

PAVE OVER THE COTTAGE

Written by

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ACT ONE

1 EXT. GRACIE'S HOUSE - POOL - EVENING

1

GRACIE GODFREY lounges on a chaise by the pool, listening to **Dave Koz playing Lullaby For a Rainy Night**.

She mindlessly eats pretzels while she pours a second glass of **Fiddlehead Sauvignon Blanc**.

She fidgets, stands, walks around the pool, pinches some buds from a Hibiscus, and drops back onto the chaise.

Her fidgeting increases.

She turns down the music, stares at the still pool, and empties the bottle into her glass.

2 EXT. GRACIE'S HOUSE - PATIO - MORNING

2

GRACIE and her husband MATT DOBIE, a stylish man in his mid 50's with a full head of black hair, greying at the temples, sit across from each other having breakfast on the patio next to the pool.

GRACIE

I think I am going to set fire to
the greenhouse today.

MATT

(reading the paper)
That's nice GRACIE.

GRACIE

MATT, what did I just say?

MATT

(MATT lowers the paper and
then raises it before he
speaks)
I'm sorry. What did you say?

GRACIE

That's what I thought. You sit in
front of me, you text, you read the
paper, you eat, but you don't see
me.

MATT

(talking from behind the
paper)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: 2

MATT (CONT'D)

Honestly. Where do you come up with such tripe?

GRACIE

I'm serious. You need to pay attention to me.

MATT continues to read the paper, oblivious to GRACIE's conversation.

Gracie picks up her dishes and goes inside the house. We hear the dishes smash.

Matt puts down his paper and exits through the pool gate. We hear his Porsche start and the sound fades as he drives away.

3 INT. GRACIE'S HOUSE - GREENHOUSE - LATER THAT MORNING 3

GRACIE gently tends orchids and hibiscus in her greenhouse. Birds of paradise hide the tool racks. She trims with the motions of an expert, stands back after each one, takes a look and smiles.

GRACIE puts away her gloves and shears, goes to the door, turns around, looks at the perfectly organized plants, takes a well manicured orchid stares at it and hurls it against the floor, destroying it.

GRACIE

You jerk. You're not ruining my paradise with your ugly presents.

Beat. She recovers her composure, moves the garbage can next to the shattered pot, and steps on the mangled orchid. She turns and leaves.

4 INT. GRACIE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON 4

GRACIE curls up on a very elegant sofa, a glass of wine in one hand and a telephone in the other. She is waving the phone around and has set to speaker.

GRACIE

Mother. I'm trying to tell you! I'm bored as hell and I'm done with it.

MOM (O.S.)

(Laughter)

GRACIE. You, my dear, are the busiest bored woman I know.

(CONTINUED)

4

CONTINUED:

4

GRACIE

People don't see me. I'm smart.
I've earned an MBA for God's sake.
I fight for the homeless here. I'm
a kick-ass dynamo, and people
either gawk at me or stare through
me.

MOM

Of course you are all those things
dear. It's just you haven't had a
job.

GRACIE

I don't want to be the 50 year old
lady who lunches. I don't even like
Mahler to tell the truth. I'm
invisible.

MOM

Nonsense. Since when did you ever
eat lunch? What about the award
tomorrow? You think the United Way
didn't see you?

GRACIE

That's different. What is the point
of selling Paula's fur sweaters to
people who don't need them so we
can buy polyester sweaters for
people who do?

MOM

GRACIE.

GRACIE

I'm serious mother. Nothing makes
sense.

MOM

Have you been drinking wine again?

GRACIE

Goodbye mother.

MOM

Wait GRACIE. Can you just check
something with MATT for me? DelCot
sent my royalty check. It was for
\$1.20 GRACIE! I don't understand
why.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED: (2)

4

GRACIE

Yes mother. Of course I will act as
Mrs. DelCot. It seems that is what
I do best.

5 EXT. GRACIE'S HOUSE - POOL - LATE AFTERNOON

5

GRACIE is dumping her jewelry into the pool and diving down
to retrieve it.

BERTHA, her maid, sees her repeating this action over and
over. She goes to the wine fridge, chooses a bottle of Pinot
Grigio, takes two tumblers from the shelf and joins GRACIE at
the pool.

BERTHA

GRACIE, I've been watching you.
It's time for wine.

GRACIE

(squinting to see BERTHA
from the pool)

BERTHA. Are you done already?

BERTHA

No, but you should be. It's time
for wine.

GRACIE lifts herself from the pool, grabs her towel and sits
down at the glass table. BERTHA hands her a tumbler.

GRACIE

You're right of course. Let's enjoy
a glass.

BERTHA

What were you doing?

GRACIE

(embarrassed laugh)
I was diving for buried treasure.

BERTHA

Treasure you already own?

GRACIE

I know. Lame huh?

BERTHA

Well, it's not my place but... yes.
What's up?

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

5

GRACIE

I don't know. I just don't know. I am bored silly with everything and I have no answers.

BERTHA

GRACIE, you're a very busy woman. How can you be bored?

GRACIE

I don't know, but I am.

BERTHA

So why diving?

GRACIE

I need adventure Bertha. I want to do something wild.

I want to dive for treasure and it seemed too lame to completely pretend,

so I thought if I tossed my jewelry into the pool...

BERTHA

But you could lose it.

GRACIE

Yes and that is the beauty of it.

Imagine losing a Harry Winston, especially if it came from...

