

BUT I KNOW WHAT I LIKE
(Pilot)

Written by

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1

INT. BIKWIL ART GALLERY. FOYER - DAY

A stylishly dressed, mid-40s woman determinedly enters the BIKWIL Art Gallery. She carries a large, rolled up canvas. Although her burden is cumbersome she maintains a refined mien and carriage.

Pausing in the room's center, she peruses the three occupants: KATE; gallery owner and director, JULIA; curator and exhibit designer, and TONY; gallery manager. In the midst of discussion, they are caught at the woman's arrival. Kate begins to speak but is motioned to silence by Tony.

The woman unrolls the painting onto the floor, steps into the middle of it, pulls down her underwear, hikes up her dress a little bit, squats, and urinates on the painting. She smiles, gives a little shiver, rises, and steps back to admire her critique. She looks up.

WOMAN

Tell William, "Tomorrow, or it's
the Degas"

She beams a smile, turns, and leaves.

Kate, Julia, and Tony stand silently looking at the painting. MIRANDA enters from the back of the gallery and takes in the scene.

MIRANDA

Who's getting divorced?

END COLD OPEN

2

INT. BIKWIL ART GALLERY. EXHIBIT HALL - DAY

The gallery is organized bedlam in preparation for a new art opening: crates spilling packing peanuts and bubblewrap like so much jetsam, Tony is directing art handlers, Julia placing artwork against any available wall she can find, and Miranda, wearing a loop, closely examining a painting on a folding table. Kate enters the exhibit hall, starts to say something, decides against it, shakes her head, and leaves.

JULIA

At least she learns fast.

MIRANDA

It's a cowboy thing.

3

INT. BIKWIL ART GALLERY. KATE'S OFFICE - DAY

The office is Spartan: a single painting of a western landscape, and, on the desk, a framed image of her horse; JOHN DOE. Kate sits at her desk looking at an art photograph alternately reaching for the phone and taking her hand away. She reaches once more just as it rings, sees the caller ID, and picks it up.

KATE

Stephanie, thank God you're back.
 (pause) What have you gotten me
 into? I know, I did say "yes", but,
 you said it ran itself. (pause) Not
 a definition of "practically" that
 I'm familiar with.

A KNOCK on the door and, as Tony enters, Kate holds up a finger to request a moment.

KATE (CONT'D)

Steph, I have to go, a woman peed
 on a painting this morning and
 there's a photograph of poo with a
 smiley face on my desk.

(pause)

Yes, I just said "poo" Please
 stop. You know, lawyers shouldn't
 laugh at their clients. Tony's
 here. We'll meet tonight.

She starts to hang up the phone, brings it back to her ear to listen, then replaces it in the cradle. She turns to Tony.

TONY

Poo?

KATE

Can't swear to a lawyer.

TONY

Isn't that their job description?

Tony produces a cheque.

TONY (CONT'D)

You need to sign off on this.

Kate turns to her desk to retrieve a pen.

TONY (CONT'D)

\$54,248.23

Kate stops. Without turning she extends her hand backward. Tony places the cheque in her hand. She reads it.

KATE
I like the 23 cents. Makes it sound
legitimate.

TONY
Did that on purpose.

Kate points to the only other chair in the office.

KATE
Sit. Now, tell me why I'm spending
more than the average annual
income...

TONY
41.5 percent

KATE
(after just a moment)
125 thousand. Plus tax. So?

TONY
In your head. Really?

KATE
Helps with tipping. What sold?

TONY
The Malcolm.

Kate casts a question.

TONY (CONT'D)
Chartreuse, vermillion, and sienna
Still Life.

Kate gives him a withering look.

TONY (CONT'D)
Green, red, and brown oil painting.
The one with the ladder.

KATE
Oh, right. Bloody Vomit to Nowhere.

TONY
Not the actual title, but, yeah.

Kate nods toward the gallery.

KATE

Out there. Is that normal?

4 INT. BIKWIL ART GALLERY. EXHIBIT HALL - DAY

The art handlers are gone. Julia sits on a crate, Miranda still examines the painting.

MIRANDA

Wonder what she named her horse.

JULIA

Whoa.

MIRANDA

After Keanu. Too obscure.

JULIA

I meant 'stop'.

MIRANDA

As in "whoa, Whoa"?

JULIA

I meant stop trying to make this normal. She's no business being here. What was Helen thinking, leaving her gallery to, to...

