EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Adam Barr
Executive Producer: James Burrows
Executive Producer: Peter Chernin
Executive Producer: Jenno Topping
Executive Producer: Dante Di Loreto

ME & MEAN MARGARET

"Pilot"

Written by
Adam Barr

Directed by
James Burrows

April 25, 2016 - 2ND REV SHOOTING (PINK)
April 26, 2016 - 3RD REV SHOOTING (YELLOW PAGES):
1, 4, 13-14, 17, 37, 45

© 2016 Universal Television LLC
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. NOT TO BE DUPLICATED WITHOUT PERMISSION.
This material is the property of Universal Television LLC and is intended solely for use by its personnel. The
sale, copying, reproduction or exploitation of this material, in any form is prohibited. Distribution or disclosure of this material
to unauthorized persons is also prohibited.
# Tentative Production Schedule

**Tuesday, April 26th**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10:00am</td>
<td>Crew call/camera block</td>
<td>Stage 41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:00pm – 5:00pm</td>
<td>Dinner</td>
<td>Rehearsal Hall B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:00pm</td>
<td>Makeup/hair touch ups/notes</td>
<td>Stage 41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:30pm</td>
<td>Audience Show</td>
<td>Stage 41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ME & MEAN MARGARET

“Pilot”

2ND REVISED SHOOTING (PINK)

April 25, 2016

MARGARET..................................................STOCKARD CHANNING
BEN.............................................................GAVIN STENHOUSE
COCO............................................................MAYA ERSKINE
CHARLES.....................................................MAMOUDOU ATHIE
TOM..............................................................TIMOTHY OMUNDSON
AVANA..........................................................JANE LYNCH
MARINA.......................................................JUSTINE LUPE
PAUL.............................................................STEPHEN GUARINO
MITZI...........................................................SHARON SACHS
HELMUT.......................................................HANS SCHOEBER
ALBA..........................................................MARIANA NOVAK
ME & MEAN MARGARET

“Pilot”

2ND REV SHOOTING (PINK)

April 25, 2016

Sets

ACT ONE
COLD OPEN – INT. BEN’S APARTMENT – DAY (DAY 1)
SCENE A – INT. LUXURY RESIDENTIAL BLDG – LOBBY – LATER (DAY 1)
SCENE B – INT. PENTHOUSE – LIVING ROOM – MOMENTS LATER (DAY 1)

ACT TWO
SCENE C – INT. CARLYLE HOTEL – BAR – LATER (NIGHT 1)
SCENE D – INT. PENTHOUSE – LIVING ROOM – SAME TIME (NIGHT 1)
INT. CARLYLE HOTEL BAR – CONTINUOUS (NIGHT 1)
SCENE E – INT. CARLYLE HOTEL – BAR – MOMENTS LATER (NIGHT 1)

ACT THREE
SCENE H – INT. CARLYLE HOTEL – HALLWAY – LATER (NIGHT 1)
SCENE J – INT. BEN’S APARTMENT – LATER (NIGHT 1)
SCENE K – INT. PENTHOUSE – LIVING ROOM – ANOTHER DAY (DAY 2)
EXT. PENTHOUSE – BALCONY – CONTINUOUS (DAY 2)
INT. PENTHOUSE – LIVING ROOM – CONTINUOUS (DAY 2)

SOUND EFFECTS
BEN GETS A TEXT P 20
BEN’S PHONE RINGS P 22
OPERA MUSIC PLAYS P 23
THUNDER P 45
## Short Rundown

### Act One, Cold Open (Day 1)
- **INT. BEN’S APARTMENT - DAY**
  - (Ben, Marina)

### Act One, Scene A (Day 1)
- **INT. LUXURY RESIDENTIAL BLDG - LOBBY - LATER**
  - (Ben, Charles, Atmo)

### Act One, Scene B (Day 1)
- **INT. PENTHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER**
  - (Margaret, Ben, Coco, Charles, Tom, Helmut, Alba)

### Act Two, Scene C (Night 1)
- **INT. CARLYLE HOTEL - BAR - LATER**
  - (Margaret, Ben, Coco, Mitzi, Atmo)

### Act Two, Scene D (Night 1)
- **INT. PENTHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME**
  - (Margaret, Ben, Coco, Charles, Tom, Helmut, Alba)

### Act Two, Scene E (Night 1)
- **INT. CARLYLE HOTEL - BAR - MOMENTS LATER**
  - (Margaret, Ben, Coco, Paul, Mitzi, Helmut, Atmo)

### Act Three, Scene H (Night 1)
- **INT. CARLYLE HOTEL - HALLWAY - LATER**
  - (Margaret, Ben, Coco, Avana, Paul, Atmo)

### Act Three, Scene J (Night 1)
- **INT. BEN’S APARTMENT - LATER**
  - (Margaret, Ben, Coco, Marina)

### Act Three, Scene K (Day 2)
- **INT. PENTHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - ANOTHER DAY**
  - (Margaret, Ben, Coco, Charles, Tom, Helmut)
- **EXT. PENTHOUSE - BALCONY - CONTINUOUS**
  - (Margaret, Ben, Coco, Charles, Tom, Helmut)
ACT ONE

COLD OPEN

FADE IN:

INT. BEN’S APARTMENT – DAY (DAY 1)
(Ben, Marina)

MARINA IS WAITING. SHE CALLS OFF INTO THE BEDROOM.

