

STRANGER IN L.A.
"PILOT"

Second Draft

Written by

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COLD OPEN

FADE IN:

EXT. CONTEMPORARY MOUNTAIN ESTATE - NIGHT

At dusk, the mountain estate of the HASTINGS is serene and splendid. Tucked into a stand of Aspens and Pines, the home blends with the mountains of Golden, Colorado.

INT. ESTATE-SIZED DINING ROOM - NIGHT

An older family of six sit around a large dining room table cluttered with fine china and champagne flutes.

TARA and ELLIOTT HASTINGS, 24 and 25, just graduated from university as engineers. Elliott's parents host them and Tara's parents, the Duprees, in celebration.

Tara is always happy like those annoying life coaches, but tonight she's even more excited than usual. She has news to share.

Elliott, reserved and dry, is clearly nervous.

MR. HASTINGS, 54, is a self-made success and thus confident, but lacking in joy. He raises his glass.

MR. HASTINGS

Here's to our new engineers, may
you build the future of your
dreams.

ELLIOTT

And, here's to our parents. Thank
you for the generous financial gift
to help us get started.

The small group clinks their glasses together.

MRS. DUPREE

(to Tara)

Have you started looking at houses
yet?

TARA

That's our exciting news...instead
of buying a house, we rented an
apartment in downtown Los Angeles.

INT. TARA AND ELLIOTT'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

After dinner, Tara and Elliott enter their modest apartment. Their energy and composure are flat as they turn on lights and slump into the couch.

ELLIOTT

Well, uh, you know, I didn't see that coming. They were so...*angry*. And the tears? I thought they were going to be excited.

TARA

I know right? I guess it's a good thing we already deposited their checks.

ELLIOTT

Yeah, but now we're cut off. I've never been cut off before.

TARA

That's alright, we have a plan. We'll get jobs and build our life not the one our parents want for us.

ELLIOTT

So you don't feel like this just suddenly got...I don't know, like, a lot riskier?

TARA

Nope...whatever challenges that come our way we'll figure them out. No second thoughts, remember?

ELLIOTT

No second thoughts. I just hope we can fit in, you know? Even find a cozy little bar to watch the games and meet some locals.

EXT. LOS ANGELES CITY SIDEWALK - NIGHT

TITLE: THREE MONTHS LATER

Tara and Elliott burst through the doors of a bar and haul ass down the sidewalk being chased by two MEN from the bar. A VAGRANT joins in the hunt.

Tara and Elliott zig-zag through the folks on the sidewalk. Elliott hurdles a homeless person, but still drops him some change.

UP AHEAD the "DON'T WALK" sign flashes at the intersection.

Tara gives Elliott an "Oh Shit!" look, grabs his arm, steers into a crowded Grand Central Market.

The men and the vagrant sees them disappear and give up.

MEN

And don't come back, tourists!

INT. GRAND CENTRAL MARKET - CONTINUOUS

Inside and away from the entry, Tara and Elliott bend over and gasp for air.

They're jostled by folks squeezing by, annoyed at how much space the two are using.

Tara starts laughing hysterically. Elliott's puzzled.

ELLIOTT

Holy cow...hey, so let's, uh, let's mark that one off the list.

TARA

Oh my God, I've never felt so alive!

ELLIOTT

Or been so close to dying.

END COLD OPEN

ACT 1

INT. TARA AND ELLIOTT'S NEW APARTMENT - DAY

Their new apartment in Los Angeles is a small one-bedroom in a historic mid-rise. Eight large windows make it light and airy with views of the city in all directions. They're on the eleventh floor.

The apartment is empty except for two camping chairs and a few boxes.

Elliott pours them both a cup of coffee then takes in the city scape.

ELLIOTT

Isn't this great? I mean, look at all that industry and energy. I love it, don't you?

TARA

Oh, just wait until our furniture gets here.

ELLIOTT

Yeah, we can start putting our personal...

SIRENS from the street drown him out.

They look out the window as tires screech and the SIRENS stop.

TARA

The acoustics downtown are great. I didn't think we'd be able to hear the street level this far up.

ELLIOTT

Well, they are at our building. And, I guess the sounds bounce off the building and right into our...

WHUP-WHUP-WHUP. The sounds of a helicopter cut him off.

