

Veep

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EXT. WASHINGTON STREETS - DAY

The Vice-Presidential motorcade screams through the traffic. Sirens wailing, motorcycle outriders. Tourists take pictures. It looks impressive.

CUT TO:

INT. VP CAR - CONTINUOUS

Inside the car are the VP - SELINA, mid 40s - her 32-year-old Chief of Staff ANNA and Selina's bodyman GARY, 36.

Anna is checking briefing papers and talking on the phone. Gary has Selina's big bag perched on his lap and is looking at various pieces of disposable cutlery. He hands a disposable fork to Selina.

GARY

That's a fork, Madam Vice President.

SELINA

Thanks for the debrief, Gary.

ANNA

(on phone)

The VP needs at least 10 minutes with Senator Hallowes, preferably 20. Well if that isn't happening you might want to make it happen in the next 5 minutes, preferably 2. Okay.

(ends call)

GARY

Actually, I meant this is one of the new cornstarch forks. I was differentiating it from the spork...

He gets a hybrid spoon-fork out.

GARY (CONT'D)

The spoon-fork.

ANNA

Just wondering if your meeting with all the senior Senators might be more important than a spoon-fork?

SELINA

Anna - congressional reform is very important...

(she examines the fork,
bending it around)

But I also need - are you listening...?

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ANNA

I am. I'm one huge ear, tuned to the frequency of your voice.

SELINA

I also need plain, simple, solid...

She tries to bend it back into shape. She can't.

GARY

I don't think...

Selina carries on.

SELINA

...solid, green policies - biodegradable cornstarch utensils in most government buildings by the fall. Senate reform's going to take years. But these...

(looks at bent fork)

...shit, do these not bend back?

GARY

They've not perfected that yet, Ma'am.

SELINA

Great. We've come up with a way people can eat round corners.

Anna's Blackberry starts beeping. She checks it. Looks worried.

ANNA

Okay...

SELINA

What's wrong? You used 'okay' like a swearword.

ANNA

Brett Kagan's blog.

SELINA

What does my bete noir have to say?

(to Gary)

Bete noir's French for 'dick.'

GARY

Copy that, Ma'am.

ANNA

He's picked up on a cutlery tweet, from us. From our Twitter guys.

SELINA

What's controversial about cutlery? TV Calling - For educational purposes only Is this chopsticks, are they saying we're anti-Asian...

Anna's getting a lot of messages on her Blackberry.

ANNA

A tweet a half hour ago said "76 percent of government buildings now have cornstarch utensils! Let's make it 100! Let's make plastic utensils extinct!"

SELINA

Fuck.

ANNA

Kagan's publicized it, plastics industry are going crazy, they want meetings and statements today.

SELINA

Jesus. Which Club Class pisser tweeted that?

ANNA

Well, officially, you. It was written by a staffer, but as Selina Meyer.

SELINA

There are seven of me in that office, which me wrote it? Glasses me? Tall me? Gay bald me?

ANNA

I think it was gluten-intolerant me.

SELINA

Ryan? Well, let's fire gluten-intolerant me. Get smelly me to do it.

ANNA

And I'll set up a meeting with the Plastics & Cellulose Association. Okay?

SELINA

Sure. I'm livin' the dream. Only it's that dream where I'm meeting men from plastics.

GARY

Do you want to see the cornstarch knife now?

ANNA

Fuck the knife Gary.

SELINA

Yes, on balance, fuck the knife.

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Selina holds her temples and closes her eyes. Immediately, Gary reaches into the big bag and brings out two packs of pills, holding one in each hand.

GARY
Codeine or Ibuprofen?

SELINA
Codeine.

Gary hands her two tablets with a bottle of water.

GARY
Would you like them to switch off the
sirens?

Selina nods. Gary whispers to the driver, sirens go off.

CUT OUTSIDE the car. The motorcade instantly slows down
and stops at traffic signals.

SELINA (O.S.)
No, no, put them back on.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAPITOL BUILDING - DAY

Establisher.

CUT TO:

INT. MEETING ROOM - DAY

A large Senate meeting room. There are about 15 SENATORS
gathered there. There are drinks being handed round by
SERVING STAFF. Selina, Anna and Gary are approaching from
the outside corridor, checking Blackberries.

SELINA
...I mean when these guys were kids, were
they like, 'I want to work with plastic.
Screw being an astronaut, or Donny
Osmond, or Kissinger: my ambition is to
make the least interesting bit of a
cotton bud. And maybe hound the Vice
President.'

They enter the room.

SELINA (CONT'D)
(to room)
Hello Senators!

Some guests start moving towards Selina. There's not as
many as she was expecting. Gary whispers to her.

GARY

Over there is Senator Alice Dorsey.
Husband died two years ago and daughter
Emily just graduated Harvard.

SELINA

Which one is she again?

GARY

Two o'clock.

SELINA

I'm not a frigging sniper, Gary.

GARY

Red dress. Slight mustache. Tiny lips.

SELINA

Okay, thank you.

She beams and approaches SENATOR DORSEY.

SELINA (CONT'D)

(looking at Dorsey's upper
lip)

Alice! Hi! So glad you could make it!
How's Emily?

SENATOR DORSEY

She's good.

Gary throws a victory punch in the air behind her.

ANNA

(To Gary)

There are more serving staff here than
Senators. Has this cutlery thing made her
toxic?

SENATOR DORSEY

I see this cutlery story is getting some
serious traction on the blogs.

SELINA

Oh, it's the plastics industry getting
antsy. They'll be fine - as long as
Priscilla Presley is alive they'll stay
in profit!

SENATOR DORSEY

Right - a 'here today' story.

SELINA

(Notices an already thin
crowd getting thinner)

Yes, unlike most of your colleagues. For educational purposes only
Senator Hallows not joining us?

(MORE)

SELINA (CONT'D)

Or is she too busy stabbing Frank in the back and taking over the Finance Committee to attend a meeting about Committee ethics?

SENATOR DORSEY

(awkwardly moving away)
I'm guessing that's a rhetorical question? No, there's a vote on the Domestic Aid Bill coming up.

SELINA

Of course.

Senator Dorsey politely moves away, and Selina gestures to Anna and Gary

SELINA (CONT'D)

Quickly!

They crowd round her and start whispering.