MARINA

Ben, come on. You’re going to be late. Show me already.

BEN (O.S.)

I don’t know about this. I don’t think it’s right.

MARINA

Of course it’s right. I picked it out myself. Come on.

BEN ENTERS WEARING A SKINNY, SHORT SUIT A LA THOM BROWNE, CLEARLY UNCOMFORTABLE.

MARINA (CONT’D)

You look amazing. This is so the new * look now. Very hip. *

BEN

I feel like I’m the Incredible Hulk who only got a little bit angry.
I need to be comfortable, Marina.
This is a big day for me.
MARINA

It’s a big day for us. You’re, like, the youngest lawyer at your firm, and they’re trusting you with their biggest client. You have to look the part.

BEN

It is a pretty good opportunity.

HE TRIES TO PICK UP A BOTTLE OF WATER, BUT BECAUSE HIS SUIT IS SO TIGHT, IT RESTRICTS HIS ARM.

MARINA

It’s an amazing opportunity. And if you do this right, you make partner, then we can throw away all of your stuff and get some nice stuff. My stuff. (OFF HIS LOOK, RE: THE “THE” ON THE WALL) We can keep the big “THE”. I know you like it.

BEN

Thanks. I can’t feel my arms.

MARINA

Hey -- eyes on the prize, mister! You look great, and you’re going to do great. I mean, you better do great. (LAUGHS) You will. (THEN) You better!

SHE LAUGHS. THEY KISS.
BEN 

Thanks, sweetie. I feel good. (LIKE THE HULK) Err, I’m going to crush this.

MARINA

You are invincible!

BEN

I am unstoppable! (THEN) Let me just get my briefcase. *

HE BENDS TO PICK UP HIS BRIEFCASE, BUT CAN’T. HE ENDS UP WITH HIS HEAD AGAINST THE DOOR.

BEN (CONT’D)

Hon?

AS MARINA HELPS BEN, WE...

CUT TO:
ACT ONE

SCENE A

INT. LUXURY RESIDENTIAL BLDG - LOBBY - LATER (DAY 1)
(Ben, Charles, Atmo)

A DOORMAN STANDS AT HIS POST. BEN LEANS BACK ON THE SOFA
WHILE CHARLES, A VIOLIN CASE ON HIS SHOULDER, TRIES TO PEEL
OFF HIS SKINNY PANTS.

BEN 16

Thanks for bringing the suit, Charles.  *

CHARLES 16A

No problem. Sorry I was late.

BEN 16B

Yeah. What happened?

CHARLES 17

I was on the M train on my way back  *
from orchestra when this guy -- and it  *
might’ve been a lady -- he/she had a  *
ferret, or maybe a long mouse, and it  *
got loose. So everyone was scrambling  *
to help him/her catch his/her  *
ferret/mouse before he/she had a total  *
meltdown. It was chaos.

BEN 17A

Sounds it. A little help, please?  *

CHARLES HELPS BEN TAKE THE PANTS OFF.  *

CHARLES 17B

It’s like peeling a hot dog. (THEN)

So who’s this guy you’re meeting?
BEN 18

Tom DuVay. Investor-billionaire.
He’s our firm’s biggest client... not
counting a certain bad boy singer
whose name I can’t say so don’t even
Bieber. (THEN) Okay. I’ll finish in
the elevator.

He takes the rest of the clothing from Charles, hands him the
skinny suit pants and jacket.

BEN (CONT’D) 18A

(RE: HIS OLD CLOTHES) Make sure these
don’t lose their crease. I have to
wear them home.

CHARLES 19

Wouldn’t it be easier just to tell
Marina you don’t like the suit?

BEN 20

Lying is easier. That’s why it’s so
popular. (THEN) Okay, wish me luck.

CHARLES 24 *

If you have skill, you don’t need *
luck. Good luck. *

Ben gets on the elevator. The doors close. Charles realizes *
Ben forgot his briefcase.
CHARLES (CONT’D) 26

Ben! Your briefcase. (THEN) Hmm, should I go up or would that be bad?
I usually ask Ben what to do in moments like these. That’s what I’ll do.

AS CHARLES PRESSES THE ELEVATOR BUTTON, WE...

OPENING CREDITS

CUT TO:
ACT ONE

SCENE B

INT. PENTHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER (D1)
(Margaret, Ben, Coco, Charles, Tom, Helmut, Alba)

BEN CHECKS OUT THE RIDICULOUS ARTSY CHAIR, ATTEMPTING TO SIT IN IT AS ALBA, A HOUSE SERVANT, ENTERS.

ALBA 27

Mr. DuVay will be right with you.

SHE EXITS UP THE STAIRS. TOM DUVAY ENTERS.

TOM 28

Benjamin Evers. Tom DuVay.

BEN 29

A pleasure to meet you, sir. I was just admiring your...

TOM 30

Chair. A two hundred and forty thousand dollar chair. Something my mother picked up for me. With my money.

BEN 31

It’s something you always wanted?

