

The Front Runner

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Note: The following screenplay features overlapping dialogue in the style of films like *The Candidate*. The idea is to create a true-to-life experience of the Hart campaign of 1987.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

THE HARTS

GARY HART, SENATOR
LEE HART, HIS WIFE

THE CAMPAIGN TEAM

BILL DIXON, CAMPAIGN MANAGER
BILLY SHORE, AIDE-DE-CAMP
KEVIN SWEENEY, PRESS SECRETARY
JOHN EMERSON, DEPUTY CAMPAIGN MANAGER
DOUG WILSON, POLICY AIDE
MIKE STRATTON, LEAD ADVANCE MAN
IRENE KELLY, SCHEDULER

AT THE WASHINGTON POST

BEN BRADLEE, EXECUTIVE EDITOR
ANN DEVROY, POLITICAL EDITOR
AJ PARKER, POLITICAL REPORTER
DAVID BRODER, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT
BOB KAISER, MANAGING EDITOR

AT THE MIAMI HERALD

KEITH MARTINDALE, EXECUTIVE EDITOR
JIM SAVAGE, EDITOR
TOM FIEDLER, POLITICAL REPORTER
JOE MURPHY, INVESTIGATIVE REPORTER
ROY VALENTINE, PHOTOGRAPHER

THE TRAVELING PRESS

JACK GERMOND, BALTIMORE SUN COLUMNIST
IRA WYMAN, AP PHOTOGRAPHER
ALAN WEINBERG, PHILADELPHIA ENQUIRER
ANN MCDANIEL, NEWSWEEK
MIKE SHANAHAN, AP

MIAMI

DONNA RICE, MODEL AND ACTRESS
BILLY BROADHURST, HART'S PERSONAL FRIEND
LYNN ARMANDT, RICE'S FRIEND

"1984"

EXT. SAINT FRANCIS HOTEL, SAN FRANCISCO. NIGHT.

We open inside a NEWS VAN. Four monitors show different competing feeds. A waiting reporter. Color Bars. A political commercial. One monitor is cueing up a debate clip.

A light pops on the reporter and he springs to life.

TV REPORTER

Yes, we learned just a few minutes ago that Senator Hart will soon be leaving this hotel back to the convention hall, where he will concede -- yes, he *will concede* -- to former vice president Walter Mondale. Hart won every state --

We pull out to reveal a PRODUCER hovering over an ENGINEER.

PRODUCER

His hair looks like shit. When's he getting it cut?

ENGINEER

That is the new cut.
(shakes his head)
We can't get a clear line.

PRODUCER

Are we at full stick?

The producer pops her head out to check the dish. We tilt up to see people watching from above as the dish slowly rises.

We pan to find the blown-dry reporter. Beyond him is another NEWSMAN, delegates, protestors, cops, etc...

TV REPORTER

-- West of the Mississippi River in this fight for the Democratic nomination. But in the end, it was Mondale's taunting question, taken from a Wendy's advertisement, that dogged his insurgent campaign.

PRODUCER

Roll tape. Go!

HART (O.C.)

I think the dedication of our party to minority people in the South...

We push back into the van to see ACTUAL FOOTAGE - WALTER MONDALE at a debate with Hart.

MONDALE

I hear your new ideas, I'm reminded
of that ad - *Where's the beef?*

A ROAR of laughter and applause as Hart tries to be heard.

HART (O.C.)

If you'd listen just a minute --"

We're pulling away from the monitor.

PRODUCER

Ok, go Steve.

REPORTER (O.C.)

Senator Hart will take the stage
tonight to --

ENGINEER

Hold it Steve, hold it! We lost the
signal.

REPORTER

(continuing unbeknownst)
Share his thoughts with the
many thousands of voters and
activists who fought hard
these last months.

PRODUCER

The fuck is going on up
there? Talk to me. Are we
facing south?

(peering up at the roof)
Steve, would you shut up? We
lost the signal again.

ENGINEER (CONT'D)

I *think* we're facing South.
Supposed to be south, yes?

PRODUCER

Well, maybe you should invest in a
god damn compass.

REPORTER

(continuing unbeknownst)
Senator Hart broke from
relative obscurity when he
took the New Hampshire
primary...

PRODUCER (CONT'D)

Would someone tell him to
shut the fuck up. No one's
listening. Ah, what's the
point?

We pop back outside the news van to find a couple guys we'll
come to know as STRATTON and WILSON. Smoking cigarettes.

STRATTON

... Guy just tried to pin my lapel.
Didn't even ask.

WILSON

How far are we from the O'Farrell
Theater...? Just curious.

They cross the street through traffic. Stratton tells a story about losing the tip of his finger while starting a golf cart as a young staffer.

We boom up and find a THIRD FLOOR WINDOW. A guy we'll come to know as EMERSON is sitting on the sill. He's wearing a WHITE ELECTION HAT. It reads "HART". He takes it off, examines it one last time, then tosses it down to the street below.

INT. VIP SUITE, ST. FRANCIS HOTEL. CONTINUOUS.

Stratton and Wilson enter the room still jawing. *The staffers were cute on the McGovern campaign.*

We pan to find a guy we'll come to know as BROADHURST. He's smoking in the bathroom with a attractive female staffer.

BROADHURST

You can't even imagine... There
ain't nothing like sleeping on the
open ocean, darling.

We find Emerson grabbing a drink at a small wet bar. It's a mixed crowd. Staffers and donors. The mood is low key, but people still mingle.

EMERSON

What's the plan for after?

STRATTON

Can we hold off the '88 talks for
just a moment.

EMERSON

I meant drinks.

STRATTON

Oh, the Hawaiian place.

WILSON

It's Polynesian.

We move through bodies to find GARY HART, sitting on an aging sofa, PHONE and a VODKA, finishing up the worst phone call you can make in politics.

HART
(cradling a corded phone)
Yeah, OK. I appreciate it, Walter.

His wife and college sweetheart LEE, wipes an eye and holds his arm. He makes meaningful eye contact with BILL DIXON.

Nearby are his son and daughter, JOHN and ANDREA.

HART (CONT'D)
(to his wife Lee, quietly)
I'll come with you back to Denver.

LEE
You should stay.

Nearby, JOHN EMERSON chats up BILLY SHORE about the Russian Olympic boycott.

Stratton checks his watch and shows Shore the time. He nods. Wilson pulls out speech and checks it one last time.

Stratton and Shore approach the sofa where Hart sits.

STRATTON
It's time, Senator.

WILSON	SHORE
(to Hart)	(to Wilson)
Remember to hit homelessness.	Doug. Come on.

HART
(to Lee)
I don't want you to fly alone.

LEE
I'm fine. I'll take the kids. You need to be in DC.

HART
I don't need to be anywhere.

LEE
Yeah, you do.

STRATTON	SHORE
We need to roll.	Gary?

BILLY SHORE, late 20s, helps Gary with his suit jacket. Stratton guides the Harts toward the door.

INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR - DAY

The team moves through heartbroken supporters offering ad libbed, "*Don't leave... stay in it...*" A couple secret service agents push through as PHOTO FLASHES POP.

Wilson continues to remind about policy.

SHORE

We promised homeless to Mondale.

WILSON

People are homeless. The name of the issue is "homelessness".

STRATTON

(struggling)

Come on, clear a path...

WILSON

(to Hart)

And Perestroika.

SHORE

It's a marker for '88.

HART

(to Wilson)

Homeless and Russians, got it.

Suddenly, COMMOTION. A woman screams. The secret service agents RUSH at Hart, pushing him back towards the suite.

STRATTON

What the fuck is --

Other agents converge on a man. For a moment, we see an ARM WITH A GUN being held up in the air.

AGENT

Active shooter... Active shooter...

LEE

Oh God! What?

The agents move like a scrum, pushing them back into...

INT. VIP SUITE, ST. FRANCIS HOTEL. CONTINUOUS.

Hart is pulled into a corner. An agent hovering over him.

AGENT

Redwood is secure.

We hear reports coming in over the walkie talkies as the team shares looks with each other. Stunned.

LEE
Gary.... Gary?!

They all look over at Hart. The secret service agent steps away to reveal him doubled over, clutching his side.

SHORE
Senator?!

AGENT
We need a paramedic in the suite.

Lee gets down on her knees to help, but Hart rears up LAUGHING hysterically, barely able to breathe.

LEE
Gary!!

But he can't stop laughing. After a long beat...

HART
Who shoots the loser?

INT. TRADER VICS, SAN FRANCISCO - MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT

Hart, tie loosened, still laughing. In an image unfamiliar for anyone today, Hart is drinking with his PRESS BUDDIES. JACK GERMOND (The Sun) DAVID BRODER (The Post) IRA WYMAN.

BRODER
Maybe he didn't like your jobs plan, either.

HART
We've been through that. It's a good plan... It *was* a good plan.

Reveal we are watching from another table, over the shoulders of a younger generation of reporters.

HART (CONT'D)
Did anyone find out this guy's reasons?

WYMAN
Yeah, they found a photo of you in his wife's purse.

Off laughter, we move to the Kids Table. ALAN WEINBERG, ANN MCDANIEL, DAVID AXELROD drinking cheap beer.

MCDANIEL

You really want to follow Mondale
around for another six months?

WEINBERG

My apartment is grim. I'll take the
free meals.

MCDANIEL

Yeah, that's how I feel about my
boyfriend.

BOB WOODWARD stops by the big boys table.

AXELROD

Holy shit, look, it's Woodward.

MCDANIEL

Think he still comes into the
newsroom?

WEINBERG

I heard he doesn't take a salary.

MCDANIEL

Doesn't need to. Have you seen his
house?

WEINBERG

Have you?

We find Hart and Woodward now at the bar sharing whiskeys.

WOODWARD

... She'd have won you New Jersey
if you hadn't made that dumbass
crack about the water.

HART

No one's got a sense of humor
anymore.

WOODWARD

Fuck 'em if they can't take a joke.
(beat while he drinks)
How's Lee doing?

HART

She needs a rest.

WOODWARD

Mondale did you a favor. Reagan's
going to crush him.

HART
Maybe. Probably.

WOODWARD
You'll have an open road in '88.

HART
'88... right.

WOODWARD
Next time, they're going to want
the one thing you won't give.

HART
What's that?

WOODWARD
Everything else.

HART
Right.

OPENING TITLES

And then BLACK. We hear a woman crying.

TITLE SLIDE: WASHINGTON. 1987.

INT. BEDROOM, GEORGETOWN. EARLY MORNING.

Tammy Faye Bakker cries through runny mascara on CNN -
"Charges expected in Bakker Family Scandal"

The room is dark, but we find Gary's legs on the edge of his
bed. He's pulling on his trademark COWBOY BOOTS.

TAMMY FAYE
*... And so I always say, 'Lord, I
trust you with me.'*

Gary stands and leaves.

INT. GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY AUDITORIUM, WASHINGTON

A debate between GARY HART and BOB DOLE is in full swing.

HART
President Reagan has allowed our
cities to decay while he buys
enough warheads to destroy the
planet 30 times over.

(MORE)

HART (CONT'D)

Imagine if every library could have a computer. Every school. Every home.

DOLE

Why don't we just buy everyone a microwave? And a television set while we're at it?

HART

I'm interested in educating the next generation... not entertaining them.

MODERATOR

This is beginning to sound like a campaign debate... Did either of you want to announce something?

Light laughter and clapping from the audience. Young people are clearly charmed by Hart's charisma.

In the wings we find Billy Shore, four years older. He's watching and nodding. ALAN WEINBERG approaches with a smile.

WEINBERG

Mr. Billy Shore, what's the story?

SHORE

It's not going to happen today, Alan... But keep asking.

WEINBERG

You hear Sonny Bono announced. He's running for mayor of Palm Springs.

SHORE

Come on. I can guess his slogan.

They both stumble some sort of *"He's got you babe"*.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - "HART FOR PRESIDENT" HQ, DENVER

Drop-tile ceiling, 35-year old carpeting with paint to match. A college aged intern is setting up three unmatching TVs. One features Hart at Georgetown.

Staffers from '84 reunite with hugs. Some holding suitcases.

A PHONE TECH is trying to open the phone jack box with a screwdriver, but the screws are stripped. He grabs a small crowbar from his bag, and pries the door off with a loud POP.

PHONE TECH
(coughing, sputtering)
Ain't gonna hold twenty-five lines.

Mid-way through the room, 50 or so VOLUNTEERS and STAFFERS are gathered in a circle, rapt, with DIXON, campaign manager.

DIXON
These other candidates, they're all decent guys. They all want the best for this country. But they are Not Going To Win. You know it, they know it, most importantly, George Bush knows it. That's why they're all gunning for us. We don't win this primary, kiss the White House good bye. And kiss your future goodbye. Because, and I don't know how the hell this happened, but damn near all of you in here are younger than me. So it is truly your future that is at stake here.

The phone tech continues to pry ceiling tiles loose, using a staple gun to drop phone cord from the ceiling.

MODERATOR (ON TV)
They call you and some of your younger colleagues the Atari Democrats.

HART (ON TV)
I've heard. I didn't coin that.

MODERATOR (ON TV)
Have you played Atari?

HART (ON TV)
I tried Asteroids with my son a few times. I mostly drifted around getting pelted with rocks. Felt like my first term in the senate.

We find KEVIN SWEENEY (press secretary) along with Wilson and IRENE KELLY (campaign scheduler) around a PHONE TREE. Wilson is distracted by Hart on television.

KELLY
If line three rings, don't pick up. That's the fax.

SWEENEY
What if line one and two are busy?

KELLY
Use line four.

WILSON
(watching the TV)
How does he look that good?

SWEENEY (CONT'D)
Genetics.

Swing back to Dixon building with steam with the volunteers.

DIXON
So, when you're tired and your feet hurt and your hands are freezing because you've been knocking on doors in Nashua for twelve straight hours. When you miss your boyfriends and girlfriends, your kids. When you're tired of eating leftovers because we don't pay you jack shit, you think about the opportunity we have right now, and the cost to this great country if we squander it. The future of this country is in your hands. That's no exaggeration. It's in your hands. Hold it carefully.

INT. THE WASHINGTON POST NEWSROOM. CONTINUOUS.

The newsroom's humming as Hart's debate continues on TV.

BEN BRADLEE's office, where the legendary editor, seated behind his desk with Watergate-era photos behind him, is meeting with about 7 editors and reporters.

In the room are: ANN DEVROY (30s, the political editor), DAVID BRODER (50s, the chief political correspondent), BOB WOODWARD (40s, reporter of Watergate fame), BOB KAISER (40s, national editor), and AJ PARKER from earlier.

BRADLEE
Let's assume Cranston's out. Who're we missing?

BRODER
If Cranston doesn't know he's out, someone better tell him.

Devroy looks at the TV, part distracted, part annoyed.

DEVROY
Gore's looking at it.

Al Gore? KAISER BRADLEE
Is he old enough?

DEVROY (CONT'D)
He's 38, I think?

BRODER
His daddy could win him the South.

KAISER
Have you seen the wife? Tipper?

BRODER
And Dukakis, maybe.

BRADLEE
Who?

BRODER
Governor of Massachusetts.

BRADLEE
Du-ka-kis. That's not going to look
good on a campaign poster.

KAISER
Add a "K". He could win the South.

Bradlee watches Hart on TV for a moment. Parker notices.

PARKER
Gallop's got Hart beating Bush by
twelve.

BRADLEE
Twelve? Jesus. Woodward, you know
the guy. What do you think?

WOODWARD
Gary Hart? He could win it. I mean,
he's got the hair.

DEVROY
How many points you think the hair
is worth?

BRADLEE
Six points. Four if it's windy.

Laughter, as we hear from the TV...

DOLE

I think it's a little lofty for Senator Hart to be discussing our grand future without crediting President Reagan with the reforms we're seeing in the Soviet Union.

HART

We didn't bankrupt the Soviets. Communism bankrupted itself, morally and economically. You don't get credit for kicking down a door that's already open.

Applause. Hart smiles at Dole, who kind of smiles back. There's genuine camaraderie amongst these men.

INT. HART CAMPAIGN OFFICE, DENVER. CONTINUOUS.

The campaign team sits in folding chairs.

KELLY

Ribbon-cutting at the end of the week, and then a run-through of the grand announcement, six thousand feet above sea level, at Red Rocks.

SWEENEY

Has anyone been able to move him off this weird mountain man thing?

EMERSON

He's entrenched.

WILSON

Technically, he can't be entrenched if he's on top of a mountain.

DIXON

There's a long storied history of announcing one's candidacy in a drab shit colored ballroom with electricity... and lights...

SWEENEY

And elevators.

KELLY

Has anyone told him we can't drop balloons from a mountain?

STRATTON

Maybe we can rent a plane.

Wilson continues to watch Hart on TV, enamored.

WILSON

We didn't prep any of this. He's just shooting from the hip.

Dixon gets the attention of a young female staffer, GINNY TERZANO. He motions for a coffee. She nods and walks off.

KELLY

She's not the one who gets the coffee.

SWEENEY

We'll need water for the press. Maybe oxygen.

EMERSON

And beer.

STRATTON

Good luck. I moved two weeks ago and still can't find a decent package store.

