

the CHAMPIONS S1 EP1: Pilot

By

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"We'll Keep On Fighting Till the End."

FADE IN

A dreary PORT CITY creates a skyline on an open and busy harbor. The current is strong amongst the cargo ships and tug boats. The bells of the buoys ring as they shift back and forth in the salty, green waters.

Seagulls fly about and squawk.

EXT. VARRICK SQUARE - DAY

The corner STREET SIGNS read: 9th Avenue and Varrick Street. And right above it: Varrick Square.

THE SQUARE is formed by a dead end back street -- a culdesac of old brownstones and little shops. Quiet at the moment, though the shops are just opening and the dogs are out for their morning walk.

At the end of the street is the noticeable little watering hole -- THE MARTIN'S PUB. Old in style, "SINCE 1956" reads below the signage in the window pane. Dark on the inside, a CLOSED sign showing in the door.

TWO FLOORS ABOVE,

curtains sway as a breeze flies through an opened window of the red brick brownstone.

An ALARM CLOCK rings, sickeningly in the dark apartment.

INT. ANDREW AND MAGGIE'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY

No lights on, just the tone of gray entering through the windows and the sound of that damn alarm clock.

A hand from the half-empty bed grabs the ringing cell phone with frustration. It is quickly SILENCED before being thrown back down on the nightstand.

SHE groggily pulls herself out of bed.

MAGGIE MARTIN, 46, ordinarily beautiful, but not mediocre. Always surrounded by her bright aura, even in her darkest and... not such attractive moments.

A running SHOWER can be heard throughout the apartment. Not to mention, a faint SINGING VOICE to QUEEN'S "WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS" (1977).

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Maggie enters the steamy bathroom yawning.

ANDREW  
 (O.S./singing)  
 "We are the champions, my friends.  
 And we'll keep on fighting till the  
 end..."

She immediately pulls down her pajama pants and sits on the toilet next to the shower, half awake.

ANDREW  
 (O.S.)  
 "We are the champions. We are the  
 champions--"

ANDREW peers out from behind the Chevy Corvette car themed shower curtain.

ANDREW  
 Hey, Butter-Love.

MAGGIE  
 (yawn)  
 Ah. Morning.

He leans over and kisses the top of her head as she continues to yawn and urinate.

The younger MARTIN brother, Andrew, 48, is ruggedly handsome. A bit of that aging weight on him, but his face is still as youthful as his soul.

ANDREW  
 Thank god it's Friday, eh?

He continues to shower behind the curtain.

MAGGIE  
 I don't know if I can keep doing  
 this for the next twenty --  
 twenty-five years. I just don't.

ANDREW  
 (O.S.)  
 Don't know what I'd do if I didn't  
 hear that every morning for the  
 rest of my life. The day wouldn't  
 be complete without it.

Maggie stands and flushes the toilet. She goes to the sink and begins washing her hands and her face.

(CONTINUED)

ANDREW  
(O.S./singing)  
"No time for losers 'cause we are  
the--"

MAGGIE  
Hey, did you pick up that thing?

ANDREW  
(O.S.)  
What thing?

MAGGIE  
The thing, Andrew. The thing -- the  
suit for Shelia's party?

NO REPLY.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)  
Andrew!

ANDREW  
(O.S.)  
I don't know what you're talking  
about.

MAGGIE  
Ugh. Andrew, the party is tonight.  
It's a black-tie event. I made you  
an appointment to be fitted for a  
suit at Delfino's. I told you days  
ago!

ANDREW  
(O.S.)  
Well, I didn't have the time.

MAGGIE  
Delfino's is five blocks from the  
business.

ANDREW  
(O.S.)  
Who the hell has a black-tie event  
for a birthday party? Why are we  
even going to this when neither of  
us can stand that fuck--

MAGGIE  
Andrew, don't start. It's too early  
in the morning and I'm not in the  
mood.

Maggie begins brushing her teeth.

(CONTINUED)

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Brian is your friend. You can't  
disrespect his wife.

The shower is turned off and the curtain ripped open.

ANDREW

Pass me the towel.

Maggie tosses him the towel with an annoyed look across her face. Andrew notices this.

He wraps the towel around him and steps out of the bath tub.

Maggie leans over to spit the toothpaste out of her mouth. As she stands back up, she sees Andrew RIGHT BEHIND HER IN THE MIRROR. He wraps his arms around her and begins kissing her neck.

Maggie sticks the toothbrush back in her mouth and tries to push him away.

MAGGIE

Stop. I got to get to the hospital.

He holds her tighter, kissing her more passionately as she tries to resist, but cannot help but laugh.

MAGGIE

Andrew, no.

Andrew whips her around, kissing her on the lips, toothpaste and all.

MAGGIE

Ah, I have toothpaste!

Maggie cannot help but laugh as he ignores her... and the toothpaste and continues to kiss and grope her.

MAGGIE

We don't have time...

He begins unbuttoning her pajama shirt.

MAGGIE

Andrew!

He rips the shirt off and picks her up onto the sink, the water still running. She stops resisting and begins to kiss him back -- toothpaste, everywhere.

Age has no bearing on this couple's passion and desire for one another -- they are all over each other.

EXT. VARRICK SQUARE - THE MARTIN'S PUB - DAY

**CUE MUSIC MONTAGE:**

**SONG: "FREEDOM" by ANTHONY HAMILTON & ELAYNA BOYNTON**

Andrew and Maggie come down their stoop, dressed in their winter wear -- Maggie in her hospital scrubs and Andrew in his plumber's uniform. They both glance over at The Pub as they pass by.

INT. THE MARTIN'S PUB - DAY

Maggie and Andrew's shadows pass over the shine through the windows onto the wooden floorboards.

