

THE UNDERWRITING

Written by

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Based on the novel THE UNDERWRITING by Michelle Miller

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TEASER

INT. MAIN FLOOR, HOOK OFFICE - EARLY MORNING

GRAY MORNING LIGHT illuminates an empty office floor through large glass windows that overlook the SAN FRANCISCO BAY.

It is dead silent, save the BUZZ of computer monitors on long tables littered with TOYS, LORD OF THE RINGS PARAPHERNALIA and half-finished containers of NICHE SODAS and SNACKS.

It is also dead still, save a LARGE MONITOR hanging on the far wall, FLICKERING. The camera moves calmly toward it, and we see it's a DIGITAL MAP OF THE WORLD, pulsing with LITTLE RED DOTS concentrated in the major cities, and spreading.

JOSH HART (V.O.)
Human beings are not complicated.

CUT TO:

INT. A POSH BEDROOM OVERLOOKING LOS ANGELES - MORNING

TWO HOT 20-SOMETHINGS go at it in a plush white bed.

JOSH HART (V.O.)
They want sex, money, power,
status.

The screen SWIPES, mimicking the TINDER SWIPE.

SWIPE LEFT TO:

EXT. A CLUB IN HONG KONG - NIGHT

The doors of a nightclub open, producing TWO HOT GAY MEN impatiently kissing as they hail a cab and tumble in.

JOSH HART (V.O.)
They want to feel cool...

SWIPE LEFT TO:

INT. A CRAMPED, MESSY STUDIO APARTMENT - NIGHT

A HIPSTER THREESOME explore each others' naked bodies, getting hotter and heavier.

JOSH HART (V.O.)
To feel wanted...

SWIPE LEFT TO:

INT. A HOTEL ROOM IN LONDON - DAY

HALF-DRESSED PROFESSIONALS are fucking, near climax. On the NIGHTSTAND, HER IPHONE is open to THE HOOK APP, where this man and this woman's photos smile under the words 'MATCH.'

JOSH HART (V.O.)
To feel above the rules.

THE SCENE COLLAPSES to a HALF SCREEN shared with the previous, then a QUARTER, then an EIGHTH, as he continues...

JOSH HART (V.O.)
And they will flock like lemmings
to outlets that satisfy these
pathetic, predictable cravings.

A MONTAGE now of dozens of couples. We zoom further out until they are all LITTLE RED DOTS on a map and we are back to:

INT. MAIN PROGRAMMING FLOOR, HOOK OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The map pulses in the quiet, but we now realize that all the dots are these people, being tracked by THEIR HOOK APPS.

JOSH HART (V.O.)
Which begs the question: if a man
doesn't care about any of it - if
he craves none of the feelings that
drive other men - is he in-human?
Is he a sociopath? A genius? Or is
he, then...

The silence is creepier now as we move back and pan around to find that the room is not, in fact, empty. JOSH HART (32, pasty white, on the spectrum) Hook's CEO, stands across the room from the monitor, leaning back on the wall, watching.

JOSH HART (V.O.)
...god?

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

BLACK OUT

A woman's heavy breathing. Sounds like sex. It's not. It's...

INT. EQUINOX, MIDTOWN - 6:15 A.M. EST

TARA TAYLOR (27, slim, pretty for a girl in finance) on a treadmill, running hard. OCD-FIT ALPHA MALES work out around her, intermittently checking their phones, reflections and the TV HEADLINE: SEC INVESTIGATES INSIDER TRADING AT L.CECIL.

Tara ignores all of it, focused on her monitor. She increases her speed as the distance climbs: 6.84 MILES...6.90...she sprints to 7 and releases, panting heavily as the belt slows.

INT. TODD KENT'S BEDROOM, NEW YORK - 7 A.M. EST

AMANDA PFEFFER (26, hot) topless, eyes smudged with last night's liner, glares at the camera, pissed.

AMANDA

You are such an asshole.

We meet the object of her rage: TODD KENT (32, 6'3", sturdy jawline) in his bed which, like the rest of his apartment, has the luxury hotel aesthetic of a GQ-advised bachelor pad.

Todd reaches for the remote, turns on MSNBC. Amanda huffs and leaves to collect last night's trail of discarded clothes.

MSNBC COMMENTATOR

L.Cecil's share price wobbled yesterday on news the SEC is launching an insider trading probe at the global investment bank...

Amanda comes back to the room, looking in the sheets for her underwear. Todd lifts the duvet to help, irritating her more.

AMANDA

I don't understand why you're so afraid of commitment.

TODD

I'm not afraid of commitment. I just don't want a relationship.

AMANDA

Then why are you on a dating app?

He turns: is she serious?

AMANDA (CONT'D)

(getting it: easy sex)

I'm not some bimbo one night stand,
Todd. I went to fucking Penn. Which
you knew from my profile, so you -

TODD

YOU. You reached out to me, drunk
at 2 A.M. You set the terms of our
relationship, not me.

AMANDA

But that was four times ago!

He looks back at the TV, knowing better than to engage.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

We've gotten to know each other
since then. I told you about my
family and I was late to work last
week because I know you like
morning sex.

TODD

I didn't ask you to do that.

Silence. It's true.

MSNBC COMMENTATOR

The investigation comes six months
after another probe into L.Cecil's
pitching stocks it knew were low
quality which, while not
technically illegal, the SEC
determined were unethical-

She leaves again, upset. Todd turns off the TV and takes a
deep breath before joining her in his underwear.

TODD

Can I get you an Uber?

AMANDA

I can get my own fucking Uber.

He holds his hands up, defensive. She looks, softens.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

I'm a catch, Todd.

TODD

I'm sure you are, but my priority right now is my career. I understand if this isn't what you want, but it's all I have to give.

She swallows hard, wishing she weren't so understanding.

AMANDA

Will I ever see you again?

TODD

I'm not going anywhere.

She nods, snuffles, leaves. Door slams.

Off his eye roll, Todd navigates to the FAVORITES section in his HOOK APP, finds her profile, and taps: DELETE USER.

INT. L.CECIL LARGE MEETING ROOM - 7:58 A.M. EST

L.CECIL'S MORNING MEETING is a meat market: a hundred well-dressed and SELF-IMPORTANT BANKERS peacocking for each other.

Tara, showered and noticeably less attention-seeking than the others, sits down next to TERRENCE BLAIR (28, half-black, dapper), her gay BFF, handing him a notebook.

TARA

New notebook supply in from Fayetteville.

TERRENCE

(taking it, admiring)
God I love these. How do they get this texture?

TARA

Two generations of Taylor perfectionism.

TERRENCE

I really don't understand why you don't go back and run the family business.

TARA

(winking)
And miss out on this fun?

L. CECIL MANAGER (40s, balding, proudly put-upon) coughs into his mic. The room quiets, turning to his presentation.

L.CECIL MANAGER

Packed agenda today. I'll give a market update, then Catherine Wiley will join to explain ramifications of the SEC investigation and Tony will remind us why we don't discuss bonuses with one another.

TERRENCE

(whispering)

Have you gotten yours yet?

TARA

I get it today. How was yours?

TERRENCE

Flat.

TARA

(her face drops)

You're kidding.

TERRENCE

Chill out. I switched groups and took a month off. Your group was up and you took, like five days off.

TARA

Three. Including Christmas.

TERRENCE

There you go. They can't screw you.

L.CECIL MANAGER

We continue to see volatility in the markets following the Fed's..

TARA'S IPHONE LIGHTS UP WITH A TEXT MESSAGE.

TERRENCE

(hopefully)

A boy?

TARA

(yeah, right)

My sister. She and her husband are in town from Charlotte.

TERRENCE

That'll be fun.

TARA

Will it though? She said the place I suggested for dinner looked too fancy and couldn't we just go to a 'classic New York pizza place.'

TERRENCE

Ha! When was the last time Tara Taylor had pizza?

TARA

Sober? Like 1998, I think.

L.CECIL MANAGER

(calling Tara out)

Excuse me, is there a comment?

TARA

(blushing)

No. So sorry.

L.CECIL MANAGER

Perhaps you would like to update us on the state of the NASDAQ then?

The room quiets, giddy for a scalping. Just then the doors open and CATHERINE WILEY (47, Chanel-suited power woman), L.Cecil's President, enters. Everyone snaps to attention.

TARA

(collecting herself)

Uh...It closed down thirty eight points yesterday on concerns about a EU backlash to Trump's latest tweet suggesting a plan to subpoena tech companies for their user data, but I suspect it will strong open higher today given the Nikkei's open this morning coupled with a drop in oil prices and an expected strong earnings report from Apple.

