

BILLIONS

Episode 404

“Overton Window”

Written by
Brian Koppelman & David Levien

Production Draft
Green Pages 10/17/18
Yellow Pages 10/06/18
Full Pink 10/03/18
Blue Pages 09/25/18
Full White 09/05/18

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REVISION PAGE

EP 404 - GREEN PAGES

COLOR	DATE	PAGES
GREEN PAGES	10/17/18	6, 9, 13A, 21, 23, 26, 27, 28, 30, 35, 36, 37, 44, 45, 48, 49

CAST CHANGES:

The following characters have been OMITTED:

The following characters have been CHANGED:

The following characters have been ADDED:

SET CHANGES:

The following sets have been OMITTED:

The following sets have been CHANGED:

EXT. EAST RIVER SITE - DAY is now:

EXT. GREENPOINT SITE - DAY

EXT. BY THE HUDSON - DAY is now:

EXT. MADISON SQUARE PARK - DAY

EXT. FRAUNCES TAVERN - DAY is now:

INT. FRAUNCES TAVERN, DINING ROOM - DAY

The following sets have been ADDED:

SCENE CHANGES:

The following scenes have been OMITTED:

The following scenes have been CHANGED:

SC6, SC9, SC12, SC17, SC18, SC21, SC22, SC24, SC32, SC33, SC40, SC42

The following scenes have been ADDED:

SETS

EP 404 - GREEN PAGES

INTERIORS

ANOTHER HOTEL HALLWAY
AXE CAPITAL
AXE CAPITAL, AXE'S OFFICE
AXE CAPITAL, CONFERENCE ROOM
AXE CAPITAL, DOLLAR BILL'S AREA
AXE CAPITAL, TRADING FLOOR
BATON ROUGE, OFFICE HALLWAYS/OFFICE
CAR
CHUCK'S LAW OFFICE
FOLEY'S STUDY
FRAUNCES TAVERN, DINING ROOM
GRAND CENTRAL, STOUT NYC
HOTEL BALLROOM
HOTEL HALLWAY
HOTEL HALLWAY (W/REBECCA)
HOTEL MEETING ROOM
HOTEL SUITE
MERCEDES-AMG GT
RHOADES HOME, LIVING ROOM
SDNY, CONNERTY'S OFFICE
SDNY, LIBRARY
SENIOR'S APARTMENT
SENIOR'S APARTMENT, SENIOR'S STUDY
TAYLOR MASON CAPITAL
TAYLOR MASON CAPITAL, TAYLOR'S OFFICE
TAYLOR MASON CAPITAL, TEMP OFFICE
TAYLOR MASON CAPITAL, TRADING AREA

INTERIORS/EXTERIORS

FRAUNCES TAVERN, KITCHEN

EXTERIORS

BROOKLYN
BY THE HUDSON (**OMIT**)
EAST RIVER SITE (**OMIT**)
FRAUNCES TAVERN (**OMIT**)
GREENPOINT SITE
LOW INCOME NEIGHBORHOOD
MADISON SQUARE PARK
PRIVATE AIRPORT, RUNWAY
RACE TRACK
SCHOOL BUS YARD
STREET

CAST

EP 404 - GREEN PAGES

CHUCK RHOADES	Paul Giamatti
BOBBY "AXE" AXELROD	Damian Lewis
WENDY RHOADES	Maggie Siff
BRYAN CONNERTY	Toby Leonard Moore
MIKE "WAGS" WAGNER	David Costabile
KATE SACKER	Condola Rashad
TAYLOR MASON	Asia Kate Dillon
CHUCK RHOADES SENIOR	Jeffrey DeMunn
"DOLLAR BILL" STEARN	Kelly AuCoin
REBECCA CANTU	Nina Arianda
SARA HAMMON	Samantha Mathis
JACK FOLEY	David Strathairn
ARI SPYROS	Stephen Kunken
MAFEE	Dan Soder
WAYLON "JOCK" JEFFCOAT	Clancy Brown
IRA SCHIRMER	Ben Shenkman
HALL	Terry Kinney
GRIGOR ANDOLOV	John Malkovich
EVERETT WRIGHT	Keith Chappelle
BEN KIM	Daniel K. Isaac
BONNIE BARELLA	Sarah Stiles
HELENA	Zina Wilde
IT GREG	Ryan Barry
KARL ALLERD	Allan Havey
BOB SWEENEY	Matt Servitto
TERRY BURKE	Michael Stoyanov
JOHNNY BURKE	Kevin Breznahan
TUK LAL	Dhruv Maheshwari
CHRIS SACCA	Chris Sacca
DOUGLAS MASON	Kevin Pollak
CARTER CALLOWAY	Lee Sellars
EVAN ROBARDS	
COMMS GUY	
REP	Peter Evangelista
TRADER'S VOICE	

FADE IN:

1 EXT. SCHOOL BUS YARD - NIGHT 1

Row after row of YELLOW SCHOOL BUSES stretch into the distance in the darkness. Two OPERATIVES are at work, under the hoods of the buses, pulling distributor caps and wires. One is clad in black, the other in...yellow.

They are TERRY and JOHNNY BURKE.

JOHNNY

We're gonna be here all fucking night.

TERRY

If we don't get caught.

JOHNNY

We're not gonna get caught.

TERRY

You sound pretty sure for someone dressed in bright fucking yellow like you're in Kill Bill.

JOHNNY

I'm in camo, bro. In this lot, I'm fucking invisible. Besides, we're getting paid well enough...

They get on with it.

2 EXT. LOW INCOME NEIGHBORHOOD - MORNING 2

A row of WORKING CLASS PEOPLE board a motor coach with "Atlantic City" in the destination slot. The door closes and it begins driving.

Pull back to see an endless caravan of motor coaches pulling out of the neighborhood. All are bound for Atlantic City.

3 INT. CHUCK'S LAW OFFICE - DAY 3

CHUCK RHOADES stands as BOBBY AXELROD enters. There is something grim about Chuck's manner. But Axe misses it at first.

(CONTINUED)

AXE

Once, as a boy, I lost a hundred dollars I didn't have at a carny game.

CHUCK

Hard to feature that. But before you really launch in--

AXE

I was very young. I thought the game was to knock down the pins. The game though, was to get people to pay to try to knock down the pins. Which, of course, didn't go down.

Chuck engages, allows the story to play out.

CHUCK

Ah. And the only guys playing that game were the carny workers. You were merely the--

AXE

Sucker. Today, your opponent thinks an election is taking place. But he doesn't know how many of his voters are already en route to a free junket with fresh Buffalo nickels in their pockets. Or that parents in his best districts have been forced to drive their kids to school instead of making it to the voting booths.

Axe notices Chuck's demeanor.

AXE

This is where you do some version of the happy dance. By day's end, it'll be the lowest voter turnout in primary history, which will allow you to eke out a victory. And then you are the presumptive Attorney General of New York goddamned State.

CHUCK

I know just the jig I'd throw down on if I thought that were so-- flatfoot and buck, like they do in the Ozarks.

Chuck does a quarter speed step or two. Stops.

CHUCK

But sadly, no matter how few vote today, I'm not gonna book a win.

ON: Axe's face...

FLASHBACK - INT. SENIOR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

SENIOR is with JACK FOLEY. Only Foley, looking determined if a little wan, sits on Senior's couch, while Senior stands, facing him, mid-pitch.

SENIOR

The thing to remember, Black Jack, is that the only folks who win in a Mexican standoff are the rest of us. Because all the Mexicans die.

FOLEY

This situation is different.

SENIOR

I don't see how. You have your guns trained on my boy, my boy has his trained on you. Anyone fires, everyone fires. Death to one and all. But if no one fires, everyone survives. And thrives.

FOLEY

I may not see the narrative in just the way you do. Because I may not be as worried about dying in the gun fight as you are. As long as the boy goes down, too.

SENIOR

Now's not the time to throw away a lifetime of pragmatism.

FOLEY

Perhaps I'm doing the opposite of throwing it away.

(MORE)

FOLEY (CONT'D)

Perhaps I'm doing the most pragmatic thing I know to do. And that is: to make certain the office stays pristine. At whatever cost. So have no doubt, Charles: Your boy shall never be the Attorney General of this proud state--nor any of the lesser states of our great nation. Not on my watch. If that means he goes public with some story about metals and bridges and me, so be it. But he can't prosecute it anymore. And I hardly think that story will capture the imagination in the same way his degenerate sex life will.

