

The Newsroom Season 03: Bigger Guns

DRAFT 2

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Aaron Sorkin's The Newsroom
AL Sharpton, Trayvon Martin Attorneys, Prosecuting Attorneys
Transcripted

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1 EXT. HANG CHEW'S- NIGHT

The front of HANG CHEW'S glows on a misty New York night.

2 INT. HANG CHEW'S- NIGHT

Jim and Maggie sit at an empty corner of the bar, COCKTAILS in progress. They watch a TV behind the bar that plays the news.

A distinguished AFRICAN AMERICAN MAN on screen, the caption reads: TRAYVON MARTIN FAMILY ATTORNEY, DARYL PARKS.

DARYL PARKS*
(on television)
We are very very very saddened, mmm
but we accept the jury's verdict in
this case.

Maggie turns to Jim.

MAGGIE
Mackenzie isn't going to fire you?

JIM
No.

MAGGIE
Are you gonna quit?

JIM
No, I'm not.

MAGGIE
I thought she might fire you.

JIM
I thought she might too.

MAGGIE
You leaked a big story.

JIM
Not on purpose.

MAGGIE
But you are being punished?

JIM
I am proving I am trustworthy.

MAGGIE

Ah.

Maggie and Jim drink silently.

MAGGIE

(Continued)

You didn't see this coming?

JIM

Nope.

MAGGIE

Not even a little?

JIM

Didn't have a clue.

MAGGIE

(to Jim)

Hallie's ambitious, Jim.

JIM

Maybe a clue. In hindsight. Now.
Maybe a little one.

MAGGIE

I can be a good listener.

JIM

So was Hallie.

MAGGIE

You need a friend. I'm trying to be
a friend. Yesterday you had a
beautiful girlfriend and were
indispensable at your job. Today
you are the idiot that leaked our
story, with no girlfriend to
console you. That's gotta suck.

JIM

Do you have many friends?

MAGGIE

Not really.

JIM

I see why.

MAGGIE

I'm empathizing. How's life?

JIM
It really sucks right now.

MAGGIE
That's what I thought. Tell me
about it.

Jim hesitates.

MAGGIE
(continued)
Please. I need to reprove my own
trustworthiness.

JIM
It started during the Zimmerman
trial. It seemed like everybody had
an angle.

MAGGIE
Except us.

JIM
Except us.

Distinguished AFRICAN AMERICAN ATTORNEY, BENJAMIN CRUMP, now
speaks for the Martin family.

BENJAMIN CRUMP
(on television)
Sabrina Fulton and Tracy Martin
would like to thank all of the
supporters throughout the nation
and throughout the world. To
everybody who attended a rally, to
the millions of people that signed
petitions-

FADE OUT:

3 INT. WILL'S BEDROOM- DAY

A WIDE SCREEN TELEVISION with CNN. A picture of GEORGE
ZIMMERMAN in the upper right corner, two ANCHORS in front.

CNN ANCHOR 1
(on television)
After her testimony in the George
Zimmerman trial, friend of Trayvon
Martin, Rachel Jeantel has been the
punchline of many jokes via Twitter
and Jay Leno.

CNN ANCHOR 2
(on television)
I know she did not want to have to
come back today.

The channel changes. AL SHARPTON fills the TV screen.

AL SHARPTON
(on television)
"If the defense wins, Mr.
Zimmerman will have to still bear
the burden of the accusations and
will be known for this throughout
his life. If the prosecution wins,
the family of Trayvon Martin will
not get their child back, their
brother back." "Whatever the
outcome, there should be no
gloating and no violence."

The channel changes. FOOTAGE of RACHEL JEANTEL testifying in
the George Zimmerman trial.

MACKENZIE (O.S.)
It's like she's the one on trial.

Will and Mackenzie, in PAJAMAS and READING GLASSES,
disheveled in bed. Both half watch the NEWS on TELEVISION.
NEWSPAPERS cover the bed. Will reads THE TIMES. Mackenzie
checks the news on her LAPTOP while eating TOAST with JAM.

WILL
Mmmmmmm.

Will changes the channel.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY
(on television)
Trayvon Martin was staying in the
area because he'd been suspended
for having drug residue. Trayvon
Martin attacked my client that
night giving him a fractured nose,
two black eyes, and a fractured
head.

MACKENZIE
They're making him sound like a
criminal.

WILL
Hmmm.

MACKENZIE

Trayvon.

WILL

Mmm.

MACKENZIE

He's dead. He can't defend himself.
He's the victim.

Eating her toast, Mackenzie gets jam on her nose.

WILL

It's a self defense case.

MACKENZIE

And that girl. They are treating
her like, like-

WILL

They are discrediting the witness.

Will brushes toast CRUMBS out of the bed.

MACKENZIE

You don't think it's racist?

WILL

I think it's a trial.

Mackenzie leaves her toast on the PILLOW as she types on her laptop.

MACKENZIE

(reading from her computer)
There have been almost two mass
shootings per month in America
since 2009.

WILL

Hmm.

MACKENZIE

We have a problem with guns in this
country.

Will wipes jam from Mack's nose.

WILL

I agree.

MACKENZIE
 (reading from her computer)
 There are more African Americans in
 the prison than were enslaved in
 1860.

WILL
 These are distressing facts you are
 trying to manipulate me with. Stop
 Googling.

MACKENZIE
 You don't think there is racism in
 the legal system?

WILL
 There is racism in our society. The
 legal system has the same values
 and problems as society.

MACKENZIE
 Shouldn't we be talking about it?

WILL
 Okay.

MAKENZIE
 Really?

WILL
 Just not during the trial.

MACKENZIE
 But-

WILL
 We have to respect the sanctity of
 the individual's right to a fair
 trial.

Gesticulating as he speaks, Will's hand lands on the piece
 of toast covered in jam.

WILL
 Dammit! Mac.

MACKENZIE
 Sorry. Sorry.

Mackenzie wipes off Will's hand with her hand, wiping the
 excess jam back on the toast. This is not entirely
 successful. She kisses his hand to lick off the rest of the
 jam. Practical at first, then more erotically she sucks the

jam off his fingers. Will grabs her head and pulls her toward him. They kiss. She drops the remaining jam covered toast. They roll into a comfortable romantic position and Will's face hits the toast-

WILL
Goddamn it! Mac.

Mack giggles at Will's jam face.

CUT TO:

4 INT. MAGGIE'S APARTMENT- DAY

Maggie comes into her apartment as morning leaks through the windows. Her hair and make up are worn. She has been out all night. Maggie kicks off her shoes and sheds clothes as she heads to her couch and flops under an AFGHAN. She grabs the REMOTE and flips on the TELEVISION.

A VERY WHITE TEA PARTY REPUBLICAN TYPE explains the Stand Your Ground Law. He becomes more pompous and arrogant as he talks.

VERY WHITE TEA PARTY REPUBLICAN TYPE
(on television)
According to Stand Your Ground a person is justified in the use of deadly force and does not have a duty to retreat if he or she reasonably believes it is necessary to prevent imminent death or great bodily harm.

Staring at the Republican on screen, Maggie's face tenses. Her breathing quickens.

MAGGIE
Jesus!

VERY WHITE TEA PARTY REPUBLICAN TYPE
(on television)
Or to prevent the imminent commission of a forcible felony.

Maggie has a panic attack. She fumbles on the ground through her purse. Withdrawing a bottle, she pops pills.