A pair of legs lie on the floor in the darkness of the bar.

The legs belong to a young man -- WILLIAM, 24, Andrew and Maggie's son. Sloppy, but handsome. He suffers terribly from a deep inner turmoil. He's completely out cold with a half empty bottle of booze still in his hand.

EXT. VARRICK SQUARE - DAY

Missing sight of their drunken son, the couple gets into a TRUCK with a big sign reading: ANDY'S PLUMBING; "Let Andy handle it!"

The truck pulls out of the square and starts down THE STREET.

Andrew honks the horn as they pass by MISS ANN TEMPEST, 65, old school -- she's the Varrick Street Matriarch. She waves as they pass and then continues to broom sweep the sidewalk outside of her deli -- ANN'S.

EXT. 9TH AVENUE - DAY

Andrew's truck speeds up the avenue, racing to make the green lights.

The truck passes by a BUS STOP where SHAVON JOHNSON, 27, stands shivering in the cold passing breezes. Brown skin, curvy and stylish. She works hard, though a bit too hard for her party lifestyle. Misery surrounds her, but her sense of humor hides this well.

A homeless man sleeps on the bus stop bench behind her.

A POLICE CAR speeds down the avenue, sirens blaring.

INT. POLICE CAR - DAY

BARRY KINSEY, 30, drives while his partner, JOSE PADILLA, 33, communicates over the radio.

Jose is perfectly clean cut -- very into his looks, though genuine and not at all simple minded. A real contrast to his partner, Barry whose not the best looking, but also self indulgent and overly confident. Your regular good cop, bad cop routine.

EXT. HARBORSIDE HIGHWAY - DAY

The police squad car races around the morning rush hour traffic.

It passes by a bumpered-in black Mercedes with tinted windows.

INT. MERCEDES - DAY

KASSIUS CONROY, 31, sits his car snorting some cocaine off of a key. He quickly looks up as the police car passes.

Kassius, a tall and muscular dark-skinned charmer. He's put a lot of years into building his life. What he built it from, however, is a whole other matter.

EXT. HARBORSIDE HIGHWAY - DAY

Barry and Jose's squad car races along the rest of the highway -- the traffic accumulating.

In the distance is Muldoon Point's answer to the Brooklyn Bridge: THE EASTON BRIDGE--

An overturned TRACTOR TRAILER lays across the lanes, burning. A huge traffic build-up on both sides.

A HELICOPTER hovers next to the bridge.

INT. HELICOPTER - DAY

NEWS FOOTAGE: A reporter, DAPHNE KAYE, 34, sexy, but conservative and so much more than meets the eye, talks into the camera, reporting on the scene on the bridge, right over her shoulder--

CUTTING TO:

INT. JIM AND BRENDA'S TOWNHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Daphne's report is broadcast live on a large flat screen TV:  
"Breaking News: Overturned Tractor on Easton Bridge"

The elderly JIM MARTIN, 82, Andrew's father, sips his morning tea with one hand and uses the remote to change the channel with the other. The channel changes--

The next channel features another new report.

ON TV: MAYOR ED MONTA, 55, stands at a podium speaking before the press. To his right is, DISTRICT ATTORNEY RONALD BENSON, 42, and to the left, POLICE COMMISSIONER BRIAN STONE, 48.

The ticker reads: "MAYOR, DA & COMMISSIONER TO TACKLE CITY WIDE GUN CONTROL LEGISLATION"

The cranky and often blunt Grandpa Jim grits his teeth and changes the channel again.

In the background behind him, Jim's wife, Brenda can be seen in THE KITCHEN.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

BRENDA, 75, walks across the kitchen in her robe, her cellphone to one ear and a worried look on her face as she sets a bowl of oatmeal before UNCLE CHARLIE.

The frail Uncle Charlie, 80, smiles softly in appreciation of his sister in-law. He's almost the opposite of his big brother, loving and accepting, but can also be stern and blunt.

Brenda's INAUDIBLE conversation clearly has her upset.

CUT TO THE OTHER SIDE:

INT. KEVIN AND ALLISON'S APARTMENT - DAY

KEVIN MARTIN, 51, is furious as he speaks to his [step-]mother over the phone. He's pale, frail and completely bald. No hiding his illness. The cancer has eaten away his organ and his once happy life.

His wife, ALLISON, 38, watches from across the room as she places a bowl of cereal in front of their son, JAMES, 11. Their daughter, CAROLYN, 15, stares at her father, disturbed and shaking her head.

(CONTINUED)

Kevin yells into the cellphone before abruptly ending the call. He looks over at his wife and son who just stare back at him.

Carolyn shakes her head and continues texting on her cellphone.

THE TEXT MESSAGE: "Fuck school today! Lets meet!"

SEND--

CUTTING TO:

INT. CLAIRE'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - DAY

JOSIE STARK, 15, stands in the mirror fixing her hair. Her cellphone on the sink, it begins to vibrate.

The deceptive teenager pretends to be a good girl, but just can't help being bad. She checks her text message with a devious smile.

INT. CLAIRE'S APARTMENT - DAY

CLAIRE McCORMICK, 43, passes by her daughter in the bathroom. Attractive, though a bit masculine in a way, she devotes herself completely to life. She rushes over to her desk in the living room and grabs her BADGE.

BADGE: Claire McCormick, M.D., Bennett Memorial Hospital.

The high rise apartment's floor-to-ceiling view looks out across all of Muldoon Point.

In the skyline is the skyscraper of the BENNETT & BROTHER INC., company. A big blue "B&B" signage at the top of the building.