She is beyond reproach. A collective sigh of disappointment.

L.CECIL MANAGER

As I was say-

TARA

(innocently)

Also, I think there's a typo on your slide. Ten year treasuries are actually up year to date.

L.Cecil Manager sneers: she's gone too far. Terrence grins. Tara bites her lip. Off Catherine, noticing.

INT. A MAN'S APARTMENT IN PALO ALTO - 5:38 A.M. PST

KELLY JACOBSON (21, pretty Stanford senior), wakes up next to a MAN. She jumps up when she sees the time.

KELLY

Shit.

She checks her phone: DEAD. She finds his phone: LOCKED. She pulls his sleeping hand out from the covers and uses his thumb to unlock it and call an UBER.

A HOOK NOTIFICATION with a NAKED SELFIE from a TANNING BED BLONDE pops up. Kelly clicks on it and sees a string of messages that make clear they hooked up yesterday.

KELLY (CONT'D)

Did you have sex with two girls in the same day? Ohmygod Gross.

She hurriedly dresses, careful not to touch anything.

EXT. L.CECIL HQ, MIDTOWN MANHATTAN - 8:45 A.M. EST

Todd steps out of a cab in front of L.CECIL, an imposing black skyscraper with the firm name in gold letters.

TWO BOUNCER-ESQUE SECURITY GUARDS stand at the entrance checking the badges of BLACK SUITS that rush in and out.

Todd stands out - where others walk with weight forward, as if afraid they might miss a chance, Todd's weight is in his heels, confident opportunity will come to him.

INT. L.CECIL ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

On his phone, Todd gets a HOOK MESSAGE from Amanda: **I'm sorry for being dramatic - totally get your POV. Hope we can see each other soon xo.**

TODD

Jesus Christ.

Tara steps on the elevator. A split second of surprise, before she buries herself in her BlackBerry.

TODD (CONT'D)
(noticing her, nonplussed)
Hi, Tara.

TARA
(Pretending she's just
seeing him)
Oh, hey.

They are interrupted by LOSER BANKER as the doors close.

LOSER BANKER
My man Todd! Dude! Where were you
Saturday? We CRUSHED it at Lavo.
SIX MAGNUMS of Rose. It was EPIC.

Todd glances at Tara, who rolls her eyes and looks back at her BlackBerry.

TODD
I was laying low.

LOSER BANKER
I'm organizing a Sunday Funday at
Bagatelle next week. It'll be sick.

The elevator stops on LOSER BANKER'S floor.

LOSER BANKER (CONT'D)
I'll shoot you the deets!

Elevator doors close, leaving Todd alone with Tara.

TODD
So awkward.

TARA
Yeah.

TODD
Him, I mean.

Awkward silence. They both revert to their devices.

Todd's PHONE STARTS RINGING in his hand.

TODD (CONT'D)
(not recognizing number)
San Francis -

A flash of realization. He presses buttons rapidly to make the elevator stop and steps off without saying goodbye to Tara, answering excitedly.

TODD (CONT'D)

This is Todd Kent. Hi, Josh. It's
so great to hear from you -

Off Tara watching, then shaking him off.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. TODD'S CUBICLE, L.CECIL, 30TH FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

The floor is crowded with long desks of 20-SOMETHING ANALYSTS
and cubicle blocks occupied by 30-SOMETHING VPS. The 40-
SOMETHING MANAGING DIRECTORS are in offices by the window
perimeter, hogging all the light. Todd bursts in.

TODD

(as an announcement)
HOLY SHIT.

KAL TAGGAR (33, good looking Egyptian-American), his fellow
VP, looks up from his desk, just as NEHA PATEL (23, dorky,
Adderrall-addicted), approaches with a deck in her hand.

NEHA

Todd, if I'm going to finish this
model I need an answer to -

TODD

Hook is going public.

NEHA and KAL both freeze.

KAL

Holy shit.

TODD

Yeah, Kal: Holy shit. Their CEO
just called asking me to pitch for
the deal this Friday.

KAL

How does Josh Hart even know who
you are?

NEHA

THIS Friday? That's in two days.

TODD

I met him at CES two years ago and
have been emailing him ever since.
Fucking weird dude, but clearly
smart taste.

NEHA

There is no way we can get a pitch deck together in two days.

TODD

There is and we will. I was saying Hook would be the deal of the next big thing before anyone on Wall Street had even heard of it. No way I'm letting anyone else take it public. Scrap whatever you're doing and get me everything you can find on their current financials.

Neha scampers off. Kal sits still, dumbfounded. Todd grins.

TODD (CONT'D)

You feel that, Kal? That's the feeling of Todd Kent becoming a motherfucking Wall Street legend.

Kal throws a pen at him.

EXT. KING STREET CALTRAIN STATION, SAN FRANCISCO - 8 A.M. PST

The Cal-Train pulls into the station, expelling a sea of scurrying hoodie-clad commuters. It's at once completely different and entirely the same as the L.Cecil morning scene.

Among them, Kelly Jacobson, heading to THE EMBARCADERO.

INT. HOOK RECEPTION - 8:05 A.M. PST

NICK WINTHROP (32, smug, average-looking, wearing a Hook-branded fleece vest), Hook's CFO, walks into a BRIGHT ATRIUM, outfitted with COLORFUL FURNITURE and BOUNCY GRAFFITI ART.

He is greeted by JULIE SAWYER (25, perky), Hook's receptionist, who hands him a clipboard.

JULIE

On behalf of the Hook community, I present you, our CFO, with a petition to bring back real M&M's.

He takes it, reads it, sneers.

JULIE (CONT'D)

Everyone knows you're behind the downgrade to the generic kind and -

A PAPER AIRPLANE hits Nick in the head. Ouch.

JULIE (CONT'D)
(Staying professional)
It's National Paper Airplane Day.

NICK
Hook is not a start-up any more,
Julie. Things are going to change
around here. Get used to it.

He swipes his badge and exits. Julie rolls her eyes as Kelly
walks in, glancing around.

KELLY
Hi, my name's Kelly Jacobson. I'm
here for an interview...?

INT. MAIN PROGRAMMING FLOOR, HOOK OFFICE - 8:30 A.M. PST

JUAN RAMIREZ (26, friendly-looking), Hook's lead programmer,
arrives to an otherwise empty floor where he finds Josh Hart
sitting at his seat, tapping on a laptop. The MAP FROM TEASER
is behind Juan's desk, still on.

JUAN
You're here early.

JOSH HART
Late.
(finishing typing)
I'm taking Hook public.

JUAN
What? For real? Wait...why? You
hate regulation and...people.

JOSH HART
You'll make \$300 million, Juan.
You're supposed to say 'thank you.'

JUAN
(blinking, processing)
It just feels really sudden...and
you've always said you didn't want -

JOSH HART
I need you to make sure the app
runs flawlessly between now and the
IPO. I don't want any dick
investors questioning our tech.

JUAN
Sure.
(a beat, then sweetly)
(MORE)

JUAN (CONT'D)

Should we celebrate? You and I have
come a long way since our ramen
days in Mountain View...

A beat. Josh TWITCHES, the way we will learn he does when he
experiences emotion. Is he sad about this?

JOSH HART

No.

(standing, turning to go)

And don't tell anyone else. I don't
want this to be a big deal.

He exits off Juan's uncertain look: what is Josh up to?

INT. MICHAEL LADD'S OFFICE - 11:30 A.M. EST

Tara is seated, eager, across from MICHAEL LADD (40-ish, smug
WASP), her boss. He slides a piece of paper across the desk.
Her face sinks when she sees the number.

MICHAEL

I know it's not what you were
hoping.

TARA

This is less than I got last year.

MICHAEL

I know. And I fought for you, hard.
But you know how it is since 08.
Senior management can't afford to
look excessive.

TARA

I'm not asking for excessive, I'm
asking for fair. My bonus is
supposed to be half of my comp and
this isn't even -

MICHAEL

We've all taken a hit, Tara.

(his PHONE RINGS)

Keep up the hard work. The good
times'll come back.

(to phone)

This is Michael. Yes, be right up.

He hangs up and exits off her miffed helplessness.

INT. TODD'S CUBICLE - 11:45 A.M. EST

Todd and Neha are looking at print-outs of slides and charts laid out on his desk. Kal is at his desk beside them.

TODD

Why does this say \$15 billion? Josh wants a \$25 billion valuation.

