

EXCUSE HIM YOUR HONOR

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. CONNIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

CONNIE WILSON, 30, court clerk/substitute jury commissioner, contacts in, makeup on, dressed in a business suit top, pajama bottoms and bedroom slippers, psychs up for her next fishing expedition on an internet dating site.

Still reeling from personal and professional blows to her self confidence, her usual outspoken, sometimes blunt, opinions are beginning to emerge once again. Knows she doesn't need a man to validate her life, but she's not ready to write off the entire gender quite yet.

With her I-phone fueled stereo blasting away "Needle in a Haystack" by the Velvelettes, she stands in her kitchen, sipping from a small, half-full wine glass, as she anxiously stares at her laptop, stationed several feet away on the kitchen table.

She walks away from it, over to a cabinet, opens the drawer, and removes a framed photo.

CLOSE on photo of her smiling from ear to ear, alongside a handsome guy her age, with his arm around her.

Connie pauses for a few seconds, then sticks her tongue out at the photo.

CONNIE

You're a turd, you know that,
making me do this.

She tosses it into the kitchen trash can, turns off the stereo and sits before the laptop. Primping her hair a bit, she flips it open.

MOMENTS LATER

Connie rapidly scrolls through photos of men on the screen.

SERIES OF HEAD SHOTS (Each labelled accordingly)

1. WAYNE, 100% ORGANIC, early 40's, a beard that could house an animal, hair growing from every part of his body.
2. SCOTT, SPACE FORCE CAPTAIN, mid 20's, wearing a metal colander with two antennae on his head.

3. WILL, NATURIST, 25, motioning downward with his hands as the camera slowly descends down his naked body.

Wide-eyed Connie holds her breath as she sets her phone upside down, just in time.

GRAPHIC: An Hour Later

Connie swigs directly from her half-empty wine bottle.

The laptop screen shows ED, early 40's, good looking, totally charming, speaking from his living room. Connie appears happy to see this guy.

ED

How about we meet after you're done with work?

CONNIE

(Hopeful)

You mean for dinner?

ED

Or just a drink.

CONNIE

(Smiling)

Sure. Where and when?

ED

(Thinking)

Let's see.

BILLY (O.S.)

(Muffled)

Daddy, can we come out of the closet now?

CONNIE

(Puzzled)

Who is that?

ED

Just the TV. Let's say five thirty, at...

MOLLY (O.S.)

(Muffled)

When is mommy coming home?

ED

(Nervous)

Here, uh, give me one minute.

CONNIE
Goodbye Ed.

She closes her laptop in disgust, rips off her suit top and flings it on the couch. She gulps another swig before plopping down on the couch, continuing to hold the bottle.

CONNIE (CONT'D)
God, they're all the same! All of them. They say they love you, but you can't believe a word of it.

Her cell phone rings. She looks at it, then answers, still fired up.

CONNIE (CONT'D)
Hi Janice.

JANICE
Uh oh, you don't sound good. What happened, a bad date?

CONNIE
Thank God it never got that far. This guy was married. Married! With kids.

JANICE
Sorry honey. But he's only one guy. You've just started getting back in the game. It won't take that long to find the right man. You're still a catch.

CONNIE
(Ruefully)
Catch and release, you mean.
(Beat)
Anyway, what's up?

JANICE
I need you to cover for me tomorrow. In the morning.

CONNIE
Are you okay?

JANICE
I hope so. But the doctor wants to see me. Will your judge let you?

CONNIE
Proibly. I'm almost off probation. You know, for that thing.

JANICE

'Bout time. It wasn't your fault
you know.

CONNIE

I know.

(Beat)

But tomorrow morning's open. All
we've got is the hardship calendar
after lunch.

JANICE

Great. Thanks honey.

INT. OUTSIDE JURY ASSEMBLY ROOM - MORNING

Above a double door hangs a sign: JURY ASSEMBLY ROOM, MANY
ARE CALLED, FEW ARE CHOSEN. A person opens one door to enter
a large room filled with the indecipherable hum of
conversations by a motley collection of prospective jurors.

They quiet down to listen to Connie on the loudspeaker.

CONNIE (O.S.)

Listen up everyone. If you've
checked in, but still don't believe
you can serve, you may leave for
lunch and report to Courtroom A at
1:30. If you haven't checked in
yet, please do so now.

Connie stands behind the counter in a small office, situated
in the back of the jury assembly room, behind a glass
partition that she slides open. She wears a court
clerk/substitute jury commissioner name tag.

Two potential jurors line up in front of Connie's window,
each holding their paper summons.

CONNIE (CONT'D)

Any reason you can't serve?

DANNY, early 20's, leans over to whisper.

DANNY

I'm not supposed to be here, I'm on
house arrest.

He lifts his pant leg to show his ankle. Connie looks down.

CONNIE

Sir, that's a fit bit. Here's your
juror badge and questionnaire.

(MORE)

CONNIE (CONT'D)

After you've filled it out, return
it to this window. Next.

TRUDY is next. Sixty-five, retired middle school teacher,
used to being in charge.

TRUDY

How close are the lawyers to the
jury?

CONNIE

One of them is fairly far away, the
other closer. Why?

TRUDY

I'm allergic to wool. So I can
only be on a jury where the lawyers
are wearing polyester.

CONNIE

(Shaking her head)

Tell the judge this afternoon
ma'am.

Trudy leaves. Connie looks to the side as she tosses Trudy's
summons into a bin labelled: "Hardship."

WILLARD, 50, walks up, dressed as Ronald McDonald. Connie
rears her startled head back and gives him a "You're Not
Serious" look.

WILLARD

When I called to ask what to wear,
the lady on the phone said wear
your work clothes.

CONNIE

(Chuckling)

Sir, go home and change into casual
clothes. Then come back.

Her grinning eyes follow him as he clomps away in his clown
shoes.

SARA, 30, too broad a grin for this early in the morning, is
next in line.

SARA

Ready to go. Sara Parker.

She hands her paper summons to Connie, who looks at it with a
furrowed brow.

CONNIE

Miss, this is obviously fake. Jury has a y, not two e's. And summons has two "m's." Why would you fake a jury summons?

SARA

(Whispering)

They're firing people right and left at work. I figured I could hide out here on a jury for a week or so.

Connie tears up the paper.

CONNIE

Go to work. And don't do this again. It's a crime.

As she turns to depart, Connie yells out to her,

CONNIE (CONT'D)

And learn to use spell check.

(Under her breath)

Maybe it'll keep you from getting fired.

JEFF, in a T-shirt and jeans, rushes to the window, carrying a laptop. Eighteen, still in the growing up generation, going nowhere in life, with a four word resume: unemployed, living at home.

JEFF

Am I too late to sign up?

CONNIE

No. I must say, It's rare to see such enthusiasm from someone your age.

JEFF

Are you kidding? I wouldn't miss this.

He takes out his wallet.

How much?

CONNIE

Oh, no. We pay you every day you're here.

JEFF

No way! Awesome.

CONNIE
It's only five dollars a day.

JEFF
That's cool. My mom's been
fronting me cash till I land a job.

He holds up his laptop.

JEFF (CONT'D)
So where do I set up?

CONNIE
Did you get a summons for jury
duty?

JEFF
Jury duty? What are you talking
about? I got an invitation to a
Call of Duty competition.

CONNIE
Can I have it?

He hands it to her.

CONNIE (CONT'D)
Did you read it?

JEFF
No, but my mom said it was a call
to duty.

Connie gives him a badge.

CONNIE
(Chuckling)
Well, she was right. You've been
called to jury duty. Take a seat
and fill this out.

She hands him a questionnaire.

EXT. PATIO OUTSIDE COURTHOUSE - NOON

JANICE and Connie sit together eating lunch: Connie, a
salad, Janice a humongous dill pickle and pastrami sandwich.

Janice is the usual jury commissioner. Early 20's, Asian,
seven months pregnant. Irreverent, opinionated, creative.
Connie's closest friend in the courthouse.

JANICE
Thanks for filling in.

CONNIE
No problem. How'd the doctor
appointment go?

JANICE
Not great. You know, it's too bad
being pregnant isn't as easy, or
fun, as getting pregnant. She
wants me to be on bed rest starting
next week. Just a precaution.
Baby's fine.

CONNIE
Why not start now?

JANICE
That's what my husband said. Eight
months married, seven months
pregnant.

CONNIE
(Chuckling)
No, really. Forget about work.
After today, I've got nothin on my
agenda till our trial starts up.
And --

ALAN COHEN, good looking 30 year old prosecutor strolls by,
carrying a briefcase. He smiles and nods, distracting
Connie, but only for an instant. Janice notices.

JANICE
(Chuckling)
And, nada on your social calendar
either, I'm guessing, by that look.
Don't let me stop you.

Connie frowns as she shakes her head.

CONNIE
You're kidding? Alan? Last thing I
need is a showboat trial lawyer
boyfriend. When I'm in the mood for
bologna, I'll order a sandwich.

Janice pauses to think as she takes a bite of her pickle.

JANICE

You know, the same instincts that make you great at doing my job might be what's holding you back in the dating world.

CONNIE

(Skeptical)

Uh huh, and what are those?

JANICE

You can spot lameo excuses faster than even I can, but you might be too quick on the trigger with potential Romeos.

CONNIE

What do you mean!?! Greg and I were together for two years.

JANICE

But now, because of that asshole, you won't give anybody else five minutes. Love at first sight's just a myth, Connie.

CONNIE

Maybe, but what if I put all that time and effort into somebody, only to get burned again?

Janice pauses in deep thought for a few seconds before a light bulb in her head goes off.

JANICE

Well, there are other options, that don't require all that much time on your part.

CONNIE

(Incredulous)

You mean speed dating? I tried that already. During the pandemic no less. It was a disaster.

FLASHBACK

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Long tables take center stage, with five men on one side and five women, including Connie, on the other side. All wear Covid masks. A bell rings and the men rise to shift over one spot, while the women remain in place.

ART, early 40's, pudgy, left hand conspicuously in his pocket as he holds his right hand out to fist bump Connie.

ART
Hi, I'm Art.

CONNIE
Connie.

Art has some difficulty taking his seat, as he continues to keep his left hand in his pocket.

ART
I know what you're thinking, but I just started a fitness regimen that'll get me back in shape in no time.

CONNIE
Happy to hear that Art. But I was actually wondering why your hand is in your pocket.

Art looks down at it.

ART
Oh, I hurt it working out. It's kinda bruised up. Not a pretty sight.

Connie tilts her head with a serious look on her face.

CONNIE
Art, let me see it.

ART
Oh, no, it's all right. No need --

CONNIE
(Demanding)
Art.

He sheepishly removes it to show a big, fat wedding ring on his beefy finger. He tries in vain to pull it off.

ART
Damn thing won't come off.

INT. BAR - MOMENTS LATER

Good looking, late 20's African American HENRY sits before Connie, chatting indecipherably, both seemingly enjoying themselves, when a noticeably pregnant African American FELICIA, 30, storms into the bar, scans around until she spots Henry.

FELICIA

I knew it! I knew I'd find you here.

HENRY

(Fake Charm)

Felicia, how nice to see you.

He rises to his feet, comes over to her, and starts to put his arm around her shoulders.

HENRY (CONT'D)

How about we catch up outside?

She yanks herself away and addresses the stunned audience.

FELICIA

Go ahead and date this lying snake.
And when he tells you don't worry,
he's had a vasectomy,

She pats her tummy.

FELICIA (CONT'D)

This'll happen to you, too.

She pushes Henry away and flounces out. He quickly follows her.

Another bell and Jamie takes up the empty seat before Connie.

JAMIE

Well, that was something. Hi, my name's Jamie.

CONNIE

Connie.

JAMIE

Do you like movies Connie?

CONNIE

Absolutely. If I wasn't here,
that's probably what I'd be doing
tonight, watching something.

JAMIE

Me, too.

He leans in to whisper.

JAMIE (CONT'D)

You know what my favorite is?

CONNIE

No, what?

He lifts his eyebrows with a sly look, removes a pair of handcuffs from his pocket and flashes them.

JAMIE

Fifty Shades of Grey.

END FLASHBACK

JANICE

Well, your clock's ticking girlfriend.

She pats her tummy.

JANICE (CONT'D)

If you wanna have a big litter of these puppies, like you say you do, you need to keep at it.

CONNIE

I'm not really in the mood for more rejection Jan.

JANICE

How about someplace where only you can be the dumpor?

CONNIE

There is no such place.

JANICE

Sure there is.

She points to the courthouse.

JANICE (CONT'D)

Right here. We use the jury pool like your own personal dating app.

CONNIE

You're kidding, right? I can't do that. Don't you remember how you got your job? Your predecessor was fired for dating a juror.

JANICE

Not jurors *selected* on one of your juries. The ones who get excused.

CONNIE

(Sarcastic)

Great, you want me to go out with guys who'll say anything to get out of jury service. I don't need another man with major trust issues.

JANICE

No, no, hear me out. First, we print out each month's list of people summonsed.

CONNIE

Then?

JANICE

We circle the names of legitimately excused jurors and men who've completed their service. After we cross out the obvious rejects, voila, you've got a treasure trove of decent guys.

