

#105 "Society Hill" WRITER'S Draft 8/17/10
CONTINUED:

Stephen
12.

Sc 1

RECEPTIONIST
Excuse me, Doctor Murphy? Todd
Fleming called for you. He said it
was personal.

The Receptionist hands over a call slip. Kate takes it,
curious, and stares at it --

ETHAN
Isn't that Doctor Hunt's ex-
husband?

Kate turns to regard Ethan. An awkward beat.

KATE
And that would be your business
how?

ETHAN
(beat)
Would this be a bad time to ask for
the night off?

KATE
Yes.

START

INT. SOCIETY HILL MAGAZINE - DAPHNE'S OFFICE - DAY

Megan and Peter are gone. Bud faces Stephen. Stephen twirls
his hair.

BUD
You told the interns to say Daphne
was in a meeting?

STEPHEN
It's the standard blow-off when we
didn't know where she was.

BUD
So she was in the habit of going
missing?

STEPHEN
For days at a time. It's my job to
cover for her.

BUD
And you don't know where she went?

STEPHEN
She was paranoid about anyone
knowing her schedule.

(CONTINUED)

BUD

When was the last time you spoke to her?

STEPHEN

Five days ago Friday. She wanted me to make dinner reservations.

BUD

Where?

STEPHEN

I booked her at Paulo's, the Rittenhouse and Mistral Restaurant.

BUD

All for one night?

STEPHEN

Daphne liked options. You had to learn what she wanted without asking. That's why I've lasted longer than any other assistant.

INT. M.E.'S OFFICE - RECEPTION - DAY

~~STOP~~

Megan and Peter return.

MEGAN

I'm kind, aren't I?

PETER

Kind of what?

She makes a face --

MEGAN

I expect results. But that doesn't make me a bad boss.

PETER

Well, technically, you're not my boss at all. You're not anybody's boss, except Ethan's maybe.

MEGAN

But I can get you fired.

PETER

Ask me about being kind again?

(CONTINUED)

Stephen
18.
Sc 2

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. POLICE STATION - INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

CLOSE ON the VIDEO footage we just saw of Stephen, sweeping off the papers in Daphne's office. FREEZE FRAME.

Reveal Bud, holding the remote. He turns to face Stephen, who sits nervously at the desk.

STEPHEN

I kind of lost it.

BUD

Kind of?

STEPHEN

I had plans to go to the shore. Instead, Daphne tells me to get a scarf for the Mayor's wife's birthday. I spent my whole weekend in Chicago.

BUD

You went to Chicago to buy a scarf... and it took two days?

STEPHEN

Daphne has a favorite designer there. Carol Ramsey. It took her two days. You can ask her.

BUD

I have to say, that's a stupendously ridiculous errand. I'd snap too. I might even ask myself how to get back at the person who sent me on it.

Stephen takes a long moment.

STEPHEN

I want to write, okay? So does everybody at the magazine. Last month Daphne announced a competition for a new column. Open to everyone. Forget sacrifice. Forget running her stupendously ridiculous errands.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BUD

And that pissed you off?

STEPHEN

I'm not the only one.

INT. M.E.'S OFFICE - MEGAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Megan sits at her desk. In her hand is a DOCUMENT with a handwritten note attached. It's a "Society Hill Magazine" article. The title reads: "The Fall of a Power Player." The NOTE is on Daphne Zimmer letterhead.

As Megan reads, she does not notice Peter appear in her doorway.

PETER

Daphne sent your hair twirler to Chicago for a scarf. Sounds like that magazine was a hotbed of discontent.

Megan slides the article into a BLUE FOLDER and sticks it in a drawer.

MEGAN

When did this happen?

PETER

This past weekend.

MEGAN

Then my hair twirler didn't kill her.

Peter enters, curious to hear more.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

As the body's cells break down after death, potassium levels increase. Daphne's levels are beyond someone who's been dead two days, even with her kidney condition.

PETER

So she was killed over the weekend?

MEGAN

Curtis' maggot will help nail that down. Meanwhile --

(CONTINUED)

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

INT. M.E.'S OFFICE - MEGAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Bud and Megan.

BUD
Two days. You're positive now.

MEGAN
Yes.

BUD
So the aspirin killed her?

MEGAN
Maybe.
(off Bud)
You're dealing with an extremely sensitive system here. The assault caused kidney damage leading to a disruption of her parathyroid hormone balance leading to hypercalcemia -- mood swings and paranoia. But, kidney damage also caused elevated potassium.

BUD
You've completely lost me.

MEGAN
Adding aspirin was like throwing gasoline on a fire. Excessive potassium can cause your heart to stop like that --

She punctuates with a SNAP of her fingers.

START

INT. POLICE STATION - INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Stephen twirls his hair nervously as Bud puts the screws to him.

STEPHEN
Daphne complained of headaches all the time. She wanted the aspirin.

BUD
Yeah. Like she wanted a heart attack. You screened every call she took, including doctors.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BUD (CONT'D)

You telling me you didn't know what aspirin would do to her?

Stephen knows this isn't going well. Time for truth:

STEPHEN

You gotta understand. Every pill I slipped her got me a day of freedom from Daphne hell. She'd stay home and I could do some writing. Which is the only reason I put up with her in the first place.

BUD

Well, you've taken care of that problem, haven't you.

STEPHEN

Wait a second. I wasn't trying to hurt her. It was only aspirin.

BUD

What it's called is involuntary manslaughter.

~~STOP~~

EXT. M.E.'S OFFICE - ROOFTOP TERRACE - DAY

Megan looks out at the city, alone. Peter comes through the door behind her. He steps to her side.

PETER

Congratulations.

MEGAN

Killed for a day off. Can you believe it?

PETER

I wonder if she saw it coming.

Megan gives him a look.

PETER (CONT'D)

Not the murder, but the fall.

MEGAN

What are you talking about?

PETER

Just that she'd seen it before. Watched another high-powered woman crash and burn. She even wrote about it.

(CONTINUED)