MIRANDA

An ex extraction executive with a equine attraction and Boggle cube of letters after her signature. Smarts?

5 INT. BIKWIL ART GALLERY. KATE'S OFFICE - DAY

KATE

What was Miranda doing?

TONY

Watching paint dry.

KATE

And this is normal? I mean for this; the art stuff. A hundred and twenty-five K? For vomit, and not even real vomit, a painting of vomit.

Kate points to the photo on her desk.

KATE (CONT'D)
And what's with the feces with
smiley faces?

TONY
I get how that one might seem odd.

Tony leans back in the chair as Kate is about to burst.

TONY (CONT'D)
You worked 'corporate' in Montana,
right? And on the CEO's walls?

KATE
Paintings.

TONY
In the lobby. Anything on the
floor?

KATE
Some weird twisty metal thing.

TONY
Outside the building?

KATE
Big horse. Looked like it was made
of branches, but it was metal.
Okay, I get it. Even the big, bad
business beast has art.

TONY
What your grandmother did here was
'business'. She loved art, well,
the good stuff, but she never
forgot that it was also about
money. And she was really good with
the numbers. Sound familiar?

KATE
It skipped a generation.

TONY
More in common than you may think.
Don't tell anyone, but she was a
registered Republican.

KATE
Oh, I get it. Because I'm from
Montana, and work in the resource
extraction field...

TONY

That's what you're calling blasting Dakotas with water cannons these days?

KATE

...and ride a horse, I must be a...

TONY

The concealed weapon you carry sorta nailed it.

Kate pauses and takes a long look a Tony.

KATE

Afghanistan?

TONY

Three tours.

KATE

And you assume that I'm a Red Hat? What about you?

TONY

Losing brothers gets you to "both sides suck" real fast. Must have got some real threats for the Sheriff to sign off on your permit.

KATE

Yes. Mostly Road-Trip Radicals from right here in the People's Republic of California. The irony of driving cross country to protest an oil company is just lost on them, I guess. And now I'm living in Hillary's Home of the Hypocrite.

TONY

But you're in the art world, with the turds and vomit. So it's all good.

6

INT. BIKWILL ART GALLERY. EXHIBIT HALL - DAY

MIRANDA

She won't change much.

JULIA

She won't change at all; they cast that one in bronze, like one of those Remington cowboys, just flailing around not caring whose lives they stomp under their hooves. What she does here changes everything. What am I going to do?

MIRANDA

Bronze melts at around 950 degrees Celsius.

JULIA

Why do you do that?

MIRANDA

Heat. You could turn up the heat...not literally, not good for the art. Make it uncomfortable.

JULIA

She'd probably fire me.

MIRANDA

Yes.

JULIA

So...?

Miranda turns away from the painting, the magnifier she wears exaggerating her eyes. She cocks her head slightly.

MIRANDA

It seems that you have a dilemma. And, by pulling me into this discussion, you are soliciting my advice. I have offered an option.

JULIA

Getting me fired is an option?

MIRANDA

Yes. Certainly not the only one, and maybe not one I would choose, but you didn't specify a qualitative or quantitative ordering of the advice.

Miranda returns to examining the painting.

JULIA

And what are you doing?

MIRANDA
Watching paint dry.

7 INT. BIKWIL ART GALLERY. KATE'S OFFICE - DAY

KATE
So what's a Marine doing shuffling
canvas? Shouldn't you be Law
Enforcement or Security.

TONY
Got tired of the dress codes.

KATE
And the gallery gets a manager and
security in the same package.

TONY
Don't forget I'm HR as well; so,
easy on the package talk.

8 INT. BIKWIL ART GALLERY. EXHIBIT HALL - DAY

Some of the art is in place. Julia and Miranda survey the
room.

JULIA
Leave the rest 'til morning. But
let's put the pedestal in the
Picasso corner.

Kate and Tony enter the room.

KATE
Picasso corner?

JULIA
Uh, um. Ms. Goodfield.

KATE
I thought I told you it's Kate.

JULIA
Kate. The Pic...

MIRANDA
Whatever's there usually sells out.

KATE
Fiduciary Feng Shui. How 'West
Coast' of it all.

Julia turns to leave.

KATE (CONT'D)
Not so fast.

MIRANDA
Ah, the 'come to carbon' moment
arrives.

KATE
Carbon?