(Gracie points to the house and laughs a bit too strongly)

BERTHA

GRACIE, you need a job.

GRACIE

Oh God, BERTHA, a job? Not you too. Ok, I'll play. What job?

BERTHA

I dunno, but you need a challenge. You need to answer to someone other than yourself. You need a job.

GRACIE

But I hate jobs for women my age.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: (2)

5

BERTHA

No. You think you hate jobs. But you haven't had one to hate. When was your last job?

GRACIE

Well, I . . .

Beat

GRACIE (CONT'D)

Ok, I haven't actually had a job.

BERTHA

Ah, you see then.

GRACIE, feeling the effects of the wine, pours out the rest into the two tumblers and tosses the bottle into the pool.

BERTHA (CONT'D)

I can tell you about every house I cleaned. That's a job and I love what it does for my family, my kids, my marriage.

By the way - don't toss around the glass out here. It's trouble.

GRACIE

Why are you telling me this?

BERTHA

Because you dive for jewelry. Who does that?

GRACIE

Apparently me.

BERTHA

Yes and it's not the right challenge. You need to keep your jewelry and dive for your job.

GRACIE

BERTHA, Can I be honest?

BERTHA

(BERTHA stares)
Of course

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: (3)

5

GRACIE
(looking at BERTHA and
then the pool. Then at
Bertha.)
I need a job.
(GRACIE finishes her
tumbler of wine and
tosses the glass in the
pool)
But right now I need to dive for
all the crap in this pool.

GRACIE stands up, walks to the pool edge and dives to the bottom of deep end. She comes up with the bottle she threw in and a ruby ring.

BERTHA, gets up from the table and goes back into the house to finish cleaning.

EXT. GRACIE'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Bertha exits the house, turns to face the door, and before she closes it, takes a look at the job she's completed.

We follow what Bertha sees, a gleaming, clean home.

BERTHA
(speaking to herself)
Gracie, you'll see. Good work, good
feelings.

Bertha smiles with pride, closes the door and leaves.

6 EXT. GRACIE'S HOUSE - POOL -EVENING

6

We return to the pool to see GRACIE listening to **Florence and the Machine (My Boy Builds Coffins)** and eating pretzels. As she finishes the wine she passes out. MATT comes home, sees her on the chaise by the pool, takes a blanket, covers her and turns back into the house.

7 INT. LACMA - GALLERY - EVENING

7

COURTNEY PATTAN, a mid thirties executive, is seated at a Blackjack table in an elegant black evening gown, wearing expensive gold jewelry. She has a troubled look on her face.

COURTNEY
I'll take my chips and cash in now
Jack. I have to give a speech in 15
minutes.

(CONTINUED)

7

CONTINUED:

7

JACK, a man in his fifties, wearing a tux, nods his head.

JACK

Good luck Courtney. I'm sure you'll
knock 'em dead.

COURTNEY

Thanks Jack. See ya next time.

JACK

Sure thing.

JACK stands and pulls out COURTNEY'S chair. She grabs her
chips, flips one to him and leaves the table.

8

INT. LACMA - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

8

Courtney stops in the bathroom where she finds GRACIE
applying eyeliner.

COURTNEY

Mrs. DOBIE. Hello. Are you excited
to get your award?

GRACIE

(startled)

Courtney Pattan? Let me look at
you.

GRACIE stands back, looks at COURTNEY, grabs her shoulders
and gives her a hug.

GRACIE (CONT'D)

You look so nice tonight. I wish
your father were still here to see
you. He'd be so proud. I miss him
you know.

COURTNEY

Thank you Mrs. Dobie.

GRACIE

Please Courtney. Call me Gracie
Godfrey tonight.

COURTNEY

I miss him too. His shoes are
bigger than I realized.

Gracie stares at her and remains silent.

(CONTINUED)

8

CONTINUED:

8

COURTNEY (CONT'D)

He left me PAVE - that media project he loved.

He expects me to run it but I'm not the CEO type.

All I hear now is him telling me to give it a chance and it will grow.

But I'm not a publisher. I'm sorry. Nevermind. It's your night tonight.

GRACIE

I can imagine. Quite a night tonight huh?

COURTNEY

Yeah. Not often I can give out awards to someone I really admire.

It's going to be so great presenting to you. I'm like totally thrilled.

GRACIE

Funny, it doesn't seem like I did much.

Paula and I go way back to when I lived in Toronto.

Asking her to do those crazy fur vests of hers was such a small thing.

COURTNEY

So what are you up to now?

GRACIE

That's a good question. I am searching these days.

COURTNEY

Searching?

Courtney zeros in on this.

COURTNEY (CONT'D)

For what?

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED: (2)

8

GRACIE

Ah, it's a late mid life thing. I think I need an adventure.

COURTNEY

Really? Wanna have coffee after the ceremony?

GRACIE

I'd love too. I'll meet you at the Café?

COURTNEY

Perfect. I'll look for you right after the awards.

See you in like 10 minutes on the podium. Oh and Congrats!

DISSOLVE TO:

9 INT. LACMA - GALLERY - CONTINUOUS

9

On the way to her table, Gracie dials Matt, waits, then hangs up, looking frustrated.

She takes her seat as Courtney goes to the podium.

Courtney speaks as Gracie downs a glass of white wine and plays with her wedding ring.

10 INT. LACMA - PODIUM - CONTINUOUS

10

We catch Courtney in mid speech.