ANCHOR
(on television)
You're saying that under Stand Your Ground, it is legal to kill?

Maggie curls up under the blanket and stares at the screen breathing steady deep breaths.

VERY WHITE TEA PARTY REPUBLICAN TYPE
(on television)
Under Stand Your Ground, yes, an
individual, legally, has the right
to kill to protect themselves.

5 INT. SLOANE'S KITCHEN- DAY

NPR NEWS is on. The Zimmerman trial is mentioned among the news we hear.

Wearing exercise clothes, Sloane fills her WATER BOTTLE.
Leaning against the refrigerator, Don eats CEREAL.

DON
I'm not saying we'll lead with the
Botox piece, but it should be
somewhere at the head.

SLOANE
I agree.

DON
We can put Snowden, the South
Africa trip, and the MidEast talks
in the middle because that's our
serious news.

SLOANE
Sounds good, Honey.

Carrying his cereal, Don follows Sloane as she walks into-

6 INT. SLOANE'S LIVING ROOM- DAY

CONTINUOUS

DON
Save Listeria for the end so people
will stick around.

Sloane grabs her GYM BAG and KEYS.

DON
(Continued)
We can plug that all hour.

SLOAN

We should want to warn people about food poison. Not withhold it.

DON

And we will. But they have to sit through the news and learn about the world first.

Don follows Sloane to the doorway of the bedroom where she grabs a SWEATSHIRT.

SLOAN

Sounds good.

DON

Yeah, it is good isn't it. Still. Not sure about the cupcake piece.

SLOAN

Cupcakes are hot now. They have boosted local bakery economies.

Don follows Sloane to the door. She gives him a goodbye peck and opens the door.

SLOAN

(continued)

I need to prep my interview on you at lunch.

DON

I have lunch with Elliott today.

SLOAN

Then after.

DON

We have to tape the Botox lady.

SLOAN

Before?

DON

Meeting with Graphics.

SLOAN

So you have no time for me?

DON

What do you need me for?

SLOAN

I don't.

Sloane shakes her head and leaves.

7 INT. SLOANE'S HALLWAY OUTSIDE HER APARTMENT- DAY

CONTINUOUS

Standing in the doorway with a mouth full of cereal, Don watches Sloane leave.

DON

It's a busy day.

8 INT. CHARLIE'S OFFICE- DAY

Charlie sits at his desk watching a television. The ANCHOR interviews an NRA SPOKESPERSON.

ANCHOR

(on television)

Zimmerman is a hero? You think it is patriotic for every American to own a gun?

NRA SPOKESPERSON

(on television)

Brian, our Constitution grants us the right to protect ourselves. Our Children. Our Country. It is the American way. Obama wants to take that right. And he will use any tragedy to do so.

Charlie picks up his cup.

CHARLIE

Incredible.

ANCHOR

(on television)

We're talking about regulation here. Obama and many other reasonable citizens want to regulate what kinds of weapons are available and how easily they can be obtained.

NRA SPOKESPERSON
 (on television)
 So that the government can control
 them. But the government isn't
 protecting us. From AlQuaeda? From
 the Adam Lanzas?

ANCHOR
 (interrupting)
 Wait a minute-

NRA SPOKESPERSON
 (getting louder)
 From the Latino Gangs? Sneaking
 over the border.

CHARLIE
 Bullshit!

Charlie shakes his head and swigs from the cup.

ANCHOR
 (on television)
 So you're saying-
 NRA SPOKESPERSON
 (on television)
 We have bigger enemies. We need
 bigger guns.

Charlie spits out his drink. He makes a face and examines
 the cup.

CHARLIE
 Coffee? What the hell is that doing
 there?

9 INT. BULLPEN- DAY

Neal scans media feeds at his computer.

NEAL
 Shit!

TAMARA
 What?

NEAL
 They're reposting it.

TAMARA AND TESS
 What?

NEAL
Those Trayvonning memes.

GARY
People are sick.

TESS
Trayvonning?

TAMARA
So tasteless.

KENDRA
What's Trayvonning?

NEAL
It's where you dress up in a hoodie.

GARY
Don't tell them.

NEAL
Okay.

KENDRA
You better tell us.

GARY
You don't want to hear this.

KENDRA
Sampat, you better finish.

NEAL
It's a thing. On the internet.
People post pictures of themselves
in a hoodie, lying "dead" with
Skittles and an Arizona Ice tea.

TESS
Ooooooh!

TAMARA
It's terrible.

KENDRA
What the fuck?

GARY
I told you.

TESS
People do that?

TAMARA
Sick people.

KENDRA
Shit.

TESS
That's fucked up. Why do you know
that?

NEAL
It's my job to know that.

KENDRA
(to Tamara)
Why do you know that?

TAMARA
Social Networks.

TESS
I defriended someone today. They
posted the worst thing. Way worse
than any of that.

KENDRA
Why were you friends then?

TESS
She's a cousin. Distant.

NEAL
What is it?

TESS
Some group proclaiming Zimmerman a
hero.

NEAL
Do you have it?

TESS
I defriended her.

NEAL
Can you find it for me?

Tess types into her computer.

CUT TO:

10 INT. LOBBY- DAY

Jim laughs out loud walking through the ACN lobby.

JIM
(into phone)
That's cause she's jealous.

11 INT. HOTEL ROOM- DAY

Hallie paints her toenails on the hotel bed.

HALLIE
She hates me right now. She
actually thinks I stole her story.

JIM
(O.S.)
No.

HALLIE
My article is so different from
what she wrote. And mine is
better. Actually.

12 INT. HALLWAY- DAY

Jim exits elevator.

JIM
(into phone)
I know it's better because you are
a better writer than Melanie
Shmidt.

13 INT. HOTEL ROOM- DAY

HALLIE
You're biased. You're just saying
that because you like when I give
you sex.

14 INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE BULLPEN- DAY

Jim smiles.

JIM
(into phone)
Very true.

Jim pushes open a large glass door and enters-

15 INT. BULLPEN- DAY

Neal and team huddle around a COMPUTER.

JIM
 (into phone)
 You scooped her. She's jealous.
 She'll get over it and you two will
 have cosmos and pedicures again
 soon.

Jim sets his BRIEFCASE on his desk.

NEAL
 (reading from computer)
 "George Zimmerman is a hero. More
 of us need to take up arms and
 eradicate these dangerous thugs
 taking over our country."

Maggie looks up from her desk.

KENDRA
 Who are these people?

TAMARA
 They call themselves the White
 Patriots.

GARY
 We have different ideas of
 patriotism.

JIM
 (into phone)
 Hold on.

Jim joins Neal and the team around the computer.

NEAL
 They are raising money to free
 Zimmerman and any future white
 vigilantes.

MAGGIE
 They're promoting more killing?

NEAL
 It's a hate group.

KENDRA
You know these people?

TESS
Not THEM. A cousin. A third cousin
posted it.

NEAL
The White Patriots have a national
membership.

TESS
I played Barbies with her.

JIM
(into phone)
Have you heard of the White
Patriots?

16 INT. HOTEL ROOM- DAY

Hallie grabs her laptop and types.

HALLIE
The White Patriots?

A list of sites and articles featuring White Patriots
appears on Hallie's computer screen. Hallie clicks on the
first one.

A picture of a well armed militia with guns against a large
American flag appears on Hallie's screen.

HALLIE
(under her breath)
Whoah.

17 INT ELEVATORS- DAY

Will and Mac stand next to each other in a crowded elevator.