SHOOTING ACROSS THE SKYLINE--

CUTTING INTO TO:

INT. BENNETT & BROTHERS, INC. - DAY

FIONA MARTIN, 26, Kevin's daughter as well as the secretary for the CEO of Bennett & Brothers. She's a total romantic and not afraid to go after what she wants, but still hasn't learned how to pick them. Independence may not be for her.

(CONTINUED)

She sits at her desk outside her boss's office, staring down at her diamond ENGAGEMENT RING. Her FACEBOOK PAGE is up on the computer screen. She changes her RELATIONSHIP STATUS to ENGAGED.

The elevator doors opens and NIKKI BENNETT, 35, comes off the elevator. She owns the world and carries herself as such. As the youngest CEO and first woman to run her family's company, her workaholic nature often leaves her personal life up shit's creek.

INT. NIKKI'S OFFICE - DAY

Nikki enters the office to a SURPRISE--

DR. KYLE STARK, 43, Josie's father and Nikki's boyfriend stands at the window awaiting her arrival. A bouquet of roses rest on her desk.

The Good Doctor is met with a lukewarm welcome by the unenthused and stressed out CEO.

A large PORTRAIT on the wall shows the founding father of the company: TOM BENNETT.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE BENNETT ESTATE - DAY

A cliff side property is the estate of the city's prominent Bennett Family. THE MANSION is an old, white Victorian style haunted house. No joke, the house is full of family ghosts... and skeletons.

INT. BENNETT MANSION - THE STUDY - DAY

Open, old and classy in style. The room is depressingly lit only by the sunlight escaping through the red curtains over the windows.

TOM BENNETT, 86, stands at the fireplace overlooking the many photographs of Bennett family members. He sips an early morning brandy to cope with the realities of getting old and losing those for which you would share your riches.

The Man That Built This Town stares at a black and white photograph of himself and his THREE BROTHERS outside the construction of the B&B Tower -- the first Skyscraper in the city.

Tom walks over to his desk and grabs a thick manila envelope, writing "NICOLE" on the front of it. With the drink in hand, he walks away.

INT. FRONT HALL - CONTINUOUS

Tom walks out of the study and into the front hall by the staircase.

CHILDREN'S LAUGHTER ECHOES.

He FLASHES BACK to BRIGHTER TIMES--

LITTLE CHILDREN race each other down the stairs.

KIDS

(O.S.)

Daddy! Daddy! Grandpa!

REALITY QUICKLY RETURNS--

The house is completely empty and SILENT, save for an old grandfather clock ticking in the background.

He takes a sip of his drink and walks back down the hall.

EXT. BENNETT ESTATE - DAY

In his robe and slippers, Tom walks across the open fields surrounding the mansion in the middle of the property. He walks toward the cliff behind the house. The oceanside cliff with the richest view.

Tom comes to the edge of the cliff, overlooking all of Muldoon Point for a BEAT.

He finishes off his brandy and then drops the glass, watching it fall to its shatter on the watery rocks below.

He looks back up at the city -- the gray backdrop behind the skyscrapers that make up the city skyline. Tom closes his eyes and lets his body fall forward.

SLOW-MOTION: The elderly man falls over the edge of the cliff, beginning the hundred foot DROP TO HIS END.

*"I am looking for freedom, I'm looking for freedom; And to find it may take everything I have."*

--END MUSIC MONTAGE--

FLASH CUT TO:

EXT. BENNETT MEMORIAL HOSPITAL - DAY

An old building stands with various modern renovations that show in the facade of THE HOSPITAL.

A large sign reads: STELLA BENNETT MEMORIAL HOSPITAL.

INT. BENNETT MEMORIAL HOSPITAL - WAITING ROOM - DAY

Kevin and Allison sit in silence -- them and one other in the WAITING ROOM.

Allison reaches into her bag and pulls out a bottle of water which she attempts to pass to him. Kevin just shakes his head, never taking his eyes off of the TV -- News coverage of the Easton Bridge accident.

A NURSE approaches.

NURSE

Mr. Martin, Dr. Stark is ready to see you now.

Kevin leaves his jacket with Allison and follows the nurse away.

Not even a minute passes when Maggie shows up in her scrubs and two coffees in her hands.

MAGGIE

Hey, there.

Allison looks up, somewhat surprised to see her.

ALLISON

What are you, on your break?

MAGGIE

Yeah. I figured you'd be up here waiting for Kevin.

Maggie takes a seat, passing Allison one of the coffees.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Ugh. We were swamped in the ER all morning. There was a big accident on the Easton Bridge.

ALLISON

I know. I saw it on the news. It was an overturned tractor trailer.

(CONTINUED)

MAGGIE

Yeah. No fatalities, though. So it's still a good day, so far. But anyway, have you figured out what you're going to wear tonight? I'm so stressed out, I have no idea what I'll throw together.

ALLISON

Wear to what?

MAGGIE

The party? Shelia's birthday at The Aurora? I know you and Kevin were invited.

ALLISON

Oh, we're not gonna go to that.

MAGGIE

Oh why not? You haven't been out for a drink in months, let alone a party.

ALLISON

Kevin won't be up for it.

MAGGIE

Oh come on. You two need to get out of that depressing apartment and have a little fun. It's Friday night.

ALLISON

He won't wanna go, Maggie. And I don't really want to, either.

MAGGIE

Between the two of you, you'd think the cancer has claimed you *both*, already.

ALLISON

It's just that we haven't really been getting along and--

MAGGIE

Well, whatever it is, you two will get through it. If you can deal with this every day and still manage to stay together--

(CONTINUED)

ALLISON  
Maggie... we're not.

MAGGIE  
What?

ALLISON  
We're not together. Kevin and I.  
We're not together. We're  
separated.

