

STATE OF PLAY

by

Matthew Michael Carnahan

Based on the BBC miniseries created by Paul Abbott

Revisions by
Tony Gilroy
Peter Morgan
Billy Ray

FULL PINK REVISED SHOOTING SCRIPT - 1/3/08
FULL BLUE REVISED SHOOTING SCRIPT - 11/29/07
WHITE SHOOTING SCRIPT - 11/01/07

© 2007 & 2008 Washington Film Productions (US), LLC. Prod #02361
All Rights Reserved.

THIS MATERIAL IS THE PROPERTY OF WASHINGTON FILM PRODUCTIONS (US), LLC AND IS INTENDED AND RESTRICTED SOLELY TO WASHINGTON FILM PRODUCTIONS (US), LLC AND INDIVIDUALS UNDER CONTRACT TO, OR IT IS CONTEMPLATED WILL ENTER INTO A CONTRACT, WITH WASHINGTON FILM PRODUCTIONS (US), LLC. DISTRIBUTION OR DISCLOSURE OF THE MATERIAL TO UNAUTHORIZED PERSONS, OR THE SALE, COPYING OR REPRODUCTION OF THIS MATERIAL IN ANY FORM IS PROHIBITED.

1 EXT. GEORGETOWN - M STREET -- NIGHT

1

Cold Winter Night. Raucous students, Shoppers and strollers in middle-class contentment. An OLD COUPLE window-shopping, until...

WHAM! - from nowhere - DESHAUN STAGG (black, 19) knocks them over as he flees for his life.

Stagg runs across the street, bounding over a parked car, across a sidewalk and into an ANTIQUE STORE. Smash. Things break. Then through the back of the store and into:

2/2A OMITTED

2/2A **

3 EXT. FREEWAY / OTHER SIDE -- CONTINUOUS

3

But he reaches the other side, alive, and jumps a guide rail into darkness below. He hides there, panting, the panic in his eyes becoming relief. He has escaped.

So still. So silent. So utterly unprepared for...

PFFT - PFFT - PFFT -- three shots -- Deshaun's body not even on the ground before we -- SWING TO:

THE SHOOTER. ROBERT BINGHAM -- he's *behind* us, took the shortcut. BINGHAM is forty, white, bland, vaguely military and all business. A sleek, 9mm, silenced pistol in one hand and an aluminum briefcase in the other. He steps forward, kneeling to confirm the kill, when...

Behind him -- *shit* --

A BICYCLE coming quick -- some PIZZA DELIVERY GUY -- already on him -- already *there* -- already slowing down--

PIZZA GUY
What's going on...?

Except suddenly he's speeding up...

Too late -- the guy's past Bingham -- he's a witness -- no choice -- no hesitation -- raising the gun and --

PIZZA GUY panic-peddalling away, as *PFFT-PFFT - head -- spine.* He's down, falling, skidding -- he topples like a faulty toy.

As he falls a group of KIDS APPROACH - concerned, curious...

Bingham can't stay, can't make sure his kill was successful. Tucking away the gun and the gloves, he fades into the night.

4/5 EXT./INT. ROSSLYN METRO STATION -- MORNING

4/5 **

TITLES - We move through a crowd of commuters, then settle on a YOUNG WOMAN: red haired; neatly dressed for the office. Her expression is unreadable. Sad? Thoughtful? Worried? Sometimes we almost lose her in the crowd but we always find her again.

The YOUNG WOMAN gets on the escalator and for the first time we see the enormous scale of the Metro: a great gaping mouth leads down into the ground. Into darkness.

The YOUNG WOMAN reaches the bottom of the escalator and moves into the enormous hall where the trains come in. She squeezes through the crowds towards her platform.

A train is approaching. Its roar builds as it enters the station. Its lights pierce out of the dark tunnel - a beast approaching. We now sit right behind the YOUNG WOMAN'S shoulder. The sound builds to a crescendo until just as the train approaches both sound and picture: CUT TO BLACK.

6 INT. METRO TRAIN -- MORNING

6

A Metro train jolts to a halt.

CONGRESSMAN STEPHEN COLLINS, 40, Democrat, ex-military: stands in a crowded train stopped mid-tunnel. Unlike every other politician in Washington he takes the train to work.

Stephen checks his watch along with the other passengers. We notice his MEMBER OF CONGRESS LAPEL PIN. Five seconds, then:

ENGINEER (O.S., OVER P.A.)
Blue-line trains in-n-outta Metro
Centre been stopped. They're telling me
for a body on the tracks...

**

Collective maw: sympathy, antipathy, and fury aimed at the PA. STEPHEN can't help but roll his eyes, check his watch...

7 EXT. U.S. CAPITOL BUILDING - ESTABLISHING -- MORNING

7

COLLINS quickly climbs the steps of the Cannon Office building.

A8 INT. CANNON HOUSE OFFICE HALLWAY -- MORNING

A8

COLLINS makes his way towards his office.

8 INT. CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING -- MORNING

8

Stephen hustles into his office. Late. GREER THORNTON: erstwhile secretary/mother-hen assistant, greets him with ashen face. Beside her, Stephen's Chief of Staff, GRAVES.

STEPHEN

I'm late guys - no big deal. I've been over the briefing notes a thousand times.

**
**
**

GREER

Stephen. Metro Police just called.
(that caught him...)
Sonia Baker was killed in an accident on the Metro this morning... They identified her by her staff badge...

Silence. Stephen just paled.

He drifts a few feet away - still hasn't said anything. Graves approaches - wants to be sympathetic - but:

GRAVES

Horrific news. For all of us. But we're scheduled to start in ten minutes. What do you want to do?

9 INT. CONGRESSIONAL HEARING ROOM -- MORNING

9

STEPHEN - leader of the committee - sits dead center at a high table flanked by 12 congressional colleagues. Various assistants, stenographers etc. sit to the side.

Facing them are the subjects of today's hearing: the CHIEF EXECUTIVE of a military conglomerate called PointCorp, flanked by a SECOND EXECUTIVE, and a POINTCORP ATTORNEY.

Behind them sit members of the public and journalists - cameras at the ready.

Stephen makes a halting start. It takes some effort.

STEPHEN

Good Morning, and welcome to our 3rd day of hearings into the Defense Department's privatization and outsourcing practices. Before we begin - before I begin -- some of you may already have heard that this committee suffered a horrible loss today.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

STEPHEN (CONT'D)
Sonia Baker, who was a valued member of
my staff and this committee's lead
researcher for these hearings, died
this morning.

That was news to most of the people in here - even Stephen's
fellow congressmen. The room hushes.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)
The circumstances of her death are
still unclear at this point. But I'd
like to offer my condolences to her
family--

STEPHEN is finding it hard to keep his emotions in check.
The press AND the POINTCORP EXECUTIVE seem to lean forward
in their seats imperceptibly: expectation, human curiosity.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)
Sonia was an invaluable aid... She...
she...

Stephen falters. The reporters' 'if it bleeds it leads'
ethic bubbles. Video cameras are zooming in now.

He stands, shaken. TEARS appear. He bolts - trying to turn
away from the assembled throng but the cameras are onto him:
Two-dozen lenses flash-pop-pop-whir.

Is that satisfaction on the face of the PointCorp Exec?

10/11 INT. GLOBE NEWSROOM -- ELEVATOR -- DAY

10/11

Reflected in the elevator door: the face of CAL McAFFREY,
40, a battle-scarred reporter. If you didn't know better you
might mistake him for a cynic. His life's joy is fighting
the powers that be.

Elevator doors open and we follow him into:

12 INT. WASHINGTON GLOBE - LOBBY/NEWS FLOOR -- CONTINUOUS

12

Not the paper of record. In fact it's teetering on the edge
of insolvency. Dilapidated 70's furniture and decor. Cal
walks briskly - nodding hello to the receptionist JESSY,
(late 20s, with a mild crush on everyone) - as he passes.

Faces, nods, hellos....we sense CAL's place in the food chain
as he walks the newsroom: respect, some mystique but clearly
not a favorite with everyone...

As he walks CAROL, middle-aged, Black reporter, joins him:

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

CAROL

Cal, do you know this guy over at city hall - Remson?

CAL

Yeah. Department of Works.

CAROL

That's the one. Is he credible?

CAL

(opening mail)

Rule of thumb about *anybody* in that office, Carol - they lie so reflexively they even lie when the truth would work better.

CAROL

Got it.

She peels off as he reaches THE MAIL ROOM. Collects a stack of letters - which he opens throughout the remainder of the scene.

As Cal walks on he is now joined by GENE STAVITZ. 60. Metro Editor. Cal's boss. Sort of.

STAVITZ

Talk to me about this shooting.

CAL

The one guy's still alive. I was just over there.

STAVITZ

(he's got copy in hand)

Deshaun Stagg?

CAL

No, he's the dead guy. The guy on the bike is Vernon Sando.

A bespectacled middle-aged journalist - FERRIS - interrupts Stavitz on the move-

FERRIS

Hey Gene, did you read the goldfish piece I left on your desk?

STAVITZ

(distracted)

I'll get to it, Ferris.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED: (2)

FERRIS

'cause it's a great human interest story

CAL

There's no human interest, Ferris. It's about a goldfish.

Ferris is left in their wake.

STAVITZ

So what's the deal? Stagg's thing goes wrong and this guy rides by?

CAL

Nobody's on the record yet, but that's how it's looking.

FERRIS

(yelling after them)

It was flushed down a toilet by a family in Rockville and found alive in the Chesapeake Bay, Cal. That's a remarkable feat of survival.

STAVITZ

(this is a dime a dozen story)

Well at least it's got a little zip-code to it - Georgetown's the hook, right?

CAL

No. The hook is Vernon Sando has an MBA from Duke.

STAVITZ

What's he doing on the bike?

CAL

He's buying a pizza franchise. They make you deliver for six months. He's a total citizen. Wife, two kids, mortgage...

STAVITZ

(from the copy)

What's "*Critical Non-reactive?*"

CAL

He's in a coma.

STAVITZ

Okay. Lemme know.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED: (3)

Cal takes off his coat, sits down at his desk: fourteen years of shit on the walls. Photos and clippings. Phone books, Rolodexes, hard drives. A police scanner. A sacred sanctuary on the brink of becoming a museum.

Cal just settling down to work when something behind him draws his attention: the sound of A C-SPAN repeat of STEPHEN COLLINS breakdown.

A knot of reporters are already watching as Cal approaches. His expression falls as he watches the breakdown. Oh shit...

Amongst the other reporters watching are: Hank (30) and PETE (55) both clearly delighted:

HANK

Oh, my god! Are those tears?

PETE

Fifty bucks says he's balling her.

HANK

Is there a special school where they learn this stuff?

PETE

Just tell me where to enroll!

They laugh like hyenas.

Stavitz is also there now.

STAVITZ

Somebody get me a picture of the girl. Her staff ID maybe. If she's 5'2" and 300 pounds it's probably a dead-end, but if she's anything to look at we've got a story.

With that they are off: like sharks smelling blood in the water - all except Cal. Hiding a look of unease, he walks back to his desk.

13 INT. GLOBE NEWSROOM - CAL'S DESK/CUBICLE -- CONTINUING

13

Cal opens up his e-mail. Hits COMPOSE. Addresses it to "stephen.collins@uscongress.us.gov."

He writes: "You okay?" Then hits send. We CUT TO:

14 OMITTED

14

15 INT. ANNE'S OFFICE -- SAME 15

This is BOOKS FOR KIDS - an underfunded non-profit in Philadelphia - surviving on donated furniture and lots of good will. **
**

ANNE COLLINS sits at a makeshift desk, surrounded by a full in-box, etc. But her mind isn't on her work just now.

Instead she's watching a small, battered TV to her right. On it is her husband, and his tears, captured forever.

She watches for a long beat, her face a mask. Listens to the gossip/speculation as it begins to bleed into the coverage.

...Which is when an OFFICE MANAGER leans in and:

OFFICE MANAGER
Anne, I need your signature on--

Office Manager stops short, just saw what's on TV.

OFFICE MANAGER (CONT'D)
Oh. Sorry. It can wait.

Office Manager backs out again, flushed.

Anne just leans forward, turns off the sound, staring. Beside her is a cell-phone. It PINGS briefly, telling her that she has EIGHT VOICE-MAIL MESSAGES.

She puts the cell-phone in a drawer and shuts it. Hard.

16 INT. GLOBE - NEWSROOM/CAL'S DESK -- LATER 16

DELLA FRYE, 26, crosses the newsroom. Stylish, Meticulously-groomed, ambitious - she's a successful blogger who recently accepted a position on the Globe's fledgling internet edition. She heads toward Cal's desk... then slows a bit, not wanting to barge in while he's on the phone. We peer over his cubicle wall, as: **
**
**
**

CAL (INTO PHONE)
Joey - hi. Cal McAffrey over at the Globe. Is Detective Bynes there? Calling about this shooting in Georgetown last night...

CAL (CONT'D) **
(a beat) **
Have him get back to me, okay? **

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

16

Cal hangs up, eyeing something on his computer screen. We can't see what it is. But he turns to it with some concern, until:

**

DELLA

Hi. How ya doing?

She's leaning over his cubicle wall. Cal hits the "off button" on his computer monitor. Della notices, but leaves it alone.

**

**

CAL

You didn't knock.

**

**

Is he kidding? Knock? There isn't even a door...

**

DELLA

Sorry...You're an old friend of Stephen Collins, right? From college.

**

**

Just like that, Cal's dander is up. He eyes her.

CAL

Yeah...

DELLA

I'm Della. Della Frye?

(like he should know her - but he doesn't)

**

**

The "Capitol Hill Blog". With the On-line edition...

**

**

(still nothing)

**

Big fan of your work.

**

(he's giving her nothing)

I'm doing this piece on political relationships - you know, single girl in the corridors of power kinda thing - and there was this... *incident* this morning on the Hill, at your friend's hearing --

**

**

**

**

CAL

Is there a question on the horizon?

Okay. The guy seems hostile. Della can handle it.

DELLA

Have you spoken to him today?

CAL

Are you trying to make me part of your story?

16 CONTINUED: (2)

DELLA

I'm just trying to get some context on--

CAL

--Context or dirt?

She might as well spit it out.

DELLA

Do you think he was having an affair
with that girl?

CAL

Gee, Della - something that important
to the running of the country - I
really couldn't say until I'd seen it
in a *blog* or two.

That was said with obvious distaste...

DELLA

There have been rumors about it for a
while now. I'm just tracking them.

CAL

Rumors. Really.

**
**

Nothing else forthcoming.

**

DELLA

(deep sarcasm)

Well, thanks for the help.

**
**

CAL

Anytime.

She goes. Cal waits a long beat then hits the power button on
his computer monitor. As the screen freshens we see what he
was watching -- a YouTube freeze-frame : STEPHEN's breakdown.
We CUT TO:

**
**
**

17 EXT. GEORGETOWN ALLEY -- DAY

17

Cal walks the alley where Stagg and Sando were shot. He
carries two cups of coffee - gives one to the cop guarding
the crime-scene.

**
**
**

There's a CHALK OUTLINE on the ground and some POLICE TAPE
marking the spot. But life in Georgetown hums along
unabated.

17 CONTINUED:

17

He looks around, re-creating the choreography of the crime in his mind, kneels down at the spot where Stagg went down, imagining the trajectory of the shot.

This is how Cal likes to work: quiet, internal, thorough. He might spend an hour here, just thinking...

...but he is not alone. Across the street, a YOUNG GIRL is watching him: MANDI, 17, dope-thin, washed-out, a fresh bruise on her cheek. We'll meet her again...

18 INT. CAPITOL OFFICE -- DAY

18

CONGRESSMAN GEORGE FERGUS (Dem. W.Va.) is the Majority Whip. The epitome of political power. No bullshit. A picture of him kissing his dog takes a place of pride on the desk.

Stephen and ANDREW PELL - slick "Media Consultant" and party fixer - sit across the desk. Door closed. Stephen looks pale.

FERGUS

Brass tacks: were you having a relationship with this girl?

That was so stark, so direct. Stephen pauses, then:

STEPHEN

Yes.

FERGUS

Okay. I've asked Andrew here to help us handle things from a media point of view. If anyone can steer us through this --

PELL

The next 72 hours are going to be brutal, you ought to brace yourself for that. The death of a young girl, a congressman crying in front of a committee hearing - for a while you're going to be everything that's wrong with politics. But we did catch one break:

(Stephen waits)

She was 25. And a staffer instead of an intern... And she was pretty.

STEPHEN

I don't...

18 CONTINUED:

PELL

People forgave Kennedy because he nailed women worth nailing, but they crushed Clinton because he always aimed so low. We're on the winning end of that equation.

Stephen eyes the guy, fairly certain now that Pell is actually a robot instead of a person. So Fergus jumps in:

FERGUS

You make a dignified statement to the press, your wife by your side. Heartfelt apology, contrition. Maybe endow a fund in her name at her former high school or college... You're still a star, Steve - and the party takes care of its stars. You just have to lay low for a while.

STEPHEN

(an alarm just went off)

Low?

**

FERGUS

(pointed)

Nothing that's going to attract undue attention. At the hearings for instance.

**

**

**

**

STEPHEN

But we're not done with PointCorp yet.

**

FERGUS

No. But you are. You open fire right now on those guys and it isn't going to look like good governance; it's going to look like a calculated distraction. Is your wife speaking to you?

STEPHEN

Not yet, not today.

FERGUS

Then that's job one, isn't it?

PELL's solemn nod says: YES, DUMMY. Stephen sighs; this all feels repugnant to him - but he's stuck.

19 INT. GLOBE NEWSROOM -- DAY

19

Cal enters, trying to hurry past Jessy at the desk before she can hit him with messages, but:

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

JESSY

Cal...

(Cal winces a bit)

She knows you got the message. And she knows you're in the building.

CAL hesitates. Jessy nods. Cal changes direction.

20 INT. CAMERON'S OFFICE -- DAY

20

CAMERON LYNNE, Editor-In-Chief, at her desk, deep into red-lining something. English, patrician, waspish -- these two go way back. Cal leans in the doorway, as:

CAMERON

So where are we? Was he knobbing her or not?

CAL

'Morning, Cam.

There are *new SAMPLE MASTHEADS* on a wall behind her. Apparently, the look of this paper is about to change...

CAMERON

Funny about you: every time your friend runs for re-election or conducts a hearing, you make sure to drop his name to me until we've given him some coverage. But he finally does something that might actually sell some papers and you're rendered mute.

**

(a beat)

It's incongruous. In fact it's bloody irritating.

CAL

I know it'd be a huge disappointment to everyone around here, but what if he just felt badly because a 25 year-old kid got run over by a train?

CAMERON

Don't be an arse. He was either screwing her or he's got the constitution of a hot-house flower.

(a beat)

If you know something, you have an obligation to share it with the rest of us. 'Successful reporters don't have friends - only sources' - isn't that your line?

**
**
**

20 CONTINUED:

Cal makes a sour face and changes the subject.

**

CAL

(re: new mastheads)

We getting a face-lift?

CAMERON

We are. Our new owners have this odd idea that we ought to be turning a profit.

CAL

I hear our on-line side is doing great.

That was a jab - about Della. Cameron studies him...

CAMERON

(getting it)

Yes - she told me you behaved like a pig.