The implicit threat rattles Senior.

SENIOR

What can I do or say to shift your thinking on this?

FOLEY

Nothing. Not a thing. Only your 'boy' can. By 5:00PM tomorrow he declares he's withdrawing from the primary, or I go public.

CHUCK (PRE-LAP)

According to my father, Foley didn't even seem worried in the slightest about what I might do to him in return...

Back in the office.

AXE

What he has on you is that strong?

A somber nod from Chuck.

CHUCK

He exposes it, my chances are flushed.

AXE

Could be posturing, knowing that you don't actually want to trade blows.

CHUCK

Charles Rhoades Senior would have sniffed that out. No. I may have to lay down to him, get out of the race.

Axe weighs this.

AXE

"Always outnumbered. Always outgunned." As Mosley said it best. That's the state of play for guys like us. That's what we need to get us up with the sun. You can't quit.

CHUCK

All I have to do is say the words.

AXE

But you won't. You know...and this isn't easy to say, but: you were the most formidable opponent I ever faced. Because you read me. I had my chest out, sure, but inside it, my heart was racing when I knew you were coming for me.

CHUCK

I'll admit I like to hear that.

AXE

Take it in, man. Let it fuel you. Then fight on.

Chuck absorbs it. Then...

CHUCK

You know I will do everything humanly possible right up until his deadline.

AXE

Old days, I loved the image of you defeated. But I've gotta say, I don't like the look of it now. I'm a phone call away if you need me.

As Axe exits, Chuck waves KARL ALLERD in.

CHUCK

Find out why Foley is so willing
to engage in this brinkmanship.
There's something here I'm not
seeing.

ALLERD

Yup.

And Allerd is gone.

Brian Koppelman

6 INT. TAYLOR MASON CAPITAL, TRADING AREA - DAY

6

DOUGLAS MASON makes his way through the empty office, which is not really open yet. He carries coffee cup and bag, with a Microsoft Surface Tablet under his arm. He reaches Taylor at their station and puts down the food. *

DOUGLAS

I know you rarely take the time to look after yourself. A latte, the way you like it, and a ginger scone.

TAYLOR

I'm not eating--

DOUGLAS

Animal-free and gluten-free. Of course.

Taylor accepts the offerings.

TAYLOR

Are you heading back home soon?

DOUGLAS

I planned to, but...

He gives Taylor the tablet. Taylor turns it on, revealing spreadsheets and schematics. *

TAYLOR

Materials on what...a proposed business?

DOUGLAS

Yes. Lattice grid fins, you know?

TAYLOR

Your white whale.

DOUGLAS

A mathematically based enhancement. Ups efficiency to unheard of levels. Perhaps you can take a look. Or I could take you through it...

He starts to move into position to do that. Taylor shuts the tablet off, their face falling in dismay. *

*
*

(CONTINUED)

TAYLOR

I don't want to be in a position
to say 'no' to you.

A bit of salesman comes out in Doug.

DOUGLAS

Hey, who says you're going to,
huh? Wait'll you see the tech--

TAYLOR

And I thought the extended visit
was about our relationship, but
now I see what it's really--

DOUGLAS

It was. It is about us.

He puts a palm on his chest to swear it.

DOUGLAS

I could use a hand--a financial
hand--with my endeavor, is all.
But it's pretty special. It really
is this time. Please, just look at
it. When you can.

Taylor allows a slight nod.

7

EXT. RACE TRACK - DAY

7

CLOSE ON: Asphalt. Then the grill of a MERCEDES-AMG GT
comes ROARING over the rise as the car BLASTS by camera.

8

INT. MERCEDES-AMG GT - DAY

8

We are inside, Axe behind the wheel, REBECCA CANTU in the
passenger seat, as they tear around the track.

AXE

This thing is fun to drive. You
want to take a lap, or--

REBECCA

Kind of have to head to the
airport.

AXE

So, you leave out of Houston.

REBECCA

Yep. You sure you don't want to join me? You sound like you want to join me. We can run a friction test up there.

AXE

In the name of science.

REBECCA

Absolutely. I've been wanting to do this for years, got the whole aircraft to myself. Paid 165K. Would've paid whatever they asked.

AXE

Thanks. But I'm gonna have to leave the vomit comet to you--

REBECCA

Wimp.

They race through a corner.

AXE

That might work another time. But I really can't. I'm delivering a sickening ride of my own today--to the CEO of Noon to Night stores... How do you not turn a fucking profit with two thousand locations selling soda and cigs?

REBECCA

You're sitting with Evan Robards?

AXE

Chris Sacca first. He's throwing his shares behind me. Then I 'big stake' Robards before he takes the stage at the shareholder meeting.

Axe pulls in to a trackside area.

AXE

He hits the bricks and I leave with two board seats.

REBECCA

Have fun storming the castle.

AXE

Oh, I will. Send me a pic from the stratosphere.

A MERCEDES REP hustles over.

REP

So?

AXE

Nice ride. How much?

REP

\$132,000.

AXE

I'll take two.

He turns to Rebecca.

AXE

What color you want?

She smiles...

PRE-LAP the sound of hard shoes SQUEAKING AND POUNDING.

9

INT. BATON ROUGE, OFFICE HALLWAYS/OFFICE - DAY

9

CLOSE ON: A PAIR OF FEET in black lace-up shoes that RACE down an endless linoleum hallway.

The feet belong to CARTER CALLOWAY, a Louisiana oil and gas broker-dealer.

Calloway careens into his office and scrabbles around on his desk for a phone number, he dials.

CARTER

It's leaking, Axe. It's leaking and it's gonna blow and there's nothing anyone can do about it...

INTERCUT CALL:

Axe walks down the street.

*

AXE

Who the fuck is this?

(CONTINUED)

CARTER

Carter Calloway, from Baton Rouge--

AXE

Slow down, breathe, and tell me what's happening.

CARTER

An LNG terminal at the port has a perforation. It wasn't detected until it was too late and when the vapors build up--

AXE

Boom.

CARTER

Ka-boom. The tank's gonna explode. Then the shrapnel from that will set off other tanks...

AXE

You sure about this?

CARTER

It's science. It's inevitable. Gonna go up like a bullfrog with an M-80 in its ass.

AXE

Who else knows about this?

CARTER

No one. Yet. But everyone's gonna. I want your business, that's why I called you. You said if--

AXE

I know what I said. We'll do business later. First I need to know which company.

CARTER

I gave you all I got. Whatever companies are involved are gonna try to keep it quiet as long as possible. But at some point--

AXE

Fireball.

CARTER

Yep. You've got 3, 4 hours at most before the whole world knows.

AXE

Keep me posted with whatever you hear.

CARTER

Don't forget me, Axe--

But Axe has hung up and is sprinting up the block for the office.

He takes out his phone, dials as he runs. DOLLAR BILL answers as he enters...

10

INT. AXE CAPITAL - DAY - INTERCUT

10

AXE

We've got to get out of natural gas.

DOLLAR BILL

Which position?

AXE

All of 'em. Natural gas's going to take a dump. And pipelines, shipping--all the corollaries--everything tied to it is going along for the downward spiral. Get set, get everyone ready, and get it done at the open.

11

INT. GRAND CENTRAL, STOUT NYC - DAY

11

CLOSE ON: A black eyeball. PULL BACK: To see it belongs to a STUFFED LONGHORN STEER HEAD, hanging on the wall.

JOCK JEFFCOAT sits in the Midtown pub, digging in to some LOADED FRIES--bacon, jalapeño, cheese, etc. Joining him, out of place in the environment, is Jack Foley.

JOCK

One thing I didn't have a handle on before taking this job: there are near on a hundred different New Yorks, aren't there? More places to congregate with fellow Longhorns than there are in some towns in Texas. Football Saturdays, this place is jammed with my people.

FOLEY

It's a great city.

JOCK

It's not, actually. It's the world's darkest and dankest sewer. But it is remarkable.

FOLEY

Perfect word for it. And I aim to add this moment to those you file away with just that label.

JOCK

If that's true, I may end up liking this burgh after all. Loaded fry?

Jock lifts one in offer.

FOLEY

I think not. No.

Foley leans in.

