

TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. BERKSHIRE COUNTRY CLUB SWIMMING POOL CIRCA 1990 - DAY

After tightening the elastic hair ties against her pigtails, CHARLOTTE (5), cautiously steps to the side of the swimming pool where she stands with her feet straddling the four-foot depth marker. She's surrounded by latchkey kids whose divorced fathers or underpaid nannies are mostly allowing them to run wild.

Fortunately, even at five-years old, Charlotte is an expert at tuning out others and entirely focusing on the task at hand. And today's task is to overcome her fear of jumping in the water. Oh, and as it always is, gaining and maintaining the attention of her own distracted parents.

Her father, LINUS (late 30s), is impatiently standing in the chest-deep water in front of her increasingly losing interest in trying to coax her in.

CHARLIE

I'm thirty-six inches tall, right daddy?

LINUS

Yes, Charlotte.

Through his dark sunglasses, she sees him roll eyes.

CHARLIE

If the water is forty-eight inches deep, that means with my feet touching the bottom, there would be twelve inches of water over the top of my head. But you're not going to let me touch the bottom, are you daddy?

LINUS

Of course not. I'll catch you right when you splash in the water. Your hair won't even get wet. Now, just close your eyes, and jump.

Charlotte's hands are nervously slapping her thighs.

CHARLIE

I'm going to close my eyes now.

She mashes her eyelids shut as though it takes that kind of effort to mute her bright, inquisitive eyes. Almost immediately, she opens them again. This time she turns her boney shoulders enough to address her mom.

Mommy, look. I'm closing my eyes.

Her mother, GLADYS (mid 30s), is sitting in a nearby lounge protecting her fair skin with a shawl, a broad-rimmed hat, and a thick layer of sunscreen, intently reading a thick book. There is a camera wrapped in a towel by her side. When she finishes the page she's on, she looks up over a pair of readers.

GLADYS

That's very brave, dear.

Charlie closes her eyes again. When she cracks them open, she finds her mom has resumed reading.

CHARLIE

Mommy. You're not watching.

She turns back to the pool and sees her father picking at a grey hair on his chest.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Daddy. You're not paying attention either.

LINUS

C'mon, Charlotte. Just jump.

CHARLIE

You promise you'll catch me? So quickly that my hair won't even get wet?

A shapely young woman struts by wearing a bright red string bikini.

Beneath his dark sunglasses, Linus' attention moves with her.

LINUS

(not paying attention)

Sure, Charlotte.

CHARLIE

Daddy's going to catch me as soon as I splash in the water, mommy.

Gladys sets down her book and fishes her oversized beach bag out from beneath her chair. While ruffling through it...

GLADYS
That's very brave, dear.

This time when Charlotte shuts her eyes, her fists are anxiously clenching and unclenching at her side.

CHARLIE
(excited voice)
Here I go-o.

SPLASH.

Not finding what she is looking for, Gladys has started tossing things out of the bag onto the chair between her pale legs lathered in sunblock.

Linus continues ogling the red bikini rinsing off in an outdoor shower.

Entirely still, Charlie is slowly sinking.

GLADYS
Linus. Did you pack *Mere Christianity* like I asked?

After turning enough to confirm his wife's attention is elsewhere, his returns to the shower.

LINUS
I did. But it's a thin book.
(mutters under his breath)
Its most redeeming quality.

GLADYS
There's a quote that I want to use during tonight's debate. You know, the one about humility?

LINUS
"Humility is not thinking less of yourself, but thinking of yourself less."

GLADYS
That's it. Did you pack my notebook?

Once she reaches the pool bottom, Charlie stubbornly sits with her arms folded across her chest, glaring up through the still water as her dad wades toward her mom. Bubbles rise as she contemptuously counts...

CHARLIE
...Eleven. Twelve. Thirteen.

Just as the periphery of her vision starts to go dark...

SPLASH.

A pair of strong arms wrap around Charlie's narrow waist. Then she feels a powerful push followed by water rushing by her face. The moment they surge out of the water, she opens her eyes and takes a breath. When she looks up, the intense sunlight is washing out the details of her rescuer's face.

END TEASER

ACT 1

EXT. ARCHEOLOGICAL DIG SITE CIRCA 2010 - DAY

Subtitle: Jewish Quarter, Old City of Jerusalem

The sharp CRACK of pickaxes and SCRATCHING of shovels BATTERING their way through the dry red and brown limestone earth have started to taper off. That means the site's coordinator, DR. GOLDBERG (60s), has left the dig site located on a tell near the Old City for the day. Confirmation he has, comes when a group of graduate students working beneath tents shielding the villa ruins up near the crest switch their boombox from a classical station to one that plays Israeli pop. And each time Diva comes on, which is does each hour, works stops, and everyone - even the foreigners down the hillside - SING.

SHOVEL BUMS

"Viva nari'a, Viva Victoria,
Afrodita. Viva la Diva, Viva
Victoria, Cleopatra."

Once the song ends, one of those foreigners, a young lady, Charlotte nicknamed Charlie (26), sets down her trowel and reaches for her nearly empty canteen of lukewarm water. After several gulps, she pours what remains onto a bandana that she uses to wipe her face, neck and upper chest. She uses it again to pull back her wavy hair which has turned into a frizzy mess.

She satisfyingly examines her progress. Between yesterday and today, she's doubled the depth of the six-by-six-foot outdoor unit making it nearly as deep as she is tall. Then she stands on her tip-toes and looks out over the rich history that literally surrounds her. To the west, the Citadel on the former site of Herod's Palace. To the north, the tower from the Church of the Redeemer, and the domes of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. And to the east, the Western Wall, and the Dome of the Rock on the Temple Mount.

Her two far less enthusiastic friends, MAYA (mid 20s), born in Israel, but quintessential New Yorker and EMI (20s), her Japanese American roommate at Stanford are chatting in the unit next to her.

EMI

(picking the grime from
under her nails)

Uhg. All this manual labor is
ruining my manicure. And it's going
to take a week of bubble baths to
get all this dirt out of my pours.

MAYA
(rubbing the back of her
neck)
The reservations I made at the
hotel spa should help.

The pair SQUEAL.

EMI
How exactly DID we let Charlie
trick us into digging for
artifacts, of all things?

CHARLIE
(resumes digging)
I didn't trick you. It was on the
itinerary.

MAYA
No one makes an itinerary for a
vacation.

CHARLIE
I do.

EMI
No one BUT you.

MAYA
And you purposely snuck it in after
visiting all the cool sights during
the day and being pampered in a
swanky hotel each night.

CHARLIE
It's only at the end because that's
when my father arranged it.

MAYA
Tell us you've at least found
something over there.

CHARLIE
Some potsherds, a broken
millingstone, and mandible and
patella fragments from the order of
Columbiformes.

EMI
English?

CHARLIE

Broken pieces of pottery, a cooking stone, and some pigeon bones. What about you guys?

EMI

(examines her fingers)

I found a broken nail.

CHARLIE

That's unlikely since nails weren't common in home construction back then.

EMI

(smirks)

It's not that kind of nail.

MAYA

What about fake eyelashes?

Both girls GIGGLE.

CHARLIE

Please don't leave anything like that in your unit.

(places her hands on her hips)

We're having enough trouble being taken seriously after arriving with the top down and radio blaring like we were going to a frat party. It's no wonder they assigned us to this midden on the outskirts of the actual pre-exilic villa site.

MAYA

(teasingly)

We get it. You're finally getting a chance to make use of that PhD in Anthropology of yours.

CHARLIE

(mutters to herself)

Archaeology.

(to her friends)

You know. Lots of people would pay money to dig at a site that dates back to six-hundred B.C.E.

EMI

(excitedly)

Ooh. I know that one. Before Christ.

CHARLIE
Actually, it means Before the
Common Era.

MAYA
Which me-eans?

CHARLIE
(sighs)
Its the secular version of Before
Christ.

Emi and Maya HIGH-FIVE.

EMI
Booyah.

Charlie shakes her head. At first softly, she starts to hum *I Want It That Way* as she resumes scraping the dirt away from a sherd of some sort of large vessel. When she get to the refrain, she pauses her work, and SINGS.

CHARLIE
Tell me why.

Maya picks up a hand shovel and Emi a trowel. Then using their handles as microphones, they join in.

EMI AND MAYA
Ain't nothin' but a heartache.

CHARLIE
Tell me why.

EMI AND MAYA
Ain't nothin' but a mistake.

CHARLIE
Tell me why.

EMI AND MAYA
I never want to hear you say.

CHARLIE, EMI, AND MAYA
I want it that way.

Maya and Emi drop down on the dirty ground laughing. After settling down, Emi looks at her watch.

EMI
How much longer do we have?

CHARLIE

Our driver isn't due to pick us up
for another two hours.

MAYA

Two more hours!

EMI

Seriously, Charlie. We love you.
But these walls are starting to
close in on us over here.

Emi stretches out her hands toward the vertical walls. With
them fully extended, she twists from side to side.

Maya points at the burnt orange handle sticking out of the
earthen wall.

MAYA

Be careful you don't smack your
hand on that dirty old jar.

EMI

(stops stretching)
Say, Charlie. What's the scientific
word for dirty old jar?