They careen their necks to try and find it in the sky.

TARA

There it is!

She takes a photo of it with her phone.

ELLIOTT

I wonder if we'll be on the news?

TARA

(newscaster voice)

Two strangers moved into downtown Los Angeles this weekend, triggering a full investigation by the L.A.P.D. The suspects are surrounded in this building. Let's go live to a deputy on scene.

ELLIOTT

(deputy voice)

Yeah, so we're considering a litany of charges. Witnesses say they had sex with the blinds open, gave a homeless man cash, and got tossed out of a gang's bar. They'll be charged with being strangers in L.A. for sure.

A KNOCK at the door ends their fun.

AT THE DOOR

A perky gay couple, ARLO, 38, and FLINT, 58, stand in the doorway. Flint holds two bags of groceries and Arlo has two Pomeranians and a French Bulldog on a leash.

Arlo is tall and lanky, a social and warm person. Flint is more seasoned, wise, a man of few words. They're in the Federal Witness Protection program and their cover is being neighborly dog walkers.

ARLO

Hi, we're Arlo and Flint, your neighbors. Welcome to the building.

FLINT

Amazon delivered your groceries to our apartment.

TARA

Oh, well come in, here I'll take those.

It's just a few steps into the kitchen/living room combo, where they put the groceries on the counter.

ELLIOTT

What cute dogs.

The two Pomeranians start barking.

ARLO

These is Sassy and Brassy. Charles is the French Bulldog. He can't get a word in around these two.

FLINT

Ooh, I love what you've done to the place, sort of a zen-rustic-minimalism.

TARA

Oh, this? Our furniture is trickling in. If you get an eight foot couch from Amazon, that's ours, too.

ARLO

Well, depending on your taste, we might keep that one. How are you settling in?

Elliott answers MOS as hot rodders REV their engines and drown him out, Everyone smiles, pauses, and pretends not to notice the noise.

ELLIOTT

Heck, it's like the Thunder Valley drag strip down there.
(announcer voice)
Earth-shaking wheelie machines!
Sunday, Sunday, Sunday!

Everyone gives him a polite smile.

ELLIOTT (CONT'D)

What, you've never been to a race or monster truck rally?

Arlo and Flint give the slightest head shake no.

FLINT

You get used to it. Once you tune our the sirens, helicopters, the dogs, and the Fast and Feverish wannabes, this is a really quiet neighborhood.

One of the dogs pees. Arlo scoops them up and starts for the door.

ARLO

So sorry! Once one goes, the others aren't far behind.

Flint grabs a paper towel and dries the small puddle.

FLINT

I always get stuck cleaning up his messes.

Elliott hands him a spray bottle and another towel.

Tara's phone RINGS.

TARA

It's the front desk, I better take it.

Flint nods and leaves with the soiled paper towels.

INT. LOBBY AND FRONT DESK - CONTINUOUS

The lobby is impressive, restored to its original 1925 glamour with marble floors, walls, and columns, plus art deco typography for signage.

KIMMIE, 26, with the customer service skills of an airline ticket agent, calls from the reception kiosk. A massive box towers over her.

INTERCUT PHONE CALL

KIMMIE

Hi, uh, you have a ginormous package. I mean, it's the biggest we've ever seen so I hope you're home and we can send the delivery guy straight up.

TARA

Yay! That sounds like our couch! Send it right up, we're here.

KIMMIE

Sweet Jesus, you ordered a couch from Amazon.

TARA

Well, Amazon *Prime*.

END CALL.

BACK IN THE LOBBY

The elevator opens and the delivery man starts to finagle the couch in.

ARLO (O.S.)
Wait, let me out first.

He squishes past the large box and speed walks to the door, dogs in hands.

As he goes out, he puts the dogs down and the Pomeranians run off in one direction, and Charles takes off in the other.

He grabs the leashes of Sassy and Brassy, but Charles escapes.

INT. ART GALLERY - NIGHT

Patrons mingle at an art gallery showing in downtown. Off to one side, Kimmie pitches the gallery owner, BARB, 56.

KIMMIE
I can promise you at least a hundred wealthy patrons.

BARB
What is it, porn?

KIMMIE
No, it's...

BARB
Look, no offense, but nobody knows a hundred wealthy people who love art. That's why I only book hot artists...has to be a draw beyond the work itself.

