

"I, CLAUDIA"

by  
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Gross Entertainment  
JSS

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**ACT ONE**

EXT. MASSACHUSETTS STATE HOUSE - NIGHT - AERIAL

Like Obama's Grant Park extravaganza: A massive stage and a sea of humanity that stretches from the steps of the State House to the far side of Boston Common. Lights from helicopters hit the crowd and cheering breaks out. Signs are proudly displayed: "McShane / Deline '28," "McShane is McOne," "That Girl," and so on.

There's magic in the air, an intoxicating blend of hope and anticipation. The chant builds, three syllables as always:

CROWD

Clau-di-a! Clau-di-a! Clau-di-a!

As the thrilling images pass before us, we CROSS-FADE NEWS REPORTS to craft a narrative...

TV REPORTER #2 (O.S.)

With an unprecedented sixteen toss-up states, we're still hours from electing our nation's forty-ninth president... but the mood here at the Massachusetts State House is absolutely electric.

TV REPORTER #1 (O.S.)

Keep in mind, we're talking about a recently divorced single mother with a romantic history that reads like a soap opera. Claudia McShane is anything but the prototypical presidential candidate.

TV REPORTER #3 (O.S.)

If the former Massachusetts Governor does pull off the stunning, bolt-out-of-the-blue upset, she can look across Boston Common to John Adams Courthouse, where she began her career as a prosecuting attorney back in 2009.

TV REPORTER #1 (O.S.)

Can you imagine what it must be like in McShane's hotel suite right now?

INT. HOTEL SUITE ON BOSTON COMMON - NIGHT

MOVE THROUGH the plush hotel suite filled with upper-level STAFFERS, FRIENDS, AND FAMILY all glued to a massive plasma TV (it is 2028, so have fun) tuned to CNN with its 3-D map, busy graphics, etc. A MALE STAFFER flips his phone closed.

MALE STAFFER

We got Illinois. They're gonna call it any minute.

A CHEER BREAKS OUT in the room... and then OUTSIDE on Boston Common. A FEMALE STAFFER scouts around...

FEMALE STAFFER

Where is she? Where's Claudia?

FIND Claudia's daughter SARAH, 15, pretty and smart with an acerbic, Juno-esque edge. She breaks from the throng and goes to the bedroom, closes the door behind her. Her mother is alone, staring out the window.

SARAH

Mom?

The woman turns and we meet CLAUDIA McSHANE, 48, the kind of pretty that never sacrifices that girl to be this woman (like TEA LEONI). She's misty-eyed... overwhelmed.

SARAH

Are you okay?

SARAH

Just reminiscing.

Sarah joins her mother at the window and they look out at the spectacle together.

SARAH

Holy crap. You are officially the toughest act to follow in mother-daughter history. We should probably get a jump on my therapy right now, huh?

Claudia takes her daughter's face in her hands, "smooshes" it a little.

CLAUDIA

There will come a day when I'll be known as Sarah McShane's mother. And that day, not this one, will be my all-time favorite.

SARAH

Oh, God, I am so close to yacking.  
Can I have my face back now?

Claudia laughs and lets go. After a beat...

SARAH

You know that's not who I am. I'm  
not like you.

CLAUDIA

Neither was I.

OFF Sarah's confusion, Claudia pulls a drape aside.

CLAUDIA

See that courthouse? The morning  
all of this started, I slipped and  
fell on my ass because I was...

SARAH

You were what?

CLAUDIA

I, uh... well, I'd been out a  
little late so... uhm...

SARAH

Ohmygod! Claudia McShane was hung  
over? I love it!

CLAUDIA

I was not!  
(surrenders)  
Great. You're gonna use this,  
aren't you?

SARAH

Oh, frequently.

Sarah kicks off her shoes, jumps onto the bed, and pats the  
space next to her.

SARAH

C'mon. Tell me a story. It'll take  
your mind off this "leader of the  
free world" crap.

CLAUDIA

Can I make myself way more noble  
and virtuous than I really was?

SARAH  
Absolutely not.

Claudia considers... finally joins her daughter on the bed.

CLAUDIA  
Where to begin...

SARAH  
Once upon a time, there was a  
promiscuous young alcoholic named  
Claudia...

CLAUDIA  
Back then, her name was C.C.

PRELAP a BLEATING ALARM CLOCK and

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. C.C.'S BEDROOM - DAWN

ON a bedside table, the alarm BLEATS relentlessly. A young woman GROANS. Her hand slaps off the alarm, then finds the energy drink waiting next to it. We hear the GUZZLE, then reveal C.C. McSHANE, 27, mascara smeared and hair all over the place.

CLAUDIA (V.O.)  
And while she was neither  
promiscuous nor alcoholic, she was  
the last person you'd point to and  
say, "One day, that girl's gonna be  
president."

On cue, C.C. BELCHES.

C.C.  
Whoa. That's better.

EXT. JOHN ADAMS COURTHOUSE - MORNING

C.C., sporting big sunglasses and mainlining another energy drink, trudges to the grand, historic courthouse beside a far crisper ELLIE WONG, also 27. Ellie wears her smart girl glasses well, but she also knows when to take them off and have a good time.

C.C.  
So it occurred to me that anything  
called a Snickertini probably ends  
poorly, so I figured I'd dance like  
crazy and sweat it all out.

(MORE)

C.C. (cont'd)

Nice theory, but I think I've done permanent physical damage to my arches and I may need a hip replacement.

ELLIE

And that's why you wore your slippers to work?

C.C. freezes and they both look down at her feet: She is indeed wearing Wonder Woman slippers.

C.C.

Aw, man! What am I gonna do?

ELLIE

Take it easy, Ceece. I'm not in court 'til noon.

They switch pumps for slippers. When they walk on, C.C. winces in pain.

C.C.

What kind of perverted shoe store sells pumps this sexy in children's sizes?

Ellie spurts a laugh as they push through the revolving door.

INT. JOHN ADAMS COURTHOUSE - GREAT HALL - CONTINUOUS

As they go through the metal detector...

C.C.

I bet today's the day, El.

ELLIE

For what?

C.C.

You know what: Bruce is bumping you to Assistant DA.

They enter elevators.

ELLIE

If it happens...

C.C.

Oh, stop it.

ELLIE

It feels weird, right? I mean,  
we've always done everything  
together.

C.C.

You're the real Wonder Woman, Ellie  
Wong. I just wear the slippers.

They hug as the doors close.

INT. COURTROOM LEVEL - CONTINUOUS

Elevator doors open and the two of them push out together...

ELLIE

We have different priorities,  
that's all: You want the house, the  
kids and the husband... and I'm on  
a bloodthirsty campaign to be Queen  
of Everything.

C.C.

You'll be a kind and decent ruler.

ELLIE

I want male concubines. I really  
do. I think it's revenge for the  
whole geisha thing.

Ellie slips a little and C.C. catches her.

ELLIE

These slippers are a Lucille Ball  
Moment just waiting to happen.

They turn a corner... and C.C. stops in her tracks: Ahead,  
talking to a WITNESS, is CHIEF ADA DAN CARVER, 30-ish. Think  
VINCE VAUGHN at this age, more appealing than handsome.

ELLIE

What's wrong?

C.C.

I totally blew it last night. I  
said the M word before he did.

ELLIE

Marriage? What'd he do?

C.C.

Stammered like Jimmy Stewart and  
lost his erection.



ELLIE

And what'd you do?

C.C.

Broke up with him, stormed out,  
mainlined Snickertinis, and danced  
like an escaped mental patient.  
What else could I do?

Dan sees them, disengages from the Witness.

ELLIE

So you haven't talked since then?

C.C.

Nope.

ELLIE

Excellent.

The three of them meet at a main intersection of corridors.  
Courtrooms fill and empty, action flying all around them. Dan  
moves in to kiss C.C., but she evades it.

C.C.

Uh, I don't think so.

DAN

Are you serious?

C.C.

I was, you weren't, so that's that.

ELLIE

Nice.

DAN

Two years is serious, C.C.

C.C.

Two years is twenty-four months.  
Commitment is serious.

ELLIE

Nailed it.

DAN

You took the bat out of my hands.

C.C.

Guess you'll just have to get on  
base without, uhm... maybe you can  
get a hit using your, uh...

ELLIE

You had a good run. Let it go.

BRUCE (O.S.)

There they are.

They turn to D.A. BRUCE JENKINS, 45, African American, handsome in a snarky, self-involved way (think of a black BRUCE CAMPBELL).

BRUCE

My brilliant Chief ADA and my two prettiest prosecutors.

