

Judgment Date

by
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OVER BLACK

BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG!

FADE IN:

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A SHORT MAN in a white blazer brandishes a Colt .45 pistol.

BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG!

CLICK. CLICK. The slide locks back, magazine empty.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

SUPER: "Three weeks later"

A small private dining room. Two chairs bookend a single elegant candle lit table. A fruit bowl, chocolates, napkins, two wine glasses, two wine bottles, a big black Samsung box.

Big band music entertains itself in the background.

FELICITY

Don't be so stupid!

JANE (V.O.)

I was only saying.

FELICITY, mid 40s, faded ex TV talent show judge, Chanel clad, applies another coat of makeup, via a hand mirror. Her face reveals a mixture of selfishness and fear.

She barks into a wireless headset on her ear.

FELICITY

Well, don't. Your last selections
were less than impressive.

JANE (V.O.)

You agreed to them.

FELICITY

Don't forget to check up on
Antoine. Make sure he's happy.

TONY appears in a Tux. Ex Oklahoma, early 30s, tall, blond hair, blue eyes, clean shaven. Observant, street smart, often underestimated. He blinks like a deer in headlights.

He sizes up Felicity, the table, the room.

Uniformed arms behind his back free him from
HANDCUFFS.

He shakes his arms, sits. Adjusts his collar, grimaces.

TONY

Are --

Felicity holds up a hand without looking.

She listens to the headset. He checks the exits.

FELICITY

(turns to him)

Feeling better now, Tony?

TONY

(Oklahoma accent)

After what you just put me through,
I'm lucky to be alive. Felicity.

FELICITY

You should have taken your chance.

POP! She opens the champagne. The cork hits the ceiling.
Tony studies its trajectory. She fills a glass.

He opens the other bottle, house brand, fills his own glass.

TONY

A bottle each? Subtle.

FELICITY

You should be so lucky.

TONY

Mine's apple. Booze didn't suit me.

FELICITY

How rare, a man who can control his
passions. Or at least one of them.

Tony pulls at his bow tie.

TONY

You're gonna have to excuse me, I
ain't done this for a while.

FELICITY

Take your time. We have plenty. Do you like the music?

TONY

Can we stop pretending it's a regular date? You might do it every week, but it just ain't natural.

FELICITY

Where's your sense of romance? How about sweeping a girl off her feet?

TONY

My current situation distracts me.

FELICITY

If you want to improve your current situation, get with the program.

TONY

Yes, ma'am, whatever you say.

FELICITY

Let's start with a blast from the past. A song, if you please.

TONY

I couldn't sing to save ...
(laughs)

You know I can't sing.

FELICITY

Do I?

TONY

Surely you done your homework?

FELICITY

I leave that to my assistant.

TONY

It must be real tiring delegating all that work. You trust him?

FELICITY

Why do you assume it's a man?

Tony shrugs.

FELICITY

I trust my people completely, they're the best in the business. My audience deserves nothing less.

He removes a poker chip from a pocket, plays with it.

TONY

Where is your live audience?

FELICITY

New show, new format. Just the two of us, so you have the best chance to impress me. No mosquitoes, no commercial breaks, no distractions.

Tony smiles, waves at TV cameras in the walls and ceiling.

TONY

You'd be nothing without those so called mosquitoes. They make you.

FELICITY

Enough trivia. Sing us something!

TONY

I wouldn't inflict that on anyone, not even you.

FELICITY

I'll be the judge of that.

TONY

At least I know my limits.

FELICITY

What's that supposed to mean?

TONY

Why don't you sing for us?

FELICITY

Tonight isn't about me.

TONY

That'd be a change.

FELICITY

Can't you do anything of interest?

TONY

What am I, a trained monkey?

He selects two apples from the fruit bowl. Juggles them. He builds up a rhythm, performs a few tricks.

Felicity smiles, her face shines. She looks years younger.

Tony adds an orange to the mix. More tricks. He loses control, the fruit salad flies towards her.

She lifts her hands in front of her face.

THUD! The fruit smashes into a
TRANSPARENT WALL.

A four inch thick wall between them splits the room in two, and rises towards the ceiling. At the top, a one foot gap.

TONY
Out of practice.

FELICITY
Didn't you have enough free time?

TONY
I had other things on my mind.

FELICITY
Is that where you learned juggling?

TONY
Hospital.

FELICITY
Did you catch something nasty?

TONY
Yeah, a busted knee. Came back
later to amuse the other patients.
It sure helps with healing.

FELICITY
You're joking.

TONY
Very funny! Nope, look it up
yourself. Laughter heals.

FELICITY
Whatever you say.

Tony pushes the wall with all his might.

TONY
That just ain't neighborly.

FELICITY
Would you prefer a straitjacket?

TONY

Don't tell me you don't trust me?

FELICITY

With my very life!

TONY

What if we want to get amorous?

FELICITY

Aren't you assuming rather a lot?

TONY

Ain't that the point of the show?

FELICITY

You've got to earn it.

Tony knocks the wall with his knuckles.

TONY

Wouldn't think it'd stop a bullet.

FELICITY

It's also bombproof.

FLASHBACK - INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A SHORT MAN in a white blazer FIRES a Colt .45 at Felicity.

She flinches, remains seated.

After eight shots, the slide locks back, magazine empty.

The wall, peppered with cracks, survives intact.

Two ARMED GUARDS rush in, taser him. He collapses in a heap.

They remove the gun, drag him away.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

TONY

How did he get that past security?

FELICITY

Maybe it was made of plastic?

TONY

Urban myth. Bet it was good for ratings. Did you slip him the gun?

FELICITY

Don't look at me, even I'm not
allowed to bring mine in here!

TONY

You carry?

FELICITY

As long as people like you exist.

TONY

People like me? What about people
like you? Like 'You Be The Judge'?

FELICITY

I can't believe you mentioned that.

TONY

Not allowed to answer back, eh?
Can't embarrass the infamous
Felicity, can we? That's ok, you do
it pretty good all by yourself.

FLASHBACK - INT. TV STUDIO - NIGHT

A SINGER awaits judgment on the stage of a TV talent show.
Early 30s, red hair, built like a fitness model.

Behind him shines a massive banner: "You Be The Judge". A
small one underneath explains: "Where the Audience Decides".

Three JUDGES, Felicity at one end, sit opposite him. In the
background, a live STUDIO AUDIENCE, silent.

Her colleagues: an ELDERLY JUDGE, hair migrated from scalp
to chin, and a blonde KOREAN JUDGE, late 20s.

FELICITY

I must disagree. Although there's
definitely room for improvement,
I'd like to see you sing again.

The Elderly Judge shakes his head.

FELICITY

However, the audience says no, so
I'm afraid this time you miss out.

SINGER

What do you mean?

FELICITY

The audience has the final word.

SINGER

What about last night?

Felicity squirms.

FELICITY

You sang very well this evening,
and you get my wholehearted vote.

SINGER

That's not what you said last
night. You said I'd get through.

The other Judges perk up. The Audience murmurs.

FELICITY

I'm sorry you didn't make it, your
act shows promise. Please leave the
stage so the next performer can --

SINGER

Not 'til you keep your promise.

FELICITY

You're making a fool of yourself.
Please leave the stage now.

KOREAN JUDGE

(to singer)

What exactly are you talking about?

FELICITY

I don't think --

SINGER

She said I'd get through to the
next round if we ... you know.

FELICITY

That's not at all what happened,
you had far too much to drink!

SINGER

It was you draining the tequila, I
don't even like the stuff!

KOREAN JUDGE

If you ... what?

SINGER
I'll tell them.

Felicity opens her mouth, closes it.

KOREAN JUDGE
Tell them what?

FELICITY
The audience's vote is final. We
can discuss this later. Please.

SINGER
I want to sing in the next round!

Felicity silently pleads.

SINGER
She said I'd get through to the
next round if we slept together.

KOREAN JUDGE
I do not believe it.

A few BOOS from the Audience puncture the air.

FELICITY
Maybe we both had a few too many,
but making up such lies only makes
you look like a sore loser.

SINGER
My buddy saw the whole thing.

The Elderly Judge leafs through a ragged rulebook.

FELICITY
We can discuss this later, but for
now, you have to leave the stage.

SINGER
I'm not going 'til I get through to
the next round, just like you said.

The Korean Judge and Elderly Judge confer. More BOOS.

ELDERLY JUDGE
I'm sorry, but if you don't leave
now, I'll have to call security.

SINGER
Give it your best shot.

The Elderly Judge whispers into his headset.

SINGER

You won't get away with this! I'm
going to sue, you lying --

His microphone goes silent.

Two SECURITY GUARDS stride onto the stage.

SINGER

(shouts)

Touch me and you'll have a law suit
on your hands! I know my rights!

He lies down. The guards grab him by the arms and legs. He flails around, kicks one in the forearm. They retreat.

One Guard addresses him. The Judges strain to hear. The other Guard draws his taser. The Singer struggles to his feet, rushes off. The guards chase him.

The other Judges turn back to Felicity. The BOOS multiply.

Felicity jumps up. Her chair topples over. She lets out a short WHIMPER, marches off. BOOS are joined by JEERS.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

TONY

Sure am glad you put that wall up,
I feel ever so much safer.

FELICITY

That's not even remotely funny.

TONY

And his daddy was a cop.

FELICITY

I know you from somewhere. Have you
auditioned for one of my shows?

TONY

Not everyone wants to be famous.

FELICITY

I'm not in this for the fame.

TONY

Yeah, right. Anyways, I've done
some modeling, mostly magazines.

FELICITY

I thought so. I'm not good with faces, but yours I remember.

She sips her drink.

FELICITY

I do enjoy a good Perrier-Jouë.

TONY

You sure are bought and paid for.

FELICITY

As I said, no commercial breaks.

TONY

So did you do it?

FELICITY

Do what?

TONY

Trade favors.

FELICITY

Don't be ridiculous!

TONY

(grins)

I believe you! Sober as a judge.

FELICITY

Some people will say or do anything for fame! I'm a sitting duck.

TONY

I feel for you, Miss Innocent!

FELICITY

Do you have any interest in winning your freedom tonight, or did you just come along to annoy me?

TONY

After what you just done, you're lucky I came back at all.

FELICITY

Why are you complaining? I gave you a golden chance right there. Don't blame me if you couldn't take it.

He glares at her.

FELICITY

How about you make a little effort?

TONY

Ok if I call a friend?

FELICITY

What for?

TONY

That 'You Be The Judge' performance scared me. I need a chaperone.

FELICITY

Do remember you're here to romance and entertain me and my audience.

TONY

How about we dance the tango while I tell them dirty jokes?

FELICITY

Anyone can call or send a text to vote yes or no. Or cast their vote online at www.judgmentdate.com. These votes alone are your ratings. Over fifty percent, you're free. If not, well, you know how that ends. Some free advice: don't be boring!

TONY

You don't care if I'm guilty?

FELICITY

Let me guess ... you're innocent?

TONY

You really want to know?

FELICITY

Why not?

TONY

I was framed.

FELICITY

Well, why didn't you say so? What a dreadful justice system we have, locking up all these innocents!

TONY

I should have --

FELICITY

Amazing, everyone on this show is
innocent. I'm calling my senator!

TONY

I'm no killer.

FELICITY

I believe you!

TONY

Subtle as a brick.

FELICITY

Your innocence or otherwise is not
my concern. I'm not a lawyer, I'm
in show biz. Romance me, give us a
good show, and it's ...

She extends a neutral thumb, turns it up.

FELICITY

If you fail ...

Her thumb turns downwards.