SELINA (CONT'D)

I don't want to be here. Make me not be here.

ANNA

No, no, it's going fine.

SELINA

No, Anna, the cutlery story's spread, I'm suddenly a leper with a dirty bomb in one hand and a sign in the other saying 'I Hate Plastic.' This room is emptier than Gary's life. No offence, Gary.

GARY

None taken.

ANNA

It's the vote. We picked a bad time.

SELINA

It's not the vote it's the cutlery. Anna, I need 20 with Hallows and a tunnel out of this meeting.

ANNA

Shall we do a Fax and Go?

SELINA

Yes. Gary, you know what to do?

Gary nods and Selina moves over to a group of Senators.

SELINA (CONT'D)

Senators, I'm really sorry but something pretty major has just broken. Gary?

Gary comes over with a piece of paper. We can just see that on it is a large picture of a cornstarch fork.

GARY

This has just come in, and it looks big.

Selina looks at it as if it's something important, but tries to hide the picture of the fork.

SELINA

Sorry, Senators, something large and unusual's come up and I'm going to have to head back. I am the Vice President, so..that happens.

CUT TO:

INT. CAPITOL BUILDING CORRIDOR - DAY

Selina, Anna and Gary emerge from the room. Anna now has the piece of paper.

SELINA

Okay, we need to search for Hallows, but not look like we're three unemployed day-trippers from Baltimore. Aalk purposefully and briskly. You and Gary can sort of surround me.

ANNA

You want us to form a human motorcade?

SELINA

Yes.

(looking at Blackberry)

It says here 65,000 Americans are employed in the plastics industry and I'm like Jack The Ripper but with a cornstarch knife.

ANNA

Are you self-Googling? Have you got news alerts switched on?

SELINA

Of course. I want to know what people are saying about me.

ANNA

You don't. Really. Don't search on your name, or your nicknames. Really don't.

SELINA

My nicknames?

A beat. A glance between Gary and Anna.

ANNA

You have some nicknames that it's necessary for us to search on...

SELINA

What are they?

ANNA

Okay: Grisly Madam, Meyer the Liar, The Batcave, Mammary Meyer...

SELINA

Is that the breastfeeding legislation?

GARY

It is, Ma'am.

ANNA

...Pissface - you apparently make a face sometimes like you're in the act of...

GARY

Voiding.

ANNA

And then just various VP things: Vaguely Personable, Viagra Prohibitor and Visible Panties.

SELINA

I'm sorry - I *prohibit* Viagra? Because - what, because of my looks? Am I hideous?

GARY

It's just using those initials...

SELINA

Yes, to say that a chemical pill which guarantees to produce a strong, sustained erection in all men, whatever their age or medical history, is nullified by me. I don't want you searching on that nickname.

ANNA

No, of course.

CUT TO:

INT. CAPITOL BUILDING CORRIDORS - CONTINUOUS

Round a corner. Coming towards them is a group of 7 or 8 CONSTITUENTS with DAN EGAN, Director of Communications for Senator Barbara Hallows. He's good-looking, mid to late 20s, sharp-suited.

DAN

So this would be where Senator Hallows might meet lobbyists, or...

CONSTITUENT

In the hallway?

DAN

Well, yeah, if she were in a hurry. She is always keen to meet her constituents.

CONSTITUENT

She got rid of that emergency trailer park. Those bastards won't be coming back.

The other constituents concur.

DAN

She's very effective.

Dan and his party come level with Anna, Selina and Gary. Dan looks at Anna. They have history. He stops, and so do his entourage of constituents.

DAN (CONT'D)

Anna.

ANNA

Dan.

DAN

On your way to somewhere important?
That's purposeful walking.

Dan looks at the piece of paper ANNA is holding. He turns to Selina.

DAN (CONT'D)

Honoured to meet you Madam Vice President. I'm Dan Egan, I'm with Senator Hallows.

SELINA

Great, Level Completed.
(to Anna)
Anna, you want to....?

CONSTITUENT

Madam Vice President, great privilege to meet you. Can we talk to you about the Mexicans?

The excited crowd gathers round Selina.

SELINA

Sure.

(to Gary)

Are my panties visible?

GARY

No ma'am. I haven't seen them.

Selina discretely checks her skirt. Dan takes Anna to one side.

ANNA

So, Dan, are you a tour guide now? I always knew you'd make it to the top.

DAN

How was your boss's meeting? I hear the catering was a box of a dozen donuts.

ANNA

Fuck you.

DAN

I hadn't finished..."and four of those were left over."

ANNA

I hadn't finished either..."fuck you Dan. You dick." OK, that's the small talk done. Now, we know Hallows is avoiding the Veep.

DAN

Veep?

ANNA

We're pushing Veep as her acceptable nickname.

DAN

Oh, you mean, instead of She-Ra?

ANNA

We need 20 minutes with Senator Hallows.

DAN

There are a lot of people who need 20 minutes with probably the next Chair of Finance. Why don't you take ticket 98 and get in line?

ANNA

Come on Dan. Did what we had together mean nothing to you?

DAN

You know it didn't. It was just kissing and rubbing and dinner at Citronelle.

ANNA

You remember the restaurant.

DAN

It's my regular second-date pre-sex restaurant.

(to his entourage)

Ladies and gentlemen.

Dan starts to move off. His entourage follow him in sync.

A beat. Anna calls out.

ANNA

It's the SRVA Fundraiser tonight.

Dan stops, comes back. His entourage shuffle back with him.

ANNA (CONT'D)

How would you like to stand right next to the President?

DAN

She gets 10 minutes.

CUT TO:

INT. SENATOR HALLOWES' OFFICE - DAY

Dan enters Senator Hallowes' office with Selina and Gary. SENATOR BARBARA HALLOWES - a confident woman about the same age as Selina - is on the phone.

SENATOR HALLOWES

I still support him. It was an ill-advised comment and, you know, Frank's chair of the Finance Committee so he needs to watch what he says...absolutely....

Dan leans over the other side of her desk and scribbles, upside down, on a notepad. She reads.

SENATOR HALLOWES (CONT'D)

Look, we've all said dumb things in our lives. But I don't think this is a resigning issue for Frank. Okay. Goodbye.

She rings off.

DAN

Now all that guy will take from the call will be the words 'dumb' and 'resigning'.