CHARLIE

Just a dirty old jar.

EMI

(taps her finger to her
lips)
That won't do. Let's make something
up.
(to Maya)
What's the Jewish word for jar?

MAYA

Cantsent.

EMI

That sounds better. Don't you think
that sounds better, Charlie?

CHARLIE

What?

EMI

We've decided to rename this dirty
old jar a *cantsent*, instead. You
know, to make it sound more exotic.

CHARLIE

You can't just make a word up.

MAYA

We didn't make it up. It's Jewish for...

CHARLIE

(interrupting her)

The Jewish language is Hebrew. But Arabic, Yiddish and English are also very..."

(abruptly sits up straight)

Wait. Did you say you found a storage jar?

MAYA

(teasingly)

A *cantsent*.

CHARLIE

Seriously?

EMI

Actually just a handle. The rest is still in the wall.

MAYA

We noticed it while playing tick-tack-toe.

Charlie scrambles to her feet.

CHARLIE

You were playing tick-tack-toe on the excavated wall of a two-an-a-half thousand-year-old Jewish villa?

MAYA

Walls, actually. All four.

(winks at Emi)

You should be happy we finally found something useful to do with that pointy dig thing.

Charlie stands on her bucket and pulls herself out of her unit...

CHARLIE

The pointy dig thing is called a trowel. Why didn't you start digging it out?

EMI

Technically, it wasn't IN...

(makes air quotes)

...our hole. Some dirt fell away when I kicked the wall while trying to get out to use the smelly potty earlier. They really should put steps in these things.

MAYA

And Dr. Grumpypants made such a big deal out of restrictive permits and remaining in our spot.

Charlie appears above their pit which is nearly the same size as when they started.

CHARLIE

Dr. Goldberg is the Director of the Institute of Archeology at Tel Aviv University. He's one of the most renowned archeologists of our time.

EMI

He should learn to be nicer to his guests.

CHARLIE

We're not guests. We're nuisances that my father forced upon him as far as he's concerned. Now, show me.

Emi steps aside revealing what appears to be the bowed handle of a clay jar. Mostly buried beside it, there is also a portion of a bulbous body that is near the same color as the dried dirt.

Charlie hops down into their unit.

CHARLIE

That's the handle of an ancient vessel.

EMI

(teasingly)

A ship?

CHARLIE

It's another name for a jar.

MAYA

I thought you said there wasn't a scientific name for a dirty old jar.

Charlie SIGHS while nudging both her friends aside. Then she snatches the trowel from Maya and begins carefully clearing away the dirt around the object. The more that is revealed, the faster she works.

CHARLIE

(excited)

I think it's intact. One of you get that tarp from the storage unit up top.

Emi scrambles out of the pit first.

MAYA

While you're up there, fill our water bottles please. By the way, your butt looks great in those Soffe Shorts.

Emi kneels down to collect both bottles.

EMI

Thanks.

During their conversation, Charlie is narrating to herself.

CHARLIE

It's definitely pre-exilic. Look at these markings. They weren't common until around seven-hundred B.C.E.

MAYA

(to Emi)

The dirt makes them look authentic. Plus the way the sweat is making them cling to your buns is super sexy.

Emi stands. With one hand on her hip, she twists and checks out her backside.

EMI

That's kinda gross. But my butt does look good.

She takes the empty plastic bottles over to the yellow and red Igloo nearby and fills them.

EMI

Maybe I should make another runway
pass by those geeks up the hill to
see if any of THEM take notice.

MAYA

Honey, those boys wouldn't know
what to do with a knock-out like
you.

Charlie sets down the trowel, lightly grabs hold of the two
free ends, and gently wiggles the jar.

CHARLIE

We just need to remove a little
more of this silty clay. Then we
should be able to ease it right
out.

Emi hands the bottles to Maya. Then she sits with her feet
dangling in the unit, the tarp folded neatly in her lap.

EMI

Wow. It's a lot bigger than it
looked before.

CHARLIE

I'm guessing twenty liters. That's
five-and-a-quarter gallons. They
used these as storage for grains,
wine, and bones.

MAYA

Hopefully, not at the same time.

CHARLIE

The Dead Sea Scrolls were found in
clay jars...

MAYA

(interrupting with a grin)
Vessels.

EMI

What I wouldn't do for a vessel of
wine right now.

MAYA

I'd settle for a cold beer.

CHARLIE

(ignoring their playful
banter)

Wouldn't it be awesome if there's
something inside. I mean, this WAS
the home of the High Priest
Seraiah, the chief religious
official in Jerusalem at the time.
He would certainly have had access
to the most valuable temple
possessions. Gold, jewels.

Emi and Maya both perk up.

MAYA

Like an ancient treasure chest?

CHARLIE

(to Emi)

Hop down and spread out that tarp.

(to both)

Then I'm going to need both of you
to help ease this twenty-six-
hundred year-old, potentially
priceless vessel out of the wall.

MAYA

Maybe we should get some help?

CHARLIE

No!

(catches herself)

I mean, we don't need it. Not yet.
Not until we're ready to move it
out of the unit.

(glances determinedly
between her friends)

We can do this. We're going to do
this.

With Maya nervously gripping the top, Charlie begins slowly
wiggling the bottom until it works free.

CHARLIE

(to Maya)

Switch places.

Once she and Maya traded ends, Charlie wiggles the top. Lose
dirt falls around the sides.

CHARLIE

Once it comes free from the wall,
Emi, you help on the backside.

(MORE)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Then we'll just ease it down to the
tarp. Easy peasy.

Maya mouths 'easy peasy' toward Emi who shrugs.

With everyone in position...

CHARLIE

On the count of three.

Emi and Maya are staring wide-eyed at their friend.

CHARLIE

One, two, three.

EMI AND MAYA

Oh my god. Oh my god. Oh my god.

With the weight of the jar in their hands, they ease it over
to the tarp. When the three of them kneel to set it down, a
wide top falls between Maya's knees.

Emi GASPS.

Once it wobbles to a stop, Maya bends down and looks into
the opening.

CHARLIE

Well?

(beat)

Is there something inside?

END ACT 1

ACT TWO

INT. KING DAVID HOTEL - EVENING

Charlie is impatiently waiting for her habitually late friends at the elevator of the posh six-story landmark King David Hotel overlooking the Old City.

Maya passes through the doorway of their top-floor suite first while observing herself applying lip gloss in a compact. Emi is holding the door open while bending over and fastening her second heel.

CHARLIE

Please hurry. We were supposed to be downstairs by now.

MAYA

We know you subtract fifteen minutes from our 'be ready' time because you think we're always late.

She 'air kisses' Charlie on the cheek so she doesn't smear her bright red lipstick.

Emi winks as she enters the elevator second.

EMI

It's just some boring academic dinner.

Charlie presses the button for the lobby.

CHARLIE

The Annual Excellence in Science Achievement Gala is the premier event of the year. And my dad's the keynote speaker.

MAYA

He's always speaking somewhere.

As the doors close, Maya checks herself out in each of the four surrounding mirrors. She stops on Charlie's reflection, and smiles.

MAYA (CONT'D)

You wore the red one.

CHARLIE

Please don't. I'm already self-conscious enough.

Emi looks over and smiles, too.

EMI

Are you kidding? You look crazy hot. Wasted if you ask me, on a bunch of self-important middle-aged brainiacs.

MAYA

Which is why you should ditch the speeches and come clubbing with us instead.

CHARLIE

I can't. I promised my dad. I barely get to see him these days.

She tugs the hem of her dress over her knees. When that doesn't make her feel less exposed, she pulls the sweetheart neckline up.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

You really think this dress is too much?

Maya slaps Charlie's hand.

MAYA

Absolutely. Now stop fiddling with it.

Charlie mashes her hands against the elevator wall behind her back.

CHARLIE

Good. I'm sure my dad will be his usual pre-occupied self.

The elevator doors open to a group of businessmen who part.

Emi and Maya strut out between them.

Charlie takes one last quick glance at herself.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

(mumbling)

I just really feel like being noticed tonight.

When she notices the men staring at her, she hustles between them atop the signatures of many of the hotel's celebrity visitors inlaid into a walkway of white stone.

EXT. KING DAVID HOTEL PORTICO - EVENING

As Charlie exits through the dark, rich mahogany-framed revolving front doors, a cool, early evening breeze lifts the bottom of her dress which she catches before anyone notices.

Ahead of her, Emi and Maya have stopped beside a long, black limousine parked beneath the portico.

MAYA
(in her loud party voice)
Our chariot awaits.

Charlie is distracted with putting on the light shawl that she's been carrying.

CHARLIE
It should be a long, black limo.

A tall, lean, broad-shouldered man wearing a wrinkled tuxedo, HUCK (28), steps out from behind a pink limestone column.

Charlie walks straight into his chest. She stumbles back.

He catches her before she falls into a row of prickly pyracantha bushes. His firm grip remains on her arms even after he sets her petite frame back on the pavement.

HUCK
I'm sorry, ma'am.

She feels his sonorous voice travel through his fingers.

CHARLIE
I should have been watching where I was going.