ELLIE

That's so wantonly sexist it's almost sweet.

OFF C.C.'s fidgeting and grimacing over the painful shoes...

BRUCE

McShane? Do you have to pee?

She forces herself to stop squirming.

C.C.

I'm good. I'm fine.

BRUCE

So about Vince Garcia...

ELLIE

Guy's a jackass even by drug dealer standards. I'll be adored and worshipped across the land when I take him down.

C.C.

You really do have a supreme ruler thing.

ELLIE

Oh, I totally do.

BRUCE

You're off the case, Wong. I'm giving it to McShane.

Ellie looks like she was punched in the gut.

DAN

Whoa, what? You can't just--

BRUCE  
Oh, but I can.

C.C.  
Why would you--

BRUCE  
Don't worry about it. Wong, give  
her the file. Now.

Still speechless, Ellie extends the file to C.C., but  
neglects to let go.

C.C.  
Uhm... El?

She finally gives it up, starts backing away.

C.C.  
Please don't be mad at me.

Ellie turns a death stare on Bruce...

ELLIE  
Oh, I'm not.

... and strides off. After a courteous BEAT...

C.C.  
As weird and awkward as this is,  
Bruce? You will not be sorry.

BRUCE  
I never am.

C.C.  
(to Dan)  
You? You're gonna be sorry for the  
rest of your life.

She turns proudly on her exit line, strides away from them.

C.C.  
Damn. Wish Ellie heard that one.

BACK to Dan and Bruce...

DAN  
Those two are roommates and best  
friends. What are you up to?

BRUCE  
Sure you wanna know?

DAN  
Why wouldn't I?

BRUCE  
Because you'll wanna tell her and  
if you do, I'll fire you.

DAN  
Tell me.

BRUCE  
The case is about to fall apart.  
It's a loser.

Bruce leaves Dan there wishing he could somehow un-know that.

EXT. JOHN ADAMS COURTHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

C.C. pushes out, finds her phone and flips it open. Just  
then...

ELLIE (O.S.)  
I want my shoes back, McShane.

C.C. puts the phone away and turns back: Ellie extends the  
Wonder Woman slippers. C.C. capitulates and they trade back.

C.C.  
You really came after me just to--

ELLIE  
So here's the lowdown on what  
should be my case...

C.C.  
(moved)  
Aww!

ELLIE  
Pull it together, Sniffles.

C.C.  
Right.

ELLIE  
Vince Garcia pushes coke and  
OxyContin in Chelsea, but nobody  
there talks because he's a nasty  
piece of work who gets off on  
hurting people.

(MORE)

ELLIE (cont'd)

We caught a break when Eliza Torres got stoned on Garcia's Ox, drove her car down a sidewalk and damn near killed somebody. She has a kid so she spilled her guts for a lighter sentence... and bing-bang-boom, we got a warrant.

C.C.

She's solid?

ELLIE

She's like every junkie: a moody pain in the ass with the emotional maturity of a fourteen-year-old. Her dad teaches phys ed at Chelsea High, but they call him "The Mayor" 'cuz he's the go-to guy around there. If Eliza gets flaky, you call him. Number's in the file.

They both nod. Awkward silence. Then...

C.C.

So are we gonna hug it out now?

ELLIE

Do I look like I'm in a hug-it-out mood, McShane?

Ouch.

ELLIE

Just promise me you'll make something out of this, Ceece.

C.C.

I will. I promise.

With that, Ellie goes back into the courthouse. C.C. looks across Boston Common, toward the State Building, a confident smile spreading across her face. It's subtle, buried in WIND and TRAFFIC... we hear it; she doesn't, but she "feels it":

CROWD (O.S.)

Clau-di-a! Clau-di-a! Clau-di-a!

The CHANT develops into INSPIRATIONAL MUSIC.

C.C.

Time to kick some ass, McShane.

She marches down the stairs with all the dignity her Wonder Woman slippers will allow. But then...

C.C.

WHOA!

She slips, disappears BENEATH FRAME with a dull THUD that abruptly CUTS the MUSIC and CHANTING. After a beat...

C.C. (O.S.)

Ow.

SLAM TO BLACK. We hear a distant REVERB of that chant...

CROWD (O.S.)

Clau-di-a! Clau-di-a! Clau-di-a!

Bring up the title: "**I, Claudia**"

**ACT TWO**

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Just off Boston Common...

C.C. (O.S.)  
Of course I read the report.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Claudia walks down a basement hallway with police officer BEN SULLIVAN (SULLY), 20s, a ruggedly handsome "Southie" type with a heavy accent that veils how sharp he really is.

C.C.  
Are you questioning my  
professionalism, Officer Sullivan?

He looks at her slippers. She's embarrassed.

SULLY  
Would it make you feel better if I  
told you I'm wearing Batman  
underpants?

C.C.  
Just focus, Sully.

As he opens the locker door...

SULLY  
Since when are you so serious?

C.C.  
This is huge for me.

SULLY  
Gotcha. All business.

He leads her to a few tables arranged with evidence: Most visible are cameras, camera equipment, and a bigscreen iMac, but as we get closer, we can see the plastic bag of pills and a small amount of cocaine.

SULLY  
We only got about forty generic  
OxyContin and a few grams of coke.  
Powder on the toilet rim and a  
stray pill floating in the water  
says Garcia flushed the rest.

C.C.  
Tipped off?

SULLY

Probably.

She eyes the camera equipment, including an HD video camera.

C.C.

Wow. Nice stuff.

SULLY

He does events, weddings and Quinceaneras, that kind of stuff.

C.C.

Three thousand a month penthouse on Rowes Wharf, slick Beemer, George Clooney's wardrobe... business must be booming, huh?

SULLY

He does just well enough to keep his cover.

C.C.

So how does a guy living like Scarface stay off our radar all this time?

SULLY

Got me. Doesn't matter now, right?

She shrugs, moves on to the computer.

C.C.

Pretty deluxe.

SULLY

Nerd Patrol's gonna run a deep scan. Maybe we'll find some correspondence he deleted.

C.C. turns to face Sully. This is important to her...

C.C.

Tell me Vince Garcia's a cancer. Tell me he's toxic. Tell me the world will be a better place when we lock him up.

SULLY

I put the cuffs on him, Ceece. Then I spent half the night in the shower trying to get it off me.



He totally got it: That's exactly what she needed to hear.

C.C.

Perfect.

EXT. CHARLES RIVER (HARVARD) - DAY

The crew team works out on the river, Harvard rising majestically in the background.

ABBY (O.S.)

You still have my Manola slings  
from last time, you know.

FIND C.C. on a bench with big sister ABBY TAYLOR, 34 and pretty in a pert suburban way. C.C. puts pumps on her feet and the slippers in her bag while Abby eats a warm pretzel.

C.C.

How would you possibly know? Your  
closet is bigger than my apartment.

Abby dabs C.C.'s face with a napkin.

ABBY

Ooh, little green right there. Is  
baby sister jealous?

C.C.

(laughing)  
Bitch!

ABBY

Let's walk. I'm a total cow.

She isn't. They do.

C.C.

I suddenly find myself back on the  
market. Does your hubby know any  
young surgeons with washboard abs  
and baby fever?

ABBY

Fifty bucks says Dan's on all fours  
with a ring in his teeth by this  
time tomorrow.

C.C. looks off, lost in something...

C.C.

God, Ab, I've been waiting so long  
for this.

ABBY  
For Dan to propose?

C.C.  
No. For this case.

They both stop. Abby reads her sister's intensity.

ABBY  
Wow. Look at you, giving a damn.

C.C.  
I know. It's about time I--

Her eyes go wide and she looks at her watch.

C.C.  
Crap!

C.C. gives Abby a quick peck, hurries off.

C.C.  
I'm late! Thanks for the shoes!

Abby can't help but chuckle as she watches her go.

ABBY  
Give'em hell, Claudia Catherine!

INT. WOMEN'S DETENTION CENTER - WITNESS MEETING ROOM - DAY

C.C. bursts in a door...

C.C.  
Sorry I'm late, but--

She freezes. REVERSE to the exhausted male PUBLIC DEFENDER (20s), alone in the cramped, bland witness meeting room.

C.C.  
What's going on? Where's Eliza?

PUBLIC DEFENDER  
Suddenly she's not feeling well.

C.C.  
Maybe she'd feel better if you reminded her that she's looking at five to seven.

PUBLIC DEFENDER  
Oh, I tried that.

C.C.

So what now?