NEHA

Then he should consider a business model that actually makes money.

ASSISTANT

(calling out)

Todd there's a call for you.

TODD

Take a message.

ASSISTANT

It's Harvey Tate's office. He wants to meet with you ASAP.

Neha and Kal react. Todd grins. Harvey only meets with VIPs.

KAL

You motherfucker.

TODD

I'll be sure to tell our esteemed Chairman you said that.

Kal throws another pen at him as he walks off.

INT. HARVEY TATE'S OFFICE, 38TH FLOOR, L.CECIL - CONTINUOUS

The 38TH FLOOR is where the big wigs sit and the old school decor reflects it. HARVEY TATE (68, silver fox) sits at his computer, typing, as an assistant shows Todd in.

HARVEY TATE

Have a seat.

Todd sits, waits. Harvey types, taking his time. Finally...

HARVEY TATE (CONT'D)

At Catherine's request, I've agreed to step in to lead the Hook pitch. I'll need you to send me all your analysis and a one-page summary of your contact with the client.

Todd shifts. His muscles tense visibly, but he is careful.

TODD

I've been following this company since it started. I can lead the deal.

HARVEY TATE

You're a Vice President and this is a multi-billion dollar IPO.

TODD

For a 32-year-old client who reached out to ME. I understand the app, the market and Josh Hart. I grew up in Silicon Valley so I -

HARVEY TATE

Also understand that we are not in Silicon Valley. Here, we respect experience. I'll see you with the rest of the team in 27A at one.

Harvey turns to his computer, declaring the meeting done.

TODD

This is my deal.

HARVEY TATE

It's the firm's deal. The system is in place for a reason, Mr. Kent. I advise you to mind it.

Off Todd fuming, as Harvey moves back to his work with the air of a bull dealing with a pesky but insignificant fly.

THE SCREEN SWIPES **LEFT**, A LOSS FOR TODD.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. TARA'S CUBICLE, 27TH FLOOR - 12:30 P.M. EST

Tara is trying to concentrate over TWO COLLEAGUES GOSSIPING when Michael returns. She follows him to his office.

TARA

Michael, I calculated the total revenue I supported last year and -

MICHAEL

Shut the door.

(she does, cautious)

Hook is going public. Catherine Wiley has appointed me as ECM lead. I'm sending you the analysis I need by tomorrow. Hope you haven't got plans tonight.

TARA

(processes, hesitates)

I do, actually.

(off his surprise)

I told you three weeks ago I need tonight off to see my sister.

MICHAEL

(with miffed disbelief)

I am giving you the chance to work on the biggest deal in the world right now. Are you telling me you'd rather I find someone else so you can have dinner with your sister?

TARA

(determined)

I'm not going to keep sacrificing everything when my compensation doesn't reflect it.

MICHAEL

Tara, if we win this deal your career will be so made that last year's bonus will look like a rounding error. Don't throw it all away when you're this close.

She hesitates, not wanting to be taken as a fool, but also...

TARA

Email me what you need.

MICHAEL

Good girl. You won't regret it.

INT. MAIN PROGRAMMING FLOOR, HOOK OFFICE - 9:45 A.M. PST

Juan returns to his desk with a pile of snacks. BROGRAMMER BRAD (26, surfer) is seated next to him. Hook MAP still on.

JUAN

What are you looking at?

BROGRAMMER BRAD

Just getting some intel on our potential future colleague.

He gestures to the meeting room where Kelly is waiting.

BROGRAMMER BRAD (CONT'D)

Kelly Jacobson is def experienced.

Juan rolls his chair over to Brad's monitor, where KELLY'S HOOK PROFILE is pulled up, along with a long list of the date, time and messaging content of her Hook encounters.

JUAN

(shocked)

How did you get in the user database?

BROGRAMMER BRAD

Dude, we built the user database.

JUAN

If Papadopolous sees you -

BROGRAMMER BRAD

Paps has been MIA for like two weeks. Besides, it's not like I'm using it against her. I think it's awesome she's banged thirt-

JUAN

Brad: shut it. I'm serious. It's in total violation of our privacy policy and now that we're -

BROGRAMMER BRAD

(off his catching himself)

Now that we're what?

JUAN

Nothing. Just stop.
(looking across the room at
Nick joining Kelly)
Girl's got enough problems having
to meet with Nick.

INT. HOOK MEETING ROOM - 10:05 A.M. PST

Kelly is seated at a table across from Nick. He has clearly
been droning on for a while.

NICK

...So after Harvard Business
School, Phil Dalton, who gave Hook
its first check, asked me to be
Hook's CFO. I had a lot of job
offers, but I felt a duty to use my
skills to help shape Hook into a
more professional organization.

He wants to impress her, but her nod is merely polite. #Awk.

NICK (CONT'D)

So, what most interests you about
working at Hook?

KELLY

I like the idea of building a
product that so many people use.
And I did my thesis on machine
learning, and I'm interested in how
you apply that to dating algorithm-
(off his confusion)
Is everything okay?

NICK

You won't really need that in PR.

KELLY

I applied to be a programmer.

NICK

(confused)
Did they not tell -
(apparently not)
Right. After considering your
application more closely we decided
you were a better fit for PR.

KELLY

I'm an engineer.

NICK

Which we love! You'll be that much better at explaining our tech.

KELLY

I have no experience in PR.

NICK

Oh, don't worry - it's not that hard.

(off her furrowed brow)

But it is important! Now more than ever we need people like you representing our brand. I mean, honestly: it would be such a waste to have you stuck, unseen, on some programming floor.

He laughs. She doesn't. It's uncomfortable. He stands.

NICK (CONT'D)

(reaching out his hand)

So I'll have HR reach out. Big things are happening here, Kelly. You don't want to miss out.

INT. L.CECIL CONFERENCE ROOM 27A - 1 P.M. EST

TEN STEREOTYPICAL BANKERS are gathered at a table cluttered with PRINT OUTS and STARBUCKS CUPS, tapping on their LAPTOPS.

BEAU BUCKLEY (30, jovial, silver-spoon WASP), Catherine Wiley's associate, is seated next to Todd, showing BANKER ONE (smug, 40-ish), the HOOK APP.

BEAU BUCKLEY

So you log in through Facebook.

(pointing to his phone)

Hit 'allow location.' And then go to the home screen and girls pop up who are within five miles. Like this girl is 0.8 miles away.

BANKER ONE

Okay...

BEAU BUCKLEY

Now you swipe left if you don't like her, and right if you do.

Banker One swipes right. Nothing happens.

BANKER ONE

Now what?

BEAU BUCKLEY

Well if she had swiped right when you popped up on her app, it would show that you're a match and then you can chat. But she didn't.

(awkward)

Keep going.

Banker One focuses, studying each profile carefully before awkwardly swiping and waiting hopefully for it to be a match.

Harvey and Michael enter. The room quiets as Harvey takes his place at the head of the table.

HARVEY TATE

Afternoon, gentlemen. For those who haven't met Beau Buckley, he joins us from Catherine Wiley's office.

Beau waves. The implication is clear: she is watching.

HARVEY TATE (CONT'D)

Now, Hook wants to raise \$2 billion in its IPO. We must convince them both that this is achievable, and that we are worth the \$200 million fee we will charge to make it happen. As ECM lead, Michael will be crafting the pitch deck, so I've asked him to get us started.

MICHAEL

Thank you, Harvey, and Beau. Now, we have to remember that we're dealing with HIGHLY UNSOPHISTICATED clients. Josh is a 32-year-old who will probably show up in a hoodie.

Michael stops to laugh haughtily. Todd wants to kill himself.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

But as the oldest, most prestigious firm on Wall Street...

THE DOOR OPENS and Tara enters, mouths a silent 'sorry' to Michael, and slips into an empty seat.

Todd perks up. She feels his gaze and blushes upon noticing him, too, but looks quickly away. Michael blabs on.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
...our value proposition is one
that is worth...Swiping Right.

The bankers chuckle. Tara cringes. Todd scoffs. Beau laughs.
Banker One, now swiping feverishly, looks up, pleased.

BANKER ONE
I got a match!

INT. COFFEE SHOP, SAN FRANCISCO - 11 A.M. PST

CHARLIE JACOBSON (34, scruffy with bright eyes) taps at his
MacBook, a TAYLOR NOTEBOOK beside him, when Kelly sits down.

CHARLIE
Hey sis. How'd it go?

KELLY
(still baffled)
The interview was for a PR role. He
said based on my application they
thought it was a better fit.