CONNIE

What if they're married? We won't know anything about the ones on the list.

JANICE

Au contraire, mon ami. What have you been doing all morning? Getting 'em all to fill out questionnaires, right? Before your retrial.

CONNIE

There never should have been a mistrial, you know. If they'd all done their duty, that binge killer would be in jail, where he belongs.

JANICE

Don't beat yourself up about it.
The jury looked okay to me when I
sent them up. And they were, until
somebody obviously got to that one
hold out.

FLASHBACK

INT. MARY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

MARY

Herman, there he is again. outside.

EXT. MARY'S FRONT LAWN - NIGHT

MARY and her husband HERMAN, both in their 40's, walk out of
the house. ALEX GUTIERREZ rolls down the window of a white
panel truck idling the wrong way on their side of the street.
Early 20's, tatted up Mexican-American with a gold front
tooth.

ALEX

Mary, you do the right thing or
your life as you and your family
know it is over.

He drives away.

END FLASHBACK.

CONNIE

Too bad they couldn't prove the
defendant was involved.

JANICE

So we make lemonade out of your
lemon of a first trial.

CONNIE

But we can't just accept excuses
from good looking, available men.

JANICE

(Chuckling)

That'd work, but it's probably
illegal.

CONNIE

And the judge would guess
something's up when all he sees is
a parade of uglies, oldies, and
women.

JANICE

That's the beauty of what I have in mind. We don't do anything differently.

(Beat)

Except, when an eligible target is screened out by us, we note his vitals. You know, name, age, marital status, how close he is to a ten.

CONNIE

And then what?

JANICE

Everybody else gets sent up to the judge, as always. But if he boots any nines or above --

CONNIE

I'd take an eight, or even a seven right now.

JANICE

Seven it is. But make sure your catalogue of hunky cast offs also includes the ones excused by the lawyers.

CONNIE

Assuming I agree to all this, and I'm not saying I do, when do I contact them? And what do I say?

JANICE

First part's easy. When you're tired of eating, drinking, and sleeping alone. I'll think of something for question #2.

CONNIE

Think fast, cause you're the only lunch date I've had since, well, you know.

JANICE

Will do. But if we're doing this, you better get back to court so you can eye the first set of prospects. Who knows? You might strike gold right from the get go.

CONNIE
Fools gold, more likely.
(Beat)
What about you?

She pats her enlarged tummy.

JANICE
Not giving birth quite yet. I'll
toddle back to the assembly room
for the rest of today. We can
share lists later.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

A dozen potential jurors sit in the back. No lawyers or
defendant. JUDGE JEFFERSON on the bench. Connie seated in
front of him. The judge is in his 60's, experienced, not
easily frustrated, voice of reason in his courtroom.

Connie reads off a printed list in front of her.

CONNIE
Juror #8.

RAYMOND stands. Early 20's, unattached, athletic build, long
hair, rugged good looks, wearing jeans and a T shirt.

Connie notes down an 8+ in pencil next to his name.

JUDGE JEFFERSON
You informed my clerk you cannot
serve on the Hakim Mansour case.
Why not?

RAYMOND
I'm afraid I'll be prejudiced in
that case, Judge.

JUDGE JEFFERSON
Is your prejudice because of the
defendant's race?

RAYMOND
Uh, yes sir.

JUDGE JEFFERSON
(Skeptical)
And do you know what race that is?

RAYMOND

No, but I'm prejudiced against everyone. I can get back to work now, right?

JUDGE JEFFERSON

(Sternly)

No, the only place you're going is back to the assembly room.

Connie slightly shakes her head "no," looks at her list, erases the 8+, and pencils in a 5.

CONNIE

Juror #12.

BRUCE stands.

Late 50's, walks with a cane, content with the mundane existence of a nine to five job, suburban housewife, and sports on TV. Right now, will say anything to get out of jury service.

No rating for him on Connie's list.

BRUCE

I cannot be a juror. It's against my religion to judge others.

JUDGE JEFFERSON

And may I ask what religion it is that precludes you from judging?

BRUCE

The same as that lady you excused a few minutes ago.

JUDGE JEFFERSON

And how long have you been a member of her church?

BRUCE

I just converted. It's a miracle.

JUDGE JEFFERSON

It'll be a miracle if I don't put you in jail. Follow the man who just left.

CONNIE

Juror #31.

STEVEN's turn. Steven, 33, bears the slightly plump figure of someone who enjoys food.

Single, moderately attractive, insanely superstitious, horseshoes and rabbits' feet decorate his food-stained tie.

Connie writes: "Face - 8, Bod - 5, Tie - 3."

STEVEN

I can't be fair to a defendant in a criminal case, your Honor.

JUDGE JEFFERSON

Why can't you be fair to the defendant in this case?

STEVEN

Because I don't believe in committing crimes, your Honor.

JUDGE JEFFERSON

So you think we should just select jurors who have committed crimes? That's not how it works sir. Take a seat.

He sits to think about that.

Connie adds "Brain - 2" to her list.

CONNIE

Juror #50.

[Cameo by Jeff Bezos, or other well known, rich entrepreneur]

He stands.

JUDGE JEFFERSON

Welcome to my court Mr. Bezos.

JEFF

I'm afraid I can't serve, your Honor. It would cause an economic hardship for my business.

JUDGE

Surely your company can get by without you.

JEFF

Of course, I know that, my wife knows that, and you know that. But I don't want my company to know it.

JUDGE JEFFERSON

Well, you're in luck sir. All the members of this particular jury will remain anonymous, so you're excused.

Connie reluctantly writes "Married" next to his name on her list, which has three dollar signs but no number next to it.

INT. JUDGE'S CHAMBERS - DAY

JUDGE JEFFERSON

Connie, this is insane. Why weren't they screened below?

CONNIE

I didn't want to violate the terms of your probation judge. Follow your rules from now on, remember? If they say they have a hardship, I have to send them up.

JUDGE JEFFERSON

Okay, forget my rules. Just use your common sense. But no more disasters, like the one that put you on probation, okay?

INT. JURY ASSEMBLY ROOM - DAY

GRAPHIC: Six Months Earlier

The room is packed with people sitting and standing around. TIM MCNAMARA, late 20's, in a suit and tie, talks to the woman seated next to him.

TIM

This reasonable doubt thing, that's a really high standard, don't you think?

She shrugs and nods. Tim gets up and plops down next to someone else.

TIM (CONT'D)

I heard the presumption of innocence is more important than evidence.

As a no-baby-bump Janice and Connie sit in the back finishing lunch, Tim waltzes up to another person who just checked in.

TIM (CONT'D)
 Did you know the framers believed
 in jury nullification?

JANICE (O.S.)
 (On loudspeaker)
 If you're in the Woofer group,
 please follow Ms. Wilson to
 Courtroom A on the 3rd floor.

Connie enters the larger room and thirty jurors, including Tim (at the rear) and the people he spoke to, rise and begin to head out.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

The jurors sit in the back. Attorneys at their respective tables. No defendant. Judge Jefferson takes the bench, looks down, and nods to Connie.

CONNIE
 We will begin jury selection in
 People v. Timothy McNamara. Ms.
 Coolidge, where is your client?

Tim stands up.

TIM
 Right here ma'am.

The judge sternly stares daggers at a mortified Connie.

CONNIE
 Mr. McNamara, please take your
 proper seat,
 (beat)
 up here.

After he takes his seat at the defense table,

JUDGE JEFFERSON
 What were you doing back there with
 the jury panel? Have you spoken to
 any of them?

TIM
 (Sheepishly)
 Well, uh --

JUDGE JEFFERSON
 How many of you prospective jurors
 have spoken to Mr. McNamara here?

All the jurors in the back raise their hands.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. JUDGE'S CHAMBERS

JUDGE JEFFERSON

An entire panel Connie. We lost an entire panel. I'm counting on you to get and keep an untainted jury this time. We are not trying this case again.

CONNIE

I promise not to upset you again judge.

JUDGE JEFFERSON

You won't. I'm too old to get upset.

(Beat)

But I am a carrier.

He looks at his wall clock, showing 4:30.

JUDGE JEFFERSON (CONT'D)

That's it for today. Tomorrow, you go back downstairs and screen their excuses more carefully before you send any more up here.

INT. JANICE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Janice in bed, eating some dessert. Connie, glasses on, wearing sweats, perched on her bedside.

JANICE

Thanks for visiting me in my future prison cell.

CONNIE

Hey, it's not that bad. At least you've got a loving husband as your trusty.

She holds up her dessert.

JANICE

Yeah, but his idea of jail food isn't as yummy as yours.

After she takes a bite, she lifts up a blank page.

JANICE (CONT'D)

I struck out this afternoon. Where are we on the juror edition of the bachelorette?

CONNIE

Empty start for me, too.

(Beat)

You know Jan, I'm not so sure we should go though with this whole jury thing. Jefferson is not dumb. He's bound to figure out what's happening.

JANICE

I won't tell him, if you don't. And what alternative do you have?

Connie sighs deeply with a forlorn look.

CONNIE

Not much. I went on hunk.com again before I came over.

FLASHBACK

Connie, half-dressed as smartly as before, back at her laptop, chatting with BILL, an attractive man in his mid 20's.

MOMENTS LATER

Connie, leaning back, sipping her wine, seems to be enjoying herself this time.

CONNIE (CONT'D)

So what do you do for a living Bill?

Bill furtively scans around, leans over, and drops his voice.

BILL

Can't tell you everything. My job is top secret.

CONNIE

(Intrigued)

Really?

BILL

Uh, huh. I work with my uncle.

CONNIE

What does your uncle do?

BILL
He works for AARO.

CONNIE
(Puzzled)
I don't know what that is.

BILLY
The All-domain Anomaly Resolution
Office. It's part of the
Department of Defense.

Connie takes a deep breath, sits a bit more upright, but plows on.

CONNIE
And what do you do?

BILL
I alert him when I see one.

CONNIE
One what?

BILL
An anomaly. Then they can send
somebody from the Space Force out
to intercept it.

CONNIE
By anomaly, do you mean UFO?

Bill nods.

CONNIE (CONT'D)
And how many of these sightings
have you reported to your uncle?

BILL
Oh, dozens of them. They don't
publicize it, but they got 'em all.
We're not safe, you know, if they
miss one.

Really deep breath this time, coupled with just a slight eye roll.

CONNIE
Ookay, I wouldn't want to risk the
safety of the planet by taking you
away. Good luck to you Bill.

END FLASHBACK

Janice laughs.

JANICE

Yeah, every once in awhile we get a few from the shallow end of the jury pool, too, but most of them are pretty sane.

CONNIE

Probably why they want out of jury duty.

Janice thinks while she wolfs down another bite.

JANICE

Okay, before you give up on my idea, let's give it another shot. You're with me the whole day tomorrow, right?

Connie sighs and nods.

INT. JURY COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

The office is situated in the back of the jury assembly room, behind the glass partition. Connie sits at one desk, with her printed and handwritten lists in front of her, along with the book "Infinite Jest." Janice sits nearby, with her lists and the book, "To Pee or Not to Pee."

The phone rings.

JANICE

Can you cover that? I gotta hit the ladies room.

SERIES OF SHOTS - SPLIT SCREEN, CONNIE AND JURORS ON PHONE.

1. ALYSSA (25 years old)
I just got a jury summons, but full time students are exempt, right?

CONNIE

Yes they are. Where are you in school?

ALYSSA

Oh, I'm not enrolled right now.

CONNIE

So you're not a full time student.

ALYSSA

But I am. I'm a full time student
of human nature.

CONNIE

Good. You should learn a lot when
you show up for jury duty.

2. Long-haired, space cadet WILL, 25, in well-practiced
stoner speak.

WILL

I can't make it lady. I'm planning
a trip.

CONNIE

So how long is your trip, sir?

WILL

Oh, man, you can never tell, you
know.

CONNIE

Can't you just postpone it?

WILL

I guess, but, I don't know how long
it's good for.

CONNIE

What, your travel voucher?

WILL

No, man, the LSD.

CONNIE

I'm afraid you'll have to postpone
your trip till after jury duty.

3. AGNES on the phone, holding a miniature dog. Sixty year
old Agnes, independent, bingo addicted, but otherwise
reclusive, devoted to her dog and not her grown children or
to any man.

AGNES

It's simply not possible. I can't
leave Fifi at home. She's in heat
right now.

CONNIE

So?

AGNES

Fifi is a purebred. And my horrid neighbor, he has a mutt. He'll sneak into my yard and, well, I can't even think of it.

CONNIE

Then put Fifi in a kennel.

AGNES

With all those pit bulls? You can't be serious. No, you just tell the judge. I'm sure he'll understand.

CONNIE

You'll have to tell him yourself, Agnes.

END SERIES OF SHOTS.

Janice returns as Connie puts the phone down.

JANICE

How's it going? Got any names for your list?

CONNIE

No, not even close.

JANICE

Relax, it's still early. You know, when you think about it, you're like a criminal defense attorney, only this time, picking jurors who'll be sympathetic to you instead of your client.

