

MOLLY'S GAME

screenplay by

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Based on the book by Molly Bloom

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EXT. SKI SLOPE - DAY

But we don't know what we're looking at yet. In front of us is just a greyish-white flurry with nothing to orient us and no sound except the whistle of a strong wind at a high altitude. We won't know where we are until--

*

--a rocket flies right in front of us--right to left--and disappears from the frame as fast as it came into it. But we probably saw it long enough to know it wasn't a rocket, it was a world-class skier and we were standing five feet away as she scorched the last few seconds of her run.

MOLLY (V.O.)

A survey was taken a few years ago that asked 300 professionals one question:

EXT. SKI SLOPE - DAY (NEW ANGLE)

MOLLY (V.O.)

"What's the worst thing that can happen in sports?"

We're at the bottom of the slope now where the skier we just saw finished her run with a swoosh, and a hundred or so spectators gave her a round. The skier snapped out of her skis, picked them up, pushed up her goggles and looked back up the slope toward the judges...

*

MOLLY (V.O.)

Some people answered losing a Game 7 and other people said getting swept in 4. Some people said--

EXT. SKI SLOPE - DAY (NEW ANGLE)

MOLLY (V.O.)

--it was missing the World Cup and some Brazilians said it was losing to Argentina. Not just in the World Cup--anytime, ever, in any contest.

We can see the whole slope now. It looks like a terrible way to die. It's a moguls course, meaning that skiers race through a punishing series of 3-foot mounds of packed snow and ice, lift-off and execute a mid-air trick, land and run through another set of moguls, lift-off and execute a second trick, land and race to the finish.

Spectators and race officials line the sides of the slope.

EXT. SKI SLOPE - DAY (BOTTOM OF THE SLOPE)

The skier we saw is looking back up the slope and now sees her scores. Not bad, but not what she needed. She gets another round from the crowd and a less-than-wholehearted hug from her coach.

MOLLY (V.O.)

But one person answered that the worst thing that can happen in sports was 4th-place at the Olympics.

EXT. SKI SLOPE - DAY (TOP OF THE SLOPE)

We're at the top of the mountain where the next skiers are waiting for their start. One of them has just jumped off the mountain and into the course.

MOLLY (V.O.)

This is a true story but except for my own I've changed all the names and I've done my best to obscure identities for reasons that'll become clear. I'm Molly Bloom and right now I'm ranked 3rd in North America in Women's Moguls.

EXT. SKI SLOPE - DAY (NEW ANGLE)

The skier who just started has raced through the first set of moguls, hits the ramp, which sends her up into mid-air where she executes a trick and lands back on the course and hits the second set of moguls.

MOLLY (V.O.)

I have a BA in Political Science from the University of Colorado where I graduated Summa Cum Laude with a 3.9 GPA.

EXT. SKI SLOPE - DAY (NEW ANGLE)

The skier's made her way through the second set of backbreaking moguls and hits the second ramp, which sends her into the air. We watch the judges examine her trick with expert eyes and then tap the keys on their laptops.

MOLLY (V.O.)

I got a 173 on the L-SATs. The median L-SAT score at Harvard Law School is 169.

*

*

EXT. A DIFFERENT SKI SLOPE - DAY

This one's much friendlier and families are skiing together in the sun with the Rocky Mountains as a backdrop. A COACH is working with a 12-YEAR-OLD BOY, showing him the right mechanics for his push-off.

MOLLY (V.O.)

I was raised in Loveland, Colorado, about an hour outside Denver or four hours if it's snowing. On a weekend family ski trip when I was 5 I was spotted by a coach. *

The COACH stopped paying attention to the 12-YEAR-OLD BOY and became captivated by the sight of a 5-YEAR-OLD GIRL--a prodigy--who's just exploded into his field of vision. The COACH watches and then glances back up the slope where the girl's FATHER is standing and watching. *

FATHER

(shouting)

Attack it, Molly! Attack it! *

The COACH watches as the 5-YEAR-OLD GIRL hits the mini-mogul section of the run. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

I'd spend the next 18 years chasing winter and being coached by the best in the world.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

Runners are competing in a road race and the front of the pack comes toward us as well-wishers cheer and hand out cups of water along the sides.

MOLLY (V.O.)

I also ran pretty well.

A 12-YEAR OLD GIRL appears among the runners--both the first kid and the first female we've seen. She's running alongside her FATHER and you can tell just by looking at her stride that this is an athlete.

MOLLY (V.O.)

I was running in a charity 5K when my back exploded.

12-YEAR-OLD GIRL

(to her FATHER)

Something's wrong.

FATHER

Tough it out.

The 12-YEAR-OLD GIRL gives her father a quick "thanks" glance that her father doesn't see before she pulls out several strides ahead of him and the rest of the men around her.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

The 12-YEAR OLD-GIRL is being prepped for surgery.

MOLLY (V.O.)

I had what's called rapid onset scoliosis.

CLOSE ON

An x-ray of a terribly curved spine.

MOLLY (V.O.)

My spine was curved at 63 degrees and I'd need a 7-hour surgical procedure that involved--

CLOSE ON

An x-ray of the same spine now fused with steel rods.

MOLLY (V.O.)

--straightening my spine, extracting bone from my hip, fusing eleven vertebrae together and fastening steel rods to the fused segments.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

The 12-YEAR-OLD GIRL is in a hospital bed, post-op. From her POV we can barely make out what a DOCTOR is saying to her FATHER and MOTHER.

DOCTOR

She's gonna be fine, but I wouldn't let her ski anymore. Definitely not moguls and skiing competitively is out of the question.

The FATHER is quietly devastated and slumps down on the closest surface while the DOCTOR and the MOTHER assure him that "...she's gonna be fine, she just won't ski", etc. We stay on the 12-YEAR-OLD GIRL's eyes--she's clocked her father's reaction and even through her post-op morphine haze her eyes are fighting back.

MOLLY (V.O.)

I was on skis again in a year,
running moguls in 18 months and by
my 20th birthday I'd made the U.S.
Ski Team.

EXT. SKI SLOPE - DAY (TOP OF THE SLOPE)

It's the slope we started at.

RACE OFFICIAL

Number 87 up.
(pointing)
56 on deck.

Number 87 takes her place at the starting gate and Number 56
is MOLLY. She's got earbuds in and a coach is vigorously
rubbing down her legs to keep them warm. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

It's the last round of qualifying
for the Salt Lake City Olympics.
This is the Champion Run at Deer
Valley.

We can see that visibility is terrible, with snow coming down
diagonally and the wind whistling ominously at this altitude.

MOLLY (V.O.)

The altitude's 8100 feet and the
pitch is 52 degrees which is the
same as the sides of the Great
Pyramids.

MOLLY stomps on her feet to keep them warm and starts to
loosen her shoulders and neck.

MOLLY (V.O.)

The wind's 20-25 miles an hour
blowing left to right. It's 3-below
zero at the top of the slope and
with 17 skiers in front of me, it's
gonna be like trying to stick a
landing on a frozen infinity pool.

The COACH points to his ears, indicating that it's time for
Molly to take out her ear buds. She hands the coach her iPod
as he says-- *

COACH

Kiki blew out of her line. Shannon
was off-balance on her second
landing.

MOLLY nods that she understands.

MOLLY (V.O.)
He's talking about Kiki Bandy and
Shannon Keebler, my two toughest
competitors who had significant point
deductions on their final runs--

QUICK INSERT

A skier landing slightly off-balance after a trick.

QUICK INSERT

Another skier skiing out of her line and scrambling to
recover.

EXT. SKI SLOPE - DAY (TOP OF THE SLOPE)

MOLLY (V.O.)
--setting the table for me.

MOLLY snaps her boots into her bindings and taps her skis to
check how they feel.

RACE OFFICIAL
Number 56 up. 44 on deck.

COACH
Go get it, here we go.

MOLLY snaps her goggles down as the Coach steps back. MOLLY's *
all alone now at the top of the mountain, snow blowing around *
her.

MOLLY (V.O.)
I can make the Olympic team right
now. And if I have three perfect
runs in Salt Lake--the best runs of
my life--I can beat the Austrians
and the Swiss and have a realistic
shot at the podium. Then the law
school of my choice and then a
start-up. A foundation that seeds
entrepreneurial women and also
teaches young girls to ignore most
of their current role models.

RACE OFFICIAL
Competitor ready.

MOLLY (V.O.)
But first this.

A small light, accompanied by beeps, blinks red, then yellow, then--

MOLLY jams her poles into the snow and launches herself onto the slope. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

Good start. My father's at the bottom trying to telepathically get me to check my line.

EXT. SKI SLOPE - SAME TIME (BOTTOM OF THE SLOPE)

Molly's FATHER is looking up the slope--

FATHER

Check your line.

EXT. SKI SLOPE - SAME TIME (TOP OF THE SLOPE) *

MOLLY (V.O.)

I check my line.

MOLLY'S POV

Out of the sea of moguls she's slashing through her eyes find the path she's chosen and, for a moment, it becomes demarcated for us like runway lights before it goes away.

EXT. SKI SLOPE - SAME TIME (TOP OF THE SLOPE) *

She's carving through this minefield, kicking up snow and ice and not being able to see more than ten feet in front of her face.

MOLLY (V.O.)

Good snow contact, calm upper-body, legs together, good shape, no line deviation and set up for the D-Spin and-- *
*
*

MOLLY sails into the air and executes a perfect back-flip with an off-axis twist. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

--stick the landing. Now two things you need to know before the second trick which'll be a 720.

As MOLLY attacks the next set of moguls we start to gradually SLOW DOWN THE PICTURE... *

(MORE) *

MOLLY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

The first is that when visibility is bad the way it is now, race officials jam pine boughs in the snow at the edge of the jump so the skiers have some foreground depth reference. The second is that the tightness of your bindings is determined by what's called a DIN setting. If you're a beginner your DIN setting is probably 2 or 3. If you're an experienced weekend skier it's probably 7 or 8. Mine's 15. My boots are basically welded to my skis. Right...so how does *this* happen?--

In semi-slow motion, MOLLY gets airborne for her second trick and almost as soon as she does, her right ski comes off and falls to the ground.

All sound except Molly's voice goes out.

MOLLY (V.O.)

It happened because I hit a pine bough and I hit it so precisely that it simply snapped the release on my bindings. Right in that moment I didn't have time to calculate the odds of that happening because I was about to land pretty hard on my digitally remastered spinal cord which is being held together by spare parts from an Erector Set.

MOLLY crashes to the ice and snow with terrible impact.

We go back to FULL SPEED now with Molly's other ski immediately snapping off and skidding away as MOLLY keeps sliding and flipping over.

We're still without sound--just the occasional slap of her helmet on the packed snow. And then her helmet flies off just before she breaks through--MOS--the wood and wire fence and into a group of gasping and shouting spectators.

We watch the whole thing again full speed. And we watch others watch it--SPECTATORS, her COACH, the JUDGES, TELEVISION CAMERAS and her FATHER...

Sound kicks back in and we hear the gasping crowd along with the radio crackle of the SKI PATROL and EMTs as they race to the scene. Molly's FATHER tries to get to her as fast as he can.

MOLLY's on her back, unconscious, blood-soaked snow on her face.

MOLLY (V.O.)

None of this has anything to do with poker. I'm only mentioning it because I wanted to say to whoever answered that the worst thing that could happen in sports was 4th place at the Olympics--seriously, fuck you.

SNAP TO BLACK

TITLE:

Molly's Game

FADE IN:

INT. MOLLY'S APARTMENT/BEDROOM - NIGHT

It's a modest one-bedroom in West Hollywood and at the moment it's all but unfurnished. She's just moved in and has hardly any possessions.

The CAMERA FINDS an open carton containing new copies of a book--*Molly's Game: My High-Stakes Adventure in the World of Underground Poker*--with a glamour-shot of Molly on the glossy cover. Leaning against the wall is a foam board blow-up of the book jacket with a banner across it announcing that you can meet Molly Bloom at a book signing. That's pretty much it. *

TITLE:

**12 Years Later
West Hollywood
5:06 AM**

We come to MOLLY, asleep in her bed. She holds two Blackberries on her chest as she sleeps. It's become an old habit. *

Suddenly we hear some kind of muffled commotion coming from outside in the corridor and down the hall. It's impossible to make out what's being said--it's all shouted whispers and confusion. *

MOLLY opens her eyes, thinking she's heard something, but now the commotion has gone away and there's silence. *

Suddenly one of her Blackberries RINGS and it startles her a moment. She answers-- *

MOLLY
(into the phone)
Hello?

MALE VOICE (ON THE PHONE)
Molly Bloom?

MOLLY
(into the phone)
Yes?

MALE VOICE (ON THE PHONE)
Is this Molly Bloom?

MOLLY
(into the phone)
Yes, who is this?

MALE VOICE (ON THE PHONE)
Miss Bloom, this is Special Agent
Delarosa of the FBI and we have a
warrant for your arrest. We're
outside your door and we want you
to come out here. Listen to me now.
Make sure we can see your hands.

*

MOLLY
(pause--then into the
phone)
Who is this?

*

MALE VOICE (ON THE PHONE)
Molly, you've got 30 seconds to
come to your door or we're breaking
it down. Do you understand what I
just said?

MOLLY
Yes.

MALE VOICE (ON THE PHONE)
Say you understand.

MOLLY
I understand.

MALE VOICE (ON THE PHONE)
Come to the door now. Make sure we
can see your hands at all times.

MOLLY, dressed in a t-shirt and boxer shorts, goes to her
front door. She still has her athlete's body, and while she's
plenty scared, we can still detect steel behind her eyes.

*

She opens the door and steps into--

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Molly's apartment is at one end of a long hallway and at the other end are 17 blinding flashlights attached to 17 automatic weapons which are trained on her. *

AGENT DELAROSA
Hands in the air. Molly Bloom? *

MOLLY
There's been a mistake. *

AGENT DELAROSA
Are you Molly Bloom? *

MOLLY
Yes.

AGENT DELAROSA
I want you to walk toward me very slowly. Go ahead, come on. *

MOLLY's walking toward the crowd of flashlights... *

AGENT DELAROSA (CONT'D)
Slower, slow down. *

MOLLY
I'm--

AGENT DELAROSA
Slower.

MOLLY
I can't see. The flashlights--

AGENT DELAROSA
Walk slower. *

MOLLY
I think there's been a mistake. *

AGENT DELAROSA
Are you Molly Bloom? *

MOLLY
Yes sir. *

A FEMALE AGENT takes hold of MOLLY and puts her up against the wall. *

FEMALE AGENT
Spread your arms and legs please.

While the FEMALE AGENT pats her down--

AGENT DELAROSA

Is there anyone in your apartment
right now?

MOLLY

No sir.

AGENT DELAROSA

Are there any firearms in your
apartment right now?

MOLLY

No sir.

AGENT DELAROSA turns to the other AGENTS--

AGENT DELAROSA

Go.

The agents head down the hallway and go into the apartment
one by one, just like they were taught at the Academy,
stopping at the door and then turning in quickly--all this as
handcuffs go on Molly.

AGENT DELAROSA (CONT'D)

You're under arrest for running an
illegal gambling operation, do you
understand? *

MOLLY

Yes.

AGENT DELAROSA

Say you understand.

MOLLY

I understand. I think there's been
a mistake because I haven't run a
game in two years. *

AGENT DELAROSA

I want you to look at this piece of
paper, do you see what it says at
the top?

MOLLY

(pause)

Yes.

AGENT DELAROSA

Read to me what it says at the top.

MOLLY

The United States of America vs.
Molly Bloom.

In the background, agents start coming back out into the hall saying, "Clear," "It's clear," etc.

MOLLY (CONT'D)

I'd bet heavy on the favorite.

CUT TO:

INT. CLOSE ON A 13-YEAR-OLD GIRL

She's the same girl we saw running in the 5K and she's being taped on a CAMCORDER. There's something about this girl. She's uncomfortably sexy for her age--a father's nightmare--but she's also oddly mature and very serious. Off screen her FATHER is asking her questions. She answers simply and evenly.

*
*
*

FATHER (O.S.)

What do you think about the following concepts? I'm just gonna run them by you. Marriage.

13-YEAR-OLD GIRL

Hm. It is a trap.

FATHER (O.S.)

Society.

13-YEAR-OLD GIRL

It is a joke.

FATHER (O.S.)

People.

13-YEAR-OLD GIRL

I think there's good and bad. I think there's jealousy. A lot of people are out to get you. I don't trust them. I don't trust people.

The frame freezes with the GIRL's eyes looking off-screen at her father.

*

MOLLY (V.O.)

Every year on our birthdays my father would interview my younger brothers and me.

*

FATHER (O.S.)

Who are the heroes or heroines in your life? Who do you really respect?

13-YEAR-OLD GIRL
I don't have any heroes.

*

FATHER (O.S.)
You don't have any heroes.

MOLLY (V.O.)
How's this for hubris?

*

*

13-YEAR-OLD GIRL
I don't. Because if I reach the goals I set out for myself, then the person I become, that'll be my hero. Because there's no one I can look at right now who's accomplished what I want to accomplish.

*

Again the frame freezes with the girl's eyes looking off-screen, almost accusingly, at her father.

*

MOLLY (V.O.)
Even by teenage girl standards I would appear to be irrationally angry at nothing in particular. It would be another 7 years before I'd find out why.

EXT. 405 FREEWAY - NIGHT

The lights of Los Angeles begin to shimmer into view through the windshield of a Jeep Grand Cherokee.

MOLLY (V.O.)
After my wipeout at Deer Valley I decided to take a year off before law school. Law school's hard and I couldn't spend the first year thinking about a pine bough. I needed to go away, sever myself from reality and come up with a new plan so I chose Los Angeles, a city whose entire population has severed itself from reality.

*

*

*

EXT. SMALL HOUSE IN HOLLYWOOD - NIGHT

MOLLY pulls her lone duffle bag out of the Jeep, throws the strap over her shoulder, walks to the front door and rings the bell.

*

*

MOLLY (V.O.)
Blair, a friend of mine from the ski team, had agreed to let me crash on her couch for a while.

(MORE)

MOLLY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

My father had disapproved of postponing law school and so declined to help out, but I had seventeen-hundred dollars I'd saved in baby sitting money and that would support me until I found a waitressing job.

BLAIR's opened the front door. Blair's pretty but it's the middle of the night--closer to dawn--and she's been partying. The two hug. *

INT. BLAIR'S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - A FEW MINUTES LATER *

MOLLY finishes making up the couch. *

MOLLY (V.O.) *

I'd already had a career and retired from it. I wanted to be young for a while in warm weather.

BLAIR says good night and switches off the lights in the living room. MOLLY sits on the couch alone. *

MOLLY (V.O.) *

(beat) *

I think that's what I wanted at first. It's hard to remember. *

CUT TO:

EXT. CLUB - NIGHT

A long line outside a velvet rope with a bouncer tells us this club is hard to get into.

MOLLY (V.O.)

I got a job working bottle service at a club in Hollywood called Nacional. It was Cuban-themed so my uniform was camouflage short-shorts and a white wife-beater. *

INT. CLUB - NIGHT

We take a tour through the club, which is packed and thumps with music. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

The promoter would go over which record producer was sitting where-- which hot designers, which Lakers and Jolo the Malaysian billionaire who didn't drink but who ran a hundred-thousand dollar bar tab. My job was to get people to spend much more money than they needed to.

*
*
*

MOLLY's attending to a table--

*

CUSTOMER

We'll have a bottle of Sky.

MOLLY

You guys look like you deserve Grey Goose.

*
*

CUSTOMER

What do guys who look like they deserve Grey Goose look like?

*
*
*

MOLLY

They have a bottle of Grey Goose in front of them.

*
*
*

CUSTOMER

Quick. Clever. I like that.

*
*

As MOLLY finishes at the table and heads back to the bar--

*

MOLLY (V.O.)

They just spent an additional three-hundred dollars, bringing their total to nine-hundred dollars for eight dollars and fifty-cents worth of vodka.

*
*
*

MOLLY passes some sexy young women who are hanging out at a table--

*

MOLLY (V.O.)

But the club doesn't need you to buy a bottle, they need you to buy five bottles. So these girls over here, they let you buy them shots for a living. It would be like waiting in a long line to get into the Gap so you can pay a one-thousand percent mark-up to buy all the employees a pair of pants.

*

EXT. BLUEROCK OFFICE - DAY

It's one of those two-story buildings on the west end of the Sunset Strip. It's not a dive but it doesn't scream first-class.

MOLLY's Grand Cherokee pulls into a space next to a silver Mercedes AMG. MOLLY gets out, dressed for her first day of work in an office.

*
*

MOLLY (V.O.)

I only had one shift a week, I didn't want to tell my parents I was a cocktail waitress and back then I never turned down an opportunity to make more money so I found a second job as an office assistant and that's how I ended up working for Reardon Greene. Reardon was a partner in Bluerock Investments. He was a regular at the club and one night he said--

*
*
*

CUT TO:

INT. CLUB - NIGHT

REARDON is at a table drinking with some friends and some girls. He's in his late 30's, not very tall, hair slicked back, 3-day beard, skull and cross-bones t-shirt and he's talking to MOLLY--

*

REARDON

Well how'd you like to get paid to go to grad school and get a fuckin' MBA in how life works?

*
*

MOLLY

What makes you think you know and I don't?

REARDON

I'm a customer here and you're a waitress here, look at the scoreboard.

CUT TO:

INT. BLUEROCK OFFICE - DAY

It's three offices and a reception area.

MOLLY (V.O.)
I can't tell you what my job was.
I'm not saying it's a secret, I
literally can't tell you what my
job was. So I made it up.

MOLLY's sat down in front of an empty desk and regarded it
for a moment. What is she supposed to do? She picks up the
phone and checks for a dial tone. *

INT. BLUEROCK OFFICE - DIFFERENT DAY

She files papers.

MOLLY (V.O.)
I filed contracts using a system I
borrowed from the alphabet, with
"B" following "A" and so forth.

INT. BLUEROCK OFFICES - DIFFERENT DAY

MOLLY (V.O.)
I answered the phone, made coffee
runs, set appointments, made
spreadsheets and showed Reardon
what spreadsheets were.

MOLLY's pointing at her computer screen and explaining how a
spreadsheet works to REARDON, dressed in his usual fatigues
and skull t-shirt and looking at a copy of LA X-Press. He
puts the paper down next to Molly and tells her--MOS--which
girl he likes. *

MOLLY (V.O.)
And ordered call girls.

INT. BLAIR'S HOUSE - EARLY MORNING

MOLLY's asleep on the couch and we can see through the window
that it's still mostly dark outside. *

MOLLY (V.O.)
But I made four-hundred and fifty
dollars a week on top of the three
hundred I was making at the club,
which would be enough to get off
Blair's couch. *

Her cell phone rings. She opens her eyes and reaches for the
phone. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

I remember the day started by being
about bagels. *

MOLLY

(into phone)

This is (Molly).

REARDON (V.O.)

(over)

Get to the office. Pick up bagels.

MOLLY

Do you mean now?

(pause)

Hello?

Reardon's hung up. MOLLY hits a button on the phone to check
the time--5:25AM. *

EXT. PINK DOT - EARLY MORNING

MOLLY comes out of the store with a bag of bagels. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

Reardon was a Hollywood staple.
Over-leveraged, into the company
assets, going broke trying to prove
he wasn't broke and making a true
effort to be as vulgar as possible.
Honestly making an effort. *

She's gotten into her jeep and her phone Buzzes with a text
from Reardon-- *

"Move your fuckin' ass"

She tosses the phone aside and pulls the car out onto Sunset,
which is nearly empty because of the hour, but we can see
that LA's decorated for Christmas. *

INT. REARDON'S OFFICE - NIGHT *

REARDON is hammering home a deal to three INVESTORS, telling
them they'd be fuckin' idiots not to put money into this. *

MOLLY's sitting and taking notes on her laptop. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

But somehow he was making hundred-
million dollar deals every day and
I got to watch him do it. "Bizness
Biznessa", as they say in the
Ukraine. The business of business.
(MORE) *

MOLLY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And I was surprised to learn I
liked it.

*

INT. STAIRCASE - MORNING

MOLLY's hustling up a flight of stairs with the bag of bagels-
- *

MOLLY (V.O.)

I hadn't told anyone that I was a
skier and it was hard not to laugh
when Reardon said--

She opens the door at the top of the stairs and walks into--

INT. BLUEROCK OFFICES - CONTINUOUS

REARDON is standing there--

*

REARDON

Did anyone ever teach you how to
fuckin' hurry?

MOLLY

No.

REARDON

What are those?

MOLLY

Bagels.

REARDON snatches the bag from MOLLY--

*

REARDON

Are these from Pink Dot?

MOLLY

It's on the way from (my house).

REARDON

Seriously? You might as well have
stopped at a fuckin' homeless
shelter! You might as well have
walked into a motherfucking
homeless shelter and said, "I'd
like a dozen bagels from this
homeless shelter please!" *I do not
eat bagels from Pink fucking Dot,
Molly, these are fucking poor
people bagels!*

REARDON throws the bag at MOLLY's head and MOLLY easily tilts *
out of the way of the throw.

MOLLY

From where would you like me to get
your bagels in the future?

REARDON

Forget about the fuckin' bagels.

MOLLY

Done.

REARDON

Except smarten up.

MOLLY

Got it.

REARDON

Hang on.

REARDON disappears into his office for a second-- *

MOLLY (V.O.)

Like I said, the day started by
being about bagels but that would
abruptly change.

REARDON comes back out with a legal pad that he's writing on *
as he scrolls through his phone to find numbers.--

REARDON

(still writing)

We're doing a poker game at the
Viper Room. Tomorrow night and then
every Tuesday night. You'll help
run it. Take these names and
numbers and invite them. Tell 'em
to bring ten grand in cash for the
first buy-in, the blinds are
fifty/one-hundred.

REARDON drops the pad on Molly's desk. MOLLY stares at the *
pad...

REARDON (CONT'D)

And Molly?

MOLLY

Yeah.

REARDON

Don't fucking tell anybody.

REARDON disappears into his office. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

I'd regarded Reardon as a nitwit when I regarded him at all, but on that pad were nine names--along with phone numbers--of some of the wealthiest and most influential people in Los Angeles.

*
*

INT. BLUEROCK OFFICES - A FEW MINUTES LATER

MOLLY's typing away on her Blackberry--

MOLLY (V.O.)

I put the numbers in my phone and composed a simple message--

*
*

Molly hits send.