CHARLIE
(frowning his brow)
Since when does a 4.0 in CS and
athletics obsession scream PR?

KELLY
I think he google'd me.

CHARLIE
And found your Model UN record?

KELLY
Found my photos.

CHARLIE
(taking a beat to process)
Ugh...this town.

KELLY
You should have seen the way he
looked at me, Charlie. Like all I
was good for was being a
'representative of the brand.' It
was so patronizing and...

CHARLIE
(not sure what to say)
We still need a web developer at
the AP. I could get you an inter -

KELLY

I'm sick of being poor, Charlie.
(off his quiet)
Sorry. I just...feel gross.

CHARLIE

What's that famous Google interview question, about the blender?

KELLY

What do you do if you're shrunk down and put in a blender with no tools and only have 20 seconds before the blade comes on.

CHARLIE

What's the right answer?

KELLY

You disassemble the blender.

As she says it, she gets his gist and starts to think. Charlie watches, with a proud smirk, knowing it'll be good.

INT. TARA'S DESK, 27TH FLOOR AT L.CECIL - 3:30 P.M. EST

Tara is at her desk when she gets a text from her sister.

Allison Taylor: Just landed!!! Should we meet at your apartment or the pizza place?

TARA

Shit.

She picks up the phone and texts back.

Tara: Did you get my VM? I've got to work late.

She goes back to her computer. Her phone buzzes again.

Allison: we can wait! When will you be finished?

Tara: It'll be past midnight so you guys go on.

The PHONE RINGS: Allison. Tara hits IGNORE. Another text.

Allison: :(

She feels bad. Texts again:

Tara: My boss will be on a flight tomorrow so I can meet you for breakfast. My treat.

A STARBUCKS CUP appears on her desk, courtesy of Terrence.

TERRENCE

Thought you might need this.

TARA

You heard about the deal?

TERRENCE

And who's on it...Todd Kent? You are so getting laid.

TARA

(going back to work)
Not happening.

TERRENCE

Come on, T. You've already slept with him: it's not like it'll increase your number.

TARA

We slept together once.
(off his look)
Fine, twice. But it was college. I don't even want to think about how many girls Todd slept with in college, or has since. It meant nothing.

TERRENCE

Maybe to him.
(off her look, undeterred)
I'll give it til the roadshow.

TARA

What about the version of this where you say: 'Holy shit, Tara: you just landed a massive deal and might actually, finally be appreciated for seven years of busting your ass for this firm'?

TERRENCE

Well, obvs, T. But success shouldn't prevent you from love and/or casual sex with a hot man.

TARA

Todd is a candidate for neither.

TERRENCE

(hopeful)
Do you think he's gay?

TARA

Don't you have a guilt groupe flash
sale to be on?

Terence winks and exits. She turns back to her computer just
as a NEW EMAIL hits her inbox from **GOOGLE ALERTS - HOOK.**

She opens it. Her face drops when she sees the headline: **THE
MISOGYNISTS BEHIND YOUR 'HOOK'-UPS, BY KELLY JACOBSON.**

TARA (CONT'D)

Shit.

SCREEN SWIPES RIGHT (KELLY'S IN).

END OF ACT TWO

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ACT THREE

INT. L.CECIL HALLWAY - 3:50 P.M. EST

Tara is trailing Michael back to the conference room.

TARA

She says the only female employees
at Hook are in PR and admin.

MICHAEL

And?

TARA

And that that's why she didn't get
hired as an engineer. She's telling
people to boycott it.

Michael stops.

MICHAEL

Let me see the article.
(taking her phone, reading)
Maybe they didn't hire her because
she sounds like an entitled
Millennial brat.

TARA

But she -

MICHAEL

Has nothing to do with the deal.
Now get me the comps I asked for.

TARA

(handing him a file)
Line was a better comp than the
ones on your list. I also
highlighted the issues with
Facebook's IPO to hint they
shouldn't pick Morgan Stanley.

He grabs the file. It's annoying how good she is.

INT. NICK WINTHROP'S OFFICE, HOOK HQ - 1 P.M. PST

It's OCD-tidy, in sharp contrast to the chaos on the
programming floor outside it.

He is on his phone headset, admiring the view of the Golden
Gate Bridge, talking to a WEALTH MANAGER.

NICK
(into the phone)
I'm hoping you can explain the
difference between the AmEx black
card and the JP Morgan Pallad -

The office door opens and Josh pokes his head in.

JOSH HART
I added L.Cecil to Friday's
schedule. They'll be here at 10:30.

He turns to leave as Nick swivels around in his chair,
dropping the phone.

NICK
You did what?

JOSH HART
(annoyed, spells it out)
L.Cecil. Is. Coming. Friday.

NICK
You can't just add banks to the
schedule, Josh. There's a process,
and a strategy, and I'm CFO which m-

JOSH HART
It's my company.

NICK
It's PARTLY your company. You have
investors like Phil who -

JOSH HART
L.Cecil will be here Friday.
(leaving, then remembering)
And get rid of the generic M&M's.
They're disgusting.

Josh leaves. Nick, pissed, looks for something to throw, but
is limited to a box of LYSOL WIPES on his desk, one of which
he flings at the door. It float wimpily to the ground.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM 27A, L.CECIL - 4 P.M. EST

It buzzes with busy bankers eagerly making slides. Todd grits
his teeth at his laptop, trying to ignore them.

Michael stands at the projector screen at the head of the
table and claps his hands. Harvey is absent this scene.

MICHAEL

Okay, team. Let's take stock of where we are with the deck.

He clicks a button to display the PowerPoint presentation.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

So we'll start with some background, then go into -

TODD

(noticing page count)
87 slides?

The whole table turns.

MICHAEL

Is there a problem, Todd?

TODD

Yes. Josh hates Wall Street jargon, and you've got 87 slides of it.

He goes to the white board, writing as he speaks.

TODD (CONT'D)

All Josh wants to know is what happens between now and his IPO. Slide one: Hook picks L.Cecil to underwrite. Two: we work with his team to get information to justify a \$25 billion valuation. Three: we file a preliminary prospectus with the SEC. Four: we go on a 12-city roadshow to talk up the opportunity. Five: we ring the bell on the stock exchange, Hook becomes a publicly-traded company and we all make shit tons of money. There: five slides.

BANKER ONE

Those slides aren't compliance-approved.

MICHAEL

Which is one of many reasons why we aren't presenting them.

Michael turns back to the presentation, clicking to a slide with the HOOK ORG CHART, a family tree of company management.

TODD

That isn't even an updated org chart. Nick Winthrop is CFO.

BANKER ONE

Who?

TODD

NICK WINTHROP. He was my year at Stanford. Jesus Christ, how are you going to win the deal without Nick -

Todd pauses, an idea hitting him. He turns and leaves.

INT. PI PHI HOUSE DINING ROOM - 1:15 P.M. PST

It's filled with cute college girls chatting. Kelly enters, immediately noticed by RENEE SCHULTZ (22, expensive-looking).

RENEE

Oh my god, Kelly! Congratulations!

Other girls follow Renee's lead.

RENEE (CONT'D)

How did you get into HuffPo?

KELLY

HuffPo?

Renee pulls it up on her pink MacBook Air.

RENEE

You've got five thousand shares.

Kelly's face flushes as she looks at the computer. SORORITY GIRLS ONE and TWO chime in.

SORORITY GIRL ONE

It is SO TRUE that Silicon Valley is unfair to women. Like, all these geeks never learned how to talk to girls, and now they're in charge and that, like, *affects* us.

SORORITY GIRL TWO

Seriously. Why should we be penalized because we're pretty?

Their arrogance is almost enough to undermine the argument.

RENEE

(more responsibly)

It's seriously amazing, Kelly, and clearly its hitting a chord.

KELLY

(surprised, elated)

So did you delete the app?

Crickets. The girls shift uncomfortably.

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT, SAN FRANCISCO - 1:30 P.M. PST

PHIL DALTON (MID-40s, Ronald McDonald/Mr Big hybrid), Hook's lead VC, and RACHEL LIU (36, sharp, fashionable), Hook's publicist, are wrapping up lunch when Nick joins.

PHIL DALTON

Hey Nick. Have a seat.

Rachel passes him an iPad with Kelly's article pulled up.

RACHEL LIU

Anything behind this?

NICK

(defensive)

No! Josh passed on her for the engineering role, and I GENEROUSLY offered her a great alternative.

PHIL DALTON

What are you thinking, Rachel?

