFSCREEN) Daddy, what are those kids doing?

WILL

They're playing ball.

HANNAH

How did they get a park at their house?

WILL AND JANE LOOK AT EACH OTHER.

WILL

That's a yard, sweetie.

JANE

She doesn't know what a yard is?

WILL

No, but she knows big city stuff those kids don't.

JANE

Like what?

WILL

Like how to buy stolen cigarettes off the back of a truck. Honey, we gotta get in there. My mom's not going to be causing trouble today. It's the first anniversary of my dad's death, she just wants to be with the people she loves. And you.

WILL GIVES HER A SQUEEZE, AND THEY ENTER.

RESET TO:

ACT ONE**SCENE B**

INT. DUPREE FOYER/LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

(Will, Jane, Donna, Mary Margaret, R.J., Hannah, Extras)

THEY ENTER TO A HOUSE FULL OF MINGLING GUESTS. EVERY WOMAN IN THERE IS BLONDE, TAN, TOTALLY DECKED OUT. MARY MARGARET SPIES THEM AND CLUTCHES HER HUSBAND, THE REVEREND R.J. CROCKETT.

MARY MARGARET

(SHRIEKS) Oh my God, he's here, my
little brother's here!

MARY MARGARET IS FORTY GOING ON THIRTY. BIG HAIR, LOTS OF JEWELRY, FULL WAR PAINT. SHE'S POURED INTO A BLACK DRESS, HER CLEAVAGE ON DISPLAY. MARY MARGARET IS PRONE TO EMOTIONAL OUTBURSTS -- CRYING, LAUGHING, IT'S ALL THE SAME TO HER. HER HUSBAND, R.J., ON THE OTHER HAND, IS ALL HUSHED TONES AND SEARCHING SYMPATHETIC LOOKS. THEY CROSS TO WILL, JANE, AND HANNAH. KISSES ALL AROUND.

JANE

Hi Mary Margaret, hi Reverend R.J.

MARY MARGARET

(TO WILL) Momma's gonna be happy to see you, she's been talking all week about how "the good one" is coming home.

(MORE)

MARY MARGARET (CONT'D)

(TO JANE) How was your flight, don't tell me, I know it was awful. I can't even fly anymore.

R.J.

Mary Margaret's on the no fly list.

MARY MARGARET

That's not what I was talking about, R.J. And anyway, that stewardess started it, all I did was finish it.

R.J.

We had to drive back from Cancun.

MARY MARGARET

(RE: HER BREASTS, PROUDLY) I was down there getting these.

WILL

You went to Mexico for plastic surgery?

MARY MARGARET

It's cheaper and they're not shy about the pain killers, either.

JANE

I didn't know a minister's wife was allowed to buy...those.

R.J.

Well J.C. understands that blessings come in many shapes and sizes.

MARY MARGARET

Heads up, Momma's making her entrance.

ANGLE ON: DONNA DUPREE. SHE STANDS AT THE TOP OF THE STAIRS. SHE IS ABOUT SIXTY, VERY ELEGANTLY PUT TOGETHER AND CARRIES HERSELF LIKE ROYALTY. SHE WAITS, MOTIONLESS, UNTIL SHE IS CERTAIN EVERY EYE IS ON HER. THEN SHE SPEAKS:

DONNA

My baby boy is home at last!

DONNA SWEEPS DOWN THE STAIRS LIKE SCARLETT O'HARA AND THROWS HER ARMS AROUND WILL. MARY MARGARET ROLLS HER EYES.

JANE

Hi, Donna.

DONNA

Look at the two of you. What a wonderful couple. (TO WILL) You're so handsome. (TO JANE) And you're so accomplished. You're like Bill and Hillary Clinton.

JANE'S JAW DROPS. WILL WINCES. MARY MARGARET CACKLES. AS DONNA COVERS HANNAH WITH KISSES...

MARY MARGARET

(TO JANE) Oh, that's a compliment.

She would've been president if so many people didn't hate her.

CUT TO:

MAIN TITLES

ACT ONE**SCENE C**

INT. DUPREE FOYER/LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

(Will, Jane, Donna, Mary Margaret, R.J., Leigh Ann, Brady, Ginny Beth, Hannah, Esperanza, Extras)

DONNA FAWNS OVER HANNAH.

DONNA

(TO WILL) She's just a vision. I wish your daddy were here to see her.

WILL

How're you doing, Mom?

DONNA

Much better now that you're home.

(THEN) Hannah, your cousins are down in the rumpus room.

HANNAH RUNS OFF.