Then puts her phone down on the desk and Googles "poker/blinds".

MOLLY (V.O.)

--that there'd be a game tomorrow night at the Viper Room, there was a ten-thousand dollar buy-in and the blinds were fifty and a hundred.

Molly begins reading about blinds when all of a sudden her phone starts buzzing with text after text--"I'm in," "I'll be there," "Yes," "I'm in"...

MOLLY turns her head and looks at her phone blowing up with responses.

*
*

MOLLY (V.O.)

All nine players confirmed that they'd be there. Within 90 seconds of my sending the text.

*
*
*
*

CUT TO:

EXT. VIPER ROOM - EARLY EVENING

We establish the front of the iconic club before circling around to the back where the Jeep is parked and MOLLY's pulling out a carton of liquor bottles and a cheese platter.

*

MOLLY (V.O.)

The Viper Room was owned by Bugsy Siegel in the 40's back when it was called the Melody Room and before his childhood friend Meyer Lansky had him shot 43 times in the back.

*

INT. VIPER ROOM/BASEMENT CORRIDOR - EARLY EVENING

As MOLLY makes her way through the dark and seedy hallway, balancing the cheese platter on the carton of bottles. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

All I knew was schoolwork and skiing. I'd always figured sophistication would be easy to learn if I ever needed it. My cheese platter had a sticker that said, "Cheese: From the Great State of Michigan." *

She goes into-- *

INT. BASEMENT CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

MOLLY (V.O.)

I'd Googled, "What type of music do poker players like to listen to?" and then tried to figure out how to make a playlist out of one Kenny Rogers song.

She arrives at--

INT. THE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

--where DIEGO has kicked out the legs of an oval card table and sets it upright with a *slam*. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

Diego, a professional dealer, was setting up the table when I got there.

INT. THE ROOM - A BIT LATER

The room and the table are set up for the game and now we can hear the thumping music coming from upstairs.

MOLLY (V.O.)

I set up the bar, put out my cheese platter and positioned myself at the door where I'd been instructed to only let in the names on the list, which I'd memorized. I was wearing my best dress, which I'd bought two years earlier at JC Penny for 88-dollars.

MOLLY stands waiting at the doorway and adjusts herself slightly. *

INT. VIPER ROOM BASEMENT - A MOMENT LATER

MOLLY (V.O.)

The players started to arrive. I introduced myself as Molly, Reardon's assistant, asked if I could get them a drink and took from each of them ten-thousand dollars in cash.

Through a **SERIES OF DISSOLVES**

--we'll see the PLAYERS arriving, chatting a moment with MOLLY--some of them flirting a little and others being matter of fact--and handing her envelopes. We'll pay special attention to one player in particular who we'll get to know in a moment--we call him PLAYER X. *

The final DISSOLVE is Reardon showing up--

REARDON

Everybody here?

MOLLY

Yeah.

REARDON

Ugly dress. Ugly shoes.
(calling out)
Let's play!

INT. VIPER ROOM BASEMENT - A MOMENT LATER

DIEGO the dealer fans 9 cards out on the table and the players each start picking a card-- *

MOLLY (V.O.)

Diego fanned 9 cards out on the table and the players chose for seats.

INT. VIPER ROOM BASEMENT - A MOMENT LATER

A stack of chips gets slapped on the table as an opening bet and in a --

SERIES OF CUTS

--we see cards being dealt, bets being raised, hands being folded, Molly making a vodka and Red Bull, the final card being flipped, hands, chips, cards, vodka and Red Bull etc.--

MOLLY's in the corner. She's standing at a small table with her laptop open, watching, listening and Googling. We push in on her slowly, cutting in the action of the game as we go, all the while hearing the thumping of the music from upstairs. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

I'd just finished counting out ninety-thousand dollars in cash. I was in a room with movie stars, directors, rappers, boxers and business titans. They were going all-in all the time, burning through their buy-ins over and over.

REARDON's come over to Molly-- *

REARDON

You're keeping track of the buy-ins?

MOLLY

Yeah.

REARDON

Where? Where's the paper?

MOLLY

(pointing to the laptop)
Spreadsheet.

REARDON takes a moment and then nods his approval before we go back to another *

SERIES OF CUTS

More chips fly in, drinks are put down, cards are flipped, players jump up in victory and pound the table in defeat, throw their cards at Diego, the seal on a new deck gets cut, more buy-ins, more drinks, more chips, more cards and the *thump thump thump* of the music from upstairs...MOLLY's typing at her laptop. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

I Googled every word I heard that I didn't know. Flop, river, fourth street, tilt, cooler, boat, nuts, playing the rush, cold deck--

INT. VIPER ROOM BASEMENT - LATER

The game is over and the room is clearing out--

MOLLY (V.O.)

The game ended at 2:30. And when it did, that's when Reardon shouted out--

REARDON

(calling out)

Hey! Tip Molly if you want to get invited back next week.

As players leave they say goodbye to MOLLY, some of them giving her a kiss on the cheek while they hand her some chips or some cash. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

Tip Molly. Deep down I didn't like the sound of that. Deep down I knew that when your boss says-- *

QUICK CUT TO:

INT. BLUEROCK OFFICES - DAY

--where Reardon says--

REARDON

And Molly?

MOLLY

Yeah.

REARDON

Don't fuckin' tell anybody.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. VIPER ROOM BASEMENT - NIGHT

MOLLY's alone counting out hundreds-- *

MOLLY (V.O.)

--that's usually not the beginning of a promising law career. But that was deep down. I'd just made three-thousand dollars.

MOLLY stares at the cash in her hands and smiles... *

CUT TO:

MORNING JOE

MOLLY's a guest on the show and her book cover--*Molly's Game*-- *
is projected in back of them.

MIKA BRZEZINSKI

What's the most you ever went home
with?

MOLLY

In one night?

MIKA BRZEZINSKI

In one night.

MOLLY

A hundred and fifty-thousand
dollars.

CUT TO:

INT. GAGE WHITNEY/WAITING AREA - MORNING

It's present day and these are the offices of a high-end,
prestigious law firm. It's early in the morning and the place
is completely empty except for MOLLY, who's sitting and *
waiting in her best professional clothes. She's mentally and *
physically exhausted but keeps it to herself. *

The morning newspapers are fanned out on the coffee table and
in the bottom right corner of *The New York Post* is a box with
a picture of Molly and a small headline that reads: "Poker
Princess Arraigned Today". MOLLY casually takes one of the *
other papers and slides it over her photo. *

Also sitting and waiting is a 14-year-old girl--STELLA--who's
dressed in a private school uniform and reading a copy of *The
Crucible*. STELLA's the opposite of precocious. *

After a long moment of silence...

MOLLY

(pause)

What are you reading?

STELLA

The Crucible. *

MOLLY

For school?

STELLA

(shakes her head no) *

My father assigned it.

MOLLY nods and there's another long silence...

MOLLY

(pause)

You know how many witches were
burned in Salem?

STELLA

No. It doesn't say.

MOLLY

None. They didn't burn witches in
Salem, it's a myth, that's not how
they killed them.

STELLA

How did they kill them?

MOLLY

They hanged them or drowned them.
Sometimes they piled heavy stones
on their chests until they crushed
them.

STELLA

You're Molly Bloom, right?

MOLLY

Yeah.

STELLA

You don't look like you do in the
pictures.

MOLLY

None of us do.

We hear the clacking of footsteps coming down the hall and
CHARLIE JAFFEY comes into view. CHARLIE's a nice-looking guy
with a kind face--around the same age as Molly or a couple of
years older. He's dressed well but not flashy. *

CHARLIE

Molly?

MOLLY

Yes.

CHARLIE

I'm Charlie Jaffey. *

MOLLY

Thank you again for seeing me.

CHARLIE

You've met my daughter Stella?

MOLLY

Yes.

CHARLIE

(to Stella)

Isabel's gonna be here in 45 minutes to take you to school. Did you finish the math?

STELLA

Yeah.

CHARLIE

Civ?

STELLA

Yeah.

CHARLIE

Do you know it? Could you teach it to your class today? If I asked you about Roman law, could you tell me?

*

STELLA

Yes.

CHARLIE

'Kay, keep reading.

MOLLY clocked that.

*

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

(to Molly)

There aren't too many people here this early but we'll have coffee soon. Come on back to my office.

*

MOLLY follows CHARLIE down a hallway--

*

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

First thing's first, when was the last time you slept?

(beat)

Today's Friday.

MOLLY

Tuesday morning at 5AM I was arrested by the FBI. I spent Tuesday at LA County Jail. I was assessed to be a minimal flight risk and my bail was set at a hundred-thousand dollars. My mother signed over her house. I was released Wednesday morning and ordered to appear in Federal Court in New York's Southern District at 10AM today.

CHARLIE

In here.

They walk into--

INT. CHARLIE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

It's a beautiful corner office with jetliner views of the river.

MOLLY

I flew here Wednesday and met with five attorneys yesterday.

CHARLIE

Why didn't you hire any of them?

MOLLY

Three of them had already been taken.

CHARLIE

Yeah, there were 31 people named in your indictment--it's Black Friday for criminal lawyers. What about the other two?

MOLLY

One told me that money was his second favorite form of payment.

CHARLIE

Uh-huh.

MOLLY

And the fifth was also taken but he recommended I call you.

CHARLIE

Why?

MOLLY

I told him I wanted someone who'd worked in the prosecutor's office. That didn't narrow the field much but then I told him I needed someone who wasn't even a little bit shady because I've had some experience with that and that's when the list got short. I told him I needed someone very good because this is nuanced. And I was given one day to find an attorney.

(MORE)

*

*

MOLLY (CONT'D)

(pause)

Do you know about me?

CHARLIE

(pause)

I've been briefed a little by my daughter who knows a lot about your story because her mother's a moron.

MOLLY

The tabloids.

CHARLIE

I've read some of the tabloids and I read the indictment after I got your call last night and I bought your book.

CHARLIE's picked up a copy of *Molly's Game*--

*

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

I'm only up to page 81, but Molly? Did you commit a felony and then publish a memoir about it?

MOLLY

I haven't run a game in over two years. Not to spoil the ending but that's when the government raided my game and took all my money, assuming all of it was made illegally which it wasn't. I've been living at my mother's house in Keystone and I wrote the book so I could start paying debts. I just finished a press tour for the book and moved back to Los Angeles.

*
*
*

*
*

CHARLIE

Just to nail down the timeline, you ran games in LA for roughly six years?

*

MOLLY

Yeah.

CHARLIE

Without taking a rake.

MOLLY

Right.

CHARLIE

Then you ran games in New York for roughly two years?

MOLLY

I took a rake the last six months.

CHARLIE

Then your game got raided, the government took all your money in a civil forfeiture and you left town.

MOLLY

I went to live with my mother at her house in Colorado. That was two years ago.

CHARLIE

And it was there that you wrote this book.

MOLLY

Yes.

CHARLIE

The book was released three weeks ago, you did a press tour and moved back to LA.

MOLLY

Yes.

CHARLIE

And that's where you were arrested by the FBI.

MOLLY

Yes.

CHARLIE

(pause)

So...In the first 81 pages you name a bunch of names.

*

MOLLY

(beat)

I'm sorry?

CHARLIE

You gave up the names of some movie stars who played in your game.

MOLLY takes a moment...this is obviously a sore spot for her and she'd rather not talk about it.

*

*

MOLLY

(pause)

Yeah.

CHARLIE

Isn't that against some sort of
poker code?

MOLLY

There's no poker code and there's
no law against lack of discretion.

CHARLIE

Wouldn't it be great if there were,
though?

MOLLY

Are you taking me on as a client?

CHARLIE

My retainer's \$250,000, do you have
\$250,000?

MOLLY

No, I don't have anything.

CHARLIE

What about sales of the book?

MOLLY

Including that one that you bought
I've sold one copy, but there's a
lot of interest from Hollywood in
buying my life rights. I'll find a
way to pay you. Charlie, ask around
about me, my word is good.

CHARLIE

Not to the guys you named.

MOLLY

I didn't have a--just ask around
about me.

CHARLIE

(laughing)

Unfortunately the people I'd ask
are goin' away for a while. What
happened Tuesday morning was called
a GPS Takedown. 31 people were
arrested in the same instant.
Someone you thought was a friend
called you on your phone to make
sure it was the one you were still
using and when you answered that
call, they had you painted and kept
track of your movements until the
agreed upon time.

(MORE)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Something in excess of 600 agents were dispatched to locations in New York and LA in coordinated strikes with automatic weapons and you're trying to tell me you're in my office because you raked a game of Texas Hold 'Em?!

MOLLY

Yes!

CHARLIE

Have you seen the other names on this indictment? Helly Habib, Mike Druzhinsky, Mike Anikovich, the Gershen Brothers? How deep were you into the Russian mob, Molly?! 'Cause so far your tell-all doesn't say.

*

*

MOLLY's well past tired and Charlie's quick cross-examination has either taken something out of her or put something back in. She stands up and walks to the window...

*

MOLLY

(pause)

Why are you making your daughter read *The Crucible*?

CHARLIE

So she can see what happens when a group of bored teenage girls gossip.

MOLLY

I've never read the play.

CHARLIE

Many consider it to be the best play of the 20th Century.

MOLLY

Is that what many consider it to be?

CHARLIE

I don't defend violent criminals.

*

MOLLY

I've never hurt anyone in my life.

CHARLIE

Your friends have.

MOLLY

I've never heard of 90 percent of the names in the indictment.

CHARLIE

And the other 10 percent?

MOLLY

I didn't know they were mobsters, I had no idea who they really were.

CHARLIE

(pause)

Let me ask you something. Reardon-- in the book--he didn't say "Poor people bagels," did he.

(beat)

I think I know who he is, I think I know a real estate lawyer who worked with him and quit. He called them "nigger bagels," right?

MOLLY

(pause)

I'm not telling you his name, he's not involved in this.

CHARLIE

But you were willing to name the movie stars.

MOLLY

None of that matters. Why is the FBI arresting me two years after--

*
*

CHARLIE

Were you paid extra in your book deal to name the movie stars?

*
*
*

MOLLY

(pause)

Yes.

*
*
*

CHARLIE

I'm not your guy, Molly. I wish you good luck but this just isn't for me.

MOLLY hears that but still doesn't leave...

*

MOLLY

(pause)

Why did you leave the prosecutor's office and become a defense attorney?

CHARLIE

My daughter.

MOLLY

You needed to make money.

CHARLIE

That and I was usually one of the few people who knew where witnesses were being hidden.

MOLLY

It was dangerous.

CHARLIE

Mm-hm.

MOLLY

So you didn't leave the prosecutor's office because you wanted to stand up for the innocent and believe everyone's entitled to the best defense?

CHARLIE

Not really.

MOLLY

It would have been helpful if you were Spencer Tracy or--I didn't know who the Russians were.

(pause--calmer)

I can get you the two-hundred and fifty-thousand, I left ten times that on the street, it'll just take some time.

CHARLIE

We do pro bono work--we regularly lend out our best litigators like me to the ACLU, Southern Poverty Law Center, veterans groups--but I don't think I can convince my partners to take a flyer on the Poker Princess.

MOLLY

I didn't name myself the Poker Princess.

CHARLIE picks up a copy of *Us Weekly* that's been tabbed and reads--

CHARLIE

"Molly Bloom, the self-proclaimed Poker Princess...".

MOLLY

That's *Us Weekly*? I agree it would be unusual for them to print something that wasn't true but it's not true and if you think a princess could do what I did you're incorrect. I'm getting that you don't think much of me but what if every one of your ill-informed, unsophisticated opinions about me were wrong?

*
*

CHARLIE

I'd be amazed.

MOLLY

Yeah you know what, bud? You would.

CHARLIE

You don't need me, you need a publicist.

MOLLY

No, I need a fuckin' lawyer!

*

CHARLIE

(pause)

You never answered my question. When was the last time you slept?

MOLLY

(pause)

It was a while ago.

*

CHARLIE

(pause)

I'm gonna walk you through the arraignment this morning, you shouldn't do that alone. I'm gonna put some bodies on you and walk you through a side door. 'Cause I don't know what you've got on the Russians but neither do they and the Russians take care of shit, you understand what I'm saying?

MOLLY

Yes.

*

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE - DAY

A SEVEN-YEAR-OLD GIRL is being pulled by a motor boat as she tries to get up on one ski. She fails and falls hard into the water.

Her FATHER--the same father we've been seeing throughout--and her MOTHER are on the boat and her FATHER shouts back--

FATHER

Again!

The SEVEN-YEAR OLD GIRL is tired but she gets herself ready to try again. The MOTHER isn't happy about this but seems helpless and slightly cowed by the force of the FATHER. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

My father's a therapist and a psychology professor at Colorado State. The second rule of his house was that academic excellence and athletic excellence weren't optional and the first rule was that he made the rules.

The GIRL is back on her water ski. The boat powers forward again and the GIRL gets up on one ski for a moment before she falls. The MOTHER, standing in the back of the boat as a spotter, raises a flag in the air to let nearby boats know there's a skier in the water. *

FATHER

You're not getting out of the water till you do this. *Again!*

MOLLY (V.O.)

I was a skinny kid, and at 7 years old I didn't have the core strength yet to pull this off. In October the water in Colorado is pretty cold and we'd been at this since 6AM. *

SEVEN-YEAR-OLD GIRL

(calling)

Dad? I'm tired.

The FATHER shakes his head...the MOTHER looks down, feeling for her daughter but not wanting to start a fight.

MOTHER

She's tired.

The FATHER whips the boat around and drives it up to the GIRL. *

FATHER

You're tired?

SEVEN-YEAR-OLD GIRL

Yeah.

FATHER

What's another word for tired? Name
a synonym for tired and I'll let
you in the boat.

SEVEN-YEAR-OLD GIRL

(pause)

Weak.

FATHER

That's right.
(holding out his hand)
Get on in.

The GIRL looks at her FATHER and his outstretched hand but
stays in the water... *

GIRL

Again.

CUT TO:

INT. BARNEY'S/SHOE DEPARTMENT - DAY *

MOLLY's wearing cut-offs, a sweatshirt and a Denver Broncos
baseball cap as she looks at herself in a pair of Christian
Loubitans. *

MOLLY *

I'll take them. *

SHOE SALESMAN *

Excellent. *

MOLLY *

Can you tell me what floor the
dresses are on? *

INT. BARNEY'S/DRESS DEPARTMENT - A FEW MINUTES LATER *

MOLLY (V.O.) *

After three months of games I had
enough money to buy some real
clothes. *

A SALESWOMAN comes up to her--

SALESWOMAN

Can I pull some styles for you? *

MOLLY

I'm looking for a dress that makes me look nothing like myself.

The SALESWOMAN smiles...

*

SALESWOMAN

Take off your hat, put your hair in a bun and put on your new shoes. I'll pull some options.

INT. BARNEY'S - A FEW MINUTES LATER

MOLLY comes out of the dressing room wearing a black dress that makes her look very sexy...

SALESWOMAN

Well...where did that body come from?

MOLLY stares at herself in the mirror...

*

MOLLY (V.O.)

I decided to postpone law school another year.

INT. VIPER ROOM - NIGHT

*

A game is underway and MOLLY has a whole new look.

*

MOLLY (V.O.)

I'd overheard stories about games that folded after one bad night and I needed this one to keep going and I needed to bring value to it. I knew if I wanted to cement my place there was one guy I needed to team up with and that was this man.

*

*

*

We see a HAND LIFTING CARDS, FINGERS PLAYING WITH CHIPS and then see that they belong to PLAYER X.

*

MOLLY (V.O.)

The game had regulars and the game had guests and four of the regulars were famous actors and I'm going to call one of them Player X. Player X subscribed to the belief that money won was twice as good as money earned. He lived to beat people and take their money. Here's Player X talking one of the guests into folding the winning hand.

*

PLAYER X is in a showdown with the GUEST, who's sweating whether to call or fold.

PLAYER X

I swear on my--look at me--I swear on my mother's life--I have you.

MOLLY (V.O.)

Player X was the best player at the table and tonight this guy was the worst. He's staring at his cards--even a reasonably good amateur would know it was mathematically the best hand, which in poker is called the nuts. There was forty-seven thousand dollars in the pot and the guest was holding the nuts but he was starting to get confused because a movie star was talking to him.

PLAYER X

My mother's life man, I'm not messing with you.

The GUEST thinks...surveys the cards... *

GUEST

(pause)

Why would you be telling me?

PLAYER X

Either I *am* messing with you OR you're new to the game, you've had bad cards all night, you should've folded after the flop and I don't want to win more of your money this way. I've got queens under here. Take your time.

The GUEST takes another moment...then tosses in his cards. *

GUEST

Fold.

PLAYER X picks up his two losing hole cards--neither a queen--and shows them to the guest--

PLAYER X

Fuck you!

The others cheer and pound the table as PLAYER X hauls in his chips and the guest tries to put on a "just one of the guys face."

MOLLY (V.O.)

A fish is a particular kind of
player. A fish has money. A fish
plays loose and doesn't fold a lot.
A fish is good but not too good.

PLAYER X looks over to MOLLY...MOLLY looks back and gives him
a half-smile. Chips get put down as a new hand is dealt. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

The Viper Room may have belonged to
Reardon but the game belonged to
Player X. People wanted to say they
played with him the same way they
wanted to say they rode on Air
Force One. My job security was
gonna depend on bringing him his
fish. But where would I find people
with a lot of money who didn't know
how to spend it and liked to be
around celebrities?

CUT TO:

INT. NACIONAL - NIGHT

The club where Molly used to work. MOLLY's talking to four of
the CLUB GIRLS who drink shots for a living as the place
pulses around them. *

MOLLY

If they say they're interested in
poker you give them my number. I
vet them. If they end up playing in
the game I'll give you a thousand
dollars the first time they play
and five-hundred every time after
that.

(handing one of them a slip
of paper)

Be sure to mention that these guys
are all regulars.

One of the club girls looks at the list of names...

CLUB GIRL

Is this true? *

MOLLY hands her a wad of cash as we *

CUT TO: *

INT. COMMERCE CASINO - NIGHT

It's a sad, seedy casino and we're in an area where an eclectic collection of guys are playing Texas Hold 'Em. MOLLY's standing near a pit boss and watching one of the players.

*
*
*
*

MOLLY (V.O.)

The Commerce Casino is off the 5 freeway in East LA and no one's ever going to confuse it with the French Riviera. I'd watch the tables for a while before I approached a friendly-looking pit boss.

MOLLY

The third chair at Table 8 can't lose.

PIT BOSS

Unless there are players at his table who can win.

MOLLY

You know about the game at the Viper Room, right?

*

PIT BOSS

Sure.

MOLLY

It's a 10K buy-in, blinds are fifty and a hundred. A thousand for every player you send me. You get a piece of what they lose. No pros. I'm Molly.

CUT TO:

INT. VIPER ROOM BASEMENT - NIGHT

DIEGO cuts the seal on a new deck and shuffles.

*

MOLLY (V.O.)

Poker was my Trojan horse into the highest levels of finance, technology, politics, art, entertainment--all I had to do was listen.

SERIES OF SHOTS--Different games on different nights as MOLLY listens to conversations between players and Googles various things she hears.

*

PLAYER #1

The art world is controlled by a few major dealers. Gagosian, Zwirner, and a couple more.

DIFFERENT GAME

PLAYER #2

China's telecom companies want to partner with other providers.

BACK TO THE FIRST GAME

PLAYER #1

They alone control the market. They choose the artists they want to be important.

DIFFERENT GAME

PLAYER #3

Obama's gonna run.

BACK TO THE FIRST GAME

PLAYER #1

They set the prices, they mark 'em up 70, 80, 90 percent.

DIFFERENT GAME

PLAYER #4

The owners don't mind paying thirty-million dollars to an outfielder who hits 320 with 110 RBI's, they mind paying ten-million dollars for a pitcher who was 8 and 14 last season.

*

BACK TO THE FIRST GAME

PLAYER #1

90 percent mark-up. It's unregulated money, usually all cash and unreported.

DIFFERENT GAME

PLAYER #5

He's the head of Google ventures and he says they're working on a secret project to live forever.

PLAYER #6

To do what?

PLAYER #5
Live forever.

PLAYER #7
Are they close?

PLAYER #5
No. Call and raise.

DIFFERENT GAME

PLAYER #2
His days are numbered.

DIFFERENT GAME

PLAYER #3
His days are numbered.

DIFFERENT GAME

PLAYER #4
I don't know how much longer she's
gonna be in that job.

DIFFERENT GAME

PLAYER #3
They're very excited about a
company called Twitter.

DIFFERENT GAME

PLAYER #2
He's done.

DIFFERENT GAME

PLAYER #5
She's gone.

BACK TO THE FIRST GAME

PLAYER #1
I'm all in.

MOLLY
People have asked me what my goal
was at that point, what was my
endgame. Back then I would have
laughed at that question. I was
raised to be a champion, my goal
was to win. At what and against
whom? Those were just details.

We're on MOLLY's face as a player, off-screen, says what Molly's thinking...

*

PLAYER #3 (O.S.)

All in.

CUT TO:

INT. HIGH RISE APARTMENT - DAY

MOLLY looks over the modest but nice new place with a rental agent.

*

MOLLY (V.O.)

I had my own apartment now--

EXT. BLUEROCK OFFICES - DAY

MOLLY gets out of a brand new Audi with a bag of bagels--

*

MOLLY (V.O.)

--a new car and seventeen-thousand dollars in a shoebox.

EXT. ELEGANT OUTDOOR PARTY - NIGHT

MOLLY's standing alone in a crowd drinking a glass of champagne.

*

MOLLY (V.O.)

One night a friend asked me to come with her to a pre-Oscar party being hosted by the head of one of the bigger talent agencies. Nothing'll remind you that you don't belong quite as fast as a party where you don't belong. And I must've been invisible because two four-thousand dollar suits were talking business right next to me.

*

AGENT #1

He's never gonna agree to that number.

AGENT #2

He's already agreed to it.

*

AGENT #1

You know that?

*

AGENT #2

Rich played cards with him.

AGENT #1
When?

AGENT #2
Tuesday night at the game. *

AGENT #1
The Lakers game? *

AGENT #2
Cards. Poker. The poker game. *

AGENT #1
I don't know what you're talking
about. *

AGENT #2
Oh, man, you have to know about the
game. It's exclusive, you need an
invitation, the winners are coming
home with a hundred thousand
dollars and the losers keep coming
back. *

AGENT #1
Where do they play?

