

## The Practice

Season 8, Episode 2

### The Chosen

Written by David E. Kelley

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The Law Firm—Alan Shore's Office

Alan Shore: Why are we whispering?

Sheila Carlisle: She has a headache.

Alan Shore: She?

Sheila Carlisle: God.

Alan Shore: She gets headaches?

Sheila Carlisle: And cramps. Explains a lot, don't you think?

Alan Shore: Sheila?

Sheila Carlisle: Alan?

Alan Shore: Sheila?

Sheila Carlisle: Alan?

Alan Shore: I want you to allow me to settle this case.

Sheila Carlisle: No.

Alan Shore: Sheila?

Sheila Carlisle: Alan?

Alan Shore: Assuming you do hear God's thoughts, persuading a jury of that reality will be difficult for me.

Sheila Carlisle: I win my cases. Had the highest winning percentage of any litigator in my firm. They had no right to fire me.

Alan Shore: Sometimes we need to forgive those who trespass against us.

Sheila Carlisle: Not.

Courthouse

**A cacophony of reporters all asking questions at once greets Ellenor Frutt, Jamie Stringer, and Bradley Stanfield as they walk out of the elevator.**

Reporter: We're on Day 3 of Bradley Stanfield's double murder trial. It's not known when the prosecution is going to rest. Sources say . . . **pushed away from his own camera crew** Hey, damn it!

Judge Warren West's Courtroom

Dr. Ming Hyang: Cause of death: cyanide poisoning.

A.D.A. Mark Campbell: And the cyanide entered Mrs. Stanfield's system how, Doctor?

Dr. Ming Hyang: Ingestion. Traces found in coffee.

A.D.A. Mark Campbell: Now, Doctor, are you aware that a suicide note was found?

Dr. Ming Hyang: Ridiculous.

A.D.A. Mark Campbell: I'm sorry?

Dr. Ming Hyang: Cyanide poisoning. Violent death. Nobody commit suicide that way.

Ellenor Frutt: Doctor, did the cyanide come in liquid or solid form?

Dr. Ming Hyang: Powder.

Ellenor Frutt: Powder. So one way for it to have gotten into the coffee would be for somebody to simply pour it into her cup. Right, Doctor?

Dr. Ming Hyang: Yes.

Ellenor Frutt: And another way, somebody could have put it into the coffee grounds. Isn't that correct, Doctor?

Dr. Ming Hyang: Could happen.

Ellenor Frutt: So the poison could have been put into the coffee long before—perhaps days before—it was bought and consumed by the victim. Isn't that right, Doctor?

Dr. Ming Hyang: Could happen.

Ellenor Frutt: Doctor, what can you tell me about Molly Stanfield's personality?

Dr. Ming Hyang: Nothing. Not psychologist.

Ellenor Frutt: Well, Doctor, suicide goes very much to the psychology of the victim. You're up here trying to rule out suicide, and you know nothing about Molly Stanfield. You can't rule out suicide, can you, Doctor?

**Dr. Ming Hyang swallows hard; he does not answer.**

The Practice—Conference Room

**Alan Shore:** The cause of action is wrongful termination under the state's Employment Practices Act. We already filed to the MCAD to no avail.

**Jimmy Berluti:** When were you fired?

**Sheila Carlisle:** June.

**Alan Shore:** We have a settlement conference scheduled for 11 o'clock. Failing settlement . . .

**Sheila Carlisle:** Excuse me. Can I just stop you for a sec?

**Alan Shore:** Surely.

**Sheila Carlisle:** Jimmy, I don't mind your looking at me; in fact, I'm even flattered. But would you mind keeping each stare to 8 seconds total in duration? Anything longer than that is just an invasion of my privacy.

**Alan Shore:** Eight seconds or less, Jimmy. Okay?

**Jimmy Berluti:** Sure.

**Sheila Carlisle nods.**

**Alan Shore:** Now, if we don't settle, I'd like to have you second-chair the trial. Your "plain folks" style could be an asset. A lot of jurors today relate to the phonetically-challenged.

**Jimmy Berluti:** Excuse me?

**Alan Shore:** I mean that as a compliment, Jimmy. You're the "Every Man."

**Jimmy Berluti:** I'm not a simple person. I'm very deep.

**Alan Shore:** Yes. And what I'd be looking for is for you to go to your depths, and say to the jury, "Not fair." Can you do that?

**Jimmy Berluti and Sheila Carlisle stare at each other.**

**Sheila Carlisle:** One, two, three.

**Jimmy Berluti looks down.**

Judge Warren West's Courtroom

**Dr. Henke:** A drug overdose is one thing. But cyanide?

**A.D.A. Mark Campbell:** Why not? It's quick.

**Dr. Henke:** And violent. There are headaches, vomiting, possible suffocation. It's an ugly death.

**A.D.A. Mark Campbell:** It's not possible Molly Stanfield wanted to die ugly?

**Dr. Henke:** I suppose it's possible, but as I said, I've never seen it. Also, the note. When people leave notes, typically it's to provide explanation or to say goodbye. Here we have, "I do not choose to live"—typed, unsigned.

**A.D.A. Mark Campbell:** You think the note was a fake.

**Dr. Henke:** Yes, scripted by somebody who wanted us to think it was a suicide.

**Jamie Stringer:** Sounds like whoever did this was pretty sloppy.

**Dr. Henke:** Certainly unconvincing.

**Jamie Stringer:** Or maybe very clever. Maybe the victim made it look like a phony suicide, hoping the police would suspect her husband of murder.