DONNA (CONT'D)

Jane, honey, let's get you a Bloody Mary.

JANE

Oh, no thanks. I'm good.

DONNA GIVES HER A PUZZLED LOOK, THEN GASPS.

DONNA

You're pregnant!

JANE

What? No. It's just, it's eleven in the morning. I'm not pregnant.

DONNA

(TRULY CURIOUS) Well, if you're not pregnant, then why would you buy that dress?

WILL

Mom, come on, we just got here.

JANE

It's an empire waist, it's the style.

DONNA

Oh, it must be one of those New York things.

JANE

Yes, New York, which is the fashion capital of --

WILL

(SOOTHING, TO JANE) Okay, alright.

MARY MARGARET

So Will, I was just telling Momma that Daddy's been gone for a year and it's silly for her to be rattling around in this big old house. Don't you think --

DONNA

Mary Margaret, stop badgering me about the house. (TO WILL) She wants me to give her the house. She can't afford to buy one because she spent all her money on Mexican body parts.

MARY MARGARET

Momma, you are not going to upset me today. I am full of light and love.

(SNAPS) Come on, R.J.!

MARY MARGARET AND R.J. MOVE OFF. DONNA TURNS TO WILL.

DONNA

Tell me everything. How's work?

WILL

Work is great, everything's great.

DONNA

I worry it must be hard for you to be a veterinarian in that big city.

WILL

No, you know, it's a lot of apartment animals -- snakes, ferrets, rats. The kind of stuff you'd kill if you saw it in your yard.

WILL LAUGHS; JANE GIVES HIM A LOOK.

WILL (CONT'D)

But I love it there.

JANE

Everybody loves New York. That's why they made the t-shirt. (FAKE INNOCENT) Does Texas have a t-shirt?

DONNA

We have a way of life, we don't need a t-shirt. (TO WILL) Well, you moved up there for love. It's just like you to give your wife everything she wants, and not give a thought to your own happiness.

DONNA SMILES SWEETLY AT JANE.

JANE

(TO WILL, SADLY) I want to go to the rumpus room.

LEIGH ANN DUPREE RUSHES UP AND THROWS HER ARMS AROUND WILL AND JANE. LEIGH ANN IS IN HER EARLY TWENTIES AND WEARS A BLACK T-SHIRT AND JEANS. NO MAKEUP, NO JEWELRY. IN DALLAS, LEIGH ANN IS CONSIDERED A COUNTER-CULTURE TYPE.

LEIGH ANN

Finally, time travelers from the year 2009 have joined us here in Dallas.

(THEN) Mom, they need you in the kitchen, there's some kind of crisis.

DONNA

Oh lord, I knew I couldn't trust
Esperanza with four hundred dollars
worth of beef, she tries to make
fajitas out of everything.

DONNA EXITS TO THE KITCHEN.

LEIGH ANN

(TO JANE) I saw her all over you so I
set a pan of cheese puffs on fire.

WILL

Keep those matches handy. We may need
to torch the whole place before this
weekend's over.

LEIGH ANN

(TO JANE) You want a drink?

JANE

Why does everybody want me to drink?

WILL

Because we all know my family's a lot
easier to take when you're half in the
bag.

LEIGH ANN

It might be why they invented the bag.

THE FRONT DOOR OPENS. BRADY AND GINNY BETH ENTER WITH THEIR CHILDREN -- A SEVEN YEAR-OLD BOY AND A FIVE YEAR-OLD GIRL. BRADY IS EARLY THIRTIES, FIT AND EXPENSIVELY DRESSED WITH A GOLF TAN. GINNY BETH IS STUNNING; THE UBER-DALLAS WOMAN, ON HER THE BIG HAIR AND GOLD JEWELRY LOOK FANTASTIC.

BRADY

(SEES WILL) Hey, there he is!

WILL

Brady!

WILL CROSSES TO GREET THEM.

JANE

Does anybody in this town have brown
hair?

BEFORE LEIGH ANN CAN ANSWER, ESPERANZA, A UNIFORMED HISPANIC
HOUSEKEEPER, PASSES WITH A TRAY OF APPETIZERS.

ESPERANZA

Just you and me.

WILL BRINGS BRADY AND GINNY BETH OVER. THE KIDS RUN OFF.

WILL

Honey, you remember my cousin Brady
and his wife, Ginny Beth.

GINNY BETH

Oh Will, of course she remembers me.
We have so much in common.

GINNY BETH GIVES JANE A FRIENDLY HUG.