He looks above her head, searches.

FELICITY

What are you looking for?

TONY

Spears dangling from the ceiling.

FELICITY

Technology has improved, I have a
remote in my purse.

TONY

I wouldn't be surprised. Judge Judy
with a black hat. Judge, jury and
executioner. Except you're not as
polite as her. Maybe you're gonna
execute me live on TV?

FELICITY

That might improve ratings.

TONY

So I have to entertain you all.
Could you be a bit more specific?

FELICITY

That's up to you. Be creative, make it interesting, make it exciting!

TONY

But what do they want? What does any audience want? You TV folks try all sorts 'til something works for a while. From what I see, nobody knows nothing.

FELICITY

Speak for yourself! Some people are consistently successful in showbiz.

TONY

Some people haven't hit one out of the ballpark in years.

FELICITY

Audiences are easily distracted. So yes, somebody knows something about showbiz. You can count on that. In fact, you can bet your life on it.

TONY

You think of that all by yourself?

FELICITY

You really do have a death wish.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

A wall of monitors captures the dining couple from various angles. Audio and video ENGINEERS toil over workstations.

DICK, mid 50s, wearing a headset, dressed in a young man's clothes, watches a close up of Tony.

JANE, mid 30s, medium height, painfully shy, plain, with a body to live for, wearing a headset, stands alone, watches.

DICK

This dude's a killer? He's smarter than most everyone in this room!

VICTORIA the intern, early 20s, flat chested, dressed as a waitress in Versace clothing, admires Dick.

DICK

Ok, get ready. This is way good practice if you ever try acting.

VICTORIA

I told you, I'm going to be like Felicity. Don't you listen? She says I got the look, she'll train me! Could you learn me how, too?

He looks her up and down.

DICK

Sorry, babe, far too busy. Remember to come back here between servings.

Dick leers at Jane. She's oblivious. Victoria glares at her.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Tony stands up, stretches.

FELICITY

What are you doing?

He slips off his dinner jacket, places it over his chair. Removes his bow tie, undoes the top button of his shirt.

TONY

Why is it so hot in here?

FELICITY

That's no excuse to be a scruff.

TONY

I heard you like a bit of rough.

FELICITY

You heard incorrectly.

She checks her watch.

FELICITY

You have under two hours to make your case.

TONY

How important is the audience vote?

FELICITY

Crucial. I always listen to them.

TONY

What if you like me but they don't?

FELICITY
Their word stands.

TONY
What if they like me but you don't?

FELICITY
Do we have to nitpick every detail?

TONY
It might not matter to you --

FELICITY
That's not very likely, is it?

TONY
What if they like me but you don't?

FELICITY
It hasn't happened yet.

TONY
What if it does?

Felicity hesitates.

FELICITY
This is their show, the audience
vote is final. So you'd better make
it interesting, hadn't you?

Victoria appears, trailed by an armed GUARD. Tony freezes.

She carries a seafood platter with vegetables. Puts it down
in front of Tony, along with some plastic cutlery.

He picks up the knife between a thumb and forefinger.

FELICITY
So you don't hurt yourself.

TONY
(to Victoria)
Sure smells good, thanks.

She nods, surprised, leaves with the guard.

FELICITY
How much better would it smell if
you weren't such a coward earlier?

FLASHBACK - INT. SPORTS COMPLEX - NIGHT

Felicity admires a LIFEGUARD at an empty swimming pool. Tony appears, in a swimming costume. The armed guard follows.

TONY

Where's the sauna?

FELICITY

I changed my mind. I thought a swim would help you work up an appetite.

Tony halts, turns to the guard, who strokes his holster.

Tony retreats until he BUMPS against the wall.

FELICITY

If you swim a length of the pool, you're free. I guarantee it.

Tony closes his eyes.

FELICITY

Dinner will be much more relaxing.

He stands motionless.

FELICITY

Swim one length for us.

FELICITY

A width? Surely you can do a width?

TONY

You'll set me free?

FELICITY

Guaranteed.

Tony creeps towards the pool's edge. His breathing speeds up. He checks the Lifeguard, slides his toes forward.

FELICITY

Hurry up! It's only water.

His eyes shoot poison.

FELICITY

My daughter can swim over a mile.

He peers into the depths, turns away.

FELICITY
We don't have all night.

Tony forces himself to face the water.

Felicity leans forward, pushes him. He tumbles into the pool with a SCREAM, thrashes around.

The Lifeguard jumps forward.

FELICITY
Give him a minute.

LIFEGUARD
I don't think he can swim.

Tony flails about, gasps for air.

LIFEGUARD
This is dangerous.

FELICITY
He's just not trying hard enough.

Tony disappears under the water. They watch him sink.

The Lifeguard dives in.

FELICITY
I said another minute!

The Lifeguard fishes him out, heaves him onto the side.

Tony CHOKES, coughs up water, sounds like a chain smoker.

Felicity turns, strolls away.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Tony reaches for a chocolate truffle.

FELICITY
Treats so early?

TONY
My future ain't exactly certain.

FELICITY
Swiss?

He opens one, smells it, dispatches it.

TONY
Belgian.
(French/Belgian accent)
Magnifique!

FELICITY
Belgium's sole claim to fame.

TONY
What about Hercule Poirot?

FELICITY
Who?

TONY
Detective Poirot? Agatha Christie?

FELICITY
Ah, yes. Weren't they married?

Tony stops chewing.

TONY
(usual accent)
He sure went quiet after she died.

Victoria enters alone with Felicity's meal and cutlery.

Tony pockets a truffle, unseen by Felicity.

Victoria puts down her offering. A mixed grill.

FELICITY
I ordered fries. Where are they?

VICTORIA
I'm not sure, I'll check.

FELICITY
You'd better.

Victoria turns, trips, recovers, hurries out.

TONY
You have to be so short with her?

FELICITY
Would you like to run this show?

TONY
Just trying to domesticate you.

FELICITY

Don't you have more important things on your mind?

TONY

There ain't nothing wrong with treating people well. Maybe it's not exciting enough for you?

FELICITY

What right do you have to lecture me, after what you've done! How about showing some respect?

TONY

There's that assumption again.

FELICITY

We already covered that. Respect!

TONY

You've got to earn it. Anyways, do you really want another yes man? I saw the others, those polite guys didn't do so well. Sure, you tried to hide the yawns, but there you were, up on your throne, always checking your watch. Some were real pretty, but tame. I watched them all, and I learned good.

Felicity reflects.

TONY

Surely you want an exciting finale?
(Irish accent)
How about we go out with a bang?

FELICITY

What do you mean?

She adjusts her headset.

FELICITY

(to Jane)

Can you check him again?

JANE (V.O.)

He's being scanned constantly.

FELICITY

(to Jane)

Are you sure it's foolproof?

JANE (V.O.)
It's from Israel.

TONY
(usual accent)
What about a death on live TV?

FELICITY
Yours or mine?

TONY
Both?

Felicity leans over, explores his side of the table.

FELICITY
Typical man, bluffing.

TONY
All hat and no cattle?

FELICITY
You hicks have a term for
everything.

TONY
And you city folk just love putting
down people you don't understand.
(formal English accent)
Would you treat me the same way if
I spoke like this?
(usual accent)
Why do you always abuse folk? Not
everyone's as strong as you!

FELICITY
Now wait a min --

Tony stands up abruptly.

TONY
Can't you just leave well enough
alone? Sooner or later you're going
to reap what you sow.

FELICITY
Calm down. They all volunteered,
nobody was forced to appear.

TONY
Why always go for the extreme?

FELICITY
We all like a bit of excitement!

TONY
One day you'll get yours.

FELICITY
Surely, that applies more to you?

TONY
Why can't you be nice like Oprah?

Felicity snorts.

FELICITY
You watch Oprah?

TONY
Ain't nothing wrong with Oprah, at least she cares about people.

Felicity shakes her head. Tony sits down.

FELICITY
Well, I never.

TONY
That sure is obvious.

FLASHBACK - INT. OFFICE - DAY

A lush office is furnished with an oak desk, straddled by a leather high back chair and a cheap office chair.

Behind the desk is Dick, hypnotized by his computer.

The door opens. In glides Felicity, sits down.

DICK
Ever heard of knocking?

FELICITY
The usual please.

Dick turns round, fills a glass with Tequila, gives her it.

DICK
I won't sugar coat it: we don't have the money for your finale.

FELICITY

Dick, I need this. Don't cut me off at the knees, we go back too far.

DICK

It's not my call. Carol just won't take the risk. A million bucks is still a lot of moola, even today.

FELICITY

Think of the ratings! Jane found a death row killer who can actually speak in complete sentences. It's never been done before on TV!

DICK

Ever asked yourself why not?

FELICITY

How can you turn down ratings? You of all people! Just give me this one. Just one more chance.

DICK

Sorry, kid, it's not up to me.

FELICITY

What if I can get the ratings without paying the ransom?

DICK

That doesn't sound fair to me.

FELICITY

I can't afford fair at the moment.

Dick considers.

DICK

No, we would look like cheapskates.

FELICITY

How's the new blonde? Have you introduced her to your wife?

Dick pauses.

FELICITY

What do I have to lose?

DICK

I'll talk to Carol.

FELICITY

You'd do the same in my position.

DICK

What's the deal with your freaky
new rating system?

FELICITY

A percentage is a far more accurate
way to measure audience approval.

DICK

Don't you think it's obvious you're
trying to camouflage low ratings?

FELICITY

You've always been jealous of my
innovations, have you? Besides, the
British have something similar: the
Audience Appreciation Index.

DICK

Whatever.

FELICITY

I so appreciate your support.

DICK

The chief police honcho says you
need three armed guards in the room
at all times. For your own safety.

FELICITY

Don't be ridiculous. That wall
survived eight bullets! One off
duty officer is more than enough.

DICK

We're not negotiating here, I'm
telling you. At least three guards
at all times, or it's finito.

FELICITY

That will ruin the sense of danger!

DICK

Don't push your luck, chica.

Felicity opens her mouth, reconsiders.

FELICITY

How did we ever get to this?

DICK

You got what you wanted, then you dumped me. Remember?

FELICITY

I miss the old days.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Victoria returns with fries. Felicity ignores her.

TONY

(to Felicity)

Thank you, they smell great!

(to Victoria)

You reckon I deserve my freedom?

Victoria looks at Felicity. She nods.

VICTORIA

If you did the crime, then you do the time. That's the law.

TONY

But what if I didn't?

VICTORIA

If a jury says you done it, then you done it.

TONY

What if they made a mistake?

VICTORIA

Mistake? This is, like, America! We are the best of the world! If you, ah, that's not good enough, then --

FELICITY

Yes, thank you, that will be all.

Victoria hurries out.

FELICITY

Tell me about yourself, apart from your obvious charm with the ladies.

TONY

(Welsh accent)

What would you like to know?

FELICITY
For a start, the accents.

TONY
(usual accent)
I like them, always have. Why
should we all talk the same?
Variety is the spice of life.

FELICITY
You have a photographic memory.

TONY
I'm pretty good with faces.

He caresses his poker chip, turns it over and over.

FELICITY
Is that why you became a gambler?

TONY
I ain't no gambler.

FELICITY
I'm sorry?

TONY
Gamblers play games they can't win.

FELICITY
And this isn't you because ... ?

TONY
I only played blackjack and poker.

FELICITY
Counting cards?

TONY
In blackjack, sure.

Felicity notices the wall has fogged up. One of her plates
rests too close. She wipes the wall clear with a napkin.

TONY
Getting steamed up over me already?

FELICITY
How long have you played blackjack?