COURTNEY

And finally, tonight I am so proud to give this award to Gracie Godfrey. Many of us know her as Matt Dobie's crusading wife.

But she is a force in her own right.

With her help we raised over 3 million dollars to support our homeless residents.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

10

COURTNEY (CONT'D)

And I am proud to let you know that I am going to match that with funds from my father's trust.

So Gracie, it is with great pleasure that I present you this award. You certainly earned it and we are proud of you.

GRACIE stands and the spot follows her to the stage.

11 INT. W HOTEL - MATT'S ROOM - SAME EVENING

11

MATT pushes LILY CHAN off his naked body and sits up, swinging his feet off the mattress and onto the floor.

MATT

God that was good Lily. I needed that. Thank you.

LILY

The pleasure was all mine Matt. You make me so horny.

MATT

I'm glad. I love making you horny you little minx.

LILY

I wish you could come stay with me tonight. I am tired of this hotel.

MATT

No can do Lil. You know the game.

LILY

So why can't we change the rules and play it a different way?

MATT

(smiling)

You know the story. If you don't like banging your head on the wall then stop doing it.

Matt begins to get dressed. Lily pouts and puts her dress back on. They leave together in silence.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

12 INT. GRACIE'S HOUSE - DEN - MORNING 12

The clock on Matt's desk shows 5:00 AM. GRACIE is reading a report MATT left on his desk.

Beat.

GRACIE stops, re-reads and draws her finger across the page making an imaginary line.

13 INSERT - EARNING REPORT 13

Gracie stops, puts her finger on a line showing the title of her mother's book (**Francis Godfrey - My Prairie for a Kingdom.**) In the column labeled **E-BOOK SALES** we see **8000**. The next column, **Royalties** shows **\$0.00**.

Gracie closes the report, looks confused. She gets up and goes into the kitchen.

14 INT. GRACIE'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS 14

GRACIE slices an orange on the breakfast island, toast pops up from the toaster.

MATT enters, ignores Gracie, and walks over to the table. He is dressed in a **WILLIAM WESTMANCOTT** suit.

He sits down and picks up the paper. He notices the toast still sitting in the toaster but does nothing to remove it.

GRACIE, puts down the orange and knife, turns to get the toast and butter, looks at MATT who smirks a smile. GRACIE glares.

 GRACIE
 (frustrated)
 It wouldn't hurt you to pick up the
 toast before it gets cold and
 butter it Matt.

 MATT
 (feigns confusion)
 HUH?

 GRACIE
 You heard me. Why do you always do
 that?

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

14

MATT
(pretending exasperation)
Do what Gracie?

GRACIE
Ugh! Never mind. I don't even know
why I bother.

MATT
(smiling)
You know the story Gracie. If you
don't like banging your head on the
wall then stop doing it.

GRACIE
It's just . . . Oh forget it.

GRACIE flings the buttered toast at MATT.

GRACIE (CONT'D)
(sarcastically)
Here's your toast darling. Just the
way you like it. See how light it
is. It almost floats you prick.

MATT
(ending the charade,
showing his anger)

What in the name of all that is
unknown is wrong with you?

This is a new suit.

GRACIE
You. You're what's wrong Matt.

Mother called yesterday. She got
her DelCot royalty check ..\$1.20
MATT. She got a lousy \$1.20. I told
her there must be a mistake.

But I had a look at the sales
report on your desk.

You sold 8000 copies of her book
last quarter.

Still she only got a buck twenty
you creep. I can't tell her what I
saw.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED: (2)

14

GRACIE (CONT'D)

She thinks God asks you for advice.

MATT

You went into my sales report?

GRACIE, you know that report is confidential.

GRACIE

Answer the question. 1.20? On 8000 copies?

MATT

Alright, enough.

There isn't much to say. That report is from our e-book division.

Your mother has no e-book rights.

The 8000 copies were e-books.

The hardcover is on the backlist. She sold 20 hardcover copies.

She was paid.

If she wants money, she needs to write a new book.

GRACIE

My mother was not on your damn back list when Kingdom made the New York Times best seller list.

Her book got you the first step towards your job.

MATT

Those were different times. She got 5% of sales. On e-books she has no claim.

(frustrated pause)

Why are we having this conversation?

GRACIE stares at MATT in disbelief. She picks up the orange and knife and continues to section the orange.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED: (3)

14

GRACIE

Go to work Matt. Let's hope DelCot can manage to pay for that car in the driveway. I'd hate to see it on your back list.

MATT walks over to GRACIE and squeezes her ass.

MATT

(apologetically)

Hey Gracie. We started off on the wrong foot. Let's make up. I've got a few minutes before I need to leave.

GRACIE pushes MATT's hand away without turning to face him.

GRACIE

The only ass you deserve to feel is your own, when this whole e-book business bites it.

You should be ashamed of yourself.

My mother doesn't deserve to be treated this way. I don't know why you can't see it.

I hope you get burned. Honestly MATT I do. I can't believe I married such an arrogant jerk.

MATT

Geez. I wish I could make you understand.

If you did you'd see that DelCot is not at fault here.

They paid your mother and she spent it.

They can't keep paying her over and over. They just can't.

GRACIE turns around, the knife still in her hand.

GRACIE

I'm going out today Matt. You should plan on finding your own dinner. Go to work Matt. NOW!

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED: (4) 14

GRACIE needles the knife into MATT's jacket. MATT turns and leaves.

