

# ACT ONE

**LIGHTS** - SOPHIA is standing still under a centre stage spotlight. She is dressed smartly and has an expensive looking laptop bag. After a moment, a projected scene of a trendy office appears behind her and she moves to sit at a desk.

**SOUND:** SOPHIA's phone rings.

**VIDEO:** Image of a phone appears overlaid on the projected wall. It says Sol - Accountant. It rings for a while with SOPHIA staring at her phone. She sends a message saying 'In meeting, call later'. The dots appear for the response which comes as 'bank said no - need to discuss'.

SOPHIA puts the phone face down and stares ahead for a moment. She picks up her phone again... then puts it down. Then picks it up again.

**VIDEO:** She scrolls through her contacts, selects 'Max Rust, Rust Venture Fund' and sends a text saying 'Sophia Ignari here from DNALicious. Can we talk?' There's a pause as she considers what's she's done and then the dots and response: 'Hark the cry of the desperate. Weds 9am your office.' There's a pause and then a smiley appears.

She sits for a moment and then heads for the door, calling through it.

SOPHIA: Violet? Are you going to be here on Wednesday?

**LIGHTS** down.

**VIDEO:** Image of Capital Life magazine with Sophia on the cover, plus Instagram coverage, Facebook comments, etc, about how inspirational she is.

**LIGHTS** up.

We're still in SOPHIA's office. There is a laptop open on the desk. The background image is the same, now superimposed with a zoom call with cardigan-wearing ERIS. The name at the bottom of the screen reads: HeadHelp - Alizarin. Behind her is a wonky HeadHelp sign. SOPHIA is pacing up and down while ERIS sits calmly watching her, bored and yawning occasionally.

ERIS: We're not going to get anywhere if you won't talk about what's troubling you.

SOPHIA: I'm not sure this is a good idea - I'm... my mind's elsewhere, I've got a lot on.

ERIS: OK, well, you've paid, I'm here for another 15 minutes if you want to carry on. Otherwise I'm more than happy to end the call.

SOPHIA: No, I guess we can talk. Should talk.

ERIS: Your parents again? I see from Dr Sage's notes that you whine about them a lot.

SOPHIA: What.. ? No, not that. Not today.

ERIS: What's today?

SOPHIA: (She considers telling all for a moment) My company. We've... we've not... (then decides against). It's pretty exciting actually. I'm in the news... I was interviewed a few weeks back and the article came out today. In Capital Life.

ERIS: (Bored) Oh? That's sounds good. Capital Life, eh? Impressive.

SOPHIA: Yes, it's good... really good.

ERIS: So what's the problem?

SOPHIA: Nothing much, really. There are just a few things in it that might cause a few headaches.

ERIS: Like what?

SOPHIA: They exaggerated some things. Made me look... different. Different to how I want to be seen.

ERIS: Oh, they added in things you didn't say? They misquoted you?

SOPHIA: No... not that...

ERIS: Did they cut stuff out?

SOPHIA: Nothing important, no.

ERIS: No? So how did they exaggerate things?

SOPHIA: They took some of the things I said and made them into headlines, bold sections, you know? Things I don't think are all that important.

ERIS: Like what?

SOPHIA: Like I turned the company around, that I came up with a lot of the ideas, that I'm this inspirational leader that... (trails off).

ERIS: And you're saying this isn't the case?

SOPHIA: (Pause) Not entirely, I mean it's true... but the way she asked the questions didn't let me tell the full story. She wanted to focus on the 'woman leading the tech company' story.

ERIS: (Turning a little nasty) So you lied and now you've been caught out, is that it?

SOPHIA: No, I just didn't get to give the full story.

ERIS: (More nasty) You were making yourself out to be some kind of genius business woman, and you forgot that people were going to read what you said. Isn't that right?

SOPHIA: What? No...

ERIS: (Scathing) And now you're embarrassed... you don't want to meet up with people who have read the article but know the truth.

SOPHIA: No, it's not that...

ERIS: Oh come on! Don't lie to me as well.

SOPHIA: You can't talk to me like that.

ERIS: Oh, you don't like people telling the truth?

SOPHIA: No, it's not that. You're supposed to help.

ERIS: And you think it would be helpful if I said 'it's perfectly fine, it's normal for people to tell lies to make themselves look good'..? Is that what Dr Sage does?

SOPHIA: No, it's not that, it's...

**ERIS:** It's pretty bloody simple. Be honest, admit your mistakes, make amends, learn from it, move on. *(Pause)* Was there something else, or are you going to carry on hiding from that too?

**SOPHIA:** What the...?! You can't talk to me like that?

**ERIS:** No? Well, you're quite right. I'll refund the rest of this call. I can't help you. God knows how Sage puts up with you. Maybe write to the complaints people if you think it will make you feel better?

**SOPHIA:** Are you serious?! I'll...*(Tries to think of a powerful threat, but can't)* I'll cancel my subscription!

**ERIS:** *(Laughing)* And what, instantly sign up somewhere else because you're addicted to listening to advice you'll never take? Go ahead!

**ERIS** cancels the call. **SOPHIA** stares at her laptop shaking her head.

LIGHTS down.

SOUND – as if on radio: Sophia Ignari is one of the 30 women under 30 to watch this year, according to an article in this week's Capital Life special edition. Her company - DNALicious - is using the latest in genetic technology to match people with their perfect foods, looking at what is written in our own unique genetic codes and designing foods that work with our body's systems, rather than against them. She says this will help with the fight against obesity and diabetes. Sophia has kindly agreed to take a few minutes out of her schedule to talk to us.

LIGHTS - spot on SOPHIA sat at a café table.

SOPHIA is on the phone. **TYCHE** is playing a stereotypical radio host and is unseen off-stage.

**TYCHE:** Sophia, thank you so much for joining us - I know you're very busy.

**SOPHIA:** Yes, today especially as we're looking to complete our latest funding round later today.

**TYCHE:** A big day!

**SOPHIA:** *(Confident and a little arrogant)* Yes, a big day in a long line of big days.

**TYCHE:** We've all heard about the product - an awesome idea, I can't wait to try it - but what I'd like to ask about is the person behind it. You're under 30 but have already appeared on the cover of Capital Life magazine. How did that come about?

**SOPHIA:** As a young woman leading a tech company, I get asked a lot of questions about how I did it, how I broke through in a world dominated by men. Capital Life were keen to dig into that story.

**TYCHE:** And how *did* you do it?

**SOPHIA:** I would love to say that it was easy. But it was the result of a lot of hard work over many, many years. Starting back when I was very young... when I made the decision to pursue a life in technology.

**TYCHE:** You weren't out smoking dope with the rest of us!

**SOPHIA:** Well no, but it's more than that. It's the extra hours you put in instead of doom-scrolling on social media or watching TV.