FOLEY

I have the goods you need to kill Chuck Rhoades's run, today, before the polls close.

JOCK

Why'd'you imagine I give a turd?

FOLEY

Let's say it's a hunch from years of study. You fired the man. He's the vengeful type. I'll chance that you are too. And that you can't afford to have him in the State AG office like a burr under your saddle.

(CONTINUED)

JOCK

I'll admit, he does leave an
aftertaste you want to wash away.

FOLEY

Indeed. And my info is yours.

Brian Koppelman

(CONTINUED)

JOCK

What are you asking in trade?

FOLEY

A non-prosecution agreement that protects my relatives and their assets, for a specific set of crimes I'll spell out.

JOCK

Crimes someone might try to gin up on you?

FOLEY

Yes. Exactly.

JOCK

And this non-pross is supposed to cover you? Because I'm not in the habit of letting offenders walk.

FOLEY

Doesn't have to cover me. I'll face my fate, should it come to that. Just my family.

Jock gives Foley a cagey look, is satisfied.

JOCK

Ok. Deal. Now, gimme what you got on Mr. Rhoades.

Foley leans in. Whispers in Jock's ear. From his reaction we can see how deeply offended he is.

JOCK

I always knew he was a pervert. A profane man to his end. And this will be the end.

Jock extends a hand and Foley shakes it.

12 INT. AXE CAPITAL - DAY

12

Axe rushes in to find the TEAM--WAGS, BEN KIM, BONNIE, Dollar Bill, EVERETT, TUK LAL, and the rest--assembled.

AXE

Make the trades through the dark pools to mask what we're doing. So we can preserve our head start. Which won't be a long one.

(CONTINUED)

Everyone buckles in behind their Bloomborgs. *

ON: A TV SCREEN for the Opening Bell. *

The clock hits 9:30AM, when they find... *

Brian Koppelman

EVERYONE AT SAME TIME

My computer just went down...
Fuck...Mine too!

Axe moves to a terminal, sees for himself.

AXE

Fuck. Where's IT!?

IT GREG hustles out of his office, confirming.

IT GREG

The Bloombergs are fine, it's Axe
Cap's network that's been
disabled.

AXE

Our whole system is offline?

IT GREG

I'm already on it. I launched a
reboot...

All watch as he begins typing frantically, trying to get
the system back up.

IT GREG

What the...? Won't reboot...

He looks up and delivers the worst news an IT can:

IT GREG

We've, uh, we're being hacked.
Brute force attack. Someone's
gained remote access to our
servers--

WAGS

The entire reason for your
existence is to make sure that's
not the fucking case.

The room is on the verge of explosion. Then:

BEN KIM

I thought since the EternalBlue
exploit, we took protective
measures and backup. This
situation is supposed to be
impossible.

(CONTINUED)

AXE

Sure. And a hummingbird shouldn't
be able to fly sideways. But it
does.

(MORE)

Brian Koppelman

(CONTINUED)

12

CONTINUED:

12

AXE (CONT'D)

The more reliable rule of the world is: The aggressor always moves the science forward first. But we do have backup. Get it working. Now.

IT Greg continues working furiously.

13

INT. SDNY, LIBRARY - DAY

13

Jock Jeffcoat enters on CONNERTY and SACKER.

JOCK

We've got our Tigerfish loaded in the tube, and if Chuck Rhoades doesn't withdraw from that primary race by end of day, the torpedo is going to launch.

Connerty and Sacker move closer, intrigued.

CONNERTY

What's the nature of this weapon?

JOCK

Chuck's character defects. Unsurprisingly. Of a fatal scope. Supplied by Jack Foley.

Connerty and Sacker trade a look. They know Foley and his influence, and perhaps his connection to Chuck.

JOCK

Oh, and in exchange for this assistance, Foley's family gets a pass on any future prosecution for industrial failures tied to him.

SACKER

Should we be looking into him--

JOCK

Only if you want to find what we're not prosecuting.

This lands on Sacker in a bad way.

SACKER

So another influential player gets a freebie in return for information.

(CONTINUED)

JOCK

You got a problem with my judgment, Ms. Sacker?

SACKER

No, sir. It'd be fun to just get 'em all for a change.

JOCK

We will. We will get 'em all. If not all at once, then one at a time. Draw up a non-pross agreement for the family and stand by.

Jock exits. Connerty turns to Sacker, who's not fully convinced.

SACKER

So Foley's family gets to keep their money.

CONNERTY

If this is the price to stop Chuck from worming his way into office, it's worth paying it.

Connerty falls into a Jock impression.

CONNERTY

With a smile wide as the biggest jack-o'-lantern at the county fair.

It works. Sacker grins, then nods in agreement.

14 INT. TAYLOR MASON CAPITAL, TAYLOR'S OFFICE - DAY

14

Taylor looks up as SARA HAMMON rushes into Taylor.

HAMMON

Blood in the water at Axe Cap. Cook says they're under some kind of cyberattack.

Taylor receives this news in a very even way. Definitely not shocked.

TAYLOR

Ok.

(CONTINUED)

HAMMON

Maybe there's a move here for us.

TAYLOR

I'm the one who sued for peace.

Brian Koppelman

(CONTINUED)

HAMMON

Yes. Do you believe that offer was accepted?

TAYLOR

I don't.

HAMMON

And might there be something we could do to take advantage of a problem there? Something that wouldn't be warring, merely opportunistic?

TAYLOR

Yes. Have Mafee call around. See what Axe Cap was slinging when the attack hit.

15 INT. AXE CAPITAL - DAY

15

Axe Cap is like a ship taking fire. Staffers hurry around. IT Greg emerges from a back room, heads for Axe.

AXE

Status report.

IT GREG

I've been scanning the endpoints for malware. But nothing's working. And, well, the backup system, uh, failed. We're still crippled.

Dollar Bill SLAMS down the receiver on his phone and SHOUTS across the room.

DOLLAR BILL

Phone is down--

EVERETT

Mine too.

AXE

Fuck.

(CONTINUED)

BEN KIM

Um, not to pile on, but in the spirit of aggregating all the information we currently have--

AXE

Ben!

BEN KIM

The direct links to the trading desks are down too.

WAGS

Motherfuck!

Axe paces for a moment. Stops.

AXE

Okay, 'here' is dead. So we trade like we're not here. Use EMSX on your mobile devices. Don't sign onto the network, use cellular.

BEN KIM

I have my laptop.

AXE

Great. Same deal. Stay off our network.

Ben Kim's already pulling it out.

BEN KIM

I've got a hotspot.

He turns on a portable wifi brick. Now he's booted up and logs in.

BEN KIM

I'm up.

WAGS

Attaway. Now we ride you like Justify.

Axe and Wags move in as Ben Kim types.

AXE

Sell fifty thousand shares Con-Pipe, at the market. Sell 100 thousand Southern Gulf Petro at the market.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

AXE (CONT'D)

Use the dark pool algo--we can't
have anyone see what we're
unloading.

Brian Koppelman

(CONTINUED)

Axe and Wags sweat him while he works.

BEN KIM

You're literally breathing down my neck. I can literally feel hot breath--

WAGS

Say literally again and I will light you on fire like a dragon of yore.

BEN KIM

First trade is confirmed...

There are some fist pumps.

BEN KIM

Second one is through.

A group exhale of relief.

AXE

Nice. Now let's--

BEN KIM

Um...

Ben Kim taps his keyboard with increasing intensity, but his screen is FROZEN.

BEN KIM

I'll force quit and reboot--

AXE

Go to the mobile apps...

Axe pulls his out, but before he can begin--

DOLLAR BILL

My shit is locked up.

IT Greg leans in over Dollar Bill's phone.

IT GREG

Yeah, this is a concerted attack, so anything mobile that's been on the network in the past couple days has probably been malwared.

Dollar Bill slams the phone into IT Greg's chest.

(CONTINUED)

DOLLAR BILL

Fix it!

Axe has a realization. Turns to Wags.

AXE

This is Grigor. He's the only one with the financial and tactical resources to take us totally off the grid.

WAGS

Guess he wasn't so sanguine as Taylor was with us front-running 'em.

AXE

Guess not.

WAGS

How should we go after him?

AXE

We can't. Not yet. First, we have to hold the fucking line here and pare our losses. Protect our book. Use resources of our own.

WAGS

What are those, exactly?