15 INT. GRACIE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON 15

GRACIE comes home to find she is alone. She puts on some **Ella Fitzgerald (Nice Work If You Can Get It)**, pours a glass of wine, sits down on the sofa and stares at the door.

Beat.

She picks up the phone and dials.

GRACIE

Hi Courtney? About our chat last night after the award.

I want to take the job.

COURTNEY

Seriously? Are you sure? Don't say this if you're not sure.

GRACIE

Yes. I'm sure.

COURTNEY

Like I said last night, you'd be the perfect CEO at PAVE.

And I'd know I'm leaving my dad's baby with a great nursemaid.

I'll meet you in the office tomorrow morning. 10?

GRACIE

See you then. The Blue Whale right?

COURTNEY

Yeah, We're in the Red Building. I'll call the desk with your name.

16 INT. PAVE - BOARDROOM - MORNING 16

GRACIE and COURTNEY create lattes using a Franke Evolution Espresso Machine on the credenza. They take the lattes to a Juliettes Ebony Boardroom Table.

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

16

The rest of the office is furnished completely in white leather and glass. There are no personal mementoes anywhere in the room.

GRACIE

So, what do you think? Did the board like me?

COURTNEY

(laughing)

I don't know. What do you think?

Asking you to step outside while they work out the details of your offer?

I'd say that was a good sign. But why don't you want a lawyer to review it?

GRACIE

Because I don't want Matt involved, even if PAVE is universes apart from DelCot in thinking.

COURTNEY

Well, suit yourself. I'm just glad to have you here.

There is a knock on the door. ANNE TILLY, head of HR, enters with GRACIE's offer.

ANNE

Well Ms. Godfrey, it is a pleasure to ask you to join us.

(Anne turns to Courtney)

Ms. Patten - good call.

(Anne sits down next to Gracie, becoming business like in her tone)

The board asked that I give this to you right away. I think you will find all the terms and conditions are quite generous.

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED: (2)

16

GRACIE
(Gracie smiles and touches
Anne's hand)

It is good to see you again. I
haven't had the chance to thank you
for buying your husband one of the
fur sweaters last year. Does he
like it?

ANNE
(Anne chuckles and
blushes)

Not as much as I do. I've bought
more. I wear them all the time.

(Grace and Courtney join
her in laughing)

Well, don't let me keep you. I just
wanted to duck in with this. It's
going to be great working with you
Ms. Godfrey.

GRACIE
Please Anne, call me Gracie.

ANNE
Fine Gracie. I'll see you soon.

COURTNEY
(to Gracie)
Let's go meet your new team.

17 INT. PAVE - AIKO'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

17

AIKO, a late 40's woman, small and trim in stature, is in her
office with the door closed.

There is a small crowd of employees standing outside AIKO's
office peering in.

AIKO, is playing a Gershwin styled tune, swinging some
imaginary pearls and doing what appears to be a Charleston
dance.

As soon as COURTNEY is spotted, the crowd disperses. AIKO,
remains oblivious. COURTNEY opens the door.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

17

COURTNEY

Good morning Aiko. Doing the
Charleston are we?

AIKO

Yes. Care to join?

COURTNEY, takes an imaginary draw of a long cigarette holder,
smiles and exhales.

COURTNEY

I'd love to but I have some
official business Aiko. Please meet
Gracie Godfrey, your new CEO.

Gracie, this is Aiko Nakamura, your
CFO.

AIKO

CEO? Courtney, I thought we were
interviewing candidates.

COURTNEY

We were but...

GRACIE

But I pushed my way in Aiko.
I am a huge 20s fan and had
to work with you.

AIKO

(smiles)

Hmmm. Gracie? I think I like you.
Care for some tea?

GRACIE

I'd love some but it will have to
fight for room with the latte I
just finished. Can we have it a bit
later?

AIKO

Of course. There is nothing worse
than a coffee tea war.

GRACIE

AIKO, I'd like to go over the
financials with you tomorrow. Can
you give me access to the ledgers
today?

AIKO

Certainly. I can even do one
better. I just ran the reports this
morning. Take my copy.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: (2)

17

AIKO goes to her desk, pulls a 3 inch stack of paper from her ink blotter and hands them to Gracie.

GRACIE

Perfect. I look forward to discussing these tomorrow. Just high level for now.

I want to get up to speed with projects and marketing as well.

AIKO

You're in the right place. PETE PENDER is our project manager. He's just two doors down from me.

LILY CHAN is our director of marketing. You'll find her on the other side.

They are both at a seminar today. You might need to wait to see them until then.

Gracie smiles and bows.

GRACIE

See you tomorrow!

18 EXT. PAVE - OUTDOOR MEZZANINE - NEXT MORNING

18

GRACIE is having coffee with PETE PENDER, a project manager in his early 30's. Lily Chan joins them.

GRACIE

Lily, Pete. I'm glad to have a chance to meet outside and have coffee. I wanted to introduce myself since you'll be reporting to me directly.

LILY

It's a pleasure to meet you.

PETE

It certainly is. AIKO told me you were our new CEO and I was more than excited.

GRACIE

Why is that Pete?

(CONTINUED)

18

CONTINUED:

18

PETE

To have the partner of the
country's largest publisher running
PAVE? Hey, what can I say?

LILY

(gulps)
Are you Matt Dobie's wife?

GRACIE

Yes, I am.

