

Two Degrees

LOUISE and EMMA scene 2

*(In Louise's apartment having a bottle of wine.)*

*EMMA looks out over the balcony. Drinks.*

LOUISE     Another bottle?

EMMA       Please, no. I have an early day with Jonah and Katie.

LOUISE     Oh, you'll be fine. You'll be brilliant.

EMMA       Will I?

LOUISE     Why else would I have asked you?

*A pause while they sip their wine.*

EMMA       I have been meaning to ask...

LOUISE     Hmm...?

EMMA       Why you asked me. Why I'm here.

LOUISE     Why are you testifying?

EMMA       Yes. That. I'm sorry if this is an awkward question, but...

LOUISE     "Awkward questions" is rather my territory.

EMMA       It's just -- I was genuinely surprised that you asked me.

LOUISE     Why not you?

EMMA       Our friendship wasn't an obstacle then?

LOUISE     Of course not. Our friendship is immaterial.

EMMA       OK...

LOUISE     You know what I mean. What are you actually worried about?

EMMA Why are so few scientists scheduled to appear before the committee?

LOUISE (Laughing.) How many do you think we need?

EMMA More than you've got! Well, at least it should be proportional to... to...

LOUISE To what?

EMMA Proportional to the volume of research outside the committee chamber! Proportional to the credibility of the arguments relevant to the question at hand!

LOUISE OK...

EMMA I went over the list. You've got lawyers, lobbyists, CEOs, CFOs, guys from think tanks –

LOUISE It's a hearing. It can't be one-sided.

EMMA I'm not telling you how to do your job.

LOUISE I think you might be... a little...

EMMA But if you've got all those oil and gas and mining lobbyists --

LOUISE Can we not use the word lobbyist?

EMMA OK -- "representative" -- I'll call them "representatives."

LOUISE How many do you think we need?

EMMA Look -- I have a necessarily limited perspective. You get that's what we do, right? As a paleoclimatologist, I've specialized in a very thin slice of this pie.

LOUISE OK.

EMMA So shouldn't there be a few more scientists?

LOUISE You think we need more slices.

EMMA You definitely need more slices.

LOUISE     Didn't you just co-author a book about climate change?

EMMA        So?

LOUISE     Wouldn't you say you pretty much understand the whole damn pie? The three of you will have it covered, I'm sure.

*Short pause.*

EMMA        You still haven't answered my question.

LOUISE     Which question is that?

EMMA        Why me?

LOUISE     You're persuasive, clear, funny -- I've heard you lecture, you know.

EMMA        But not in Washington DC.

LOUISE     Well -- That's right. That's exactly why.

EMMA        Whoa. I didn't think you'd actually admit it.

LOUISE     Admit what? It's important to have a fresh perspective.

EMMA        That sounds suspiciously like you wanted someone green.

LOUISE     No. It means I needed someone passionate and articulate to shake things up. (Beat.) Let's leave the shop talk. OK? Have another glass. No more business. More wine.

EMMA        I really can't. I have to sleep tonight so I can get through this week.

LOUISE     It's only three days.

EMMA        God. Three days.

LOUISE     The circus comes to town.

EMMA        That's exactly what it feels like.