DIXON

Okay, come on, let's focus. Please.

KELLY

We've got a down weekend in Miami.

An exchanged glance over this.

WILSON

(turning to Stratton)

You haven't found the one on Wynkoop? Right around the corner.

STRATTON

(to Emerson)
Doesn't it close at like 5?

EMERSON

I'll put together some local party leaders out of Fort Lauderdale.

DIXON

We're not doing that.

EMERSON

We're not getting endorsements?

DIXON

We're not filling up photo albums with people who'll think we owe them something.

EMERSON

Anything else we should know?

DIXON

No barbecues.

SWEENEY

Dix... The road to the
presidency goes through the
Iowa State Fair.

EMERSON

Yeah, what about the steak
fry?!

DIXON (CONT'D)

Not this year.

SWEENEY

Jesus. Who's staffing Miami?

KELLY

Billy's there all weekend.

SWEENEY

(to Dixon, surprised)
You're going to Miami?

KELLY

Billy B, Broadhurst, not Shore.

SWEENEY

Damn, there's a lot of Billy's
around here.

DIXON

I'm Bill. Only an 8-year-old should
be called Billy.

STRATTON

What is Billy B's exact position on
this campaign?

DIXON

He's a Louisiana lobbyist. His
chief contribution to the political
process seems to be gumbo and
bourbon.

EMERSON

And dirty jokes. He makes the
senator laugh.

KELLY

Last week in April we kick off and
hit the road, starting with a grip
and greet in Kansas.

SWEENEY

Kansas is a go?

DIXON

We *think* Kansas is a go.

SWEENEY

He'll actually talk about his parents?

DIXON

He finds the subject irrelevant.

WILSON

How...? Everyone's got parents. It's relatable.

DIXON

That he was born?

SWEENEY

This isn't four years ago. He's up by twelve points... People are going to want to know him.

KELLY

Is the senator comfortable... "sharing"?

DIXON

I've never met a man more talented at untangling the bullshit of politics into something anyone can understand. It's a gift - That he wants to share. And all people want is him to pose for a stupid photo. He will never understand that.

Everyone digests this. Terzanno returns with coffee.

KELLY

After Miami, it's up to New York for the newspaper publishers.

SWEENEY

Speaking of... What am I telling *People*?

DIXON

People is not a newspaper.

SWEENEY

It's circulation is thirty million. I think it counts.

DIXON

If you run covers about the sexiest man alive, you're not a newspaper.

INT. BEN BRADLEE'S OFFICE, WASHINGTON POST. CONTINUOUS.

ON THE TV -- CHEERS for Hart.

KAISER

He ever find the beef?

WOODWARD

Uh yeah, he wrote a pamphlet on it -
Reform, Hope, and the Human Factor.
(adding)
It's 94 pages.

KAISER

Some pamphlet.

DEVROY

(looking over at the TV)
What about his marriage?

More CHEERS from the TV as Devroy, annoyed now, reaches over and turns the volume OFF. We still SEE, but can't HEAR Hart.

KAISER

I heard she looks the other way.

BRODER

Sounds pretty ideal to me.

BRADLEE

Sounds like a zipper story.

DEVROY

What is the candidate's position on zippers?

WOODWARD

He prefers them open.

BRADLEE

Bob, weren't you two roommates at one point?

WOODWARD

When Lee kicked him out a few years back, he crashed on my couch.

DEVROY

And?

WOODWARD

And anything that happens on my sectional sofa is irrelevant.

DEVROY

AJ says the trail reporters are obsessed with it.

BRADLEE

Mr. Parker. Is that right?

PARKER

(stepping forward now)
Just a lot of stories circulating.

BRADLEE

Such as?

PARKER

I heard one when I was in Dallas. Someone saw Hart go up to his hotel room with this blonde heiress after a fund-raiser.

BRADLEE

Hm. When I was on trail, we were fucking each other, not writing about it.

PARKER

I'm married.

BRADLEE

Good luck with that.

DEVROY

Should we follow up?

BRADLEE

It's gossip. Do you know how many members of congress... I mean, we'd have to expel half the senate.

BRODER

And you wouldn't be *thrilled* with who was left.

DEVROY

I'm not *thrilled* now.

INT. HART CAMPAIGN OFFICE, DENVER. CONTINUOUS.

Where Hart is still giving his speech on the TV, Wilson mostly paying attention and the rest of them mostly not.

DIXON

Why do they need three hours to take a picture?

SWEENEY

That's just what they do. It's the cover of *People*.

EMERSON

And they want Gary *and* Lee.

SWEENEY

They call me every day, and they're not the only ones. I need to know what the plan is here.

DIXON

As in?

SWEENEY

There's a ton of interest in the separations, the getting back together. Wouldn't hurt us to put them both out there. Together.

DIXON

What are you talking about?

SWEENEY

The state of things... I mean... Are we talking about, I don't know, whatever their arrangement...?

DIXON

Arrangement - Did you really just say that out loud?

SWEENEY

People want to know the Harts. They want to see them walking their dog, pumping gas, being regular people.

DIXON

He's not a regular person. He's the next fucking president of the united fucking states.

KELLY	EMERSON
(aside to Emerson)	(whispering back)
I guess we're really not	We are not.
talking about it?	

INT. FIRST CLASS CABIN, UNITED 767 - MORNING

As passengers board, we linger on a row where a MAN and a WOMAN are reading magazines. We see the covers: The Bakkers and Jimmy Swaggart on Time ("Row in the Pulpit"), Charlie Sheen and "Platoon" on People.

HART
No, it's not up for discussion.

SHORE
Millions of people read *People*.

HART
(smiling)
Oh, it has words?

SHORE
People want to feel like they know you. It's a good forum for that.

HART
Billy. If I do a photoshoot,
what's tomorrow? Talent show?
Swimsuit competition?
(to himself)
A good forum.

SHORE
There will be photographers in
Kansas.

HART
And I will be smiling... like some
sort of game show host.

PLANE WOMAN
Excuse me. Mr. Hart? Would you mind
signing my diary?

He reflexively takes the daybook and signs it, then hands it back to the WOMAN with a smile. She actually *squeals*.

PLANE WOMAN (CONT'D)
Thank you!

She and HER FRIEND leave elated. Hart nods at the autograph seeker, then realizes Shore is staring at him in disbelief.

HART

What?

EXT. FRONT GATE AT TROUBLESOME GULCH, COLORADO. DAY.

A WAGONEER pulls up to a ranch-style gate at the end of a gravel drive. The only sign says: PRIVATE PROPERTY. KEEP OFF.

About 50 yards ahead, we see the log cabin where the Harts live. We can make out the figure of Lee spreading BIRD SEED on the ground. Hart gets out of the car and they share a hug.

INT. KITCHEN, TROUBLESOME GULCH - DAY

Gary and Lee enjoying sandwiches with Shore. Quick ad-libs about the quality of the food.

SHORE

Your husband won't move off of announcing at Red Rocks.

HART

It's a powerful backdrop.

SHORE

We're going to need to distribute oxygen tanks to the press.

LEE

Perhaps they'll conserve energy by not asking questions.

Lee smiles at Gary. He winks back.

GARY

Billy wants us to pose for People Magazine.

LEE

Don't be fooled, Gary loves *People*.

GARY

That is slander.

Their daughter ANDREA (23) wanders into the kitchen.

ANDREA

You should have told him it was for *Popular Science*.

SHORE

What do you think Andrea - This time next year, you might be living in the White House.

ANDREA

Just think what my chores will be.

LEE

Just think what your rent will be.

GARY

How are the applications coming?

ANDREA

Utterly fascinating.

GARY

You know there's a little school called Georgetown...

LEE

I think we have some pull.

EXT. AMONGST THE TREES - DAY

Gray and Lee are hiking. He stumbles for a second and she makes a quip about his age.

INT. LIVING ROOM, TROUBLESOME GULCH - AFTERNOON

Gary and Lee share a sofa, reading books. They're SURROUNDED BY BOOKS. Lee borrows Gary's PENCIL to take notes.

INT. ANDREA'S ROOM, TROUBLESOME GULCH - AFTERNOON

Andrea is filling out grad school applications. Gary is going over one of her personal essays.

GARY

I just don't think you need the paragraph about the iguana. It makes light of everything else you're saying about yourself.

ANDREA

Says I have a sense of humor.

GARY

Yeah, I don't think they care.

Andrea chuckles a little. Gary picks up her GUITAR for a second. Tries strumming. Can't play a lick.

ANDREA
So, red rocks?

GARY
A little too much?

ANDREA
If you're going to reframe the
debate... why not reframe the
location.

Gary smiles. The kind of smile we reserve for our daughters.

ANDREA (CONT'D)
Still getting a hard time about the
road trip with Kate.

GARY
We're your parents. We're supposed
to, you know... Just stay on main
roads. Call us every night.

ANDREA
That's not the problem.

Gary looks up from the application.

ANDREA (CONT'D)
It's Kate's dad... He's concerned
about us sharing a room. I think it
makes him *uncomfortable*.

GARY
One bed or two?

A beat. There is more to this conversation. Andrea hasn't come out of the closet, but there is an understanding.

GARY (CONT'D)
Hotel rooms aren't cheap...
(smiles)
Make an economics argument.

She smiles and nods a *thank you*.

EXT. HART CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Flashing bulbs. Hart, flanked by Lee on one side and Dixon on the other, holds a pair of scissors over a ceremonial ribbon.

A large sign reads - "HART FOR PRESIDENT. NEW IDEAS." We SEE assembled staff and supporters cheering and whistling.

Hart tries to cut the ribbon twice, but the scissors are too small and dull. He smiles gamely.

HART

Well this isn't much of an omen!

Amid the LAUGHTER, Shore appears to hand Lee a larger pair of scissors, which she hands to Hart.

LEE

To second tries!

Raucous LAUGHTER as Hart finally cuts the ribbon.

INT. HART CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - THIRTY MIN LATER

Quieter now as Hart moves briskly from cubicle to cubicle, accompanied by Dixon and Shore, meeting the STAFF.

We see dozens of young people at desks, folding tables, cubicles -- trying to look busy as they wait eagerly for Senator Hart to say hello to them. As he lets go of a YOUNG WOMAN's hand, moves on to the next --

DIXON

This is Joe Trippi, Senator. He's handling mail.

HART

Hi Joe.

(looking at his desk)

Is that supposed to be a chef?

JOE

Huh? Oh.

(re: a blue figurine)

It's a smurf. Brainy Smurf.

Actually. See? Glasses.

HART

(taking the smurf)

Uh-huh.

DIXON

And this is Ginny Terzano, part of our press team...

Hart goes to shake the next hand, absentmindedly pocketing the smurf. OFF Joe's '*Oh my god! He took my smurf!*' look.

EXT. RED ROCKS STATE PARK, COLORADO. MIDDAY.

Gary, Lee, and the campaign trudge up a dusty hill under the hot sun. The wind WHIPS around them audibly, obscuring some of the dialog, which is rushed and sometimes overlapping.

DIXON
(to Stratton)
Can you run this much cable?

STRATTON
We'll use a mult box.

DIXON
How much higher are we going?

The altitude is brutal on all of them, but the Harts.

HART
Just a little bit further.

STRATTON
The straight down light is going to make brutal shadows. I'd like to shade him somehow, for the cameras.

EMERSON
(gasping for air)
Mrs. Hart, are you okay with the climb?

LEE
(fine, smiling back)
Are you?

STRATTON
(to Hart)
How would you react to a tent?

HART
Poorly.

WILSON
(to Hart)
We should hit enlightened engagement before the three E's.

DIXON
Was Everest not available?

HART
(to Wilson)
Huh?

WILSON
Economy, education, environment.

DIXON
Are we calling it the three E's?

HART
(to Wilson)
Not that. The part before.

WILSON
I think foreign policy first?

HART
You forgot ethics.

DIXON
So there's four E's?

LEE
Gary'll need water.

HART
(to Lee)
What's that?

LEE
You'll need water.

STRATTON
(puffing for air)
We'll have... water.

EMERSON
(suffering)
... and beer.

WILSON
It's got to be the three E's.
Linguistically.

DIXON
So we're losing one of the E's?
Which one?

HART
Ha, environment, education, or the
economy. Which one do you suggest?

DIXON
Add an E. Who gives a fuck?

WILSON
(quietly to himself)
Four fucking E's.

STRATTON
Can I get some music? Maybe a high school band?

HART
(quickly)
No band.

STRATTON
Music is important. It sets a tone.

DIXON
(re: the band)
What are we, opening a Stater Brothers?

HART
Where's Bill?

DIXON
What do you need?

HART
Not you -- Shore.

DIXON
He's Billy, I'm Bill.

When they arrive at a small bluff, they find a couple staffers and Irene Kelly already waiting.

KELLY
(pulling Lee aside)
Lee, you'll be over here. I think you want to wear something dark, maybe a blue. Not black.

Stratton takes Hart's arm, guides him away from Lee.

STRATTON
Let's see how the light'll play.

LEE
(reaching for Hart)
Did you talk to Andrea?

HART
(over the wind)
Yeah, remind me when we -

STRATTON

We'll need makeup for that glare.

HART

Really?

DIXON

Can we have a moment?

Dixon pulls Hart away a couple steps.

DIXON (CONT'D)

Is all of this really necessary?
Brown Palace has a perfectly fine
ballroom...

HART

Dix, You know what brought me to
Colorado originally?

(Dixon doesn't know)

The railroad. I spent a summer
hammering railroad ties. Can you
imagine?

DIXON

I actually can.

HART

You know the last time a democratic
president came out of the west?

DIXON

Never.

HART

Exactly. The west is the future. It
always has been. And it still is.

OFF Hart, hair whipping in the wind, moving back to his
podium spot. Dixon watching him amongst the grandeur of the
giant rust colored rocks.

Lee recedes with her staff as aides bicker over where Hart
should stand. Someone mindlessly fixes his hair.

EXT. TROUBLESOME GULCH, COLORADO - DAY

Gary and Lee sit for a MAGAZINE PHOTOGRAPHER who is making
minor adjustments to lighting as hair and make up people fuss
with Hart's appearance. He's trying to smile but it's driving
him crazy. The photographer keeps giving instructions... The
tension builds when we suddenly...

EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN. DAY.

SILENCE, except for the sound of the GULLS softly cawing.

The sun reflects off the ocean. It's as peaceful as the last scene was hectic. We linger on the water for several seconds, seeing and hearing no one.

Then we realize our POV is Hart's POV.

In a a tee-shirt and shorts and dark shades, he leans on the HOTEL BALCONY RAILING and stares out over the ocean. He's so relaxed, we barely recognize him.

EXT. TURNBERRY ISLE PIER, MIAMI. AFTERNOON.

Hart drifts aimlessly down the pier with BILLY BROADHURST, early 50s, a Southern raconteur.

BROADHURST

He says, Billy B, for that I will
trade you the car and the crawfish!
I took that deal! I took it!

(laughing)

There it is, up ahead.

We SEE a YACHT with a dozen people milling around on deck, drinking. We HEAR strains of Miami Sound Machine.

BROADHURST (CONT'D)

Belongs to a guy named Soffer. Real
nice guy. Owns a shit ton of real
estate down here.

EXT. ABOARD THE MONKEY BUSINESS. NIGHT.

A PARTY AT SEA! It's LOUD, and Hart and Broadhurst are drinking tequila from tumblers, talking to LYNN ARMANDT, brunette in her 20s, and DANA WEEMS, a model in her 20s.

Everyone's drinking, SHOUTING over the music.

ARMANDT

A senator?

HART

(laughing, having fun)
I was. Recently retired.

ARMANDT

Wow. Like, in Florida?

Broadhurst leans into Hart. He points at a couple rich guys across the way, asking if Hart wants to meet them.

HART
Not interested.

An attractive 29 year old blonde joins the group. She whispers something in Armandt's ear. This is DONNA RICE.

Rice introduces herself but Hart can barely hear her name.

EXT. THE MONKEY BUSINESS. DAY.

The yacht drifts on the open ocean. Music now twinkling in the distance.

PRELAP:

HART (O.C.)
I intend -- as I always have -- to run a campaign of ideas.

EXT. RED ROCKS STATE PARK, COLORADO. DAY.

For a moment, we see a caravan of reporters hiking up to the press conference as they struggle to breath.

HART (O.C.)
Ideas have power. Ideas are what governing is all about.

TIME CUT - A CAMERAMAN is on his knees in the orange dust, a massively heavy camera slung on his shoulder.

We see Parker taking notes. Fielder a couple rows back. Hart stands without podium, framed by the majestic rocks.

HART (CONT'D)
We are running for the highest and most important office in the land.

We find Emerson, Shore and Stratton in a heated discussion.

EMERSON
It is your job, specifically, to convince the senator not to do things exactly like this.

SHORE
What exactly do you want me to say?

EMERSON

That he's going to look like an idiot... or worse, kill somebody. What the fuck is an axe throwing contest anyway?

WILSON

I believe they call it *Timbersport*.

STRATTON

I can look into light weight axes.

WILSON

Like, for children?

SHORE

Roosevelt was an outdoorsman. He killed a grizzly once.

(aside)

You know that's where teddy bears came from?

EMERSON

Fuck off.