RACHEL LIU

It hasn't had any impact on user numbers. If it starts to, we'll come back with the Juan Ramirez story. Hook making an immigrant kid from the ghetto worth \$300 million should curry enough good will to deflect gender claims. And if that doesn't work, I'll destroy her.

NICK

I knew you'd take my side.

RACHEL LIU

I'm not. I am absolutely certain you pigeonholed her based on her looks. She just should have thought harder before implying PR is an idiot's job.

PHIL DALTON
(standing)
Let me walk you out.

They exit. PHIL'S PHONE DINGS on the table.

Nick considers, then picks it up. His face goes white when he sees: A HOOK ALERT with A NAKED SELFIE FROM A YOUNG MAN and a message *SEE YOU TONIGHT, COWBOY*. He drops it, horrified.

PHIL DALTON (CONT'D)
(returning)
Sorry about that. She's helping my wife and I plan a charity auction.
(as Nick collects himself)
So are we all ready for tomorrow?

NICK
(grateful for business)
Yes. I've selected the seven top investment banks, all of whom have been preparing for a month, so -

PHIL DALTON
I saw eight on the schedule.

NICK
Uh, yeah. Josh added one.
(off Phil's look)
It's just L.Cecil. Clearly we won't pick them given the SEC investiga-

PHIL DALTON
I put you in as CFO to control Josh. I don't need to remind you I've got \$100 million and my reputation invested in this.

NICK
I know. I've got it under control.

PHIL DALTON
(reading Nick carefully)
You have to think of Hook as a ship. You're captain, guiding the direction, and Josh is engineer, keeping it running. As long as he stays in the bows, we sail smooth.

Nick sits up importantly, captain-like.

NICK

Where are you on the ship? Are
Venture Capitalists the passengers?

PHIL DALTON

No, Nick. I'm the ocean. Which
means if you crash this ship, I'm
the one who makes sure you drown.

He winks, but he's dead serious. Nick squirms. His PHONE
DINGS and he takes refuge in it, finding an EMAIL from TODD
KENT. Off Nick's face, stunned and...pleased.

INT. L.CECIL CONFERENCE ROOM - 8:00 P.M. EST

Todd, Tara, Beau and Neha are alone, working. Tara is reading
the comments on Kelly's piece when she gets a text.

ALLISON: We're going for ice cream. Want to join??

Tara blinks. How does she not get it?

TARA: Still working. Sorry!

BEAU

We've got to work on your Hook
profile, T2.

Todd and Tara both look at the phone he turns toward them,
with TARA'S PROFESSIONAL PHOTO is displayed.

BEAU (CONT'D)

Advertising that you're a woman in
finance is like Man Repellent.

TARA

I only got on to see how it works.

BEAU

Boyfriend?

TARA

No.

Todd takes note.

BEAU

Better get on it. Only thing worse
than being a woman in finance is
being a woman over thirty in
finance.

TARA
Excuse me, Beau but -

BEAU
(grinning, hard to hate)
I'm teasing, T2. You're legit good
at your job. You should be focused
on it.

TARA
Could you make sure the bonus
committee knows that?

BEAU
Por que?

TARA
Nothing. Sorry. I know everyone
took a hit this year.

TODD
Who told you that?

TARA
Michael.

BEAU
You mean Michael who gave himself a
50% bump on his bonus?

TARA
(WHAT?)
He said he fought for me.

BEAU
Ha! If by fought for you, you mean
he said he was giving you \$120 and
Catherine said 'okay' then, yeah.

Off Tara, trying to stay calm.

INT. MICHAEL LADD'S OFFICE - 8:15 P.M. EST

Michael is at his desk when Tara walks in, serious.

TARA
Michael, we need to talk about my -
She is interrupted by Catherine Wiley at the door.

CATHERINE WILEY
(to Michael)
How is the pitch deck coming?

MICHAEL

(handing her the file Tara
gave him earlier)

Good. I decided to use Line as the
main comp, and I'll emphasize
Facebook's problems to hint why not
to pick Morgan Stanley.

CATHERINE WILEY

Smart.

Tara glares at Michael: those were HER ideas.

CATHERINE WILEY (CONT'D)

(flipping through deck)

Anything out of the norm?

MICHAEL

Nope. All under control.

TARA

They might be involved in a gender
discrimination suit.

Catherine looks up: this girl again. Michael's nose flares.

CATHERINE WILEY

(to Michael)

Is that true?

MICHAEL

It's nothing. A spoiled sorority
girl trying to get atten-

TARA

She's a national merit scholar with
a 4.0 in CS who is correct that
there are no female engineers at
the company.

CATHERINE WILEY

(still to him)

You don't think that's relevant?

MICHAEL

Right now all we need to focus on
is winning this deal.

CATHERINE WILEY

(studying him, then firmly)

Your job is to recognize risk and
keep me apprised of it. I suggest
you start doing better. Fast.

She holds him in her gaze a beat longer, then exits.

MICHAEL

(under his breath)

Bitch.

(to Tara, biting her lip)

Get out of my office. And learn
your fucking place.

Off Tara's guilty look.

INT. TARA'S DESK AT L.CECIL - 11:30 P.M. EST

Tara is on alert, like a kid who knows she's stepped out of line, when she gets an EMAIL FROM CATHERINE WILEY, **subject: pls come to my office.** Off her anxious face.

INT. CATHERINE'S OFFICE - 38TH FLOOR - 8:35 P.M.

Tara enters the office, a more utilitarian version of Harvey's, and finds Catherine working at her computer.

CATHERINE WILEY

Have a seat.

(turning as Tara does)

How do you know about this girl?

TARA

I saw the piece when it first went
up and so I looked into it.

CATHERINE WILEY

You went to Stanford also, yes?

TARA

(how does she know this?)

Yes. I was in the same sorority as
Kelly, actually, so I guess I took
what Michael said personally. I
didn't mean to overstep or -

CATHERINE WILEY

Do you know her?

TARA

No. But I knew Nick in college, and
can believe he typecast her.

CATHERINE WILEY

You think he's sexist?

TARA

I think he wouldn't see that he was discriminating.

(a beat)

But I also think - I hope - society is getting to a place where white men have to be responsible for their unconscious biases.

CATHERINE WILEY

(studying her)

You think she should file a suit?

TARA

(is she on trial?)

No. I mean, I wouldn't. Even if she wins she'll always be marked.

(remembering the deal)

And obviously I don't want her to - I mean, I want this deal to work out for the firm.

CATHERINE WILEY

I do, too. But I can't have the firm take on a client about to be mired in scandal.

(relaxing a smidge)

Which is why I'd like you to go to California and find out what's going on.

TARA

You mean talk to Kelly?

CATHERINE WILEY

No, talk to Hook's GC. Find out how they're dealing with it, and take the opportunity to sell yourself as a member of the team.

Tara nods, processing: this is a huge opportunity.

CATHERINE WILEY (CONT'D)

(reaching for a pen)

Kelly won't change anything by attacking the system. Women change things by rising from within it, as I have done, and am now empowering you to do.

(writing down her number)

Here's my cell. Call me afterward.

Tara takes it, a little starstruck, a lot excited-nervous.

TARA

What about Michael? I don't want
him to think -

CATHERINE WILEY

You have what it takes to really be
something, Tara. Don't forego that
chance to preserve a man's ego.

TARA

Thank you.
(standing to leave)
Do you have any other advice? As a
woman in this business, I mean?

CATHERINE WILEY

Freeze your eggs at 30 so it isn't
an issue and don't get married
until you're 35 and established.

TARA

Is that how old you were?

CATHERINE WILEY

I was 26.
(glancing at her, serious)
I'll look forward to your call.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. AIRPLANE CABIN, JFK TO SFO - 9:30 A.M. EST

Tara is in a middle seat in coach, focused on her laptop when Todd appears, addressing the MAN seated beside her.

TODD
Mind switching? I'm up in business.

MAN NEXT TO TARA
Uh, sure.

The man shuffles to get his things and Tara watches Todd sit.

TODD
Sucks they make associates sit
coach. Real sign of the economy.

TARA
(studying him)
Why are you back here then?

TODD
The alternative is sitting next to
Michael. Not worth the leg room.
He's super pissed at you, btw.

TARA
(shifting, concerned)
Is he really upset?

TODD
You made him look like an fool in
front of his boss. Of course he is.

TARA
Well given the choice, I'd rather
have Catherine's respect than his.

TODD
Please don't become a Catherine
Wiley groupie.

TARA
She's an incredible role model.

