

VICE

Written and Directed by

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OPEN ON: BLACK

"The following is a true story."

"Or as true as it can be given that Dick Cheney is one of the most secretive leaders in history."

"But we did our fucking best."

INT. ROAD SIDE BAR WYOMING - 1963 - NIGHT

MUSIC: ROLY POLY by Bob Wills and His Texas Playboys.

The place is full of DRUNK LINE MEN, DRIFTERS, WEATHERED RANCHERS and a few ROUGH PROFESSIONAL WOMEN who flirt and dance.

Young DICK CHENEY, 21, liquored up and playing dice, screams to the heavens in triumph.

EXT. DESOLATE ROAD - NIGHT - LATER

The RED TAIL LIGHTS of a battered 1949 Frazer Sedan SWERVE BACK AND FORTH ERRATICALLY. Dick is at the wheel. Very drunk.

POLICE LIGHTS FLASH behind him.

POV A HARSH POLICE FLASH LIGHT HITS THE DRIVER SIDE WINDOW AS DICK LEANS HIS HEAD OUT.

DICK
How you doing tonight?

OFFICER
I need you to get out of the car.

Dick gets out and IMMEDIATELY STUMBLES TO THE GROUND.

SFX: A LOUD BLARING ELECTRONIC SIREN

INT. WHITE HOUSE OFFICE OF VICE PRESIDENT - 9/11 2001 - DAY

Older Cheney, 60, CONDOLEEZZA RICE and MARY MATALIN are watching CNN. ONE OF THE TWIN TOWERS IS SMOKING.

SUDDENLY A SECOND PLANE SOARS INTO FRAME AND HITS THE OTHER TOWER. Everyone gasps.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT
MOVE!!!!!!

Secret Service Agent grabs Cheney and pushes him down the hall to the underground bunker.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT #2
(into ear piece)
A plane just struck the Pentagon.

INT. HAIR SALON - SAME TIME

A TV in a hair salon shows the 9/11 coverage. LYNNE CHENEY, 59, stares at the twin towers in shock.

INT. UNDERGROUND WHITE HOUSE BUNKER - 9/11 9:38AM

Cheney begins barking out orders.

DICK
Let's make sure the phone lines are working. SIVITS.

CONDI RICE
Phones are a go, Sir.

DICK
Let's contact the FAA. Find out how many planes are in the air.

JUMP CUT: Cheney, on the phone amidst the chaos, NORMAN MINETA, DAVID ADDINGTON, Condi Rice, SCOOTER LIBBY, KAREN HUGHES and a few others are there.

CONDI RICE
(into phone)
May I get the President on the line, please?

STAFFER
That's right. We've got planes in the air and no where for them to land.

The Twin Towers burn on the television as Dick lowers his head into his hands.

CONDI RICE
Mr. Vice President, POTUS on line 1.

Council looks at Cheney as he is about to pick up a call from POTUS.

DICK

Mr. President, this situation is extremely fluid. I am strongly recommending you stay in the air. I've sequestered Congressional leadership and I'm coordinating our response with the White House team... Okay then...

Dick hangs up and we reveal Lynne, now standing behind him. She has her hand on Dick's shoulder. He touches her hand.

STAFFER

Sir, Don Rumsfeld on 3.

Cheney points to the speaker phone.

CHENEY

That?

He picks up the line.

RUMSFELD (V.O.)

Dick, there are still passenger planes in the air. I need rules of engagement.

CONDI RICE

Let's get the President back on the-

Cheney holds up his hand.

DICK

You have authorization to shoot down any aircraft deemed a threat.

Beat.

RUMSFELD

Presidential authority?

DICK

That's correct. All orders are UNODIR.

CONDI RICE

UNODIR?

KAREN HUGHES

Unless otherwise directed.

FREEZE on Dick Cheney.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
 (male, late 20's)
 By all accounts of what people saw
 in that room on that terrible day,
 there was confusion, fear,
 uncertainty, but Dick Cheney saw
 something else that no one else
 did... he saw an opportunity.

Famous Photo of Men Playing Golf while the hillside behind
 them is on fire.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
 As the world becomes more and more
 confusing, we tend to focus on the
 things that are right there in
 front of us. While ignoring the
 massive forces that actually change
 and shape our lives.

VT and Stills of people working at Amazon and Wal-Mart.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
 And with people working longer and
 longer hours, for less and less
 wages, when we do have free time,
 the last thing we want is
 complicated analysis of our
 government, lobbying, international
 trade agreements.

VT of people partying and dancing.

Cheney clasps his hands thinking in the 9/11 Bunker.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
 So it's no surprise that when a
 monotone bureaucratic Vice
 President came to power. We hardly
 noticed. As he achieved a position
 of authority that very few leaders
 in the history of our nation ever
 have.

Quick shots of the Iraq war, torture, the Senate passing tax
 cuts etc.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
 Forever changing the course of
 history for millions and millions
 of lives. And he did it like a
 ghost. With most people having no
 idea who he is or where he came
 from.

Lynne puts her hand on Dick's shoulder as we SMASH CUT to Jet Planes bombing a Middle Eastern Town with a ferocity.

FADE TO BLACK...

EXT. RIVER - DAY

Young Cheney fly fishes in a river ALONE. Working his rod and the line... Over and over again.

NARRATOR

How does a man go on to become who he is? Well it starts in 1963.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL FIELD - HOMECOMING

YOUNG LYNNE CHENEY, in the back of a fancy car: Miss Mustang, in a sparkled cowboy outfit waving at the crowd in SLO MO. She's a cross between a movie star and a goddess.

NARRATOR

When Dick's best girl Lynne was getting straight A's at Colorado College,

INT. YALE DORM ROOM - DAY

Young Cheney passed out in bed. His sheets and floor covered in vomit.

NARRATOR

Lynne had helped Dick get a scholarship at Yale, where he did way more drinking than class attending. Pretty soon Dick got the boot. So he went back home to Wyoming to work as a lineman for the state.

EXT. VAST WYOMING FIELD - DAY - 1963

Dick strapped to a pole works on power lines with a cigarette in his mouth. It's rough hard work.

NARRATOR

Back then they would have been called a guy like him a ne'er-do-well. In today's parlance they would just call him a dirt bag.

In the distance, a Man SCREAMS. Dick looks down below.

LINEMAN #1

Man down!

EXT. POWER LINE BASE - CONTINUOUS

Linemen gather around a FALLEN MAN who's leg has snapped in half, a bone sticking out of his torn pants.

LINEMAN #2

His leg looks like an Elvis dance move.

The men laugh.

LINEMAN #1

Somebody give that poor son of a bitch a shot of whiskey.

LINEMAN BOSS

Alright, back to work. I SAID, Back to work!

Everyone walks away except Cheney who continues to stare at the writhing man.

LINEMAN BOSS (CONT'D)

(to Lineman #3)

Take him into town, put \$5 in his pocket. Find another man for tomorrow.

(to Cheney)

You got a problem Cheney?

DICK

No sir.

Cheney takes a drag of his smoke and walks away.

INT. ROAD SIDE BAR WYOMING 1963 - NIGHT

Dick dances around the bar drunk with a giant smile on his face, taking shots and stumbling into other locals.

A SHIFTY CREW MEMBER keeps putting his arm around Dick's shoulder. He's trying to agitate Cheney.

SHIFTY CREW MEMBER

Are we becoming friends?

DICK
Will you stop touching me?

SHIFTY CREW MEMBER
What you gonna do about it, Mr.
Yale? Huh?

Cheney slaps Crew Member's hand off his shoulder.

SHIFTY CREW MEMBER (CONT'D)
Woah! The fuck you gonna do about
it, Mr. Yale? Come on!

Dick shoves him back and PUNCHES HIM.

EXT. DESOLATE ROAD - NIGHT

From earlier, with the police officer's help, Cheney stumbles out of the car. The crackle of the police radio in the background.

EXT. LYNNE'S HOUSE - THE NEXT MORNING

A lower middle class home. A dog barks in the distance.

INT. LYNNE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME

DICK, WITH A BLACK EYE AND STAINS ON HIS SHIRT SITS ON THE COUCH.

LYNNE, 21, pretty and sharp, stands over him with a fury in her eyes.

LYNNE
Two times! Two times I had to drag
you out of that jail like a filthy
hobo!!

DICK
I'm sorry, Lynne...

LYNNE
What? What did you just say?

DICK
I'm sorry, Lynney.

LYNNE

You're sorry? Don't call me
 "Lynney!" One time is "I'm sorry."
 Two times makes me think I've
 picked the wrong man! They kicked
 your ass out of Yale for drinking
 and fighting! Now are you just a
 lush who's going to hang power
 lines for the state? Are we going
 to live in a trailer and have ten
 children!? Is that the plan?!

Dick looks like he might be sick.

DICK

Can we please... discuss this
 later?

LYNNE

No. We discuss it right now while
 you smell of piss and cheap booze!

EDNA, Lynne's Mom, starts to walk in.

EDNA

Does Dick want some coffee?

LYNNE

Mother get out! Does Dick want some
 coffee? Jesus Christ!

(back to Dick)

Here's my plan. Either you stand up
 and put your back straight and have
 the courage to become someone or I
 am gone! There are a dozen men and
 a few Professors at school who
 would date me!

DICK

I love you, Lynne. I've loved you
 since the day I first saw you.

LYNNE

Then prove it! I can't go to a big
 Ivy League school! I can't run a
 company or be Mayor! That's just
 the way the world is for a girl! I
 need you! And right now you're a
 big fat piss soaked zero!

(beat while she reloads)

I've seen my Mother waiting up all
 night for my Father to come home.

(MORE)

LYNNE (CONT'D)
And I've seen him drunk in this
house raising his voice and way
worse, and I'm not dancing that
dance anymore... I'm not!

QUICK FLASH BACK to Lynne's FATHER yelling at her MOTHER in
the kitchen. Her dad is scary and has been drinking.

LYNNE (CONT'D)
Can you change? Or am I wasting my
goddamn time?

Beat as Dick looks up. There is a GROWLING DETERMINATION IN
HIS EYES.

DICK
I won't ever disappoint you again
Lynne.

FADE TO BLACK

QUOTE AGAINST BLACK

"Beware the quiet man. For while others speak, he watches.
And while others act, he plans. And when they finally
rest...he strikes." - ANONYMOUS

OPENING TITLES

Dick graduating from U of Wyoming.

Dick and Lynne's Wedding Day.

Lynne stands pregnant and Dick signs Vietnam Deferment
papers.

Dick drives into Washington D.C.

MAIN TITLE: VICE

INT. RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

A theater with a podium is filled with FELLOWS from around
the country. A MONOTONE CONGRESSMAN, 73 finishes a speech.

MONOTONE CONGRESSMAN
You are America's best and
brightest. God bless you all... and
God bless... this great nation.

The 100 or so interns looked bored. A few clap politely.
Cheney looks like he's made a big mistake coming to DC.

MONOTONE CONGRESSMAN (CONT'D)

Next up is a young man from
Illinois who's done quite well for
himself here at the Capitol...
Representative Donald Rumsfeld...

DONALD RUMSFELD, 36, strides over with brash confidence. HE
LIGHTS HIS PIPE and leans on the lectern.

DONALD RUMSFELD

So did Bob tell you this internship
is a great honor? Huh? Did he?

A few people murmur yes.

DONALD RUMSFELD (CONT'D)

Well, it's not. It's what we called
in the Navy "a shit detail."

THE ROOM LAUGHS. Dick Cheney laughs. Rumsfeld oozes charisma.

FREEZE ON RUMSFELD.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Donald Rumsfeld, or Rummy as they
called him, was the former captain
of the Princeton wrestling team...

INT. PRINCETON WRESTLING GYM - DAY - 1952

SUPER 8 FOOTAGE: A 20 year old DONALD RUMSFELD, in wrestling
singlet and head gear poses for camera in a wrestling pose
moving his hands around, ready for a take down.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

...and an elite navy jet pilot.

EXT. NAVY AIR FIELD - DAY - 1956

SUPER 8 FOOTAGE: 24 YR OLD RUMSFELD, in front of a jet plane,
removes his helmet, waves to camera and smiles.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Most Congressmen used their power
like an axe, Rumsfeld used his like
a master of the Butterfly knives.

VT: We see expert hands flipping around a butterfly knife.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

And like any master if you got in his way, he would cut you.

VT: The knife slashes someone's cheek. UNFREEZE: Rumsfeld continues his speech.

DONALD RUMSFELD

Look, this is an opportunity. An opportunity to work in the halls of decision making for the most powerful country in the goddamn world. If that doesn't give you a hard on I don't know what will. Sorry to the few ladies in the room. They used to not have girls for this program... but now they do. Anyway, I'm Don. Whatever you do, don't work for Bob over here. He's the most boring son of a bitch in DC.

Bob chuckles, though it didn't seem like good natured ribbing.

DONALD RUMSFELD (CONT'D)

That's it. Now scat! Go get a Congressman a cup of coffee! And if his wife calls, he's always in a meeting!

The STUDENT next to Dick turns to him. He's got longish hair and a mustache.

STUDENT

Hey, I'm Alan. You're the other guy from Wisconsin right?

DICK

That's right...

STUDENT

One of us is supposed to start with a Democrat, the other with a Republican. Do you care if I go with the Dem? I did a lot of work with the DNC on campus.

DICK

What party was that guy we just heard?

STUDENT
(looking at the directory)
Rumsfeld is... a Republican.

DICK
Perfect. Because that's what I am.

INT. RUMSFELD'S OFFICE - MONTHS LATER

Cheney knocks. Rumsfeld smoking a pipe, pours through papers.
He doesn't answer. Cheney knocks again.

RUMSFELD
Don't lurk! Come in dammit!

Cheney enters. Rumsfeld doesn't look up as he talks to him.

DICK
It's, uh Dick Cheney... Reporting
for work...

RUMSFELD
You're Congressional relations for
my Office of Economic Opportunity.
And you'll assist me in my job as
councillor to the President.

Cheney waits a beat.

RUMSFELD (CONT'D)
You want me to pin your mittens to
your sleeves so you don't fucking
lose em? Go!

Cheney starts to leave.

RUMSFELD (CONT'D)
By the way Cheney, your two DUIs
showed up on your background check.
Don't worry. I vouched for you.

DICK
Thank you sir.

RUMSFELD
Thanks are for when neighbor Dottie
pulls your pud for the first time.
You owe me.

DICK
Yes, sir.

RUMSFELD

GO!

Cheney nervously exits.

INT. CONGRESSIONAL FLOOR

Montage of Cheney working for Rumsfeld 1) Flipping Cards for a Congressional Committee 2) Flipping cards for Senators 3) Talking to a WHITE HOUSE MEDIA ADVISOR, 30, in a hallway.

MEDIA CONSULTANT

You're Rumsfeld's lackey right?
Make sure he sees this.

FREEZE FRAME

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Roger Ailes, founder of FOX News.
He first pitched the idea as
conservative news when he worked
for Nixon as a media advisor.