KIMMIE
You said you had a cancellation, why not give me a chance? I'll personally send out invitations.

EXT. BUSY SIDEWALK - DAY

Tara and Elliott are dragging from too much walking. People, dogs, and scooters flit about them.

ELLIOTT
Man, downtown sure has it's own signature smell, doesn't it?

TARA
(watching map on phone)
Casey's should be right around...

ELLIOTT

There - three doors down.

They pick up their step, Elliott grabs the door handle and walks into the glass door when it doesn't open.

TARA

Must be a push.

Elliott presses his face against the door to see the place is empty.

ELLIOTT

This one's closed, too.

TARA

Biscuits! Nobody in this town updates their website. This is the third time this week.

ELLIOTT

Hey, I think we need to start calling these place before we head out.

TARA

You know I hate talking on the phone. I'm going to leave them a bad review.

Elliott smirks and scans the street. He sees someone go into a place that's open.

ELLIOTT

Let's give that place a try. I'm starving. We'll be off the streets and can plan our next move.

They start down the stairs to the restaurant.

TARA

Really? The Subterranean?

ELLIOTT

You never know, could be the best subs in town.

INT. SUBTERRANEAN - CONTINUOUS

Eclectic and extreme. Everyone is trying incredibly hard to look like they don't care. Except for the servers, they really don't care.

TARA

Ooh, I like this place, kind of funky.

ELLIOTT

I think that's just the smell.

TARA

What is it with you and odors?

ELLIOTT

I don't know, I just have a sensitive nose, I guess.

TARA

(to bartender)

Okay to sit at the bar?

Of his slightest, most annoyed nod, they sit.

ELLIOTT

How about a tasty beer?

TARA

And Pinot Noir?

The BARTENDER moves only his eyes, first to the beer taps then to three bottles of wine: red, white, rosé. The taps are unmarked black knobs.

Signs behind the bar get Tara's attention. QUIET, I'M TRYING TO DRINK, TOURONS GO HOME, NO TALKING.

Tara gives Elliott her own look.

ELLIOTT

Two I.P.A.'s.

BARTENDER

Like, uh, we only have domestic beers. How about a Pabst Blue Ribbon? It's award winning.

ELLIOTT

Great, two of those.

(turns to Tara)

How are we going to find jobs when we can't even find lunch?

TARA

Simple, in a world of regular beers, we just have to be the fresh new craft ones.

Another PATRON walks in.

ELLIOTT

Ugh. There's that smell again. I can't quite place it, ya know? It's earthy, it's uh, sorta skunky, sour, a touch of ammonia.

TARA

Around here, I think they call that Life.

ELLIOTT

Well, you certainly can't get it at Macy's.

INT. BANK - DAY

The next day, Tara and Elliott stop by the bank. JAVIER, 24, a bit spacey, helped them set up their account and has become a de facto friend.

TARA

We need to check on our debit card, it hasn't arrived yet.

JAVIER

Sure, let me look it up. How are things going?

ELLIOTT

It's fine, we just can't seem to find the right hangout, you know? A place where you fit in and can just decompress from the day.

JAVIER

Yeah, yeah, sure. Hey, try the place I used to work at, BJ's. It's super popular, heck, I made a killing there.

TARA

So why did you leave?

JAVIER

My till kept coming up short.

TARA

And the bank hired you?

JAVIER

No, the bank *recruited* me. They tempted me with a career, you know less to start, more money later. And, look at me now, suits, a briefcase...I even have a cat.

EXT. BUSY SIDEWALK - DAY

Tara and Elliott walk home, sipping boba teas. A convoy of scooterists whiz past them.

ELLIOTT

I love this place, but I think...I wonder...have we overestimated our charm and ability to fit in?

TARA

Nonsense, we're perfectly normal and charming, this is just a big place...it's going to take time.

ELLIOTT

No, I think we need to find somewhere friendlier.

TARA

You mean, like the suburbs?

ELLIOTT

No, like Siberia.

An off-leash French Bulldog runs past them.

TARA

Isn't that Charles, I thought...

Arlo and Flint run by in pursuit of Charles.

END OF ACT 1

ACT 2

EXT. ENTRANCE TO THE APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

It's dark when Tara and Elliott return home.

