

DANNY

46.

ACT THREE

HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

DANNY is standing in front of the TV, holding a remote and watching--for the tenth time--playback on WES's rant. His wife, BLAIR, sits on the couch talking into the room phone while holding her cellphone.

WES (FROM TV)

...and it's not even good pornography. They're just this side of snuff films, and friends, that's what's next 'cause that's all that's left.

There's a KNOCK on the door and BLAIR gets up and answers. JAMIE, who gives BLAIR a friendly pat on the arm and an audible 'hello' and slips into the room unnoticed by DANNY.

WES (FROM TV) (CONT'D)

And the two things that make them scared gutless are the FCC and every psycho-religious cult that gets positively horny at the very mention of a boycott.

JAMIE

Well there are gonna be some horny psycho-religious cults tonight.

DANNY turns around...

JAMIE (CONT'D)

Danny, I'm Jamie McDeere.

DANNY

(pause)

I'm sorry are we in your room? The hotel just let us in to use--

(to BLAIR)

--are we in somebody's room?

BLAIR

Jamie's come to see you.

DANNY

(pause)

Isn't today your first day?

JAMIE

As a matter of fact my contract doesn't start till Monday. Technically, I suppose, I could blow all this off and go to Cabo for the weekend. You wanna come?

DANNY

I have a date waiting downstairs in the lobby.

SCENE ONE

START SCENE →

(CONTINUED)

1/5

JAMIE

Your date's gonna win a Pulitzer Prize within three years, you heard it here first.

DANNY

I've actually heard it before but I'll pass along the compliment.

JAMIE

Well since you won't go to Cabo, what about this? You and Matt Albie run *Studio 7*?

DANNY

(pause)

You want Matt and me to run the show?

JAMIE

Yeah. Right now as a matter of fact. Your cast and crew and staff are gathering at the--

DANNY

We're making a movie right now, I'm gearing up to start production on a new screenplay of his.

BLAIR

Danny--

JAMIE

I don't think you are.

DANNY

Look, I'm not even comfortable having this conversation without--you fired Wes?

JAMIE

Yeah.

DANNY

Well I'd like to do for him what he never did for us and ask--

JAMIE

--for his blessing. You have it.

DANNY

I'm sorry?

JAMIE

You have his blessing. You can call him if you want.

(CONTINUED: (2))

DANNY
You've already talked to him?

JAMIE
Yeah.

DANNY
What did you say to him?

JAMIE
I said I want your blessing and I want your endorsement. In gratitude I'll pay the full term of his contract. If he'd said no, I'd have sued for damages and won and while the case was pending for seven years I'd have successfully sought an injunction against his working at any other network.

DANNY
You threatened his life.

JAMIE
In so many words.

DANNY
You bought his blessing.

JAMIE
Yeah.

DANNY
That's okay with you.

JAMIE
Well it's not me he's blessing.

BLAIR
Jamie, I think we ought to talk about what we're talking about.

DANNY
What did you mean when you said--I said we're making a movie and you said I don't think so.

BLAIR
Jamie knows about the test.

DANNY
I'm sorry?

JAMIE
I have an ex-boyfriend who's an executive at Great Western Mutual and he tells me things he's not supposed to tell me.

(CONTINUED)

3/5

FD: (3)

DANNY

'Cause he doesn't want to be your ex-boyfriend anymore.

JAMIE

I know you failed your physical.

(beat)

And I'm sorry to bring it up like this, it's certainly none of my business. You'll be able to get bonded again in 18 months and I need you for two years so it just about works out.

DANNY

It does?

JAMIE

Yeah.

DANNY

You're blackmailing me.

JAMIE

I absolutely am not. The information I have interests me only inasmuch as it means you're available to do a job that you're great at and that you love. And the money's not bad either. Blair and I'll settle in on something but you'll be the highest paid showrunners in the business. It'll be roughly three times what you'd make directing a feature which you're not gonna be able to do for another year and a half anyway. What I'd like you to do is to come over to the studio and talk with Jack.

DANNY

(pause)

Am I on the Jamie Kennedy Experiment?