JANE

Yeah, Donna never fails to remind me
what a perfect couple you and Will
were in high school.

BRADY

But he just leased her. I paid cash.

BRADY AND GINNY BETH LAUGH AT BRADY'S JOKE.

LEIGH ANN

More like you won the lottery.

BRADY

Well, that's true. She's loaded. (TO
GINNY BETH) I love you, baby.

GINNY BETH

Love you, too. (TO JANE AND WILL) So
tell me about the kids.

JANE

We still just have the one. Hannah.
She's amazing.

WILL

We want more, but our place in the
City is really small. Hannah has to
sleep in the breakfast nook.

JANE

It's more than a nook. It's like a
really airy, expansive corner...ette.

GINNY BETH

I'm sure it's beautiful. And when you
go outside you're in New York City.
It's so exciting! I always kind of
wanted to get mugged.

MARY MARGARET AND R.J. JOIN WILL'S GROUP.

R.J.

I got another drink in her, she seems
to have settled down some.

DONNA ENTERS, THEN STOPS TO TAKE IN THE VISION OF HER GATHERED FAMILY STANDING TOGETHER.

DONNA

(LOUDLY) Ohhh.

SHE HOLDS A BEAT WHILE EVERYONE IN THE ROOM TURNS TO HER. SHE PUTS A HAND OVER HER HEART.

DONNA (CONT'D)

The whole family, together at last.

Daddy would've loved this.

SHE CROSSES TO THEM.

DONNA (CONT'D)

Brady, Ginny Beth, I'm so glad you could make it. Jane, did you know Ginny Beth and Will used to date in high school?

JANE

Really? I had no idea.

DONNA

(TO GROUP) It's funny. I always thought Ginny Beth was the girl Will would end up marrying. (TO JANE, BRIGHTLY) But then he married you.

A BEAT AS JANE ABSORBS THIS.

WILL

(ASIDE, TO JANE) You ready for that drink now?

CUT TO:

ACT ONE**SCENE D**INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

(Will, Jane, Donna, Mary Margaret, R.J., Leigh Ann, Brady, Ginny Beth, Floyd, Extras)

THE LIVING ROOM HAS BEEN SET UP FOR A MEMORIAL SERVICE. R.J. STANDS UNDER A MOUNTED STUFFED DEER HEAD AND DRONES A SERMON. THE GUESTS ARE SEATED IN ROWS OF PARTY CHAIRS.

R.J.

...and it is on this first anniversary of Leon's passing that we are reminded of our buddy J.C., who tells us to look not inward, not outward, but upward. Only after we have looked upward, should we look outward, to those who have not yet looked upward, but are instead looking inward...

AS R.J. CONTINUES, THE GUESTS BEGIN TALKING AMONG THEMSELVES.

ANGLE ON: WILL AND JANE.

JANE

(MIMICKING DONNA) "But then he married you."

WILL

I think she was saying she was happy about it. I could tell because when she said it, her voice went up at the end -- "But then he married you."

JANE

Yeah, well on the outside her voice may have gone up, but on the inside it went down -- "But then he married you." Maybe you could talk to her?

WILL

You want me to talk to her about her voice going down in her head?

JANE

Don't try to make me sound crazy. The only crazy person here is everybody but me. (THEN) Please?

WILL

Honey...I've spent my life avoiding talking to her. We all have. The first words my dad taught me were "don't poke the bear."

JANE

(RE: HERSELF) What about this bear?

WILL

(GENTLE) You're not a bear. You're the bunny the bear plays with for an hour before biting its head off.

ANGLE ON: R.J.

R.J.

I am reminded of the story about the man who was looking inward instead of upward, or even outward...

ANGLE ON: DONNA IN THE FRONT ROW. FLOYD, A CHEERFUL FELLOW DONNA'S AGE IN WESTERN-STYLE SUIT, SLIDES IN NEXT TO HER.

FLOYD

Sorry for your loss, Donna. Leon was my best friend. I miss him terrible.

DONNA

Me too, Floyd.

FLOYD

It's sad. (THEN) Do you want to go out dancing with me on Saturday night?

DONNA

Floyd! I've only been a widow a year.

FLOYD

Yeah, now's when people are going to start coming after you. It's like the first day of duck season.

DONNA

You need to back off.

FLOYD

Yes, ma'am.

HE STARTS TO MOVE AWAY.

DONNA

Floyd.

HE TURNS BACK TO HER.

DONNA (CONT'D)

Not too far.

FLOYD

(SMILES) Yes, ma'am.