TARA

The interview went great, but there was something off about the vibe.

ELLIOTT

Engineers aren't exactly known for their vibe.

Tara tries her key fob to open the door, it doesn't work.

TARA

What the flip?

ELLIOTT

Maybe your battery's dead.

TARA

It's lithium, it should last at least a hundred thousand miles.

Elliott tries his, it doesn't work either. They press their faces against the door to get the attendant's attention. No one is there.

ELLIOTT

How do you like that? In a city of millions, there's not one person at our front desk.

TARA

Someone will be along.

A bus goes by and makes a WHUT-WHUT-WHUT sound as it slows.

ELLIOTT

Great, even the bus is laughing at us.

TARA

(mimics the laughing sound)

Whu-whu-whu.

Another WHUMP! WHUMP! They jump and turn around. It's Kimmie on the inside of the locked apartment doors.

KIMMIE

The security system is down. I've got a call into maintenance, they're rushing over and should be here in the morning.

It starts raining.

TARA

How do we get in?

KIMMIE

Go around to the parking garage, wait by the unmarked door. When someone comes out, grab it and sneak in.

ELLIOTT

Can't you go around and open it for us?

KIMMIE

I can't leave the front desk.

She feeds a piece of paper under the door.

KIMMIE (CONT'D)

Emails down, too. Check it out, you're invited to an art gallery exhibition.

Tara and Elliott read the flyer in the rain.

EXT. SIDEWALK NEAR THE PARKING GARAGE - DAY

The next day, Tara and Elliott leave through the unmarked door by the parking garage and run into Arlo and Flint.

Arlo and Flint have cigarettes in one hand, dog leashes in the other.

ELLIOTT

Hey fellas, did you catch your runaway?

Flint scrunches his face and shakes his head "no."

ARLO

He's fast and sneaky, just like most French men I've known.

FLINT

(gives Arlo a look)
Get this, the owner says "we'll never walk another dog in California" if we don't find Charles.

ARLO

Come on, as if that's some kind of threat... Nobody really wants to walk their own dogs. That's why we don't have any ourselves.

FLINT

Still, we don't want to half-ass it. The threat might not mean much, but we need to protect our brand. One bad yelp can sink us.

TARA

Yes, it's all about your brand.

FLINT

Say, how are you two adjusting?
Starting to feel like home?

A gang member in a football jersey rides by on a mountain bike. A shotgun is strapped across the handle bars. No one blinks.

TARA

We love, love our apartment. But, we're not having much luck with the job search or feeling like we'll ever fit in.

ARLO

Why don't you guys come by the apartment for a few drinks. You can't tell by looking at him, but Flint is a great mixologist.

Flint puts his cigarette between his lips and shakes his hands like he's mixing a drink.

INT. FRONT DESK - DAY

Kimmie sits behind the desk with four video monitors. She ignores folks as they come and go. Her computer screen shows no RSVPs to her invite. A resident approaches.

KIMMIE

(to the resident)

What is wrong with you people? I send out an invite to a posh art gallery opening with free champagne and hor d'oeuvres and not one person is interested? Not one?

RESIDENT

I'm just here for my package...

KIMMIE

Right. *Your* package. It's all about *you*. Well, *you* can't buy culture from the internet. This is L.A., would it kill *you* to support the local arts?

RESIDENT

Oh, I don't know, art seems so bougie at the moment.

KIMMIE

What? Wait, are you kidding me? You drive a Tesla and have personal-sized crème brûlées delivered at midnight.

He pouts off. Elliott enters and notices the attitude.

ELLIOTT

Hey Kimmie, what's up with that guy?

KIMMIE

His avocado toast was soggy this morning. Where's Tara?

ELLIOTT

She's still talking to Arlo and Flint.

KIMMIE

I can't believe you left her alone with those two.

ELLIOTT

Yeah, I suppose I should have warned them first.

KIMMIE

Hey, I bet you two lovely people appreciate the arts.

She hands him a flyer.

ELLIOTT

You already gave us one of these,
remember the other night, the rain?

KIMMIE

No, it never rains in L.A. Anyway,
I'm going to be there and would
love it if I knew a few people in
the crowd.

ELLIOTT

You really think this is the next
Banksy?

KIMMIE

You never know.