Maggie practically jumps out of her face.

MAGGIE  
Wait, what? Separated? Are you  
kidding me? Since when?

ALLISON  
Um, since about a week before he  
found out.

MAGGIE  
Oh my god. No way. Do the kids  
know? Does Fiona?

Allison falls into tears, just shaking her head.

MAGGIE  
Aw, honey...

Maggie wraps her arms around her.

ALLISON  
I just didn't have the heart to  
leave him. Not after all we have  
been through.

MAGGIE  
You're still married.

ALLISON  
Exactly. We may not be together,  
but this is still my responsibility  
- *He* is still my responsibility.  
Kevin would do the same for me, if  
the positions were reversed.

MAGGIE  
I have no doubt about that. You two  
share children. Of course you have  
to be there for each other.

ALLISON

I just feel so horrible all the time, Maggie. All these bad feelings. The reason we separated, in the first place, is because of these... negative feelings that grew for each other.

MAGGIE

Ally, it's been more than six months now. You've been faking it all this time? Through it all so far, has there been any inclination that the two of you could possibly reconcile? Anything at all?

ALLISON

No, that is why I feel so horrible. The bad feelings have not gone away, Maggie. When Kevin told me that the biopsy came back positive, it was like, 'okay, is this suppose to be some sort of sign?' And as much as I tried for it to be and hoped that it was, it just never felt like that.

Allison stuffs her face into her hands.

ALLISON(CONT'D)

And the truth is... I don't really want it. [whispers] We slept together after he first found out and told me. But we were never intimate again after that.

MAGGIE

How *does* Kevin feel about all of this?

ALLISON

Oh, you know him. He's embarrassed. It's just like with the cancer, he didn't want to talk about it; he didn't want anyone to know. It's like everything is one big secret. Like if we don't talk about it, it'll go away.

Allison regains some of her composure, wiping the moisture from her cheeks.

(CONTINUED)

ALLISON(CONT'D)

I told him, "you need to communicate!" We've been married for thirteen years and you never learned how to talk to me. I told him, "we're like married acquaintances." I couldn't live like that any longer. And it's like, once I finally gained the courage to leave him... Now I have no choice.

MAGGIE

You do have a choice. Everyday you choose to stay and take care of him, Ally. God, you have got to be the most honorable person I know. Really, I mean it. I know what a difficult person Kevin can be and ask Andrew, I always said, "I love him with all my heart, but I don't know how any woman could marry that man." And his brother agrees. I always said that, even when we were kids. And you did it for thirteen years. Give yourself some credit, Al. Sticking by him through all of this... ugh. How did you keep this from me for so long? Ally, I thought you trusted me. I live right below you, for pete's sake.

ALLISON

I do. I do trust you, Maggie. More than anyone. I just -- I didn't want to break my husband's trust when he didn't want a single person to know. You know how hard this has been, Maggie? Every time we've been together, I've been fighting back tears. I just want to cry all the time. I can't take it anymore.

Allison falls into Maggie, bury her face.

MAGGIE

I know, honey. I can't even imagine really. This is so much to take in.

Maggie rubs Allison's back.

(CONTINUED)

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

(jokes)

You're good at hiding things,  
that's for sure.

ALLISON

(laughs)

At least you know you can trust me.

MAGGIE

I've known that all along... Who is  
he, though?

ALLISON

(looks up)

Hm? What? Who?

MAGGIE

The man you so obviously have on  
the side.

Allison is "kicked in the gut;" too flabbergasted to speak.

INT. BENNETT MEMORIAL - HALLWAY - DAY

Kyle stands outside the SCANNING ROOM, reading a TEXT  
MESSAGE on his cellphone.

TEXT MESSAGE: "From Nikki; I didn't mean to be so dismissive  
this morning. I love u. Call me when you get the chance."

Kyle responds: "You mean you didn't mean to be so dismissive  
AGAIN..."

SEND.

INT. BENNETT MEMORIAL - SCANNING ROOM - DAY

Kevin lies in a hospital gown on the table to the big MRI  
machine, just staring around at the white ceiling, white  
walls. He closes his eyes and takes some controlled breaths  
to ease his nervousness.

Kyle comes through the door.

KYLE

Hey, Kevin. How are ya feeling,  
man?

(CONTINUED)

KEVIN

A little nervous.

KYLE

Don't worry. We're gonna get this over with quickly and we'll have the results for you tomorrow. Okay?

KEVIN

Alright. I just need the next twenty four hours to go by fast.

KYLE

They will. You just gotta hang in there, pal. Alright?

Kevin nods and Kyle pats his arm.

KYLE(CONT'D)

Alright, I gotta get going. I just wanted to come up and say hello. Make sure you were okay.

KEVIN

Thanks.

Kyle salutes to Kevin, who salutes back before the Doctor leaves.

TECHNICIAN

(O.S./over speaker)

Okay, sir. We're ready. Just hold still while in the machine.

Tears well up in Kevin's eyes as the table moves into the circular machine.

INT. MONTY'S ADDICTION - DAY

MONTY'S ADDICTION -- a popular coffee shop and staple in Muldoon Point.

Josie takes a seat at a table with Carolyn and BRAD, 16 dropping off all of their beverages.

They all sit with their iPhones in hand, randomly staring down at them, texting and what-not THROUGHOUT.

CAROLYN

I can't believe my sister. She gets engaged and how do I find out?

(CONTINUED)

JOSIE

Well, if it isn't Instagram, than it's gotta be Facebook.

CAROLYN

Sometimes I really hate social networking. I hate being social, in general. In fact, I just hate people.

BRAD

Well, if *that* wasn't already obvious.