Connie looks out at the assembled group. Connie's POV: among the masses, we glimpse Duncan, Kyle, Steven, Toby, and Dietrich. She leans back in her chair and closes her eyes.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

Judge Jefferson on the bench. Connie stands behind the lawyers' lectern, hair pulled back, glasses on, bow tie and suit, the perfect image of a tight ass TV lawyer, addressing a jury box filled with men in their 20's or early 30's.

CONNIE

Juror #1, what can you tell me about yourself?

DUNCAN

Hi, Connie. Remember me, Duncan? I was here two weeks ago.

CONNIE

Sorry, not really. You got summonsed again?

DUNCAN

No, I just wanted to come back. It's a great place to meet chicks.

Connie crosses out his name from her list on the lectern. Still looking down, she says,

CONNIE

Juror #2.

She looks at KYLE, who holds a cat on his lap. Kyle, early 30's, civil attorney, fastidious dresser, even tempered, non-distinct, everyman look. Probably not an oddball; well, except for the cat.

CONNIE (CONT'D)

Sir, you can't bring a cat into this courtroom.

He holds up a summons.

KYLE

But she's the one who got this summons, not me.

Connie looks at "B. Wilson" on her list, then crosses it out three separate ways.

As she looks up, STEVEN in the back row raises his hand, waving a note.

STEVEN

Pardon me, but can I give you this note?

Connie looks at the judge, who shrugs and motions for her to go retrieve it. As she walks over,

CONNIE

We usually don't receive notes from the jury until the end of a trial.

Connie opens the note and reads it.

INSERT

CLOSE on note: Please excuse juror #3. He's passed gas all morning. We could not sit on a jury with him.

CONNIE (CONT'D)
Juror #3, you're excused.

Juror #3 stands, letting out a loud fart.

CONNIE (CONT'D)
Your turn juror #4.

Connie looks at DIETRICH, a good-looking, 35 year old man, with a well-trimmed goatee, tweed jacket and tie.

CONNIE (CONT'D)
I see you are a professor. Welcome to the jury.

Connie circles his name (marked with an 8) on her list.

DIETRICH
Sorry to disappoint you, but I'm afraid you'll have to take my summons back.

CONNIE
We don't do that sir. What is the problem?

DIETRICH
I'm philosophically opposed to jury trials.

CONNIE
May I ask why?

DIETRICH
Twelve against one. That's totally unfair.

Connie thinks to herself, pen hovering over Dietrich's name on her list, when she looks up and spies an open seat right next to him.

CONNIE
Does anyone know where Juror #5 is?

NURSE (O.S.)
He's right here.

Everyone turns to see a nurse wheel in an unconscious man on a gurney with an IV attached. She holds up his summons.

MOMENTS LATER

CLOSE on Connie's list, eleven names crossed out.

Connie visually evaluates the remaining decent looking, young juror, before marking 8 next to his name.

CONNIE

Juror #12, what were you thinking when you were called to the box?

TOBY

What have I done to deserve this.

CONNIE

You mean jury service?

TOBY

Yes. I mean I've got a good job. Not a great job, mind you. It's okay, but kinda boring some times. I guess that's normal, but I was kinda hoping there could be more to life than that. You spend a lot of time at work, you know, and you wanna feel fulfilled. At least by the end of the day, you want to...

CONNIE

Is there a point here sir?

TOBY

(Not missing a beat) Yeah, yeah. Of course.

Connie marks his 8 down to a 6.

TOBY (CONT'D)

My point is that when I got the summons, I figured it was my civic duty, right? I pay my taxes. By myself, you know. I don't use a service. It's not all that hard if you get one of those software programs. Of course, I don't make all *that* much, and I don't have many investments.

He's now marked down to a 2.

TOBY (CONT'D)

That's the hard thing about doing your own taxes, when you have investments...

CONNIE

Sorry to interrupt, but there are only so many hours in the day.

BACK TO:

INT. JURY COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

Connie opens her eyes, sits back up, and turns to Janice.

CONNIE

I don't know Janice. I think we better send out more summonses.

EXT. BANK OF APARTMENT MAILBOXES - DAY

SUZANNE ALVAREZ, wedded to her phone, talks indecipherably on it as she approaches. Mid 20's, very attractive, BA in fashion design, so she's always wearing trendy fashions. Recently dumped by the man she somewhat unilaterally planned to marry, but unwilling to accept that it's all over.

Mailman CRAIG, 40, places mail in the separate apartment slots, as Suzanne keeps talking on her phone.

SUZANNE

I know, I'm not giving up just yet. Hold on Karen. Anything interesting Craig?

CRAIG

Looks like a jury summons. I'm delivering loads of 'em today.

After he hands it to her, Suzanne gets back on her phone.

SUZANNE

Ever been on a jury Karen? Me neither. Might be fun.

CRAIG

Not this time.

SUZANNE

Hold on. How come?

CRAIG

They're retrying that sleaze-bag who's been messing up people's lives all over town.

SUZANNE

You mean that binge killer guy?
Why's he called that?

CRAIG

He kneecaps his competitors by
introducing his product for like
next to nothing. Buyers get hooked
and start binging out. Then he
jacks up his prices. When they
can't pay, he cuts 'em off, and
they're toast.

SUZANNE

So you think I should try to get
excused?

CRAIG

Yep. That's what everybody else
who's gotten one of these has told
me they're planning to do.

INT. AGENT'S OFFICE - DAY

MICHELLE, mid 40's, B-list actress at best, clothes, hair,
and heavy makeup aimed almost successfully at making her look
30, waves a jury summons in the air.

MICHELLE

I can't do this. You're my agent.
You have to get me out of this.

LAWRENCE

Why? Didn't you serve on a jury
once before?

MICHELLE

Yes, but it was just some
meaningless civil thing. If this is
that big criminal case, the
press'll be all over it.

LAWRENCE

How is publicity a bad thing for an
actress?

MICHELLE

No cameras allowed in the
courtroom, so that means sketch
artists. A bad sketch could ruin
my career.

INT. WHITE VAN - MORNING

Parked down the street from the courthouse. HAKIM MANSOUR in the driver's seat, wearing a nice suit and tie. A ruthless, well heeled, fifty year old Lebanese-American, who'll do anything to get what he wants.

Alex, in casual clothes, occupies the front passenger seat.

HAKIM

My lawyers said they might keep the names of the jurors secret this time.

ALEX

So what do you want me to do, boss?

HAKIM

Go in there and poke around. See if you can get some names. If we're lucky, one of 'em will be on the jury.

ALEX

Any idea which ones to look for?

HAKIM

Yeah, anybody with a crappy excuse who can't get out.

INT. JURY ASSEMBLY ROOM - MORNING

The room is only half filled with potential jurors. Connie is in the office by herself, with three people lined up in front of her window.

Away from the window, Alex sits down next to CARLOS, 40, with the never-can-get-clean fingernails of an auto mechanic and the manner of someone who takes no guff, except from the oldest of his four kids. He is in the midst of completing a questionnaire when Alex introduces himself.

ALEX

Alex Gutierrez.

CARLOS

Carlos Rivera.

ALEX

First time on jury duty?

CARLOS

Yeah. I tried to get out. Dodgers got day games on the tube all next week. But she caught me.

FLASHBACK

INT. WINDOW IN ASSEMBLY ROOM - DAY

Carlos comes to the window with his teenage daughter SONYA.

SONYA

My dad got a summons, but he doesn't speak English, so he needs to be excused.

CONNIE

I'm surprised he was able to read the summons.

SONYA

Oh, he understands a little, you know.

CARLOS

(Whispering in English)
I told you not to say that.

SONYA

(In English)
Dad, let me handle it.

As she hands Sonya a juror badge and a questionnaire,

CONNIE

Tell your father in any language you like that it's a crime to lie about your qualifications.

SONYA

See, I told you. I am so outta here.

Sonya hands the badge and paperwork to Carlos.

END FLASHBACK.

CARLOS

You checked in yet?

ALEX

Uh, no. Over there at the window?

CARLOS

Yeah, just get in line. She'll give you a badge and one of these.

As Carlos returns to his questionnaire, Alex surreptitiously takes his picture with his cell phone. Then Alex begins walking very slowly over towards the two people waiting to talk to Connie.

ISABELLA is first in line. Early 50's, stay at home mom for years, super friendly, celebrity obsessed, holding her copy of People magazine. Not enough money to afford a huge wardrobe, but every outfit she owns is quite fashionable.

ISABELLA

Is this a high publicity case?

CONNIE

I suppose.

ISABELLA

Is there somebody famous on trial?

CONNIE

I can't really comment on that.

ISABELLA

Hope so. I've lived here for years and celebrities are spotted all over town, but I keep missing them.

CONNIE

Maybe you'll be lucky.

ISABELLA

How long will the trial last?

CONNIE

I don't know. Probably several weeks.

ISABELLA

Oh my. Then you'll have to excuse me.

CONNIE

And why is that?

ISABELLA

I simply don't have enough nice outfits to wear for that long a trial.

Connie hands her a badge.

CONNIE

Don't worry, this goes with
anything you're wearing. And fill
this out.

Connie hands her a questionnaire. As she turns away, a very pregnant woman waddles up.

CONNIE (CONT'D)

Oh my goodness, when are you due?

EMILY

Any day now.

CONNIE

Why didn't you say that on the
summons return?

EMILY

I've been working on this excuse
for nine months, so I wanted to
enjoy this moment.

Connie chuckles as Emily very slowly departs. No one else in line. She glances at Alex, but he quickly turns away.

INT. CARL'S LIVING ROOM - MORNING

CARL SCOTT, late 20's, in a sport coat, no tie, heads to the door.

Handsome, effortlessly engaging both at work as a cybersecurity analyst and in his surprisingly unsatisfying personal life. Not quite sure what he's looking for in women, but knows he hasn't found it yet. So, he continues to live with his college buddy ART, also late 20's.

CARL

Gotta go guy, I'm late.

Art in a ratty t-shirt and shorts, eating cereal.

ART

(Yawns)

For what?

Carl waves his jury summons in the air.

CARL

Jury duty, remember? Starts today.

ART

C'mon, a brainiac like you is definitely smart enough to get out of it.

CARL

Don't want to. Never done it before and, who knows, I might meet some new people.

ART

If you mean girls, it won't work. Jury duty's just for old farts.

Another bite of cereal; talks with his mouth full.

ART (CONT'D)

Your own fault, you know, being single. She'd a followed you forever. Probably still would.

CARL

I know, that's the problem. See ya.

INT. COURTHOUSE - MORNING

Carl walks towards the jury assembly door and enters a packed room. He smiles as he stands there, scanning the room, pausing at each of the few pretty young women he sees. Connie's voice comes on over the loudspeaker.

CONNIE (O.S.)

If you haven't checked in, please do so now.

Carl walks towards her window. The woman in front of him in line, CANDY, walks away with her badge and questionnaire. In her early 20s, thin, small chested, not as ditzy as her bleached-blonde hair might suggest. Definitely attractive enough to draw Carl's rapt attention.

CONNIE (CONT'D)

Uh hum. Sir.

After Carl turns to face Connie, he flashes a great big smile and hands her his summons.

CARL

Sorry. Hi. Carl Scott. Do you need to see an ID?

Although the full package is quite enticing, the smile is enough to stun Connie into a few seconds of staring silence.

CONNIE

Oh, uh, no. Let me just check my list.

She scans down her printed juror list and checks his name off.

CONNIE (CONT'D)

First time on jury duty?

CARL

Uh huh. Kinda looking forward to it.

CONNIE

How so?

CARL

I meet a lot of the same kind of people at work. This gives me a chance to branch out.

Now he adds sustained eye contact to that smile.

CARL (CONT'D)

You're probably just the opposite. Get to see new people all the time.

As she hands him a badge and questionnaire,

CONNIE

See them for sure. Actually get to know them, not so much. What kind of work do you do?

He holds up the questionnaire.

CARL

Guess you'll find out after I fill this out.

(Beat)

No, just kidding. I'm a computer hacker.

Connie is stunned into silence. Carl laughs.

CARL (CONT'D)

Totally ethical hacking. I analyze company computer networks for security risks.

He looks over at her desk. Carl's POV: her computer monitor has a sticky pad attached. Next to it is her book.

CARL (CONT'D)
Is that your desk?

CONNIE
(Perplexed)
Uh huh, for today.

CARL
(Smiling)
And does that sticky pad have your
password on it, for everyone to
see?

Connie clinches her face in an "Oops" kind of way before going over and yanking off the sticky. She hesitates, holding it in her hand.

CARL (CONT'D)
Hide it in your book. Towards the
back. I don't think too many people
will wade through to the end of it.

She does this and returns with the book in hand.

CONNIE
You didn't like it?

CARL
Couldn't finish it. It had like
200 characters.

CONNIE
(Chuckling)
Give it another try. You seem like
someone who can get handle
something other than comic books
and graphic novels.

They smile at each other in silence.

ANOTHER ANGLE:

Suzanne walks into the room, on her cell phone as always, stands just inside the door, and scans around. She freezes in shock when she sees Carl.

SUZANNE
Oh my God Karen, you're not gonna
believe who's here...Uh huh. No,
he hasn't seen me. He's talking up
some clerk. Jesus, I miss that
smile...I gotta go.

She pockets her phone and begins to weave through the room when her way is blocked by a grinning Alex.