TODD
If what you're going for is a
cheating alcoholic husband and two
daughters in rehab.

She turns back to her work, offended. He tries to save it.

TODD (CONT'D)

What is she having you do anyway?

TARA

I'm meeting with Chris Papadopoulos about the Kelly situation.

TODD

(makes a face)

How did you get a meeting with Hook's General Counsel?

TARA

(what does he take her for?)

I emailed? He responded right away.

Her phone rings. As he considers this new perspective on her.

TARA (CONT'D)

(to phone)

Hi. 23A. I left the key with the doorman. Yes, I'm sure he'll be there. Just take a taxi. It will cost \$12: I'll pay for it. I've got to go Allison. We're taking off.

Todd watches as she hangs up, takes an irritated breath.

TARA (CONT'D)

(noticing)

My sister is visiting.

TODD

I thought your sister died.

TARA

(surprised)

How did you -

TODD

You told me. When...I made fun of you for the teddy bear on your bed, and you said it belonged to your sister who died.

TARA

You remember that?

TODD

Of course. I felt like a dick.

She blushes. Had he cared? Could he still?

TARA

(softer)

That was my older sister. This is my younger one.

HOT FLIGHT ATTENDANT

Seat belts, please.

Todd's eyes move from Tara to FLIGHT ATTENDANT'S ASS. Tara watches. The spell breaks. She goes back to her work.

INT. JUAN'S DESK, HOOK OFFICE - 10 AM PST

Juan is deep in his work, a line of empty Red Bull cans suggesting he's been at it all night. Programmer Brad enters.

BROGRAMMER BRAD

Juan-deezy: whatcha working on?

JUAN

I'm building a wall to keep everyone out of the user database.

Brad sits at his computer, trying his old trick. A clown in a fire truck starts spinning around his screen, accompanied by the sound of MANIACAL LAUGHTER. The room turns.

BROGRAMMER BRAD

Yah yah, yah. Fair enough.

Off Juan, satisfied that he's hacked temptation.

INT. THE BATTERY MEMBERS' CLUB IN SAN FRANCISCO - 5 PM PST

THE MEMBERS' CLUB is full of white men wearing fleece vests or variations on the checkered button-down. Their un-sexiness is in alarming contrast to the spare-no-expense setting. Todd's cool stands out as he spots Nick, who fits right in.

TODD

Nick! Hey, buddy, how are you?

NICK

(shaking his hand, strictly professional)

Todd Kent.

TODD

This place is great.

NICK

It is. Unfortunately for you, they don't accept bankers. The mission is to create a community of people who create real value.

Todd pauses, unclear whether Nick realizes that was rude. Nick beckons a waiter.

NICK (CONT'D)

What is your most expensive wine?

WAITER

The 1987 Chateaux Margaux Bordeaux.

NICK

I'll have that.

WAITER

It only comes by the bottle.

NICK

That's fine.

WAITER

And for you?

TODD

Macallan 15, neat, please.

Nick folds his hands and looks at Todd, waiting. It's weird.

TODD (CONT'D)

So how long has it been? Ten years?

NICK

Yes. A lot has changed, huh?

A beat. Todd isn't sure how to read him. Waiter returns.

WAITER

The 1987 Chateau Margaux.

NICK

Fine.

(to TODD)

So why did you want to meet?

TODD

(to get to the point)

Well I know that you are going to hear the full L.Cecil pitch tomorrow, but before that I wanted to...introduce an idea.

(MORE)

TODD (CONT'D)

(off his listening)

What you need is the best New York firm - which L.Cecil is - led by someone who speaks your language, which I am.

(sitting forward)

You know me. I won't just get the best valuation, I'll make sure everything's handled so you and Josh feel respected and understood.

NICK

You're suggesting I choose L.Cecil, but request you be in charge?

(off TODD's nod)

Interesting.

Nick puckers his lips, thinking. Todd eases, glad to be through initial awkwardness and now on the same page.

NICK (CONT'D)

There's just one issue.

TODD

(confident)

Try me.

NICK

I don't like you.

Todd's face shifts. Nick leans in, looking him in the eye.

NICK (CONT'D)

We are not friends, Todd. You are an asshole who I despise, who I have always despised, and who I would continue to despise were it not for the fact that you are not worth the energy it would take to go on despising you. I wouldn't let you near my IPO if you were the last banker on the planet.

Nick stands and zips his fleece importantly. Todd is aghast.

NICK (CONT'D)

The world is changing, Todd. And in the new world order, **I'M** king.

(to waiter)

He'll take the check.

On Todd, stunned.

INT. THE ROSEWOOD HOTEL, MENLO PARK - 6:00 P.M. PST

It's witching hour at the hotel known for power meeting days and escort-heavy nights as men in suits and women in too-high heels put aside briefcases and settle into second rounds.

Tara quickly applies lip gloss at a table by the window and organizes her notebook to calm her nerves, as Josh arrives.

JOSH HART

Are you Tara?

She looks up, confused, then stands, reaching out her hand.

TARA

Josh Hart? It's so nice to meet you. I'm just here to meet -

JOSH HART

Papadopoulos couldn't make it. I thought I'd come instead.

Tara blinks, nerves igniting: is he upset she'd reached out? He sits. She follows, collecting herself. He twitches.

JOSH HART (CONT'D)

Why did you want to see Chris?

TARA

(hesitating, careful)

I wanted to talk to him about the potential liability from Kelly -

JOSH HART

A girl on the team would have been a distraction that threatened productivity. By not hiring her the liability was averted.

TARA

(did he just admit...)

You can't -

JOSH HART

Political correctness is for people with too much time on their hands.

(before she can protest)

Why are you wearing lip gloss?

TARA

(what?)

I...like to look nice.

JOSH HART

You mean you wanted Chris to like you.

She blinks, trying to understand his meaning.

JOSH HART (CONT'D)

You think if Chris likes you it will help you get the deal and then people will respect you.

TARA

(carefully)

What's so wrong with that?

JOSH HART

Chris isn't here. And I don't like people who try to manipulate truth.

TARA

(defensive)

I am one of the top performing asso-

JOSH HART

And yet here we are in plain view of all these people, and not one of them is thinking: look, a banker! Maybe Hook's going public.

(Off her becoming conscious of the people glancing)

All they're thinking is a) Josh Hart finally got a girlfriend and b) surely with all his cash he could have gotten a hotter one.

She flushes, struggling for composure. Finally, she stands.

JOSH HART (CONT'D)

(without getting up)

Don't create problems where there are none, Tara. You won't win.

Off her holding it together as turning heads follow her exit.

INT. TARA'S RENTAL CAR - 7:00 P.M. PST

Tara, shaken, certain she's just screwed up the entire deal, heads back to SF. Her PHONE RINGS: Catherine.

TARA

(Swallows hard and picks up on hands-free)

Hi, Catherine.

CATHERINE WILEY
How did it go?

A heavy pause.

TARA
Chris couldn't make it so Josh
actually came instead.

CATHERINE WILEY
(takes this as a good sign)
Great. And what did he say?

Tara cringes, ashamed. How did she let him distract her from finding out about Kelly? And why DID she wear lip gloss? She doesn't know what to say, and so, finally, she lies.

TARA
He said everything is under
control.

CATHERINE WILEY
So she's taking the article down?

TARA
(hesitating)
I think so. Yes.

CATHERINE WILEY
Great news. And how was your report
with Josh?

An excruciating pause. Tara clenches her breath.

TARA
(thin)
Really good.

CATHERINE WILEY
Great. Really good way to head into
tomorrow. Good work, Tara.

The phone clicks off as Tara hits traffic, slams the brake. She looks at her phone and sees a tweet from Kelly: **My piece about @Hook is #1 trending on @HuffPo!** Phone rings again.

TARA
Fuck, fuck, fuck!
(thinking it's Catherine)
I can expla-

ALLISON
Hey!! We caught you!!

Tara looks down at the phone screen. It's a FACETIME from ALLISON TAYLOR (26, softer version of Tara).

ALLISON (CONT'D)
Can you see where we are?

Tara sees the STATUE OF LIBERTY behind Allison. A car honks. She glances back at the road, starts to move, softening.

ALLISON (CONT'D)
Have you ever done the night tour?

TARA
No, Allison. I've never been at all, actually.

ALLISON
Tara! You've lived in New York for seven years! How have you never been to the Statue of Liberty???

A car cuts Tara off. She slams on the brake. Off her stress.