Brad is the girls' homosexual best friend. He's definitely out of the closet to them, but they're probably the only two he admits it to. Though, it is definitely obvious to anyone.

JOSIE

Yeah, I've been hating my mother a lot, lately.

Carolyn rolls her eyes.

CAROLYN

Because she's a lesbian?

JOSIE

No! It has nothing to do with that!

BRAD

Come on, admit it. You're a homophobe.

JOSIE

I am not! How could I be a homophobe when you're one of my best friends, dummy.

BRAD

That doesn't mean you're not. It's okay if I'm gay, because I'm not your mother.

CAROLYN

And how come you don't like her girlfriend, either? Huh?

JOSIE

Because! She's *Daphne Kaye* and she's just so... ugh! You tell me of one reporter than isn't just so... cringey in the way that they

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JOSIE (cont'd)  
act with their fake on screen  
persona and... ugh. I can't stand  
the sound of her voice!

CAROLYN  
What if your mom dated someone  
else?

BRAD  
Yeah. What if she dated a man?  
Would you feel the same way?

JOSIE  
Uh, yeah. I would. I even told my  
dad, I didn't want to meet his  
girlfriend. And he's been with her  
for like two years now.

CAROLYN  
Isn't she the CEO of Bennett &  
Brothers?

JOSIE  
Something like that. How about we  
talk about *your* parents, Ms.  
Carolyn.

BRAD  
Yeah, how's your dad doing?

CAROLYN  
What? Your dad never gives you the  
inside scoop, Josie? He is my  
father's *brilliant* oncologist.

JOSIE  
Please, I'd actually have to talk  
to my dad to know anything about  
his life. Besides, you know him --  
he would never break doctor-patient  
confidentiality.

Carolyn avoids the original question -- she reveals three  
cigarettes.

CAROLYN  
Hey, you wanna go smoke these? I  
swiped them from my mom's pack this  
morning.

(CONTINUED)

BRAD

I didn't know your mom smoked.

CAROLYN

She pretends like she doesn't, but she always has a pack for those *extra stressful days*.

JOSIE

Come on.

The three of them get up and get ready to leave.

INT. SPECIAL K'S - BATHROOM - DAY

Andrew lies on the floor in one of the stalls of the bathroom, his tools all laying out.

He stands just in time for Kassius to come in.

ANDREW

Hey.

KASSIUS

How's it coming?

ANDREW

All installed. The throne is ready for use.

Andrew uses his foot to kick the handle, flushing the toilet for Kassius to see.

KASSIUS

That's whats up. You ready for that drink?

ANDREW

You know it.

Andrew begins putting away his tools while Kassius leaves the bathroom.

INT. SPECIAL K'S - DAY

SPECIAL K's is Kassius' night club -- one of the most popular in Muldoon Point.

It's dark -- looks almost like a TV studio with lights hanging from the exposed ceiling. A large dance floor is in the center, with a long bar along the side. An ENTIRE WALL shelves the hundreds of bottles of liquor.

(CONTINUED)

Andrew comes out from the back and takes a seat at the bar.

KASSIUS

Here is the freshest Shirley Temple  
for my number one bruthah. Extra  
maraschino cherries.

Kassius places the drink on a coaster right in front of  
Andrew.

Andrew takes a big sip.

ANDREW

Ah, yup. That's hitting the spot.

KASSIUS

Sure you don't want me to add some  
liquor to that? A little vodka?  
Maybe some rum?

ANDREW

(sarcastic)

The 7-Up is good. Wouldn't want to  
overdue it now.

KASSIUS

(laughs)

Andy man, I've known you for a  
couple of years now. You know your  
shit and you've always given me a  
fair price. We always have a good  
time bullshittin' when we see each  
other. I don't know about you, but  
I consider us... boys?

ANDREW

Uh, yeah. Yeah, you're my *boy*,  
Kash.

The both of them laugh at the obvious generational  
separation of lingo.

KASSIUS

I offer you free drinks for any  
time you come in here and all you  
get is a fuckin' Shirley Temple...  
or a chocolate milk, even. Even  
when you came that night with your  
wife. What is it with that shit? At  
least she had some vino, ya know  
what I'm sayin'.

(CONTINUED)

ANDREW

Maggie does enjoy a glass of a good red every now and then.

KASSIUS

What about you? I mean, look at THIS WALL. The sight doesn't get your blood rushing? Doesn't make you want have fun and fuck the first shorty that brushes up against you?

ANDREW

(laughs)

In another life, yes it would've.

KASSIUS

Finally, something. Now what's this other life shit?

ANDREW

Well, more like another *liver*. Metaphorically, another life.

KASSIUS

You had a transplant?

ANDREW

Cirrohsis. It'll get ya every time. And how do you get Cirrohsis? By being a hopeless drunk.

Andrew raises his glass to Kassius and then downs the rest of it.

INT. ANN'S - DAY

The bell above the shop door rings as Will enters looking completely hungover and without any sleep. He walks straight for the coffee pot.

MISS ANN

Afternoon, William.

WILL

(groggy)

Hey, Miss Ann.

Approaching the counter with his cup of coffee, Ann places a packet of Aspirin down on the counter, a smirk on her face.

(CONTINUED)

WILL

Ah, yes. Thank you.

He hands her two bucks and throws back the Aspirin as she rings it up.

MISS ANN

Another long night, eh?

WILL

Running a bar sounds like a lot more fun than it is... the next day, at least.

MISS ANN

You better embrace that youth. It doesn't last very long.

WILL

You're telling me. I can't believe how fast the days go. I feel like I just turned twenty-one. But I'm about to be twenty-five.