MIRANDA
The atheist's element.

KATE
And you always talk like this?

JULIA
On good days.

MIRANDA
Metaphors are my meat.

KATE
Well, think of this as Tanagra.

TONY
That makes me Will Riker,

He turns to Miranda.

TONY (CONT'D)
...and you...

MIRANDA
Not.

JULIA
(to Tony)
She didn't just make a Star...

KATE
(to Julia)
I'm not Cain.

JULIA
Who? What?

MIRANDA
Son of Adam and Eve. Third person
reference of those present is
considered rude.

(to Kate)
(MORE)

MIRANDA (CONT'D)

Is there a brother we shouldn't mention?

JULIA

Oh, sorry Ms., uh, Kate.

KATE

Accepted. So, let's...

Miranda turns to leave.

KATE (CONT'D)

Miranda, you are exempt, how?

MIRANDA

A one to thirteen synthetic polymer solution will drop to an unacceptable per hydrogen level and be useless as an adhesive unless there is a precise intervention. Meetings must as the mix metes.

Miranda continues to her lab.

KATE

I don't know what bothers me more; that I understood that, or that I believed it.

Kate motions Tony and Julia to sit.

KATE (CONT'D)

Okay then. This is your chance to get it out and...

JULIA

Why are you even here?

KATE

In accordance with the previous CEO's wish, I own this business. As new owner it is my obligation to ensure a smooth transition. It was also her wish that the gallery continue in its present form.

TONY

Wow. I bet that tasted like a mouthful of warm milk.

JULIA

How!? You have no idea what we do here, or what this...

(MORE)

JULIA (CONT'D)
 (spreading her arms)
 ...is even about.

KATE
 True. But this
 (acknowledging Tony)
 is a business; and that I have some
 ideas about.

JULIA
 This is human. It's not carving
 into the land for metal or sucking
 oil from the ground. It's not about
 destroying the earth; it's creating
 something.

KATE
 (looking at the art)
 I see oil, and metal, and colors.
 Where do you think it comes from,
 Hogwarts? There's no fairy land of
 raw material.
 It's carving, and digging, and
 drilling.
 (pointing to the wall)
 The oil in that painting...

TONY
 Actually, that's an acrylic.

KATE
 Also from oil. Your artists may
 create, but they take part in the
 "destruction".

JULIA
 But now they're your artists. And
 you don't know what to do with
 them.

KATE
 I guess we're lucky we have you.

TONY
 Uh, still here.

9 INT. KATE'S HOME. LIVING ROOM - EVENING

The house has the 'not-quite-moved-in' feel of recent occupation. Helen's presence is still felt in the furnishings and artwork. But there is comfort in the quality and taste of the appointments. STEPHANIE relaxes on the sofa with a familiarity of pleasant past visits.

STEPHANIE
So, did they rebel?

KATE
Tony's good. And no, not because
he's easy on the eyes.

STEPHANIE
That he is. Oh, if only he could
pick a side.

KATE
I'll leave that alone, for now. So,
tell me why. Why did my grandmother
put me here?

STEPHANIE
Put you? You had a choice. Yes, you
did. Okay, you didn't. Helen knew
you were unhappy up in that
wasteland.

KATE
Montana is not a wasteland. It's
big and beautiful, and wild.

STEPHANIE
I'm referring to SimCor
Incorporated. Seven years you gave
them, and for what? Passed over
time and again. Watching Bill or
Martin or some other three-leg take
the laurels and money for work you
did. Face it honey, the only thing
that kept you sane was that damn
horse.

KATE
Take John Doe's name in vain again
and this most excellent wine you
supplied will Rorschach that Chanel
top.

STEPHANIE
Where is he, anyway?

KATE
Transport. He'll be down in a day
or so.

STEPHANIE
And so the happy couple reunites.

KATE

Five legs beats three every time. Seriously, you knew Helen much better than me. What was she thinking? I don't know crap about whatever passes for art these days; especially when it is literally crap.

STEPHANIE

(taking a moment to sip)
Helen loved the gallery. And she loved her staff. Yes, even the odd one.

KATE

Which one's that?

STEPHANIE

True enough.
She couldn't leave it, or them to someone she didn't trust. Oh, she knew what was happening with SimCor. How do you think I know? She has, had more connections than Kevin Bacon. Kept tabs on you, she did.

KATE

But never a word. What good's a mute Yoda.