**Dr. Henke:** I beg your pardon?

**Jamie Stringer:** This marriage was marked by a lot of anger, Doctor, if not hatred. Isn't it possible Molly Stanfield decided to check out, and take her husband down in the process?

**Dr. Henke:** Is that what you think happened?

**Jamie Stringer:** Or somebody else killed her, knowing the police always look to the spouse. Can you positively rule that out? That somebody else killed her? Let me put it this way: Who besides my client did you investigate?

The Practice—Conference Room

**Atty. Albert Ginsberg:** You can't be willing to take this to trial.

**Alan Shore:** Oh, but we can. She was terminated for a disability. That's against the law.

**Atty. Albert Ginsberg:** She was terminated for not being able to fulfill the function of the job. One such function being client relations. She claims God talks to her, for God's sake! She claims bald men access her thoughts.

**Alan Shore:** *reaches out and touches Atty. Albert Ginsberg's hands* You seem upset.

**Atty. Albert Ginsberg:** I *am* upset!

**Alan Shore offers a glass to Jimmy Berluti, who declines, then pours a glass of water for himself.**

**Atty. Albert Ginsberg:** We're wasting valuable time here. How can you be willing to go forward with this? She will be publicly revealed as a loon. Which you are, Sheila!

**Alan Shore:** May I speak off the record? As recently as five months ago, you, Mr. Lambert, and my client had rather vigorous sexual relations. Do you recall that, Mr. Lambert?

**Atty. Jonathan Lambert looks indignant at the question, but does not answer.**

Alan Shore: Do you, Sheila?

Sheila Carlisle: Vividly.

Atty. Jonathan Lambert: What is this? An extortion attempt?

Alan Shore: **as he and Sheila Carlisle raise their glasses to drink their water** Oh, extortion is a very bad thing. I would never . . . However . . . **drinking in unison with Sheila Carlisle** . . . Umm, one of my favorite words, however. **To Sheila Carlisle:** Don't you like that word?

Sheila Carlisle: Love it.

Alan Shore: **breathy** However. **back to his regular voice** I would have to introduce this carnal episode as an admission on Mr. Lambert's part that he considered my client to be both competent and sane.

Atty. Albert Ginsberg: How do you figure that?

Alan Shore: Well, Mr. Ginsberg, certainly if he had relations with a person who, to his mind, lacked capacity to consent to said relations . . . **turns to Sheila Carlisle** What's the word I'm looking for now?

Sheila Carlisle: Heavens?

Alan Shore: Rape. In Massachusetts, having sex with the incompetent . . . **To Sheila Carlisle:** Was it heavens?

Sheila Carlisle: Rape.

Alan Shore: Right.

**Sheila Carlisle stares at Atty. Jonathan Lambert.**

Atty. Albert Ginsberg: You're now using the threat of a criminal trial to advance a civil claim. Mr. Shore, that's grounds for disbarment.

Alan Shore: I don't believe I did that. But why don't you go report me? See how it all unfolds. Two point six million dollars, gentlemen—that's your "out."

**Atty. Albert Ginsberg shakes his head slightly. Jimmy Berluti is horrified at what he has just witnessed transpire.**

The Practice—Common Office Area

**As Jimmy Berluti exits the Conference Room, and walks toward his desk, shaking his head a bit, Christine Shepard strides in, closing the door loudly behind her.**

Christine Shepard: I want to see my niece.

Eugene Young: When the meeting is over, they will come out . . .

Christine Shepard: I am that child's guardian.

Eugene Young: Actually, her father is still the legal guardian, and it's my understanding you want him convicted. If you interfere with our defense, what you'll be doing, is giving him grounds for a new trial. I don't think you want that.

**Christine Shepard crosses her arms and looks down in acquiescence.**

Eugene Young: Now, please. Sit over there and wait, while I check on your niece. **sighs, then turns and walks toward the back of the office**

Jimmy Berluti: **bumping into him** All right. First, this Shore guy is totally corrupt. Second, the client is nuts. She thinks God talks to her.

Eugene Young: Excuse me?

Jimmy Berluti: She also thinks bald men access her thoughts. And if you stare at her more than 8 seconds, you invade her privacy. And Shore? He just tried extorting the lawyer. He's a crook.

**Ellenor Frutt's office door opens, and she walks out of the office with Emma Stanfield and Jamie Stringer.**

Christine Shepard: Come on, honey.

Ellenor Frutt: Christine?

**Ellenor Frutt and Christine Shepard step to the side, and talk quietly together.**

Ellenor Frutt: Listen, I know you're not sympathetic to our case, here.

Christine Shepard: You're using a ten-year-old girl as a trial prop. How could anyone be sympathetic to that?

Ellenor Frutt: If you try to interfere with Emma's involvement, we will assert our rights against you.

Christine Shepard: **looks at Emma Stanfield, then back at Ellenor Frutt** Come on, honey.

**Christine Shepard escorts Emma Stanfield out the door, closing it behind them.**

**Ellenor Frutt turns back to Eugene Young and Jimmy Berluti.**

Eugene Young: You calling the daughter?