(beat)

I like Ms. Della Frye. I like the way she writes. She's hungry, she's cheap - and she pumps out copy every hour.

**
**
**
**
**
**
**

CAL

I know, I know. I cost a fortune and I take forever.

(she's still waiting...)

I don't know anything, Cam. Stephen and I haven't spoken in a while.

**

CAMERON

That's a shame.

21 EXT. CAL'S STREET IN MOUNT PLEASANT -- NIGHT

21

CAL walks along his street with a take-out meal under one arm. He passes a laundrette and a Guatemalan restaurant etc. until he reaches his apartment door - above the bakers - and opens up.

22 INT. CAL'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

22

Cal sits on his couch eating take-out food and watching sports with the sound down. In the background, 70's music plays.

The doorbell goes.

Cal opens up to find Stephen here, clutching a bag.

Whoa. Cal wasn't expecting this.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

22

STEPHEN

Surprise.

There's a lot of history here, a deep friendship, but also a lot unspoken.

Cal embraces him. A deep one.

CAL

You okay?

STEPHEN

Your reporter friends have taken over my whole street. You'd think Paris Hilton was pole-dancing in the back yard. I was gonna do a hotel but...

CAL

They'd find you in an hour. Stay here.

STEPHEN

You sure?

CAL

Unless I have to do your laundry again.

**

Stephen appreciates that. He enters. Cal shuts the door.

CAL (CONT'D)

Drink?

STEPHEN

- or twenty.

Cal heads for the kitchen. Stephen drops his stuff, drifts over to the window, looks outside. Anyone follow him here?

On a cluttered bookcase is a PLAQUE from the D.C. PRESS CLUB - for "Journalistic Excellence." Stephen smiles fondly...

Cal re-emerges now with two glasses and a handful of AIRLINE MINI-BOTTLES: whiskey, gin, brandy, the works.

CAL

Dated a stewardess a couple months ago. Kirstin. You would've liked her.
(Stephen grabs a bottle)
You want some tonic or...?

STEPHEN

Tonic just makes it take longer.

Down goes the Gin. We TIME-CUT TO:

23 INT. CAL'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM -- LATER NIGHT

23

SEVERAL of those mini-bottles are now empty. More 70's music plays. Stephen has loosened up considerably.

STEPHEN

I can't believe you're still listening to this shit. It's so depressing.

CAL

Not depressing - soulful.

Stephen downs another bottle. Cal waits a beat, then:

CAL (CONT'D)

How's Annie?

STEPHEN

Not speaking to me.

(Cal nods)

The Party wants us to do a press conference together. They've spoken to her.

CAL

Will she do it?

Stephen shrugs, who knows?

STEPHEN

A couple stupid tears... that's all it was. And it's going to get more coverage than anything else I do for the rest of my life.

CAL

Unless you go on American Idol.

Stephen smiles; it's hard finding anything funny just now.

STEPHEN

I never cheated on her before, Cal. Not ever. You know that.

(Cal nods)

It was just... this girl adored me. I was the love of her life... That was really nice for a change.

That was loaded, but Cal lets it go.

CAL

Have you called her parents yet?

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

23

STEPHEN

I'm the last person they'd wanna hear from.

CAL

You should. First thing tomorrow. You need to pay a condolence call or they'll hammer you: 'Married man. Broken heart. He never so much as phoned after our daughter's suicide.'

**

**

STEPHEN

She didn't kill herself, Cal... She wasn't that kind of person.

**

**

Cal eyes him, unsold. STEPHEN pulls out his cell phone.

There, ON THE SCREEN -- a video clip -- SONIA just out of the shower, naked, bare-breasted, pink and alive:

SONIA

(on video phone)

"Hey, baby. Good luck today. Give 'em hell. I can't wait for the weekend! Love you!"

**

**

She gives a big kiss right into the lens. Stephen shuts the phone... but her presence hangs in the room for a moment.

STEPHEN

This morning. That look like somebody who's about to kill herself?

CAL

Not even a little bit. Have you shown that to anybody?

STEPHEN

(drunken sarcasm)

I was planning to put it on YouTube. Think I should?

Down goes another bottle - Vodka this time. Cal waits...

CAL

You can survive this.

STEPHEN

Naah. This is how we assassinate politicians now. Don't need bullets anymore, just a little stumble.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: (2)

23

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

Look what they did to Clinton - took two whole years of his Presidency away, *poof*, and nobody ever had to fire a shot. And I walked right into it.

CAL

Here's what you gotta do: fight back with the facts. Set-the-record-straight. Let me get into it - see what I can dig up.

STEPHEN

Too late for that. Have you seen the Globe's website tonight?

(Cal tightens a bit)

Even you guys are burying me.

Cal begins a slow burn. We CUT TO:

24 INT. DELLA'S BEDROOM -- LATER NIGHT

24

Spartan. Anonymous. DELLA sleeps alone. Her MOBILE PHONE starts ringing. She grapples for it --

DELLA

(hoarse with sleep)

Hello?

CAL (THROUGH PHONE)

Ya got a pen?

DELLA

What?

25 INTERCUT WITH/INT. CAL'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN -- SAME

25

Cal's alone. (Stephen's gone to bed already.) On the LAP-TOP in front of him we see GLOBE-ON-LINE.COM... a lead COLUMN/BLOG with a *big picture of a weeping Stephen*.

Headline? "A CRYING SHAME." Blogger's by-line? Della Frye. We see the first few lines which describe how powerful, libidinous politicians find easy prey in their young, naive staffers. It lists various other examples of the phenomenon.

CAL

Sonia Baker. That's your story, right? I've got a source at Metro P.D. You need to talk to him.

25 CONTINUED:

DELLA
(scrambling for a pen)
Why?

CAL
Do you have a pen?

DELLA
Yes!

CAL
Write this down. Lt. Leon Comey.
C-O-M-E-Y. He's police department
Technical Security Supervisor --

**

DELLA
I already called that department - they
said they weren't sharing anything--

**

**

**

CAL
(ignoring her)
-- 202-874-9258. 874-9258. You got that?
He'll give you an off-the-record preview
of the security camera footage from the
Metro station this morning.

**

**

**

DELLA
You mean, what, like now?

**

**

CAL
Shit my mistake. I thought I was
calling Della Frye the reporter.

**

DELLA
(pissed)
Listen. A few hours ago you wouldn't
even give me the time of day --

**

**

**

CAL
--Just trying to make sure you get some
facts in the mix next time you splurge
on-line.

**

**

**

**

Click. Della's left with the notepad and a dial tone

26 INT. METRO P.D. HQ/HALLWAY -- NIGHT

26

Big, empty, antiseptic. DELLA looking sleepy and lost. Never
been to a police station before. She's got a pass in hand, but
has clearly wandered off course. Coming around a corner and --

THREE UNIFORMED COPS lingering around a doorway --

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

26

DELLA

Anybody know where room 514 is?

PATROLMAN BROWN -- 6'4", black, youngish, steps out to take the call, a large sugar-frosted pastry in his hand.

BROWN

514A or 514B?

DELLA

It doesn't say...

(looking at her pass)

Is there a big difference?

BROWN

Big enough. You looking for Uniform Squad or Investigation?

DELLA

I don't know. Cal McAffrey told me--

BROWN

(instant recognition)

Why didn't you say so? You Cal's new 'assistant'?

DELLA

(firm)

No. I'm not.

BROWN

Can I see it?

(she hands him the pass)

Yeah, it's across the courtyard...

DELLA

So how do I get there?

BROWN

You want a police escort?

DELLA

I'm fine. Really...

BROWN

No trouble. I'm just grabbing some dinner.

DELLA appalled at the disgusting pastry.

**

BROWN smiles and chews as he escorts her down the corridor.

27 INT. GLOBE -- NEWSROOM -- NEXT MORNING

27

CAL coming through cubicle-land.

ANGLE ON: Della - at her pristine, clutter-free desk. Seeing Cal coming she shuts her lap-top.

DELLA

(before he even asks)

They've got fifty-six cameras covering the track platforms. There are three blind spots in the entire system. Sonia Baker went down in one of them.

CAL

You're kidding? It's not on camera?

DELLA

And not one eye-witness has come forward with anything useful. Maybe it was too crowded to see anything... or maybe everyone just raced out of there to hail a cab.

CAL stalled, trying to think... as Stavitz locates him:

STAVITZ

You got copy for me, Cal?

(Cal's distracted)

The shooting. The delivery guy. What are we doing?

CAL

I'm on it.

STAVITZ

I got Marty lined up to shoot some pictures of the family. If you want I'll send somebody out with him. They can do the crying you can do the nuts and bolts.

CAL

I'm on it. You'll have it tonight.

STAVITZ

I'm not pressing, I'm *asking*.

CAL

Jesus OK - I'm on it.

Stavitz goes. Cal turns back to Della... thinking...

27 CONTINUED:

27

CAL (CONT'D)

Okay... Call him back. Here's what we need...

DELLA

(again, on it:)

Nine suicides in twenty years.

(she's got notes)

Six accidental deaths -- two from people dropping stuff on the tracks and trying to get it back before the train came.

Four cases of random, psycho-on-stranger pushing attacks. Did Collins sleep at your place last night?

CAL caught short. Way short. How does she know that? A guess? Was Stephen followed there by reporters?

DELLA (CONT'D)

Just like to have my facts straight.

A loaded look from Cal - interrupted by: Della's PHONE RINGING. She grabs it.

DELLA (INTO PHONE) (CONT'D)

This is Della.

Della stiffens, instantly thrown. Cal's wondering why.

DELLA (PHONE) (CONT'D)

Oh. No, he's right here.

(a beat)

Of course.

She covers the phone, turns to Cal.

DELLA (CONT'D)

It's Anne Collins. They put her through for you.

Oh. Cal nods as if that's nothing noteworthy, or awkward... But Della seems to know better. She hands him the phone.

CAL (INTO PHONE)

Hi. I'm not at my desk right now. Can I call you back?

On Della's look, we CUT TO:

28 INT. GLOBE - STAIRWELL -- MOMENTS LATER

28

Cal sits on a cold cement stair. Sadly, this is the only spot in the whole building that affords any privacy. Cell-phone pressed to his ear, empty stairs above and below...

CAL

(wry)

So, what's up?

29 INTERCUT WITH/INT. ANNE'S HOME IN PENNSYLVANIA -- SAME/DAY

29

She sits at her desk, looking out the window.

ANNE

There are paparazzi on my lawn. Does that entitle me to half-price on US Weekly from now on?

He laughs.

CAL

I've been trying you all day..

ANNE

I had my phone off.

CAL

Spoken to Stephen yet?

ANNE

No. But they want me to come down for a press conference...

CAL

They're going to toss him on the bonfire if you don't, Annie.

ANNE

You know, I'm not that hurt. I'm not even that surprised. It's just...so humiliating...Tell me you didn't know about her.

Cal stares up through five floors of handrails...

CAL

Of course I didn't, Annie.

ANNE

Yeah.

(a beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED:

29

ANNE (CONT'D)

I'll take the train up. Will you buy me
a drink after?

CAL

Sure. Call him. Okay?

Anne doesn't answer. On her face, we CUT TO:

30 INT. CAPITOL - COMMITTEE ROOM -- DAY

30

All the players are in place. The POINTCORP EXECS and their
ATTORNEYS. A full GALLERY. Lots of press, (including Della,
notepad in hand). And Stephen sitting dead center.

But today, *he's not saying a thing*. Just sitting, "laying
low."

...While an IOWAN CONGRESSMAN has the floor, lobbing softball
questions at the PointCorp guys:

IOWAN CONGRESSMAN

...now about the contract by which your
services were retained - there have
been so many conflicting reports about
this, in the media, that these were no-
bid contracts. But that's not actually
true, is it?

**

POINTCORP EXEC #1

No, congressman, it's not. I thank you
for giving me an opportunity to touch
on that.

We find STEPHEN... who has been sitting through an *hour* of
this while silently fuming... Della, sitting in the gallery,
can see that.

Also here are two SINISTER-LOOKING MEN, watching... Stephen
notes them; he's seen these guys somewhere before.

31 INTERCUT WITH/INT. FERGUS' OFFICE -- SAME/DAY

31

Fergus watches the proceedings on C-Span:

POINTCORP EXEC #1

Due to the secure nature of the work we
do, the bidding process is conducted
out of the glare of public scrutiny,
which I think is appropriate.

(MORE)

31 CONTINUED:

31

POINTCORP EXEC #1 (CONT'D)
But I can assure you that our contract
was secured from the Defense Department
in a series of competitive and
transparent bids.

**

32 INT. CAPITOL - COMMITTEE ROOM -- RESUMING

32

Stephen continues his silence, as the PointCorp Exec goes
on:

IOWAN CONGRESSMAN
Perhaps this is a good opportunity to
address another issue that has been
discussed during these hearings: your
price structure.

**

**

**

**

**

That was a dig. Stephen restrains himself but it's an
effort.

POINTCORP EXEC #1
Of course. Our price structure follows
the Defense Department model as
established in the first Gulf War,
adjusted of course for inflation.

**

**

We PUSH IN ON Stephen as the PointCorp Exec goes on: the
tension in Stephen's jaw, the way his face feels like it's
burning. He's going to erupt, we can feel it...

POINTCORP EXEC #1 (CONT'D)
Happily, what's costing us so much this
time around are some incredible advances
in on-field medical care. Our company
motto is "Adapt and Achieve" and that is
exactly what - I am happy to say - we
have done here. Put simply, we're now
keeping more of our injured soldiers
alive than ever before. I can hardly
believe that any member of this
committee would want us cutting corners--

**

**

**

**

**

**

...until Stephen just can't sit still anymore:

STEPHEN
Sir, have you ever served in the
military?

That caught everyone off-guard. The PointCorp Exec, the
Iowan congressman, the gallery. Everything hushes.

POINTCORP EXEC #1
No I have not, Sir.

32 CONTINUED:

32

STEPHEN

You might view things differently if you had.

POINTCORP EXEC #1

We're all aware of your war record, congressman.

STEPHEN

Sir, why is it that given the many allegations of atrocities committed by PointCorp and its subsidiary contractors on the civilian population in Iraq, I can't find one iota of evidence that anyone in your company has ever launched an internal investigation into - let alone taken responsibility for - these abuses --

Della leans forward, re-evaluating Stephen in a hurry.

32A INT. FERGUS' OFFICE -- DAY

32A

...and Fergus begins to scowl. He *hates* disobedience...

32B INT. CAPITOL COMMITTEE ROOM -- DAY

32B

POINTCORP EXEC #1

These are complex issues - -

STEPHEN

Are they? How much did your company pay out to its shareholders last year?

POINTCORP EXEC #1

(not answering that without a fight)

I was told I'd be allowed to make my submission without interruption.

STEPHEN

Adapt.

(beat)

Isn't that one of your slogans?

(he's got a PointCorp brochure--)

Here it is. "Adapt and Achieve."

(holding it up)

You even have it up here, in Latin:

"COMMODA ET CONFICE."

**

The Executive is furious now.

(CONTINUED)

32B CONTINUED:

32B

POINTCORP EXEC #1

Sir, this is outrageous -

STEPHEN

- Outrageous is putting war in the hands of people who consider it a business. Wars are too awful for that, too permanent. And too profitable. I hope you'll remember that the wars that defined this country forever - the ones we look back upon with pride instead of shame - were fought *despite* what they cost, not *because* of it. But if we entrust our wars to mercenaries and conglomerates like yours we'll never stop fighting them, will we?

**

POINTCORP EXEC #1

I didn't come here for a lesson in history, congressman - or morality. Especially from you. The people you're dishonoring by calling them "mercenaries" are by and large retired American military personnel.

STEPHEN

It's a great system, isn't it? We pay to train them and you get rich killing them.

The room hums. The PointCorp Exec shrinks a bit, cowed. Camera MOTOR DRIVES spin wildly. Della looks around, noting the respect Stephen just commanded in here.

33 INT. FERGUS' OFFICE -- RESUMING/DAY

33

Fergus turns off the TV, disgusted - throws a look at Pell, who is also not too amused. They've got a problem here...

34 INT. D.C. MORGUE -- DAY

34

CAL alone with DR. JOY JACKSON - late 40's, African American, no-nonsense. She's checking names on the clipboards hanging from each of the freezers. He's poking around a bunch of boxes full of personal effects from bodies.

JACKSON

They're talking about putting a camera down here.

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED:

34

CAL

Guess you'll have to keep your clothes on.

JACKSON

(too tired to flirt)

You're gonna have to play by the rules like everyone else.

He checks the tag on the box he's examining: STAGG'S PERSONAL EFFECTS, starts rooting through with a pen - cop style.

CAL

Be nice if they spelled his name right. It's Stagg with two G's.

Jackson finds the freezer. Pulling the clipboard.

JACKSON

Yeah, well, nobody's even come for his stuff yet. It's appalling.

CAL

Wouldn't happen to a white man.

JACKSON

Skip it. I'm not in the mood.

CAL

No love. No politics. What're we gonna talk about?

JACKSON

We're not. You're gonna get out of here before we both get in trouble.

CAL

I heard one shooter. You buy it?

JACKSON

No idea.

CAL

Drugs?

JACKSON

This guy was the place veins go to die.

There's A PHONE in Stagg's personal effects bag.

CAL

Toss me a pair of gloves.

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED: (2)

34

JACKSON
 (not Kosher)
 C'mon, Cal...

A dispenser behind Cal. He pulls himself a pair.

CAL
 Close your eyes.
 (off her look)
 I just want to check the phone...

JACKSON can't bear it. Taking the clipboard back.

JACKSON
 You watch, this'll be the moment they
 decide to come pick all this shit up.
 What's gonna happen then? You gonna
 write some articles and get me my job
 back?

CAL too busy to answer -- scrolling through the numbers on
 Stagg's phone - scribbling them down in a notepad --

JACKSON (CONT'D)
Cal? Cal, for crissake...
 (she's had it)
 What do I tell Jack if he walks in?

But Cal is ignoring her. Jotting down numbers.

35 INT. MORGUE WAITING AREA -- DAY

35

CAL coming through. STRANGERS gathered here and there.
 Grievors. Orderlies. Two uniformed cops. Somber vibe.

Cal fishes for change at a soda machine as a girl approaches.

It's MANDI, whom we saw at the crime scene, watching him.
 That bruise on her cheek has healed a bit now.

MANDI
 Buy me a soda?

CAL turns. She notes his PRESS PASS.

The can drops. He pulls it. Hands it to her. Walks away.

36 INT. MORGUE UNDERGROUND PARKING STRUCTURE -- DAY

36

Cal heads towards his car, he now has a list of the last ten
 phone numbers Stagg called. He dials the first from his own
 cell. We hear:

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED:

36

PHONE VOICE (V.O.)

"Yo, you wanna leave word for Kippy,
make sure you give your number and make
sure I can make it out. Later for you."

BEEP. That's no help.

37 INT. CAL'S SAAB - DRIVING -- DAY

37

Cal juggles the wheel and the phone and his notebook,
something it looks like he's done a million times before. It
helps that the car is set up like a mobile office -- pens, a
shelf, hands-free dialing, etc.

MACHINE VOICE

(through speakers)

"...the number you have dialed is
currently not in service, if you feel
you've reached this message in error..."