AGENT #2
No one knows where. Nobody who
plays talks where. Nobody who
plays talks about it and everybody
wants in. But my point is that Rich
played with him and he's agreeing
to the number.

MOLLY (V.O.)
And just like that, I was about to
belong.

AGENT #1
I need to get a seat at this game. *

MOLLY downs what's left of her champagne and steps to the two *

MOLLY
Excuse me, I couldn't help
overhearing you.
(beat)
I'm Molly Bloom and I run the game
you were talking about. If you give
me your cards I can get in touch if
a seat opens.

AGENT #1
(pause)
Seriously?

AGENT #2
The game's real?

AGENT #1
Who plays?

MOLLY
You can just give me your cards.

They hand her their cards.

MOLLY (CONT'D)
I'll be in touch.

MOLLY walks away and we stay on her face as she glides through the party and we see a small smile as we --

CUT TO:

EXT. DOWNTOWN FEDERAL COURTHOUSE - DAY

Press and paparazzi are on the steps behind police barricades. No one notices a black SUV has driven past them and pulls up to the side of the courthouse.

A BODYGUARD hops out the front passenger side and opens the back door for another BODYGUARD who helps Molly out of the car. The three of them head for a side entrance as we --

CUT TO:

INT. COURTHOUSE CORRIDOR - DAY

CHARLIE is standing and waiting as MOLLY and the bodyguards come in and walk through a metal detector. They all make their way down the hall--

CHARLIE
Here's all that's gonna happen today. The judge is gonna ask each defendant if they've read the indictment or if they'd like the court to read it to them. Then the judge is going to ask you how you plead and you'll answer, "Not Guilty." I'll make it clear for the record that I'm not your counsel but that I'm appearing on your behalf at the arraignment. *In propria persona.*

MOLLY
"In propria persona" means on your behalf.

CHARLIE

Yeah.

MOLLY

No, I'm saying it means on your behalf.

CHARLIE

I *am* appearing on your behalf.

MOLLY

"In propria persona" means that you're appearing on your behalf, not my behalf.

CHARLIE

(beat)

I'll check that out but the point is I'm not your lawyer and I'll make that clear for the record.

He stops her before they walk into the courtroom and shows a little compassion...

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Look...my office'll give you a list of names when we're done. There are plenty of firms that'll just be happy for the exposure. You'll be fine.

MOLLY

I appreciate it. *

CHARLIE

(pause)

Alright. It's a scary room. Don't be scared.

MOLLY

Charlie, I know what's what, okay?

CHARLIE opens the courtroom door and holds it for MOLLY and the TWO BODYGUARDS as they walk into-- *

INT. COURTROOM - CONTINUOUS

The courtroom is huge and ornate and right now it's a bit of a spectacle.

On the right side of the gallery are the defendants and their lawyers--about 60 people in all. Behind a plexiglass partition are some more defendants in prison coveralls and shackles. The defendants range in age from early-20's to late 80's.

On the left side of the gallery are the wives and girlfriends of the defendants. They're all beautifully dressed and manicured and have on some of their gaudiest jewelry for the occasion.

Seated in back of them are the press and it was a tough ticket to get.

At the prosecutor's table are three Assistant U.S. Attorneys, including HARRISON WELLSTONE, the lead attorney on the case who we'll get to know later.

JUDGE DUSTIN FOXMAN is already seated at the bench and is quietly going over some business with the prosecutors as the packed courtroom hums with quiet chatter.

CHARLIE points a bodyguard to where he wants Molly to sit-- *
four taped off seats on the right side toward the back. As *
MOLLY and the BODYGUARDS take their seats, CHARLIE stands in *
the aisle a moment and looks at HARRISON, the lead *
prosecutor. HARRISON turns back from the bench and heads to *
his table and sees Charlie. HARRISON half-smiles and gives *
CHARLIE a small wave. CHARLIE gives him a small wave back and *
takes his seat on the aisle next to one of the bodyguards.

MOLLY's clocked all that. *

CHARLIE
(quietly to MOLLY) *
You got a good judge, he's a good
guy.

MOLLY
How 'bout the prosecutor?

CHARLIE takes a moment and then shakes his head "no". *

JUDGE FOXMAN raps his gavel once, the room quiets down, and *
everyone takes their seats.

JUDGE FOXMAN
Counsel, please state your
appearances for the record?

HARRISON
Good morning, Your Honor, Harrison
Wellstone and Jack Brennan on
behalf of the Government, joined at
counsel table by FBI Agent Deborah
D'Angelo.

JUDGE FOXMAN
Are there any oral motions at this
time?

One of the defense lawyers stands up--

MR. SERNOVITZ

Your Honor--

The seemingly routine business of the hearing continues under the following--

CHARLIE

(quietly to the bodyguard)

Switch with me a second.

CHARLIE and the BODYGUARD switch places so that Charlie's sitting next to Molly now. *

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

(quietly)

Do you know what a "Vor v Zakone" is? A "Vor"?

MOLLY

No.

CHARLIE

The literal translation is "thief-in-law." It's the Russian equivalent of a Don or a Godfather. Nikolai Illyanovich is a Vor. He's the one who tried to fix the Salt Lake City Olympics.

MOLLY

I wasn't there.

CHARLIE

He's also had a lot of people killed. It's basically do what I'm telling you or we'll kill your kids.

MOLLY

I've never had an audience with the Vor, I'm not a made man and I don't know who Nikolai Illyanovich is.

CHARLIE

(pointing to a man behind the plexiglass)

He's standing right there. I can introduce you guys, you're co-defendants.

(to the BODYGUARD)

Switch back. *

CHARLIE and the BODYGUARD switch back to their original seats. The business of the court continues.

*

CLERK

Defendant 4, Jonathan Hirsch.

SIEGEL

Good morning, Your Honor. David Siegel for the purposes of today's appearance.

JUDGE FOXMAN

Has the defendant seen a copy of the indictment?

HIRSCH

Yes, Your Honor.

JUDGE FOXMAN

Have you discussed it with your lawyer?

HIRSCH

I have.

JUDGE FOXMAN

Do you waive its public reading?

HIRSCH

Yes.

JUDGE FOXMAN

How do you plead at this time?

HIRSCH

Not Guilty.

JUDGE FOXMAN

Thank you, you may be seated.

CLERK

Defendant 5, Arthur Azen.

The court's business continues as--

CHARLIE

(whispering to the
BODYGUARD)

Switch with me.

*

CHARLIE and the BODYGUARD switch seats again and CHARLIE speaks quietly to MOLLY--

*

*

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Just in case your lawyer doesn't mention it, the next time you appear in front of the judge you should re-think your clothes. You look like the Cinemax version of yourself.

MOLLY

I sold my clothes after the government seized all my money two years ago which incidentally was the last time I ran a poker game but I think I mentioned that already.

CHARLIE

(beat)

Okay.

(pause--then quietly)

Your old boss--the one you call Reardon--he was kind of a jerk to you. Why would you cover for him by changing it to "poor people bagels"?

*
*
*
*
*

MOLLY

(quietly)

I promise it couldn't matter less.

CHARLIE

(shrugs)

Just making conversation.

*
*
*

CHARLIE's not really satisfied but he taps the bodyguard and they switch back.

*

JUDGE FOXMAN

Do you waive its public reading?

ALEXANDER

I do.

JUDGE FOXMAN

How do you plead at this time?

ALEXANDER

Not guilty.

CLERK

Defendant 7, Molly Bloom.

MOLLY and CHARLIE stand and when they do, everyone in the courtroom turns around to get a look at the Poker Princess.

*

CHARLIE

Good morning, Your Honor. Charles Jaffey, just for the purposes--

*

And CHARLIE stops mid-sentence and thinks...

*

JUDGE FOXMAN

(pause)

It's good to see you, Mr. Jaffey, are you with us this morning?

*

(beat)

Mr. Jaffey?

*

CHARLIE

Just a moment please, sir.

(to the BODYGUARD)

*

Switch back.

They switch--

MOLLY

Seriously?

CHARLIE

You said you left ten-times that much on the street. Back at my office. I said it's a \$250,000 retainer and you said you left ten times that on the street.

MOLLY

Yeah.

JUDGE FOXMAN

Counsel, I need to record your appearance.

CHARLIE

Please the Court Your Honor, just one moment.

(to Molly)

You were extending credit. You're destitute and you left two and a half million dollars on the street?

MOLLY

I had to.

CHARLIE

Didn't anyone try to buy your debt sheet?

MOLLY

Everyone tried to buy my debt sheet, is this the right time to--

CHARLIE

Why didn't you sell it like you
sold your clothes?

MOLLY

I couldn't.

CHARLIE

Why?

MOLLY

I couldn't be sure how they were
gonna collect.

CHARLIE

(pause)

I was afraid you were gonna say
that.

JUDGE FOXMAN

Counsel?

CHARLIE thinks...

*

CHARLIE

(pause)

Charles Jaffey for the defendant,
Your Honor.

*

JUDGE FOXMAN

For the purposes of this hearing
only?

CHARLIE

No sir, I'm Molly Bloom's attorney.
She's read the indictment,
discussed it with her lawyer,
waives her right to have it read to
her and pleads "Not Guilty".

HARRISON clocks this, smiles and shakes his head.

*

CLERK

Defendant 8, Alexander Gollib.

MOLLY

Thank you.

CHARLIE

I'll need to keep reading your
book.

CUT TO:

BLACK AND WHITE PHOTO OF AN AFRICAN-AMERICAN MAN CIRCA 1930

MOLLY (V.O.)

There was a track star from Pasadena in the 1930s named Matthew Robinson.

BLACK AND WHITE PHOTO OF MATTHEW ROBINSON CROSSING A FINISH LINE

MOLLY (V.O.)

Matthew Robinson shattered the Olympic record in the two-hundred at the Berlin Games in 1936. Absolutely shattered the Olympic record...and came in second.

*
*

We PULL BACK and see that another runner finished just ahead of him.

*
*

MOLLY (V.O.)

The man who came in first was Jesse Owens.

BLACK AND WHITE PHOTO OF JESSE OWENS ON THE MEDAL STAND

*

MOLLY (V.O.)

Owens went on to be a legend.

*
*

BLACK AND WHITE PHOTO OF MATTHEW ROBINSON AS AN OLD MAN HOLDING A MOP.

MOLLY (V.O.)

Matthew Robinson went on to be a janitor at a whites-only school in Pasadena. The difference was two-hundredths of a second.

*
*

BLACK AND WHITE PHOTO OF A CATCHER TRYING TO PUT THE TAG ON A RUNNER SLIDING INTO HOME.

MOLLY (V.O.)

As if that wasn't enough, Matthew Robinson had a little brother who was also an athlete.

We PULL BACK on the photo and see the runner sliding into home has the number 42 on his back and the umpire is signaling that he's safe.

*
*
*

MOLLY (V.O.)

His name was Jack but everyone called him Jackie.

FOOTAGE OF JEREMY BLOOM RACING THROUGH MOGULS (FILE)

MOLLY (V.O.)

I have two younger brothers who were also overachievers. While I was ranked 3rd in North America, my brother Jeremy was Number 1 in the world.

HOME VIDEO OF THE FATHER HELPING A YOUNG BOY WITH HOMEWORK

MOLLY (V.O.)

And while I was placing into A.P. Chemistry as a junior, my brother Jordan was doing it when he was 12-years-old or something, I don't know.

*

MOLLY'S CHILDHOOD HOUSE - NIGHT

*

Molly, now 15, is having dinner with her FATHER, MOTHER, and two YOUNGER BROTHERS.

*

MOLLY (V.O.)

I was a hotshot student and a hotshot skier everywhere but my own house. And that's where we live. As I got older I began to bait my father into fights without really knowing why I was doing it.

*

*

*

*

*

FATHER

Let's go around the table. Impress me with what you learned at school today. Jeremy Bloom.

*

*

*

JEREMY (YOUNGEST BROTHER)

The usual stuff.

FATHER

Usual stuff. Jordan Bloom.

*

JORDAN (MIDDLE KID)

Usual stuff.

FATHER

I *am* impressed. Molly?

*

GIRL

I learned that Sigmund Freud was both a misogynist and an idiot and that anyone who relies on his theories of human psychology is a quack.

The FATHER laughs a little and the MOTHER looks nervous.

*

FATHER

I don't know why you'd say that.

GIRL

You asked me what I learned in school today.

FATHER

Is this Mrs. Linwood?

GIRL

Yep.

FATHER

Did she happen to mention anything about his work on the unconscious mind?

GIRL

His dream analysis has the credibility of a horoscope but what got my attention was that he opposed the women's emancipation movement. He believed that a woman's life is about their reproductive functions.

FATHER

So you were really getting to the nuts and bolts of why middle-class, suburban white girls have been oppressed for centuries.

GIRL

Mrs. Linwood--

FATHER

Barbara Linwood doesn't like men, Molly.

GIRL

She doesn't like dicks, Dad, there's a difference.

The FATHER looks at MOLLY then throws his fork down on his plate with a frightening clang.

*

MOTHER

Molly, don't say things like--

FATHER

Don't disrespect me like that at the table.

GIRL

I wasn't disrespecting you, I was disrespecting Freud and it's a kitchen table, it's not the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

FATHER

And I'm a professional psychologist, not a quack.

GIRL

I never said (you were a)--

FATHER

(over)

Yeah you did and don't do it again and don't ever use that language again.

GIRL

Okay, ignore my teachers, watch my language and respect the kitchen table. What else do I need to do before I'm allowed to disagree with you?

FATHER

Make your own money so you can live in your own house and eat your own food.

CUT TO:

INT. VIPER ROOM BASEMENT - NIGHT

MOLLY counts out a big stack of hundreds.

MOLLY (V.O.)

I'd been running the game for 13 months and saved twenty-eight thousand dollars.

REARDON counts two stacks of chips and throws them in the pot.

*

REARDON

Call.

MOLLY (V.O.)

I was recruiting and vetting players, keeping the books, collecting and delivering checks--

PLAYER X
Straight to the eight.

PLAYER X won and REARDON lost. *

MOLLY (V.O.)
--meeting the needs of all the
players throughout the week and
still working full-time for
Reardon, who'd made it clear that
if I quit the office job I'd lose
the game.

REARDON picks up what's left of his chips-- *

REARDON
I'm done.

Reardon gets called "Pussy" and other names before the
players go back to their own conversations and Reardon makes
his way over to Molly. He puts his chips down in front of her
which Molly skillfully stacks, counts, and types into her
spreadsheet as she says--

MOLLY
(quietly)
I thought he had trips too. He was
slow-playing into the river and he
hid the pocket 3 pretty well. Tough
beat. You owe the game--

REARDON
I know what I owe the game, I want
to talk to you a minute.

MOLLY
(beat)
Okay.

REARDON
Outside.

EXT. VIPER ROOM PARKING LOT - NIGHT

A band is loading out its equipment into a couple of waiting
vans. A back door opens and REARDON comes out, followed by
MOLLY. *

REARDON
Is he cheating? *

MOLLY
No.

REARDON
How would you know? *

MOLLY

I'd know.

REARDON

He and Diego aren't in bed together?

*

MOLLY

No.

REARDON

What about him and you?

*

MOLLY

(beat)

If you're asking what I think you're asking, no. In fact there's nothing you could be asking where it wouldn't be no. A fifty-two card deck produces hundreds of millions of random patterns but every time one of you loses two weeks in a row you're sure something fishy must be up.

REARDON

I'm gonna stop paying you.

MOLLY

What do you mean?

REARDON

As my assistant.

MOLLY

You're firing me?

REARDON

I'm not firing you, I'm just gonna stop paying you. You get paid once a week from the game, it doesn't seem fair.

MOLLY

But I also have a job working for you 24 hours a day.

REARDON

And if you didn't have that job you wouldn't have the game, you understand what I'm saying?

MOLLY

(pause)

I understand each of the words that you're saying, but--

REARDON

Look--

MOLLY

24 hours a day every day. You're gonna stop paying me to do that job because I'm making too much money doing my second job and if I say no I'll lose both jobs. Because it doesn't seem fair?

REARDON

Business is bad right now, welcome to the real world.

MOLLY takes a moment and then goes for it--

*

MOLLY

Alright, here it is: Banks are loaning you money and they shouldn't. You're a bad risk, they know that. So the debt service on your loans is close to 20 percent which is crazy. 20 percent is barely survivable if it's a bridge loan but, for instance, it's taken you 10 years to build seven houses, all of which are worth less than they were before you built them because the housing market's on a downward trajectory for the first time in the history of houses and that's why business is bad, not because you pay me four-hundred and fifty dollars a week.

REARDON

You're a business savant?

MOLLY

I've read every piece of paper in your office.

REARDON

You're making thousands in tips every week, why do you care about (four-hundred and fifty dollars a week?)

MOLLY

(over)

I care about it because I don't want to pick up your dry cleaning for free.

REARDON

You don't have bargaining power
here. You can refuse the pay cut
but you'll lose the game.
(handing her a few chips)
Cash me out please.

REARDON heads back inside and Molly stands there alone a
moment... *

MOLLY (V.O.)

There's an old saying:

CUT TO:

EXT. FOUR SEASONS HOTEL - DAY

As a VALET opens Molly's car door and MOLLY, looking
fantastic in business clothes, steps out. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

"Never wait until your ski releases
before you check to see if a small
pine bough's in your way." I don't
know how old that saying is but I
wasn't going to wait for Reardon to
take the game away before I put a
plan in place. *

MOLLY's met by a HOTEL MANAGER. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

The next morning I made
appointments at the Four Seasons,
the Peninsula and the Beverly Hills
Hotel.

INT. LUXURY SUITE - DAY

The MANAGER is showing MOLLY the expensive suite with
beautiful views. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

The suite was fifty-two hundred a
night.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LUXURY SUITE - DAY

As DIEGO fits a Shuffle Master into the hole that's been cut
into the table. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

I spent seventeen-thousand on a Shuffle Master that was installed in the table.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LUXURY SUITE - NIGHT

The view is even more spectacular and glamorous at night. Delicious food is being put on small tables between the seats by an attractive server.

MOLLY (V.O.)

Food was brought in from Mr. Chow and available to eat on side tables.

An equally attractive BARTENDER is preparing the bar. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

There was Macallan 18, Belvedere, 1942, Remy Martin, and an '88 Lafite Rothschild served by a bartender who'd already memorized your drink. Cohibas and Monte Cristos were in the humidor and two licensed massage therapists were there to rub your shoulders as you played.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LUXURY SUITE/BEDROOM - NIGHT

MOLLY's having her hair blown out while working a spreadsheet * on her laptop. An outfit is being laid out on the bed.

MOLLY (V.O.)

A professional stylist turned me into what my defense attorney would later call the Cinemax version of myself. I spent almost everything I had in preparation for the phone call I new was coming.

We HEAR a cell phone ring before we--

CUT TO:

INT. MOLLY'S BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

MOLLY rolls over in bed and looks at the ringing cell phone.
It's Reardon. *

MOLLY
(into phone)
Hello?

REARDON doesn't sound good.

REARDON (OVER THE PHONE)
I want you to listen to me. 'Cause
you need to hear this.

MOLLY
(pause)
Are you alright? *

REARDON (OVER THE PHONE)
Are you listening? You need to hear
this.

MOLLY
Where are you?

REARDON (OVER THE PHONE)
I need to tell you something in
plain English and I need to know
that you understood it.

MOLLY
Okay.

REARDON (OVER THE PHONE)
You are unimportant, did you hear
me? And you are fired.

(pause)
Did you hear me? The job, the game,
you're fired. *

MOLLY
Why don't you lie down for a while.

REARDON (OVER THE PHONE)
You're fired, Molly.

MOLLY
Can I ask why?

REARDON (OVER THE PHONE)
You were supposed to set up the TV.

MOLLY

I did, I installed it myself.

REARDON (OVER THE PHONE)

I'm looking at a blank screen.

MOLLY

I told you yesterday your cable would be out until 10am today.

REARDON (OVER THE PHONE)

It was your responsibility.

MOLLY

I told you there would be cable outages in your area. It'll be back on by 10am. I don't have control over Comcast.

REARDON (OVER THE PHONE)

How many of my friends are you sleeping with?

MOLLY

I'm not sleeping with any of them.

REARDON (OVER THE PHONE)

That's not what I heard.

MOLLY

Reardon, listen to me, with a hazmat suit I wouldn't sleep with-- just lie down.

REARDON (OVER THE PHONE)

Can I give you some advice? Lose the bitchy air. Lose the superior air. Go to the office and get your stuff and be out of there before I show up.

REARDON hangs up and we --

CUT TO:

INT. BLUEROCK OFFICES - MORNING

LEAH, an attractive young woman, is putting the last of Molly's things in a box when MOLLY walks into the office. *

LEAH

Hi. Are you Molly?

MOLLY

Yeah.

LEAH

I'm Leah. Reardon asked me to pack your personals.

MOLLY

I appreciate it.

LEAH

He also asked me to get the numbers of tonight's players so I can confirm the list for tonight. I'm really sorry.

MOLLY

Don't be. My phone's in my car. I'll text you all the numbers you need when I get downstairs.

CUT TO:

INT. MOLLY'S CAR - DAY

MOLLY's got her box of stuff from the office next to her in the passenger seat as she pulls into the Four Seasons and is met by the hotel manager. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

I texted my replacement a bunch of random numbers with 310 area codes. Then I sent a text to the players for tonight and told them the game had been moved to the Four Seasons Hotel, Suite 1401.

INT. LUXURY SUITE - NIGHT

The players are sitting and standing around, drinking champagne and cocktails, smoking a cigar, standing on the terrace, etc. The place looks beautiful and so does MOLLY. *

MOLLY

Fellas, can I have your attention a moment?

PLAYER

Where's Reardon?

MOLLY

I'll be hosting a game in this suite every Tuesday night. If you play tonight you'll be guaranteed a seat at the game for life. If you'd prefer to play at the Viper Room there'll be no hard feelings. *

There's quiet for a moment and everyone kind of looks at
PLAYER X...PLAYER X looks at MOLLY and smiles, who looks back *
at him...blank but confident. *

CUT TO:

INT. LUXURY SUITE - A BIT LATER

The game is in full swing and high spirits. MOLLY and her *
laptop are observing from a little distance. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

The game was mine now. I
incorporated and MDB Event Planning
was born. I paid taxes and 1099'd
my employees. I never became
romantically or sexually involved
with any of the players. It just
wouldn't have been professional--
this was back when I was still
making good decisions. And I went
to a lawyer to make absolutely sure
all this was legal.

INT. LOUIS BUTTERMAN'S OFFICE - DAY

MOLLY sits across from LOUIS BUTTERMAN, a lawyer. *

BUTTERMAN

Are you taking a rake?

MOLLY

No.

BUTTERMAN

Then you're not breaking the law *
but can I give you some advice? *

MOLLY

Please. *

BUTTERMAN

There's a saying in my business. *
Don't break the law when you're
breaking the law. *

MOLLY

What do you mean?

BUTTERMAN

No drugs, no prostitutes, no muscle
to collect debts.

MOLLY

I don't do anything like that but you just said I wasn't breaking the law.

BUTTERMAN

Let's keep it that way, 'cause you don't want to break the law when you're breaking the law.

MOLLY

(beat)
Am I breaking the law?

BUTTERMAN

Not really.

MOLLY

We're able to find out for sure, aren't we? Laws are written down.

BUTTERMAN

You're not taking a percentage of the pot?

MOLLY

No.

BUTTERMAN

You're running a square game.

CUT TO:

INT. LUXURY SUITE - NIGHT

A game is underway and it looks like everything Molly's describing.

MOLLY (V.O.)

My game had a tricky ecosystem. It was built around escapism and exclusivity. These guys could buy their way into anything and anyone but here in this room you couldn't buy your win. You couldn't buy me, you couldn't buy the girls and you couldn't buy a seat at the table. There's nothing as sweet as a win you have to work for and the wins and losses were compelling and they were real. Of course it helped that the players were gambling addicts.

INT. LUXURY SUITE - LATER

The game has ended. Diego's breaking down the table, the women are cleaning up and PLAYER X is talking to MOLLY. *

PLAYER X
I've had a thought.

MOLLY
Yeah?

PLAYER X
Raise the stakes.

MOLLY
(pause)
To what?

PLAYER X
50K buy-in. Blinds are five-hundred and a thousand.

MOLLY
(pause)
That's uh...that's a 500 percent hike.

PLAYER X
Yeah.

MOLLY
I don't think it's a good idea.

PLAYER X
(calling out)
Could you give me the room a second?

They wait for the women to leave the room... *

MOLLY
The players who are losing a hundred-thousand a week are gonna be losing half a million.

PLAYER X
And the players winning a hundred-thousand--

MOLLY
--will have no one left to play with. Players are gonna get hurt, others are gonna get killed and some of them are gonna drop out. It's not sustainable and we'll lose the game.

PLAYER X

Find new players.

MOLLY (V.O.)

He meant find new fish and with these stakes that was gonna be challenging. First up was Donnie Silverman.

*
*

PHOTO OF DONNIE SILVERMAN POSING AT A POKER TABLE WITH A TWO-FOOT HIGH PILE OF CASH.

*
*

MOLLY (V.O.)

Donnie won the World Series of Poker last year and got in touch with me through one of the players.

*
*

INT. MOLLY'S APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

*

MOLLY's watching the World Series of Poker on her laptop. We can see that DONNIE's one of the players as MOLLY hits pause, makes a note on a pad and then continues watching.

*
*
*

MOLLY (V.O.)

Ordinarily if you were at the final table at the World Series that would automatically disqualify you from playing in my game but a Vegas contact told me to look at the film. So that night I watched seven hours of the world's worst spectator sport.

*
*

*

CUT TO:

*

EXT. OUTSIDE THE HOME OF PLAYER X - DAY

*

MOLLY's standing with a check for PLAYER X.

*

PLAYER X

Are you fuckin' nuts? Donnie Silverman won the World Series of Poker.

MOLLY

He took eleven hands at the final table. He had the nuts on eight of them and three of those--three--were two-outers with four players still in the hand. He ran hot. He doesn't lock his chips down, he's reckless, gives tons of action and just won 12-million dollars.

PLAYER X
(beat)
Okey-doke.

*
*

CUT TO:

INT. COMMERCE CASINO - NIGHT

MOLLY (V.O.)
Next up was Harlan Eustis.