ANGLE ON: LEIGH ANN. SHE MOTIONS JANE OVER. JANE SLIDES INTO THE SEAT NEXT TO HER.

LEIGH ANN

So listen, you know that thing I told you last month at my graduation?

JANE

About you being g-a-y?

LEIGH ANN

Shh! Just 'cause they don't like something doesn't mean they can't spell it. (THEN) Just, let's keep it between us, okay?

JANE

Leigh Ann, you're back home now, you're going to have to tell them sometime.

LEIGH ANN

I guess. Maybe I'll just wait til Momma gets real mad at somebody she doesn't like, (TEASING) probably you, and then toss it out there. My little news'll be like a fart in a tornado.

ANGLE ON: R.J. PREACHING.

R.J.

And so we celebrate the life of Leon, who always looked upward before he looked outward...

ANGLE ON: WILL AND MARY MARGARET.

WILL

(RE: R.J.) He's your husband, don't you have some signal for wrap it up?

MARY MARGARET

I will not interrupt R.J. when he's in a righteous fever. He's got the Holy Ghost by the scruff of the neck. It's sexy as hell.

WILL

Uh-huh. One of your new Mexican maracas is making a break for it.

MARY MARGARET

(PIOUS) I put it like that on purpose to inspire R.J. while he preaches.

ANGLE ON: R.J. PREACHING.

R.J.

...and we have all known those who,
unlike Leon, have looked downward, and
lived downward, and spent an eternity
(DRAMATICALLY) downward. So as we --

DONNA

Amen! You've given us a lot to think
about, R.J.

DONNA STANDS AND FACES THE CROWD.

DONNA (CONT'D)

And I know what Leon would say right
about now: Who wants a drink?

THE GUESTS RISE AS WAITERS CIRCULATE WITH TRAYS OF DRINKS.

MARY MARGARET

Actually, mother, R.J. and I have a
little present for you.

DONNA

Ooh.

MARY MARGARET

It's just a gesture to let you know
how we feel about you.

DONNA PEERS INTO LARGE BOX THAT R.J. HOLDS OUT TO HER.

DONNA

Oh my God, it's beautiful.

SHE PULLS OUT A HUNTING RIFLE AND PEERS THROUGH THE SCOPE,
SIGHTING IN ON THE STUFFED DEER HEAD.

JANE

(TO WILL) A gun?

WILL

(SHRUGS) She likes to kill things.

DONNA

(TO CROWD) I'm so grateful you could all be here. This is a very emotional day and I want to thank everyone for their support. Especially two members of my family who travelled such a long way to be with me. My son Will, and his wonderful wife Ginny Beth.

JANE'S JAW DROPS.

WILL

(PANICKY) Jane! His wife, Jane.

DONNA

(BLITHELY) Oops, I'm just an old lady who doesn't know what she's saying.

DONNA HEADS OFF.

JANE

(TO WILL) She didn't say that in her head.

WILL

I'll talk to her.

JANE GRABS A BLOODY MARY OFF A PASSING TRAY.

JANE

I'm going to have about ten of these.

WILL CROSSES TO DONNA. HE TAKES A DEEP BREATH, THEN:

WILL

So Mom...what happened there?

DONNA

What happened where, honey?

WILL

Okay. I love Jane, she's my wife.
And you're going to have to accept
that.

DONNA'S FEATHERS ARE IMMEDIATELY RUFFLED.

DONNA

I don't know what you're talking
about.

WILL

Yes you do, don't you? (THEN REALLY
WONDERING) Don't you? (OFF DONNA'S
BLANK LOOK) It's just...I always see
Jane trying and I don't see you
trying.

DONNA

How can you say that to me?

WILL

Mom --

DONNA

(GETTING CHOKED UP) I love my family
more than anything, and it's not my
fault I barely know Jane.

(MORE)

DONNA (CONT'D)

You're the ones who moved halfway
across the country and hardly ever
visit.

WILL

Well, maybe the reason we never visit
is...

WILL, NOTICING THAT DONNA IS STILL CLUTCHING HER RIFLE,
GENTLY TAKES IT FROM HER.

WILL (CONT'D)

Maybe the reason we never visit is
because you're not nice to Jane. If
anyone is to blame, it's you.

A BEAT. DONNA'S HAND GOES TO HER FOREHEAD, AND WITH A GREAT
DRAMATIC SIGH, SHE FAINTS SOFTLY AND ELEGANTLY ONTO A NEARBY
SETTEE, CAUSING THE CROWD TO GASP. AS PEOPLE SURROUND DONNA
TRYING TO REVIVE HER, MARY MARGARET LOOKS AT WILL, SHAKES HER
HEAD.