SENATOR HALLOWES

Thanks Dan.

(she sees the VP)

Selina!

(looks horrified at Dan)

SELINA

Hi Barbara. You've not been returning my calls. You been seeing another VP behind my back?

DAN

The Senator has been very busy with extremely important legislative business.

SENATOR HALLOWES

You must remember what that was like, Selina, from when you were a Senator?

Dan leaves. Selina and Gary sit down.

Senator Hallows is drinking a coffee. Selina waits a beat, nothing is offered.

SELINA

Heard you talk about Frank there. Is this about his deficit reduction comments?

SENATOR HALLOWES

Yep. Officially supporting him, unofficially positioning to take his job after his sure-fire resignation tomorrow afternoon.

SELINA

The usual dance. Gary, could you get me a coffee from the machine?

Gary goes to leave.

GARY

Oh, I've managed to get a fresh batch of those European sweeteners you like so much. The French sweeteners?

SELINA

Thanks Gary. You're phenomenal. They're great, great sweeteners.

Gary exits.

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SELINA (CONT'D)

(explaining)

I don't like them especially, they taste just like any other sweetener. Sweet. It's not like wine, you don't say, mmm, sweetener - I'm getting oak, maybe a hint of raspberries and, my, is that fennel? No, it's just a harsh chemical sweetener, but Gary puts so much effort into getting them I don't have the heart to tell the poor bastard.

A beat.

SENATOR HALLOWES

So, I love what you're doing with the whole cutlery thing.

CUT TO:

INT. DAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Dan with Anna in his office next to the Senator's.

DAN

You got Google alerts on all the VP's nicknames? Mrs Doubtmeyer, you got that one?

ANNA

("No")

Yes.

DAN

That's a clever one, because it implies she's both nannying and confused, which..

ANNA

(interrupts)

So Hallowes is going to get the Chair of the Finance Committee from Frank?

DAN

Probably. She wont be very good at it though. They'll want Frank back.

ANNA

Okay. Indiscreet?

DAN

She wouldn't believe you over me so I can be honest. She's mediocre. If they did greetings cards that said "You're basically adequate", that's what people would send her.

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CUT TO:

INT. SENATOR HALLOWES' OFFICE - DAY

Back with Selina and Senator Hallows.

SELINA

Dan seems good.

SENATOR HALLOWES

He's great. Very loyal.

Gary comes back in with a takeout coffee.

SENATOR HALLOWES (CONT'D)

Got him from an Ohio Congresswoman. She was clearly going nowhere. You know he's dating my daughter?

SELINA

Janet?

SENATOR HALLOWES

No.

Gary writes something on the sleeve of the coffee cup.

SELINA

Of course not. I meant...(reads coffee cup) Carol. Carol Hallows, of course. Great name.

GARY

(re coffee cup)

I got you a double sleeve. Always err on the side of caution. And two sweeteners.

SELINA

You're a star.

Gary exits.

SELINA (CONT'D)

Listen, Barbara, are you on board with supermajority reform? You know I sent a personal letter to you and 20 other senior Senators asking for your support?

SENATOR HALLOWES

(picking up letter from her desk)

Yeah, I got that. Anna does your signature rather well, doesn't she?

SELINA

Yes, she does it so well sometimes I think I use her version of my signature when I sign my own name. She's good.

SENATOR HALLOWES

I need to go. Important committee.
Remember those?

CUT TO:

INT. DAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Gary comes to join Anna and Dan. He is carrying his big bag. He sits down with it on his knees.

DAN

Nice bag Gary.

ANNA

He calls it 'The Leviathan'.

DAN

You got the nuclear codes in there?

GARY

Ha, yes, you see, what I have in here may seem trivial but it is far from trivial.

He takes out two small tins.

GARY (CONT'D)

See? Two types of lip salve - one is ordinary, everyday, regular salve. But if the Vice President is in too many air-conditioned rooms her lips get radically dry, and she needs this fella, the heavy-duty stuff. Without it, she can't talk. Literally, it's too painful for her to speak words.

DAN

And I guess if she can't talk that could result in anything. Maybe war?

GARY

Very funny, Dan, but not so very far from the truth. I do do a serious job.

DAN

Sure. And all those guys who say you're just an old man holding a lady's purse - screw them.

ANNA

Dan - play nice.

DAN

Would you take a bullet for the VP?

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GARY

Well, that's the security guys. My job would be to help her when she's down. Staunch the bleeding, get her painkillers and, you know...

DAN

Lip salve, right. In case she gets shot in the lips.

ANNA

Dan. Give me the ball.

DAN

But you're the one constantly by her side, so if someone were to shoot at her...you know...

GARY

Okay...

DAN

You ready for that? Hot, fast metal ripping your internal organs apart. It ain't Shiatsu.

Off Gary's worried look we...

CUT TO:

INT. CAPITOL BUILDING CORRIDORS - DAY

Selina, Hallows, Dan, Anna and Gary are walking down the corridor.

SENATOR HALLOWES

You know Senator Reeves died?

SELINA

Retard Reeves? He must have been ..91?

SENATOR HALLOWES

96.

SELINA

He was the first Senator to welcome me to the Capitol. He was old even then.

ANNA

Was he full of wisdom?

SELINA

He was full of Bourbon and he touched my left boob.

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ANNA

God rest his soul.

SENATOR HALLOWES

Did you fire your tweeting guy? Because he is a *weapons-grade* retard. I think you might have been 'hoist by your own retard' there!

Selina laughs.

SELINA

I might use that.

SENATOR HALLOWES

Okay, but tell them I came up with it first.

Senator Hallows exits.

SELINA

Okay, so, good to meet you Dan.

DAN

My pleasure. Really admired your campaign, sorry you didn't get the nomination.

Anna mimes vomiting behind Dan.

SELINA

Thank you. I agree, I think we fought a good campaign.

DAN

Two things I would have done differently, but you've probably been over those with Anna.

SELINA

Two things? What were they?

DAN

Shouldn't have spent so much time in New Hampshire, that was in the bag, and attack ads in Oregon were four days too early, it looked like you were mean before you had to be. But look, I'm teaching my grandmother to suck eggs here.

(off Selina's look)

Mother..big sister to suck eggs.

SELINA

Interesting.

Selina and Gary head off.