As her eyes make their way upward, she notices his worn Converse below pants that are too short for his long legs, and too wide for his narrow hips and waist. His jacket is tight over his shoulders but loose everywhere else. The entire ensemble has clearly been borrowed. And it looks even more slapdash because his shirt-sleeves are unbuttoned and his tie is crooked because he's loosened it too much for it to stay in place.

Charlie pulls at one of his fingers to free herself. It doesn't budge.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Could you please release me now?

HUCK
I'm sorry, ma'am.

CHARLIE
You said that already.
(when he still doesn't)
My arms?

He finally releases her and takes a step back.

As he does, she makes a practiced mental note of a jagged scar across his left cheek that is mostly hidden beneath his thick beard. His nose is crooked and there is a nodule of scar tissue just above where it was once broken. Her pause on his transfixed hazel eyes is unintentional and quickly corrected when she notices she has.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
You are my driver?

He CLEARS his throat as he looks away.

HUCK
Yes, ma'am.

CHARLIE
You're new? To driving, I mean?

HUCK
I'm new to this job, if that's what
you're asking.

He tries to straighten his tie. But fiddling with it makes it worse.

A pair of men with sun-dried skin and narrow eyes standing nearby smoking, move to the far side of the portico. They are whispering in Arabic, and Charlie instinctively listens in.

FIRST MAN
Ei janeb?

SECOND MAN
Rakab.

FIRST MAN
Gade jadda.

Charlie suddenly takes in her surroundings. Emi and Maya are still waiting beside the limo's back door staring at her. She has that FEELING. Her attention returns to her driver.

CHARLIE
Is this your usual vehicle?

HUCK
Like I said. I'm new to the job. I
can assure you that I thoroughly
cleaned it.

Emi and Maya are getting fidgety.

EMI
C'mon Charlie.

She ignores them.

CHARLIE
What I mean is, is this one of your
regular pool vehicles?

HUCK
Actually, it just came back from
the shop. They replaced the air
conditioning thermal control valve.
It works fine now.

CHARLIE
Would that involve motor oil?

HUCK
Not normally.

Emi and Maya join her at the back of the limo.

MAYA
What is it?

CHARLIE
What is what?

EMI
You've got that - LOOK.

Charlie runs her fingers over the polished trunk.

CHARLIE
It's probably nothing.

HUCK
(interjects)
C-4 can smell oily.

She looks more intently at him.

CHARLIE
You smell it too?

He shakes his head as he steps around them to the vehicle.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
(mumbles to herself)
Your sense of smell is limited
because of the scar tissue in your
sinus cavity.

His suddenly serious expression doesn't allow for a reply.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Is this limo gas or diesel?

HUCK
You smell diesel, too?

CHARLIE
Faint. But, yes.

HUCK
You three should go back inside.

Maya grabs one of Charlie's hands, and Emi the other. Then they drag her a few feet away.

MAYA
(whispers)
Is something wrong?

CHARLIE
Maybe you two SHOULD go back inside
and order a cab. I don't want you
to miss your dinner reservations.

EMI
What about you?

CHARLIE
My dad ordered the limo. So I'm
going to stick around a bit longer
to see if this ride can be
salvaged.

EMI
(giggling)
I think the ride you want to
salvage is on that brawny driver.

CHARLIE
(firmly whispers)
What? No. He's SO not my type.

MAYA

Tall, rugged, and mysterious?

EMI

And the way he man-handled you. I
sure wouldn't mind checking out
what's under HIS hood.

CHARLIE

You two stop. I mean it.

(sighs)

Please just go inside and order a
cab. I'll catch back up with you
later.

MAYA

Okay. But we want to know if that
scar eventually leads to a pair of
soft, firm lips.

LAUGHING, the pair link arms and walk away.

Charlie finds Huck checking beneath the back bumper on the
driver's side.

CHARLIE

You might want to try the right
side.

He looks up with a questioning expression.

Charlie subtly confirms that the two men she overheard before
are still there. And they are watching her while pretending
not to. She kneels down beside Huck.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

(whispers)

There are two men. Middle-eastern.

HUCK

I saw them.

CHARLIE

I overheard them talking. One of
them said, "which side." The other
answered, "passenger."

HUCK

That could mean anything.

CHARLIE

Sure. But the smell. Dioctyl
sebacate.

HUCK

How...

CHARLIE

I have a B.S. in Biochemistry. And I read a lot. A whole lot. Not to mention, I have an instinct about these things. And it's telling me that something is up.

Her driver duck-waddles by her. When he stretches his neck beneath the wheel-well, his jacket TEARS along the back seam.

One particular vein in his neck is swollen, and Charlie stops her fingers from tracing it.

HUCK

Would there be any reason someone might want to...

CHARLIE

Blow up the car I'm supposed to take to a gala dinner for scientists?

HUCK

Is there?

CHARLIE

Not me. But my father who made the arrangements. He's had some very public, potentially inflammatory things to say about - all religions, actually. But particularly about Christianity and Islam.

When he's finished his search, there's a drop of grease on his forehead.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Wouldn't it make more sense for IT to be located nearer the front?

Huck stands and briefly reexamines the two Arabs.

HUCK

Maybe you should take the cab with your friends while I check this out further.

CHARLIE

We're going to separate places. Besides, now I'm curious.

HUCK
Curiosity killed the cat.

CHARLIE
But resolution brought it back.
(beat)
I promise to stay out of your way.

Her driver takes off his jacket and tosses it on top of the trunk. Then he rolls up his sleeves.

Charlie grabs the jacket, folds it neatly, then sets it more carefully back on the trunk.

HUCK
(in a low voice)
IT could be wired to the ignition.
Or connected to a timer.

CHARLIE
(in a low voice)
Since you've driven it here, it's probably not triggered by the ignition. And those guys wouldn't be standing so close if it was on a timer.

HUCK
That leaves remotely controlled probably by a repurposed fob.
(beat)
But why haven't they set it off?

CHARLIE
Since my father arranged for the vehicle, they probably assumed he'd be using it. Maybe they're waiting for him to show.

HUCK
(firmly)
You should go.

CHARLIE
I'm fine. Besides, haven't I already proved myself helpful?

He walks past her toward the front of the car and starts to take a knee.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Wait.

The way he obediently pauses, makes her pause.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
When they see you getting near the
device, they'll have to set it off.

HUCK
Good point.

CHARLIE
I've got an idea.

She nonchalantly approaches the valet, YAEL (60s), standing
behind a podium. They have a brief conversation, he smiles,
and then she returns with something in both hands.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Almost all car remotes transmit on
the same frequency.

She discreetly shows that she has two borrowed fobs.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
When I alternate pressing these
buttons, it will jam the receiver
on the bomb.

HUCK
Giving me time to diffuse it.

CHARLIE
Can you do that?

HUCK
Yes.

CHARLIE
Okay then. What are you waiting
for?

HUCK
We ARE talking about a bomb.

CHARLIE
We're talking about Chemistry and
Physics.

HUCK
But this isn't a classroom.

CHARLIE
The world is a classroom. Now I've
already started pressing. So go.

This time he slides his entire torso beneath the car. When he glances forward, he notices her exposed legs kneeling beside his.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Ooh. How about a signal. Some sort
of code word.

HUCK
You know this isn't a game, right?

CHARLIE
I know. It's just that my life has
always been so - cautious. And I
know all this stuff. But its
academic, not practical.

She dreamily smiles in a way entirely inappropriate for the
present serious situation.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Sometimes, I imagine myself on some
grand adventure. Sometimes...

HUCK
(interrupts)
Shut-up.
(beat)
For just a moment. Please.
(beat)
Do you have a purse?

CHARLIE
(subdued)
A clutch. A small one, yes.

From under the car, he reaches out a dirty white bar that
looks like play-do.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Is that it?

HUCK
C-4? Yes. But it's disconnected so
it's...

CHARLIE
Harmless without an energy source
to trigger an explosion.

HUCK
Regardless, try not to handle it so
the authorities can fingerprint it
later.

She grabs the stick with a handkerchief and then closely examines it.

CHARLIE

(rambles)

I can't believe I'm actually holding a stick of C-4 in my hands. It's lighter than I imagined. The holes are from the blasting caps, right? It looks so harmless.

HUCK

Please, shut-up so I can concentrate.

(beat)

Now if those two goons ARE involved, they're likely getting real suspicious by now.

She frowns again as she places the wrapped stick in her purse.

HUCK (CONT'D)

They may have a back-up plan, if you know what I mean.

She doesn't answer.

HUCK (CONT'D)

Are you alright up there?

Her feet haven't moved.

HUCK (CONT'D)

Look. I'm sorry I told you to shut-up.

CHARLIE

Twice. You told me to shut-up twice.

HUCK

I really think that there are more important things to worry about here.

Her feet begin shuffling.

CHARLIE

It's just rude, that's all.

HUCK

Not as rude as someone trying...

CHARLIE
...to kill me.
(beat)
Wait. Somebody was trying to kill
me!

HUCK
I know that must be upsetting.

CHARLIE
I'm not upset. I'm pissed. Who do
those dip-sticks think they are?

HUCK
(smirks)
So look. I'm going to finish
untangling the rest of this line.
I'm telling you, they threaded it
through just about...

CHARLIE
(whispers firmly)
Shut-up.

HUCK
What?

CHARLIE
They're coming this way.

