

ACT TWO

6 INT. COUNCILWOMAN HILL'S OFFICE - RECEPTION AREA -- DAY 6

Later. In COUNCILWOMAN HILL'S OFFICE. A RECEPTION AREA.

Behind the desk: the Councilwoman's new receptionist, MARIA SCHECTER- the worst receptionist in history. Confused. Inept. Defensive. Wearing glasses. And: she's six months pregnant- already quite plump.

The phones all three lines- are ringing off the hook. BRRING BRRING! BRRING! Maria is overwhelmed. She doesn't know the phone system. She keeps hanging up on people.

START  
SC.1 →

MARIA  
(frazzled, into phone)  
Councilwoman Hill's office. Can I  
put you on hold?

DESPERATE VOICE  
NOOO! I've been trying to-

Too late. Click. Maria has hung up.

MARIA  
(into another phone)  
Councilwoman Hill's office. May I  
put you on hold?

Maria disconnects call after call. During this, Monk and Natalie enter.

MONK  
Hello. My name is-

MARIA  
Sir. I can't talk to you now. The  
Councilwoman is missing. It's a  
madhouse here. Thank God it's Friday.

NATALIE  
It's not Friday.

MARIA  
(sharply)  
Who told you that?

NATALIE  
Well, no one told me...

Maria picks up another line. But it's dead.

(CONTINUED)

"MONK" -  
MARIA

1/7

MARIA  
(into phone)  
Councilwoman Hill's office. Thank  
you for holding. Hello?  
(shrugging)  
They must've hung up.

MONK  
I think you disconnected them.

MARIA  
Why would I do that?

~~MONK  
I... don't know.~~

NATALIE  
I'm Natalie Teeger. This is Adrian  
Monk. We're working with the police.  
We're trying to locate Councilwoman  
Hill.

MARIA  
You should've called first.

NATALIE  
I tried. We tried. You kept putting  
us on hold. And then-

During this, Maria continues to disconnect callers.

MARIA  
(into phone)  
Councilwoman Hill's office. Can you  
hold? Hello?

NATALIE  
-- hanging up on us.

MARIA  
I've already talked to the police.  
A sergeant. I forget his name. He  
had a big scar on his face. Just  
like yours.

NATALIE  
I... don't have a scar.

MARIA  
Sure you do. On your cheek. It's  
right there.  
(indicates Monk)  
You both do.

(CONTINUED)

2/7

MARIA

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6 CONTINUED: (2)

6

Monk realizes the problem.

MONK

I think there's a scratch on your glasses.

Maria takes off her cyoglasses, and confirms this. She's an idiot.

MONK (CONT'D)

Is there someone else here I can talk to?

MARIA

(indicating Natalie)  
You can talk to her.

MONK

I mean, someone who works here.

MARIA

You could try Janet Grote. She's the legislative assistant.

MONK

Oh thank God. Where is she?

MARIA

She's not in.

MONK

~~(trying again)  
Here's the thing. I'm conducting my own investigation. It's kind of personal. There's a vote that's very important to me. They've just postponed it until next week.~~

NATALIE

When was the last time you saw Ms. Hill?

MARIA

Yesterday morning. She was here for about an hour. Then she left. She had an appointment.

MONK

With who?

MARIA

I don't know. I'd have to check her calendar.

(CONTINUED)

3/7

MARIA

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6 CONTINUED: (3)

6

A boat. Maria just stares at them.

MONK

Could... you do that please?

MARIA

(to Monk, flatly)

I don't like you.

Maria taps her keyboard. Councilwoman Hill's DAILY PLANNER appears on her screen.

MARIA (CONT'D)

There it is. That's her schedule for the whole week.

NATALIE

Could we have a copy of that, please?

MARIA

This computer doesn't print.

Natalie indicates a PRINTER.

NATALIE

There's a printer. Right behind you.

MARIA

There's no print button.

NATALIE

It's right there. P-N-T.

MARIA

Print?

MONK

It's abbreviated. It's print.

Exasperated, Natalie reaches over, and hits the PRINT button herself. The PRINTER CLICKS ON.

MARIA

(explaining)

I'm new here.

END  
SC. 1

~~MONK~~

~~Really? I never would've guessed.~~

~~MARIA~~

~~Are you patronizing me?~~

(CONTINUED)

4/7

MARIA

10 CONTINUED: (2)

10

DR. BELL  
Do you think she was murdered?

MONK  
It's beginning to look like it.

DR. BELL  
Maybe she ran away. Maybe she  
couldn't stand all those meetings.  
(explaining)  
I served on the City Council. Not  
here. When I lived in Tulsa. I  
hated it. The meetings were  
interminable. After a few months I  
stopped going completely. I used to  
send my secretary in as my proxy.

MONK  
Is that legal?

DR. BELL  
It was in Tulsa.

Something clicks. Monk is so excited... he stands up.

MONK  
Proxy?

DR. BELL  
Adrian? You're standing up.

A beat. Monk doesn't move.

DR. BELL (CONT'D)  
Why don't you sit down?

MONK  
I think you're a genius.

DR. BELL  
Okay. You can stand.

11 INT. COUNCILWOMAN'S OFFICE - RECEPTION AREA -- LATER 11

Later. Back in Councilwoman Hill's office.

Maria Schecter- the Receptionist From Hell- is still behind the desk. She still hasn't mastered the phone system...

START →

5C.2

MARIA  
(flustered, into phone)  
I'm going to put you on hold.  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

5/7

**MARIA**

"MR. MONK FIGHTS CITY HALL" Prod/Network Draft - 10/22/08 34.

11 CONTINUED:

11

MARIA (CONT'D)

If we get disconnected, please don't  
call back.

Once again- CLICK!- Maria hangs up on the caller. During  
this, Monk enters. He's carrying a BOUQUET OF FLOWERS.

MARIA (CONT'D)

It's you again.

MONK

Yes it is. It's me.

MARIA

Did you find her?

MONK

Not yet.

(beat)

Actually, I'm looking for Ms. Grote.

MARIA

I told you. She's sick.

MONK

She's still not back?

MARIA

She has pneumonia. She won't be  
back for two weeks.

Monk sighs. He starts to leave. Then: an idea-

MONK

You're a staff member. I mean, you're  
full-time, right?

MARIA

(warily)

Why?

MONK

You can vote. At the hearing  
tomorrow. You have the authority.

MARIA

I don't think so.

Monk has brought a PAMPHLET. It's a copy of the CITY COUNCIL  
BY LAWS.

(CONTINUED)

6/7

MARIA

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11 CONTINUED: (2)

11

MONK  
(reading)  
It's in the bylaw! "If a council member is absent or incapacitated for any reason, any member of his or her staff..."

Monk changes gears. He smiles. He leans in. Dear God. He's trying to be charming.

MONK (CONT'D)  
It's Maria, right? These are for you.

Monk offers Maria the FLOWERS.

MARIA  
Why were you asking about Janet?

MONK  
I... wanted to make sure she wasn't here. I didn't want her to get jealous.  
(then)  
Are you interested in politics?

MARIA  
No.

MONK  
Hmmm. Interesting. I like the way you think. Are you busy for lunch?

Maria flashes her WEDDING RING.

MARIA  
I'm married.

MONK  
I know. I know. This is strictly business. There's a big vote tomorrow. I just want you to hear my side of it.

Maria shrugs.

MARIA  
I only get fifteen minutes. I usually just grab a hot dog.

~~MONK~~  
~~(stunned, unhappily)~~  
Oh. ~~Great. Perfect. A hot dog.~~

// END  
Sc. 2  
7/7