AXE

At the moment, that's you and me, pal.

16 INT. TAYLOR MASON CAPITAL, TAYLOR'S OFFICE - DAY

16

MAFEE enters on Sara and Taylor.

MAFEE

Got it from a guy at a gas desk. Large block of natural gas dumped through a dark pool, but he knew who was behind it. Lots of big prints like that going up around town. Feels like Axe Cap trading out of the sector.

A look between Taylor and Sara.

(CONTINUED)

TAYLOR

You know what? Let's sell our positions--satisfy the buyers out there. Depress the price. Maybe kill it.

A smile from Sara.

MAFEE

Love it, boss-people.

He goes to do it.

17 INT. AXE CAPITAL - DAY

17

Axe and Wags, looking across the floor at IT Greg and a COMMS GUY trying to address the problem.

AXE

Get Hall in here to help solve this. Until then, we've only got one way left to dump out of our toxic shit.

WAGS

Like Huey Lewis crooned--we're going back in time.

Axe nods and races up the stairs, disappears into his office.

WAGS

(shouts up the stairs)

Who's ready to do some smilin' and dialin'?! *

He re-emerges with a BLACK BAG.

AXE

Heads up. *

(CONTINUED)

Axe throws something down to Wags, who catches it. It is an old FLIP PHONE, one of his many burners. Axe comes down the stairs brandishing one as well.

AXE

Pump up your Reebok Blacktops,
we've gotta do this old school...

But then he realizes.

AXE

Fuck, I don't even have any
trading desk phone numbers
anymore.

WAGS

Which of you tenderfoots has the
numbers of the prime trading
desks?

A bunch of blank looks stare back at them.

BEN KIM

We all pretty much use Bloomberg
chat these days.

AXE

(to HELENA)

Get the CEO of every prime on the
phone--they're the only ones we
have numbers on. I want them to
walk down to their fucking trading
floors and set up open lines with
us.

Axe turns to the group.

AXE

Use burners, call friends on the
outside. Have 'em get on social
media and get direct dials from
anyone who can make a market on
one of our names.

HELENA

Do you think you're still going to
get to your Chris Sacca meeting on
the Noon to Night shares?

ON AXE: Fuck. He thinks for a moment, then dials Rebecca
on a burner.

(CONTINUED)

AXE

Hi. Where are you?

INTERCUT: Rebecca in the back seat of a car.

REBECCA

On my way to the airport.

AXE

I hate to ask, but I'm in need of a big fucking favor. One that would mean missing the vomit comet. But if you do it for me, I promise to get you re-booked. And I'll even go with you.

ACROSS THE FLOOR...

18 INT. AXE CAPITAL, DOLLAR BILL'S AREA - DAY 18

Dollar Bill walks up with a box, pulls something of a relic out, practically blows the dust off it. *

BONNIE

What the fuck is that? *

Dollar Bill holds it up like something Indiana Jones would find.

DOLLAR BILL

That, my young lass, is a Filofax. It contains the names of some world class ladies--

BONNIE

Who are grandmothers now, if not fucking dead--

DOLLAR BILL

And also the number, written in un-hackable ink, of an old broker friend on the Toronto Exchange, who can move some shares nice and quiet for us...

Dollar Bill fires up an Axe burner phone.

19 INT. CHUCK'S LAW OFFICE - DAY 19

Allerd enters.

ALLERD

Foley is terminal. Started in the liver. The guy is so tough that he didn't see a doc until it was everywhere.

CHUCK

Even when it's your enemies, you hate hearing that. How long?

ALLERD

Few weeks.

CHUCK

Which is why he's going full suicide vest. Goddamn, he's committed. I hope I face my own end with the same Fuck You to the world.

ALLERD

It's my fondest wish for you.

A look from Chuck, then...

ALLERD

Some folks inside Justice are saying he's been back channel negotiating immunity for his heirs, protection from prosecution or clawbacks.

CHUCK

Sure. Once that's out of the way, he knows that even if I drop what I have on him, it won't splash onto his family. They'll keep the wealth. Oh, heavens.

ALLERD

Yeah. The great man's final move.

Chuck sits back down.

CHUCK

There may really be no stopping Foley at this point.

20 INT. HOTEL MEETING ROOM - DAY

20

Rebecca moves through, and catches famed investor CHRIS SACCA, just leaving.

(CONTINUED)

REBECCA

Chris.

Brian Koppelman

(CONTINUED)

SACCA

Hey, Rebecca. I was just on my way out.

REBECCA

I'm late. Well, Axe is. I'm here in his stead. I'm gonna work with you on getting the CEO out.

Sacca leads her to the side of the room.

SACCA

Yeah. No. My situation changed. A really nice opportunity presented. Both actually. I sold out of my position. So I can't back Axe. Or you as Axe.

REBECCA

That's not what you told him you would do.

SACCA

It's a fluid situation. He didn't show and wasn't reachable. Now you're here, but, as you said, late.

REBECCA

Fair. All fair.

He moves to go, she stops him.

REBECCA

If you won't give me your shares, I need your time. What are the pressure points on the CEO? What's the leverage?

SACCA

Why should I let you in on that?

REBECCA

You backed out of your thing with Axe, and he may forget about it-- but I never will...

This stops Sacca.

REBECCA

And I'll show you my next few winners before they're fully subscribed.

(CONTINUED)

Sacca nods, ready to talk.

WAGS (PRE-LAP)
Honey, baby, sweetie...

21 INT. AXE CAPITAL - DAY 21

Axe and Wags work the phones like an old school backcourt soft selling their positions as they pace the floor.

WAGS
...It's your dear old Uncle Wags. Haven't seen you since that tray of kamikazes we stared down after Sohn...I figure why be so impersonal as to let some keystrokes run our lives, why not reach out and touch? And I come bearing gifts. Three hundred thousand Drill Southern to go...I know it's tough, that's why I'm calling the young master.

*

Wags covers the phone and informs Axe.

WAGS
He's putting me up on a hundred, to work two hundred behind it.

Then back to the phone.

WAGS
At the market...Next time I get a good call, you're gonna get it too. Go out and buy yourself a longer boat come bonus time.

And with Axe.

AXE
...Don't be scared, nothing to be afraid of. I'm calling because I heard good things about you, Jared. So let's see what you can do...I'm sitting on half a million Bay Pipeline I want to exit quick and silent as Le Samourai...It's an old French movie. Nevermind... How much can you take? One fifty?
(MORE)

AXE (CONT'D)

I heard you were a man of
appetite, put on your fucking hard
hat and I'll make your commish
five cents a share instead of
three...Good lad! Two fifty's more
like it. Forty-nine low. Stop me
out at forty-eight and a half.
Come find me and shake my hand at
Robin Hood.

As Axe closes, Helena follows writing up the trades on
old buy-sell tickets. Axe notices.

AXE

Where the hell'd you find those?

HELENA

In a storage closet with the old
Instinet machines.

SPYROS appears, pushing a whiteboard in front of him. *

SPYROS

I too, come from the old school.
The old math school that is. Allow
me to be our office *Cartesian*.

He starts in on a Kelly criterion--a complicated diagram of Axe Cap's holdings in the sector and financial projections. *

WAGS

Whoa, whoa, whoa...I need you to clean me up on Gulfport LNG, what do you mean you're not a buyer?... How'd you just fucking satisfy your need?...

Wags covers the mouthpiece of his phone, looks to Axe.

WAGS

I'm running into would-be buyers who already bought.

AXE

Me too. Fuck. Keep jamming.

Wags nods and speaks back into the phone.

WAGS

I'll believe you're satisfied when I hear you moan and shake like an old washing machine...And you will tell me who finished you off. We're sitting down over a porterhouse and discussing every fucking detail of this.

Wags hangs up, moves to Axe who is just finishing his call.

AXE

...Yeah, sure, me and you at the Open. My box on Arthur Ashe.

Axe hangs up.

AXE

Someone's flooding the market with our names.

WAGS

Taylor?

AXE

Probably. Street is seeing our prints go up, and they're talking. Taylor knows we're having a panic yard sale.

WAGS
And they're piling on.

AXE
Wouldn't we?

They're about to go back to their lists and their phones
when ACROSS THE FLOOR:

WENDY walks down the stairs, sees the troops sitting idly
by watching Wags and Axe work.

