

UNTITLED TRACEY WIGFIELD PROJECT

"Pilot"

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ACT ONE

INT. KATIE'S APARTMENT - KATIE'S BEDROOM - MORNING

We OPEN ON: KATIE WENDELMAN (30) asleep in her tiny West Village apartment. Her phone lights up with a picture of her mom and the name "CAROL". Katie picks up.

KATIE

Hi Mom.

We INTERCUT WITH: Carol's house. CAROL (60) sits on the couch in her New Jersey home.

CAROL

Good morning! Ooh, Katie, I have so much to tell you! We went out for the other Carol's birthday and I got her a top from Chico's. But then, she opens Angie's present, and you're not gonna believe this --

KATIE

It was the same top?

CAROL

It was the same top! Different color though. She's keeping both.

JUMP CUT TO:

Katie tries to do yoga on a mat. Carol is on speakerphone.

CAROL (CONT'D)

You know who you should marry? Amal Clooney's brother. George could give a speech at the wedding --
(reading something on iPad)
Oh wait, he's Muslim?

JUMP CUT TO:

In the living room Katie's roommate, VERONICA, takes a photo of her outfit with a selfie stick. Katie enters on the phone.

KATIE

(whispers)
Veronica, can you take Carol?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Veronica nods and puts the phone to her ear.

JUMP CUT TO:

Katie returns, dressed and showered and takes the phone back.
Veronica is now loading margarita ingredients into a blender.

KATIE (CONT'D)
(whispered, to Veronica)
What are you doing?

VERONICA
I posted my outfit for the day.
It's quittin' time, baby.

Veronica fires up the blender. A jealous Katie heads out.

INT. NEW JERSEY TRANSIT - LATER

Katie sits on the crowded train, still on the phone.

CAROL
I saw the show last night. Which
segment was yours?

KATIE
Hey, I actually just got to work so --

CAROL
Nice try, Pumpkin. I'm your mom, I
can always tell when you're lying.

KATIE
(ashamed)
I produced the one about Halloween
costumes for obese pets.

CAROL
Oh, it was good! I liked the dog
that was a fat Dracula.

KATIE
It wasn't good. I've been at this
show for seven years and I've never
once produced a real news segment.
Greg always gives me the fluff
pieces.

CAROL
You gotta tell that Greg, "Listen,
bub, I'm the best and if you don't
see that you're an idiot!"

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATIE

Mom, you haven't had a job since 1985. Maybe back then it was okay to call your boss an idiot. But it was also okay to wear tan pantyhose and have tan teeth.

CAROL

(offended)

What do you mean I haven't had a job? I do have a job. I'm a mom.

KATIE

No, I know --

CAROL

And it still keeps me busy! Who else is gonna order food for your dad or take care of your sister's rabbit she left here that I hate?

The train pulls to a stop at the Secaucus station.

KATIE

I'm sorry, Mom. But I'm at work for real now. I gotta go.

CAROL

Ugh, you always have to go.

KATIE

We've been on the phone for two and a half hours.

INT. THE BREAKDOWN - NEWSROOM - A LITTLE LATER

A busy MSNBC newsroom. We see signs for *The Breakdown with Chuck Pierce and Portia Scott-Griffith*. Katie hustles by.

INT. THE BREAKDOWN - CONFERENCE ROOM - A LITTLE LATER

Katie arrives at the morning meeting. GREG WALSH (30), the Executive Producer, stands at the table. PORTIA SCOTT-GRIFFITH, the dingbat co-host, takes a seat nearby.

PORTIA

Where's Chuck, Greg? If he's not here, I should get overtime for this.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GREG

Portia, you make a million times what I do and you're married to an NFL player.

PORTIA

Yeah, but Korvell got bumped to second string and lost his Papa John's endorsement.

Greg rolls his eyes and addresses the staff.

GREG

Good morning. Just a warning, David Muir had a great Obama interview last night so we should be prepared for Chuck to be in a bad mood. Now who has segment pitches?

KATIE

(shuffles through newspaper)
Um, the Washington Post led with --

PORTIA

Ooh, what if we did a segment called, 'Am I Instagramming My Vacation Wrong?' It's a serious issue I just thought of.

GREG

Fine. We'll stick that in the "human interest" block. Katie, you can produce.

Katie reacts, "Are you kidding me?" GENE, a kindly Senior Producer in a Mets yarmulke, looks up from his newspapers.

GENE

The Washington Post led with the G20 Summit.

GREG

Great. We'll open with Chuck doing a G20 piece. Gene, you take that.

Gene gives a thumbs up. Katie is annoyed. Just then, CHUCK PIERCE (60), the news desk veteran, blows in on a tirade.