KIMMIE (CONT'D)

Bring all your friends. Priority
package service if you bring single
men...or women. Preferred parking
if we hook up.

ELLIOTT

And free cable?

KIMMIE

I'm not sure that quality of a date
exists.

ELLIOTT

(counts on one hand)

What the hell, we'll bring everyone
we know.

The elevator DINGS.

KIMMIE

Oh, hey, the elevator will be down
that day, so plan ahead.

ELLIOTT

We live on the eleventh floor.

KIMMIE

Free glute day!

INT. ARLO AND FLINT'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The Hastings are at Arlo's and Flint's apartment. The apartment is well-designed and clean, opposite of their intentionally shabby appearance.

ARLO

Yeah, we've been here a year so far. Not in L.A., in this building. It takes some getting used to, but we love it.

Flint finishes shaking a mixer and pours a blue drink into martini glasses then passes them out.

FLINT

This is the DTLA elixir. Guaranteed to make life better in an instant.

ELLIOTT

(under his breath)
Maybe it helps with smells, too.

TARA

(elbows Elliott)
What brought you guys here?

ARLO

We were relocated here by...

FLINT

(interrupts)
Our former employers.

ARLO

Right, nowadays we just walk dogs. It's a lot simpler than the old nine-to-five grind.

FLINT

And, it lets us keep a low profile.

ARLO

What about you two, why L.A.?

ELLIOTT

We always loved visiting California so when we graduated we decided to come here and give it a year.

TARA

Yeah, instead of a gap year between high school and college, we're taking one to find the right jobs.

FLINT

What kind of work would that be?

TARA

I'm a computer engineer, Elliott's in aerospace.

ARLO

Oh, well big tech is just up the road, but I don't know about airplanes. Aren't they a thing of the past? I mean, now we have Zoom.

ELLIOTT

Yeah, I'm hearing that a lot.

FLINT

They say all this flying around is killing the enviro...

A jet ROARS overhead, drowning out Flint.

FLINT (CONT'D)

(finishing)

...that and the beef industry.

TARA

It's important to work for the right place. A company with scruples.

ARLO

That's true, so true. Hey, the social media industrial complex...tread lightly, am I right?

FLINT

Okay, okay, Arlo, that's all we need to say about that, don't go a rant.

TARA

It's hard to find a place that truly values its people.

FLINT

Ever since the Pharaohs.

ELLIOTT

Not to change the subject, but can I ask you something? Do you think we're too normal for L.A.?

Arlo and Flint LAUGH.

ARLO

Are you kidding me? No. You guys are some of the strangest people we know.

FLINT

I mean, don't take that the wrong way, we like it. I was just saying, "they're so normal they're weird," and that's a compliment. Normal is just so...blah.

Unsure of the true sentiment, Tara and Elliott down their drinks.

EXT. BUSY SIDEWALK - DAY

Tara and Elliott are walking back from lunch when they see a homeless lady holding Charles.

TARA

Oh, fantastic! You found our Charles!

(pretend scolding voice)

"Charles you know better than to run off like that, we've been worried sick."

The homeless lady takes off running with Charles. Tara and Elliott give chase.

HOMELESS LADY

Help! Help!

She's fast and beats them to the corner. Tara and Elliott pass Arlo and Flint as they come out of a smoke shop.

ELLIOTT

(as he passes them)

We found Charles!

They join in, but Flint slows to a fast walk after a few steps.

When they turn the corner, it's Tent City. A major homeless encampment.

EXT. TENT CITY - CONTINUOUS

They scan the place for the lady, get a glimpse of her disappearing into a tent.

TARA

There! She went into the green one.

All eyes are on them as they pick their way to the lady.

ELLIOTT

Excuse me.

TARA

Pardon.

ARLO

Oops, sorry man.

EXT. GREEN TENT - CONTINUOUS

The three of them arrive at the tent. It's zipped up.

ELLIOTT

I'm not sure of the protocol here,
do we knock?

TARA

M'am, I'm sure we can come to an
arrangement to get our dog back.

The tent unzips halfway, the lady sticks her hand out in a fist, turns it up and flips them the bird, re-zips.

HOMELESS LADY (O.S.)

(from inside)

Bugger off ya mutts, this is my
dog.

Other homeless people gather around, quickly outnumbering the trio.