(CONTINUED)

WENDY

Why is everyone just sitting here dumbstruck like they're at fricking Cirque du Soleil?

BEN KIM

I'd like to help. But I've never made a voice trade in my life. None of us have. We don't know how.

Wendy takes this in.

WENDY

What about a big trade? A sensitive one? Those have to happen by phone.

BEN KIM

Mafee did them.

WENDY

When this is over, we are having a fucking seminar. Believe that.

Axe and Wags trade a look and shake their heads as Wendy walks over.

WENDY

You ever think you'd miss Mafee this much?

AXE

I miss him like the case of crabs I had freshman year.

WENDY

Delightful.

She walks away.

AXE

Listen--we've got to undercut Taylor. Sweeten the deals and up the pressure. Find some fucking squirrels who've been dying to get in our pants.

WAGS

We're already shoving it down people's throats out there, what do we do now?

(CONTINUED)

AXE

Shove harder.

Wags moves off to place his next call when Axe's phone rings. INTERCUT: Rebecca in a HOTEL HALLWAY.

REBECCA

How's it going?

AXE

Breezy. You?

REBECCA

Sacca is out.

AXE

Out?

REBECCA

Apologies and all that. So fucking forget him for now. My sleeves are rolled up. My chin is tucked. Fists raised. I'm ready to scrap.

AXE

I knew I liked you for a reason. You're gonna kill a CEO.

REBECCA

Damn right I am.

22 EXT. GREENPOINT SITE - DAY

22 *

A vista of ramshackle buildings and vacant lots with views of the East River. Senior gestures with a flourish.

SENIOR

There it is, Elysian Fields.

CHUCK

Grandiose.

SENIOR

The name should invite dreams. This development is my legacy. Hell, it'll be yours too. Generational wealth, Sonny, beyond you, beyond your kids even. As long as certain expedited approvals come through. I'm counting on you for that.

(CONTINUED)

CHUCK

One: today is primary day. The last place I should be is where I can't speak to voters. Two: I can't speak to voters anyway because I have to quit the race. Three: Even if I didn't have to quit, this would be a disaster. The worst possible moment for me to lubricate a situation for you and create a possible scandal.

SENIOR

It hasn't always been convenient for me to pull you out by the ass from whatever bear trap you've gotten into either, Sonny.

CHUCK

Well, as I said, it's not like I could be much help even if I were willing. Foley can't be moved.

SENIOR

Everyone can be--

CHUCK

He has a cancer, Dad. Moving through him like a race car on the Bonneville Salt Flats--fast and full steam ahead.

SENIOR

Ah, Jesus. That buckles a man at the knees. Even me. And it buckles you, too. On all counts.

CHUCK

Yeah. So you can stay here and keep looking out there for your future. I've got to go back and face mine, which starts at five o'clock today, whether I like it or not.

A beat as Senior chews it all over.

SENIOR

What if you defy him anyway? Let him say what he says. Deny it. Tough it the fuck out.

(CONTINUED)

CHUCK

Even if I could weather the public shaming, I'd lose anyway. How do I ask Wendy to face that crap?

SENIOR

If she's angry about it, let her smack you a good one later. A win for everyone involved.

CHUCK

Well, I'm glad to see you've got your legs under you again, Dad. I'll see ya.

Chuck, thinking, turns and walks away.

23 INT. AXE CAPITAL - DAY

23

Wags fires his phone at a trash can.

WAGS

Dead soldier. Reload.

Ben Kim tosses Wags a fresh phone from the bag.

WAGS

And gimme a '45.'

An ASSISTANT tosses him a can of Diet Coke. Axe is making a trade nearby.

AXE

What do you mean 'why?' Because my analyst recommended it...Accident? I didn't hear anything. Has one been reported? Like I said: I'm just changing strategies. Listen, do this for me and you'll have a fucking angel on your shoulder your whole career. I'm a good friend and bad fucking enemy. ...Solid choice, Kevin.

Axe hangs up, throws the phone down.

(CONTINUED)

AXE

I need a freshie. Book one-thirty TransCon Petro. Took a little bit of a hit at twenty-eight. Wags, we don't have much time, news is breaking.

WAGS

People are hearing shit--port's in lockdown, evacuation underway.

AXE

Go peer-to-peer. Anyone you've gone drinking with, gone clubbing with, gone--

WAGS

'Hunting' with?

AXE

Right. Anyone you can think of who may want what Axe Cap has.

WAGS

I've been doing that.

AXE

Call Carter Calloway down in Baton Rouge, stick him with some of this shit. Tell him this is the call and if he helps us swallow some burnt pancakes now, we'll have plenty of perfectly cooked langoustine together down the road.

Wags nods and moves off.

OVER BY IT GREG'S OFFICE: HALL steps out. IT Greg is behind him, CRYING. Comms Guy has his head in his hands.

Hall walks calmly up to Axe.

HALL

Those two definitely weren't in on this. I'll find it...

Hall stalks off, starts heading upstairs.

(CONTINUED)

GO WITH: Dollar Bill as he crosses to Spyros, who's keeping the tote board, and hands over a sell ticket.

DOLLAR BILL

Eighty thousand shares offloaded
through my Canuck on the TSX.

SPYROS

Ice, ice, baby.

Spyros adds a notation to his board.

WITH: Tuk Lal, who quietly pulls Ben Kim aside. Whispers about Spyros's board. The two walk over to Spyros. Tuk Lal points to several figures.

TUK

It's wrong.

(CONTINUED)

Spyros appraises his work, cocks his head.

SPYROS

Where's it wrong?

Tuk Lal whispers something.

BEN KIM

The whole thing. The whole thing
is wrong.

Dollar Bill steps away from the embarrassment. Tuk picks
up a marker and starts fixing it. A chastised and
confused Spyros stands by squinting at the board.

24 EXT. MADISON SQUARE PARK - DAY

24 *

As Wendy approaches and sits next to him, Chuck begins. *

CHUCK

Foley is going to come forth. With
what he knows about me. About us.
The only way to stop him is for me
to bow out. That's his demand.

Wendy takes it in.

WENDY

Then I'm sorry that it's over.

CHUCK

Does it have to be?

WENDY

I think so.

CHUCK

What if I fight? What if I take
the humiliation. Lean into it.
Proceed despite it.

WENDY

Then you will lose and we will be
a laughing stock.

CHUCK

Are you sure?

WENDY

Are you fucking insane?

(CONTINUED)

CHUCK
Tell me why I am.

Brian Koppelman

(CONTINUED)

WENDY

I'm sure of a few things, first, the Overton Window--that which is an acceptable part of the public discourse. This behavior...our behavior is so far outside that window it might as well be on fucking Mars.

CHUCK

The window's been shifting. Isn't it our responsibility to--

WENDY

You want it to have shifted. Maybe it has. But not that much. And don't forget: part of you wants the humiliation, too. Needs it. But I don't. I can't live with it. Won't live with it. We cannot take the chance Foley is serious.

CHUCK

Oh, he's serious.

WENDY

Then that's it, Chuck.

Wendy stands.

*

CHUCK

That you can live with? Me just capitulating? In silence.

WENDY

I can. And so can you. You have to. Walk away.

Chuck breathes. So does Wendy.

CHUCK

I want to scream, Wend.

WENDY

At the situation or at me?

CHUCK

Yes.

WENDY

I know. And if you need that before you can move on, do it. But then, sure as fuck, move on...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:
She stills herself. Ready for the onslaught. But Chuck
reins it in. Doesn't yell. Just nods.

Brian Koppelman

CHUCK
Okay. Alright. Okay.

WENDY
It'll be okay. We'll find the next
adventure together.

They share a smile.

CHUCK
Be watching at five PM to see me
bend the hell over.

WENDY
Hey, I've seen it before.

A last smile. He stands, turns and is gone. *

25 INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - DAY

25

SHAREHOLDERS make their way through the space heading
toward the ballroom for the yearly meeting. Rebecca is
there, waiting against the wall, when she sees:

A phalanx of JUNIOR EXECs around EVAN ROBARDS, the CEO of
Noon to Night Corp. He's 40s, tight haircut, arrogant
vibe.

She fights her way through a couple of the young
gatekeepers, who try to tell her: 'not now.'

REBECCA
Evan, can I get a moment...

He stops, signals to his group it's okay. He knows her.