No good. TIME CUT TO:

38 INT. CAL'S CAR - DRIVING -- TWO MINUTES LATER/DAY

38

NASTY VOICE (THRU PHONE)

Who's this?

CAL (INTO PHONE)

It's me, man, who's this?

NASTY VOICE

Me who, bitch? You got your phone
blocked.

CAL

(mumbling on purpose)

It's me, man, Deshaun It's me, bro.
Where are you?

NASTY VOICE

Who the hell gave you my number?

CAL

I was just talking to Kippy.

NASTY VOICE

Skippy?

(voices in the BG)

Shit ain't funny, bro.

Dial tone. TIME-CUT TO:

39 INT. CAL'S CAR - DRIVING - A MINUTE LATER/DAY 39

New street -- new call -- except this time WE HEAR IT RING...
and AGAIN... and then --

SONIA'S VOICE

"Hi! You've reached Sonia Baker. I can't
take your call right now, but if you
leave your name, number, and the time
you called, I'll be sure to get back to
you."

BEEP. Cal's not sure what just happened.

That's all wrong. What was that? He re-checks the number.
Still driving. Punching it in again, and:

SONIA'S VOICE (CONT'D)

"Hi! You've reached Sonia Baker. I can't
take your call right now, but if you
leave your name, number, and the time
you called, I'll be sure to get back to
you."

40 EXT. DC STREET - WORLD BANK -- DAY 40

Except now he's pulling over again. Like anywhere. What the
fuck? CAL staring at the phone. Then the notebook.

How can Sonia's number be on Deshaun's phone?

Sitting there, utterly gobsmacked - a CAR HORN suddenly
blaring behind him as we CUT TO:

A41 INT. GLOBE - LOBBY -- DAY A41

Cal bursts out of the elevator -- hopped up and weirded out -
- Sonia's phone message still ringing in his ears.

He hurries through the lobby as a WORKMAN is adding, in
bronze: "...A MEDIACORP COMPANY" to the Globe wall-insignia.
Cal doesn't stop to pick up his messages...

41 INT. GLOBE - NEWSROOM -- CONTINUING 41

Scanning the bullpen -- looking, looking, looking.

There. A SMALL CONFERENCE ROOM -- through glass -- Della
huddled with Pete and Hank.

Cal hesitates. Hates to interrupt, but there he goes...

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED:

41

Della turns as she hears him tapping at the window -- excuses herself from the meeting and:

CAL

Sonia Baker. Is there any kind of drug angle? Was she ever busted or rehabbed - anything like that?

DELLA

Who are you asking for?

CAL

For me.

But something's turned.

DELLA

You're not on this story.

CAL

Who gave you the Metro tapes last night?

DELLA

Uh-huh. What are you trying to do? Ruin what's left of her reputation?

CAL

Whoa... slow down.

DELLA

You're doing this for Collins, right? A little "context" on Sonia?

CAL

You've got to be kidding...

She's not. Incredulous, he walks away. DELLA watching him go, as--

42 EXT. GLOBE BUILDING -- DAY/LATE AFTERNOON

42

CAL coming out, head still spinning. Carrying a coat and a bag. Heading for the corner cafe. We CUT TO:

...a LONG-LENS shot of him, from across the street.

43 INT. NEARBY COFFEE PLACE -- MOMENTS LATER

43

Regular haunt. Lost in thought, CAL approaches the counter, where SAMMY, a Chinese man, is serving.

(CONTINUED)

43 CONTINUED:

43

SAMMY

Hey, Cal.

CAL

All day breakfast bagel, Sammy.

SAMMY

Big story?

CAL

Uh-huh.

Cal juggles his notebook, bag, wallet. Drops his bag to the floor to fish out money, pays, drops the change in a tip bowl. Grabs his roll, looks back down: bag gone.

Rising tide of panic. An immediate, wild, hopeless scan of the customers concurrent with under-the-breath curses --

44 EXT. COFFEE PLACE -- CONTINUING

44

CAL coming out fast -- eyes everywhere -- scanning -- is anybody running? -- cars pulling away -- anything...

Nothing.

There.

MANDI across the street. Waiting on a bench. Cal's bag in her lap. She waves at him.

CAL dodges traffic, makes his way over and --

CAL

Okay.

(she hands the bag back)

Long way to go for another soda.

No niceties from Mandi.

MANDI

Do you wanna buy something from the last bag Deshaun ever stole? I need five hundred dollars.

45 EXT. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS -- LATE AFTERNOON

45

Small media cluster-fuck. TWO NEWS VANS -- PAPARAZZI...

46 INT. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS - ANTEROOM -- SAME/DAY

46

Pell opens a door, ushering Anne in. Stephen's already here. Anne says nothing. No one sits. No one settles.

STEPHEN

Train was okay?

ANNE

What?

STEPHEN

You got through okay.

ANNE

You're gonna make small talk?

Pell grimaces a bit, uncomfortable. Stephen smiles thinly. Anne fiddles with the pearls around her neck...

PELL

I'll go check on the arrangements.

He goes. Just husband and wife now...

STEPHEN

I'm sorry, Annie.

(giant pause)

This...it doesn't have to be anything detailed. Just a short, dignified statement. And we're outta there.

She throws a look at him that is lethal.

ANNE

Dignified. Got it.

STEPHEN just nods. On Anne's face we SMASH CUT TO:

47 OMITTED

47

48 INT. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS -- DAY

48

Stephen and Anne sit at a table. Pell is behind them...as 500 questions are hurled at them at once:

...by a HORDE OF REPORTERS AND CAMERAMEN. Anne squints in the glare. Stephen tries to look calm, but he has no idea what she's about to say. Truth is, neither does she... until:

48 CONTINUED:

48

ANNE

I'm all too aware of the long line of politicians' wives who have had to make this speech before me. Like everyone else I pitied them and laughed at them, but I never imagined that I'd be one of them, making a statement of support for my husband. I do so because I believe that his - our - private life deserves defending. And because I believe that this country will be better served if you focus on the issues being raised by my husband's work, rather than his marriage.

STEPHEN glances round the packed room. His eye is caught by those same TWO SINISTER-LOOKING MEN...

REPORTER #1

Does that mean you've forgiven him?

ANNE

Are you married?

REPORTER #1

Me? Yes. Yes, I am.

ANNE

Then I'd assume, unless you're a newlywed, you've got some idea of how much a marriage changes over time. Good and bad. Sometimes in a day. The truth is there are many couples that have survived much worse than this - and plenty that have folded over nothing. We've been together, Stephen and I, for a long time -- since college -- we grew up together. We've had triumphs and disappointments. And we've both made mistakes that have done harm.

Murmurs amongst the assembled journalists. One interrupts --

REPORTER #2

What do you mean by "mistakes" Mrs. Collins?

ANNE

Speculate.

That shuts the guy up.

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED: (2)

48

ANNE (CONT'D)

What I'm saying is, I don't know what will happen. But Stephen and I have been through far too much together to make this one moment the thing that defines us forever.

There's your news clip. STEPHEN staring at her -- they all are -- the whole room blown away. Blown into silence.

PELL

Anyone else?

A49 EXT. MANDI'S LAIR -- SAME

A49

Establishing.

49 INT. UNKNOWN EMERGENCY STAIRWELL -- SAME

49

Down dark concrete stairs. A sub-sub basement somewhere. CAL follows MANDI. They reach the bottom and she yanks open a rusted metal door.

A dark, earthy room - lit only by a single, dim emergency bulk-head. A rancid mattress and a few clothes scattered over a broken chair. CAL is appalled.

CAL

This where you live?

MANDI

Me an' Dee, some a' the time.

CAL

You have a family?

MANDI

I had him.

CAL

You have a name?

MANDI

No.

Mandi goes over into a corner, with some effort lifts up a concrete man-hole cover, reaches in and pulls out a plastic bag, grinning at the thought of profit...

CAL

What's in it?

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED:

49

She opens the bag, spills its contents onto a chipped Formica table... and Cal's eyes go wide:

Before him are a series of photographs. Of Sonia Baker.

Surveillance shots: Sonia entering a restaurant, getting into her car - and Sonia CRYING, seated next to an unidentified man we will later come to know as DOMINIC FOY. Spooky.

Cal has to reboot. *What the hell is all this...?*

MANDI

Deshaun boosted it off a guy. That's what we do. Or *did*. He'd find somebody outside a Starbucks or something and grab their bag. Then we'd sell it back to 'em. This stuff was all in a briefcase.

Cal nods, trying to make sense of this.

MANDI (CONT'D)

Usually we'd just get people's business papers n' shit. But this one was weird. All these pictures of this lady, and stuff from her mailbox. And a gun, with these weird-looking bullets in a baggie. I got scared.

CAL

Did you see the owner?

Mandi shakes her head.

Cal looking at these photos of Sonia. Someone had been watching her, maybe stalking her... as:

MANDI

There was a cell-phone in there. It started ringing. It was the guy, super-calm. He just wanted his bag back, five hundred bucks, whatever. I told Deshaun we shouldn't do it. I mean, what about the girl? We had a big fight about it. But he needed a fix bad - and he wouldn't listen. So him and this man set a time and a place, and that was it. My boy never came back.

CAL

(re: photos)

But you took these out first. And you called her from Deshaun's phone...

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED: (2)

49

MANDI

Her number was in there too. I thought somebody should tell her she had a psycho following her around. Just didn't get through.

Cal eyes those photos again, Sonia's face, as seen from a distance through a telephoto lens. Again: *what is all this?* On Cal, trying to make sense of it, we CUT TO:

50 OMITTED

50

51 INT. CAL'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

51

Stephen's on a sofa, flicking through the news channels, watching the tabloid-style coverage of himself and Annie on TV...

Cal walks in.

STEPHEN

Can you believe this? We're on six channels simultaneously here...

**

CAL

Was there anyone who might have wanted Sonia dead?

No preamble. No hello. Stephen's smile fades...

STEPHEN

What?

CAL

Did she have some kind of history you haven't told me about - connections that could've gotten her into trouble?

**

STEPHEN

No. And what the hell is this? Don't I even get a warning light before you flip from 'friend' to 'reporter' -

CAL

You're taking a beating right now. Because of that I'm gonna be both. I don't think she killed herself.

**

STEPHEN

I told you that.

51 CONTINUED:

51

Cal knows he shouldn't be doing this, but he hands Stephen a photo and press clipping of Deshaun Stagg.

CAL

Ever heard the name Deshaun Stagg?
 (Off Stephen's 'no' nod)
 Kid. Criminal. Drug addict. Shot and
 killed the night before Sonia died.

STEPHEN

So?

CAL

I think the person who killed Stagg
 killed Sonia.

STEPHEN

(incredulous)

What? Sonia didn't do drugs.

**

CAL

Who said this had anything to do with
 drugs?

**

**

Cal looks straight into his friend's eyes.

CAL (CONT'D)

I'm telling you stuff I haven't even
 told the paper yet...I'm out on a limb
 here...

(beat)

Who would have wanted her dead,
 Stephen?

Close up of Stephen's face.

52 EXT. GLOBE OFFICES -- NIGHT

52

To establish. Lights on here and there. Late night.

53 INT. CAMERON'S OFFICE -- NIGHT

53

The news floor is deserted. CAMERON, CAL, DELLA, STAVITZ,
 and CHRIS KAWAI stand around CAMERON'S meeting table.

Staring at those surveillance photos of Sonia, Kawai has
 latex gloves on, extremely cautious with them.

*Sonia entering a restaurant. Sonia getting into her car.
 Sonia with the still-unidentified Dominic Foy...*

53 CONTINUED:

53

CAMERON

Core question, Chris: do the police
need to know about this?

KAWAI

Material evidence in a double homicide?
Possibly a triple? Of course they're
gonna have to see it.

CAMERON

...but not this very instant.

Della looks uneasy at Cameron's insistence. She KNOWS it
should be handed over - now.

**

**

But Kawai eyes Cameron, getting the idea... He looks to Cal:

**

KAWAI

Does your source have a name?
(Cal shakes his head)
Good: no way to produce one if the
police ask. And they will.

They all get the point.

KAWAI eyes the picture of SONIA crying as she sits with Foy.

KAWAI (CONT'D)

Who is this man here?

CAL

We don't know yet.

Cameron studies the photos as well. Odd...

CAMERON

What was her background - before she
went to work for Collins?

DELLA

She's got some very random moments in
her resume. Got into Georgetown Law but
dropped out in Year Two. A couple
different waitressing jobs, half a year
as a paralegal - a shoplifting
conviction two years ago.

That drew some looks.

STAVITZ

They don't do background checks on the
Hill?

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED: (2)

DELLA

She also wrote position papers for Collins on banking regulation and the S.E.C. -- a lot of people thought she was a star.

CAL

And she was Lead Researcher for him on the PointCorp hearings.

(they wait... "so?")

He's a threat to a lot of money for those guys. Why couldn't all this just be an attempt to marginalize him?

Cameron eyes the others, looking for reactions. No takers...

CAMERON

Got to love him for it. Give him 24 hours and a body in an alley and he turns it into a full-blown corporate conspiracy.

CAL

You don't think there's a connection?

CAMERON

No - but then I'm the kind of gullible fool who thinks that Elvis really is dead.

CAL

The guy stalking her was the same guy who took out Deshaun Stagg and Vernon Sando. Five shots, one's dead, the other's in a coma. Spoke to Ballistics at Metro-PD, turns out the slugs from the shooting are some kind of hand-packed, homemade ammo. Untraceable. That doesn't sound like the work of a *professional* to you?

A big beat.

Then Cameron picks up a newspaper - a tacky local free paper - and thrusts it at Cal.

**
**

CAMERON

Maybe before we all get ahead of ourselves I should remind you that we are a newspaper - and as such we need news to print on paper.

**
**
**
**
**

Cal looks at a front-page photo of Stephen in the army in Kuwait, circa 1990. He's posing with seven or eight young soldiers. Shirtless warriors. Brothers.

**
**
**

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED: (3)

53

The headline: "Stephen Collins: The kind of guy you want in a fox-hole with you." **

CAMERON (CONT'D) **

Walter Schroyer - army buddy of your libidinous friend - gives his 'moving tribute' to Collins in this arse-wipe excuse for a paper and not to us. **

CAL **

Never heard of him before. **

Cameron sighs: Dubious? Annoyed? It's hard to tell. Then:

CAMERON **

(at Kawai)

OK Chris. How long do we have before this has to go the police? **

She throws him a look. He gets the point...

KAWAI

(uncomfortable but calculating) **

Time to verify, consult relevant case law... **

(final tally)

48 hours, tops. **

That lands on Cal. We CUT TO:

54 INT. HOSPITAL ICU PROTECTION UNIT -- NIGHT

54

Private room. One bed. One window. VERNON SANDO buried under a nest of tubes and equipment. He's been comatose since the shooting, but something's happening. TWO NURSES and a RESIDENT hovering at the monitors --

PATROLMAN BROWN (who helped DELLA earlier) in the doorway. He's witness protection duty tonight.

BROWN

You gonna let me know if I gotta call the ID team, right?

55 INT. ICU VISITOR'S WAITING AREA -- NIGHT

55

A DOZEN EXHAUSTED, WORRIED PEOPLE spread out around the hallway. Only one of them, however, taking an interest in the sudden activity at the nursing station down the hall...

It's BINGHAM.

56 INT. ICU NURSING STATION -- NIGHT / CONTINUOUS 56

People going in and out of the room. MORE NURSES. NEW DOCTOR. The guy seems to be waking up. PATROLMAN BROWN standing by and -

NURSE #1 (INTO PHONE)
-- where's the neurologist?...I'm here,
yes -- he's *responsive* --

57 INT. GLOBE NEWSROOM - CONFERENCE ROOM -- NIGHT 57

Big conference has ended. There's a skeleton crew manning the news-room. Cameron sits opposite Cal and Della. He's eyeing a TEXT MESSAGE.

Cameron looks them over, her mind working...

CAMERON
To start with I want to bring a few more people on to work the political side. People with experience. Certainly Ted Moody.
(pitching Cal)
I think Ted's perfect for this, Don't you Cal?

Della's alarms just went off.

DELLA
You're taking me off the story?

CAMERON
Not off. Just off point.
(Della hated that)
If it's what he says it is - *IF* - big if...you'll learn an enormous amount watching seasoned reporters at work.
(to Cal)
And you, if you're going to stay on this, it's got to be *clean*, up and down. The congressman can't get any--

CAL
(at Della)
Don't let her do that.

That threw Della. Cameron too.

DELLA
What?

57 CONTINUED:

57

CAL

Tell her no. It's your story and you're not giving it up.

CAMERON

You're *defending* her now?

CAL

(to Cameron)

She's fine. She's a grinder. I could do without the blogging but she hasn't gotten anything wrong yet.

(a beat)

She can work with me.

(to Della)

Tell her.

DELLA

I'm not giving up the story.

She realizes that didn't come out right.

DELLA (CONT'D)

If I could just have, just a few more days, just to see...

(pure youth)

I promise I won't let you down.

CAMERON

Oh, for crissake...don't throw those dewy cub-reporters eyes at me. It's insupportable!

(rounding on Cal)

Fuck you very much!

A58 EXT. THE GLOBE BUILDING -- NIGHT

A58

Cal exiting the building checks his messages as Della follows.

CAL

(turning back, as he listens)

Ever been to D.C. Hospital?

(she shakes no)

It's easy...

(juggling the phone and his wallet--)

Take this...take my card...

(more listening)

There's a uniformed P.D. Officer on duty up there...

(impatient)

Write it down. Third floor ICU.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

A58 CONTINUED:

CAL (CONT'D)

Tell them that Detective Bynes, Joe Bynes, cleared you for access.

DELLA

Access for what?

CAL

Vernon Sando. The pizza guy. He's coming around.

CAL about to move to the next message, when --

DELLA

But that's your side of the story.

**

CAL

Excuse me?

DELLA

You think by keeping me around, I'm going to be your 'loyal retriever' - fetch and carry all the stuff you're too 'senior' to do? Is that what it was all about in there?

**

**

**

**

**

CAL nods. Got it.

CAL

Ted Moody's a hell of a writer. He's also a world class blowhard and territorial son of a bitch. You know what? Doesn't bother me. I actually get along with the guy. The reason I didn't want him is because he's a lazy, source farmer. If he can't get a story over the phone or under a plate of scampi, it never happens. I don't know you. Maybe that's what you're after. Maybe this is just a big warm-up for your chair on the Meet The Press.

**

DELLA

You're right. You don't know me.

CAL

I know, but you know what's great? I don't have to.

(listen up)

Here's what I do. I take stories that are right in front of me and try to keep them honest enough so that every now and then they actually mean something more than the sum of their parts. This is a *real* story.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

A58 CONTINUED: (2)

CAL (CONT'D)

It's not open for *interpretation*. This is two dead bodies and a guy in a coma half a mile away from here. This is us with a lead that nobody else has got. So you gotta make a decision because I got another lead to follow tonight and I can't be two places at once. You want go slumming and see if Vernon Sando's coming around? Or do you want me to walk back in there and tell Cam I made a mistake about you?

**

58 EXT. GW HOSPITAL -- NIGHT

58

DELLA approaches the entrance.