STEPHANIE

Left you a nice house. With a stable out back; at least I hope that smell means a stable.

KATE

That, and some reminders of the previous occupant. I'm going to need some help, Steph.

STEPHANIE

Not a chance. I like my shoes.

Stephanie takes Kate's hand.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

I know what you mean. That's why I'm here.

10

INT. JULIA AND EMMA'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The room is the epitome of 'comfy': art on the walls, small sculptures on every horizontal surface, an overstuffed sofa where EMMA, a sculptor with the slight evidence of studio work clinging to her clothing, sits enjoying an after-dinner flavored seltzer.

Julia enters from the kitchen.

JULIA

And you know what else?

EMMA

Oh, you mean there's more?

JULIA

I'm sorry. Too much shop talk. But I just don't understand...

EMMA

How your 84 year old boss, who ran a premier gallery in California, takes a dirt nap and leaves the operation to LA's truly endangered species - the right wing female.

JULIA

She's not from LA. They dragged her out of a coal pit in Montana. Her idea of art is an old saddle with a coyote tooled into it.

EMMA

LA's other endangered species.

JULIA

I'm serious.

EMMA

So are the coyotes. Come here. Sit.

Julia sits on the sofa with her back to Emma.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Good girl.

Emma begins a seemingly ritual neck rub.

KATE

You could quit.

JULIA

Now you sound like Miranda.

EMMA

Bite me.

JULIA

Later.

Julia rises to return to the kitchen for her forgotten wine.

EMMA

You weren't in the running, you know.

JULIA (O.S.)

I know. Well, maybe.

EMMA

I love you dear, but it wasn't gonna happen; not now, maybe not ever. You're not cold enough.

Julia returns from the kitchen.

JULIA

You think Helen was cold?

EMMA

Uh huh. You do not get to where she was by playing nice. She outlived two husbands, and her kids. And in her 80s was still using artists and dealers as toothpicks. She was fair, honest, and generous but, when they handed out warm and fuzzy, she was busy biting the heads off whippets.

Julia sits on the sofa.

JULIA

She turned you down each time you submitted for an exhibit.

EMMA

No. She shot me down. Ripped me to shreds and munched on my heart. And made my work better every time.

JULIA

So?

EMMA

A little trust.

JULIA
With Kate?

EMMA
With Helen, may she rest in peace.
But you might give Kate some
benefit of doubt. Maybe the genes
skipped a generation.

JULIA
Oh, got that covered. She wears
Wranglers. To the Gallery! It's
like she's from another planet.
Cowgirls and Aliens.

EMMA
Is she hot?

11 EXT. KATE'S HOUSE. STABLE - MORNING

Kate, in stained jeans, sweat-soaked work shirt, and sturdy boots, admires the freshly cleaned stable. Every inch the horsewoman, she bends to pick up the last piece of dried manure and tosses it over her shoulder into the pile of old hay.

KATE
It's ready for ya, boy.

12 INT. BIKWIL ART GALLERY. EXHIBIT HALL - DAY

The gallery clean, the art hung, Julia and Tony sit on a bench in the middle of the room.

JULIA
Will she stay?

Kate enters the room.

KATE
I could ask the same of you.

JULIA
I, I, damn.

Julia and Tony stand and face Kate. A THUNK is heard from the direction of Miranda's Lab. Kate turns.

KATE
I haven't really spoken with
Miranda yet.

Kate starts toward the back of the Gallery.

TONY

I wouldn't go in there right now.

Kate glances from Tony to Julia, who shakes her head in agreement.

Kate gives an aggrieved look and marches toward Miranda's Lab. She knocks. No response. As she reaches for the door handle a THUNK is heard from the other side of the door. The door is locked. Kate returns to the Exhibit hall.

KATE

Key.

Tony, with a look of amusement tinged with caution, hands her a ring of keys, holding one apart from the rest.

TONY

Go in after the noise, and step to the right as you walk in.

Kate turns back to the lab, a little less assuredly. Her knock is answered with another THUNK. She unlocks the door and enters.

13

INT. MIRANDA'S LAB - DAY

Miranda, wearing earbuds and hunched over a large, ancient book laying on an oversized table, draws a scalpel from beneath the leather of the book's cover. She swings her arm back over her shoulder and lets fly the scalpel. It just misses Kate as she steps aside. Miranda reaches for another scalpel.

KATE

Miranda!