Long awkward moment.

MACKENZIE
There are no African American
jurors.

WILL
I saw that.

MACKENIZE
No male jurors.

Neighboring ELEVATOR RIDERS eye Will.

WILL
(in a hushed tone)
It has been noted by several
reputable news organizations.

MACKENZIE
(hushed)
And shouldn't we be one of them? Of
the reputable news agencies?
(Voice Rising)
Noting that?

18 INT. BULLPEN- DAY

Neal and the TEAM look at the computer featuring: an image
of a well armed militia with guns against a large American
flag with WHITE PATRIOTS written across it.

CHARLIE
(O.S.)
The NRA calls themselves the
largest Civil Rights Organization
in the world.

Neal and the team look up to see Charlie walking toward
them.

CHARLIE
Civil Rights! The NRA equating
themselves with Rosa Parks. Martin
Luther King. Nelson Mandela. Can
you believe that?

Neal and the team shake their heads.

CHARLIE
(continued)
Well?

NEAL
You wanted an answer?

JIM
We thought it was rhetorical.

CHARLIE
Have you heard that thanks to
Obama, there will be no cops?

NEAL
Still talking about the NRA?

MAGGIE
No, I hadn't heard that.

Charlie gives them a dirty look.

JIM
So that time you were being
rhetorical?

CHARLIE
The Vice President of the NRA is
telling people that Obama will get
rid of cops.

GARY
I've read some of that stuff.

NEAL
I've seen even worse.

CHARLIE
On their twitters and twats?

NEAL
Tweets.

CHARLIE
That's what I said.

JIM
Yes you did.

NEAL
Yes. There are a lot of crazy
people out there.

CHARLIE
That's what I'm saying. Crazy and
stupid! Listen to this
quote."Hurricanes. Tornadoes.
Riots. Terrorists. Gangs. Lone
criminals. These are perils we are
sure to face--not just maybe. It's
not paranoia to buy a gun. It's
survival. It's responsible
behavior, and it's time we

CHARLIE
encourage law-abiding Americans to
do just that."

TAMARA
Wow.

CHARLIE
How does the NRA think a gun is
going to fight a hurricane? How
stupid do you have to be buy this
stuff?

MAGGIE
You just have to be scared.

CHARLIE
What?

MAGGIE
You don't have to be stupid, you
don't have to be crazy, you just
have to be scared.

CHARLIE
What is she talking about?

MAGGIE
People are scared. Women are being
murdered in their homes. Citizens
are being killed for their
nationality. Kids are being killed
just for going to school. The world
isn't safe, and if the bad guys
have guns, why don't we?

Charlie stares at Maggie. The newsroom waits in silence.

CHARLIE
Well. That's just stupid.

Charlie starts to leave. He turns around.

CHARLIE
(to Neal)
We need to stay ahead of the stupid
before it spirals out of control.

NEAL
On it.

19 INT. HALLWAY- DAY

Mac and Will walk to work.

MACKENIZE

There are so many questions we should be asking. Why was he carrying a gun? Is Stand Your Ground just? How do Americans get guns so easily?

WILL

Not during the trial, Mac.

Will and Mack walk silently.

MACKENIZE

Which invitations did you like best?

Will stares blankly ahead.

MAKENZIE

Will?

WILL

I'm thinking.

MACKENZIE

You didn't look at the invitations at all did you?

Will pushes the big glass door open into-

20 INT. BULLPEN- DAY

CONTINUOUS:

WILL

I like whatever you like, dear. I do whatever you want.

MACKENZIE

Regarding invitations, you mean.

CHARLIE

(to Will)

You. I need to see you.

WILL

Yes, dear.

Will follows Charlie. Neal, Jim, and Maggie assail Mackenzie with their ideas.

NEAL
Mackenzie!

JIM
So glad you're here.

MAGGIE
I've been looking into cases using
the Stand Your Ground Defense.

NEAL
I've found this hate group.

JIM
There are some big gun control
bills right now.

NEAL
I wanna do a story on them.

MACKENZIE
Hold that thought. All of them.
Rundown's in 30 minutes.

Mackenzie leaves.

21 INT. BAR- NIGHT

Jim and Maggie sit at bar.

BENJAMIN CRUMP
(on television in the
background)
To everybody that put their hoodies
on, and to everybody that said, "I
am Trayvon."

MAGGIE
You didn't think Hallie was a
little too interested in the White
Patriots?

JIM
I thought she was just the right
amount interested.

MAGGIE
You didn't think maybe you
shouldn't be sharing our story with
another reporter?

JIM
It wasn't a story yet.

MAGGIE
We produce news. Everything is a story.

JIM
I trusted her.

MAGGIE
Even after she did the Snowden story?

JIM
Until the Snowden story. I had a little distrust after the Snowden story.

MAGGIE
But you kept talking to her.

JIM
I was worried.

MAGGIE
You were worried?

JIM
Yes.

MAGGIE
You didn't think we could handle it?

JIM
Not about the story-

MAGGIE
Then what?

JIM
YOU, Maggie. I was worried about YOU.

Awkward moment. Jim just admitted something, and neither are ready to discuss it.

Maggie stirs her drink.

MAGGIE
What happened with Snowden?

JIM
You were there.

MAGGIE
I haven't heard your side. What happened with Snowden?

JIM
Somehow, Sloan got on this kick about Snowden in Russia.

FADE OUT:

22 INT. DON'S OFFICE- DAY

Hanging up the phone, Don sees Sloan step into his office.

DON
Hot Damn!

SLOAN
Me or the phone call?

Don wraps his arms around Sloane and nibbles her ear.

DON
You too.

Don kisses Sloane's neck. She pushes him away.

DON
Rrrrrraahr. A little late for playing hard to get.

SLOAN
I'm interviewing Bernanke in fifteen minutes.

DON
Snowden is going to ask for asylum.

Don strokes Sloane's hair. She slaps his hand.

SLOAN
Focus. I just need advice on a couple questions.

DON
If Putin grants him asylum, the cold war will be back on.

SLOAN

He won't grant it. Now listen.

Sloane scans her clipboard.

SLOAN

The FDIC and Fed the Office of the Comptroller have proposed stricter banking rules for the eight largest banks.

DON

So sexy when you talk like that. If Putin does grant it, Obama will have to halt diplomacy with Russia.

SLOAN

He can't. Not right now. It would be disastrous. LISTEN. The banks include Goldman Sachs, Citigroup, Bank of America, JPMorgan Chase, Wells Fargo, Morgan Stanley-

DON

(interrupting)

What do you mean disastrous? Obama can't not take diplomatic action against a country that takes in someone who has leaked classified information.

SLOAN

A diplomatic fallout now could be catastrophic on the world economy during the 2014 Olympics in Russia.

Sloane grabs his face and stares into his eyes.

SLOANE

(continued)

Now focus. If these regulations are passed they will go into effect in 2018. The regulations will require the banks-

DON

(interrupting)

We can't worry about the whole world economy. We have to protect our own National Security.

SLOANE
 Sometimes you have to sacrifice
 some personal interests for the
 good of others you depend on.

DON
 We have to protect ourselves first.

Sloane pushes him away.

SLOANE
 I have an interview.

Sloane leaves. Don watches her legs.

DON
 You'll be great honey. You look
 great. Mmmmm.

23 INT. BULLPEN- DAY

Maggie works at her desk. Neal sits on the corner.