LILY

(Lily puts on a stone face
and checks her watch.)
Gosh, that's great. Mrs. Dobie, I
want to talk more, but I have a
meeting with an advertiser. I have
to go. I'm sorry.

GRACIE

We can meet tomorrow Lily. I need
to review projects with Pete now.

Book some time on my calendar in
the afternoon.

We can catch-up on the marketing
strategy in that meeting.

Lily stumbles as she gets up and exits quickly. Gracie looks
puzzled, then turns to Pete.

GRACIE (CONT'D)

Well Pete. I hear you're quite the
straight shooter around here.

PETE

Thank you ma'am. I try to keep our
projects flowing.

GRACIE

Courtney told me that you are from
Iowa?

PETE

Yes ma'am. I came here after I
graduated from the University of
IOWA. I wanted to be a writer but I
needed to pay my bills. The bills
won ma'am. PAVE is a perfect fit
for me.

(CONTINUED)

18

CONTINUED: (2)

18

GRACIE

Pete, Please call me Gracie. Have you written anything since you came here?

PETE

I have a first draft but it's a long way from being ready for an editor.

GRACIE

Well let me tell you from my own experience, you have to take risks to be alive. I'd get it out there.

PETE

Yes ma'am, I mean Gracie. My Gran used to say that too. I think she worried that I would suffocate.

She used to say that security was death and if I wanted to live I needed to risk everything for something I believed in.

GRACIE

And that made you a project manager?

PETE

On the inside of a publishing company who wants to go where no one has gone before.

GRACIE

(smiles and makes a
Vulcanian sign)

Well I hope you live long and prosper here. I am glad to have you aboard. Your grandma was right. Listen to her.

I need to see the project plans for each author under contract with us. Can you send them over today?

(Pete nods.)

Certainly.

GRACIE takes her coffee cup, nods her head and turns to leave. She hesitates and turns to look once more at PETE.

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED: (3)

18

GRACIE (CONT'D)
Pete, I want that book on my desk
in 6 months.

PETE
(standing up and saluting)

Yes sir, er ma'am, I mean yes
GRACIE. Thank you!

19 INT. AIKO'S OFFICE - LATER THAT AFTERNOON

19

Gracie enters AIKO's office with the book of financial
statements.

Aiko is throwing pencils into the ceiling.

GRACIE
Am I interrupting?

AIKO

Aiko looks at Gracie and then at the ceiling.

As long as you don't sit under
those
(she points to the pencils
in the ceiling)
I don't know how long before they
fall.

Gracie takes a chair and moves next to AIKO, and out of the
range of the pencils.

GRACIE
I need to understand the Patten
investments. I can't see that the
fund will be enough to expand. Am I
seeing this clearly?

AIKO
You see perfectly well. Our growth
is capped unless we increase
revenue or decrease expenses.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

19

CONTINUED:

19

AIKO (CONT'D)

In short, with the addition of your salary we will need to generate more income or approach VCs.

GRACIE

What's your plan?

AIKO

My plan, before you arrived, was to use the Pirates of the Caribbean model.

GRACIE

Huh?

AIKO

It's like this. I was at Darya's in Irvine having lunch with James and Jack from *Eggwhite Media*. They wanted to acquire us.

They knew we needed cash. But I proposed we gather all the SoCal self-publishers together and form a Lords of the Brethren Court like they did in Pirates.

(Gracie looks bewildered)

AIKO - (CONT'D)

No offence to your husband, but independent publishing is growing fast and to us, DelCot is just like the British East Indian Trading Company.

I thought by pooling resources we could beat them without selling out.

I didn't want to become another division of *Deliberate Cottage*.

I suppose that won't happen now. Courtney didn't know, or she would have told you.

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED: (2)

19

GRACIE

I see. Did Eggwhite buy-in?

AIKO

They're thinking about it.

GRACIE

Get them on the phone today and give them 24 hours to buy-in. Tell them Matt's wife is the CEO now.

And Jack Sparrow is ready to battle the Trading Company with them.

Gracie, rises from her chair and walks to the door. The pencils begin to drop.

20 INT. PAVE - PETE'S OFFICE - EVENING

20

Pete is playing with the pen his grandmother gave him and staring out his window.

Ok Gran. You said that if I wanted to live I needed to risk everything for something I believed in. So, I hope you're watching me now!

Pete puts the pen to paper.

INSERT - THE LETTER (V.O)

"Dear Ms. Atwood,

You don't know me but I work for Matt Dobie's wife Gracie Godfrey. Recently, Gracie took on a big challenge - She agreed to run Courtney Pattan's ***Pattan Arts Virtual Entertainment***. We call it PAVE. It was a dream child of Courtney's father to give a voice to authors who needed to be heard but had the publishing door slammed shut.

Courtney convinced Gracie to take on this challenge the night she awarded Gracie the United Nations Award for Compassion.

I haven't told Gracie I am writing to you. If you agree to my request, I will run fast to tell her. In short, we need one great icon of literature to light the way for the authors we support. I'm hoping you will provide that light.

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED: 20

Will you come to Los Angeles and hear us out? Enclosed is an open ticket. If you say yes just text me the date and I will have someone at LAX to pick you up.

I would like you to hear our proposal. At best, you'll support us. At worst, it's a free trip which you can use to see Matt Dobie while you're here. Please come.

Peter Pender."

21 INT - PAVE - PETE'S OFFICE - THREE DAYS LATER. 21

The phone rings.

PETE

Hello, this is Pete Pender. How can I help you?