He extends his neck until he sees two sets of feet walking
hurriedly toward them.

When one of the men pulls a gun from his jacket, Charlie
SHRIEKS.

Her driver wraps his long legs around hers and then yanks her
to the ground behind the passenger side of the limo. Then he
drives his heel right into the shin of the first man passing
the front bumper, SNAP. The man drops to the ground MOANING.

Squatting behind cover, Charlie glances toward the front
entrance of the hotel where she sees the bellman, valet, Emi,
and Maya all urgently WAVING for her to join them inside.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
(quiet dialogue with
herself)
You should go.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Are you kidding. This is
exhilarating.

She crawls forward to the front right tire from where she watches her driver sweep the second man's legs out from under him. After pulling himself out from under the engine, and with the same thick fist that had held her so securely earlier, he punches the second man in the jaw as he tries to come back to his feet. His whole body goes limp.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
 (quietly narrates to
 herself)
 His eyes roll to the back of his
 head because the violent blow has
 rattled the brain in his skull
 enough to break the axon
 connections causing it to
 temporarily shut down.

Curiously, she then watches as the first man retrieves the gun that he'd dropped, and points it at her driver's chest. She'd never really known if the world actually slowed down at certain times, or if her mind simply had an extra gear. In that gear, she reaches into her clutch, pulls out the stick of C-4, peels a square chunk free then lights it with a match.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
 (shouts)
Amek tretdy Crocs!

When the man looks her way, she throws the brightly burning square at him. Though she misses by several feet, he ducks allowing her driver time to spring back into action. From behind, he wraps his arm around the man's neck, and squeezes.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
 (narrates)
 Now he's constraining the blood
 flow to the brain by constricting
 the carotid artery which should
 shortly result in...

The weapon drops a second time and the man's eyes close.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
 ...temporary loss of consciousness.

EXT. KING DAVID HOTEL PIAZZA - NIGHT

Several police cars with flashing lights surround the impounded limo. By the time the Israeli counterterrorism force, the Yamam, finish interviewing Charlie, she finds her driver sitting on a bench nearby smoking.

CHARLIE

Cigarettes increase the risk of death due to lung cancer by twenty-five times in men. They also make it more likely that you'll get chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder, emphysema, bronchitis...

He pinches out the lit end then sticks the butt in his pocket.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

You'll pollute your lungs but not the environment?

HUCK

There's still hope for the environment.

She sits beside him not yet able to tell if he's joking.

CHARLIE

Thanks for, you know.

He notices a scrape on her knee that's bleeding. After spitting on the tail of his shirt, he delicately wipes it clean.

HUCK

I'm sorry I yanked you down like I did.

CHARLIE

All things considered, it was probably better than getting hit by a lead projectile moving at fifteen-hundred feet per second.

Her legs start to swing beneath the bench.

HUCK

It was a forty-five.

CHARLIE

Twelve-hundred then.

HUCK

You DO read a lot.

CHARLIE

And I have an eidetic - photographic memory.

She glances toward the hotel entrance.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
The bellman has your jacket.

HUCK
He can keep it.

CHARLIE
I'm sure the damage can be mended
by a good tailor. Maybe you should
get it professionally fitted while
you're at it.

HUCK
That won't be necessary.

CHARLIE
I'd pay for it since this was all
sort of my fault.

HUCK
It's not the money.

CHARLIE
I could come pick it up and...

HUCK
(interrupts)
I quit the job.

CHARLIE
Oh?

HUCK
Not enough action.

She smiles.

HUCK (CONT'D)
Besides, I was just trying to make
enough for a plane ticket out of
here.

CHARLIE
To where, if you don't mind me
asking?

HUCK
Haven't decided yet.

He abruptly stands.

HUCK (CONT'D)
Someone from work will be dropping
off my wheels shortly.
(MORE)

HUCK (CONT'D)
You can either wait for the
replacement limo - or I could give
you a lift to your fancy dinner?

She frowns and her legs stop swinging.

CHARLIE
I forgot about the gala. My dad
must be worried.

A pair of motorcycles drive up and stop in front of the
bench. One of the riders gets off his bike, sets the
kickstand, removes his helmet, and hands it to Huck. Then he
hops on the back of the other bike and they drive off.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Your WHEELS is a motorcycle?

HUCK
It's a Harley.

She surprises herself when she stands.

CHARLIE
I've never ridden on a motorcycle
before.

He straddles the bike.

HUCK
It's a Harley.

After kicking back the kickstand, he presses the clutch and
then revs the engine.

CHARLIE
Wait!

He releases the throttle and the bike idles again.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Considering its advantage in
acceleration and agility, I might
imagine that one could get downtown
- at a reasonably safe speed and
mindful of existing laws and
regulations - sooner on a bike such
as this.

HUCK
(grins)
A reasonably safe speed, huh?

CHARLIE

One that might be exciting yet
allow ample reaction time to
respond to any unforeseen
circumstances.

Her driver shakes his head. Then he tosses her the helmet.

After fumbling but catching it, she sits as far back on the
seat as is possible.

HUCK

Unless you want to risk falling off
the back and rattling that pretty
little head of yours, I'd recommend
you move forward.

She slowly does.

HUCK (CONT'D)

And wrap your arms around my waist.

She slowly does.

HUCK (CONT'D)

By the way. What did you shout at
that guy with the gun earlier to
make him look?

CHARLIE

Your mother wears Crocs.

She feels his stomach muscles tense as he presumably laughs.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

It's the first thing that came to
my mind.

HUCK

You might want to drop that visor.

She slowly does.

HUCK (CONT'D)

And please don't scream directly
into my ear.

CHARLIE

Why would I scream?

He releases the brakes and opens up the throttle. The front
wheel hops off the ground as the bike lurches forward and
then races away.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
HOLY HAZEL EYES!

END ACT 2

ACT 3

EXT. ISRAEL MUSEUM - NIGHT

As the motorcycle slows in front of the sprawling museum complex located on a hill in the Givat Ram neighborhood, Charlie points toward a service road which Huck follows until it dead ends at a poorly lit loading dock.

EXT. BACK ALLEY, ISRAEL MUSEUM - NIGHT

A square man with an intimidating scowl is blocking the lone steel door. FRANCIS (30s), has been Charlie's father's bodyguard since the start of his controversial book tour for *Blasphemy* five years ago.

Even after the bike is turned off, Charlie can still feel the cool wind on her skin, and tingling vibrations all over her body. She releases his waist then hops off.

CHARLIE

That was ama - I mean, it was kinda cool.

She removes his helmet and shakes out her hair. After briefly taking in the star-filled sky, she turns to find him still on the bike.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

I was hoping you might come inside.
I'm sure I could scrounge us up
some dessert. Not to mention that
my dad will want to thank you for
getting me here.

HUCK

Does he thank all your drivers?

CHARLIE

Usually just the ones that prevent
his only daughter from being blown
to bits.

HUCK

I'm not exactly dressed properly.

CHARLIE

I'm sure he'll understand.

She hands him the helmet.

He looks at his scraggly reflection in the visor.

HUCK

How long have I had this grease on
my forehead?

CHARLIE

As fast as you were going, I
thought it might blow off.

HUCK

Axle grease is very viscous.

CHARLIE

But thixotropic greases usually
thin when pressurized by...

Her voice trails off as he grins.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

It won't take but a second. Then
you can speed off to wherever the
wind takes you.

He wipes it free with the loose sleeve of his shirt.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Please?

He stands. Then he dangles the helmet by its strap on the
steering wheel.

HUCK

I'm pretty sure I'm going to regret
this.

He walks a step behind from where he watches her glide across
the asphalt drive then skip lightly up the steps.

As she approaches, Francis' chiseled face softens. He lifts
her in a bear hug completely off the ground.

FRANCIS

Where have you been?

After he sets her down, she straightens her dress.

CHARLIE

We had some trouble with the limo.
So my friend drove me here instead.

Francis opens the door then guides her inside. As the door
begins to close...

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Wait.

She GRUNTS as she pushes the heavy door back open.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

This is...I'm sorry. I don't even
know your name.

Francis SNORTS like a bull.

Her driver steadies the door over her head.

HUCK

Huckleberry. Huck.

She reaches her hand through the opening and he takes it.
Then she leans in and whispers near his ear.

CHARLIE

You should know as well as anyone
that stars and shadows ain't good
to see by.

INT. ISRAEL MUSEUM - NIGHT

A young lady taking short steps in a tight-fitting evening gown, PENELOPE (late 20s), is approaching from the opposite direction. When Francis, Charlie, and Huck turn the hallway corner in the back of the museum, she's the only one that's surprised to see others there.

PENELOPE

(British accent to
Francis)

Blimey. How does a man as wide as a
lorry walk so quietly?

(tidies her hair)

Have you heard anything more on
Charlie?

Charlie's shoulder's tense at the sound of the woman's voice.

Francis steps to the side.

PENELOPE (CONT'D)

Oh Charlie. You're alright.

The two women lean toward one another's cheek and make the noise of a KISS. From several inches above Charlie's shoulder, Penelope does a double-take at Huck.

PENELOPE (CONT'D)
Linus will be so relieved.

The bottom of her dress whirls about as she turns and then escorts them further down the hall.