TOM 32

No.

BEN 33

But something she likes.

TOM 34

No. So, Ben, what has your boss told you?
BEN 35

Not much. Just that you recently became legal guardian of your mother. Is she well?

TOM 36

Is she well? Yes. Yes, physically, she’s fine. She could kill you with her thumb.

TOM LAUGHS. BEN LAUGHS WITH HIM, BUT HE’S NOT SURE WHY.

BEN 37

I’m sorry, sir. I’m a little confused. I am here to help you, right?

TOM 38

Yes. By helping my mother. See, she needs guidance. Legal guidance.

(HANDING DOCUMENTS) Court-ordered legal guidance. Unrelated, have you had any combat training?

BEN 39

Combat...?

TOM 40

Doesn’t matter. You’re going to love her. She used to be a famous actress. Margaret Manley?

BEN 41

Margaret Manley... I thought she was--
Dead?  No.  (HATE) She’ll never die.

(CALLING) Mother?  Mother?  (TO BEN, HOPEFUL) Maybe the shadows took her.

WE HEAR A SHRIEK, THEN ALBA RUNS DOWN THE STAIRS CLUTCHING THE BACK OF HER HEAD, MORTIFIED. MARGARET MANLEY APPEARS AT THE TOP OF THE STAIRS, SWINGING THE HACKED-OFF PONYTAIL AND HOLDING LARGE SCISSORS.

MARGARET

Goodbye, Alba.  Sorry this didn’t work out, but you know how I feel about * women over thirty with ponytails.

ALBA RUNS TO THE ELEVATOR AND EXITS.

MARGARET (CONT’D)

(TO BEN) Hello.  You must be the boy the lawyers sent over.  And lucky me, I got a handsome one.

MARGARET DESCENDS THE STAIRS.

TOM

Oh, Mother, you’re such a flirt.  (TO BEN) Remember, if she charges you, make yourself look big.

TOM QUICKLY EXITS TO THE KITCHEN.

BEN

Ms. Manley, hi.  Benjamin Evers.  A pleasure to meet you.

MARGARET

I’m just bursting.
BEN
48
Let me say, I realize how difficult it
must be, giving up control of your
life.

MARGARET
49
So difficult. I cry.

BEN
50
But I’m confident I can help you with
whatever it is you might need. And so
you know, I have no problem being
around old people.

MARGARET
53
Isn’t that comforting.

BEN
54
My Grandma Jo, who turns eighty-six in
June -- I’m always helping her.
Making her toast, taking her to her
doctors, getting her out of the tub.
My point is, I am here to serve you.
Legally speaking.

MARGARET
55
Wonderful. (THEN) Now listen to me,
you little blonde stain.

ON "STAIN", SHE SHOVES HIM DOWN ONTO THE BENCH.
I do not need supervision. I’m quite capable of getting out of a bath, I can butter my own toast, and the only doctor I visit is Dr. Phillip de Vant, professor of Russian literature at Columbia University, a man whose tongue is so vigorous, so enthusiastic, it renders me inert two times a month and every Easter Sunday. So as you can see, I won’t be needing your services.

She snatches the legal docs from Ben and flings them out the balcony doors. Ben rushes out to gather them.

Now, you may want to hold onto your *toupee. It gets windy out there.*

She shuts the doors, leaving Ben trapped on the balcony.

Free at last! Free at last! *

Ms. Manley? I think you accidentally locked the door. Ms. Manley?

Margaret exits to the kitchen.

Angle on: The elevator opens and Charles enters holding Ben’s briefcase.
Ben? I have your attaché. (TAKing THE PLACE IN) Oh my God. I need to touch everything.

HE STROKES THE FURNITURE.

Charles! Open the door!

HE NOTICES THE BOWL BEHIND THE SOFA AND PULLS OUT HANDFULS OF PONYTAILS.

Bowl of hair. I’m confused, but intrigued.

AS CHARLES LETS BEN IN, TOM HURRIES DOWN THE STAIRS WITH AN OVERNIGHT BAG AND HEADS FOR THE ELEVATOR.

Right this way.

Mr. DuVay!

BEN CHASES AFTER TOM. TOM TURNS AND ESCAPES UP THE STAIRS.

(to CHARLES) Go! Get out of here!

(THEN) Mr. DuVay! Can I talk to you, sir?

BEN CHASES AFTER TOM. CHARLES CROSSES OFF. TOM RE-ENTERS FROM UNDER THE STAIRS, AN OVERNIGHT BAG ON HIS SHOULDER, AND RACES TO THE ELEVATOR WITH BEN CLOSE BEHIND.
Mr. DuVay! Sir, you kinda forgot to mention your mother’s Cruella DeVoldemort. No offense.

None taken. She is. She’s awful. That’s why she needs supervision. Or, ideally, sedation, but she’s immune to the darts. (THEN) Good luck!

But sir! I can’t be her legal guardian. You should be her legal guardian.

I don’t want to be her legal guardian. Look, we could debate this all day, but we’re adults, so... (WHAPS HIM) Tag. You’re it.