MOLLY's watching HARLAN play at one of the tables. He's got a big stack of chips in front of him. *

MOLLY (V.O.)
Player X said he met him at the Commerce Casino and that he'd be good for the game but I wasn't seeing what he was seeing. He played tight, folding after the hole cards 64 percent of the time.

HARLAN tosses his cards into the middle of the table. *

MOLLY (V.O.)
It wasn't clear where his money came from. He produced backyard wrestling videos and other low-rent productions--

*
*

QUICK CUT TO:

BACKYARD WRESTLING VIDEO

*

GIRLS GONE WILD-TYPE VIDEO

*

AMAZING CAR CHASES-TYPE VIDEO

*

CUT BACK TO:

INT. COMMERCE CASINO - NIGHT

--as HARLAN wins the hand and pulls in his chips. *

MOLLY (V.O.)
--but worst of all, Harlan Eustice was a good card player. And Player X knew he was good but he wanted him anyway and he wanted him badly. You'll see why in a moment. *

*
*
*

EXT. BEAUTIFUL MALIBU BEACH HOUSE - EVENING

Two men in their 30's, BRAD and NEAL, are walking on the beach toward the house and we move in on BRAD--

MOLLY (V.O.)

The third new recruit was Brad Marion, who everyone called Bad Brad because he was uniquely terrible at this game. If there was a worse player in the world, Brad would still find a way to lose to him.

As BRAD and NEAL get closer to the house we can see bikini-clad women and a few guys partying around the hot tub.

MOLLY (V.O.)

I'd been asked to throw together a game on a Saturday night at the Malibu house of a man who made his money by co-starring in a sex video opposite a woman who made her money by being born with it.

INT. MALIBU BEACH HOUSE - EVENING

A game is underway. BRAD waits in the doorway and watches the game as NEAL approaches MOLLY.

NEAL

Hey.

MOLLY

Hey, what are you doing here?

NEAL

I'm three houses down. Derrick said you were having a game and I wanted to--

MOLLY puts her finger up to say, "Just a second." She watches the end of the hand play out.

MOLLY

(back to Neal)

Yeah.

NEAL

I just wanted to introduce you to Brad Marion, he wants to play.

MOLLY

Well if you give me his information I'll check him out.

NEAL

No, Derrick's gonna vouch for him.

MOLLY looks at BRAD, a sweet if slightly odd guy with a slight facial tic. He's looking at the game like a kid in a candy store. Then she steps over to one of the players-- DERRICK--and whispers in his ear.

MOLLY (V.O.)

"Derrick's gonna vouch for him" meant Derrick would cover any losses if Brad didn't pay. Up to any amount.

DERRICK nods his head "yes" without taking his eyes off the table.

MOLLY looks at BRAD again, then waves him over.

INT. LUXURY HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

A game is underway and BRAD's playing now.

MOLLY (V.O.)

But he *could* pay, and did.

As we go through a SERIES OF CUTS showing BRAD betting huge stacks of chips, losing, buying in from MOLLY for another 50K, betting huge, losing, etc.

MOLLY (V.O.)

Bad Brad had raised 45-million dollars for a fund that traded oil futures and every week he came to the game, lost a quarter of a million dollars and tipped me 10-thousand so he could play the next week. He wasn't getting any better and the guys were feasting on him.

BRAD loses another hand and walks over to Molly's table.

BRAD

Can I get another fifty?

MOLLY

Hey, let's talk for a second.

BRAD

Sure.

MOLLY

Brad, this game may not be for you.

BRAD

I know I'm no card shark.

MOLLY
No, you're not.

MOLLY shows BRAD her computer screen--

MOLLY (CONT'D)
These are your losses after ten weeks. And you've won...never. The strongest players have losing weeks and the weaker players get lucky but I've never seen someone not win, you know, ever. It's actually a statistical anomaly.

BRAD
Yeah I know. I like playing with the guys. I don't have that many friends. Don't take my seat away, I can tip you more.

MOLLY
No, your tips are very generous. How about if I got you some books to read? Or even a pro to give you lessons?

BRAD
Sure. Maybe. Let me think about it.

MOLLY
(pause)
Okay. Sign for fifty-thousand.

MOLLY pulls chips while BRAD signs on a clipboard.

MOLLY (V.O.)
Turned out Bad Brad knew what he was doing. He was getting customers. He'd drop 200K at the game and pick up two-million for his hedge fund.

DERRICK slaps BRAD on the back--

DERRICK
Tell 'em what's smart this week.

MOLLY (V.O.)
More on that later as well but first the final recruit.

EXT. DODGER STADIUM/OWNER'S LUXURY BOX - NIGHT

MOLLY and some other nicely-dressed people are watching the game in style but at this moment they're standing in nervous anticipation. Some of the people are holding hands for luck and a couple are covering their eyes.

MOLLY (V.O.)

I was in the owner's box at Dodger Stadium when People Magazine's Sexiest Man Alive called me. I was dating the owners' son at the time and the night before we'd had a discussion about priorities.

INT. BOYFRIEND'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The BOYFRIEND's in bed as MOLLY comes into the darkened room, dressed for the poker game she's just come from.

BOYFRIEND

It's 4:30 in the morning.

MOLLY

(quietly)

Hey babe, I'm sorry to wake you up.

BOYFRIEND

You didn't wake me up, I've been waiting up.

MOLLY

You shouldn't have, that's why I have a key.

BOYFRIEND

I don't know any other guy who'd put up with his girlfriend staying out till 4:30. Dressing like that for millionaire movie stars, being the only woman in the room--

MOLLY

I'm sorry, I didn't realize until just now that you're mad.

BOYFRIEND

When you're not running a game you're out recruiting, you sleep-- when you sleep--you have two phones clutched to your chest, you went out in the middle of the night last night, I don't even know where--

MOLLY

It was to pick up a check from a player. I got a call.

BOYFRIEND

You couldn't pick up the check in the morning?

MOLLY

You can't let a gambler sleep on a debt.

BOYFRIEND

I don't think this argument's gonna get me anywhere.

MOLLY

You want to have sex like we're strangers?

BOYFRIEND

I want to make this work!

MOLLY

Okay. Okay. I do too. And tomorrow night I'm gonna come with you to the game and I'm not gonna make any calls or take any calls and I'm gonna make a good impression on your parents. I'm gonna be there just for you.

*
*

MOLLY (V.O.)

I over-promised.

*

EXT. DODGER STADIUM/OWNER'S LUXURY BOX - NIGHT

Back with MOLLY, her BOYFRIEND, the PARENTS and other guests, some of whom are praying or covering their eyes, etc.

*
*

MOLLY (V.O.)

'Cause the thing is if you're sitting in the owner's box with the owners, who are also your boyfriend's parents--

*

We see hits of the scoreboard that demonstrate what Molly's talking about.

MOLLY (V.O.)

--and your team is batting in the bottom of the ninth, down by a run, one out, runners on first and third and a win means you're in the playoffs, you're really not at that moment supposed to take a phone call.

MOLLY's phone buzzes and she sneaks a peak at the caller ID. The BOYFRIEND clocks this.

MOLLY (V.O.)

I wanted this man in the game, and not because he was *People's Sexiest Man Alive*. I already had three of them at the table. But this one was a heavyweight--one of the biggest stars in the world. A 9-time Grammy winner whose last two albums debuted at Number-1 on the Billboard chart. Smart, charismatic, and influential, he wasn't a recluse but you didn't see him at parties or clubs. He was powerful fish bait, he was whale bait, he was an actual rock star and he was good business. And if I had him as an ally I wouldn't be dependant on Player X.

MOLLY makes her decision, takes out her phone, tells her BOYFRIEND she's sorry and she'll be just a second and gets the reaction you'd expect.

MOLLY (V.O.)

I'll call him Player Y.

MOLLY

(into phone)

This is Molly.

CUT TO:

THE VIEW (FILE FOOTAGE)

They come back from commercial with bumper music and animation. JENNY MCCARTHY is introducing their next guest with a giant copy of *Molly's Game* projected on the rear screen.

JENNY MCCARTHY

Molly Bloom was dubbed the Poker Princess for running underground high stakes poker games for Hollywood superstars, Wall Street big wigs--

GOOD MORNING AMERICA (FILE FOOTAGE)

AMY ROBACH

The new book, *Molly's Game*, just out today, is already making headlines with big stories in *Vanity Fair* and *People Magazine*.

20/20 (FILE FOOTAGE)

Over a montage of seedy-nightlife-in-LA shots--

VOICE OVER

In the heart of Hollywood, hidden beneath the notorious Viper Room, a narrow hallway leads into a musty room, a poker table, and the secret life of Molly Bloom.

We hear MOLLY's voice off screen--

*

MOLLY (O.S.)

Not as secret as I'd hoped.

We pull back and we're in--

INT. CHARLIE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

--as CHARLIE clicks off the TV. Molly's standing in the doorway.

*

CHARLIE

Hey. C'mon in. Throw your coat anywhere.

MOLLY

Thank you.

CHARLIE

How was your flight?

MOLLY

Just fine.

CHARLIE

How are you paying for plane tickets between LA and New York?

MOLLY

I had two-million points left on my AmEx. They took away the card but they let me keep the points which I thought was nice of them.

CHARLIE

It was. So you had meetings.

MOLLY

Hm?

CHARLIE

You had meetings out in LA about the book?

MOLLY

I did.

CHARLIE

With the studios.

MOLLY

Yes. And a few other people.

CHARLIE

You have an agent working with you? *

MOLLY

I do.

CHARLIE

Was there interest?

MOLLY

A company that owns 400,000 video poker machines wants to put my face on them.

CHARLIE

Anything else?

MOLLY

Treat Magazine made a generous offer.

CHARLIE

Treat?

MOLLY

It's a new magazine for the high-end photography enthusiast.

CHARLIE
They want you to pose naked.

MOLLY
I'd be the April treat.

CHARLIE
I meant interest in the book.

MOLLY
Yes.

CHARLIE
Any offers?

MOLLY
A few I guess. A couple. Seven.

CHARLIE
Really.

MOLLY
Yes.

CHARLIE
And...?

MOLLY
I passed.

CHARLIE
You passed on seven offers.

MOLLY
You will be paid, Charlie.

CHARLIE
No, I'm just curious why you passed
on seven offers.

MOLLY
Creative differences. Should we
start?

CHARLIE
Okay, you see this?

CHARLIE's motioned to a stack of documents--

*

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
This is discovery. Let's see what
we've discovered.

CHARLIE will draw a crude diagram on a white board as he
speaks.

*

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Over here we have Michael
Druzhinsky, Michael Anikovich and
Michael Slobo. The three Mikes.

CHARLIE draws three "M"s and puts a circle around it. *

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

The three Mikes run a chain of
corrupt medical clinics and they've
been committing insurance fraud,
wire fraud and mail fraud on an
epic scale. Over here is the
Taiwanchik-Gershen Organization. *

CHARLIE writes "TGO" and draws a circle around it. *

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

They're a worldwide bookmaking
operation handling hundreds of
millions of dollars a year in
illegal sports betting. And over
here is the Habib-Gershen
Organization. *

CHARLIE writes "HGO" and draws a circle around it. The three
organizations are now in a triangle on the white board. *

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Also an illegal bookmaking
operation but this one financed by
an art gallery owned by Hillel
Habib who everyone calls-- *

MOLLY

Helly.

MOLLY and CHARLIE both understand that MOLLY just admitted to
knowing these guys. *

CHARLIE

(pause)

This is the Russian mafia. And the
three are tied together in the
indictment through...? A poker
game.

CHARLIE writes "Molly" in the middle of the triangle and
draws a circle around it. *

MOLLY

Were they tapping my phone?

CHARLIE

No.

MOLLY

Thank God.

CHARLIE

They were tapping the phones of everyone you talked to.

MOLLY

Okay.

CHARLIE

Druzhinsky's phone was tapped. They've got you confirming that you ran raked games at various locations in New York and they've also got a confidential informant confirming that you ran raked games at various locations in New York. You were in violation of 1955-- that's the part of the U.S. Code that makes it illegal to run an illegal gambling business.

(pause)

You know what you did? You finished writing your book before the good part happened.

MOLLY

You get a kick outta yourself, don't you.

CHARLIE lifts up a copy of *Molly's Game*--

CHARLIE

I don't like this picture.

MOLLY

Thank you.

CHARLIE

You look like the cat who ate the canary and then told the canary's parents about it.

*
*

MOLLY

I don't like it either but it's the picture the publisher wanted and I wasn't given a vote.

CHARLIE

I liked the book though. A good story well told.

MOLLY

Thank you.

CHARLIE

I need you to tell it again. From the beginning and this time without leaving anything out. Would you like a glass of water?

MOLLY

I'd like a glass of bourbon.

CHARLIE

And one more thing.

MOLLY

Yeah.

CHARLIE

I need your hard drives.

MOLLY

Going back how far?

CHARLIE

What do you mean?

MOLLY

I kept my hard drives when I'd buy a new laptop.

CHARLIE

You're kidding.

MOLLY

It had records of who owed what and spreadsheets on the players.

CHARLIE

They have more than that. Every time you charge your phone by plugging it into your computer the computer records all your text messages and e-mails.

MOLLY

(pause)

Are you joking?

CHARLIE

I want to run a forensic imaging of your hard drives.

MOLLY

No, I'll be destroying those hard drives.

CHARLIE

You can't, they're evidence.

MOLLY

I'm going to blow them up. I'm literally going to use explosives and then scatter the remains in the Colorado River.

CHARLIE

You already told me they exist.

MOLLY

You're just gonna have to pretend I didn't tell you.

CHARLIE

I can't do that.

MOLLY

I don't have any hard drives, I work with an abacus.

CHARLIE

Molly--

MOLLY

There are no hard drives!

CHARLIE

If you destroy evidence and obstruct justice on top of the charges already brought against you in this case, you will, I promise you, be incarcerated.

MOLLY

You don't understand what's in those text messages.

CHARLIE

I understand that you've had boyfriends and that there are gonna be private exchanges.

MOLLY

You *don't* understand. There are going to be those messages and they'll be embarrassing but there are also going to be messages that would destroy lives. Other lives. There are messages that would end careers and obliterate families. If the text messages were made public--

CHARLIE

They won't be.

MOLLY
If they were--

CHARLIE
They won't be.

MOLLY
--it would be catastrophic for many
people.

CHARLIE
I'm a lawyer. I'm legally--

MOLLY
No.

CHARLIE
Listen to me, I'm legally
prohibited from disclosing--

MOLLY
*My last lawyer sold my deposition
to the National Enquirer, Charlie!*
(beat)
That happened. But the information
in that deposition will be nothing
compared to the consequences of
those text messages--

*

CHARLIE
Hang on.

CHARLIE walks to his desk and picks up his copy of *Molly's
Game*.

*

MOLLY
Children will find out their
fathers--

CHARLIE
The movie stars you named in the
book--you'd already named them
under oath in the Bad Brad Marion
deposition.

MOLLY
It was that or perjure myself and
Brad had already named everyone in
the game.

CHARLIE
That's not what I'm getting at.
Your lawyer back then--Butterball--

MOLLY
Butterman.

CHARLIE
Butterman leaked your deposition to
the tabloids?

MOLLY
Yeah.

CHARLIE nods that now he understands...

MOLLY (CONT'D)
What.

CHARLIE
That's why those were the only real
names you used in the book, the
ones that were given up by
Butterbean.

MOLLY
Yeah.

CHARLIE
And is that why you have creative
differences with the Hollywood
offers? They want information you
won't give them?

MOLLY
None of this has anything to do
with the Russian mob, right?

CHARLIE
What's on the hard drives, Molly?
Famous married guys hitting on you?

MOLLY nods her head "yeah".

CHARLIE picks up his cell phone and tosses it to her.

MOLLY
What's this?

CHARLIE
It's got every e-mail and text
message I've sent in the last year
as well as a variety of
incriminating evidence about my
clients. If anything of yours leaks
you can sell my phone to the
highest bidder and I'll lose my job
and be disbarred.

*

MOLLY

In order to demonstrate the sanctity of your attorney/client confidentiality you're betraying the confidentiality of all your other clients?

CHARLIE

I know you're not gonna read it. If you're having a hard time trusting me, maybe it'll help to know I trust you.

MOLLY takes a long moment before she says--

MOLLY

I'll fly home to Colorado and be back the next day with the hard drives.

MOLLY tosses Charlie's phone back to him.

MOLLY (V.O.)

Here's how I lost the LA game.

CUT TO:

INT. LUXURY SUITE - NIGHT

HARLAN EUSTICE stares silently at cards we can't see. Then he explodes--

HARLAN

Motherfucker!

HARLAN's frozen in furious silence for a moment. The other players are quiet and don't look at him. HARLAN grabs some food that's on a plate and throws it at DIEGO--

HARLAN (CONT'D)

Fuck you!

DIEGO is professional and doesn't react.

HARLAN (CONT'D)

Fuck you, you Mexican fuck!

HARLAN doesn't get far in his tirade before MOLLY quickly steps in and defuses the situation.

HARLAN (CONT'D)

You undocumented fucking border jumping fuck!

MOLLY

Hey HEY!
(to Harlan)
You get out on the terrace.

HARLAN

(to DIEGO)
*You've been pullin' that shit all
night!*

*

MOLLY

(to HARLAN)
Out on the terrace. Now.

*

MOLLY motions to CASSIE, the relief dealer, the way a
baseball manager would motion to the bullpen. MOLLY walks
DIEGO away from the table--

*

*

*

MOLLY (CONT'D)

(quietly)
You good?

DIEGO

Yeah.

MOLLY

Have a drink.

MOLLY goes out on to--

*

EXT. TERRACE - CONTINUOUS

--where HARLAN's waiting.

*

MOLLY

What the hell.

HARLAN

I'll apologize to Diego.

MOLLY

Yeah and you're gonna go home, I'm
making a floor call, that's it.

HARLAN doesn't say anything--he just stares out at Los
Angeles...

*

MOLLY (CONT'D)

(pause)
Did you hear me?

HARLAN

I don't have it.

MOLLY

(beat)

You don't have what?

HARLAN looks at MOLLY very simply...

*

HARLAN

The million-two, I don't have it.

MOLLY takes that in...

*

MOLLY (V.O.)

It was 5am on Saturday. This game began at 7pm on Thursday.

INT. HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

Everyone's much fresher and more energetic. DIEGO's dealing.

*

HARLAN

I rented out the whole courtyard of the Buffalo Club, it'll be about a hundred people. Kumamoto oysters, snow crab, lobsters--

MOLLY (V.O.)

Harlan Eustice was the producer of backyard wrestling videos who Player X badly wanted in the game. Harlan was excited about the surprise 40th birthday party he was throwing for his wife in 24 hours.

HARLAN

Kobe beef, black truffle pasta, Dover sole--

MOLLY (V.O.)

I liked Harlan. There was no affectation, no Hollywooding, no flossing--he wasn't ticking off the menu items to show off, he was genuinely excited about the party he was giving his wife.

HARLAN

She doesn't know anything, she thinks we're having dinner with her brother and his wife.

MOLLY (V.O.)

But nobody else liked him except Player X.

*

*

*

(MORE)

MOLLY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

He played tight, didn't give a lot of action and always got his money in good which means he was running the odds. In other words he was playing poker and the others were gambling.

*
*
*
*
*
*

In a SERIES OF SHOTS we see HARLAN folding hands--

*

HARLAN

(tossing in his cards)

Fold.

*
*
*

LATER--

*

HARLAN (CONT'D)

Fold.

*
*

LATER--

*

HARLAN tosses in his cards--

*

LATER--

*

HARLAN (CONT'D)

(tossing his cards)

Nope.

*
*
*

LATER--

*

HARLAN hauls in a huge pile of chips after a win.

*

MOLLY (V.O.)

And he won.

*
*

INT. LUXURY SUITE - **LATER**

*

CASSIE's dealing in the middle of a hand. There's already a small pot in the middle and the only two players left are HARLAN and BRAD. The four cards turned over in the middle are queen-eight-nine-nine.

*
*
*

MOLLY (V.O.)

By midnight Harlan had tripled his original fifty-thousand dollar buy-in but everything came off the rails with one hand. And that's how it happens, that's how you go full tilt. Harlan, the best player at the table, the best player at most tables, was about to get bluffed off the nuts by, of all people, Bad Brad.

*
*
*

CASSIE turns over a fifth card--a king.

*

MOLLY (V.O.)

How? Because this was only Brad's second game, Harlan hadn't been at his first, and Harlan didn't know yet that Brad was bad.

Animation shows Harlan's hand--an 8 and a 9--which when added to the table cards (KQ899) gives Harlan a full house.

MOLLY (V.O.)

Harlan's got a boat, nine's full.

Animation shows Brad with a 3 and a 5, which when added to the table cards equals nothing.

MOLLY (V.O.)

Brad's got nothing but his pre-flop betting made it look, entirely accidentally, like there was a chance he had pocket kings, which, if true, would give him the better full house.

HARLAN counts his chips and pushes some into the pot--

*

HARLAN

30-thousand.

BRAD begins counting his chips.

*

MOLLY (V.O.)

And there it is. Brad's counting off 30-thousand which means he's gonna call and Harlan knows that if Brad's gonna call and not raise it means he didn't have the boat and he's betting a high two-pair--probably kings and queens. But then instead of calling the bet--

BRAD pushes ALL his chips in--

*

BRAD

I'm all in.

MOLLY (V.O.)

--Brad pushes 72-thousand dollars into the pot. Harlan looks at Brad. Every tell Harlan knows about--carotid artery pumping, stiff hands--Brad's doing the opposite. Harlan's betting had represented a huge hand by calling on the flop, check-raising the turn and bombing the river.

*

(MORE)

MOLLY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Of course Harlan didn't know that Brad didn't know what any of that meant. So Harlan, always a good sport, said--

HARLAN

Nice bet. I'm laying this down.

MOLLY (V.O.)

--as he tossed in what he didn't realize was the winning hand. Brad tosses in his cards too and one of them flips over and Harlan sees it's not a king.

BRAD

Oh, sorry about that.

HARLAN puts his finger on the flipped card to keep the dealer *
from collecting it. *

HARLAN

You didn't have pocket kings?

BRAD

I didn't have any kings. Except the one in the middle.

HARLAN

You had two pair?

BRAD

I had one pair, the nines in the middle.

Everyone starts laughing raucously at Harlan--asking "*How* *
could you fold that?!", "*Bill Buckner!*"--further humiliating *
Harlan and patting Brad on the back. HARLAN is frozen. White- *
faced. MOLLY of course is clocking all this. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

It wasn't even that it was that
much money--Harlan only lost about
40-thousand on the hand--

HARLAN gets up and starts pacing around the room. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

--but a circuit breaker blew and
Harlan was out for blood.
Everyone's. *

HARLAN walks up to MOLLY-- *

MOLLY
(quietly)
You've got 51-thousand on the
table, you want another 50?

HARLAN
Gimme another hundred.

MOLLY
(beat)
Sign here for 100-thousand.

MOLLY starts to pull the chips and we --

CUT TO:

INT. LUXURY SUITE - LATER

HARLAN watches while another pair of hands haul in the pot.
He gets up and goes to MOLLY.

MOLLY (V.O.)
By 5am Harlan was down half a
million. He'd abandoned everything
he knew about poker and was playing
like a frat kid--swinging for a
home run on every hand.

HARLAN
Another hundred.

MOLLY
Harlan--

HARLAN
Molly. Please. Let's go.

MOLLY
Sign here for a hundred.

INT. HOTEL SUITE - LATER

The staff closes the curtains to shut out the daylight. TWO
NEW PLAYERS walk in, freshly dressed for work.

MOLLY (V.O.)
Text messages were going out
letting everyone know Harlan was
bleeding. Guys were coming by to
play for a couple of hours before
work. They'd been losing to him for
months. Everyone wanted a check
from Harlan Eustice.

HARLAN's pouring himself a Red Bull and vodka as Molly walks up to him. *

MOLLY

If you go home now you can get a few hours sleep before Sheila's party.

HARLAN

Soon.

MOLLY

You're on tilt--everybody knows it. And you're playing without the ammunition you need to win. *

HARLAN

You're right.

MOLLY

(beat)

Alright, thank you. *

HARLAN

Give me 500-thousand.

MOLLY looks at him... *

HARLAN (CONT'D)

I'm just gonna get back to even.

MOLLY looks at him and then pulls \$500,000 in chips and counts them for Harlan. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

That should be the second line of every gambler's obit. "Mr. Feldstein died while trying to get back to even." Harlan never did. And he never got to his wife's birthday party. She filed for divorce two days later but there was one last punch coming that would put Harlan on the floor for good.

INT. LUXURY HOTEL SUITE - LATER

The staff opens the curtains and it's dark outside again. A room service cart is being pushed into the hall by one of the female staff. *

HARLAN and another player in his 30's are the only two in the hand but everyone's watching with great interest.

MOLLY (V.O.)

Harlan was heads-up against a guy named Frederick who was Austrian royalty--the son of a Count in the House of Habsburg and a distant cousin of Marie Antoinette.

Again, we see animation on the screen as MOLLY describes their hands. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

Harlan had pocket queens. His Excellency had Ace-King. They were both in 65K pre-flop.

DIEGO burns a card and then deals three in the middle. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

The flop's queen-seven-seven. Harlan has a full-house again, queens full of sevens--with three rounds of betting in front of him. The Count has nothing. *

FREDERICK stacks his chips and pushes them all in. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

And the Count goes all in. He wants Harlan to think he's got two more sevens under there. Bite me, says Harlan, he's not falling for this again and he snap calls all in. There's \$750,000 on the table. Diego burns a card and deals the turn. A king. Otto von Bismarck now has two pair, kings and sevens, but two-pair's nothing next to a full house. And at this point, the only hand left that can beat a queen full house-- *

DIEGO turns over the fifth card. It's a king-- *

MOLLY (V.O.)

--is a king full house. Captain von Trapp bluffed two pair and rivered into kings full!

Then all of a sudden--

HARLAN

Motherfucker!

We're back at the scene we saw before. HARLAN's frozen in furious silence for a moment. *

The other players are quiet and don't look at him. Harlan grabs some food that's on a plate and throws it at Diego--

HARLAN (CONT'D)

Fuck you!

DIEGO is professional and doesn't react. *

HARLAN (CONT'D)

Fuck you, you Mexican fuck!

HARLAN doesn't get far into his tirade before MOLLY quickly steps in and defuses the situation. *

HARLAN (CONT'D)

You undocumented fucking border jumping fuck!

MOLLY

Hey HEY!