PUBLIC DEFENDER

The usual: I call her father and--

C.C.

No.

(off him)

Let me handle it.

EXT. MEXICAN NEIGHBORHOOD IN CHELSEA - DAY

LS: A cramped, bustling street in a low-income urban neighborhood where most of the signs are in Spanish.

EXT. URBAN KINDERGARTEN - CONTINUOUS

MANNY TORRES, 50 and strong, kisses his granddaughter MARIA, 5, hands her off to the TEACHER.

MANNY

Adios, mi hija.

Manny turns and his mood falls. He goes down the stairs to C.C., waiting on the sidewalk in this cramped, Hispanic corner of low-income Chelsea.

C.C.

Manny, I'm gonna be blunt: If Eliza doesn't testify, that little girl will be in middle school by the time her mom gets out of prison.

He digests that. He starts walking and C.C. follows.

MANNY

Right after you and I spoke, I called her. She's real scared.

C.C.

Garcia got to her.

Manny nods sadly. Then...

MANNY

I used to train him as a boxer, back when he still lived here.

(beat)

Heart like a stone, that boy. Been hurting people his whole life.

C.C.

I need another witness, just in case Eliza flakes. There must be somebody we could convince to testify.

MANNY

Maybe Bobby Flores. Three weeks ago, he shows up for my gym class with both eyes swollen shut and every finger on his right hand broken.

(beat)

Says he fell.

C.C.

So?

MANNY

Just so happens his girlfriend Amanda moves product for Vince.

C.C. turns that over. PRELAP a SCHOOL BELL...

INT. HIGH SCHOOL COMMONS AREA - DAY

Behind the school as the BELL RINGS: Basketball hoops and metal tables, fenced like a jail. HISPANIC TEENAGERS flow out for lunch. BOBBY FLORES, 16, hand still in a cast, sees Manny and C.C., quickly blends in and slips away.

MANNY

Bobby! Bobby Flores!

Suddenly AMANDA CASTILLA (16) gets right up on Manny and C.C., distracts them from Bobby. She's Penthouse hot with enhanced breasts and a cocky attitude.

AMANDA

Aw, Manny, did you bring a cop to my school?

MANNY

It's Mister Torres to you, Amanda.

C.C.

My name is C.C. McShane. I'm a prosecutor, not a cop. Let's talk about Vince Garcia.

AMANDA

Oh, let's not.

C.C.

If you're the one on his payroll,  
why is Bobby Flores the one with  
the swollen eyes and broken  
fingers?

AMANDA

(sarcastic)

Oh, no! Bobby got hurt?

C.C.

When I take down Garcia, I'm gonna  
offer him a one year reduction for  
a list of names. Wanna bet you'll  
be on it?

Amanda flinches at that. Got her.

C.C.

Unless you wanna sell him out  
first? Offer expires in ten,  
nine...

AMANDA

Three-two-one. Buh-bye.

Amanda walks away from them. After a beat...

C.C.

So why would a teenager get a  
lethal boob job like that?

MANNY

Because she can afford it?

C.C.

Maybe.

MANNY

Can I ask you something?

C.C.

Sure.

MANNY

Why did they take that Asian girl  
off the case and put you on?

C.C.

I'm starting to wonder the same  
thing, Manny.

INT. PROSECUTORS' OFFICES - DAY

C.C. strides down the busy office, past offices, ASSISTANTS, PROSECUTORS, and WAITING WITNESSES, heads straight for Dan. The closer she gets, the bigger his eyes get...

DAN

Oh, boy...

She gets him by the arm, practically throws him into...

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Our go-to set in these offices: long, weathered table, rolling chairs, plasma on the wall, arched windows, and a lounge area near the coffee pot and refrigerator.

DAN

You're right. This is good. We need to hunker down and figure this thing out so we can--

C.C.

Shut up.

DAN

Absolutely.

C.C.

Why did Bruce take this case away from his shiny little superstar and give it to me?

DAN

Oh, that. Okay. Hmm. Well. That's a, uhm... hmm...

C.C.

(suspicious)

Well, well, well. Haven't heard that much stammering since I said the M word.

Ellie enters, reads the confrontation...

ELLIE

Yikes. Little chilly in here.

She starts to leave, but...

C.C.

This involves you, too. We're talking about the Garcia case.

ELLIE  
What about it?

BRUCE (O.S.)  
McShane!

DAN  
(sotto)  
Oh, thank God.

They all turn as Bruce enters looking very serious.

BRUCE  
Tough break on the Garcia case:  
Eliza Torres is recanting her  
statement and defense is pushing  
hard to get the charges dropped.

C.C.  
When's the hearing?

BRUCE  
Day after tomorrow, Thursday.  
Without a witness, the whole thing  
falls apart.

C.C. doesn't quite know who to be pissed at yet... so she  
just bolts out of the room without another word. Bruce slaps  
Dan on the shoulder and leaves, too.

BRUCE  
See? That wasn't so bad.

Dan's left to wilt under Ellie's glare.

DAN  
What?

ELLIE  
Boy, you are in such deep sh--

EXT. JOHN ADAMS COURTHOUSE - DAY

C.C. EXPLODES out the door in a rage, jaw and fists clenched,  
breaks a heel on that damn first step and almost goes down.

C.C.  
Damnit!

She bends to pick up the heel and REVEALS: Beyond her, at the foot of the stairs, VINCE GARCIA, 26, and his bulbous, 40-ish LAWYER are answering questions from a pack of REPORTERS with mikes and cameras. Garcia is predatory and smugly confident in Armani and open collar shirt.

VINCE'S LAWYER

Vincent Garcia is innocent. This is a story of a very troubled woman looking to blame someone else for... her...

Vince's lawyer realizes he's losing his audience: One after the next notices C.C. on the stairs.

REPORTER

That's the new prosecutor!

They go after her like a crazed mob. She tries to push through them but they make it impossible.

REPORTER #2

What do you have to say about Eliza Torres, counselor?

REPORTER #3

Will charges against Garcia be dropped? Is this case dead?

That stops her cold.

C.C.

Is that what you think? You think just because Vince Garcia threatens our witness, we're gonna hold the door for him and wish him luck? Let him go back to poisoning the very neighborhood that nurtured him? Let him wring some more cash out of their desperation, maybe put some shiny new rims on his Beemer?

Her fury surprises the Reporters... and gets the attention of Garcia and his Lawyer. BYSTANDERS gather and film C.C. with their cell phones and handhelds.

C.C.

We're supposed to stand between the victims and the bullies of the world. We're supposed to be their answer, their solution, their haven. That's our job.

(MORE)



C.C. (cont'd)

That's why we're here. And that's why this case is anything but dead.

She pushes through the throng and past Garcia and his Lawyer. But then the two men WHISPER something and chuckle together as she hops along in one shoe. She slows to a stop.

GARCIA

Looks like this poor secretary broke her shoe, huh?

C.C.

You're going to jail, Garcia.

GARCIA

Babydoll, if your boss actually believed he could nail me, he'd put a real lawyer on the case.

Her eyes ice over. Uh-oh.

INT. COURTHOUSE - SAME

Ellie strides across the marble with Dan in close pursuit.

DAN

Bruce said he'd fire me!

ELLIE

Oh, grow a pair, Carver. You told me so now I'm telling her.

Ellie pushes out. When the door opens, we hear a RUCKUS outside. A beat later, it opens again and Ellie reappears, eyes wide with shock.

ELLIE

On second thought, this may not be the best time.

EXT. JOHN ADAMS COURTHOUSE - SAME

Ellie and Dan both push out and stop, jaws falling to the cement. REVERSE to show why: C.C. flails wildly, throws punches at the air, fights to get at Garcia while reporters and OTHERS try to hold her back. Total mayhem, all captured from every angle by news cameras and cell phones.

At the peak, **CUT TO BLACK.**

**ACT THREE**

EXT. C.C.'S "GOING VIRAL MONTAGE" - DAY

C.C.'s SPEECH and ATTACK ON GARCIA are sucked into cyberspace and quickly go viral: We see it from every angle, on YouTube, in slow motion, in black and white, with digital ZOOMS, with "EYE OF THE TIGER" music, with a BOXING BELL, with exaggerated sound effects, etc.

Then it circles back: The Internet "success" of the clip becomes big news in Boston, and we tell that story by INTERCUTTING three different EVENING NEWS REPORTS...