ALEX

'Scuse me miss. I'm new to all this. I'm Alex Gutierrez. Have you been on a jury before?

She glances at Carl, who's still talking, then at Alex.

SUZANNE

Hi. I'm Suzanne. No, this is the first time for me, too.

Meanwhile, back at flirt central, Connie has handed Carl a badge and questionnaire.

CONNIE

If there are any questions that you'd prefer not answering, you can say that on the form.

CARL

Like what?

CONNIE

Well, some people don't like stating their marital status, for example.

Carl flashes the back of his naked left hand.

CARL

No problem. Not married.

He looks at her left hand. Carl's POV: no wedding ring either.

The person behind Carl in line interrupts this love fest by noticeably clearing his throat. Carl turns.

CARL (CONT'D)

Sorry dude. My bad.

Carl grins as he turns back to Connie. He raises the questionnaire.

CARL (CONT'D)

I guess I better start filling this out. Do I return it to you...

Even though she wears a name tag with her name on it, he doesn't break eye contact. She taps her badge with her finger.

CONNIE
Connie. And yes.

CARL
See you again soon then Connie.

As he walks away, Connie's gaze lingers. The spell is broken when the next in line slams his summons on the counter.

CONNIE
Just one minute sir.

Connie lifts the last page of the printed juror list to reveal her own, very short list. She writes down Carl Scott and puts a star next to it.

Carl pins on his badge and looks around the room, almost instantly spotting Suzanne, still talking to Alex.

CARL
(Sotto voce) Shit.

Carl looks around frantically, sees the restroom doors, and hides his face with his questionnaire before barging in.

He enters just as Suzanne looks up from Alex towards Connie, but no Carl. Frantic, she looks everywhere in the room.

ALEX
Well good luck. Hope you get
picked.

Suzanne doesn't look at him. Still scanning, as Alex secretly snaps her photo.

CONNIE (O.S.)
(On loudspeaker)
Please check in, if you haven't
done so.

As she slowly ambles over to Connie's window,

SUZANNE
(Sotto voce) Damn it. Where is he?

Her back is turned as Carl exits the bathroom. One look in her direction, then he spots a distant group of jurors, seats gathered in a circle. He hurries over to them.

CARL
Can I join you?

BRUCE
Sure. Pull up a chair.

He does, slouching down and making sure his back is to Suzanne.

CARL

I'm Carl.

WALT touches his juror badge. Late 60's, relaxed persona, semi-retired, sophisticated widower.

WALT

No names, remember?

He leans in to stare at Carl's badge.

WALT (CONT'D)

Number 189.

CARL

The lady at the window didn't mention that when I talked to her.

PENELOPE

(Grins)

Probably got distracted. I would have if I was her age.

PENELOPE, also late 60's, lives alone in a mature living complex, feisty, energetic, with an active under the covers social life.

WALT

First time in the judicial peanut gallery?

CARL

Yep, my maiden voyage. How 'bout you guys?

WALT

No, not for us. We're veterans. Been on juries lots of time. Penelope here was even on a grand jury once.

PENELOPE

Not as much action as trial juries.

Bruce joins in.

BRUCE

If it's what I think it is, it might be too much action.

CARL

How so?

BRUCE

This big a jury pool, means it's a special case. Might be the one with that guy who supposedly threatened people during his last trial.

WALT

You might be right. That would explain why no names.

BRUCE

I tried a surefire excuse already, but it didn't work.

CARL

I'd kinda like to get picked.

BRUCE

I don't want to take that chance. My wife's home all day. She's already seen him once around our neighborhood. We got too much to lose if he comes after us. So I brought some insurance.

He lifts up his book.

BRUCE (CONT'D)

Just gotta make sure the prosecutor sees this, and he'll excuse me for sure.

CLOSE on cover, "Turning Hung Juries into Hit Movies."

By this time, Suzanne has worked her way up to the front of Connie's line. She hangs up her ubiquitous phone and hands over her summons, without turning around from continuing to look for Carl.

CONNIE

Ms. Alvarez, here's your juror badge. Please fill out this questionnaire and return it to me.

SUZANNE

That good looking young guy who was talking to you a few minutes ago, is he still here?

Connie tries in vain to hide her concern, but the pregnant pause is a dead giveaway.

CONNIE

He should be. You can't leave unless you're excused from jury service.

SUZANNE

I need to see him. Could you page him? His name is --

CONNIE

(Interrupting)

All the jurors here are to remain anonymous. And I'm afraid we're not permitted to page someone unless it's an emergency.

SUZANNE

It's an emergency to me. He's my fiancé.

To say Connie is crushed is an understatement. After a deep sigh of resignation,

CONNIE

Then I'm sure you have his number. You're free to text him.

SUZANNE

No, he won't answer my texts.

(Beat)

That's okay, I'll find him.

She turns away and immediately pulls out her phone as she slowly paces around the room.

SUZANNE (CONT'D)

He's hiding from me, I know it. The lady here said he's not allowed to leave...You know, the jury lady...No, she's no help.

Connie, meanwhile, with a depressed, deep sigh, lifts her printed list and crosses out Carl's name from her personal one.

As Suzanne grabs a seat and rushes through her questionnaire, GRACE, an Elvira-looking, 30ish woman in a flowing cape wearing a turban, waltzes into the assembly room. She looks around until she sees Carl staring at her. She walks over, pulls up a chair and sits next to him.

GRACE
So who has been summonsed?

PENELOPE
All of us.

GRACE
Oh my God. But you are all so corporeal.

She reaches out with both hands to touch the two on either side of her and is stunned.

GRACE (CONT'D)
And who summoned you? Her powers must be extraordinary.

CARL
Uh, Connie, over there.

He points.

WALT
The jury commissioner.

As Grace begins to get to her feet.

CARL
Wait. Why are you here?

GRACE
As I was walking by, I felt a presence in this building, and the man outside said a host of people had been summonsed here.

PENELOPE
And you thought it was a seance?

GRACE
Of course.

WALT
Sorry to disappoint you madam whatever, but we are all here on jury duty.

A crestfallen Grace stands and makes a flourish with her cape before departing, that attracts everyone's attention, including Connie's and Suzanne's.

Connie's stare follows Suzanne as she makes a b-line to Carl's group.

PENELOPE
(Chuckling)

You meet all kinds on jury duty.

Suzanne suddenly plops into the empty seat. Pretending she's interested in all of them,

SUZANNE
This is exciting. My name's --

CARL
(Brusquely interrupting)
No names.

He leans over to look at her badge.

CARL (CONT'D)
Number 140.

Miffed, Suzanne flashes her most insincere smile, before looking at Carl's badge.

SUZANNE
Thank you, juror 189.

Suzanne's phone buzzes. She's got a text.

PENELOPE
You know they don't let you call anyone once you're in the courtroom.

SUZANNE
That's okay. I usually just text.

She stares at Carl.

SUZANNE (CONT'D)
And most of the time, people answer.

WALT
Unless you get selected for this case. There's a good chance the judge is gonna sequester the jury.

SUZANNE
What's that mean?

BRUCE
That you have to stay in a secure location for the length of the trial.

Carl's face shows concern as he glances at Suzanne.

CARL
All of us together?

BRUCE
Yep.

His look of disappointment morphs into one of hope as he glances over in Connie's direction.

CARL
Including Connie?

SUZANNE
Who's Connie?

WALT
(Pointing)
The clerk over there. I don't think so. Usually it's just with a bailiff.

PENELOPE
And if you're sequestered, she'll make you surrender your phone.

SUZANNE
What!? No way. That's like un-American.

Carl smirks as he gently shakes his head.

WALT
Them's the rules. No need to worry, really. This is a huge pool. The odds of any of us getting picked are pretty slim.

CARL
And the chances of all of us here being selected together is even less, right?

Suzanne's turn to be irritated.

CONNIE (O.S.)
(On the loudspeaker)
Will all the jurors in the Tweeter group please follow me to Courtroom A. Bring your questionnaires with you.

Connie exits the commissioner's room and walks through the jurors as several get to their feet. She looks over at Carl as she passes.

Connie's POV: Suzanne couldn't be any closer to Carl if she was a conjoined twin.

INT. OUTSIDE JURY ASSEMBLY ROOM - DAY

Suzanne physically pulls Carl aside as the others walk on.

SUZANNE

Why are you so mean to me? You know I'm willing to forgive you sweetheart.

CARL

There's nothing to forgive. It's over Suzanne.

SUZANNE

But why? I love you.

As she tears up, Carl's tone softens.

CARL

I told you why Suzanne. I have to love you, too, and I don't anymore.

SUZANNE

But you did once. I know you did. You can again.

CARL

No, accept that it's over and move on. You're a beautiful woman. There are thousands of men out there. I'm just not one of them.

He walks away to follow the others. Once he's out of earshot, her eyes show determination, not sadness.

SUZANNE

But I don't want them. I want you.

INT. WHITE VAN - DAY

Alex climbs in on the driver's side. Hakim next to him.

ALEX

They're all headed to the court.

HAKIM
You get any names?

ALEX
A handful. I got their pics too.

HAKIM
Good. Make me a list of the names.

ALEX
You want me to go into court with them and see if any get picked?

HAKIM
No. Trial doesn't start till next week. That's when we start choosing the jury. This is just another screening thing.

Hakim hands the van keys to Alex, then opens his door.

HAKIM (CONT'D)
I gotta go. My lawyers want me in there. Take the van back to my place, until I call you.

Hakim leaves the van and heads to the courthouse.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

Carl and then a few seconds later, Suzanne, walk in to see the judge in place, along with the lawyers and Hakim. Connie sits in front of the judge. Empty jury box. The spectator section is filled with potential jurors, all wearing their numbered badges.

MELODY, an attractive, normally stern, 30 year old bailiff in her police-like uniform, standing by the back door, takes the questionnaires from Carl and Suzanne as they enter.

JUDGE JEFFERSON
Ladies and gentlemen. We're here to determine your eligibility to serve at the trial that begins on Monday. Actual jury selection won't happen until after the lawyers have reviewed your questionnaires over the weekend.

He addresses the lawyers.

JUDGE JEFFERSON (CONT'D)
Will the lawyers and the defendant
stand and face everyone.

They comply, allowing the audience to look at them.

JUDGE JEFFERSON (CONT'D)
Raise your hand if any of you
personally know either the lawyers
or the defendant.

No hands. They turn and sit, except for Alan, the prosecutor.
(The lawyer who walked past Connie and Janice when they ate
lunch.)

The judge looks down at first.

JUDGE JEFFERSON (CONT'D)
Good. Now, we'll --

He pauses, confused, when he looks up and sees Alan standing.

ALAN
Excuse me, your Honor. But I know
one juror. She's seated second
from the right in the front row.

JUDGE JEFFERSON
Ma'am, do you know the prosecutor
Mr. Cohen?

MRS. COHEN
I used to know him, judge. But not
anymore. He never visits. He
never calls.

She rotates in her seat to turn away from Alan.

Suzanne clucks and leans forward in her seat, eager to hear
this. Carl, seeing her reaction, shakes his head in disgust.

MRS. COHEN (CONT'D)
He's nothing to me.

ALAN
Your Honor, she's my mother.

She rotates back to face him.

MRS. COHEN
Fifteen hours. I was in labor for
fifteen hours. And this is how you
show your gratitude. I have to
come to court to see you.

In the back of the courtroom, Melody can't stop giggling, so she leaves the room.

JUDGE JEFFERSON

Mrs. Cohen, we thank you for answering the jury summons, but you are excused.

Mrs. Cohen struggles to get to her feet.

JUDGE JEFFERSON (CONT'D)

Bailiff --

He looks at the back of the courtroom, no bailiff.

JUDGE JEFFERSON (CONT'D)

Connie can you help her out?

Connie leaves her seat, walks over and offers her arm.

MRS. COHEN

Why, how nice of you young lady. I noticed that you have no wedding ring. I have another son, my good son. He's single too.

As they continue to exit,

JUDGE JEFFERSON

Mr. Cohen, after this trial is over, call your mother.

ALAN

Yes, judge.

Bruce raises his hand.

JUDGE JEFFERSON

Yes, what's your number sir?

BRUCE

Juror #12. He's never called me either. Can I be excused, too?

JUDGE JEFFERSON

No.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE COURTROOM - DAY

Connie palms off Mrs. Cohen to Melody, but not before,

MRS. COHEN
I'll make sure he calls. He's a
doctor, you know.

Connie can't quite hide her interest as she heads back
inside.

BACK TO:

INT. COURTROOM

JUDGE JEFFERSON
My clerk has informed all of you
that this trial is expected to last
two weeks, during which time you
will be sequestered.

Defense attorney EVELYN stands. Late 20's, in a bow tie and
suit (Connie's role model for her earlier fantasy), unclear
whether she's as type-A as she looks.

EVELYN
Your Honor, we renew our objection
to sequestration.

JUDGE JEFFERSON
Denied. If either of these
measures present any personal
concerns, please raise your hand
and state your juror number.

WILLARD
Juror 84, judge. My wife is going
to conceive a baby.

JUDGE JEFFERSON
By herself? In vitro?