(to HARLAN)

You get out on the terrace. *

HARLAN

(to Diego)

You've been pullin' that shit all night!

MOLLY

(to Harlan)

Out on the terrace.

MOLLY motions to CASSIE, the relief dealer, the way a baseball manager would motion to the bullpen. MOLLY walks DIEGO away from the table-- *

MOLLY (CONT'D)

(quietly)

You good?

DIEGO

Yeah.

MOLLY

Have a drink.

MOLLY goes out on to-- *

EXT. TERRACE - CONTINUOUS

--where Harlan's waiting.

MOLLY

What the hell.

HARLAN
I'll apologize to Diego.

MOLLY
Yeah and you're gonna go home, I'm
making a floor call, that's it.

HARLAN doesn't say anything--he just stares out at Los Angeles...

MOLLY (CONT'D)
(pause)
Did you hear me?

HARLAN
I don't have it.

MOLLY
(beat)
You don't have what?

HARLAN looks at MOLLY very simply...

HARLAN
A million-two, I don't have it.

MOLLY takes that in...

MOLLY
(pause)
Go home.

HARLAN
I'm sorry.

MOLLY
We'll meet tomorrow and talk about
what to do.
(beat)
And what you've gotta do is tell
Sheila the truth, okay, you tell
her the truth. Tell her what
happened. And I'm gonna help you,
I'm gonna get you to a meeting.
We'll talk tomorrow and figure out
what to do about the money.

MOLLY (V.O.)
Harlan and I didn't meet the next
day. He just called me and said
everything was okay and showed up
the next week with a check.

EXT. BRENTWOOD MANSION - DAY

MOLLY's standing in front of her car, a Mercedes convertible, *
in the middle of a slightly heated exchange with PLAYER X. *

MOLLY
Where did he get the money from?

PLAYER X
I loaned it to him.

MOLLY
Loaned it?

PLAYER X
I get 50% of his wins until the
debt's paid off and then 50% for
the next two years with no
exposure.

MOLLY
You're taking 50% of his wins and
no exposure on the losses.

PLAYER X
Yeah.

MOLLY
First of all he'll never climb out
of that, that's sharecropper math.
Second, you can't stake a player
and play in the game at the same
time.

PLAYER X
I've been doing it for three years. *

MOLLY's stunned...

MOLLY
(pause)
You've been staking Harlan?

PLAYER X
Yeah.

MOLLY
(beat)
Jesus Christ--

PLAYER X
It's not cheating.

MOLLY
It is a hundred percent cheating. *

PLAYER X
Tell me how it's cheating.

MOLLY
Are you kidding?

PLAYER X
Tell me how it's cheating.

MOLLY
If you have an interest in another
player winning?

PLAYER X
You think I'm gonna take a dive?
And if I did, who would care?

MOLLY
You fold your hole cards--a five of
clubs and a jack of hearts--he's
still in the game. It would benefit
him to know that the five of hearts
and jack of spades are no longer in
play, don't you think?

PLAYER X
You think I'm signaling him?

*

MOLLY
I'm saying it can't fuckin' happen
again.

PLAYER X
(pause)
You know who the biggest winner in
this game is?

MOLLY
You.

PLAYER X
You know who the second biggest
winner is?

MOLLY
Look--

PLAYER X
You.

MOLLY
We've had this conversation a
couple of times before.

PLAYER X

Maybe it's time to have it again.
'Cause between you, the dealers and
the girls you're taking a lot of
money out of the game.

MOLLY

You made more money playing poker
this year than you did making
movies.

PLAYER X

I think we should talk again about
capping your tips.

MOLLY

You want to get together with the
other players--who on my tax
returns are called clients--and
discuss putting a ceiling on my
wages. *

PLAYER X

That's right.

MOLLY

It'll be America's most closely-
watched anti-trust case.

PLAYER X

Are you threatening me? *

MOLLY

That's movie dialogue and you were
threatening me. Here's your check. *

I'll see you Tuesday. *

MOLLY gets back into her car. PLAYER X comes over to the
driver's side to say one last thing... *

PLAYER X

You're sleeping with him, right? *

MOLLY

(pause)
Harlan?

PLAYER X

No.

MOLLY (V.O.)

I knew he meant Player Y.

PLAYER X

Is he writing a song about you, are
you his muse? *

MOLLY
I'll see you Tuesday.

*
*

CUT TO:

*

INT. LUXURY SUITE - NIGHT

A game is underway and we see the hands of PLAYER X. We move down the table and see ANOTHER PAIR OF HANDS. They belong to PLAYER Y.

*
*

MOLLY (V.O.)
I always found Player Y to be a nice guy. Polite, a good loser, a good winner, and unflappable in the face of boorishness.

DERRICK
Tell us who you're fucking besides your famous girlfriend.

PLAYER Y
No one, and can we maybe not talk like this in front of Molly?

*
*

INT. HOME RECORDING STUDIO - NIGHT

*

PLAYER Y is playing a few chords for MOLLY in his home studio--a few gold records on the wall along with a bank of Grammys and other awards.

*
*
*

MOLLY (V.O.)
I'd go to the Hollywood Hills home he shared with his girlfriend to drop off or pick up a check and sometimes he'd play me a little of whatever he was working on.

*
*

Player Y's GIRLFRIEND steps in--she's in the middle of dressing for a night out.

*
*

GIRLFRIEND
Excuse me. You gotta get dressed, we're gonna be late.
(to MOLLY)
Is it Millie?

*
*
*
*

PLAYER Y
Molly.

*
*

MOLLY
Millie's fine.

*
*

INT. GYM - NIGHT

MOLLY's working out on a bike in the gym in her building. Her PHONE BUZZES and she checks the text. *

MOLLY (V.O.)
He started texting me--mostly game stuff but once in a while a joke or a compliment. *

INT. MOLLY'S APARTMENT/BEDROOM - NIGHT

MOLLY's sitting up in bed reading. Her phone rings. *

MOLLY (V.O.)
It was around 1am on the night of the American Music Awards when my phone rang.

She looks at the caller ID.

MOLLY
(into phone)
Hello?

PLAYER Y
(from the phone)
Where are you?

MOLLY (V.O.)
He was hammered.

MOLLY
Are you alright?
(into phone)

PLAYER Y
(from the phone)
Are you home?

MOLLY
(into phone)
I am.

PLAYER Y
Where *is* your home?

MOLLY
(into phone)
Listen, bud, you're wasted. Can you get home? *

PLAYER Y
(from the phone)
I want to come over. *

MOLLY's in a tough spot and needs to navigate this carefully...

*

MOLLY
(pause)
Do you think that's a good idea?

PLAYER Y
I want to hang out with you outside that room with those idiots staring at you.

MOLLY
(pause)
How were the AMA's?

PLAYER Y
A lot of fake people. Viners and YouTube stars. I sang like I was in the high school play. I'm having a low self-image moment. What are you wearing?

*

MOLLY
I'm sorry?

PLAYER Y
I want to tell you something.

MOLLY
(beat)
Go ahead.

*

*

PLAYER Y
No, I want to whisper it in your ear.

MOLLY
Listen--

PLAYER Y
It's not a bad idea. It's not, I've thought about it. You broke up with your boyfriend and I went alone tonight so what does that say about the state of my, uh, you know... I think about you all the time. You are so cool. And nice. I'm in a car right now, I want to come over.

MOLLY
(beat)
You're not *driving* the car, right?

*

PLAYER Y
Where do you live?

MOLLY

Okay, listen to me. You're drunk and I'm not so I'm gonna be team captain, okay? I want you to hang up the phone and think about this for 30 minutes. Drink a lot of water, get some air and think about this for 30 minutes. If you're still sure it's a good idea in 30 minutes, call me back.

PLAYER Y

(from the phone)

I think--No, I know I'm falling in--

*

MOLLY hangs up.

*

MOLLY (V.O.)

He didn't call back.

INT. LUXURY HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

The players are doing their pre-game mingling.

MOLLY (V.O.)

At the game Tuesday night he was sheepish and said--

PLAYER Y

(whispering)

I passed out. Thank you, you're a class act.

MOLLY

(whispering)

Don't worry about it.

PLAYER Y

(whispering)

I'm writing you an email.

MOLLY

(whispering)

You don't have to do that.

PLAYER Y

(whispering)

It's in draft. When I get it right I'll hit send.

INT. MOLLY'S CAR - NIGHT

It's late at night and MOLLY's driving along Sunset. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

I assumed the email was going to be an apology which really wasn't necessary--that he was embarrassed, that kind of thing.

Her PHONE BUZZES on the passenger seat and she answers. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

It turned out it was an invitation to go with him to Cabo San Lucas. *

EXT. MOLLY'S CAR - SAME TIME

We're on the outside of the car now.

PLAYER Y (V.O.)

I've only ever had one fantasy. I'm sitting on a plane and a beautiful woman sits down next to me. I'm messengering you a ticket to Cabo. Leaves Friday, returns Sunday. Your seat is 1-B. I'll be in 1-A.

And then Molly's car SCREECHES to the side of the road, almost fishtailing.

MOLLY (V.O.)

It wasn't until I was finished reading that I saw that the email wasn't from Player Y. It was from his girlfriend.

INT. MOLLY'S CAR - SAME TIME

MOLLY's sitting there breathing, trying to think. Her cell starts ringing in her hand... *

MOLLY (V.O.)

His girlfriend had gone into his account and found the letter in drafts. And she sent it to me. And she sent it to the wives and girlfriends of everyone who played in the game. And I knew the truth even before I answered the call that came next. *

MOLLY finally answers the phone-- *

PLAYER X
(over phone)
You are so fucked.

MOLLY takes a beat and snaps the phone closed. Then she gets out of her car, which is on the side of the street, and leans against it with the occasional car passing by.

MOLLY (V.O.)
You didn't have to be a strategic mastermind to know what was coming next. The musician and his girlfriend stayed together on the condition that he not play in my game and that was all Player X needed to get the other guys to fire me. I'd made a dumb joke about an anti-trust suit and I never ran another game in LA.

We stay on MOLLY for a long moment, watching her from a long way down the street, her silhouette leaning against the car.

CUT TO:

INT. CHARLIE'S OFFICE - DAY

MOLLY and CHARLIE have been at it for a while.

CHARLIE
There's no such word as verticality.

MOLLY
Verticality?

CHARLIE
In the book, on page 217. When you lose the game in LA and come to New York you admire the city's verticality.

MOLLY
It's a word.

CHARLIE
I don't think so. Once you're in New York you talk about games that lasted all night, two nights, being up for days but you don't mention drugs.

MOLLY
There were drugs. I'm two years clean.

CHARLIE

You left the drugs out of the book.

MOLLY

You know what, I'm not paying
\$250,000 for your Amazon customer
review.

CHARLIE

Well so far you're not paying me
anything.

MOLLY

I just emailed you verticality from
Merriam-Webster's Dictionary.

CHARLIE

What's an advance on a book like
this?

MOLLY

The advance?

CHARLIE

Yeah.

MOLLY

(pause)
It depends.

CUT TO:

INT. AGENT'S OFFICE - DAY

MOLLY's talking to her agent, LOIS.

*

LOIS

If you guarantee the publishers
certain elements--if you're able to
guarantee that--then I can get you
a million and a half which you'd
probably double in sales plus
ancillary rights.

*

MOLLY

What kinds of elements?

LOIS

Well you know what kind.

*

MOLLY

Lois--

*

LOIS

You have to use real names. You have to name the bold-faced names. You have to tell tales and those tales have to be compelling and that's just the way it is.

(pause)

There's a guy who sits outside my Starbucks with a cardboard sign that says, "Vietnam Vet" and every morning I give him a quarter and right now the only difference between you and him is that you have a story.

MOLLY

I'm one-thousand percent sure that the homeless Vietnam vet has a better one.

LOIS

You have one asset. Write your story and I can get you a million and a half and that's the *floor*. Write about a girl from Loveland who gets rich and then loses everything in a civil forfeiture and no one--listen to me--no one will care. Not the publishers and not the readers.

MOLLY

(pause)

It's none of my business but you should really give that guy more than a quarter.

LOIS

Millions or nothing. Go big or go home and live with your mother. For the rest of your life.

This is excruciating for MOLLY...

MOLLY

(pause)

What if I...What if you told the publishers that I'll name the players who were already named in the Brad Marion deposition?

LOIS

All four?

MOLLY

The ones that were already--I'll use the real names of the players who were already named by Bad Brad, what if I did that?

*
*
*
*
*

EMILY

They're gonna want to know what stories you're willing to tell. You spent 8 years in Hollywood and 2 years in New York running the world's most exclusive, glamorous and decadent man cave. So what do the publishers get from you about people with real names?

*
*
*

*

MOLLY takes a long time before...

MOLLY

(long pause)

One of them was a bad tipper. I'll say which one.

MOLLY and LOIS sit there for a moment as LOIS taps her pen lightly on her desk and we

*
*

CUT BACK TO:

INT. CHARLIE'S OFFICE - DAY

MOLLY

My advance was thirty-five thousand dollars.

CHARLIE

How did you meet the Playmates?

*

MOLLY

I'd met them a few years earlier on a G-5 to Vegas.

CHARLIE

How did you have occasion to be on a private jet to Vegas with Playboy Playmates?

MOLLY

I was the CEO of Douchebag Inc., I often had occasion to be on private jets to Vegas with Playboy Playmates. What's our plan?

CHARLIE

The first thing I'm gonna do is get you a minor role reduction, get the 12 points knocked down to 10.

*
*

MOLLY

What's a minor role reduction?

CHARLIE

I'm gonna argue to the prosecutor that you didn't play a leadership role. That you were an employee who was hired and fired by the players.

MOLLY

Not a chance.

CHARLIE

I think we've got a good chance.

MOLLY

No, there's not a chance I'm gonna let you make that argument.

CHARLIE

Why not?

MOLLY

It's not true.

CHARLIE

Let me explain how the point system works.

MOLLY

I know how it works. Points correspond to the prosecutor's sentencing recommendation. You try to get point reductions based on a variety of factors including, say, prior criminal history, which I don't have, or whether the defendant played a minor role, which I certainly did not.

CHARLIE

You really think this is a good time to hog credit?

MOLLY

I built it from scratch.

CHARLIE

There was already a game at the Viper Room when you came along.

MOLLY

The LA game was legal, I wasn't taking a rake. I'm talking about the New York game which I built and scaled from scratch. I wasn't fireable from the New York game, I made sure of that, so...no.

*
*
*

CHARLIE

I wasn't really listening.

MOLLY

I'm refusing you permission to seek a minor role reduction. I'm refusing you permission to invalidate my entire career.

CHARLIE

I'm not caring.

MOLLY

Charlie--

CHARLIE

Do you want kids? Are you interested in having a family?

MOLLY

Absolutely.

CHARLIE

I don't get some point reductions and the sentencing recommendation guidelines say 8 to 12 years, Molly. That's before they try to jam you up more with money laundering.

MOLLY

Money--

CHARLIE

The moment you changed the Russians' money for chips.

MOLLY

I'd have to be aware that--

CHARLIE

Find me twelve men and women who'll believe you weren't aware of exactly who was sitting at your table and where their money came from.

(pause)

(MORE)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

So that's that. You were a cocktail waitress.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

*

MOLLY's right where we left her, leaning against her car.

*

MOLLY (V.O.)

When I lost the LA game I told myself it was no big deal. It was just supposed to be an adventure and a way to meet influential people. And I'd saved over two-hundred thousand dollars.

INT. MOLLY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

MOLLY's sitting at her kitchen table, wearing the sweatshirt and Denver Broncos cap we saw her in earlier. She's listening to her iPod and staring into space. She's depressed and we'll watch the depression turn into anger and then action.

*

MOLLY (V.O.)

But that was just a weak firewall I'd hastily built to keep out the humiliation and depression I knew was coming.

INT. L.A. BAR - NIGHT

MOLLY's at the end of the bar drinking alone.

*

MOLLY (V.O.)

It had to end sometime, I just thought it would be on *my* time. I didn't think it was gonna be taken away from me. And for such a stomach-turning reason.

INT. GYM - NIGHT

MOLLY's working out in the otherwise deserted gym in her apartment building but this is an angry work-out--the cardio equivalent of revenge sex.

MOLLY (V.O.)

I made the real housewives of the Chateau Marmont uncomfortable because I unambiguously rejected passes from their degenerate husbands and boyfriends? Thanks ladies.

EXT. RUNYON CANYON - DAY

It's raining and MOLLY's cutting through the rain, jogging up a path with her athlete's body beating the incline and again, this no fun-run. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

And thanks fellas. You trusted me for eight years and I proved worthy of that trust, over and over, and none of you could speak up?

MOLLY hits another gear and disappears around a curve in the path as we -- *

CUT TO:

INT. MOLLY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

MOLLY's sitting on her windowsill with the window open and smoking a joint. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

The game had given me an identity, respect, and a defined place in a world that was inaccessible and in one irrational heartbeat it was taken away. I was irrelevant and forgotten overnight.

INT. THERAPIST'S WAITING ROOM - DAY

It's a small privacy room. MOLLY comes in, sees the button she's supposed to press to announce her arrival and pushes it. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

It'd been two weeks since I lost the game and I made an appointment to see someone because now the humiliation and depression had given way to a blinding anger at my powerlessness over the unfair whims of men who had leverage over me and I wanted to talk it out with someone.

MOLLY picks up a magazine and starts thumbing through it.

MOLLY (V.O.)

That was it, that's what was making me angry. It was that there weren't any rules. These power moves weren't framed by right and wrong, just ego and vanity.

She puts the magazine back and picks up a different one.

MOLLY (V.O.)

Selfish whims with no regard to consequence. No fairness, no justice. And that giggling, cackling call from Player X--

QUICK CUT TO:

INT. MOLLY'S CAR - NIGHT

The scene we saw earlier--

PLAYER X (OVER THE PHONE)

You are so fucked.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. THERAPIST'S WAITING ROOM - DAY

MOLLY (V.O.)

I couldn't lose to that green-screened little shit and I didn't want a therapist to make me feel okay about it. You know what makes you feel okay about losing? Winning.

MOLLY tosses the magazine back, grabs her bag, turns the arrival light switch back off and heads out the door.

MOLLY (V.O.)
I got on a plane to New York.

CUT TO:

EXT./EST. PLAZA HOTEL - NIGHT

We see the famous landmark in all its beauty and then we PULL
BACK to see MOLLY heading into the hotel. *

MOLLY (V.O.)
Wall Street, Madison Avenue, Fifth
Avenue, Sutton Place, the Dakota,
the Beresford, the San Remo--the
players were here, I just had to
bait the hook. This time I didn't
have movie stars.

INT. HOTEL BAR - NIGHT *

MOLLY (V.O.) *
This time I used Playboy Playmates. *

A beautiful Playmate named JESSE is sitting at the bar. She's *
waiting for someone and checking the front door when MOLLY *
sits down on the other side of her and taps her shoulder. *
They give each other a hug. *

MOLLY (V.O.)
And these weren't just any
Playmates. They had particular
skill sets. Jesse was Puerto Rican
knockout who grew up working in
card rooms and was a good player
herself.

INT. HOTEL BAR - LATER *

MOLLY, JESSE and two other Playmates--SHELBY and WINSTON, are *
sitting at a table with a "reserved" sign on it. Their spent *
drinks are being replaced with a new round. *

MOLLY (V.O.) *
I could stake her, infiltrate other
games and poach their big ticket
players. She could glance at a
table and tell you how much money
was on it.

MOLLY holds a plastic sandwich bag filled with different
colored poker chips, takes out a fist-full of chips and
throws them on the table.

JESSE

Six-hundred and forty-thousand,
eight-hundred dollars.

MOLLY

Not even close.

JESSE

No, that's how much is left in the
bag.

MOLLY smiles.

*

INT. HOTEL BAR - LATER

*

SHELBY is tapping away at a laptop--

*

MOLLY (V.O.)

Shelby could write code and was a
decent hacker. Right now I've asked
her to tell me my account balance
at B of A.

MOLLY

(to SHELBY)

You got it yet or are you playing
Minecraft?

SHELBY

Playing Minecraft.

MOLLY

Shelby--

SHELBY

You don't have an account at B of
A. Here's your balance at CitiBank.

SHELBY turns her laptop around to show MOLLY. MOLLY's
pleased.

*

*

INT. HOTEL BAR - LATER

*

WINSTON's writing on a napkin with a Sharpie. She's writing
in Farsi and her penmanship is beautiful.

*

*

MOLLY (V.O.)

Winston would be working for the
CIA if she could pass a drug test.
She was the daughter of an American
diplomat who's lived in nine
different countries and who had the
email addresses of half the Saudi
royal family.

*

*

*

*

MOLLY
(to WINSTON)
Who's the biggest game in Manhattan
and what are the stakes?

WINSTON
On any given night it's either
Eddie Ting or Irv Gotti. 50K buy-
in, blinds are one-thousand/two-
thousand.

MOLLY
Right.

WINSTON
But that's Manhattan.

MOLLY
(beat)
What do you mean?

WINSTON
The biggest game in New York is in
Brooklyn. Russian Jews. Buy-in's a
hundred K. No one runs the game,
they just play and pay.

MOLLY
I didn't know that.

WINSTON
That's what you have me for.

MOLLY
Tomorrow night we start recruiting.

INT. UPSCALE NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

It's high-end decadence. Crowded with beautiful people and pulsing with house music. MOLLY, JESSE, SHELBY and WINSTON, all dressed for the job--sexy but not slutty--are standing on the balcony that wraps around the club so they can get a bird's-eye view of the floor.

MOLLY (V.O.)
We couldn't promise anyone they'd
rub elbows with movie stars, but
New York has one thing Hollywood
doesn't. The Yankees. And there was
one Yankee in particular that every
man in America would line up to
lose to.

MOLLY

You don't say his name out loud.
Write it on a cocktail napkin, then
crumple the napkin up and put it in
a glass of water so they can see
the ink dissolve.

*
*

SHELBY

That's really necessary?

MOLLY

It's not at all necessary.

SHELBY

Got it.

WINSTON

Can we tell them when the game's
gonna start?

MOLLY

You tell them it's been happening
once a week for about six months at
a location you won't disclose right
now. There's a pretty long waiting
list for a chair but Molly's here
somewhere tonight, I'll introduce
you.

SHELBY

Do we mention the stakes?

MOLLY

They'll ask you.

*

JESSE

50K buy-in, blinds are one and two?

And now Molly stares down at something...nothing...she's
thinking...

JESSE (CONT'D)

(pause)

Mol?

MOLLY

(pause)

Two-hundred and fifty.

*

JESSE

Blinds are two-fifty and five?

MOLLY

No, the buy-in. Two-hundred and
fifty-thousand dollars.

JESSE

That's gonna make a lot of noise.

MOLLY

Just enough to be heard on Rodeo Drive. Guys? You're up.

MOLLY downs her glass of scotch and walks away.

INT. NIGHT CLUB - LATER

Men have now descended on their table. JESSE writes a name on a cocktail napkin and shows it to the guy she's been talking to. We see the guy mouth "Seriously?" and JESSE nods before she drowns the cocktail napkin in her drink.

We see MOLLY watching this from a distance.

MOLLY (V.O.)

We went to clubs, polo matches in the Hamptons, art gallery openings--

INT. ART GALLERY OPENING - NIGHT

MOLLY's looking at a painting while SHELBY talks to a TRUST FUND KID.

MOLLY (V.O.)

They never approached anyone, the men came to them.

SHELBY

I don't think you'd be interested. The buy-in's 250K and half the players re-load after two hands.

TRUST FUND KID

Two-hundred and fifty thousand is steep. That's almost what I paid for my second car.

INT. WALL STREET BAR - NIGHT

WINSTON is having a drink and a quiet conversation with a man at the bar. MOLLY's farther down the bar watching the news on the TV.

MOLLY (V.O.)

And they never asked anyone to play. The game had to be an impossible ticket.

(MORE)

MOLLY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

It had to be clandestine and sexy but above all, it had to be exclusive. What these men want is to want. They had to ask *us*.

WINSTON

(to the man)

You should talk to my friend Molly.

INT. ART GALLERY OPENING - NIGHT

SHELBY

(to the older man)

I can introduce you to Molly.

INT. NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

JESSE

(introducing them)

Molly, this is David.

CUT TO:

*

INT. PLAZA HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

A magnificent suite with breathtaking views of the city.

*

The Shuffle Master rips through a deck. A full game is underway with the playmates working the bar and as servers. A uniformed masseuse is working on someone's shoulders. MOLLY's observing the action.

*

MOLLY (V.O.)

It only took seven weeks of recruiting to get ten players and there were four on a waiting list and these circles that was more than enough to start the mythology. By morning, gamblers would be hearing and telling stories about this game in London, Tokyo and Dubai. At the end of that year I reported an income of four-million, seven-hundred and seventy-three thousand dollars. Every square inch of it legal and on the books. I still hadn't taken a rake. And I still hadn't accidentally recruited members of a Russian crime syndicate.

*

INT. PLAZA HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

CLOSE on an Aderall pill being crushed with a mortar and pestle. We PULL BACK and see it's MOLLY.

MOLLY (V.O.)

In the beginning I was using drugs to stay awake. First aderall. Then Aderall crushed up to defeat the time release.

We go through a **SERIES OF SHOTS** showing MOLLY and the PLAYMATES getting ready for a game.

*
*

--SHELBY, JESSE, and WINSTON are in various states of dress and having fun trying on different outfits drinking champagne, doing lines of coke, etc.

*
*

MOLLY (V.O.)

Then coke, valium, vicodin, percocet and more aderall.

*

INT. MOLLY'S APARTMENT - DAY

*

A luxury rental with a poker table in the living room. Four flat screen tv's are being bolted to the walls.

*
*

MOLLY (V.O.)

I rented a penthouse apartment and installed plasma screens for the sports betters. I had the lower stakes games on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays at my place with Tuesday night at the Plaza being the big game.

*
*
*
*
*
*

INT. PLAZA HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

*

--A bottle of champagne is opened and poured. A glass is set down next to MOLLY, who's at the desk with her laptop open. We see quick shards of information on her screen--

*
*
*

MOLLY (V.O.)

My spreadsheets would tell me who was playing tonight, what their track record was, where I had to cut off their credit, everything down to their kids' birthdays.

--Candles are being lit and placed around the room. A table clock gets put out of sight. An iPod gets popped into a dock.

MOLLY (V.O.)

Casinos have discovered that certain scents make people more likely to place big bets. The casinos pump those scents in through the ventilation. I had custom candles made.