MARY MARGARET

And you're the favorite.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO**SCENE E**

FADE IN:

INT. WILL AND JANE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

(Will, Jane, Donna)

WILL ENTERS AS JANE PACES IN FRONT OF THE BED. ON THEIR WALL IS ANOTHER, SMALLER STUFFED DEER HEAD.

WILL

Okay, Hannah's down. She said chasing frogs with her cousins was the most fun she ever had in her whole life.

(SAD) Then she said my tummy was squishy like a frog's.

JANE

We gotta get out of here. I can't take anymore of your mother.

WILL

What? But I talked to her. I talked to her so hard she fell down.

JANE

(INCREDULOUS) And then you apologized.

WILL

Because I made her lose consciousness.

JANE

Oh please, what a crock. Who faints?!

WILL

I think some of the drama can be chalked up to the fact that cocktail hour followed five hours of cocktails.

JANE

She wants to act like I don't exist?

Fine, I'm out of here.

WILL TAKES HER HAND AND SITS HER DOWN ON THE BED.

WILL

Honey, it's only a couple more days. And here's some good news. I got an email from our realtor, she found a three bedroom place we can actually afford.

JANE

(EXCITED) What? Are you serious?

WILL

(TRYING TO SELL IT) In New Jersey.

JANE

(MAD) What? Are you serious? (THEN)

We don't know anybody in New Jersey.

We'd be all alone.

WILL

I know, but to afford a place like we want in Manhattan we'd have to invent, like, food.

DEFEATED, JANE FLOPS BACK ON THE BED. WILL JOINS HER.

JANE

I want another baby.

WILL

Me, too.

JANE

I want Hannah to have a big fun family to grow up with, like you did. But without, you know, your mom or (RE: WALL) the dead animals.

WILL

I promise you we'll find a bigger place. And we'll have a little brother or sister for Hannah. And we'll live happily ever after.

JANE

I love you.

SHE KISSES HIM. IT STARTS TO GET HEATED.

WILL

Wow, I cheered you up good.

DONNA ENTERS WITHOUT KNOCKING.

DONNA

Have some respect, I gave birth to
Will in that bed.

WILL AND JANE QUICKLY MOVE APART.

DONNA (CONT'D)

(A LITTLE STIFF) Jane, I heard the
boys are playing golf tomorrow, so I
thought we could spend some time
together. Talk everything out.

JANE IS STUNNED.

JANE

Really? Me and you?

DONNA

Yes. You and I.

JANE

Okay, alright, great.

WILL

(SUDDENLY NERVOUS) Wait, Jane, don't
you have that... (CAN'T THINK OF
ANYTHING) something important other
thing?

JANE

No, I'm totally free. (TO DONNA)
I'll see you in the morning.

DONNA

Good night. Will, I love you more
than life itself.

SHE EXITS.

WILL

That's it. I gotta cancel golf.

JANE

Why?

WILL

My mom wants to talk things out with you.

JANE

Yes, and it's the first time she's acknowledged that I'm an actual person who deserves some consideration. I want to talk to her.

WILL

No, you don't. You don't understand, she does things with words. She twists things and changes things and confuses you. Up is down, day is night and suddenly you find yourself at your senior prom in a white tuxedo she talked you into and everybody's calling you Mr. Rourke. She tricks you with her words.

JANE

Will, I'm a lawyer, I have a degree in tricking people.

(MORE)

JANE (CONT'D)

And if I don't stand up for myself
I'll never get what I want.

WILL

What could you want that she would
actually give you?

JANE

Respect. Appreciation. Maybe an
actual friendship.

WILL

Jane, the bunny can never be friends
with the bear.

JANE

Come on, what bad could come of being
honest with her about how I feel?

WILL

You don't get it. You're in a house
where people drink all day and there
are guns. Bad things can happen,
Jane. (POINTS TO DEER HEAD) Bad
things.

CUT TO:

ACT TWO**SCENE H**INT. DONNA'S BEDROOM - A LITTLE LATER

(Donna, R.J.)

IN CONTRAST TO WILL AND JANE'S ROOM, DONNA'S ROOM FEELS QUIET AND LONELY. SHE SITS AT HER MAKE-UP TABLE HOLDING A PICTURE OF LEON. AS SHE DABS A TEAR, R.J. POKES HIS HEAD IN THE OPEN DOOR.

R.J.