UNFREEZE: Rumsfeld walks up as the Media Advisor leaves.

DICK CHENEY

Roger wants Nixon to start a
Republican TV news network.

Rumsfeld throws the memo in a waste basket.

RUMSFELD

Forget it. Roger knows TV. But he
doesn't know politics.

4) Dick and Lynne having dinner with Rumsfeld and his wife.

LYNNE

So I would do this flaming baton
trick and Dick would wait around
with a bucket of water. So I'm at
the State Finals and I throw up the
baton....and it doesn't come down.

RUMSFELD

Where have you been hiding her
Cheney!?

5) Flipping cards for Nixon in the Oval Office. 6) Flipping
cards for cabinet members.

INT. WHITE HOUSE HALLWAY - DAY

Rumsfeld continues down the hallway. Cheney follows.

RUMSFELD

You're quiet. I like that. You're not blabbing to everyone what cards you have. I missed my flush draw a month ago but everyone still thinks I have pocket kings. Except maybe fucking Haldeman.

DICK

I mostly play hearts so I'm not-

RUMSFELD

No, no, no.

FREEZE

NARRATOR (V.O.)

For a man like Donald Rumsfeld he only wanted three things from his lackey: he had to keep his mouth shut, do what he was told and always be loyal.

They stop by Rumsfeld's office.

RUMSFELD

So is it a yes or a no?

Half beat.

DICK

It's a yes.

RUMSFELD

You don't even know what the question is do you?

DICK

I, uh, I assume it was-

RUMSFELD

Good. That's exactly the kind of "yes" I was looking for.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Cheney had always been a so so student and a mediocre athlete. But now finally he had found his life's calling, he would be a dedicated and humble servant to power.

INT. WHITE HOUSE - CHENEY'S OFFICE - DAY

Cheney enters his office. It's basically a closet with a desk, phone and a chair.

STAFFER

Here's your new office. No windows.
But all you'd see is a bunch of
hippies flipping off Nixon.

He sits down and picks up his phone.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Now at this point you're probably
wondering who exactly I am.

INT. MIDDLE AMERICA HOME - 2011 - DAY

A DAD, 29 and MOM, 28 play with their SON, 2, on the couch.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Well my name is Kurt. My favorite
football team is the Steelers. And
me and my son love watching Sponge
Bob. And if you are wondering how I
know so much about Dick Cheney,
well let's just say we are kind of
related... We'll get to that later.

BACK TO:

INT. WHITE HOUSE CHENEY'S OFFICE

Dick is talking to Lynne on the phone and beaming with pride.

DICK

Lynnie... guess where I'm calling
from?

INT. SMALL APARTMENT IN D.C. - SAME TIME

Lynne is on the phone holding her new BABY MARY while LIZ,
now 3 plays in the background with the TV on.

Intercut phone call:

LYNNE

I am so damn proud of you right now
Dick Cheney... I knew I picked the
right man. I knew it even when I
didn't...

DICK
We did it.

LYNNE
Have you seen Nixon?

DICK
I did. I met him. Shook his hand.
That impish smile of his.

FLASH TO ACTUAL STILL of Nixon with an odd smile posing for camera.

DICK (CONT'D)
Pardon my French, but it's the best
fucking feeling in the world.

LYNNE
I am so proud of you.

DICK
I love you.

LYNNE
WE are proud of you. Your girls are
proud of you.
(to girls)
Are you proud of your Daddy?

YOUNG LIZ
Yes!

INT. WHITE HOUSE HALLWAY - DAY

Rumsfeld and Cheney are walking down a hallway.

DICK
Now that I'm not just flipping
cards, I have a few ideas--

RUMSFELD
(suddenly)
Stop.

They both stop.

RUMSFELD (CONT'D)
You see that door?

He motions to an office door.

DICK
Isn't that Kissinger's office?

RUMSFELD

Yes, but I happen to know that Nixon's in there right now. Now why would Nixon not meet Kissinger in the Oval Office?

DICK

He's having a conversation he doesn't want to go on the record?

RUMSFELD

Very good.

DICK

What's the conversation?

RUMSFELD

They're going to bomb Cambodia.

DICK

That's impossible. That would have to be approved by Congress and I'm over there every day-

RUMSFELD

Fuck Congress. Unless you're in it. Then it's the greatest deliberative body on earth. But we're not, so fuck it.

DICK

I thought the President campaigned on ending the war?

RUMSFELD

Shhhh. Listen to me...

GLANCING PIECES OF NIXON AND KISSINGER TALKING: A cigarette being put out in an ash tray. A polished shoe tapping, etc.

RUMSFELD (V.O.)

Because of the conversation Nixon and Kissinger are having right behind this door, five feet away from us... in a few days, 10 thousand miles away...

EXT. CAMBODIAN VILLAGE - DAY - SAME TIME

A peaceful Cambodian Village goes about it's day to day life. We hear a WHISTLING SOUND far above.

RUMSFELD (V.O.)
 ... a rain of 750 pound bombs
 dropped from B-52s flying at twenty
 thousand feet will hit villages and
 towns across Cambodia...thousands
 will die and the world will change
 either for the worse or the better.

We SNAP BACK TO THE HALLWAY. Cheney enthralled by the sense
 of power and reach Rumsfeld is expressing.

RUMSFELD
 That's the kind of power that
 exists in this squat little ugly
 building. But screw Kissinger, he's
 over rated. Come on!

MASSIVE EXPLOSION. WE SEE BLOOD AND LIMBS AND HEAR SCREAMS
 JUST FOR A SPLIT SECOND, THEN CUT BACK to Cheney still
 looking at the office door.

INT. WHITE HOUSE HALLWAY - RUMSFELD'S OFFICE - LATER

Dick is struggling to ask Rumsfeld a question.

DICK
 So, uh, what do we... I mean are we
 against spending, or are we, uh...

RUMSFELD
 Come on... Out with it!

DICK
 What do we, uh, believe?

Rumsfeld starts to laugh and then laugh harder and harder.

RUMSFELD
 "What do we believe?" Good one
 Cheney! Good one!

He slams his door shut leaving Cheney standing in the
 hallway.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACK YARD - BETHESDA, MARYLAND - 1973

Dick teaches the girls how to string worms on a fish hook.

DICK

We find out what the fish wants,
and in this case it's a worm, and
then we use it to catch them.

8YR OLD LIZ

So is it a good trick we're
playing?

DICK

It's not good or bad. It's fishing.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Dick had taken a job as a political
consultant for a large financial
firm, where he was finally making
good money. He took the job because
Nixon's inner circle had had enough
of Donald Rumsfeld.

INT. CHENEY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - 1973

Dick and Lynne have just been awoken by the phone. They are
dazed and tired.

RUMSFELD

(on the phone)

I'm out. They're sending me to
Brussels.

DICK

Wait, what?

INT. RUMSFELD'S OFFICE - SAME TIME - NIGHT

Rumsfeld is tearing up papers and throwing them out.

RUMSFELD

Nixon's making me permanent
ambassador to NATO. It's a fuck off
assignment. Kissinger and Haldeman
won. Come with me.

DICK

I have a four and a seven year old.

LYNNE

Tell Don we're not moving just
because everyone at the White House
hates him!

RUMSFELD

Good boy. I taught you well these past few years.

DICK

I'm sorry, Don. I really am.

RUMSFELD

Don't worry. I'm like bed bugs. You gotta burn the mattress to get rid of me!

Don hangs up.

CUT BACK TO:

EXT. BACK YARD - BETHESDA, MARYLAND - 1973

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Dick was becoming sharper and sharper as a D.C. insider, and Lynne had started to write articles and explore ideas for her first novel.

Lynne walks out across the backyard looking ashen.

LYNNE

Dick?... Something terrible has happened...

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Then, she received news from back home in Casper.

EXT. LAKE IN CASPER, WYOMING - DAY

By a LARGE LAKE there is a car with both doors left open, a purse scattered all over and two Dachshunds running around loose. Police Cars pull up in SLO MO with sirens blaring.

NARRATOR

Lynne's mother Edna, who had avoided the water her whole life, was found drowned in the local Caspar Lake. They said her and Wayne, Lynne's Dad, had had a nasty argument an hour before.

EXT. CHENEY HOME IN MARYLAND 1973

Dick holds Lynne in his arms.

LYNNE
(in shock)
She doesn't swim, Dick. My Mother
doesn't swim. She never swam.

EXT. GRAVE YARD - FUNERAL - DAY

About 20 MOURNERS including Lynne, Dick, Dick's parents, Liz and Mary and yes, Wayne, Lynne's Father listen to a priest read from the Bible as a coffin is lowered into the ground.

NARRATOR
There was never a serious
investigation into Lynne's Mom's
death.

THE FUNERAL HAS ENDED. WAYNE IS TRYING TO DO A HANDSTAND FOR LIZ AND MARY. Lynne stops him.

LYNNE
Dad...Dad...

Dick walks over.

DICK
Girls, Lynne. Why don't you go to
the car.

LYNNE
(raspy from crying)
Come on. Listen to your Father.

They leave. Dick is intense.

WAYNE
Heya Dick. You catching any fish?

THERE IS A RESOLUTE LOOK IN DICK'S EYES. He stares at Wayne.

WAYNE (CONT'D)
How's it going in DC?

DICK
Don't ever go near my daughters or
my wife again.

A tense beat. Then Wayne finally walks away.

WAYNE
(yells)
Big shot! Big shot in D.C. Dick!

Dick stares straight ahead. He has a resolute quiet power about him. He can feel it.

CUT TO:

INT. WHITE HOUSE OFFICE - 2003 - MORNING

CLOSE UP: a basket of plain brown donuts, flaking croissants and one GLORIOUS DANISH WITH A BRIGHT YELLOW CENTER.

HANDS REACH IN and take a few brown donuts, a croissant. BUT THEY STAY AWAY FROM THE DANISH WITH THE YELLOW CENTER.

Finally, Cheney TAKES THE LARGE TREAT. FOUR WHITE MEN IN SUITS (CIA AGENT, SCOOTER LIBBY, DAVID ADDINGTON AND PAUL WOLFOWITZ) ages 35 to 55, all wait for him to speak. The room is his.

DICK
So what do you got?

The Unseen Man's hand flips through papers marked CLASSIFIED.

CIA AGENT
(slightly nervous)
Hassan Mustafa Nasr. A cleric based in Milan, Italy. He's a member of Al-Gama's al-Islamiyya, the group that killed Anwar Sadat.

SCOOTER LIBBY
That's the blind sheik, right?

CIA AGENT
There's some debate at Langley on whether they're a threat or not. They claim to be peaceful now.

He holds up the danish he's eating.

DICK
I "claim" to be eating healthy.

Everyone laughs a bit too hard.

DICK (CONT'D)
Okay... pick him up.

EXT. STREET IN MILAN - DAY

POV: A DOOR OF A VAN SLAMS OPEN: A CLERIC, 40, with beard, wearing a Muslim taqiyah (cap) walks down an Italian street. THREE MEN IN ALL BLACK JUMP OUT, CHASE HIM DOWN AND PULL HIM INTO THE VAN IN A MATTER OF SECONDS.

CLERIC
NOO! Help! Help me!

QUICK CUTS: 1. Scissors slice off the Cleric's clothes 2. He is struck hard in the face 3. A black hood is put over his terrified bloodied face. 4. A diaper is then put on him.

THE VAN DRIVES AWAY.

BACK TO:

INT. OFFICE - 2003 - MORNING

DICK
What's the next name?

CIA AGENT
Well Mr. Vice President, there's been some chatter about an engineering student in Berlin...

FADE TO BLACK

RICHARD NIXON (V.O.)
I have never been a quitter.

INT. CHENEY'S LIVING ROOM - 1974 - DAY

TV in the Cheney's living room shows Nixon resigning as President.

RICHARD NIXON (SOT)
But I must put the interests of the nation first...

DICK
Nixon forgot the voice activated recorders were there. He got sloppy.

LIZ
Mom, is the President being punished?

LYNNE

The President has a lot of enemies.
Never forget Lizzy: when you get
power they always try and take it
from you. Always.

LIZ

Yes M'am.

Dick dials the phone.

DICK

Donald Rumsfeld please...

LYNNE

I can't believe this, this is our
President. This is a tragedy!

DICK

I actually think this could be
very, very good news.

MUSIC: Kicking 70's horns come in. This is starting to feel
like good news.

EXT. DULLES PARKING LOT - SAME TIME

Rumsfeld gets into Cheney's beat up black VW Bug in the
airport parking lot. Both toss their cigarettes.

RUMSFELD

What's your read on things?

DICK

The way I see it, any Republican
not touched by Watergate is golden
right now.

RUMSFELD

Nice. Ford called me right before
my flight took off.

(sees black bug)

You're still driving this chick
magnet, huh?

CHENEY

You can always take the bus.

CLOSE UP ON TELEVISION.

RICHARD NIXON (SOT)
Effective immediately I will resign
the Presidency of the United States
and Vice President Ford will be
sworn in tomorrow at noon.

INT. VW BUG - PENNSYLVANIA AVE - SAME TIME

Both are smoking again as they pull up to the White House.

RUMSFELD
So what's the plan?

DICK
The plan? Well the plan is to take
over the damn place...

RUMSFELD
Who lit a fire under your ass?

DICK
I haven't flipped cards in a long
time Don.

INT. RUMSFELD'S NEW OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

RUMSFELD CLOSES THE DOOR TO HIS BIG NEW OFFICE.

RUMSFELD
They gave me the damn keys to the
palace!

He pours two Glenlivet neats.

RUMSFELD (CONT'D)
Chief of Staff.

DICK
Holy shit. You salty son of a
bitch. You did it.

They clink and drink.

RUMSFELD
Now we have work to do. Kissinger
is trying to kiss and make up with
the Soviets.

DICK
Well, let's make sure that shit
doesn't happen.

RUMSFELD
(laughing)
Yeah. Yeah.

INT. OVAL OFFICE - WHITE HOUSE - SAME TIME

Ford talks with Kissinger, Rumsfeld and Cheney.

CHENEY
If I may, I believe I may have a
way to put an ore in the water, on
Russia. What if-

KISSINGER
Mr. President-

FORD
Come on Henry let's hear Dick out.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
One of Dick Cheney's super powers,
was the ability to make the most
wild and extreme ideas sound
measured and professional.

DICK
What if on a unilateral basis, we
all put miniature wigs on our
penises, and we walked out to the
White House lawn, and we jerked
each other off. So, like a puppet
show, but much more enjoyable?

Long pause. Rumsfeld smiles a sly grin.

KISSINGER
I do like a good puppet show.

FORD
I say we do it!

MORE MEMOS THROWN IN THE GARBAGE, PHONES HUNG UP, NAMES
CROSSED OFF MEETING LISTS, LINES ON MEMOS REWRITTEN.