Ellenor Frutt: I don't know. All she has to say is that her mother seemed sad. We're thinking about accusing Christine.

Eugene Young: Her? The sister?

Ellenor Frutt: She has no alibi. They didn't get along. Basically, we've got nothing else.

Eugene Young: Ellenor!  
Ellenor Frutt: I think I can sell it.

#### Jailhouse Consult Room

Bradley Stanfield: Are you out of your mind?  
Ellenor Frutt: It's called "Plan B." We use it on occasion when Plan A is sure to fail.  
Bradley Stanfield: What about Emma's testimony? She'll support suicide.  
Ellenor Frutt: None of us feel Emma will help us. In fact, we think trying to exploit her further could even hurt.  
Bradley Stanfield: Well, my testimony . . .  
Ellenor Frutt: And we don't think you should testify, either. There's too much to impeach you with. Right now, your domestic assault isn't in evidence. If you testify, Bradley, it comes into play.  
Bradley Stanfield: What is our defense?  
Ellenor Frutt: Reasonable doubt. All we need to show is that it's possible somebody else did it—including, *possibly*, your sister-in-law. We know it's desperate. We're not kidding ourselves. But it's something, Bradley.

#### The Practice—Common Office Area

Eugene Young: We do not commit blackmail in this firm. We do not resort to extortion or any other criminal offenses to settle our claims.  
Alan Shore: Eugene, I give you my word. I would *never* get caught.  
**Eugene Young takes a step forward, so the height differential between the two of them is emphasized, and he looks down at Alan Shore.**  
Eugene Young: I will report you to the bar myself. **steps around Alan Shore and toward his office**  
**Alan Shore looks at Jimmy Berluti, then follows slowly behind Eugene Young until he gets to Jimmy Berluti's desk; Alan Shore sits in the chair in front of Jimmy Berluti's desk.**  
Alan Shore: Jimmy, I brought you in on this case because I sensed a connection between us.  
Jimmy Berluti: You brought me in because you think I'm simple.  
Alan Shore: Simple would be speaking directly with the person you have issues with, Jimmy. Going behind my back—that makes you complicated. You're no longer invited to play on my team, Jimmy. **gets up and walks away**

#### Judge Warren West's Courtroom

Christine Shepard: My sister was a devout Catholic. Suicide is considered against God. She also was not a woman to indulge in self-pity. Nothing kept that woman down, no matter what the setback.  
A.D.A. Mark Campbell: Could she have privately been unhappy?  
Christine Shepard: No. If anything, she seemed happier lately. She was in love.  
A.D.A. Mark Campbell: In love with . . . ?  
Christine Shepard: She had a boyfriend. I didn't approve, but I was at least hopeful that it would get her out of her involvement with him.  
A.D.A. Mark Campbell: **pointing at Bradley Stanfield** Him? You observed your sister with him?  
Christine Shepard: Yes. It was increasingly more and more angry to the point that I felt that it was extremely unhealthy for Emma. Clearly it turned out to be unhealthy for Molly as well.  
Ellenor Frutt: **writing notes** You said she was a devout Catholic. Are you?  
Christine Shepard: Yes, I am.  
Ellenor Frutt: Is it possible, knowing how opposed *you* were to suicide, that your sister concealed her plans to take her life?  
Christine Shepard: This was not a suicide, and I am finding this repulsive.  
Ellenor Frutt: You seem angry.  
Christine Shepard: I am.  
Ellenor Frutt: You and your sister often got angry with each other, didn't you?  
Christine Shepard: We had our differences—primarily over the war zone that they subjected Emma to.  
Ellenor Frutt: Just out of curiosity: Where were *you* the day your sister died?  
Christine Shepard: I beg your pardon?  
Ellenor Frutt: I don't mean to be rude, but if my client should be convicted of this murder, he'd be disqualified from inheriting, and you'd get more of your sister's money, wouldn't you?  
Christine Shepard: Are you suggesting I killed my sister?  
Ellenor Frutt: I'm just suggesting that you had keys to her house, that you knew her coffee-drinking patterns. Did the police ever investigate *you*?  
Christine Shepard: No, they did not.

Ellenor Frutt: A year ago, you tried to get custody of Emma, because you considered your sister to be an unfit parent.

Christine Shepard: I considered them both unfit because of the way they fought continually in front of Emma.

Ellenor Frutt: You love Emma very much.

Christine Shepard: Like a daughter. Yes, I do.

Ellenor Frutt: And if your sister dies, and your brother-in-law gets convicted of this crime, *you* would get custody of Emma; wouldn't you, Christine? Everything would work out.

Christine Shepard: You are disgusting!

The Practice—Conference Room

Alan Shore: ***clears his throat*** One dollar?

Atty. Albert Ginsberg: Yes, Mr. Shore. That is our offer. One dollar—and it's final.

**Alan Shore nods.**

Atty. Albert Ginsberg: We were offended by your little extortion attempt yesterday, and we're perfectly willing to go to trial on Thursday. And when we do, it's going to get out that your client is insane. Her peers are going to learn that she is deeply, deeply deluded, and she will likely be unemployable forever. So, go ahead, Mr. Shore—advise your client to move forward with this claim. Counsel her that it *is* in her best interest to do so.

**To Sheila Carlisle:** And you? Why don't you just talk it over with God.

Sheila Carlisle: Let me tell you something.