CHUCK

You know who I hate?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PORTIA

Venus Williams? Me too. She was a bitch to me once at a luncheon --

CHUCK

Young "rock-n-roll" reporters like David Muir. The only reason anybody likes him is because he did a back flip at the Correspondents Dinner! This industry is plagued by ageism! If you don't tweet and know all the newest slang, they'll throw you out like yesterday's salami!

(hearing self, defensive)
Which is a good expression that people should still be using!

An INTERN, who looks fifteen, approaches Chuck, unaware.

INTERN

Here's your coffee, sir. I'm Cody!
I go to SUNY New Paltz!

CHUCK

Wonderful, I'm sure we'll be very close. You're fired.

Chuck storms out. Greg turns to the staff.

GREG

Good meeting. Somebody tell HR we need a new intern. And a goodbye tote bag for Cody. Sorry, Cody.

Katie watches Greg exit. She steels herself and follows him.

INT. THE BREAKDOWN - GREG'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Katie follows Greg into his office.

KATIE

Hey Greg, can I talk to you?

GREG

We can't soundproof the women's room. I'm sorry if the camera department can hear you in there --

KATIE

That was an anonymous suggestion and that wasn't me.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATIE (CONT'D)

I was wondering if maybe I could
switch assignments with Gene?

(off his silence)

It's just, it's my dream to produce
a lead.

(off his silence)

I once read in *Glamour* that when
negotiating you should be quiet and
let the other person keep talking
until they give up their position.

(off his silence)

Is that what you're doing? Because
I don't have to switch with Gene --

GREG

Listen, I hear you. It's just Chuck
is difficult and I trust Gene.

KATIE

But maybe you're biased to trust
him because he's a man. You should
take the Implicit Bias Test online.

(proud)

My results said I distrust all
white men and women.

GREG

So you think this is sexism?

KATIE

I've worked here longer than Gene.
Why else haven't I gotten a shot?

GREG

Maybe you're not as good as Gene.
Have you ever considered that?

KATIE

Huh. Uh, no, I had not.

GREG

Good journalists, like Gene, can
produce a segment without someone
saying 'Great job!' every step of
the way. Good journalists know when
to scrap their story and think on
their feet if a better one comes
along. Can you do that?

Katie is silent. She doesn't know.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GREG (CONT'D)

I don't think you can, but it's not sexism. If anything, this is a win for equality. 'Cause I'd have no problem telling a man he isn't good and now I'm extending the same courtesy to you.

KATIE

(hurt)

How do you know you're any good?

GREG

Excuse me?

KATIE

You only got this job because your dad anchored *Nightly*. Great rags to riches story: "Guy Whose Godfather Is Tom Brokaw Makes Good in the News Business."

Greg reacts. Katie knows she's gone too far.

GREG

I think we're done.

INT. THE BREAKDOWN - EDITING BAY - LATER

Katie sits with JUSTIN, a schlubby editor and Katie's closest friend at work. Justin cuts together news footage of Syria.

KATIE

Oh, Justin, everything sucks.

JUSTIN

Are you referring to the Yazidi women enslaved in Syria or your annoying boss?

KATIE

(ashamed)

My thing. It's just, I've always wanted to be a great newswoman. It's my dream.

JUSTIN

Calm yourself, Anne Hathaway.

KATIE

What's wrong with Anne Hathaway anyway?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATIE (CONT'D)

I like that she's thirsty and has
ambition. I'm sorry we can't all be
weed-smoking, falling down chill
Jennifer Lawrence!

JUSTIN

"Dreams" make people miserable.
That's why I recently gave up my
dream of doing one sit up.

KATIE

But I want to be great. I used to
be great. I got As, I was a track
star. I won first in the talent
show lip-syching the crap out of a
Grease medley. What happened?

JUSTIN

You graduated eighth grade?

KATIE

Is it too late to change careers?
Should I become a meteorologist?
(re: news footage)
Or an ISIS bride?

JUSTIN

Ugh, do NOT become a meteorologist.
(noticing Katie's phone)
Hey, do you know you have forty
missed calls from your mom?

KATIE

Uh-oh. I hope nothing's wrong.
That's less than usual.

INT. THE BREAKDOWN - NEWSROOM/CAROL'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Katie dials the phone. Carol answers in tears.

CAROL

The Other Carol died!

KATIE

Oh my god! What?!

CAROL

She had a heart attack! No one saw
it coming. I mean, she was four
hundred pounds and screamed at the
news a lot. But hindsight's 20/20.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATIE

Oh Mom, I'm so sorry.

Portia approaches Katie, oblivious that she is on the phone.