RADIO NEWS MONTAGE (V.O.)
They're calling it the Halloween
Massacre. Donald Rumsfeld has
replaced Secretary of Defense James
Slessinger. And Dick Cheney has
been chosen as the--

INT. CHENEY'S NEW OFFICE - DAY - NOVEMBER, 1975

Lynne spins around her husband's well appointed office.

LYNNE

--the youngest Chief of Staff in history! It's like a dream.

DICK

It's real. And Don is the youngest Secretary of Defense ever.

LYNNE

Well, I'm not talking about Don, I'm talking about you. And I'm going to give you a kiss, right her in the White House.

She holds Dick. They kiss.

A SECRET SERVICE AGENT peeks in the door with Liz and Mary in tow.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT

Excuse me Mr. and Mrs. Cheney. These girls tried to enter the Oval Office.

They run into Dick's arms.

DICK

Oh dear!

LYNNE

Girls this is not a playground, please do not--

MARY

Daddy! Is this where Santa lives?

DICK

Better than Santa. It's where the leader of the greatest nation on earth lives!

MARY

Are you one of his elves Daddy?

DICK

In a way, yes.

LYNNE

No he's not Mary. Your Father is Chief of Staff. Chief. Of Staff.

(MORE)

LYNNE (CONT'D)

(to him)

Dick, if you're silly with her
she'll grow up to be a silly woman.

DICK

Right of course, I forgot, that's
just silly, Mary.

INT. OFFICE OF LEGAL COUNSEL - DOJ - THE NEXT DAY

Cheney talks to a YOUNG LAWYER at the OLC.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

And as the new Chief of Staff and
with the Presidency weakened by
Watergate, Dick Cheney wanted to
find out exactly how much power did
the President have.

DICK

I would like to reinstate Executive
Authority. How?

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Antonin Scalia, a young lawyer with
the justice department who would
later go on to serve on the Supreme
Court, rocked Dick's world.

YOUNG LAWYER

Have you heard of the theory of the
unitary executive?

DICK

No, tell me about it.

YOUNG LAWYER

It's an interpretation a few, like
myself happen to believe, of
Article two of the Constitution
that vests the President with
absolute executive authority. And I
mean absolute.

Cheney and Scalia both smile. This is what Cheney has been
looking for.

MUSIC: GLORIOUS ORCHESTRAL STING.

VT footage of a Lion chasing a gazelle and catching it.

INT. MIDDLE AMERICA HOME - DAY

Narrator Dad plays with his son on the floor.

NARRATOR

(to wife)

Honey, you wanna get Cole up to the high chair? I gotta explain this to the people.

WIFE

(picking up son)

Come on buddy!

IMAGES OF THE WHITE HOUSE, THE SCALES OF JUSTICE AND SOLDIERS AT WAR.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

The Unitary Executive Theory.

Certain legal scholars believe that if the President does anything it must be legal because it's the President. To hell with checks and balances, especially during times of war. This was the power of kings, pharaohs, dictators,

FREEZE ON DICK CHENEY

NARRATOR

Dick Cheney was a foot soldier in the power games of Washington DC, but with the Unitary Executive Theory, he could become Galactus, devourer of planets,

Image of the super villain... GALACTUS

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

But then it was Election Day and there was one big problem...

INT. RESIDENTIAL QUARTERS - WHITE HOUSE - NIGHT

Ford, Betty Ford, Cheney, Lynne, Rumsfeld watch the returns on ABC NEWS with BARBARA WALTERS and HARRY REASONER. Cheney is chain smoking. They all sip cocktails.

TV SCREEN reports Carter winning presidential election

BARBARA WALTERS (SOT)
 ...Which means that Jimmy Carter is
 the next President of the United
 States.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
 And just like that it was all over.

LYNNE
 That can't be right. It got to be
 some sort of a mistake.

RUMSFELD
 Well...there goes the neighborhood.

FORD
 (his voice is horse)
 Thank you everybody.

TV REPORTER (V.O.)
 The Republicans have lost the
 Presidency, they are the minority
 in Congress and in most states.
 With America demanding change, I
 don't see a future for the GOP.
 They are the party of the past.

EXT. WHITE HOUSE ROOF - 1976

Maintenance workers install giant solar panels on the roof of
 the White House.

DAVID BRINKLEY (SOT)
 President Carter went to the roof
 of the White House today to
 announce his new solar
 initiative...

VT President Carter speaking to the press.

PRESIDENT CARTER (SOT)
 We must end our dependence on
 fossil fuels. And by the using the
 energy God gave us in the sun, we
 may have an endless source of power
 with solar energy...

EXT. WYOMING RIVER - 2012 - DAY

Cheney trudges through a river with fishing gear in hand in slo-mo. He is older, unsteady, but determined and focused.

CUT TO:

EXT. SMALL TOWN IN WYOMING - DAY - SUMMER - 1978

A VFW IN A ONE STOP SIGN TOWN. A beat up Winnebago with a shabby "Cheney for Congress!" on it parked out front.

INT. SMALL TOWN VFW - DAY - SUMMER - 1978

Cheney speaks to RANCHERS at a VFW. It's hot.

DICK

...I will become the gentleman from Wyoming. And hear this, taxes must come down.

Lynne coaches from the back of the room.

LYNNE

(whispers)

Talk. Talk.

DICK

I'll say it again, taxes must go down, we must ameliorate pain for the taxes of the working man....and bring perspicacity to the fore.

Lynne watches, pained. He's not good at this. The Campaign Manager leans in.

CAMPAIGN MANAGER

(whispers)

Thank God for name recognition.

DICK

But enough of the horsing around. Which is of course, what us cowboys do. So uh, remember, vote Cheney for Congress. Uhh, thank you and vote for Cheney in Congress.

LYNNE

Either he drinks next time, or I do.

Crowd applauds tepidly. Dick walks over to Lynne and his Campaign Manager. He's rubbing his arm.

DICK

I don't want anyone to panic. But I
do believe I have to go to the
hospital.

FADE UP ON AN ACTUAL HEART BEATING AND THEN STOPPING AND THEN
BEATING ERRATICALLY BEFORE FINALLY IT STOPS.

QUICK CUT: A CUCKOO CLOCK STRIKING TWELVE: A cuckoo pops out.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Cheney is in bed, IV coming out of his arm, heart monitors
beeping. Lynne is there by his side. A DOCTOR, 39.

DOCTOR

It's an inferior wall infarct.

LYNNE

But it can be fixed, right?

DOCTOR

If it was up to me you'd drop out
of the election. But you've both
made it clear that's not an option.
So you must have a minimum of two
weeks bed rest.

DICK

Two weeks off. We'll lose our lead.

LYNNE

The hell we will.

EXT. RANCH - DAY

A microphone stand on the back of a truck and a crowd of
fifty HARD FACED MALE FARMERS AND RANCHERS waiting. A good ol
boy RANCH OWNER, 59, intros.

MAYOR

Dick Cheney has an illness so he
can't be here today. But we have
his wife and a heck of a pretty gal
here to fill in: Lynne Cheney!

Lynne walks up to the Podium. SHE IS TOO SMALL TO REACH THE
MICROPHONE. THE CROWD LAUGHS. Lynne takes the mic off.

LYNNE

I grew up in Wyoming. But somewhere along the line Washington DC stopped listening to real folks like us! And started only listening to liberal snobs who want us all to lose our jobs to affirmative action!

Awkward silence. The Campaign Manager tries to usher her off.

CAMPAIGN MANAGER

Okay Lynne...

The crowd EXPLODES in applause. Lynne pushes the Manager's hand away.

LYNNE

When I was in New York City I saw women burning their bras. Well you know what women do with bras in Wyoming? We wear them!

Crowd applauds lustily again. The Campaign Manager looks around "What the hell is happening?"

EXT. WYOMING RURAL AREA

A VAN weaves through a windy dirt road.

LYNNE (V.O.)

Here in Wyoming we believe there is a right and a wrong.

INT. CHURCH BASEMENT - DAY

A Ladies Auxiliary Meeting. Some women knit as Lynne gives a speech.

LYNNE

Because I'm a mom and a wife from Wyoming. And I know how it feels to make every penny count. And not only do I speak for you, my husband Dick Cheney...

Crowd livens up, applauding hard.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

A hard wind of change had been blowing through America, civil rights, Roe versus Wade, environmentalism. But there was a part of the country that didn't like this change and wanted it to stop.

INT. DC RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Lynne and Dick toast to a table of CONGRESSMEN AND WIVES.

DICK

Thanks to my amazing wife, it is good to be joining you all here in D.C. as Wyoming's sole Congressional Representative!

Everyone smiles and toasts.

EXT. DC STREET - DAY

CUTS OF: OLD MONEY PATRIARCHS getting out of limos in SLO MO.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

And then big money families like the Kochs and the Coors that were sick of paying income taxes, rolled into Washington DC and started writing fat checks to fund right wing think tanks...

QUICK CUTS: the Heritage Foundation, the American Enterprise Institute, the CATO Institute, ALEC, etc.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

...that would change the way many Americans looked at the world.

INT. THINK TANK OFFICE - DAY

CU of a document on a desk: "TRICKLE DOWN ECONOMICS: A study on reduced top tax rates as stimulus."

PULL OUT to reveal a giant office with dozens of desks and PEOPLE. A BIG SIGN READS "THE AMERICAN ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE"

LITTLE LINES TYPE IN THE AIR OVER EACH DESK: "Welfare Fraud, America's Hidden Epidemic" "OIL AND COAL: AMERICA'S FUTURE!" "Regulations Are Costing us Billions!"

NARRATOR (V.O.)
 Finally in 1980, this unlikely
 revolution of the super rich and
 white conservatives found its
 face...

INT. RNC CONVENTION - DETROIT - 1980

VT. STOCK: RONALD REAGAN giving his ACTUAL nomination speech.

REAGAN
 For those who have abandoned hope,
 we'll restore hope, and we'll
 welcome them into a great national
 crusade... to make America great
 again!

Crowd goes NUTS.

EXT. WHITE HOUSE ROOF - 1980 - DAY

WORKERS unscrew solar panels from the roof and discard them
 into a pile.

INT. HALLWAY - CAPITOL BUILDING - DAY - 1980'S

Cheney walks confidently talking to Congressmen and Aides.

NARRATOR
 It was the fucking 1980's, and it
 was a hell of a time to be Dick
 Cheney.

INT. FLOOR OF CONGRESS - DAY

QUICK CUTS: CHENEY INSERTING HIS HOUSE VOTING CARD, A FEW RED
 "NAY" VOTES COMING UP ON THE BIG BOARD AGAINST A SEA OF GREEN
 "YEA" VOTES.

CLERK
 Vote on the Undetectable fire arms
 Act to ban "plastic guns that can
 evade metal detectors"... Clean
 water act... endangered species
 act... School lunch
 program...Martin Luther King Jr
 federal holiday...

ACTUAL CLIPS of Nancy Reagan on Mr. T's lap, Donald Trump,
 Aerobics.

INT. HALLWAY - CAPITOL BUILDING - DAY - 1984

Dick COLLAPSES IN THE HALLWAY, going to his knees.

MUSIC: OUT

PANICKED AIDE
Someone call an ambulance!!
 (to Cheney)
 Can you breathe?

DICK
 I'm having a heart attack you
 idiot.

INT. WHITE HOUSE - EAST WING - NIGHT - 1986

White House CHRISTMAS PARTY. REAGAN AND NANCY (from behind)
 meet and greet celebrities, leaders and friends like Royalty.

REVEAL: Lynne and Cheney ENTER like a Duke and Duchess. Dick
 looks dashing in a tux and Lynne stunning in a tasteful gown.

ON SCREEN: "Dick Cheney House Minority Whip 1989" and "Lynne
 Cheney Chair of the National Endowment for the Humanitites
 1986-1993"

Quick shots of people at the party CATCHING GLIMPSES OF THE
 CHENEYS, some whisper, some smile.

LYNNE
 (finishing a conversation)
 Thank you... I'm very excited.

The couple she was talking to walks away.

LYNNE (CONT'D)
 They're both brilliant, but broke.

VICE PRESIDENT GEORGE BUSH SR. walks up.

GEORGE BUSH SR
 Hey Dick... Hello Lynne.
 Congratulations on your
 appointment.

LYNNE
 Why thank you Mr. Vice President.
 How is your lovely family?

GEORGE BUSH SR
My son Jeb seems cut out for
office. We may be asking you for
endorsements in a few years.

LYNNE
If he's half as charming as you
George, he's got both our votes.

GEORGE BUSH SR
Dick. I just wanted to say thank
you for getting the House not to
override the President's veto of
the fairness doctrine.

DICK
Not a problem. Happy to get rid of
any big government regulations.

FREEZE

NARRATOR (V.O.)
The fairness doctrine was a law
from the forties that required any
broadcast TV or radio news to
present both sides of an issue
equally. Its repeal would lead to
the rise of opinion news.

QUICK CLIPS OF MORTON DOWNEY JR, RUSH LIMBAUGH, AND THEN A
GIANT FOX NEWS ANIMATED LOGO "FAIR AND BALANCED."

INT. NEWSROOM - MODERN DAY

30'S FEMALE BLONDE ANCHOR AT A NEWS DESK

NEWS ANCHOR
(To camera)
... And eventually to the
realization of Roger Ailes' dream:
Fox News. Which would go on to
dominate all other news and swing
America even more to the right.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. CHRISTMAS PARTY - NIGHT

UNFREEZE: There's a CRASH on the other side of the party. We
see a LANKY DRUNK GUY who's knocked over a tray of champagne
glasses. A waitress is distraught.

LANKY DRUNK GUY
 Lighten up sweetie! It's a party!

DICK
 What's that fella's problem?

GEORGE BUSH SR
 Let me go see if everything's okay
 over there. Great to see you both.
 Love to the girls...

George goes over to the young drunk man and ushers him out.

LYNNE
 (quietly)
 That's his son. George W. He's the
 black sheep of the family.

DICK
 A little too much unconditional
 love.

LYNNE
 Can you feel it Dick? Half the room
 wants to be us and the other half
 fears us. I know George is up next
 but after that, who knows?

She rubs her hand against his back.

DICK
 (takes it in)
 I respect the hell out of Reagan...
 But no one's really shown the world
 the true power of the American
 Presidency...

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. VIRGINIA HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

MARY CHENEY, now 17, leaves school SOBBING HARD. A TEACHER
 FOLLOWS HER.

TEACHER
 Excuse me Ms. Cheney! You cannot
 leave the grounds during school
 hours! Mary! Come back!

She jumps in her 85 Honda Accord, tears out.

MARY CHENEY
 No, no, no!!!

Mary speeds through a stop sign and BAM!! IS HIT BY ANOTHER CAR! She is dazed with blood coming down her face.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - AN HOUR LATER

Mary, in a hospital bed. Dick and Lynne are there.

LYNNE

I just don't understand. You left school? Why? It doesn't make sense.

MARY

It was Susan...

LYNNE

Your best friend? Were you fighting over a boy?

MARY

She broke up with me...

Beat.

MARY (CONT'D)

Mom, Dad, I like girls... I'm gay.