59/60 INT. GW HOSPITAL ELEVATOR -- NIGHT

59/60

DELLA riding up with AN ORDERLY and THREE NIGHT NURSES. Pulling on her Globe credentials as THE DOOR OPENS and --

DELLA

Is this three? The ICU?

It is -- she's rushing to get out -- except there's someone trying to get on and -- They almost collide.

It's BINGHAM.

DELLA (CONT'D)

(as he steps aside)

Sorry...thanks...

We stay with BINGHAM as the doors close and the car rises.

A61 EXT. D.C. BAR -- NIGHT

A61

Establishing the bar.

61 INT. D.C. BAR -- NIGHT

61

Cal sits at a dark bar. He turns, sensing something behind him:

Anne. She just got here.

Cal can't help it - the sight of her always hits him: affection... and some longing too.

61 CONTINUED:

61

CAL

Hi.

ANNE

Hi.

CAL

You've cut your hair.

ANNE

Months ago.

62 INT. GW HOSPITAL NURSING STATION -- NIGHT

62

DELLA coming down the hall, when suddenly --

BROWN

Don't tell me you're still lost.

DELLA

(genuinely surprised)

What are you doing here?

BROWN

Working.

DELLA just getting it now --

DELLA

Are you Officer Brown?

(his badge)

You are... You're who I'm looking for.

BROWN

I knew you'd come around.

Della smiles. This guy won't give up.

63 INT. D.C. HOSPITAL ICU NURSING STATION -- NIGHT

63

VERNON SANDO is awakening. Lots of quiet activity -- lots of traffic in and out of the room.

BROWN just wrapping up a call. Moving back now past the room as Della's hanging there--

DELLA

He's really waking up?

BROWN

Looks that way. They're sending a detective over - maybe get an ID

(CONTINUED)

48
 63 CONTINUED: 63
 Brown's phone rings again. He moves off down the corridor to answer it - and Della sees her opportunity-- **
 **

64 INT. D.C. BAR -- RESUMING 64
 Anne and Cal have had a few now. Still not completely relaxed... but the guards are coming down a bit.

CAL
 I caught you on the news, Annie. If you're not careful, they're gonna have you running for office soon.

ANNE
 Yeah, this thing is opening all sorts of doors for me.
 (a beat)
 Monica Lewinsky sent me an e-mail; that was encouraging.

Humor has always been her armor. Cal goes with it:

CAL
 What was in it?

ANNE
 Her lawyer's phone number.

They share a laugh - first one we've seen from Anne.

65-66 INT. D.C. HOSPITAL ICU PROTECTION UNIT -- NIGHT 65-66 **
 Lots of action inside Sando's room. A NEUROLOGIST barks instructions over the house phone. NURSES rush in some new piece of equipment. And -- DELLA has slipped into the room. Nurses and doctors too busy to notice. **
 **
 There's Sando - awake. Della approaches his bed: **
 **

DELLA
 Mr. Sando. I'm sorry to bother you - **
 but I was wondering if you'd be willing **
 to answer a few questions -- **

But now Patrolman Brown appears through the door. **

BROWN
 You can't be in here. **
 **

DELLA
 Just a couple of minutes-- **
 **

(CONTINUED)

65-66 CONTINUED:

65-66

And then suddenly...

**

A glass by the bedside just SHATTERS. Everyone turns: what was that?

**

**

Now the window. It just SHATTERED!

**

CRACK!-CRACK!-CRACK! -- Bullets! --

CRACK! -- the window's gone! -- CRACK! -- SANDO'S BODY jacked with every shot! -- CRACK! -- NURSES SCREAMING! -- trying to hide! -- CRACK! -- DELLA down! -- slammed to the floor! -- BROWN on top of her -- shit falling and breaking and --

BROWN

(yelling to the Nurses)

-- STAY DOWN! -- STAY WHERE YOU ARE! --
STAY DOWN! --

(to the door--)

-- GET OUT OF THERE! -- GET BACK!! --

And then it's over. Twelve seconds of madness.

Blood already dripping under the bed. FINALLY TO:

DELLA, still hugging the floor. Seeing the blood. And the NURSE cowering beside her who's so scared she can't breathe. And the sound of voices and police radios rising with the wind and traffic blowing in from outside. And then:

PATROLMAN BROWN, beside Della on the floor -- clutching his shattered arm -- shock and pain just hammering home as the blood starts pushing out through his shirt, and we CUT TO --

67 INT. HOTEL BAR -- RESUMING

67

Anne and Cal have moved a bit nearer to one another... Might be the wine, might be something else.

ANNE

I think he was just lonely. Stephen.

Cal nods... probably best not to say too much.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Do you ever get that way?

CAL

'Course I do.

ANNE

He just... made a choice.
(tipsy philosophy...)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED:

67

ANNE (CONT'D)

But that's what *life* is - right? The sum of our choices...and boy have I made some bad ones...

Cal's not sure how to interpret that.

CAL

You've also made some great ones.

ANNE

I don't know. I guess deciding not to become a cheerleader in junior year was a good one.

**

They smile and study one another.

ANNE (CONT'D)

- I knew it would come. I meant it when I said I wasn't surprised. Being married to a politician you have to get used to sharing him...he gets such a charge out of being adored, being at the centre of things.

Cal puts his arm around her to comfort her. It feels good. She nestles into him.

Until the moment is wrenched - by a vibrating PHONE.

Cal tightens. It's a TEXT MESSAGE. Part of him decides not to look at it.

**

But he has to. So he grabs it, reads it.

Not just duty calling, a *crisis*. He looks at Anne. She tries not to sag.

**

CAL

I gotta go.

68 EXT. GW HOSPITAL -- NIGHT

68

Raining hard. Massive Police presence assembled and moving. CAL pushes past D.C.P.D. showing his credentials but not caring what they say/think. Gets to DELLA.

She's in *shreds*: face and shirt blood-spattered, eyes blank, soaked through from the heavy rain. Shaking.

He wipes the blood off her face with his sleeve.

CAL

Tell me it isn't yours.

**

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED:

68

Scared out of her wits, she lets it go now: fear, rage, relief. Cal takes off his jacket and puts it round her.

DELLA
They didn't find him? **

CAL
(shakes his head) **
They're pretty sure it came from the **
roof of the garage across the road. **

DELLA
I saw him Cal. The killer. We shouldn't **
have kept this to ourselves. **
**

CAL
We had to. We have to. We're not there **
yet. **

DELLA
We could've stopped this. **

CAL
If we were psychic.

DELLA
No! We should have told them. What if **
there were fingerprints on those
photographs? **

Cal hates that question. Looks away. Trying to think.

DELLA (CONT'D)
I can't let anyone else get hurt. **

Cal knows she's right.

69 INT. GLOBE - CONFERENCE ROOM -- MORNING

69

An emergency meeting. Big table. Two sides.

On the Police side: DETECTIVE INSPECTOR DONALD BELL, 50, (the boss.) LT.'s GIBB & DOBBY. ASST. D.A.'s CHRIS PURCELL & LAMA.

On the Globe side: CAL, CAMERON, STAVITZ, KAWAI, TWO OTHER ATTORNEYS... And Della, who has decided not to quit just yet.

Icy atmosphere.

69 CONTINUED:

69

CAMERON

(bluffing it out)

The Globe is willing to hand over the material with the following conditions. Our source will remain anonymous. Any and all forensic results will be shared with the Globe before any announcement -- official or otherwise. The Globe will assume no liability for any evidence either assumed, present, or damaged.

D.A. PURCELL

You want sorbet with that?

CAMERON

Excuse me?

DETECTIVE BELL

(fury aimed at Cal)

Who decided this wasn't evidence?

CAL

We kept it for less than a day, Don, weren't really sure what we had.

DETECTIVE BELL

Bullshit! Who do you think I am, Bambi's baby brother? You knew exactly what you had, Cal. You just decided that your need was greater than ours - and now you have blood on your hands. Feel good?

**
**
**
**
**
**

CAL

Wo! That's a pretty strong allegation you're levelling, Don. Sure you can live with that in black and white?

**
**
**
**

BELL

I can live with what I do, Cal -- now I'm asking myself why a smart guy like you would do such a stupid thing and I can only come up with one answer.

**
**
**
**
**

CAL

And what's that?

**
**

BELL

Protecting your pal, Collins. These photos cast a long shadow over the golden boy.

**
**
**
**
**

69 CONTINUED: (2)

69

CAL **
 (exasperated) **
 Use your head. He's the one who told me **
 it wasn't suicide way before you guys **
 gave a damn. **

DETECTIVE BELL **
 Look what he'd have to gain by having **
 that little girl iced. **

CAL **
 You sales pitching me or asking me? **

DETECTIVE BELL **
 No blackmail headache, no spunk-stained **
 blue dress. Keep the office. Keep the **
 wife. Keep rising... **

CAL
 You're right, I'd toss her in front of
 a train too.

This is getting out of hand. Cameron tries to intervene.

CAMERON
 Detective - I don't think --

DETECTIVE BELL
 (turning viciously)
 Shut up!
 (back to Cal)
 No - you'd hire it out. **

CAMERON
 Don't tell me to shut up you jack-
 booted wanker!

That got their attention. **

CAMERON (CONT'D) **
 The thesis we're pursuing, Detective, **
 involves the companies that Stephen **
 Collins is investigating. **

DETECTIVE BELL
 What? Corporate conspiracies that
 threaten the highest levels?..All my
 years on the job and I've only ever
 seen that on TV...

CAL
 All your years on the job and you've
 only ever seen congressmen on TV.

69 CONTINUED: (3)

69

Bell pauses to consider for a moment - then comes back hard: **

DETECTIVE BELL
Who gave you the photos? **

CAL
Wouldn't give a name.

DETECTIVE BELL
Address?

CAL
No fixed abode.

DETECTIVE BELL **
Male or female? **

CAL **
Couldn't tell. **

Bell glares at Cal - does he expect him to believe that
shit?

DETECTIVE BELL
(with finality) **
If I find out that you've withheld any
more evidence or information pertinent
to this case I'll have the lot of you
shipped off to Guantanamo for a stretch
in a day-glo jump suit - and you can **
kiss goodbye to those first amendment **
rights. **

They smile - but that got through. **

70 INT. GLOBE - UPSTAIRS CONFERENCE ROOM -- 6:30 A.M.

70

Battlestations. Here's Cal, Della, Stavitz, Hank, and Pete,
(now on the story).

Della stands in front of a video cart, slotting a DVD into
the player.

DELLA **
Security footage from the Rosslyn metro
station on the morning Sonia died. I
went through it with the cops and ID'd
the man I saw at the hospital.

As she talks she fast forwards through surveillance footage
of a normal rush-hour. Then she plays. Sonia Baker appears
in frame.

70 CONTINUED:

DELLA (CONT'D)

There's Sonia...and ten seconds later...

She hits pause. There - smeary, soft and imprecise - is an image of the killer - ROBERT BINGHAM.

DELLA (CONT'D)

They say it's not enough to get an id on him - unless he's already on file.

Everyone looks at the image. A new seriousness.

CAMERON

Police gossip being what it is, I'm guessing every news organization in DC will know as much as we do within forty-eight hours. So I need something solid today. Not nameless sources. Not assumptions. I want this thing wrung out. Investigated. I'll be damned if we can't do a better job of that than the police. Cal's focusing on PointCorp. Della, get me everything on Sonia Baker - let's find out who and what she knew. (they're still waiting)
Go.

Now they disperse. Della goes to her desk.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

(at Hank and Pete)

And you two: the rule on this one is discretion. Understood? It's not a good subject for gossip over drinks at the Monocle.

(at Pete then Hank)

Or spliffs in the stationary cupboard. Hmmm?

PETE

I'm offended. Truly.

CAMERON

To work.

They go... But Cameron lingers... looking at Cal.

CAL

(once they're alone)

What?

CAMERON

When's the last time you slept?

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED: (2)

70

CAL

You trying to change horses?

CAMERON

Never. I always wanted us on a story like this - together. I just wish it wasn't *this* story.

She eyes him, a long beat... then exits. We CUT TO:

71 INT. GLOBE - DELLA'S DESK -- SAME/DAY

71

Della's on the phone. Her insanely-neat cubicle now has three or four POST-ITS on it.

DELLA (INTO PHONE)

Hello - this is Della Frye, calling from the Washington Globe. We're looking into the death of Sonia Baker.

72 INTERCUT WITH/INT. GLOBE - UPSTAIRS CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

72

A copy of the paper with the photo of Stephen and his shirtless ARMY BUDDIES sits alongside a pile of eighty other leads on Cal's desk: notes, phone numbers. We BRUSH PAST IT ALL ... as he leans into a desk, nearby: Hank and Pete.

CAL

I need everything we've got on PointCorp. Corporate history, mergers, shareholder statements. I need records on any suits they're defending - might get a litigant or two to come forward. And I wanna know where their money is, how many banks they're running things through...

HANK

But quietly. Right?

CAL

Quiet would be good.

73 INT. GLOBE NEWSROOM - DELLA'S DESK -- RESUMING/DAY

73

A bit more CLUTTER on her desk now: scribbled names and arrows. A half-eaten sandwich.

DELLA (INTO PHONE)

Henry Tribino?

(CONTINUED)

73 CONTINUED:

TRIBINO (THROUGH PHONE)

This is he.

DELLA

My name's Della Frye, I'm a reporter over at the Globe. You were Sonia Baker's attorney on her shoplifting case, is that correct?

**

TRIBINO (PHONE)

Did Dominic give you my number?

DELLA

Dominic?

Della pushes aside the sandwich. Writes "DOMINIC."

TRIBINO

I'm sorry. This really isn't appropriate.

**
**
**

And click. He's gone. Della underlines the name. Dominic.

**

A74 OMITTED

A74 **

74 INT. GLOBE - CAL'S DESK -- RESUMING/DAY

74 **

Back to Cal, on the phone, working the story.

CAL (INTO PHONE)

Now, you were working in the Accounting Department at PointCorp during that period - is that right?

A can of COKE spills as he turns the page of his notebook. He mutters "Shit," but doesn't stop writing.

CAL (INTO PHONE) (CONT'D)

Mmm-hmm. And how did that work exactly? If you guys host someone for dinner or a golfing weekend or something, how is that accounted for in your system?

As he writes, Carol breezes by, dropping a TABLOID on his desk. It's a PICTURE OF SONIA - and the headline:

DID SHE DIE FOR LOVE?

Cal eyes it. Carol shrugs. Cal gets on with his work...

75 INTERCUT WITH/EXT. 15TH STREET T-SHIRT VENDORS -- DAY 75

DELLA with A COUPLE she's just handed her card to-

DELLA
Mr. Phillips, would you mind sharing your thoughts on Sonia Baker? **

The couple moves on, shaking their heads.

76 INTERCUT WITH/MISC. FRONT DOOR -- DAY 76 **

DELLA stands on the porch of a DC house. A WOMAN stands in the doorway. **

DELLA
Excuse me - Sarah? - would you mind if I asked you a few questions about Sonia Baker-- **

WOMAN
Would you people leave me alone?

The woman slams the door. **

77 INTERCUT WITH/EXT. WASHINGTON MALL - CAROUSEL -- DAY 77

DELLA approaches a suited man - LOBBYIST TYPE. She's perfected her line:

DELLA
Could you take a minute to remember Sonia Baker?

The man stops walking. Well, if you put it like that...

78/79 INT. GLOBE - UPSTAIRS CONFERENCE ROOM -- DAY 78/79

Cal's at his computer as Pete downloads:

PETE
Okay. PointCorp...
(from a pad)
They're headquartered in Conway, North Carolina - just bought another 60,000 acres down there to expand their training facility. The locals have taken to calling it 'Little Baghdad'. But here's something interesting from the paper down there- **
(MORE) **

78/79 CONTINUED:

78/79

PETE (CONT'D)

(he hands Cal a press clipping)

-could just be coincidence - but this guy, Jerry Symes, local politician, campaigned against the opening of the facility: died in a freak car accident eighteen months ago. Lotta talk about it locally

**
**

Cal absorbs that...then sifts through a PointCorp SHAREHOLDER'S STATEMENT.

CAL

What's the "Medal Of Freedom Initiative?"

PETE

It's listed as a "lobbying interest," but PointCorp is under-writing it instead of paying a retainer. Hank's got stuff on it - Hank!

Hank grabs a file, hurries over.

HANK

According to its website, MOFI, the *Medal of Freedom Initiative* is an umbrella group for a bunch of private defense contractors. Ya know, lobby a little. Party a little. Kill things. Their offices are at the Watergate building.

**

Cal can't help it - that made him smile.

CAL

Somewhere up there Richard Nixon is laughing his ass off.

They smirk... Then Cal *sees something on his computer screen*; it has an instant impact on him. He rises.

CAL (CONT'D)

Good work, guys. Gotta go. Just found a graduate from Little Baghdad who's willing to talk.

**

With that, Cal's gone. Pete and Hank eye his computer screen to see the E-MAIL that just sent him out of here...

81 INT. COMMERCE DEPT. -- DAY

81

Stephen walks, flanked by Greer and Graves, both of whom are Blackberrying as they go. Then Stephen spots something:

...Fergus, approaching from the other direction.

Stephen braces himself, preparing for some unpleasantness. Greer and Graves are steeling themselves too, "Uh-oh," as:

STEPHEN

George. You got a minute?

FERGUS

Sure, Steve.

That was all-smiles. Maybe Fergus isn't angry...

STEPHEN

We haven't spoken since the hearing yesterday. I just wanted you to know that my... participation wasn't meant in any way as a gesture of disrespect to you - or a lack of gratitude for the support you've given me.

**

FERGUS

Steve, I wouldn't have many friends on the Hill if I took things personally. You've got your passions, I understand that implicitly.

STEPHEN

That's a great relief. Thanks, George.

FERGUS

Not at all. There are work-horses, and there are show-horses. I'm sure we can all find a way to get along.

Again, all-smiles. Then he's gone. Stephen just stares...

82 EXT. D.C - M-STREET -- DAY

82

Cal and Della walk past a group of MAJORETTES and a marching band practicing their routine in front of a government building. The music continues, as:

CAL

He goes by the name "Red-Six" on-line. That's what he wants us to call him.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

82 CONTINUED:

CAL (CONT'D)

Did two tours with PointCorp as a "Weapons and Tactics Consultant," then saw one dead civilian too many and opted out. Now he writes a daily anonymous blog --

(she raises an eyebrow)

--ripping PointCorp and their subsidiaries. Has kind of a small but loyal cult following. I traded about twenty e-mails with him this morning before he agreed to meet with us.

DELLA

You? Finding something on the dreaded Internet?

CAL

I'm not a *dinosaur*, Della. I was e-mailing when you were still in grade-school.

DELLA

But finding him on-line, *and* trading with him, while working the phones *and* bossing around Pete and Hank. You've been multi-tasking.

CAL

Don't use that word.

They reach a METRO ENTRANCE, as:

DELLA

You still have an answering machine. Don't you?

(Cal's silent)

I bet you do. I bet you still have one of those old answering machines on a table in your apartment. The kind with the little mini-tapes inside, probably dusty as hell, right?

CAL

Are we gonna meet this guy or what?

In other words, "Yes and screw you." Della smiles. They descend into the Metro...

83 INT. DC FISH MARKET -- DAY

83

An out-door market underneath the freeway, crabs a speciality. You can buy seafood and stand at tall tables to eat it fresh.