PORTIA

Hey, I had an idea for "Am I
Instagramming My Vacation Wrong" --

KATIE

(whispers to Portia)
Can you hang on a second?

PORTIA

Oh I can't. If I don't say my ideas
immediately I forget them.

KATIE

(sighs, then into phone)
Mom, can you hang on a second?

CAROL

At a time like this?!
(hears something, then)
Oh, Angie's calling. Don't hang up!

PORTIA

Anyway, what do you think of people
who post pictures of the beach with
the caption, 'I could get used to
this'? Because I hate them.

CAROL

Katie, are you still there?

PORTIA (CONT'D)

Katie, are you listening?

KATIE

Yes, I am.

CAROL

Anyway, I have no one to go
with me to the funeral.

PORTIA

Anyway, do you have any
ideas?

KATIE

What about Dad?

CAROL

Well, him. But I meant no one
fun.

PORTIA

That's true. Dads do take
terrible vacation pictures.

Katie reacts, surprised she got away with that one.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CAROL PORTIA (CONT'D)
Can you please come, Katie? Can you get working on that?

KATIE
Yes, I can.

CAROL PORTIA
Great! Terrific!

Carol hangs up. Portia heads off. Katie groans, overwhelmed.

INT. CAR - DAYS LATER

Carol and Katie, dressed in black, pull up to a church. At the wheel is Katie's sweet, put upon father, DAVE. (The camera only catches his arm.)

DAVE (O.S.)
You girls go ahead. I'll park.

CAROL
Okay, Dave, but God's gonna know if you sit here reading your book instead of coming into His house.

EXT. CATHOLIC CHURCH - MOMENTS LATER

Carol and Katie head into the funeral.

CAROL
Poor Carol. I hope her jerk son feels guilty he missed her birthday to go to a Phish concert.

KATIE
(beat, then)
Mom, I'm sorry I was a bitch on the phone the other day.

Carol grabs Katie tightly and kisses her.

CAROL
You don't have to explain, Pumpkin. I track your period.

KATIE
You gotta stop doing that.

CAROL
And I'm sorry too. You were right. I don't have a lot going on right now.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATIE

Yes, you do. Your family depends on you and your friends and... that little farm you care for on Facebook.

CAROL

I don't know. Yesterday I was so bored, I went into your email and saw that guy from college wrote you. I looked him up and he works at Merrill Lynch so I went there and pretended I wanted to set up a retirement fund but he's married.

KATIE

Yeah, maybe you do need something to keep you busy.

Carol nods.

INT. CATHOLIC CHURCH - A LITTLE LATER

FATHER KEVIN is mid-eulogy. Carol whispers to Katie in a pew.

CAROL

She's lucky she got Father Kevin. I went to a Father Francis funeral last week -- I was jealous of the guy in the coffin.

FATHER KEVIN

Carol accomplished a lot in her time on earth. She was a stay-at-home mom, a TV enthusiast, an occasional lottery player. But she also had big dreams.

At the word "dreams" Katie perks up. That sounds familiar.

FATHER KEVIN (CONT'D)

In Carol's case, her dream was to visit the castle in England where *Harry Potter* was filmed. But the Lord called her home before she ever got the chance. If Carol's passing can teach us anything, it is this: life is short and if you have a dream, you must go after it. Not next year. Not next week. Now.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

We PUSH IN on Katie as she realizes what she must do: go after her dream. Now.

FATHER KEVIN (CONT'D)
God asks us to live our best life.
To see the castle where they filmed
Harry Potter. Praise be to God.

KATIE
(emotional)
Amen.

INT. THE BREAKDOWN - CONFERENCE ROOM - MONDAY MORNING

People mill around, waiting for the morning meeting. Katie is there, fired up. Greg enters, panicked.

KATIE
Greg, I need to talk to you --

GREG
Not now. Page Six had a blind item
about Chuck that he cannot see. I
need you to get every copy before --

Chuck barrels in, reading a copy of the Post.

CHUCK
"It's an open secret that this
Anchor Monster is hated by his
staff. When he isn't screaming at
them, he's telling boring stories
about women he dated in the 90s."
This better not be about me! Or the
time I took Jennifer Love Hewitt to
Jingle Ball!

Everyone is scared. But Katie thinks on her feet.

KATIE
No, it's about... David Muir. I
mean that's what everyone's saying
on Twitter.

CHUCK
Really? Well, that's a relief.

Katie smiles, crisis averted.

CHUCK (CONT'D)
What are they saying?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATIE

Uh... let's take a look.
("reading off phone")
"David Muir? Ugh, hate that guy."
"I never liked David Muir. His hair
is greasy."

CHUCK

Ha! It is! Who tweeted that?