Dick and Lynne are silent for a long time. Everything they've worked for hangs in the balance. Finally Dick moves towards Mary and hugs her.

DICK

It doesn't matter sweetheart. We will always love you no matter what.

MARY

Oh, I love you so much Daddy...

LYNNE

(tearing up)

It's just going to be... so hard for you...

INT. SHIPPING WAREHOUSE - 2011 - DAY

Kurt the Narrator, drives an electric pallet cart.

NARRATOR

When George Bush Sr. was elected President, Dick Cheney was made Secretary of Defense. Sixth in line to the Presidency.

Kurt the Narrator parks his cart and moves some boxes.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

And after a few years, it was
Dick's turn to run for President,
so they decided to do some early
polling numbers.

INT. CHENEY KITCHEN - DAY - 1992

CLOSE UP: early poll results in Cheney's hands. They show him
dead last behind 11 other Republicans including Dan Quayle.

DICK

Well I guess that's it.

Lynne is there.

LYNNE

We can move those numbers. We
attack the welfare state,
regulations, government waste...

DICK

It'll be a war. I can't put Mary
through that. Every primary
opponent will go after her...

LYNNE

We deny. Shame them for going after
the family...

He crumples the paper, leaves it on the table and exits.
Lynne looks at the paper.

SCORE: BITTER SWEET BUT STILL GLORIOUS ORCHESTRAL

EXT. MIDDLE EASTERN DESERT - DAY - 1993

CHENEY WALKS ACROSS THE DESERT WITH THE FAMILY OF SAUD.

ON SCREEN: "Dick Cheney would go on to become CEO of a large
oil service company: Halliburton"

EXT. LAKE - HOUSTON SUBURB - 1993

Dick, Mary, now 30, her partner HEATHER POE and Liz, 33 and
her HUSBAND PHILIP (holding a newborn) with Lynne, all fish
and sit by a beautiful lake. A GRAND DAUGHTER KATE, 4, runs
around laughing with 2 DOGS.

ON SCREEN: "Lynne would publish several books on American History."

Dick holds his newborn grand daughter and laughs with family.

ON SCREEN: "Dick had a choice between the Presidency of the United States and his youngest daughter. He chose his daughter."

Mary chases Lynne with the fish, everyone laughs.

ON SCREEN: "The Cheneys would never again enter politics or the public eye."

ON SCREEN: "Lynne and Dick are happy and wealthy and live in Virginia where they breed award-winning Golden Retrievers."

The Cheneys walk together up to the their house for supper.

END CREDITS ROLL

SFX: Is that a phone ringing?

END CREDITS CONTINUE TO ROLL

The Phone ringing gets LOUDER.

END CREDITS KEEP ROLLING

THE PHONE RINGING IS NOW VERY LOUD.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. CHENEY HOME OFFICE - 1999- DAY

A desk phone is ringing as Dick, now in his early 60's moves towards it.

DICK CHENEY
Okay, okay. I'm coming...

LYNNE (O.C.)
Who's calling on a Sunday morning?!

DICK CHENEY
I don't know!

He answers.

DICK
Hello. Cheney residence?... Uh-huh...I understand... Anyway I can be of assistance... Okay...
(MORE)

DICK (CONT'D)
That should work... 3pm... Of
course... That goes without
saying...

He hangs up and stands there for a second. Lynne comes
walking out of the kitchen.

LYNNE
Who was it?!

DICK
It was someone from George Bush's
son's campaign.

LYNNE
Jeb?

DICK CHENEY
No. George W... Jeb's Florida.

LYNNE
Right. I still can't believe
they've got that poor boy running
for President.

Beat.

LYNNE (CONT'D)
So what did they want?

DICK
They want to talk to me about being
his running mate.

LYNNE
What?

DICK
They didn't say it outright but
I've made that call myself and
that's what they want.

Beat.

LYNNE
Vice President is a nothing job.

DICK
I'm just going to hear them out. I
owe his Father that...

Beat.

LYNNE

VP just waits for the President to die. You've said it yourself.

DICK

It's just a meeting.

LYNNE

Is it just a meeting? Or is it just a meeting?

DICK

It's just a meeting.

LYNNE

Good.

She walks away. Cheney stands there still in thought.

EXT. AUSTIN, TEXAS - CAPITOL BUILDING - DAY - 1999

INT. GOVERNOR'S OFFICE - LOBBY - SAME TIME

CU: Cheney's polished shoes. He reaches for a copy of Time Magazine: The Cover a picture of Bush with the headline "President Bush?" A receptionist, THERESA, 28 approaches him.

THERESA

The Governor will see you now Secretary Cheney.

DICK

Sure.

INT. GOVERNOR'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

CU of W Bush's hand as it shakes Cheney's. A signed Nolan Ryan baseball on a shelf, papers on the desk with a copy of Sports Illustrated, Cheney lowering himself into a chair, Bush tapping his finger on the desk to an unheard beat.

W BUSH

Hello Dick.

DICK

Hello George.

W BUSH

It's been awhile.

DICK

Since last year. The foreign policy sessions...

We see GEORGE W BUSH, 53. Handsome but boyish with a petulant fidgety edge to him.

W BUSH

That's right. Those meetings were very engaging. I remember we both agreed my Dad would have been re-elected if he had taken out Saddam.

DICK

War time Presidents are always popular.

W BUSH

That they are. That they are.

DICK

So... Congratulations on a successful primary. I've been through a few myself and they can be... Shall we say-

W BUSH

Fucking exhausting?

DICK

(chuckles lightly)

Yes.

W BUSH

Buses, bologna sandwiches. I mean I like people but enough's enough. Am I right?

DICK

(and then)

So uh, the call I received...

W BUSH

I forgot, you're a brass tacks guy aren't you? I like that. Are you surprised I'm running for President? After my, shall we say, wild years?

DICK

I sowed some oats myself back in the day. Still enjoy a cold beer on occasion.

W BUSH

I bet you did. I bet you did you rascal. Well I can't anymore. It got bad... Real bad.

DICK (V.O.)

What does he really want? What does he need?

W BUSH

Do you want some brisket? Theresa can we get some brisket?!

THERESA

Yes sir!

W BUSH

Get the burnt ends!

DICK

George... Listen...

W BUSH

(changes gears nervously)
So listen, I've got a lack of experience problem in the polls and you're one of the most experienced guys around. You wanna jump on board and be my Vice?

QUICK FLASH: Cheney's fishing line in a RIVER. He watches the water with a patient focus.

DICK

...I'm honored.

W BUSH

Don't be honored. Fucking say yes Mr. Brass tacks.

DICK

...I have to say no at this time.

W BUSH

Come on. I know you love politics. What are you in the private sector now? Come on...

DICK

I can't.

W BUSH

That's a shame. It is. I really need you near my campaign.

Beat. QUICK FLASH: a satchel is opened revealing fly fishing lures of all shapes and sizes.

DICK
Perhaps... I, uh, could help you
find the right running mate?

W BUSH
You mean run my VP search team?

DICK
No team. Me.

W BUSH
Yeah, yeah. That could work. I'll
have to run it by Rove of course.
(and then)
This campaign's gonna be a bitch.
But if I lose I can maybe become
commissioner of baseball, you know?

DICK
But the idea is to win, right?

W BUSH
I'm going to keep you in the back
of my mind.

INT. CHENEY'S BATHROOM - THAT NIGHT

Dick and Lynne brush and floss and prepare for bed. After a long beat Lynne finally speaks.

LYNNE
So are you going to tell me how it
went today or not?

DICK
It was... interesting. He is
a...green. He's very green.

Beat.

LYNNE
And you told him no?

DICK
I told him I'd help with the
search.

Beat. Dick gargles Listerine for a very long time. Painfully long.

LYNNE

What are you thinking? I can tell you're thinking.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

What was Dick Cheney thinking?

DICK

I'm thinking I've never seen anything like this.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

After his first meeting with George W.

LYNNE

We've had a lot of successes Dick. Vice President is a nothing job.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

How many steps ahead was he looking? How did he feel about the opportunity that was in front of him?

Cheney stares in the mirror.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

There are certain moments, that are so delicate. Like a teacup and saucer...

FLASH BACK of Dick hugging Lynne and the children after they found out Lynne's Mom died.

NARRATOR

Stacked on a teacup and saucer...

FLASH BACK of Lynne yelling at young Dick as he sits hungover on the couch with his head hung in shame.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Stacked on a teacup and saucer....

Back to Dick and Lynne in the bathroom.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

And on and on. That this moment could fall in any direction and change everything.

FLASH TO Tea cups wobbling as they are stacked higher and higher.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Sadly there is no real way to know exactly what was going on with the Cheneys at this history changing moment. We can't just snap into a Shakespearian Soliloquy that dramatizes every feeling and emotion. That's just not the way the world works.

CUT TO BLACK.

NARRATOR

You know what?

INT. CHENEY BEDROOM

Dick and Lynne get settled into bed.

LYNNE

My sweet Richard.
Dance'd nimbly round the King's
hearth thou hath.
Even whilst clamored I for more,
more!
Parched maw craned towards the
drip, drip of imagined waters.
But I say to you now, rest, retire.
Thou hast honored thy vows to wife
and crown.

DICK

Has blindness usurped vision in you
my wife?
No mere treaty is our union!
Thou shared thy torch's flame with
mine.
Revealing halls and spires of long
faded empires.
But now I hold aloft mine own fiery
cresset
To make flesh our bond of power.

LYNNE

Dare I?
Dare I let hope's beak place
gathered bramble
Upon my heart for future's nest?
Many winters past hath I let this
hope die,
cruel winds silencing tiny birds
needy cries

(MORE)

LYNNE (CONT'D)
 Now that it hath arrived I say yea,
 yea!
 Mine own blood and will, are yours
 til pierced be the last soldier's
 breast plate,
 spilling open its jellied ruby
 treasures!

Lightening Strikes as they embrace and kiss passionately.

CUT TO BLACK.

Back to the Bedroom with non-Shakespeare Dick and Lynne. Long
 beat of silence.

LYNNE (CONT'D)
 So?

DICK
 So...I think we proceed.

LYNNE
 What about Mary?

DICK
 It's VP. It's not the same
 scrutiny.

Dick rolls over, finally ready to sleep.

LYNNE
 He's got allies Dick...
 Connections. You're new to his
 world. You don't know the
 landscape.

DICK
 Well, then I had better run a very
 thorough search...

CUT TO:

INT. CHENEY KITCHEN - THE NEXT DAY

Liz, Lynne, Mary, Dick's friend DAVID GRIBBIN and Dick work
 on the VP questionnaire. Laptops, papers are everywhere.

DICK
 Every stone. Hell, every grain of
 sand needs to be looked under for
 this questionnaire.

Mary is putting pizzas on the table.

DAVID GRIBBIN

Dick we're asking for all
financials, all medical, all
interviews, press, writings, legal
records, family medical and family
financials. Any more
"comprehensive" and we'd need a
rubber glove. Sorry Liz.

LIZ

That wasn't offensive. Should I be
offended?

LYNNE

I'm offended Dave wasn't worried
I'd be offended.

LIZ

Oh, a rubber glove. Like a
proctology exam. That's...that's
disgusting.

The phone rings. Dick answers.

DICK

Hey David. Any thoughts?

INT. LAW OFFICE - VIRGINIA - SAME TIME

David Addington at his desk, phone crook'd in his neck.

DAVID ADDINGTON

One big one.

FREEZE

NARRATOR (V.O.)

David Addington, Dicks main legal
advisor and a huge believer in the
Unitary Executive Theory. He was
known for telling people to their
face that they were stupid.

UNFREEZE

DAVID ADDINGTON

So the Vice Presidency is part of
the executive branch and because
the VP casts tie breaking votes in
the Senate, also part of the
legislative branch, right?

DICK

Okay?

DAVID ADDINGTON

That means the VP is also not part
of the executive or the
legislative.

DICK

So one could argue neither branch
has oversight of the VP?

DAVID ADDINGTON

Not only can "one" argue that, I'm
arguing it right now.

DICK

Brilliant David.

DAVID ADDINGTON

I know! Right?

CUT TO:

EXT. CRAWFORD RANCH - DAY

Cheney and W walk towards a porch with a screen door slightly
ajar at W's Crawford Ranch.

W BUSH

Rove made me buy this ranch. He
wanted to distance me from my years
at Yale and Harvard. Make me more
of a man of the people for the
election.

DICK

Smart.

They sit. W BUSH eats chicken while Cheney sips his ice tea.

W BUSH

So, we gonna do this thing or what?
Is this happening?

DICK

We've found some very interesting
candidates. I think if we could
schedule a three hour window to go
through each one-

W BUSH

No. I meant are you going to be my VP? I want you.

Beat.

DICK

I'm CEO of a large company. I've been Secretary of Defense, Chief of Staff... The Vice Presidency is a mostly symbolic job...

W BUSH

Right, right. I can see how that wouldn't be enticing to you.

DICK

However... the Vice Presidency is also defined by the President. If we were to have a... different understanding...

W BUSH

Uh-huh. Go on.

QUICK FLASH: a fishing line going TIGHT.

DICK

I get the sense you're a, shall we say, kinetic leader. You make decisions based on instinct. You're very different from your father in that regard.

W BUSH

(he likes that)

I am. People have always said that.

DICK

Maybe I could handle the more mundane parts of the job. Managing the bureaucracy, overseeing the military, energy, foreign policy...

W BUSH

That sounds good.

QUICK FLASH: a fishing line reels out for another catch.

W BUSH (CONT'D)

I never want to be the kind of team owner that pulls the starter in the 4th inning. That's the manager's job.

DICK
And one last thing. My daughter
Mary...

W BUSH
Right... Rove told me she likes
girls.

DICK
I know you'll have to run against
gay marriage for the south and the
mid-west. But it's my daughter and
that line in drawn in concrete.

W BUSH
So long as you don't mind us
pushing that messaging. Sure, we're
okay with you sitting that one out.
I think it's important for all the
Marys in the world, you know? No
problemo.

DICK
Then I believe this can work.

W raises his glass.

W BUSH
Hot Damn! Well good, let's
celebrate!

They cheers ice tea.

INT. FRANK ERWIN CENTER - AUSTIN - 2000 - DAY

BACKSTAGE: Dick and Lynne wait behind the curtains while we
hear W Bush speaking.

W BUSH (O.S.)
When I was searching for a Vice
President I turned to the
experience of Dick Cheney.
But I soon realized he was the best
choice. Please welcome, my friend
and my running mate: Dick Cheney!
And his lovely wife Lynne!

The Cheneys enter. On stage we see Dick's shoes walk towards
the podium. A quick flash of the campaign's slogan on the
podium: "RENEWING AMERICA'S PURPOSE"

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Dick never filled out his own 83 question questionnaire. Full medical records were never handed over. No tax or corporate filings, nothing.

Crowd starts chanting "Cheney! Cheney!"