WILSON

He's correct.

SHORE

It's true. Teddy Roosevelt killed a giant bear and they commemorated it by making plush toys for children. It was a national sensation.

STRATTON

Maybe he'd settle for log rolling?

EMERSON

How will they commemorate Gary Hart impaling a lumberjack?

SHORE

Might play well with the far left.

INT. HART CAMPAIGN PLANE. 90 MINUTES LATER.

No one obeys the traditional rules of flying. People mill around seats and stand in the aisle and perform interviews.

Meanwhile, Hart, chin in hand, alone, staring out the window. Nearby, Ann McDaniel is working Sweeney for time with Hart.

MCDANIEL

Sure looks overjoyed to be going home after thirty years.

SWEENEY

(swigging beer)

The Senator has very fond memories of Kansas. He cannot wait.

MCDANIEL

No one has fond memories of Kansas.

We find Dixon, Germond, Broder and Wyman playing cards. We're watching them from behind the economy curtain. In the BACK with most of the REPORTERS. Parker watches carefully.

An ORANGE enters foreground. A Sharpie scrawls a message on the peel. After a big windup, Weinberg rolls the orange up the aisle of the plane. It disappears into the front cabin.

A few REPORTERS cheer in their seats. We notice TOM FIEDLER, early 30s and nerdy, among them. He feels on the outside.

FIELDER

What'd you write on it?

WEINBERG

I asked where the goddamn food is.

SHANAHAN

Good. I'm starving. What do they have in Kansas? Hardys?

WEINBERG

Arbys.

Parker looks up to first class. He sees Germond, Broder and Wyman leaving the front section and heading back.

Billy picks up the ORANGE. Shows it to Hart. He smiles.

SHORE

Remember this time last year? Our bus had a flat outside Dubuque.

Parker is watching Hart chuckle in response, when Sweeney arrives at his seat.

SWEENEY

We've got a few minutes now if you're ready.

Parker practically hops out of his seat.

WEINBERG

Go get 'em tiger.

FIEDLER NOTICES and pulls Sweeney into the galley.

FIEDLER

Hey, when can I get some face time
with the Senator?

SWEENEY

We'll do a presser in Kansas.

FIEDLER

I mean one on one.

SWEENEY

We're not doing that this time.

FIEDLER

(motions to Parker)
What do you call that?

SWEENEY

The Washington Post.

Sweeney keeps moving as Fiedler takes this in.

Just then Weinberg notices the orange a few feet away,
tumbling back down the aisle. He reaches out and grabs it.

We see the words written on the orange in all caps: "HAVE AN
ORANGE. - GARY."

INT. HART CAMPAIGN PLANE. FIVE MINUTES LATER.

Off the flipping of a NOTEPAD, we find Hart and Parker facing
each other in the front, with Sweeney watching carefully.

PARKER

But you think the president hasn't
gone far enough?

HART

I know he hasn't. I know Gorbachev
too, don't forget.

PARKER

What can we do? Aside from
negotiate more reductions.

HART

There won't be any *peace dividend* if we don't meet Gorbachev more than halfway. I'd invite him to my inauguration.

PARKER

(doubtful)
The Soviet premier.

HART

Sure. Why wouldn't he come? Why wouldn't we show him democracy in action? We need to be bolder.

PARKER

You really think that might lay the groundwork for more negotiations?

HART

Groundwork? The groundwork is laid.

A BUMP OF TURBULENCE rocks the cabin for a moment. Gary casually catches his drink. Parker grabs his armrests.

HART (CONT'D)

(calming)
It's just wind.

PARKER

Yeah, uh huh.

A few more bumps. Parker doesn't love it.

HART

Close your eyes.
(off Parker's reluctance)
Seriously.

Parker finally shuts his eyes.

HART (CONT'D)

We're driving down a country road.

The cabin jostles again.

HART (CONT'D)

See. We hit a few bumps. Truck keeps going. You've been doing this your whole life. Some roads aren't paved. That's all.

The plane settles. Parker opens his eyes.

PARKER
(embarrassed)
Thank you.

HART
You got it... So the Soviets are in
an economic tailspin, but change
has to be managed. Otherwise you'll
get a power vacuum, in Asia and the
MidEast. You know what fills
vacuums?

PARKER
Human nature?

HART
Exactly. Wars. Dictators. Religious
extremism.

PARKER
That's your view of human nature?

HART
Didn't they teach you Tolstoy at..?

PARKER
Yale. I was a history major.

HART
(rummaging for a book)
Here.
(hands him a worn copy of
Resurrection)
It'll teach you something about the
Soviets, too.

PARKER
Thank you. I'll get it back to you.

HART
Keep it. I'm not a library.

EXT. TARMAC, AIRPORT - DAY

Staffers and journalists exit the plane and try to make sense
of their next move as they wander towards the terminal.

EXT. MAIN STREET, OTTAWA, KANSAS. DAY.

The Hart MOTORCADE enters the town square. People take
notice. Some wave.

Inside, Hart looks out with mixed feelings for his childhood.

INT. OTTAWA UNIVERSITY CHAPEL, OTTAWA - DAY

Hart has a private moment in the church he grew up in. It's quiet and kind of beautiful. An organ player sits down and warms up the keys.

INT. OTTAWA UNIVERSITY CHAPEL, OTTAWA - DAY

Hart is midway through an ordinary policy speech for a large group of locals who are listening, but not very engaged.

HART

As we move toward the end of this long, dark chapter in our history, new challenges lie ahead...

Dixon, Wilson, and Shore speak quietly in the wings.

DIXON

We flew to Ottawa fucking Kansas to give a policy speech? He's supposed to be getting personal.

SHORE

Personal is not a comfort zone.

WILSON

If it's any consolation, He is hitting all of the four E's.

DIXON

We added an E?

EXT. HART CHILDHOOD HOME, OTTAWA. DAY.

Hart and Lee, surrounded by a PACK OF REPORTERS, stand in front of a rickety clapboard house.

ROADWORK is being done across the street.

MCDANIEL

How does it feel to be back home?

HART

We...uh... We actually lived in six different houses. My dad, he was out of work a lot.

The campaign team just hangs back. Quietly stewing.

DIXON
 (quietly)
 Christ, just say it's good to
 be home.

SHORE
 I know, I know.

Hart kind of notices his guys grumbling. Lee brightens.

LEE
 (prompting)
 Remember George used to sit out
 here all day?

HART
 Of course... Whenever I got home,
 my granddad would always be sitting
 here on the front porch with a
 Bible open in his lap. Every day.
 One time a neighbor asks him, just
 to be friendly, "What are you doing
 up there?" Granddad says, "Cramming
 for finals."

Lee and the reporters laugh. More photos. Hart turns and
 gives a reluctant smile.

INT. ECONOLINE VAN - OTTAWA, KANSAS - NIGHT

AN ELDER WOMAN VOLUNTEER drives the team. They seem to have
 lost their way and the staff is AUDIBLY UPSET.

STRATTON
 (prickishly clarifying)
 You've been to the airport before.

ELDER VOLUNTEER
 Yes, just never in a van.

WILSON
 (quietly)
 Where did we find her?

KELLY
 Are we going to swing through the
 South or not?

DIXON
 Why waste the money?

STRATTON
 (to the volunteer)
 How would you get there in a car?

WILSON
(found a map)
We can turn right on the farm road.

KELLY
State directors in Georgia and
Alabama are begging.

WILSON
That was the farm road.

SHORE
Carter won the South.

DIXON
Carter was the South. Trust me,
it's already gone.

HART
Irene's right. I'm not writing off
the South.

DIXON
I can give you the numbers.

HART
I intend to be the president of the
entire country. Not 35 states. If
my ideas make sense in Youngstown,
they'll make sense in Mobile.

DIXON
(dryly)
And we get to go to Alabama.

STRATTON
(re: volunteer driver)
Dear God, she ran a green.

EXT. AIRPORT TERMINAL, TOPEKA, KANSAS - NIGHT

They've arrived at the AIRPORT. Everyone exits in a hurry.
Hart puts his hand on the ELDERLY VOLUNTEER's shoulder. He
gives her a smile and she immediately relaxes.

INT. AIRPORT TERMINAL, TOPEKA, KANSAS - LATER THAT NIGHT

STAFF and REPORTERS buzz around the terminal. WEINBERG,
SHANAHAN, and a STRINGER read off stories into PAYPHONES.

Hart sits between Sweeney and Shore, tinkering with a first-
generation, shoe-size cellphone.

Stratton approaches the press corps in the background.

STRATTON (O.S.)

It's a 30-minute delay, guys. Go
get a sandwich.

Stratton walks back towards Wilson and Emerson.

EMERSON

It's a travesty.

WILSON

A designer suit?

EMERSON

It's not about the suit. It's the
presentation of things.

STRATTON

What's this?

WILSON

Ralph Lauren announced they're
doing wardrobe for CBS News.

STRATTON

You prefer Hugo Boss?

EMERSON

There's that word - Wardrobe. Like
they're on *Three's Company*

STRATTON

It is a television show.

EMERSON

No, it's the news... A bad suit
should mean something. It's
trustworthy.

We see Hart hits a key on the phone and holds it up.

HART

Why isn't it ringing?

SHORE

Did you hit send?

SWEENEY

Do you see any bars?

SHORE

(holding out his hand)
You have to hit send. I'll do it.

HART

(rising)

Keep it. I'll be back.

Back to Emerson... Getting more heated.

EMERSON

It starts with designer clothes.
And everyone says - *Don't they look nice* - Pretty soon Vidal Sassoon is doing Tom Brokow's hair.

STRATTON

(poking the bear)

Maybe some music.

EMERSON

Sure, Mark Knopfler's writing some opening theme song and they'll have action shots of the anchors leaping away from fires and pulling kittens out of storm drains.

STRATTON

Hey, maybe they don't even need to read the news...

EMERSON

Fuck, why have newsmen at all...?
Let's just hire models and teach them to read. You know, someone you can really jerk off to.

WILSON

(genuinely amused)

That's funny.

EMERSON

It's not Doug. It's not funny at all. It's the Death Nail of journalism.

WILSON

Do you mean Death Knell? It's a common mistake.

EMERSON

How often do people just punch you in the face?

We find Parker grabbing a coke from a vending machine. Something catches his eye. He stares a moment, curiously.

CUT TO Sweeney, still in his seat, clocking the same thing Parker's looking at: Hart crammed into a phone booth, head down, talking quietly with a big grin.

Parker and Sweeney make eye contact, and then a GATE ANNOUNCEMENT draws their curiosity away.

CUT TO:

THWACK! An ax lands solidly in a wooden BULLSEYE.

EXT. NORTH COUNTRY, NEW HAMPSHIRE. DAY.

Two strong hands yank the ax out of the log.

A burly LUMBERJACK hands the LARGE AXE to Hart, who wears a flannel shirt and jeans.

The crowd whispers in anticipation.

Quick shot of a gaggle of reporters, Parker among them, snickering skeptically. Fiedler, from the Miami Herald, lifts a TWENTY DOLLAR BILL towards Parker.

FIEDLER

Ten bucks says he misses.

PARKER

I'm alright, thanks.

Fiedler shrugs. Suit yourself.

Quick POP of Sweeney, head in hands.

EMERSON

This is a first... He might just actually *throw* away his campaign. I can't fucking watch this.

Shore, munching on an apple, looks on with detachment.

Hart, smiling, lifts the ax over his head and hurls with all his might. It travels 25 feet and - THWACK! A dead bulls-eye.

Even the reporters CHEER as Hart lifts his arms above his head and grins triumphantly.

Parker gives Fiedler a little nod. Shore looks at Emerson.

EMERSON (CONT'D)

(euphoric)

That was incredible.

Gary starts working his way through a line of WOODSMEN, eager to shake his hand, particularly after that throw. However, there's a few dissenters including one particularly ANGRY WOODSMAN who keeps his hands in his pockets.

ANGRY WOODSMAN
(passive aggressive)
Just keep your hand out of my
pocket.

HART
What was that?

ANGRY WOODSMAN
Taxes are high enough. Keep your
hand out of my pocket.

The woodsman begins to walk away. Hart kind of smiles...

HART
So, are we going to talk or are you
just going to walk away?

The woodsman turns back. Caught off guard and a little sheepish. Hart is unflinching.

HART (CONT'D)
What's a good place to get a beer
around here?

OMITTED

INT. HUNTING LODGE - DAY

Rifles on racks. Timbersport pros and hunters have formed a horseshoe around Hart in the smoky hall. It's quiet. No one knows where to start.

Hart sees the angry woodsman from earlier. He rolls back his sleeves, shows his hands, and smiles.

HART
Your pockets are safe.

Chuckles around the room.

HART (CONT'D)
So, where should we start?

Note: in this scene, questions will come from the crowd. We won't see each person talk. The group is speaking as a whole.

HUNTER 1
What are we supposed to ask?

HART
Let's talk about anything you want.

We find the campaign team on the side visibly nervous.

HUNTER 2
Where's the beef?!

Chuckles around.

HART
(smiles)
Haven't heard that one in a while.

HUNTER 3
You a Christian?

HART
Yes I am.

HUNTER 3
You think they should have prayer
in school?

HART
I like prayer in church.

HUNTER 4
Do you hunt?

HART
Not so much. When I was a kid, my
uncle taught me to track bears.

HUNTER 5
You going to take our guns?

HART
You going to take mine?

This calms the room a bit for a beat.

HUNTER 4
What about Mexicans?

HART
What about them?

HUNTER 5
They're taking our jobs.

HART

(thinks for a moment)

You think they want to leave their lives behind? Their families?

(stops)

Would you?

HUNTER 3

They'll work for nothing.

HART

That's why we need to invest in Mexico.

HUNTER 2

You want to buy a jalapeno farm?

HART

Is that what you do? You're a farmer?

HUNTER 2

I make chairs.

HART

(riffing)

So why don't we invest in their enterprise? Their industry. Create opportunity for Mexicans in Mexico. Instead of stealing your jobs, they'll buy your chairs.

HUNTER 5

They're not very good chairs.

HART

Well, I can't help him with that.

(a thought)

I mean, forget jobs for a second, think about security. You really want a chaotic nation on the brink of economic collapse just south of the border?

HUNTER 2

Sounds like Massachusetts.

Real laughter.

HUNTER 4

So you anti-military or something?

HART

Why do you say that?

HUNTER 4
You're a democrat.

HART
(incredulous)
I'm in the military.

HUNTER 5
What branch?

HART
Navy reserve.

A couple chuckles.

HART (CONT'D)
Does that not count?

HUNTER 4
You want to cut the military?

HART
I want to reform it.

HUNTER 3
That means cut it.

HART
I disagree. I actually wrote an
entire book on military reform.
Sold twelve copies. I don't suppose
anyone here read it?
(looks to his staff)
Any of you guys?

Sheepish looks amongst his team. Wilson raises his hand.

WILSON
(quietly)
It's a good read.

HART
You say you're worried about your
taxes. You know how much that new
B2 Bomber costs? About a billion
dollars.

HUNTER 5
Worth every penny.

HART
Is it? Sure, they might look pretty
flying over the Superbowl.
(MORE)

HART (CONT'D)

But let's face it, we're building a military that's only good at bombing. And after twenty years of bombing, you know what we'll be left with?

He looks around the room, genuinely open for an answer.

HART (CONT'D)

Rubble. Rubble that we'll need to rebuild. And people who hate us. But we won't have a conventional military ready to fight in the jungles and deserts where they hate us the most.

HUNTER 1

Nuke 'em.

HART

Okay. Sure. Who you going to nuke?
(long beat)

The cold war is over and our addiction to oil is going to take us into battles we don't know how to fight in places like the middle east, where stateless Islamic terrorism will become an epidemic.

HUNTER 4

I'm not worried about some ragheads in the desert...

HART

You should be. Their bombs won't have a return address.

HUNTER 1

Celtics or Lakers?

HART

Nuggets.

Boos rain down from all the men.

HART (CONT'D)

(laughing)

I'm not afraid of being booed.

More laughter. There's an awkward pause. Feels like they're running out of questions.

HUNTER 6

If you get elected, are you ever going to come back to this town.

A long beat.

HART

What do you mean "if"?

He smiles. The men laugh. The room has been defused.

INT. BAR AT THE WAYFARER INN, MANCHESTER, NH. NIGHT.

Hart gets up from a table of the old guard reporters. They're laughing about the day's events.

The CAMPAIGN TEAM is at a table, talking about the next stop.

Hart heads for the bathroom when he stops at the KIDS TABLE.

HART

What's the news, guys?

PARKER

Cuomo is officially out.

The young reporters watch Hart's face waiting for a reaction. Hart has a small smile, then catches himself.

HART

Long way to go.

MCDANIEL

Kennedy, Bradley... All out.

HART

I like Gephardt. Al's still in this thing. Jesse Jackson.

SHANAHAN

Come on... I mean, Senator, sir.

HART

He's got double digits.

SHANAHAN

You think this country will elect Jesse Jackson president?

PARKER

Maybe vice president.

MCDANIEL

That's what Jesse really wants
anyway, right?

Hart smiles just as a waitress arrives.

HART

They need another round. On me.

PARKER

You can't do that. It's...