(CONTINUED)

83 CONTINUED:

83

But RED-SIX is here for cover, not lunch. He's 35, carved out of granite, keeps his hair "high and tight." Has the look of a trained killer... which, in fact, he has been. For pay.

RED-SIX

I want you to know something: I love my country; I love the military. My aim here is to save them.

Cal and Della nod soberly.

RED-SIX (CONT'D)

He told you my terms?

(Della nods)

I will not give you my name. I will not give you my rank in the PointCorp military structure, or the in and out dates of my service.

CAL

What's your understanding of PointCorp's M.O.?

RED-SIX

Their M.O.? To do whatever they want.

That was a bit chilling. He goes on:

RED-SIX (CONT'D)

Imagine a privately-hired army going after any targets it deems worthy. These are soldiers answering to no one, loyal to nothing. And they're making three times more than ordinary troops. It's the Moslem-Terror Gold Rush.

DELLA

But they must answer to someone.

RED-SIX

To who? The *Replicant Overload*?

Red-Six's eyes are always moving, his antennae always up: *Am I being followed? Am I being shadowed?*

CAL

Have you been watching the hearings?

RED-SIX

When there's nothing good on the Comedy Channel.

(CONTINUED)

83 CONTINUED: (2)

83

CAL

The Committee Chair, Stephen Collins --

RED-SIX

--he's finished.

(Cal hated that)

They'll just keep knocking him down until he goes away. It's not the association of retired embroiderers he's fucking with.

Red-Six suddenly focuses on a particular GUY AT A FISH-STAND. The guy seems out of place here, maybe too well-dressed...

Cal pauses a beat, then:

CAL

You know this?

RED-SIX

Do you understand what he's *threatening* here? 30 or 40 billion dollars, annually. That's wrath of God money.

CAL

The hearings said 3 or 4 billion.

RED-SIX

Overseas... The *real* money is what PointCorp stands to make on its domestic operations.

Cal pauses, pretty sure he just heard that wrong. Then he sees the same confused look on Della's face.

CAL

I didn't know they had any...

RED-SIX

It's the future - the privatization of Homeland Security. Here.

(Cal's lost)

Who was sent in for "Crowd Control" after Hurricane Katrina? Us. Private security contractors, *deputized to shoot at American citizens*. Who's training the Chicago Police Force on "interrogation techniques"? Also us. Soon PointCorp will take over from the NSA on phone-taps, terrorist databases, all of it. A fundamental re-structuring of domestic intelligence policy, billions of dollars.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

83 CONTINUED: (3)

RED-SIX (CONT'D)

Do you really think they're going to
forfeit all that just because some hero
from the 7th District of Pennsylvania
thinks they should?

Cal's silent - just can't reply. Red-Six turns quickly,
spotting a CAR as it pulls away from here a bit too quickly.
Paranoia and training tell him he's been here too long.

RED-SIX (CONT'D)

I should go.

He turns to leave, but Cal can't possibly allow that:

CAL

If they were targeting him, something
specific - would you know about it?

RED-SIX

These things are always insulated.

CAL

But you might hear something...?

Cal pulls out a photo from his pocket - a FREEZE FRAME from
the metro security footage. Bingham.

CAL (CONT'D)

This is one of the guys we think
they're using. Can you help us find
him?

RED-SIX

(doubtful)

I'll ask around. But don't try to
contact me again: phones, e-mail, it's
all porous at this point, it's all
vulnerable. Just write what I've told
you - put some pressure on them.

DELLA

But what else can we do?

**
**

RED-SIX

Well, they're a publicly-traded
company. Maybe you should just go buy
yourselves some stock.

With that, he disappears into the crowd...Both Della and Cal
are a little freaked out - but both also wonder: can we
really trust this guy?

**
**
**

84 INT. CAPITOL - CANNON BLDG. - MENS' ROOM -- DAY

84

Cal bursts through the door. Stephen right behind him - impatient - incredulous - as Cal checks the stalls to make sure they're alone.

STEPHEN

What is this? I'm three kinds of late here...

**

CAL

I just met a guy who scared the hell out of me. He's on the inside - at PointCorp.

Now Stephen gets it, but he refuses to look rattled.

STEPHEN

They make all kinds of threats. It's just part of the game.

**

CAL

Listen to me. Sonia was being stalked. A professional. There was a guy following her. We've got a file that came out of his bag.

STEPHEN

(full attention now)

What do you mean a file?

CAL

Someone surveilling her. Pictures.

STEPHEN

Of me?

CAL

Not in what we have. But the guy who took them has killed two other people now, wrong-place-wrong-time kind of people.

(a beat)

The research she was doing for you. The PointCorp stuff. Had she found anything that was particularly damning?

STEPHEN

We find stuff everyday! Okay? I could run these hearings for fifteen years with the evidence we have.

**

(MORE)

84 CONTINUED:

84

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

I could tell you stuff about Pointcorp and their buddies that would really give you nightmares. It's getting anyone to give a shit that's the problem. **

CAL

So come into the paper with me and go on record. We'll make the connection between them and Sonia. **

STEPHEN

(irritated)

What are you talking about? Not satisfied with me looking like a heartless adulterer you want me to be a crazy paranoid too? You don't have any evidence. And even if they were involved - they're not so stupid they'd leave a paper trail, a smoking gun. **

CAL

Bigger companies than this - Presidents - have been brought down by the press, Steve. **

STEPHEN

(laughs)

Really? The press is a joke, Cal - the only person it's interested in bringing down is Britney Spears. The United States Congress is holding this company to account in hearings and has been for the last year and a half, not that anyone would have read about it in the fucking newspaper. Thanks for the help but maybe you should just stick to the crime beat. **

With that, Stephen strides out. As he leaves he turns to Cal: **

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

By the way, I moved back to my place this morning. Thanks for the bed. **

85 INT. CAPITOL - CANNON BLDG. CORRIDOR -- MOMENTS LATER/DAY

85

Cal exits the mens' room, and into an august hallway decorated by state flags that hang in front of the offices of Stephen's fellow congressmen.

Cal's eyes move from flag to flag. He turns a corner...

85 CONTINUED:

...to find a group of VISITING SENIOR CITIZENS, stopped outside the office of their CONGRESSMAN:

Fergus. Of course. Charming them to no end.

FERGUS

This office they just moved me into is one of the perks of Seniority. I had my eye on it since you good people first sent me here in 1986...

Cal passes by, his eyes on Fergus - who smiles cordially.

An instinct tells Cal that this guy is in this thing up to his elbows. They eye one another as Cal drifts past, Fergus continuing to address the assembled seniors.

Then Cal disappears down the hall. We CUT TO:

86 INT. GLOBE NEWSROOM - CAL'S DESK -- DAY

86

Cal at his desk, working. Feels like he's halfway down the rabbit hole. Then Della approaches.

DELLA

I heard a rumor you have a source who can run social security numbers.

(handing him a number)

Sonia's ex-roommate. Rhonda Silver. No one else has her yet. She's changed her name twice in the last year.

Cal grabs a nearby phone, dials as:

CAL

How'd you get this?

DELLA

I had to agree to go out on not one, but two dates with a sweaty role-player named Vic.

**

CAL

(pulling out of thought)

Role Player?

DELLA

Like, he is the Lord of the Rings.

CAL

(smiles)

'Midgets sprinting after a wedding ring for nine hours'.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

86 CONTINUED:

86

CAL (CONT'D)

Tell him that on the first date and I bet he cancels the second...

DELLA

Just what I need: *rejection from Vic.*

CAL (INTO PHONE) (cont'd)

Hey, it's Cal. I need a Social Security rundown. 213-87-9394.

(pause)

"Last Known." Please. I'm going to put my assistant on, okay? She'll hold.

(handing Della the phone)

Pen?

(she doesn't have one)

You never have a pen...

Cal pulls a pen from his jacket pocket, hands it to her, returns to typing. Della starts writing down the info :

DELLA (PHONE)

Thank you so much.

(hangs up, turns to Cal)

Rhonda Silver's address and phone. Did we just break the law?

CAL

No. That's just damn fine reporting.

87 INT. WASHINGTON RESTAURANT -- LATE AFTERNOON

87

Tacky restaurant, hours before the dinner rush. RHONDA SILVER has left her hostess station to speak with DELLA. She's 26. Works hard to be cute. More than eager to be heard.

**

RHONDA

Okay, so here's my question...

(fishing in her bag)

Pictures of her. They'd be *worth* something, right? I have some great ones...

Della smiles thinly. Rhonda starts handing her PICTURES, eagerly.

**

RHONDA (CONT'D)

They're not like nudes or anything, but they're kind of crazy...

DELLA

How long did you and Sonia share the apartment?

(CONTINUED)

87 CONTINUED:

87

RHONDA

Umm, lemme see. She moved in like,
summer of '06. I moved out in August of
'07. I got married - separated 3 weeks
later - but that's a whole other story -
(one photo:)
Oh. That was my birthday party.

**

We EXAMINE THE PHOTOS...as Della flips through them, an
attempt to be polite. Pictures of a birthday party -- drunk
people caught in the flash -- the cake -- dancers -

RHONDA (CONT'D)

Half of these were taken on my cell-
phone. But they came out pretty good.

DELLA

(insincerely)

They're great. You really have an eye.

DELLA (CONT'D)

Can we speak somewhere a little more
private?

**

CUT TO:

87A EXT. FOOD COURT -- DAY

87A

Della sits at an outdoor food court continuing her
questioning of Rhonda.

**

DELLA

(on point:)

What was she like?

**

RHONDA

Smart, lotta friends, pretty... and if
you didn't mind being her personal ATM
she was a lot of fun.

(at Della)

That was our Pug. We had him for like,
five months...

Sure enough, a picture of Sonia and Rhonda with a Pug. Then
one of Sonia in her underwear. Della flips through, as:

DELLA

She owed you money?

**

RHONDA

She owed *everybody* money. I was just
the most conveniently located.

(re: photo)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

87A CONTINUED:

87A

RHONDA (CONT'D)

That's how she always walked around, in her underwear.

(to DELLA again)

For the last couple months I paid the rent, I paid for everything - all the way down to toilet paper and shampoo.

**

DELLA

But she was working.

**

RHONDA

She owed forty thousand dollars on her credit cards. And those guys were starting to lean on her.

DELLA

Forty thousand from what?

**

RHONDA

From buying shit she didn't have the money to pay for. She was a shopping fr--

DELLA

Who's this?

That had some urgency to it. Della's looking at a photo of a MAN SHE RECOGNIZES.

**

...a guy with his arm around SONIA. It's the "unidentified man" beside her in the surveillance pictures when she was crying.

DELLA (CONT'D)

This guy. Here.

RHONDA

That dip-shit? That's Dominic Foy. Friend of Sonia's. He's completely beside the point.

DELLA

(it's adding up...)

Dominic Foy?

RHONDA

Right. He's the guy who tries so hard you cringe - into PR, club promotion, that kind of thing. He's got a website called Foydog.com.

(off Della's look)

Like I said: cringe.

DOMINIC FOY - writing that name down.

**

(CONTINUED)

87A CONTINUED: (2)

RHONDA (CONT'D)

Anyway, one day outta nowhere she gives me a hundred bucks for groceries and tells me all her bills have been paid off.

Della looks up from her notes.

**

DELLA

Paid off by who?

**

RHONDA

Well isn't it obvious? That was right when she started seeing Collins.

(a beat)

Or "The Distinguished Gentleman" as we used to call him.

That landed hard.

**

DELLA

So is that when you moved out?

RHONDA

No. I stuck around for a few fun-filled weeks.

DELLA

Her affair with him...

RHONDA

(wicked smile)

Our affair with him.

Hold it. *What'd she just say?* Maybe she heard that wrong.

**

DELLA

I'm sorry...?

RHONDA

That's why she tossed me out.

DELLA

Are you saying you were--

RHONDA

--banging the congressman? Yes, I was. We both were. It sorta depended on who was home when he'd come over. Sometimes it was *both* of us - he always referred to that as being "in committee." It was a real riot.

No way. No way - Della cannot accept what she's hearing.

**

(CONTINUED)

87A CONTINUED: (3)

DELLA **
That doesn't sound credible to me.

RHONDA **
Would you like to know what he looks
like naked?

DELLA **
And you'd be willing to go on the
record with this?

RHONDA **
Well I dunno... **
(a beat...) **
How much were ya planning t'pay me? **

88 INT. STAIRWELLS -- DUSK 88 **

Della walks briskly. Mobile phone to ear: **

DELLA **
(into phone) **
You're not going to believe this. **

89 OMITTED 89 **

89A INT. GLOBE - UPSTAIRS CONFERENCE ROOM -- NIGHT 89A **

Cal and Della alone in a conference room. **

CAL **
You're right. I don't believe a word of
it. **

DELLA **
But we have to bring this to Cameron. **

CAL **
What the hell for? She's obviously lying. **

DELLA **
You don't see a story here? **

CAL **
No. This Foy guy is the story. **

DELLA **
Uh-huh. And you'd be saying that if you
hadn't gone to college with Stephen? **

Cal stops, stares right through her. **

89A CONTINUED:

89A

CAL

That's two different sets of pictures he's shown up in. You don't have an instinct about that?

**
**
**
**

DELLA

C'mon. A United States congressman potentially sleeping with two roommates outside his marriage and one of them winds up dead? Be my boss for a second. If I had that story and didn't write it, wouldn't you fire me?

**
**
**
**
**
**
**

CAL

She's completely full of shit, Della.
I'd fire you if you *did* write it!

**
**
**

A stand-off. They eye one another... Frustrated.

**

DELLA

What about the forty thousand?

**
**

CAL

I don't buy that either.
(off her look)
Even if he did pay off a debt for her - which *nobody's confirmed yet* - it's still got *nothing* to do with how all these people keep getting shot. His private life's a disaster, we knew that already. There's nothing there. The story's still PointCorp.

**
**
**
**
**
**
**
**
**

Despite herself Della is persuaded by Cal's argument.

**

DELLA

OK. But I'm telling you: that lady won't stay quiet for long.

**
**
**

Cal sighs, pauses. It's a mess.

**

90 OMITTED

90

90A INT. CAL'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

90A **

CAL sits at his computer working. The doorbell rings.

**

Cal opens up to Annie.

**

CAL

Thanks for coming round.

**
**

90A CONTINUED:

90A

ANNE

So what's the big emergency?

**

**

There's an awkward atmosphere.

**

ANNE (CONT'D)

Drink?

**

**

CAL nods. Goes to fix her one.

**

CAL

Could Stephen have pulled together forty grand without your knowing?

**

**

**

Anne tenses.

**

ANNE

Why?

**

**

CAL

I just need to know.

**

**

ANNE

I'd really rather not be a source if you don't mind. This thing's messy enough as it is.

**

**

**

**

CAL

I really need to know, Anne.

**

**

She pulls away from him.

**

ANNE

I can't keep up with you, Cal. One minute you're--

**

**

**

He doesn't want to say this.

CAL

Annie - I need to know because there's going to be some tough news breaking.

**

(beat)

Sonia's roommate - lying about a threesome with Steve. It's complete bullshit.

**

**

A giant pause. She looks at him.

ANNE

(quietly)

Bastard.

90A CONTINUED: (2)

90A

Up to this point Anne has held it together - but this looks like it might break her. She sits down.

CAL

Don't take this on Annie. The girl's a joke.

**
**
**

ANNE

I've been faking it for days. If I have to fake it with you then I quit.

**
**
**

Cal goes to sit next to her. Puts his arm around her to comfort her. Anne looks him straight in the eyes. A moment - then Anne kisses him. Hungrily.

Cal pulls away - knows he shouldn't be doing this - but Anne is insistent. Kisses him again - this time he responds. For the moment this feels so familiar - and right.

**

They pull each other's clothes off - ornaments clatter around them as they do.

**

90B INT. CAL'S APARTMENT -- TIME CUT -- NIGHT

90B **

After. A moment of complete intimacy between them. But it holds the seeds of its own destruction: guilt.

**
**

ANNE

I gotta go.

**
**

CAL

Really?

**
**

ANNE

Yeah.

**
**

Anne starts getting dressed. She can barely look at him. Anne starts to cry.

**
**

CAL

Don't, Annie.

**
**

ANNE

Why did we do that? I don't know what I'm doing.

**
**
**

Cal gets up and goes over to her but she pushes him away.

**

CAL

Annie --

**
**

(CONTINUED)

90B CONTINUED:

90B

ANNE

Don't touch me. I can't believe you let
this happen again.

**
**
**

CAL

Me? It wasn't me--

**
**

ANNE

I feel like a piece of shit. You should
have stopped me. A gentleman would
have.

**
**
**
**

CAL

I guess I never was one of those --

**
**

With that Anne gives him a withering look and goes.
Something totally ruptured in this relationship.

**
**

The door closes. Cal sits for a long moment. Puts his head
in his hands.

**
**

RRRRRIIIINGGGG!! The moment is broken by the telephone.

**

Still in his underwear, Cal answers.

**

CAL (CONT'D)

Hello

**
**

VOICE (ON PHONE)

Who's the great-looking Blonde, Cal?

**
**

CAL

(freaked)

Who is this?

**
**
**

CAL has gone to the window - he's frantically scanning the
street outside.

**
**

VOICE

Across the street - the phone booth.

**
**

Cal's eyes dart to the phone booth - he can just make out a
figure hunched inside - looking up at him.

**
**

91-92 OMITTED

91-92 **

92A OMITTED

92A **

92B OMITTED

92B **

93/94 OMITTED 93/94 **

95 EXT. CAL'S STREET -- NIGHT 95

Cal walks toward the phone booth. No one much around. Cold, dark night. **

A MAN steps out of the shadows and now we realize that it is RED SIX. **

RED-SIX **
Like your style, man. **

But Cal's decided he definitely doesn't like this guy -- **

RED-SIX (CONT'D) **
I got something for you.

CAL **
And you couldn't just ring the bell? **

Red-Six laughs. **

RED-SIX **
Precautions. **

He hands Cal a piece of paper **

RED-SIX (CONT'D) **
The guy in the photo. I asked around. Definitely a grunt. Buddy said he's seen him around at security trade-shows 'n shit. No name. But they said he used to work for a guy by the name of Fred Summers - does alarm installations.
(indicating paper)
That's Fred's address. Crystal City.

Cal, despondent as he is after today, can't help but feel a rush of adrenalin. But as he looks into the hooded eyes of Red-Six he wonders: "Is this guy setting me up?" **

96 EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX -- NIGHT 96

Cal's SAAB pulls up on the street. A huge, drab residential block of buildings looming.

97 EXT. COMPLEX FRONT DOOR -- NIGHT 97

Glass and terrazzo. No doorman. CAL enters the foyer. There's a directory on the wall. He checks it.

(CONTINUED)

97 CONTINUED:

97

Just finding the name - Fred Summers - as A COUPLE comes off the elevator inside --

CAL smiles -- moving for the door -- holding it as they exit -- entering the building, as they walk away and -

98 INT. COMPLEX LOBBY -- NIGHT

98

CAL standing by the elevator and --

99 INT. COMPLEX NINTH FLOOR HALLWAY -- NIGHT

99

Long and weird. The buzzing fluorescent bulb. The audio sample behind every passing door. CAL walking from the elevator. Checking the numbers as he goes.