OMG - Of course I can be at LAX tomorrow at 11 am!

Yes, at Baggage. Flight AC 787. OMG - Thank you!!

Yes, I understand. I'm telling her as soon as I hang up!

Pete sprints down to Gracie's office and bursts in.

22 INT. PAVE - GRACIE'S OFFICE 22

Gracie is absorbed in project plans. She looks at Pete, hiding her annoyance.

PETE

Catherine Par Atwood is coming to see you tomorrow at lunchtime.

GRACIE

What?

PETE

Catherine Par Atwood called and is coming to see you. I'm picking her up at LAX at 11.

GRACIE

Why?

PETE

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

22

Pete turns sheepish.

Remember when I told you my gran
said I need to take risks and you
agreed?

I took one and wrote to Atwood.

I told her you were here now and
leading the Patten mission to give
voice to those who have been
silenced.

I asked her to come see us.

She called to say yes. And... we
paid for her trip.

GRACIE

I see. Do you have the letter?

PETE

Yes.

GRACIE

Gracie sat silent and stone-faced - neither smiling nor
frowning.

Bring it to me please.

Pete leaves the room to return to his office. He retrieves it
and returns to Gracie's office.

GRACIE (CONT'D)

Thank you Pete. Leave this with me.
Come here in the morning before you
go to LAX. We'll talk then.

23 INT. PAVE BOARDROOM - MINUTES LATER

23

LILY

Pete - In here!

Pete enters the boardroom and Lily closes the door.

LILY (CONT'D)

What's going on?

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

23

PETE

I might have messed up.

Lily gives him a quizzical look but says nothing and waits.

PETE (CONT'D)

I took a risk a couple of days ago
and write to CP Atwood.

I asked her to come to PAVE and
speak with Gracie.

I doubted she'd accept, but she
did. She's coming tomorrow.

LILY

How's that messing up?

PETE

I told Gracie and she was stone
faced. She asked for the letter and
told me to come in before I went to
LAX.

LILY

Oh. Can I help?

PETE

Dunno. I'll have to see what
happens tomorrow.

Pete gives Lily a hug.

PETE (CONT'D)

But thanks for asking.

LILY

It'll be ok Pete. I'm here for you.
Go home and celebrate with your
husband. Go dancing or something.

Getting Atwood here is big league.

Pete leaves the boardroom. Lily presses speed dial on her
phone.

Matt, I've got something here you
need to know.

FADE OUT.

24 INT. GRACIE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DINNERTIME

24

Gracie is making a salad and opens a bottle of wine. She pours a glass, sips, and makes a vinaigrette from Ojai olive oil.

Matt bursts into the kitchen. He grabs Gracie's arm and takes the knife she is using for the salad away from her. He tosses the wine in the sink and pours the bottle out.

Gracie stands still.

MATT

I heard Atwood is coming to town.

GRACIE

Is she?

MATT

She's coming to see you! What the blazes are you doing?

GRACIE

Making dinner.

MATT

Cut the crap.

Gracie stares into Matt's eyes.

We see her fear. He stares her down into the submissive behavior he expects from her.

She opens her mouth and then closes it and steps back from him.

Matt reaches to grab her arm again and she recoils.

GRACIE

So what? You think you're all powerful you little prick?

MATT

I'm your husband. She's my client. Know your damn boundaries!

GRACIE

Boundaries? What are my boundaries oh great wizard of LA?

Matt glares at her.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

24

MATT

Know your boundaries Gracie. I mean it.

Matt turns and exits the kitchen. We hear the front door slam and the Porsche rev up. The tires squeal and the place goes silent.

Gracie unlocks the wine cabinets, pulls out a new bottle of Screaming Eagle Cabernet Sauvignon, pours a glass, and picks up her phone. She presses one digit.

GRACIE

Pete. Sorry to bother you. But I wanted to say you don't need to come in tomorrow.

(Pause)

Go straight to LAX and pick up CP. Bring her to Baltaire's at 1 pm. Ask for my table.

PETE

Yes Ma'am!

FADE OUT.

25 EXT. BALTAIRE - ENTRANCE - NEXT DAY

25

Atwood, Pete, and Gracie are standing outside waiting for the valet to bring Gracie's car.

ATWOOD

(shaking Pete's hand and smiling)

Mr. Pender . . .

(Atwood looks at Gracie)

. . . Gracie - it's been a pleasure.

ATWOOD (CONT'D)

You've got a fine young man here Gracie. Pete is a gift and I'm glad he set up our meeting.

(Atwood's eyes bore into Pete and her quirky smile emerges again)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

25

CONTINUED:

25

ATWOOD (CONT'D)

You've got a bright future, young man. And a new client.

Pete is, for the first time, speechless - for a moment. He bows, then curtsies, then jumps, stretching his arms into the air.

PETE

I'm sorry. Please excuse my Iowa outburst.

I grew up reading your books.

I've listened to every interview, and I never thought that one day I'd get to meet you like this.

ATWOOD

Be careful what you wish for, young man. Only a small shake crumbles a pedestal. I'm trusting you'll catch me when mine breaks.

Atwood turns to Gracie.

ATWOOD (CONT'D)

Have your lawyer send over the contract. I'm holding you to it - every detail we discussed.

And I'll tell Lishman to keep knitting those fur vests. Your relation with her is all the proof I need. Bill and I were good friends and I'm happy you used her crazy ideas to help the homeless here.