INT. FOUR SEASONS - AUSTIN - NIGHT

ON SCREEN: November 7, 2000, Bush vs. Gore

Room full of people watching the election results: Don and Joyce Rumsfeld, Lynne, Mary and Heather, Liz and Philip, Addington, Wolfowitz etc. In the back of the room Dick talks to SCOOTER LIBBY.

SCOOTER LIBBY

Gore rescinded his concession. They're claiming Florida is too close to call.

DICK

He can't fucking rescind his concession.

SCOOTER LIBBY

He just did. There's going to be a recount. What should we do?

Half beat as Cheney processes.

DICK

We play it like we've already won. Which means we need to staff the White House.

SCOOTER LIBBY

Who's leading the transition team?

DICK

I'll do it.

SCOOTER LIBBY

Um, that's not really something a Vice President does, is it?

DICK

It is now.

News reporting on election results.

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)
Gore has called Governor Bush and
retracted his concession.

The room erupts. "No!" "He can't do that!"

INT. CHENEY KITCHEN - A WEEK LATER - DAY

Addington, Liz, Mary, Lynne, Dick and AIDES work amidst tons
of folders, files, cell phones in the Cheney kitchen..

DICK
Wolfowitz. State or Pentagon?

ADDINGTON
Depends on who your Secretary of
Defense is.

DICK
Rummy.

ADDINGTON
100%

LIZ
Rumsfeld?

MARY
Doesn't Bush Sr. hate Rummy?

DICK
That's not a bad thing with W. He
wants to be his own man.

Dick checks his blackberry.

ADDINGTON
Rumsfeld believes in a robust
Executive. That's good for us on
war powers.

LYNNE
(joking)
Just keep him out of state, he'll
start World War three.

DICK
Halliburton gave us a 26 million
dollar exit package. Twice as much
as we were hoping for.

LYNNE
They're no dummies.

Cheney wiggles two fingers around on his right hand.

DICK

Uh. Sorry gang. But I think perhaps... I should go to the hospital...

LYNNE

Oh no. Are you kidding me?

Everyone circles around Dick.

INT. SUPREME COURT - DAY

MARSHALL

Oyez! Oyez! Oyez! All persons having business before the Honorable, the Supreme Court of the United States, are admonished to draw near and give their attention, for the Court is now sitting. God bless the United States and this Honorable Court.

The Justices enter, sit. Whip pan reveal: JUSTICE SCALIA.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

December 12th 2000. Antonin Scalia, remember him? And the Supreme Court stopped the state of Florida from completing their recount.

Clips of Washington D.C.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

George W Bush and Dick Cheney were going to the Whitehouse by a margin of 537 votes.

EXT. WASHINGTON DC. 2001 - DAY

OVERHEAD SHOT OF A PROCESSION OF 5 BLACK LIMOS DRIVING INTO THE HEART OF DC.

INT. WHITE HOUSE - NIGHT

Cheney walks the halls of the White House alone.

He stops at a CLOSED DOOR. Looks at it. REACHES OUT AND TURNS THE HANDLE. Reveal: THE EMPTY OVAL OFFICE.

Dick doesn't enter but looks at the office for a long beat.

As he stands there we FLASH BACK TO THE DAY DICK FIRST GOT HIS OWN OFFICE IN THE NIXON WHITE HOUSE AND CALLED LYNNE.

YOUNG DICK
(to baby Mary on phone)
Hey little Mary. My little Mary.
How are you doing?

YOUNG LYNNE
They're both doing really well.
Except I'm trying to make this
dinner and it's this, uh, Macaroni
and Cheese that they said was easy,
but it just keeps coming out a
little watery.

YOUNG DICK
It's the milk, remember. You gotta
add more milk. Yep, make it
thicker.

YOUNG LYNNE
There's so much I want to say right
now. You just keep doing what
you're doing. You're doing so
great.

They laugh.

YOUNG LYNNE (CONT'D)
You have earned something very
special from your wife.

YOUNG DICK
Listen! Listen! I'm buying wine and
I'm picking something up. Chinese?

YOUNG LYNNE
I really love you.

YOUNG DICK
I love you.

They laugh and giggle. And then the memory is gone.

Dick stands in the doorway shrouded in darkness and silence.

INT. OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT - A FEW DAYS LATER

Cheney, Scooter, Addington, Mary Matalin, PAUL WOLFOWITZ, 52,
and Rumsfeld all sit in Cheney's office.

DICK
Scooter, why don't you let everyone
know the lay of the land?

MUSIC: DRUM BEAT

SCOOTER LIBBY
Of course. As you all know, I'm
Scooter Libby, Dick's Chief of
Staff...

INT. OVAL OFFICE - WHITE HOUSE

A GIANT HAND PUTS A "GEORGE W BUSH GAME PIECE" (LIKE
STRATEGO) DOWN IN THE OVAL OFFICE.

SCOOTER LIBBY (V.O.)
But I'm also a special adviser to
the President.

A GAME PIECE OF SCOOTER APPEARS IN THE ROOM.

SCOOTER LIBBY (V.O.)
Mary Matalin will serve as an
adviser to the VP and to Bush.

GAME PIECE OF MATALIN APPEARS.

SCOOTER LIBBY (V.O.)
David Addington, Dick's main legal
counsel, will play center field on
all matters relating to executive
power.

GAME PIECE OF ADDINGTON APPEARS.

SCOOTER LIBBY (V.O.)
The President has Alberto Gonzales,
Karl Rove and Karen Hughes as his
team.

GAME PIECES OF THOSE THREE APPEAR.

SCOOTER LIBBY (V.O.)
Quite frankly Gonzales has no clue,
Rove is a hack and Hughes should be
in double A ball.

Their PIECES GET SWEEPED OFF THE BOARD BY A GIANT HAND. BUSH IS
NOW SURROUNDED BY CHENEY GAME PIECES.

SCOOTER LIBBY

We will be automatically BCC'd on all emails the President receives or sends. As well as have access to his schedule the second it is set or changed.

DICK

We'll also be receiving the daily intelligence briefing before the President so we can get inside the decision curve.

RUMSFELD

Jesus. Bush approved all of this?

DICK

We have... an understanding.

RUMSFELD

What about the emails? Paper shredders don't work with emails.

DICK

The entire administration will run off of the RNC's private server.

ADDINGTON

And we've deactivated automatic archiving. We're clean.

SCOOTER LIBBY

Okay, so over at the Pentagon we've got Don as Secretary of Defense. Paul Wolfowitz, who worked with Team B in the Ford days, as Undersecretary of Defense.

More GAME PIECES GO ONTO A GAME BOARD that shows the Pentagon, DOJ, White House, and all of DC.

DICK

Let's check what kind of plans they have to invade Iraq, okay Paul?

PAUL WOLFOWITZ

It's already in the works.

SCOOTER LIBBY

We've got Ashcroft at the DOJ. State seems to be the only tricky department. That's Colin Powell and his guy Lawrence Wilkerson.

PAUL WOLFOWITZ

We've got Bolton over there. He's a loose cannon but loyal.

DICK

I want to get Liz in there as well. Let's make sure that happens.

SCOOTER LIBBY

Consider it done.

(back to business)

And this list of "our" people doesn't include about 800 others lobbyists and industry insiders we placed in the regulatory jobs.

The game board is flooded with pieces everywhere. Some of them have corporate logos on them.

RUMSFELD

Hey. What did you do with W's friends? Pataki, Ridge, Thompson? I didn't hear their names.

DICK

They were not offered jobs in this administration at this time.

RUMSFELD

"Were not offered jobs at this time?" Have you gotten more ruthless Dick!? You must not be getting laid!

Beat. It gets uncomfortable for a second.

SCOOTER LIBBY

Moving on!

INT. WHITE HOUSE HALLWAYS - LATER

Don and Dick walk through the hallways together just like old times.

DICK

Listen Don, you haven't been here in over 20 years. Times have changed. The softer touch is the norm now. We have the conservative radio and TV doing the yelling for us.

RUMSFELD
Is your old friend embarrassing
you? Is that it Dick?

DICK
Soft touch, that's all.
(looks at watch)
Alright. I have to go to my office
over at the House of
Representatives.

RUMSFELD
You mean the Senate? Vice President
is the tie breaker in the Senate.

DICK
No. I mean the House.

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. - DAY

QUICK FLASHES of a car racing around Capital Hill.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Dick Cheney had used an old
connection with former wrestling
coach and speaker of the house
Dennis Hastert to get an office at
the House of Representatives. The
house is where revenue bills
originate and he wanted to be near
the money faucet.

INT. HALLWAYS OF THE CAPITOL - DAY

SPED UP TRACKING SHOT down the halls of the Capitol.

Tracking stops, door opens. It's DENNIS HASTERT, 60.

DENNIS HASTERT
Hey Dick! Will this work for you?

Camera TRACKS AWAY SUPER FAST AGAIN DOWN HALLS TO THE SENATE.

INTERCUT: Curt the Narrator jogging and camera fast tracks
through Capital Hill.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
And not one, but two offices at the
Senate...

Door opens and SENATOR TRENT LOTT is there.

TRENT LOTT
Hey Dick. I found this extra office
for you.

Camera tracks away FAST AGAIN.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
One in the Pentagon...

Down a HALLWAY OF THE PENTAGON. OFFICE door opens...

DONALD RUMSFELD
I picked out this one personally.
And I got you a welcoming gift!

Reveal a bottle of Glenlivet on the desk.

CAMERA SPEEDS AWAY AGAIN down the hall.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
And later when Cheney's team was
combing through the intelligence on
Iraq, a conference room at the CIA.

CAMERA SPEEDS DOWN HALLWAY TO OPEN DOOR. GEORGE TENET 57, the
garrulous head of the CIA stands inside.

GEORGE TENET
The room is soundproof and secure
Mr. Vice President.

SPEEDS AWAY AGAIN...

GAME BOARD: ONE PARTICULAR BUILDING LIGHTS UP.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
But there was one relatively new
think tank that had become the
place to be in Washington DC.
Americans for Tax Reform.

INT. BIG CONFERENCE ROOM WITH PODIUM AT THE FRONT - DAY

HUNDREDS OF GOP CONGRESSMEN, LOBBYISTS AND MEMBERS OF THE
RIGHT WING MEDIA are seated and waiting.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Grover Norquist ran the anti-tax
group with huge funding from the
Koch brothers network, big oil and
tobacco.

Dick and Lynne enter and THE WHOLE ROOM STANDS.

NARRATOR

His Wednesday meeting as it was called had become the center of the Republican world.

GROVER NORQUIST, 48, roundish, bearded, starts the meeting.

GROVER NORQUIST

Let's talk about the estate tax. This has been hard to eliminate because the tax only applies to estates larger than 2 million dollars. But marketing guru Frank Luntz is here to help...

FRANK LUNTZ, 42 and portly stands up.

FRANK LUNTZ

Hello all. Getting regular people to support cutting taxes for the very wealthy has always been very difficult. But I think we've had a break through...

INT. FOCUS GROUP ROOM - DAY

FRANK LUNTZ, 42, stands in front of a DOZEN REGULAR PEOPLE.

FRANK LUNTZ

The Estate Tax kicks in for anyone inheriting over \$2 Million dollars. How many of you have a problem with that?

One guy raises his hand.

FRANK LUNTZ (CONT'D)

Now, how many of you would have a problem with someone called a "death tax?"

ALL TWELVE HANDS GO UP

Frank turns to the two-way mirror to give a DOUBLE thumbs up. Then we flash to another focus group already in progress.

FRANK LUNTZ (CONT'D)

Instead of global warming, which we all agree sounds very scary, we call it... climate change?

ALL TWELVE HANDS GO UP

EXT. LINE OF CARS STOPPED AT A RED LIGHT - DAY

Track past cars, hearing their RADIOS. A mixture of sports talk, classic rock and a fair amount of RIGHT WING RADIO.

SNIPPETS OF TALK RADIO (V.O.)
 Folks, the government is taking
 your money AFTER you die!... It's a
 death tax... Death tax... The
 liberals want you to pay a tax when
 you die! etc.

QUICK CUTS TO WEB PAGES: DRUDGE REPORT, THE WASHINGTON TIMES,
 NEWS MAX: "DEATH TAX MUST GO!"

INT. MIDDLE AMERICA HOME - DAY

Kurt the Narrator plays on the floor with his son while Mom makes lunch in the kitchen. Reports on the Death Tax blares on the TV with our BLONDE ANCHOR at the desk.

NEWSCASTER (SOT)
 The liberals would tax you for
 laughing or crying if they could.

NARRATOR
 So with one of the biggest media
 and political machines every
 created behind him, Cheney was able
 to squash action Global Warming,
 cut taxes for the super rich and
 gut regulations for massive
 corporations.

CUT TO:

INT. NEWSROOM - DAY

30'S FEMALE BLONDE ANCHOR AT A NEWS DESK

NEWSCASTER
 And then there was Cheney's
 National Energy Policy Development
 Group. His first major test to
 expand executive power.

INT. OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT - DAY

Libby, Addington and Cheney sit in Cheney's office.

DICK CHENEY

I don't understand what the goddamn problem is! I want to hear what the energy CEOs need and I'm not allowed to?

SCOOTER LIBBY

It's called FACA.

DICK

What the hell is FACA?

DAVID ADDINGTON

It's the Federal Advisory Committees Act. Congress got their panties in a bunch that elected officials would just let CEOs roll in and, you know, write the laws.

SCOOTER LIBBY

The Act demands that appropriate government officials be present.

Tense beat

DAVID ADDINGTON

Hold on a second.

Addington picks up the phone and dials.

DAVID ADDINGTON (CONT'D)

Hello? What's your name?... Doug?
Doug, how long have you been working reception at the Department of Energy? Three months? Perfect.

INT. WHITE HOUSE MEETING ROOM - DAY

CU: NAME TAG READING "DOUG." Some guy in a Men's Warehouse suit, DOUG, 24, sitting in the corner of a conference room.

DOUG

So what am I supposed to do?

DAVID ADDINGTON

Just sit there and be quiet.

Cheney and Addington sit at the large table very far away.

Two men walk in, FACES PIXILATED AND VOICES DISTORTED.

DICK
Hello (BEEP) and (BEEP). How's
business at (BEEP)?

OTHER MAN
We're good. (BEEP) has been
performing quite well and (BEEP)
and (BEEP) are quite optimistic.

They all shake hands and have a seat.

ADDINGTON
(pointing to Doug)
Oh, he's with the Energy
Department.

Doug now listening to music on his head phones gives a
chipper thumbs up.

INT. ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP'S HEADQUARTERS - DAY

CU of hands opening a large envelope and removing copies of
maps that are laid on a table.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
The details of Cheney's meetings
with the energy CEO's were never
disclosed.

CU on a MAP OF ALL THE IRAQI OIL FIELDS with OIL COMPANIES'
NAMES ON THEM...

NARRATOR
But a freedom of information
request did provide some documents,
including a map of Iraq's oil
fields with all of the oil
companies that would be interested
in acquiring them if "somehow" they
were ever to become available.