END OF ACT 2

ACT 3

EXT. TENT CITY - CONTINUOUS

More homeless people surround them.

ELLIOTT

Time to go. We can call the police
and tell them where she lives.

TARA

(thinks fast)

What if we upp'd the reward money?
How about fifty bucks?

Arlo looks surprised. The lady pokes her head out to see if they're serious.

HOMELESS LADY

One hundred dollars.

TARA

Jeez, that's too much, we'll just
have to call the police.

The crowd closes in.

HOMELESS LADY

Seventy-five.

TARA

Deal. Pass us out Charles and we'll
pass in the money.

HOMELESS LADY

Same time.

Elliott takes the money from his billfold and slowly moves the cash toward the tent.

The lady slowly hands out Charles.

She snags the money and Tara takes Charles.

Charles licks Tara's face.

TARA

(comforting, then
disgusted)

There, there...ugh, here.

She hands Charles to Arlo just as Flint arrives, out of breath.

TARA (CONT'D)
 (to the crowd)
 Show's over. She found our dog, we
 paid her ransom. Fair and square.

They start back across the encampment. The homeless lady comes out of her tent.

HOMELESS LADY
 Git them! They're stealing my dog!

The four pick up speed, skips through the maze of tents and cardboard creations. The lady is after them, and a few of the others join in.

Once they clear the tents, they turn the corner and find the street filled with protestors, marching right toward them. They shuffle in, but are swimming upstream.

PROTESTOR
 What do we want?

MOB
 Acceptance!

PROTESTOR
 When do we want it?

MOB
 Now!

Arlo lifts Charles up over his head to snake through faster.

PROTESTOR
 What do we want?

ARLO
 A way out!

Flint grabs his elbow and pulls him toward a dive bar, The Palms. Tara and Elliott follow them.

Looking back, the homeless lady is still coming.

INT. THE PALMS - DAY

The bar is decorated like a pirate ship. Lots of nautical kitsch everywhere.

The quartet runs in and pull up laughing.

When they look up, three regulars are giving them the evil eye.

ELLIOTT
(nervous)
Hey, how's the beer?

REGULAR 1
Somebody after you?

ARLO
Big tech.

REGULAR 2
(to Elliott)
What about you two? You're not from around here. Tourists?

FLINT
Knock it off, *they* live around the block, where do *you* live?

REGULAR 1
Dog's ain't allowed.

ARLO
He's my service animal.

The third regular nods off.

THUMP! THUMP! THUMP! A tough looking bartender, Jules, 32, steps behind the bar. She has a prosthetic that's a peg leg and wears an eye patch.

She pulls four mugs from a freezer and fills them from four separate beer taps. She sits them in front of the group.

ELLIOTT
(sips)
I got an I.P.A., what did you get?

TARA
A perfect sour.

ARLO
A fruity hard seltzer.

FLINT
A nutty brown ale, perfect.

TARA
Wow, how'd you do that?

JULES
When you only have one eye, you gotta be good at reading your customers.

ELLIOTT
And they're so cold.

JULES
The coldest in town.

Tara gives Elliott a look...is this their new hangout?

ELLIOTT
(off Tara's look)
Hey, do you want to join us at an
art gallery tomorrow night?

EXT. SIDEWALK - NIGHT

Tara and Elliott walk to the art gallery opening in the Arts District. They're more dressed up than usual and the streets are scarier at night.

ELLIOTT
So, what do ya...what do you think
Arlo and Flint are really all
about?

TARA
They were a bit dodgy, huh? Trust
funders probably.

ELLIOTT
Have to be spies, right? Secret
agents?

TARA
Assassins. Laying low after a big
job in Morocco.

Their clothing catches the eyes of vagrants. In a group of men up ahead, the largest one steps out in front of them.

VAGRANT
Hey, Mr. Man, I could use a little
help, can you spare a few dollars?

ELLIOTT
Sorry, friend, I'm not carrying any
cash.

VAGRANT
You get me next time, though,
right?

He lets them pass.

VAGRANT (CONT'D)
You got a beautiful lady.

Elliott stops to look at the man, he's big. He looks at Tara and nods.

ELLIOTT
Thank you, I agree.

EXT. ART GALLERY - NIGHT

Tara and Elliott arrive at the gallery. Kimmie is out front. She wipes away tears and tries to smile.