Hey Donna, Mary Margaret was worried about you so I came over to see if you needed one of my spiritual check-ups.

DONNA

(TO LEON'S PICTURE) See what you did?

R.J. MOVES INTO THE ROOM.

R.J.

I want you to know that Leon was right with J.C. when he passed. And that J.C. is here, in this very room, with you and me.

DONNA

Well, even He might agree that three's a crowd.

R.J.

And if you want to talk, J.C. will
listen.

DONNA

Funny you should mention that, R.J.,
because He and I were just having a
little talk before you came in. And
He wanted you to know that He does not
like to be called by His initials.
While He understands why you would
prefer it -- since your name is
Reginald which is atrocious -- He
thinks J.C. makes Him sound like a
long-haul trucker.

A BEAT.

R.J.

I believe I've come at the wrong time.

DONNA

(SMILES) I knew I could ring that
church bell if I hit it hard enough.

'Night, R.J.

HE GOES. DONNA SIGHS AND LOOKS SADLY AT HER PICTURE OF LEON.

CUT TO:

ACT TWO**SCENE J**

INT. LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN - MORNING

(Will, Jane, Donna, Hannah)

WILL, A GOLF BAG OVER HIS SHOULDER, COMES DOWN THE STAIRS WITH HANNAH TO FIND JANE WRITING NOTES ON A PAD OF PAPER.

HANNAH

Mommy, mommy, I'm going to go ride horses with my cousins!

JANE

That's so exciting! (TO WILL) Do they have helmets?

WILL

No, they haven't quite sucked the fun out of everything yet. Don't worry, I'll wrap her in bubble wrap or something. You know, it's not too late to come with us, call off the big talk with Donna.

JANE

No way. I made a list of all the reasons I'm great and Donna's a dope for not liking me. It's four pages long. Both sides. I'm going to crush her.

WILL

Uh-huh. I think you're the one who's going to need a helmet.

WILL AND HANNAH HEAD OUT. JANE EXITS TO THE KITCHEN.

RESET TO:

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

JANE ENTERS TO FIND DONNA AT THE KITCHEN TABLE WAITING FOR HER. ON THE TABLE ARE A PITCHER OF ORANGE JUICE AND A PLATE OF FRESH-BAKED MUFFINS. DONNA GIVES JANE A TIGHT SMILE.

DONNA

Thank you for coming.

JANE

Of course. I'm really looking forward to this.

SHE AND DONNA EYE EACH OTHER WARILY AS JANE SLIPS INTO A SEAT ACROSS FROM HER. DONNA POURS JANE A GLASS OF ORANGE JUICE. JANE TAKES A SIP AND ARRANGES HER LIST IN FRONT OF HER.

JANE (CONT'D)

I have several items I'd like to talk to you about.

DONNA

I have some things to say to you as well. Since we're in my home, I'll start.

JANE

Or we could do it by whose home state entered the union first. In which case I would start.

DONNA

Or we could do it by whose home state by itself is bigger than Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Delaware, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, and New York put together.

A BEAT. JANE SURREPTITIOUSLY CROSSES SOMETHING OFF HER LIST.

JANE

Why don't you start?

DONNA

Fine. I...am intimidated by you.

JANE

What?

DONNA

I am. That's why I sometimes misbehave.

(MORE)

DONNA (CONT'D)

Jane, you're working full-time helping needy families at your law practice and raising Hannah in that tiny apartment with no relatives around to help.

JANE

(THROWN) A lot of that stuff is on my list. (THEN) I thought you wished I was more like Ginny Beth.

DONNA

(DISMISSIVE) Ginny Beth is sweet, but she's not the brightest bulb in the chandelier. Not like you. I knew the first time I laid eyes on you that you were a woman to be reckoned with. And I didn't know what you would see in little old me.

JANE

I had no idea you felt that way.

DONNA

Of course you didn't. I was hiding it. Very well.

JANE

Listen, I would love a better relationship, but I've always been intimidated by you.

DONNA REFILLS JANE'S ORANGE JUICE.

DONNA

That's ridiculous. I had it so easy. I never had to work. I had this big beautiful house and family all around to help me raise the kids. I'm nothing special. But you, you're special.

JANE BASKS IN THE WARMTH OF DONNA'S FLATTERY.

JANE

This is nice.

DONNA

Jane, I want to be someone you can turn to. Someone you can confide in. Do you think you can feel that way about me?

JANE

I do.

DONNA

Good. Now why don't you tell me every single little thing you want out of life. And we'll see if I can't help you get it.