ROBARDS
Rebecca. It's a shame that
branding thing didn't work out
between our companies. Bad time
for me right now though. I'm about
to do the soft shoe for a room
full of fucking morons--I mean my
valued shareholders.

The Junior Execs give him some laughs for this.

REBECCA
Well, I'm here on behalf of a
certain shareholder. And believe
me, he's no fucking moron.

(CONTINUED)

Now he's listening.

Brian Koppelman

REBECCA

In fact, he holds eleven percent of your company's outstanding shares. And I speak for him.

ROBARDS

(calculates)

Eleven percent...Bobby Axelrod?

She nods.

ROBARDS

Fuck. Give us a minute...

Robards's team drops back. He moves close to Rebecca.

ROBARDS

What does he want to tell me?

REBECCA

That it's over.

ROBARDS

Over?

REBECCA

Your time as CEO of Noon to Night.

Robards puffs back up.

ROBARDS

Yeah, I don't think so. I believe I can rally my board to give me another few quarters--

REBECCA

No such thing as a 'few more quarters' in this world. Not your board anymore either. I'm here to make you think again. Stock price is weak despite buybacks. Per store revenue is in the shitter. Brand awareness and support are at all time lows. Did you sleep with a junior VP out of Seattle at the company retreat? Hell if I know, but people are about to start asking--

ROBARDS

He wants to take it to the press?
I'll go to war with Axelrod any
fucking time. Guy's the Al Capone
of Wall Street for Christ's sake--

REBECCA

Uh uh. You won't be going with
him. You'll be going to war with
me. He'll sign his shares over and
I will use all my credibility, all
my connections, all those women
who buy all my products to turn
their fucking backs on your
company. On you. So the question
you need to be asking yourself is:
what do you want in your go-bag?

ON: Robards, his world caving in.

26 INT. AXE CAPITAL - DAY

26

The trading day has worn on. Axe and Wags are bleary
eyed, coffees, soda, Red Bull and lunch are strewn around
them.

WAGS

350 thousand shares. Right here,
right now. I need you to buy it. I
don't care if you have to jam it
in your grandmother's goddamned
IRA account. I. Need. You. To.
Take. It...Take it. Fucking take
it! Right fucking now! Or suffer
my wrath forever!

TRADER'S VOICE (O.S.)

...Fine. Booked. But Wags, you
know I hate you now.

Wags's arm holding the phone lowers from his ear and goes
limp in relief and exhaustion as he hears SHOUTS from
across the floor. HOLY SHIT, it blew. Fireball. Etc...

ANGLE ON: The flatscreen TVs. The explosion has happened.
Smoke billows around a river port transfer station, a
storage tank is involved in flames.

(CONTINUED)

DOLLAR BILL

That's fucking that. Every single institution on or attendant to the Street is gonna be dumping like a dray horse on an all taco diet.

AXE

But it's gonna be too late for them...

Then Wags sees the crawl on the TV:

WAGS

Holy shit, Axe. Look what just hit the tape. Surprise announcement at the Noon to Night shareholders meeting. CEO Evan Robards is stepping down. The company's new strategy will be announced soon and bladiblahblahblah. That Rebecca is one cold fucking assassin.

Axe, with great, quiet pride.

AXE

She is indeed.

27 INT. TAYLOR MASON CAPITAL - DAY

27

Taylor is crossing the floor when they encounter Mafee and Hammon.

HAMMON

Mafee has the scuttlebutt.

MAFEE

It got bloody there. We bled 'em. Your idea did.

HAMMON

We cost them plenty by selling when we did and you saved us a massive loss in the sector or at least a several months-long forced hold by selling before that terminal went up.

TAYLOR

Okay. Virtual group high five.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:
A slight pause, as if they do it. Mafee turns away.
Taylor starts walking, Hammon alongside.

Brian Koppelman

(CONTINUED)

HAMMON

Strange confluence of events, Axe Cap's computers going down right on the cusp on a sector-killing industrial accident, allowing us an opening.

TAYLOR

I agree, it was. And that's how I am going to continue to think of it, you know? Act of God, as they say.

HAMMON

What's the Russian word for God?

TAYLOR

Good question.

Hammon nods, begins to go.

TAYLOR

Hey. Glad I had someone's guidance this morning.

HAMMON

Hey, I did my job. You did yours. That's the way it oughta work.

A moment passes between them and Taylor continues into...

28 INT. TAYLOR MASON CAPITAL, TAYLOR'S OFFICE - DAY 28

Taylor sits behind the desk, allows themself a moment of satisfaction at the day, then spies Douglas's folder.

Almost despite themself, Taylor begins to review Douglas's specs/business plan.

As they read, Taylor's eyes LIGHT UP IN SURPRISE, then admiration for the innovation, the elegance, they see.

Absorbed, Taylor grabs an engineering pencil and begins making some notes on the documents...

29 INT. AXE CAPITAL - DAY 29

CLOSE ON: A flat screen television. A financial show plays the closing bell.

(CONTINUED)

WAGS

...AAAAAaaaand, it's over!

Spent, Axe and Wags fall back into chairs.

AXE

We got out of about 90% of that
toxic trash.

WAGS

Whiskey!

Across the room, Spyros proudly announces, after looking
to Ben and Tuk for the nod that it's correct:

(CONTINUED)

SPYROS

If you don't want to live in the
"about" of it all, I have
specificados.

DOLLAR BILL

I'll live in the "about of it
all." I think I'm responsible for
saving us about seventy million
today!

SPYROS

(to the group
LOUDLY!)

We took a 48 million dollar hit
today, instead of eating the 512
million dollar exposure we were
facing at the open.

The young Axe Cappers break into applause at the display.
Axe finally breathes. He and Wags shake hands. Then they
head upstairs...

30 INT. AXE CAPITAL, CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

30

Hall moves around with the instincts of Hans Landa. Then
he sees it.

ANGLE ON: What looks like a Carbon Monoxide Detector,
plugged into an outlet. With a wire protruding and
inserted into an ethernet jack.

Hall removes it from the wall. He separates the cover and
discovers a circuit board that shouldn't be in there.

HALL

Uh huh, very clever.

31 INT. AXE CAPITAL, AXE'S OFFICE - DAY

31

Axe is on the couch, Wags is in a chair, cradling a
specialty bottle of Michter's. Hall stands before them
with the device.

HALL

...Russian made circuitry. It was
plugged into the network. It has
wifi and cellular data cards, to
give remote access.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HALL (CONT'D)

And it was powered off the main
outlet, allowing them to just wait
for the right moment.

(MORE)

Brian Koppelman

HALL (CONT'D)

Somebody who came for a meeting
wasn't who they said they were.

AXE

Put a protocol in place so that
can't happen again.

HALL

I will.

IT Greg breathlessly runs in.

IT GREG

We're back up!

WAGS

We know, you simple fool!

HALL

Go run a security audit. Clear out
the whole Admin file and rebuild
it. Call CyberBuoy to help make
sure it's done right.

A beaten and chastened IT Greg leaves.

HALL

I'll go supervise.

Hall leaves, as Rebecca enters and flops down next to Axe
on the couch.

REBECCA

It's gonna be six months before we
can rebook our anti-gravity flight-
-

WAGS

Gonna be six months before anyone
in the business talks to us.

REBECCA

But I feel like I'm fucking
floating right now.

AXE

How'd you do it?

REBECCA

I showed him the hieroglyphics on
the cave wall and he folded. For a
13 million dollar exit payment.

(CONTINUED)

WAGS
Pennies on the fucking dollar!

Brian Koppelman

The men are impressed by her success.

REBECCA

You're gonna have to force the board to make good on that. Shouldn't be hard, since I got you three board seats--one of which I'm taking.

AXE

Wow. I owe you.

REBECCA

You do. And payback's gonna be steep. Gimme some of that.

Axe smiles in admiration as Wags slides her a glass of whiskey. She takes a sip.

REBECCA

You two are animals, drinking it warm. I need some ice.

AXE

I can--

REBECCA

I'll get it.

She exits. Axe and Wags begin to drink...

AXE

Grigor didn't beat us this time. He almost did. But not quite.

WAGS

He won't stop trying.

AXE

No, he won't. Until all his chances are taken away.