Miranda stops working, removes her earbuds, and turns in her lab chair.

MIRANDA

You've changed the relative humidity in this room. Close the door before the leather wakes up and starts mooing.

Kate closes the door and sees six scalpels imbedded in a cork board covered with an image of Jeff Koon's inflated, silver rabbit. When Kate turns back, Miranda is at the sink washing her hands. Kate approaches the table.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)
Don't touch that.

KATE
There seems to be a
misunderstanding with the
employer/employee relationship.

MIRANDA
And you've come for advice?

KATE
No.

MIRANDA
Elucidation?

KATE
Again, no.

MIRANDA
Then please, sit. But not there.

She points to the only other chair in the room

MIRANDA (CONT'D)
That's a '56 Eames.

Kate takes in the room and realizes that it is actually a laboratory with beakers, microscope, various instruments, chemicals, and tools. There are artifacts and art in different stages of repair.

KATE
Let's start over.

Kate walks toward Miranda and extends her hand.

KATE (CONT'D)
I'm Kate. Your boss.

MIRANDA
(taking Kate's hand)
Miranda. The one who contributes
twenty-five percent of the revenue.

KATE
Yes, you do. Or to be precise, this
room does.

MIRANDA
Ooo, I like you. This will be fun.

Miranda walks around Kate, retrieves the scalpels from the door, returns them to the table, begins to sit at the table, looks at her hands, then at Kate's hands, and walks back to the sink to wash her hands again.

Kate, the understanding of having reached a detente dawning on her, smiles. As she approaches the door to leave she pauses.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)

I loved her.

KATE

I hardly knew her.

14 INT. BIKWIL ART GALLERY. EXHIBIT HALL - NIGHT

A typical opening night at an LA art gallery, with the added confusion of more media attention due to Kate's installment as the new owner. All the staff is present, along with Emma and Stephanie. Julia kisses Emma

JULIA

And now off to kiss some ass.

EMMA

Rinse before you come back.

Julia approaches a dealer examining the sculpture in the Picasso Corner.

Tony scans the room, comes to a decision, and retreats to Kate's office.

15 INT. BIKWIL ART GALLERY. KATE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Kate, in Western Formal attire, sits at her desk reviewing her evening's remarks. Stephanie sits, not a little impatiently, waiting.

TONY

We've hit critical mass out there,
and the media hounds are
salivating.

STEPHANIE

Time's up, girl.

KATE

My first LA rodeo.

She rises. Stephanie and Tony take in her clothing choice.

TONY

I'm going to have to build some
hitching posts out front.

STEPHANIE

Western's the new bourgeoisie punk.

KATE

Let's meet the wolves.

16 INT. BIKWIL ART GALLERY. EXHIBIT HALL - NIGHT

The room is near capacity. The Entertainment reporters are speaking to their cameras.

REPORTER 1

...first opening since the late
Helen Goodfield...

REPORTER 2

...controversy about a mining
executive, with no artistic
background taking control of LA's
premier contemporary gallery...

REPORTER 3

...will she bring a 'cowboy'
aesthetic to the contemporary art
scene...

A hush settles over the room, and the cameras pan to catch Kate entering the room. The silence is only broken by the embarrassed crunching of half-finished crispy shrimp crepes. The faces of the attendees run the gamut: excitement, bewilderment, doubt, mistrust, hope, boredom, antagonism, and green - the last from too much wine and canapes.

EMMA

She's hot.

17 INT. BIKWIL ART GALLERY. FOYER - NIGHT, LATER.

Tony is half listening to an artist making a pitch for their work; his eyes scoping the entrance and rooms in full security mode. Near closing time, some patrons are clearly drunk. Only one camera crew remains; taking B-Roll for the Morning Shows. His eyes dart to the Exhibit hall.

18 INT. BIKWIL ART GALLERY. EXHIBIT HALL - CONTINUOUS

An inebriated guest, holding a too-full glass of red wine, is attempting to butt into a conversation. He is rebuffed and drunkenly steps back into another guest walking by. The drunk pitches to the side. The glass flies toward a painting. Miranda, seemingly out of nowhere, interrupts its flight, tripping as she catches the glass. She lands heavily on the floor. She examines the glass; most of the wine is missing. She turns her gaze to the painting to see red wine steaming down the canvas. The camera crew has caught the whole incident. Miranda looks at the glass in her hand. She takes a sip.