TONY
I gave that up years ago. Boring,
and too hard playing hide and seek.

FELICITY

What?

TONY

If you win regular, you're banned.

FELICITY

Surely, they can't do that.

TONY

It's private property, so they can and do. Except in Atlantic City.

FELICITY

That's not fair! Why can't anyone count cards if they want to?

TONY

Yes indeedy! Casinos just love it when people try card counting.

Felicity frowns.

TONY

Most people who try counting get it wrong, and lose more money than usual. But a few can and do win, so the casinos ban them. No point giving money away if they don't have to. And they don't have to.

FELICITY

Sounds like they can't lose.

TONY

Now you're getting it.

(stretches)

Enough of cards. Just hearing about playing cards is almost as much fun as ... reality TV.

FELICITY

We'll discuss whatever I want us to discuss. I'm running this show, ok?

TONY

Sure ... for now.

FELICITY

What do you mean by that?

TONY

You'd prefer I make an effort to
keep things kinda interesting?

Felicity nods.

TONY

Just checking.

FELICITY

Why do they let you win at poker?

TONY

You don't play against the casino.
so they don't care who wins.

FELICITY

How do they make money out of that?

TONY

They take a piece of every pot, or
hourly fees from all the players.

FELICITY

Do you count cards at poker?

Tony snickers.

TONY

Mostly, I watch the other players.
At the highest levels, it's all
about reading people and disguising
your play. The cards hardly matter.

FELICITY

Don't be ridiculous!

TONY

In the long run, the cards even
out, but the money always ends up
with the same people.

FELICITY

Really? So skill does count.

TONY

You've got to study your opponents.
Watch how they play a strong hand,
a weak hand, how they mix it up.

Tony drops his poker chip, retrieves it.

TONY

Most players have tells, little habits that tell you what cards they have. One player always gets nervous when he's strong. Another scratches his ear when he has nothing. You gotta look and learn.

FELICITY

There's more to this than I imagined.

TONY

It's endlessly fascinating. If you spot their tells, then it's pretty much free money. It's like seeing their cards. Of course, you gotta mix up your own play so they can't figure you out. Works both ways. Another thing. If you look around the table and can't see the sucker, it's you. Change tables. Now.

He stares at her like a laser.

FELICITY

Where do you play?

TONY

Friends set up games with whales, high rollers who can't play. It's amazing how many are willing to lose four or five figures a night.

FELICITY

Thousands of dollars a night?

TONY

It's only money. Play a few times a week, you can almost live on it.

FELICITY

Only money? I'm obviously in the wrong business. Aren't you worried no one will play you after tonight?

TONY

If ... I mean, when I get out of here, there will be twice as many want to take a crack at me. There's never any shortage of rich kids willing to put Daddy's money where their mouth is. It's an expensive lesson, but I believe in education.

FELICITY
Do you play regular hours?

TONY
I hate playingindoors. Nothing beats the freedom of being out in nature. I make what I need and move on. Sometimes I take the odd job, gardening, maybe. I've travelled around Mexico and the South West.

He pronounces Mexico with an authentic accent.

FELICITY
Do you speak Spanish?

TONY
Un poco solamente.

FELICITY
What does that mean?

TONY
A little. Enough to get around.

FELICITY
Where have you been?

TONY
Here and there ... Santa Fe,
Tuscon, Lake Havasu City, Siuti --

Felicity startles.

TONY
You know it?

FELICITY
No, I thought you said something else.

He watches her. She turns away.

TONY
I had to keep moving, people thought I was cheating. I threw hands to put them off, but that only delayed things. Sometimes I ended up at the wrong end of a gun.

FELICITY
Couldn't you call the police?

TONY

Sometimes they were the police.
Even south of the border, a forty
four Magnum beats four aces.

FELICITY

How did you end up here?

TONY

Safer. Nobody cares when I win.

Felicity stares at him.

FELICITY

Do you have anyone special?

He clams up.

FELICITY

Hmmm?

TONY

Not no more.

FELICITY

What happened?

Tony resists the tears.

FLASHBACK - EXT. BEACH - DAY

UNKNOWN MAN'S POV:

A man frolics in the surf, face unseen. He splashes LINDA, attractive, Hispanic, playful, well built, a decade older. The sun reveals the years have been kind to her.

She giggles, skips away from the water. He chases. They collapse onto towels at the foot of a sand dune.

He gazes into her eyes, caresses her face. She melts.

He glances away. His other hand searches under a crumpled polo shirt. It returns with a hidden prize.

His hand leaves her face. She opens her eyes.

His other hand unfolds, reveals a small open box containing an engagement ring.

She swoons, opens her mouth. He presses a finger to her lips. She smiles, they embrace, kiss passionately.

They part, lost in each other, oblivious to the world.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

FELICITY

My viewers would like to know.

TONY

Maybe I'll tell you later.

FELICITY

Maybe you'll tell us now.

TONY

Don't rush me. Remember how you
felt when your mom left you?

His words cut like a knife. Both take a moment to recover.

She checks her watch.

FELICITY

Let's hope those skills of yours
are in good condition tonight. This
is the biggest gamble of your life.

TONY

You specialize in stating the
obvious? Why don't you tell us all
something about your past?

Her face sours.

TONY

You're not so pure. How'd you get
those debts? Not exactly popular,
neither. Skeletons in the closet?
You've got an Indian burial ground.

FELICITY

What do you --

TONY

White Trash TV Queen.

FELICITY

I'm not going to dignify that
garbage with a comment.

TONY

It was a great read. Yes indeedy!

FELICITY

Do you really think I bothered?

TONY

It was way more fun than your own effort. That just made me dizzy.

FELICITY

Dizzy?

TONY

Apache chopper has less spin. Why fight the truth? We all know it. You live off pain and suffering!

FELICITY

Not this again. You're boring me!

TONY

But you don't have to abuse them! They can't all handle it. You never wondered why you're so unpopular?

FELICITY

All my shows are amongst the highest rated in TV history.

TONY

Some of the early ones, maybe.

FELICITY

Why do you keep on about it? Enough already! Have another chocolate.

Tony reviews the range. He grabs one, unwraps, devours it.

TONY

Not bad. You should try one.

His right hand moves to his jacket pocket.

FELICITY

I'm not big on chocolate.

TONY

Please, these are real good.

She shakes her head.

TONY

I'm afraid I got to insist.

Tony lobs something up in the air, towards top of the wall.

It stretches up towards the gap just below the ceiling.

JANE (V.O.)
Get down! Under the table!

It crosses over the gap above the wall, onto the other side.

Felicity SCREAMS, hides under the table.

Tony tracks the descent ... falling ... falling ...

Felicity closes her eyes.

It lands on the floor, bounces, hits Felicity's nose. She startles, opens her eyes, rotates her head to identify it.

JANE (V.O.)
Get away, as far as you can!

Felicity turns, scurries away on her hands and knees. She knocks over her purse on the floor. The contents scatter.

She curls into the fetal position, hands over her ears.

Silence.

She unravels, turns towards the projectile.

She inches forward, investigates up close.

A chocolate truffle.

TONY
You really have to try one.

FELICITY
You bastard, you vicious bastard!

Felicity rubs her grazed knees, winces.

TONY
I only offered you a truffle.

FELICITY
You're lucky you're stuck behind
that wall, however big you are!

She scours the floor, repacks her purse.

TONY
Not much fun being scared, is it?

INT. CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Dick and Jane are glued to the monitors.

He checks a large digital panel below. Green figures: 75%.

DICK

This homie rocks! If he wins
tonight, I'm offering him a job.

Jane paces back and forth.

DICK

Don't worry, I've got a little
surprise in store for Felicity.

JANE

This is important, don't interfere!

DICK

Chill out, it's going to send
ratings through the roof! You'll be
well pleased, just wait and see.

Jane isn't convinced.

DICK

Listen ... why don't you drop by
after we're done? I could show you
a few things. After all, I made
Felicity the success she is today.

JANE

I can't, I'm busy.

A BUSTY BLONDE, late 20s, saunters by, winks at Dick.

DICK

You can lead a horse to water ...

He slides off, follows the blonde.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

TONY

What do you want in a man?

FELICITY

What do you care?

TONY
Maybe my fate depends on knowing?

She scrutinizes his face.

FELICITY
The usual, I suppose. Strong, good looking, knows how to move, can hold up his end of a conversation.

TONY
Just don't say you want a nice guy.

FELICITY
I think I've figured that out.

TONY
Well meaning mamas tell their sons to be nice and kind, and they'll get the gal. It just ain't true.

FELICITY
I don't want a selfish drunkard!

TONY
Sure, but you do like a bit of danger. You might protest loudly, but you're always attracted to bad boys. Just can't resist that edge.

FELICITY
Lucky for you, isn't it?

TONY
Me? I'm a pussy cat.

FELICITY
That's not what the files say.

JANE (V.O.)
This is standard 'pick up' stuff.

FELICITY
(to Jane)
What?

JANE (V.O.)
They teach this on the Internet.

FELICITY
Do they just?

JANE (V.O.)
He's trying to seduce you.

FELICITY
No kidding, Sherlock.

JANE (V.O.)
I'm just telling you.

FELICITY
I can look after myself, thank you.

She clears her throat.

FELICITY
My assistant tells me you can learn
this patter on the Internet.

TONY
Sure, you can, yes indeedy! Books,
too. Heck, you can even do courses!

FELICITY
Don't just recite your lines at me!

TONY
No, listen. Most men fall for that
nice guy stuff, ok? So they strike
out with women, and women miss out,
too. I was the same - hopeless.

FELICITY
What? With those baby blues?

TONY
I made all the usual mistakes.
Always complimenting a girl, doing
anything she asked. Always buying
her things, being real nice.

FELICITY
And?

TONY
Let's just be friends. I thought it
was tattooed on my forehead. Howdy,
my name is Tony and I'll be your
doormat for as long as you like.
Ask me for anything, I'll buy it.

Felicity can't repress a chuckle.

TONY

I didn't have a clue. One day, many years ago, after yet another gal yawned in my face, it hit me. Why not learn from someone who does? So I bought an online dating course.

FELICITY

You mean women fall for that stuff?

TONY

It's not about technique, it's about learning what women are really attracted to. If you don't know that, and you're not pretty or rich, or both, just stay at home.

FELICITY

Now you have women queuing up?

TONY

Not quite, but I get a helluva lot more interest than I used to. I'll never understand women, but a little bit of know-how goes a long way. Wouldn't you rather a guy had half a clue for a change?

Felicity plays with her hair.

FELICITY

Go on.

TONY

Guys always think it's easy for pretty women. They can have any man they want. But I've talked to a few, they say different. How do you deal with all the clueless, coming on to you like moths to the flame?

FELICITY

It's not easy.

TONY

Guys like what they see and don't care about the rest. How do you cope? You put up a bitch shield --

FELICITY

A what? Are you calling me a bitch?

TONY

Hold your horses. Pretty women don't have time to politely decline the attention of every chump, so they put on this act of being a bitch, so guys won't even approach. Just a look will do, they'll slink away without even trying. Sure beats having the same conversation with each loser that shows up.

FELICITY

Did you check with any real women?

TONY

Casino waitresses. They have to deal with hell. Smile and act real friendly, no matter how big a bozo is ogling their titties.

FELICITY

Language please.

TONY

From what I see, all she really wants is a guy who'll lift his gaze from her titties, I mean, rack, I mean, chest, and look her in the eye. Someone who wants to know who's behind that pretty face and who lives in that luscious body.

Felicity leans forward.