We pan over the map. Seeing names like Exxon, BP, Shell etc.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)
And then, it happened.

SMASH CUT TO:

TV SCREEN: ACTUAL DiTech Commercial for mortgage
consolidation that was playing on 9/11, is interrupted by
BREAKING NEWS.

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

This just in, you are looking at a very disturbing live shot. That is the World Trade Center and we have unconfirmed reports that a plane has crashed into one of the towers.

INT. WHITE HOUSE OFFICE OF VICE PRESIDENT - 9/11 2001 - DAY

Cheney, Condi Rice and Mary Matalin are watching CNN. ONE OF THE TWIN TOWERS IS SMOKING. SUDDENLY A SECOND PLANE SOARS INTO FRAME AND HITS THE OTHER TOWER. Everyone gasps.

CNN ANCHOR (SOT)

Oh my God! That was a second plane!
A second plane has hit the south tower!!

SECRET SERVICE AGENTS rush in.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT

Mr. Vice President, we have credible information that a plane is headed for the White House at this moment. We have less than a minute to get to the secure underground bunker.

Cheney is transfixed by the smoking towers. He doesn't move.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT (CONT'D)

Let's MOVE!!

THE SECRET SERVICE AGENT GRABS CHENEY BY THE BELT AND LIFTS HIM OFF THE GROUND. Everyone rushes to the door and down stairs. They make their way into a Cold War era bunker. The Secret Service Agent straggles behind with another AGENT.

INT. HAIR SALON - SAME TIME

A TV in a hair salon shows that the Pentagon has also been hit. Lynne is there arguing with her SECRET SERVICE detail.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT #2

But Mrs. Cheney I'm being told no one is to go to the White House. It's not safe.

LYNNE

I said, you take me to the White House!

Sirens blare in the background as Secret Service escorts Lynne to a car.

INT. UNDERGROUND WHITE HOUSE BUNKER - 9/11 9:38AM

Cheney, on the phone amidst the chaos, Norman Mineta, Addington, Condi Rice, Scooter Libby and Karen Hughes and a few others are there.

STAFFER

That's right. We've got planes in the air and no where for them to land. Permission for them to land in Canadian Airports. International flights into Newfoundland.

Dick hangs up a call with the President.

STAFFER (CONT'D)

Sir, Don Rumsfeld on 3.

Cheney points to the speaker phone.

CHENEY

That?

He picks up the line.

DICK

You have authorization to shoot down any aircraft deemed a threat.

Beat.

RUMSFELD

Presidential authority?

DICK

That's correct. All orders are UNODIR.

Condi and the Staffer make eye contact.

CONDI RICE

UNODIR?

KAREN HUGHES

Unless otherwise directed.

CONDI RICE

Mr. Vice President are we sure these are the proper rules of engagement.

DICK
The country's under attack, the ROE
is fluid. David?

DAVID ADDINGTON
Yes Mr. Vice President.

Addington leans to Cheney. They talk in hushed tones.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Now we don't know what exactly what
the people in that room were
thinking, but it's safe to assume
that at least one person wondered
why, in the midst of the most
fateful day in American history,
was Dick Cheney talking to his
lawyer?

Karen Hughes tries to get Cheney's attention.

KAREN HUGHES
(gets off another phone)
...Mr. Vice President, the
Congressional Members you sent to
Mount Weather Emergency Operations
Center want to leave.

DICK
No.

KAREN HUGHES
Excuse me?

DICK
They're not going anywhere. Just
tell them, we've got all the
helicopters.

KAREN HUGHES
Yes, sir.

CLIP: The Twin Towers crumble to the ground.

Lynne leans into Dick.

LYNNE
Are we at war?

DICK
Yes we are.

LYNNE
With who?

Dick clasps his hands and considers the question.

L/3 "The Unitary Executive"

STOCK: EXT. New York

People running through the streets covered in ash.

INT. UNDERGROUND BUNKER - WHITE HOUSE - THAT NIGHT

W Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld, Colin Powell, RICHARD CLARKE 53,
Scooter Libby, Condi and George Tenet all convene.

GEORGE TENET

We've picked up chatter from well-
known Al Qaeda operatives
celebrating today's attack.

RUMSFELD

We shouldn't rule out Iraq.

CONDI RICE

What's Al Qaeda's Leader's name?

GEORGE TENET

His name is Osama Bin Laden

RICHARD CLARKE

But this is clearly Al Qaeda. I've
been tracking their movements for
years. They're fingerprints are all
over this.

RUMSFELD

Iraq has all the good targets.

RICHARD CLARKE

Iraq has NOTHING to do with this.

RUMSFELD

Richard you don't know that for
sure--

RICHARD CLARKE

I do know that.

COLIN POWELL

Mr. President, if I may,
Afghanistan is Al Qaeda's
headquarters. This is where our
focus should be.

L/3 "Colin Powell: Secretary of State"

GEORGE TENET

And the CIA would be capable of taking down the Taliban's power structure.

RUMSFELD

With all do respect, George. Mr. President. We are the Pentagon. This is what we do.

CHENEY

Don...

Bush looks around the room. Uncertain for a beat.

W BUSH

Okay... We'll go with Tenet and the CIA for now.

Tenet gives Rumsfeld a glance. Don is not happy.

COLIN POWELL

I'll make calls to our allies.

Everyone gets up to leave.

DICK

I think given the current situation Mr. President, it's wise that you and I not be in the same location. For, uh, COG...Continuity of Government.

W BUSH

(he looks freaked)

Of course, of course... Hey... Are we going to be alright?

DICK

Yes sir. We are.

EXT. WHITE HOUSE ROOF - HOURS LATER

A LARGE HELICOPTER TAKES OFF. Two SECRET SERVICE AGENTS holding machine guns stand and watch.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT

(into his mic)

Angler has taken off to an undisclosed location. I repeat, Angler is airborne.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT #2
 Angler? That's the VP? I thought
 only the President could land and
 take off from the south lawn?

SECRET SERVICE AGENT
 What can I tell you? Today's
 fucked.

INT. UNDERGROUND TUNNEL - UNDISCLOSED LOCATION - THAT NIGHT

Dick, Lynne, A MARINE GUARD and a DOCTOR are in a small craft
 GOING DOWN AND DOWN INTO THE DARKNESS...

INT. CABINET ROOM - WHITE HOUSE - DAY

Intel Officers, NSC members surround a table. CHENEY IS ON A
 SCREEN OR SVTS (sivits), TELECONFERENCING IN FROM AN
 UNDISCLOSED LOCATION.

DICK
 This intelligence has been edited,
 redacted and reduced.

INTELLIGENCE OFFICER
 Mr. Vice President, usually we vet
 the daily intelligence threat
 matrix to eliminate unreliable
 sources, non-players-

DICK (SOT)
 Stop. Don't you dare give me a damn
 disquisition on what I cannot hear.

INTELLIGENCE OFFICER
 Mr. President a lot of this
 information is not verified.

DICK
 This is the last time I'll say it.
 I want to hear everything. Every
 day. From now on.

SLOW PUSH IN ON CHENEY'S FACE AS HE HEARS THE RAW INTEL BEING
 READ BY THE GROUP. The collage of intel becomes denser and
 denser, mixed with static ridden Arabic and other languages.

SCORE: A SINGLE LONG DARK NOTE

VOICES

We're tracking the possibility of Bio-attacks using serin gas, cow pox, ebola... There was a post on a dark web site about mass beheadings in residential neighborhoods.... Plans were found outlining the use of infants as suicide bombs in major airports... A source has told as asset about fire bombs targeting hospitals... A video was captured describing televised executions interrupting American network TV... Movie studios, museums, subways, day care centers may all be targets... etc.

As we get to a grainy close up of Cheney's eyes on the screen we see something that hasn't been apparent before: FEAR.

INT. BOMB SHELTER - THAT NIGHT

Lynne and Dick lay in bed in a giant DARK CAVERN with spare furniture and telecommunications equipment.

LYNNE

I'm scared Dick...

DICK

I'll always keep you safe.

LYNNE

What are you going to do?

In the darkness Cheney is just a black silhouette.

FLASH TO: A stream. Cheney stands in it fishing. BY A ROCK, UNDER THE WATER IS THE SHADOW OF A HORRIBLE CREATURE.

EXT. MOUNTAINS OF AFGHANISTAN - DAY

VFX: CHEST POUNDING EXPLOSIONS dot a mountainside in Afghanistan as US FIGHTER JETS screech across the sky.

EXT. OLD STONE BUILDING - DAY - 2001

5 US SOLDIERS lead a row of 12 TALIBAN PRISONERS towards an old stone wall. The Taliban fighters are dirty and dusty and look spent. One of the US SOLDIERS IS OUR NARRATOR TALKING TO CAMERA. HE HAS ENLISTED.

NARRATOR

So while Powell, the CIA and their international coalition toppled the Taliban and took Afghanistan in a matter of days... Cheney had found something much more powerful than missiles or jet planes.

INT. OFFICE OF LEGAL COUNSEL - CONFERENCE ROOM - A WEEK LATER

Sign: "The Office of Legal Counsel." David Addington sits across from two OLC LAWYERS. Cheney TELECONFERENCES in.

DAVID ADDINGTON

Mr. Vice President, this is John Yoo.

JOHN YOO, 34, an Asian American lawyer with a deliberate professional manner sits across from them. JAY BYBEE, 48, the Assistant Attorney General for the OLC is next to Yoo.

JOHN YOO

It's a pleasure to meet you Mr. Vice President.

DICK (SOT)

Mmm huh.

DAVID ADDINGTON

The Vice President believes that it is the duty as Commander in Chief to protect that Nation. And that no other obligation whether it be Congress or existing treaties supersedes that duty... How do you feel about that statement?

Beat.

JOHN YOO

I couldn't agree more.

MUSIC: GLORIOUS AND INTRICATE

INT. JOHN YOO'S OFFICE - DAY

John Yoo is at the computer. David Addington paces. Occasionally Bybee walks in with case files.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
John Yoo's first legal opinion
allowed the US government to
monitor every citizen's phone
calls, texts and emails without a
warrant. It was a giant legal leap
based on sketchy law at best.

QUICK CUT: Soldiers punch prisoners.

NARRATOR
But their masterpiece, their Moby
Dick if you will, was the torture
memo.

QUICK CUT: Prisoners are pushed into boxes.

INT. WHITE HOUSE - OVAL OFFICE

Cheney, Addington, W Bush, Tenet and Rumsfeld.

GEORGE TENET
But what about the Geneva
Convention?

DICK
We believe the Geneva Convention is
open to... interpretation.

GEORGE TENET
What exactly does that mean?

ADDINGTON
Stress positions, water boarding,
confined spaces, dogs.

RUMSFELD
We're calling it enhanced
interrogation.

W BUSH
We're sure none of this fits under
the definition of torture?

ADDINGTON
The U.S. doesn't torture.

CHENEY
Therefore, if the U.S. does it, by
definition, it can't be torture.

QUICK CUTS SHOWING:

1. A MIDDLE EASTERN MAN naked and being water boarded. He howls and cries.

TRANSLATOR
(in Arabic)
Just tell us what targets are next!
What targets are next?!

2. The CLERIC from the beginning having his genitals shocked with wires. He screams as much as a person can scream.

CIA AGENT
All of this ends the second you
tell us the truth!!

4. A MAN WITH HIS WIFE AND KIDS IN FRONT OF HIM. A CIA AGENT SCREAMS AT HIM.

CIA AGENT (CONT'D)
We will rape and kill your wife and children! Do you fucking hear me!!?

TRANSLATOR#2
(Translates in Arabic)

A TRANSLATOR yells the translation. The Man, his family SOB.

NARRATOR
But torture and privacy laws
weren't the only laws Cheney
rewrote with John Yoo. They had a
full menu of opinions challenging
Constitutional and International
law,

INT. HIGH PRICED GOURMET RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A fancy WAITER, 54, lists the specials to Cheney, Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz and Addington at a lavish table.

WAITER
(formal and dispassionate)
Tonight we are offering the enemy
combatant: whereby someone is not a
criminal or a prisoner of war.
Which gives them no protection
under the law. We are also have
Extreme Rendition where suspects
are abducted without record, on
foreign soil and taken to foreign
prisons in countries that torture.
(MORE)

WAITER (CONT'D)

We have Guantanamo Bay which is very, very complicated but allows you to operate outside the purview of due process on land that isn't technically US soil, but is under our control.

DONALD RUMSFELD

That sounds delicious!

WAITER

And there is a very fresh and delicious War Powers Act interpretation, which gives the executive branch broad power to attack any country or person that might possibly be a threat. Finally for desert we have the fact that under the unitary executive theory if the President does anything it makes it legal. In other words you can do whatever the fuck you want. So which would you like gentlemen?

DICK

We'll have them all.

WAITER

Excellent choice.

They hand the Waiter their menus.

PAUL WOLFOWITZ

Look Dick, we've been using focus groups and advertising executives to help us sell this war on terror.

INT. FOCUS GROUP ROOM - DAY

FOCUS GROUP LEADER, 34, an upbeat woman talks to a DOZEN AMERICAN MEN AND WOMEN OF MIXED AGES.

FOCUS GROUP LEADER

I do want to reiterate, we are still being recorded and there still may or may not be clients behind the door.

INT. HIGH PRICED GOURMET RESTAURANT - NIGHT

PAUL WOLFOWITZ

These guys are pretty sharp.

RUMSFELD
There's a problem. The results show
that people are confused.

INT. FOCUS GROUP ROOM - DAY

FOCUS GROUP LEADER
So you're saying you support the
President and you hate terrorism,
but you're confused. Can you tell
me why?

A 60 YEAR OLD MAN in a football jersey answers.

60 YEAR OLD GUY
Don't we just have to get Osama bin
Laden? He did it. So why are they
calling it a war? A war with who?

19 YR OLD GIRL in a half tee raises her hand.

FOCUS GROUP LEADER
Thank you Mark. Yes Jasmine?

19 YR OLD GIRL
I don't get what this Al Qaeda is.
Are they a country? Why can't we
just bomb them?

FOCUS GROUP LEADER
Interesting. Who else isn't
entirely sure what Al Queda is?

Most hands go up.

ON SCREEN: These focus groups happened in February 2002. They
were overseen by the Pentagon and headed by PR and Marketing
execs.

FOCUS GROUP LEADER (CONT'D)
Would it be less confusing if it
was a country?

60 YEAR OLD GUY
Damn right. I'm angry as hell. We
gotta fuck someone up.

FOCUS GROUP LEADER
Really strong feelings from Mark,
I'm interested. Who agrees with
this statement?

Most hands go up.

CUT TO:

INT. GOURMET RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

PAUL WOLFOWITZ
They know we're at war but they
don't understand against who.

RUMSFELD
They want a country. It's simpler.
Cleaner.

ADDINGTON
That would certainly help us
legally.

Beat.

DICK
Looks like it's time to take Iraq.

They all smile and laugh.