NEAL
 I can't infiltrate them as me.
 Obviously.

MAGGIE
 The White Patriots?

Maggie Googles them. A page comes up on her screen. It is a
 hero board of White vigilantes.

MAGGIE
 How big are they?

NEAL
 Their recorded membership shows
 over 2,000 members nationally.
 Mainly in Southern states.

MAGGIE
 What's the story?

NEAL
 Not sure yet.

MAGGIE
 I don't want to give them free
 publicity.

NEAL

Yes. And if I just reported what I currently know, that is what we'd be doing. But if I can infiltrate them, I can find the links to other hate groups.

MAGGIE

KKK?

Neal shrugs.

MAGGIE

Nazis?

NEAL

Maybe.

MAGGIE

Whoa.

NEAL

Sometimes these groups have shared affiliations.

MAGGIE

You want to trace the connections?

NEAL

Yeah. Find political and economic ties. Somebody funds them. And they fund politicians.

MAGGIE

The Tea Party?

NEAL

I'm not saying anything. Yet. But the money comes from somewhere.

MAGGIE

You need a white person.

NEAL

Kind of.

MAGGIE

Let me do it.

NEAL

That might be a bad idea.

MAGGIE

I'm white.

NEAL

That's true.

MAGGIE

You can encrypt my information and cover my tracks, can't you? You know all that stuff.

NEIL

I think I can.

MAGGIE

Let me do it.

NEIL

This could get heavy.

MAGGIE

I want to do it.

NEIL

I need to erase your online presence to be safe.

MAGGIE

Erase it.

NEAL

Then we can create a new one.

MAGGIE

Done.

NEAL

And then you can become a white power racist.

MAGGIE

My parents will be so proud.

Neal leans over Maggie's shoulder and they start working on the application.

NEAL

First, we'll delete your Facebook.

24 INT. WILL'S OFFICE- DAY

CHARLIE
Seventy-Five percent.

WILL
From?

CHARLIE
Sixty percent last month. Thirty
percent immediately following
Genoa. And 90% before Genoa.

WILL
People still don't trust us.

CHARLIE
They trust us more.

WILL
We've been so careful.

CHARLIE
We've been too careful. Trust is
up. But viewership is still down.

WILL
We've been playing it safe, but our
reporting has been solid. We are
doing the same thing we did before-

CHARLIE
We've been PUSSY! We played it safe
with Benghazi. We played it safe
with Petraeus. We're being safe
with Zimmerman. We haven't been the
first with any story since Genoa
and you know it. We haven't held
anyone accountable or accused
anybody. You've lost your fire
Will.

WILL
Fire got us into trouble. People
are starting to trust us again.

CHARLIE
They trust us to bring lukewarm
redundant news just like everybody
else. Not to educate. Not to cross
examine. Not to break important
stories. Not like we were.

WILL

Well, maybe News Night three point is just a little fragile. A little burned. A little-

CHARLIE

Pussy!

WILL

I was going to say watered down, but fine PUSSY. Maybe we are. I have people to protect. I have people that rely on me. I'm not ready to risk their reputations again. Yet.

CHARLIE

Being too cautious can hurt their reputations too.

WILL

I'm not ready.

CHARLIE

Well, get ready. It's time to move on to Four point oh.

25 INT. MAC'S OFFICE- DAY

Mackenzie's office is full of wedding planning books and swatches. Mackenzie flips through a book of flower arrangements. Jim stands in the doorway.

JIM

What's our viewpoint of the Zimmerman case?

MACKENZIE

Viewpoint?

JIM

We don't seem to have a viewpoint.

MACKENZIE

It's a trial. We don't take sides during a trial.

JIM

So we don't have a viewpoint.

MACKENZIE
That is our viewpoint.

JIM
There's going to be a verdict soon.

MACKENZIE
We can explore the angles then. How
do you feel about Daffodils?

JIM
They're yellow.

MACKENZIE
Bright and cheery.

JIM
And yellow.

MACKENZIE
You don't like daffodils?

JIM
I don't like yellow.

MACKENZIE
Gladiolas?

JIM
Are they yellow?

MACKENZIE
Not always.

JIM
Which ones are they? Are they the
ones with the-

Jim opens and closes his hand.

MACKENZIE
Snapdragons. You don't know what
Glads are do you?

JIM
I like Snapdragons.

MACKENZIE
MMMMM.

JIM
What about Snowden? Do we have a
take on Snowden?

MACKENZIE
Security. Diplomacy now that he's
in Russia. Privacy. Hero or
traitor?

JIM
Right.

MACKENZIE
We'll see if there are any new
ideas at rundown.

JIM
Which we should get to now.

Jim starts to leave. Stops

JIM
(Continued)
Violets.

MACKENZIE
Violets?

JIM
I like Violets.

Jim exits and Mackenzie looks at her book.

MACKENZIE
Violets? Hmmm.

26 INT. CONFERENCE ROOM- DAY

The team sits at the table for the run down meeting.

SLOAN
The Olympics are hugely important
for their host country.
Providing stimulus for long term
social and economic development.

JIM
Russia needs that boost.

SLOAN
They do.

Mackenzie arrives carrying a binder and notepad.

MACKENZIE

Sorry. Sorry. I got waylaid with emails.

Jim and Mackenzie exchange a look.

MACKENZIE

(Continued)

Busy ACN business urgent emails.

Mackenzie settles in her chair and puts on her reading glasses.

MACKENZIE

(Continued)

Right. Who's got ideas?

GARY

There's a move to amend Florida's Stand Your Ground law.

MAGGIE

About time.

KENDRA

A little too late, I'd say.

MACKENZIE

What else?

TESS

Two reports have come out on mass shootings this year.

MAGGIE

Are they including Sandy Hook?

TAMARA

That was last year.

TESS

Several places have passed laws for teachers to bring guns to school.

GARY

That's a bad idea.

MAGGIE

But it's a good story.

MACKENZIE

Right. But. Will doesn't want to cover guns during the trial.

MAGGIE

What?

JIM

Why?

TAMARA

Gun debates are big right now.

MACKENZIE

Just during the trial.

KENDRA

I'd like to look at racial profiling.

MACKENZIE

Will wants to avoid race during the trial.

GARY

Oh really?

JIM

What are we supposed to talk about?

TESS

These are current issues.

MAGGIE

We're just supposed to sit back and not have any viewpoint.

MACKENZIE

Will has a viewpoint. There is a trial in progress.

JIM

That's the point. The American Justice system has a racial bias.

MACKENZIE

Now is not the right time.

JIM

It's relevant now.

MACKENZIE

Will doesn't want to exploit it.

JIM

WILL doesn't?

MACKENZIE
I'm supporting Will on this.

JIM
Mackenzie-

MACKENZIE
Just as you, my senior producer,
will support me.

Jim nods in submission.

JIM
We just want to do news.

MACKENZIE
We are. We will. I know. Listen
guys, I know everybody else is
talking about this stuff. It is
being talked about. But Will's a
prosecutor. And he doesn't want us
to jump on the media bandwagon and
be part of the circus trying to
influence outcome of the trial.

TESS
Just til the trial's over?

MACKENIZE
Just til the trial's over. Now.
What else we got?

SLOAN
Snowden is in Moscow seeking
asylum.

MACKENZIE
Elliot has been covering it.

SLOAN
I want to talk about the world
economic ramifications.
Our relationship with Russia is
questionable if Putin gives it to
him. But the 2014 Olympics are in
Russia. And the Olympics create a
major stimulus in the international
economy.