The valet brings Gracie's car. Gracie opens the passenger door and offers it to Atwood.

ATWOOD (CONT'D)

Thank you but I have some other business to which I must attend.

(She turns to Valet)

Please find me a cab, sir.

ACT THREE

27

INT. W HOTEL - MATT'S ROOM - SAME DAY LATE AFTERNOON

27

MATT

(Matt rolls onto his back)
Whew - I needed that.

LILY

Now, Matt. Tell me why we're really here. I wasn't banging my head against the wall. You were.

(Lily smiles)

Not that I'm complaining. It's just different to feel you that way.

MATT

It's Atwood. She called and told my secretary that she's moving to your company.

I can't believe Gracie disobeyed me last night and went ahead and poached her.

LILY

So, she did it.

MATT

Yep. And now for the first time, I have a competitor I don't know how to handle.

LILY

Have you thought that maybe it's our time now? Move out and let's get this ball rolling. I can leave PAVE.

MATT

You've read the Art of War.
(Lily stares. Matt looks surprised)
Or haven't you?

Now is not the time. I need to stay close.

PAVE must burn to the ground.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED: 27

LILY
I have an idea.

FADE TO GREY.

28 INT. GRACIE'S HOUSE - LIVINGROOM - NIGHT TWO DAYS LATER 28

Gracie is reading a book, still unaware that Matt knows about Atwood. The landline rings and they both reach for it.

MATT
I guess having another CEO in the house is going to take some getting used to. Do you want to answer that?

GRACIE has already picked up the phone.

GRACIE
Hello? Oh hi AIKO. What's up? I'll call you back.

GRACIE's face grimaces and she goes into the den and closes the door.

GRACIE (CONT'D)
Listen Aiko, Let's Zoom this. I'll send you the link and get COURTNEY in on this too.

GRACIE opens a video conference call and is soon connected with COURTNEY and AIKO.

COURTNEY
So Aiko. I hear you have some news. You do know it is 10 p.m. already correct?

AIKO
Yes, sorry but you know - trial by fire. Eggwhite is pulling out of the Lords of the Brethren Court.

COURTNEY
Oh I see. How well are we positioned?

(CONTINUED)

28

CONTINUED:

28

AIKO

We have about 6 months of reserves
but our working cash flow is not
meeting expenses. If we don't
reduce staff we have 3 months left.

GRACIE pulls up a screen on a second monitor next to the
video conference. She logs into her brokerage account and
runs queries while they speak.

GRACIE

So, what are the options?

AIKO

Well, we need to find another
partner or a VC, but that is going
to take time.

I think we need to first stop the
bleeding which most likely means
layoffs.

GRACIE

I see. How much has Eggwhite given
us so far?

AIKO

They promised 30 and deposited 3 so
far. They haven't asked for it back
but they could.

COURTNEY

So we're pretty close to the bottom
of the barrel on this anyway AIKO.

AIKO

That's true.

GRACIE

How long will their 3 million give
us?

AIKO

Another 3 months, beyond our 6
months of reserves.

GRACIE

One more question. To either of
you. Why did they pull out?

(CONTINUED)

28

CONTINUED: (2)

28

AIKO

Lily sent them a press release about Atwood. Jake from Eggwhite called me asking why we admitted to defaming DelCot to poach Atwood.

They didn't want to be involved in a potential lawsuit with a player that big.

I checked the wires and there is no press release. It was sent only to Eggwhite to get them to pull out.

GRACIE

I see. Well Courtney, maybe we need to alter my contract.

COURTNEY

Yes, I understand. I'm sorry. I wouldn't have asked you if I knew things would go this way.

GRACIE

No I don't think you do understand.

I am going to invest the other 27 million. We need to work out the structure for the investment.

GRACIE completes the sale on 500,000 of DelCot stock options in her account. We see the confirmation page - Total sale value 29.4 Million

GRACIE (CONT'D)

I'll put up the cash but we'll need to work out the details as part of my contract.

AIKO

You understand that this is really high risk?

GRACIE

Absolutely and but it's my resurrection.

I am going to give Bertha a raise.

(there are confused looks
on Courtney and Aiko)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

28

CONTINUED: (3)

28

GRACIE (CONT'D)

I am alive and have an adventure.

AIKO

Gracie Godfrey, you are more like me than I thought. Let's meet tomorrow and build a strategy to carry us forward for the next year.

The web conference closes as MATT walks into the den. He has his phone in his hand.

MATT

(showing Gracie the e-mail)

You don't really think I am going to approve this transaction do you? That is our boat money.

GRACIE

Your boat just sailed. If you read this carefully you will see that this is a **notification** to you of a completed transaction on the Deliberate Cottage account.

(Gracie smiles as she hands him back his phone)

I've already moved the money to my cash account.

MATT

(failing to contain his anger)

Gracie - never make these decisions without me. I want that money back in the brokerage account now.

GRACIE

No.

MATT

I'm not playing here. This new diversion of yours is too expensive. Put it back.

GRACIE

I will put it back if you rollback all the gifts you told the IRS you made to me.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED: (4)

28

GRACIE (CONT'D)

If you want to keep your CEO job at DelCot you're going to have to shut up about this.

You gave me the stock options and I exercised them. It's done Matt.

MATT

Maybe we are too Gracie. Maybe we are too.

MATT turns around and leaves the den. GRACIE sits stone faced for a few minutes then tears well up in her eyes.

FADE TO BLACK.

