

'TED ZELNICK'

7.

INT. TILDA'S DUPLEX - DAY

Tilda types. Fingers blazing, totally in the zone, utterly focused.

CUT TO:

INT. ZELNICK'S TESLA - DAY (LATER)

Ted Zelnick cruises up the 405. The phone RINGS through the speaker. He answers.

SKIP (O.S.)

It's handled. I got it back.

TED ZELNICK

How much?

SKIP (O.S.)

Do you really give a shit?

TED ZELNICK

That bad, huh?

SKIP (O.S.)

Go home, play with your kid, have sex with your wife. And enjoy it for a change.

TED ZELNICK

I love you, Skip.

Zelnick hangs up, relieved. Happy, even.

He clicks through tracks on his CD player until he finds "Big Poppa" by Notorious B.I.G.

CRANKS up the volume, raps a little with Biggie, raises the roof every once in a while. What an asshole.

The phone rings again, cutting off the song. Zelnick answers, feeling so good he doesn't even check the number.

TED ZELNICK (CONT'D)

Ted Zelnick.

TILDA (O.S.)

I hear you're getting fired because you finally had the balls to tell the truth.

TED ZELNICK

Who is this?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TILDA (O.S.)

It's Tilda. I'm preparing a story
and I wanted to run a few things
by you.

EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

The Tesla loses its shit, veers across two lanes of
traffic.

INT. ZELNICK'S TESLA/ TILDA'S DUPLEX- DAY

Zelnick regains control of the car.

TED ZELNICK

Look -- call Skip, I can't talk to
you about this.

TILDA

No, I'd rather talk to the valet
guy at Mozza again -- the one who
talked to your catering friend
right after Skip left. I guess
she was pretty turned on about the
hundred grand she made over lunch.

TED ZELNICK

Fuck fuck fuck.

Hard to tell if he's more upset by the amount or the fact
that Tilda knows.

TILDA

Are you okay? Maybe you should
pull over.

TED ZELNICK

Listen, I don't give a shit what
some fucking valet says.

TILDA

I know you don't. That's why they
turn on you.

TED ZELNICK

I swear on my mother's life, it
never happened. And even if it
did you can't print it, because it
was a private conversation in a
private fucking house.

TILDA

So?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TED ZELNICK

So you'll never get anyone to confirm it.

Tilda picks up a small reporter's pad filled with notes.

TILDA

(reading quotes)

"Will Smith can suck my dick."
 "Brad Pitt is starting to look weird." "Who wants to see Meryl Streep fucking anybody?"

TED ZELNICK

Mother of fucking God. Who gave it to you?

TILDA

It wasn't hard. Like I said, people don't really like you.

This is spoken with such clarity that Zelnick's eyes tear up.

TED ZELNICK

Look, please...my ass is on the line here. I'm asking you as a human being. I've got a wife, I've got a kid.

TILDA

I know, Ted. And I feel sorry for them.

Tilda taps a pencil on a yellow legal pad, which is covered with names, quotes, phone numbers.

TILDA (CONT'D)

I'm looking for a good picture of you but the only one I can find is from the "Titanic" premiere. That seems weird, it's over ten years ago.

Zelnick switches gears, begging hasn't worked.

TED ZELNICK

Okay, let's drop the bullshit. There has to be something you need. Tell me -- and I mean this sincerely -- what I can do for you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

For the first time, Tilda goes silent. The pencil stops tapping. Tilda likes this moment -- it's important to her.

TILDA

Tell me something I don't know.

TED ZELNICK

Like what?

TILDA

Something bigger than you.

TED ZELNICK

You mean Andrew.

A beat.

TED ZELNICK (CONT'D)

It's always about Andrew, isn't it?

She still doesn't respond.

TED ZELNICK (CONT'D)

If I give you this -- you're going to leave me alone, right?

TILDA

I can't really promise that. But it's worth a try.

This is a standoff. Zelnick takes a moment to decide.

TED ZELNICK

For the last two years Andrew has been quietly acquiring companies -- a lot of them, all digital, all small, and almost all having to do with virtual storage space.

TILDA

Huh. Interesting. Why?

TED ZELNICK

Obviously he's putting something in place.

TILDA

Thanks, Ted. I appreciate it.

TED ZELNICK

So we're good.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

TILDA

Well, I don't know if you're good, I really hope you are. But I'm still going to have to go with the story.

TED ZELNICK

Are you fucking kidding me? That's not fair.

TILDA

I know, it's not. All you did was say out loud what a lot of people are secretly thinking. If it were me, I wouldn't fire you for that. I'd fire you because you're a pathetic douche bag who fucks assistants and then replaces them...a lying pussy who hogs the spotlight and takes credit for everybody else's hard work. But most of all, I'd fire you because you're a sycophantic ass-wipe who works for maybe the worst person in this entire fucking cesspool. But it's not up to me, honey. All I can do is try to tell the truth.

She hangs up. Then she hits SEND.

A SERIES OF SHOTS

As Tilda's post spreads instantaneously through the Hollywood bloodstream:

-- In a writers cafe in Santa Monica, a bleary-eyed SCREENWRITER leaves the quiet windowless room to refill his coffee. As he moves through we see that EVERY OTHER SCREENWRITER is glued to Tilda's site. We catch a bit of the story: "ZELNICK SPEAKS HIS MIND!"

-- In Tilda's duplex, the tower of servers in the dining room starts to hum. Dozens of talkbacks are posted in quick succession. We see various phrases: "WHY KARMA IS A BITCH...YOU WANT CHEESE WITH THAT WHINE, TED?...IT'S THE END OF ZELDICK..."

-- At the newsroom of the Los Angeles Times, entertainment columnist BRIAN SHEEN shakes his head, envy mixed with admiration. He picks up the phone, punches a number.

BRIAN SHEEN

It's Brian Sheen calling for Ted Zelnick --

(CONTINUED)