MACKENZIE
Good. Very Good. What else?

TAMARA
Obamacare rollout is coming soon.

MACKENZIE
Great! That's should be safe. What else?

JIM
So that's our goal? To be safe?

MACKENZIE
For the moment, yes.

KENDRA
Syria.

MACKENZIE
Again or still?

KENDRA
Both.

NEAL
Maggie and I are investigating a white power hate group called the White Patriots.

MACKENZIE
Is it related to the trial?

NEAL
Only indirectly.

MACKENZIE
How indirectly?

NEAL
Very.

MACKENZIE
I'm listening.

JIM
It sounds dangerous.

MACKENZIE
Shit, he's right. Is this dangerous?

NEAL
It's all on-line. I've erased Maggie's on-line presence. I have encrypted her user info, and we are running from a proxy server.

MACKENZIE
So it's not dangerous?

NEAL
Only slightly.

MAGGIE
We can't be traced. We've got it
under control.

MACKENZIE
Just be careful.

27 INT. BAR- NIGHT

Jim and Maggie at the bar.

BENJAMIN CRUMP
(on television in background)
I know Trayvon is up there proud at
the changes that you as his parents
have inspired in his name.

JIM
I knew, I knew, I knew that the
White Patriots assignment was too
dangerous.

MAGGIE
I wanted to work on something
important. That story was
important.

JIM
I also wanted to make news that was
important.

MAGGIE
YOU were arrogant. You thought you
knew best. You're outgrowing the
subservient loyal devotion to
Mackenzie you came here with.

JIM
And you've long outgrown the role
of Will's mousy secretary believing
blindly in his leadership. You're
now a real news producer.

MAGGIE
So are you.

Maggie and Jim toast.

MAGGIE
 Maybe if Will and Mackenzie weren't
 so distracted.

28 EXT. SAK'S FIFTH AVENUE- DAY

Mackenzie exits with overflowing WEDDING PLANNING
 PARAPHERNALIA. Mackenzie drops a couple boxes.

MACKENZIE
 (dropping more boxes, as she
 tries to pick up boxes)
 Excues me. Sorry. Sorry.

Nina passes Mackenzie hiding her face. Mackenzie sees Nina
 entering the store.

MACKENZIE
 Nina!

NINA
 Mackenzie? I didn't see you.

Nina starts to enter the store, as Mackenzie gather her
 things.

MACKENZIE
 I'm so glad I ran into you.

NINA
 You are?

MACKENZIE
 I wanted to give you one of these.

Mackenzie hands Nina an ENVELOPE.

MACKENZIE
 (continued)
 It's an invitation! To the wedding.
 You don't have to come. If you're
 busy. But I wanted to invite you. I
 don't have many friends.

NINA
 Oh. Mackenzie. That's sweet. Thank
 you. I'd love to. I'm touched. I
 thought you hated me.

MACKENZIE
 Hated you? Why because a couple of
 stories? That's your job. It's all
 water on the bridge now.

NINA

I just figured once you found out I was dating Will, you wouldn't like me anymore.

Mackenzie drops all her packages.

MACKENIZE

(shrill, and smiling really hard)

Because you were- Dating? Will?

Mackenzie bends over to collect packages.

NINA

I thought things would be awkward.

MACKENZIE

(nodding and smiling tightly)

Awkward.

Mackenzie stands up with her packages precariously in her arms.

NINA

And I never expected to be invited.
Thank you.

Nina gives her a big hug.

MACKENZIE

Yes. Well. Good. This is good. I'm so glad I ran into you.

NINA

Me too.

Mackenzie stands nodding for a seemingly long time. She raises her hand slightly and waves it.

Mackenzie turns and leaves. Nina waving after her.

NINA

See you at the wedding.

MACKENZIE

(under her breath)

Oh goody.

29 INT. WILL'S OFFICE- DAY

Will writes his script. Mackenzie drops her packages and attacks.

MACKENZIE

Is there anything you want to tell me?

WILL

The chocolate flourless with hazlenut fudge ganache.

MACKENZIE

Wrong.

WILL

Lemon buttercream? By the look on your face, that's not right either.

MACKENZIE

No. It's not.

WILL

This isn't about cake is it?

MACKENZIE

No.

Will stares at Mack trying to figure out what he is supposed to say.

WILL

Dumb it down. I'm stuck.

MACKENZIE

Do you have anything you want to tell me?

WILL

About?

MACKENZIE

No secrets. Remember? We spent the whole weekend cleaning out the cobwebs, so that we could start fresh and share our lives together. I told you everything. Everything. Did you?

WILL

I can tell by the way you are looking at me now that something slipped my mind.

MACKENZIE

I can tell by the way you are looking at me back that you still don't know what it is, which means-

WILL

It must not have been important-

MACKENZIE

Which MEANS that you withheld more than one thing.

WILL

Tell me what it is and I'll make it up to you.

MACKENZIE

No.

Mackenzie turns and walks out of Will's office. Will follows her into-

30 INT.CORRIDOR- DAY

CONTINUOUS

WILL

I'm very sorry. Just tell me what I did and I'll explain.

MACKENZIE

No, I don't think so.

Will follows Mackenzie into-

31 INT. MACK'S OFFICE- DAY

Mackenzie sits down and puts her READING GLASSES on. She starts to work.

WILL

You're not going to tell me?

MACKENZIE

You're going to tell me.

WILL

I see. I'm supposed to guess.

MACKENZIE

Ha. Ha. Billy Boy. If you don't know-

WILL

I slept with Barbara Walters. Only once.

MACKENZIE

That, you told me.

WILL

I did shrooms with Hunter S. Thompson?

MACKENZIE

That, I guessed.

WILL

My porn's in my tie drawer. I only have a couple of videos and I rarely watch them.

MACKENZIE

I could care less about porn.

WILL

I read all your emails and letters after we broke up. I said I didn't, but I did.

MACKENZIE

What?

WILL

I read them.

MACKENZIE

You lied?

WILL

Yes.

Mackenzie returns to work and ignores Will.

WILL

That wasn't it, was it?

MACKENZIE

I'm very busy here.

Will realizes the conversation is done. He leaves. Mackenzie calls after him.

MACKENZIE

You're supposed to keep porn in your underwear drawer. Everybody knows that.

32 INT. BULLPEN- NIGHT

Jim Skypes with Hallie on his laptop.

HALLIE

Mackenzie's not mad

JIM

I think she's just as mad at Will. Sloan's economic take on the Snowden situation may be the most insightful coverage we've done in a while.

HALLIE

Sloan's economic interpretation of Snowden?

JIM

She's worried about a diplomatic fallout impacting the world economy during the Russian Olympics.

HALLIE

Yeah, the 2014 Olympics. We were just talking about that here.

JIM

Really?

HALLIE

The Olympics are international. Sloan's not the only one to know about them.

JIM

No, of course not.

HALLIE

Mackenzie should listen to you. I thought you were her right hand man.

JIM

I was.

HALLIE

There are other jobs, Jim. You could move on. If you're not happy there-

JIM

I didn't say that.

HALLIE

You're a good producer. I hate to see you being wasted.

JIM

There is one story I feel good about.

HALLIE

What?

JIM

It's still in the research phase.

HALLIE

What is it?

JIM

(whispering)

This is top secret.

HALLIE

Tell me.

JIM

Completely off the record.