TOM GETS IN THE ELEVATOR. AS THE DOORS CLOSE, BEN GRABS TOM’S JACKET. THEY HAVE A SMALL STRUGGLE. BEN CLINGS TO THE JACKET AS IT SLIDES DOWN.

(CALLING DOWN) No, no, no -- You can’t leave me with her! And a tag isn’t legally binding!

MARGARET ENTERS WITH HER DRIVER, HELMUT, A MYSTERIOUS GERMANIC MAN CARRYING A WHITE BOX, AND COCO (MID-20’S), * WEARING A COOKING APRON. *
MARGARET 71 *
And you prepared it as I asked? *

COCO 72

Yes.

MARGARET 73
With the ingredients I provided?

COCO 74
Yes, alright? I made the cake. I have done your bidding. (THEN) Now unless there’s something else Your Royal Heinous desires, I’m going to my room, pouring myself a glass of rubbing alcohol, and making a compilation of all the movies you were murdered in.

MARGARET 75
Oh, Coco. Why some lucky man hasn’t snatched you up. That’s rhetorical, we all know why. (THEN) Helmut, zeit zu gehen.

MARGARET HEADS FOR THE ELEVATOR.

BEN 76
Ms. Manley!

MARGARET 77
Uch, this again.

MARGARET AND HELMUT STEP INTO THE ELEVATOR. BEN Follows.
BEN 78

Look, I get you don’t want a chaperone, but apparently, this is my job now, so if you’re going somewhere, I have to go, too.

MARGARET 79

Your logic is unassailable.

THEY STEP INTO THE ELEVATOR, OUT OF SIGHT. *

MARGARET (O.S.) (CONT’D) 79A *

Helmut, off mit ze blondie! *

BEN IS THROWN OUT OF THE ELEVATOR. AS THE DOORS CLOSE: *

MARGARET (CONT’D) 80

Best regards to Grandma Jo! *

BEN 81

(TO COCO) She is not a nice lady!

COCO 82

Dude, she’s not a lady. She’s just a bag of bitterness held together with spite and Percocet. Oo, Percocet.

LIKING THE IDEA, COCO TURNS TO GO UPSTAIRS. BEN STOPS HER.

BEN 83

Wait! Coco, right? Hi. I’m Ben, Ms. Manley’s new handler.

COCO 84

Oh, Ben. So young, so cute, so full of promise. You remind me of the cow they lower in “Jurassic Park”. *
CHARLES RE-ENTERS.  

CHARLES  85

Ben, this place is outrageous.

BEN  86

You’re still here?

CHARLES  87

They have a live-in masseuse. I just got a cranial massage. I feel new again.

COCO  88

Uh... We don’t have a masseuse.

CHARLES  89

Then there is a tiny woman in the pantry with oddly strong thumbs. (THEN) I should go cancel my wax.

CHARLES EXITS. BEN TURNS TO COCO.

BEN  90

Please. Just tell me where Ms. Manley is going.

COCO  91

Well, the sun’s setting, so she’ll have to feed... The Carlyle.

BEN  92

Great. Come with me?

COCO  93

You want me to go toward it?  

*
BEN

You know her. I’m going to lose my job. Come on. One drink?

COCO

Fine. I’ll have one drink with you.
But that’s it -- three drinks.

BEN FISTS PUMPS, YES! HE AND COCO HEAD FOR ELEVATOR. CHARLES REAPPEARS AT THE TOP OF THE STAIRS.

CHARLES


AS HE WANDERS OFF HAPPILY, WE...

END OF ACT ONE
ACT TWO

SCENE C

INT. CARLYLE HOTEL - BAR - LATER (NIGHT 1)
(Margaret, Ben, Coco, Mitzi, Atmo)

MARGARET IS ENJOYING A COCKTAIL AT A TABLE. SHE TURNS TO A
YOUNG COUPLE SITTING NEARBY.

MARGARET

First date, huh? With your ears and
his nose, your children will look like
bats. (RAISING GLASS) To young love.
(THEN, NOTICING) Will you excuse me?
I see a dear friend.

MITZI PASSES. MARGARET STICKS OUT HER FOOT. SHE FALLS.

MARGARET (CONT’D)

Hello, Mitzi.

MITZI

Margaret, you did that on purpose.
All because of one bad review thirty
years ago.

MARGARET

No. I did it because it was funny.
But now that you’re reminding me,
would you be a dear and shimmy past me
one more time?

MITZI EXITS. BEN AND COCO APPROACH.

COCO

There she is. I told you I smelled
sulphur.
Ms. Manley, what are you doing?! You can’t just take off. You’re under a legal conservatorship.


You know, every first meeting I ever had with a director, I had right here in this very room.

And every second meeting she had, she had in the bathroom stall just outside this very room.

Oh, Coco. Looks, brains, and charm. Why have you none of those?

Careful, your original face is showing.

See, that’s weird to me. How is it your cook gets to talk to you like that?
Coco’s not my cook. She’s my granddaughter.

BEN

Your granddaughter?! (TO COCO) So Tom DuVay’s your dad?

COCO

My mom’s Japanese. Dad has an Asian fetish. The more exotic the better. His last girlfriend had that surgery to look like a cat. She was a mess, and she ruined all the furniture. (TO MARGARET, LOUD) We’re talking about father. (TO BEN) Poor dear. She’s fading fast.