DAN

(to Anna)

See you at the fundraiser.

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ANNA
(giving Dan the middle
finger)
Yup, don't forget your 'plus one'.

DAN
(giving her the finger back)
Yup, plus one.

CUT TO:

INT. VP MOTORCADE - DAY

SELINA
So - what do you think of Dan?

ANNA
Dan is a shit.

SELINA
Okay, want to expand on that?

ANNA
He's a massive and total shit. When you
first meet him, you think, surely to God
this man can't be as big a shit as he
seems. But he is.

SELINA
See, I...

ANNA
It's like, if you were to see a book with
covers made of shit, you'd think, that's
intriguing. I wonder what's in this book
that they saw fit to give it covers made
of pure shit. Then you open it and -
shit.

SELINA
I think he's OK. I think we could use
him for...Let's just say, I think Senator
Hallowes has made herself a very powerful
enemy.

ANNA
Who?

SELINA
Me!

ANNA
Yes, you.

GARY TV Calling - For educational purposes only
Absolutely, you.

SELINA
I'm the powerful enemy.

CUT TO:

EXT. WHITE HOUSE - DAY

The VP's motorcade draws up to the White House but doesn't go in. Instead it veers right to the Eisenhower Building.

INT. EISENHOWER BUILDING - DAY

Selina, Anna and Gary on their way to the VP's office. In the corridor they catch up with MIKE MCLINTOCK, the VP's Press Spokesman. He's mid- to late-40s, portly, looks like he could deck you.

ANNA
Hey Mike - off to give the 3:30?

MIKE
Yeah. I heard about the cutleryfuck at the Capitol. Thanks everyone.

ANNA
Yeah, go polish that turd, Mike

MIKE
And the plastic guy - what do you plan to say to him?

SELINA
Oh shit, him. Okay I guess my main...

MIKE
No, don't tell me. If I genuinely don't know, the bastards can't make me tell them. You know my motto: "I Don't Want To Know And Anyway What Motto, I Have No Motto."

On the far side of the office is JONAH, 24, one of the President's communications guys - the liaison between White House and VP. Drinks and smokes too much, wispy beard, dandruff, crumpled suit.

Jonah is standing at the window. It's one that opens only a few inches. He is smoking out of the small gap, his hand jammed outside - he leans in to take a puff, exhales through the gap from the side of his mouth.

SELINA
Jonah. TV Calling - For educational purposes only

JONAH
Madam Vice President.

ANNA
I know you only do that to look cool and
get the girls.

MIKE
You look like the guy from My Left Foot.

Selina goes through into her private office.

JONAH
The President lets me smoke out of the
White House briefing room window, and
that opens the whole way.

GARY
That one's an anti-suicide window.

JONAH
They only put it in when you joined,
right Gary?

GARY
No.

Jonah flicks his cigarette butt out the window.

ANNA
How many times have you spoken to the
President today, Jonah? You need to
remember so you can put it up on your
star chart on the refrigerator.

JONAH
Four times. In the briefing room, in the
hallway, NSC meeting, in the hallway
again.

MIKE
Is that as he was trying to throw you out
of the NSC meeting?

JONAH
The President knows my name Mike. I doubt
he remembers yours.

ANNA
You know he attaches an image to a name
to make it easier to remember? So for you
- Jonah - he'd think of a whale, because
you're called Jonah and you look like a
whale.

Jonah moves over to where Anna has sat down.

JONAH

So, Anna, good new Italian place opened downtown. You like Italian?

ANNA

I love Italian Jonah. But still, unfortunately, really dislike you.

JONAH

Hey, I'm not asking you out. That wasn't a knockback because I didn't ask you out. So...

Selina has come out into the open-plane office again, checking her Blackberry.

ANNA

Jonah, you know I will never go out with you. I would rather go out with Gary than go out with you, that's how little I want to go out with you, because I would never in a million years go out with Gary. Isn't that right, Gary?

GARY

Right. You've said this many a time.

Selina looks up from her Blackberry.

SELINA

Jonah, you are, I know, a very busy and important 24-year-old. So why've you come to see us?

JONAH

The White House would like you to go to tonight's SRVA fundraiser instead of the President.

SELINA

Why?

JONAH

There's lots of bad vibes around Frank's remarks about deficit reduction, and the President doesn't want to be asked about them.

SELINA

I'm afraid I haven't the time Jonah. I have my own agenda space to tend to.

JONAH

The President is very keen that your going to the fundraiser should be, fundamentally, the ~~sequence of events~~ educational purposes only that does actually take place this evening.

Selina has no option.

SELINA

Let me make a call.

She goes back into her office, closes the door.

JONAH

We'd like you to be there too Mike, so no going home to walk the dog..

MIKE

Don't tell me what to do, Doogie fucking Howzer.

JONAH

I don't know what that means. Or the left-foot thing. And I can fucking tell you what to do because one of us backed the winning candidate in the Presidential nominations.

(Jonah starts fiddling with his Blackberry.)

Let me text you the name of that someone who does now work for the President...

(he clicks send)

...and not for the candidate who didn't win.

Mike's Blackberry beeps. He looks at it.

MIKE

'Jungle'.

JONAH

Jonah. It's predictive text. You know what I wrote. I wrote my name.

MIKE

Okay Jungle.

Selina comes back out.

SELINA

Okay, I've cancelled my date. Now presumably for tonight I need a speech and some jokes, instead of a new dress and some jokes?

JONAH

What jokes exactly?

SELINA

Just some gags to liven things up. Anna will come up with some.

ANNA

Maybe not jokes as such. Maybe more a light touch. Like Ugly Betty - it's not technically a comedy, but it has a light touch.

JONAH

No, no jokes. These are not humorous times for America.

Jonah leaves.

SELINA

You know, I'm wondering just how hard I'll weep when that guy gets his embolism.

ANNA

Okay, let's turn this - use tonight's speech to expand on supermajority reform and reshaping committees.

Mike goes to leave.

MIKE

I'll go and check if the press room's ready yet.

SELINA

Mike - what were my two big campaign mistakes, would you say?

MIKE

You looked tired a lot of the time? And that hat?

SELINA

You don't think one of them was that we went too soon with attack ads in Oregon?

MIKE

Who knows about that shit? Anyway, we got here in the end.