SCORE: GIANT ORCHESTRAL PIECE

166 INT. OVAL OFFICE - LATER

166

Cheney talks with W Bush.

DICK
It's called the Office of Special
Plans. Tenet is not yet serious
enough about the threat Saddam
poses in the GWot, or global war on
terror. But I can promise you this
intelligence group will be.

W BUSH
I've been wanting to take that
motherfucker Saddam down for a long
time.

167 INT. PENTAGON - THE OFFICE OF SPECIAL PLANS - DAY

167

A half dozen of Cheney's people work at desks, reading and
writing at the OFFICE OF SPECIAL PLANS: WILLIAM LUTI, DOUGLAS
FEITH, ABRAM SHULSKY, and Paul Wolfowitz barking out orders.

DOUGLAS FEITH
I've got something! Here's a report
that Mohamed Atta one of the
hijackers may have met with an
Iraqi spy in Prague.

INT. FOCUS GROUP ROOM - DAY

WOMAN
Wait, we can't just bomb people.

GUY IN HIS SIXTIES
Give me a break!

INT. PENTAGON - THE OFFICE OF SPECIAL PLANS - DAY

DOUGLAS FEITH
It's from Czech intelligence and
they question its credibility...

PAUL WOLFOWITZ
I've been to Prague. They question
everything.
(to the room)
Who wants to be an "unnamed
source?"

DOUGLAS FEITH
Make sure to get in the phrase "we
don't want the smoking gun to be a
mushroom cloud." It focus grouped
through the roof!

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY - SEPT 8 2002

Condi Rice is being interviewed by Wolf Blitzer.

CONDI RICE
The problem with Saddam is that
there will always be uncertainty
about when he will acquire nuclear
weapons. But we don't want the
smoking gun to be a mushroom cloud.

CUT TO: SNIPPETS OF CSPAN, CNN, ABC, CBS. Various Politicians
across party lines supporting the war on Iraq.

JEFF SESSIONS (SOT)
(on TV)
..whether it's a smoking gun or a
mushroom cloud.

CHENEY

(on TV)

There is no question that Saddam Hussien has Weapons of Mass distruction.

BILL O'REILLY (SOT)

(on TV)

We gotta get rid of this dictator. He's got anthrax. He's got all these weapons.

REP. MIKE PENCE

(on TV)

And not if, but when, Saddam uses weapons of mass destruction, what will we tell the American People.

SEN. HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON (SOT)

(on TV)

Saddam Hussien will increase his capacity to wage biological and chemical warfare.

PM TONY BLAIR (SOT)

(on TV)

..we will stand up for what we know to be right. To show that we will confront the tyrannies and dictatorships and terrorists who put our way of life at risk.

TV CLIP FROM SURVIVOR

JEFF PROBST (SOT)

The tribe has spoken.

CUT TO:

INT. OVAL OFFICE - WHITE HOUSE

The President, Rove, Condi, George Tenet, Hughes, Powell, Cheney and Rumsfeld are all talking about the war.

KAREN HUGHES

Polling for an invasion of Iraq is at 53%. Focus groups show people still aren't sure about a connection between Saddam and Al Qaeda.

POWELL

France and Germany have said they won't join the coalition. Neither will Israel.

Cheney is quiet.

W BUSH

We went to the wall together. We prayed together. Israel is one of our closest allies.

RICE

They said an invasion of Iraq would destabilize the region, Sir. And they don't view Saddam as an immediate threat.

W BUSH

That's not good. I really want a strong coalition for this.

KARL ROVE

I have an idea. Secretary Powell has the highest trustworthy ratings of any of us. What if he gave an address to the U.N. and the American people to push this over the finish line?

COLIN POWELL

Karl, I've been very vocal, very vocal, about my reservations about invading Iraq.

RUMSFELD

Oh Colin, you're such a nervous Nellie.

COLIN POWELL

We're talking about invading a sovereign nation without provocation Don!

RUMSFELD

Oh, sovereign nation...

COLIN POWELL

What about the intelligence. Has anybody thought about the intelligence? You break it, you bought it. You break it, you bought it!

RUMSFELD (CONT'D)

Oh come on! You know you're wrong, you're just a chicken shit.

GEORGE W
Hey, hey, hey, alright. Let's slow
down. That's enough of that guys.

Dick is next to W across the room. He speaks to him quietly.

DICK
Are you going to take Saddam down
or not. You're the President. War
is yours. Not the U.N. Or some
coalition. Do not share powers that
are yours alone.

After a quarter beat W turns back to the group.

GEORGE W
George, make sure Powell sees the
intelligence. Colin I want you to
make that speech. I'm the President
and I want this to happen!

COLIN POWELL
Yes, sir. I look forward to being
briefed on that intelligence.

GEORGE TENET
On another note, I've been handed a
credible report that there's a
small terrorist enclave in
Northeastern Iraq. If we're going
to invade we recommend taking it
out before.

RUMSFELD
Let it go, George, we have bigger
fish to fry.

Dick pulls Tenet aside.

DICK
Excuse me George. May I see that
intelligence?

GEORGE TENET
Of course.

FREEZE: as the report is handed to Cheney.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

That classified document described a terrorist named Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi who had started as a drug dealer and pimp before becoming fully radicalized in a Jordanian prison.

EXT. AFGHANISTAN - AL QAEDA BASE - DAY

Zarqawi walks toward OSAMA BIN LADEN. They sit and talk.

NARRATOR

Zarqawi went to meet Bin Laden in Afghanistan. But Zarqawi had vowed to kill all Shia Muslims and Bin Laden's mother was Shia, so the meeting didn't go well

INT. CIA CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Cheney and Scooter Libby talk to a female CIA ANALYST, 28.

DICK

Did he or did he not meet with Al Qaeda?

FEMALE CIA ANALYST

They had no operational contact.

DICK

Hogwash.

INT. WHITE HOUSE WEST WING HALLWAY - DAY

Powell storms down the hallway holding some papers. He stops COLONEL WILKERSON, 57, Powell's Chief of Staff at State.

COLIN POWELL

Larry have you read this speech?!

LAWRENCE WILKERSON

Yes. It's beyond thin. I saw five pieces of disproved intel in there.

COLIN POWELL

Who wrote it?

LAWRENCE WILKERSON
They claimed it was from the
President but I think you can guess
who really wrote it.

INT. SCOOTER LIBBY'S OFFICE - DAY

Scooter on the phone.

SCOOTER LIBBY
There's no need to yell Larry. Yes,
we reviewed the speech and gave
some notes...

David Addington enters and silently listens.

DAVID ADDINGTON
Powell really doesn't have a clue
does he?

INT. TERRORIST TENT - MIDDLE OF NOWHERE - DAY

Zarqawi and some of his followers clean their guns and talk.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
After the US invaded Afghanistan
Zarqawi set up shop in Iraq. It was
the only connection Cheney had
between Al Qaeda and Iraq, and
Cheney made sure Zarqawi's name was
all over Powell's speech.

INT. U.N. GENERAL ASSEMBLY - DAY

Actual VT: Joschka Fischer, German Foreign Minister,
addresses the General Assembly.

JOSCHKA FISCHER
The Security Counsel will now begin
its consideration of item 2 of the
agenda. I now call the
distinguished Secretary of State of
the United States Mr. Colin Powell.

COLIN POWELL
My purpose today is to share with
you what the United States knows
about Iraq's weapons of mass
destruction as well as Iraq's
involvement in terrorism...

INT. SMALL ROOM - IRAQ - SAME TIME

Zarqawi and five other TERRORISTS watch Powell on a laptop.

POWELL

(on TV)

Iraq today harbors a deadly terrorist network headed by Abu Musab Zarqawi, an associate and collaborator of Osama Bin Laden and his Al Qaeda lieutenants.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Powell's UN Address was seen by millions of Americans. But other people were watching as well.

POWELL

(on TV)

Zarqawi's activities are not confined to this corner of Northeast Iraq.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

The great general of America saying his name over and over again immediately made Zarqawi a star.

ZARQAWI

Allah Akbar!

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Within a day he had gone into hiding.

OTHER TERRORISTS

Allah Akbar! Allah Akbar!

INT. U.N. GENERAL ASSEMBLY - CONTINUOUS

POWELL

...an Al-Qaeda source tells us that Saddam and bin Laden reached an understanding that Al-Qaeda would no longer support activities against Baghdad.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

By the time we invaded Iraq 70% of Americans thought that Saddam Hussein was involved in 9/11.

Powell shuffles his papers.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
 Later Colin Powell would call the
 speech the most shameful moment of
 his life.

POWELL
 Thank you.

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Dick Cheney, Lynne, Liz, Philip, Mary and her girlfriend
 Heather eat a LAVISH FISH DINNER with the grandkids. They
 laugh and talk over each other.

MARY
 It was Kelly. And the Justin

DICK
 What are you talking about?

MARY
 American Idol.

LIZ
 You've watched it. You've seen it.

MARY	LIZ (CONT'D)
We watched it at your house.	I watched it sitting next to you.

LIZ (CONT'D)
 The singing and mean judge.

DICK
 Oh, I like him.

Everyone is drinking and laughing

DICK (CONT'D)
 How do you stop a fish from
 smelling?

LIZ	DICK (CONT'D)
I don't know.	You cut off his nose.

LYNNE
 Ok, we aren't going to revisit your
 father's colorful conversation.

CUT TO:

EXT. BAGHDAD - MARCH 20, 2003- NIGHT

STOCK FOOTAGE: The skyline of Baghdad explodes with rockets.

INT. OVAL OFFICE - WHITE HOUSE

W Bush talks to camera addressing the nation.

W BUSH

My fellow citizens, at this hour, American and coalition forces are in the early stages of military operations to disarm Iraq, to free its people and to defend the world from grave danger. On my orders, coalition forces have begun striking selected targets of military importance to undermine Saddam Hussein's ability to wage war. These are opening stages of what will be a broad and concerted campaign. To all of the men and women of the United States armed forces now in the Middle East, the peace of a troubled world and the hopes of an oppressed people now depend on you.

W Bush's leg bops up and down nervously under the desk.

INT. APARTMENT IN BAGHDAD - SAME TIME

An IRAQI FAMILY cowers under a table. The Father's leg also bounces up and down.

EXT. BAGHDAD - SAME TIME

POV VT FEED: A CRUISE MISSILE HITS THE APARTMENT BUILDING

EXT. IRAG DESERT - DAY - 2003

US SOLDIERS run alongside a tank. Bodies burning in the street.

MONTAGE - EXT. IRAQ -DAY

A CROWD OF IRAQIS pull down the statue of Saddam and put an American flag over his head.

EXT. AIRCRAFT CARRIER - APRIL 9, 2003 - DAY

ACTUAL VT: WIDE SHOT: W BUSH lands on the aircraft carrier in his flight suit (STOCK FOOTAGE/HEAD REPLACEMENT).

EXT. VAST WYOMING FIELD - DAY

Lynne, Dick, Liz, Philip, Mary, Heather, RIDE ACROSS A FIELD ON HORSES IN MODERN WESTERN GARB. They stop and pose in a line. We FREEZE. It is magnificent.

EXT. TAILGATE - DAY

PUMPED UP AMERICANS with USA caps and beer, chant to camera.

AMERICAN TAILGATERS
USA! USA! USA!

EXT. IRAQ - DAY

Kurt the Narrator talks to us into a video camera.

NARRATOR
Hi. Seems like they've been shipping men and equipment out of Afghanistan and into Iraq. And at the moment we're a little unsure of what's going on. I don't want you to worry about me.

EXT. AIRCRAFT CARRIER - APRIL 9, 2003 - DAY

ACTUAL VT: W BUSH speaks from a podium. (STOCK FOOTAGE/HEAD REPLACEMENT).

W BUSH
Ladies and Gentlemen... Major Combat operations in Iraq have ended. In the Battle of Iraq, the United States and our allies have prevailed.

INT. RUMSFELD'S OFFICE - DAY

Cheney, Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz and TWO GENERALS meet.

GENERAL #1
We have concerns over Halliburton KBR's billing practices.
(MORE)

GENERAL #1 (CONT'D)

As you know, the no-bid contracts they received were quite sizable and now-

RUMSFELD

Well, we're not concerned. Are we?

DICK

Not at all.

WOLFOWITZ

The Secretary of Defense and the Vice President just said they're not concerned. Now can we please talk about Iran?

EXT. TEXAS SKY - DAY - 2006

Birds fly across a late morning Texas sky.

We hear a SHOTGUN BLAST AND A SCREAM. Tilt down to reveal a lawyer, 78, HARRY WHITTINGTON with blood all over his face.

It is a hunting group: PAMELA WILLEFORD, Cheney, holding a smoking gun, a RANCH HAND, SECRET SERVICE AGENTS and OTHERS sitting in town cars parked across from the hunting blind.

NARRATOR

To this day, Dick Cheney has never apologized for this incident.

KATHERINE ARMSTRONG, late 50's and her sister run up.

KATHERINE ARMSTRONG

Jesus Dick..

CU OF AN EMPTY BEER CAN.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

But, someone else did.

CUT TO:

TV SCREEN: BREAKING NEWS MSNBC - DAY

HARRY WHITTINGTON

My family and I are deeply sorry for all that Vice President Cheney and his family have had to go through this past week. We send our love and respect to them.

(MORE)

HARRY WHITTINGTON (CONT'D)
And we hope he will continue to
come to Texas and seek the
relaxation that he deserves.

INT. CHENEY'S OFFICE - DAY

Cheney and Scooter look at the famous Op-ed in the NY Times
by Joe Wilson questioning the yellowcake intel.

DICK
This Joe Wilson asshole is
questioning our intelligence in the
New York Times? What's his wife's
name?

SCOOTER LIBBY
Valerie Plame. I confirmed it.
She's undercover CIA.

DICK
Leak it...

SMASH CUT TO:

"ONE YEAR LATER"

EXT. ROAD OUTSIDE OF BAGHDAD - DAY - 2004

A road near some Iraqi apartments. A CONVOY OF AMERICAN
HUMVEES MAKES THEIR WAY DOWN THE ROAD. Two SOLDIERS, 19 AND
29 sit in the front of one of the vehicles.

SOLDIER #1
Okay, okay, like... they don't care
about their dogs. They'll shoot em,
let em run wild... What kind of
people don't love a dog?

SOLDIER #2
People in India love cows. They
would look at us and how we treat
cows and think the same thing.

SOLDIER #1
Captain, with all due respect that
is some liberal ass scratchin
bullshit if ever I've heard it-

EXPLOSION GOES OFF UNDER THEIR FRONT WHEEL.

The vehicle is thrown up in the air. QUICK FLASH OF THE YOUNG SOLDIER DEAD, HIS RIGHT HALF BLOWN CLEAN OFF.

INT. WHITE HOUSE HALLWAY - DAY

Rumsfeld, holding a piece of paper in his hand, walks with a head of steam towards the Vice President's office. He walks right past his SECRETARY.