SFX: BEN GETS A TEXT.

WE HEAR THE TEXT ALERT. IT’S MARINA’S VOICE:

MARINA (V.O.)

Don’t ignore me. Don’t ignore me.

BEN CLICKS IT OFF.

MARGARET

Well, that’s unpleasant.

BEN

It’s my girlfriend, Marina. She changed my text alert. It’s funny. She says it’s funny.

MARGARET AND COCO REACT, DISGUSTED.
COCO GRABS HIS PHONE.

COCO

(RE: PHONE) Why is she sending you a photo of Thor?

BEN

(TAKING PHONE) She wants me to have Chris Hemsworth’s haircut. And his hammer.

MARGARET TAKES IT FROM BEN AND SCROLLS THROUGH.

MARGARET

(READING) “Here’s that article. ‘A six pack in six weeks.’”

COCO TAKES IT FROM MARGARET.

COCO

(SCROLLS) “No snacking today. You don’t want puffy cheeks.” So you’re dating your mother. Hot.

MARGARET

You need to kill that girl.

BEN

What?!

COCO

Or maybe just dump her.
Please. He’s never going to do that.
He’s not that kind of man.

And what kind of man am I?

The kind who doesn’t have any balls.

I have balls, thank you very much.

MARGARET SUDDENLY REACHES OVER AND GRABS HIS CROTCH.

So you do. There they are. Let me
buy those bad boys a drink. (CALLING)
Rosalie?

Well. Now we can add “assault” and
“sexual harassment” to your rap sheet.

SFX: BEN’S PHONE RINGS.

It’s Charles. (TO COCO) Don’t let her
move. Don’t let her scalp, cut,
knife, shoot, or fondle anyone.

BEN EXITS.

He didn’t say anything about fire.

AS MARGARET REACHES FOR A CANDLE, WE...

CUT TO:
ACT TWO

SCENE D

INT. PENTHOUSE - LIVING ROOM/INT. CARLYLE HOTEL BAR - SAME (N1)
(Ben, Charles, Atmo)

SFX: OPERA MUSIC PLAYS.

CHARLES ENTERS, ON THE PHONE, ONE BATH TOWEL AROUND HIS WAIST, ANOTHER OVER HIS SHOULDERS AS IF HE CAME FROM THE SAUNA.

CHARLES 130

(INTO PHONE) Ben. Quick legal question. If someone were to grill a panini on sauna coals and there was no explicit signage forbidding it, would said person be liable for any cheese-related damage?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. CARLYLE HOTEL BAR - CONTINUOUS (NIGHT 1)

BEN IS ON THE PHONE, AGITATED.

BEN 131

(INTO PHONE) I don’t know. I don’t have time for this. I’ve got Godzilla running loose on the city. My career path suddenly took a résumé-killing turn. And there are two nasty ladies in the other room telling me I need to dump Marina.

CHARLES 132

Oo. Now there’s an idea.
BEN 133

You, too?

CHARLES 134

I just don’t see it, man. She’s not a good fit for you. You’re nice and generous. And she’s controlling and fake and...

A HOUSE SERVANT OFFERS HIM A GLASS OF LEMONADE. HE SIPS.

CHARLES (CONT'D) 135

(RE: DRINK) Oo. Tart.*

BEN 136

So she’s been with a lot of guys.*

(THEN) Why’m I hearing opera?

CHARLES 137

There are many ways to respond to that. Here’s one.

CHARLES JUST HANGS UP.

CUT TO:
ACT TWO

SCENE E

INT. CARLYLE HOTEL - BAR - MOMENTS LATER (NIGHT 1)
(Margaret, Ben, Coco, Paul, Mitzi, Atmo)

MARGARET IS STILL AT HER TABLE WHEN MITZI GETS UP OFF THE FLOOR AND EXITS.

MARGARET 138

Mitzi, how stupid are you?

BEN RE-JOINS MARGARET AND COCO, DRINKS HIS DRINK.

COCO 139

Everything okay?

BEN GESTURES “SO-SO.” PAUL, A HOTEL EMPLOYEE (AND MARGARET SYCOPHANT), STEPS UP.

PAUL 140

Ms. Manley.

MARGARET 141

Paul. Tell me. How did it go?

PAUL 142

Ms. DuVay loved the cake. Loved it!

MARGARET 143

Good. And she won’t know it’s from me?

PAUL 144

I said it was a gift from the hotel, our way of thanking her for having the wedding here today.
MARGARET 145

Aren’t you a clever little bugger.
Er.

BEN 146

(ALARMED) Wait. What’s happening?
You gave someone a cake?

BEFORE MARGARET CAN RESPOND, PAUL JUMPS IN.

PAUL 147

This woman. She calls me last week and says, “Paul, I’d like to provide the cake for Avana DuVay’s wedding, my way of forgiving her for stealing my first husband, Jeffrey, and destroying my marriage.” And she does it anonymously. “Hello, karma? I’d like to be cleared.” “Okay!”

BEN 148

Wait. You had Coco make a cake for the woman who stole your first husband?

MARGARET 149

Paul, you can go now. Thank you.