916...922...931...

It's gonna be at the end of the hall. Down where the worst light is buzzing.

CAL keeps going until...

There it is.

936.

A sock on the floor. Caught in the door - left deliberately to keep the door ajar?

CAL

Mr. Summers?

Suddenly, behind him --

A METAL DOOR echoing in the distance.

Someone coming down the hall.

It's BINGHAM himself! CAL recognizes him instantly from the photo.

BINGHAM wears flip flops and camo pants. Laundry basket full of clean, warm clothes. Just now registering that there's someone down by his door --

CAL trapped.

BINGHAM trapped.

As if nothing were wrong...

99 CONTINUED:

99

BINGHAM

What's up?

CAL

How you doing?

(the smile)

Cal McAffrey...

(he'd shake but--)

BINGHAM

Who are you looking for?

CAL

Fred - Fred Summers. You know him?

BINGHAM

Fred's not here.

CAL

Shit, man...

(backing away from the door--)

You live here. I'm sorry... So he's
your roommate?

(all polite now)

You know where I can find him?

BINGHAM

He's overseas. He shipped out last
week.

CAL

Overseas, like...?

BINGHAM

Look, I don't really know what Fred's
into, okay?

(starting to move for the
door--)

He ships out, he comes back.

CAL

Would you pass a message?

Beat. BINGHAM doesn't respond and just pushes into the
apartment.

BINGHAM

(as he disappears)

Take it easy.

And the door closes behind him. CAL already backing away for
the elevator and --

(CONTINUED)

99 CONTINUED: (2)

99

CAL waiting for the elevator. Phone in hand. Eyes down the hall. He's already dialed. Punching the elevator button as if that's gonna make it come any faster and --

Cal gets into elevator. Raises the phone to his ear.

100 INT. COMPLEX ELEVATOR -- NIGHT

100

CAL with the phone. Doors closing and... Signal loss.

CAL

Shit!

CAL descending. 5...4...3... Chunk.

It has stopped. Everything suddenly black. Then, a moment later, an emergency light powers on. But the car isn't moving.

CAL trapped. Coincidence? Can't be. Fuck...

Pulling his phone -- waving it around the car -- searching for a signal -- there, up by the ceiling, a flicker.

CAL (PHONE) (CONT'D)

Jimmy. Cal McAffrey...just tell Bell I've found the killer. Five -sixty-six, Jasper Avenue. Five-six-six Jasper! I need cops. I need cops here immediately!

CAL perched on the railing -- wedged near the ceiling -- bent like a contortionist to hang with the signal and --

THE ELEVATOR jolts! -- power on -- CAL falling hard to the floor -- barely catching his breath as the elevator drops a few feet before stopping suddenly and --

THE DOORS OPEN TO

101 INT. COMPLEX LOBBY -- DAY

101

An empty lobby. CAL steps out cautiously. Did Bingham take the stairs??

Everything quiet. CAL can hear his own breathing. He starts tentatively towards the exit. Then out of the corner of his eye he sees:

A slight movement. A reflection in the glass door. CAL stops. Looks. Sudden Fear. Is that a reflection of BINGHAM just outside the door?

(CONTINUED)

101 CONTINUED:

101

CAL can't be sure...it looks like it might be someone. Movement again- almost imperceptible. Shit! BINGHAM has obviously come down the stairs and is lying in wait...

CAL turns: looking for an alternative exit. He sees a door that leads down into the UNDERGROUND PARKING GARAGE.

102 INT. PARKING GARAGE -- NIGHT

102

CAL emerges into the dark garage. A few fluorescent bulbs provide pools of light here and there. Tomb-like silence except for distant water and pipes.

**

Every movement Cal makes sends quiet echoes curling around the space.

CAL sees an EXIT SIGN at the far corner of the garage and walks quickly towards it. Out of the corner of his eye he sees: BINGHAM'S LEGS, coming down the ramp.

**

**

**

Cal moves as quickly and quietly as he can to hide behind a column.

**

**

Bingham approaches where Cal is hiding. Fear in Cal's eyes.

**

As Bingham draws near, Cal takes off his wristwatch and throws it as far as he can behind Bingham. It hits a car - and Bingham whips around - for the first time pulling out his gun.

**

**

**

**

Using the momentary diversion, Cal runs across the open space to a large group of parked cars.

**

**

Bingham hears Cal's echoing footsteps and spins around again - just catching a glimpse of Cal as he disappears behind a car.

**

**

**

Bingham now knows where Cal is. He's hunting his prey. He moves slowly but steadily among the parked cars and round the columns. Searching.

**

**

**

Bingham draws nearer to CAL.

**

Cal is tantalizingly close to the Exit - but Bingham is directly in his way. He has Cal trapped.

**

**

Then unexpectedly the Exit door opens and an ASIAN FAMILY appears - chattering loudly. Joking. They make their way towards their car - which is close to where Cal is hiding.

**

**

**

Cal watches them. He's desperately thinking of how to attract their attention - but would that be a good idea? Would Bingham kill them all?

**

**

**

(CONTINUED)

102 CONTINUED:

102

Bingham meanwhile makes no attempt to hide. He has put his gun away inside his jacket and is fiddling with a bunch of keys - pretending that he is trying to get into a car. **
**
**

The Asian family notice Bingham and quiets down. *He looks dangerous.* They get into their car. **
**

Cal is desperate as he watches them get ready to leave: what can he do?? **
**

The car reverses out of the parking space, then changes gears to go forward. No sooner do they start driving off than the driver slams on the brakes: a manic looking Cal is standing in front of them gesticulating wildly and shouting-- **
**
**

CAL **
LET ME INTO YOUR CAR! **

Terrified, the driver throws the vehicle into reverse. Cal runs along side - putting the car between himself and Bingham - opens the door and tries to get in. The occupants of the car hit, kick and shout at him - in Urdu. **
**
**

As the car reverses, Cal hangs on for dear life. He can see Bingham through the car window, taking out his gun to fire when he gets an opportunity. **
**
**

The car swings around the corner, the driver starts forward - at high speed, towards the ramp, trying to shake Cal free. Cal yells at them to stop the car and let him in. **
**
**

The car is now pulling Cal along at great speed. He clutches on to the door. But it is going too fast and he lets go, rolling to the ground. **
**
**

Just as he does, the family car is HIT - WHAM!!-by a police car speeding down the ramp. The family car is sent spinning into the garage wall. **
**
**

Cal rolls over to look in Bingham's direction: but all he sees is Bingham's back as he disappears through the exit door. **
**
**

103-115 OMITTED

103-115

116 INT. METRO P.D. HQ - HALLWAY -- NIGHT

116 **

CAL standing with TWO YOUNG DETECTIVES. Della sits over to the side. It's late and nobody's in a great mood. Least of all DETECTIVE BELL who's just coming in, making a point of ignoring CAL, as --

116 CONTINUED:

116

DETECTIVE BELL

So?

JR. DETECTIVE #1

No sign of the guy.

**

DETECTIVE BELL

The apartment?

**

JR. DETECTIVE

Clean. No guns. No ID. Nothing. The guy was a pro. Must have another site.

**

**

DETECTIVE BELL

Jesus!!

(turning to Cal)

And what the fuck were you doing there? I thought we had an understanding.

CAL

What do you want me to do? Call you every time I need to take a leak?

**

**

**

DETECTIVE BELL

We could've caught the guy if you'd shared the lead with us.

**

CAL

Okay, I've had enough of this. Can I get back to my story now?

DETECTIVE BELL

(steel)

It's not a story. It's a case. And just so you know: girl by the name of Mandi Brokaw - 16, junkie - turned up dead tonight. Murdered.

**

(hands Cal a picture of the dead girl)

Look familiar? Her prints were taken off those surveillance photos you so kindly gave us. Maybe she'd still be alive if you'd thought of doing it sooner.

This hits Cal hard. And Della is freaked out.

117 OMITTED

117

118 INT. POLICE STATION CORRIDOR -- NIGHT

118

It's 3AM. they're leaving and Della's still rattled.

(CONTINUED)

118 CONTINUED:

118

DELLA

You okay?

**

**

CAL

Yeah. You didn't need to come out in
the middle of the night you know. But I
appreciate it.

**

**

**

**

DELLA

I wasn't worried about you. They gonna
find this guy?

**

**

CAL

I dunno. If he's got any priors he'll
be in their database somewhere.

**

DELLA

And until then we...?

CAL

We find out who's paying him.

DELLA

No. I meant now. Tonight.

(a beat)

I don't wanna go back home. It doesn't
feel safe. He saw me at the hospital,
Cal. Probably saw my staff ID.

**

**

A beat. Cal considers that.

CAL

See, if you were working television
news and this shit happened, they'd get
you a hotel room.

She shrugs. He smiles. We CUT TO:

119 INT. CAL'S APARTMENT -- LATE NIGHT

119

Della snoops while Cal pulls sheets and an extra pillow from
a hallway closet. Her first look at his life outside work:

There's a framed photo of *Cal with Stephen and Anne*, an old
poster featuring the 1978 *Philadelphia 76ers*, a *Nikon camera*
and, sure enough, sitting on an end table: an old dusty
ANSWERING MACHINE, the kind with a mini-cassette inside.
That makes her smile.

Cal enters, bearing sheets and a pillow. Hands them over.

DELLA

So what happens next?

(CONTINUED)

119 CONTINUED:

119

CAL

On the story?

DELLA

No. With our relationship. Yes on the story.

CAL

We start with Foy. He's the next step.

(beat)

Your room's through here.

He leads her into:

120 INT. CAL'S APARTMENT - SPARE BEDROOM - CONTINUING/NIGHT

120

Hardly the Ritz: a crammed, tiny room that connects directly to Cal's. Just some sliding glass doors between them... so it's an awkward moment.

DELLA

Thanks.

CAL

Bathroom's right there.

DELLA

(a little shocked at the conditions)

Great.

He heads out.

CAL

G'night.

DELLA

'Night. And thanks, Cal.

He slides the door closed. She pulls a blind over the glass.

121 INT. CAL'S LIVING ROOM -- CONTINUING/NIGHT

121 **

Cal enters, shuts the door behind him. Picks up the phone: dials. **

**

Three rings and it's answered. No 'hello'. **

**

CAL

Annie. It's Cal. I'm sorry about what happened -- **

**

**

**

(CONTINUED)

121 CONTINUED:

121

But he's about to get the SHOCK OF HIS LIFE because the voice that speaks is not Annie - IT'S STEPHEN. **

STEPHEN (ON PHONE) **

She doesn't want to talk to you Cal. **

Click. He hangs up. **

Cal is left certain that Stephen must know what happened... **

122-124 OMITTED

122-124

125 INT. GLOBE - CAMERON'S OFFICE -- MORNING

125 **

...Cameron, in a very angry CLOSE-UP:

Obviously, some massive fuck-up has just taken place...

Cameron sits, LIVID, as Rhonda Silver tells her story on three different TV's at once. The sound is off, but the moving STRAP-LINE beneath her image fills us in nicely:

"*Rhonda Silver. Claims she had long-standing affair with Collins*" -- hence the rage on Cameron's face.

CAMERON

I know you got shot at - and I know I should just be making you a cup of cocoa - but I'm just SO FUCKING ANGRY.

(referring to the Rhonda news)

The decision, I'm supposing, was that this was not news?

Della can throw Cal under the bus, they both know it.

CAL

It was my call, Cam. I didn't believe her story.

CAMERON

Well why the hell couldn't we have printed that?! A waitress comes forward with an unsubstantiated story about a sex scandal. That is a story! Then he denies it. That's a story too! Then one of them cracks - also a story! Meanwhile, people are *reading* about it - they're reading *us* about it, because we had it first!

(a beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

125 CONTINUED:

125

CAMERON (CONT'D)

Except we didn't, did we? No. Someone decided it was beneath us.

That was a hammer. Cal tries not to waver...

CAL

She's a sideshow - a smear, like Stephen predicted. The real story's PointCorp.

CAMERON

THE REAL STORY IS THE SINKING OF THIS NEWSPAPER! CHRIST!

That shook walls. Everyone in cubicle-land heard it.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

We have new management to answer to now; they're interested in SALES, not discretion - and I can't tell them why we're suddenly *behind* a story that we were once in *front* of.

(decision made:)

So we're going to run with what we've got. Period.

CAL

Can't do that.

CAMERON

We've got two other deaths linked to Sonia Baker; we've got your druggie giving us the file of surveillance photos indicating that Sonia was being followed - along with a gun - capped off with our "senior reporter" being shot at last night by the killer himself. No one else has any of this - and we're running it.

CAL

You run that now it'll blow the rest of the story.

CAMERON

I don't give a damn about the rest of the story!

CAL

There's a guy. We're getting on him this morning. He's the key.

(CONTINUED)

125 CONTINUED: (2)

125

CAMERON

Good. Lovely. I look forward to hearing what he tells you.

(a beat)

But we're going to press tonight.

(looking at watch)

You've got 8 hours.

**
**
**

Cal can't win this one; he knows that.

125A INT. GLOBE - UPSTAIRS CONFERENCE ROOM -- SAME/MORNING

125A **

Pete and Hank ogle a WEBSITE - FOYDOG.COM: weird fetishy club clips, etc.

**
**

Then, unbeknownst to them, Cal leans in, seeing what they're seeing.

**
**

Pete and Hank turn quickly, caught.

**
**

PETE

Take a look - your friend Foy's a winner.

**
**
**

Cal views the strange website.

**

CAL

Jesus. Who is this guy? Anything I can use?

**
**
**

PETE

Yeah. He has a surprising business address.

**
**
**

(Cal waits...)

Watergate building. Suite 413. Same as the Medal of Freedom Initiative.

**
**
**

That was huge. Cal stops.

**

CAL

Huh?

**
**

PETE

If you call their main number and ask for him, they put you right through.

**
**
**

126 EXT. THE WATERGATE BUILDING -- 9AM

126

The SAAB parks. Cal and Della get out, dials his cell again. And again he gets Stephen's outgoing message.

(CONTINUED)

126 CONTINUED:

126

CAL (INTO PHONE)
Stephen. Me again. You gotta call me
back, man...

127 INT. WATERGATE OFFICE ELEVATOR -- DAY

127

CAL and DELLA getting on alone. He's punching the button --

127A INT. MOFI RECEPTION/WATERGATE -- DAY

127A

A plush reception area. A gold plaque proclaiming MOFI -
MEDAL OF FREEDOM INITIATIVE. A reception desk but no
receptionist. CAL and DELLA pause for a moment and then -
shrugging - push their way through the doors behind the
reception which lead into the office proper.

128 INT. MOFI OFFICE/WATERGATE -- DAY

128

The doors open onto a weird sight: a completely gutted open-
plan office, stripped back to the structure by the previous
owners. Only two or three desks in this huge area and several
piles of pamphlets and paperwork. Two employees sit at the
desks. Huge picture windows look out over a spectacular
Washington view. The Emperor has very few clothes. CAL and
DELLA exchange a look.

A very sweet guy in a wheelchair wheels himself towards them.

MR. WHEELCHAIR
(open and friendly)
Hi - how can I help you guys?

CAL
We're looking for Dominic - he said
he's be in this morning.

MR. WHEELCHAIR
(smiling)
Dom? He's not really the early bird --

MR. WHEELCHAIR looks over at what is obviously FOY's desk.
CAL checks it out from afar - messy with fashion mags and
take-away coffee cups and baggies.

MR. WHEELCHAIR (CONT'D)
(to young woman at other
desk)
Jackie - did Dom say he'd be in early
this morning for a meeting?

128 CONTINUED:

128

JACKIE

I don't recall...

MR. WHEELCHAIR

You know what though - he always goes
to the same place for breakfast - An---

But before he can finish he's cut off by --

WOMAN'S VOICE

Can I help you?

A WOMAN -- call her MS. BUZZKILL -- looming suddenly in a
peach trouser suit--

CAL

Hi, how are you? Cal McAffrey from the
Globe, this is my associate Della
Frye...

MS. BUZZKILL

(no handshake, no smile)

What do you want?

CAL

We were looking for Dominic - but
actually we're doing a story -- on the
industry - the mercenary industry that
is, not the lobbying one - and I realize
that we haven't actually got any
information on '*The Initiative*'....

MS. BUZZKILL

(pissed by the use of the "M"
word)

I'm afraid you'll have to call back
during business hours.

DELLA

This isn't business hours?

MS. BUZZKILL

This is just a mailing center.

CAL

Pretty expensive real estate for a mail
room.

MS. BUZZKILL

(frostier still)

If you leave your card, I'll have
someone contact you.

DELLA doing just that, as --

(CONTINUED)

128 CONTINUED: (2)

128

CAL

Would you mind if I just left a message
for Dominic --

MS. BUZZKILL

I do mind. He's not an employee here -
he just sub-lets some space. You'll have
to go.

(to Mr. Wheelchair)

Ron...

Party's over and --

129-130 OMITTED

129-130

131 EXT. WATERGATE -- DAY

131

CAL and DELLA walk towards the SAAB.

DELLA

Now what?

**

**

CAL

We're going to meet him for a late
breakfast.

**

DELLA

What?

CAL

Didn't you see the bags on his desk?
Antonio's: Purveyor's of find food to
the wannabes of the universe.

131A EXT. D.C. SIDEWALK -- DAY

131A

BLUE BMW M5 chirps to a stop. Mega-bass throb behind tinted
glass. Engine revs and then dies. Door opens and we meet
DOMINIC FOY. D.C. dipshit. Fringe player trapped in the ego
of a K Street market mover. Locking up the Beemer as --

131B INT. ANTONIO'S CAFE -- DAY

131B

A pretentious eatery. FOY rolling in. Briefcase and
hangover. Wan smile for the cashier. They know him here.
Making his way to a booth in the corner. Just getting
comfortable, when --

131B CONTINUED:

CAL
(sitting across from him)
That your M5 out there?

FOY
(wary)
Yeah.

CAL
LeMans blue. By far the best color for
that car.

FOY half-impressed.

FOY
That's why I picked it.

CAL
And the 2003 body is the last of the
greats if you ask me. Infinitely more
refined than that new iDrive, Buck
Rodgers bullshit.

FOY
(fully impressed)
What's in your garage?

CAL
1997 Saab with velour seats.

FOY
Ouch.

CAL
Yeah - dive into my nightmare. Water's
warm. If only I had a job in PR, huh?

FOY'S smile just died. *How's this guy know who I am?*

FOY
Who the hell are --

CAL
Y'ever read the paper, Dom?

Foy pauses: *he knows my fucking name too...*

FOY
Sometimes.

CAL
I got an article that might interest
you.

131B CONTINUED: (2)

131B

Cal pulls four pieces of TYPING PAPER from his jacket, and...

CAL (CONT'D)

(reading:)

"Dominic Foy, a D.C. Public Relations figure with known ties to Defense Contractor PointCorp, was linked yesterday to the death of Capitol Hill Staffer Sonia Baker."

FOY

What the--

CAL

"A source close to the case reported that Foy met Baker at a party in--"

(stops himself)

It goes on from there. Nice huh?

FOY

You're a reporter?!

(Cal nods, sorry)

Not cool. Definitely not cool.

CAL

It runs tomorrow... unless you tell me what I need to know today.