HART

Fine, another round on them.

WAITRESS

Word is you're going to be
president.

HART

I don't know, how does secretary of
the navy sound?

WAITRESS

Already been a secretary, honey.
But you're sweet.

INT. WAYFARER INN. MOMENTS LATER.

Hart follows a sign to the RESTROOM. He's smiling about the
Cuomo news. He turns the corner and stops, flustered.

Weinberg and a woman reporter from the pool are leaned up
against a wall, giggling and making out. Both wear WEDDING
RINGS they did not exchange with each other.

Hart kind of smiles and quietly enters the mens room.

INT. MIAMI HERALD CONFERENCE ROOM. MORNING.

About a dozen editors and reporters sit and stand around a
long conference table, among them FIEDLER from the pool.

BOB MARTINDALE, the paper's editor, sits at the head of the
table. Another editor, JOE SAVAGE, sits nearby. An
investigative reporter named MURPHY is dramatically
recounting the movements of a drug cartel.

MURPHY

They fly in below the radar,
cruising a hundred feet above the
water like Apaches on a strafe run.

(MORE)

MURPHY (CONT'D)

Right before they breach our airspace, they dump the whole fucking shipment into the Atlantic - not pounds... tons of coke. A Volkswagon of coke - where they've got cigarette boats that kick the shit out of our coast guard.

SAVAGE

You saw this?

MURPHY

Got an old Navy buddy. Runs fishing tours out of Islamorada. Spent five nights under a cargo net.

MARTINDALE

Nice. Let's work up some sort of map that shows the route and make sure we've got artwork on those cigarette boats in motion. Not some bullshit stock photo, but really kicking up surf.

ASSISTANT EDITOR

(dry)

Got it. Sexy boats kicking up surf.

MARTINDALE

Anything from the Mickey Desk?

SAVAGE

MGM is suing Disney World over the new park. It's a license violation.

MARTINDALE

No shit. Could it scuttle the deal?

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Tim's trying to nail it down.

MARTINDALE

Let's get a top for front page. Maybe some options on a crying Mickey drawing.

SAVAGE

We've done crying Mickey. Twice. When Universal came to Orlando and when that alligator ate that kid near Epcot.

MARTINDALE

Right. Try Mickey in hand cuffs.
Politics?

FIEDLER

Yeah, just got back from the
kickoff tour with Gary Hart.

MARTINDALE

(to Fiedler)

Okay. Anything new there?

FIEDLER

I mean, it's the curtain raiser on
the guy who's going to win the
presidency.

The ASSISTANT EDITOR, a woman in her late 40s, speaks up --

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Keep it to 100 twills, Tom. We're
tight today.

FIEDLER

Are you serious?

MARTINDALE

(moving on)

Sports. Who the Dolphins drafting?

INT. MIAMI HERALD NEWSROOM. MONDAY NIGHT, APRIL 27.

Fiedler, reading through clips, has his feet up on his desk
in the mostly deserted newsroom.

Baseball on the transistor radio. The desk phone rings. He
picks up. We don't see the face of the coy, yet tipsy, Dana
Weems on the other side of the call.

FIEDLER

Tom Fiedler - - - Hello?

WEEMS (O.S.)

Did you write the story about Gary
Hart today?

FIEDLER

(half-listening)

Yeah, that was me.

WEEMS (O.S.)

Um... He's having an affair with a
friend of mine.

FIEDLER

What?

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. PHONE BOTH - NIGHT

We're on a street corner. The phone booth is fogged. Inside is DANA WEEMS, a friend of Donna Rice from the boat. Outside, bolstering her friend, is Lynn Armandt.

WEEMS

She's sneaking around with him.

FIEDLER

(doesn't buy it)

Okay, right and how do you know?

WEEMS

(giggling)

I mean, it's all she talks about.

FIEDLER

What's her name? What's *your* name?

WEEMS

(giggling again)

I can't tell you that!

FIEDLER

Look, this isn't funny, OK? You can't just call people and make allegations. Now, who are you and --

WEEMS

She's flying up there. To see him in Washington. This weekend.

FIEDLER

This weekend?

WEEMS

Friday, yeah. Maybe you can follow her or something. God, she's so pathetic. Like a cheerleader getting notes from the popular boy, you know?

Fiedler finds a crinkly faxed sheet.

FIEDLER

(eyeing the sheet)

Hart's not in DC this weekend.

(MORE)

FIEDLER (CONT'D)

He's going to Kentucky for the derby. Sorry lady...

WEEMS

Wait. It's just, I want to ask you.

FIEDLER

Uh huh?

WEEMS

Do you guys pay for pictures?

FIEDLER

Jesus... Good luck.

He hangs up on her. Shakes his head.

INT. HART CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS, DENVER - DAY

A CAMPAIGN AD is being edited on an old tape-to-tape online bay. Dixon and Sweeney watch and criticize ad lib.

COMMERCIAL: Gary Hart amongst nature. Speaking to camera.

HART

... Now over the next year, you're going to see a lot of campaign ads. Many of which will have some kind of faceless announcer. But not from me. I believe a candidate should stand by what they believe in rather than hide behind some stranger's voice. So, next time you hear that faceless announcer making claims and accusations, ask yourself why.

As the HART '88 LOGO comes up we find Stratton and Wilson. They're admiring all the HOLLYWOOD PHOTOS at Emerson's desk.

In them, Emerson hangs out with 1980's icons like Nicholson, Beatty, Hunter S. Thompson, Don Johnson.

STRATTON

Must be hard to be away from all your *friends* back home.

EMERSON

Yeah, okay, I ran the California office. These were my constituents.

WILSON

Warren Beatty and Jack Nicholson?

EMERSON

... Yes. They're both Angelinos.

STRATTON

On those particularly tough nights,
it must be reassuring to look over
and see their faces.

WILSON

Do they serve as a reminder of the
regional struggles in California?

EMERSON

Warren Beatty is a thoughtful...
political... Fuck both of you.

We find Hart in the front corner, feet up on Sweeney's desk,
gazing out the window, talking on a corded phone.

HART

Well thank you. I mean it, Ed.
(listens but glances away)
Well we will, and Lee and I
appreciate it. Hal will call you
about where to send the check and
all that... Righto. Talk soon.

He hangs up and we PAN to see Kelly and Shore.

SHORE

You're a free man.

HART

Thank you.

KELLY

Until call time tomorrow.

Hart walks by staffers pulling out new HART SIGNS.

HART

Oh Irene, tell Steve and Kitty I
can't make Kentucky, OK?

KELLY

You're gonna miss the derby?

HART

And tell Ellie to grab coffee?

INT. MIAMI HERALD NEWSROOM. DAY. FRIDAY, MAY 1.

A TELETYPE MACHINE printing out the following:

HART FOR PRESIDENT. REVISED SCHEDULE - DC/NEW YORK/NEW
HAMPSHIRE

We find Fiedler eating a sandwich.

FIEDLER

(to another reporter)

You never get the tacos. Someone should have told you that.

REPORTER

But Friday's taco day, man.

FIEDLER

Let me know how Saturday goes.

The mail clerk, an old guy with a limp, wheels his mail cart past the desk and stops.

FIEDLER (CONT'D)

Thanks Earl.

He stares at the sheet. Fiedler's brain clicks. He starts walking. We follow Fiedler to Murphy's desk.

MURPHY

Hey, what's doing?

FIEDLER

I think I need your help on something.

INT. CAMPAIGN BUS - DAY

Stratton is attempting to demonstrate the best way to cook a HAMBURGER. He's using a RULER as a spatula and a flattened ball of lined paper as a BURGER.

HART

I know how to make a burger, Mike.

STRATTON

If they see you flip it twice...

Others from the team chime in.

WILSON

(dicking around)

*What else will he flip on...
healthcare... farming subsidies...?*

STRATTON

I'm serious.

INT. TRUCK STOP, NORTHEAST - DAY

Hart in an apron, poses with the RESTAURANT STAFF for a few photos. He flips burgers. Parker watches from nearby.

Moments later, Hart is at a table facing Parker. A tape recorder sits between them on the table.

HART
(to Parker)
We almost done?

PARKER
Just about.

HART
You read the book yet?

PARKER
Just about. It's Tolstoy.

Parker looks down at his notepad. A series of questions have been crossed off. One word remains - "Marriage".

PARKER (CONT'D)
(visibly uncomfortable)
Can we talk about your separation.

Sweeney looks up.

HART
It's a fairly common occurrence.
I'd avoid it if you can.

PARKER
I'm not having fun asking about
this. In case you were wondering.

HART
I wasn't.

	SWEENEY		PARKER
AJ...		Look --	

HART (CONT'D)
Why should anyone care? How is it
relevant?

	PARKER		SWEENEY
	People feel like it's hard to know you. I'm trying to help elucidate --	Senator...	

HART (CONT'D)
People. Who are these 'people'
everyone keeps telling me about?

PARKER
Fine, maybe we feel that way.

HART
So, reporters.

PARKER
Some of us.

SWEENEY
AJ, either ask something
else...

HART (CONT'D)
Some of you who were in high school
when I ran McGovern's campaign.
It's not my fault you're just
arriving at the party.

PARKER
OK, so around that time, you told
Gail Sheehy you believed in "reform
marriage." What did that mean?

HART
For crying out loud. I was young
and tired and living across the
country from my wife, and I made a
stupid joke. You know, this is why
people don't want to be in public
life. Because someone will dredge
up something you said in a moment
15 years ago and act like it
somehow encapsulates your life.

PARKER
It's just --

HART
I'm going to answer one more of
these, and then I'm not going to
sit here anymore. We've covered all
the stuff that matters. Did anyone
ask Reagan about his marriage?

PARKER
I don't think --

SWEENEY
Let's wrap this up...

HART (CONT'D)
Did you ask Carter these questions?

PARKER
There've been rumors --

HART

Oh for God sake, AJ. Ask whatever
it is you came here to ask.

PARKER

OK. Do you think you have... A
traditional marriage?

HART

(disbelief)
A trad --

SWEENEY

OK. That's enough. We're done
here--

HART

You want to know what I'm doing in
my spare time? Is that it, AJ?
Follow me around then. Put a tail
on me. I mean it. You'd be very
bored.

Parker scribbles, head down as Sweeney escorts Hart away.

INT. MIAMI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT. FRIDAY AFTERNOON.

We're watching the ESCALATORS, over the shoulders of Fiedler
and Murphy. Mostly tourists and businessmen. Fiedler is
flipping through a magazine nervously. He's so nervous, it's
comical. Murphy is trying to keep it cool.

MURPHY

Just calm down.

FIEDLER

What am I supposed to do?

MURPHY

Act bored. Most people usually look
bored. What does she look like?

FIEDLER

Attractive. Hot enough to make you
leave your wife.

MURPHY

Honestly wouldn't take much.

Murphy looks ready to give up and then they see her. DONNA.
Armandt walks alongside her. Without saying a word, they
begin following her towards the gate.

INT. BOEING 737 TO DC - EVENING

Fiedler and Murphy sit deep in coach. Fiedler leans into the aisle to get a look at Donna who's reading a book a few rows down. He leans a little further and is suddenly hit by the BEVERAGE CART, making a bit of a mess. He flinches back.

INT. NATIONAL AIRPORT TERMINAL, DC - NIGHT

Fiedler and Murphy walk 15 feet behind Donna and Armandt, trying to play it cool.

EXT. NATIONAL AIRPORT TAXI LINE - NIGHT

Donna and Armandt are shown into a waiting cab.

Several people back in the line, Fiedler and Murphy watch anxiously as their marks pull away.

MURPHY

Do we know where they're going?

FIEDLER

I fucking hope so.

EXT. HART'S TOWNHOUSE, CAPITOL HILL. FRIDAY NIGHT.

Fiedler's TAXI comes up on a stately, two-story row house. Lights shine in the windows and illuminate the sidewalk.

No one's visible inside or out.

Fiedler and Murphy fight for the driver's side window.

FIEDLER

This one here on the left.

CAB DRIVER

You want me to pull over?

FIEDLER

Just hang a second.

MURPHY

No security? Nothing? You sure this is right?

FIEDLER

It's his place.

MCGEE CAB DRIVER
(looking at the house) You guys getting out?
Doesn't feel right.

 FIEDLER (CONT'D)
 Just give us a second.

Fiedler looks at the windows, hoping for an answer.

 MURPHY
 No secret service?

 FIEDLER
 He isn't the nominee yet.

 CAB DRIVER
 Look, I'm not sure what you guys
 are up to...

 MURPHY
 (to Fiedler)
 I think you got taken buddy.

 FIEDLER
 We've been here all of two fucking
 seconds...

 CAB DRIVER
 This isn't a peep show, one of you
 has to pay me...!

 MURPHY
 New destination, we need a hotel...

 FIEDLER
 Hold on!

Suddenly, the lights turn off inside the house.

Fiedler and Murphy go silent.

 CAB DRIVER
 Which one of you is going to...?

 FIEDLER
 (quietly)
 Pull over there.

The cab pulls over. Inside, they all hold still, waiting to see what will happen next.

We SEE the front door open. A man's arm holds it open.

Hart and Donna come out onto the stoop.

MURPHY

Fuck me.

Broadhurst and Armandt follow. They walk down to Hart's SEDAN, all get in and drive off.

BACK TO Fiedler, suddenly vibrating with mixed energy.

MURPHY (CONT'D)

We're gonna need a photographer.

CUT TO:

THE BACK OF AN SLR CAMERA BEING LOADED WITH FILM

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE HART'S TOWNHOUSE, CAPITOL HILL. DAWN.

Murphy sit in a rental car outside the house, as the sun appears on the horizon. He does a crossword. In the back seat with the camera is ROY VALENTINE, a photographer.

ROY

You're sure they're in there?

MURPHY

Yep. Have you staked out before?

ROY

(scoffs)

I mean, I'm not a paparazzi. Are we even allowed to do this?

MURPHY

A few years ago, I figured out most of the planes carrying kilos of coke into the US weren't coming from Colombia. They're actually coming from the fucking Bahamas. So I dig a little deeper. Turns out, the prime minister is taking pay offs from Miami lawyers to leave beach front runways unguarded.

ROY

Wo.

MURPHY

Yeah, "Wo". Sometimes you need to catch someone in the act. I mean, fuck, have you ever had to do this kind of investigative journalism?

ROY

(uncomfortable sharing)

Last year, I snuck into the Magic Kingdom as a tourist. I cut right into Tomorrowland, bought a rocket pop, and when no one was looking, I climbed a barricade and caught the first images of Captain EO.

(long beat)

It was terrifying, but worth it.

A long look from Murphy. Suddenly, THE DOOR OPENS. It's Fiedler. He's holding a printed out FAX.

FIEDLER

Follow me around.

(passes it to Murphy)

Hart told the Post to follow him around...

MURPHY

"Follow me around. Put a tail on me. You'd be very bored."

FIEDLER

He asked us to follow him.

ROY

Technically speaking, we were already following him.

MURPHY

Are you fucking kidding me?

FIEDLER

It's an invitation.

(off Roy's skepticism)

Look, if this were 20 years ago and party bosses were still picking the candidates in back rooms, that would be one thing. But things changed. Everyone forgets that. They just handed these primaries and caucuses back to some folks in Iowa lined up around the Country Kitchen to pick nominees they've never heard of, you know, to vet some governor or congressman from god knows where? We have a responsibility here... to hold these guys accountable.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE HART'S TOWNHOUSE - DAY

It's RAINING. The rental car sits there. Three silhouettes behind the windshield.

Inside, they're eating individual cartons of Chinese. Just watching and waiting for something to happen.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE HART'S TOWNHOUSE - AFTERNOON

The car parked in the same spot. Murphy and Roy asleep. Fiedler looks up from his newspaper.

He SEES a WOMAN WITH A BABY CARRIAGE, and then a JOGGER. Then, WILSON (policy aide) approaching the front door.

Murphy sits up for a better look. He lowers the window an inch, hoping to hear. We barely hear the DOORBELL.

A moment later, the townhouse door opens revealing Hart, wearing a white hoodie and jeans.

Wilson hands Hart a thick envelope. We barely make out what they're saying.

HART

Thanks.

WILSON

Hopefully this is the last draft.

HART

Yeah, I'll give it a look...

And then Hart freezes. He seems to be either lost in thought or STARING STRAIGHT AT THE RENTAL CAR. Fiedler holds stock still, not sure whether to go back to his paper or drive off, when Hart gives a quick goodbye to Wilson and shuts the door.

Fiedler gives Murphy a shove.

MURPHY

What's happening?

FIEDLER

Wilson, policy guy.

MURPHY

What is that, a speech writer?

FIEDLER

To a certain... He studies the fluctuations in foreign... and...

(MORE)

FIEDLER (CONT'D)
(Murphy doesn't care)
Yes, he's a speech writer.

MURPHY
Did he make you?

FIEDLER
Don't think so. Need a closer look.

Thinks for a second.

CUT TO:

TAGS BEING RIPPED OFF NEW JOGGING CLOTHES

EXT. HART'S TOWNHOUSE - LATE IN THE DAY

Fiedler, pretending to run in a ridiculous jogging suit, trots past the rental car, giving Murphy a furtive glance.