ANCHOR #1

Now Boston prosecutor C.C. McShane's impassioned speech and attempted attack on alleged drug dealer Vince Garcia has "gone viral," to use the Internet vernacular. The clip--

ANCHOR #2

--has been viewed by an estimated three million people so far. McShane--

ANCHOR #3

--has become a symbol to those who think authorities need to get tougher on crime. You might say this Boston prosecutor is--

ANCHOR #1

--"mad as hell and not gonna take it anymore."

PULL OUT OF the last news report on a TV screen to reveal that we are...

INT. 21ST AMENDMENT PUB - EVENING

The joint on Beacon Hill, right by the State House, a clubhouse for lawyers and legislators. As we continue PULLING BACK from the TV behind the bar, APPLAUSE breaks out among the PATRONS.

VARIOUS (O.S.)

That's her! That's the chick who went postal at the courthouse!

FIND Ellie and C.C. as the crowd surrounds them. Ellie "presents" C.C. and they CHEER her.

CROWD  
Speech! Speech!

C.C.  
Okay, you guys, take it easy! The only good thing about all this publicity is that Bruce couldn't pull me off the case!

CHEERS around. Ellie looks a little uncomfortable with that.

C.C.  
But none of it matters if I can't find a way to nail this douchebag.  
(beat, cool smile)  
Oh, but I will find a way.

They LOVE HER LOUDLY. Ellie interjects herself...

ELLIE  
Quick! We need two drinks!

A GUY among GUYS at a table gives two of their drinks to Ellie and C.C. Ellie raises her's for a toast.

ELLIE  
To my girl C.C. McShane, America's latest YouTube superstar! May she drain every drop from her fifteen minutes of fame, and may it catch the attention of a grownup man ready to make a grownup commitment to a grownup life!

Everybody CHEERS and drinks... except C.C. She isn't quite sure how she feels about Ellie's toast.

ELLIE  
Ceece? Is something wrong?

Just then, they hear the venerable "SLOW CLAPPING." They look across to JACK BROOKSHIRE at the bar. He's 40, handsome but worn in his suit jacket and jeans: hair too long, eyes too bleary, stubble too scruffy.

BROOKSHIRE  
Wow. A new boyfriend, huh? You go, girl! Dream big!

With a derisive chuff of a laugh and an eye roll, Brookshire turns away from them again, back to his drink.

ELLIE

That's right, drunk dude! Turn around and keep your opinions to your lonely, pathetic self!

C.C. bolts for him.

ELLIE

What the hell are you doing?

At the bar, Brookshire senses her, turns, raises an eyebrow.

C.C.

Okay, pal, I just downed a double scotch and I'm still itching to land a punch, so... whoa. Hold on. You're Jack Brookshire.

BROOKSHIRE

That's right.

C.C.

Totally screwed up Pruitt's senate campaign last year, huh?

BROOKSHIRE

Look at you, knowin' stuff and talkin' trash. I could eat you up.

C.C.

Drunk, obnoxious, and horny. You are so poised for a comeback.

BROOKSHIRE

Funny you should say that. Do you know who Frank Shea is?

C.C.

Conservative talk radio blowhard Frank Shea?

BROOKSHIRE

He's running for Congress, Ninth District, basically unopposed. Election's not for eight months but he's already picking out drapes.

She looks at her watch.

C.C.

That is so fascinating, but I really have to be anywhere else right now, so--

BROOKSHIRE

What he doesn't know is that a certain Hispanic neighborhood was quietly drawn into that district last month. They don't vote so they don't matter, right?

C.C.

Chelsea?

BROOKSHIRE

Bingo.

C.C.

This doesn't feel like an accident.

BROOKSHIRE

I don't believe in accidents, Claudia Catherine.

C.C.

What do you want?

BROOKSHIRE

If you can find a way to win this case, we can sneak up and beat Shea. Southies in the Ninth love a broad who can throw a punch.

C.C.

Let me get this straight: You want me to run for Congress.

BROOKSHIRE

Anybody can run. I want you to win.

C.C.

You aren't just drunk. You're insane.

He hands over his business card. She chuckles, tucks it away as she leaves him behind. But then...

BROOKSHIRE

Bruce Jenkins knew the case was falling apart. That's why he gave it to you.

She stops. On cue, Dan walks into the bar, waves to her sheepishly. Her cheeks suck in and her eyes go cold.

EXT. 21ST AMENDMENT PUB - NIGHT

C.C. EXPLODES from the bar in a rage, dives in front of a cab to stop it. Ellie and Dan hurry out after her.

C.C.  
Stay away from me!

ELLIE  
Bruce threatened to fire him if he told you!

C.C.  
So he told you instead?

Oops.

DAN  
Good one, Wong.

ELLIE  
Wait! It wasn't like that!

C.C. spins ferociously, freezes Ellie in her tracks.

C.C.  
Nice toast, El. Now I know what you really think of me.

As she dives into the back of the cab...

C.C.  
Drive!

The cab SCREECHES off, leaves Dan and Ellie in its wake.

INT. C.C. AND ELLIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

In reading glasses, a Celtics T and sweats, C.C. sits on the floor in their charming but humble apartment, surrounded by files, papers, and a calculator, punching buttons and scrawling furiously.

C.C.  
Damn, Vince. Throwing around some serious Benjamins, arencha?

Just then, a key WORKS in the door... and Ellie walks in. C.C. immediately starts pulling the mess together and packing it into her bag.

ELLIE

Can you please explain to me why  
I'm getting tossed in with Carver?  
What the hell did I do wrong?

C.C. hikes her bag over her shoulder, gets ready to leave.

C.C.

C'mon, El. You had to know  
something was up.

ELLIE

Right backatcha, McShane.

That stops C.C. This is becoming a showdown.

C.C.

Meaning?

ELLIE

Meaning you set your priorities and  
you treated it like a paycheck, so  
you got the loser case dropped on  
your pretty little head so it won't  
mess up my promotion. Don't blame  
Dan, don't blame Bruce, and sure as  
hell don't blame me for taking my  
career seriously.

Ouch. But after a chilly beat...

C.C.

You're right.

ELLIE

I'm your best friend. I have to  
tell you the truth whether I want  
to or not.

(beat)

So are we gonna hug it out now?

C.C. considers, completes the callback...

C.C.

Do I look like I'm in a hug-it-out  
mood, Wong?

... and leaves.

EXT. URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

Main Street in a tough part of town, mostly African American.  
FIND JENSEN'S, a nondescript pool bar.

C.C. (O.S.)  
Hey, Titus.

INT. JENSEN'S BAR - NIGHT

TITUS, 25 and black, waits in a back booth of a bar that's dark by design. We can hear the CRACK of a pool ball over the warm, low BLUES MUSIC. He's wired, alert, a little worried as C.C. approaches...

C.C.  
Thanks for--

TITUS  
Sit down, girl! Don't be hovering!

She hurries into the booth with an "eek" expression.

TITUS  
Can't be seen conspiring with the most famous prosecutor on YouTube.

C.C.  
I'll make it quick.

She pulls out her scribble-covered legal pad...

C.C.  
I crunched some numbers: To support his lifestyle, Vince Garcia has to net about four hundred K a year. I can't figure how he got so big without us knowing about it.

TITUS  
So what do you need from me?

C.C.  
A drug dealer's perspective.

TITUS  
Who says I'm a drug dealer?

C.C.  
Commonwealth of Massachusetts?

TITUS  
Let's go with former drug dealer.

C.C.  
Whatever works.

Titus leans in closer:



TITUS

If Vince Garcia was movin' that much product, he'd get a warning and then a funeral. He has Chelsea and that's it.

C.C.

How much Ox and coke can he move there?

TITUS

Eighty grand, tops.

C.C.

He made thirty as a photographer.

TITUS

That's a long way from a four hundred yards.

C.C.

Sure as hell is.

She nods, processes, and stands.

C.C.

Thanks, Titus.

EXT. JENSEN'S BAR - CONTINUOUS

C.C.'s already on her phone as she settles on the sidewalk. She couldn't possibly look more out of place here.

C.C.

Sully? Yeah, it's C.C. You know that deep scan on Garcia's computer? I need it done right now.

(beat)

What are we looking for? We're looking for about three hundred grand a year.

(beat)

I don't care if she's at her own wedding. I want her elbows deep in Garcia's computer in five minutes.

She flips her phone shut. Titus is there beside her.

TITUS

Whoa. Badass like you don't need me walkin' her to the corner so she can get a cab, huh?

He's digging her and she knows it.

C.C.

Thought you couldn't be seen with  
me, Titus?

TITUS

It's a risk I'm willing to take.

