

CONSPIRACY THEORY

INT. JUSTICE DEPARTMENT - LIZA'S OFFICE - DAY

In its own way as cluttered and overflowing with files as Jerry's apartment is. At her desk, Liza watches Jerry pace. The door is intentionally open. Liza's secretary JILL keeps a protective eye from the outer office.

LIZA

I don't see the connection.

JERRY

Come on! Six major earthquakes in the last three years? The space shuttle in orbit for every one of them?

LIZA

(incredulous)

Testing some top secret seismic weapon.

JERRY

Not testing. Using. Nukes are passe. This is the weapon of the future.

As Liza exchanges a look with Jill, Jerry pauses to look at a framed photo on a credenza.

Liza, 20, in full riding gear, gracefully jumping a horse over a set of rails.

LIZA

I still don't see what it has to do with the President.

JERRY

(re: photo)

Do you still ride?

LIZA

Not for years.

JERRY

So why do you keep the picture up? You wish you hadn't quit?

LIZA

Well, I -- Jerry, the point. Get there. What does it have to do with the President?

It takes him a moment to switch gears. Setting down the picture, he pulls out a map, unfolds it on Liza's desk. A seismic survey map. He points as he talks.

JERRY

The President's in Europe.
Tomorrow he'll be in Turkey.
Right along this fault line. They
launched the space shuttle
yesterday.

LIZA

Motive?

JERRY

He's cutting funding for NASA.
The milk cow of the aerospace
industry. We're talking billions.
Motive enough?

LIZA

NASA is going to kill the
President of the United States
with an earthquake.

JERRY

(nods)

Not exactly the kind of thing a
Secret Service Agent can throw
himself on top of.

Liza sighs. On another day, Jerry might have been
welcome comic relief. Not today. As she folds his
map...

JERRY

You going to warn him?

LIZA

I can't promise you anything.

JERRY

You think I'm crazy.

LIZA

I think you're different.

JERRY

You know, to be 'normal' and live
in the 'real world,' to swallow
Coca cola and eat Kentucky Fried
Chicken, you have to be in a
conspiracy against yourself. I
can't lie to me, Liza. And the
more I strip through the sham, the
crazier I look to people like you.
Can't you see that's what they're
counting on?

(a beat)

You want to go out sometime?

LIZA

No.

Jerry smiles, looks away, embarrassed in an appealingly boyish way. If he wasn't crazy, the answer might be yes.

JERRY

I better get going.

LIZA

You don't have to burst in here every time, Jerry. Just call and make an appointment.

He nods, gathers his map. Halfway out, he looks back.

JERRY

What was your horse's name?

LIZA

Johnny Dancer.

(a beat)

You've been in my office ten times. How come you never asked me about that picture before?

JERRY

Was waiting till I knew you better. Johnny Dancer, huh? Sounds like a racehorse.

Jerry heads out. Liza watches after him a beat as he goes.