He jogs onto the sidewalk and slows down as he passes Hart's townhouse. He's trying to see through the windows but can't quite make anything out.

INT./EXT. FIEDLER'S RENTAL CAR - LAST LIGHT

Fiedler finishes his loop and jogs back up to the rental car and gets back in the passenger seat. He's sweating... Hard.

MURPHY
Jesus, you ran around the block.

FIEDLER
Fuck off.
(looking for Roy)
Where's our shooter?

Murphy nods toward the house. We SEE Roy with his CAMERA, crouching behind a bush, trying to get a good angle.

FIEDLER (CONT'D)
Are you fucking kidding me?

MURPHY
He's young, excited. What was I going to say?

FIEDLER
He's going to get us caught.

We watch from the car as Roy gets closer to the townhouse. Suddenly one by one, the WINDOW BLINDS SLAM SHUT.

FIEDLER (CONT'D)

Fuck.

EXT. HART'S TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

A beat as they watch the townhouse. The last glow of ambient daylight disappears into night.

And then the front door of the townhouse opens. Hart comes down the steps, still wearing his white hoodie.

Hart climbs inside his Chrysler. He's visibly nervous. A stark difference from his usual confidence and calm.

Hart checks the mirror as he pulls out slowly onto the street. We SEE the Herald's rental car reflected in the mirror, pulling out to follow him.

Hart puts on his blinker and deliberately takes a right turn onto a side street. He checks the mirror again, sees the car following.

His jaw clenches. His breathing grows shallow. We can almost hear his adrenaline.

He pulls to a slow crawl at a stop sign, waiting for the Herald car to get close enough, and then Hart hits the brakes - His TAIL LIGHTS illuminate the car behind him.

We can't quite make out details, but we see three male faces, bathed in a red glow. He shakes his head to himself.

Hart hits the gas. Quickly, he makes three right turns, bringing us back to...

EXT. HART'S TOWNHOUSE, CAPITOL HILL - NIGHT

Hart re-parks the car outside his house. He takes a deep breath. He gets out and looks behind him at the Herald's rental car, which has come to a stop a few car-lengths away.

He puts his head down, shoves his hands into his pockets, and heads off briskly into the side alley.

The moment he rounds the corner, the Herald team quickly pulls over and jumps out of the car. They briskly follow to the mouth of the alley, visually checking in with each other as they walk.

EXT. SIDE ALLEY BY HART'S TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

The three Herald guys, Murphy leading the way, head toward an intersection where a side alley meets a BACK ALLEY.

MURPHY
(hissing)
You were too close.

FIEDLER
(hissing back)
He was already on to us.

As they turn the corner into the back alley --

HART (O.C.)
Good evening, gentlemen.

Standing in front of them, in his white hoodie, is HART.

A long silent beat. The three journalists from the Herald line up across from Hart. Murphy out front. Fiedler in the shadows. There's an eerie High Noon quality to the stand off.

No one knows what to do. No one has ever been here before. For better or for worse, they've breached a historical trust between candidate and the press... and they must figure out the next moment on their own.

MURPHY
(nervous)
Good evening, Senator. I'm a reporter for the Miami Herald. We'd like to talk to you.

Hart holds his ground, trying to decipher what's happening.

MURPHY (CONT'D)
Um... We'd like to ask you about the woman who's been staying in your townhouse.

Hart doesn't move. Composes his thoughts specifically.

HART
... No one is staying in my townhouse.

MURPHY
We saw you leave and return with a woman last night. A blond woman?

HART
I may. I may not have.

MURPHY

We saw you.

HART

I don't know what you think you saw...

FLASH - Roy takes a photo. It's blinding and confusing in the dark alleyway. It almost feels like a gun shot.

Fiedler steps forward.

FIEDLER

Hello, Senator.

HART

(registering Fiedler)
Tom?

FIEDLER

Yes, sir. I uhh... I wonder if you could tell us whether this woman works for the campaign.

(beat)

The one we saw you with.

HART

She is not part of my campaign.

FIEDLER

Okay. Then can you tell us how you know her?

FLASH - Another photo startles Hart.

HART

Well... I don't think that's relevant.

MURPHY

(scoffing)

Oh, I assure you, Senator, it's relevant --

FIEDLER

It's just that, we saw you leave and come back with this woman. And we didn't see her leave again.

FLASH!

HART

Tom, you can't be serious. No one is staying in my home but me.

FIEDLER

I am serious, sir. How long have you known her?

HART

What kind of questions are these?

FIEDLER

Is she a friend?

HART

I don't know why I would tell you that. Tom, I am not --

FLASH!

MURPHY

Can you produce the woman so she can corroborate what you're saying?

HART

I don't have to produce... This has gone on long enough.

Hart takes a step forward, as if to leave, and Roy snaps two more photos, blinding Hart momentarily. Hart blinks. The flashes begin to build now, more and more - Frustrating Hart.

FIEDLER

Senator, we know you've made calls to this woman. You called her from Kansas. And New Hampshire. We have the dates.

HART

I make calls every day. I don't see how I'd remember, and I don't see how you'd --

FLASH, FLASH...

FIEDLER

(stammering)

But... Senator... I was at your announcement speech. You said... you said... We must...

FIEDLER (CONT'D)

(from his notebook)

"Hold ourselves to the highest possible standards of integrity and ethics."

HART

... I know what I said.

FIEDLER (CONT'D)

So why am I standing here? Why am I standing here in an alley on a Saturday night? Don't you think you owe it to us to be forthcoming?

FLASH, FLASH...

HART

(scoffs)

Owe you?

FIEDLER

You're denying what we've seen with our own eyes!

HART

The only thing I deny is the idea that somehow you have the right to ask these things.

FIEDLER

You're running for president!

HART

I'm aware of that, Tom. It's in the papers.

FLASH, FLASH...

FIEDLER

Then you have a responsibility --

HART

I know full well what my responsibilities are.
(taking a step forward)
Do you know yours?

Hart goes to leave, but Murphy steps into his path.

MURPHY

Senator. Have you had sex with this woman?!

HART

What?!

FLASH, FLASH...

HART (CONT'D)

You should be ashamed of yourself.
(to Fiedler)
(MORE)

HART (CONT'D)

The only one putting you in this alley, Tom, is you.

Hart moves to the back door of the townhouse amidst multiple *FLASHES*... And then he's gone.

A moment as the two journalists and the photographer catch their breath and look at each other - *What just happened?*

And then they scuttle off down the alleyway. We boom up to a WINDOW and find Hart catching his breath. He grabs for a phone. Begins to dial.

HART (CONT'D)

(through the window)

Yeah, Billy. Find Dixon. Now.

INT. QUALITY INN GUEST ROOM, CAPITOL HILL

Fiedler, Murphy, and Roy rush into the room. Fiedler opens up his giant TANDY LAPTOP.

INT. BROADHURST'S KITCHEN, CAPITOL HILL. 9 PM SATURDAY.

BROADHURST

Think.

Donna and Armandt sit on the velour couch in front of him.

BROADHURST (CONT'D)

Maybe you told somebody. Your momma. Your mailman. Somebody.

ARMANDT

We didn't.

BROADHURST

I'm asking Donna.

DONNA

Oh my God. You think... *He's* going to think I told someone.

BROADHURST

Donna, darling, I need you to be straight with me here.

DONNA

I told you, I didn't -- Don't reporters follow him all the time?

BROADHURST

Gary says these guys are from
Miami. Which means they're
following you, not Gary, OK?

DONNA

I don't know any reporters, Billy.
I don't know anyone.

INT. QUALITY INN GUEST ROOM, CAPITOL HILL. 10 PM.

Smoke in the air, coffee cups, detritus everywhere. Fiedler
frantically bangs out copy while Murphy hovers behind.

We GLIMPSE Roy, the photographer, in the bathroom developing
his NEGATIVES with a mini-daylight tank over the sink, half-
listening. One roll is already hanging and drying.

MURPHY

(checking his watch)
42 minutes.
(eyeing the screen)
You want to say linked here. Saying
she's *tied* to Hart makes it sound -

FIEDLER

Professional?

MURPHY

No, like ropes and chains and shit.

Fiedler grunts, nods and keeps typing. The phone rings.

MURPHY (CONT'D)

(to Roy)
Can you grab that?

ROY

(adding chemicals to the
developing tank)
A little busy here.

MURPHY

(answering)
Hey... Uh huh...
(mutes the phone)
They want to hold for a day, just
to get our shit straight. Maybe get
the girl's name.

FIEDLER

Can't. We lose half the readers.

MURPHY

(back on the phone)

This can't wait til Monday. It's a Sunday story.

(muting the phone)

They want to know if we saw the girl with our own eyes.

FIEDLER

(still typing furiously)

We did.

ROY

I mean we saw her... arrive.

FIEDLER

Interview or conversation?

MURPHY

Interview? In an alleyway?

FIEDLER

Watergate started with an interview in a parking garage.

A moment. That word. Watergate.

INT. BROADHURST'S KITCHEN, CAPITOL HILL. CONTINUOUS.

TIGHT ON the RINGING phone.

BROADHURST

(answering, harried)

Hello.

(beat)

Ok. Hang on.

(to Donna)

It's for you.

DONNA

(taking the corded phone)

Hello?

INTERCUT as needed with -- Hart in GEORGETOWN.

HART

Hello.

DONNA

Gary! Thank God. What's happening?

HART

I don't know. I thought you might.

DONNA

What?

Behind her, the sound of shattering glass.

BROADHURST (O.S.)

Goddamnit.

DONNA

(looking behind her)

No. I... look, I need you to know,
I had nothing to do with this. I've
never talked to those men. I don't
know any reporters.

BROADHURST (O.S.)

Get me that broom, would you
sweetheart?

HART

They knew I'd called you. They knew
where I was.

DONNA

I don't understand.

BROADHURST

(Kneeling over glass)

Ow! Goddamn!

HART

What's going on over there?

DONNA

BB dropped a glass, I guess. He's
upset. We're all upset.

HART

It'll be fine. Trust me.

DONNA

Do you trust *me*?

HART

I want to trust you.
(a tough beat)
I may not be seeing you again.

DONNA

What?

HART

Good night, Miss Rice.

Off Donna as his icy words take the breath from her lungs.

INT. MIAMI HERALD NEWSROOM - NIGHT

Martindale exits the elevator and looks up to see Joe Savage already in the lit conference room. They both clearly got pulled out of bed and returned to work.

A beat later, we find them huddled over the conference phone.

SAVAGE

It's not our quote.

MURPHY

(speakerphone)

We need the quote.

MARTINDALE

You want the quote.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. QUALITY INN GUEST ROOM, CAPITOL HILL - CONTINUOUS

Murphy is still holding the phone to his ear.

FIEDLER

(quietly)

We could credit the Post?

MURPHY

Yeah, yeah... Hart told The Post to "follow him around"...?

ROY

Is there a chance the senator was being facetious?

Murphy shoots Roy a look.

MARTINDALE

So now we're advertising for the Post?

SAVAGE

We could run an 800 number for new subscribers.

MURPHY

Fuck you, Jim.

SAVAGE

(laughs)

We could just tease the interview.
Follow up later in the week.

MURPHY

(shaking his head)

They're going to find a way to spin
this thing. We've got him right
now. Dead to rights.

MARTINDALE

Easy there Magnum, this isn't a
drug bust.

MURPHY

He was asking for it. That's a
story. That is the story.

FIEDLER

(already typing)

"In an interview with the Post, he
challenged those who questioned him
to 'follow me around...'"

MURPHY

(into the phone)

Right now, the Washington Post is
in bed, asleep... And Gary Hart is
in a locked room with his entire
campaign team, figuring a way out
of this.

SAVAGE

He's not wrong.

MARTINDALE

You have twenty minute to make
tomorrow's A1.

(adding)

No quote.

EXT. DIXON'S APARTMENT, DENVER - NIGHT

Dixon exits the front door and approaches a waiting car. He
clearly got packed in two minutes. He hops in the passenger
seat. Irene Kelly is behind the wheel. They start driving.

KELLY

Are we...?

DIXON

I don't know.

INT. HART CAMPAIGN OFFICE, DENVER - NIGHT

Lights flip on as Emerson enters to find Sweeney already manning a phone at a desk. Nearby, STACKS OF HART POSTERS.

SWEENEY

(into the phone)

Tell Fiedler we can give him an interview with the girl. Straighten everything out. Just buy us some time.

Sweeney opens a bottle of whiskey takes a deep inhale, then drinks a glass of water. Emerson just swigs the whiskey.

INT. QUALITY INN GUEST ROOM, CAPITOL HILL - NIGHT

The phone rings. Murphy picks up with an informal greeting. He mutes the receiver under his arm and turns to Fiedler.

MURPHY

They say the girl will talk to us.

FIEDLER

(shakes his head)

They're stalling.

INT. AIRPLANE, DENVER. MIDNIGHT.

Dixon, Shore and Kelly out of breath as they board a flight. The last two people aboard.

The flight attendant gives a little look - *You made it* - as the captain is finishing his pre-flight announcement.

INT. BROADHURST'S KITCHEN, CAPITOL HILL. CONTINUOUS.

Billy B hangs up his phone. He turns to Donna.

DONNA

They don't want to hear my side of things?

BROADHURST

They don't care. Fuckers are going to print without sources.

DONNA

Can I talk to Gary?

PRELAP: The jarring ring of an old phone...

EXT. TROUBLESOME GULCH, COLORADO - MIDNIGHT

We hear the phone ringing.

INT. KITCHEN, TROUBLESOME GULCH - MIDNIGHT

We see Andrea shuffle in to pick up the phone.

ANDREA
(groggy)
Hello?

HART
Hey kiddo, I need you to get your
mother for me.

ANDREA
Dad, it's the middle of the night.
Is everything okay...?

HART
Andrea.

Andrea stops short. Lee enters in night clothes and takes the phone from her daughter.

LEE
Hello?

There's a pause and then...

HART (O.S.)
Something's happened.

LEE
All right. What is it?

INT. HART'S TOWNHOUSE, CAPITOL HILL. CONTINUOUS.

Hart sits at the kitchen island, eyes closed, phone to his ear. He rolls the glass of VODKA on the counter.

HART
There's going to be a story.
Tomorrow. About me.

A long beat. Lee sighs.

HART (CONT'D)
What they're going to write...
shouldn't ever be written. I can't
seem to stop them...

LEE
(exasperated)
Oh, just say it, Gary.

HART
I met a woman in Miami. They
followed her. To DC. To our
townhouse in DC.

LEE
I see.

A long beat as Lee absorbs the pain. We see Andrea watching her mother with anxious curiosity.

LEE (CONT'D)
The one thing I ever really asked
is that you don't embarrass me.

Hart nods painfully.

HART
I feel so stupid.

LEE
Good. Sounds like you should. Feel
stupid for a while.

And with that, she hangs up.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOORSTEP, CAPITAL HILL - MORNING

A hand grabs the POST, still inside the wet newspaper bag.

INT. BROADHURST'S LIVING ROOM, CAPITOL HILL - MORNING

Broadhurst enters, opening up the paper. He finds Dixon watching Donna from the kitchen. She sits on a sofa with a lost gaze. There's a nod between both men before Dixon leaves to find a seat across from Donna, watching her like an investigative journalist.

DIXON
What are you doing here, Donna?

DONNA
I don't know. I just want to go
home. Can I go home now?

DIXON

Sure, of course. Soon. I know you want to get home.

Broadhurst walks through the background leafing through the Post, not finding anything of note.

DONNA

I don't belong here.

DIXON

I just need to know the facts.

DONNA

Talk to Gary.

DIXON

Gary's not a big talker when it comes to... this kind of thing.

DONNA

I told you already.

DIXON

Uh-huh.

DONNA

I wanted a job with the campaign. BB arranged the interview.

DIXON

(has to smile)

An interview?

Quick POP of Broadhurst and Armandt sitting nearby. He looks miserable and guilty. Armandt reads the Post.

DIXON (CONT'D)

You've worked in politics before, Donna?

DONNA

No. I just wanted to work for Senator Hart.

DIXON

Why's that?

DONNA

I like his positions.

Dixon smirks.

DONNA (CONT'D)

You think I'm some stupid bimbo.

DIXON

I don't think anything.

DONNA

I sell pharmaceuticals, you know.

DIXON

Ok.

DONNA

I was the top saleswoman in my district.

DIXON

I don't doubt it.

DONNA

I graduated Phi Beta Kappa... I did all the things I was supposed to do to make sure men didn't look at me the way you're looking at me right now.

All Dixon can do is sigh.

DONNA (CONT'D)

I need to get home.

DIXON

Yeah. Let me see how we're doing with that.

Dixon rises wearily. We TRACK HIM as he walks to THE KITCHEN, where Irene Kelly stands in the doorway. She's been watching Dixon talk to Donna and clearly has mixed feelings. Shore is at the table, underlining passages on crinkly fax paper.

SHORE

The Herald piece just came across.

DIXON

Already?

SHORE

Didn't exactly wait for comment.

DIXON

Gary see it?

SHORE

We moved him to Georgetown. Steve and Kitty's.

DIXON

(shakes his head)

... Who he should have fucking been with at the derby.