PAUL 150

Of course, Ms. Manley. I am forever your humble servant.

HE BOWS, TAKES HER HAND, AND STARTS KISSING IT.

MARGARET 151

No touching.
Then you give it to her anonymously on her wedding day...?

MARGARET

Why is it so hard to believe I’m capable of a little kindness? My God, Benjamin, if we’re going to be in this arrangement, the trust has got to start somewhere.

BUT BEN’S NOT BUYING IT. A BEAT, THEN HE TURNS TO COCO.

BEN

What’s going on with that cake?

MARGARET

(TO BEN) Don’t speak to the help. (TO COCO) And don’t you go flapping your trap.

COCO

You know, you don’t control me,

(POINTEDLY) Grandma.
Of course not. Now dab your lip.
Your moustache sweats when you display
human emotion.

THIS PUSHES COCO TO HER EDGE. SHE’S HAD ENOUGH.

(TO BEN) I put peyote in the cake.
And she’s the one who made me.

SHE SMILES AT MARGARET, SELF-SATISFIED.

Peyote?

From a vision quest I did in seventy-four with Brando and Gloria
Vanderbilt. A truly bizarre weekend, though Gloria did come up with the
idea for the jeans. Brando made a football out of fudge.

I’m done. My career is over. (THEN)
I have to get that cake.

BEN STARTS TO GET UP, BUT MARGARET PULLS A KNIFE.

Don’t you dare.
(CALLING) Paul! It’s Ms. Manley.
She’s choking on something.

I’ll save you, Ms. Manley!

Paul rushes to his Queen’s side and grabs hold, trying to Heimlich her.

Let go of me! Helmut, attacken ze poofter!

Helmut rushes in and grabs Paul. In the melee, Ben and Coco rush out.

End of Act Two
ACT THREE

SCENE H

INT. CARLYLE HOTEL - HALLWAY - LATER (NIGHT 1)
(Margaret, Ben, Coco, Avana, Paul, Atmo)

WE’RE IN THE HALLWAY OUTSIDE THE FUNCTION ROOM. A CATER-WAITER STANDS HOLDING A TRAY WITH FLUTES OF CHAMPAGNE, WATCHING THE ACTION PLAY OUT IN FRONT OF HIM, A SMILE FROZEN ON HIS FACE. BEN AND COCO RUN IN AND PEEK IN THE DOOR.

BEN 168

Over here. This is it.

COCO 169

And there’s the cake! C’mon, let’s go get it.

COCO STARTS IN. BEN STOPS HER.

BEN 170

Whoa, whoa. You can’t just bust in.
They’re in the middle of their vows.

COCO 171

So?

BEN 172

So? It’s the one moment bride and groom express their promise to each other, before God... or Goddess, if you’re talking to my Aunt Daphne who sells dream catchers out of her yurt in Big Sur. It’s sacred.

COCO LOOKS AT HIM, THEN CRACKS UP LAUGHING.
COCO 173
Oh my God. Did you just fall out of a
twelve-year-old girl’s unicorn snow
globe? Do you have a collage from
“Brides Magazine” that you keep in
your hope chest?

BEN 174
No. Not a hope chest. And so what if
I’m traditional? I like those things.

COCO 175
I get it. It explains why you’re with
that girl. It’s all “done” for you.

BEN 176
Exactly. I like having it done. A
lot better than having nothing done,
just going around doing your wicked
grandmother’s evil bidding.

COCO 177
Hey -- that’s not me, alright? I’m
not like that.

BEN 178
You do those things.

COCO 179
Only ‘cause I’m around that beast all
day long.
BEN

So leave, Coco. Get a life. Do you have friends? A passion? Do you ever go out? (OFF HER SILENCE) Yeah. So don’t go criticizing me. Now I’d love to help you with your Upper East Side problems, but I’ve got to stop a mass poisoning.

THAT’S WHEN BEN SEES MARGARET CHARGING TOWARD HIM.

BEN (CONT’D)

Margaret, I know what you’re going to--

SHE PINCHES HIS NECK. A SMALL MOVE, BUT BRINGS HIM DOWN.

MARGARET

This is not your business!

BEN

I’m your legal advisor. It is my business. No one’s eating that cake!

HE GETS UP AND CHARGES. SHE YELPS, STUMBLING BACK.

MARGARET

Ah! I just had bunion surgery!

BEN

Oh my God. Margaret, I’m so sorry--

HE GOES TO COMFORT HER -- BUT MARGARET ELBOWS HIM IN THE GUT.

MARGARET

Ha! No bunions on me!

THE DOORS OPEN AND AVANA DUVAY STEPS OUT. A FEW OTHERS POKE THEIR HEADS OUT TO SEE.
AVANA

What is going on?! Margaret Manley?

MARGARET

Avana DuVay. I didn’t know you were here.

AVANA

(TO OTHERS) It’s okay, I got this.

(TO MARGARET) What are you doing here?

I’m getting married. Dr. James Normand. He’s a gyno. We met during an exam. It was love at first sight.

MARGARET

How sweet. Well, I wish you all the--

AVANA SUDDENLY PULLS MARGARET INTO HER BOSOM.

MARGARET (CONT’D)

I was wrong. They’re not implants.