TONY

Ain't that what we all want? Someone who's interested in who we are, not just what we look like?

Felicity is spellbound.

TONY

It's even worse if you're famous - everyone wants a piece. How can you tell if someone wants to get to know you, or use you? Beats the heck out of me. I don't envy you.

Felicity slides off a shoe, glides a stocking foot forward under the table. She bumps it against the wall, startles.

FELICITY

So, Mr Know It All, what are you looking for in a woman?

TONY

Big titties and a trust account.

He chortles.

TONY

I wouldn't knock either of them, but I'm a sucker for maturity. The pretty young things are nice for a while, great for your confidence, but they haven't lived. There ain't no bigger turn on than maturity.

FELICITY

That's an uncommon view.

TONY

Even the biggest stud can only spend so long in the sack. Other things matter. Life experience, knowing how to deal with emotions. Youngsters just ain't lived long enough. It ain't their fault. I was the same when I was young and cocky. Now I'm just cocky.

FLASHBACK - INT. BAR - NIGHT

A noisy fashionable crowd. Felicity sits beside Dick.

He types on his cell phone. She writes with a fountain pen.

A Tequila bottle sits between them. She sips from a glass.

Jane touches her shoulder.

JANE

Excuse me, are you Felicity? On TV?

FELICITY

Yes, that's right. And you are ...?

JANE

I've always wanted to meet you!

FELICITY

My compliments on your good taste.
This is Dick, my ... colleague.

DICK

Hi, I'm in charge of her show.

He extends his hand to Jane. She shakes it.

JANE

(to Felicity)

Could you please sign my notebook?

FELICITY

Of course, I'd be happy to. What would you like me to write?

She takes the notebook.

Jane is fascinated by the fountain pen.

JANE

To Jane. From Felicity.

FELICITY

That's all?

Jane nods. Felicity signs it. Dick pockets his phone.

JANE

Thank you!

She gawks at Felicity. Dick checks out Jane's body.

JANE

What's your next show?

FELICITY

Sorry, I can't share that just yet.

JANE

Oh.

FELICITY

You're not with Bob, are you?

JANE

Bob?

Felicity searches her face.

FELICITY

Sorry, I'm a little paranoid. This business is so competitive, people are always out to steal my ideas.

JANE
I don't work in TV.

FELICITY
No?

JANE
I've always wanted to, but ...

FELICITY
But what?

JANE
I'm ...

FELICITY
Don't let being shy stop you! There
are many things to do behind the
scenes that are just as important
as being out in the limelight.

Dick sighs.

JANE
Really?

FELICITY
Are you a good organizer?

Jane nods.

FELICITY
Punctual?

Another nod.

FELICITY
Willing to get up early?

JANE
I've always been an early riser.

FELICITY
Married?

JANE
Not any more.

FELICITY
I've been looking for a good PA.

JANE
PA?

FELICITY
Personal Assistant.

Jane beams.

Felicity digs into her purse, extracts a business card.

FELICITY
If you want to learn from the best,
call my office for an interview.

JANE
Thank you!

DICK
The hours will be very long.

Felicity glares at him.

FELICITY
It's hard but rewarding. There's no
better way to get into showbiz.

She hands Jane her card. She takes it, opens her purse.

She removes a small business card folder, rearranges several cards to make room. She inserts Felicity's card.

DICK
You really are organized.

JANE
Alphabetical order, easier to find.

Felicity looks her up and down.

FELICITY
What's your name?

JANE
Jane.

FELICITY
You'll have to dress better if you
work for me. Do you understand?

Jane nods, adjusts her collar, studies Felicity's clothes.

FELICITY

This could be your lucky day. I
look forward to getting your call.

DICK

It was a pleasure to meet you.

Felicity and Dick both admire Jane as she leaves.

DICK

Hiring another stranger?

FELICITY

Chasing another filly?

DICK

And you're not?

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

JANE (V.O.)

Ratings are sixty five percent.

FELICITY

Interesting.

JANE (V.O.)

Tell him.

FELICITY

All in my own good time.

TONY

You gonna tell me how I'm doing?

FELICITY

Soon. Don't you love the mystery?

TONY

You're playing with my life!

FELICITY

Relax, you've got over an hour.

TONY

I sure hope there's a hell --

The transparent wall HUMS. A vertical gap appears in the middle. The two wall sections glide apart on tracks.

Tony and Felicity stare at each other.

FELICITY
(whispers to Jane)
What's happening?

JANE (V.O.)
I'm checking.

Tony looks behind Felicity, into the shadows.

TONY
This another gimmick? I head over
your side and get lead poisoning?

He explores the sides of the room, the wall tracks.

TONY
Any shooters around the corner?
It's a trap, ain't it?

Felicity is motionless. Tony leans forward.

TONY
Or maybe not.

FELICITY
Yes ... it's a trap.

TONY
Funny how things change.

FELICITY
(to Jane)
Where the hell is security?

JANE (V.O.)
I don't know. We're looking.

FELICITY
What do you mean, you don't know?

TONY
I've always wondered what it's like
on the right side of the tracks.

He springs up. She jumps.

He ambles over to her side of the room.

TONY
This could get real interesting.

FELICITY
Don't do anything stupid.

TONY
Mercy don't live on death row.

She shudders.

TONY
Still don't care if I done it?

Felicity tries to speak but cannot.

TONY
Huh?

FELICITY
(to Jane)
Call the geek.

JANE (V.O.)
Steven?

FELICITY
(to Jane)
Call him!

Tony faces her. Moves closer. He looks into her eyes.

JANE (V.O.)
He wants to be paid double.

FELICITY
Give it to him, for God's sake!
After he's closed it, fire him.

Tony moves in closer. Felicity strains her neck backwards.

JANE (V.O.)
He's watching. Now he wants triple.

FELICITY
Just pay him!

TONY
It ain't polite to be on the phone
when somebody wants to talk to you.

His hand advances, removes her headset, puts it on.

TONY
Houston, do we have contact?

He looks away.

TONY

Anybody there? Maybe they've deserted? Or have you just been talking to yourself? I guess it beats being lonely. What do you think? I'm talking to you, lady.

FELICITY

I don't know.

TONY

When I came in, I noticed you were dressed real ... conservative. Was that for me? Are you dessert?

He looks her up and down. She looks away.

He walks behind her. Stops.

He gets out a handkerchief, wipes his chin.

She twists around. She sees his handkerchief, turns back.

Her eyes fall on her plate. On her steak knife.

TONY

Not quite so confident now, are you? If I didn't know any better, I'd say you were almost ... scared.

He takes a sniff of her neck.

TONY

Hmmm.

His hands explore her hair.

TONY

Oops, missed a bit. I never knew it was dyed! Sorry, I suppose you wanted to keep that a secret.

Her head quivers.

TONY

Just for fun, let's assume I am a murderer. Can you give me one good reason why I should let you go?

FELICITY

Millions of people would miss me!

TONY

Ha! Think that's going to save you?

FELICITY

If you hurt me, you die.

TONY

Having seen the other fellas on
your show, I'm not sure I'm an odds
on favorite to get pardoned. So
what difference does it make?

FELICITY

I'll pay you.

TONY

Money. You think you can buy
anything. How much use is a stash
of cash without a pardon?

FELICITY

You've got it.

TONY

As easy as that? I'd love to
believe you, but I suspect your
offer is null and void due to you
being in fear for your life.

She closes her eyes.

TONY

We found that one good reason yet?

He leans forward until his head is in line with hers.

FELICITY

Have mercy, for God's sake. Surely
you don't get pleasure from this?

TONY

It ain't nothing to do with
pleasure. You stand accused of
being selfish beyond belief. You
profit by making misery for others,
giving no thought to anyone but
yourself. How do you plead?

FELICITY

My daughter!

TONY
Your daughter?

FELICITY
Who would look after her if I ...

TONY
Die?

She swallows.

TONY
Yes, Naomi would lose a Mom. But
would she really be any worse off?

She turns, looks him in the eye.

FELICITY
I love her more than life itself!
I've sacrificed repeatedly for her.

TONY
Have you? Like her schooling?

She turns away.

FELICITY
What about her schooling?

TONY
Why didn't you change schools?

FELICITY
Running from problems doesn't help.

Her words distract him. He reflects, recovers.

TONY
You could have easily moved her
somewhere nicer. Even her teachers
said so. Why didn't you?

She fiddles with her fingers. Her eyes return to the knife.

TONY
I didn't quite hear that. Do share.

FELICITY
I didn't have the money.

TONY
That's not what I read.

FELICITY

The others were a great deal more expensive. I'm not made of money.

TONY

No, of course you're not. We can all relate to that.

He lifts her left arm.

TONY

That's a Cartier, isn't it?

FELICITY

Quality always pays for itself.

TONY

Quality ... or luxury? Just out of interest, what car do you drive?

FELICITY

That's got nothing to do with it.

TONY

No? Toyota hatchback? Little old VW? Late model Mercedes, ain't it?

FELICITY

I've got to look the part, image is important in this business!

TONY

More important than her education?

FELICITY

That's what pays for her education!

TONY

How selfless. She thank you for making her stay and face the music?

She rocks back and forth on her chair.

TONY

How about we ask the audience?

He stares directly into a camera.

TONY

What do you good folks reckon?

Felicity bursts forward towards the knife.

Tony, too late to catch her arm, grabs her around the chest, like a car seat belt in a crash. She recoils, winded.

TONY

What were you going to do with
that? You ain't got the balls!

He reaches past her, lifts the knife. He admires its edge.

TONY

Now where were we? Ah, yes, the
audience. Think we should ask them?

Felicity rubs her ribs, winces.

TONY

That's a yes?

She shakes her head. He wipes the knife on his handkerchief.

TONY

I thought this was their show?

His hands move to her neck. He gazes straight ahead.

TONY

Not keen? Alright. I'll reserve my
final judgment ... for a while.

He slides the knife into a pocket.

TONY

I am getting really hot. You know
what would help? A beer. Not one of
them fancy imported beers, just a
good old fashioned American beer.
You know ... with a twist off cap.

He holds her head still with both hands. She trembles.

TONY

I wonder what that lover boy singer
would give to be here right now? A
chance at revenge. Should I do it?
Strike a blow for artistic dignity?

A single SOB escapes her.

TONY

Trouble is, somebody might be
watching. It probably wouldn't
improve my chances tonight.

She shakes her head once.

TONY

You're really tense, you should
take some time off after the show.
Maybe a year or two, away from TV.

He puts the headset onto the table, returns to his chair.

She picks up the headset, drops it, puts it onto her ear.

FELICITY

What the hell is taking so long?

JANE (V.O.)

I'll check with Steven.

Tony lobs the knife onto Felicity's plate. She startles.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

DICK

Listen up, peeps. If any of you
were involved with that wall coming
down, you're outta here. Got it?

Two engineers look up, stare, return to their work.

Dick turns away, struggles to conceal a smile. Jane watches.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

TONY

Was that exciting enough? You love
me yet? Even just a little bit?

Felicity ignores him, still trembling.

TONY

I believe your words were ... make
it interesting, make it exciting.

She refills her glass, quaffs it.

TONY

What say I pay you?

FELICITY

What?

TONY

You're offering to buy my freedom,
how about I pay you back?

(New Jersey accent)
I'll make you a real good offer.

FELICITY
It wouldn't make much of a show,
would it? One law for the rich,
another for the poor?

TONY
(usual accent)
Ain't that what you're offering? A
'Get Out of Jail Free' card?
Anyways, I can clear my name later.
Kind of hard to do if I'm dead.

The wall HUMS. CLICK. The two halves move together.