From behind the hurried, noisy steps...

CHARLIE
I hope I didn't ruin dad's speech.
Or his dinner. I know how much he
likes Foie Gras.

PENELOPE
Not to worry. His speech was
rousingly received. And dinner was
delish. He's relaxing in the VIP
room with a brandy.

They arrive at a room with a color picture of her father on the door, and DR. WALLACE printed in bold letters below it. Inside is a crowd of formally dressed people around Charlie's age surrounding a fully extended recliner. Smoke from a pipe is wafting toward the high ceiling from the headrest.

Francis remains in the hallway.

Instead of holding the door after she opens it, Penelope pushes her way through those gathered, and then sits on the armrest of the recliner.

Several of the by-standers turn and then create an open path for Charlie. Once she's through, the opening closes.

Huck remains on the periphery.

LINUS
That's when I looked the surly
chief in his fiery red eyes and
say, I'm not leaving without my
favorite hat.

The crowd bursts into LAUGHTER.

Charlie continues around Penelope, grabs the pipe from her father's hand and taps the charred remains into a nearby ashtray.

LINUS (CONT'D)
Charlie, dear. You made it. You
should have heard me tonight. I had
them on the edge of their seats.

CHARLIE
You always do, father.

She leans down and kisses him on the cheek.

Penelope reaches for Linus' near hand.

PENELOPE
You were fabulous, Paulie.

LINUS
They had me follow that scruffy,
Neanderthal Dovid Gottlieb who wore
sneakers and couldn't be bothered
to find his one clip-on tie. You
believe that?

The others LAUGH.

Huck looks down at his worn sneakers. Then he scratches at
the scar that suddenly itches below his scruffy beard.

LINUS (CONT'D)
What respect he had leaving the
stage, I reduced to contempt before
he made it out of the building -
without his supper.
(to Charlie)
Your mother is a far more
formidable opponent. How is she?

Francis doesn't say a word as Huck passes him in the hallway.

EXT. BACK ALLEY, ISRAEL MUSEUM - NIGHT

Once back outside, Huck looks up at the sky. He FLASHES BACK
to his Grandmother reading to him before bed when he was a
boy. Mark Twain was her favorite author. Because he'd heard
The Adventures of Tom Sawyer and *Huck Finn* literally dozens
of times, he recognized the quote immediately.

HUCK
(repeats)
Stars and shadows sure ain't good
to see by.

He removes his helmet from the handlebars and puts it on.
When he INHALES, he smells her shampoo.

EXT. STREETS OF JERUSALEM - NIGHT

Huck idles his bike back out to the main street in front of the museum where he distractedly merges into traffic. When he gets to the loop on Yehuda Burla Street, he slowly circles several times. A child screams from the open window of a car nearby. His head SNAPS toward the sound. Then he watches as the young boy turns and yanks a Tickle-me Elmo doll back away from his sister.

He takes a deep breath.

HUCK

(mutters)

You had your chance. And you blew it.

Aggressively weaving between vehicles, he eventually accelerates ahead of the others. There is a mistimed stop-light ahead that is green. From experience, he knows that it will turn red just as the throng behind him approaches.

He momentarily FLASHES BACK to the memory of her red dress and toned legs. He shakes it away and then CLOSES his eyes. His increased heartrate must have carried over from earlier because he's done this before, and felt nothing. Several seconds pass. Horns HONK. But there are no screeching tires or smoking brakes. No screams of horror.

On the far side of the intersection, Huck opens his eyes and raises his visor. Looking back, he sees a flood of cars crossing the intersection. He shakes his head. Then he lowers his visor and speeds away.

INT. VIP ROOM, ISRAEL MUSEUM - NIGHT

Linus finally takes a pause from a crude story about getting sick from eating wild buckthorn berries that he thought were blueberries. As he finishes off the remainder of his drink...

CHARLIE

Don't you want to hear why I'm late?

LINUS

Sure. Sure I do, dear.

(pats Penelope on the thigh)

Penelope. Be a dear and pour me another brandy.

Once Penelope leaves for the bar, he similarly pats on the armrest where she had been sitting.

Instead, Charlie kneels in front of him and rubs his forearm. Her eyes brighten.

CHARLIE

Well, as it turns out, you have
made more enemies than Rabbi
Gottlieb in Jerusalem.

LINUS

Unfortunately, it is the ignorant
that propagate like cockroaches.

Charlie frowns as the crowd dutifully breaks out in LAUGHTER again. When Penelope returns with the brandy, she grabs the glass, and then takes a sip before handing it to her father.

CHARLIE

Someone tried to blow up the limo
you arranged for me.

The crowd GASPS.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

(mutters to herself)

I'm sure they thought you'd find
the time to pick me up.

Her father raises the pull-handle on the recliner and sits up straight.

LINUS

But you're alright? Of course, I
can see that you are.

As he shuffles to the edge of his seat, she smells the alcohol on his breath. His watery eyes brighten.

LINUS (CONT'D)

You know, my daughter has always
lived beneath a lucky star. I
remember this one time, we were on
safari in the Maasai Mara National
Reserve, Kenya, when this Tarzan-
like figure appeared from the
jungle...

Charlie stops listening. Instead, she FLASHES BACK to bouncing off Huck's chest but then being caught before falling into the pyracantha bushes in front of the King David Hotel. She smiles.

Once her father's finished with the story and the others stop esteeming him, she stands.

CHARLIE

I want you to meet someone.
(calls out)
Huck?

LINUS

I once knew a professor named Huck.
Huckleberry, to be precise.
Huckleberry Spencer from Cambridge
had a nose that came to a crook
that he could have used to catch
fish...

Charlie stretches her neck to try to see around the crowd.
Then she walks around them, searching. Finally, she opens the
door.

Francis looks down at her.

CHARLIE

Did he leave?

Francis nods. Then he pulls her through the doorway for
another bear hug. The door SHUTS behind her muting the most
recent round of LAUGHTER from inside.

FRANCIS

We're all so relieved you're
alright.

CHARLIE

(mutters into his barrel
chest)
Some more than others.

END ACT 3

ACT 4

INT. TOP FLOOR SUITE, KING DAVID HOTEL - DAY

A bellman rolls the last of Emi's and Maya's bags out to the elevator on a luggage cart. Then her friends take turns hugging Charlie.

MAYA
(through free-flowing
tears)
Are you sure you want to stay?

CHARLIE
We found a twenty-six-hundred year-old vessel with some sort of ancient priestly vestment inside. Most archeologists work a lifetime without ever discovering anything that significant.

EMI
(ignoring tears)
Maybe you could focus on a different degree of yours, instead. One that doesn't involve danger.

CHARLIE
It's only for a few more days.

MAYA
(grabs hold of Charlie's
hand)
Just promise you'll be careful.

CHARLIE
I've been careful all my life.

EMI
(grabs Charlie's other
hand)
Need we remind you that someone just tried to kill you.

Charlie squeezes then releases their hands.

CHARLIE
And they didn't succeed.

After Maya wipes away her tears with a Kleenex, her eyes suddenly twinkle.

MAYA

Maybe you could get that ninja limo driver to be your bodyguard?

CHARLIE

I don't need a bodyguard.

MAYA

When was the last time you let some strapping man GUARD your body?

EMI

Yeah. Why not let ninja guy put some miles on that practically unused motor of yours?

CHARLIE

(blushing)

You two need to go now so you don't miss your plane.

All three hug again.

Charlie escorts them to the door.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Say hi to the rest of the gang for me.

After Emi and Maya leave, she listens to their chattering down the hallway until it fades away.

Through the peephole, she sees the elevator door shut. She turns, leans her back against the door and tries to expel the uncertainty.

She locates her cellphone and carries it over to the long window near the narrow balcony. In the distance, she catches the sun glint from the golden dome of the Temple Mount. Then she watches as the usual crowd of tourists in cars and on foot make their way toward the Old City. Further below, her eyes follow a motorcycle weaving between the stop-and-go vehicles.

Charlie's mother is sitting at a desk surrounded by stacks of books, rereading a copy of *Villette* beneath a bright lamp. She sets the book aside when the phone, also somewhere on the desk, RINGS.

GLADYS

Hello?

CHARLIE

Mom. It's Charlie.

GLADYS
I'm so glad you called, dear. How
was the Holy Land?

CHARLIE
Actually, I'm still here.

Gladys takes off her thick readers and rubs her eyes. Then
she wraps the wire hooks back around her ears.

GLADYS
Oh?

Charlie walks over to the couch and straightens the pillows.

CHARLIE
I think I told you how dad set us
up to dig with the team from Tel
Aviv University?

GLADYS
Seraiah's Villa.

CHARLIE
That's right. Well...
(beat)
...we found something.

GLADYS
Ooh. How exciting.

CHARLIE
A fully intact, twenty-liter clay
vessel. And that's not all.

GLADYS
(sits up straight)
I'm riveted.

CHARLIE
Inside, there was what appeared to
be a priestly breastplate.

GLADYS
Hoshen. What about the *ephod*?

CHARLIE
There were fragments which could
have come from a ceremonial apron.
They've been sent off for analysis.

GLADYS
(rolling her long nails
over the top of the desk)
(MORE)

GLADYS (CONT'D)

You will be my all-time favorite child if you tell me they're on their way here.