(turns to Irene Kelly)

OK. Your turn.

Kelly looks to Dixon. She wasn't expecting this.

DIXON (CONT'D)

Shouldn't take much.

Kelly nods. A complicated look on her face.

INT. WASHINGTON POST NEWSROOM. CONTINUOUS.

Close up on a TELETYPE as it slowly spits out a headline. It's the Herald story: "Miami Woman Linked to Hart" and the image of Hart in his hoodie below it.

A hand grabs the sheet just as the next one starts to emerge from the machine. It's Ann Devroy. She turns to somebody.

DEVROY

You seen Parker?

INT. STEVE MOSES'S STUDY, GEORGETOWN. LATE SUNDAY MORNING.

We find Hart sitting behind an antique desk, unsettled and beat up, reading through a sheaf of paper.

Then a KNOCK on the door jamb and the sound of bags being dropped on the floor as Dixon and Shore enter.

DIXON

How you holding up?

HART

(clearly shaken)

When we talk about a digitized economy, I wonder if we have to talk more about equality of opportunity.

Dixon, confused, looks over at the nearby couch where Wilson and Stratton sit. The three aides exchange 'are we *really* talking about this?' looks. Dixon takes a deep breath.

DIXON
We can't hide from this, Gary.

HART
Who's hiding? I'm working.

DIXON
... We need to say something.

HART
I've already spoken to the person
that matters.

DIXON
There are stories being written.
Right now.

HART
It's gossip, Dix. It'll blow over.

DIXON
I don't think it's *blowing over*.

Hart's still looking down at his remarks.

DIXON (CONT'D)
We need to go through some things.
This boat cruise I'm hearing about,
for one, and --

WILSON
Do we think they completely missed
the back door of the townhouse?

SHORE
It's not in the piece. They must
not have checked.

STRATTON
If they don't have her leaving...

Gary...

DIXON

SHORE

Without the back door, the
entire article amounts to -

STRATTON (CONT'D)
- Garbage. Come to think, I don't
remember many alleyways in Florida.

WILSON
Of course. Florida developed after
the industrial revolution. No horse
and carriage. It is a primarily
front door community...

DIXON

Gary...

HART

Forget the fucking back door! The point is it's nobody's goddamn business. None of it is. They shouldn't have been there, period.

(beat)

Now, if we can all move on.

DIXON

That's what we're trying to do.

HART

I've been doing this for 20 years. So have you. The public doesn't care about this crap. They won't stand for it.

DIXON

This isn't '72. It's not even '82. It's different now. I don't know why, but it is. If we get our story down, we can --

HART

There is no story! They can write all this crap all they want, but they will not earn the dignity of my response!

DIXON

Jesus, Gary. How about us? Do we deserve a response?

HART

About this? No.

Shore and Wilson look like kids whose parents are fighting.

DIXON

I've got a hundred kids unpacking boxes back in Denver right now because we told them you would do what it took to win. I told them! The best and the brightest. They left families and jobs. Billy left his *fiance* --

SHORE

She left me --

DIXON

People are *sacrificing* for you.

HART

I'm not sacrificing? Should I sacrifice my privacy? My self-respect? It won't just be me who gets dragged down. None of those kids you're talking about will ever work another campaign where some candidate doesn't have to account for who comes and goes from their bedroom. And that's just the beginning.

DIXON

We're not talking about that. Future campaigns, at the moment, are not our responsibility. We're talking about how you get through today without pissing away everything we've worked for on *this* campaign!

HART

This campaign *is* about the future, not rumors and sleaze. I care about the sanctity of this process whether you do or do not.

And he's finished. Dixon pauses. Watching.

HART (CONT'D)

(to Wilson)

I want to reexamine the language on page 17. It's not just the specter of a trade war I worry about. It's the loss of influence globally.

OFF Shore and Dixon's looks.

INT. BROADHURST'S LIVING ROOM, CAPITOL HILL. CONTINUOUS.

Irene Kelly and Donna sit at the coffee table.

KELLY

(holding up a coffee)

You sure you don't want any?

DONNA

Tea?

KELLY
(over her shoulder)
Can you make a hot tea?

BROADHURST (O.S.)
Yes ma'am.

DONNA
Why did Lynn get to leave?

KELLY
Because I'm not sure you can trust
her. And I don't.

DONNA
You're kidding. Lynn?

KELLY
I don't know.

DONNA
Why were they interrogating me?

KELLY
The standard practice for a scandal
is to get all the damaging facts
out yourself - If there are any. So
it doesn't look like you're hiding.

DONNA
But you'll keep me out of it? My
parents won't hear about any of
this, will they?

KELLY
We know what we're doing.

DONNA
BB did say you might have a job for
me. Fundraising? I graduated magna
cum laude.

KELLY
That's impressive.

DONNA
Do you believe it? About a job?

KELLY
You sound pretty qualified.

DONNA
It's just, when you're a model, you
know. People just assume.

KELLY
That you can't be smart.

DONNA
Right.

KELLY
(smiles)
I don't have that problem.

DONNA
No! I wasn't comparing.

KELLY
Kidding. I mean, I *don't* have that
problem. But I get why you do.

BROADHURST (O.S.)
(from the kitchen)
Honey in it, honey?

Kelly looks at Donna, who shrugs.

KELLY
Southern Comfort!

Donna's eyes widen and she actually laughs.

BROADHURST (O.S.)
Well all right then!

INT. BEN BRADLEE'S OFFICE, WASHINGTON POST - AFTERNOON

Editors and reporters, in weekend clothes, are gathered. ON
TV, a news reporter. Logo reads - "FOLLOW ME AROUND."

PARKER
They're using my quote.

BRADLEE
(shrugging)
Congrats.

PARKER
It's completely out of context.

DEVROY
What context? The only context is
that the idiot says "follow me
around" and then goes and fucks his
mistress on Capitol Hill.

PARKER

It was a throwaway line. They're using it after the fact to justify some tabloid bullshit.

KAISER

Would we have staked him out? If we knew about the girl?

PARKER

I hope not.

DEVROY

So you get to decide which lies matter and which lies don't!

BRADLEE

All right, all right, enough! The kid's right. They're just covering their asses.

(lost in a memory)

So help me this is true. That New Years Eve after Jack died, Lyndon Johnson sits down with a bunch of us, pulls us in close and says, 'Boys? You're gonna see some girls come in and out of my hotel suites, and I want you to give me the same courtesy you gave Jack.' Just like that. And we did. We did, goddamnit.

BRODER

Different time, Ben.

BRADLEE

Why? Who decides that?

BRODER

The readers.

BRADLEE

And if the readers want to see the candidates naked?

DEVROY

Well, that's one kind of measuring contest.

BRADLEE

What is the limit to our curiosity?

DEVROY

Where is he?

PARKER

Hart's gone into hiding. Sweeney won't tell me where. He's got a big econ speech Tuesday in NY with the newspaper association.

BRODER

(chuckling)

The publishers...

BRADLEE

Iran-Contra hearings start this week? Can't make this shit up.

PARKER

It's a big speech. First major policy address since he announced.

DEVROY

Policy? Is he serious?

BRADLEE

All right. Suppose we do something small. Write something up from the wires about the Herald's little expose.

DEVROY

Are we going after Hart or the Herald?

Before anyone can answer...

INT. HART KITCHEN, TROUBLESOME GULCH - AFTERNOON

Lee grinds coffee as the radio plays Travis Tritt, surprisingly LOUD, like she's trying to drown out the world.

She HEARS something in the distance, under the music.

She turns off the music and we HEAR it. A LOUD RUMBLING combined with a PIERCING WHINE. She stops what she's doing, walks to the front of the house and steps out onto the screened in porch.

ANDREA (O.S.)

Mom?

Lee doesn't answer, but we SEE what she sees:

A massive SATELLITE TRUCK sits at the front gate. Couple SAT VANS sit nearby. DIESEL GENERATORS and PNEUMATIC PUMPS sending loud *whines* into the sky.

REPORTERS, PRODUCERS, ENGINEERS mill around the gate, unpacking equipment. It's like an invading army.

Lee simply reenters the house, walks back into the kitchen.

ANDREA (CONT'D)
Mom, what's happening?

LEE
It's an invasion.

ANDREA
I don't understand.

INT. HART CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS, DENVER. AN HOUR LATER.

SWEENEY
(on his phone, pacing)
Maureen! Listen to what I'm telling you! They were hiding in the bushes, OK? Like fucking scavengers. Is that journalism?

Behind him, a chaotic scene with phones RINGING constantly. We see STAFFERS answering questions.

Joe (former owner of Brainy Smurf) shuffles up and motions to Sweeney that he has another call.

JOE
Mrs. Hart. On four.

SWEENEY
Maureen, I gotta go. Please do me a favor and ask your editors to remember they run the *New York Fucking Times*, OK? Not US Weekly.
(beat)
Oh, that's funny. You're hilarious.

Sweeney SLAMS the phone down. He's about to pick up Lee on line four when he makes eye contact with Emerson.

EMERSON
You don't think he actually...?

SWEENEY
(to Joe Trippi)
You got a car?

Trippi doesn't. Sweeney tosses him his keys. Takes a deep breath, then picks up the phone.

EXT. HART CABIN, TROUBLESOME GULCH. SUNDAY DUSK.

An old JEEP WRANGLER barrels up the gravel road, past a line of five or six SAT VANS.

It *screeches* to a halt outside the front gate, kicking up a cloud of dust. Joe Trippi gets out and gawks at the trucks.

He turns around and nearly slams into a boom mic. A pack of REPORTERS close in on him.

WOMAN CORRESPONDENT

Who are you?

MAN CORRESPONDENT

Are you with the Hart campaign?

TRIPPI

I've, uh, got no comment for you.
I'm sorry.

WOMAN CORRESPONDENT

When is Lee coming out? Will there be a statement?

A slick reporter approaches, camera already rolling.

STEVE DUNLEAVY

Hello young man, Steve Dunleavy. A *Current Affair*. Who are you going to see in there?

TRIPPI

(bewildered)
A Current Affair?

Trippi continues, finally getting through the gate. He's about to keep walking when he spots a TABLOID PHOTOGRAPHER up in an old OAK TREE, trying to get an angle into the cabin.

TRIPPI (CONT'D)

Hey! What the fuck? Get down from there!

INT. HART CABIN, TROUBLESOME GULCH. MOMENTS LATER

Lee Hart answers the door for Trippi.

TRIPPI

Hi, Joe Trippi ma'am. Here to help.

LEE

Okay, what's your plan?

Joe goes to speak, but has nothing. Lee smiles.

INT. CHECK IN DESK, DULLES AIRPORT HOTEL - NIGHT

Irene steps away from the desk with a room key to find Donna lost in thought.

KELLY

It's only one night.

Donna nods, sullenly.

KELLY (CONT'D)

I saw a bar.

INT. "WHEELS UP" BAR, DULLES AIRPORT HOTEL - LATER

End of the bar. Empty glasses beginning to stack.

KELLY

That's my one time in Miami! Shit-faced, lost and bumming a ride off some lecherous guy I knew I'd never see again!

DONNA

Guys in Miami... One of my ex-boyfriends had his car repo'd *while* we were at the movies.

KELLY

Seriously?

DONNA

I still can't see Indiana Jones without picturing Ed Clausen crying in the parking lot.

(they laugh)

Another's in jail for selling blow.

KELLY

Jesus.

DONNA

Yeah. Even my mom doesn't know about that.

Donna nods in agreement as the WAITER sets down 2 more beers.

DONNA (CONT'D)

Gary's so different.

Kelly flinches at the sound of his name, but hides it.

KELLY

How so?

DONNA

He asks about me. Even if nothing comes of it. I feel like I can just be quiet with him. Myself. You ever have that feeling?

KELLY

Did the Senat... Gary know you were a model? Did you show him pictures?

DONNA

Oh God, no. Don't get the wrong idea. I do tasteful shoots. Toothpaste. Jeans.

KELLY

You don't...?

DONNA

No!

(long beat)

I mean... One time, during a shoot, a photographer I *thought* was a friend of mine talked me into posing with nothing but an American flag. Patriotism, you know. And when I saw them later...

(quieter)

My boob was hanging out.

KELLY

Some friend!

DONNA

Right? I was so mad. I'm way more selective now. You have to be smart.

KELLY

You are.

DONNA

Thank you. Coming from someone like you. I mean. Look at where you are.

Beat as Kelly takes a drink, looking at Donna.

KELLY

I'm sorry you got caught up in this, Donna. This whole world we're in. None of it's making sense right now. You should be somewhere else.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE MOSES HOME, GEORGETOWN. SUNDAY NIGHT.

Dixon, carrying his bag, stands with Shore on the sidewalk.

SHORE

It has to mean something, right?
If she swears it was a job interview.

Dixon's looks off, down the street, watching something, lost in thought.

DIXON

I've known Gary a long time. In '84 we were in this hotel, I forget which one. Me and Gary and Warren Beatty. And Gary starts wiggling out because now, you know, he might actually win the thing, and he's grilling the Secret Service agents.
(as Hart)

'What if I'm president and I want to fly to Boulder for the day and shop for used books with my kids? What about my private time?' And Warren goes, 'Gary, you're not getting it. There is no privacy. The cameras go everywhere now.'

A cab pulls up. Dixon waves to the driver.

DIXON (CONT'D)

Gary's confounded. 'That's Hollywood, Warren. That's the paparazzi. That's not politics.'

SHORE

He's right, isn't he?

We SEE what Dixon's been looking at -- a FEMALE REPORTER with a notebook a few houses down, knocking on doors, a cameraman waiting behind her. They're closing in.

Dixon opens the cab door.

DIXON

I don't know. Is he?

PRELAP: the sound of A WHIRRING CHOPPER.

INT. FRONT PORCH, TROUBLESOME GULCH. MONDAY MORNING.

Trippi, sprawled on a wicker couch with a blanket, stirs awake from the sound of the choppers close overhead, he rises and goes to the screen door.

In the distance, A MOB OF REPORTERS are setting up their stakeout equipment for the day and drinking coffee outside the front gate like they own the place.

INT. HART KITCHEN, TROUBLESOME GULCH. CONTINUOUS.

Trippi shuffles in groggily and sees Lee at the stove, her back turned to him. Andrea's at the farmhouse-style table.

TRIPPI

Were you able to sleep?

Lee just gives him a look and slides some scrambled eggs onto his plate. Andrea has her head in a cup of coffee. A rotary phone is RINGING harshly.

The RINGING stops.

TRIPPI (CONT'D)

You could take that off the hook.

LEE

It's unlisted. Not many people have the number.

(beat while he eats)

Jesse Jackson called.

ANDREA

Really?

LEE

Just told me to keep my chin up.
He's a lovely man. *Strange.*

Lee takes another look through the window. She observes the news vans and journalists camped out at her gate.

LEE (CONT'D)

All these people want to feel anger and outrage for me, but it doesn't belong to them. It's my anger. They can't have it.

TRIPPI

It, er, it won't be easy getting out that gate.

LEE

We'll figure it out. I think I'll be ready to fly soon.

ANDREA

What?

LEE

I need to see my husband.

ANDREA

Mom. Seriously?

LEE

I've spent thirty years of my life with your father. I've made many allowances...

Lee sees the disappointment in her daughter's eyes.

LEE (CONT'D)

You think I should feel humiliated.

Trippi and Andrea say nothing.

LEE (CONT'D)

Feelings that simple are a privilege of being young. Our marriage is complicated. So is our love for one another.

(to Trippi)

You married, Joe?

TRIPPI

Yes, ma'am. Just last year.

LEE

I think you'll find that it's more complex than what they said at the altar.

ANDREA

You should let *him* deal with this.

LEE

He will.

ANDREA

But you're just letting him off the hook!

LEE
(a sharp look)
Andrea... I went to a Nazarene
College. We invented penance.

OMITTED

INT. CONCOURSE, MIAMI INTERNATIONAL - MONDAY MORNING.

As they approach the ESCALATOR to the land side, Kelly takes Donna's arm and stops her. Passengers continue to stream by.

KELLY
We've got a car waiting downstairs.
It'll take you wherever you need.

DONNA
Thank you.

KELLY
And we've got a guy here in Miami.
A lawyer who can --

DONNA
Thank you, but I just want --

KELLY
Let me just give you his number.

DONNA
Really, Irene. I don't know what
I'd have done without you. But I
just want to get home.

She hugs Kelly quickly and turns to descend an escalator into the baggage claim area. She's having a moment to herself. Her first in a while, when suddenly - A CAMERA FLASH.

Below, we see a gathering mob. The questions are aggressive.

SHOUTER 1
Donna! Donna Rice! Look up here,
please!

DONNA
(bewildered)
How do you know my name?

SHOUTER 2
Are you and Gary in love?

DONNA

In love? How did you...?

SHOUTER 2

Was your boyfriend a drug dealer?

SHOUTER 3

Do you have ties to the drug trade?

DONNA (CONT'D)

No... I don't know what you're talking about.

SHOUTER 1

Was the boat really called Monkey Business?

DONNA

(recoiling and shaking)

I'm just... Just trying to go home.

SHOUTER 2

What kind of erotic pictures can we expect to find from you?