HALLIE

Cross my heart.

JIM

Neal and Maggie are infiltrating a hate group called the White Patriots.

HALLIE

White Patriots?

JIM

Yeah.

HALLIE

Jesus, is that safe?

JIM
Neal thinks it is. He's encrypting everything. If they can get in, they can trace where the money comes from. And where it goes.

HALLIE
That's amazing. That's good.

JIM
I know, right?

HALLIE
But these people are scary, Jim.

JIM
I know.

HALLIE
Keep an eye on her.

JIM
Yeah.

HALLIE
I mean it.

JIM
I'll keep you posted.

HALLIE
You'd better.

33 INT. STUDIO- NIGHT

Will behind the anchor desk.

WILL
A suicide bomber in Mogadishu, Somalia killed himself and at least two others. The explosives detonated near an African Union military convoy.

34 INT. CONTROL ROOM- NIGHT

CONTINUOUS

Mackenzie and Jim watch the show.

WILL
 (on the monitor)
 Officials say the dead were
 civilians passing by. The soldiers
 were uninjured. At this time no
 group has claimed responsibility
 for the attack.

JIM
 It's weak.

MACKENZIE
 I know.

JIM
 He's holding back.

Mackenzie pushes a button.

MACKENZIE
 (to Will)

Get your head out of your ass and try not to look so bored.

Will's face has a new tensions, and he articulates
 energetically.

WILL
 (on the monitor)
 At this time no group has claimed
 responsibility for the attack.

Mackenzie turns to Jim.

MACKENZIE
 Hallie's article on Snowden was
 very interesting.

JIM
 I haven't read it yet.

MACKENZIE
 It's VERY interesting.

JIM
 I'll read it tonight.

MACKENZIE
 She warns of the financial
 implications on the upcoming
 Olympics.

JIM
That is interesting.

MACKENZIE
I thought it was interesting. She
doesn't usually talk about
economics.

WILL
(on the monitor)
We'll be right back.
(to Mackenzie)
I did smoke a cigarette in your
apartment that night.

MACKENZIE
I knew it.

WILL
(on the monitor)
Is that it?

MACKENZIE
No.

WILL
(on the monitor)
Tell me.

MACKENZIE
I shouldn't have to. I've told you
everything. I have laid myself open
to you. And you have kept so many
things from me that you can't keep
track.

35 INT. STUDIO- NIGHT

CONTINUOUS

WILL
I obviously didn't think these
things were important. I have told
you everything that's important.

Mackenzie enters the Studio.

MACKENZIE
Then we have different ideas of
what's important.

WILL

(on the monitor)

I didn't learn how to tie my shoes until I was six. Yes, I was crying during the Titanic. I lied because I wanted you to think I was manly. There WAS meat in the spaghetti, and I let you eat it and told you it was vegan, because I was embarrassed that I forgot you were vegetarian. And I was looking at your breasts and not your eyes on our first date, because I am a man. I am manly and that is what we do. And I wanted you to think I was a better man I am. I was nervous and I wanted to impress you.

MACKENZIE

You were nervous?

WILL

I've told you everything.

MACKENZIE

Everything?

WILL

Am I laid open and bare enough for you, because it feels a little like humiliation on my end.

TECH DIRECTOR

(O.S.)

Twenty seconds.

MACKENZIE

I ran into Nina.

WILL

Shit.

Mackenzie exits.

36

INT. CONTROL ROOM- NIGHT

Jim watches monitor. Mackenzie reenters.

WILL

(on monitor)

Toulik, being called a super typhoon, heads for Taiwan and Japan. Residents prepare.

JIM
He's green.

MACKENZIE
Mmmm.

JIM
What did you say to him?

MACKENZIE
Pep talk.

37 INT. BAR- NIGHT

Maggie and Jim at the bar.

MAGGIE
So Mackenzie suspected then?

JIM
She implied.

MAGGIE
But you didn't?

JIM
Everybody was covering Snowden. The Olympics was an easy connection to make.

MAGGIE
Sloan was the first.

JIM
Hallie's story was very surface. She didn't really scoop us.

MAGGIE
She published before Sloan covered it.

JIM
Things were going well with Hallie. I thought I was lucky.

38 INT. SLOANE'S OFFICE-NIGHT

Sloan gathers her stuff to leave.

DON
Was the Conan interview funny to you? It seemed funnier when we filmed it.

SLOAN
It was funny.

DON
Did you laugh?

SLOAN
I chuckled. Once. Quietly. To myself.

DON
I wanted it to be funny. I wanted people to laugh.

SLOAN
It was funny.

DON
What about the little girl with cancer? Did you cry?

SLOAN
I don't cry. But I felt sad. How was my show?

DON
You were great.

SLOAN
What was your favorite part?

DON
The part where you talked about economics.

SLOAN
You didn't watch me did you?

DON
I missed it.

SLOAN
I watched your news.

DON
And I appreciate it honey. Was it a good show?

SLOAN

So-so.

DON

Really. Shit.

SLOAN

I can't do this.

DON

What?

SLOAN

I am working so hard to be a good girlfriend.

DON

And you are a great girlfriend.

SLOAN

I can't be just your cheerleader.

DON

I don't see you that way.

SLOAN

I'm supposed to reassure you and encourage you and tell you your show is great, honey. Even when it's not.

DON

You don't like the show?

SLOAN

I'm supposed to look good for you and be sexy. Sometimes I'm not sexy. Sometimes I smell. Right now I smell terrible.

Sloan sniffs herself.

DON

You don't smell terrible.

SLOAN

Liar.

DON

Maybe a little terrible.

SLOAN

And you can't bother to watch me.

DON

I'm sorry, I got busy.

SLOAN

I have two PHDs. I speak four languages.

DON

Sloan-

SLOAN

I can't be reduced to JUST a girlfriend. Even yours.

DON

You are perfect. You're strong. You're brilliant. You're beautiful. I don't have to watch your show to know you were brilliant.

SLOAN

I'm not perfect. Not even close. If you're going to be with me, I need you to love me when I'm imperfect.

DON

I do.

SLOAN

Because I can't be perfect 24 hours for you. I can't. What did you say?

DON

I do.

SLOAN

Show me.

DON

I never asked you to be perfect.

SLOAN

Good. Cause I'm not going to be.

39 INT. STUDIO- NIGHT

Mackenzie collects mic from Will.

WILL

I know it wasn't a great show.

MACKENZIE

It wasn't.

WILL

It wasn't bad.

MACKENZIE

It wasn't interesting enough to be bad. It was safe. It was just safe, Will. No gripping news, no cross examinations, no fire. That's it Will, there's no fire. You are too afraid to do any challenging news, and even you are bored by the news you are reporting.

WILL

Is your hostility right now purely professional? It's hard for me to separate.

MACKENZIE

It's hard for ME to separate. You should stop giving me reasons to feel hostile.

WILL

I didn't tell you about Nina, because it wasn't a big deal.

MACKENZIE

You didn't tell me about Nina, because you didn't think I'd find out.

WILL

I DIDN'T think you'd find out.

MACKENZIE

I invited her to the wedding, Will.

WILL

I wish you hadn't done that.

MACKENZIE

I also wish I hadn't done that.

WILL

We used to date. It could be awkward for me.

MACKENZIE

I sure hope so.

Mackenzie exits Studio.

40 INT. DRESSING ROOM- NIGHT

Sloan hangs up clothes she wore on Broadcast. Don appears behind her with a notebook he reads from.