--A poker table gets stood up by two dealers--one male, one female. Twenty brand new decks of cards with Molly's initials get stacked on the table. Bellmen are bringing in stools. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

At 7:00 the dealers came and the table was set up and polished and eleven stools were placed around it exactly twelve inches apart.

--A case of chips is opened and stacks counted. The chips are beautiful and heavy and engraved with Molly's initials. * Included among the chips are rectangular gold plates that say "MB" but have no denomination. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

I used custom chips and two dealers who worked an hour on, an hour off with a new crew coming in after twelve hours. *

--The female dealer, a tall knockout, fans a deck out in front of her and sweeps it up with one card. She repeats this as well as a few other simple tricks that show how fast and nimble her hands are.

MOLLY (V.O.)

I'd been working with a new dealer named Small, that was her name, and Small was 5-11. She'd been working in trashy card rooms on the east side and we became friends.

INT. PLAZA HOTEL SUITE/BEDROOM *

MOLLY's writing checks and putting them into envelopes and SMALL is sitting up in the bed with her shoes kicked off. *

SMALL

You've gotta do it. Not doing it is insanity. You must be able to see that now. *

MOLLY (V.O.)

Small had been suggesting it for a long time and she was suggesting it again because of an incident the week before. *

PRE-LAP a DOORBELL--

*

CUT TO:

*

INT. MOLLY'S APARTMENT - DAY

*

MOLLY, in jeans and a t-shirt, answers her door. COLE, the trust fund kid we saw earlier, is standing there.

*

MOLLY

Hey Cole.

*

COLE

Hey.

*

MOLLY

Come on in.

COLE

Thanks. You've got my check?

*

MOLLY

(picking up an envelope)

I do, right here.

COLE

Thank you.

*

MOLLY

Hey, can I show you something on TV?

KEN

Is it Michigan/Michigan State? I took State and the points.

MOLLY clicks her TV on with the remote. The TV's showing a quad split of tape from four security cameras trained on a poker game.

MOLLY

This is last Tuesday night's game.

COLE

Shit. Molly. If the guys find out you've got cameras on them--

*

MOLLY

(pointing)

This is you in the seventh chair. Look at your stack of chips.

COLE

Uh-huh.

*

MOLLY

Look at the time stamp--1:06am.
Let's fast forward to 1:07.

COLE

What is this?

*

MOLLY

Come on, Cole. 1:07 you lose the
hand to Boosty. 1:08.

*

(she fast forwards to 1:08)
Our sheets say you didn't buy in
again between 1:06 and 1:08 but
look at that--your stack got
bigger.

KEN

Molly--

MOLLY

So let's rewind. This screen's got
the dealer changeover while at the
same time back on this screen...
aaaaaand--there we are.

We PUSH IN on the TV and see COLE drop his hand below the
table--presumably into his jacket pocket--take out a
cigarette and casually drop some chips in front of himself
like he'd been playing with the chips all along.

*

*

*

MOLLY (CONT'D)

And that's why I can't reconcile
seventeen-thousand dollars from
Tuesday's game.

(pause)

A 7-11's got security cameras on
their Slushy machine, I've got a
million dollars changing hands
every two minutes, imbecile, you
didn't think I had eyes on the
table?

COLE starts breathing heavily--

*

MOLLY (CONT'D)

Shh--relax.

COLE

I owe people money.

*

MOLLY

I know, so why isn't it coming out
of the trust fund.

COLE

I'd need my parents' permission and they'd kill me. You don't even understand--

*

MOLLY

Alright. Look, first of all, those guys who make the counterfeit chips, they're taking you for a ride. They know there are signatures built into the chips-- exact weight, infra-red markings-- breathe. Second, don't try this at someone else's game because they're gonna express their anger in a much different way than I am. I'll cover you, You owe me 17-thousand dollars and when I get it I'll give you the tape. That's it.

*

*

*

MOLLY (V.O.)

So when Tuesday night came, Small was at it again.

CUT BACK TO:

*

INT. HOTEL BEDROOM - NIGHT

*

Through the open door we can see the suite being prepared for the game.

*

SMALL

Your exposure's crazy, Molly. It's not if, it's when. You're gonna get stiffed and your risk is nuts.

MOLLY

It was 17-thousand dollars.

SMALL

This time. You told me what happened with Harlan Eustice.

MOLLY

He paid.

SMALL

That time.

MOLLY

If I took a rake this game would no longer be legal.

SMALL

And if you can't cover a debt this game will no longer exist. You're the bank now, you're guaranteeing the game.

MOLLY doesn't say anything...

*

SMALL (CONT'D)

(sitting up)

Alright. But if you see a hand you don't want to carry, just look at me, flash me a number and I'll take that number off the table. Most runners cap it at 5 percent. I'll see you out there.

MOLLY

See you out there.

SMALL goes back out into the main room and MOLLY starts filling in another check. She stops, thinks, takes a couple of pills, chews them up and washes the bad taste down with champagne as we --

*

CUT TO:

INT. PLAZA HOTEL SUITE - LATER

A hand is underway with SMALL dealing. MOLLY watches from a short distance as the pot gets bigger and bigger.

MOLLY (V.O.)

Around 2am there was a pot that was up to a million and a half pre-flop with five players still in.

SMALL burns a card and lays out the flop.

MOLLY (V.O.)

My hope was that the flop would chase four of them off.

PLAYER #1

A hundred-thousand.

PLAYER #2

Call.

PLAYER #3

Call and raise a hundred-thousand.

SMALL

Two-hundred thousand to you.

PLAYER #4
Plus two-hundred.

SMALL
(to Player #1)
Three-hundred thousand to you.

PLAYER #1
Call.

MOLLY (V.O.)
There was now two-point four
million on the table.

PLAYER #2
Call.

MOLLY (V.O.)
Two-point six million.

PLAYER #3
Call.

PLAYER #4
Call.

MOLLY (V.O.)
Three million.

SMALL burns another card and lays out the turn. MOLLY's thinking.

MOLLY (V.O.)
She was right, I was extending credit, big numbers. And it's not like Harlan Eustice hadn't already put the fear of God into me. If I couldn't pay, one time, that'd be the end of the game. I was the house.

She catches SMALL's eye and holds up two fingers while mouthing "Two".

SMALL's quick hands begin to stack the chips in the pot, knocking two percent off one of the stacks, tapping those chips on the table so the players know she's doing it and sliding the chips to the side.

MOLLY (V.O.)
That's how quickly I'd made the decision. And just as quickly, Small calculated two percent of the pot and took it off the table. That was it.

(MORE)

*

*

*

*

MOLLY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I'd just taken a rake, in violation
of U.S. Criminal Code 1955.

CUT TO:

INT. PLAZA HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

We see the remnants of a game that ended a short while ago. MOLLY's at work on the books with a drink at her side. One of the players has stayed behind--late 30's and drunk. He downs a drink and then pours himself another.

MOLLY (V.O.)
It's time to introduce Douglas
Downey 'cause Downey's gonna take
us all the way home. Downey was a
drunk and he'd stay after the game
and hang out while I did the books.

DOWNEY brings his newly poured drink over to MOLLY's area and takes a seat.

MOLLY (V.O.)
He was hard to understand when he
was drunk and his conversation
openers would always sound like the
title of a detective novel.

DOWNEY
(he sighs--then)
Victim of circumstance. *

MOLLY
Yeah.

DOWNEY
Story of, uh, you know, story of my
proverbial, you know, life.

INT. PLAZA HOTEL SUITE - DIFFERENT NIGHT

DOWNEY again brings a drink over to MOLLY who's doing the books and barely pretending to pay attention-- *

MOLLY (V.O.)
He'd talk about his marriage.

DOWNEY
I married young, Mol. I married
young and I married dull.

INT. PLAZA HOTEL SUITE - DIFFERENT NIGHT

After the game--

MOLLY (V.O.)

He talked about wanting a better life.

DOWNEY

If I'd been born in Greenwich instead of Flushing? New Canaan, Fifth Avenue? Gone to Rye Country Day? Princeton? The life I'd have? The wife I'd have? I'd be a plaaaaayuh. Victim of circumstances. Mol, these are things I only say to you.

MOLLY

Good call.

INT. PLAZA HOTEL SUITE - DIFFERENT NIGHT

After the game--

MOLLY (V.O.)

And he'd talk about another game he played in. It was the Brooklyn game. The Brighton Beach game where they played all night and all day. The game that was populated by Russians.

DOWNEY

I'm the only Irish guy they let play. These are the nicest guys I've ever met, Mol.

INT. PLAZA HOTEL SUITE - DIFFERENT NIGHT

After the game--

MOLLY (V.O.)

Then one night Douglas Downey lost eighty-thousand at my game and didn't have it.

DOWNEY

I'm sorry. You're so, you know, just, nice. And you're honest and I respect your hustle so I just want to be straight with you. It's been a bad month. You know, God, sports. Some investments went bad.

MOLLY

You won a hundred and ninety last week.

DOWNEY

I owe Eddie and Irv.

MOLLY

Got it.

DOWNEY

You know what? No. Fuck Eddie, fuck Irv, I'm paying you!

MOLLY

Doug--

DOWNEY

I'm paying you, Mol!

*

MOLLY

Quiet down, listen to me--

*

DOWNEY

The little guy's gonna win for once!

MOLLY

I don't even know what that means but you can't stiff Eddie Ting or Irv Gotti.

DOWNEY

I'm not afraid of those guys.

MOLLY

You really should be.

DOWNEY

Mol--

MOLLY

There's another way.

DOWNEY

I'm a winner trapped inside the body of--

MOLLY

Douglas.

DOWNEY

Yeah.

MOLLY

The Brooklyn game. Is everything
I've heard true?

*

DOWNEY

About Brighton Beach?

MOLLY

Yeah.

DOWNEY

What have you heard?

MOLLY

That the Russians have deep
pockets, are bad at poker, give
action and pay instantly. Bring me
some of those players and I'll give
you a piece of the game until your
80K's paid down.

DOWNEY

I'm the only Irish guy they let
play.

MOLLY

Did you understand what I said?

DOWNEY

No, I'm saying this because you're
Irish and they may not want to play
in your game. I'm the only Irish
guy they let play.

*
*
*
*

MOLLY

I'm not Irish.

DOWNEY

You're not?

MOLLY

No.

DOWNEY

Molly Bloom?

MOLLY

You're thinking of the James Joyce
character--

*

DOWNEY

I always thought you were Irish.

MOLLY

I'm not. Can you get me some of those players?

DOWNEY

Isn't there a famous book--

MOLLY

Doug. Focus up. Yes, there is a book by James Joyce called *Ulysses* that has a character named Molly Bloom and that is why you think I'm Irish and now it's time to get past that. Can you get me some Brighton Beach players?

*

*

DOWNEY

If you're not Irish what are you?

MOLLY

I'm a Russian Jew.

MOLLY (V.O.)

The next week I had some new players.

*

*

*

CUT TO:

INT. PLAZA HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

The room is sparkling and set for a new game. The doorbell rings and JESSE answers the door. A handsome man in his early 30's wearing a coat and tie is standing there.

*

*

*

MOLLY (V.O.)

Mike was the first one to arrive.

JESSE

Good evening.

MIKE

Good evening, I'm Mike Druzhinsky. I'm here to see Molly.

MOLLY (V.O.)

Mike owned a chain of medical clinics and had already posted with a wire transfer.

*

*

*

*

HOTEL SUITE - A FEW MINUTES LATER

*

ILLYA and ALEX GERSHEN, 22 and 24, are standing at Molly's desk. ALEX hands MOLLY a backpack. MOLLY opens it and sees what's inside.

*

*

*

MOLLY (V.O.)

Next were the Gershen brothers,
Illya and Alex. They were in the
business of exporting steel to
China. Alex brought a quarter of a
million dollars in cash in a
backpack.

*
*
*
*
*
*
*

HOTEL SUITE - A FEW MINUTES LATER

*

**HELLY HABIB, 30's and a cherubic mess, stands in front of
MOLLY with a painting wrapped in brown paper.**

*
*

MOLLY

And then Helly Habib. The Habib
family owns the largest collection
of classical art in the world,
valued at 3-billion dollars, and
Helly runs the Habib gallery on
Madison Avenue.

*
*
*
*
*
*
*

MOLLY (CONT'D)

I'll need you to post the first few
times, I hope you understand.
(handing him a card)
Here's information about wiring the
post in advance.

*

HELLY

Thank you.

HELLY starts unwrapping the painting he brought--

HELLY (CONT'D)

As for tonight, I was not able to
put my hands on cash today because
I woke up this morning after the
banks had closed so I'm hoping
you'll accept this as temporary
collateral.

MOLLY stares at the painting blank-faced...

MOLLY

(pause--calmy)
That is...an authentic Monet?

HELLY

Grabbed it right off the wall.

MOLLY

(pause)
You came over here carrying a
Monet.

HELLY

I was driven. And I have security
outside the door.

*
*

MOLLY

Okay. Helly, here's what I need you
to do. I need you to get this,
what, 20--?

HELLY

27.

MOLLY

--27-million dollar painting out of
here right now. And your, I assume,
armed security--?

HELLY

Sure.

*

MOLLY

--can't stand in front of the door.
Fix that up, come on back and I'll
extend you credit tonight up to one
and a half.

INT. PLAZA HOTEL SUITE - NEW NIGHT

Bets fly into the pot as SMALL's magician hands quickly stack
chips in piles, pull off two percent, tap the chips on the
table and throws them into a rake bucket.

*
*

MOLLY (V.O.)

Mike, Illya, Alex and Helly. Those
were the players Douglas Downey
brought me. As advertised, they
played loose, gave action, lost to
the regulars and settled right
away.

*
*
*

SMALL deals another card and the whole table reacts as MOLLY
looks on.

MOLLY (V.O.)

People have asked, "Wasn't there
any way to tell that the new
players were connected to one of
the darkest, deadliest and far-
reaching organized crime syndicates
in the world?" No. There wasn't.

DOWNEY

All in.

CUT TO:

INT. CHARLIE'S OFFICE - EVENING

MOLLY's sitting in the office and waiting as CHARLIE comes in *
wearing a coat.

CHARLIE
I wish I had better news.

MOLLY
Harrison Wellstone didn't go for
the minor role reduction?

CHARLIE
No.

MOLLY
He didn't buy that I was a cocktail
waitress?

CHARLIE
No.

MOLLY
Aww.
(claps him on the shoulder)
Was it because I wasn't?

CHARLIE
Hey, I tried. That's what you're
not paying me to do.

MOLLY
So what now? *

CHARLIE looks at MOLLY--he knows this is going to be a *
difficult subject.

CHARLIE
The Government is expressing an
interest in you as a cooperating
witness.

MOLLY
You don't say.

CHARLIE
Molly--

MOLLY
Who could've possibly seen *that*
coming?

CHARLIE *
Let's have the conversation. *

MOLLY

It's gonna be very short because I don't know anything at all that can help them.

*

CHARLIE

You don't know anything that can help them convict the Russians but you know things that can help them.

*

*

*

MOLLY

Did you know that 97 percent of federal cases never go to trial? Even though your chance of being convicted at trial is a little more than one in a hundred?

*

*

*

*

CHARLIE

If you want to go to trial that's fine but it's gonna cost in the area of three and a half million dollars.

MOLLY

Which the Justice Department knows I don't have because they took all my money in a civil forfeiture which they can do without a warrant because your property doesn't have a presumption of innocence. Then after I was arrested by 17 agents holding automatic weapons--totally necessary and not at all meant to intimidate me--they gave me two days to hire a lawyer and appear in a courtroom on the other side of the country.

*

*

CHARLIE

If you're saying that everything that happens in a federal bust from the moment you're arrested is designed to persuade you to plead guilty, you're correct.

MOLLY

So tell me all the ways I can help 'cause I really feel I owe it to them. Speaking of owing, the IRS has put a tax lien on the money they took from me.

*

CHARLIE

(beat)

None of that--

*

*

MOLLY

Taking my money wasn't a tax, they also need me to give them my money. Or they'll take it again.

*

CHARLIE

Good to get that off your chest?

MOLLY

It needed to be said.

CHARLIE

Not really. So to be clear, you're not interested in entering into a cooperation agreement with the prosecutors.

MOLLY

That's right.

CHARLIE

Because you feel the Government has acted--

MOLLY

--like the neighborhood extortionist? No. The U.S. Attorney's Office does everything within the law to fight crime and also for some reason to keep taking my stuff, I get it. And if I had testimony that could lead to the conviction of a bad guy no one would have to coerce me into cooperating. But I don't. I have dirt. I have dish. I have gossip. So my value to the prosecution is exactly the same as it is to Hollywood. I'm here to ensure the New York Post covers the trial. I'm here to sell tickets.

CHARLIE

Which is nonetheless value to the prosecution so what we do is leverage it to get you a favorable sentencing recommendation or, better yet, complete immunity.

*

There's a KNOCK on the door--

*

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

*

(shouting)

*

Come in!

*

It's STELLA, Charlie's daughter whom we met earlier.

*

CHARLIE (CONT'D) *
Oh hey honey. *

MOLLY *
Hey Stella. *

STELLA *
Hey. *

MOLLY *
What does he have you doing now? *

STELLA's getting an essay out of her backpack and giving it *
to her father. *

STELLA *
An essay on three poems with a *
common theme. *

CHARLIE *
Two paragraphs. *

MOLLY *
Which three poems? *

STELLA *
"Close", "Rush" and "Walls". *

MOLLY *
I know those. What's the common *
theme? *

CHARLIE *
(while reading) *
Things with one-word titles. *

MOLLY *
(to CHARLIE) *
Are you sure you're qualified to be- *
- *

CHARLIE *
(still reading) *
Hang on. And yes. *

MOLLY *
(to STELLA) *
Anytime you want to run away from *
home you can come live with me. *

CHARLIE *
And then when you discover she *
doesn't have a home you can come *
back to me. *

(MORE)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

(to STELLA)

Good job. Why don't you get a snack
and start your homework in one of
the conference rooms.

STELLA

Okay.

(to MOLLY)

See you.

MOLLY

There's no law that says you can't
just hit him in the head.

CHARLIE

There is a law that says that, it's
the first thing I taught her to
read.

(to STELLA)

Go.

STELLA exits.

MOLLY

My father used to give us extra
work.

CHARLIE

Where *is* your father in all this?

MOLLY

(beat)

He's--you mean physically?--He's in
Colorado.

CHARLIE

Are your parents still together?

MOLLY

No.

CHARLIE

Are you and your father close?

MOLLY

(pause)

No.

CHARLIE

Was he hard on you?

MOLLY
(smiles)
You know how many girls at the
Olympics have demanding fathers?

CHARLIE
All of them?

MOLLY
That's right.
(pause)
I was hard on *him*.

CHARLIE
What do you mean?

MOLLY
Mmmmmm...I was brat.

INT. GIRL'S HOUSE/FOYER - DAY

The GIRL, now 22, walks in the front door of her house. She's got a USA Skiing jacket on and her skis over her shoulder. She closes the door behind her.

INT. CHARLIE'S OFFICE - DAY

CHARLIE
Fathers don't care.

MOLLY
I'd start fights with him.

CHARLIE
Why?

INT. GIRL'S HOUSE/FOYER - DAY

The GIRL hears her MOTHER shouting upstairs.

INT. GIRL'S HOUSE/MASTER BEDROOM

The MOTHER is on the phone shouting.

MOTHER
(into phone)
I put you through medical school, I raised the kids, I did every--and all you did was cheat on me. All you did was cheat.

We see MOLLY standing in the doorway hearing this, unseen by her MOTHER.

*
*

INT. CHARLIE'S OFFICE - DAY

*

MOLLY

I don't know.

(pause)

For the record, the law--1955--that I'm accused of breaking, defines gambling as betting on games of chance.

*
*
*
*

CHARLIE

Yes.

MOLLY

Poker isn't a game of chance. Roulette's a game of chance. Poker's a game of skill.

CHARLIE

Molly--

MOLLY

Charlie, I'll tell them anything they want to know about me. About me. That's it.

*

CUT TO:

EXT. MALIBU BEACH HOUSE - DAY

The front door is open but we can't yet see what's happening.

MOLLY (V.O.)

Now stick a pin in the Russians for minute because remember Bad Brad Marion? It turns out his 300-million dollar hedge fund wasn't what you'd call...real.

*
*

And now we see several men in suits escorting BRAD, who's in handcuffs, to a waiting black sedan that's backed up by a Malibu patrol car.

*

MOLLY (V.O.)

It was a Ponzi scheme. He'd been falsely reporting profits for years. He wasn't even registered with the SEC.

We see QUICK FLASHES of what Molly describes--

MOLLY (V.O.)

With the money given to him by friends and family he bought several Malibu beach houses, an airplane hangar full of cars, another one with an airplane, and the life he wanted. When he was arrested he had seventy-four hundred dollars in the bank.

INT. FBI INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

As a door shuts with a bang. BRAD is sitting at a table with his lawyers opposite several men and women from the government. Video cameras are pointed at him and a stenographer is recording his confession. BRAD's gesticulating wildly and telling them everything.

MOLLY (V.O.)

Brad cooperated with the FBI and gave them hours of testimony on a range of subjects, including how three years earlier he'd lost 5.2-million dollars in an underground celebrity poker game that was run by a girl named Molly Bloom. His story was that I'd induced him to play in a high stakes game--

QUICK FLASHBACK to a scene we saw earlier--

*

INT. MALIBU BEACH HOUSE - NIGHT

NEAL

I just wanted to introduce you to Brad Marion, he wants to play.

MOLLY (V.O.)

And that due to my enabling he'd become a gambling addict.

QUICK FLASHBACK to another scene we saw earlier--

*

INT. LUXURY HOTEL SUITE (L.A.) - NIGHT

A game is underway--

MOLLY

Brad, this game may not be for you.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

MOLLY and her lawyer, BUTTERMAN, are sitting across from three lawyers in a deposition.

MOLLY (V.O.)

Federal bankruptcy lawyers were brought in to recover as much of the boosted money as they could. I was sent a subpoena and flew out to L.A. to be deposed. Sitting next to me was my attorney at the time, Louis Butterman.

BUTTERMAN

My name's Louis. You've been calling me Lou for two hours.

BANKRUPTCY LAWYER

I apologize, I thought it was Lou.
(to MOLLY)

Can you confirm the names on the list? This is Tab 27. Can you confirm that these people--let me ask this again so it's clean on the record--can you confirm that the people listed here--Tab 27--all played poker with Brad Marion?

MOLLY

The names on this list were provided to you by Brad Marion?

BANKRUPTCY LAWYER

I just need you to confirm for the record that your game included but was not limited to the players on this list.

MOLLY

I understand. What I'm trying to get in the record is that I'm not the one who provided the list.

BANKRUPTCY LAWYER

These names were provided by Brad Marion. So under oath--

MOLLY

Yes, I can confirm the list is accurate.

DISSOLVE TO:

THE DEPOSITION - A LITTLE LATER

BANKRUPTCY LAWYER

On how many occasions did you invite Mr. Marion to play in the game?

MOLLY

Mr. Marion asked to be in the game. *

BANKRUPTCY LAWYER

That wasn't my question.

BUTTERMAN

That wasn't his question.

MOLLY

(to Butterman)

Thanks.

BANKRUPTCY LAWYER

On how many occasions did you invite--

DISSOLVE TO:

THE DEPOSITION - A LITTLE LATER

BANKRUPTCY LAWYER

And Donnie Silverman won the World Poker Championship?

BUTTERMAN

I'm gonna object on relevancy.

MOLLY

Yes. Yes. Donnie Silverman won the-- *

BUTTERMAN

He's withdrawing the question.

MOLLY

It's public record, it was on television. Donnie Silverman won the World Poker Championship.

They continue MOS--

MOLLY (V.O.)

Right there I mis-spoke. It's not called the World Poker Championship, it's called the World Series of Poker. I was ordered to pay five-hundred thousand dollars in restitution-- *

INT. GENERIC FBI OFFICE - DAY

A lawyer walks a photograph over to a wall--

MOLLY (V.O.)

--and somewhere in an FBI field office in New York, someone was pinning my picture to a wall.

*

The lawyer pins Molly's picture up. We PULL BACK and see the wall is covered with pictures and lines that form an organizational chart--including Michael "Miko" Druzhinsky, "Russian Alex" Gershen, Illya "The Son" Gershen and Helly Habib.

*

*

*

INT. PLAZA HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

A game is underway.

MOLLY (V.O.)

By this point I was running six games a week, sometimes at two different locations in a night.

*

MOLLY downs a couple of pills with a glass of champagne.

MOLLY (V.O.)

And by this point I was addicted to drugs.

QUICK SHOTS OF DRUGS

We see a series of tight shots of pills being swallowed, cash being exchanged for two bottles of pills, bourbon being poured, a leather folding case with a small mirror, metal straw and razor blade, etc.

MOLLY (V.O.)

Adderall, Ambien, Xanax, coke, alcohol, Valium, Ativan, Trazadone-- anything that could keep me up for a few days and knock me out for a few hours.

INT. MOLLY'S BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

The sun's starting to come through the window and MOLLY, still in her clothes from the night before, is sitting on the edge of the bed and staring into space.

MOLLY (V.O.)

But I wasn't just taking them to stay awake anymore. It was dark and friendless where I was.

(MORE)

MOLLY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I felt like I was in a hole so deep
I could go fracking. It didn't feel
like depression, it felt more
violent.

INT. LUXURY SUITE - NIGHT

HELLY smacks his hand on the table--

HELLY
(flipping his cards)
Fuck you all!

--and rakes in his chips.

MOLLY (V.O.)
I was tired of living in the frat
house I'd built for degenerates. I
was tired of the greed--mine, not
theirs. Everybody's.

INT. MOLLY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Once again it's early morning and MOLLY's still dressed from
the night before. She's standing by the window and holding
the curtain cord. *

MOLLY (V.O.)
I was sick of being high all the
time, I was sick of only living in
the dark.

MOLLY lets go of the curtain cord and a blackout curtain
drops.

MOLLY (V.O.)
I couldn't recognize myself and
what I recognized I couldn't stand.

INT. LUXURY HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

A game has ended. MOLLY's reconciling the books and DOUGLAS
DOWNEY is pouring himself a drink. *

MOLLY (V.O.)
After a game one night Douglas
Downey surprised me with a
confession after opening with
another detective story title.

DOWNEY sits down next to Molly, takes a drink, and says--

DOWNEY

Gut shot on the river.