Crap. Foy is already looking for an escape route.

CAL (CONT'D)

I've got a car out back, and a safe place where we can talk without interruption.

FOY

Listen, I don't know anything about anything! I'm just a PR guy!

CAL

That may be, but there are a couple thousand reporters in this town, and by noon today they're all gonna be looking for you. My source has been shopping pictures of you and Sonia.

FOY

Rhonda, right? Of course. Perfect. Leave it to her to try to make a *profit* outta Sonia's being dead. Ya know, they weren't even friends.

(CONTINUED)

131B CONTINUED: (3)

CAL

See? Ya do know something.

Foy sags. Cal smiles.

CAL (CONT'D)

I'm gonna be your friend, Dom. I'm gonna protect you. But the longer we sit here, the more likely we are to draw a crowd. And I'm guessing the guys at PointCorp wouldn't like that too much, right?

Foy tightens. A WAITRESS breezes by:

WAITRESS

Coffee?

CAL

No we're fine...
(reaching in his pocket)
What's your name?

WAITRESS

Peggy.

CAL lays two twenty-dollar bills on the table.

CAL

I'm wondering, Peggy, if you could do us a favor?

131C INT. DINER KITCHEN -- DAY

131C

CAL and FOY hustling back through the kitchen and --

FOY

You didn't go to my office, did you?

CAL

I did.

FOY

Shit! Did they know you were a reporter?

CAL

Of course. I'm a straight dealer Dom.

131D EXT. DINER REAR PARKING LOT -- DAY

131D

CAL and FOY out the back door and towards CAL's car.

(CONTINUED)

131D CONTINUED:

131D

CAL chirping the unlock -- clambering in -- FOY hesitating at the passenger door, scared and hyper. Rushing to open his briefcase -- scrambling for something inside, as --

FOY

I'm just a PR guy! I do parties!

CAL

Aw, don't sell yourself short, FoyDog.
I bet you're multi-talented.

Foy yanks prescription bottle of pills from the briefcase, slugs two down without water.

FOY

Medication. My hand. You have no idea how painful it is.

Then Foy, too rattled for vanity, makes his move: swinging that briefcase like some old lady that's being mugged --

Cal ducks it, and:

CAL

Jesus. Are you kidding me?

FOY

I'm not afraid of you!

Foy tries the briefcase swing again. Another miss. Cal's almost feeling sorry for the guy...

CAL

This is some serious shit, Dominic. Who do you think's the most interested in seeing you alive and well? Me - or PointCorp?

FOY

(another briefcase swing)
You're a liar!

CAL

There's a killer out there Dominic. A killer working for them. Tidying things up for them.

(Did Foy just hesitate?)
You think you're name's not in his address book?

132 INT. MHOTEL - ROOM "B" -- DAY

132

V.U. METERS rising and falling silently. A hand flips a switch and we begin to hear THE VOICES that are driving the needles.

FOY (V.O.)

What a dump, man. You've got to be kidding...

CAL (V.O.)

We won't be here long.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL... THE LISTENING ROOM. A motel room jammed with GEAR, and a team consisting of HANK, PETE, DELLA - here with a techie-guy named MILT.

They've got an audio/video surveillance set-up with the room directly next door. Raw and basic. TWO MONITORS for the two cameras. A DIGITAL DECK for the audio. Pens, papers, wires and a toolbox.

The sound of FOY FLIPPING ON THE TV next door, as --

They're watching THE MONITOR -- there's FOY, with no idea he's on camera, tossing aside the television remote control and --

FOY

What kind of hotel doesn't have On-Demand or a mini-bar? Doesn't that make this a "motel?"

DELLA

He's off his head and now he wants a beer. This is getting out of hand.

She's nervous now. HANK just shrugs.

MILT

Can we get some coffee?

This irritates her. *There's Foy, slamming another pill.*

PETE

That's three, right? What is it he's taking?

HANK

It's Oxy or something. He's getting sloppy...

133 INT. MHOTEL - ROOM "A" -- CONTINUOUS/DAY

133

Cal pulls the shades. Foy's in a glassier, chipper mood now.

CAL

Let's start at the beginning. Where'd you meet Sonia?

FOY

We need to talk compensation first.

CAL

For what?

FOY

For what? For helping you out. For losing my business. For *asking...*

(stands, wipes his pants)

This bed is disgusting...

CAL

You want to get paid to help solve Sonia's murder?

**

FOY

Dude, please, I'm in PR, okay? I know all about phrasing questions. Try it this way, "Do I want to get paid to help you get a book deal?"

CAL

Nobody's here for a book deal.

FOY

Bullshit, *everybody* wants a book deal.
(he's stoned)

I want a beer.

CAL

When did you meet Sonia?

FOY

Back off, man...

CAL

Start talking, Dominic.

FOY

I'm *talent*, asswipe. And I don't like the vibe.

CAL

Really.

(CONTINUED)

133 CONTINUED:

133

FOY lights a cigarette, enjoying his leverage.

CAL (CONT'D)
Non-smoking room-

FOY
-under your name.
(grabs his phone)
I wanna talk to my lawyer...

CAL
I'd think that over.

FOY
(dialing)
Yeah, whatever....

CAL
Any chance your lawyer has a
relationship with PointCorp?
(as Foy hesitates)
Does he?

FOY
She.

CAL
But she does, doesn't she?
(pressing)
And who's the bigger client?

Irritated, Foy flicks that cigarette at Cal.

...which is enough to make Cal SNAP. He's up in Foy's face:

CAL (CONT'D)
Listen Dipshit, you don't have any
cards to play here. Don't you get that?
If I want I can slant that article to
make it look like you were my source!
How do you think that'll play over at
the Medal of Freedom Initiative? You
won't live out the week!

That landed. But before Cal can capitalize:

DELLA
Hey guys...

Della just breezed in, closing the door behind her.

DELLA (CONT'D)
I'm taking lunch orders. Anybody hungry?

(CONTINUED)

133 CONTINUED: (2)

133

CAL caught mid-flame. Relaxing his grip. FOY shaken up.

FOY
(to Cal)
You can do that?

CAL
Try me, Foy-Dog.

Foy seems to get it now. *I'm screwed.* We CUT TO:

134 INT. MHOTEL - ROOM "B" -- DAY

134

VIDEO MONITORS -- two angles -- both suck. The team watches... as *Della and Cal interview Foy.* Those Oxy's have taken hold now. The beers are helping too:

FOY
...it was just this guy I know who hangs around the clubs. He works for a PR firm - a big one...

CAL
Name.

FOY
No...he's a friend. I ain't giving him up...he told me his company had a client - a special client, who needed a special employee. A girl...

DELLA
And you thought of Sonia for the job.
(Foy silent)
Why?

FOY
She had balls, she was smart.

CAL
And in debt.

FOY
That didn't hurt.
(aggrieved)
And it was way more than the forty they said on the news this morning - must have been 70 or 80 thousand to clear her up before she started. Which is a load more than they paid me. All I got was 20 and some shitty free office space. It's like a crypt in there.

134 CONTINUED:

134

CAL

Did they tell you who the client was?

FOY

No.

(not sure if he should say
this)

But Sonia told me. Told me about
PointCorp. And Collins. I didn't even
know who that was - I mean, I don't sit
around all day reading the Wall Street
Journal.

**
**

135 INT. MHOTEL ROOM "A" -- CONTINUOUS/DAY

135

Della and Cal with Foy.

DELLA

They wanted her to sleep with him?

FOY

No. She sorta went off-the-clock on
that one. Screwed everything up, too.

CAL

How'd they get her onto Collins' staff?

FOY

Sorry. Can't go there. Go torture
someone else for that shit.

CAL

Dominic, we have a deal. No one's here
to screw you. But we need to know who
was working this on the Hill.

FOY

They found a guy who could fix it.
Okay?

CAL

What guy? Who?
(leaning in)
Who?

FOY swallows hard. He knows he shouldn't be saying.

FOY

You're not gonna quote any of this
shit, right? I'm double-deep
background, right?

(CONTINUED)

135 CONTINUED:

135

DELLA

We keep our deals, Mister Foy.

Foy pauses, tweaking. Just about to cough up a name, when:

FOY

No way. Absolutely no way. I'd be
afraid to start my car in the mornings!

Stalemate. Cal looks to Della...

CAL

(an excuse)

We're outta ice. I'll be right back.

He grabs an empty ice bucket, heads out.

FOY

They're outta *everything* in this dive!

136 INT. MHOTEL - ROOM B -- CONTINUING/DAY

136

Cal enters. No niceties with the guys - just gets to a
phone:

137 INTERCUT WITH/INT. THE CAPITOL BUILDING -- DAY

137

STEPHEN just leaving a vote, coming through with GREER, when
her CELL starts ringing. She answers.

GREER

Greer Thornton.

CAL

Greer. It's Cal McAffrey.

GREER

Hello Cal-

She looks over at Stephen who makes it clear this isn't a
call he wants to take.

CAL

I need to speak to Stephen--

She's about to reply in the negative -

CAL (CONT'D)

Don't tell me he's not with you and
don't tell me he's busy. He NEEDS to
speak to me.

137 CONTINUED:

137

STEPHEN takes the phone.

STEPHEN

Cal

CAL

(no pleasantries)

How did you find Sonia?

STEPHEN

What?

CAL

Who put her in your office? Where'd the recommendation come from?

STEPHEN

Why?

CAL

Stephen. I think you've been played.
Who gave you her name?

STEPHEN

Played how? What're you talk--

CAL

Look, I can't dick-around about this
right now! How the hell did she wind up
in your office? Who recommended her to
you?

A long, pregnant pause. Stephen feels a little sick
inside...but he has to say it:

STEPHEN

Fergus. George Fergus.

That lands. Now Cal feels a little sick too...

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

He said she was a friend's daughter.

This thing just got bigger. Much bigger.

CAL

Doug Sponder's bachelor party, you
remember that hotel?

STEPHEN

Yes.

CAL

Get here. Alone. Now.

(CONTINUED)

137 CONTINUED: (2)

137

We STAY WITH STEPHEN pocketing the phone and --

STEPHEN
(to Greer beside him)
I'll meet you at the office.

GREER
We're late already...

STEPHEN
I'll call in.

138 INT. MHOTEL ROOM "B" -- AFTERNOON

138

PETE eats takeout. HANK on the phone. MILT checking the tapes. DELLA at her laptop --

...Foy can be seen on the monitor, sleeping in the next room. His Oxy-addled wheezing serves as a beacon for us, so we'll always know where he is. Cal stares at that monitor.

DELLA
Don't check your voice-mail. Cameron's just crushing us. She wants something she can print.

Cal shrugs, well-aware. Then:

CAL
I'm gonna need the room cleared, guys.

The men don't question him. They just grab their coats to go... which is when Cal notices that Della isn't moving.

CAL (CONT'D)
That means you too.

DELLA
Forget it. I'm not going.

139 EXT. MHOTEL - STREET ENTRANCE -- SAME/AFTERNOON

139

STEPHEN'S CAR pulling up. STEPHEN getting out. Hustling in and -

**

140 INT. MHOTEL - ROOM "B" -- RESUMING/AFTERNOON

140

Cal and Della...

CAL
Listen, Della...

140 CONTINUED:

140

DELLA

Since when does the subject of an investigation get his own *private preview* of another subject's interview? You're polluting the story.

CAL

Special circumstance.

DELLA

Which part? His being a congressman? His being a friend? Your crush on his wife? Help me out here.

(over him:)

You're going on what you believe about this guy instead of what you know. You're such a hypocrite.

That put Cal on his heels. He's silent.

DELLA (CONT'D)

This is my story too now. If you're about to kill it forever by letting him come in here, I want to at least be around to see it happen.

Before Cal can reply there's a KNOCK at the door. Cal and Della trade a look... He crosses to the door. Opens it...

Here's Stephen... surprised that Cal's not alone.

Stephen enters. The mood in here is instant frost.

CAL

Stephen Collins. Della Frye.

DELLA

Congressman.

No reply. He notes the VIDEO MONITOR - on which Foy remains asleep. Della looks to Cal, her opinion clear.

Cal crosses to the monitor, REWINDS the tape, pausing it on an image of Foy, seated...

CAL

You know that guy?

STEPHEN

No...

(looking closer)

Maybe. I don't know. Why?

(CONTINUED)

140 CONTINUED: (2)

140

CAL

I think you better sit down.

On Stephen's face, we CUT TO:

141 INT. NEWSROOM -- AFTERNOON

141

STAVITZ huddles with CAMERON:

STAVITZ

She's asking us to push the deadline.

CAMERON

Where the hell are they?

STAVITZ

You say that as if I should know.

142 INT. MHOTEL - ROOM "B" -- RESUMING/AFTERNOON

142

Cal nods to the monitor...

CAL

PointCorp wanted to plant someone on your staff. This guy found Sonia for them and took a fee. Fergus did the rest.

Stephen is ashen, no idea how to respond.

STEPHEN

That's...

CAL

They paid her eighty grand to get her out of debt, then three thousand a week to report back everything you were doing. She went dry on them and they killed her for it.

**

STEPHEN

(the words won't come)

That's just not... possible.

CAL

Stephen.

Cal hits PLAY. The monitor comes alive: Foy on tape...

142 CONTINUED:

142

FOY (ON MONITOR)

...so I get a call, "Go to the corner and buy a magazine." I get down there, there's a new guy, this hardcore, big-neck, Navy Seal dude waiting for me...

CAL (O.S.)

This is when?

FOY

Maybe a month ago. He's upset because Sonia's stopped givin' 'em anything.

CAL

What did he want you to do?

FOY

Fix it. Like it was a - hair dryer.

CAL

And did you?

FOY

I tried - she wouldn't answer my calls - I went to see her. All she did was cry...

DELLA

Crying because she was scared of them - somebody after her?

FOY

No. The only reason she was crying was Collins. Said she was in love with him. And now she was pregnant...hadn't told him. She was terrified he'd find out what she'd done...that he wouldn't want her or the kid if he found out. She got so wrecked about it she burned Twenty-Four thousand dollars in paychecks. Who does that?

**

**

STEPHEN looks as though he can barely breathe.

FOY (CONT'D)

I tried to get her to think about the publicity if it came out, an abortion, keeping her word, what her decisions meant for ME!

(fear-cracks)

Then she dies. Then I'm told it was a murder...and now I want no more to do with it -- I'M FUCKING TERRIFIED HERE.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

142 CONTINUED: (2)

142

FOY (CONT'D)

*I just please want to go somewhere
warm, come back to a blank-slate. So
write your story and get people OFF ME.
I'm nothing-*

CAL stops the tape, studies his friend. Della can see how hard all of this is hitting.

CAL

You need to cancel the rest of your day
and come back to the paper with me.
You're going on the record - everything
you know about this. And we're gonna get
these guys.

STEPHEN

(absently)

You know I can't do that...

The waves are hitting Stephen now: grief, loss, anger...

CAL

Stephen. You were right. She didn't
kill herself. They've murdered four
people. We're gonna prove that now. We
win. That's what you wanted, right?
Let's go sit down and get this on the
record. Screw 'em.

STEPHEN continues to stare at THE MONITORS. On the one that's still live, he sees Foy awakening, rising, disoriented.

STEPHEN

He's next door, isn't he?

CAL

Forget about him, he's a pimp.

Without warning, Stephen rises and BOLTS out the door.

143 INT. MHOTEL - HALLWAY -- CONTINUING/AFTERNOON

143

STEPHEN coming out fast -- nobody expecting this -- least of all Cal and Della, at Stephen's back...

144 INT. MHOTEL - "A" ROOM -- CONTINUING/AFTERNOON

144

STEPHEN piles in - a force of nature.

FOY

-- hey, dude, slow dow--

(CONTINUED)

144 CONTINUED:

144

...never finishing because Stephen just slammed him off his feet! FOY falling back into his room and --

FOY down! -- STEPHEN flooding in after him -- dragging him up -
- bouncing him off the wall -- PUNCHING NOW! -- one - two -
three monster shots to FOY'S FACE! -- *teeth spilling free* --
STEPHEN just about to launch a brutal kick into Foy's ribcage
when --

CAL and HANK grab him from behind and --

CAL

-- STOP! -- STEPHEN! -- WHAT'RE YOU
DOING? -- STEPHEN! --

STEPHEN -- just wild -- backs off -- shakes free! -- pounds
the guy some more.

...until Foy is immobile, barely breathing.

And Stephen stops - regards what he's done. No one in this
room can believe what just poured out of him. There are
tears flooding down his face. He looks to Cal, no idea what
to say, and stumbles to the door.

**
**

145 EXT. MHOTEL - CORRIDOR - A MOMENT LATER/AFTERNOON

145

Stephen falls out of the room, hurries down a corridor. Cal
follows.

CAL

(at his back)
Stephen? Stephen?
(no reply)
Turn around Goddamnit! I'm trying to
help you!

That spun Stephen around. For the first time he seems
utterly helpless - pathetic. But also furious.

**
**

STEPHEN

Help me?! Is that what you were doing
in there? *What the hell did I have to
hear that for?!* Did you like it,
actually being there the second I got
the news about her?

**
**
**

CAL

I thought you'd wanna know the truth.

**

STEPHEN

Please - that's *always* the dodge with
you! "*I'm pursuing the truth*"...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

145 CONTINUED:

145

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

except when it comes to the one thing
we really oughta be truthful about.

Okay. It's going to be one of those...

CAL

Listen, I'm not gonna do this shit with
you right now. I'm--

STEPHEN

Not content to destroy my marriage -
you want to destroy my career too!

**

**

CAL

Listen, asshole, your marriage is the
same train-wreck it's always been; you
wanna blame it on me? Great. But not
now. Do you know how far over the line
I just went for you?!

STEPHEN

For me? You sure about that?

CAL

Yeah. I'm sure.

STEPHEN

Uh-huh. And sleeping with my wife -
was that for me too?

**

CAL

I'm sorry.

**

(no reply)

I'm sorry about all of it.

STEPHEN

It's too late for that.

**

Feels like there's a mile between them.

CAL

Are you gonna come in with me, Stephen?
Are you gonna help me get these guys?

STEPHEN

Jesus, Cal. You've got to be kidding.

**

With that, he walks away. Cal just watches him go then turns
around to see: Della. She's been watching the whole
argument.

146 OMITTED

146

147 INT. KENNEDY CENTER - LOBBY -- NIGHT

147

An early evening children's event: "PETER AND THE WOLF". Cal bursts into the lobby, his eyes burning.

Cal, disheveled, on-fire, sees George Fergus, here with his TWO GRANDKIDS (5 and 7, boy and girl, dressed for the occasion). But before he can get close he is held back by ORGANIZERS, twenty yards from Fergus. Fergus laughs over pastries with other distinguished-looking white guys. Our TWO SINISTER GUYS are also there - discretely. **

CAL
(to the Organizer)
I need to get a word with the
Congressman. Tell him it's Cal McAffrey
from the Globe and I'm on deadline. **

The Organizer approaches Fergus like penitent Catholics approach the Pope. Whispers. Cal sees Fergus frown: *fuck him*. Cal pulls a notepad, writing as the Organizer walks back to him. Before the Organizer can say: 'Sorry.'

CAL (CONT'D)
Hand him this note. Now.