TONY
Parting is such sweet sorrow.

He waves at Felicity. The wall closes.

FELICITY
(to Jane)
Fire that mercenary and don't pay
him a cent.

JANE (V.O.)
You can't.

FELICITY
It's my show, I'll do what I want.

JANE (V.O.)
It's not legal.

FELICITY
What are you talking about? We
never signed anything, and ... a
verbal contract isn't worth the
paper it's written on.

JANE (V.O.)
All contracts are verbal. You mean
an oral contract.

FELICITY
What?

JANE (V.O.)
The proper term is oral contract.

FELICITY
Aren't you just full of surprises?

JANE (V.O.)
An oral contract is just as valid
as a written one. We have to pay.

FELICITY
Even though he was blackmailing me?

JANE (V.O.)
Yes.

FELICITY
I'm not convinced. I'll check with
our legal team after the show.

She and Tony lock eyes.

FELICITY
(to Jane)
Reopen the wall.

JANE (V.O.)
What?

FELICITY
You heard.

JANE (V.O.)
I'll check with Dick.

FELICITY
Just do it.

She empties her glass.

JANE (V.O.)
Dick likes it. Ratings are up to
seventy two percent.

The wall HUMS. It separates at the middle, parts.

TONY
Oh, my dear, it's been so long!

FELICITY
Do you take anything seriously?

TONY
Yeah. What kind of system is it
when only the rich can buy justice?

FELICITY

You want government to control
access to legal counsel?

TONY

No, but I can see what don't work!
How come you can buy my freedom?

FELICITY

The state is short on prison space
and funds. I offered to help out.

TONY

Bet the cops on the beat love that.

FELICITY

The cops on the beat can't see the
big picture. The state is close to
bankruptcy. Do you the total cost
for each inmate on death row?

TONY

Can't say I do.

FELICITY

Over a million dollars.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Carol, 50s, gray hair, quietly confident, RAPS on the door.

Dick looks up. She motions to him. He wanders over.

CAROL

What happened with that wall?

DICK

We're checking into it.

CAROL

It has your fingerprints all over.

DICK

Why would I do something like that?

CAROL

Let me count the reasons ...

DICK

That's crazy, I love that girl.

CAROL

It's not easy for a woman in this game. I was in her position once.

DICK

She might be in your position soon.

CAROL

If anything happens to her, it's on your watch. Remember that.

Dick is silent. Carol leaves.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Tony bends under the table to his right, returns with a green abalone decorated fountain pen.

TONY

Will you look at this? They sure made things to last way back when.

FELICITY

Where did you get that?

TONY

Under the table.

FELICITY

It must have fallen from my purse.

TONY

Finders keepers.

FELICITY

It's mine.

TONY

Prove it.

FELICITY

AJM. My grandmother's initials on the bottom. Anne Julie Macintosh.

Tony checks.

TONY

Well, I'll be a ...

FELICITY

The case is abalone, from New Zealand. She had relatives there.

TONY
Maybe you do, too?

She puts her hand out. Tony gives it up.

FELICITY
I wondered where this got to. I
haven't seen this in ages.

Tony lets out a CRY, looks up at the ceiling.

FELICITY
What's wrong?

TONY
Sorry, this whole thing is getting
to me. Have you ever looked death
in the face, up close and personal?

Felicity contracts.

TONY
It ain't easy. I try to avoid it,
but you can't hide forever. Sooner
or later, it sneaks up on you.

FELICITY
I'll take your word for it.

TONY
You know what it's like on death
row? It ain't pretty. Solitary
mostly, only see other people an
hour a day. It's a nightmare.

FELICITY
You should have thought of that
before you committed murder.

TONY
You want me to continue?

FELICITY
Please.

TONY
The cell is tiny, makes some go
crazy. You distract yourself as
much as you can, reading, planning,
Internet if you can swing it.

FELICITY
On death row?

TONY
Sure, it's banned, but if you have
the money. Then you've got the
uncertainty. You never know when.

FELICITY
How long usually, before ... ?

TONY
Don't you know this stuff already?

FELICITY
For the audience, please.

TONY
It can take years. Most get several
appeals, some wait for decades.
Others die waiting their turn.

FELICITY
You appealed, of course.

TONY
Tried several times. Didn't make no
difference. Not allowed any more.

FELICITY
So tell the audience when ...

Tony tears up.

TONY
Next month.

They share the silence.

FELICITY
Do you believe in God?

TONY
I don't know. I'd sure like to. I'm
no different from anyone else. I'd
like to meet my maker, but not yet.

Felicity softens. She points the pen at him.

FELICITY
Have you ever used one of these?

Tony digs in his jacket, extracts a royal blue fountain pen.
Writes on the menu. Elegant strokes from another age.

"Upset, upset, read all about it. Pen beats Sword!"

She smiles. He extracts his handkerchief, dries his eyes.

FELICITY

How did you get it past security?

TONY

I was real devious. I showed it to them. Guess they didn't expect the wall to come down. I was thinking of bringing a sword, but ...

Felicity meets his eyes. She returns to his writing.

FELICITY

Did you practice that in prison?

TONY

Sure is amazing what you can do with a little time on your hands.

FELICITY

Time. I remember that. There isn't so much of it in my game. Everyone is always busy and overworked.

TONY

People wonder why they get sick and marriages break up. Nobody takes the time any more to slow down and enjoy life. Kind of old fashioned.

Victoria and guard return. She clears away dinner. Tony eyes the guard's holstered Glock 23.

TONY

Compliments to the chef.

FELICITY

(to the guard)

I'll deal with you later.

Victoria and the guard leave.

FELICITY

I almost envy you, with all that time. No meetings, no deadlines, no stress worrying if your job --

TONY

Anytime you want to trade places.

FELICITY

I need to slow down. I hardly see
Naomi these days.

TONY

Nobody's gonna do it for you.

Tony admires his pen.

TONY

Older than me, still writes fine.

FELICITY

Mine's an antique.

TONY

Wait, there's something wrong here.
We ain't fighting no more!

Felicity smiles.

TONY

You're not all bad, you know that?

FELICITY

Is that an attempt at a compliment?

TONY

Fancy sharing an interest in these
old relics. I'd never have guessed
you were into penology.

FELICITY

I've always loved them.

Tony chuckles.

FELICITY

Why is that funny?

TONY

Penology is about how best to deal
with crime and criminals.

An upbeat new tune lightens the mood.

FELICITY

We used to play this when I was a
girl. It always takes me back.

TONY

Happier days?

FELICITY
Simpler days.

Tony rises, extends his hand towards her.

TONY
May I have the pleasure, ma'am?

Felicity stands, takes his hand.

He guides her away from the table. They dance. He leads with confidence, spins her gently, pulls her in. She sighs.

TONY
Not bad.

He whispers in her ear. She smiles.

Victoria enters, clears away dinner.

JANE (V.O.)
There's a problem.

FELICITY
Not now.

JANE (V.O.)
Yes, now.

Felicity stops, turns away from Tony.

FELICITY
Can't you see what's happening?

JANE (V.O.)
But --

Felicity takes off the headset, throws it onto the table.

Tony takes her in his arms, leads her around the floor.

TONY
Now, where were we?

He whispers to her head on. He moves closer. Her eyes widen.

He moves closer. Stops dancing. She looks at his lips. He pauses, smiles, whiskers her off in another direction.

She slaps his back, closes her eyes, relaxes.

FLASHBACK - INT. JAIL - NIGHT

A fluorescent ceiling light barely illuminates a dingy cell.

A plain wooden table separates Tony from a male INTERVIEWER, serious, mid 40s, plainly dressed. Both are seated.

An armed GUARD watches. A mounted video camera records.

INTERVIEWER

Why do you want to be on the show?

TONY

I have this unnatural desire to live a little longer. Yes indeedy.

INTERVIEWER

Anything else?

TONY

I want to know if she can handle a guy who doesn't roll over and beg. One who might be as smart as her.

INTERVIEWER

That would be you?

TONY

You're pretty smart, yourself!

INTERVIEWER

Why would Felicity choose you?

TONY

I've got something upstairs. I'm not your typical dumb jailbird. She could use a challenge instead of the usual doormats. Keep things interesting, good for ratings.

INTERVIEWER

Anything else?

TONY

Sure there is. I prefer older women. The young gals look good, but they get boring real quick. They're all the same after a while. No depth. Women of a certain ... maturity, they've lived a little, been round the block a few times.

He addresses the video camera.

TONY

That's sexy. That's what I want.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A new tune. Felicity rests her head on Tony's shoulder, eyes closed. She moves his hand down to her butt.

He stops, shakes his head.

TONY

It's way too soon, I can't do this.

He returns to his chair. Felicity stands alone.

FELICITY

You really need some dance lesson.

She drifts back, sits down, replaces the headset.

FELICITY

So what was so important that it
couldn't wait a few minutes?

JANE (V.O.)

Dick says never remove the headset
again. And ...

FELICITY

And?

JANE (V.O.)

Carol won't pay.

FELICITY

What? Get her on the line.

JANE (V.O.)

She's in a meeting.

FELICITY

Don't try that on me. Get her now.

JANE (V.O.)

She really is in a meeting.

FELICITY

She can't do that! Not now.

JANE (V.O.)

You have to pay. You can afford it.

Victoria brings vanilla ice cream. She sets it down, leaves.

Felicity picks up her spoon, replaces it on the table.

JANE (V.O.)
Ratings are forty percent. Do
something!

Felicity looks around in a daze.

TONY
What's up?

She refills her glass to the brim, takes a gulp.

FELICITY
Ratings are down to forty percent.

Tony flops back in his chair.

TONY
I guess nobody wants a happy
ending. What's it gonna take to
impress this audience of yours?

Victoria returns, gives Tony two plates of trifle.

TONY
Thanks.

FELICITY
What in the world is that?

TONY
(Cockney accent)
Trifle. The British Empire's
greatest gift to world cuisine.

He admires the feast. Victoria leaves.

TONY
(usual accent)
Eat up, or it'll get cold.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Dick studies the ratings meter: 39%. The digits are red.

Victoria tramps in.

VICTORIA
I was hoping they'd get together.

DICK

Why do you care? You're her slave!

VICTORIA

She's under pressure, that's all.

DICK

Can't you see she's using you?

VICTORIA

How would you know? You're just
jealous of all her success!

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Tony grabs a spoon without looking, knocks it to the floor.

He reaches down to his right, picks it up, CRIES OUT.

FELICITY

What's up?

TONY

Nothing much. Just a little love
bite I got in a fight.

FELICITY

Our worst drug problem isn't heroin
or cocaine, it's testosterone.

TONY

I happened to be helping someone!

FELICITY

Did you help him to the hospital?

TONY

I should have helped him to a
boxing ring and taught him some
moves. He looked at a waitress the
wrong way. His timing wasn't great,
the boyfriend was watching.

FELICITY

You men are so possessive.

He takes a mouthful of trifle, savors it.

FELICITY

I'm listening.

TONY

Hold your horses. Whatever happened
to slow down and smell the roses?

FLASHBACK - INT. CASINO - NIGHT

Tony sits at a poker table. Next to him is a tattooed ANGRY MAN, 30s, and PETER, skinny, mid 40s, bespectacled.

A skimpily clad WAITRESS delivers vodka on the rocks to the Angry Man. Peter admires her. The male DEALER watches him.

ANGRY MAN

That's enough, little man.

PETER

What?

The Angry Man rises up, towers over him.

TONY

Leave it, he's not worth your time.

ANGRY MAN

(eyes still on Peter)

This is between me and him.