MOLLY closes her eyes for a second to brace herself against the incoherent conversation she knows is coming.

DOWNEY (CONT'D)

I want to say something.

MOLLY

Okay.

DOWNEY

I want to say something.

MOLLY

(beat)

Okay.

DOWNEY

I'm just gonna say it.

MOLLY

Cool.

DOWNEY

'Cause there's a poem--a famous--a poem about thoughts left unexpressed. Two roads emerged from the woods. Do they explode? I don't know. You like poetry?

MOLLY

I did until a second ago. I'm gonna call you a car and--

DOWNEY

I'm in love with you.

MOLLY takes a moment before she says--

MOLLY

This isn't happening.

DOWNEY

You're the woman I've always dreamed of and I've been dreaming--

*

MOLLY

Shhhstop it. Listen to me. Doug? I'm the woman *all of you have always dreamed of*. I'm the anti-wife. Instead of making you feel bad about going out every night and gambling, I encourage it.

*

*

(MORE)

MOLLY (CONT'D)

And instead of asking you to cut
down on your drinking, I have
drinks served to you by models who
simultaneously create the
impression that you're the kind of
guy who can score a dime piece
anytime you want. Do you know who
Circe was?

*
*
*
*
*
*

DOUGLAS

Who?

MOLLY

Circe.

DOUGLAS

(beat--confused and drunk)
Used to play in Eddie Ting's game?

MOLLY

Nope, Circe did not play in Eddie's
game. She was the Greek goddess of
magic and she gave men feasts with
wine and honey and then she turned
them into swine.

DOWNEY

Why?

MOLLY

Fantastic question.

*

DOWNEY

Well I would never do that to you.

*

MOLLY

Missed the point by miles but
that's okay. And thanks for the
compliment.

*

DOWNEY

It wasn't just an empty--

MOLLY's packed up her laptop and thrown a few bound stacks of
hundreds into a leather envelope which she's zipped up and
put in her bag.

MOLLY

Winston and Shelby are gonna close
up and I'll see you next week.

She heads for the door and we --

CUT TO:

EXT. PLAZA HOTEL - SAME NIGHT/DAWN

The city is just waking up. *

MOLLY comes out of the hotel in a coat and with her bag on her shoulder. A driver gets out of a black SUV that's waiting on the corner and begins calling to Molly as he hustles over to her--

DRIVER (PAT)
(calling)
Hey! No! We've gone over this! You wait for me!

MOLLY
Sorry.

PAT
Someone knows about the game, knows you're carrying cash--right there is where they wait and right *there* is where they grab your bag. I can't run him down in the car 'cause Fifth Avenue's one-way. *

MOLLY
Sorry.

PAT opens the door and MOLLY gets in the car. Her head is somewhere else as she looks out the window.

PAT gets in the front and they pull out.

They drive along in silence for a while, MOLLY looking out the window as the almost-empty city goes by in the grey/blue light of early morning.

MOLLY (CONT'D)
I used to be a competitive athlete.
I didn't know if you knew that.

PAT
What sport?

MOLLY
Skiing. Freestyle.

PAT
Were you good?

MOLLY
(pause)
I don't know.

The drive continues--

MOLLY (V.O.)

I used Pat for security when I was going home with cash. He asked me if I could do him a favor.

INT. FOUR SEASONS HOTEL BAR (NEW YORK)- DAY

MOLLY, dressed in a business outfit, is sitting at a table drinking iced tea and working on her laptop.

MOLLY (V.O.)

He said there were a couple of hedge fund guys in New Jersey who wanted to play and he could score points with them if he was able to get them a meeting with me. I said sure and set the meeting for 5pm on a Thursday at the Four Seasons bar, knowing that if they were legit they'd recognize someone in the crowd at Happy Hour at the Four Seasons right after the closing bell.

MOLLY spots two men enter the hotel bar. One of them is wearing a shiny brown suit with a t-shirt and a bullet on a chain. The other is wearing a black shirt and black jeans.

MOLLY (V.O.)

It turns out I didn't need to be that clever. These weren't finance guys, they were from the cast of *Jersey Boys*. They stood at the entrance to the bar self-consciously--they were out of their element and tough guys try to look tougher when they're insecure.

*

MOLLY stands up and gives them a small wave and they make their way over to the table.

MOLLY (V.O.)

I had a good hunch what they wanted and I was gonna have to shut down this meeting quickly but without being rude to Joey Bag-a-Donuts and Secaucus Sal.

MOLLY

(shaking hands)

I'm Molly Bloom, nice to meet you.

JOHN G

I'm John G.

MOLLY
(to the other)
And you are?

PAUL
(not interested in giving
his name)
Ah.

MOLLY motions subtley to a waiter--

MOLLY
Can I get you guys a drink?

MOLLY (V.O.)
I don't remember what the big guy
ordered but I'll never forget what
John G had. He looked at the waiter
as if to say that he could handle
himself among the Manhattan elite
and said--

JOHN G
I'll have an Appletini.

MOLLY
(beat)
Okay, alright.

JOHN G
So...How was your week?

MOLLY
My week? It was fine, thank you.
Pat said you might be interested in
a game.

JOHN G
Pat's a good guy, you like Pat?

MOLLY
Do I like--yes. He's been my driver
for almost two years.

JOHN G
Driver and security.

MOLLY
Sometimes.

JOHN G
We hear a lot of good things about
your game.

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

MOLLY *
Thank you. *

JOHN G *
Who's backing you? *

MOLLY
(beat)
Nobody. *

JOHN G
Nobody.

MOLLY
No.

JOHN G
Not Gigi?

MOLLY
I don't know who that is.

JOHN G
You're solo.

MOLLY
Yeah.

JOHN G *
Just Pat your driver. *

MOLLY *
Mm-hm. *

JOHN G
That must be hard.

MOLLY
It's fine.

JOHN G
We want to partner with you. We've
talked to Irv, Will--

PAUL
Eddie Ting.

JOHN G
--Eddie Ting, we're gonna work with
them too. We can make your life
easier.

(quieter) *
Nobody'll fuck with you, nobody'll
stiff you.

There's a long silence before...

MOLLY

(pause)

I appreciate your offer but I'm really fine. I don't carry a big debt sheet, I feel safe--

JOHN G

Ahh. You lied just then. *

(beat)

When you said you don't carry a big debt sheet. You've got two 2.8-million on the street right now, right as we're sitting here, we do our research. That money should be in your hands 'cause you owe it to people *

MOLLY looks at the two of them for a moment... *

MOLLY

Fellas, I'm sorry, it's just a friendly game with higher stakes. It's nice to meet you though. Let me know if there's ever anything I can do for you, I like to do favors. They'll put your drinks on my card. *

MOLLY gets up and heads out and suddenly we -- *

SNAP TO BLACK

We sit in silence for a moment before...

MOLLY (V.O.)

There are some gaps in my memory, which they say is common when you've had what they call an event. For instance I don't remember where I was coming from and I don't remember walking into my building. Just that my doorman, Reggie, said he had packages for me. *

FADE IN: *

INT. MOLLY'S BUILDING LOBBY - NIGHT *

It's decorated for Christmas as MOLLY walks in from outside and heads to the elevators. *

REGGIE

Ms. Bloom, I think I've got some things for you in the package room, I'll bring them on up.

MOLLY

Thanks, Reg.

INT. MOLLY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

MOLLY's running a bath for herself.

MOLLY (V.O.)

It was a night off and my plan was to take a bath and to try not to take drugs. *

The DOORBELL rings--

MOLLY (V.O.)

Reggie came up with my packages.

MOLLY unlocks the front door and begins to open it. As soon as she does the door flies open and a STRANGER--a heavy set man in his 50's--pushes MOLLY back into the apartment and slams the door shut behind him and locks it. *

MOLLY

I'm sorry, you're in the wrong--
Wait, just hang on-- *

The STRANGER grabs MOLLY by the throat and slams her head against the wall. *

STRANGER

Shut the fuck up. You need to shut your fuckin' mouth right now, you follow me?

He flings her head against the other wall and SLAMS HER INTO IT HARD-- *

STRANGER (CONT'D)

Do you get me? *

MOLLY

(barely a rasp)
Yes.

STRANGER

Open your mouth.

MOLLY's frozen. The STRANGER slaps her hard across the face. *

STRANGER (CONT'D)

Open your mouth. *

MOLLY opens her mouth a little and the STRANGER takes out a gun and puts it between her teeth. *

STRANGER (CONT'D)

You're gonna keep quiet now.

MOLLY's teeth are chattering against the gun.

STRANGER (CONT'D)

Nod that you understand.

MOLLY nods slightly. The STRANGER takes the gun out of her mouth and puts it to her head. *

STRANGER (CONT'D)

Walk to the bedroom. *

The STRANGER walks her down the hall toward the bedroom. *

STRANGER (CONT'D)

They say you got a smart mouth.
What else can that mouth do? *

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS *

The STRANGER throws MOLLY down on the bed and MOLLY turns over so she's sitting up by the headboard. *

MOLLY

I have a lot of money, it's all cash.

STRANGER

Where?

MOLLY

In the safe.

The STRANGER grabs MOLLY by the hair-- *

STRANGER

Where?

MOLLY

In the closet. Right here.

He drags MOLLY by the hair to the safe and pushes her to her knees and gestures toward the safe with the gun.

MOLLY taps her code into the keypad and the door swings open, revealing rubber-banded stacks of hundreds and some jewelry boxes as well as documents. *

STRANGER

Give me the cash and the jewelry.
Put it in a bag.

MOLLY grabs one of her designer bags and puts the cash and jewelry inside. *

STRANGER (CONT'D)

Okay.

The stranger stoops down to MOLLY and grabs her face, shoving it up against his.

STRANGER (CONT'D)

You don't call the shots, you little cunt. This is your fault.

He pulls her to her feet by her hair.

STRANGER (CONT'D)

If you weren't such a bitch to my friends, I wouldn't have to do this now. *

He slams MOLLY's head into the wall. It knocks her semi-conscious. Then he punches her in the face. He punches her in the face again. *

Her face is covered with blood as she backs away as far as she can into the closet. She's having a hard time breathing as she chokes on her own blood. He punches her again. Then he grabs her and pulls her to her feet and out of the closet.

He takes his gun out of his jacket.

MOLLY

Please don't. I have a family. *

STRANGER

Yeah. Your mom lives alone in Keystone, Colorado. *

(beat)

Right?

(beat)

Right, Molly?

MOLLY shakes her head "no"-- *

MOLLY

No, my mother-- *

STRANGER

Yeah she does. *

He smacks her bloody face as hard as he can.

STRANGER (CONT'D)

Open your eyes. Open your eyes,
Molly.

She's barely conscious but she opens her eyes...

STRANGER (CONT'D)

It wasn't an offer they made. It
wasn't a suggestion. This'll be
your only reminder.

*
*

The last punch knocks her unconscious. She lies there as we
HEAR the stranger's footsteps walk away off-screen, then the
door opening and closing.

We move through a SERIES OF DISSOLVES--

--MOLLY still unconscious on the floor.

MOLLY (V.O.)

So that happened.

--MOLLY pulling herself up to lock the deadbolt on the front
door and then sliding back down to the floor.

MOLLY (V.O.)

I couldn't call a doctor or go to
an E.R. They'd take one look at me
and call the police.

--Blood and water swirling down a shower drain.

MOLLY (V.O.)

My eyes were swollen and black, my
lips were cut and bloody--

--MOLLY holds a folded, wet towel to her face, then lifts her
face off the towel and looks in the mirror.

MOLLY (V.O.)

--there was dried blood caked all
over my neck and chest and I
couldn't feel my face. It was
Christmas Eve.

--MOLLY sits alone, staring into space in her darkened
apartment, lit only by the city lights out the window.

MOLLY (V.O.)

Pat had set up the meeting. And he
was how they knew where I lived.

*
*

--MOLLY closes the blackout curtains in her bedroom against
the daylight and then picks up a bag of ice and holds it
against her face.

MOLLY (V.O.)

I stayed in my apartment for two weeks waiting for my face to heal and waiting for the phone call I knew was coming.

--MOLLY checks her phone.

MOLLY (V.O.)

But the call didn't come. Where was the call from Joey Bag-a-Donuts saying--

--She checks her phone again.

MOLLY (V.O.)

--"So maybe you've had a change of heart?"

--MOLLY opens her front door and there's a stack of uncollected newspapers there.

MOLLY (V.O.)

After 10 days I opened my front door for the first time. People were coming back into town after--

--She's going through the newspapers, throwing out the old ones after she scans the front page.

MOLLY (V.O.)

--New Year's in Cabo and St. Bart's and South Beach. My phone was blowing up with "When's the next game?" But nothing from John G.

MOLLY discards a newspaper...and then looks at it again.

MOLLY (V.O.)

And then right there on the front page of the *The New York Times* from 8 days ago--

INSERT OF THE *TIMES* HEADLINE--

*

MOLLY (V.O.)

"Nearly 125 are Arrested in Sweeping FBI Mob Roundup." Those guys were either laying low or they were in custody. Sometimes God happens fast.

INT. MOLLY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

MOLLY's face is almost healed and she's applying make-up to cover a dark spot under her eye.

MOLLY (V.O.)

My face had healed enough so that a little make-up would cover the bruises that were left. I put together a week of games.

INT. MOLLY'S APARTMENT - A LITTLE LATER

She's getting dressed in one of her killer outfits.

MOLLY (V.O.)

One week of games to get the 2.8-million I'd loaned out in credit and then I was out, I was done. One week of epic games. I had some of my London players in town and the Russians had visiting friends from Moscow.

INT. MOLLY'S APARTMENT - A LITTLE LATER

She's putting on the finishing touches.

MOLLY (V.O.)

Jesse and Shelby had already started the game at the Plaza and were reporting heavy early action. I was on my way when my phone rang. It was Douglas Downey.

MOLLY answers her phone--

MOLLY

(into phone)

I'm on my way, Doug.

DOUGLAS (ON THE PHONE)

Wait! Molly, wait. I'm hiding in the bathroom.

MOLLY

What?

DOUGLAS (ON THE PHONE)

I need you to believe me--

MOLLY

Slow down.

DOUGLAS (ON THE PHONE)
I need you to believe me, okay? I'm
hiding in the bathroom right now.

MOLLY
Who's bathroom?

DOUGLAS
At the suite. At the Plaza.

MOLLY
Why are you hiding in the bathroom?

DOUGLAS (ON THE PHONE)
I would never tell them anything
about--I said, "Guys, you want me
to go further, you want me to go
other places, I'll do it. But
nothing about Molly, she can't be
touched. Just the Russians."

MOLLY
Doug, you're drunk and a little
hard to understand so I'll see you
in a few minutes when I get there.

DOUGLAS (ON THE PHONE)
Securities fraud.

MOLLY
You're speaking in book titles.

DOUGLAS
Do you have an attorney? Does your
attorney understand that I would
never help them build a case
against you? I would never--

MOLLY
Hang on--

DOUGLAS (ON THE PHONE)
--give them anything against you?
commit perjury before I did that.
(pause)
Are you there?

MOLLY's starting to put this together--

MOLLY
What did you mean when you said
"securities fraud"?

DOUGLAS (ON THE PHONE)
It was such bullshit, it was 2006.

MOLLY

Were you arrested for securities fraud?

*

DOUGLAS (ON THE PHONE)

It was bullshit.

MOLLY

Doug--

DOUGLAS (ON THE PHONE)

I told them I'll go further, I'll go other places but not you. I love you whether you--

*

*

MOLLY

Doug! Listen to me! I need you to pull it together for a second.

MOLLY's other phone starts BUZZING and she glances at it--

DOUGLAS (ON THE PHONE)

I love you whether you believe me or not.

MOLLY

Are you informing for the FBI?

*

DOUGLAS (ON THE PHONE)

Should I have told you? That's a question that'll, you know, that'll haunt me for my days. For my days, Molly, but--

*

MOLLY

You're an FBI informant?

DOUGLAS (ON THE PHONE)

I told them anyone but Molly. Always know that I was trying to protect you.

MOLLY's grabbed her other phone and looks at the text from Shelby--

"FBI is here!!! Stay away!!!"

DOUGLAS (ON THE PHONE) (CONT'D)

You're someone I want to know so bad. I mean really know. Do you ever think to yourself--

MOLLY tosses the phone down and bolts to her bedroom where she grabs a weekend bag and starts throwing things into it.

MOLLY (V.O.)
 Five blocks away the FBI had raided
 my game.

INT. MOLLY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

MOLLY's quickly rummaging through a series of designer bags until she finds some hundreds. She grabs them, grabs her laptop and grabs her bag and heads out.

MOLLY (V.O.)
 I fully expected the lobby to be
 filled with guys wearing
 windbreakers but it wasn't.

INT. MOLLY'S LOBBY - NIGHT

MOLLY gets off the elevator and walks into the lobby.

REGGIE
 Ms. Bloom. Haven't seen you for a
 while.

MOLLY
 Yeah.

REGGIE
 You need a cab?

MOLLY
 I'll get it myself. Hey Reg. I
 guess you never made it upstairs
 with those packages.

She stuffs a hundred dollar bill in his jacket--

MOLLY (CONT'D)
 Maybe I didn't tip you enough
 before Christmas.

MOLLY heads out onto--

EXT. SIDEWALK - CONTINUOUS

Where she flags down a cab.

MOLLY (V.O.)
 I'd gone online and bought a plane
 ticket out of Newark Airport.

She gets in the cab--

MOLLY

JFK please.

She opens her laptop and begins tapping keys--

MOLLY (V.O.)

I logged into my bank account where the balance should have read a little more than 5-million dollars.

MOLLY stares at something we can't see. She's expressionless. Then we see the screen--

MOLLY (V.O.)

It said I had negative 9-million, nine-hundred and ninety-nine thousand, nine-hundred and ninety-nine dollars and ninety-nine cents along with a note to contact the U.S. Attorney's Office. My bank assets had been seized.

*
*

CUT TO:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM IN A FEDERAL BUILDING - NIGHT

MOLLY and CHARLIE are sitting across a table from HARRISON WELLSTONE and BRENNAN, two prosecutors in their 30's.

BRENNAN

And she flew to Denver.

CHARLIE

She flew to Denver where her mother picked her up and drove them both to her mother's home in Keystone. That was two years ago. It's been two years since Ms. Bloom ran a game. I want to mention as well that two days after arriving in Keystone she voluntarily checked herself into a 28-day rehab and has been clean and sober for two years.

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

MOLLY, in jeans, a t-shirt, and a baseball cap, is waiting on line at the checkout along with a half-dozen others--all women.

MOLLY (V.O.)

My third week at rehab they took us on a field trip to a grocery store because most addicts have to be reintroduced to simple things like making your bed and buying eggs.

One of the women further up in the line sees something on the magazine rack and pulls it off. She begins excitedly talking to the others next to her and flipping through the pages.

MOLLY (V.O.)

At the check-out line I saw one of my roommates pull a magazine off the rack. She started looking at me and back at the magazine and back at me. Then she showed me the cover and said, "Is this you?!" It was me, along with four of the players from the Hollywood game, including Player X and Player Y.

EXT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

MOLLY sits on the curb reading the magazine.

MOLLY (V.O.)

They'd gotten a hold of someone's deposition from the Brad Marion bankruptcy suit. The game was run by a cocktail waitress turned poker princess who, they said, provided the players with drugs and prostitutes. A blind quote referred to Donnie Silverman, who they mis-referenced as a winner of the World Poker Championship. I can't be a hundred percent sure that Louis Butterman gave my deposition to the tabloids, but I'm a hundred percent sure Louis Butterman gave my deposition to the tabloids.

CUT BACK TO:

*

INT. THE CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

*

CHARLIE

And during the two years she lived with her mother in Keystone she wrote the book you have there.

BRENNAN

Were the women who worked for you
call girls?

MOLLY

No sir.

BRENNAN

They never exchanged sex for money?

MOLLY

No.

BRENNAN

Have you ever exchanged sex for
money?

CHARLIE

No.

MOLLY

I think he was talking to me.

CHARLIE

I meant no, she's not answering
that question. The purpose of this
meeting--

HARRISON

I know.

CHARLIE

The purpose of the meeting--

HARRISON

We're off the record.

CHARLIE

No we're not.

HARRISON

Do you see a stenographer in here?

CHARLIE

Yes, we are off the record inasmuch
as there's no record but you're
free to act on information that
you're given and we're not giving
it to you for free. I've been
sitting at this table for five
hours, waiting for the opportunity
to implore you to do the right
thing while begging my client for
the last three weeks to act in her
own best interest. And neither of
those things should be hard.

(pause)

(MORE)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

The purpose of this meeting is for you to meet Molly Bloom and discover, as I have, that she's not the person the press has invented.

HARRISON

She's not under federal indictment for getting bad press, Charlie. And the purpose of the meeting, for me, is to discover if your client is willing to cooperate with the government in putting away some bad people.

MOLLY

No.

HARRISON

You're not willing to cooperate?

MOLLY

No, I've never traded sex for money.

(beat)

I'm still not sure if there's a record but if there is I wanted to make sure that was *in it*.

HARRISON

It appears to me that throughout your career as a gamerunner you were extremely diligent about vetting the players.

MOLLY

I was.

HARRISON

But you let four guys play in the game without knowing they were connected?

MOLLY

Plus an FBI informant, it's pretty embarrassing.

They're still waiting for an answer.

MOLLY (CONT'D)

(beat)

I was high at the end and doing my job badly. I'll also add that in my limited experience with the Russian mob, they don't give many clues that they're mobsters. In my experience with the Italian mob on the other hand--

HARRISON

Help us.

MOLLY

I don't know anything that can help you.

HARRISON

Yes--

MOLLY

If I did--

HARRISON

Yes you do. You can provide color.
(beat)

You can paint a picture. You can tell us that Druzhinsky wore a Rolex and drove a Phantom. You can tell us that Illya Gershen showed up with a quarter-million dollars cash in a backpack and you can tell us how much action Helly was taking on a sports bet.

MOLLY's starting to get dizzy from this but she's fighting through it.

MOLLY

(pause)

Uh...No one was allowed to place sports bets from the room, they had to go outside--I'd have no idea how much anyone was taking or laying.

BRENNAN

So now you're saying you knew they were making and taking sports bets?

MOLLY

No sir, that was the point of them leaving the room. They could've been calling their mothers for all I knew.

HARRISON

Molly?

MOLLY

Yes sir.

HARRISON

I don't believe you. In Mike Druzhinsky's phone intercepts alone--just Druzhinsky--your name comes up nineteen times. "

(MORE)

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*

HARRISON (CONT'D)

We need Molly," "Get Molly," "Bring Molly"--it strongly suggests that you were important to his business and so it's hard to believe that someone with your savvy and obvious intellect--

*
*

MOLLY

They're talking about the drug.

(beat)

"Get molly", "Bring molly", "We need molly", they're talking about the drug, ecstasy.

There's a long silence in the room...and then CHARLIE can't help laughing--

*

CHARLIE

Shit. My office was next to yours for two years and I saw you make some bone-headed moves but I've never seen any prosecutor step in it the way you just did. You should thank all of the gods that there's no physical record of that exchange.

*
*
*
*

HARRISON

Look--

CHARLIE

No you look, Harry--

*

HARRISON

You gonna implore me to do the right thing?

CHARLIE

(shouting)

You caught a dolphin in a tuna net and you know it!

*

The rage that's been building up in CHARLIE for hours if not weeks--maybe years--has finally exploded.

*

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

(beat)

Molly Bloom does not belong in a RICO indictment, *are you outta your minds?!* She does not belong in a mob indictment, she raked a game, that's it, for seven months two years ago. Why? Because she was giving credit in the millions and she didn't want to use muscle to collect.

*

(MORE)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Between the two of us we've appeared in front of this judge 28 times as prosecutors and not once has he deviated from our sentencing recommendations, he's not gonna start now. I know you've been putting this bust together for three years and there's no one who doesn't want to see mobsters in jail, including and especially the only person in this room who's had one of them put a gun in her mouth. Probation. Community service. Or better yet, consider that all she did was run a poker game exactly the same way every casino in America does and drop the goddamn charges.

*

There's silence after that long speech. Then HARRISON turns to MOLLY--

*

*

HARRISON

Do you have anything you'd like to add?

MOLLY

(pause)

I am guilty.

*

HARRISON

(pause)

Yeah.

(beat)

Molly, I'd like to talk to your lawyer in private if that's alright with you.

MOLLY turns to Charlie and CHARLIE nods that it's okay.

*

CHARLIE

Can you get some dinner for an hour and then meet me back at the office?

MOLLY

Yeah.

EXT. CORNER OF FIFTH AVE. AND CENTRAL PARK SOUTH - NIGHT

The city's decked out for Christmas. MOLLY's standing in front of a hot dog cart across the street from the Plaza Hotel and staring up at her old stomping ground. She turns suddenly to the hot dog vendor.

MOLLY

Hm? I'm sorry?

HOT DOG VENDOR

Did you want a hot dog?

MOLLY

(beat)

Uh...a pretzel please.

MOLLY takes two singles out of her wallet and trades them for the pretzels.

MOLLY (CONT'D)

Thank you.

HOT DOG VENDOR

Merry Christmas.

MOLLY

To you too.

MOLLY walks up the sidewalk a little bit--the street is lined with carriages and horses. MOLLY stops at the first carriage and asks the driver--

MOLLY (CONT'D)

Is it okay if I feed your horse? *

The driver nods, "Sure go ahead." *

MOLLY takes a piece of her pretzel, offers it in her flattened hand and the horse takes it.

MOLLY (CONT'D)

(whispering)

On my signal, the revolution will begin, and I will lead us all to freedom.

MOLLY rips her pretzel into a few pieces and drops them in the horse's feed bucket. She shoves her hands in her coat pockets and moves on.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - NIGHT

MOLLY's walking down a path and the skating rink comes into view. It's lit up and the skaters are making their way around the rink with Christmas music coming from the speakers.

EXT. SKATE RENTAL - NIGHT

MOLLY steps up to the window which is being manned by a woman.

MOLLY

Hi, I'd like to rent a pair of skates, size 6, but I just spent my last two dollars on dinner which I ended up feeding to a horse. These are 800-dollar leather Chanel gloves and I'll trade you.

SKATE RENTAL WOMAN
800 dollar gloves?

MOLLY
Yes. And they keep your hands just as warm as the 10-dollar kind.

SKATE RENTAL WOMAN
Are you alright?