32 EXT./INT. FRAUNCES TAVERN, KITCHEN - DAY

32 *

Establish the famed tavern front. *

IN THE KITCHEN: John Mellencamp's "Troubled Man" plays. *

But the chef isn't there. Only Chuck and Ira are.

IRA

Fraunces. Fitting.

(CONTINUED)

CHUCK

Washington bid farewell to his troops here. So even though I never got my troops again...

IRA

Just the farewell. I don't see any other way either.

CHUCK

Yeah. I go out there. Give up. Everyone moves on.

IRA

Yeah. I wrote it all down for you.

Ira gives Chuck a SPEECH.

CHUCK

(reading aloud from speech)

...And for reasons having more to do with familial commitments than a lack of desire to do the job, I hereby...Yup. That's about it.

IRA

Okay.

CHUCK

Okay. Gimme a few alone.

IRA

I'll get out there, tell 'em a couple minutes.

ON: Chuck, left studying the speech.

33 INT. FRAUNCES TAVERN, DINING ROOM - DAY

33 *

A hoard of MEDIA waits in front of a lectern. Chuck steps up to the lectern, holding the speech in his hand. He looks out at the assembled and into the maw of the NETWORK FEED CAMERA. Then down at the speech again. *

CHUCK

Nope. Not reading that one.

Then he folds it up and puts it in his pocket.

(CONTINUED)

CHUCK

"A lie," the wise man, Churchill, purportedly said, "gets halfway around the world before the truth has a chance to get its pants on." But I have a feeling this truth will find its way quick enough.

He takes a breath. Plunges forward.

CHUCK

And it's high time for truth, too. For openness. For unburdening. I am not here, as most running for office might be, to ask you to trust me. Instead, I am asking if I may trust you, with my deepest fear, which is that you might know me, who I really am.

The hardened Members of the Media are rapt.

CHUCK

The job of the prosecutor is to expose that which is hidden away, the dirty, the evil, the crooked and the untruthful. To shine light and reveal what's under all that darkness. And I have come to realize that to do it right, I must first shine that light on my own dark parts. Which is why I have asked you all here today.

One last pause, one last moment to rein himself in. But no, on Chuck presses.

CHUCK

You know what? I'm just going to say it. I...In my private life...In the confines of my happy marriage...with my consenting wife...practice sadomasochism...

Ira almost double-takes such is his disbelief.

34 INT. AXE CAPITAL - DAY

34

The post-bell financial news gives way to Chuck's press conference. Axe Cappers watch, agog, as Chuck speaks. As does Wendy, her hand over her mouth in horror.

(CONTINUED)

CHUCK (ON TV)
Bondage, Dominance, all the rest.
Masks. Binds. Ropes. Fire.

35 INT. FOLEY'S STUDY - DAY 35

Foley sits watching, IV chemo treatment in his arm,
riveted and enraged by Chuck's choice.

CHUCK (ON TV)
Wow. Even just saying it like that
I can feel my shoulders loosen for
the first time in decades. I am a
masochist.

36 INT. TAYLOR MASON CAPITAL - DAY 36

Taylor, Mafee and Sara stand watching, stunned.

CHUCK (ON TV)
In order to have sexual
gratification, I need to be tied
up, punched, pinched, whipped,
kicked or otherwise tortured. By
my loving wife...

37 INT. SDNY, CONNERTY'S OFFICE - DAY 37

Jock stands with Connerty and Sacker, watching.

CHUCK (ON TV)
And here's the bigger truth. All
of us need something, right? I
don't know what you do in your
bedroom, with your loved one, but
I do know this: you're probably a
little embarrassed about it.

38 INT. AXE CAPITAL, TRADING FLOOR - DAY 38

Axe, Wags and Rebecca are on the trading floor and watch.

CHUCK (ON TV)
You probably don't want the rest
of us looking at you while you do
it--unless that's your thing and
if so, great.

39 INT. SENIOR'S APARTMENT, SENIOR'S STUDY - DAY 39

Senior sits with a drink watching, his eyes dancing with an energy that is almost delight.

CHUCK (ON TV)

But wouldn't we be better off if we didn't let shame win. If we didn't feel sheepish, didn't feel like we had to hide what moves us?

40 INT. FRAUNCES TAVERN, DINING ROOM - DAY 40 *

The Reporters begin to shout questions, but Chuck waves them off. When they settle, he continues.

CHUCK

There are some who believe that I have just ended my legal and political careers. They don't think you can handle what I just told you. In fact, political opponents of mine were plotting to use it against me. I said "bring it." And that's why I told you I was here to trust you. Because I know that you can handle it. That you may laugh a little. But that in the end you'll get it, because you want the truth. At worst, maybe it won't stop you from getting to the polls to support me. At best, maybe on the way you tell someone who you really are. Maybe they like it. Maybe you feel just a little more comfortable in your own skin. As I finally do in mine. Thank you.

Chuck steps back, the Cameras and Reporters go crazy and the Mellencamp kicks back in, taking us around the city.

41 INT. MONTAGE - DAY 41

Pop around to characters watching:

-- Taylor, Sara, Mafee. He is stunned, Sara calculating, Taylor disturbed.

-- Jock, disgusted.

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED:

41

-- Connerty, Sacker, frozen in a state of sudden understanding and disbelief.

-- Senior, his eyes ablaze with glee over the rim of his glass.

-- Foley, bested this final time, slumps back in his chair, exhausted, and closes his eyes.

-- Axe, Wags and Rebecca look across to Wendy, who makes her escape into an elevator.

42 INT. CHUCK'S LAW OFFICE - NIGHT

42

CLOSE ON: The POP of a champagne cork. The bottle opened by IRA.

IRA

This cork is symbolic of the exit
polls popping huge for Chuck
Rhodes, your next Attorney
General of the State of New
York...

Chuck is there, smiling, along with Senior and DONNA and a few campaign AIDES. Ira pours champagne around. Senior raises a glass, filled with Scotch.

*

*

SENIOR

Here's to all or nothing gambits--
the only way to live.

A round of "cheers" goes up. But then the door swings open and Wendy walks in. Her mood is not celebratory.

WENDY

I'm gonna need this room.

Everyone reads her right away.

IRA

Sure, of course. Why don't we fall
back into the outer office--

WENDY

That's not gonna be far enough.

The assembled clear out. And only as the door closes does Wendy turn to Chuck.

(CONTINUED)

WENDY

You're a real politician now,
aren't you?

Chuck stands straight, not quite defiant, but not
retreating either.

CHUCK

That's right. But the distinction
you failed to make is: winning
politician.

WENDY

No matter the cost?

CHUCK

Yes. Victory at all costs, victory
in spite of all terror, victory
however long and hard the road may
be; for without victory, there is
no survival.

WENDY

More Churchill? You blow up my
fucking life and more Churchill.
You can shove him up your ass. And
believe me, he'll fit.

CHUCK

What would you have had me do,
Wend, lose?

WENDY

Yes, Chuck. Lose. For once in your
fucking life, you could have taken
the L instead of humiliating me
utterly and absolutely.

CHUCK

Are you sure about that?

WENDY

That I'm humiliated? I'm pretty
goddamned sure right now. How am I
supposed to face my colleagues, my
friends, strangers? Our children?

CHUCK

Eva's too young to know. And Kevin--
-at a certain age it becomes time
to see your parents as people, not
perfect beings--

(CONTINUED)

WENDY

I'm getting the kids out of town.
Sending them to my parents. God
knows how long will be long enough-

-

CHUCK

And as for the rest of them, maybe
wait a second. See how you poll.
Because they loved what I had to
say out there. The frank talk. The
numbers make that clear, and I can
only imagine that you--going along
for the sake of your husband--are
gonna be viewed as hero of the
people.

WENDY

I don't care. Poll numbers? You
motherfucker. We discussed it
beforehand. I made my position
crystal clear, and you agreed and
then went off and did it anyway.

CHUCK

I freed us of the yoke of secrecy,
of Jack fucking Foley. And I
didn't just 'go off' so don't try
to draw it up like I'm some
impulsive, disorganized amateur.

This hits Wendy. She struggles to process.

WENDY

So you planned it?

No answer from Chuck.

WENDY

Discussed it with someone? Your
campaign people--Ira?

Still no answer. Then it lands on her:

WENDY

No. Of course. You childish prick.
You ran it by your daddy, didn't
you? What, you had him mark up
that ridiculous speech?