KATIE

(can't think of any name)
Uh... the Pope actually.

Greg puts his head in his hand. Chuck shrugs, appeased.

CHUCK

Greg, why are you just standing
there? Let's start this meeting.

GREG

(relieved)
Okay. Well, we're obviously gonna
lead with the Hurricane --

PORTIA

Oh, I had a segment pitch: "Am I
Instagramming My Vacation Wrong 2?"
The first one started a dialogue,
but I think we can go deeper.

Katie looks to Greg expectantly. Greg thinks, then:

GREG

Fine. Katie, you take that. Gene,
you good with the hurricane?

Gene gives Greg a thumbs up. Katie is flabbergasted.

KATIE

I am not taking that! Life is too
short for me to take that!

GREG

Excuse me?

Katie takes a deep breath and turns to Chuck.

KATIE

Mr. Pierce, I have never produced a
lead, even though I've worked here
longer than Gene.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PORTIA
(quiet, to Gene)
Which white guy is Gene?

KATIE
I know I can prove myself if I'm
just given the opportunity.
(then, taking a swing)
I mean, shouldn't seniority count
for something?

CHUCK
Yes. Yes, it should! She's doing
the Hurricane lead.

Katie smiles, psyched. Chuck then turns on Greg.

CHUCK (CONT'D)
And you know, Greg, that's exactly
what's wrong with this business.
Nobody rewards experience! It's like
my ex Daphne Zuñiga once said...

As Chuck continues his rant, Greg fumes at Katie.

INT. THE BREAKDOWN - KATIE'S OFFICE - A LITTLE LATER

Katie enters her office, psyched. Carol is there.

KATIE
Why are you here? Oh no, did Dad
finally run off because of how you
treat him?

CAROL
Even better! I'm going back to
school!

KATIE
Really? That's great!

CAROL
I'm gonna study TV production! And
the admissions lady said I could
get credit for an internship!

KATIE
Wow. That sounds like a lot of
work.

CAROL
So I'm getting one here!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATIE

Um, what?

Carol holds up a printout from *The Breakdown's* website.

CAROL

Your show needs an intern. And the lady said students should use their --

(re: Katie)

-- connections in the industry. I'm gonna start from the bottom! Like that rapper sings. Who's that guy? Got in a feud with Mickey Mouse over Nicole Mirage --

KATIE

Drake. Mom, this is crazy. It's one thing for you to take a class to keep busy, but you can't embark on a giant, new career at sixty.

CAROL

But it's my dream.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. CATHOLIC CHURCH - YESTERDAY

We now see the funeral from Carol's POV.

FATHER KEVIN

If you have a dream, you must go after it. Not next year. Not next week. Now. Now, Carol!

We PUSH IN ON Carol, getting inspired just like Katie did.

CAROL

(emotional)

Amen.

BACK TO:

INT. THE BREAKDOWN - KATIE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Katie and Carol are as we left them.

KATIE

Since when was it your dream to work in news?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAROL

Since always! I used to watch Barbara Walters and think wow, I wish I could ask Fidel Castro flirty questions in a little power suit. But then I met your dad and quit my job to raise you.

KATIE

And what does Dad think of this?

CAROL

He loves it! He says between school and interning, I'll be too tired to make him take me to the mall every weekend. But he's wrong!

KATIE

Mom, this feels like a rash decision. Like when you bought a full set of Princess Diana plates.

CAROL

(getting real)

Listen, I loved raising you kids. It was my whole life. But I can't help feeling like I'm capable of more. And yesterday I realized maybe it's not too late for me.

KATIE

I don't know, Mom, sometimes it is too late. I mean, I'd love to go be a supermodel in Milan, but it's not gonna happen.

CAROL

Not with that attitude, it's not.

KATIE

Well, I'm sorry, but we already filled that internship opening --

Greg pops his head in.

GREG

She's lying! I'd be happy to accept your application, young lady!

Katie reacts, horrified. Carol smiles.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. THE BREAKDOWN - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Katie pulls Greg into the hall.

KATIE

What do you think you're doing?

GREG

Hiring your mother as our intern.

KATIE

Okay, I get you're mad that I went over your head with Chuck. But this is not the way to get back at me.

(being helpful)

Maybe you can spread a rumor around the office that I'm an alcoholic?

GREG

This has nothing to do with you. If I hire an Old as an intern, it'll finally get Chuck off my back. Whenever he yells about ageism I can point to this Old!

KATIE

But why does this Old have to be my mother? There are a million old people who would love to work here!

GREG

For free? Like who?

Katie looks around and notices a SAD OLD MAN delivering heavy water cooler bottles. She runs up to him.

KATIE

Congratulations, sir! How would you like to be an intern on a fancy television news program?