MISS ANN

And I can still remember the days when your beautiful mother would cradle you in her arms over on that old bench that use to be in front of The Pub... And then she'd whip out that tit and feed ya in front of the entire Square.

WILL

Ugh. And I almost forgot how vulgar you could be, Miss Ann.

Will isn't sure if he find that funny. He heads for the door.

MISS ANN

Hey, it was Maggie who did it. I just remember it. I mean, if I had the knockers she did, I wouldn't have any shame, either.

WILL

Goodbye, Miss Ann.

He pushes open the door -- can't get out of there fast enough.

(CONTINUED)

MISS ANN  
You feel better now, Sweetie.

Ann cracks herself up -- getting a real kick out of teasing others as often as possible.

INT. BENNETT MEMORIAL HOSPITAL - WAITING ROOM - DAY [CONT'D]

Maggie and Allison sit as they were. Allison staring at her best friend in shock.

ALLISON  
You're accusing me of having an affair?

MAGGIE  
Come on, Ally. Kevin found out six months ago. You mean to tell me that not only did you not confide in your best friend and sister in-law, for *six whole months*, but you also haven't [whispers] had sex in all that time either? No. I don't believe it. There must be somebody.

ALLISON  
Maggie, I can't believe you!

MAGGIE  
I'm not judging you, Ally. I just want to know the truth. I'm your best friend and I have never ever broken your trust in all of the fifteen years that we've known each other.

Allison stands and shakes her head, pacing back and forth.

ALLISON  
This is ridiculous.

MAGGIE  
Your reaction says it, Ally. We both know that I am right.

Allison turns to Maggie. She goes to speak WHEN--

Kevin comes walking out. They both turn to him.

(CONTINUED)

KEVIN  
Is everything alright?

Allison wipes her tears and nods her head, not even looking at him.

Maggie takes notice of the awkward reaction the two of them have for each other.

MAGGIE  
How did it go? Are you alright?

KEVIN  
I just want to get home. [turns to Allison] Are you ready?

Allison nods.

Kevin walks away. Allison goes to follow, but Maggie grabs her as she passes by.

They stare, eye to eye, for a BEAT.

MAGGIE  
I can't believe this.

Maggie lets go and Allison leaves. Maggie is left shaking her head in disbelief.

EXT. CITY HALL - DAY

An art-deco style building, large in surface area, but only four or five floors.

Protesters crowd around the front of the building. Police patrol the gated off area. Signs are held up high, reading: "END THE VIOLENCE! SAVE OUR FUTURE!" and "GET RID OF THE GATTS" and "MAKE IT LAW! GET THE GUNS OFF OUR STREETS!"

They chant.

PROTESTERS  
No more bullets, no more guns! End  
the violence, save our sons!

BARRY and JOSE stand near the entrance.

BARRY  
Hey, Padilla. What do you think  
about all this? This whole gun  
control bullshit?

(CONTINUED)

JOSE

They gotta do something, Barr'.

Jose's Spanish accent is thick for an American.

JOSE(CONT'D)

Can't just let these psychopaths  
keep killing people at will.

BARRY

Please! They're scaring people into  
buying the damn things before they  
can't. Gun sales have skyrocketed.  
And you think a lack of guns is  
gonna stop people from killing each  
other... pfft...

JOSE

But if they don't have easy access  
to weapons like AK's and other  
automatics, than maybe it could  
decrease the chance of another  
massacre. I think we've all had  
enough of that.

BARRY

Trade one massacre for another,  
huh? You know what's going to  
happen? The mob is gonna eat this  
up like prohibition. Shit. Just you  
watch.

Jose shrugs.

INT. CITY HALL - MAYOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Brian and DA Benson sit at Mayor Monta's desk.

MONTA

The Governor wants to make the  
legislation state-wide. It's the  
Senator that's giving him a hard  
time.

BENSON

That conservative bastard.

BRIAN

I just can't fault the Senator for  
his apprehension when it comes to  
this. Look, you both know that I am  
behind the gun control legislation

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BRIAN (cont'd)  
one-hundred percent. But as  
Commissioner of this city, I just  
can't decide whether or not we're  
ready for it.

BENSON  
It doesn't matter. The people want  
it.

MONTA  
They are right outside, Brian. You  
can hear them from here.

BRIAN  
But it's the same people who are  
thinking with their morals rather  
than their brains.

MONTA  
Commissioner, you're not going to  
sit there and insult the citizens  
of Muldoon Point, are you?

BENSON  
I have to say, I'm offended.

BRIAN  
I didn't mean it like that. It's  
just that, regardless of the  
legislation, we don't have the  
man-power to enforce the law. That  
is, unless you're planning on our  
budget getting a nice boost.

MONTA  
We don't have the funds, Brian.  
We've discussed this to death.

BRIAN  
I'm not going to apologize for  
making public safety a priority.  
The fact of the matter is,  
organized crime may be scarce, but  
it still exists. They just had to  
find new avenues of secrecy for the  
illicit activities. We get this  
legislation passed without more men  
on the streets, the illegal guns  
industry is going to boom. It'll be  
right under our noses and we won't  
be able to do anything about it.

(CONTINUED)

BENSON

And we'll cross that bridge when we get to it.

MONTA

The fact of the matter is, Brian, that the people of Muldoon Point want this.

BRIAN

I want it too! But I don't know if now is the best time. We simply are not ready for it, as a city. Getting a city-wide gun ban law passed will be a redundant waste of resources.

BENSON

(annoyed)

Oh my god. How many times--

Benson stands and walks over to the window, opening it wide.

PROTESTERS

(O.S.)

What do we want? Gun Control! When do we want it? We want it now!

BENSON

Do you hear that, Commissioner?

MONTA

Alright, Benson. We hear. Shut the window.