WILLARD
No, with my help. So I kinda have
to be there.

The courtroom laughs.

JUDGE JEFFERSON
I see. Report back down to the
jury room. My clerk will join you
shortly to postpone your service.

Connie crosses his name off her list.

TRACY, 30, walks in from the back holding three-year old
TOMMY's arm. He looks around at the floor.

TOMMY
(Loudly)
But Mommy, where is it? I don't
see any.

CONNIE
Ma'am, you're not allowed to bring
children in here.

TRACY
I apologize, but I'm a single mom
with no place to put Tommy.

Tommy tugs on her arm.

TOMMY
Mommy, you said there was jury
doody here. I don't see any doody.

JUDGE JEFFERSON
(Smiling)
Ma'am, you're excused. I'll have
my clerk take you off the list
until Howdy Doody here is in
school.

Kyle raises his hand and stands up.

KYLE
Yes, your honor. Juror 72. My
darling Bella has just started
seeing a psychiatrist and I need to
be there for support.

JUDGE JEFFERSON
How are you related?

KYLE
Oh, we're not judge. Bella is my
cat.

The judge sighs and shakes his head slightly.

JUDGE JEFFERSON
Give the name of your pet's
psychiatrist to my clerk and she'll
call to see if a delay in treatment
won't be too traumatic.

GLENN, 40, raises his hand and stands up.

JUDGE JEFFERSON (CONT'D)
Yes sir, what's your number?

GLENN

I don't have one, but my father does. Glenn Joseph senior.

JUDGE JEFFERSON

Is he here with you?

GLENN

Yes, in a manner of speaking.

JUDGE JEFFERSON

Can he speak for himself?

GLENN

No judge. He's dead.

Glenn reaches down and lifts an urn.

JUDGE JEFFERSON

Assuming that is your father, why didn't you just say that when you checked in?

GLENN

I did.

The judge, totally irritated, looks down at Connie, who turns, nervously shrugs, and shakes her head "Not me."

GLENN (CONT'D)

Not her, but the guard downstairs. He said I had to come because the summons was sent to Glenn Joseph. Which is my name. Glenn Joseph, Jr.

JUDGE JEFFERSON

Thank you sir. You are excused. And take your father with you, please.

(Beat)

We're going to take a short break.

The judge rises and turns to leave the bench.

CONNIE

We're in recess for fifteen minutes. Please don't leave the hallway outside.

INT. JUDGE'S CHAMBERS

JUDGE JEFFERSON

Connie, what is going on? It's a circus out there. A dead guy, really?

CONNIE

I swear judge, I'd never seen or heard any of these excuses until just now.

JUDGE JEFFERSON

How many of the people left *have* you talked to about their situations?

CONNIE

Just one judge. And she wouldn't tell me the specifics. She asked to speak in chambers.

JUDGE JEFFERSON

Okay. Bring the parties in, then her.

INT. TEN MINUTES LATER, JUDGE'S CHAMBERS.

The judge behind his desk. Connie standing beside him. Lawyers and Hakim seated to the sides. Candy sits in front of the judge.

JUDGE JEFFERSON

Juror #9, you say you have an operation scheduled. And what type of operation?

CANDY

Surgery. Elective surgery.

JUDGE JEFFERSON

Can it be postponed?

CANDY

I've been thinking about it for years judge. It's now or never. What do you think? Should I go through with it?

Seen from the back as she lifts her blouse, no bra. The judge's eyes get big, as he holds his breath; all the others in the room smile. Hakim leers.

CANDY (CONT'D)
A boob job might jump start my
social life, right?

Connie, mortified, motions for her to pull her blouse back down.

JUDGE JEFFERSON
Um, miss, I think that's purely a
personal decision. But I believe
you can hold off the operation
until after the trial. I don't
think they'll get any smaller by
then. Please return to the
courtroom.

She leaves, followed by Hakim and the lawyers.

The judge shakes his head, and sinks in his chair, as he's clearly given up.

JUDGE JEFFERSON (CONT'D)
Connie, tell everyone to come back
on Monday. I'll talk to them then.

INT. COURTROOM

CONNIE
Ladies and gentlemen, we'll restart
voir dire Monday at 8:00 sharp.
All of you come straight to this
courtroom by 7:45. Court is
adjourned.

INT. OUTSIDE COURTROOM

Suzanne already has her phone out.

SUZANNE
I don't know, lemme ask. What's
voir dire?

WALT
It just means jury selection.

Suzanne turns her back and whispers indecipherably into her phone while the rest chat.

PENELOPE
We all made it this far. This is
exciting.

JEFF

Not as exciting as Call of Duty.

He begins to walk off, along with the others. Suzanne rushes up to assume her role as Carl's second skin.

INT. OUTSIDE JURY ASSEMBLY ROOM - DAY

Carl begins to leave the others, hoping to shake Suzanne outside, until he hears Bruce.

BRUCE

Dang it. I left my book upstairs.

He starts his slow, cane-assisted hobble.

CARL

I'll get it. Take a seat.

Suzanne looks at him for a second and thinks about following, but Carl prevents that by sprinting away, up the stairs.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

Connie, alone, goes about the room cleaning up. She picks up Bruce's book just as Carl enters.

CARL

Hi Connie. That's one of the juror's. He's downstairs waiting for me to bring it back.

Connie looks at the cover and laughs.

CONNIE

Plans to flash it before the prosecutor I'm guessing.

Carl comes over and she hands it to him. He lingers.

CARL

Think I should read this one, too?

CONNIE

(Chuckling)

Only if you want the prosecutor to get irritated with you.

CARL

Nah, he's had a bad enough day already.

FLASHBACK

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

Connie stands to whisper something to the judge.

CONNIE

Juror #5 says she remembers something about Mr. Cohen.

JUDGE JEFFERSON

Juror #5, do you know the prosecutor, Mr. Cohen?

MARIA

Uh huh, but he probably doesn't remember me.

JUDGE JEFFERSON

What do you mean?

MARIA

He tried to pick me up in a bar about four years ago.

JUDGE JEFFERSON

Maybe he'll have better luck picking a jury. Juror #5, thank you for your time. You're excused.

END FLASHBACK

CARL

You ever see any old flames pop up for jury service?

There's that smile again. Connie tepidly returns a smile, before starting to return to her clean up (even though there's nothing visible to pick up). Without looking up,

CONNIE

No, not really.

(Beat)

Were you surprised to see your fiancé in the same jury pool?

CARL

What? Who are you talking about?

Connie looks up now.

CONNIE

Juror number 1 --

Pretending she doesn't have it memorized.

CONNIE (CONT'D)
140, I think. The attractive woman
in the [describes her attire].

CARL
Suzanne?

Connie puts her finger to her lips and shakes her head.

CONNIE
No names remember.

CARL
That's okay, I can guess where you
got that. But juror whatever
number and I are not engaged.
Never have been. She tells people
that, but its not true.

CONNIE
But why would she say it?

CARL
(Shaking his head)
A long story that hopefully I get
the chance to tell you. But I
should go. I promised Bru...the
other juror, that I'd bring this
back. See you tomorrow, right?

Connie nods. Then, just as Carl gets to the door,

CONNIE
You don't have to tell me, but does
the story end with you dumping her?

CARL
Yeah, but like I said, it's a long
story.

He leaves. Connie remains.

CONNIE
(Sotto voce) Damn it.

INT. CARL'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Carl is on his laptop when Art waltzes in, toting a pizza.
He sets it on the table and they talk as they eat.

ART

So how'd it go? You get picked?

CARL

Not over yet. It's that binge killer case. They brought in dozens of us, probably 'cause of all the pub from his first trial.

ART

Wow! You might wanna bail man. From what I hear, he's one scary dude.

CARL

Yeah, you shoulda seen the look he gave one guy who told the judge he'd hated him for years.

ART

A lot of people in town think that, after what he's done to them. You know how he gets away with it, don't you?

Carl shakes his head "No" as he eats.

ART (CONT'D)

He's supposedly wired into all the police and politicians in this town. I'm surprised they went after him at all.

Art glances at his TV for a fleeting second.

ART (CONT'D)

You don't think he'd come after us, do ya?

CARL

Can't. We're all anonymous.

ART

We? You're not thinking of trying to get on this jury are you? That makes no...wait.

(Beat)

(grinning)

I get it. There's a hot chick on the jury.

Carl nonchalantly keeps eating.

CARL

Like I said, haven't picked it yet.

(Beat)

But there are a couple in the pool,
and the bailiff is pretty cute.

Art chuckles and tosses a napkin at him.

ART

You are such an asshole. You had
the prettiest girl on the planet.
What the hell more do you want?

CARL

She's in the pool too.

ART

Suzanne? You're kidding me. Maybe
it's fate, telling you to get back
together.

Carl wipes his hands on a napkin, leans back in his chair,
and stares at Art in silence for a few seconds.

CARL

In the jury pool, not the dating
pool.

ART

(Sarcastic)

Right. She's in both if she's
talking to you.

CARL

Talking too much, if you ask me.
Keeps telling anyone who'll listen
she's my fiancé.

Art laughs.

ART

Well, you deserve that.

CARL

Maybe. But it mighta ruined it for
one of the women I kinda liked.

He turns his laptop towards Art, but not the CAMERA.

CARL (CONT'D)

Here, you wanna see her pic?

INT. JANICE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Connie helps Janice waddle back from her bathroom.

JANICE

Be sure to drink tons of liquids,
she said. Good for the baby. She
didn't tell me that little thief
would steal my bladder. I'm as big
as a house, but it's the size of a
pea.

Connie chuckles as Janice settles back into bed.

JANICE (CONT'D)

Don't laugh. If you do land a man,
this could be you in a few years.

(Beat)

So, how'd your date with the doctor
go on Saturday?

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Connie, looking very nice, pauses at the maitre d's lectern
to look around.

Connie's POV: she sees an attractive, mid 30's man smiling
back at her.

(Beat)

CAMERA slowly PANS to the seat across from him at the table.
There's Mrs. Cohen, smiling and waving.

BACK TO:

JANICE'S BEDROOM

CONNIE

His mother! He brought his mother
to the date.

JANICE

How old was he, 15?

CONNIE

Chronologically? No. Socially?
Just barely. All he could talk
about was his work. He's a zit
doctor, by the way. How
interesting do you think that was?

JANICE
You're a hard one to please girl.

CONNIE
Janice, at this rate, I'd be happy
with Quasimodo. At least he'd be
interested in something I like.

Janice looks at her, puzzled.

CONNIE (CONT'D)
Music.

JANICE
(Chuckling)
So anybody in the courtroom ringing
your bells?

CONNIE
Certainly not the defendant, or his
lawyers.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM, FANCY LAW OFFICE - NIGHT

Hakim sits with his lawyers, CHRISTOPHER and Evelyn, with a
stack of completed questionnaires on the table. Christopher
is mid 40's, experienced defense lawyer, arrogant, ethically
challenged.

HAKIM
How many we got left?

CHRISTOPHER
According to his clerk, about
forty.

HAKIM
So, we gonna get their names?

EVELYN
No, like we told you, the judge is
keeping their identities secret,
after that stunt you pulled last
trial.

HAKIM
For all the money I'm paying you
two, I shouldn't a had to get
involved. But it worked and I'll
do it again if you screw this trial
up, too.

CHRISTOPHER

Afraid that option's out Hakim.
You heard the judge, he's gonna
sequester the jury this time.

HAKIM

Where?

EVELYN

Some hotel somewhere. They don't
tell us where.

HAKIM

I can find 'em. I got connections
in almost every hotel.

EVELYN

(Actually concerned)
What do you plan to do?

HAKIM

You don't really wanna know. Let's
just say, I can get immediate
access to all their guests if I
have to.

CHRISTOPHER

If you do find out where they are,
then what?

(Beat)

(Insincerely)

We can't be involved in something
illegal.

HAKIM

You leave that up to me.

CHRISTOPHER

First, let us do our job.

He points to the pile of questionnaires.

CHRISTOPHER (CONT'D)

We just started going through
these. If we can pick the right
jurors, you might not need to do
anything.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

The jury box and the courtroom are filled. Judge, Connie,
lawyers, and defendant seated.

JUDGE JEFFERSON

Ladies and gentlemen, the lawyers for each side will now ask you some questions to determine if they want to challenge you.

One good looking 25 year old juror in overalls, seated in the jury box, raises his hand. Connie looks at her printed list.

CONNIE

Yes sir, Juror #100?

JETHRO

(Back country drawl)

I only moved to Los Angeleeze 'bout a year ago, but I can save y'all some time. That lady lawyer might give me trouble, but I'm pretty sure I can take that pencil neck sitting next to her, if he's a mind to challenge me.

JUDGE JEFFERSON

It's not that kind of challenge sir.

CHRISTOPHER

Perhaps I can help your Honor. If I may?

The judge waves his hand to go ahead.

CHRISTOPHER (CONT'D)

Juror #100, my name's Christopher Carroll. Do you know what happens in a criminal trial?

JETHRO

Why sure I do. I ain't no idyat. All you lawyers yap and yap, then we decide whether to give your guy the chair.

CHRISTOPHER

Your Honor.