MIRANDA
Blech. Merlot.

19 INT. BIKWIL ART GALLERY. MIRANDA'S LAB - DAY

Miranda is working on the wine-stained painting.

20 INT. BIKWIL ART GALLERY. EXHIBIT HALL - DAY

Below the blank space where the painting was hung is stained with red wine. A can of paint, a brush, and a drop cloth are on the floor.

21 INT. BIKWIL ART GALLERY. TONY'S OFFICE - DAY

Tony is on the phone.

TONY
...there is no permanent damage.
(pause)
No, I don't know the vintage.

22 INT. BIKWIL ART GALLERY. KATE'S OFFICE - DAY

Kate and Julia are sitting discussing the event.

KATE
Did the artist blow a gasket, or
paint can, or tube?

JULIA
She's happy that her work made it
on the Morning Shows.

KATE
For her the fame; for us, infamy.

JULIA

This isn't a Wall Street scandal. The Weeklies are fighting for interviews and photos. We made sidebar in the Times; in the News, not the Culture section.

KATE

Los Angeles has a culture section; who knew.

JULIA

There is a problem.

KATE

Just one?

JULIA

They want a live interview.

KATE

I can handle...

JULIA

With Miranda.

KATE

Oh.

23

INT. BIKWIL ART GALLERY. MIRANDA'S LAB - DAY

After knocking on the door, Kate tries the door handle; it is unlocked. She enters and closes the door behind her.

KATE

Unlocked?

MIRANDA

Head wound prevention only.

KATE

A sound policy. So, they want a...

MIRANDA

A live-to-tape interview is the antithesis of truth.

KATE

Noam Chomsky?

MIRANDA

Sure. Why not?

KATE
They're calling you 'heroic'.

MIRANDA
The 'K' say "nay"?

KATE
Reckless, bordering on idiotic.

MIRANDA
That's a sound bite with legs.

KATE
I'm not doing the interview.

MIRANDA
Actually, I am a bastion of 'reck'.
(counting off with her
fingers)
Distance: well within the 4 meter
immediate response parameter. Drunk
Dick: falling away from the
trajectory of the wine glass. After
Action Area: free of obstruction.
Summary: twas a decision, not
reflex. Ergo: not 'reck'less.

KATE
And yet you fell, with a high
probability of a 'skewered-by-stem
ware, bleeding out on the floor'
Miranda, destined to give a 'dead'
to tape interview from the morgue.

MIRANDA
Then, for future reference; spare
the staff, spoil the painting.

Kate turns to leave.

KATE
Don't be a priest, you can't save
everything.

MIRANDA
The concern is noteworthy.

KATE
It's the paperwork.

Kate opens the door.

KATE (CONT'D)
Interview's at three-thirty.

MIRANDA
Dazzling, or demur?

KATE
De-frocked.

Kate closes the door as she exits.

24

INT. BIKWIL ART GALLERY. TONY'S OFFICE - DAY

Tony is at his desk reading and signing off on paperwork. Kate stands with her back against a wall. She is determined not to start the conversation. After a few moments, Tony is obviously just doing 'busy' work, trying to outlast Kate.

TONY
Okay. You win.

KATE
What did...

TONY
Hold that thought.

Tony leaves the office. Kate waits a moment, then examines a desk devoid of personalization. She looks at the single artwork in the room: a shadow box hanging from the wall encasing nine small jars. She approaches to take a closer look; the jars contain sand.

Tony returns with a framed photograph of a smiling turd. He places it on the floor against the wall. He sits at his desk.

TONY (CONT'D)
You were saying.

Kate starts to speak, looks at the photo, starts again, stops, looks at the photo. She walks to the photo, picks it up and stares at it in a futile attempt to extract some meaning. She puts it back down, facing the wall, and lets out a sigh.

KATE
Well played.

TONY
You in charge, boss. Probably be better if you know of what. But you don't want to ask, and Helen's sense of humor was always more Baroque than Romantic.

KATE

I'm sure there's someone with a half-caf caramel frappa-almost coffee who understands that. But I've been here a week - two if you count the memorial and the lawyers...

TONY

How is Stephanie?

KATE

On my side. Whatever that means.

TONY

She's like family. You're the only kin Helen had left. Truth is, she didn't much care for them. She thought they were Hirst.

KATE

Which is what?