OLD MAN

I'd hate it! I love delivering water!

Katie reacts, "Damn it." Greg smiles.

INT. THE BREAKDOWN - KATIE'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Greg and Katie re-enter. Carol happily chats with Portia.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAROL

Your skin is beautiful. What kind of
creams do you use? Are they for --
(being racially sensitive)
-- all types?

Portia laughs, charmed. She turns to Katie.

PORTIA

Katie, I didn't know your mom lived
so close by! We're practically
neighbors!

CAROL

Yeah, but she's in the fancy
section. Where the dentists live.

GREG

I'm sorry, Portia, I need to talk
to Carol for a second --

KATIE

No, you don't --

PORTIA

Bye, Carol! Nice to meet you!

CAROL

Ooh, don't forget your ring.

Carol takes off a giant diamond ring and gives it back to
Portia. Portia exits. Greg turns to Carol.

GREG

I'm Greg, the Executive Producer.

CAROL

Oh, I know! I loved your father. I
had a dream about him once where we
were under a waterfall --
(censoring herself)
-- just swimming.

GREG

Okay, good interview. You're hired!

KATIE

What?!

GREG

When can you start?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CAROL
How about today?

GREG
Perfect!

Greg and Carol hug.

CAROL
I love this man!
(mouths to Katie)
Why don't you date him?

Katie hates her life.

INT. THE BREAKDOWN - NEWSROOM - LATER

A PA gives Carol a tour.

PA
The job's pretty simple. Except you
do have to be careful around Chuck.

CAROL
Why? Is he handsy with the girls? I
don't mind.

PA
No, but he loves to fire interns.

CAROL
Shouldn't be a problem. I get along
with everybody. Except my neighbor
Pat. She thinks she's god's gift
ever since she got lap-band.

PA
Just avoid him. And if he asks for
the ratings, say "Right away!" then
hide until he forgets he asked.

CAROL
That's what I do when my husband
wants to see the Visa bill but I
spent too much on online bingo.

PA
Oh, and this is important: Chuck
gets his lunch at one. He gets his
snack at four. At four-ten he takes
his nap so his snack must arrive at
four. Got it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAROL

Yes.

PA

Say it back to me.

CAROL

Oh, then no.

Chuck passes by.

CHUCK

Hey, can you get me the ratings?

PA

Right away!

(whispers to Carol)

I'm going in a file cabinet. You
have to find your own spot.

INT. THE BREAKDOWN - EDITING BAY - LATER

Katie and Justin put together a video package.

KATIE

Maybe start with the guy in the
rowboat, going past the submerged
car. That's real hurricane-y.

JUSTIN

Do we care that his shirt has a
swastika on it?

KATIE

Damn it.

Carol pops in.

CAROL

I'm doing a coffee run! Any takers?

JUSTIN

No thanks, Mrs. Wendelman.

CAROL

Call me Carol. Mrs. Wendelman is my
mother-in-law who won't die.

(re: monitors)

Ooh Katie, your big story. It's too
bad it has to be about a hurricane.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATIE

Why is it "too bad", Mom?

CAROL

It's just, the news always makes a big deal about hurricanes. You buy frozen dinners and take in the deck furniture and then nothing happens. Eh, but what do I know?

Carol gives Katie a kiss and exits. Katie shakes her head.

KATIE

Why is she working here?

JUSTIN

I'm surprised she wants to. All my mom wants to do is wear a housecoat and yell at her bird in Spanish.

KATIE

Work was always the one place she couldn't interfere. But now, there are no boundaries. She's gonna be on top of me every single day.

(spiralling)

Eventually she'll completely consume me and there won't be a Katie anymore! There'll just be Carol and another little Carol!

Justin grabs Katie by the arms.

JUSTIN

Stop freaking out! I will slap you!
I always wanted to!

Katie takes a deep breath, calming down.

JUSTIN (CONT'D)

Listen, this is a temporary problem. Chuck always fires the interns. Just wait it out.

Katie takes this in, getting an idea.

INT. THE BREAKDOWN - CAROL'S CUBICLE - LATER

Katie drops by Carol's cubicle.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATIE

Hey Mom, I was wondering if you could go to the post office for me.

CAROL

I don't think I have time. I have to get Chuck his snack at four.

KATIE

No, Chuck takes his nap at four. He gets his snack at five.

CAROL

Oh, right. It's hard to remember things when you're a woman my age. Hillary should not be president.

Carol heads out. Katie already feels guilty. Greg pops in.

GREG

Bad news, your hurricane just got downgraded to a tropical storm.

Katie's eyes go wide.