DONNA RAISES HER GLASS. JANE RAISES HER GLASS, AND AS THEY CLINK AND DRINK, WE...

CUT TO:

ACT TWO**SCENE K**

INT. WILL AND JANE'S BEDROOM - DAY
(Will, Jane)

JANE RELAXES ON THE BED WITH A BOOK. WILL NERVOUSLY POKES HIS HEAD IN. JANE LOOKS UP AND GIVES HIM A BIG SMILE.

JANE

Hi, honey.

WILL

Oh, smiling. I expected tears. I brought tissues and some of Mary Margaret's pills.

JANE

No, it went great. We had a nice long talk. Then I took a bath, had a nap, and decided we should move to Dallas.

WILL

What? What did she do to you?

JANE

It makes perfect sense. We can afford a bigger place here, Hannah will know what a yard is.

(MORE)

JANE (CONT'D)

We'll have family to help with the kids, and there will be kids because we'll be able to have another baby. We'll get every single little thing we want in life.

WILL

But...my mother's here.

JANE

Your mother's not a problem anymore. Your mother loves me.

WILL

That is a stinking lie.

JANE

Donna explained that the reason we didn't get along is because she was intimidated by how special I am.

WILL

What? You're not special. I told you this would happen. She tricked you with her Texas witchcraft.

JANE

Give me a little credit. It was a very emotional experience.

WILL

Did she give you booze?

JANE

No.

WILL

Did she give you orange juice?

JANE

...yes.

WILL

Aha! She hides it in the juice.

There hasn't been vodka-free orange
juice in this house since I was nine
years old!

HE SPINS ON HIS HEEL AND STORMS OUT. JANE FOLLOWS.

CUT TO:

ACT TWO**SCENE 1**INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

(Will, Jane, Donna, Mary Margaret, R.J., Leigh Ann, Hannah)

IT'S COCKTAIL HOUR. AGAIN. WILL AND JANE ENTER. WILL STRIDES UP TO DONNA.

WILL

Mom, it is not okay for you to manipulate my wife and trick her into moving down here.

DONNA

(VERY SOUTHERN) Why, I didn't manipulate anybody.

LEIGH ANN

(TO JANE) She always talks like Scarlett O'Hara when she gets busted.

JANE

Did you really spike the orange juice?

DONNA

Well, that's just festive.

WILL

(TO DONNA) Well, you can forget it.
We're not moving down here no matter
how drunk you get us.

DONNA

Oh, that's too bad. Because I was
going to give you this house.

WILL/JANE

What?

MARY MARGARET

Are you kidding me? I deserve this
house! I'm the one who's been down
here taking your crap for all these
years! Why don't you love me?!

DONNA

R.J., control your woman.

R.J.

If I did, it'd be the first time.

R.J. MOVES MARY MARGARET OFF.

DONNA

(TO WILL AND JANE) I'm serious about
this. I don't have any use for a
place this big. I already bought a
condo up in Turtle Creek.

JANE

You're offering to just give us this
beautiful house? (THEN) Will?

WILL

Slow down, let me think. This has got
booby trap written all over it.

HANNAH RUNS IN WITH BRADY, GINNY BETH AND THEIR KIDS.

HANNAH

Mommy, Daddy, Uncle Brady has a pony
that I can ride any time I want and
her name is Starflower and I love her!
I never had a pet before.

WILL

That's not true. What about your
cricket?

HANNAH

(SAD) Oh yeah.

JANE

(TO DONNA) We'll take it.

DONNA

I knew you would.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE**SCENE M**

FADE IN:

EXT. DONNA'S FRONT PORCH - MORNING
(Will, Jane, Hannah)

CHYRON: SIX WEEKS LATER

WILL AND JANE STAND ON THE FRONT PORCH AGAIN. BUT THIS TIME
JANE LOOKS HAPPY.

WILL

You ready for this?

JANE

I think so.

WILL

Good, because we gave up our apartment
and quit our jobs, there's no going
back now.

HANNAH RUNS UP TO THEM.

HANNAH

I just caught a frog and he peed on
me. I love it here!

SHE RUNS OFF AGAIN. JANE LOOKS AT WILL HAPPILY; SHE'S NOW
COMPLETELY SURE SHE MADE THE RIGHT CHOICE.

JANE

It's going to be great.

WILL

(WARNING) And my mom'll be in a real lather. She's in the middle of packing and she hates mess and upheaval. Believe it or not, you've mostly seen her in a good mood.

JANE

I can live with anything for a week or two.

WILL

Okay. Welcome to Big D, I guess.