Alan Shore: ***interrupting her with a hand on her arm*** Mr. Ginsberg, what you've done, unwittingly or not, is turn the matter *personal*. ***smiles*** When a case becomes personal to me, Mr. Ginsberg, my priorities shift. My goal becomes not so much to vindicate, but rather to avenge. My mission now is to get *you*.

**Alan Shore stands up and walks around Sheila Carlisle in her chair while buttoning his jacket. He stands, rock steady, next to Atty. Albert Ginsberg's chair.**

Alan Shore: The meeting is over. You may go.

**Atty. Albert Ginsberg arises, and stares at Alan Shore, then walks to the door, buttoning his jacket.**

Sheila Carlisle: Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

**With a slight nod at Sheila Carlisle, Atty. Albert Ginsberg exits.**

Sheila Carlisle: Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land.

**Alan Shore looks at Sheila Carlisle, concerned.**

Sheila Carlisle: Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice, for they will get their fill.

Courthouse Conference Room

Bradley Stanfield: Rest? What about my testimony?

Ellenor Frutt: We agreed you shouldn't testify since . . .

Bradley Stanfield: I never agreed. You agreed.

Ellenor Frutt: If you take the stand, your domestic assault comes into evidence.

Bradley Stanfield: And if I don't go up there, we have no defense.

Ellenor Frutt: Our case is reasonable doubt. It's burden of proof. We've already established the possibility of suicide; we've established the possibility of somebody else killing her. That's the best we can do here.

Bradley Stanfield: No, it isn't.

Ellenor Frutt: If you take the stand, you are guaranteed a guilty . . .

Bradley Stanfield: You listen to me! From my perspective, I've already bought the guilty verdict. I do not want to rest.

Ellenor Frutt: If you get . . .

Bradley Stanfield: I'm talking. Like you said from the start, everyone thinks I'm guilty. I'm the sick bastard who killed his pregnant wife and unborn child. Well, people need to hear from me now. My daughter needs to hear from me.

Ellenor Frutt: Then do it behind closed doors.

Bradley Stanfield: I will do it in that room!

**Ellenor Frutt and Jamie Stringer look at each other.**

Bradley Stanfield: I have made a life of being liked, Ellenor. Look at my face. Every job I've gotten, every woman . . . It's 'cause I'm trustworthy, I'm sympathetic, I make a favorable impression.

Jamie Stringer: Brad, I agree with Ellenor. You testifying would not be a good idea.

Bradley Stanfield: I will take that stand, and I will make a favorable impression. I will tell my story, and they will cry for me. You understand me?

Ellenor Frutt: We understand you perfectly.

Restaurant

**Sheila Carlisle:** I'm actually really excited about the trial. *laughs*

**Alan Shore laughs with her.**

**Sheila Carlisle:** There's no greater rush of adrenaline. And I'm looking forward to working together again—you and me—too. I thought we gelled perfectly at that first settlement conference. You know, our rhythms were together, it was kinda like . . . sex. *pauses, staring off into space*

**Alan Shore watches her, concerned.**

**Sheila Carlisle:** What do you think about me presenting the open? There's no better way of showing off my skills as a litigator.

**Alan Shore:** Did you get a message just then? From God?

**Sheila Carlisle:** As a matter of fact, I did. Why?

**Alan Shore:** *shakes his head* I was just wondering. *picks up a glass of scotch; drinks from it*

**Sheila Carlisle:** So what do you think about me opening?

**Alan Shore:** I think it sounds good.

**Sheila Carlisle:** *nodding* Okay.

**Alan Shore:** Listen, I need to meet with your doctors tomorrow.

**Sheila Carlisle:** *also drinking scotch* Why?

**Alan Shore:** To prepare their testimony.

**Sheila Carlisle:** Why would we be calling doctors?

**Alan Shore:** We're basing our claim on disability law, so I'll need to present evidence of . . .

**Sheila Carlisle:** My disability. I have none, Alan.

**Alan Shore:** When I try cases, Sheila, I don't like surprises. Therefore, I would like to meet with your doctors.

**Sheila Carlisle:** Why don't I give you all the surprises right now? I have no doctors.

**Alan Shore:** You're not being treated by anybody?

**Sheila Carlisle:** Why should I be? Because God speaks to me? That doesn't make me ill, and it doesn't make me any less of a lawyer. *picks up and opens menu* I thought I'd have meat. I'm on the Atkins diet, so let's bring on the protein.

**Alan Shore takes another swallow of scotch, as Sheila Carlisle peruses the menu.**

Eugene Young's Office

**Eugene Young and Jimmy Berluti are watching TV. A reporter, Sarah Ehret, is standing outside the courtroom in which the Bradley Stanfield trial is being heard.**

**Sarah Ehret, Reporter (TV):** In what certainly promises to be the most dramatic moment of the trial, Brad Stanfield will sit in the witness chair and presumably deny that he killed his pregnant wife, Molly, and their unborn son, Michael.

**There's a knock on the door, and Eugene Young uses the remote to turn the TV off. Alan Shore opens the door and walks in, Sheila Carlisle following and hiding behind him.**

**Alan Shore:** You called, Eugene?

**Eugene Young:** Yes. *rising, and stepping around the desk to greet Alan Shore and Sheila Carlisle* I wanted to meet our new client.