INT. THE BREAKDOWN - NEWSROOM - CONTINUOUS

Katie chases Greg through the newsroom.

GREG

A Category Two isn't gonna make much of a lead. Maybe your angle can be umbrella sales?

KATIE

No! I'm gonna fix it!

GREG

Good luck changing the weather!

Katie gets a determined look in her eye.

INT. MSNBC OFFICES - METEOROLOGY - LATER

Katie is on the creepy Meteorology floor. A WEATHER WEIRDO at reception turns a rain stick in his hands. Katie approaches an office: "Beth Vierk, Meteorologist". She knocks, tentative. BETH, a strange nerd, pops up from under the desk.

KATIE

Ah! Hey Beth. Preparing for an earthquake?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BETH

The mega-quake isn't until 2018 and this building won't survive it. I dropped a raisin.

KATIE

Do you have any contacts at the National Weather Association? I'm trying to get a tropical storm upgraded back to a hurricane.

BETH

Oh, sure thing. I'll call Bernie in Storm Designations.

KATIE

Really?!

BETH

No! There's no Bernie in Storm Designations. I mean, there is a Barney in Weather Event Classifications, but I'm not calling him!

KATIE

(deflated)
You're not?

BETH

You can't re-categorize a storm for no reason. Unless you want to be called before an ethics tribunal at the Barometric Castle.

KATIE

But there is a reason! This is my one shot to produce a lead story. To finally prove to my boss that I'm good and can think on my feet --

BETH

Oh god, if this is you "thinking on your feet," you're in trouble.

(then, helpful)

Maybe you could ask Gene for help?

Katie takes this in, her confidence shaken. There is a ding on Beth's computer. Katie reacts.

KATIE

Don't tell me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BETH
Your tropical storm just got
downgraded to a moderate rainfall.

INT. THE BREAKDOWN - NEWSROOM - LATER

Katie heads back downstairs, worried. As she passes Greg:

GREG
How did your rain dance go?

KATIE
Fine. Everything's under control. Now
if you'll excuse me, it's already
four and some of us have work to --
(remembering)
Oh no. It's four.

CHUCK (O.S.)
Where is my snack?!

Chuck bursts out of his office.

CHUCK (CONT'D)
I'm supposed to get my snack at
four! What if I had a blood sugar
issue? I could be dead right now!

Carol comes up behind Katie, oblivious.

CAROL
Who's yelling like that? Sounds
like the Pathmark by me that's all
Hispanic now.

KATIE
(caught)
It's Chuck. About his snack.

Carol's eyes narrow. Katie tries to cover.

KATIE (CONT'D)
Oh no, did I tell you the wrong
time?

CAROL
Yes, you did.

CHUCK
Who messed up? Who's the intern?!

Not wanting to see her mom get yelled at, Katie runs up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATIE

Mr. Pierce, I can explain --

CHUCK

Are you the intern?

KATIE

I'm Katie. I held your hand while
you passed your kidney stones.

CAROL

I'm the intern! We haven't met. I'm
Carol!

Chuck takes Carol in, a little thrown. He shakes it off.

CHUCK

We have a schedule and when people
disrespect that schedule, they
disrespect me! I've worked in this
business for thirty years and I
will not be disrespected!

CAROL

What are you getting so worked up
about? You're a graying old man
yelling about a snack. Calm down.

Everyone in the office reacts, shocked. Chuck is speechless.

CAROL (CONT'D)

The world won't end if you don't
get your little pizza bagel. Which
by the way, you don't need. You
hold your weight in your belly.
That's heart attack city according
to *Good Housekeeping*. I mean you're
not like -- who's that actor who
died? Mob show? Come on.

CHUCK

Uh... Marlon Brando?

CAROL

No, he was in that movie I liked
with Old Christine. *Enough Said?*

KATIE

James Gandolfini, Mom.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CAROL

Yes! You're not like him, but you
gotta take care of yourself and
stop getting so mad.

(mom-like)

Now go in your office and I'll make
you a bowl of popcorn, okay? Go on.

Carol takes Chuck kindly by the shoulder and directs him to
his office. He wanders away, confused. Katie covers to Carol.

KATIE

I'm sorry, Mom, that was my mistake --

CAROL

Nice try, Pumpkin. Come on, I'm
your mom.

She knows. Katie reacts, guilty. Greg grabs Carol, psyched.

GREG

That was amazing! Do you know what
this means? You can get Chuck to do
things for me! My hair's gonna stop
stress-thinning!

CAROL

I'm sorry, hon, but I don't know if
I can do this internship.

KATIE

Mom --

CAROL

It's just, after all the running
around today, I'm exhausted! I'm
too old for this. I have to quit.

PORTIA

But you're my favorite person who
works here!