CUT TO:

EXT. WASHINGTON ROOF TERRACE - EVENING

The SRVA fundraiser is very busy. Lots of important-looking people chatting in small groups, a large free bar, waiters with canapes.

Selina, Anna, Gary and Mike are there. Anna and Mike scanning the room. Gary does too, but also nervously looks up, and across at other roofs, for snipers.

Gary heads towards two SECURITY GUYS.

ANNA

Okay, Senator Clements is here, you should definitely talk to her. And Bill Knight from the Speaker's office.

MIKE

Ooh, little burgers. Great. Four of those make a normal one.

Mike takes four burgers from a waiter's tray.

ANNA

I assume you're taking some of those home for your dog?

SELINA

I really need some major food.

ANNA

Is this a blood sugar thing?

SELINA

I don't have blood sugar any more. I have blood sweetener. What utensils do they have here? I can't be seen using cornstarch over plastic. Or plastic over cornstarch.

MIKE

(eating)

You could use celery as a kind of shovel?

SELINA

Bring me some lentil salad, I'll go in the corner and eat it with my fingers.

CUT TO:

Gary next to WOMAN AT DESK, who is letting people in.

GARY

I expect this is a fairly low-risk event, yeah? All-ticket affair?

WOMAN

Pretty much. There's usually one or two unknowns.

GARY

Unknowns?

Three people - one female(KATE), two male - are coming in. The WOMAN on the desk knows the female guest. She addresses the guys.

WOMAN

You guys with Kate?

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The men nod.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Okay. You're not on the list, but go ahead.

(jokily)

You're not terrorists are you, 'cos Kate knows a lot of terrorists!

They all laugh. Gary looks very worried.

Gary shuffles off.

CUT TO:

Mike chatting to a YOUNG WOMAN. He stares a little too hard at her. He holds his left arm out, on which he has balanced five small spring rolls and two mini burgers.

MIKE

They deliberately don't give you a plate at these things to discourage you from getting a free dinner. But I always say - the forearm is nature's plate.

He takes a spring roll off his arm and eats it.

MIKE (CONT'D)

By the way, I'm Mike.

He goes to shake her hand with his greasy fingers. She doesn't respond.

CUT TO:

Selina is with Anna, ready to make her speech. Selina wiping lentil salad from her hands.

SELINA

Do you have my notes Anna?

ANNA

Gary has them.

Selina speaks quietly over her shoulder.

SELINA

Notes please Gary.

He isn't there. He's about three metres away.

SELINA (CONT'D)

Gary?

GARY

Sorry ma'am - do you need me? TV Calling - For educational purposes only

SELINA

I need my notes. Why are you over there?

Gary brings the notes, but stands behind one of the PA speakers and leans across to Selina to hand them over.

A LITTLE GIRL is on the rostrum, playing with the microphone. Mike approaches her and whispers.

MIKE

Take a hike kid.

LITTLE GIRL

I'm sorry sir?

MIKE

I said take a hike. Defcon one.

Slightly desultory applause as Selina steps onto the podium. Immediately, people aren't paying attention. There's lots of talking, ordering of drinks.

SELINA

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen...
(she looks at a party
official)
...and Tom!

A beat. She expects a laugh. There's nothing.

SELINA (CONT'D)

Aaaaahm. These are serious times. For the world and for our country. I'm reminded tonight of the late Senator David Reeves, God rest his soul...

She steps back from the microphone a little, waits for warm applause. Zilch. Selina starts getting flustered.

SELINA (CONT'D)

He died. He's dead. And I remember him saying...

The noise of the crowd gets louder. More people drift away to get drinks.

CUT TO:

Anna is with Jonah, watching Selina's speech. Dan is nearby.

JONAH

Well, this sure isn't the Gettysburg Address.

DAN

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More a recreation of the tragic events that led to it.

ANNA

Could you two shut your mouth?

(to Jonah)

It's that red and yellow hole you use to seive carbohydrates through your pubey 15-year-old's beard.

JONAH

I'm sorry. Are you having difficulty hearing the other 200 people talking over your boss?

Jonah looks over at a very attractive woman a few feet away - CAROL HALLOWES.

JONAH (CONT'D)

That your date?

DAN

That's the woman I'm with tonight, yes.

JONAH

She's nice. An eight. Definite eight. I used to get sixes, now I'm in the White House I get eights.

DAN

I've never seen you with an eight.

JONAH

Oh, I get eights, believe me. I'm up to my neatly trimmed nuts in eights.

Jonah heads to the bar. Anna looks across at Carol.

ANNA

Carol Hallows? How do you even say that? Carol Hallows. "Hello Carol Hallows!"

DAN

You know I did promise her she'd be three feet away from the President tonight.

ANNA

What a shame - she's going to have to be content with being, what?

(makes cock-measuring
gesture)

...three and a half inches away from you later?

DAN

That doesn't work. As a joke. The penis, whatever size, is inserted into the vagina.

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DAN (CONT'D)

So she would be the same distance from me if my penis were small - which as you know it isn't - as she would be if it were huge - which as you also know it isn't. I have an average-sized penis.

Carol joins them.

DAN (CONT'D)

Hi Carol.

ANNA

Hello Carol Hallows.

CUT TO:

Selina's still speaking.

SELINA

With a Senate logjam like we currently have, hundreds of Bills are getting stalled, which means millions...

Anna gives the 'lighten it up' signal - pushing the corners of her mouth up with her fingers to make a smile.

JONAH

What are you doing?

ANNA

I'm giving her the signal to make a joke.

JONAH

Don't, she's in enough trouble.

Anna again does the pushing her mouth thing. Jonah puts his hand on her face, squashing her cheeks together.

ANNA

Get your hand off me you freak!

Jonah does.

ANNA (CONT'D)

And don't tell people you got to first base with me, because that wasn't first base. That was assault.

Selina has seen Anna.

SELINA

So, I'll let you all get back to enjoying yourselves. Actually talking of enjoyment, and leisure, I just booked a holiday in Florida. Wonder if that makes me the Miami Vice President!? Or...

Nothing. If there was such a thing as a negative laugh, she just got it. Deathly.

SELINA (CONT'D)

Okay, thank you for listening and...

A HECKLER calls out.

HECKLER

You going to be tweeting about this?