TONY

Who. Damien Hirst. Artist. 'Hirst' is what she called the self-indulgent, unreflective, and overpriced. Her husbands were arm candy, her kids a disappointment; especially your father.

KATE

Hey!

TONY

Then don't ask a Marine for an opinion. You want nice, find a therapist. Everyone in this town has two, or three.

(pause)

Helen thought it was her fault.

KATE

Hence, the lack of contact.

TONY

Hence?

KATE

Found it in the Shelter for the Linguistically Abandoned.

TONY

Aw. They make the best pet words.

KATE

So?

TONY

I've scheduled your appointments with our corporate clients for next week. Just 'meet and greet'. The artists you can arrange with Julia.

KATE

Hmmm.

TONY

Yea, she wanted your job and she's not done licking the wounds.

KATE

She only thought she wanted it.

TONY

True, but betrayal begets the bitchy.

KATE

By Helen?

TONY

In her head. The hubris of the young and smart.

KATE

Call me Nemesis.

TONY

When you exact vengeance upon her, be kind. Emma, that's her wife, will bring her around. Good artist. Almost ready for a solo show.

KATE

And there it is.

TONY

Yup. You're the final word on who gets into the Hall.

Tony retrieves a large binder from his desk.

KATE

You just happen to have that handy.

TONY

Nah. Special, just for you.

He hands it to her. She opens it to reveal pages of contemporary artists and their art.

TONY (CONT'D)
And there's three more.

The look Kate gives him a look that could freeze nitrogen.

TONY (CONT'D)
No, really, but I've sent the file to your email; desk and home. I'm just messin' with the boot. Uh, Boss.

KATE
Antonio, though I appreciate your attempt at lightening the mood, one more like that and I'll start calling you "Army".

TONY
Trust Julia on this stuff. She knows what's good, and more important, what moves.

KATE
Like turds.

TONY
Alimentary. You'd be surprised.

KATE
Constantly.

Kate opens the office door.

TONY
Say 'hi' to Stephanie for me.

Kate turns to pose an unasked question. Tony smiles as he is working at his desk. Kate leaves and closes the door.

KATE
Constantly.

END EPISODE I

25

INT. BIKWIL ART GALLERY. FOYER - DAY

Julia is working on the computer at the RECEPTION DESK. There are three paintings leaning against the wall.

Once or twice she expectantly looks up at the front door. The door opens. Kate enters and surveys the foyer, finally landing on the paintings against the wall.

KATE

What's with the...

JULIA

You might want to see this.

Kate strolls behind the desk and peers at the computer screen.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Not this.

A burly, bear of a man, carrying an impossibly small dog enters the foyer. He moves with a grace that belies his size, and speaks in a rapid, clipped 'stream of consciousness' manner.

JULIA (CONT'D)

This.

MR. EDELSON

Julia! And you are Ms. Goodfield. Those were thoughtful and kind words you gave at the reception. Helen would be so proud. She was such a fine woman. And you! The rustic, rural carriage; so elegant. Few could do our western heritage so well. Pity about the painting. I hope Miranda is well.

JULIA

Kate, this is Mr. Edelson. Mr. Edelson; Kate Goodfield.

MR. EDELSON

A pleasure. Truly a pleasure.

KATE

Thank you, Mr. ...

MR. EDELSON

Oh, no, please. It's Edward.

KATE

Edward.

MR. EDELSON

And this...
(referring to the dog)
(MORE)

MR. EDELSON (CONT'D)
...is Clarice. But time is fleet,
and I have so many obligations
today. Julia, shall we?

JULIA
Of course, Mr. Edelson.

Julia and Mr. Edelson move to the wall opposite the paintings. Mr. Edelson whispers something to Clarice and sets her down.

MR. EDELSON
Go Sweetie.

Clarice runs to the paintings sniffing at each one in turn. She moves back and forth, finally sitting in front of her choice.

MR. EDELSON (CONT'D)
Well, goodness me. I think that was
a record. Are you sure Sweetie?

Clarice lies down. Mr. Edelson hurries to Clarice, picks her up and strokes her lovingly, whispering sweet nothings in her ear.

JULIA
I'll have it crated and delivered
within a week.

MR. EDELSON
Thank you, dear. Must run. Ms.
Goodfield, a pleasure. Bye all.

KATE
And that was?

JULIA
One hundred and sixty-five thousand
dollars.

KATE
I like that bitch.

END COLD OPEN