Donna looks back for Kelly, tears swelling. She can barely see her walking away. Donna turns back around. She looks frightened and shattered. The shouts of her name continue to build as we suddenly...

CUT TO:

A TELEVISION - IRAN-CONTRA HEARING

FAWN HALL

As a secretary, you saw your boss shredding documents...

Reveal, we're at an...

INT. AIRPORT BAR, MIAMI INTERNATIONAL - MOMENTS LATER

Irene Kelly sips a much needed drink. Half watching Fawn Hall testify about Oliver North on television.

INT. BEN BRADLEE'S OFFICE, WASHINGTON POST. DAY.

A TELEVISION plays the same hearing.

We PULL OUT to find Bradlee, Devroy, Kaiser, and Broder watching the hearing with fascination.

A CLERK taps on the door frame. He's holding a PADDED ENVELOPE. No one hears him amongst the ad-libbed responses to Hall's testimony. He knocks a little louder.

Broder sees him and points to the desk. The clerk sets it down on Bradlee's heavy desk. He hangs back for a moment...

BRODER

What, are you waiting for a tip?

The clerk scurries off.

INT. HOTEL BAR, NEW YORK - NIGHT

Wilson and Shore are having a drink. The TONIGHT SHOW lead-in plays on an old TV.

TV ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

*Next up, Johnny's got George C.
Scott and gymnast Kristie Phillips!*

WILSON

Something's been bothering me.
(off Shore's look)
I mean, he sees the entire chessboard at all times. He looks at the country and see decades ahead of anyone. How the hell did he not see this coming?

SHORE

He'd say - *It's Chinatown, Jake.*
(off Wilson's look)
It's just fucked.

WILSON

Are we just spinning our wheels?
When do we know we're dead?

SHORE

We had a dinner at Sorenson's place tonight. Raised four hundred thousand dollars.

Wilson takes this positive news in. We see him visibly relax.

DON PARDO (O.S.)

...the Tonight Show with Johnny Carson! And heeeer's Johnny!

We hear the familiar opening music in the background.

CARSON

(from actual footage)

By the way, before the monologue begins. If Gary Hart is watching, you might want to hit the mute button on your remote control.

Wilson and Shore share a look of death.

INT. SMALL BEDROOM, NEW YORK - NIGHT

Hart's lying on the bed in his undershirt. He's reading through his speech while making notes on a legal pad. The TV is on in the background.

CARSON

I really don't need a monologue tonight. I'll just bring out and read the front pages of newspapers around the country. It is getting so wild that people standing in supermarkets are rushing out to buy regular newspapers.

Hart puts down his notes and grabs the remote to turn it up.

CARSON (CONT'D)

USA Today is advertising numbers to call. It's kind of a poll. You can call in an 800 number, one number, if you think the press coverage has been fair. There's another 800 number you call if you think it's been unfair. And there's a third 800 number to call if you want to meet Donna Rice.

Loud laughter and hooting... And then ZAP -- Carson disappears and the screen goes black.

Hart's holding the remote, frozen. He picks up a LEGAL PAD.

INT./EXT. TOWN CAR, MANHATTAN. NEXT MORNING.

Hart's in the back seat, going over his speech throughout. Stratton's in the front passenger seat, next to Shore behind the wheel.

HART
 (distracted) Left. STRATTON
 Rusting industrial base...
 deteriorating public
 infrastructure... declining
 system of public education...
 astounding accumulation of
 public and private debt...

SHORE
 On 49th?

STRATTON
 We're going in the front.

HART
 Has Dix seen what they've got?

SHORE
 You sure?

STRATTON
 Right up there...

HART
 Billy?

SHORE
 Dix hasn't been back to the office.

The car is slowing to a stop outside the hotel. *FLASH...*

HART
 You've called him?

Before Shore can answer... WHAM! - A BODY sprawls onto the windshield. *FLASH!* - The photog on the hood clicks away.

FLASH, FLASH, FLASH. PAPARAZZI surround the car and BANG up against the windows.

STRATTON
 Jesus!

Stratton jumps out and pulls the photographer off the hood of the car, before hopping back in.

STRATTON (CONT'D)
 Go! Go!

SHORE
 Go where?!

STRATTON
Pull away!

SHORE (CONT'D)
I can't pull away! I'll kill somebody!

STRATTON
(opening his door)
Get out of the car! Let's go!

Shore opens his door and Stratton comes around, pulling a deeply rattled Hart from the car.

Stratton pushes his way through the scrum to the car.

STRATTON (CONT'D)
This way! C'mon!

They guide Hart through the throng of SHOUTING, SHOVING PHOTOGRAPHERS toward the front door of the Waldorf Astoria.

INT. GRAND BALLROOM, WALDORF ASTORIA. 10 MINUTES LATER.

Hart still rattled by the attack outside, sits on the dais next to Senator BOB DOLE. The room buzzes with anticipation. An EMCEE gives a dry introduction in the background.

DOLE
So.... How was your weekend, Gary?

Dole cracks a smile. Hart laughs despite himself.

Something in the balcony catches his attention. He shades his eyes and peers into the lights.

HART
Is that Tom?

DOLE
Huh?

HART
Brokaw. Is that Brokaw? *Here?*

The lens reaches into the balcony to SEE TOM BROKAW and his crew frantically setting up in the balcony, which is packed elbow-to-elbow with reporters and cameras.

DOLE
(droll)
Guess they're really curious about your economics plan.

Hart shakes his head.

DOLE (CONT'D)

Hell of a deal, Gary. Hell of a deal.

Hart looks around the room. He notices MARTINDALE sitting down along the dais. He pulls his speech from his pocket and begins to scribble further.

We move up into the BALCONY. Parker sits among a group of reporters on the risers where the cameras are set up. He clocks Hart jotting notes.

MCDANIEL

(re: something else)
Jesus, that's balls.

PARKER

Huh?

McDaniel nods to a place across the risers, where Fiedler is standing alone.

PARKER (CONT'D)

Front row seats.

Back ON STAGE, we find Shore in the wings. Weinberg, the reporter from the beginning of the film approaches.

WEINBERG

Billy Shore. You hear Stevie Wonder won't play Arizona until they recognize Martin Luther King Day?

SHORE

Nothing to announce, Alan.

WEINBERG

(smiles)
I'll keep asking.

CUT TO:

INT. GRAND BALLROOM, WALDORF ASTORIA. 20 MINUTES LATER.

Two rows of suit-n-tied men are on the dais. Hart is now speaking at the podium.

HART

Good afternoon. Thank you. I'm here today to talk to you about America's future. That's what my campaign is and ought to be about.

(MORE)

HART (CONT'D)

But with your permission, I'd like to address the events of the last three days that you have no doubt been discussing amongst yourselves.

Quick shot of Parker, riveted.

Others amongst the press leaning in. Lenses ZOOMING.

HART (CONT'D)

Last weekend, a newspaper published a misleading story that hurt my family and reflected badly upon my character.

Quick shot of Fiedler, soaking in his Watergate moment.

HART (CONT'D)

This story was written by reporters who by their own admission, undertook a spotty surveillance...

We catch MARTINDALE from the Miami Herald along one of the arms of the DAIS. He rolls his eyes and whispers loudly...

MARTINDALE

Jesus Christ, man the lifeboats...

HART

What was that?

A frozen beat between the two of them. Martindale gives a nod and a gesture - *keep going, you're doing fine on your own.*

HART (CONT'D)

Something you'd like to say?

We see Shore and Stratton at one of the tables on the floor.

STRATTON

Fuck. What do we? I can yell fire.

SHORE

He's got this.

Back to Hart. Unmoving.

HART

Is there something you'd like to ask me? Or does the Miami Herald prefer to chat in alleyways?

Light laughter.

MARTINDALE

(speaking loudly)

Senator, this is not a story about the Miami Herald. This is a story about Gary Hart's judgment.

HART

Can we get him...

(aside)

Can we get him a microphone?

Staffers move a CABLED MICROPHONE to Martindale.

MARTINDALE

(now on mic)

We stand by the essential correctness of our story.

HART

The *essential correctness*?

More laughter from the audience.

MARTINDALE

This is a story about a married man who spent a considerable amount of time with an unmarried woman. We've never speculated on what went on...

HART

If I may, it's because you simply don't know... Despite hiding in the bushes outside my home.

We briefly find Fiedler in the audience.

FIEDLER

(quietly)

I wasn't in his fucking bushes.

MARTINDALE

We know you called Donna Rice several times from the campaign trail. We know she was seen leaving your town house in Washington...

HART

Well was she leaving or not? In your story she *didn't* leave my home. Now, you're saying she did.

MARTINDALE

Senator, when we interviewed you...

HART

Your *newsmen* accosted me in my alleyway. Some interview.

MARTINDALE

With all due respect...

HART

It's a little late for respect, sir. You ambushed me outside my home in the middle of the night after putting me under some half-baked stake out... During which, your crack reporting team failed to realize my home had a back door.

MARTINDALE

(*you're going with that?*)
A back door?

HART

Some surveillance is no better than zero surveillance. In fact, it's worse.

MARTINDALE

You do your job, we'll do ours.

HART

It would be a welcome change.

Martindale throws his hands in exasperation. Meanwhile Parker furiously takes notes.

HART (CONT'D)

Now if no one else minds, I'd like to discuss something a little more exciting. Economics.

LAUGHTER as we close in on Fiedler, also taking notes, when a *FLASH* suddenly distracts him.

Fiedler looks up to see a photographer snapping away at him. He looks around and notices other journalists taking note of him. He's become part of the story and he doesn't like it.

OMITTED

OMITTED

EXT. HIGHWAY TO NEW HAMPSHIRE - DAY

The HART CAMPAIGN BUS works its way up a hill.

INT. HART CAMPAIGN BUS - DAY

Hart, Shore, and Sweeney huddle around a table as staffers work furiously around them.

A staffer is passing out sandwiches to the men. There's a bit of ad-libbed confusion over who ordered what.

SHORE

Back to New Hampshire.

WILSON

Live free or die.

EMERSON

Wonder how many people pick "die"?

HART

I can't keep answering these questions.

SWEENEY

One more presser. We let them ask whatever they want and we put it to bed. Get back to big ideas.

TED KOPPEL (PRELAP)

Well, you have conceded that you weren't able to watch the back of his townhouse...

CUT TO:

A BROADCAST OF NIGHTLINE

Footage of Ted Koppel interviewing Tom Fiedler.

TED KOPPEL

... And that, therefore, the lady in question may have left when you thought she was still there.

FIEDLER

(sweating and stammering)
Well, that's, um... That's... I mean, Mr. Koppel... Ted...

(MORE)

FIEDLER (CONT'D)

If we're conceding that we're not as good as the FBI at conducting surveillance, then I think we have no problem agreeing to that. But --

TED KOPPEL

Hold on. That's cute, but that's not the point. Did she spend the night with him or didn't she spend the night with him?

FIEDLER

Right. Well, not right. I mean, the basis of our report was that Senator Hart had this ongoing relationship with this woman who, again, was not his wife. A single woman...

TED KOPPEL

You have spoken several times, Mr. Fiedler, about the relationship. And of course, *relationship* is one of those loaded words that suggests that somehow there's been a tryst going on.

FIEDLER

No. No, I...I...I haven't suggested, you know --

TED KOPPEL

Well you've suggested it. You haven't said it, but you've certainly suggested it.

FIEDLER

(flailing)

I think a relationship simply means there were, you know, dealings between two people. There were --

TED KOPPEL

Well you're not suggesting a professional relationship. You were suggesting a romantic relationship.

REVEAL:

SONY TRINITRON TV - SHOWING "NIGHTLINE"

FIEDLER

Well. No. I, uh, I guess we mean a,
you know, non-political
relationship.

Koppel is not impressed.

TED KOPPEL

I can imagine what it's like,
because I'm a reporter too and I've
been in similar situations. Let me
put to you an alternative question.
This wasn't a competitive story.
Nobody was breathing down your
neck. You could have waited twenty
fours hours... and got it right.

FIEDLER

(dumbfounded)

I believe we did get it right.

TED KOPPEL

Is this a story that the Miami
Herald drops now?

Fiedler looks at Koppel. Doesn't feel like Watergate. REVEAL:

INT. BEN BRADLEE'S OFFICE, WASHINGTON POST. EVENING.

The sound from the TV fades into the BG. Parker is watching
with a big grin, when he notices the rest of the office has
focused on something else.

Bradlee is leafing through photos from the PADDED ENVELOPE
revealed earlier. Kaiser, Broder, and Devroy are experiencing
a collective emotional kidney stone.

BRADLEE

Fuck me. Close the blinds, would
you?

BRODER

I know this broad.

Broad? - Devroy shoots a look to Broder.

KAISER

(holding out a pack)

Gum?

BRADLEE

Not yet, he's not.

DEVROY

No return address, no note. Just a date. Six months ago.

KAISER

Well there's your other shoe, Ben.

BRADLEE

Yup.

PARKER

I mean, just because an unmarked envelope lands in our laps. That doesn't obligate us to...

DEVROY

It's a pattern of behavior. Womanizing. *Lies*.

PARKER

He's not lying to us.

DEVROY

Christ, don't be so naive.

BRADLEE

I have no doubt the same envelope probably landed in the laps of three other enterprising reporters.

PARKER

Okay, I mean, can't we let some other paper run gossip as front page news. Doesn't mean we...

BRADLEE

But it *does*, AJ. It does now.

(professorial)

We decline to publish, and then some other pissant paper runs with it anyway... I don't know, the Poughkeepsie Journal... or the Miami Herald... or the New York Times... And the TVs go fucking apeshit over the story. And we get on our high horse and say, *well we still don't think it's news*, because after all we didn't think it was news before, right?

(MORE)

BRADLEE (CONT'D)

And now the wires are running a story about how we won't cover the only thing anyone in the entire country is talking about, and, so on and so on.

A beat of silence. Bradlee looks to Broder - *What do you think...?* Broder shakes his head - *no*.

INT. BREAK ROOM, WASHINGTON POST - EVENING

Parker walks up to find Devroy making coffee by herself.

PARKER

Why do you hate him so much?

DEVROY

I don't hate Gary Hart. I don't think I trust him...

PARKER

That's one approach.

DEVROY

That's my job.

PARKER

To pass judgement?

DEVROY

To be skeptical. I don't think his own wife trusts him. Why should I?

PARKER

I think you should trust him on the things that matter.

DEVROY

Okay, I question his respect for women.

PARKER

Are you kidding me? He *loves* women. Too much, frankly...

DEVROY

He uses them.

PARKER

Aren't we being a little precious here? He's smart and handsome and these women are throwing themselves at him...

DEVROY

He's a man with power and opportunity and that takes a certain responsibility. If he was some day trader screwing cocktail girls, I could handle just not liking him... but as our potential next president, as a woman, that makes me nervous... And as a journalist, you should care.

PARKER

I think you're being a little sensitive.

DEVROY

Oh, fuck you. You know what name I'd like to hear Gary Hart say? Donna Rice.

PARKER

(combative)

What exactly is he supposed to say?

DEVROY

I don't know. I'm not running for president. He is. And now we get to see what he does when he's under pressure. He throws a woman under the campaign bus.

Devroy leaves with her coffee. A nearby clerk motions for Parker's attention.

INT. DARTMOUTH INN, HANOVER, NH - NIGHT

We find Irene Kelly, subdued, inside a phone booth. Dialing a number. It's late. A hotel worker vacuums. Intercut with -

INT. BILL DIXON'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The phone is ringing. We turn to see Dixon in his favorite chair, watching the BASEBALL GAME. He ignores the incoming call for a long time, then finally lifts the receiver.

DIXON

Yeah?

KELLY

You're missing all the excitement.

DIXON

(a beat)

Thank God.

KELLY

Looks like we're turning the corner
out here. I could get you a flight.

Dixon has no response. Perhaps Kelly expected that.

DIXON

What's on your mind?

KELLY

I just keep thinking... This is
never going to be over for her.
Every time she applies for a job...
She doesn't have a staff of
overeducated volunteers. As far as
I can tell, she's alone.

A long pause.

KELLY (CONT'D)

You got anything for me?

Dixon thinks. He can't tell her that she's wrong.

DIXON

Buck up kid. You've got work to do.

Kelly nods. Sucks it up.

INT. VIP SUITE, DARTMOUTH INN - NEXT MORNING

Hart, stripped to his sleeveless undershirt and still in suit
pants, is doing push-ups. Sweat beads on his face and he
huffs. We watch him do a couple.

SHORE (O.S.)

They don't have a podium.

HART

I don't need one.

WILSON

(to Stratton)

You couldn't get a podium?

STRATTON

Don't start with me.

SWEENEY (O.S.)

How're voters supposed to believe you?! You've clearly been lying!

HART

They will or they won't. I don't think they much care.

We SEE Shore sitting in plush chairs nearby, sipping a Coke. Sweeney is pacing. Hart pops up.

SWEENEY

(friendly again)

You can cite the polls here.

HART

I don't care about polls.

SHORE & WILSON

(finishing each other's thoughts)

Yes you do. Gallup just came out of the field - *Do you think the media went too far in its reporting on Senator Hart's private life?* 64 percent say yes. *Do you think a candidate's behavior in his marriage is relevant to his qualifications as president?* 38 percent say yes. 52 percent no.