DON

Your report was smart and clear.
Easy to understand.

SLOAN

You watched?

DON

I took notes.

Sloan kisses him on the cheek.

DON

(Continued)

It's "A bird in the hand is worth
TWO in the BUSH"

SLOAN

I always get that confused.

DON

You had something in your teeth
didn't you? Because you were doing
that thing you do. That you think
nobody notices.

SLOAN

I had popcorn earlier.

DON

You said whom when you should have
said who.

SLOAN

Damn.

DON

It sounded pretentious and wrong.

SLOAN

I'm not perfect.

DON

You are far from perfect.

Don wraps his arms around Sloan.

(Cont'd)

And I love that about you.

Don kisses Sloan.

(Cont'd)

You're so much smarter than me. How could you possibly need me?

Sloan punches Don.

DON

Ow!

SLOAN

Stupid!

Sloan punches him again.

DON

Ow!

Sloan grabs Don's head and pulls it close.

SLOAN

I need you!

Sloan kisses Don.

41 INT. OFFICE- NIGHT

An office has been dressed with racist symbols. Maggie sits at the desk. Neal angles the computer to frame Maggie just right.

Jim hovers.

JIM

You don't have to do this.

MAGGIE
I wanna do this.

JIM
Are you sure this is safe?

NEAL
Not entirely.

MAGGIE
You said it was safe.

NEAL
I said I would do everything I
could to make it safe.

MAGGIE
And?

NEAL
And I've done everything I can to
make this safe.

JIM
What does that mean?

NEAL
I have erased her online presence
as Maggie Jordan. Her Facebook. Her
old Myspace. Her Spotify. Anything
and everything I could find with a
profile, I've eliminated. Anything
with a picture identifying Maggie
Jordan, I have erased.

JIM
What's the problem?

NEAL
I can't guarantee I found
everything. The internet is vast
and things hang out in corners
forever. If I couldn't find it, it
is unlikely that anyone else can.

MAGGIE
How unlikely?

NEAL
Pretty unlikely.

JIM
Percentage of a chance?

NEAL
I can't say.

JIM
Try.

NEAL
Ninety percent.

MAGGIE
I'm fine with that.

NEAL
Maybe eighty. Or sixty.

MAGGIE
My confidence is shaking.

JIM
You don't have to do this.

NEAL
I have encrypted her current
information. We have disguised her
appearance.

Maggie pulls out a black wig.

(Cont'd)

And I am using three proxy servers
to mask her ISP.

JIM
I understood a third of that.

NEAL
They would have to have very
expensive decoding software, or
rockstar hackers to find her true
identity.

MAGGIE
They would have to be incredibly
paranoid.

JIM
And are they incredibly paranoid?

NEAL
I think they are.

JIM
You don't have to do this.

MAGGIE
This is a real story.

JIM
It could be dangerous.

MAGGIE
I have to.

JIM
Don't do this.

MAGGIE
I'm doing this.

Maggie puts on the wig and faces the computer.

MAGGIE
It's ready.

NEAL
You're ready.

Jim and Neal step out of the frame and watch anxiously.

Maggie presses a VIDEOCHAT button.

CUT TO:

42 INT. MESSY LIVING ROOM- NIGHT

We see Maggie, with her black wig in a computer monitor. She is framed by suggestively racist paraphernalia, and the Newsroom is unrecognizable in the screen.

HAND moves a mouse.

WHITE PATRIOT
(O.S.)
This is Brother Jess. State your
business.

MAGGIE
(on monitor)
My name is Ashley Walker. And I
want to be a Patriot.

CUT TO:

43 INT. OFFICE- NIGHT

Jim and Neal are watching Maggie.

Don and Sloan walk into the Bullpen which can be seen from the office. Sloan sees Jim and opens the office door.

SLOAN

Jim.

Neal and Jim motion to be quiet. Jim pulls Sloan into the -

44 INT. BULLPEN- NIGHT

JIM

(whispering)

They're talking to the racists.

SLOAN

(whispering)

Did you mention the Olympics and Snowden to Hallie?

JIM

No. No. Maybe.

Neal pokes his head out.

NEAL

Shhhhhhhh.

Sloan pulls Jim into-

45 INT. CORRIDOR- NIGHT

CONTINUOUS

SLOAN

Hallie did a story on Snowden, and she mentioned the impact on the economy of the Olympics.

JIM

It wasn't your story.

SLOAN

It sounded like my story.

JIM

Your story focused on the economy, with in depth brilliant coverage.

JIM
 You. Are a brilliant economist.
 Hallie merely implied the
 possibility of economic fallout in
 a long list of ramifications-

Sloan twists Jim's arm.

JIM
 Ow. Ow. Ow.

SLOAN
 It was my story. Don't even mention
 my stories to her ever again.

JIM
 It's a coincidence.

SLOAN
 She's a reporter Jim. I don't want
 any confusion or suspicion about
 where she is getting her ideas.

JIM
 She wouldn't use anything I told
 her-

Sloan twists his arm.

(Cont'd)
 Ow. Ow.

SLOAN
 Swear it.

JIM
 Ow.

SLOAN
 Swear.

JIM
 I swear.

SLOAN
 Thank you. That shirt looks good on
 you.

JIM
 Hallie bought it.

SLOAN
 She has good taste.

46 INT. OFFICE- NIGHT

WHITE PATRIOT
(O.S.)
You look different from your
picture. MAGGIE JORDAN. At ACN.

Maggie jumps out of her seat. There is a CLATTER as she
knocks over the racist knick knacks. Neal pulls the plug on
the computer.

MAGGIE
Shit!

NEAL
Shit! Shit! Shit!

MAGGIE
It was supposed to be encoded.

NEAL
It was.

MAGGIE
I was supposed to be erased.

Jim runs in.

JIM
What happened?

MAGGIE
He knew my name.

NEAL
They must have decoding software.

MAGGIE
He knew my real name.

NEAL
Or a hacker.

MAGGIE
He knows I work for the ACN.

Maggie hyperventilates. Jim sits her down and finds her
pills.

JIM
(to Maggie)
You're okay. We'll make this okay.

MAGGIE

Yeah.

JIM

Does he know where she is?

NEAL

I don't know.

JIM

Does he know where she lives?

NEAL

I don't know.

JIM

Maggie, you're staying with me tonight.

MAGGIE

I need my things.

JIM

We'll get your things. You're staying with me for now.

MAGGIE

Yessir.

47 INT. BAR-NIGHT

Jim and Maggie drink at the bar.

CRUMP

(on television in background)
To Sabrina and Tracy, Trayvon's parents, your tireless work in the name of your son, has made Sanford and many other cities just a little bit safer for all our children.

MAGGIE

That was when you talked to Hallie? That night?

JIM

I wanted to explain why you were staying at my apartment.

MAGGIE

I didn't have to be in your apartment.

JIM
I felt responsible.

MAGGIE
You didn't have to tell her.

JIM
I did. I had to tell her.

Maggie and Jim drink.

JIM
(Continued)
I didn't know things had gotten so
bad. For You.

MAGGIE
Yeah.

JIM
You were keeping it together. At
work, at least.

MAGGIE
Yeah.

JIM
I'm sorry.

MAGGIE
I'm sorry. I'm sorry for the
blowing the Patriots story and
breaking up you and Hallie. I'm
sorry for almost killing you.

JIM
That was a little bad.

MAGGIE
Just a little?