ELLIOTT
Wow, is the exhibit that moving?

KIMMIE
(a laugh)
No, it's a flop. The gallery owner is furious with me.

TARA
Why would she be mad at you?

KIMMIE
I'm the artist. The one who told her I could get a full house. You know, I figured at least ten percent of the residents would come. And, at least my own family, but...

Tara looks in and sees Arlo, Flint, and Javier milling about.

TARA
All the important people are here, come on and show us your work.

INT. ART GALLERY - NIGHT

Tara, Elliott, and Kimmie join the others inside.

ARLO
This is really great work. The champagne is a little cheap...

FLINT
...but free, my favorite kind.

JAVIER

Who's the artist? Aren't they usually at their opening?

ELLIOTT

Javier, this is Kimmie. She's the artist.

JAVIER

Wow. I thought you had to be strange to be an artist. Your work is amazing, congratulations. Hey, I have a question about...

They walk off to discuss a painting.

TARA

So, was your client happy to get Charles back?

ARLO

Yes and no.

FLINT

She thinks he smells funny now. I told her, that's just life, lady.

Tara nods and Elliott raises his glass in agreement.

Jules enters. She looks totally different, simple and elegant. No eye patch and a regular prosthetic.

JULES

Hey guys, sorry I'm late, where's the champagne?

ARLO

Look at you, what happened to the pirate?

JULES

She's just part of the bar.

ARLO

Even the eye patch?

JULES

I use it to mess with the guys. Sometimes it's the right eye, sometimes it's the left. Sometimes they notice.

TARA

I knew I liked you. So, it turns out, the artist is a friend. She's a concierge at our building. The night is not exactly going how she expected.

JULES

Got it.

Kimie and Javier join them with a glass of champagne for Jules.

JULES (CONT'D)

Oh thanks, and congratulations on your showing.

KIMMIE

Let's lock up. The owner said I could take any open bottles.

FLINT

On it, how many should I open?

KIMMIE

Hey, uh, listen. Thanks for coming tonight. It didn't work out like I had envisioned...

JAVIER

Oh honey, it never does. Hey, like when I first started at the bank, my drawer was eight hundred dollars over. I thought, this is *great*, this is a bank, they're all about money and I just made them a little extra. My supervisor wanted to fire me on the spot.

ARLO

What saved you?

JAVIER

Nobody else wants to work at a bank, it's too bougie.

JULES

Happened to me, too. I signed up for the G.I. bill. I mean, I wanted to travel a few years anyway, might as well let Uncle Sam pay for college afterwards.

She lifts her pant leg.

JULES (CONT'D)

I didn't expect to visit the Middle East. We just gotta keep moving forward.

Arlo catches the spirit and blurts out his truth.

ARLO

Awe, heck. We're not really dog walkers. I mean, we are, but we're in the witness protection program. We thought testifying was the right thing to do, but we never dreamed we would need new identities.

POP! Flint opens another bottle of champagne, the top flies across toward Arlo, but he ducks just in time.

ARLO (CONT'D)

Missed me, honey.

Tara takes Elliott's hand and smiles.

TARA

As strange as things are in L.A., I'm happy to have friends.

FLINT

(gruffly)
Yeah.

They all clink their glasses together.

THUMP! THUMP! They all turn to look. The homeless lady is outside; she pounds on the window and points at Tara.

TARA

Are you pointing at me?

The homeless lady shakes her head no, points again, at a bottle of champagne.

EXT. SIDEWALK NEAR THE PARKING GARAGE - DAY

Tara and Elliott run into Arlo and Flint in their usual spot. They're smoking cigarettes and watching a passel of dogs.

TARA

Looks like you're still in the dog business, sort of.

ARLO

Oh yeah, hey, you know that fracas
in Tent City? It was a hit.

FLINT

Picked up four new clients.

ELLIOTT

Homeless people?

FLINT

(shrugs)

Nobody wants to walk their own dog.

ARLO

Hey, they're busy, too. It's hard
work being homeless.

ZING! ZING! Two scooterist hell bent for leather zip down the
sidewalk.

SCOOTERIST (O.S.)

On your left.

TARA

(to Elliott)

We have to give those a try.

END OF ACT 3

FADE OUT.