JUDGE JEFFERSON

Mr. McConnell, I'm sorry, Juror #100, you're excused. You can mosey on back to the assembly room.

Connie chuckles as she crosses out his name from her personal list.

JUDGE JEFFERSON (CONT'D)
Mr. Cohen, please begin.

ALAN
Juror #66, do you know anything
about the charges in this case?

ALYSSA
Absolutely. You're very easy to
read.

ALAN
Excuse me?

ALYSSA
It's all in your body language. I
can read auras, you know.

ALAN
Can you read my mind as well?

ALYSSA
No, but you are sending out very
negative vibrations right now.

ALAN
Do you have any other...talents?

ALYSSA
Uh huh. I can also predict the
future. Do you want me to tell you
how this trial is gonna end?

ALAN
No thank you miss. Judge, we thank
and excuse Juror #66.

As she begins to walk out,

CLOSE ON HAKIM

He leans over to whisper to Evelyn.

HAKIM
Go out there and ask her what
happens.

INT. JUDGE'S CHAMBERS - LATE AFTERNOON

GRAPHIC: Hours Later

The judge removes his robe and plops down on his chair, looking exhausted. Connie stands nearby on pins and needles.

JUDGE JEFFERSON

You did this on purpose, admit it.

CONNIE

(Nervously)

Did what, judge?

JUDGE JEFFERSON

Sent out summonses to people who you knew would force me into an early retirement.

CONNIE

(Chuckling)

Honestly, your Honor, I've never seen anything like this. One or two maybe, but I'm beginning to wonder if we can find twelve jurors fit to serve.

JUDGE JEFFERSON

Fifteen. We've also got the three alternates, remember. Just make sure we don't lose more than three of our original twelve.

INT. JANICE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Janice on her side in bed as Connie gives her a back rub while Janice peruses Connie's list.

CONNIE

I thought this was your husband's job.

JANICE

Oooh no. He could care less that I'm as big as a blimp. He puts one hand on me and the next thing you know, he wants to have sex. God, what is it with men?

CONNIE

Still trying to figure that out. What do you think of my list so far?

JANICE

You've nixed an awful lot. Who's this guy Carl?

(MORE)

JANICE (CONT'D)

You crossed him out, then put him back on with a question mark.

CONNIE

I knocked him off the list when another juror said she was his fiancé. Turns out they'd broken up.

JANICE

Whoa, don't do it honey. The last thing you wanna do is lead the dating league in rebounds. It never works.

Connie sighs in disappointment.

CONNIE

Yeah, you're probably right. Anyway, it might not matter. He hasn't been excused yet.

JANICE

That's okay, you got a few here to get started. And after the lawyers finish thinning the herd, you'll probably get a few more.

CONNIE

Are you kidding? This pool is loaded with genuine fruit cakes.

(Beat)

And anyway, my dating days and nights are on hold until this trial is finished.

JANICE

Why? What happened?

CONNIE

Melody, you know, our bailiff, can't babysit the jurors when they're sequestered. She's taking care of her sick mother apparently. So Jefferson wants me to watch them once they're sworn in.

JANICE

Aren't you afraid?

CONNIE

Of what?

JANICE

Of the defendant. He got to the last jury and the papers said he's still in business, pushing speed all over the neighborhood.

CONNIE

He won't know where we are. It's a secret.

JANICE

He's connected all over town, you know that. I heard he's got a whole network behind him, here and in Mexico.

CONNIE

We'll be safe in the hotel. I've already got my bag packed.

Janice pauses in thought for a few seconds.

JANICE

Fine, make your first move when you're hunkered down.

Connie is aghast.

CONNIE

What?

JANICE

If you really think Mr. Bounce Back has potential, get up close and personal with him when you're at your no tell motel.

CONNIE

(Sarcastic)

Right, and punch my express ticket to the unemployment office. The judge told me in no uncertain terms that he's holding *me* responsible for keeping this jury untainted. I can't do anything with anybody on that jury.

JANICE

Well, then let's hope your guy gets booted.

INT. CARL'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Art and Carl sit on their couch, staring at the end of a football game on TV.

ART

That game totally sucked. Feel like watching something else?.

CARL

Like what?

ART

The Bachelor. I taped it.

CARL

Nah, I got a book somebody suggested I read.

He looks over at "Infinite Jest" sitting on the end table.

ART

C'mon, watch it with me. You got all those chicks on jury duty to drool over. Me, I got nothing.

(Beat)

How's it going at your little meat market by the way?

CARL

Not great. Suzanne muscles in whenever she gets a whiff I'm even just looking at somebody else.

Art shakes his head.

ART

I still don't get why you dumped her. She's gorgeous, smart enough, totally obsessed with you.

Carl sighs deeply, wondering whether he even knows the reason himself.

CARL

I can't really put it into words. It was just too easy I guess. I'd always be the one in charge. She never questioned anything I said or did. Even when we argued, I always knew I'd win.

ART

How is that a *bad* thing?

CARL

Probably not when I'm old and gray,
but right now I think I need
someone who'll challenge me, at
least on some stuff.

ART

You know, before you totally burn
that beautiful bridge, you could
talk to her again. Tell her what
you just said.

CARL

I tried once, but couldn't really
articulate what I felt without
making her feel really bad.

ART

Try it again. Otherwise, what you
gonna do?

CARL

Hope the defense excuses her
tomorrow, so I don't have to deal
with it.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

Walt sits in the jury box, along with Candy, Carlos,
Isabella, Kyle, Michelle, Richard, Raymond, Trudy, and
Penelope.

When Trudy even just looks at a lawyer, she sneezes.

Jeff, Carl, Suzanne, Agnes, Lou Ann, Dietrich, and Steven sit
in the audience.

CONNIE

Juror #15, please take an open seat
in the jury box.

As he moves into a seat.

JEFF

Okay, but I really shouldn't be
here.

Connie turns to the judge.

CONNIE

Your Honor, he was properly
summonsed.

JUDGE JEFFERSON

And why is that? Do you have an essential job, felony conviction, or medical condition you failed to mention.

JEFF

Yeah, that's it. I have gloobenshmire right now. It might be contagious.

Jeff rises to his feet.

JUDGE JEFFERSON

What is that?

Jeff doesn't move, holding his breath. Connie turns to the judge and shrugs. She has no idea.

WALT

(Stage whisper)
It's toe jam judge.

Laughter from others in the box and Connie. The judge shakes his head. Jeff, exhibiting a caught-with-his-hand-in-the-cookie-jar look, sits back down.

JUDGE JEFFERSON

Mr. Carroll, you may proceed.

CHRISTOPHER

JUROR #45, I see you've served on juries before.

LOU ANN

Yes sir. Five criminal trials. Convicted every one. I'm batting 1,000.

CHRISTOPHER

Your Honor, we'd thank and excuse Juror #45.

Connie turns to the judge.

CONNIE

That's the last challenge on either side, you Honor.

JUDGE JEFFERSON

Okay, select our final juror, madame clerk.

Connie rifles through an opaque bowl and pulls out a number.

CONNIE

Juror # --

She sighs as she pauses, disappointment in her face.

CONNIE (CONT'D)

189, please take a seat in the jury
box.

Immediately after Carl does,

JUDGE JEFFERSON

Ladies and Gentlemen, I need to
meet with the lawyers for a spell.
We'll reconvene in, say, fifteen
minutes.

He stands to leave the bench.

CONNIE

You in the jury box, the bailiff
will take you into the deliberation
room. The rest of you, be back
from the break and in your seats in
fifteen minutes.

As all the jurors, lawyers, and defendant leave, Connie sits
at her desk, looking dejectedly at her jury lists.

INSERT

CLOSE on Connie's personal list with all but five names
crossed out. Carl's is one of the remaining names. As she's
about to cross it out, Carl reenters the room, causing Connie
to look up.

He goes into the jury box and picks up his book.

CARL

The bailiff said I could get this.

He turns to leave the box, then stops.

CARL (CONT'D)

Guess this means I'm on the jury,
huh?

Connie gives a weak smile as she nods her head.

CONNIE

Yep.

(Hopeful Beat)

(MORE)

CONNIE (CONT'D)
Unless you're hiding some skeletons
you haven't told us about.

There's that smile again, before holding his arms out and
spinning around in place.

CARL
No, nothing here. But it's not
fair, you know.

CONNIE
Why? You seem like you wanted to
be selected.

CARL
Oh, that's not it. It's just that
you know so much about me, but I
know nothing about you.

CONNIE
(Chuckling)
So you'd like me to fill out a
questionnaire?

CARL
No need. I looked you up online.

Now *that* perks Connie's interest.

CARL (CONT'D)
Just a coupla questions.

Suzanne quietly pushes the back door ajar and listens in,
unseen.

CONNIE
Like?

CARL
English major in college, music
minor. What instrument?

CONNIE
Oh, not performance; music theory.

CARL
Ooh kay.

CONNIE
Why? Don't you like music?

CARL
Sure, to listen to. But theory?
That's way outta my league. I
can't read a note.

CONNIE
You could learn, if you wanted to.

Suzanne is not pleased by any of this.

CARL
Good to know. Second question.
(Beat)
Can you date a juror?

At that, Suzanne noisily enters the room.

SUZANNE
There you are. The bailiff is
looking for you.

Carl shakes his head in annoyance.

CARL
Can you give us a minute?

CONNIE
No, it's okay. I have to get ready
for what comes next.

Carl grudgingly leaves with Suzanne. As his back is turned,
Connie sighs.

CONNIE (CONT'D)
(Sotto voce) Not anymore.

INT. MEN'S RESTROOM

Alex and Hakim stand side by side at urinals, neither one
using one. Alex waits until Dietrich leaves, then hands
Hakim a piece of paper.

ALEX
Here are the names I got. Two of
'em might be customers.

HAKIM
Good. Look up all of their social
media pages to see what else you
can dig up. I gotta get back to
court.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

CLOSE on Judge Jefferson.

JUDGE JEFFERSON

It appears we've settled on our twelve jurors.

All the jurors look at the judge, except Carl, who's smiling at Connie. Suzanne, in the audience is not amused by this.

JUDGE JEFFERSON (CONT'D)

It is time to select our three alternates. Each side has one additional challenge.

Connie pulls five numbers.

CONNIE

Next in line are jurors #27, 31, 61, 139 and 140.

Suzanne's rather downcast face perks up as Carl's half smile shifts the other direction.

JUDGE JEFFERSON

The prosecution may go first.

ALAN

Juror #31, I see you've served on juries before that all reached verdicts, is that correct?

STEVEN

Uh huh. But I can't be on the jury now.

ALAN

And why is that sir?

STEVEN

I wasn't an alternate then, and this would make me the next juror after 12.

ALAN

You mean the 13th juror.

Steven noticeably shivers.

STEVEN

Please don't use that word. I have a condition.

JUDGE JEFFERSON
And what is that sir?

STEVEN
Triskaidekaphobia.

ALAN
But if you were the second
alternate, you'd be okay?

STEVEN
Uh huh, I guess.

Alan looks at Agnes's questionnaire.

ALAN
Juror #27, you indicated you had
some issue regarding pet care.

AGNES
Oh, I solved that. My daughter is
watching Fifi.

ALAN
No further questions. Jurors #27
and 31,
(beat)
in that order, are acceptable to
the government.

The three at the defense table confer quietly for a few
seconds. Evelyn stands.

EVELYN
And to the defense, your Honor.

JUDGE JEFFERSON
Will you both please take a seat in
the jury box.

As they do, Alan focuses on Dietrich.

ALAN
Juror #61, do you drive a car?

DIETRICH
Yes, a Prius.

ALAN
And do you have any decals on your
Prius?

DIETRICH
Only one.

ALAN
What does it say?

He stares at Alan with a slight smirk.

DIETRICH
Not without a warrant, you don't.

ALAN
Your Honor, we thank and excuse
Juror #61.

CONNIE
The defense has the lone remaining
challenge, your Honor.

Suzanne gives Christopher her best come hither look. And
it's a good one.

CHRISTOPHER
Juror 140, have you ever been a
victim of a crime?

SUZANNE
Heartbreak is not a crime, is it?

Carl rolls his eyes.

CHRISTOPHER
(Smiling)
No.

SUZANNE
Then no.

CHRISTOPHER
JUROR #139, have you ever been a
victim of a crime?

SHIRLEY
I was a murder victim.

CHRISTOPHER
You mean attempted murder?

SHIRLEY
No, the attempt was successful. I
died.

CHRISTOPHER
And how is it that you're here with
us now?

SHIRLEY

Oh, it was in a previous life.
Around the Middle Ages, I think.

CHRISTOPHER

Ookay.

Christopher consults with Evelyn and Hakim. This time, they obviously don't agree as Evelyn animately shakes her head no. Christopher raises his hand to silence her, then takes a quick look at Suzanne.

Suzanne bats her eyes at him.

CHRISTOPHER (CONT'D)

Your Honor, the defense would thank
and excuse Juror #139.

JUDGE JEFFERSON

Juror #140, you may take a seat.

As she enters the jury box, Suzanne looks triumphantly at Carl. Connie sees this and dejectedly sighs.

JUDGE JEFFERSON (CONT'D)

Ladies and gentlemen in the
audience, you are excused. Thank
you for your service.