Organizer reluctantly walks back, note in-hand. Cal watches Fergus get angry, open it quickly. Switch to Fergus's POV, reading Cal's note: Sonia Baker's family says 'hi.'

Fergus looks up at Cal, smiles wide now, steps lively.

FERGUS **
Oh, *that* Cal McAff-

CAL
-we need privacy.

148 EXT. KENNEDY CENTER -- NIGHT

148

FERGUS and CAL emerge. Fergus all light and goodness... initially.

FERGUS
So what's up? How'd you find me-

CAL
(burning)
I need your comment on a story we're running tomorrow. You suggested Greer Thornton hire Sonia Baker, that's tantamount to ensuring Sonia got the job.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

148 CONTINUED:

148

CAL (CONT'D)

If it then turns out Sonia was reporting Stephen Collins' Committee findings to one of the very companies being investigated, and was eventually murdered by that company -- well Christ -- that might not look so good for you.

FERGUS

(face turns evil)

One: never use the Lord's name in vain with me. Two: how could you even assume a bright, naïve 25 year-old girl was, what: *a double agent?*

CAL

Because a bright, naïve, 25 year-old blonde sounds like the perfect double agent-

FERGUS

-Mr. McAffrey: I went to bat for a young girl whose family I met and respected. A family that seemed like the wholesome ideal upon which this country was founded-

CAL

-What's Sonia's Mom's first name?

FERGUS

(big beat)

Pardon-

CAL

-you heard me *Family Friend...*

Fergus hesitates, caught, turns deeper crimson. Then turns vicious. **

**

FERGUS

You really think your new owners - responsible corporate citizens - are going to let you publish any a' this speculative drivel? You'll be out of a job sooner than the devil can toss you on his pitchfork, son. **

**
**
**
**
**
**
**

Cal not exactly certain what that threat implies. **

**

CAL

Janine.

Fergus fumes to hide his embarrassment, bolts.

149 INT. GLOBE - CAMERON'S OFFICE -- NIGHT

149 **

Cameron is truly livid, but bottling it. Cal and Della sit there. Somehow Della feels like she is more on Cameron's team now.

**
**
**

CAL

Don't cave. I'm begging you. We've got them.

CAMERON

Got them how?

CAL

We've got the majority whip up to his eyeballs in collusion. We've got PointCorp planting Sonia Baker on Stephen's staff.

CAMERON

What we've got is our ace lying in a hospital with his Goddamn jaw wired shut. And when he finally can open his mouth the first thing out of it will be "I'm suing!" Then we've got every lawyer in a thousand mile radius calling on behalf of PointCorp to tell us that if we print the words "Sonia Baker," "death," and "PointCorp" on the *same page* it'll be the last one we ever publish!

**
**

CAL

You give me one more day and I'll have them pushing her in front of that train.

CAMERON

Really? Corporate won't let us print a word of any of this unless we have one of the major players on the record. And the only person who could do that won't -- will he? Perhaps you'd like to explain to me why.

**
**
**
**
**
**

Cameron glances at Della - did Della tell her what she heard during Stephen and Cal's argument?

**
**

CAL

They've been got at Cam. Fergus and his cronies are trying to shut us up. You aren't going to let them get away with it are you?

**
**
**
**
**

(CONTINUED)

149 CONTINUED:

149

CAMERON

It's not just them, Cal.

**

**

CAL

What're you saying?

**

CAMERON

I'm saying what you think I'm saying.
 The story is over. And as far as the
 owners of this company are concerned
 you are too. I can't protect you
 anymore... Right now I'm not even sure
 I'd want to.

**

**

**

There it was, the bottom. Cal's silent. He eyes the floor.

**

Then she STOPS HERSELF, mid-word. Just saw something that
 she can't quite compute: a man, walking toward this office.

But not just any man. *Stephen*, heading right at us...

Following her look, Cal turns... and *his* jaw drops too.

Here's Stephen, passing by desks that have suddenly gone
 pindrop quiet... with Anne by his side.

Cal rises as they approach. Cameron remains silent.

Then Stephen and Anne complete their journey through cubicle-
 land, finally arriving at Cameron's office... and:

STEPHEN

(resolved)

You want the story?

CAL

On the record?

STEPHEN

(nods)

Yes.

**

**

150 INT. GLOBE - CONFERENCE ROOM -- NIGHT

150

A TAPE RECORDER whirrs. Five different NOTEPADS are opened
 simultaneously. Cal has a pen in hand.

Stephen sits beside him, flanked by Anne. Cameron's here.
 Della too. Kawai. Stavitz.

It all feels official, and irrevocable. That plays across
 Stephen's face. He takes a deep breath... and begins:

(CONTINUED)

150 CONTINUED:

150

STEPHEN

I was first introduced to Sonia Baker in April of 2007, after she was hired as a research assistant by my office. She'd been personally recommended to us by the chief whip congressman George Fergus...

**

This is a giant we're watching, a man of vast integrity. Cal knows that. Anne does too.

As Stephen goes on, something *horrible* is happening, just blocks away. And he is entirely unaware of it:

150A INTERCUT WITH/INT. ANONYMOUS APARTMENT -- NIGHT

150A

It is Bingham. We see him in a series of close-ups. Fractured. He goes to a cupboard and pulls out a case...Inside is a "take-down" rifle.

Bingham starts putting it together as we return to Stephen:

150B INT. GLOBE - CONFERENCE ROOM -- NIGHT

150B

Stephen continues.

STEPHEN

Sonia and I became romantically involved - sexually involved - three months later.

He looks to Anne, sickened with guilt. She takes his hand. Cal tries not to react. Della tries not to notice. Anne smiles gently at her husband, "Go on." He nods...

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

I have now learned that she'd been planted on my staff as a spy - by congressman Fergus and other like-minded individuals whose ultimate goal was to sabotage my investigation of PointCorp and other private-security contractors currently in business with the United States Government.

**

Reactions all around: Stephen has just officially gone outside the club. The balls on this guy...

150C INTERCUT WITH/INT. ANONYMOUS APARTMENT -- NIGHT 150C

Bingham - a look of total concentration on his face - continues to piece the gun together. He pushes bullets into a chamber.

150D INT. GLOBE - CONFERENCE ROOM -- NIGHT 150D

Cal, Della and Cameron are rapt listening to Stephen.

STEPHEN

Somewhere, I don't yet know where, is a paper trail that will document the payments made by PointCorp to Sonia. She received three thousand dollars a week for making regular reports to PointCorp about the nature and progress of my investigations into their fraudulent and criminal practices. But when my relationship with her grew, she ceased her spying on their behalf. I believe they killed her for it.

No one's more relieved and happy than Cal, whose faith in this man is being validated, triumphantly..

Anne looks to Stephen - giving him the strength to do this.

150E INTERCUT WITH/INT. ANONYMOUS APARTMENT -- NIGHT 150E

BINGHAM is now getting dressed - in full camo uniform. Polished boots. A cap. He looks at himself in the mirror. Our thought: he's planning to kill Stephen disguised as a soldier.

150F INT. GLOBE - CONFERENCE ROOM -- NIGHT 150F

STEPHEN

I believe they were also responsible for the subsequent deaths of Deshaun Stagg, Vernon Sando, and Mandi Brokaw... In that world, such casualties are referred to as "collateral damage. I believe that only my public profile has protected me from a similar fate.

He looks to Cal, "That's it."

Cal puts down his pen. Della shuts off the tape recorder.

150F CONTINUED:

150F

There's a sort of reverential silence hanging in this room now. Everyone in here knows what he has just risked.

Still, no one has spoken, until:

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

So... as political suicides go - how was that?

Everyone laughs, easing the tension...

Stephen and Anne rise.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

Thank you, everyone.

Folks start filing out now, one look of respect after another. Stephen shakes a few hands. Until it is just Anne, Stephen, and Cal. Alone together.

CAL

It's gonna be a circus for a while.

STEPHEN

I earned it. Thanks for sticking with me.

ANNE

Thank you Cal.

They hug each other. The three of them have been on a long, hard road. But they've ended with some kind of equilibrium. They all seem to see where things stand now - it feels sad but necessary. And final.

Then Stephen and Anne leave the Conference Room. Cal watches them leave. He stands still for a beat. It's the end of something, bittersweet as Hell.

CAL

Figured you'd be at your desk by now, blasting this thing on-line.

DELLA

I kinda thought you should have the honor of writing it.

(that caught him)

Besides, a piece this big, people oughta have *newsprint* on their fingers when they read it - don't ya think?

151 INT. GLOBE - CAL'S DESK -- LATER NIGHT 151

Cal, at his desk, the sounds of fingers hitting keys. The impact of this night is still etched on his face.

Then, he's done. He reads a last line one more time, making sure it's right.

Then he hits SEND.

151A INTERCUT WITH/INT. ANONYMOUS APARTMENT -- NIGHT 151A

Bingham - now fully dressed picks up a cheap "pay-as-you-go" cell phone. Dials a number. He gets a message machine. We don't hear who's it is.

BINGHAM

Sir. It's Robert Bingham. I apologize for calling you directly. But I realize that there is only one way to see this through - to protect you and all of us. Goodbye.

He hangs up the phone, takes out the SIM card and then carries both it and the phone through to a small kitchen. He puts both down the garbage disposal. Switches it on: the phone is cut into a million little pieces and washed down the drain.

152 INT. TOWN CAR -- SAME/NIGHT 152

Stephen and Anne sit in the back of a TOWN CAR. It pulls over. Outside we can see various military types - uniformed - walking around.

Stephen reaches for the door, turns to his wife:

STEPHEN

I love you.

ANNE

I love you.

A squeeze of her hand, then Stephen gets out. We're right in front of the Canon Building. To our right, like a beautiful beacon, is the Capitol.

152A INTERCUT WITH/INT. ANONYMOUS APARTMENT -- NIGHT 152A

Bingham walks over to the table where the rifle lies assembled, puts the barrel into his mouth and pulls the trigger. Head blown off.

153 INT. GLOBE - DELLA'S DESK -- NIGHT 153

Cal and Della, at her desk. He opens a bottle of JACK DANIELS, sets down two paper cups.

CAL

Feels like a night for it - don't ya think?

DELLA

Kinda does, yeah.

154 INT. COLLINS CONGRESSIONAL OFFICE -- NIGHT 154

Stephen enters his office, alone. A deep exhale, as if a weight has just now come off his shoulders.

155 INT. GLOBE - DELLA'S DESK -- RESUMING/NIGHT 155

They toast with their paper cups.

CAL

Have you ever seen one of those pens they had in the seventies - that hung by a leather thong round your neck? Like a necklace. I'm getting you one.

DELLA

The only jewelry a reporter needs, heh?

Smiles. They drink... Della spilling some on her shirt.

DELLA (CONT'D)

Shoot!

She laughs. So does Cal.

Then, without apparent cause, his smile begins to fade. Something just occurred to him. Something troubling...

DELLA (CONT'D)

What?

CAL

Nothing.

155 CONTINUED:

155

He shakes it off, grabs for the bottle...

156 INT. COLLINS CONGRESSIONAL OFFICE -- RESUMING/NIGHT

156

Stephen passes through the empty desks, heading for his private office.

157 INT. GLOBE - DELLA'S DESK -- RESUMING/NIGHT

157

Cal starts to take a swig... then puts his cup down. Just can't shake this one troubling thought.

DELLA

What?

CAL

Nothing. It's stupid.

But it's not going to leave him alone... so:

CAL (CONT'D)

Has anyone reported on Mandy Brokaw's death yet?

DELLA

Huh?

CAL

Has it been in a paper or on the internet yet?

DELLA

No - the cops haven't released it to anyone. They have to notify the family.

CAL is disturbed by something - we don't know what. He gets up and strides over to his desk. He starts rummaging through a pile of old newspapers - throwing them everywhere.

DELLA (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

But he doesn't answer - he's found the newspaper he was looking for.

We don't see what it is he sees in it - but we see its impact.

CAL

(to himself)

Jesus...

157 CONTINUED:

157

Without saying anything he grabs the newspaper he's been looking at and his jacket and starts to leave.

DELLA

What's wrong?

CAL

(over his shoulder)

Tell Cam to hold the story.

Della is now beyond worried. What the hell is this?

DELLA

What are you saying, Cal?

CAL

Just get her to hold the goddamn story!

And he's gone.

158 INT. STEPHEN'S OFFICE -- RESUMING/NIGHT

158

Stephen finishes studying his briefing documents and is about to start on another folder when he is startled by:

CAL (O.S.)

What the hell have you done, Stephen?

Stephen pauses, a bit startled. Cal waits in the doorway.

STEPHEN

What?

Cal crosses the room... silently dropping the newspaper he pulled from under his desk. It's the one which has a color photo of Walter Shroyer, Stephen and their army buddies in Kuwait in 1991. We see it now for the first time in its entirety. There is Stephen - young, handsome, determined - and there is Walter Shroyer - and there, blurred, half-hidden by another buddy is ROBERT BINGHAM - young, maybe 18, serious looking, but definitely him. The man who killed Sonia and the others. The man Cal has recognized from Fred Summers' apartment.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

(game up)

I met him in Kuwait in '91. We weren't even in the same regiment - but this one night I found him wounded, scared out of his wits. I saved his life, I suppose. He was a 17 year old hick from Missouri but he was proud of what we had done there - he was a proud soldier.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

158 CONTINUED:

158

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

He wrote to me all the time - I didn't
reply much. We kind of lost touch...

He dries up.

CAL

(insistent, disgusted)

But you were still in touch enough to
get him to kill your girlfriend.

STEPHEN

No! I swear to you! I never wanted him
to kill her!! I loved her Cal. She's
the only woman I ever properly loved!

CAL

(cold, vicious)

I don't believe you anymore.

STEPHEN

I started to get suspicious of Sonia.
Started to notice little lies -
inconsistencies. I thought she might
have a lover...and Robert offered to
follow her...it didn't take him long to
discover what she was doing, how she
was betraying me.

CAL

You asked him to kill her!

STEPHEN

To observe. To observe.

CAL

You told him to Push her in front of a
train --

STEPHEN

FUCK YOU! I said observe. He went off
the reservation.

CAL

YOU'RE A LIAR, STEPHEN. YOU USED ME!

That takes Stephen's breath away.

STEPHEN

I swear to Christ -- He seemed more
upset about what she was doing than I
was...He loved the military, Cal.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

158 CONTINUED: (2)

158

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

It disgusted him that these people wanted to make money from something that should be pure, that should be patriotic...he wanted to protect me. She had to stop --

CAL

She did stop. She tore up her pay-checks, risked her life for you.

STEPHEN

NO-NO...PLEASE DON'T SAY IT...I didn't know. You think this would've happened if I'd known? I WAS TEARING MY LIFE APART FOR HER! I didn't know any of it 'til Foy-

CAL

I DON'T BELIEVE YOU ANYMORE!

Stephen suddenly quiet. A different tack. He's bolder, more assertive now.

STEPHEN

You've done your homework the last few days. You know what these companies want to do to this country. They want to eat up the whole goddamn place. Privatize the police. Privatize the CIA. Privatize the FBI. This is the paramilitarization of our country Cal. Private armies running around doing what the fuck they want when they want. HERE. In America. It's not about Iraq or Afghanistan. That's just the beginning.

Cal tries to interrupt.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

If I go down, the whole country - God damn it, the whole world! - loses. And what will you accomplish? Yeah, I'll be front page for a few weeks. They'll hound Annie, they'll ask my grade school teachers if I was a loner at school. They'll speculate endlessly about why and how and all that shit!...It'll all be personal. All those creeps - Fergus, PointCorp - nobody's going to care about them. They'll all get away with it.

(CONTINUED)

158 CONTINUED: (3)

158

CAL

Save it for your next press conference,
okay?

STEPHEN

It's almost laughable Cal - your sense
of your own worth. What you don't
realize is that nobody gives a fuck
about what you guys write. A couple
days of shit storm then it's tomorrow's
wrapping paper. Nobody cares about the
news, Cal.

Cal looks at Stephen. Part of him knows this is true.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

You know those arguments we used to
have: who can change the world more,
the politician or the journalist? You
and I know there is no competition. And
here's one time you CAN make things
better, Cal - when you can change
something. By not publishing this
story.

We PUSH IN on Cal, slowly, the whole world bearing down on
him. It's just *heartbreak*.

His eyes find the floor, his face working. We keep PUSHING
IN on him, the camera just will not let him breathe again
until he decides, and declares himself.

CAL

She was a beautiful young girl Stephen.
Nobody had the right to kill her.

Those are tears in his eyes. He shuts them tight for a
second, thinking, weighing it all.

Then he opens them again. And studies his friend.

With that he turns and leaves.

In the distance, we begin to hear the sound of fingers
hitting keys. Steady, relentless, building... as:

159 INT. CAPITOL CORRIDOR -- NIGHT

159

Vast. Cold. Empty. CAL walks towards the exit.

160 EXT. WASHINGTON MALL -- NIGHT 160

CAL walks with snow falling around him, on him. He walks right past the snow-covered Korean War monument. A blanket of snow softening the black statues of the soldiers.

CUT TO

161 OUT OF THE WHITE: LETTERS -- FULL FRAME -- AS THEY ARRIVE 161
ON AN LCD SCREEN --

C-O-N-G-R-E-S-S-M-A-N I-M-P-L-I-C-A-T-E-D

WIDER TO

WORDS -- as *they arrive* --

...Collins of Pennsylvania, a three-term Democrat, has been linked to the man police believe to be responsible in the murders of Sonia Baker, Deshaun Stagg, and Vernon Sando...

WIDER TO

FINGERS speed slamming on a computer keyboard and --

WIDER TO

162 INT. WASHINGTON GLOBE -- NIGHT 162

Cal typing the story. A cold, hard look in his eyes and --

WIDER TO

CAL'S cubicle.

WIDER TO

JUST OUTSIDE CAL'S cubicle -- DELLA and CAMERON hanging by his door watching and waiting and --

WIDER TO

THE NEWSROOM -- *pulling back slowly* -- as we find STAVITZ and HANK and PETE and CHRIS KAWAI and ALL THE LAWYERS and then finally...

THE ENTIRE STAFF standing around -- the whole place almost frozen -- everyone here *knowing* -- waiting -- for CAL's copy to come down.

(CONTINUED)

162 CONTINUED:

162

Cal types in the final words of the article, goes to the top of the page and writes: A GLOBE SPECIAL REPORT BY DELLA FRYE AND CAL MCAFFREY.

Della's face. Cameron's face. A moment.

Cal gets up from the chair and starts putting on his coat.

CAMERON

Aren't you going to send it? I've only been holding the front page for 4 hours after all -

CAL

(to Della)

You send it.

And with that Cal is walking towards the elevators. All eyes on him.

Della steps forward and - taking a breath - hits the SEND key. Gone.

HARD CUT TO:

163 INT. PRINTING PRESS -- NIGHT

163

Dozens of huge machines rolling impossibly fast at a deafening volume. THE SOUND just overwhelming. Tomorrow's news flying past on a blur of massive sheets. An inevitability.

As the end credits begin to roll a different noise begins to seep in - the sound of television and radio speculation about Stephen Collins - was he a psychopath? What did his mother do wrong? Where did he go to school? As this cacophony builds, we start to see tabloid headlines and snippets of news-shows all discussing Collins and the murders -- NONE OF THEM even mention PointCorp....