SELINA

Ha! If that's a reference to the rogue cutlery tweet - I hear you! I'm afraid that there we were very much 'hoist by our own retard'! Thank you so much.

She gets down to sporadic applause. She crosses over to Anna and Dan, who are on their Blackberrys. Selina at first doesn't realise what she's done.

SELINA (CONT'D)

Well that was hell on Earth. Do people not listen any more? So rude.

ANNA

Ma'am...the last remark you made...

DAN

The word 'retard'. This is already getting on the blogs.

SELINA

What? Shit - how? I just said it like a second ago. Fuck broadband up the ass.

ANNA

Ma'am, the President of AT&T is in the room.

DAN

Just walk briskly through the party, nod some hellos, leave.

They start to walk.

Anna calls on her Blackberry. We see Mike across the room answer his phone.

ANNA

Mike, put the crabcakes down, we have a situation with the Vice President.

Gary emerges from the men's room, joins Mike.

MIKE

A situation with the Vice President?

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GARY

Oh God! Is she down? I should have been there!

Mike and Gary hurry after the VP, Anna and Dan as they leave the party.

CUT TO:

EXT. SRVA FUNDRAISER - CONTINUOUS

Selina on her way to the car with Anna and Dan. Mike and Gary bring up the rear. All are walking quickly, checking their Blackberrys. A sense of panic.

SELINA

This is not my fault.

DAN

Kagan's going big with this.

ANNA

No, not your fault. I can't access Kagan...

SELINA

(to Dan)

This is your boss. She was using that word so much this morning - 'retard' this, 'retard' the other - it was like Hurricane Retard. It fixed it in my head.

ANNA

I can't get fucking Kagan on this thing. Someone go punch the AT&T guy.

DAN

There's a way to mend this. Tomorrow morning you meet with someone from a mental health charity. I worked on the 2007 Disability Rights Bill, I have a lot of contacts.

SELINA

I imagine you probably do. You're a hub. A node. A nexus the size of Texas. Talk to Anna.

Selina gets in the car.

ANNA

Appreciate your input Dan but fuck off. She needs to call the Association of Mental Health Charities right now, not tomorrow, and apologise. That will show decisive moral strength.

DAN

No, don't do that. Calm things down. More haste, less speed.

ANNA

What does that mean? My grandmother says that. The way I see it, more haste, more haste. We need haste here.

Anna, Gary and Mike bundle clumsily into the car.

DAN

Larry, Moe - let Curly in first.

CUT TO:

INT. VP'S CAR - EVENING

Selina is on the phone. Anna, Mike and Gary with her.

SELINA

... and I want to apologise for my comments of this evening.

(a beat)

Okay, just a second...

(hand over phone, whispers to Anna)

They haven't heard about it. The mental people haven't heard the retard comments.

ANNA

Well, they will hear eventually so...

SELINA

You think they'll hear tomorrow?

MIKE

They might not hear. What if Tom Hanks dies?

ANNA

What?

MIKE

Just a for-instance - what if Tom Hanks dies? That's all that will be on the news for like a week. When Phil Spector was convicted we couldn't get anything in the papers for two days.

Selina goes back to the phone.

SELINA

Okay, what happened was I used the word 'retard'. Retard, yes. In a humorous context. No, that is why I'm apologising now....

ANNA

I think we're going to need you to pull an all-nighter on this Mike.

MIKE

I can't. The dog.

SELINA

Go home. Feed the dog. Walk the dog. Shoot the dog. Come back in.

MIKE

Sure. Actually, maybe...the dog will be fine.

CUT TO:

INT. VP'S OFFICES - DAY

Next morning Selina is in her own private office

Outside it's very busy. Phones ringing, staffers dealing with calls.

Anna fielding calls. Mike tired and unshaven. He cradles a phone receiver under his chin as he tries to take off his shirt and put on a fresh one out of a cellophane packet.

MIKE

(on phone)

It was a reference to a 'petard'. No, not Star Trek - 'petard'. It's a Shakespearian word for an explosive device. No, she was not making light of the war on terror.

Mike is now in his undershirt. Anna goes over to Gary's desk.

ANNA

Okay, set up new Google alerts for 'VP resignation' for 'Meyer offensive', 'Meyer retard', 'Meyer resigning issue'. Then delete your History.

Jonah has arrived. He's carrying a very large envelope.

JONAH

Hey Anna, have you put in 'VP worse than the Jonestown massacre'? Or 'VP 9/11 point 2'?

ANNA

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I haven't got time to ignore you. Gary, could you ignore Jonah for me?

JONAH

Got a condolence card, for Senator Reeves' widow. The President's already signed, so if Selina could also while she still has a job? Then I can send it round the Hill.

Dan arrives with another man - PAUL, early 40s, smart.

DAN

(to Anna)
Is the Vice President in?

Anna slightly taken aback.

ANNA

Is she expecting you?

DAN

Anna, this is Paul Burton, Chair of the American Association of Mental Health Charities.

PAUL

Hi.

Paul smiles at Gary. Gary quickly shifts his chair to cover a card pinned up in front of his desk that says 'You Don't Have To Be Mad To Work Here But It Helps'.

Selina emerges.

SELINA

Mr Burton. Why don't you come through to my office. Gary, could you fix some coffee?

GARY

Yes ma'am.

Gary does. Paul and Selina go in to her office.

JONAH

Ma'am, I have a card here for Senator Reeves' widow, which...

As Selina closes the door she mimes a writing gesture to Anna, and makes a different, odd, gesture to Dan.

ANNA

What was that gesture? I've never seen her give that gesture.

Jonah gets closer to Anna with the card.

JONAH

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Is she not going to sign this card?

ANNA

I'll sign the card. That's what her gesture was to me, to do her signature on this. What was her gesture to you Dan?

DAN

I'm not sure I noticed a gesture.

Jonah is now leaning in too close. Gary takes the coffee in to Selina.

ANNA

Can you not stand so close Jonah, you stink of cigarettes.

JONAH

I smell like a man. All men used to smell like this. Spencer Tracy used to smell like this. Cary Grant. I smell like them.

DAN

Dead old men.

Gary emerges from Selina's office.

JONAH

You all smell of women, especially you Gary.

Gary points to the VP's bag, The Leviathan.

GARY

That'll be the VP's scented wipes. Vanilla and rose.

ANNA

I know what you're doing Dan, okay?