BLAIR

Danny--

Grabbing his coat--

DANNY

I have to talk to Matt.

JAMIE

Matt's not down there anymore.

DANNY

Where is he?

(CONTINUED)

4/5

CONTINUED: (4)

JAMIE

He's meeting you at the stage, he's being taken in a separate car.

DANNY

Why?

JAMIE

'Cause the press is about 8 minutes behind all of us tonight.

DANNY

I'm going over there now, but I'm not going over to talk to your boss, I'm going over to tell Matt before you do.

JAMIE

Danny, I have no intention of telling Matt or anyone else.

DANNY

That's nice, but I have no reason to trust you and every reason not to.

JAMIE

Why?

DANNY

You work in television.
(handing BLAIR a ticket)
Would you call down for my car please.

DANNY bolts out of there as we

CUT TO:

INT. BEVERLY HILTON LOBBY - NIGHT

As the elevator doors open and DANNY flies off. He looks around quickly and sees who he was looking for--MARTHA--and runs over and grabs her hand.

DANNY

Marty. I'm sorry. I have to go right now and I can't take you home and I can't take you with me.

MARTHA

That's okay. You're going to the stage?

DANNY's led MARTHA outside to--

EXT. BEVERLY HILTON - CONTINUOUS

--where hundreds of people are waiting to get their cars from the VALETS.

(CONTINUED)

5/5

DANNY

50.

CONTINUED: (4)

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EXT. BEVERLY HILTON - CONTINUOUS

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START
SCENE
HERE →

SCENE TWO

1/4

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANNY

I can't really talk about it. You see a black BMW?

MARTHA

We're in Beverly Hills, I see six black BMW's without turning my head. I have friends at the paper who know I'm here tonight.

DANNY

What does that mean?

MARTHA

I get the text message about what happened at the show, I see you getting hustled out by your agent, I see Matt getting hustled out of the press room after he wins, I've got Felicity Huffman telling me Jack Rudolph and Jamie McDeere met immediately after the show and she's preparing for a press conference on Monday.

DANNY

Where's the damn car?

MARTHA

I'm a columnist but I have friends who work on the news side and they get very pissed when they get scooped.

DANNY

I on the other hand don't care at all if they get scooped and neither does anybody else.

MARTHA

Are you dropping Matt's new screenplay and taking over the show?

DANNY

I gave the guy a hundred dollars to keep the car up here.

MARTHA

I'm gonna get in trouble if I don't--I have to tell them what I've seen.

DANNY, who's had it, takes MARTHA's arm and moves her slightly to insure secrecy--

DANNY

I can't direct Matt's script. 8 days ago I failed a drug test and I can't get bonded.

2/4

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARTHA

(beat)

I don't understand what that means.

DANNY

Movie studios take out completion bonds. Insurance. So that when Tom Cruise breaks his arm during principal photography and you have to shut down for three weeks, you're covered. I failed my physical and with my history I won't be able to get bonded until I've had 18 months of clean tests. The new president of UBS knows this, so pretty soon everyone else will. You guys are gonna have me for lunch and I don't care. I just want to get to Matt and tell him before somebody else does.

(shouting to the crowd)

SO I HAVE MY CHECKBOOK HERE, AND I AM WILLING TO BUY THE NEXT CAR THAT GETS BROUGHT OUT!!

MARTHA

(calming)

Danny.

DANNY

Call your guys on the news side and tell 'em that, and then let's get this rectal probe started.

MARTHA

There are good reporters and bad reporters, and confusing me with other people is no way to get me into bed with you.

DANNY

(beat)

Well if I'd known that was a realistic possibility, I never would've--

MARTHA

Your car is here.

DANNY

I'm sorry. Can I call you a cab?

MARTHA

I got it.

DANNY

Can I call you?

3/4

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MARTHA

Yeah. But I don't think you're gonna have time 'cause my reporter's instinct says you're gonna agree to take over the show.

DANNY

I don't mean to insult you twice in the same minute but your reporter's instinct sucks.

DANNY heads for a black BMW--

DANNY (CONT'D)

(to the valet)
Right here.