SWEENEY

Take that, fuckers.

HART

64 percent. Got it.

WILSON

(quietly to Shore)

They'll ask about phone calls.

HART

Uh-huh. I call lots of people.

SWEENEY

Right. That's fine.

KELLY

Are we going to bring up Donna Rice?

The mention of her name chills the room.

KELLY (CONT'D)

We could ask the pool to respect
her privacy?

SWEENEY

Are you fucking nuts?

KELLY

It could be seen as a noble
gesture.

Kelly looks to Hart for a response, but gets nothing.

SHORE

(to Hart)

They may ask you about, you know...
Women.

HART

They can talk to Irene or Ginny.
Anyone who's worked for me...

SWEENEY & SHORE

Yeah, I think what Billy means...
Have there been others. Women that
aren't... your wife.

HART

(turning quickly)

Now you have got to be kidding me!
I'm not going to answer that! Not
for them and not for you! That's
nobody's goddamn business!

SWEENEY

That's it! That's perfect. That's
your answer.

There's a knock at the door. It opens, revealing LEE HART.
The team quickly begins gathering their things to leave.

SHORE

I'll come back when it's time.

The door closes behind them, leaving just Gary and Lee. He's
sitting on the edge of the bed, unsure whether to move.

Lee walks to the window.

HART

I... I'm sorry... I...

LEE

I've woken up the last two mornings
to the sound of helicopters.
They're waiting at our gates.
Dozens of them. Trucks with
satellites. Their trash littered
all over our driveway.

HART

How's Andrea?

LEE

She's disappointed.

Hart bows his head in shame.

LEE (CONT'D)

(stoic)

Just to leave our home, She had to
climb in the back seat. One of your
staffers threw an old blanket over
our daughter. That's how she left
our house. Hiding like a criminal.
Like she should be ashamed.

HART

(stumbling)

These people should be ashamed...

(adding)

The public won't stand for it.

LEE

(staring out the window)

Right.

HART

Lee... I'm so sorry.

LEE

I can imagine. Sorry you got
yourself in this mess.

(scoffs)

I'm sorry too.

Gary wants to apologize but doesn't know how.

HART

I feel so foolish.

LEE

Maybe I'm the foolish one. I gave
you all that rope and then I
tripped over it.

Lee begins walking to Gary.

LEE (CONT'D)

Were you thinking of me when you were flirting with this *girl*? Were you thinking of me on that boat when you were making her laugh in front of fifty other people? Were you thinking of me when you invited her into our home?

Gary shakes his head then drops it. A long beat.

HART

Are you leaving me?

LEE

I didn't fly across the country just to say goodbye. That's what phones are for.

HART

You think you can you accept my apology?

LEE

Not right now - Not yet - Maybe at some point. And that might feel like a burden. It should. You hurt me... and you need to know that. You need to feel it. Carry it so I don't have to.

(a beat)

There'll be a time for us to talk about why you did this and why I should ever trust you again. But that will have to wait. When it's just the two of us.

Lee now standing before him as he sits hunched on the bed. He reaches out and wraps his arms around her torso, hugging her. She rests her hands on his shoulders.

INT. WASHINGTON POST - EVENING

Devroy is working with a LAYOUT EDITOR at a LIGHT TABLE.

LAYOUT EDITOR

If we push the girl scout diamond anniversary to page three, we'll have to lose the picture.

DEVROY

Fuck. I liked the picture. Is this to make room for the tank piece?

Bradlee wanders in.

DEVROY (CONT'D)

(to Layout)

Find a way to save the girl scouts.

Bradlee and Devroy begin moving copy on the light table absentmindedly as they discuss the following.

BRADLEE

At some point we need to draw a line in the sand. We might not agree where that line is...

DEVROY

Where does honesty fall?

BRADLEE

Ask a man enough questions and you're going to reach a point where he either has to lie or simply refrain from answering, which is kind of the same as lying.

DEVROY

Maybe if he didn't put himself in a position where he needed to lie.

BRADLEE

I'm talking about what's relevant. Some paper is going to want to know if the president can still get it up or if the first lady still goes down on him...

DEVROY

I'm not asking to know any of that.

BRADLEE

But we're opening a door... I don't know. Maybe the door's already open.

DEVROY

I'm a reporter. I can only work with what's presented to me. I follow leads. I look for the truth. And the truth is he lied to his wife and then he lied to all of us. Is that relevant?

INT. PARKER'S CUBICLE, WASHINGTON POST - EVENING

Bradlee walks by Parker's desk. He drops the ENVELOPE OF PHOTOS with a meaningful look.

BRADLEE

You have a train to catch.

Puts his hand on Parker's shoulder and keeps moving.

EXT. DARTMOUTH INN, HANOVER, NH - NEXT MORNING

The news vans have assembled. It's as bad as we've seen it.

INT. DARTMOUTH INN RESTAURANT - MORNING

Shore walks up the staircase to the second floor dining area.

The place buzzes with anticipation. We find Parker at a table with a NOTEPAD and coffee.

At another table, McDaniel, Weinberg, and Shanahan watch Parker with mixed envy.

SHANAHAN

Follow me.

WEINBERG

Can you believe that? He just stumbled into a Pulitzer.

MCDANIEL

I don't know.

SHANAHAN

What don't you know?

MCDANIEL

I want my president to be smarter than me, not trying to outsmart me.

Broder sits with the older crew - Germond, Broder, Wynman.

Shore comes walking through and Germond grabs his attention.

WYMAN

Let Gary know we're around if he wants a drink? With old friends?

SHORE

The senator is unavailable.

Shore keeps walking. Germond takes in the moment. The others at the table weigh the feeling of being shut out. Broder stands up and walks over to AJ Parker.

BRODER

You know you don't have to do this.

Parker looks up in question.

BRODER (CONT'D)

You think you're the first guy he asked?

Off Parker's look, Broder keeps walking. Parker nods.

INT. HART'S HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

Evidence of Hart having slept on the sofa. Gary and Lee get ready in silence. There's a distance though they are preparing for battle together. Lee gives her husband a look. She fixes his tie. NEWS about Hart plays on the TV.

PRELAP of the press conference - A dozen cameras firing away.

HART (O.S.)

Yes, over there, Ann.

INT. DARTMOUTH INN BANQUET ROOM, HANOVER, NH, AFTERNOON

We're in a tight room with no raised platform or podium. Hart stands surrounded by over one hundred sitting journalists and photographers. Close enough to bite him. His team leans against the wall along with Lee who stands by Irene Kelly.

MCDANIEL

Doesn't this episode call your judgment as a leader into question?

HART

Yes, I suppose I made some mistakes. But I think judgment, like character, has to be measured in the full context of a career. I think what I've undertaken in the Senate, the plans I've outlined for the nation, speak to my judgment. I'm not aware of anyone having questioned my integrity as a public servant.

VARIOUS REPORTERS

Senator Hart! Senator! Over here!

We see Stratton, on all fours, trying to body-block the crowd of reporters from Hart.

A quick look at Lee. Smiling and composed. Then we see Parker watching her.

HART

Yes.

GERMOND

You were quoted once as saying you love danger. Is that why you think you put yourself in this position?

HART

(smiling)

I don't love it *that* much, Jack.

LAUGHTER among the press corps. A releasing of tension.

Angle on Shore, Sweeney, Wilson exchanging a relieved glance.

SHANAHAN

You said there's no relationship. Are you willing to take a lie detector test?

HART

I think the voters are a pretty good lie detector test.

Broder and Germond chuckling.

WEINBERG

Will they believe you?

HART

Well, I think they do. The last poll I saw said that most voters think the *Herald* was out of line. More than 60 percent, in fact.

SWEENEY

64 percent.

HART

When the numbers are in your favor, always be specific.

Another chuckle from the group. More shouts for attention.

HART (CONT'D)

(pointing towards Parker)

Yes.

Parker and another reporter hesitate, unsure of which one Hart's pointing to.

HART (CONT'D)

Mr. Parker. Go ahead.

Parker steadies himself.

PARKER

(voice quivering)

Yes. Senator. Thank you. Good afternoon.

HART

Good afternoon to you, AJ. Glad you could make it.

PARKER

Yes. Senator, in your speech yesterday you raised the issue of morality. I'd like to, um, ask you what you mean, specifically, by that. I have a series of questions, if you don't mind.

HART

All right.

PARKER

When you said you did nothing 'immoral', did you mean that you had no sexual relationship with Donna Rice, last weekend or at any other time?

HART

I've said there was no relationship. That's correct.

A pause. Parker continues.

PARKER

Do you believe that adultery is immoral?

HART

Do I...? Well, yes. I do.

Hart's team grows uncomfortable with where this is going.

PARKER

Senator. Have you ever committed adultery?

It gets so quiet, we almost hear a GASP in the group.

Older reporters shake their heads in disbelief.

Lee's face falls.

We can see Sweeney hoping for Hart to come back swinging...
Come on... Come on...

SWEENEY
(under his breath)
Say it... Say it...

Hart opens his mouth, but freezes. No sound emerges.

He looks to Lee. He looks to his feet.

HART
I...I...I guess I don't think
that's a fair question.

It's a flinch. The campaign team bows their heads as the room goes mad with questions and camera flashes, arms lifting for follow up questions.

WYMAN, a photographer we recognise from earlier bar scenes, a friend of Hart, makes eye contact with Hart... then goes back to taking photos.

We see Broder leaving the room.

Hart and Lee exchange a look amidst the noise... Too many questions at once.

And then quiet.

INT. INSIDE THE CAMPAIGN BUS - DAY

The Harts and their entourage sit quietly. They're shell-shocked. For a long moment, no one speaks.

SWEENEY
Are we doing the last event?

Hart's rummaging in his suit pocket distractedly.

SHORE
Supposed to have a Town Hall in
Littleton.

Hart produces a small blue figurine from his pocket. He examines it in wonder.

LEE
What's that?

HART
I believe it's called a Smurf.

SHORE
Brainy Smurf, actually.

INT. RESTAURANT OF THE LITTLETON INN - DAY

A WAITER clears plates from the table where Hart, Lee, Shore, Stratton and Wilson are eating.

SHORE
Kevin's right.

WAITER
Can I get you folks dessert?

SHORE
Keep on pushing. It's early. We take it on the chin and then pack the schedule as tight as we can.

STRATTON
I'll take a coffee.

LEE
Same here.

The waiter is looking at Gary, who stares straight ahead.

LEE (CONT'D)
Gary?

HART
Hm?

LEE
Coffee?

Hart waves off the waiter.

MOVE TO the entrance of the restaurant. SWEENEY is returning from the bathroom. He's stopped by PARKER, who is holding a now familiar PADDED ENVELOPE.

PARKER
I need time with the candidate.

SWEENEY

(venom)

Are you fucking kidding me?

PARKER

Something's come up. I have some questions.

SWEENEY

You think anyone's letting you anywhere near their candidate?

PARKER

Come on, man...

SWEENEY

Oh, and I used to steal beer from the corner deli in high school... I tried coke at Berkley... and I cheated on my girlfriend. Twice. Just to save you the time.

Parker starts opening the PADDED ENVELOPE.

We move back to the Hart table.

SHORE

Maybe we move up military reform. Do a big rollout here.

STRATTON

Yeah. It's just...

LEE

(to Gary)

I need to call Andrea. I'll be right back.

Shore finds a couple dimes for Lee.

Hart kind of nods as we follow Lee to the PAY PHONES on the wall. She begins to dial.

Back to Hart and the campaign team. We begin to push on Hart as the chatter between Shore and Stratton becomes a low whisper. Just noise along with the silverware.

STRATTON

I'm all for shaking more hands. I'm just not sure I can get him anywhere near them just yet.

SHORE
Could call Denver, get some
more bodies --

WAITER
(returning)
Fresh coffees. On the house.

STRATTON (CONT'D)
What if... we booked some TV time.
I mean, how long would it take to
shoot a 30-minute spot?

WILSON
Saying what?

SHORE
Can we pay for that?

STRATTON
Go directly to the voters. Talk
about reporters out of control,
invasion of privacy.

Hart looks to the entrance. He SEES Sweeney and Parker.
Sweeney is leafing through PHOTOS. His posture falling.

Hart leans towards Irene Kelly for a moment.

HART
Any word from Miami?

KELLY
How do you mean?

HART
Is she okay?

KELLY
I don't know how you want me to
answer that.

Hart's face tightens. He nods. Registering the guilt.

BACK TO Sweeney and Parker. Sweeney now leafing through the
photos. His face doesn't betray his feelings. He looks up.

SWEENEY
Congratulations. You just became
the National Enquirer. You're fifty
cents at the register.

Back to the campaign team. Their conversation is down to a
whisper. The noise of the restaurant continues to build.

SHORE
I'm not sure enough people would
see it.

STRATTON

If the media won't talk about it...

WILSON

We'd need a national buy.

STRATTON

Where the hell is Dixon?

And then Hart hears LEE on the phone cutting through the rest. He turns to the PAY PHONES. Lee is clearly emotional.

Hart stands up and walks over to his wife.

LEE

(emotional on the phone)

OK, you're home now? And you're safe?

We faintly HEAR Andrea's voice CRYING as she speaks. Hart is slowly cracking.

LEE (CONT'D)

(on phone)

It's outrageous. They cannot, they will not hound you like this. They shouldn't be anywhere near you. We will take care of this.

Lee's eyes begin to tear up as Gary pulls her into his arms - A family just trying to hold on.

HART

(quietly)

Lee. It's time to go home.

We move back to the campaign table. Sweeney is joining the table, but Stratton, Shore, and Wilson have already clocked the Harts at the pay phone. It couldn't be more clear.

It's over.

EXT. DRIVEWAY, TROUBLESOME GULCH, COLORADO. MORNING.

We SEE the WAGONEER weaving through the NEWS VANS.

EXT. HART'S FRONT PORCH, TROUBLESOME GULCH - DAY

Trippi pours ice tea for the campaign team as Hart writes notes on a legal pad. Ad-libbed thanks and comments, but it's mostly quiet. Stratton looks out the side, checking out the helicopters with bewilderment. Shore pulls him away.

Hart pauses. He looks out into the trees - Vast beautiful Colorado. It's wild and unmistakably American.

HART

You know, when General Lee resigned his commission in the union army to command the confederate forces, he had to leave his house in Washington behind.

The campaign team turns to listen. As does Lee, even though she's heard this story before.

HART (CONT'D)

The union informed Lincoln and asked if they should tear it down - Light it on fire, what have you... But Lincoln had a different idea. He told them to bury the confederate soldiers in Lee's backyard.

STRATTON

Jesus.

HART

That's how we got Arlington cemetery.

Hart looks at his backyard - an infinite run of trees leading to red mountains.

INT. HART CAMPAIGN OFFICE, DENVER - MORNING

For the first time - Quiet. A couple people answer phones.

Dixon approaches Terzano. Her eyes are red. He hands her an ENVELOPE from a stack. She eyes him quizzically.

DIXON

(off her look)

Cash it before the end of the day.

Dixon moves to Bill Martin and hands him an envelope.

INT. CORRIDOR, EXECUTIVE TOWER INN, DENVER - MORNING

PRELAP: the rapid clicking of a hundred camera shutters

HART (O.S.)

In public life, somethings may be interesting, but that doesn't necessarily mean they're important.

Hart is moving down a line of his campaign team, shaking hands. In effect, saying goodbye to them. At 51, he is about to walk way from public service for the rest of his life.

Each good bye carries its own weight - Stratton. Emerson. Wilson. Kelly. Sweeney. Shore.

INT. HOTEL ROOM, EXECUTIVE TOWER INN - DAY

Hart enters to find Lee waiting for him. He sits across from her. For a moment they just stare at each other. We can tell by their body language that this is the beginning of a difficult conversation. What will be the first of many. But we CANNOT hear them. Rather, we give them their privacy.

Meanwhile, in the corner on a television, we see Hart at a podium with no notes, giving his farewell.

INT. EXECUTIVE TOWER BALLROOM (ON TV) - DAY

The camera scans the crowd then cuts to Hart at the podium.

HART (ON TV)

Clearly, under present circumstances, this campaign can't go on. I refuse to submit my family and my friends to further rumors and gossip. It's an intolerable situation.

In the room: Hart reaches for Lee's hand.

On TV: We see a brief moment of Parker watching.

HART (ON TV) (CONT'D)

But we're all going to have to seriously question the system for selecting our national leaders that has reporters in bushes and photographers peeking in our windows. That reduces the press of this nation into hunters and the presidential candidates into the hunted.

ON TV: As Hart gathers himself, we SEE Kelly, standing with Shore and Wilson, starting to cry.

HART (CONT'D)

After which, ponderous pundits wonder in mock seriousness why some of the best people in the country choose not to run for high office. Politics in this country is on the verge of becoming another form of athletic competition or sport. We'd all better do something to make this system work, or we're all going to be soon rephrasing Jefferson to say: I tremble for my country when I think we may, in fact, get the kind of leaders we deserve.

The TV goes out of focus. We push in on the Harts as Lee takes Gary's hands into her own.

CUT TO BLACK.