TONY

Let it go, he's no threat.

The Angry Man spins around, slashes at Tony with a knife. He springs back but gets caught. He YELPS, grabs his right arm.

The Dealer presses the silent alarm button under the table.

ANGRY MAN

Any more helpful advice?

They circle each other.

TONY

I just want to play some poker. A fast game is a good game, right?

The Angry Man jabs at him. Tony evades the blade.

Two GUARDS appear next to Tony, with tasers drawn.

ANGRY MAN

Sorry, we started without you.

He lunges for one. Both guards fire. Two darts bury themselves into his torso. He collapses in convulsions.

A guard kicks away the knife. They drag him off.

PETER

You become forever responsible for
that which you tame.

FELICITY (PRELAP)

What did you say?

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

TONY

Made no sense to me, neither.

She sits up straight, puts down her spoon.

TONY

He bought me a drink and we shot
the breeze for a while. He was a
real strange one, yes indeedy.

FELICITY

Where was this?

TONY

Reno.

FELICITY

What did you say he looked like?

TONY

I didn't. Average height, pretty
weedy, dreadful thick glasses,
kinda hopeless look in his eyes.

FELICITY

Did he say anything else unusual?

TONY

Sure, plenty. Mostly from a book
called 'the Little Prince'. It was
out there, some weird kid planet
hopping, meeting other weird folk.

FELICITY

What was his name?

TONY

Peter. We used to hit the sauna
together. He was an awful player,
passive and scared. Always hoped
for a big win, always booked a

(MORE)

TONY (cont'd)
steady loss. Every weekend he gave
away his allowance, like clockwork.

FELICITY
Allowance?

TONY
His wife gave him money, he'd just
drink and gamble it away.

FELICITY
His wife?

Tony downs another dollop of trifle.

TONY
He didn't love her, just kinda
drifted into it. She fell for him,
had money, he didn't mind. Said his
one true love left him as a kid.

FELICITY
That wasn't my fault! My father got
a job here and we had to move!

TONY
You're kidding me.

She digs into her purse, retrieves a worn copy of 'the Little Prince'. She offers it to Tony. He leafs through it.

TONY
Yep, that's it. Said you planned to
meet up five years later. He showed
but she - you - didn't. After that,
he just gave up.

FELICITY
I forgot! Oh, my God, I forgot!

She breaks down. Sobs.

TONY
Hey, lady, it ain't the end of the
world. I got his address.

FELICITY
Where? Where is he?

TONY
He gave me a card. He's in Dixie.

FELICITY
You mean the South?

TONY
The very same.

FELICITY
You've got to tell me.

TONY
You have a little something I'd like, too. Maybe we can all get what we want out of this?

FELICITY
Oh, God, yes!

TONY
What about the ratings?

FELICITY
I'm sure my audience will be ecstatic if I can find him again.

JANE (V.O.)
The network won't pay, remember?

FELICITY
(to Jane)
We'll deal with that later.

JANE (V.O.)
But --

FELICITY
(to Jane)
We'll deal with that later!
(to Tony)
When did you last see him?

TONY
A few years back. Then we split.

FELICITY
Why? What happened?

FLASHBACK - INT. SAUNA - DAY

Tony and Peter are wrapped in towels below the waist.

TONY

Come on, what've you got to lose?

PETER

I couldn't bear it again. She's twice already broken my heart.

TONY

But you keep saying she's your soul mate! Ain't that worth going after?

PETER

I'd rather not risk yet more pain.

TONY

But you're already miserable!

PETER

My wife treats me very well. She gives me --

TONY

No, she don't, you're always saying how she puts you down in public!

PETER

At least I know where I stand.

Tony shakes him by the shoulders.

TONY

Whatever happened to all that 'better to have loved and lost' stuff? Do you believe any of it?

PETER

It wouldn't do any good, she missed our sacred rendezvous. Even if I wanted to, how would I find her?

TONY

There are plenty ways. Why not take your pocket money and hire a PI?

PETER

I couldn't. They're shifty and grubby, going through garbage cans.

TONY

I don't get you. All that romantic talk, poems and stuff, and what do you actually do? Squat! What about that dream wedding of yours?

PETER

Yes, that would be something. The service at Notre Dame, in the Paris spring, reception under the --

FELICITY (PRELAP)

Paris? We had planned on Hawaii.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

TONY

Yes, that's right. Paris was the second honeymoon.

FELICITY

It was Maui, always Maui.

TONY

Sure, the Islands. He was all talk and no action, so I got tired --

FELICITY

He wouldn't have forgotten Maui!

TONY

We had put back a few. Anyways, I got tired of trying to --

FELICITY

Where was his birthmark?

Tony falters.

TONY

Said he had it removed years ago.

FELICITY

Where was the scar?

TONY

The scar was ...

Tony's eyes flicker around, searching.

FELICITY

Where's your photographic memory?

TONY

What can I say? You got me.

FELICITY
What? WHAT?

She slaps him across the face, backs off.

His poker chip falls to the floor.

FELICITY
You absolute ...

Tony rubs his face.

TONY
And I'm violent and dangerous?

Felicity snatches her purse, bounds up.

She marches towards the exit, and out of sight.

FELICITY (O.S.)
(to Jane)
Let me out.

JANE (V.O.)
What?

FELICITY (O.S.)
It's over, I'm done.

JANE (V.O.)
There's still another half hour.

FELICITY (O.S.)
How dare he do that to me? On live
TV! This is my show! It's over. He
spent the last ten minutes lying!

TONY
We're all liars, and anyone who
says otherwise --

FELICITY (O.S.)
I am NOT a liar!

TONY
Never played hard to get?

She reappears.

FELICITY
That's completely different!

TONY

Did you ever let someone down
gently when ... no, scratch that.

FELICITY

Why did you do that? Why?

TONY

Ratings were way down. I gotta do
something! I'm sure you'd do the
same if you were in my shoes.

FELICITY

You've just signed your own death
warrant.

She turns back towards the exit.

TONY

You're bluffing.

FELICITY

You think so?

She turns, rushes towards him. She raises her hands to scratch him. He stands tall. She stops in her tracks.

FELICITY

I'm going to get a ring side seat
to watch you fry, and I'm going to
enjoy every minute. In fact, I'm
going to buy the DVD as well, so I
can relive it all in the comfort of
my own home, again and again.

TONY

Oh, don't be like that. It's just a
lovers' tiff. We still have some
time. Quit now, your career's over.
I never figured you'd be a quitter.

She stands immobile, looks at him, the door, back at him.

DICK (V.O.)

This is great! Sure, it was below
the belt, but the show must go on!
Don't give him the satisfaction.
That'd be mucho unprofessional.

FELICITY

Unprofessional?! Let's talk about
unprofessional, shall we? You try
to ruin me while I'm out here live.

DICK (V.O.)
That wasn't --

FELICITY
No, it never is. Let me guess,
priming your new bimbo? The one
you're sleeping with? Aren't you
getting enough sleep at home, Dick?

DICK (V.O.)
Be careful what you're saying.

FELICITY
Don't worry, I won't tell a soul.
Dick by name, Dick by nature.

She spins around, strides back towards Tony.

FELICITY
We're not continuing until you
apologize for what you just did.

TONY
Ever hear of the Golden Rule?

FELICITY
I don't give a shit about any of
your folksy homespun good old boy
country rules. Apologize! Now!

Silence. She reverses, heads for the exit.

TONY
Sorry. I didn't mean to hurt you.

Felicity stops.

TONY
No, that ain't true, I did. Listen,
lady, you had that coming. Anyways,
I reckon it's good for ratings.

Felicity resumes her departure.

Tony dashes after her, blocks her path.

He gets down on one knee, takes her hand. She rips it away.
He clasps his hands together, looks up at her.

TONY
I do hereby solemnly and sincerely
apologize for deliberately
humiliating you on live TV.

She sniffs.

TONY

Guess you can't handle someone fighting back. You just want us all to roll over. First sign of any resistance, you scamper away with your tail between your legs.

FELICITY

You don't sound worried. Why aren't you worried? You're on death row.

TONY

I figure you'll keep going. I read the papers, I ain't the only one here with something to lose.

FELICITY

Don't believe everything you read.

TONY

Or see on TV.

JANE (V.O.)

Ratings are eighty four percent.

Felicity makes a beeline for her chair, sits down, checks her watch. She refills her glass, takes a sip.

FELICITY

Ratings are down, you have half an hour. Let's see you get out of this one! This is your last chance.

FLASHBACK - INT. DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

A large mirror dominates the room, facing a plush high back chair. Enthroned is Felicity.

Her dressing table supports a hyperactive caged blue Macaw, and a half empty bottle of Tequila. She sips from a glass.

Cramped in a corner on a cheap chair is Jane.

Plugged into the wall next to her is Felicity's cell phone.

FELICITY

Is it fully charged yet?

Jane picks up the phone.

JANE
Five minutes.

FELICITY
When it's done, put it in the box.

Jane examines the phone.

Felicity applies her make up.

FELICITY
In the box.

Jane nods, puts down the phone.

FELICITY
Don't be so nervous. It sounds like
this one's still full of life, and
has more than enough motivation.

She waves the Tequila bottle at Jane, who shakes her head.

FELICITY
You need to relax a little.

JANE
I need a clear head tonight.

Felicity opens a packet of birdseed.

JANE
I'll do that.

FELICITY
No, leave it.
(to the bird)
Don't worry, Antoine, Mommy will be
back before you notice I'm gone.

She fills a plate, pops it into the cage.

FELICITY
How did you get to be so beautiful?
(to Jane)
You should buy one. They're the
most loving creatures. So faithful.

Felicity offers her finger to the bird. It scuttles away.

Dick rushes past the door. He stops, pokes his head in.

DICK

Go for gold! We'll all be watching.

He reaches across, whispers into Felicity's ear.

DICK

This is your last chance.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Victoria arrives with coffee for Felicity.

TONY

You have any Earl Grey tea please?

VICTORIA

Go get it yourself.

She turns to leave.

FELICITY

What did you say?

VICTORIA

(to Tony)

I'm not getting you anything more
after what you just did to her!

TONY

I'm only trying to entertain.

VICTORIA

How dare you treat her like that!

Felicity smiles, settles back in her chair.

TONY

You know how she earns her living?

VICTORIA

She's Felicity! Everyone knows how
good she is. She's famous!

TONY

Is that all that matters?

VICTORIA

Just cos you never did anything
famous in your life, you loser!

TONY
Your logic leaves me speechless.

VICTORIA
I hope they hang you good and --

FELICITY
That's enough now. Get him the tea.

Victoria fumes, hesitates, storms out.

FELICITY
Another success with the ladies.

Tony ignores her.

FELICITY
How will you be executed?

TONY
Didn't you look it up already?
Sorry, your female assistant.

FELICITY
She did, but I'm sure our audience
would like to hear the details.

TONY
I'm not so sure.

FELICITY
If you please, the execution.

Tony retrieves his poker chip from the floor.

FELICITY
I'm waiting.

He shakes his head.

TONY
Lethal injection, or gas if you
have a thing about needles.

FELICITY
What a shame, I thought they were
going to fry you up with some
grits. Why do they have to take all
the fun out of these things?

TONY
You ever seen anyone executed? I
did, hope to God I don't see
(MORE)

TONY (cont'd)
another. Talk about cruel and unusual punishment. Yes indeedy.

FELICITY
Killing an innocent person wasn't?

TONY
Judge not, lest ye be judged. You keep making that assumption.

FELICITY
Didn't we agree the courts had already settled that?