MARTHA

(calling)
Danny.

DANNY

(calling back)
Yeah.

MARTHA

(pointing to a different black BMW)
That one.

DANNY

(calling back)
Thank you.

DANNY gets in the car and screeches away from the hotel as fast as he can as we

CUT TO:

INT. SOUNDSTAGE CORRIDOR - NIGHT

HARRIET is coming the down the hall with two cups of coffee. The hall is lined with framed photos from 20 years of Studio 7. She stops at one and looks at the picture of herself with SIMON and TOM, laughing at rehearsal with MATT and DANNY. She regards the photo for a moment before she moves on into--

INT. SIMON'S DRESSING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

TOM's got his feet up on the table, smoking a cigarette and SIMON's lying down on the couch. They're waiting...and while they're waiting, TOM's doing some talking...

TOM

We're witnessing the rise of the hack. A sort of celebration of mediocrity.

(CONTINUED)

4/4

DANNY

59.

ACT FOUR

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

It's empty as DANNY opens the door and ushers MATT in. We can see part of the Hollywood sign in the distance out the window.

START
SCENE
HERE →

DANNY

In here.

MATT

I had them move the follow-spot over. I said "He's never not been there for me", and then there was a klieg light on a basket of dinner rolls.

DANNY

I understand.

MATT

They're offering us the job?

DANNY

Yeah, but that's not what I want to talk to you about. Somebody else has to direct the movie, I can't do it.

MATT

What are you talking about?

DANNY

I can't do it. I took my insurance physical and tested positive for cocaine. I can't get bonded for 18 months.

MATT takes it in... nods...

MATT

(pause)
Okay--are you alright?

DANNY

I'm, yeah, I'm fine.

MATT

Okay so wait.

DANNY

Look--

MATT

No wait--

DANNY

Matt--

SCENE THREE

1/3

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MATT
I'll bond you.

DANNY
What?

MATT
I'll pay for the bond.

DANNY
How much money do you have?

MATT
Well, with alimony and my percent of the first dollar gross on this movie...65 dollars.

DANNY
Matt--

MATT
We make some budget cuts, we shoot in Vancouver.

DANNY
We're not shooting in Vancouver. Vancouver doesn't look like anything, it doesn't even look like Vancouver. It looks like Boston, California. Now we can make the movie for 65 dollars but it's gonna end up looking an awful lot like an only slightly more polished version of *The Blair Witch Project*. You need to go to another director. Go to Soderbergh, go to Curtis Hanson, go to--

MATT
Wait a second.

DANNY
Ang Lee.

MATT
Wait a second.
(beat)
They must know. That's how they knew we were available.

DANNY
A guy at the insurance company wants to sleep with Jamie McDeere.

MATT
Who doesn't want to sleep with Jamie McDeere?! Are they swinging this thing in front of your face?

(CONTINUED)

2/3

CONTINUED: (2)

DANNY

The point is, the new movie doesn't have to be--

MATT

Sons of bitches!

MATT bolts out of the room--

DANNY

Matt--

DANNY follows him out into--

// STOP SCENE

INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

--and follows MATT quickly down the hall. There are a few people there who are surprised and delighted to see them both, so they get a couple of "Hey, look who's here"'s and respond with a couple of genial "Hi"'s and "How you doin"'s until MATT goes into--

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

--where JACK RUDOLPH, JAMIE and a few of the EXECUTIVES we saw earlier are sitting around the table. DANNY comes in a few steps later.

MATT

Excuse me.

JAMIE

Matt, I'm Jamie.

MATT

Matt Albie.

JAMIE

I couldn't be a bigger fan of yours.

MATT

Thank you.

JACK

Matt--

MATT

You don't have to introduce yourself, Jack, we've met. Are you people using the confidential information that Danny failed a drug test to force him into taking over Studio 7 to deflect attention from what happened on the air tonight?

There's a long, puzzled silence in the room...

DANNY

67.

CONTINUED: (2)

HARRIET
There's no way to get this idiotic
argument behind us?