AVANA

I feel like we’re an oil painting of this moment. Shh, your hair is so loud. I do love this song, though.

SHE SINGS A MADE-UP SONG. BEN AND COCO EXCHANGE A LOOK.

BEN

Avana? Did you, by any chance, have some of the wedding cake?

AVANA

Just a wittle bit of fwosting. (THEN) Has the lake thawed? I feel like a swim.
SHE RUSHES OFF.

COCO

I’m on it.

COCO GOES AFTER HER.  BEN WHEELS ON MARGARET.

BEN

You happy?  Is that what you wanted?

MARGARET

I was hoping to get a look at her hysterectomy scar.  (DELIGHTED) It was botched, you know.

BEN

Unbelievable.  You come here, you ruin her wedding, all for something that happened a million years ago?

MARGARET

You know nothing about it.

BEN

I mean, yes, she stole your husband. That sucks. But at some point, you let it go. You move on.

MARGARET

You don’t know! Jeffrey and I were in love. We had the perfect marriage. Then she came along. Avana, with her taut swimmer’s body and condor-like wingspan. And ripped it all apart.

IN B.G., AVANA ROLLS PAST ON A CATERING CART.  COCO FOLLOWS.
BEN 202

I’m sorry, Margaret. I am. But you can’t go around poisoning everyone who ever did you wrong.

MARGARET 203

If someone takes a swing at me, I swing back. I speak my truth.

BEN 204

Yeah, and now you have a court-appointed babysitter.

IN B.G., COCO ROLLS PAST IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION WITH AVANA PUSHING HER.

BEN (CONT’D) 205

Look, Margaret, you’re angry. And I get it. You’ve had a tough life.

MARGARET 206

Have I? How? How has it been tough?

BEN 207

Well... Four marriages. The last guy cleaned you out. You haven’t made a movie in a while. It’s got to hurt.

MARGARET 208

So, you googled me, and now you know what makes me tick? You understand the complex inner pains and pleasures of an older woman?

BEN 209

I understand I’m very frightened.
Of course you’re frightened. The world is a tough place. And you’re soft.

I’m tough when I need to be.

Sweetheart, the skin on Madonna’s neck is “tough.” I’m talking about gutsy. Brave. Saying what needs to be said. And that ain’t you.

You know nothing about me.

No? You’re in a bad relationship and you’re doing nothing about it.

I know it’s bad! And I am going to do something about it.

No, you’re not. Because you’re soft. You’re going to go home, make soft love to soft rock, have soft babies, then die in a soft coffin. Softee. You soft man.

You are such a... a...
MARGARET 218

Come on. Spit it out, Plushy.

AVANA CROSSES THROUGH PUSHING PAUL ON THE CART. COCOFollows. *

PAUL 219 *

Where exactly are we going? *

AVANA 219A *

Second star to the right and straight *
on till morning! *

BEN 220 *

You know, you make a big thing about “speaking the truth,” but what’s it gotten you? You live alone in your son’s guest room, your own family would rather hire someone than spend a second with you. You say I’m soft, but I see it as kind, something you know nothing about because you’ve never done one kind thing in your life. (THEN) So go ahead. Poison everyone, go to jail. I don’t care. I quit. I’m going home and I am breaking up with Marina.

Yeah. How do you like that?

HE EXITS. AVANA RUSHES IN WITH COCO.

AVANA 221

Hey, did you know I had a hysterectomy?

SHE HIKES UP HER GOWN TO SHOW THEM. AVANA RUNS OFF. *
ACT THREE

SCENE J

INT. BEN’S APARTMENT – LATER (NIGHT 1)
(Margaret, Ben, Coco, Marina)

MARINA PUTS THE FINISHING TOUCHES ON A ROMANTIC DINNER FOR TWO WHEN BEN ENTERS, DETERMINED.

BEN

Marina. Before you start in, I have to say something--

MARINA

Where’s your skinny suit? Did you go * shopping without me?

BEN

Marina. There’s something important I have to say. (DEEP BREATH) Hoo, I’m a little nervous. I’ve thought about this for a long time. I’ve even rehearsed it in my head.

MARINA

(EXCITED) Oh my God. This is not happening with my hair like this!

SHE EXITS TO THE BEDROOM. AS BEN SIGHS, EXASPERATED, MARGARET AND COCO ENTER.

MARGARET

Hello, hello. I hope we’re interrupting.
Margaret?! What the hell are you doing here?! I thought you’d be arrested by now.

MARGARET Why? I got your point. I went in there and got the cake myself.

BEN So you threw it away?

MARGARET I gave it to Mitzi as an apology.

BEN What? Just get out of here!

MARGARET No. You’re in a rotten relationship, so I’m here to help you kill your girlfriend.

COCO (CORRECTING) Dump your girlfriend.

MARGARET Dump your girlfriend. Where is she?

BEN In the other room. But I don’t need your help. I can do this myself.

MARGARET No, you can’t. Come on. It’s my “one kind thing”.
BEN 233

This isn’t kind, it’s insane.

COCO 234

You should let her. She’s really good at breaking bad news. She’s the one who told me my parents were getting divorced.