DAN

Yes? What am I doing?

ANNA

I don't know, exactly, but I do know that you are one sly fuck. You know Fantastic Mr Fox? That's you, only you're worse than a fox. You're Fantastic Mr Shit.

DAN

Smart wordplay.

JONAH

Sorry to interrupt the pre-nup, but is this card going to...?

Anna grabs the card.

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ANNA

I'm signing the fucking card.

She does a quick signature. Jonah glances at the card. A smile. He leaves as Mike comes in.

MIKE

Hit the deck! Brett Kagan's blog is now saying the VP was calling Senator Reeves a retard at the fundraiser.

DAN

Well, see, that's Kagan getting things completely wrong. We can prove the VP didn't say that and discredit him.

MIKE

Yes, but...

DAN

Which is why I planted that story with him in the first place.

ANNA /MIKE

What the fuck...?

DAN

We make an issue of the unreliability of bloggers, I get a few people to phone in Rush Limbaugh, the retard story moves to page 5, and on page 1 we have "Bloggers Eat Babies". Now what you need to do, Mikey, at the 11:30 press call today is make it clear there were two people - the VP and Senator Hallows - involved in Retardgate.

ANNA

Oh, okay, now I see what this is.

GARY

Dan, can we maybe not call it Retardgate? Can we call it, I don't know, the R-word F-up?

Dan turns on Gary.

DAN

I don't give a splayed fucking anus what the fuck we call it you clumsy fucking human tumour, we've got to deal with it, okay? Now get on board, or I swear I'll slice your tits off so Mike can take them home for his dog. We need a body. And we can't give them the Vice President, can we?

MIKE

TV Calling - For educational purposes only
So we give them your boss? Are you doing a thing, a clever double thing, or...?

DAN

Don't worry your meaty head, Mike, just tell the press that Senator Hallowes introduced the expression 'retard' into the conversation. And she encouraged - strike - she goaded the VP into using it.

MIKE

You think I'm going to do what you say?

Dan gets very close to Mike.

DAN

Mike, ask yourself this, do you think I'm going to end up working in a position above you or below you? Now you've got 10, 15 years of work left to do Mike, and every shred of ambition left your body a long time ago. All you've got left is a damp apartment, cold dwarf-burgers from a buffet, and an invisible fucking dog. So make a calculation.

Dan and Mike exit to the other office. Gary is looking through some paperwork. He hands a sheet of paper to Anna.

GARY

Oh, could you sign this customs form to confirm that Selina's French sweeteners weren't a gift? Not, if you will, a 'sweetener'.

Anna signs.

ANNA

You, Gary, are as funny as...
(a horrified beat)
...fuck.

GARY

Why thank you.

ANNA

No. Fuck. Bad fuck. The worst fuck.

Anna has gone ashen.

ANNA (CONT'D)

The condolence card. I think I signed my own name. Not Selina's, mine.

GARY

How sure are you, on a scale of one to ten, where one...

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ANNA

I can work out how the fucking scale will go Gary. Nine. I'm nine sure that I signed my name.

GARY

Nine. That's almost the full ten.

ANNA

Okay. Not good. The VP couldn't be bothered to sign a card for one of the most revered Senators of the last 50 years. Selina can't know about this.

GARY

No.

Gary almost immediately gets up and goes straight towards the VP's office.

ANNA

Gary...!

GARY

I've got to be by her side. If she's going down, I've got to catch her.

He knocks and enters. A pause. From outside we can hear the VP's voice is raised. Gary comes out.

ANNA

Why did you tell her? You lunatic. She's going to turn into an apeshit crazy person.

At the words 'lunatic' and 'apeshit crazy person' the VP opens the door and comes out. Paul has obviously heard. She closes the door.

SELINA

What have you done Anna? This is fucking Chernobyl. You know how finely the Senate is balanced? We need every Senator on side. We are on the verge of legislative constipation.

ANNA

We'll get the card back.

SELINA

Yes you will get the card back. Now get on with it, because I'm busy in there apologising.

She goes back in.

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SELINA (CONT'D)

Sorry, now where...

The door closes.

Mike and Dan have come back through. Mike is still half-dressed.

ANNA

Mike, a truckload of fuck has just been unloaded all over this office.

MIKE

Man, this is too much information.

He puts his hands over his ears.

Selina emerges from her office with Paul, the Mental Health guy, who stares at a man in his undershirt with his hands over his ears.

CUT TO:

INT. EISENHOWER BUILDING - DAY

Mike and Dan are walking along a corridor, heading to the Press Room.

MIKE

I need you to know I'm not happy about giving this briefing.

DAN

And I need you to know that I couldn't give a shit.

MIKE

Is this going to be like Moonlighting where we end up falling in love with each other and fucking?

DAN

No, more like The Wire, where I end up blowing your brains out. And then like Dexter, where I cut you into little pieces and incinerate you. And then like The West Wing, where I become President.

CUT TO:

INT. VP'S OFFICES - DAY

We're now in the open-plan office with Selina, Gary and Anna.

GARY

I'm feeling a bit like, you know, the Watergate burglars? I mean, this is...
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ANNA

Don't be a dick Gary. With Watergate they burgled party secrets, you are retrieving a greetings card. Okay? They forced illegal entry, you have a pass that authorises you to enter most of the White House.

SELINA

This isn't Watergate. This is walking through a gate.

GARY

Okay. I need a long coat. To hide the card under.

ANNA

You can borrow mine.

SELINA

Good luck Gary - take that bullet for me!

Gary smiles weakly.

CUT TO:

EXT. WHITE HOUSE - DAY

Establisher.

CUT TO:

INT. WHITE HOUSE LIAISON OFFICE - DAY

Gary enters the office. He is wearing a scarlet overcoat with a slight fur trim on the cuffs. He looks sick with nerves. Suddenly there's Jonah.

JONAH

Gary.

GARY

Jesus! Jonah! Hi.

JONAH

You're in my office.

GARY

Yes.

JONAH

What do you want? In my office.

GARY

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Nothing at all. Just...I needed to see...

JONAH

Are you here to steal the card, Gary?

GARY

No sir, not at all.

JONAH

This looks bad Gary. This looks real bad.
And I'm a friend of yours.

GARY

But it isn't bad. I'm not bad.