MATT
No. But score for us on Friday nights and
we won't have a problem. I'm looking
forward to working with you.

And MATT takes a few steps and walks through the double-steel
doors onto--

INT. SOUNDSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

DANNY is sitting alone on the stage as MATT walks in.

MATT
We're doing it.

DANNY
Matt, you can get another director, you
can get someone good.

MATT
I don't want someone else, I want you.

DANNY
(beat)
The joke was "I don't want someone good,
I want you."

MATT
I know where the joke was. What happened?
(beat)
What happened?

DANNY
Nothing happened. It just happened.

MATT
Once?

DANNY
Yeah.

MATT
You talked to your sponsor?

DANNY
Yeah.

MATT
You're back at meetings?

DANNY
Yeah.

START
SCENE
HERE →

SCENE FOUR

(CONTINUED)

1/4

CONTINUED:

MATT

Why didn't you tell me? When I screw up you know about it.

DANNY

When you screw up I read about it.

MATT

No, I tell you, you're the first one I tell. Now we're back in the NFL and only one of us can screw up at a time and I think we both know that most of the time it's gonna be me. You're the big shoulders.

DANNY

I hear you.

MATT

Good, 'cause I'm pretty stoned and I can't really remember what I said.

DANNY

(smiles)

Don't worry, I do.

During the above scene, a few cast and crew members have begun trickling onto to the stage and taking up positions in front of the bleachers. Their conversations are hushed and they keep their distance from MATT and DANNY.

JAMIE appears coming out of a vomitorium with a few rolled up sheets of paper--

JAMIE

Boys? Let's not have another meeting like that again, okay? It just makes my job harder.

DANNY

Why do I care about your job being harder?

JAMIE

Because you don't know it yet but I'm gonna be your dream come true.

DANNY

I appreciate the sentiment but I'll believe it when I see it.

JAMIE

Yeah, I get that a lot. You know what happened the morning after it was announced I was the new president of UBS?

(CONTINUED)

2/4

0: (2)

DANNY

What?

JAMIE

AMG stock dropped three-eighths of a point. I actually caused a dip in the NASDAQ index just by showing up to work in the morning. I don't think a lot of people are bettin' on me.

DANNY

How much latitude do we have with personnel?

JAMIE

Some. Some you're gonna have to keep though. Ricky and Ron have two more years on their contract.

MATT

I don't want Ricky and Ron.

JAMIE

They're getting 30 thousand an episode, we're not gonna eat that.

MATT

You're paying Beavis and Hackboy 30 thousand an episode?

JAMIE

I'm not the one who made the deal but it's there so they're your co-execs.

More people have been filtering in and taking places down in front of the bleachers.

JAMIE (CONT'D)

(re: the rolled up papers)

Hey, you know what this is? It's the sketch that got cut. I just read it, I thought it was inspired, but I'm not an expert--Matt, read it and tell me what you think.

MATT

Nah, I'm not gonna read it.

JAMIE

Just read it and tell me if it should've gone on the air.

MATT

I don't need to read it.

(CONTINUED)

3/4

CONTINUED: (3)

JAMIE
Matt--

DANNY
He doesn't need to read it.

JAMIE
Why?

MATT
Because I wrote it. Four years ago.
Shortly before I apparently quit.

JAMIE
I know.
(pause)
Alright, so want me to prove it? Here's
my first try.
(handing the sketch to DANNY)
Open with it next week.

JAMIE walks off and disappears...And now we HEAR the low-pulsing intro to a familiar DAVID BOWIE song.

A horseshoe of about 80 people--cast, crew, writers--are standing excitedly and waiting to be addressed. The buzz is growing.

MATT and DANNY are looking off after JAMIE...DANNY turns back to MATT--

DANNY
You gotta give her style points.

MATT
Yeah.

DANNY
And you gotta ask yourself.

MATT
What.

DANNY
What if she's for real?

MATT
Yeah.

The DAVID BOWIE pulsing is building as DANNY sees CAL and waves him over--

DANNY
Cal.

CAL comes over...

END SCENE

(CONTINUED)

4/4