She rolls her eyes, heads off on her own. We REVISIT the  
INSPIRATIONAL MUSIC from Act One, complete with the SUBTLE  
CHANT underneath it...

TITUS

Looks like there's a new sheriff  
in town.

(watching her ass)  
And she is fine.

She doesn't look back. Fights the smile... finally loses.

C.C.

Damn right.

**CUT TO BLACK.**

**ACT FOUR**

EXT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Boston Common is quiet at this hour...

COMPUTER COP (O.S.)  
I'm not sure I've ever seen a two-  
year-old computer this clean.

INT. POLICE IT ROOM - NIGHT

Sully stands behind a young, female COMPUTER COP as she taps the keyboard of Vince Garcia's bigscreen iMac. She's clearly dressed to be somewhere else, like a nice dinner out.

COMPUTER COP  
He did more than hose down this  
sucker... he sterilized it with  
some pretty serious software.

SULLY  
You hear that?

Over the SPEAKER PHONE on the desk...

C.C. (O.S.)  
Yeah, I heard it.

EXT. C.C. AND ELLIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

She gets out of the cab, phone to her ear, pays as she talks, and the cab drives off.

C.C.  
So tell me something, Sully: Where  
did you find the drugs?

INTERCUT I.T. ROOM AND C.C. ON STREET:

SULLY  
In a coffee can. Why?

C.C.  
Seems like Garcia worked a lot  
harder nuking his hard drive than  
stashing his dope.

Just as C.C. starts into her building...

BROOKSHIRE (O.S.)  
Well, what are the chances?

She smiles, shakes her head but doesn't turn.

C.C.  
Thanks, Sully.

She flips the phone shut, turns to see Brookshire in a hoodie and pajama bottoms, walking his Puggle.

C.C.  
You don't take no for an answer.

BROOKSHIRE  
What are you talking about? I just happened to be in the neighborhood.

Yeah, right.

C.C.  
Cute dog. Nice jammies. How'd you know Bruce set me up?

BROOKSHIRE  
I was a prosecutor before I became a brilliant campaign guru. Only took one call.  
(beat)  
Had time to think about my offer?

She moves a little closer, inspects him.

C.C.  
Tell me about Mark Pruitt.

BROOKSHIRE  
Good friend, dreadful candidate. Next thing I felt was the bus wheels crushing my spine. And my marriage. And everything else.

She reads that for a beat, like she might know better. Then...

C.C.  
What makes you think I'd even consider running for Congress?

BROOKSHIRE  
That senior thesis about The Bush Doctrine betrayed the whole good-time, go-along girl image you worked so hard to construct.  
(off her)  
(MORE)

BROOKSHIRE (cont'd)  
 Google search. The thesis and your  
 My Space page are still up.

C.C.  
 Oh, God...  
 (shakes it off)  
 Look, Brookshire... I'm not who you  
 want me to be.

BROOKSHIRE  
 Wrong. You're not who you're  
pretending to be.  
 (beat)  
 I know it when I see it. And  
 you're it.

With that, he turns and walks away, leaves C.C.'s jaw on the  
 pavement. PRELAP: POLITE BUT LOUD APPLAUSE...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CONGRESSIONAL HALL - NIGHT

The House Chamber, with 435 REPRESENTATIVES standing and  
 applauding. REVERSE to the podium as none other than  
 Brookshire approaches, clean shaven and wearing a great suit.

BROOKSHIRE  
 Thank you. Thank you everybody.

Gradually, they all settle and sit. Brookshire calmly looks  
 around, takes it all in, juices the moment for all it's  
 worth. At last...

BROOKSHIRE  
 Ladies and Gentlemen of Congress...  
 please welcome... your newly  
 elected Queen of Everything...  
 (louder)  
 C.C. McSHANE!!

The place GOES NUTS, like it's a rock concert instead of  
 Congress in session. They BURST to their feet, SCREAMING,  
 even holding lighters aloft.

The house goes dark and concert lights hit "the stage": C.C.  
 strides out looking Congressional but somehow sexy at the  
 same time. Oh, and she's wearing an actual crown, too.

She smiles, bows, points and waves... but then the CHEERS  
 suddenly DIE OUT. The Representatives MURMUR and HUM. What  
 the hell? Brookshire nods his head toward C.C.'s feet and we  
 REVEAL: those damn Wonder Woman slippers.

A few TITTERS and LAUGHS. ON THE CUT, we reveal that C.C. is is no longer wearing a dress... just panties. Yikes. It's that familiar nightmare times about four hundred.

She devolves on every CUT TO THE CROWD, where the REPRESENTATIVES shake their heads, roll their eyes, and WHISPER in disapproval.

In the end, Claudia stands there before Congress in her Celtics T, panties, and slippers with rat's nest hair and raccoon eyes. Just about the way we met her.

C.C. looks to Brookshire...

C.C.

I told you: I'm not what you want  
me to be.

His smile is calm and confident... and then he begins that SLOW CLAP again. Somewhere in the crowd, one REPRESENTATIVE joins in... then another... then dozens more. It spreads across the House until they're CHEERING all over again!

C.C. goes to Brookshire, looks him in the eye.

C.C.

You seriously think I can do this?

BROOKSHIRE

I seriously do.

She goes up on her toes... and kisses him with everything she's got. He melts into it; the crowd LOVES IT. Then, FULL and RESONANT...

DAN (O.S.)

Ceece?

INT. C.C.'S BEDROOM - DAWN

She JOLTS UP in bed with a gasp. Dan is standing there.

DAN

Did I scare you?

C.C.

What? No. A little.

(beat)

What the hell are you doing in my  
bedroom at six in the morning?

He's nervous. He reaches in his breast pocket... and pulls out the little velvet box.

He gets down on one knee and opens it to reveal the stunning diamond ring. Holy shit... he's proposing. C.C.'s eyes pop out of her head.

C.C.  
No freaking way.

DAN  
You really caught me off guard the other night. But now I've had time to think about it and here's the deal: I'm one hundred percent ready for this. I'm ready to give up Boys' Night and Vegas trips and significantly reduce my intake of Internet porn and I'll never--

C.C.  
STOP!

DAN  
Stop? Is that... are you saying no?

C.C.  
Did you say "porn?"

DAN  
It was sort of a joke, like a riff, but if you really don't want me to--

C.C.  
That girl's boobs could poke your eye out.

DAN  
Are you sure you're awake?

C.C. gets out of bed, lost in thought.

C.C.  
Torpedo tits plus a sterile computer plus that tricked-out, high-def video camera...

She disappears into her closet...

DAN  
Uh... Ceece? Hello?

C.C. (O.S.)  
It's just a hunch... but I think it's a pretty damn good one.

She comes back out with a hastily crafted outfit, a sweater and sweatpants, never breaks stride on her way to the door. Dan clears his throat. She remembers him, looks back.

C.C.

Oh, God, Dan. I'm so sorry.

She hurries to him, helps him up and pecks his cheek...

C.C.

We'll finish this later, okay?

... and then bolts from the room.

INT. FRONT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

She screeches to a stop in front of a kitchen table outfitted with a champagne breakfast, including croissants, berries, and Veuve Clicquot. Ellie literally JUMPS OUT...

ELLIE

Congratulations!

But then Dan steps out, shakes his head.

ELLIE

No?

DAN

To be continued.

C.C. can't imagine what to say... so she just picks up her bag and starts for the door.

C.C.

Sorry, guys.

ELLIE

"Sorry, guys?" I bought champagne!  
I made breakfast, you big diva!

C.C. spins back to face Ellie. Showdown, Part II...

C.C.

Oh, you just can't wait to get me married, barefoot, and pregnant, can you, El?

ELLIE

Are you kidding me? Is this still about that stupid toast?



DAN  
Girls, let's not--

C.C. AND ELLIE  
Back off, Dan!

He does. After a beat...

ELLIE  
Stop trying to make me the enemy,  
McShane. I love you, damnit. Always  
have, always will.

C.C.  
Are you sure about that, El?

ELLIE  
What?

C.C.  
What if I want to marry, procreate,  
and be Queen of Everything? What if  
I want the next ADA promotion?  
(beat)  
Would you still love me then?

Ellie's mouth opens but the words won't come. C.C. nods  
sadly... and leaves. After a beat...

DAN  
Okay, who the hell was that?

EXT. POLICE STATION - MORNING

Hustle and bustle of morning rush hour on the Square...

COMPUTER COP (O.S.)  
We have nineteen active porn sites  
originating from Boston IPs...