Victoria returns with a tea tray. It supports an ornate china cup, teapot, bowl of sugar, and jug of milk.

TONY
Thank you again.

She leaves. Tony ladles half a spoonful of sugar into his cup, adds milk. He lifts it towards his mouth.

FELICITY
Don't take too long, we have one more surprise visit this evening.

Tony stops, cup half way up.

FELICITY
Another guaranteed 'Get Out of Jail Free' card for you to earn.

Tony puts the cup down. His hand trembles.

TONY
I'll see you when you get back.

FELICITY
It's not optional.

TONY
You go enjoy it for me. I'm not doing any more of your tests.

FELICITY
Not even to save your life?

TONY
You just don't know when to call it quits. How would you feel if someone you loved was threatened?

FELICITY

Another hypothetical question.

TONY

How about your daughter?

FELICITY

What do you mean?

TONY

It might grow a little compassion
in that empty hole in your chest.

Felicity tears open the Samsung box on the table, extracts a phone, turns it on.

FELICITY

Come on, come on.

It beeps. The screen lights up. She makes a call. No answer.

She makes another call. Same result.

FELICITY

What have you done?

TONY

Me? I been here all night with you!

She keys another number.

SECURITY OPERATOR (V.O.)

Bast Security, can I help you?

FELICITY

This is Felicity. Can you check my
house? I can't get hold of Naomi!

SECURITY OPERATOR (V.O.)

Sorry, the links are down. We'll
get right onto it when the line's
up again. Might be a while, though.

FELICITY

You're joking!

SECURITY OPERATOR (V.O.)

No, ma'am. Sorry, ma'am.

She hangs up, puts the phone down. Stands up.

TONY

How long you had your sitter?

FELICITY

What?

TONY

How long you had your sitter?

FELICITY

Three years, maybe four.

TONY

They ever go out unexpectedly?

FELICITY

I expressly forbade it.

TONY

Not never, not even once?

She pauses.

FELICITY

Once, several months ago.

TONY

Maybe this is the second time?

She rocks back and forth on her heels.

TONY

How about we believe that for now?

The phone rings: old fashioned ring tone from decades ago.

INT. SECURITY FIRM - NIGHT

Video screens monitor rooms in Felicity's house. All but the living room are immaculate, more for show than living in.

A bodybuilding magazine lies open on the desk.

A young SECURITY OPERATOR with a huge belly is on the phone.

FELICITY (V.O.)

Yes?

SECURITY OPERATOR

Is that Felicity?

FELICITY

Yes, yes!

SECURITY OPERATOR

The line's up again. Your house is empty. A few dirty plates, some clothes, but nobody home.

FELICITY (V.O.)

Have you checked every room?

SECURITY OPERATOR

Yes, ma'am, several times.

CLICK.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Felicity calls another number.

POLICEMAN (V.O.)

Hello?

FELICITY

My daughter is missing! I called security but the house is empty!

POLICEMAN (V.O.)

This is a private line. Who is this? How did you get hold --

FELICITY

This is Felicity, and my daughter is missing. You've got to find her!

A sigh from the other end of the line.

POLICEMAN (V.O.)

How long has she been gone?

FELICITY

I don't know, I only just called home. Perhaps one or two hours?

POLICEMAN (V.O.)

Have you any idea how many kids go AWOL for a few hours?

FELICITY

You've got to go and look for her!

POLICEMAN (V.O.)
There's really no point looking
yet. She'll probably be home soon.

FELICITY
You wouldn't say that if it was
your child! I have to find her!

POLICEMAN (V.O.)
Please calm down, be patient. Call
back if she's not home by midnight.

FELICITY
What if she's in danger? All alone?
(turns to Tony)
The world's full of sick people!

POLICEMAN (V.O.)
Do you have a recent photo?

FELICITY
Come and get it as soon as you can.

POLICEMAN (V.O.)
I'll send someone over.

CLICK. Felicity produces a small photo from her purse.

TONY
Sit, she'll probably show up soon.

FELICITY
Do you have children?

TONY
Not that I know of.

FELICITY
Then why don't you just shut up!

TONY
Sure, you're right. Work yourself
up into a frenzy, that'll help.

Felicity drops her head into her hands. She weeps.

TONY
She'll be ok, you'll see.

He walks around behind her, massages her neck.

TONY
Tell me about her.

FELICITY
She's the sweetest thing you ever saw. She has short brown hair and the cutest smile. If anything happened to her, I'd never ...

Tony strokes her hair. She swings around to face him.

FELICITY
If you're behind this, if she gets hurt, I swear I'll kill you.

TONY
Relax, they probably went to the movies. You know how kids are.

FELICITY
Why would I trust anything you say?

TONY
Don't tell me you don't trust a drifter gambler on death row?

FOOTSTEPS. The guard scampers in.

GUARD
You got that photo I can give them?

Tony steals a glimpse of his gun.

Felicity pushes the photo onto the guard.

FELICITY
I'm coming with you.

GUARD
Sorry, I can't let you leave.

FELICITY
I can't do anything here!

Felicity pushes past him. He darts back in front of her. They collide.

Tony gets up.

GUARD
You have to stay here, ma'am.

TONY
Be gentle with her.

She pushes the guard. He grabs her hands, resists.

TONY
Hey, buddy, take it easy.

GUARD
Keep out of this.

TONY
She's been under a lot of pressure.

The guard turns towards him, unlocks his holster.

GUARD
I'm telling you for the last time!

Tony puts his hands up, sits down.

Felicity grabs the gun. The guard spins around.

FELICITY
On the floor!

GUARD
Listen, lady, I got no beef --

FELICITY
On the floor! Face down!

The guard bends down, does as he's told.

FELICITY
Turn around, face him. You two
should get on well together.

The guard scrambles, turns himself around.

Felicity turns the gun on Tony.

FELICITY
Put your hands in the air.

TONY
That's such a cliche.

FELICITY
Just do it!

Tony obeys.

The guard hiccups.

Felicity turns to him.

FELICITY
Stop that!

GUARD
I can't help it.

FELICITY
Where the hell were you when the
wall came down?

GUARD
The door jammed, I couldn't get in.

FELICITY
So you just stood there looking
stupid?

GUARD
I asked, but they couldn't open it.

FELICITY
Who did you ask?

GUARD
Ah ... I can't remember.

FELICITY
Jesus Christ!

He hiccups.

FELICITY
Do you always do that?

GUARD
Only under stress.

FELICITY
Great. Why didn't you tell us?

GUARD
I needed the job.

JANE (V.O.)
Give him back the gun.

FELICITY
You can shut up, too.

Another hiccup.

JANE (V.O.)
We'll get fired!

FELICITY
Ha!

JANE (V.O.)
Somebody could get hurt.

FELICITY
I want my daughter back.

Felicity grabs a look at the table, back at Tony.

She feels for her glass, eyes only leaving him for moments.

DICK (V.O.)
Felicity, this has to stop.

FELICITY
Isn't it helping ratings?

DICK (V.O.)
The network would be liable.

FELICITY
He's kidnapped my daughter and
nobody is doing anything about it!

DICK (V.O.)
We don't really know he did it.

FELICITY
Who else could it be?

DICK (V.O.)
Just chill for a moment, will you?

Felicity knocks her drink over, curses. Locates the chair with her other hand, backs into it.

FELICITY
Remember that newsreader who shot
herself on live TV?

DICK (V.O.)
You don't have the cojones!

FELICITY
Not me, you idiot. Him.

Tony inches forward.

DICK (V.O.)

Put the gun down, and I'll get the cops to start looking pronto.

FELICITY

Why don't I save everyone the trouble? They've already paid for these bullets. How about it?

CAROL (V.O.)

Felicity, you're doing wonderfully tonight. Just great. I'd like to offer you a new show next season.

FELICITY

After you sabotaged me earlier?

CAROL (V.O.)

We don't need to pay that money. Ratings are up to eighty seven percent. You did that all by yourself. He's not worth saving.

FELICITY

Finally, somebody's talking sense! How do I know you're not lying?

CAROL (V.O.)

It's all about ratings, remember?

Tony creeps forward.

FELICITY

(to Tony)

Get back! You don't want to try me!

Tony steps backwards.

FELICITY

(to Carol)

Very well, you have a deal.

CAROL (V.O.)

Good. I'll put Jane back --

FELICITY

Wait a minute! You cut me loose when ratings had collapsed!

CAROL (V.O.)

This isn't the time to argue. Do you want your own show or not?

TONY
Whatever they're offering, take it.

Felicity racks the gun. A round of ammo flies to the right.
She follows its descent to the floor.

JANE (V.O.)
You've got what you want, now stop!

FELICITY
Have I?

JANE (V.O.)
Please! I can't take this any more!

FELICITY
Why am I surrounded by weaklings?

She wrenches off the headset, discards it.

FELICITY
(to Tony)
I don't believe a single word
you've said all evening.

She creeps towards him. Sweat drips down his nose.

FELICITY
I think it would be best for all
concerned if your sorry life ends
right here. Tonight. On live TV.

Another step. The gun is within touching distance.

He appears calm. She shakes.

She brings her right hand up to join the left.

TONY
Don't forget the safety catch.

FELICITY
Nice try, Glocks don't have them.

TONY
But you write with a fountain pen!

FELICITY
I'm not going to stand here and
argue the merits --

Tony shifts his head to his right, out of the line of fire.
His hands swing inwards, converge upon the gun. He swivels
to his left, yanking Felicity forward. She SCREAMS.

Tony twists their hands, rotating the gun away from them. Another SHRIEK, she releases it, falls to the floor.

It's over in a few seconds.

Tony adjusts his grip on the gun, redirects it at her.

TONY
On your front. Now.

Felicity breaks into tears.

TONY
Do it!

She does it. He aims the gun at the guard.

TONY
Get up real slow and put your hands
on your head.

No movement.

GUARD
Me?

TONY
Yes, you, sunshine.

The guard puts his hands on his head, tries to get up.

He fails.

TONY
Get up, THEN hands on your head.

The guard scrambles up to face Tony. Raises his hands onto his head. Hiccups.

TONY
Someone had to stop her.

The guard nods. Tony's eyes dart around the room.

His gaze returns to the guard.

TONY
I'm going to give you back the gun.

The guard looks confused. The penny drops. He nods.

TONY
Then you take her to her chair.

The guard nods.

Tony lowers the gun. He presses the magazine release catch.

He extracts the magazine, sets it down on the table.

He turns the gun on its left side, racks it. The final cartridge flies into the air. He catches it on the way down.

Another hiccup.

Tony bends down to pick up the cartridge Felicity ejected. His eyes remain fixed on the guard.

He rotates the gun so it points into empty space, holds it out in front. The guard extends both hands, takes it.

He looks at it, up at Tony, points the gun at him.

Tony picks up the magazine, waves it.

He hands it to the guard, then the loose rounds.

The guard lowers the gun. Tony sits down in Felicity's seat.

The guard pushes the loose rounds into the magazine. He inserts it into the gun, racks it, redirects it at Tony.

They stare at each other. The guard hiccups.

He lowers the gun, returns it to his holster. Eyes Tony.

He helps Felicity to her feet, guides her to the empty seat.

Having swapped seats, Tony towers over her.

He wipes up the spilled drink on the table with a napkin.

He recharges her glass, pushes it across the table.

GUARD
You ok, ma'am?

He hands her the glass. Felicity holds it with both hands.

GUARD
Drink.

She drinks.

Tony bends down, retrieves the headset, slides it onto the table. He places his poker chip into a trouser pocket.

The guard stands behind Felicity. He watches Tony.