CAROL

I'm sorry. I'd rather just watch
the show from home like I usually
do. Bye, everyone. Bye, Pumpkin.

Carol goes to her cubicle to get her things. Katie is sad.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. THE BREAKDOWN - KATIE'S OFFICE - LATER

Katie stares at a blank computer screen, trying to write copy. Procrastinating, she checks Facebook. There is a post from Carol: a picture of her little cubicle and the caption "My first office!" Katie feels awful. She dials the phone.

CAROL
(voicemail message)
You've reached Carol --
(not thrilled about it)
-- and Dave. Leave a message!

KATIE
I'm sorry, Mom. Please call me.

Katie hangs up.

INT. THE BREAKDOWN - CHUCK'S DRESSING ROOM - LATER

Katie approaches the door. Steely Dan's "Reelin in the Years" blasts inside. Katie knocks. The music stops. Chuck answers.

CHUCK
Could you hear my psych-up music?

KATIE
(lying)
No.

CHUCK
It was a rap song.

KATIE
They want you for rehearsal.

CHUCK
Alright, but I need to speak to that... mature intern first. Can you send her in?

KATIE
Carol? She quit.

CHUCK
Well, get her back here. Or else I can't do the show.

KATIE
What?!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He shuts his door in her face. "Reelin in the Years" resumes. Greg, having overhead this, stops.

GREG
What the hell was that?

KATIE
I'm on it.

Katie calls Carol again. Portia pops out of her room.

PORTIA
If he's not doing the show, can I
leave? I have a dinner.

GREG
No! No one's leaving!

KATIE
(leaving voice mail)
Mom, if you don't call me back, I'm
gonna do something drastic! Like...
become an organ donor! Even though
you're always telling me EMTs just
let organ donors die!

Katie hangs up. Greg turns to her, intense.

GREG
You have to fix this. Now.

INT. CAROL'S HOUSE - LATER

Katie busts in. Carol is on the couch, watching TV.

KATIE
Why didn't you answer your phone?!

CAROL
I don't have to. You're not my boss
anymore.

KATIE
Chuck is refusing to do the show
until he talks to you.

CAROL
Oh, so you only came here because
you need my help.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATIE

Look, I'm sorry I tried to get you fired, but --

CAROL

I gave up everything for you! And now I just want a little dream for myself and you won't let me have it!

KATIE

Well, why can't you get a different "little dream", Mom? Why do you have to horn in on mine?

Dave pops his head out in the deep background.

DAVE (O.S.)

Hi honey! I'm just gonna close the den door so I can read my magazine.

He shuts the door. Katie turns back to Carol.

KATIE

Things are hard enough at work without you there. Greg and everybody else thinks I suck. And the worst part is they're probably right. I've got nothing for my lead hurricane segment -- excuse me, lead drizzle segment.

CAROL

You do not suck. You're great! You've always been great! Look at this shrine!

On the wall is a shrine to Katie's accomplishments: ribbons, trophies, a framed photo of Katie dressed as Danny Zucco.

CAROL (CONT'D)

You were the smartest kid. And a track star! And don't get me started on that *Grease* medley!

KATIE

Yeah, and do you remember how I got on the track team? I didn't make it and then you went to the coach and forced him to let me on! You have always interfered! I can never do anything on my own.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CAROL

But do you remember what happened
after that?!

(tapping cabinet)

You won these trophies! I got you
on, but I didn't run the race for
you, dum-dum!

Katie takes this in. Carol's right.

KATIE

I did run it on my own. You just
made me believe that I could.

CAROL

And you can do it now. You're a
good little journalist.

KATIE

(triumphant realization)

A good journalist... that's it! I'm
gonna scrap my story!

CAROL

You sure that's a good idea?

KATIE

Shut up, Mom. Let's go to work.

INT. THE BREAKDOWN - NEWSROOM - LATER

Katie hurries in and makes an announcement to the newsroom.

KATIE

I need all hands on deck! I'm
scrapping the lead!

GREG

What?!

KATIE

Justin, get me clips of workers in
their sixties. Amy, book that Econ
professor from NYU, the really old
one! Brenda, I need stats on Baby
Boomers re-entering the workforce!

BRENDA

My name's not Brenda!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATIE

Sorry! The story's not about a hurricane anymore. It's about a tsunami.

GREG

Do you know what you're doing?

KATIE

Good journalists always know when to scrap their story and think on their feet if a better one comes along.

(off his blank stare)

You said that.

GREG

No, I didn't.

KATIE

Yes, you did!

GREG

When?

KATIE

The other day -- Just trust me!

Katie heads off. She's got this.