**Alan Shore:** Ahh! *turns around to find Sheila Carlisle hiding behind him* Sheila . . . oh. Sheila Carlisle, Eugene Young.

**Eugene Young:** Why is she hiding behind you?

**Alan Shore:** You're bald, Eugene. You can access her thoughts.

**Eugene Young:** May I have a word with you, please, Alan?

**Alan Shore:** Certainly. Sheila?

**Sheila Carlisle:** Um, hmm. *exits*

**Eugene Young:** Are you serious about tryin' this case?

**Alan Shore:** Quite.

**Eugene Young:** The woman thinks God speaks to her?

**Alan Shore:** She does.

**Eugene Young:** As senior partner, I'm directing you to either settle or enter your withdrawal. This firm cannot and will not proceed to court with that cause of action.

**Alan Shore:** May I respond? *raises his left eyebrow*

**Eugene Young:** Please.

**Alan Shore:** *looks out the window to see what Sheila Carlisle is doing; then, quietly* The client merely thinks you can access her thoughts because of your baldness, Eugene. But if I'm not mistaken, you're not

bald—you shave your head. If I may? **takes out his eyeglasses and puts them on, then looks closely at Eugene Young's scalp** Just as I thought. Nubs. It's all a big misunderstanding. I'll let her know.

Eugene Young: You do not amuse me.

Alan Shore: I sense that. **puts his eyeglasses in his top jacket pocket and exits**  
**Jimmy Berluti and Eugene Young both look they are not amused.**

Judge Warren West's Courtroom

Bradley Stanfield: It wasn't a perfect marriage. I had an affair once. Turns out, she was having one.

Ellenor Frutt: But, still, you didn't want a divorce?

Bradley Stanfield: No. We had a daughter. For both Molly and me, Emma was everything. And, uh . . .

Ellenor Frutt: And what, Brad?

Bradley Stanfield: And despite our battles, my love for Molly was as strong as ever. I resisted the divorce simply 'cause I—I couldn't imagine life without her. That may make me weak but, uh, it's the truth.

Ellenor Frutt: Did you kill your wife, Bradley?

Bradley Stanfield: No. I didn't. Uh, she—she was pregnant with my son—a son I had dreamed of. The idea that I could take a life—any life—but to accuse me of killing Molly? Or Michael?

Ellenor Frutt: You heard it mentioned that your sister-in-law, Christine, might have had both motive and opportunity.

Bradley Stanfield: I can't believe Christine could be capable of this. I . . . She and Molly had battles, and I know she wanted custody of Emma, but this was her own sister.

Ellenor Frutt: Did Molly have any other enemies? **shaking her head**

Bradley Stanfield: I mean, obviously she had secrets—I didn't know about the affair—but no enemies that I knew of.

Ellenor Frutt: Brad, you have to understand why you're a suspect. You have a troubled marriage, your wife wants to leave you, and she's suddenly found poisoned to death in your home with no signs of anybody else being there but you.

Bradley Stanfield: I would never be capable of taking a human life. I could never hurt the woman that I love more than life.

A.D.A. Mark Campbell: You could never hurt her. A year ago, the police were called to your house once because you hit her.

Bradley Stanfield: Once, during an argument, I lashed out. I'm ashamed of that.

A.D.A. Mark Campbell: You're ashamed. And when the police questioned you after finding her dead, you didn't tell them of *your* affair, did you?

Bradley Stanfield: No, I—I was . . .

A.D.A. Mark Campbell: Ashamed.

Ellenor Frutt: Objection.

A.D.A. Mark Campbell: The police asked if you and your wife had any domestic problems. You answered, "No." That was a lie, wasn't it, Mr. Stanfield?

Bradley Stanfield: I didn't imagine that I was a suspect at the time of that question that . . . I thought my marriage was a private matter.

A.D.A. Mark Campbell: I see. You also told the police that you tried to revive your wife.

Bradley Stanfield: Yes, after I found her, I performed chest compressions, mouth-to-mouth . . .

A.D.A. Mark Campbell: Yes. You said you tried to breathe air into her lungs. And yet, we found no traces of your saliva on her mouth. In fact, there was no smudging even of her lipstick, Mr. Stanfield. Did you not touch her lips as you performed mouth-to-mouth?

Bradley Stanfield: I thought I did.

A.D.A. Mark Campbell: You *thought* you did.

**Bradley Stanfield says nothing; we see the reactions of Ellenor Frutt, Jamie Stringer, and some of the jurors.**

A.D.A. Mark Campbell: The night before Molly's death, the neighbors heard you and your wife screaming at each other from inside your home. What was the fight about, Mr. Stanfield?

Bradley Stanfield: We argued a lot in our marriage. I said so. That particular argument . . . She complained that I worked too much, that I was a . . . an absentee husband.

A.D.A. Mark Campbell: That's what the fight was about?

Bradley Stanfield: Yes.

A.D.A. Mark Campbell: One neighbor—Martin Reed, who is seated right there—he heard you screaming at your wife, "Do you love him?" Did she love who, Mr. Stanfield?

Bradley Stanfield: I do not recall saying that.

A.D.A. Mark Campbell: You stated to the police and testified again today that you didn't learn of your wife's affair until after her death. And yet, the night *before*, you were heard screaming, "Do you love him?"

Bradley Stanfield: As I said before, I don't remember saying that. I knew nothing about her affair.