RUMSFELD

Linda-

INT. OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT - CONTINUOUS

Rumsfeld bursts in. Cheney and Scooter are there.

RUMSFELD

Look at this crap.

DICK

Hello Don.

RUMSFELD

That report says Zarqawi, the same fucking Zarqawi we talked up for months, is leading a major insurgency in Iraq. And the implication is it's because we talked him up!

He hands Cheney a CIA CLASSIFIED BRIEFING. Flashes of words "building insurgency" "Zarqawi" "using former Iraqi Military" "Zarqawi" and once again, "Zarqawi."

DICK

Has POTUS seen this?

RUMSFELD

No I intercepted it before it got across the hallway.

Libby is now reading it.

SCOOTER LIBBY

This is generated by an analyst.

DICK

Get me Tenet. This stops here.

XT. WIDE CITY VIEW OF BAGHDAD - DAY - 2004

THE ANCIENT CITY LOOKS NORMAL, with traffic, and yes, a military presence but still, fairly hum drum.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Abu Musab Al-Zargawi had taken his
fame from Powell's UN speech and
taken it into his own new thing.

An explosion erupts in the distance. We hear sirens.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
The Islamic state of Iraq and
Levant, or ISIS.

Another explosion in the distance. More sirens.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
And because that intelligence
somehow found itself on the bottom
of a stack of papers, Zargawi had a
whole year to do whatever the hell
he wanted.

INT. BRITISH SUBWAY CAR - DAY - 2005

We pan off a blood stained and blackened wall of a subway car and down to the floor where a blood smear from a body being dragged makes it way across the floor. There is a briefcase with scattered papers, a purse, a child's lunch box and shoe and a severed hand laying about.

NARRATOR
And what he wanted was carnage.

We follow the smear down the aisle and out to the door where it meets the platform and becomes dirt and blood mixed together. We see the legs of 2 POLICE OFFICERS IN THE BACKGROUND.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Shia versus Sunni, the West versus
Islam and death versus life.

EXT. SADDAM HUSSEIN'S PALACE - BEDROOM - DAY

Next to a giant bed, a shelf full of dusty VHS tapes of American movies.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
And on top of that US forces
couldn't find any WMD's or nuclear
programs in Iraq.

Pan past copies of RED HEAT, TURNER AND HOOTCH etc.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Turns out that Saddam and his son's
mostly liked cocaine and American
movies from the 80's.

INT. SENATE FLOOR - DAY - JUNE 2004

Cheney walks through the crowded Senate floor, shaking hands.

SNIPPETS OF NEWSCASTERS (V.O.)
Vice President Cheney is being sued
by Valerie Plame and her husband
Joseph Wilson.... The White House
announced four cabinet
resignations...

A Dem Senator PATRICK LEAHY, 60's approaches him.

PATRICK LEAHY
Hey Dick. I hope there's no hard
feelings about us investigating the
no-bid Iraq contracts for
Halliburton. Just doing my job.

Cheney turns to him with his crooked smile.

DICK
Go fuck yourself.

EXT. NATIONAL'S BALL PARK - DAY

Dick Cheney, wearing a Nationals jacket comes exits the
dugout to throw out the first pitch.

The crowd boos Cheney.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
Dick Cheney low and outside with
that pitch.

INT. PENTAGON HALLWAY - DAY - NOVEMBER 2006

An AIDE walks down a long hallway as we hear snippets of
news, radio and pundits.

NEWS SNIPPETS (V.O.)
Some nations accusing Bush and
Cheney of war crimes... There is a
chorus of people calling for Dick
Cheney to step aside and resign.

The AIDE reaches the end of the hallway, knocks on a door.

RUMSFELD (O.C.)
Go away!

The Aide turns and walks away.

SAME TIME

Cheney is on the phone in his study. Cut back and forth.

RUMSFELD
I wanted a clean phone line so I'm
in an empty office. Listen, if we
can just get an air bombardment in
Iraq, it'll make a statement and
give us political cover-

DICK
It's over Don.

RUMSFELD
What's that?

DICK
It's over. The President wants you
to step down. He appreciates your
service.

Beat.

RUMSFELD
Does Bush's kid want me out or do
you?

Beat.

DICK
I can't win every fight Don.

RUMSFELD
You are a little piece of shit.

Beat.

RUMSFELD (CONT'D)
Wow, how did you become such a cold
son of a bitch.

DICK
I'm sorry Don. I really am.

RUMSFELD
You know how I know you're not?
(beat)
Because I wouldn't be.

Beat.

RUMSFELD (CONT'D)
Do you think they'll prosecute us?

Long beat.

DICK
...Okay then.

RUMSFELD
Okay then.

Rumsfeld hangs up.

EXT. WEST FRONT LAWN OF THE CAPITOL - JAN 20, 2009

THE INAUGURATION OF BARACK OBAMA. Cheney, in a wheelchair,
and W Bush walk out for the ceremonial changing of power
(STOCK FOOTAGE/HEAD REPLACEMENT).

CUT TO:

EXT. SUBURBAN STREETS - DAY

Our NARRATOR jogs while talking to camera.

NARRATOR
A few years later, Dick's heart
trouble started up again. With no
donor available, he finally found
himself at death's door.

INT. GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL - DAY

Cheney, looking very thin is in a hospital bed with Mary, Liz
and Lynne around him. A DOCTOR is there.

DOCTOR

I wish I had better news. Your heart just isn't pumping enough oxygen to keep his vital organs alive. Should I call for a Minister?

LYNNE

No. He's not going anywhere. Dick Cheney you are not going anywhere, do you hear me?!

DICK CHENEY

(raspy)

This may be the one time I can't do what your Mother says.

The family laughs while crying.

MARY

I love you Daddy.

LIZ

We love you so much...

DICK

I love my girls...

Lynne comes over to Dick and they share a quiet moment together.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

Our NARRATOR, continues jogging.

NARRATOR

Dick Cheney told his family he was ready to die and that he wasn't afraid. He told them he had lived a full life. And he had zero regrets about the choices-

A CAR HITS THE NARRATOR IN A CROSS WALK. Throwing him with a bone crushing thud onto the hard macadam of the street. BLOOD POOLS BEHIND HIS HEAD.

QUICK CUTS: 1) A HEART BEING PUT ON ICE IN AN ORANGE COOLER. 2) A MEDICAL HELICOPTER TAKING OFF 3) A SURGICAL ROOM BEING PREPPED.

INT. SURGICAL ROOM - DAY

Cheney is wheeled into the surgical room.

INT. MORGUE - SAME TIME

The NARRATOR WITH CROSS HATCHED STITCHING ACROSS HIS CHEST, nude, lays on a morgue slab.

NARRATOR

(to camera)

They say my heart could give him another ten years. Cheney doesn't like to refer to it as someone else's heart, he likes to refer to it as his NEW heart. And even though I'm dead, it still makes me feel pretty shitty.

A helicopter lands on the roof of the hospital. A doctor runs with a cooler.

INT. SURGICAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The SURGEON AND TEAM make an incision in Cheney's chest.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

And so, when Liz decided to run for one of Wyoming two senate seats against Republican incumbent Mike Enzi, our Dick was right there to hopefully see the Cheney legacy of power continue.

INT. CHENEY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

CU of a phone. We hear a RECORDING OF MAN'S VOICE coming through the receiver.

RECORDING (SOT)

Are you aware Wyoming Senate candidate Liz Cheney supports gay marriage? Her sister is married to a woman and Liz refuses to support a constitutional amendment banning same sex marriage. Don't you agree, Wyoming deserves a Senator who believes marriage is between a man and a woman.

Liz, in tears puts down the phone.

LIZ CHENEY
 (in tears)
 These calls went to every house in
 Wyoming. Every single house. I
 will never win! What are we gonna
 do?

INT. SURGICAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The Surgeon has the chest spreader out and opens up Cheney's
 chest, revealing his heart.

INT. NEWS STUDIO - DAY

Liz being interview by male news anchor.

MALE NEWS ANCHOR
 We're joined here today by Liz
 Cheney who is running for the
 Senate from the state of Wyoming.
 According to one poll she is behind
 by double digits. Welcome.

LIZ CHENEY
 Thank you for having me here Chris.
 And may I point out there are other
 polls that have me much closer.

MALE NEWS ANCHOR
 Your opponent Senator Mike Enzi
 claims you support gay marriage. In
 part because you support your gay
 sister's union with her wife. How
 do you respond?

LIZ CHENEY
 Let me make this very, very clear:
 I do not support gay marriage. I
 believe marriage is between a man
 and a woman.

MALE NEWS ANCHOR
 But you've always claimed gay
 marriage is a state issue. Your
 opponent claims this is an
 equivocation.

INT. CHENEY'S TV ROOM - VIRGINIA - NIGHT

Cheney and Lynne watch. Cheney is silent.

LYNNE

I think she's coming off very well.

INT. MARY CHENEY'S HOME - THE NEXT DAY

Mary is on the phone with Heather behind her. Their children's toys scattered on the floor.

MARY

(in tears)

I know Liz wouldn't have done this
without you and Dad didn't approve.
I can't believe you would do this.
I really thought there was a limit
to politics..

INT. CHENEY'S VIRGINIA HOME - SAME TIME

Lynne is on the phone.

LYNNE

No now you're just being
hysterical. I can't talk to you
when you get this way. You need to
settle down.

Dick sits in the background.

INT. SURGICAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The Surgeon removes Cheney's heart. We see Cheney on the table. A hole where the heart should be. Even the Surgeon takes a beat to take in the image.

QUICK CUTS SHOWING:

1) A Soldier's body in a casket as a group of soldiers salute. 2) Bodies burning in the streets of Iraq. 3) Rumsfeld alone in the Pentagon basement office. 4) George W standing alone thinking. 5) A soldier taking a thumbs up photo with a dead Iraqi. 6) Focus Groups raising their hands. 7) A news office reporting of various stories. 8) Stills of Americans yelling. 9) Kids in American cages.

INT. SURGICAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A heart is placed in Cheney's chest.

CUT TO:

INT. CHENEY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Liz waits for Dick's response to the push poll about her sister.

LIZ
DAD?...

Lynne looks at Dick...who after a beat, NODS "DO IT."

INT. MARY'S HOME - DAY

Mary's wife rubs her back as she cries.

QUICK CUTS/STILLS SHOWING:

1) Iconic Crying Border Girl 2) Cops pulling guns on a group of black teenagers 3) High school graduates being arrested. 4) Alex Jones from INFO WARS 5) A family praying 6) Dick walking out to fish.

EXT. WYOMING LAKE SIDE - DAY

Push into the trees til we focus on one tree with an aged worn carving in it of a HEART WITH: DICK + LYNNE

INT. SURGICAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

We hear a heart monitor beeping.

NURSE
Patient's heart rate is stable.
Blood pressure increasing...

Pan to the side table where CHENEY'S OLD HEART SITS, SCARRED FROM IT'S MANY HEART ATTACKS AND TWICE THE SIZE OF A NORMAL HEALTHY HEART.

"Lynne and Dick split time between their home in Wyoming and Virginia."

"In 2016, Liz was elected as Wyoming's sole representative to the House of Representatives."

"Mary Cheney was asked in 2015 whether she and Liz had mended their relationship. She replied, "I don't have to answer that.""

CUT TO BLACK:

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM

Camera crew surrounds Dick and Martha the interviewer.

MARTHA
Hello Mr. Vice President.

DICK
This must be the right place.

MARTHA
Nice to meet you.

DICK
Pleasure.

MARTHA
You can sit right there.

DICK
So is it gonna be just me on camera
or...

MARTHA
Primarily you. It'll cut back to
me. Eddie's got you on the "A"
camera. Me on the B.

OVER BLACK:

"4,550 US Soldiers were killed in the Iraq war with over
32,325 casualties. Suicide among American soldiers has
increased 31% since 2001."

"More than 600,000 Iraqi civilians died as a result of the
war."

"ISIS is responsible for the deaths of an estimated 150,000
civilians in Syria and Iraq with more than 2,000 murdered in
international terror attacks.

CUT TO:

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM

Camera crew surrounds Dick and Martha the interviewer.

Dick takes a drink of water.

MARTHA
Two-thirds of Americans say the
Iraq war is not worth fighting.
(MORE)

MARTHA (CONT'D)
And their looking at the value
gained at the cost of American
lives. And Iraqi lives.

DICK
So?

Beat.

MARTHA
So...don't you care what the
American People think?

DICK
No..uh...I think you can't be, uh,
blown off course.

Dick struggles then turns to camera.

DICK (CONT'D)
I can feel your recriminations and
your judgement. And I am fine with
it. If you want to be loved, go be
a movie star. The world is as you
find it. And you gotta deal with
that reality. And there are
monsters in this world. We saw
3,000 innocent people burned to
death, by those monsters. And yet,
you object, when I refuse to kiss
those monsters on the cheek and
say, "pretty please." You answer me
this, What terrorist attack would
you let go forward so you wouldn't
seem like a mean and nasty fella? I
will not apologize for keeping your
families safe. And I will not
apologize for doing what needed to
be done, so your loved ones can
sleep peacefully at night.

Dick gets emotional.

DICK (CONT'D)
It has been my honor to be your
servant. You chose me and I did
what you asked.

CUT TO BLACK:

"In the years following the invasion of Iraq, Halliburton
stock rose 500%"

"The Bush-Cheney White House claimed to have lost 22 million emails, including millions that were written in the run up to the Iraq war."

"It was found that there were "Blackout" periods, when there were no emails available from the office of Vice President Cheney."

"The memos Yoo wrote on torture and warrantless surveillance give the President almost unlimited power under the unitary executive theory."

"These memos are in the Justice Department's computers to this day."

"Any President can still cite them if he or she wishes."

MUSIC: America from WEST SIDE STORY

CREDITS ROLL

THEN AFTER AWHILE THEY ARE INTERRUPTED BY A HASH AND A CHANNEL CHANGE...

INT. FOCUS GROUP ROOM - DAY

Our FOCUS GROUP LEADER in front of the group again.

TERRI

Sorry to interrupt but Mark had something he wanted to share...

Guy in the Bucs jersey (Mark).

MARK

Yeah, something's been bothering me this whole movie and I just figured it out. This whole thing is liberal. It's got a liberal bias.

TERRI

Interesting. Does anyone else feel this way?

Two other hands go up.

TURNER

This is all facts. I mean, they had to vet all this, right?

MARK

You would say that, libtard!

TURNER

So because I have the ability to understand facts, that makes me a liberal?

TERRI

Guys let's lower our voices.

MARK

You probably like Killary!

TERRI

Let's take it down a notch or two ok?

TURNER

Ok, first of all, Hillary's not President! Ok, the orange cheeto that you hired is the President. And he's ruining the country that you claim to love!

MARK

Chicken shit!

Mark lunges for Turner. The fight. People jump up and break them apart. A Young Woman screams.

FAST AND FURIOUS GIRL

I can't wait to see the new FAST AND THE FURIOUS MOVIE. That looks lit!

CUT TO BLACK:

THE END