CHARLIE

I'm your only child. And yes. Yale.

GLADYS

(throws her arms into the air)

Hallelujah! I can't wait to get them into my lab. What about the breastplate?

CHARLIE

They're insisting on conducting the initial analysis here. But I had someone from Dr. Goldberg's team send you pictures.

As Charlie's cleaning up some of the dishes her friends left out, she notices the red dress that she wore to the gala laying across the back of a chair to a corner writing desk.

GLADYS

That's amazing. I can't wait to examine them.

Charlie walks over and picks up the dress. When she raises it to her nose, she frowns when she only smells her father's pipe. She returns to its hanging bag and puts it back in the closet.

CHARLIE

I was hoping you might have a moment to fill in some details.

GLADYS

There's nothing I'd love more - with the possible exception of having an opportunity to personally examine that breastplate.

CHARLIE

Okay, then. Who was Seraiah? And what was *urim* and *thummim*?

GLADYS

My word. I'm getting all tingly inside.

CHARLIE

It's probably nothing.

GLADYS
But you have one of your hunches?

CHARLIE
Yes.

Gladys opens her desk drawer and takes out a notepad and a pen. Then as quirky habit leftover from her days debating, she jots down key words during her explanation. The first word at the top of the page is 'Seraiah.'

GLADYS
Now then. Seraiah hails from a family of prominent Jewish officials. He served as High Priest under King Zedekiah around 590 B.C.E.

CHARLIE
The time of the Babylonian Exile.

GLADYS
That's right. It was rumored that the family may have secretly aligned themselves with their conquerors.

CHARLIE
A High Priest betraying his people?

GLADYS
It's just a title, dear. Hiding behind which was apparently just another flawed man.

Charlie returns to the chair and sits. Then she lifts her feet up on the desk. Almost immediately, she sets them back down on the ground then wipes off the surface where they were.

CHARLIE
Can we please have a conversation without slighting dad?

GLADYS
(dismisses)
The association was too obvious.

Jots down the words '*urim*' and '*thummim*.'

Now the Hebrew words *urim* and *thummim* literally mean 'lights and perfections.' But it has also been interpreted along the lines of 'revelation and truth,' or 'guilt or innocence.' Its purpose was to divine God's will in the ancient tradition of casting lots. The privilege of doing so was maintained by the priesthood.

CHARLIE

So Seraiah would have had access to it?

GLADYS

Access to it, along with the responsibility of protecting it.

CHARLIE

By potentially burying it in midden outside his villa during a conquest. But what exactly were they?

Gladys opens a nearby Bible and quickly flips to Exodus.

GLADYS

The *ephod* was a vest-like overgarment that would have been made of some sort of expensive linen, and elegantly embroidered with gold thread. It would have held the *hoshen* or Breastplate of Judgement, which Exodus 28 describes as having pouches for four rows of three different precious stones each.

CHARLIE

The number twelve would have been associated with the original twelve tribes of Israel.

Gladys jots down the word 'jewels' as she takes a DEEP BREATH.

GLADYS

Can I assume you didn't find any jewels?

CHARLIE

We did not.

GLADYS

(exhales)

Too bad. That would have been the
find of the century.

Charlie places the phone on speaker then sets it on the desk.
Then she resumes tidying up the mess that her friends left
behind.

CHARLIE

How would it have worked?

GLADYS

According to the renown Jewish
philosopher *Maimonides*, the High
Priest would stand facing the Ark
of the Covenant. An inquisitor at
his back would then ask a question,
and God, through the priest, would
respond.

CHARLIE

But how, exactly?

GLADYS

That's where things get quite
speculative. Some believe that
there were letters inscribed in the
jewels that would either
supernaturally protrude, or
illuminate like LIGHTS, ultimately
spelling out God's reply.

CHARLIE

Like a divine Ouija Board.

Charlie pauses from drawing open the window shade.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

But there were only twelve jewels,
and the Hebrew language has twenty-
two letters?

GLADYS

As with any ancient legend, there
are areas open for interpretation.

Charlie grabs her phone and heads into the bathroom where she
collects water in the sink bowl.

GLADYS (CONT'D)

Your dad would tell you to leave
that for room service.

CHARLIE
I got it from you.

She turns the water off and then begins soaking the wash clothes that are covered in makeup smears.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
So while the *ephod* and *hoshen* are historically significant, their contents are the real treasure.

GLADYS
They would have been irreplaceable. Priceless.

CHARLIE
Did I mention that we also found sherds from a similar vessel in a different unit?

GLADYS
That's interesting. Whatever *urim* and *thummim* were, they would have been kept separate from the other adornments. Only when they ceremonially came together would they have worked.

Gladys jots down the word 'divination.'

I should add, there's much academic debate surrounding whether the Temple was even using divination by that time, though.

Charlie leaves the cloths to soak then hangs the wet towels piled up on the floor over the shower curtain bar.

CHARLIE
Because the roll of determining God's will had shifted to the Prophets.

GLADYS
Precisely. Although there ARE historical writings that suggest they were still being used for another five hundred years.

CHARLIE
During the Hasmonean Empire and the Jewish reign of the Maccabees.

GLADYS

Until Jerusalem was conquered by
the Romans around 70 B.C.E.

Gladys stands, pushes aside a column of thick volumes from another table nearby, and then starts removing books from the top of a second stack. Then she returns to her seat and first opens *Jewish Antiquities*.

GLADYS (CONT'D)

I'll start with a passage from
Antiquities written by the
historian Josephus around 94 A.D.
"Now this breastplate, and this
sardonyx, left off shining two
hundred years before I composed
this book, God having been
displeased at the transgressions of
his laws."

CHARLIE

The prefix 'sard' means red. And
onyx stones are thought to bring
protection.

Gladys closes that book and opens the second.

GLADYS

Now from the *Book of Maccabees*. "He
extended the glory of his people.
Like a giant, he put on his
breastplate; he bound on his armor
of war and waged battles,
protecting the camp by his sword."

She turns a few more pages then stops again.

GLADYS (CONT'D)

Later in Chapter 3, "They also
brought the vestments of the
priesthood and the first fruits and
the tithes."

CHARLIE

That suggests *urim* and *thummim*
somehow ended up in the hands of
the Maccabees.

GLADYS

Traditionalists who cleansed the
Temple and reinstituted many of the
old practices.

Charlie collects her phone and steps out of the bathroom. As she looks around the room for something else to do...

CHARLIE

What happened to them after that?

GLADYS

We may be quickly moving from speculation to fancy.

CHARLIE

Noted.

Once in the bedroom, she tosses the pillows on the floor and begins making the bed.

Gladys jots down 'Hasmonean' and 'Herodian.'

GLADYS

The Hasmonean Empire was replaced by the Herodian Empire.

CHARLIE

(pauses)

As in Herod the Great. The King that ordered the massacre of Jewish boys below the age of two at the time of Jesus' birth.

GLADYS

In a final attempt to hold onto power, Hasmonean royalty married off one of their daughters, a young princess named Mariamne, to King Herod.

She jots down 'Mariamme' then 'Mariamne' followed by a question mark.

GLADYS (CONT'D)

With her went many of the families' most precious possessions. Though Herod was enamored by her beauty, and loved her deeply, he became increasingly convinced that she was plotting to have him killed. Under his direction, she was eventually tried for treason, convicted, and put to death.

CHARLIE

And the family possessions?

GLADYS

Folklore says they were buried with her in a cave west of Herod's Palace in Jerusalem.

CHARLIE

Do we have any idea where that cave is?

Gladys leans around the books, and thumbs through an old-fashioned rolodex that she's kept for decades.

GLADYS

An acquaintance of your father's may be able to help. He goes by the name of...

Pulls out a contact card.

Here it is. Tuvia Perl. He deals in grey-market antiquities.

CHARLIE

Grey?

GLADYS

The world of antiquities isn't often black or white.

After she finishes making the bed, Charlie returns the pillows.

CHARLIE

It's a start. Thanks mom.

GLADYS

Glad I could help.

Charlie walks back over to the window. She FLASHES BACK to racing through the streets on the back of Huck's motorcycle.

CHARLIE

There's something else.

Her mom immediately notices the change in her voice.

GLADYS

It's okay, dear. I already know that your father is sleeping with that leggy assistant of his.

Charlie WINCES.

CHARLIE
We said we weren't going to talk
about dad.

Gladys draws a very rudimentary skull and crossbones on her notepad.

GLADYS
You said that.

CHARLIE
Regardless, that's not it.

Her face scrunches in anticipation of her mother's reaction.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Someone may have tried to booby-
trap the car I was taking to the
gala.

The pencil point snaps because Gladys is pressing too hard on the notepad.

GLADYS
What does that mean?

CHARLIE
I don't want you to overreact.

GLADYS
If you don't clarify that
disclosure, I almost certainly
will.

CHARLIE
We found a bomb.

GLADYS
(rambling)
Oh my God! Are you alright? Where?
When?

CHARLIE
(attempts interrupting)
Mom.

GLADYS
Why would anyone try to blow you...

CHARLIE
(interrupts)
MOM. I'm fine. We disarmed it, and
everything is fine.