JONAH

I knew the card had been incorrectly
signed. But I didn't want to say anything
because you guys obviously know what
you're doing. And because I wanted to use
this knowledge for my personal advantage.

GARY

Right.

JONAH

I will give you the card Gary. With
pleasure.

GARY

Thank you. Please get to the bad bit of
this because I know there'll be one and I
don't like tension. I have acid reflux
issues.

JONAH

Okay. In return for giving you the card,
I want Anna to go out on a date with me
tonight. We won't have sex, because she
hates me. But you see Anna is an eight,
and if the other eights I want to have
sex with see that I'm eight-capable, then
I will probably have some sex with an
eight before too long.

GARY

I'm sorry, but do I look like a pimp?

Jonah looks at Gary in his scarlet overcoat.

JONAH

You kind of do.

CUT TO:

INT. CAPITOL BUILDING - DAY

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Dan is in the corridor we saw him in earlier. He's on the
phone, standing at a snack-dispensing machine.

DAN

Yeah, the thing is...look, we've all said dumb things in our lives. But I certainly don't think this is a resigning issue for Senator Hallowes. Okay. Goodbye.

He rings off. Calls another number.

DAN (CONT'D)

Hi, Carol Hallowes please.

(slowly)

"Carol Hallowes". Yes, voicemail, thank you.

(A beat. He chooses his snack.)

Carol, it's Dan. I don't really know how to say this...

(money in the slot)

...but I don't think, right now, I'm ready to take that next step that we need to take as a couple ...

(picks up his chocolate bar)

...I mean, really, this is killing me, this decision. Jesus. I'm not eating...

(he starts to unwrap the candy)

...it's tearing me up.

(rings off. To himself)

Plus, you have a stupid fucking name.

CUT TO:

INT. VP'S OFFICES - DAY

Anna is working at her desk. Gary enters, sweating, in Anna's overcoat. He holds two large envelopes. Selina comes out of her office. At that moment Dan arrives.

DAN

(noticing Gary's envelopes)

Hey, big guy. Looks like Operation Terrified Old Man went well.

GARY

There was a slight hitch. Jonah caught me. I had to make a deal. Anna has to go on a date with him tonight.

ANNA

No she fucking doesn't.

GARY

He doesn't want to sleep with you, just dinner and a movie.

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DAN

A date with stinky Jonah. Lucky you. You're getting him in his prime, before next year's heart-lung transplant.

ANNA

I'm not going out with Jonah.

SELINA

Oh get a grip. It's one date, with no sex. I was married to a man I hated for 12 years, with no sex. Okay, let me sign this thing. This has gone from being a resigning issue, to a 're-signing' issue. That's a very clever orthographic joke.

GARY

That's very funny ma'am.

SELINA

Do you know what orthographic means?

Without replying, Gary takes the cards from their envelopes and lays them side by side on a table. Everyone looks at them. A beat.

SELINA (CONT'D)

Shit.

ANNA

Shit.

SELINA

The President already signed. We need to forge the President's signature as well.

GARY

Isn't that still a capital offence? Can't you be electrocuted for that?

Dan steps forward, grabs a pen.

DAN

I'll do it. The key is to do it upside down.

He flips the cards upside down. Squiggles, quickly, on the blank card. Turns them up the right way. A perfect copy.

DAN (CONT'D)

There you go.

SELINA

Wow. Dan - thank you. Is there anything you can't do?

ANNA
Foreplay. Empathy.

DAN
Oh, and Senator Hallows has let it be known that she will not be putting her name forward to replace the Chair of the Finance Committee.

SELINA
Who's the baadass? Gary?

GARY
You are, Madam Vice President.

SELINA
Correct.

DAN
She also added she'll be taking a less public role in future. So...

Anna commentates.

ANNA
Checking the mirror.

DAN
I guess that leaves me with a fatally injured boss.

ANNA
Signalling.

DAN
And I wondered if there might be a position in this office?

ANNA
And we're moving off. Careful, you hit a toddler.

SELINA
We should talk. I was thinking I'd like to create a Special Director of Communications role within this department.

DAN
Uh-huh? Interesting.

From his pocket Dan brings out his Blackberry charger, plugs it in. Smiles at Anna. Selina heads to her office. Anna, furious, follows.

ANNA TV Calling - For educational purposes only
Excuse me - you just hired him? You hired the biggest bastard in DC?

SELINA

It's fine. I can speak bastard. It's one of my languages. I'm fluent in bastard. Don't worry about me.

ANNA

You? I'm worried about me, actually, ma'am. I've worked for you for six years. I have done a hell of a lot for you.

SELINA

Oh, and, what - I haven't done anything for you? You happen to be standing in the office of the Vice President of the United States young lady. I think that's pretty good.

ANNA

"Young lady"?

SELINA

Dan's OK. I used Dan to get what I wanted.

ANNA

No, he used you to get what he wanted.

SELINA

No, I definitely used him. I'm the u-ser, he's the u-see. That's right, isn't it? Is it?

ANNA

Does he look used?

They look over at Dan. He is smiling happily as he plugs in his Blackberry and stares at Gary's desk, which is right outside the VP's office.

DAN

Nice desk, Gary.

Mike enters.

MIKE

Duck and cover, everyone. This is the front page of tomorrow's Post.

A large photo on the front shows Selina cramming lentil salad into her mouth with her fingers. It looks disgusting. The headline reads: "Veep Looking Cheap".

MIKE (CONT'D)

At least they're using the right nickname.

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At that moment Jonah enters the outer office. Calls through.

JONAH

Come on Anna, shrimp linguine and a porno. Sorry, I'm joking. It's chicken linguine. Come on.

Anna leaves for her date.

ANNA

Touch me at this restaurant and you will get metal cutlery in your scrotum.

MIKE

Ma'am, what are you gonna say to the plastic guy when he comes?

SELINA

I'm going to say, "Hey, Mr Plastic Guy, are you like a GI Joe doll, with no genitals?"

We now see Anna standing in the doorway with KEN, a man in his mid-thirties.

ANNA

Sorry ma'am, forgot to brief you. This is Ken Nichol of the Plastics & Cellulose Association. I booked him in for a four o'clock.

Selina smiles.

SELINA

Mr Nichol.

(calling through)
Gary! Coffee! And two fucking sugars.