INT. BOSTON POLICE IT ROOM - MORNING

The IT room has been turned into a "war room," of sorts: In addition to C.C. and Sully, the female Computer Cop works one computer while male COMPUTER COP #2 digs into Vince Garcia's bigscreen iMac; a YOUNG POLICE TECH works over Garcia's video camera, disassembled and attached to a laptop; and two YOUNG DETECTIVES push paper stacked all over a long table. There's heat here... a sense of pieces coming together.

COMPUTER COP  
... but I'm way more interested in  
exhuming this recently buried site.

COMPUTER COP #2

Almost there. Garcia put several coats of paint over his IP, here...  
(tap-tap-tap)  
Bam. Coming your way.

COMPUTER COP

Got it.

C.C. Goes to the Police Tech breaking down the video camera.

C.C.

Camera just as clean as the computer?

POLICE TECH

He pulled the hard drive entirely. What he doesn't know is that manufacturers often build in internal clocks to measure usage for warranty claims.

SULLY

Like an odometer. How hard did he drive it?

POLICE TECH

Real hard. Almost a thousand hours in one year.

COMPUTER COP (O.S.)

We have a match! We got it!

SULLY

Put it on the big screen.

Everybody stops what they're doing, gather in front of the 70" LCD display on the wall. A CLICK later, and we see the cover page for LATINA-TEENS.COM: Amanda Castilla is front and center of several models, all wearing lingerie, sporting torpedo tits and naughty girl smiles. Prominent on screen, the disclaimer: ALL MODELS ARE 18 OR OLDER.

C.C.

Hello, Amanda.

SULLY

Is she legal?

C.C.

Not even close.

TECH TEAM

YES! WHOOO!

The young crew around C.C. and Sully HOLLER, high five, hug, and generally CELEBRATE.

SULLY

Nerd cops. They don't get out much.

(beat)

Hey, Ceece?

C.C.

Yeah?

SULLY

Way to go.

As the celebration continues, OFF C.C. basking in Sully's admiration, **CUT TO BLACK.**

**ACT FIVE**

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING IN CHELSEA - DAY

A humble urban fringe apartment building.

AMANDA (O.S.)  
I'm gonna say it real slow: Vince.  
Thinks. I'm. Legal!

INT. AMANDA'S APARTMENT - DAY

C.C. and Sully watch as Amanda feeds a six-year-old LITTLE SISTER, cleans the cramped kitchen, and ties her hair in a ponytail, all while talking to them.

AMANDA  
He asked for I.D. and I showed him  
a fake, okay?

C.C.  
Wow. It's almost like Garcia told  
you we can't charge him if he  
believed you were legal.

SULLY  
Mind if I get a look at the I.D.?

She stops, thinks fast...

AMANDA  
I lost it.

C.C.  
Where are your parents?

AMANDA  
Parent. She's in bed.

C.C.  
Night shift?

After a long pause...

AMANDA  
Sure.

Cracks are spreading in the girl's hard exterior. C.C. moves in closer...

C.C.  
I'm sorry, Amanda.

AMANDA

About what?

C.C.

I'm sorry you have to be the grownup around here at sixteen years old. It isn't fair.

Amanda starts to say something, but it won't come.

C.C.

After Vince Garcia wrings the last drop from you, he'll toss you out and get a new one.

(beat)

Let me help you, Amanda. Please.

Amanda is torn. She rubs her face in frustration and C.C. notices something, grabs her hand: She's wearing an engagement ring with a tiny ruby, maybe fake.

C.C.

What's this about?

Amanda snaps back, pulls away, looks between Sully and C.C.

AMANDA

We're getting married, me and Bobby.

C.C.

You're sixteen years old, so wild guess: You're pregnant?

AMANDA

Yeah, I am. We are. Me and Bobby. It's his. The baby is his.

Well, that came out odd. C.C. reads Amanda: She's scared.

C.C.

Does this have anything to do with Bobby's unfortunate accident?

AMANDA

What? No!

C.C.

You do know we can make you two take a paternity test, right?

Amanda panics...

AMANDA

(shaky)

You can?

Off C.C. getting just what she needed,

CUT TO:

EXT. AMANDA'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

C.C. and Sully stride quickly to his car.

SULLY

So you're thinking Garcia's the  
real father?

C.C.

Let's go see if Bobby Flores wants  
some help getting out of this mess.

INT. MANNY'S PHYS ED OFFICE - DAY

Amanda's boyfriend Bobby, eyes still bruised and hand still  
in a cast, sits in a metal chair in Manny's office, which  
doubles as an athletic equipment room. He's sweating it out,  
surrounded by C.C., Sully, and Manny.

BOBBY

I was drunk. Didn't wear a condom.  
Now I have to do what's right.

SULLY

It's so weird how your eyes go dead  
just like Amanda's when you recite  
the lines Garcia taught you.

BOBBY

I'm not lying. I swear.

C.C.

So Vince Garcia beat you up and  
then started breaking fingers until  
you agreed to take responsibility  
for his baby, right?

BOBBY

I. Fell.

MANNY

These people will put Vince Garcia  
away for a very long time.

BOBBY

I can't do it, Manny.

C.C.

Let me tell you what's next, Bobby: Garcia will graduate Amanda from Ox to Heroin so he can control her. Guaranteed. He'll kill her one piece at a time until you can't even recognize her.

MANNY

You'll be raising Vince's baby by yourself. That's what you get out of this.

SULLY

If you help us, we can protect both of you.

A long, frozen moment. The only sound is Bobby's ragged breathing as he looks between them. At last...

BOBBY

Amanda's a good Catholic. Vince said the only way she could keep the baby is if she came right back to work... and we told everyone I'm the father.

C.C. moves closer, leans in even closer so Bobby knows just how serious she is:

C.C.

Bobby, I'm going to ask you a very, very important question, now.

BOBBY

Okay.

C.C.

Did Vince Garcia know that Amanda Castilla was under age when he featured her in pornographic material and had sexual intercourse with her?

BOBBY

She's a sophomore in high school. Vince ain't stupid.

C.C.

You and Amanda will have to testify to that in court. Can you do that?

He looks around. Finally...

BOBBY

Yeah.

That's it. They got him. Sully, C.C., and Manny exchange restrained looks of triumph.

C.C.

Never forget this, Bobby.

EXT. DOWNTOWN BOSTON - DUSK

Across the Charles River from Cambridge. A gorgeous, drifting, magic hour aerial...

C.C (O.S.)

This is the day you saved Amanda Castilla's life.

INT. 21ST AMENDMENT PUB - NIGHT

At the bar, Brookshire sips from a tumbler of Scotch on the rocks and watches C-Span. The door jingles an arrival. He feels her, turns to look at C.C. She can't fight the smile.

BROOKSHIRE

You've got something on Garcia.

C.C.

I do.

BROOKSHIRE

They didn't believe in you, McShane. Make'em eat it.

C.C.

That's the plan.

Gradually, both of their smiles fall... and she's standing there with her insecurities and fears showing.

C.C.

I had the craziest dream. Thanks to you, I was elected Queen of Everything.



BROOKSHIRE

It always begins with a dream.  
Every damn time.

He means it so much she can't help but be moved.

C.C.

How do you know I'm "it?"

He takes a fortifying drink and turns to face her. He's reading her. Adding it all up.

BROOKSHIRE

You went by Claudia when you graduated tip-top of Amherst high, am I right?

C.C.

(reluctant)

Yeah.

BROOKSHIRE

Serious daughter of a serious CEO mother. Did you consider Harvard Business School, because she went there?

C.C.

I got in.

BROOKSHIRE

I'm sure you did. Mom always said you were just like her, right? Heir to her corporate throne?

She doesn't deny it.

BROOKSHIRE

So what happened?

C.C.

She would pretty much sprint in one door of our house and out the other. It was a week before she noticed my dad had left us.

BROOKSHIRE

For a younger woman? A softer woman? A less serious woman?

She nods again. Now he's locked in...

BROOKSHIRE

So you landed at Boston College,  
majored in History, and changed  
your name to C.C. New name for a  
whole new girl, right?

He reads her. She shrugs. He knows he's right.

BROOKSHIRE

Let me give it a shot: C.C.  
McShane, frivolous and fun, party  
girl with a plan to get married,  
make babies, and die happy. You'd  
never drive a man away like Mom  
drove away Dad. You'd never put  
your ambition first.

C.C.

Not bad.

BROOKSHIRE

Internet meets intuition.

(beat)

But you couldn't pull it off, could  
you? Couldn't help graduating third  
in your law class, couldn't accept  
that cushy private practice gig you  
were offered, couldn't seem to shut  
her up.