He closes it.

Brian stands and shakes his head. He looks at the Mayor and the proceeds toward the door.

MONTA

It's what the people want, Brian.

Brian pauses.

BRIAN

You mean, the voters?

Benson lets out a sarcastic laugh.

Brian goes to finally leave--

(CONTINUED)

MONTA  
Commissioner...

He stops again.

MONTA  
See you tonight. My wife and I are  
looking forward to it.

Brian doesn't respond. He just goes.

BENSON  
He's going to turn into a problem.  
I saw this coming and I warned you,  
Monta.

MONTA  
It was unavoidable. I've taken  
measures to resolve this. And fast.

Mayor Monta cracks his knuckles and stares off in thought.

INT. BENNETT & BROTHERS, INC. - NIKKI'S OFFICE - DAY

Nikki sits at her desk, her cell phone to her ear.

NIKKI  
(on cell phone)  
Hey, it's me again. I'm really  
sorry about this morning. I'm just  
under so much pressure. I know it's  
no excuse, but I hope you  
understand that I didn't mean to  
hurt your feelings.

The flowers Kyle brought her sit in a vase on her desk.

A knock at the door is immediately followed by Fiona  
entering.

NIKKI  
(on cell phone)  
Just please call me back. I love  
you.

Ending the call, she looks up at Fiona.

FIONA  
There's a Detective Marlowe on line  
one. He says it's urgent.

(CONTINUED)

NIKKI

Okay. Thanks. Wait a minute!

Fiona stops.

NIKKI (CONT'D)

Is that an engagement ring I see?

FIONA

Yeah! He asked me last night.

Fiona giddily shows off her ring with pride.

NIKKI

Congratulations! Lemme just take this call and then I want to hear all about it.

Fiona nods and leaves and Nikki picks up the line.

NIKKI

Yes, hello? This is Nikki Bennett, speaking.

A BEAT of silence ensues as Nikki listens to her caller. Her facial expression quickly changes from curiosity to shock and HEARTBREAK.

NIKKI

What?

She can barely speak as she struggles not to burst out crying. Tears well up in her eyes. She is suddenly devastated.

EXT. SPECIAL K'S - DAY

Andrew throws his supplies into the back of his truck. He then turns around to Kassius whose standing behind him. They shake hands.

ANDREW

Mr. Conroy, thank you for the drink.

KASSIUS

Andy, thanks for coming on such short notice.

ANDREW

Anytime, Kash.

(CONTINUED)

KASSIUS

We should get together some time.  
You want to go to a Miners game  
sometime? I can get us tickets.

ANDREW

Oh yeah? That'd great. Let's do  
that.

Andrew notices a SUITED MAN in a long, expensive peacoat  
come up to the front of the club and stand outside the  
entrance, waiting.

Andrew stares over Kassius's shoulder, prompting Kassius to  
take notice. Upon sight of the Suited Man, Kassius'  
expression completely reverses.

ANDREW

Who's that?

KASSIUS

Oh, he's just, uh... an old  
employee. Security.

ANDREW

Is everything alright?

KASSIUS

Yeah! Yeah, it's fine. He's  
probably just looking for a free  
drink, ya know what I'm sayin'?

ANDREW

Yeah. Alright. Well--

Kassius sees Andrew into his truck.

KASSIUS

Thanks, again. I'll get us those  
tickets, brothuh. Alright?

Andrew can't stop staring at the Suited Man as he starts up  
the truck.

ANDREW

Alright. Take care of yourself,  
Kash.

Andrew pulls away and Kassius turns around, pure dread in  
his facial expression.

The Suited Man smiles smugly, awaiting Kassius.

INT. JIM AND BRENDA'S TOWNHOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Will comes into the kitchen. His hair still wet and his face looking more awake and rested. He just got out of the shower.

Uncle Charlie sits by himself at the table, enjoying a peanut butter and jelly and some tea.

Will raids the fridge and takes a seat across from his Great Uncle. He eats some cold pasta leftovers.

WILL

How are you today, Uncle Charlie?

Uncle Charlie shrugs and nods.

WILL(CONT'D)

Feeling alright? Ain't nothing gonna break your stride? Ain't nothing gonna slow you down?

It takes him a second to speak, but Uncle Charlie leans--

UNCLE CHARLIE

My knees no longer work.

Uncle Charlie's voice is hoarse and every word seems like it takes a lot out of him.

UNCLE CHARLIE(CONT'D)

I been sittin' here since this morning. I can't make it around anymore. Don't get old, lad. Don't get old.

WILL

Oh, come on. You're not old. You got more life in ya than Gramps, that's for sure.

UNCLE CHARLIE

His bad attitude makes him angry. Makes his life harder.

WILL

Exactly. Poor Gram should've married you.

UNCLE CHARLIE

She did!

Will nods in agreement.

(CONTINUED)

WILL

That's true. She certainly did. You and Gramps have always been a package deal, huh?

UNCLE CHARLIE

I had to start school two years early because he wouldn't go alone.

WILL

Really? Wow.

UNCLE CHARLIE

And he still cried for my mother, God rest her soul. Everyday, he cried.

WILL

Gramps was a real wimp, huh?

UNCLE CHARLIE

He never grew out of it. Just like wetting the bed -- he never grew out of it.

Will finds it all so funny until--

UNCLE CHARLIE(CONT'D)

Don't you be like him, now. Or your Papa. You grow up, Baba. Don't waste your life.

Uncle Charlie's words are felt by Will. He shrugs and continues to eat the rest of his pasta.

INT. BENNETT MEMORIAL - KYLE'S OFFICE - DAY

Kyle sits at his desk, filling out paperwork and what-not. The sun is beginning to set on the city outside of his office window.