Courthouse Conference Room

**Emma Stanfield is sitting quietly—watching the adults carefully—next to Ellenor Frutt, with Jamie Stringer and Bradley Stanfield seated opposite at the table.**

Tara Wilson: **entering, and closing the door behind her** Not good.

Ellenor Frutt: How bad?

Tara Wilson: All six voted guilty. Unequivocally.

Bradley Stanfield: Uh, what are you talking about?

Ellenor Frutt: I hired a focus group to monitor the trial.

Tara Wilson: They found your testimony unconvincing and unanimously rejected it.

**Bradley Stanfield shakes his head, looking down at—and clenching—his hands.**

Ellenor Frutt: All right. Look. I would like to explore murder two.

Bradley Stanfield: Absolutely not!

Ellenor Frutt: Brad . . .

Bradley Stanfield: That is a life sentence, Ellenor!

Ellenor Frutt: With the possibility of parole. I—I don't know what to tell you. We are going to lose, here. We are dead!

Emma Stanfield: Daddy, let me tell!

Bradley Stanfield: Emma, please. Be quiet.

Emma Stanfield: Daddy, you said you . . .

Bradley Stanfield: Emma . . . ?

**Bradley Stanfield arises, walks to the couch on which Emma Stanfield is sitting, and sits next to her.**

Ellenor Frutt: Tell what?

Bradley Stanfield: Nothing. Could . . . could I have a moment alone with my daughter, please?

**Ellenor Frutt, Jamie Stringer and Tara Wilson look at each other, suspicious something is up.**

Alan Shore's Office

**Sheila Carlisle is studying some law books on his desk; Alan Shore enters.**

Alan Shore: Hey.

Sheila Carlisle: Hey! I'm working on my opening. Do you wanna hear it?

Alan Shore: In a second. I need you to listen to me, Sheila.

Sheila Carlisle: **looking up at him** Yeah.

Alan Shore: The reason I so readily took this case, aside from my tremendous affection for you, is because I know, your eccentricities notwithstanding, you've always been a fierce and brilliant litigator, and I have never, ever known you to be "off" on the law. But I'm concerned, Sheila, because now you *are* "off" on the law.

Sheila Carlisle: How so? **goes back to studying the law books**

**Both Sheila Carlisle and Alan Shore sit down.**

Alan Shore: The basis of our claim lies in employment discrimination. Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 151—you drafted the complaint, Sheila. We must, as a matter of law, make a showing that you're handicapped within the meaning of the statute. We will need a doctor to testify that you have a mental illness, because you do. And if we cannot make a showing, that you're mentally ill, we cannot win this lawsuit.

**Sheila Carlisle looks distant as she considers what Alan Shore has said.**

Alan Shore: What are your thoughts? **pause, then quietly** Talk to me.

Sheila Carlisle: Please don't abandon me, Alan.

Alan Shore: **shaking his head** I won't.

Sheila Carlisle: **clears her throat** I was initially diagnosed with schizophrenia. I had excellent pre-morbid functioning. I was later re-diagnosed with a non-bizarre delusional disorder—delusional, and not schizophrenic because the voices were within my head and not from external sources. I was treated with anti-psychotic medication, the voices remitted. I went off the medication, and . . . She came back. There you have it. I'll make the doctors available to you, though I haven't been treated in over two months.

**Alan Shore holds her hand, kisses the back of it gently, then smiles.**

Alan Shore: Yup. I'll let you get back to your opening.

Sheila Carlisle: Alan, I need you to win this case for me. Can you win it for me, please.

Alan Shore: **nods** Done.

Courthouse Hallway

**Ellenor Frutt, Emma Stanfield and Tara Wilson are seated on a bench; Jamie Stringer is standing in front of them.**

**Ellenor Frutt:** We know you love your dad very much, and he loves you. We're his lawyers, and all of his secrets are safe with us. Are you the person who poisoned your mother?

**Emma Stanfield:** I told you I don't really want to talk about it right now.

**Jamie Stringer:** Emma, I don't think you really want your dad to live the rest of his life in prison.

**Ellenor Frutt:** There may be a way for us to help him and to protect you at the same time, but we need to know the truth, Emma. Did you poison your mother?

**Emma Stanfield cries and looks down at her hands.**

**Ellenor Frutt:** Can you tell us why?

**Emma Stanfield:** She was ruining everything.

**Tara Wilson and Ellenor Frutt look at each other, slack-jawed.**

Courthouse Conference Room

**Ellenor Frutt and Jamie Stringer are talking with Bradley Stanfield.**

**Bradley Stanfield:** She's lying to protect me.

**Ellenor Frutt:** I don't think so.

**Bradley Stanfield:** Where is she?

**Ellenor Frutt:** She's with Tara. Listen . . .

**Bradley Stanfield:** I killed Molly, all right? Emma's just trying to protect me, leave it at that.

**Ellenor Frutt:** Oh, so now you're suddenly saying that you did it? You've been protecting your daughter.

**Jamie Stringer:** This doesn't help her. She's 10. She'll be destroyed.

**Bradley Stanfield:** She'll most definitely be destroyed if she's locked up.

**Ellenor Frutt:** That doesn't have to happen. There's probably an insanity defense—she's 10. Plus, for God's sake, if she's ever to have any chance of psychological or emotional health, she's going to need you on the outside. You accepting guilt for her crime . . .