29 EXT. GRACIE'S HOUSE - POOL - THE NEXT EVENING

29

Gracie and Matt have avoided each other since their outburst the day before.

Gracie's mom, Frances Godfrey, has called each of them together to eat a Beef Bourguignon she has been cooking all day.

They are sitting by the pool drinking Levy & McClellan Cabernet Sauvignon.

FRANCES

This is excellent wine, don't you think?

(neither answer. She dishes up the bourguignon and serves it to them)

GRACIE

Thanks mom.
(Matt grunts)

FRANCES

Matt? Your thoughts?

MATT

Yes, Frances. It is really good. You're a great cook.

(CONTINUED)

29

CONTINUED:

29

FRANCES

I'm going to cut to the chase of this drama you're in. Both of you, look at me - 30 years together and this is the storm that's going to shipwreck you?

MATT

There is no ship now Frances. Your daughter left me a dingy.

GRACIE

That's not true ...

FRANCES

Gracie! Shush. Matt is talking.

MATT

It's ok Frances. To answer your question. Yes. This is the shipwreck. I don't see a way out.

FRANCES

(pause, eyes down, then up to meet Matt)

It's hard to talk, isn't it Matt?

I know it is. But I love you Matt.

You've been a special force in my life since you two met. I'm going to fight for you.

GRACIE

(Gracie finishes her glass of wine and pours another. Frances moves the bottle out of Gracie's reach)

Mother.

FRANCES

If you want to be a business powerhouse my dear, you don't get to slip back into the lady who lunches.

(CONTINUED)

29

CONTINUED: (2)

29

MATT

I hope you're listening Gracie.
Because I can't treat you as a
business woman until I see you as
one.

Honestly Frances, she isn't. You're
analogy is apt. She is the lady who
lunches and plays with friends she
meets along the way.

GRACIE

(controlling a bubbling
anger)

Why? Because my project manager was
smart enough to find the gap in
your relationship with your high-
profile client?

Atwood came to us willingly. I
didn't even discuss DelCot.

MATT

You were sneaky.

GRACIE

That's rich. I know Lily is your
courtesan and your spy.

Honestly, she is the one who stole
your boat and you helped her.

I just took what was mine and used
it to my benefit.

Speaking of which..

(Gracie turns to Frances)

Did he mention that Lily is his
courtesan?

(Matt looks up in disgust
and then down in shame
and finally straight at
Gracie in defiance)

FRANCES

Don't be provincial Gracie.

Most women I know couldn't care
less about affairs. Some welcome
them so they can get on with their
lives.

(CONTINUED)

29

CONTINUED: (3)

29

GRACIE

Mother! How would you know?

FRANCES

Because I know we all have short
little lives in the grand design.

And we better live them to the
fullest. Sex is sex is sex. Who
cares?

I know men who defend their
toothbrush more than their
"courtesan."

MATT

(Looking pleasantly
surprise)

Thank you Francis. Well said.

FRANCES

(turning to Matt)

And as much as I love you dear. You
were a sneak.

You'd still have your boat if you
were truthful with my daughter.

I doubt Lily would have been a
problem if you'd just been honest.

You had a foundation of trust you
undermined.

You publish authors to create tales
of deception.

So, don't pretend you don't know it
destroys those things that matter
most.

That is the real lesson your living
now.

MATT

And so I am.

(Matt wipes his lips and
leaves the table.)

FADE TO BLACK.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED: (4)

29

END OF ACT THREE

37 CONTINUED:

37

The guard opens the door and stands between Courtney and Lily, extending his arm as if to show Lily the way to her office.

COURTNEY (CONT'D)

Aiko, go home. Tell your wife we're doubling your salary. Your Pirates strategy is a hit with Professor Trueman at UCLA.

If you have any trouble implementing it, speak directly to him.

Now, go strengthen our position.

Courtney hands a business card to Aiko, who begins to shake as if she's going to explode.

COURTNEY (CONT'D)

Pete. Your stunt with Atwood is going to cost you your job as Project Manager at PAVE.

Beat

I'm promoting you to Director of Client Development. Please clear out your office and move down to the corner office opposite Gracie.

And don't forget to buy flowers for Terry on the way home. Your husband deserves them.

PETE

Do I still do project management?

COURTNEY

No, For now, I'm taking your job. I'm going to use my fine tooth comb and promote every author and creator who is signed with us.

We're going to take a real run at DelCot and we're not stopping until the British East Indian Trading Company is no more.

FADE TO WHITE.

38 INT. GRACIE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - SAME DAY

38

Gracie is packing her things in a variety of suitcases and wardrobes. The keycard to the W Hotel lays on the dresser.

Bertha walks in.

 BERTHA

 I'm here to help you Gracie

Gracie turns to her and cries.

 GRACIE

 Bertha. I have a job. But I don't
 have a husband.

 BERTHA

 Don't say that Gracie. He's still
 here. He's on the patio, looking as
 blue as the water.

 GRACIE

 I'm at such a crossroad Bertha.
 Matt won't join me on the path I'm
 taking now.

Matt enters the room

 MATT

 Are you sure about that?

He pulls out one of the Harry Winston's diamonds Gracie threw in the pool.

 MATT (CONT'D)

 You need me to find your treasures
 before they plug up the filter.

Gracie turns to Bertha.

 BERTHA

 I know.

 It's time for wine. I'll get the
 tumblers and meet you at the pool.

 GRACIE

 And bring the soda maker.