C.C.

Her who?

BROOKSHIRE

This thing inside you, this force  
of will, this larger truth, this  
Claudia who wants to do more, be  
more, matter more.

(beat)

So tag... you're "it."

With that, he toasts her and turns away. We're done here.

Claudia's mouth moves and her eyebrows raise, but she just  
can't seem to respond. Finally, she simply turns... and walks  
back out the way she came.

Bartender/owner O'ROURKE (50) approaches, big and ruddy.

O'ROURKE

She's just a girl, Brookshire.

BROOKSHIRE

Not for long.

Brookshire raises his glass. O'Rourke CLINKS it with a beer.

EXT. JOHN ADAMS COURTHOUSE - MORNING

Lawyers and clients flow up and down the long run of stairs.  
We hear a GAVEL BANG.

JUDGE BRUGANO (O.S.)

Would the defendant please rise?

INT. COURTROOM - SAME

Woody and historic. No jury. Just JUDGE CATHERINE BRUGANO,  
50s, a bit of hippy left in her; Vince Garcia and his Lawyer  
at the defense table; and C.C. alone at her's.

Garcia stands and so does his Lawyer.

JUDGE BRUGANO

Mister Garcia, you are charged with  
one felony count of trafficking  
prescription narcotics and one  
count of trafficking cocaine. How  
do you plead?

GARCIA'S LAWYER

Your Honor, we request that both  
charges be dropped and Mister  
Garcia be released immediately.

JUDGE BRUGANO

Based on what grounds?

GARCIA'S LAWYER

If I may be blunt? She's got  
misdemeanor possession at best,  
Your Honor. At best.

JUDGE BRUGANO

Counselor?

C.C. stands.

JUDGE BRUGANO

Is that true?

C.C.

Regrettably, that's pretty  
accurate, Your Honor.

(MORE)

C.C. (cont'd)

And while we're convinced that Mister Garcia was indeed trafficking and got tipped off so he could flush his inventory, our key witness is no longer willing to testify.

(beat)

So... we very reluctantly agree to drop the charges.

GARCIA

Yes!

JUDGE BRUGANO

Well, that was easy. Mister Garcia, you're free to go.

She BANGS her gavel. Vince and his Lawyer embrace, neither seeing Sully and a uniformed COP edging up behind them. Vince smiles nastily at C.C. and she smiles too sweetly right back. His smile falls: What the hell?

SULLY

Vincent Garcia?

Startled, Garcia turns.

SULLY

You are under arrest for statutory rape and knowingly producing and distributing child pornography.

Sully roughly turns him and cuffs him.

GARCIA

Hey! What is this?  
(to his lawyer)  
Do something!

His Lawyer steps away, holds up his hands. Judge Brugano leans back, takes it all in with a wary eye. The Cop leads Garcia away, READING HIM HIS RIGHTS as he goes. Garcia glares at C.C. and she doesn't so much as flinch.

But then: A YOUNGER COP enters, goes up to Sully, whispers in his ear.

SULLY

What?

Sully goes over to C.C.

C.C.

What was that about?

SULLY

We have a little hiccup in our plan.

C.C.

What kind of "little hiccup?"

SULLY

The kind where we lose our witnesses?

C.C.

Again?

SULLY

Looks like Amanda talked Bobby out of testifying. They're both missing.

C.C. turns right into Judge Brugano, who clearly just heard all of that.

C.C.

Oh, crap.

JUDGE BRUGANO

I won't go through this with you again, Counselor. I'm tempted to cut Garcia loose right now.

C.C.

Please, Your Honor--

JUDGE BRUGANO

Five p.m., my chambers. You present waterproof charges with real live witnesses... or he walks.

Judge Brugano leaves. OFF C.C., **CUT TO BLACK.**

**ACT SIX**

EXT. AMANDA'S APARTMENT - LATER THAT DAY

Shadows fall. Time is running out.

C.C. (O.S.)  
This is it, Mrs. Castilla.

INT. AMANDA'S APARTMENT - SAME

C.C. and Sully hover over MRS. CASTILLA, 40s, once pretty but faded by her own bad decisions.

C.C.  
This could be your last chance to be Amanda's mother again. If you don't convince her to do the right thing, Vince Garcia walks, free and clear.

MRS. CASTILLA  
I told you already: I don't know where she is.

C.C. gets even closer, holds nothing back:

C.C.  
You're thinking maybe this is all your fault, right? Well, I'm thinking maybe you're right.

SULLY  
Ceece, you can't--

C.C.  
I won't pretend to know why you're still in bed while Amanda gets her little sister ready for school, but I'm pretty damn sure she's doing what she's doing to support her family... because somebody has to.

Tears rim the woman's eyes... but she doesn't speak.

SULLY  
It's almost four-thirty. Brugano said she'd cut him loose at five.

MRS. CASTILLA  
(to C.C.)  
You think you know so much.

C.C.

Here's what I know for sure, Mrs. Castilla: If Garcia gets his hooks back into Amanda, she will die.

A stare-down. After a long beat...

MRS. CASTILLA

Can you guarantee that Garcia will stay locked up where he can't hurt them?

C.C.

If you can get them here, I can make that happen.

Mrs. Castilla pulls a phone closer.

MRS. CASTILLA

Okay.

C.C. checks her watch, bolts for the door.

C.C.

(to Sully)

Call me the second they're here.

SULLY

You got it.

EXT. JOHN ADAMS COURTHOUSE STEPS - TEN MINUTES LATER

C.C. bounds up the steps. Her cell phone rings. She flips it open...

C.C.

Got 'em?

INTERCUT C.C. AND AMANDA'S APARTMENT:

SULLY

Got 'em.

PULL OUT to reveal Amanda and Bobby, pacing anxiously around Sully and Mrs. Castilla.

INT. COURTHOUSE - JUDGE BRUGANO'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Phone still to her ear, C.C. strides right past Judge Brugano's MALE ASSISTANT...

C.C.  
(to Sully)  
Here we go.

MALE ASSISTANT  
She's waiting.

INT. JUDGE BRUGANO'S CHAMBERS - CONTINUOUS

Judge Brugano sits on a couch with a laptop on the table in front of her, already on "TEEN-LATINAS.COM." C.C. blows in...

C.C.  
(into phone)  
I'm putting you on speaker.

... sets her cell phone on the table next to the computer.

C.C.  
I know this is a little unconventional, Your Honor... but Officer Sullivan and my witnesses, Bobby and Amanda, are on the other end of that line.

JUDGE BRUGANO  
Never a dull moment with you, Counselor. I'll give you that.

INT. AMANDA'S APARTMENT

Now Sully puts his phone on speaker, sets it on the table.

C.C. (OVER SPEAKER)  
These two kids are terrified of Vince Garcia.

JUDGE BRUGANO  
I assumed as much.

INTERCUT JUDGE'S CHAMBERS AND CASTILLA HOME:

C.C.  
The anger you and I feel for the Vince Garcias may get us out of bed in the morning... but it's the responsibility we feel for the Bobbies and Amandas that keeps us coming back, right? Day after day... week after week?



JUDGE BRUGANO

Does this end with you trying to punch me?

C.C.

No. It ends with you holding Vince Garcia without bail because he's an imminent threat. Because that's the only way those two kids come in... and that's the only way we can do right by them. And maybe next time something bad happens in Chelsea, somebody will actually call us.

A frozen moment. C.C. and Judge Brugano lock eyes. After a beat, Judge Brugano leans in closer to C.C.'s cell phone...

JUDGE BRUGANO

If I hold Vince Garcia without bail, will the two of you come in right now?

Bobby looks to Amanda. She nods. He puts his arm around her.

AMANDA

Yeah. We'll do it.

JUDGE BRUGANO

Then let's get Garcia's lawyer in here and give him the bad news.

OFF C.C.'s triumphant smile...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. JOHN ADAMS COURTHOUSE - DUSK

Rush hour. People hurrying to go home.

C.C. (O.S.)

You wanted to see me?

INT. BRUCE'S OFFICE - DUSK

Bruce stands quickly, hurries around his desk to C.C.

BRUCE

Congratulations, my newest assistant district attorney!

He waits for her big reaction. Instead, she crosses her arms with a tight, knowing grin.

BRUCE  
Did you hear me?

C.C.  
I did. And I accept.

BRUCE  
You're conflicted because of Ellie.

C.C.  
Some. Mostly, I want you to know  
that I know.

BRUCE  
Know what?