**Bradley Stanfield:** I accept guilt because I'm at fault, Ellenor. She was raised in an environment of hatred. Her mom and I fought. Emma . . . whatever caused her to do this, I absolutely accept fault.

**Ellenor Frutt:** Let us try to work this out.

**Bradley Stanfield:** Just make the deal on murder two. I'll take it.

**Ellenor Frutt:** We're not allowed to do that.

**Bradley Stanfield:** As Emma's legal guardian, I am directing you to hire independent counsel for her. That you have to do.

Judge Spindle's Courtroom

**Atty. Albert Ginsberg:** She's is a gifted attorney, and I mean, gifted. She has the highest winning percentage of all our litigators. But God speaks to her. She claims bald men access her thoughts. As much as we adore Sheila Carlisle—and we do— **Sheila Carlisle smiles** —she's ill, and her delusions simply shake client confidence in our firm. Now you'll hear lots of evidence during this trial from many people documenting her illness, and you'll understand our position, but you'll truly come to appreciate it, I'm afraid, once you hear from Sheila. **nods, ending his speech**

**Alan Shore watches the jury's reaction, then turns as Sheila Carlisle arises and walks toward the judge. She nods at the judge, the turns to address the jury.**

**Sheila Carlisle:** Imagine being considered insane for endeavoring to communicate with God. I've been so ostracized by my firm these days, God was the only one who'd talk to me. **Addressing specific jurors:** You talk to her, Margaret, every night. And even though you think she's a he, that's okay.

**Margaret nods.**

**Sheila Carlisle:** And, Ward, I know you don't believe in Her, but when your wife survived cancer, you were heard to mutter, "Thank God."

**Atty. Albert Ginsberg:** Wha—what is going on here?

**Sheila Carlisle:** I'm giving my opening remarks, and I'd appreciate being allowed to finish. And this . . . **lifts a male juror's comb-over off his bald head** . . . is fraud.

**Atty. Albert Ginsberg:** Objection!

**Sheila Carlisle:** Agnostic, Mitchell? Shame!

**Judge Spindle:** Ms. Carlisle! Chambers—now!

**Alan Shore arises, then Judge Spindle stands.**

**Sheila Carlisle:** Just as well. Shirley has to pee.

Judge Spindle's Chambers

**Atty. Albert Ginsberg:** Obviously she managed to find personal data on the jurors. This is unethical . . .

**Judge Spindle:** Where did you get this information, Counsel?

**Sheila Carlisle:** God.

**Judge Spindle:** I'm not fooling around, Ms. Carlisle. If you have access to the clerk's office—if you gained access to the files . . .

**Atty. Albert Ginsberg:** This is the probably why she relates so well to juries. She gets inside information, which she . . .

**Sheila Carlisle:** You're absolutely right, Albert. If you'd like a mistrial, fine. We can do this over and over again. My source will always be there.

**Atty. Albert Ginsberg scoffs.**

**Judge Spindle:** All right. Regardless of where you get your information, it is improper for you to have personal contact with jurors.

**Sheila Carlisle:** I haven't.

**Judge Spindle:** Yes, you have. The fact that you had it in open court doesn't change things. This is a mistrial.

**Sheila Carlisle:** She told me that you'd do that, but I wouldn't listen.

**Judge Spindle:** Mr. Ginsberg.

**Atty. Albert Ginsberg turns to look at Judge Spindle.**

**Judge Spindle:** Given you don't know her source, and that she might be more subtle the next go-around, I seriously suggest you think about settling this.

**Sheila Carlisle:** Your wife would be happy. You could take that trip to Mexico. **To Judge Spindle:** They're in a rut.

**Alan Shore scoffs.**

Judge Warren West's Chambers

**Ellenor Frutt:** The cyanide came from her mother's photo lab. Evidently, it's used in developing pictures.

**Jamie Stringer:** It explains the simple suicide note, written by a ten-year-old.

**A.D.A. Mark Campbell:** I need to talk to her.

**Atty. Singleton:** I can't allow that.

**A.D.A. Mark Campbell:** Look, you're going to have to help me out here, otherwise . . .

**Atty. Singleton:** I'm assigned to help the girl, not you. Trust me. She's not talking.

**Judge Warren West:** And if I were to subpoena her?

**Atty. Singleton:** She'll plead the Fifth—unless, of course, you'd like to grant total immunity.

**A.D.A. Mark Campbell:** Well, if I can't speak to her, I have no new evidence, and therefore . . .

**Ellenor Frutt:** Actually, you do. Jamie and I are witnesses, as is Tara Wilson, our assistant. We heard the girl confess.

**A.D.A. Mark Campbell:** And I'm to take *your* word? You represent the guy!

**Ellenor Frutt:** No, actually we would have to recuse ourselves now, because we've become witnesses. Look: I pull a lot of stunts. In this trial alone, pointing the finger at the sister—it was a tactic, a part of the game. But as an officer of the court, I am here before you now—as is Jamie—telling you, this was not a stunt.