When she hears her mother pause for a needed breath.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
I don't think it was meant for me.

GLADYS
Your father. I told him that his
constant antagonizations were
foolishly provocative. You should
leave Israel. Come home
immediately.

CHARLIE
I can't do that. I'm too close to
something. I can FEEL it.

GLADYS
I don't want you out searching
isolated caves on your own. These
extremists can be ruthless.

CHARLIE
I'm a grown woman. I can take care
of myself.

GLADYS
I know you THINK you can.

Gladys looks at her watch and SIGHS.

Charlie has been checking hers every few minutes, and the
timing has worked out precisely as planned.

GLADYS (CONT'D)
I have to leave for class. But I
suspect you knew that.

She jots down 'CALL LINUS' in capital letters.

GLADYS (CONT'D)
Promise me you won't do anything
until we have a chance to talk
again.

CHARLIE
I promise I'll be careful. Now go
to class. I love you, mom.

GLADYS
I love you too, dear.

After they hang up, she calls her father. When Penelope
answers, Charlie feels her entire body tense.

CHARLIE
Could I speak with my father,
please?

PENELOPE
He's on the other line.

CHARLIE
Have him call me when he's done.

Charlie watches a plane climbing into the sky heading west.
It's too early to be the flight she was supposed to return to
her sheltered life in New York with Maya and Emi on.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
(mumbles)
I hope you know what your doing.

EXT. KING'S GARDEN RESTAURANT, KING DAVID HOTEL - DAY

The waiter seats Charlie at the same table that she and her
friends frequented. This time, she is alone out on the
terrace overlooking the pool gardens nibbling on a bagel
topped with cream cheese and sipping on a limonana. Her phone
starts to VIBRATE.

CHARLIE
Charlie.

LINUS
Your mother has been yelling at me
for the last hour.

CHARLIE
I'm sorry about that, dad. But I
had to tell her.

Linus rubs the bridge of his nose then SIGHS.

LINUS
She may have a point, you know.

CHARLIE
Not you too. I can take care of
myself.

LINUS
Once she calmed down, she told me
about your plans. Why not just
continue digging at the villa site?
I can talk to Goldberg?

CHARLIE

It's not there. *Urim* and *thummim*, I mean.

LINUS

I figured. I also figured you have your mind set on finding that cave. So I called Tuvia.
(teasingly pauses)

CHARLIE

And?

LINUS

He has a friend, who has a friend. There IS a site.

He teasingly pauses.

CHARLIE

That's terrific.

LINUS

There's one condition. And I'm afraid your mother and I are in complete agreement on this one.
(laughs)
Wow. I never thought I'd hear myself say that again.

CHARLIE

(sarcastically)

When was the other time?

LINUS

When we decided to have you.

She allows herself a brief moment to let that thought warm her before refocusing.

CHARLIE

What's the condition?

LINUS

You can't do this alone. I've contacted a local agency for a bodyguard.

Charlie smiles as she FLASHES BACK to Maya's similar, albeit more racy suggestion.

CHARLIE

I have a condition to amend your condition.

LINUS

That's not how conditions work.

CHARLIE

It's how this one is going to work.

LINUS

When did you get your mother's...

CHARLIE

(interrupts)

Determination. The stubbornness
came from both of you.

LINUS

That's likely true. So what is your
amendment?

CHARLIE

I'll get my own bodyguard.

LINUS

What would you know about getting a
bodyguard?

CHARLIE

You're going to have to trust me.
One thing I can assure you though
is that the person I have in mind
has proven they're capable.

LINUS

Where should I wire the money?

CHARLIE

I may have to convince him first.

LINUS

I'm sure you will. You always get
what you want.

He pauses so suppress suddenly intense emotions.

LINUS (CONT'D)

Listen, sweetheart. I have accepted
that my controversial opinions
sometimes ruffle some feathers. Who
am I kidding, I enjoy pushing
people's buttons. But I would never
want to endanger you.

CHARLIE

I know that, dad.

LINUS
Promise you'll be careful.

CHARLIE
I promise.

END ACT 4

ACT 5

INT. HETZI TUKI BASEMENT DIVE-BAR - NIGHT

After the cab drops Charlie off, she pauses at the top of a set of narrow stairs.

CHARLIE

(muttering to herself)

Tracking down a virtual stranger in
an area with a discreet, if not
unseemly reputation, isn't exactly
being careful.

She starts down at the same time the door opens below and three young men exit fully engrossed in their on-going conversation. Seeing they are distracted, Charlie presses her small frame against the sticky wall to avoid being trampled over.

Once inside, she searches the dimly lit tavern around several small pockets of harmless looking revelers. She locates her subject at the far end of the bar, tracing his finger around the rim of an empty lowball glass while staring in the direction of a game of soccer on a wall-mounted television. Before she even has time to rehash the many reasons why this is a foolhardy idea, she finds herself cowering in a cramped lady's room.

INT. LADY'S ROOM, HETZI TUKI BASEMENT DIVE-BAR - NIGHT

Seeing her hesitant reflection in a smudge-covered mirror flashes her back to earlier in her hotel suite when she'd tried on virtually every outfit she'd brought on this trip. Eventually, she had settled on a pair of tight-fitting jeans and a thick button-down shirt because it was getting cool in the evenings. Finally, she had squeezed her small feet into a pair of stiff, practically new cowboy boots because they added an inch-and-a-half to her height.

CHARLIE

(scolding her reflection)

Stop being a ninny baby. Just go
right up to him and ask if he'll be
your bodyguard.

She takes out a tube of lipstick and then leans in toward the mirror. Then she backs away, returns the tube to her purse, and wipes the original heavy application off.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
And don't ever use the word 'ninny'
again.

INT. HETZI TUKI BASEMENT DIVE-BAR - NIGHT

Huck abruptly turns in the stool he's sitting on. He pauses from standing when he sees Charlie approaching.

His continuous staring is making her even more self-conscious. But when she lengthens her strides to hasten getting there, her heel slides on a spilt drink, and she stumbles.

He catches her by the arms, then stands her back up.

CHARLIE
You can let go now.

He looks at his hands firmly gripping her elbows. Then he releases them.

More uncomfortable silence follows.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Don't let me keep you if you're in
a hurry.
(mutters to herself)
You rehearse for an hour and that's
what comes out?

HUCK
I'm not in any hurry.

He looks down at the empty stools.

HUCK (CONT'D)
Would you like to have a seat?

She accepts.

CHARLIE
So you like football?

HUCK
I love football.

She looks up at the television.

HUCK (CONT'D)
Oh. You mean soccer. Actually, no.
Not enough scoring and too much
flopping.

CHARLIE
Flopping?

HUCK
When a player flops to the ground
after barely being touched to get a
penalty call.

CHARLIE
I see.

Crossing her feet dangling above the floor to keep from
nervously kicking them, she notices his empty glass.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
What's good here at the Half
Parrot?

HUCK
Half Parrot?

CHARLIE
That's what *Hetzi Tuki* - the bar
we're at - means.

HUCK
Oh.
(beat)
I had a Jack and Coke.

The BARTENDER (30s), with tattoos covering his arms,
approaches and sets a napkin on the bar in front of her.

CHARLIE
Jack and Coke, please.

BARTENDER
(Israeli accent)
Another for you?

HUCK
Actually, I'll have an Arak this
time.

The bartender looks at him curiously.

Huck nods. Then he sits beside Charlie.

HUCK (CONT'D)
I'm sorry I flaked out on you the
other night.

CHARLIE
It's alright. My father and his
friends can be a bit much.

HUCK
They seemed your age.

CHARLIE
Our age. Yes. Groupies.

The bartender returns with the drinks.

Huck slides the Arak in front of Charlie, grabs the Jack and
Coke, and takes a drink.

HUCK
(explains)
You don't seem like the Jack and
Coke type.

She dips her finger in the sweet drink, sticks it in her
mouth and smiles.

CHARLIE
So, you have probably guessed by
now that me being here isn't a
coincidence.

HUCK
This doesn't seem like the kind of
place a girl like you would happen
upon.

She takes a sip of her drink.

CHARLIE
A girl like me?

HUCK
The kinda girl that has a limo and
goes to fancy galas.

CHARLIE
I would have been fine with a taxi.
But my father insisted.

HUCK
Daddy's little girl.

She takes a bigger gulp.

CHARLIE
You shouldn't stereotype people.
It's not nice.

HUCK
It's necessary in my line of work.

CHARLIE
I didn't know that being a
limousine driver was normally so
perilous?

HUCK
(grimaces)
I told you. That was a temporary
gig.

CHARLIE
So what is your USUAL gig?

Huck downs what remains of his drink. Then he taps on the bar
as the bartender passes by.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Why don't I guess?

HUCK
(blurts)
I was a Marine.

CHARLIE
Semper Fi. Always faithful.

She reaches for her drink but then she can already feel
herself getting light-headed. Instead, she unwittingly traces
her finger around the rim of the glass.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
I thought it was once a Marine,
always a Marine.

Huck turns as the bartender slides him a fresh Jack and Coke.
He takes a drink then hovers over the top of it.

HUCK
I'm just not one anymore.

Despite his stony face, she's clearly hit a nerve. Suddenly,
her eyes are drawn back to the scar that disappears under his
beard.