C.C.  
That you dumped this case on me to  
protect Ellie. And that I'm only  
getting this promotion because the  
publicity forced your hand.

BRUCE  
Don't sell yourself short, McShane.

C.C.  
Oh, I won't. Not anymore.

It's an exit line.

INT. COURTHOUSE CORRIDOR - EVENING

C.C. maintains her dignity and professionalism until she hits  
the main intersection on the courtroom level. She looks  
around to make sure nobody's watching... and does a quick  
little victory dance.

ELLIE (O.S.)  
Well that settles that.

Oops. Ellie approaches. C.C. gathers herself.

C.C.  
Why, it's my esteemed colleague  
Ellie Wong.

ELLIE  
You were wondering if I'd still  
love you if you got the promotion.

C.C.  
And?

ELLIE

You stepped out of your box. You changed the game. You stole my promotion and my crown. I still don't know how I'm supposed to deal with that. I don't even know how you and me work anymore.

Whoa. C.C. doesn't know what to say to that. Then...

ELLIE

But at the same time... as crazy as it sounds... I'm proud of you. And I definitely still love you.

Neither can hold back the tears, which makes them both laugh as they come together for the hug.

EXT. JOHN ADAMS COURTHOUSE STEPS - EVENING

C.C. happily bounds down the steps.

DAN (O.S.)

Ceece? C.C.?

He catches up to her.

C.C.

Dan, I'm really sorry about--

DAN

Don't worry about it.  
(meaning it)  
Congratulations.

She smiles. He takes a deep breath and...

DAN

Now let's finish this thing.

But before he can get down to his knee, a Mercedes SUV bounds the curb, LAYS ON THE HORN: It's Abby.

ABBY

GET HER!

ELLIE (O.S.)

Got her.

Ellie snatches C.C. by the arm, drags her off.

ELLIE

It's his turn to wait a little.

C.C.  
Sorry again!

DAN  
Well played, Wong.

But as they REV OFF, his smile falls. The ground is shifting.

EXT. UNION OYSTER HOUSE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The historic landmark restaurant.

ELLIE (O.S.)  
You have a little lemon butter on  
your cheek, Ceece.

INT. UNION OYSTER HOUSE RESTAURANT - SAME

C.C., Ellie, and Abby are at the center table of this historic, high-ceilinged seafood joint, wearing bibs and knocking back champagne. C.C. doesn't have a little butter on her cheek... the entire area around her mouth is greasy.

C.C.  
I don't eat lobster well.

ABBY  
The hell you say.

C.C.  
Where is it?

ELLIE  
Pretty much everywhere between your  
neck and hair.

C.C. unconsciously touches her hair.

ELLIE AND ABBY  
Everywhere above your neck.

They all crack up. As she wipes her face...

C.C.  
Wanna hear something really funny?  
I'm thinking about running for  
Congress.

They both smile... and wait.

ELLIE  
I don't get it.

C.C.

Remember that guy in the bar?

ELLIE

The loud-mouthed derelict?

C.C.

He's not a derelict. He's just...  
broken.

The way she says it makes Ellie and Abby suspicious.

ELLIE

Oh my God. You're into him?

C.C.

What? No! He's Jack Brookshire, the  
big campaign guru... and he thinks  
I can win in the Ninth District.

After a deadpan BEAT...

ABBY

I've recently come to the  
conclusion that I'm fully qualified  
to be Governor of Alaska.

ELLIE

I've been keeping this on the down  
low, but I'm actually the Princess  
of Genovia.

(monotone)

I just wanted someone to love me  
for me, damnit.

Ellie and Abby crack up together, both obviously drunk. C.C.  
tries to join in but it's half-hearted.

C.C.

You're right. It's stupid.

ELLIE

You were kidding, right?

Before she can answer... a TAP-TAP-TAP at the nearby front  
window. They all turn to see: Dan, on one knee, holding the  
velvet box. Others look, too, WHISPER and POINT.

Finally, all eyes turn to C.C.

EXT. UNION OYSTER HOUSE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

C.C. steps out into the sidewalk. Dozens of people press to the glass inside to watch. Dan snaps his fingers... and two alt-folk HIPSTERS with guitars appear and start playing Damien Rice's "BLOWER'S DAUGHTER," softly as background.

Dan opens the box... and then SOUND FADES OUT. His lips move but we can't hear him.

C.C. looks inside to see Abby and Ellie with the others at the window. They're all gleeful with anticipation.

C.C. looks back to Dan, clearly on a riff he's pretty proud of, if the expression is any indication.

Slowly, a fraction of an inch at a time, C.C.'s smile falls. Brookshire's speech is paraphrased...

BROOKSHIRE (O.S.)

C.C. McShane, party girl with a plan to get married, make babies, and die happy. But you couldn't shut her up, could you?

C.C. (O.S.)

Her who?

BROOKSHIRE (O.S.)

This thing inside you, this force of will, this larger truth, this Claudia, who wants to do more, be more, matter more.

DAN

C.C.?

She snaps out of it. He's standing now. The music has stopped. The faces in the window look a little stunned.

DAN

Are you okay?

C.C.

I know this isn't fair, but... now I'm not ready.

He slumps... but he doesn't break down.

C.C.

I'm not the same girl I was two days ago, Dan. And I have a feeling this is just the beginning.

(MORE)

C.C. (cont'd)

(beat)

Maybe you'll like who I become. And maybe you won't. But one thing's for sure: I won't be the girl who poked and prodded you into this.

He smiles just a little... and nods. C.C. kisses him on the cheek, takes a last look in at the befuddled faces in the window (including Abby and Ellie)... and walks away.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. 21ST AMENDMENT PUB - NIGHT

O'Rourke turns the sign to "closed." PAN UP to the second floor. The light is on...

INT. BROOKSHIRE'S "OFFICE" - SAME

Brookshire sweeps up the sprawling space that looks more suited for storage: brick walls, timber floors, kegs stacked along the walls.

We follow him to the corner that looks clean and displaced: His "office." An antique desk with a computer, nameplate, and pictures on the wall. We scan them: evidence of his once fruitful career. In one, he even gladhands Ted Kennedy.

C.C. (O.S.)

Hey.

He gathers, takes her in... smiles. She smiles back. Suffice it to say, there's some complicated chemistry here.

BROOKSHIRE

Heard you got promoted.

C.C.

Yup.

BROOKSHIRE

Bigger cases, higher profile... everybody wins.

A silent beat between them. Then...

C.C.

Anything you wanna tell me?

He considers that. Finally...

BROOKSHIRE

I blew Pruitt's campaign. His  
opponent was dumb like cabbage, but  
he was also a one-legged war hero.  
I was afraid if I went after him...  
(struggles)  
Whatever. I blew it.

C.C.

Thanks. I really needed you to be--

BROOKSHIRE

There's more.

C.C.

Oh.

BROOKSHIRE

My wife didn't leave me because I  
fell from grace. She left me  
because I was sleeping with a  
staffer.

(beat)

A very young staffer.

(winces)

A law student, actually.

CLAUDIA

You aren't doing all this to get in  
my pants, are you?

BROOKSHIRE

Please. In your dreams.

Claudia's eyes widen. How could he know?

CLAUDIA

What? I don't... I didn't...

BROOKSHIRE

You really think I'd mount an  
entire Congressional campaign just  
so I could mount you?

She laughs, mostly in relief. Then...

C.C.

Friend of mine thinks you're just a  
mentally unstable drunk.



BROOKSHIRE

Tell Ms. Wong that under my recent circumstances, getting drunk was the only sane thing to do.

She smiles. She's drawn to him for reasons she doesn't understand. He feels it, too. It's the elephant in the room.

BROOKSHIRE

So, Claudia Catherine... do you like your new campaign office?

Her smile comes slow but it lights up the whole of the dark, rustic space.

C.C.

I do.

EXT. MASSACHUSETTS STATE BUILDING - NIGHT

... and Boston Common, desolate at this hour.

C.C. (O.S.)

I really do.

It starts low and builds, the INSPIRATIONAL MUSIC and the CHANT...

CROWD (O.S.)

Clau-di-a! Clau-di-a! Clau-di-a!

EXT. BOSTON - NIGHT

It continues to BUILD as we tour Beacon Hill, the Public Gardens, Fenway Park, Quincy Market, the skyline from Boston Harbor...

CROWD (O.S.)

(louder)

Clau-di-a! Clau-di-a! Clau-di-a!

At our CRESCENDO, **SLAM TO BLACK**. As it all REVERBERATES, bring up the title once more: "**I, Claudia**"

**(THE END)**