**Ellenor Frutt, Jamie Stringer, A.D.A. Mark Campbell, Atty. Singleton, and Judge Warren West all look at each other, sizing each other up. There is a knock on the door, the Court Clerk opens it, and Christine Shepard enters. The Court Clerk closes the door behind her.**

**Judge Warren West:** Thank you for coming in. I understand you've had opportunity to talk to your niece.

**Christine Shepard nods reluctantly.**

**Judge Warren West:** Ms. Shepard, I need you to be a friend of the court, and I . . .

**Atty. Singleton:** Hold on a second.

**Judge Warren West:** Ms. Singleton, you represent the girl, not the aunt.

**Atty. Singleton:** This is improper, your Honor.

**Judge Warren West:** Well, that's my call, not yours, and I'll thank you to be quiet. Ms. Shepard, none of us wants the wrong person convicted here. Did your niece indicate to you that she poisoned your sister?

**Christine Shepard hangs her head, shaking her head slightly, and looking at the floor.**

**Judge Warren West:** I asked you a question. I would like you to answer.

**Christine Shepard:** I am not going to incriminate my niece. But I'll say, it appears Mr. Stanfield did not commit the crime.

**All look shocked.**

Judge Warren West's Courtroom

**Judge Warren West:** Members of the jury: New information has come to light. As a result of this new information, the District Attorney feels he is duty-bound to withdraw the complaint. The charges against Bradley Stanfield are, therefore, dismissed.

**A chorus of shocked expressions from the visitors' gallery.**

**Judge Warren West:** The defendant is free to go. The minor, Emma Stanfield, will be taken into custody. And we are adjourned.

**Bradley Stanfield turns around and clasps Emma Stanfield's arms in his hands.**

**Bradley Stanfield:** Please try to be brave, sweetheart.

**Emma Stanfield:** I will, Daddy. I will.

**Reporter (heard above the din of the crowd):** Stanfield, what happened?

**Atty. Singleton and the Bailiff escort Emma Stanfield out of the courtroom and into custody.**

Alan Shore's Office

**Alan Shore:** They're not taking you back.

**Sheila Carlisle:** What?

**Alan Shore:** They can't be forced to employ you, Sheila. You know that.

**Sheila Carlisle:** Well, then, let's not settle. Five is not enough.

**Alan Shore:** You don't need them.

**Sheila Carlisle:** **scuffs** Being alone is not good for me, Alan.  **pacing** I need voices on the outside to balance . . . Being alone is not good for me. Let's not settle.

**Alan Shore:** Nobody's gonna hire you. Except maybe me.

**Sheila Carlisle:** You? Here?

**Alan Shore:** Why not?

**Sheila Carlisle:** Do you even have the authority to hire people?

**Alan Shore:** **laughing; shaking his head** No. I'll figure it out.

**Sheila Carlisle:** You're a good friend, Alan.

**Alan Shore:** **laughing** How did you learn the identities and backgrounds of all those jurors?

**Sheila Carlisle laughs, and Alan Shore smiles.**

Ellenor Frutt's Office

**Ellenor Frutt and Jamie Stringer are sitting in the office when there is a knock on the door, and Bradley Stanfield enters.**

**Ellenor Frutt:** Brad?

**Bradley Stanfield:** You got a second? **closes the door**

**Ellenor Frutt:** Sure.

**Bradley Stanfield:** Emma's lawyer—is she qualified?

**Ellenor Frutt:** Well, she was assigned by the courts. Her reputation is good.

**Bradley Stanfield:** Can you take over?

**Ellenor Frutt:** Oh, I—I suppose, but . . .

**Bradley Stanfield:** Good. I wanna move quickly. I don't want her to be locked up.

**Jamie Stringer:** She's going to be locked up. She committed murder. There's . . .

**Bradley Stanfield:** Actually, she didn't, Jamie. She just said she did.

**Ellenor Frutt and Jamie Stringer look puzzled.**

**Bradley Stanfield:** All right. Look. I'm embarrassed to say I haven't been truthful with you. I killed Molly. I maintained otherwise for obvious reasons—I didn't want to spend my life in jail. As the case went south, Emma and I devised a back-up plan—a Plan B of our own, I guess you'd call it. It involved manipulating you—getting you to think that she did it, in the hope that you'd find a way to right an apparent travesty of justice—which you did, and I'm grateful. Now, we need to help her. Assuming double jeopardy will prevent me from being re-tried, on strategy might be for me to come forward now, and admit my guilt. Is that right?

**Ellenor Frutt is obviously speechless.**

**Bradley Stanfield:** Do I assume correctly, Ellenor?

**Ellenor Frutt:** You killed your wife?

**Bradley Stanfield:** Yes. And I'm not proud of using my daughter to secure my freedom. Actually, you two gave me that idea. Anyway, the mission now is to fix things, and get her out. So, we all need to get on-board. Again, I totally apologize for manipulating you. I thought that was the only way. When can we proceed?

**Ellenor Frutt:** Brad? You're going to have to give us a little time to absorb all of this.

**Bradley Stanfield:** But let's not waste any time, okay? An innocent ten-year-old girl is in jail. We need to help her. Whatever we choose to do, by the way—it cannot involve me going to jail. That is not an option.

**Ellenor Frutt:** *nodding* Okay.

**Bradley Stanfield:** Thank you. *exits*

**Jamie Stringer:** I think he could be sick.

**Ellenor Frutt:** We need to figure out a way to take him down.

**Jamie Stringer:** How? There's double jeopardy, privilege . . .

**Ellenor Frutt:** Jamie, he just used us as puppets to defraud the court. We need to take him down. *picks up a pen and throws it back onto her desk*