**CUE SONG: "WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS" by QUEEN**

He stops and stares at a photo of Josie. Stuffed in the corner of the frame, in front of the glass is a smaller photo of Nikki.

Kyle pulls out his cellphone to see a MISSED CALL FROM NIKKI. As he goes to hit CALLBACK, the cellphone starts ringing.

IT'S NIKKI.

EXT. BENNETT & BROTHERS, INC. - DAY

**CUE MUSIC MONTAGE:**

Reporters swarm the area outside the office building.

Nikki comes out of the building, her sunglasses covering her puffy eyes. Fiona trails right behind her as they make their way through the crowd and to the TOWNCAR waiting for them at the curb.

CAMERA FLASHES EVERYWHERE--

FLASH CUT TO:

INT. KEVIN AND ALLISON'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Allison peaks through the ajar door from in the hallway.

Kevin pukes into the toilet, on his hands and knees. Letting it all out. He flushes it and wipes his mouth before hugging the toilet -- his face pressed against the cool porcelain.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Allison stares through door and then looks down at the plastic covered, red dress in her hands.

INT. ANDREW AND MAGGIE'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Maggie stares at herself in the mirror. Her hair all done up. She finishes up her make-up when Andrew steps up behind her in his black-tie tuxedo. He immediately wraps his arms around her and begins kissing her neck, much to her amusement.

INT. THE MARTIN'S PUB - NIGHT

THE PUB is open for business. The bar is filling up with customers who continuously show up every couple of minutes on this Friday evening.

Will is behind the bar, Uncle Charlie on the other side. Will pours them both a shot of Whiskey, to which they cheers. Will quickly throws his back, but Uncle Charlie only takes sips.

A gorgeous young woman -- PAIGE, 27, comes through the door. Will immediately takes notice.

INT. CAROLYN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Carolyn closes her laptop and pulls and climbs out of her bedroom window, out onto the fire-escape.

EXT. BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

Carolyn climbs the steps of the fire escape up to the roof. It's just one floor above her apartment and as soon as she reaches the top, she pulls out another stolen cigarette.

In the window below, unbeknownst to Carolyn, her father sits in his bedroom alone, rolling a joint, which he sparks at the exact moment she lights up.

INT. CLAIRE'S APARTMENT - JOSIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Josie lies her queen sized bed, texting on her cellphone.

TEXT MESSAGE: "To Rod; House to myself. Cum over. <3"

The background of her cellphone shows ROD, 21 -- Josie's foolish boyfriend and quite pivotal character.

INT. BRAD'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Brad comes through the door. He walks into a shadowy apartment, mostly lit by the television, immediately heading for his bedroom.

The apartment is small -- the kitchen and livingroom all in the view of ONE SHOT, religious artifacts and crosses on the walls.

Brad's MOTHER sits at the kitchen table smoking a cigarette, not even acknowledging him. A hockey game is what HIS FATHER is passed out in front of in the livingroom, beer bottles piled on the coffee table. Brad speeds past.

EXT. BACK ALLEY - NIGHT

Miss Ann comes through the back door to the back alley behind Varrick Street. With bowl of cat food in her hands, she places them down and strays come running. A big smile is planted on Miss Ann's lonely, aging face.

EXT. THE BENNETT ESTATE - THE GATE - NIGHT

The press lingers in front of THE GATE leading up to the mansion.

INT. THE BENNETT MANSION - SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

Fiona sits across from a tearful Nikki who lounges across the couch with a glass of red wine, just staring down at the *unopened* manila envelope addressed to her.

Suddenly, an out of breath Kyle appears in the archway.

Nikki immediately bursts into tears before they run into each other's arms.

EXT. THE AURORA HOTEL - NIGHT

The front of THE AURORA HOTEL -- the classiest, early 1900's luxury hotel. Was once the tallest building in Muldoon Point, it's owned by the famous DONOVAN WARNER.

The hotel is crowded with limousines and personal cars as guests arrive for the black-tie event of local celebrity, Shelia Stone's birthday party.

In a dark window in the building across the street, A FIGURE MOVES ABOUT.

INT. BUILDING ACROSS FROM THE AURORA HOTEL - NIGHT

The room is completely dark. The window is about fifteen floors above the ground level. Looking out, the view below is immediately of the entrance to The Aurora Hotel... the crowded entrance.

A MAN IN BLACK, kneeling on the floor, assembles the components of a SNIPER RIFLE.

INT. THE AURORA HOTEL - BALLROOM - NIGHT

Guests enter the glass-shielded ROOFTOP BALLROOM from the elevators.

Among them are much of the ensemble we have and have not been formerly introduced to yet. Such as, CARRIE MATTSON, 72, Brian's youthful mother and her date, DR. JERRY THREADGOOD, 68, Chief of Staff at Bennett Memorial.

(CONTINUED)

Mayor Monta and his wife, LUCILLE, come off of one of the elevators.

Officer Barry stands by the elevator bank. A party for the Police Commissioner's wife surely necessitates police security.

INT. BUILDING ACROSS FROM THE AURORA HOTEL - NIGHT

The Man in Black finishes assembling the gun and aims it out the window, straight across -- a direct view into the GLASS BALLROOM on the roof of The Aurora.

The Man In Black traces the crowd through the SCOPE of the sniper. Some of THE CAST comes into view--

Andrew, Maggie, Mayor Monta, Dr. Threadgood, Daphne Kaye are among the faces the scope comes across until--

He looks up and then back through the scope. TARGET LOCATED.

He pulls the trigger--

BANG!

FLASH CUT TO BLACK

-- END MUSIC MONTAGE --

CUE CREDITS