As the others leave the courtroom, Carl shrugs at Connie and she wanly smiles back briefly before looking down at her handwritten list. Instead of crossing out Carl's name, she takes the entire list, crumbles it up, and tosses it in the wastebasket.

JUDGE JEFFERSON (CONT'D)

We'll swear you in after I speak to
the lawyers. The bailiff has to
leave, so my clerk will escort you
all to the deliberation room.

INT. JURY DELIBERATION ROOM - DAY

All 15 jurors sit around a large table. Connie stands. She never once looks at Carl.

CONNIE

The judge will give you more
detailed instructions when he
swears you in, but a few ground
rules first. You cannot discuss
the case until you begin
deliberations.

PENELOPE

But we're allowed to get to know each other a little bit, right?

CONNIE

Absolutely. You'll be together for awhile.

Suzanne smiles at Carl, who stares only at Connie.

CARL

Will you be in here with us?

CONNIE

No. In fact, I'll step outside so you can all get acquainted.

Connie leaves the room.

PENELOPE

I can start. I'm Penelope, retired elementary school teacher.

WALT

I'm Walt, semi-retired veterinarian.

AGNES

Oh, thank goodness. Can you examine pets over the phone?

WALT

If they have a cough perhaps, but I usually need to see them. You are?

AGNES

Agnes. Agnes Morton. If anything happens to my Fifi while I'm here, I'll insist the judge let you see her.

KYLE

I'm Kyle. I'm a civil lawyer. Do you ever see pets with psychological problems?

WALT

Not really.

RAYMOND

I'm Raymond. Construction. Just curious, what's the problem?

KYLE

Bella's scared of vegetables.
Cucumbers, squash, Chinese beans.

SUZANNE

They remind her of predators.

She stares at Carl.

SUZANNE (CONT'D)

Like snakes in the grass.

Carl clearly gets the gist, as does Candy, who notice's
Carl's frustrated reaction.

SUZANNE (CONT'D)

Hi everyone. I'm Suzanne. I work
in fashion.

ISABELLA

I'm Isabella. Now that my stint as
a stay at home mom is over, I'm
looking for work.

Isabella looks at Michelle, next around the table.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

I think I recognize you.

MICHELLE

Michelle.

ISABELLA

Michelle Young, right? You were in
Game of Thrones.

JEFF

Really? Cool. I'm Jeff. Who'd you
play?

MICHELLE

Lady Stoneheart.

ISABELLA

Wow, I always wondered if
celebrities had to do jury duty,
like the rest of us.

CANDY

I'm Candy, between jobs at the
moment. I'd love to be on a jury
with Dolly Parton.

CARLOS

I'm Carlos. Car maintenance. For me, it be the Dodgers' announcers. They could do play by play of the trial.

CARL

(Chuckles)

My name's Carl, cybersecurity analyst.

PENELOPE

How about you young man?

Richard sits, head down, taking notes in his notebook.

RICHARD

Sorry, no names. I'm juror #87.

PENELOPE

Okaaay. You two?

TRUDY

Trudy, middle school teacher, retired, along with my husband.

STEVEN

Steven, alternate #2. Sous chef.

Connie knocks on the door and enters.

CONNIE

The judge said that after he swears you in, you need to go home and pack. We'll all check into the hotel tonight.

CARL

(Hopeful smile)

You coming with us?

A look of trepidation on Suzanne's face.

Connie nods but doesn't smile as her blank look at Carl lingers. Suzanne, sees this and breaks the spell.

SUZANNE

I'm alternate #3. What's that mean?

CONNIE

It means you are a member of the jury for the entire trial.

(MORE)

CONNIE (CONT'D)

But unless three of the first twelve have to drop out for some reason, you won't be in the final deliberations.

STEVEN

Can we switch places?

CONNIE

Afraid not sir. Your place is set in stone now.

INT. HAKIM'S VAN - EARLY EVENING

Hakim looks at a list of names, Alex seated next to him. He points to one name.

HAKIM

Start with this one here. Once we figure out which hotel, you call her husband at home. Tell him she's in danger and give him the name of the hotel.

ALEX

Then what?

HAKIM

Pay a visit to the hotel and --

ALEX

(Interrupting)

Yeah, I know what to do.

INT. SERIES OF SHOTS (SET TO MUSIC) - EARLY EVENING

1. Isabella, sitting on her bed, shakes her head as her husband presents one of the many outfits hanging in her closet.
2. Michelle turns her head different ways as a sketch artist draws her head, under the watchful eye of her agent.
3. Candy stares at several bras laid out on her bed. She lifts an unpadded one, sets it back down, and lifts a padded one, eventually posing before her stand-up mirror with it.
4. Steven has his clothes stacked in four neat piles of three on his bed, before his opened suitcase with a rabbit's foot in it. He lifts one more shirt, shivers, and sets it aside.
5. Trudy sneezes, just before putting a very large bottle of

allergy medicine in her cosmetic bag.

6. Walt pulls a book out of his bookcase: Robert's Rules of Order.

7. As she gets to the stenciled door of the Happy Valley Retirement Home, Penelope turns to wave goodbye to three older men.

8. Raymond has his suitcase open, but nothing in it. A pair of pants lays on the bed. He walks to his closet, takes a shirt out, places it next to the pants, then shakes his head, and tosses it onto a pile of shirts on the floor.

9. Jeff stuffs some tee shirts in his duffel bag, followed by his X-box and a dozen video games. His mother enters, looks in his bag, then goes to his dresser and pulls out several pairs of underwear.

10. Agnes tearfully holds Fifi in her arms, kisses her, then hands her over to her daughter. She lifts a photo of her with Fifi out of her suitcase, tearfully smiles, then replaces it.

11. Kyle stands before his opened, but fully packed suitcase. His cat sits in it, on top of the clothes. Kyle gently lifts the cat into a carrier. Taped to the inside of the carrier is a large photo of Dr. Phil.

12. Richard talks animatedly, but indecipherably, on his phone, shaking his head several times.

13. Suzanne tosses a Cosmo magazine on top of the clothes in her fashionable suitcase. CLOSE on the cover: How to Win Back Your Man; and Surviving Without Your Phone.

INT. DRUGSTORE - NIGHT

Carl, holding a bottle of men's cologne, pauses as he strolls down the condom aisle.

EXT. CARLOS'S HOUSE - DAY

Carlos exits his house, carrying a suitcase and accompanied by his daughter. As she drives away with him in the passenger seat, they pass a white van. Once they're gone, Alex pops his head up in the van.

END SERIES OF SHOTS.

INT. JURY DELIBERATION ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

GRAPHIC: First Day of Trial

Connie holds the door open as they all file in.

SUZANNE

Well, that was interesting. After what his lawyer said --

CONNIE

Uh uh, no talking about the case yet. Those were just the opening statements. You still have to hear all the evidence and the jury instructions.

Connie leaves.

Michelle and Isabella are dressed to the nines, hair well coiffed, heavily made up. Isabella whispers to Michelle.

ISABELLA

Thank you so much for warning me. I almost put on my casual outfit.

MICHELLE

This was the key day, when they sketch all of us. Then they use that sketch until the last day.

PENELOPE

The judge said we might be here awhile. What should we talk about?

JEFF

Hey, I got a question. How come they never show superheroes on juries? You know, like Superman or Spiderman. That'd be cool.

KYLE

Can't.

JEFF

Why not?

KYLE

Well, a lot of them, like Superman, the Black Panther, and Wonder Woman are ineligible.

CARLOS
Probably because they're not real
people.

KYLE
No, because they're not citizens.

JEFF
But Peter Parker is.

Walt leans over and whispers to Penelope.

WALT
Who?

PENELOPE
(Whispering back)
Spiderman.

KYLE
Also ineligible. He's a full time
student, remember?

JEFF
Captain America, then.

KYLE
Exempt. Full time military.

CARL
How about Ant Man?

ISABELLA
Oh, Paul Rudd. I'd pay to be on a
jury with him.

KYLE
He might make it on a jury, but not
his movie character. Convicted
felon, remember?

JEFF
What about Bruce Wayne, or Tony
Stark?

RAYMOND
Too rich. They'd buy their way
out.

SUZANNE
You can't do that. Can you?

MICHELLE

You'd be surprised. Money can open
a lot of doors in this town.

INT. HOTEL RESTAURANT - NIGHT

GRAPHIC: Second Week of Trial

Everyone's seated at a big table except Richard, who is seated at an adjacent table, by himself. All in casual clothes, other than fashionable Suzanne and business-suited Connie.

Connie at the head of the table, Carl, in a Pomona College shirt to her side, Candy on her other side. Suzanne sits next to Carl. Everyone is done eating, except Jeff, still finishing his double portion of dessert.

PENELOPE

Richard, you sure you don't want to
join us?

Richard shakes his head "No" silently, as he looks up from whatever it is he's writing.

WALT

But Connie, didn't we all have to
leave our trial notebooks in the
jury room?

RICHARD

I did. These are just some, uh,
drawings I'm making.

CONNIE

May I see them?

Richard grudgingly hands them over. Connie chuckles as she quickly leafs through them, before handing them back.

CONNIE (CONT'D)

They're okay.

Connie turns to Carl.

CONNIE (CONT'D)

You finish that book?

CARL

Uh huh. You were right. It *is*
good. You got any other
suggestions?

CONNIE

I do, but it depends how difficult you want them to be.

CARL

I hope they're not like that music you suggested the other night.

CONNIE

(Chuckling)

Perhaps I should have had you start with someone a bit more melodic than Schoenberg.

SUZANNE

Why do you need that anyway Carl? Remember the music you picked out for my playlist? It was perfect.

As Suzanne squeezes Carl's arm affectionally, Connie's sigh of resignation is interrupted when the waiter brings the check.

CONNIE

Everyone ready to hunker down back in your rooms?

Raymond stands and smiles as he helps Candy with her chair. Carl looks at them, then rises quickly, but hesitates, looking at Connie and Suzanne. Connie gets to her feet by herself, while Suzanne waits for Carl to pull her chair back.

INT. FIRST FLOOR - NIGHT

The jurors gather near the elevator. Connie at the rear.

The elevator arrives. Room for six: Trudy, Agnes, Penelope, Walt, Stephen, and Carlos.

CONNIE

Everyone, wait for me upstairs.

Elevator door closes.

JEFF

Is it okay if I take the stairs?

CONNIE

Go ahead.

KYLE

I'll join you.

JEFF

C'mon Carl. Be good for you.

CARL

No, I'll just take the next elevator.

JEFF

Don't be a toad dude, I'll race ya.

Carl looks at Connie, before reluctantly joining them.

The elevator returns. Michelle, Isabella, Suzanne, Richard, Raymond, and Candy get in. Suzanne stabs the close door button, but Candy holds the closing door back.

CANDY

You can fit Connie. We'll hold our breath.

They squeeze in tightly to let Connie in.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Everyone gathers together until Kyle emerges from the stairs. Then they head down the hallway to their rooms.

When Suzanne sees Carl hanging back with Connie, she stops and turns to watch.

CARL

You staying up?

CONNIE

Uh huh. Still got the room checks, remember?

CARL

Need any company?

Connie hesitates for a fleeting second.

CONNIE

Thanks, but I think I better do it alone.

CARL

(Disappointed)

Okay, you're the boss.

He hurries towards Suzanne, but rushes past her. Ahead of them, Raymond says goodnight to Candy as he enters his room. Carl catches up to Candy.

Connie looks disappointed as she watches the two chat.
Suzanne looks really, really worried.

CARL (CONT'D)

You and Raymond seem to be getting
along.

CANDY

Oh, he's sweet. You are too, you
know.

(Beat)

But don't get your hopes up.
Men aren't really my thing.

She looks back down the hallway from a surprised Carl.
Candy's POV: Suzanne is closest, but Connie can be seen in
the distance as well. Both are frozen in place waiting to
see what is gonna happen between Candy and Carl.

CANDY (CONT'D)

But you are clearly somebody
else's. Good night Carl.

Connie's POV: Candy enters her room. Suzanne rushes up to
Carl's side and they chat indecipherably as they walk down
the hall. Connie can't mask her disappointment.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

GRAPHIC: Hours Later

Connie knocks on a door.

CONNIE

It's Connie. Bed check.

INT. ROOM - NIGHT

Suzanne, in a skimpy nightie, primps before a mirror.

SUZANNE

Fine here. Just getting ready.

HALLWAY

Connie knocks on another door.

WALT (O.S.)

Come in.

Connie opens the door and enters. As she does, Carl sneaks out of his room and tip toes in the direction of Suzanne's room.

INT. WALT'S ROOM - NIGHT

Connie enters a few feet, stops when she sees Walt in bed, covers pulled up, reading a book.

CONNIE
In for the night?

WALT
Uh huh. In fact, can you put the do not disturb sign outside? I forgot.

CONNIE
Will do. Good night Walt.

INT. ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE on inside of door, as it opens.

CLOSE on Carl's face.

CARL
I hope it's not too late.

BACK TO:

INT. WALT'S ROOM

Connie takes the do not disturb sign with her as she leaves. Once the door is closed, Penelope pops her head out from under the covers.

PENELOPE
(Giggling)
Now where were we?