HE PICKS HER UP. SHE LAUGHS AS HE CARRIES HER OVER THE THRESHOLD.

RESET TO:

ACT THREE**SCENE P**

INT. FOYER/LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

(Will, Jane, Donna, Mary Margaret, R.J., Leigh Ann)

WILL AND JANE ENTER AND STOP COLD. THEY NOTICE THAT EVERYTHING LOOKS EXACTLY THE SAME AS IT DID BEFORE -- NO SIGNS OF AN IMMINENT MOVE.

JANE

Uh, where's the mess and upheaval? I thought she told you she was packing.

WILL

She did.

JANE

What exactly did she say?

WILL

She said she was prepping for the move. (HEARS HIMSELF) Ohh.

JANE

Prepping's not packing, that could mean anything. It's a loophole word.

WILL

Hold on, we don't know anything for
sure.

DONNA AND THE FAMILY ENTER FROM THE KITCHEN.

DONNA

(THROWS OUT ARMS, DRAMATIC) Welcome
to your new home!

EVERYONE CLAPS.

LEIGH ANN

(THROWS OUT ARMS, IMITATES DONNA) And
welcome to your Welcome To Your New
Home Mexican Fiesta!

EVERYONE GATHERS AROUND WILL AND JANE EXCEPT FOR MARY
MARGARET AND R.J. WHO HANG OFF TO THE SIDE.

MARY MARGARET

I can't believe she's giving them my
house.

R.J.

Honey, J.C. says it's better to give
than receive.

MARY MARGARET

I didn't give or receive, I got shut
out. What's J.C. got to say about
getting shut out?

JANE TURNS TO DONNA, ATTEMPTS TO BE NONCHALANT.

JANE

This place is so neat, it doesn't even look like you're moving.

DONNA

Huh, that's funny.

JANE

Is it?

SHE LOOKS TO WILL.

WILL

Well, we're here now, we can help you pack.

DONNA

Oh, we don't need to worry about that yet. (TO EVERYONE) Who wants margaritas?

SHE EXITS TO THE KITCHEN.

JANE

(TO WILL) Why don't we have to worry about that yet?

WILL

Jane, we just got here --

JANE

This was not the deal. I did not move down here to live with your mother.

(TO EVERYONE) I mean, is she even leaving or is this just another one of her tricks?

JANE NOTICES THAT EVERYONE IS LOOKING AT SOMETHING BEHIND HER. WILL AND JANE TURN TO SEE THAT DONNA HAS ENTERED WITH A PITCHER OF MARGARITAS AND OVERHEARD JANE'S OUTBURST. THERE'S A HORRIBLE AWKWARD SILENCE. SUDDENLY LEIGH ANN STEPS FORWARD.

LEIGH ANN

I'm gay.

DONNA SLOWLY TURNS TO LEIGH ANN. LEIGH ANN LOSES HER NERVE.

LEIGH ANN (CONT'D)

No I'm not. (POINTS AT JANE) She
said a mean thing.

DONNA TURNS BACK TO JANE.

DONNA

(TO JANE) I told you I was leaving
and I am. And in all my years, no one
has ever questioned my word before.

JANE, FOR SUPPORT, STEPS CLOSER TO WILL. HE TAKES A STEP AWAY FROM HER. SHE'S ON HER OWN THIS TIME.

JANE

Donna, I...I'm so sorry.

DONNA CROSSES TO A SIDEBOARD AND PULLS A BROCHURE OUT OF A DRAWER.

DONNA

Since you seem to demand proof, I
suppose you can look at a brochure of
the condo I bought.

SHE HOLDS THE BROCHURE OUT TO JANE. JANE IS MORTIFIED. WILL TAKES IT.

WILL

She doesn't need proof, right Jane?

JANE

No, no, of course I believe you.
You've been so good to us. I'm
really, really sorry I doubted you.

DONNA

I'm sorry too. That you doubted me.

WILL

(OFF BROCHURE) Mom, this says they're
not even starting construction until
next June.

JANE

What?!

DONNA

(VERY SOUTHERN) Why, once they break
ground I'm sure it will only be nine
or ten more months.

JANE FAINTS DEAD AWAY. BUT NOT GRACEFULLY; SHE THUDS TO THE
GROUND. DONNA LOOKS DOWN AT HER IMPASSIVELY.

DONNA (CONT'D)

So melodramatic.

UNPERTURBED, DONNA HEADS BACK INTO THE KITCHEN AS WILL TRIES
TO REVIVE HIS WIFE.

FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW