

EMILIA
Nicole told CNN?

MEG
No.

EMILIA
She blamed Shelby?

MEG
It was my idea to implicate Shelby. I figured she had the least to lose.

EMILIA
No. You defended the Center. You said--

MEG
After we tipped them off. I wanted to talk about hate speech and--

EMILIA
Wait.

MEG
--this was a way to position me as--

START

EMILIA
You cost Ronnie her job.

MEG
I never thought she'd go public with a--

EMILIA
No--

MEG
Up until that point, she--

EMILIA
You're blaming her?

MEG
I didn't say that.

EMILIA
Stop, okay. Just...don't say anything.

Emilia moves away from Meg, putting as much physical distance between them as possible, and sits in a chair at the table.

MEG

If I'd known Ronnie would make that statement...

EMILIA

What? What would you have done?

MEG

(a few long beats
pass as Meg
considers)

EMILIA

This whole time. Meeting with Jennifer, going to the funeral? All your impassioned pleas on Ronnie's behalf. That was all--

MEG

It was real. This life--my life--it's not always black and white.

EMILIA

What was so important about... Oh. Right. It's that fucking campaign.

MEG

I have a chance to--

EMILIA

You?

MEG

I could help hundreds of thousands of people. I can have more impact during one congressional term than in 20 years as a city councilor.

EMILIA

All of this was selfless? Standard operating procedure for a humble public servant?

MEG

Everyone makes compromises.

EMILIA

So your career was worth ruining Ronnie's life and Shelby's reputation over.

MEG

If I can help pass reasonable gun laws? Or create a bigger social safety net for at-risk teens?

EMILIA

And you decided you had the right to make that call. You and Nicole.

MEG
I don't expect you to understand. But you said you'd support me no matter what.

EMILIA
Who even are you?

MEG
I'm the same person you met right here.

EMILIA
(beat)
Then maybe I'm the one who's different.

END

Meg's phone chimes with an incoming message. After a moment, she pulls it out, looks at the screen.

Emilia stands.

MEG
I've got to go, but I can--

EMILIA
No. I think we're done here.

Emilia exits. After a beat, Meg exits behind her.

SCENE SEVEN

Meg's office, later the same evening. Nicole is putting folders in piles. She occasionally places something into a large black garbage bag that sits, half filled, on the floor.

Meg enters, takes in what's going on.

NICOLE
Don't touch anything.

MEG
What is all of this?

NICOLE
An interim system until you hire the new me.
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