HUCK (CONT'D)
(feeling her staring)
So. Your father is someone famous?

CHARLIE
The most famous clown in the
circus.

She SNORTS then embarrassingly covers her mouth with her hand.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

That's what my mom says sometimes.
They are divorced.

Before she can stop herself, another drink goes down.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

He's actually a geologist and evolutionary biologist. Though he spends most of his time writing books and giving lectures these days. The group of adoring graduate students that follow him around sure think he's famous. And unfortunately, he's come to believe them.

HUCK

What about your mom?

CHARLIE

She's a professor at Yale. Her specialty is the Abrahamic Religions. Judaism, Christianity, Islam and some lesser-known faiths such as Bahá'í, Samaritanism, the Druze. SHE'S written several books, too. They used to do this thing where they would debate one another. Creation vs. Evolution.
(smiles)
It was fun watching them together.

HUCK

You've followed in your father's footsteps, then?

CHARLIE

Not necessarily. I also have a B.A. in Religious Studies.

HUCK

Also?

CHARLIE

Never mind.

HUCK

(faces her)

How many degrees do you have?

CHARLIE
It's embarrassing.

HUCK
No way you're getting away that easily.

She looks around though nobody is near enough to hear.

CHARLIE
My undergraduate degrees are in
biochemistry and linguistics.

HUCK
And Religious Studies.

She nods.

HUCK (CONT'D)
And?

CHARLIE
Masters in Philosophy and
Astrology. A Ph.D. in Archaeology,
and an M.D. in Forensic Pathology.

HUCK
You're a doctor, and a doctor?

She shrugs.

HUCK (CONT'D)
How did you have time for all that?

CHARLIE
I graduated high school when I was
fifteen.

HUCK
So you're a genius.

CHARLIE
I don't like that term.

HUCK
What's your IQ?

CHARLIE
Those kinds of tests aren't a
complete measure of intelligence.

HUCK
The number?

CHARLIE
I don't remember.

HUCK
I doubt that.

CHARLIE
Two twenty-five, okay.

HUCK
Wow. I'm assuming that's high?

CHARLIE
Pretty high.

Huck sits up straight.

HUCK
I've never known a genius before.

CHARLIE
I'm just an ordinary girl.

HUCK
I doubt there's much that's
ordinary about you.

CHARLIE
(looks away to cover her
smile)
What about you?

HUCK
High School GED.

CHARLIE
What about home?

HUCK
Idaho.

CHARLIE
Is that where your parents still
live?

HUCK
Grandparents. They raised me.

CHARLIE
Oh.

HUCK
MY pedigree is pretty ordinary.

CHARLIE
Why'd you join the service?

HUCK
Usual reasons. Adventure.
Patriotism. Judge said it was
either that or jail.

She LAUGHS then catches herself when she sees his expression
still hasn't changed.

HUCK (CONT'D)
I was just joking about the judge
thing.

The bartender returns.

BARTENDER
Will that be all?

HUCK
(nods)
Close my tab.

Once the bartender leaves.

HUCK (CONT'D)
How'd you find me, anyway?

CHARLIE
I went by your former place of
employment.

HUCK
They shouldn't have given out
personal information to a stranger.

CHARLIE
I'm pretty non-threatening.
Besides, they didn't tell me much
because they didn't know much.

HUCK
So why ARE you here?

Charlie leans her forearms on the sticky bar.

CHARLIE
I have a proposition for you.

HUCK
I wasn't expecting that.

CHARLIE
(blushes)
Not THAT kind of proposition.

He lifts her arms and slides two napkins underneath.

HUCK
I figured.

She twists around on her stool to face him.

He pulls the napkins that have remained stuck to her forearms, free.

CHARLIE
I was part of an archaeological dig which uncovered a vessel - a clay jar, with a priestly breastplate inside that may have been used in divination - prophesizing.

HUCK
Why don't I raise my hand if I don't know a word.

CHARLIE
I didn't mean to imply anything.

HUCK
It's alright. A vessel to me is a boat you take into theater - area where bad guys do bad things.

CHARLIE
Clever.

HUCK
I guess we're just from two very different worlds.

CHARLIE
Adventures almost never originate from my world.

She licks her dry lips.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
The reason I've stayed in this THEATER is because I have a potential lead on where the jewels that were fitted into an ancient breastplate used to divine God's will, might be.

HUCK

Finding something like that might
make you more famous than your
parents.

CHARLIE

That's not why.

(beat)

Listen. Your initial stereotyping
of me was probably right. Naïve.
Privileged. Maybe even a little
spoiled.

HUCK

For the record, I didn't say any of
those things.

CHARLIE

But you thought them.

HUCK

Don't tell me you're clairvoyant,
too?

CHARLIE

I have read some books on
parapsychology. But no, I'm not
clairvoyant. If I was, I would
already know how you were going to
react to what I'm trying to ask
you.

She twirls the hair tie around her wrist. Her wide eyes look
directly into his.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

And I don't.

HUCK

So just ask.

CHARLIE

My parents - that is, I have
decided it prudent for me to have
an escort...

(blinks)

...attendant.

(blinks)

HUCK

Driver who knows how to break
shins.

CHARLIE

Yes. It seems my father has made many enemies. And these jewels, if they exist, would be priceless to the scientific and religious communities.

HUCK

And to bad guys who'd like to steal them.

(beat)

You need a bodyguard.

CHARLIE

Look at me. Degree in linguistics and I can't seem to come up with the right words...

HUCK

What's pasta got to do with any of this?

CHARLIE

Linguistics is the study...

HUCK

I was just joking Doctor, Doctor. You've read about those, right? When a person says something clever to be amusing?

CHARLIE

Very funny. Pun intended. By the way, I'd prefer you not call me Doctor, Doctor.

HUCK

How about Professor?

CHARLIE

Does that mean you'll take the job?

In anticipation of his answer, her eyes have already started to sparkle.

HUCK

I think it PRUDENT of me to take some time to consider all my options.

She softly bites her bottom lip.

CHARLIE

Now you're just making fun of me.

He notices a smudge of lipstick in the corner of her mouth.

HUCK

You know, I've never met anyone quite like you.

CHARLIE

Like I said. I'm just a regular girl.

HUCK

I've known a lot of regular girls. And you're nothing like any of them.

Huck finishes his drink and then slides his empty glass next to hers. After signing the receipt, he wedges it between the two glasses.

She casually tries to read the signature. But it's too sloppy.

HUCK (CONT'D)

Huck Soulis. Or were you trying to see if I'm a good tipper?

When she stands and extends her hand to shake, she feels the effects of her drink go straight to her head.

CHARLIE

Charlotte Wallace. Most people call me Charlie.

HUCK

Please to meet you, Charlotte Wallace.

CHARLIE

And I you, Huckleberry Soulis.

They shake.

HUCK

By the way. The only person that's allowed to call me Huckleberry is my grandmother. Call me Huck.

Charlie uncharacteristically takes a step toward him.

CHARLIE

What are you going to do to me if I don't?

She immediately steps back, blushing.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
I'm so sorry. I don't know where
that came from.

HUCK
It's alright Charlotte, Charlie,
Doctor, Doctor, Professor. I have a
feeling we'd better get used to
working closely together.

Charlie hiccups once, then again. After she finishes the
melted ice from both their drinks, they stop.

CHARLIE
So, you're accepting my offer?

HUCK
We haven't really talked about pay.

CHARLIE
Name your price?

HUCK
Five hundred a week.

CHARLIE
Done.

HUCK
Plus expenses.

CHARLIE
Plus expenses.

HUCK
All I've got is the bike.

CHARLIE
I'll get us a vehicle. Do we have a
deal?

HUCK
I suppose we do.

When Charlie leans in for a hug, she feels the tips of his
stiff fingers glance off her boob. She immediately withdraws,
blushing again.

Huck snatches back his hand and they both glance away.

CHARLIE
I should be going.

HUCK
I could give you a ride?

CHARLIE
That won't be necessary.

Huck steps aside as she quickly walks by.

HUCK
Say, Professor.

She pauses.

HUCK (CONT'D)
When and where would you like to meet?

CHARLIE
I'll pick you up at 8:00am. Where do you live?

HUCK
Why don't I meet you in the hotel lobby instead. 8:00am.

CHARLIE
I'll be there.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE HETZI TUKI BASEMENT DIVE-BAR - NIGHT

Huck watches her ascend the steps from the doorway below. Then from near the top of the stairs, he watches as she waits for a cab. She's either singing or talking to herself, or both.

CHARLIE
(talking to herself)
Huck Soulis. Probably Greek.
Possibly derived from the Albanian word *shul* meaning brawny.
(smiles)

EXT. JERUSALEM STREETS - NIGHT

After she enters the cab and it drives off, Huck gets on his bike and follows her to The King David Hotel. Out of sight, he waits until she disappears inside.

This time, he only makes one circle at the roundabout on Yehuda Burla Street. Deep in thought, he sees the stop-light ahead. It's late, and there's far less traffic.

Approaching the intersection, he slows at the last minute when the light turns red. Just as he comes to a stop, the inattentive driver of a delivery truck races through the crossing.

HUCK

(shaking his head)

I wonder what the Professor would
have to say about that?