INT. THE BREAKDOWN - CHUCK'S DRESSING ROOM - SAME TIME

Carol enters Chuck's dressing room and takes a seat.

CAROL

I feel like I'm in the principal's office.

(re: framed photos on table)

Except Father Riley didn't have pictures of him with Quincy Jones.

CHUCK

That's Kofi Annan. Earlier, you called me a "graying old man" --

CAROL

I'm sorry. I have no filter. I've ruined dozens of surprise parties.

CHUCK

No, I wanted to know if it's true. Does my hair look gray on camera?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHUCK (CONT'D)

It's just... no one around here
tells me the truth.

CAROL

(sympathetic beat, then)
Your hair does look gray.

CHUCK

Thank you, Carol.

Chuck smiles at his newfound ally.

INT. THE BREAKDOWN - SHOW - A LITTLE LATER

The opening credits of the show. Chuck, whose hair has been
dyed a weird auburn color, and Portia are at the desk.

CHUCK

Good evening. Tonight we take a
look at the so-called Silver
Tsunami, a term used to refer to
America's surplus of baby boomers
and their predicted drain on social
security. But as more and more
older Americans choose to re-enter
the workforce, it may be a storm
that never happens at all. One of
those storms where you buy frozen
dinners and take in the deck
furniture for nothing...

INT. THE BREAKDOWN - CONTROL ROOM - A LITTLE LATER

Katie talks into the mic, finishing producing her segment.

KATIE

And go to commercial.

Katie smiles, proud. Greg sidles up.

GREG

Hey, good job.

KATIE

(dignified)
I don't need compliments. But I
will write that down and put it in
my Compliments Box.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GREG

Onto the next crisis: who's gonna tell Chuck he looks like Ronald McDonald?

KATIE

It's too bad my mom quit.

GREG

It really is. She could have talked Chuck into so many things.

(re: *Breakdown* graphics)

Like changing the name of the show to something that doesn't mean "a total failure."

Katie thinks for a beat, getting an idea.

KATIE

Listen, if you really want her back, I'm willing to negotiate.

GREG

Okay. What are the terms?

KATIE

I convince my mom to be our intern for the semester. You let me do half the leads every week.

GREG

Done. Phew, I thought you were gonna ask for a raise. I would have given it to you.

KATIE

Damn it.

INT. THE BREAKDOWN - HALLWAY - A LITTLE LATER

Katie walks down the hall to her office. She calls Carol on the phone. We INTERCUT WITH: Carol on the couch at home.

CAROL

Hi, Pumpkin! The show was great. And what'd you think of Chuck's hair? Zazzy, right?

KATIE

Zazzy. Listen, Mom, I think you should come back and be our intern.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATIE (CONT'D)

I know you liked working. And you were good at it.

CAROL

I know. For the first time in years I felt like I had a purpose. And it wasn't just decorating the house for holidays -- ooh, did I show you my new Labor Day pillow?

KATIE

You did. So will you come back?

CAROL

I don't know, Katie. Having me around is a big sacrifice. I can't do that to you. I already gave you genes for hairy arms and scoliosis.

KATIE

It's not a sacrifice. You push me and make me better. You make me believe I can "win the race", even though all evidence points to the contrary. I need you, Mom.

CAROL

(touched)

Really? Aw, Katie. But I have to think about it, okay?

KATIE

Okay. Love you, Mom.

Katie hangs up and crosses into her office. WE REVEAL: Carol has been sitting on Katie's couch the whole time.

CAROL

Just kidding! I'm in! I love you too, my little co-worker!

Katie smiles, shaking her head.

CAROL (CONT'D)

Why don't you have any pictures of me in here?

END OF ACT THREE

TAG

INT. THE BREAKDOWN - CONTROL ROOM - DURING THE SHOW

Portia is at the desk.

PORTIA

Thank you, Chuck, for that chilling
update on Boko Haram. Speaking of
Boca, have you ever had a friend
who just won't stop Instagramming
their beach vacation?

"Am I Instagramming My Vacation Wrong 2?" GFX appear. We
INTERCUT WITH: the control room. Gene turns to Katie.

GENE

She insisted on that transition.

KATIE

Not so fun producing the fluff
piece, eh?

GENE

(shakes head, then into mic)
And cue graphic of bare feet
poolside.

KATIE

Better get used to it, my friend.
Hope you like reporting on ab
exercises and psychics who can
predict hairdos and --

Just then, Gene notices an incoming alert.

GENE

We have breaking news, people!
(into mic)
Okay, Chuck, we're gonna dump this
segment and go live! There is a
bomb threat at the White House!
(loving it)
God, this is why I love the news
business.

KATIE

(jealous)
Damn it, Gene.

END OF SHOW