CHUCK

He didn't know exactly what I'd
do.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CHUCK (CONT'D)

He just...seeded the idea that maybe I should get my back up. He's a seasoned political operative. A power player--

WENDY

I don't know which of you two are crazier. Holy shit, is this marriage getting crowded. How many dicks is a woman expected to have in her face?

CHUCK

Wendy, I'm going to be the Attorney General. Let's talk this out like two rational--

WENDY

No. I'm done hearing you talk.

Wendy leaves, devastated and disappointed.

43 INT. TAYLOR MASON CAPITAL, TEMP OFFICE - NIGHT

43

Douglas Mason is waiting in a small office writing notes in a little book when Taylor comes in.

TAYLOR

It's all you say it is, Dad. Let's do something with this.

DOUGLAS

You're gonna help me raise capital?

TAYLOR

I am. I'm going to put things in motion right away. Because it's a strong idea, well executed. And also because I want to. For you.

Taylor keeps their emotions in check, with difficulty. Douglas doesn't do as well, his eyes are glistening.

DOUGLAS

I'm in business with my...child.

Taylor gives him a quick smile, nods and exits.

44 EXT. BROOKLYN - NIGHT

44

Chuck walks down the street. Axe gets out of a car.

AXE

Congratulations. You blew the doors off with that speech. I did not expect you to come across with that. Neither did Wendy, to be honest.

CHUCK

Yes. I will have to deal with that. For certain. I already am.

AXE

She'll beat your ass for it.

They share a look.

AXE

That'll be the first and last of those.

CHUCK

I doubt that.

AXE

Hell, if that's the price you gotta pay for moving the conversation along...

CHUCK

Exactly so. What other price might I be paying?

Axe nods in acknowledgement of Chuck's read.

AXE

Grigor Andolov. Now that you'll be AG, I need him gone.

CHUCK

I surmised. When?

AXE

Now. And I'll work on Wendy, see what I can do for you.

They shake hands. Chuck walks on. Axe gets in the car.

45 INT. RHOADES HOME, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 45

Wendy sits in the dark, a forgotten glass of liquor by her hand, wrecked and stewing in all that's transpired, when her phone rings.

A call comes in, from Axe. She sends it to voicemail. Then her phone rings again.

It's a FaceTime from...Taylor Mason, in their office. Wendy lets it ring a few times, then answers. INTERCUT:

TAYLOR (FACETIME)

Hello...I saw...I'm sorry to have seen Chuck's press conference. I can't believe...Look, I know what it's like to face public scrutiny over who you are. How it must be even worse when it's been foisted upon you. But you can still claim it. Whatever's transpired between us, I can imagine you could use some support right now...So, would you like to? Talk?

Wendy says nothing, just stares into Taylor's face on her phone, and after a moment, hangs up. A CHEER goes up...

46 INT. HOTEL BALLROOM - NIGHT 46

SUPER: 30 DAYS LATER.

The cheer is Chuck's election night celebration.

CHUCK

...And it's only because you threw your support behind me, because of your FAITH in me, that I stand before you now as the Attorney General of the finest state in the Union--New York!

The Crowd cheers again, even louder, as Chuck steps off the stage. As he begins to walk out of the room an AIDE hands Chuck a cell phone. It's BOB SWEENEY, who has just been elected governor.

47 INT. ANOTHER HOTEL HALLWAY - NIGHT - INTERCUT

47

SWEENEY

Congratulations, Chuck. Can't wait
to work together.

Brian Koppelman

(CONTINUED)

CHUCK

Congratulations to you, Mr.
Governor-elect. I'm eager to get
started, sir.

Chuck hands off the phone, continues on to...

48 INT. HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

48

Chuck enters to find Allerd waiting there, pretending to
read the paper and sitting on GRIGOR ANDOLOV. Allerd
stands and heads for the door upon Chuck's arrival.

As he reaches Chuck they speak quietly.

CHUCK

Is it done?

ALLERD

It is. Outgoing AG approved it as
a courtesy to you. I made sure of
it before we scooped him up.

The door closes behind Allerd, and Chuck turns to Grigor.

CHUCK

Mr. Andolov. My first act as
Attorney General of New York
State, even before I'm sworn in,
was to freeze your funds in the
United States. My second is:
Inviting you to leave our sunny
shores.

GRIGOR

Mr. former US Attorney and now
Attorney General, congratulations!
There were so many ways we could
have met. It is unfortunate you
chose this one.

CHUCK

Like the musician says of the
piece he plays: it chose me.

GRIGOR

Did it? Or are you doing favors
for friends on high? Because you
must know I am higher than any
other friend you can imagine. And
my friends are even higher still.

(CONTINUED)

CHUCK

That notwithstanding, your business interests have been connected with blacklisted governments and the paperwork is prepared to have you declared an unregistered foreign agent with intent against ours. There's only one choice that will preclude that: you firing up your private *samolet* and flying home--or wherever else you may call home.

Grigor weighs this.

GRIGOR

I know much about you. Both from your own words and from other... information I've gathered. So I know that despite your predilections, you are a practical man. Why don't we combine those facets and start our own friendship? Take some time before assuming office and we can travel to places that have certain establishments you would not believe. We would come back refreshed and with a whole new outlook on how we can work together.

Chuck's eyes shine as he seems to consider the offer, but:

CHUCK

Yes, sounds tempting. You and me, traveling the continents, the real world Lestat and Louis. But no.

GRIGOR

Ah. Depressing.

CHUCK

A bit. Yes. Now, I'd offer you twenty-four hours to blow town, but you're too tricky, so I'm only going to make it twelve, before I file the papers and you'll be removed by force.

A look of disappointment comes over Grigor. He stands, shakes hands with Chuck.

(CONTINUED)

GRIGOR

Americans pretend to lead, but they're still provincial in so many ways. It is truly sad.

Grigor exits and Chuck shakes his head at the man he's just encountered.

49 EXT. PRIVATE AIRPORT, RUNWAY - NIGHT

49

The Andolov FAMILY disappears into a large private jet. Grigor crosses the tarmac, taking in his last moments in the United States, when Axe appears.

GRIGOR

I, of course, picked up the scent of the Axelrod behind this.

AXE

As I did your recent attack on my systems. But you shouldn't consider this an attack. Rhoades gave you a warning. He's letting you leave. That's a favor to me. And a favor to you. I hope you understand that.

GRIGOR

What I don't understand fits on a fucking Bazooka comic.

AXE

Then here's one more thing for you to get your mind around. I can be scared. But I cannot be scared off.

GRIGOR

More Chuck Wepner than Michael Spinks. Sure. But they both lost in the end.

Axe looks Grigor in the eyes.

AXE

Because they were underprepared and overmatched. I'm neither.

GRIGOR

Okay. That's what Mr. Spinks believed, right up until the 91st second of round one.

(CONTINUED)

AXE

Probably did. But he couldn't do what I can.

GRIGOR

What's that? Move like Jagger?

AXE

Give away the kind of parting gift that I'm about to: the few billion you have with Taylor Mason Capital will be unfrozen and released to you--once you land back home.

GRIGOR

That's something. But it is actually my own money you are giving back to me. So I'm not sure how much gratitude it buys.

AXE

Do you want it or not?

GRIGOR

I do. Will I get it?

AXE

You will. The moment you land. As I said.

GRIGOR

Good.

He turns to leave.

AXE

Grigor.

He turns back.

AXE

Listen, here's the thing: after that cash hits your account, you may start feeling like you didn't get your satisfaction and have some further score to settle with me. You're gonna want to tamp down that feeling.

Axe gets very close to Grigor.

(CONTINUED)

AXE

It's true that I didn't have you do my killing for me. But don't let that trick you into thinking I don't have the will or ability to do it under different circumstances. Like when I feel threatened...You send someone after me here, they're going to find I'm a very insulated, protected and powerful man in these fucking parts. And there is nothing I won't do to defend what's mine.

Grigor considers this for a moment.

GRIGOR

You know, I don't think I will. I rather like the idea of having you stalking around, stirring shit up. But here. In America. On the other hand, if you come to Russia or any of her territories, then, Axe, all bets are off.

AXE

You know, I don't think I will.

GRIGOR

Good.

AXE

Good.

After a final moment between them, the two men nod and go their separate ways--Grigor onto his plane and Axe back to his life.

FADE OUT.