INT. KELLY'S DORM ROOM - 7:30 P.M. PST

Kelly is tapping away at her computer when her RA, ROBBY GOODMAN (22, teddy bear-ish) comes in.

ROBBY GOODMAN
Hey rock star. Want to grab dinner?

Her affectionate smile is clearly friendly to his more-than.

KELLY
I need to keep working.

ROBBY GOODMAN
What are you working on?

She turns her screen so he can see a KICKSTARTER CAMPAIGN.

ROBBY GOODMAN (CONT'D)
You're raising \$200k? For what?

KELLY
Catch. It's a new dating app. No one is going to boycott Hook unless they have an alternative, so I'm going to build one. But unlike Hook, Catch lets girls rate guys so they get penalized for being dicks.

Robby hesitates, then takes a \$20 bill out of his pocket.

ROBBY GOODMAN

Allow me to be your first investor.

Off Kelly's confidently hopeful smile.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - 7:15 P.M. PST

Todd returns, pissed, just as Tara enters from the valet.

TODD

How'd it go?

TARA

Don't want to talk about it.

TODD

Do you want to get dinner?

TARA

Only if we get very, very drunk.

Todd lifts the bottle of wine Nick didn't drink.

TODD

I have a \$2,880 bottle of 1987
Chateau Margaux Bordeaux.

TARA

That should do the trick.

INT. RESTAURANT IN SAN FRANCISCO - 8:45 P.M. PST

Todd and Tara are seated, plates finished and the bottle of wine empty. They are both tipsy and in lighter moods.

TARA

He seriously asked for the most
expensive wine on the menu?

TODD

Swear to God. Then proclaimed that
'the world is changing and he is
King.'

TARA

You know he's been waiting for that
moment for ten years.

(off his not believing)

Oh come on, Todd. He's the
consummate b-teamer who finally has
some power over the cool guy whose
frat rejected him.

TODD

That was college. Who hangs on to
shit from college?

A pregnant beat. She changes the subject.

TARA

Are you worried he'll tell Harvey?

TODD

I don't really give a shit.

TARA

What is like to be so confident?

TODD

What?

TARA

I'm sitting here certain my career
is ruined because of a tweet and
you tried to undercut the chairman
of the firm and aren't concerned.

TODD

That feels like your confidence's
problem, not mine. It's all a moot
point: we aren't getting the deal.

She looks down, twirling her wine glass. All for nothing.

TARA

I think this is my punishment for
blowing off my sister.

TODD

Are you two close?

TARA

No. I don't really fit in my
family.

TODD

Were you close to the other one,
before she died?

TARA

I hated her.

(sad laugh)

She was Dad's favorite. Dying made
it even harder to live up.

(brushing it off)

(MORE)

TARA (CONT'D)

I think I thought going to Stanford
and getting a big New York job
would make it better, but...

TODD

Well it has.

TARA

(almost hopeful)
How?

TODD

You met me.

Todd grins, she smiles, vulnerable. It's sweet.

INT. HOTEL ELEVATOR - 11:30 P.M. PST

Todd and Tara are on the elevator, laughing, clearly drunk.

TODD

Remember when we started that
sloshball game on the Quad during
Nick's admit weekend speech? His
face was *priceless*.

TARA

God, I miss college.

TODD

Me too.
(holding elevator door for
her as it opens)
It's too bad how things worked out.
We'd have made a great team.

She turns: does he mean the deal, or...? The elevator doors
close behind him, their bodies close in the quiet hall.

TARA

I had fun tonight. I mean, thank
you for making me feel better.

TODD

I did, too. And ditto.

They stand for an exaggerated moment, mutual want obvious.

TARA

So I'll see you in the morning.

TODD
(going with it)
Yeah, see you in the morning.

She turns back to her room. He watches her for a beat then, realizing she isn't going to turn back, takes out his phone and starts SWIPING RIGHT AND LEFT on the screen in the motion we now recognize as meaning he's on the HOOK APP.

INT. MAIN PROGRAMMING FLOOR, HOOK OFFICE - 11:45 P.M. PST

Juan is alone in the room, tapping away at something when a message pops up on his screen:

SECURITY BREACH. USER DATABASE INFILTRATED.

JUAN
Oh, come on, Brad.

Juan navigates to the 'SOURCE' field, and opens it, expecting to find Brad's profile but, instead, seeing the words **IP ADDRESS UNKNOWN**. DATABASE DOWNLOADING (COMPLETION: 1%. 2%...)

JUAN (CONT'D)
What the....?

Just then, Josh appears over his monitor.

JOSH HART
Hey.

JUAN
(startled)
I didn't realize you were here.

JOSH HART
(studies him, twitches)
Is everything okay?

Juan hesitates, glances at the screen, remembering what Josh said about making sure nothing went wrong.

JUAN
(maybe it's nothing...?)
Fine.

JOSH HART
Why haven't you bought your options?

JUAN
What? Oh...I will after the IPO.
Just in case it doesn't happ...

JOSH HART

I told you it is.

(off his hesitation)

Don't be stupid. If you wait the government will take 50% in taxes.

JUAN

I'd still have \$150 million...

JOSH HART

You built this entire product. You shouldn't make less than parasites like Phil Dalton. Get a loan and buy your options. Nothing is going to go wrong.

Off Juan glancing at his screen as download hits 100%.

INT. TARA'S HOTEL ROOM - MIDNIGHT PST

Tara is in the bathroom, where 8 beauty products and 2 prescription bottles are lined up neatly.

She starts to take off her eye make-up, then catches her reflection, studying it with drunken curiosity. Maybe she was wrong about Todd. Maybe Josh is the bad guy and he is the good guy, and maybe their reunion is the silver-lining of this whole fiasco. She turns, suddenly, into...

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Tara walks toward TODD'S ROOM, but stops when the ELEVATOR OPENS, producing a YOUNG, HOT BLONDE.

Tara watches as the blonde looks at her phone, then goes to TODD'S ROOM. He opens the door. They smile, then kiss.

The door slams and we hold on Tara, standing make-upless in the fluorescent hall, looking as foolish as she feels.

SCREEN SWIPES LEFT: SO REJECTED.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

INT. - HOOK LOBBY - 10:00 AM

Be-suited and game-faced L.CECIL BANKERS are gathered, looking like aliens in the colorful, friendly space.

Todd is visibly hungover. He winks at Tara as she walks in, but she looks away immediately.

MICHAEL

(smug)

Did you find your big drama?

TARA

(SO not in the mood)

Did you find my bonus?

Off his scowl. A DOOR OPENS and a loving-every-minute-of-this Nick walks in, leading two COMPETITOR BANKERS.

NICK

Really great presentation. I loved that part at the end where you said 'swipe right on us.' So clever.

COMPETITOR BANKER

Well, we wanted to show we aren't all work and no play.

NICK

(shaking his hand)

I'll be in touch soon.

(turning to Harvey Tate)

You must be Harvey Tate. I've heard so much about you.

He can't resist a glance at Todd. Off Todd's face: THIS. IS. GOING. TO. BE. SO. EXCRUCIATING.

INT. THE HOOK FISHBOWL - 10:15 A.M. PST

The conference room is called THE FISHBOWL because it is all-glass, allowing everyone in the company to peer in, which they are doing from the windows of the main building floors.

Phil and Rachel are seated at the table when Nick and the L.Cecil team enter. Tara braces herself, but Josh is absent.

PHIL DALTON
(cheerily to Harvey)
Phil Dalton. I believe you
underwrote the deal that made me my
first hundred million.

HARVEY TATE
(taking his hand)
And I look forward to underwriting
your next.

Meanwhile, the minions fill in. Tara takes a seat at the end.

MICHAEL
Tara, let Ben sit there. You can
sit with the analysts.

She glances to the analysts, in standing room only. Ouch. She
moves, pridefully, to perch next to Neha on the A/C unit and
takes out her Taylor notebook, preparing to take notes.

INT. JUAN'S DESK, HOOK OFFICE - 10:25 A.M. PST

Juan is at his desk. More all-nights' worth of Red Bull cans,
but he still hasn't figured out who hacked his security wall.

OTHER HOOK EMPLOYEES have figured out the IPO and are chit-
chatting at the window, watching the action in the FISHBOWL.

HOOK EMPLOYEE ONE
So what do the bankers actually do?

HOOK EMPLOYEE TWO
They crunch a lot of numbers and
make a lot of boring documents that
say how much Hook is worth so we
can sell our shares. Hey Juan, what
are you going to do with your first
ten million?

JUAN
Do you guys remember webvan?