MOLLY
Mm-hm. I'm divesting.

EXT. SKATING RINK - NIGHT

MOLLY's finishing lacing her skates on a bench, takes off her coat and steps out onto the rink. As soon as she begins skating it's clear that she knows how to skate. And as she starts skating faster it's clear that if she hadn't chosen skiing she could've had a future in speed skating.

She begins to skate faster and faster--weaving through the other skaters with impressive grace and athleticism. And speed. More and more and more speed as she begins her second lap. Faster. Effortless speed.

Two RINK EMPLOYEES on skates and in orange vests see her and one of them shouts out--

RINK EMPLOYEE
(shouting)
HEY! SLOW DOWN!

MOLLY pays no attention as she flies through the other skaters.

RINK EMPLOYEE (CONT'D)
HEY MISS! SLOW DOWN!

The two rink employees set out chasing after her on their skates.

RINK EMPLOYEE #2
LADY! SLOW DOWN!!

MOLLY flips around, skating backwards now, just as fast as she was before.

*

MOLLY
(calling back)
Catch me!
(louder)
Come on! Catch me!

MOLLY flips forward again and rockets away. As she passes the group of observers watching from the railing she hears a man's voice off-screen. *

VOICE (O.S.)
Bend your knees.

MOLLY turns around to see who just said that-- *

--it was her FATHER. MOLLY crashes into the railing and falls down, creating a chain reaction pile-up of skaters who fall over her and then over each other.

MOLLY
(to the other skaters)
Sorry. Sorry.

The two RINK EMPLOYEES skate up and grab MOLLY by each arm.

RINK EMPLOYEE
We're taking you off the ice right now, miss, and if you give us any trouble we're calling the police.

As the RINK EMPLOYEES continue to skate MOLLY off the ice like a prisoner, her father asks simply--

FATHER
How's it goin'?

EXT. BENCH NEAR THE RINK - A FEW MOMENTS LATER

MOLLY's father puts her coat over her as she sits on the bench.

MOLLY
What are you doing in New York and how did you know I was at the skating rink? *

FATHER
I'm both your father and a doctor of the *mind*. I'm in New York because that's where you are and I called your mom at the hotel and she said you were here. Listen, it's not a big deal but from what I saw out there I think you're having a small breakdown. *

MOLLY
That's weird, I can't think of why.

FATHER
I would think it was because of the
arrest and not knowing what's going
to happen.

MOLLY
Old man, do you really not
recognize sarcasm?

FATHER
Do you? Drink this.

He's handed her a styrofoam cup.

MOLLY
I can't drink, I'm an alcoholic but
thanks for remembering.

FATHER
It's hot chocolate.

MOLLY
Okay.

FATHER
And for diagnostic purposes, do
you think we're in a cocktail
lounge right now? 'Cause if you do
I have to walk you into Bellevue
tonight. Did you know I can do
that? I can institutionalize
people, it's fantastic. I want to
check your pulse.

He takes her wrist and looks at his watch.

MOLLY
(pause)
Dad--

FATHER
Hang on.

MOLLY
(pause)
Have you found a pulse?

FATHER
Yeah, I just like looking at this
watch.

MOLLY

Dad, I can see you're getting warmed up but I don't have the emotional bandwidth to defend my "as usual irresponsible behavior."

FATHER

I know, I got your e-mail. I get that I'm not welcome in your life right now as your father though you should know I could give a shit if I'm welcome or not. But I'm not here in my capacity as your father. I'm indifferent to whether your father lives or dies. I'm a very expensive therapist and I'm here to give you one free session.

*

MOLLY

You think what I need right now is a therapist?

FATHER

(almost laughing)
Yuh-huh!

MOLLY

I have to be back at my lawyer's office soon.

FATHER

You like your lawyer?

MOLLY

I wasn't asking for money when I called you, dad, I just needed my dad. And God forbid you part with a nickel.

FATHER

Yeah Tiny Tim, you grew up on a lake and you've skied all over the world, were those work houses tough?

MOLLY

(getting up)
I have to go.

FATHER

Molly--

MOLLY

I have to go.

FATHER

Molly, sit the fuck down!

MOLLY does as she's told. There's a long silence before...

FATHER (CONT'D)

(pause)

Alright. We're gonna do three years of therapy in three minutes.

MOLLY

How?

FATHER

I'm gonna do what patients have been begging therapists to do for a hundred years--I'm just gonna give you the answers.

MOLLY

To what?

FATHER

Well let's start with this. Why does a young woman who, at 22, has a gold-plated resume--why does she run high-stakes poker games?

MOLLY

Why did I choose to make a lot of money, that's a head scratcher.

FATHER

You were gonna be a success at anything you wanted and you know it. If you'd gone to law school you'd have been a partner by now. Why this?

MOLLY

(beat)

I don't know. Drugs.

Her father waves that off--

FATHER

You didn't start with drugs until the end. They weren't the problem, they were the medicine. No. It was so you could control powerful men. Your addiction was having power over powerful men.

*
*
*
*

MOLLY

That's really what you think?

*

FATHER

No, I know it for sure. You've now completed your first year of therapy.

*
*
*

MOLLY

I saw an opportunity, it wasn't about you.

FATHER

It wasn't *just* about me.

MOLLY

It wasn't at all about you.

FATHER

It was. Second year, second question.

*

MOLLY

Do you think you were a good husband?

FATHER

What do you care?

MOLLY

I care because you were married to my mother! I care because my father's an asshole!

FATHER

Congratulations, you've completed Year Two. For the record, your father raised three kids on a college professor's salary. One of them is a two-time Olympian, sixth-round draft pick of the Philadelphia Eagles and a leading philanthropist. Another is a cardiothoracic surgeon at Mass General and the third built a multi-million dollar business using not much more than her wits.

MOLLY

I'm about to plead guilty in a federal court.

FATHER

Nobody's perfect. The point is I must have done a few things right. Last question.

MOLLY

I have to go.

FATHER

Last question, Mol. I'll answer it but you have to ask it.

MOLLY

Why didn't you like me as much as my brothers?

FATHER

There it is. I did. It only from time to time *appeared* that I didn't.

MOLLY

(pause)

It only *appeared* that you didn't?

FATHER

Yeah.

MOLLY

That's some Category-5 bullshit, dad. Why would--*It only appeared*-- Why would--Okay, I had an attitude. I talked back. And I broke some normal adolescent rules. I snuck phone time past curfew, I took your car when I wasn't allowed to--

FATHER

--and drove it into a McDonald's.

MOLLY

And kids get punished for that but they don't get--you'd turn into another person--your voice, your face, it was--

FATHER

--because I knew you knew.

MOLLY

(pause)

You knew I knew what?

QUICK CUT TO:

CAMCORDER

The birthday interview we saw at the beginning--

FATHER (O.S.)
 What do you think about the
 following concepts? I'm just gonna
 run them by you. Marriage.

CUT BACK TO:

EXT. PARK - SAME TIME

FATHER
 That I was cheating. I knew you
 knew.

CAMCORDER

FATHER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Family.

EXT. PARK - SAME TIME

MOLLY
 I didn't know that until I was 20.

He shakes his head "No"...

CAMCORDER

13 YEAR OLD GIRL
 I don't trust people.

EXT. PARK - SAME TIME

FATHER
 You'd known since you were five.
 You saw me in my car. And you
 didn't really know what you saw.

CAMCORDER

13 YEAR OLD GIRL
 I don't have heroes.

EXT. PARK - SAME TIME (BOTTOM OF THE SLOPE)

FATHER
 (beat)
 You knew, honey, and I knew you knew.
 And that's how I reacted to the shame.
 And you reacted by showing seething
 contempt for me, by driving my car
 into a McDonald's--

MOLLY

--and wanting to have power over powerful men?

FATHER

No, that was a red herring just to make you mad.

MOLLY

You're *such* an asshole, dad--

FATHER

YOU TRIPPED OVER A STICK!

(beat)

OKAY?!

(pause)

Ten years ago you tripped over a stick. It was a one-in-a-million thing. You tripped over a stick. That's what you did wrong.

(pause)

There's your session. It's funny how much faster you can do it when you're not charging by the hour. I'm your father. Trying to comprehend how much I love you would be like trying to visualize the size of the universe.

(pause)

I didn't know you'd gotten beaten up until I read it in your book, it was a helluva way to learn about it. You should know I'm hiring someone to find the guy who did it and then I'm hiring someone to kill him.

MOLLY

(smiles)

Don't even joke about that, Dad.

FATHER

I'm not.

MOLLY

It wasn't a purse snatcher, it was the mafia.

FATHER

I don't care if it was the leader of Hamas--

(beat)

--Someone put their hands on you...they're gonna suffer.

MOLLY looks and sees to her surprise that her father is crying. She holds him--

MOLLY

It's okay, dad. It's alright--

Her father is holding her tight--

FATHER

They're gonna suffer.

MOLLY

I'm fine. Really, dad, I'm fine.

FATHER

They're gonna suffer.

They keep holding each other tight as the skaters skate in the background.

*
*

INT. CHARLIE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

*

CHARLIE's alone in his office with the city flickering out the window. He's holding a deck of cards and after a moment, deals himself two down. He looks at them, then he burns a card and deals himself the flop. He tosses his hole cards in the middle and folds.

MOLLY comes and stands in the doorway for a moment...

MOLLY

Did you know that the center of our galaxy smells like rum and raspberries? It's true. At the center of the galaxy is ethyl formate, which is the same gas that gives rum its smell and raspberries their taste.

CHARLIE

Why do you know these things?

MOLLY

To stay busy during games I surfed the internet. Then I started taking online courses. I'm 12 credits away from a degree in astronomy, I didn't even know I was enrolled.

(pause)

I want to thank you for what you said tonight.

CHARLIE

Molly, there's a new offer on the table.

MOLLY

What is it?

CHARLIE

We hand over our forensic imaging.

MOLLY

(pause)

I don't get it.

CHARLIE

We give them the forensic imaging
of your texts and e-mails and in
exchange--

MOLLY

In exchange--What could they
possibly offer me to do that?

CHARLIE

Your money back.

(pause)

They'll return all of your money.

MOLLY takes in that information...doesn't know whether to
laugh or cry and just says...

*

MOLLY

(pause)

Yeah, that sounds about right.

CHARLIE laughs a little.

MOLLY (CONT'D)

Is that why they took the money in
the first place? So they could
offer it back to me?

CHARLIE

I think they just wanted to buy an
espresso machine.

MOLLY

A four and a half million dollar
espresso machine?

CHARLIE

Yeah. Hey, for what it's worth, if
we were going to trial we'd have to
hand over the forensic imaging in
discovery.

MOLLY

Yes but that's different from
voluntarily handing it over.

CHARLIE

Sure.

(pause)

(MORE)

*

*

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

But it's not really voluntary
anymore when the alternative is
prison. Which is what they're gonna
recommend--three years.

*

MOLLY

(beat)

Why do you keep breaking eye
contact with me?

CHARLIE

I'm looking right at you.

MOLLY

You think I should do it.

CHARLIE

You have to let me keep you out of
prison.

MOLLY

You've seen what's on those hard
drives.

CHARLIE

Yeah--

MOLLY

A lot more than a little color.

CHARLIE

I don't care.

MOLLY

Careers will be ruined. Families.
Wives, lives on both coasts--

CHARLIE

Listen to me. When a rich guy goes
to jail he spreads money around.
His lawyer knows how to take care
of it. He spreads money around and
you don't have any. The composition
of female inmates in federal prison--
they did not commit financial
crimes. They're drug dealers and
they get raped by prison guards and
you will not be anonymous, Molly,
you'll be a target.

MOLLY

Children will read their father's
text messages saying he wished he'd
never had kids. These guys--

*

CHARLIE

Where are they?!

(beat)

Why are you in this alone? Where are your friends? Where's one guy saying, "Molly, I know you're doing everything you can to save my life, the least I can do is take care of your legal bills."

MOLLY

If this is about paying your fee--

CHARLIE

It's not! I'll pay my fee, okay?!

MOLLY

You're gonna pay yourself two-hundred and--

CHARLIE

My firm, it's my firm that gets-- where are they, Molly? You kept their secrets. Where are these people you're protecting by not telling the whole story in the book, by settling the Brad Marion suit, by turning down four and a half million dollars of your own money and by going to jail? *Where'd everybody go?!*

MOLLY

It's not their names I'm protecting, Charlie, it's mine.

CHARLIE

Your integrity?

MOLLY

Frame it anyway you want but it's still throwing other people under the bus.

CHARLIE

And you know I admire that but we have to live in the real world now. I'm sufficiently convinced that he's gonna recommend jail time as a coercive measure so you don't have the luxury of integrity.

MOLLY

I never thought I'd hear you say that.

*

*

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*

*

CHARLIE

I'm saying it, that should mean something to you. I'm saying it. We're taking the deal.

MOLLY

No.

CHARLIE

You stay out of jail and you have your money back to pay your debts and start a new life.

(pause)

If this is a self-imposed punishment for naming the four guys in the book--

*
*

*

MOLLY

It's not.

CHARLIE

I think it is.

MOLLY

I noticed you kept that out of your speech to the prosecutors but it's not.

CHARLIE

I think your psychotic need for redemption is making you make bad-- They were already in the tabloids 'cause of Brad Marion!

*

MOLLY

It doesn't have anything to do with that!

*
*
*

CHARLIE

Then take the deal!

*
*

MOLLY

(calmly)

'Kay Listen to me. I'm named after my great-grandmother.

CHARLIE

I don't care.

MOLLY

Molly Dubin Bloom--

CHARLIE

We will stay here all night until--

MOLLY

--is my name.

CHARLIE

--you understand that no one gives
a shit about your good name.

MOLLY

I do!

CHARLIE

Why?

MOLLY

Because--

CHARLIE

Why?

MOLLY

Because it's--

CHARLIE

Tell me why.

MOLLY

(shouting)

BECAUSE IT'S ALL I HAVE LEFT!

BECAUSE IT'S MY NAME!

(deliberately--knowingly)

"And I'll never have another."

They stare at each other...

CHARLIE

(pause)

You read *The Crucible*?

MOLLY

(pause)

Yeah, everyone's right, it's great.

(beat)

I want to go into court and plead
guilty. No deals, no trades...I
want to plead guilty for the crime
I'm guilty of.

CHARLIE

(pause)

I am...so sorry that I wasn't able
to--

*

*

*

*

MOLLY

This was all me. Listen up a second
okay? For most of my life, for
whatever reason, I've experienced
men as nocturnal predators.
Degenerate gluttons of sloth. Crass
and stupid misogynists who measure
their worth in worthless ways.

*
*

CHARLIE

And then you met me?

MOLLY

(pause)

No, Counselor Ego. I've known good
men--beginning with my father and
my brothers.

CHARLIE

I know, I was just--

She puts her hand on his shoulder--

MOLLY

But you confirmed it wasn't a
fluke.

EXT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE - DAY

*

It's a freezing cold day. Paparazzi and a couple of TMZ-type
film crews are behind police sawhorses. MOLLY--along with her
MOTHER, FATHER and her two handsome brothers, JORDAN and
JEREMY, step out of a black SUV where they're met by CHARLIE,
STELLA, and a couple of UNIFORMED POLICE OFFICERS. They head
up the courthouse steps as cameras come to life and some
questions we can't really make out are shouted and ignored.

Molly's MOTHER takes her arm. MOLLY turns to her--

MOLLY

You alright?

MOTHER

(pause--not allowing
herself to cry)

New Yorkers think this is cold
weather? In Colorado this is a
beach day.

MOLLY

There you are.

(then to her FATHER)

You alright?

*

FATHER

These people taking pictures and shouting? The desire--

MOLLY

I know.

FATHER

--to punch them as hard as I can in the mouth--

MOLLY

Yeah.

FATHER

--is overwhelming.

MOLLY

Yup.

They head into the courthouse as we --

CUT TO:

INT. COURTROOM - A MOMENT LATER

Not too many people. It's just another day's business for the court. The family takes its seats and STELLA takes a seat a few rows down and on the aisle. HARRISON and BRENNAN are already at the prosecutor's table discussing some things.

MOLLY walks in with CHARLIE and they head down to the defense table.

MOLLY

(TO CHARLIE)

Why isn't Stella in school?

CHARLIE

She insisted.

MOLLY turns and goes back up the aisle and kneels down where STELLA's sitting.

MOLLY

(pause)

There's gonna come a moment in your life that tests your character. When that moment comes, it'll be better if you don't have any.

After a moment, STELLA smiles and then laughs a little. MOLLY gives her a light smack on the knee and joins Charlie at the table.

*

*

MOLLY (V.O.)

The business of the court began.

We continue semi-MOS as Molly begins narrating over a series of easy DISSOLVES--

MOLLY (V.O.)

We stood for the Honorable Judge Dustin Foxman and counsel entered their names for the record.

DISSOLVE:

MOLLY (V.O.)

The docket was called and some pro forma instructions were given to counsel.

DISSOLVE:

MOLLY and CHARLIE stand up.

MOLLY (V.O.)

And I was asked a series of questions from a script the judge had in front of him.

JUDGE FOXMAN

What is your full name?

MOLLY

Molly Dubin Bloom.

JUDGE FOXMAN

How old are you?

DISSOLVE:

The questioning continues.

JUDGE FOXMAN (CONT'D)

Have you taken any drugs, medicine or pills or had any alcoholic beverages in the past 48 hours?

MOLLY

Sudafed.

JUDGE FOXMAN

Is there anything about the reasons for your taking Sudafed that would interfere with what's going on here today?

*

MOLLY

No, sir.

JUDGE FOXMAN

I state for the record that I've also taken Sudafed in the last 48 hours.

DISSOLVE:

MOLLY (V.O.)

87 questions he was required to ask before he'd permit me to plead guilty.

JUDGE FOXMAN

Is your mind clear today, Ms. Bloom?

MOLLY

Yes it is.

JUDGE FOXMAN

Do you understand what is going on here today?

MOLLY

I do.

DISSOLVE:

JUDGE FOXMAN

Under the Constitution and laws of the United States you have a right to plead to the charges in the indictment, do you understand that?

MOLLY

Yes Your Honor.

DISSOLVE:

JUDGE FOXMAN

And do you understand that?

MOLLY

Yes sir.

DISSOLVE:

JUDGE FOXMAN

At that trial you would be presumed to be innocent and you would not have to prove that you were innocent, do you understand that?

MOLLY
Yes sir.

DISSOLVE:

MOLLY (CONT'D)
Yes Your Honor.

DISSOLVE:

MOLLY (CONT'D)
Yes sir.

DISSOLVE:

JUDGE FOXMAN
If you plead guilty and I accept your plea, you will give up your right to appeal along with all the other rights I've enumerated, do you understand?

MOLLY
Yes sir.

JUDGE FOXMAN
Even now as you are entering this plea you have the right to change your mind and plead not guilty to Count Twenty of the indictment and go to trial, do you understand that?

MOLLY
Yes sir.

JUDGE FOXMAN
Do you understand that you are charged in Count Twenty with operating an illegal gambling business in violation of Title 18 United States Code Sections 1955 and 2?

MOLLY
Yes, I understand.

JUDGE FOXMAN
Understanding everything you've just been told, do you now wish to enter a plea?

MOLLY
Yes sir.

JUDGE FOXMAN
How do you plead to the charge?

MOLLY
Guilty, Your Honor. *

JUDGE FOXMAN
Your plea has been so recorded and
you can take your seat. Before we
move to the sentencing phase I'd
like a word with counsel please.

CHARLIE, HARRISON, and BRENNAN all stand up to approach the
bench--

MOLLY (V.O.)
And then something happened.

JUDGE FOXMAN
(to CHARLIE)
Pardon me, Mr. Jaffey, just
government counsel. *

CHARLIE's a little confused, this is very unusual.

CHARLIE
Yes Judge.

CHARLIE sits back down as HARRISON and BRENNAN have a private
conversation at the bench.

MOLLY
(beat)
What's going on?

CHARLIE
I don't know.

The wait continues...

MOLLY
(pause)
What is it usually?

CHARLIE
I don't know.

MOLLY
(pause)
I can't feel my legs. I've never
been this scared in my life. *

CHARLIE looks at her...

CHARLIE
Yes you have.

The JUDGE tells the prosecutors they can step back.

JUDGE FOXMAN

Would the defendant please rise for sentencing.

MOLLY and CHARLIE stand.

JUDGE FOXMAN (CONT'D)

Based on all available information, this court manifestly disagrees with the government's sentencing recommendation. This courthouse is located three streets from the financial district, which is populated by men and women who will commit more serious crimes by lunchtime today than the defendant has committed in this indictment. I simply don't see how either the People or the cause of justice are served by locking Molly Bloom in prison.

*

We see the family's reaction--holding their breath, as CHARLIE closes his eyes a moment and exhales in relief and anticipation. The JUDGE continues semi-MOS--

MOLLY (V.O.)

It was as casual as if he was ordering lunch off a menu.

JUDGE FOXMAN

Ms. Bloom, this court sentences you to two-hundred hours of community service, one year of supervised probation and drug testing and a one-hundred thousand dollar fine. This case is adjourned.

He raps his gavel. Everyone rushes a stunned Molly to congratulate her.

MOLLY (V.O.)

And that was that. There was crying and hugging, jokes from my brothers--

EXT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

--as MOLLY, CHARLIE, STELLA, and MOLLY'S FAMILY exit and head down the stairs with CHARLIE casually waving off questions.

MOLLY (V.O.)
 --tough talk about how no one
 messes with the Blooms and level-
 headed talk about Christmas
 miracles.

INT. STEAKHOUSE - NIGHT

The seven of them are having a lively dinner.

MOLLY (V.O.)
 Steaks and beer bought by my father
 and full reenactments.

In the middle of the revelry, we start to slowly PUSH IN on
 MOLLY, whose face is beginning to change a little.

MOLLY (V.O.)
 And in the middle of it all, as
 grateful as you are, the reality
 starts creeping toward you like the
 tide. And that's the first time you
 have the thought..."What do I do
 now?"

CUT TO:

EXT. SKI SLOPE - DAY

It's the slope we were on at the beginning, windy and
 forbidding. We're watching from a few hundred feet away and
 we can barely see MOLLY on the ground where she's just had
 her accident. She's surrounded by EMTs, ski patrol, her coach
 and her father. From time to time we'll see the other skiers
 standing by silently, waiting and hoping.

We can hear the two TV COMMENTATORS--one male, one female--
 and a female REPORTER on the ground near the action.

MALE COMMENTATOR (V.O.)
 She's been laying still for about a
 minute now. I want to emphasize
 again, our cameras can't get in
 there so we don't know if she's
 conscious.

FEMALE COMMENTATOR (V.O.)
 She fell hard and then kept going
 at a punishing speed.

MOLLY (V.O.)
 I'm a felon. I'm 35 years old,
 unemployed, and pled guilty in a
 mob indictment.

MALE COMMENTATOR (V.O.)

Molly Bloom is of course the sister of Jeremy Bloom who holds the world's number one ranking. That's her longtime coach there, Ted Keene, and her father.

MOLLY (V.O.)

I owe the government close to two-million dollars in taxes assessed on the civil forfeiture plus the hundred-thousand dollar fine. And they're gonna come get it.

MALE COMMENTATOR (V.O.)

On the doorstep of making the Olympic team.

MOLLY (V.O.)

I have a quarter of a million dollars in legal bills.

FEMALE COMMENTATOR (V.O.)

She came back from an injury when she was just 13. Emergency back surgery. You know I wonder if Tracy's got an update for us on the ground--Tracy?

MOLLY (V.O.)

I don't know what I'd say in a job interview, or if I'll ever be given a job interview. I won't know how to explain this. And for some reason I'm never allowed to go to Canada.

TRACY (V.O.)

Guys, we're hearing the chopper blades down here.

MALE COMMENTATOR (V.O.)

That's the sound you don't want to hear.

FEMALE COMMENTATOR (V.O.)

They don't think--

MALE COMMENTATOR (V.O.)

Yeah, they don't think they can get her off this mountain.

MOLLY (V.O.)

And I'm not allowed to vote.

FEMALE COMMENTATOR (V.O.)

If she can hear those chopper
blades--

TRACY (V.O.)

She's moving, guys!

MALE COMMENTATOR (V.O.)

She's moving.

TRACY (V.O.)

She's waving off the chopper.

We see someone with the ski patrol get on their radio and
look to the sky where the chopper is. *

MOLLY sits up even though the EMTs and her father and the
coach are telling her to sit still.

MALE COMMENTATOR (V.O.)

This is something.

TRACY (V.O.)

I'll tell you guys, as banged up as
she has to be right now, she
appears more angry with herself
than she is hurt.

MALE COMMENTATOR (V.O.)

We can see she's being helped to
her feet now.

MOLLY takes a towel and wipes the remaining blood off her
face.

MOLLY (V.O.)

Did anything good come of this? Not
really. But I learned things. For
instance the largest diamond ever
found isn't on Earth. It's a burned
out corpse of a star that's 50
light years away in the
Constellation Centaurus.

TRACY (V.O.)

She's on her feet.

MOLLY (V.O.)

It weighs 5-million trillion
trillion pounds which is 10-billion
trillion trillion carats.

TRACY (V.O.)

She's looking back up the slope,
trying to figure out what went
wrong, I'm sure that question's
gonna haunt her.

MOLLY (V.O.)

So I learned that our galaxy smells
like rum and raspberries and has a
floating diamond the size of
Polaris.

APPLAUSE from all the spectators and officials.

FEMALE COMMENTATOR (V.O.)

You have to wonder about the
psychological toll. Coming that
close after 18 years only to lose
it like that.

MOLLY (V.O.)

And I learned that I'm very hard to
kill.

MALE COMMENTATOR (V.O.)

You and I both know people who've
never gotten over it.

FEMALE COMMENTATOR (V.O.)

I don't know if the young woman
we've just seen is one of those
people. We may not see her ski
competitively again but I think
we're gonna see her. She'll be
back.

*

As the ski patrol starts to move MOLLY down off the slope,
the camera counters in the other direction--still at a
distance--so that we're turning to look at the crash site
from a different angle.

And as we continue the camera move, coming into the
foreground of the shot...

...we see the PINE BOUGH.

FEMALE COMMENTATOR (V.O.)

She'll be back.

*

MALE COMMENTATOR (V.O.)

Alright, next up in the gate is
Whitney Summerhill who's currently
sitting in 12th place after--

SNAP CUT TO:

BLACK

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