EXT. ALLEY BEHIND HOTEL - NIGHT

CLOSE on cash changing hands near a back door. A hotel maintenance man pockets the cash, hands over a piece of paper, and opens the door to let a blue-hooded figure enter.

INT. TRUDY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Trudy, in a hotel robe, goes to the window to close her curtains. She looks out.

Trudy's POV: her husband, stands next to an RV, waving frantically at her.

She tries to open the window, but can't.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Connie slowly walks towards the corner of the hallway.

CAMERA tracks ahead of her to show Trudy peek out her door, hang her do not disturb sign, and rush down the hallway away from Connie.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Trudy's husband opens the door to a parked RV and Trudy enters.

BACK TO:

INT. HALLWAY

Connie stands in front of Trudy's room. Holding her hand as if to knock, she looks down at the do not disturb sign, then shakes her head "no," turns, and spots Carl tip toeing around the corner.

CONNIE

Carl, heading somewhere?

CARL

Oh, uh, yeah. Hi Connie. Back to my room.

(Beat)

You know, you never answered my question about dating jurors.

CONNIE

No, I can't. But don't you think your social calendar is full enough right now.

CARL

What do you mean?

CONNIE

Give me some credit Carl. Juror 140's room is back where you came from.

CARL

You mean Suz...Sorry. Yeah, but so are some others. Juror #8 for example.

FLASHBACK

CARL (CONT'D)

I hope it's not too late.

ANOTHER ANGLE:

Carl talks to Raymond.

RAYMOND

For what?

CARL

For you to pay more attention to Suzanne than Candy.

RAYMOND

I thought you were Suzanne's man.

CARL

Not anymore. And Candy doesn't want a man, now or ever.

RAYMOND

So what are you thinking?

MOMENTS LATER

INT. SUZANNE'S ROOM - NIGHT

A knock on her door.

SUZANNE

(Big smile)

Come in Carl.

The door opens and it is Raymond.

RAYMOND

Sorry, it's me. Can we talk?

END FLASHBACK

Connie's mood has brightened considerably.

CONNIE
I better get back there to make
sure --

CARL
(Grinning)
Maybe give em' a few more minutes.

CONNIE
(Chuckling)
Okay, I'll start back at the end of
the hall.

Just before she gets to the end of the hallway, she turns
back to Carl.

CONNIE (CONT'D)
Oh, and you won't be a juror
forever. If you're still
interested.

He smiles back at her and she turns the corner. As she does,
she spots the blue hooded figure at the other end.

CONNIE (CONT'D)
You! Stop!

She sprints after him.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Connie storms out the door and scans the lot. A white panel
truck speeds away. As she's about to come back in, she spots
the RV with Trudy climbing out.

CONNIE
Busted.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

All the jurors except Trudy in the box. Judge, lawyers,
defendant, and Connie in their respective places. Otherwise,
an empty courtroom.

JUDGE JEFFERSON
(Sternly)
Juror # 23 has been excused from
further service. Juror 27 will you
please step into her seat.

Agnes does as instructed. As she does, Steven becomes
noticeably nervous.

JUDGE JEFFERSON (CONT'D)
Ladies and gentlemen, I have to
discuss some legal matters with the
lawyers. Please retire to the jury
room.

The jurors file out and the CAMERA tracks them into the jury
deliberation room. Suzanne immediately sits next to Raymond
and the two engage in a very friendly, indecipherable private
chat.

JEFF
Wow. The judge wasn't exactly a
happy camper.

KYLE
He doesn't want to try this thing a
third time.

STEVEN
I don't think I can do this any
longer.

He begins hyperventilating.

PENELOPE
Steven, try to relax.

He grabs a piece of paper and writes something on it, After
folding it, he goes to the door and knocks. Connie opens it
and he hands her the note.

MOMENTS LATER

Connie comes back with the note and hands it to Steven.

CONNIE
Sorry Juror #60, your request was
denied. Trial resumes in 5
minutes.

She leaves. Steven reads the note, head drops, shoulders sag.
He dejectedly shuffles into the bathroom.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

All jurors seated. Steven's seat is empty.

JUDGE JEFFERSON
Are we missing one?

As Connie gets to her feet, the jury door opens and Steven enters, wearing only his boxer shorts. He takes his seat without saying a word. Hakim grins.

JUDGE JEFFERSON (CONT'D)
JUROR #60, what's going on?

STEVEN
I can't do that your Honor. I mean, I can put my clothes back on, but I cannot be the, well you know.

JUDGE JEFFERSON
Then you leave me with no choice sir. I find you in contempt. Go back in that room, put your clothes back on, and wait for a bailiff to come and take you into custody until this trial is over.

After Steven gets up and goes back into the jury room, CLOSE on Hakim looking back at Alex in the audience and nodding.

JUDGE JEFFERSON (CONT'D)
Defense, call your next witness.

EXT. CARLOS'S HOUSE - MIDNIGHT

Alex pulls up in front, with the lights out on his van. He dashes up to the front door and tacks something on it, before sprinting back to his van.

INT COURTROOM - DAY

While Christopher indecipherably questions a witness, Sonya (Carlos's daughter) enters the back and hands a note to Melody. Melody reads it and signals Connie to come over.

Connie walks back there, takes the note, and reads it.

INSERT CLOSE on note: Acquit or you and your family will never see a Dodger game again.

Connie brings the note up to the judge and hands it to him.

INT. SPLIT SCREEN - NIGHT

Janice in bed at home. Connie in her hotel room. Both on the phone.

CONNIE

I don't know what to do Janice.
We're down to 12. No more
alternates.

JANICE

Twelve's all you need. Was your
dreamboat one of the dumpees?

CONNIE

No, he's still on the jury. But if
the defendant gets to anyone else,
the judge will declare a mistrial
and he might dismiss everything
rather than try it a third time.

JANICE

Hang in there honey. The trial
will be over soon.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

GRAPHIC: Last Day of Trial

CAMERA pans the jury. Only 12 now, with Suzanne moved up to
Carlos's seat.

Alan stands, giving an inaudible closing, referencing a large
city map with markings on it.

Suzanne glances over at Hakim. He looks back at Alex in the
gallery, drawing Suzanne's attention that direction. Alex
takes out a cell phone from his pocket, flashes it at her,
then crushes it with his hand. Suzanne jolts her head back
to look at Alan.

INT. JURY DELIBERATION ROOM - DAY

Raymond holds a distraught Suzanne's hand.

RAYMOND

Don't worry Suz. Trial's over. He
can't do anything.

Suzanne is unconvinced.

SUZANNE

Did you all see that? Did you see
what that guy in the audience did?

JEFF

What?

SUZANNE

He looked right at me and crushed a cell phone, with his bare hand!

RAYMOND

Do you want me to tell the judge?

KYLE

If you do, the judge might excuse Suzanne and end this trial prematurely.

CARL

Then don't say anything, please Suzanne. If you do, he might blame Connie and she could lose her job.

KYLE

Carl's right. We all saw the way the judge looked at her when people were trying anything to get out of jury service. He's certainly not gonna take the blame if this case blows up.

WALT

Not our problem. Right now, we do what the judge said, start deliberations. First, we select a foreman.

CANDY

Foreperson.

WALT

Yes, yes. Now I've been a foreperson on juries before and --

CANDY

(Interrupting)

Penelope, you've been on juries, too. Does the director of our little play *have* to be male.

Penelope shakes her head "no."

CANDY (CONT'D)

Then I nominate Suzanne. To teach that guy in court a lesson that we can't be intimidated.

RAYMOND

I second that.

SUZANNE
No, please, I don't --

CANDY
All in favor?

Everyone says "Aye," including a disappointed Walt.

SUZANNE
So what do I do?

PENELOPE
Go around the room and let everyone
say what they think.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

Packed courtroom. Participants in place. Press, sketch artists, and public in the gallery.

JUDGE JEFFERSON
Madame Foreperson, have you reached
a unanimous verdict?

Suzanne nervously stands and nods. Raymond stares daggers at Hakim, but no one else looks at him. Suzanne holds the verdict form.

SUZANNE
Yes, your Honor.

JUDGE JEFFERSON
Please hand it to my clerk.

She hands three pages to Connie, who gives them to the judge. He scans them before handing them back to her.

JUDGE JEFFERSON (CONT'D)
The defendant will please rise.

Hakim and his lawyers stand. He directs an angry stare at Suzanne after she receives the pages back from Connie,

JUDGE JEFFERSON (CONT'D)
Madame Foreperson, what is your
verdict?

SUZANNE

As to Count One, we, the jury in the above captioned case, find the defendant Hakim Mansour guilty of wire fraud in connection with the provision of cable TV service to subscribers in the Los Angeles area.

Alex gets up from the audience and heads to the back door. He stops suddenly when Carlos stands up from the back row. He looks at Melody, points to Alex, and nods. Melody grabs Alex by the arm and escorts him out of the courtroom, where two other cops await.

BACK TO:

JURY BOX

SUZANNE

As to Count Two,

She pauses as she smiles ever so slightly.

SUZANNE (CONT'D)

the provision of cell phone service, we, the jury find the defendant guilty.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. VIDEO GAME STORE - DAY

GRAPHIC: SIX MONTHS LATER

Jeff hands \$60 to the clerk, who hands him 3 Call of Duty games.

CLERK

This still leftover jury money
Jeff?

JEFF

Naw. Now that I'm supposedly responsible, my mom forced me to get a job.

INT. MOVIE SET - DAY

Trial scene. CLOSE on Michelle as the judge.

MICHELLE

And do you really think you can
avoid jury duty this easily sir?

RICHARD (O.S.)

Cut!

Richard sits in a chair labeled: WRITER/DIRECTOR. He lifts the same notebook he had in the restaurant, now labeled "Storyboard."

INT. CANDY'S APARTMENT - DAY

She, still small breasted, exits her bathroom wearing a nightie, and heads to her bed, where the female occupant closes a magazine and places it on the bedside table. CLOSE on the cover: "Dolly Parton Has Breast Reduction Surgery Due to Crippling Back Pain."

INT JURY ASSEMBLY ROOM - DAY

Janice sits at her desk, bassinet nearby, when her telephone rings.

CONNIE

Jury Commissioner. Can I help you?
Let me ask my new assistant. Can
you take this Isabel?

She hands the receiver to Isabella, wearing an Assistant Commissioner name tag.

ISABELLA

Yes?...Really Mr. Hanks?...Your
first time? Well be sure to check
in with me, Isabella, when you get
here.

INT. JEWELRY STORE - DAY

Raymond and Suzanne look at rings in a section marked, "Engagement Rings." She's latched onto his arm.

SUZANNE

Which one sugar? I'll go with
whichever one you pick.

INT. ASSISTED LIVING DINING ROOM - DAY

Penelope sits at a table with her three male friends. A staff member hands her an envelope labeled: Jury Summons.

PENELOPE

Oh, goody.

INT. WAITING ROOM, VET'S OFFICE - DAY

Agnes and Kyle sit, holding their pets on their laps, as Walt walks out.

WALT

Nice to see you two. How they holding up?

KYLE

Bella here is much better since we started doing yoga together.

WALT

And you Agnes?

AGNES

Fifi has such an active social life now, thanks to that dog dating site you mentioned. Of course I screen all her dates, before I let her meet them.

INT. JAIL COMMON ROOM - DAY

TV playing before room of tatted up, fierce-looking prisoners. One goes to the elevated TV but can't reach it. He turns.

PRISONER

Hey dudes, you fix that remote yet?

Hakim fiddles with the remote while Alex nervously looks on.

INT. JUDGE'S CHAMBERS - DAY

JUDGE JEFFERSON

I heard some scuttlebutt Connie that you have a pool going with the jury commissioner about the people who report for jury service?

CONNIE

A pool? What do you mean your Honor?

JUDGE JEFFERSON

Some kind of dating pool.

CONNIE

An interesting idea judge, but I'm actually seeing someone right now. In fact, if you'll excuse me, I'm meeting him in a few minutes.

As she heads to the door,

JUDGE JEFFERSON

Not a juror, I hope.

Connie smiles without turning around.

CONNIE

No, certainly not.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

CLOSE on Carl, in a sports coat, sits alone in a booth. Steven comes over, wearing a chef's hat. He delivers a plate of beignets.

STEVEN

Here you are, a dozen beignets. I got the recipe from somebody in lockup, while you all deliberated.

CARL

I was hoping for a baker's dozen. Just kidding Steven, I'm sure they're great.

He addresses someone off camera.

CARL (CONT'D)

What do you think?

Connie stands next to the table, dressed, well, not in any outfit permitted in a courtroom.

CONNIE

They look as delicious Chef as the person sitting next to them.

Connie sits and they kiss. Steven walks away. Carl lifts up a wrapped present.

CARL
I got something for you.

CONNIE
That's so sweet. But what's the occasion?

CARL
Just open it.

She does. It is a hardback copy of Finnegans Wake by James Joyce.

CONNIE
(Taken aback)
Wow.
(Beat)
You know this is like the hardest book to read ever written.

He pulls up an unwrapped copy of the same book.

CARL
I know. We'll do it together.

A much longer kiss.

FADE OUT.

THE END.