HOOK EMPLOYEE TWO
What's webvan?

JUAN
Exactly. It was a grocery delivery
company worth \$5 billion at its IPO
that then went totally bust.

The HOOK EMPLOYEES are all quiet. Awkward. They disperse.

HOOK EMPLOYEE ONE
(To Hook Employee Two)
Webvan sounds stupid. We're
different.

JULIE
(entering)
Does anyone know if Instacart came
yet? They're delivering real M&M's.

INT. THE HOOK FISHBOWL - 10:35 A.M. PST

Everyone has settled in. They are waiting for Josh.

NICK
Let's go ahead and start. I'll fill
Josh in.

MICHAEL
Great.

He stands, cueing an analyst to project the presentation.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
When L.Cecil was founded in 1894,
our primary business was financing
the railroads, a revolutionary
technology that allowed citizens to
connect with each other in an
unprecedented way.

Todd glances at Tara, but she is buried in her phone.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
And so it seems appropriate that we
should find ourselves, again, a
century later, financing technology
that is building the routes of
modern connection.

Michael nods and AN EAGER ANALYST clicks to the next slide:
Hook's org chart with the title **You = New Heroes.**

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
You, gentlemen, are the
contemporary Cornelius Vanderbilt,
George Pullman, Leland Stanford.
You are the gentlemen who are
building the foundations of the new
world. This IPO isn't just a DEAL,
it's YOUR LEGACY, and you deserve a
financial partner with -

THE DOOR OPENS suddenly. Josh Hart walks in. Everyone turns.

JOSH HART

Which one of you is Todd Kent?

All eyes to Todd. He stands carefully as Josh approaches.

JOSH HART (CONT'D)

When did you last use Hook?

TODD

(glancing around)

Uh...last night?

JOSH HART

Do you have any concerns about its worth?

Todd shakes his head. Josh studies him for a long moment, before turning to [nervous] Nick and Phil.

JOSH HART (CONT'D)

Give the deal to L.Cecil. I want Todd Kent in charge.

Josh turns and walks out of the room. Rachel gets up, calmly, to leave. Nick feels PHIL'S ANGRY GLARE and leaps out of his seat to follow.

Everyone hangs, dumfounded. Off Todd's surpris, and Tara's shock behind him.

INT. HALLWAY EN ROUTE TO JOSH HART'S OFFICE - 10:50 A.M. PST

Josh and Rachel walk quickly. Nick trails behind them.

NICK

What in God's name was that?

Josh doesn't acknowledge him. They get to the OPEN PROGRAMMING FLOOR where HOOK EMPLOYEES TURN TO WATCH.

NICK (CONT'D)

L.Cecil is a floundering bank, and Todd Kent is -

Josh goes into the office. Rachel follows. THE DOOR SLAMS IN NICK'S FACE. He feels the stares of HIS EMPLOYEES.

NICK (CONT'D)

Get back to work!

INT. THE HOOK FISHBOWL - 10:55 A.M. PST

TODD'S DUMBFOUNDED FACE starts to relax into a broad grin.

TODD
(collecting his things)
Well, how about that.

HARVEY TATE
(short, but keeping cool)
We will discuss this at the hotel.

TODD
(like he's been waiting for
this)
I've got a lot of work to do,
Harvey, and not much time.

Harvey stares at him, a mix of anger, disgust and you-have-no-clue-what-you've-gotten-yourself-into. Todd is unfettered.

Michael waits for Harvey's exit and makes a move for Todd.

MICHAEL
(eagerly, like he's won)
We'll want to meet with Nick and
the team ASAP to get -

TODD
What makes you think you're going
to be part of this, Michael?

MICHAEL
(light: he's surely joking)
You have to have someone from the
Equity Capital Markets team to
organize the roadshow and sales -

TODD
Tara Taylor will handle it.

THE BANKERS ALL TURN TO TARA, still standing in the corner.

TODD (CONT'D)
Assuming you're up for it, Tara?

She looks at Todd, searching: can she trust him to protect her? Finally, she nods.

TARA
(softly)
Yeah, I'm up for it.

The room empties as she gathers her things to follow. Michael stands in the doorway, blocking her. They are alone, his body is uncomfortably close, and angry.

MICHAEL

Are you and Todd fucking? Is that what's going on?

Tara stares back at him, surprise turning to anger turning to defiance that refuels her ambition.

TARA

I'm getting what I deserve, Michael, and so are you. Now get out of my way, and learn your fucking place.

Off her pushing past him. ZING!

INT. JOSH HART'S OFFICE - 11:15 A.M. PST

Rachel and Josh are alone in his office, reviewing her list. Her straight-forward logic clearly puts him at ease.

RACHEL LIU

The NY Times wants a quote from you about cyber security.

JOSH HART

Fine. Write me one.

RACHEL

Already did.

She passes it to him. He reads, nods, returns to his screen.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

Are you sure going public is the right thing?

JOSH HART

How else am I going to get \$2 billion?

RACHEL

(a concerned sigh)

IPO filings require a lot of company information, Josh. Investors are going to ask why your General Counsel quit.

JOSH HART

And you'll craft an answer.

RACHEL
(studying him)
Why did you pick Todd Kent?

JOSH HART
Because I need the IPO quickly...

Josh turns his monitor so Rachel can see: TODD'S HOOK PHOTO, MATCHING WITH AMANDA PFEFFER'S, above a STRING OF MESSAGES and the words LAST MET TWO DAYS AGO.

JOSH HART (CONT'D)
...and Todd Kent is the only one sleeping with the SEC.

INT. AMANDA PFEFFER'S OFFICE AT THE SEC - 2:20 P.M. EST

Amanda looks at her Hook exchange with Todd, DOWN SWIPING to refresh the screen, willing a response to appear.

A THICK FILE with the SEC LOGO plops down on her desk. She looks up at HER BOSS (50s, frumpy).

AMANDA'S BOSS
American taxpayers are not paying for you to play games, Amanda. Please review this IPO filing and be prepared to brief me tomorrow.

She exits and Amanda turns back to her phone. She kisses her fingers, then touches them to Todd's pixalated lips.

AMANDA
Don't worry, Todd. I'm not going anywhere, either.

The scene collapses into the corner, but stays as we swipe into the next. With each swipe, the scene shrinks but continues up in the corner, creating a montage of our series leads.

SWIPE RIGHT TO:

INT. HOTEL BAR - 3:00 P.M. PST

Todd and Neha, at their computers, getting to work.

SWIPE RIGHT TO:

INT. PRIVATE AIR STRIP - 3:00 P.M. PST

Harvey Tate, on a private jet, looking at an EMAIL, **subject: [confidential] Employees flagged for possible Insider Trades.** His eyes zoom into a name half way down the list: **Todd Kent.**

SWIPE RIGHT TO:

INT. KELLY'S DORM ROOM - 3:00 P.M. PST

Kelly, at her computer, Robby at her side, watching the contributions to her Kickstarter campaign tick up and up.

SWIPE RIGHT TO:

INT. JUAN'S DESK AT HOOK - 3:00 P.M. PST

Juan, at his desk, stares helplessly at the security breach.

SWIPE RIGHT TO:

INT. DARK CONFERENCE ROOM - 3:00 P.M. PST

Phil Dalton, in the throes of sex with a hot young man, as his phone gets a call from NICK WINTHROP.

SWIPE RIGHT TO:

INT. CATHERINE'S OFFICE - 38TH FLOOR - 6:00 P.M. EST

Catherine, at her desk, reading the headline: **Kelly Jacobson launches Kickstarter to fund dating app to take down Hook.**

SWIPE RIGHT TO:

EXT. THE GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE - 3:00 P.M. PST

A man (42, upset), shakily removes his wallet, A MEMORY STICK and his HOOK EMPLOYEE BADGE on which we see his name: CHRIS PAPADOPOLOUS. The wind whips as he climbs up on the bridge railing, squeezes his eyes shut...and jumps.

INT. HOTEL GYM - 3:00 P.M. PST

Tara running hard on the treadmill. Like the opening except when the distance hits 7 miles she keeps going. 7.2...she picks up the speed...7.6...faster still...7.9 and...

SHE TRIPS, lunges forward, grabs the rails and pants as the belt flies on. Off her horrified face, as if it's an omen.

The shot hovers, hesitating...is she a keep or a pass? In or out? About to make it, or be destroyed? She pants, like she's waiting for her verdict. Finally, the SCREEN SWIPES...RIGHT. Boom.

END OF PILOT

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