MARGARET 235

Well, who doesn’t like getting mail at camp? Alright, let’s do this thing.

(CALLING) Ariana. Mary-Ann. (TO BEN)

What’s her name? Oh, I’ll just make one up. (CALLING) Carol!
MARINA, NOW WEARING A FLORAL WREATH ON HER HEAD, ENTERS.  

MARINA 236

Oh my God! You invited all your
friends and family for this. (TO  
MARGARET) You must be Ben’s grandma.

COCO 237

Great grandma.

BEN 238

(TO MARGARET) Look, this is not
happening, alright?

MARGARET 239

Clearly.

MARINA 240

Ben, what’s going on?

BEN 241

(TO MARGARET) It’s like you have no
boundaries. I can handle my own
business.

MARGARET 242

I’ve handled your business.

BEN 243

You know what? Get out. I don’t want
you here. I don’t want you locking me
on balconies, sticking me with knives,
and especially, grabbing my balls.
MARINA 244
Okay, this is, like, the worst proposal ever.

BEN 245
I’m not proposing, I’m breaking up with you!

MARINA 246
Breaking up?

MARGARET 247
My work here is done.

BEN 248
(STILL GOING STRONG) We’re just not a good fit, Marina, and we both know it. But someone had to say it. And I hate soft rock. I hate it.

MARINA 249
You know, I felt bad I slept with your brother all those times, but not anymore!

SHE MARCHES OFF TO HER ROOM AND SLAMS THE DOOR.

MARGARET 250
Well, now I’m on the fence. She’s fun!

DISSOLVE TO:
ACT THREE

SCENE K

INT. PENTHOUSE - LIVING ROOM/EXT. BALCONY - ANOTHER DAY (D2)  
(Margaret, Ben, Coco, Charles, Tom, Helmut)  

TOM SITS READING THE NEWSPAPER.  BEN ENTERS OFF THE ELEVATOR.  

TOM 251

Ah, good.  You’re here.

TOM EXITS INTO THE ELEVATOR.  BEN SPOTS MARGARET ON THE  
BALCONY HAVING TEA.  CHARLES AND COCO COME DOWN THE STAIRS.  

COCO 252

Hey, the baby-sitter’s back.

BEN 253

Yup.  Got the whiskey and binkies ready to go.  And there’s my best friend.  In your house.

CHARLES 254

Dude.  Two words: Talking toilet.  Two more words: Never leaving.  (THEN)  
Now, I think I’ll make a macchiato and throw it out.  Because I can.

CHARLES EXITS TO THE KITCHEN.  

COCO 255

So, how you feeling, post-girlfriend?  

BEN 256


COCO 257

Good.
(RE: MARGARET) Guess I should go jump into my “work”. Or maybe just push it off the balcony.

COCO 259
Well, when you finish with your “work”, you feel like grabbing a drink? Maybe Sherry Bar on East Eighty-Sixth?

BEN 260
With you?

COCO 261
I was just throwing it out there. But hey, if you don’t want to--

BEN 262
No, no. That sounds great. I’d like that.

COCO 263
Oh. Good.

BEN / COCO 264
So, I guess I should... / Yep.

COULD IT BE? WAS THAT JUST A... SPARK? COCO EXITS TO THE KITCHEN AS BEN HEADS OUT ONTO THE BALCONY.

RESET TO:

EXT. BALCONY - CONTINUOUS (DAY 2)

MARGARET SITS ENJOYING HER TEA, WHEN BEN ENTERS.
So. What’s on the menu for today? A little beheading? Some light asphyxiation? Oh -- I hear Maggie Smith is in town. Did you want to see if we could waterboard her?

MARGARET

You know, Benjamin, we’ve been through quite a bit, you and I. Don’t you think we’re past all that?

BEN

You’re right. I apologize.

SHE PRODUCES A BRACELET OF SOME SORT.

MARGARET

Accepted. And to commemorate what is sure to be a long and mutually beneficial relationship, I got us a little something.

HE SITS AT THE TABLE. MARGARET PUTS IT ON HIS WRIST.

BEN

Friendship bracelets? Margaret Manley, I got to you, didn’t I? Are you becoming... (MOCK GASP) soft?

MARGARET

Don’t push it, Plushy.
Well, thank you. And thanks for helping me end it with Marina.

My pleasure. (THEN, RE: BRACELET)

There.

I love it. Huh. It’s caught on some kind of string, or... Wait a minute.

HE REALIZES: THE BRACELET IS A HANDCUFF, AND THE STRING IS A WIRE SECURING HIM TO THE TABLE. MARGARET GETS UP.

Have a nice day, counselor.

SHE EXITS, SHUTTING THE BALCONY DOORS ON HIM.

(CALLING) Margaret? Margaret! You’re only hurting yourself, you know!

INT. PENTHOUSE – LIVING ROOM – CONTINUOUS (DAY 2)

Helmut, macht schnell! Martha Stewart’s trees need a little trim.

HELMUT ENTERS CARRYING A CHAINSAW. HE AND MARGARET EXIT.

SFX: THUNDER.

Friendship bracelets. How did I miss that?

CHARLES RIDES IN FROM THE KITCHEN ON A SCOOTER.

END OF SHOW