Her phone rings. She ignores it. Tony snaps his fingers.

She looks up at him. The phone. Grabs it, answers.

FELICITY

Yes?

SECURITY OPERATOR (V.O.)

Is that Felicity?

FELICITY

Yes. Who is this?

SECURITY OPERATOR (V.O.)

Bast Security. We have some good news for you. They just got home.

FELICITY

Put her on!

SECURITY OPERATOR (V.O.)

We can't, we're not at your house.

Felicity hangs up, hits a speed dial number.

NAOMI (V.O.)

Hi, Mom.

FELICITY

Thank God you're safe! Where were you? I was scared to death.

NAOMI (V.O.)

Why? We went to the movies.

FELICITY

Why didn't you let me know?

NAOMI (V.O.)

Um ... 'cos you told us to go?

FELICITY

No, I didn't. When?

NAOMI (V.O.)

You texted me.

FELICITY

When?

NAOMI (V.O.)

(reads)

Why don't you go see that movie?

Felicity's arm drops onto a knee.

NAOMI (V.O.)

Mom? Are you still there?

She raises the phone to her ear.

FELICITY

I don't ... I don't remember.

She squints at the screen, presses it several times.

Tony reaches across the table for his glass and bottle.

FELICITY

(reads)

Why don't you go see that movie?

NAOMI (V.O.)

It's ok, Mom, you're just getting old. Can I go? There's ice cream.

FELICITY

I don't ... ah ... yes, you can go.
I love you, Naomi, you know that?

CLICK. She puts the phone down.

GUARD

You want me to stay with you?

FELICITY

No, I'm alright.

GUARD

You sure? You've had quite a shock.

FELICITY

I'm fine. Thank you. Thank you.

She smiles at him. He leaves.

Felicity breaks down.

TONY
It's ok, she's safe.

She looks up at him.

TONY
Naomi is fine.

FELICITY
It's not just that.

TONY
What?

FELICITY
The network broke their promise.
They won't pay for your freedom.

TONY
You're kidding. No, you're not.

FELICITY
I'm sorry.

TONY
So this whole evening has been a
farce, nothing but a desperate
attempt to save your own butt?

FELICITY
They only told me half way though,
after we finished dancing!

TONY
I knew something was wrong.

FELICITY
I didn't mean this to happen! They
double crossed me as much as you.

TONY
You on death row, too, huh?

FELICITY
I'd buy you out if I could. But the
crash. I don't have the money.

Tony buries his head in his hands.

TONY
Borrow it.

FELICITY

What?

TONY

I can pay you back. It'll take a year or two, but with the action I get, you'll be fine. I'll pay you fifteen percent a year interest. You'll even make a nice profit.

FELICITY

Who's going to lend me a million dollars at my age?

TONY

Mortgage your house.

FELICITY

I can't do that. There are debts.

TONY

Can't or won't?

FELICITY

I don't have ... many years left. There are too many younger prettier models snapping at my heels. I can't put my future up for grabs.

TONY

Why does any of this surprise me?

Felicity reaches out to touch him. He moves out of reach.

FELICITY

I'd pay if I had the money.

TONY

Easy to say when you don't.

FELICITY

I'm sorry, I really am.

TONY

We had something tonight.

Felicity looks away.

TONY

You know I can make the money at poker. What's the problem?

Felicity drains her drink.

Tony sighs.

TONY
I'm sorry. You leave me no choice.

FELICITY
What?

TONY
I don't need your money no more.

FELICITY
Since when?

TONY
Since you claimed the fountain pen.

FELICITY
Who cares about the fountain pen?

TONY
Remember you asked if I had someone special in my life?

FELICITY
Yes.

She pours another drink, lifts it to her mouth.

TONY
I had someone a couple of years back. A real sweetie. Her name was Linda ...

Felicity stops. The color drains from her face.

TONY
... and she was from Siuti.

FELICITY
I ... I didn't even know her.

TONY
No?

FELICITY
You're trying to confuse me!

TONY
At least you still remember her.

FELICITY
I never met her in all my life!

He drops his head, removes a contact lens from his left eye.

FELICITY
What are you ... ?

He removes the other. He produces a pair of black spectacles and a dull green baseball cap from his jacket, dons them.

He looks up at Felicity. His eyes are brown.

TONY
(Australian accent)
Does this jog your memory, mate?

Her head sways. She stops cold.

FLASHBACK - EXT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

Tony limps down the steps, held by two cops. In front, TV reporters, cameras and microphones jostle for position.

He is handcuffed, brown eyed, sports thick black spectacles, a scruffy black beard, sideburns, ponytail.

He wears jeans, a black shirt, a dull green baseball cap.

TONY
(Australian accent)
I told you, she was already dead!
Why would I kill her? If you saw us
together, you'd know it wasn't me!

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

TONY
(Australian accent)
Ring any bells?

Felicity shrinks into the chair, grabs the headset.

FELICITY
(to Jane)
Get this wall back up RIGHT NOW!

JANE (V.O.)
Why?

FELICITY
Get me out of here! He's a killer!

JANE (V.O.)
Is that news?

FELICITY
He's trying to frame me! That
Mexican woman a few years ago.

TONY
(usual accent)
Refresh my memory.

FELICITY
Get me out of here right now!

JANE (V.O.)
Dick says no, it's great TV.

TONY
Go on, we're listening.

FELICITY
(to Tony)
I don't know what you mean!

TONY
She meant so little to you?

Felicity's eyes dart around the room.

TONY
I'll explain for the audience. Her
name was Linda, and she sure was.

Felicity opens her mouth. Nothing.

TONY
I came around one day and there she
was. Dead. Mi carina. I panicked.
An old girlfriend a few years back
took out a restraining order. She
said I hit her, but she was the
violent one. Nothing I could do. It
don't look good on your record.

Felicity shakes.

TONY
I knew I'd get blamed, so I split.
That sure was a smart idea. Cops
said that proved I killed her.

FELICITY

Why the accent?

TONY

Sympathy vote. Didn't work. So there I was, in the can for killing the woman I loved. Losing Linda was bad enough, but the cops wanted to impress the new Latino DA, so they went for the death penalty.

He pours a drink.

TONY

They found a fountain pen at her place. I told 'em it wasn't mine, but it had my initials. AJM. Anthony John Morrison. But if it wasn't mine, whose was it?

He takes a gulp.

TONY

They didn't care. I been inside for a couple years. That's a lot of time to think. Lucky for me, I had a little help on the outside.

FELICITY

I'll get you for this, Dick!

TONY

Why do you assume it's a man?

FELICITY

But if you were with her, then ...

TONY

Little big sis, God bless her heart. Blood is thicker than tequila. Why do you think she pushed you to do a prison show?

FELICITY

Don't be stupid, that was my ...

She crumbles.

TONY

Thanks, sis. I can't ever ...

He raises his glass high, chokes on the emotion.

TONY

It was the fancy abalone fountain pen. Pretty rare, so I researched them. Couldn't find anything for ages, then some magazine said you used nothing else. So I sent Jane.

JANE (V.O.)

I didn't want to deceive you. I did like you, just not like that.

FELICITY

Did.

TONY

She checked your pen at the bar, it was the exact same pattern.

FELICITY

Why didn't you tell the police?

TONY

We did. They weren't interested.

FELICITY

So you brought it with you today.

TONY

Jane couldn't just ask you if it was yours. Even if you said yes, there'd be no witnesses. No proof.

FELICITY

Live TV. No editing, no censoring.

TONY

You had to claim it in public. I didn't know about your grandma, that just sealed the deal.

Felicity gets up, looks around the room.

TONY

You also knew Siuti. You tried to hide it, but you knew it alright. That's where Linda grew up.

FELICITY

Anyone could know that town.

TONY

That's what I thought. Jane asked a few Mexican friends, they never heard of it. Americans? No chance.

She turns to face him.

TONY

I could also tell when you were lying. It ain't exactly hard.

FELICITY

Nobody can do that.

TONY

You blink real fast whenever you lie. I saw it on TV before, I saw it today. Heck, even Jane saw it.

FELICITY

That won't be accepted as evidence.

TONY

Maybe, maybe not. Then you slapped me with your left hand. I had to provoke that. Sure, normally you look right handed, but when you're under stress, you go back to left.

FELICITY

So what?

TONY

Linda had a bruise on the right side of her face. Only a Southpaw could make that by slapping her.

She slips back into the chair.

TONY

You also grabbed the gun with your left hand.

FELICITY

Don't pretend you planned that.

TONY

I try to avoid the wrong end of a gun. Sooner or later, it ends bad.

FELICITY

I didn't mean for her to die.

TONY

(earnestly)

I believe you.

FELICITY

I loved her. I just couldn't stand
the thought of losing her.

FLASHBACK - INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Soft lights reveal a bed decorated with floral patterns.

Seated on top are Felicity and Linda.

FELICITY

Engaged? When?

LINDA

Last week. I cannot handle the
secrecy any more. I am sorry.

She takes Felicity's hand. Felicity snaps it away.

FELICITY

Let me see a picture.

LINDA

No. It is private.

FELICITY

I love you to bits, you know that!
It doesn't have to be me or him.
Why can't you love both of us?

LINDA

You are joking, yes? That would be
a sin. I am sorry, I have decided.

FELICITY

If you leave me, I'll tell him.

LINDA

You wouldn't ... would you?

FELICITY

Do you want to risk it?

Linda examines her eyes.

LINDA

It is better to face my shame now
rather than forever live in fear.

Felicity gets up.

FELICITY

You're being so selfish! What we have is special, why give that up?

LINDA

I thought so, too, yet now you threaten me. You call this love?

FELICITY

I need you! I can't lose you!

LINDA

I am sorry, there is no other way.

Felicity chokes up.

LINDA

Please leave.

FELICITY

I won't leave. I can't.

Linda jumps up, shakes her by the shoulders.

LINDA

Yes! Leave!

Felicity slaps her on the cheek with her left hand.

Linda bounces off the bed, hits her head on the nightstand.

FELICITY

Linda. Linda?

Blood trickles down Linda's forehead.

Felicity muffles a cry, scrambles for the door.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

FELICITY

You must be delighted to know I'm going to get locked up.

TONY

You'd think so. All I care about at the moment is reasonable doubt.

FELICITY

What?

TONY

My attorney said it's enough to set
me free. Reasonable doubt.

Felicity shudders.

FELICITY

I'm scared. Will I end up like you?

TONY

It was an accident. You'll be out
in a few years. It'll be tough, but
so are you. Probably sell your
story for millions, too.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Everybody is riveted to the screens.

Victoria sobs. Jane is ecstatic. Dick turns to her, claps.

DICK

Best supporting actress.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The guard appears.

GUARD

Sorry, ma'am.

Felicity turns back to Tony, leans over, kisses him. He
resists, softens. He holds her face, prolongs the kiss.

The guard taps her on the shoulder. She lets Tony go, pushes
herself to her feet. Her eyes linger.

The guard cuffs her, leads her away.

Tony puts on the headset, turns around.

TONY

(to Jane)

You ok, sis?

JANE (V.O.)

I didn't think she'd push you in!

TONY

What? Oh. It's over now, forget it.

JANE (V.O.)
How do you feel?

TONY
Like I done fifteen rounds with
Marilyn Monroe.

JANE (V.O.)
I didn't know you were a model.

TONY
Me neither. I had to say something.
She get her precious ratings?

JANE (V.O.)
Let me check.

At the exit, Felicity stops, looks back at Tony.

JANE (V.O.)
Ninety three percent.

The guard nudges Felicity. They leave.

FADE OUT.