JIM
I'm still alive.

MAGGIE
I'm glad.

JIM
Yeah?

MAGGIE
Yeah.

Maggie and Jim drink.

48 INT. CONTROL ROOM- NIGHT

Subtitles: July 12, 2013

Will on the monitor, offline. Second monitor of footage from the George Zimmerman Case.

WILL

(on monitor)

Claiming self defense in the February 2012 killing of seventeen year old Trayvon Martin, the case has brought national attention to Florida's Stand Your Ground Law. We go now to closing statements today at the George Zimmerman trial.

PROSECUTING ATTORNEY*

(on monitor)

Was he just casually referring to a perfect stranger by saying F-ing punks? That doesn't evidence to you anything? That's normal language? Or is that not? What was in that defendant's heart whe he approached Trayvon Martin?

Jim and Mackenzie watch the broadcast.

JIM

We need to be prepared for the verdict.

MACKENZIE

Maggie's on research now.

JIM

Maggie?

MACKENZIE

You have a problem with that?

JIM

No.No. Maybe.

MACKENZIE

What?

JIM

Nothing you need to worry about.

MACKENZIE

Good.

JIM

Yet.

49 INT. BULLPEN- NIGHT

Maggie researching at her computer. Jim appears and hovers over her shoulder.

JIM

You okay?

MAGGIE

I'm safely at my desk.

JIM

Mack has you doing research for the Zimmerman verdict. You're okay with that?

MAGGIE

I'm looking at Stand your Ground cases, which was easier before I felt you staring over my shoulder.

JIM

I just thought-

MAGGIE

You thought I would freak out reading about violence and racism.

JIM

A little.

MAGGIE

Have you seen the news lately? It is all violence and racism and fear. I'm not going to freak out every time I hear a story with violence or racism or hatred or sexism or poverty tragedy or catastrophe or-

Maggie hyperventilates and motions for her purse. Jim hands it to her. She pops her pills and takes a deep breath.

JIM

I don't know why I thought you might freak out.

Maggie focuses on her research.

MAGGIE
I'm totally under control.

JIM
I haven't told Mac about the video chat.

MAGGIE
Don't tell Mac.

JIM
I feel like I should tell Mac.

NEAL
You didn't tell Mac did you?

JIM
Maggie should have protection.

MAGGIE
I have protection. I'm staying at your place.

JIM
Not indefinitely.

MAGGIE
They didn't threaten me.

JIM
Do you think she's safe?

NEAL
They didn't threaten her. They know she works for the news.

JIM
Mac's going to wonder why you dropped the story.

NEAL
I'll take care of it.

MAGGIE
(reading her computer)
Marissa Alexander!

NEAL
Who?

MAGGIE

In 2012, the same year Trayvon Martin was killed, an African American single mother was sentenced to 20 years in prison for firing a warning shot- A WARNING SHOT- in self defense of an abusive husband. She used Stand Your Ground to defend herself.

NEAL

That's good.

JIM

That's very good.

50 INT. STUDIO- NIGHT

Will and Sloane behind the desk. On commercial break.

Sloane checks her phone.

Text from Don:

YOUR INSIGHT INTO PHARMACEUTICAL STOCKS WAS INSPIRED. AND YOUR HAIR LOOKS GOOD.

Sloane smiles.

WILL

How long do you plan to punish me?

51 INT. CONTROL ROOM- NIGHT

MACKENZIE

I haven't decided yet.

WILL

(on monitor)

Do you think you'll be done by Friday?

MACKENZIE

I'm not sure.

WILL

(on monitor)

I need to know whether to cancel our reservations for the Plaza. Or I can take someone else.

MACKENZIE

Don't you dare. I can punish you
just as easily at the Plaza.'

WILL

(on monitor)

Yeah that would be fun for me.

MACKENZIE

That could be very fun for you.

52 INT. STUDIO- NIGHT

Will and Sloan behind desk. Will perks to full attention.

WILL

That could be fun?

MACKENZIE (O.S.)

(suggestively)

Very Fun.

Will's becomes clearly distracted by Mac's innuendo.

Music cues return to broadcast.

Sloane sends text: TONIGHT WILL BE A GOOD NIGHT FOR YOU. She
gets a text back that reads: I LOVE YOU EVEN WHEN YOU SMELL
TERRIBLE.

Sloan melts and gushes to herself.

TECH DIRECTOR

(O.S.)

Three. Two. One.

Sloan hides her phone and smells her underarms quickly. Both
Will and Sloan are a little too happy.

WILL

(absolutely buoyant)

Sloan Sabbith is here to explain
why Chinese companies are leaving
the US market.

Will turns to Sloan.

WILL

(Continued)

Sloan, tell us about these Chinese
companies.

SLOAN
 Well, Will,
 (giddy)
 The China Development Bank,
 responsible for strengthening
 China's competitiveness-

Will and Sloan try hard to keep serious faces.

53 INT. CONTROL ROOM- NIGHT

Mackenzie pushes a button.

MACKENZIE
 Dead kittens. Poor dead kittens.
 And puppies.

Will and Sloan on the monitor force deeply serious looks.

SLOAN
 (on monitor)
 -is offering a billion dollars to
 help smaller Chinese companies
 leave the US stock market.

54 INT. HANG CHEWS BAR- NIGHT

Mackenzie and Neal sit at a booth. Jim hands them drinks.

MACKENZIE
 What is it you don't want to tell
 me?

NEAL
 Have a drink first.

Jim lifts his glass.

JIM
 To the wedding!

ALL
 To the wedding.

They toast. And drink.

MACKENZIE
 What the hell's going on?

NEAL
You know the hate group story?

MACKENZIE
The one that wasn't going to be dangerous?

NEAL
It might be a little dangerous.

JIM
They ID'ed Maggie.

MACKENZIE
You were going to encode her and do a bunch of computer hocus pocus so that wouldn't happen.

NEAL
I did all that.

MACKENZIE
And?

NEAL
They figured it out.

MACKENZIE
Are you any good at your job?

NEAL
Sometimes I'm not sure.

MACKENZIE
Is she in danger?

JIM
She hasn't been threatened.

MACKENZIE
Is she in danger?

JIM
I don't know. She's staying with me for now.

MACKENZIE
Keep her there. Until we know what kind of trouble we're in.

JIM
Yes.

MACKENZIE
What kind of trouble are we in?

NEAL
This group is big. This story could
be big.

MACKENZIE
Let's protect Maggie first.

NEAL
I know.

MACKENZIE
I'm not saying never. Just for now.
Hold off for now.

NEAL
I will.

MACKENZIE
Okay.

55 INT. JIM'S LIVING ROOM- NIGHT

Maggie sleeps on the couch in the darkened room. A JIGGLING
of the door handle can be heard. Maggie's EYES open.

JIGGLING.

The CLOCK reads: 11:45

56 INT. JIM'S APARTMENT HALLWAY- NIGHT

Jim raps lightly at the door.

JIM
(whispers)
Maggie!

Jim goes through his pocket and bag. Jim JIGGLES handle.

JIM
(whispers)
Maggie Jordan!

CUT TO:

57 INT. JIM'S LIVING ROOM-NIGHT

CONTINUOUS

With a gun pointed at the door and a phone in one hand, Maggie, in T-shirt and sweatpants, freezes.

The DOOR KNOB JIGGLES.

58 INT. JIM'S APARTMENT HALLWAY- NIGHT

Jim searches jacket. Relieved Jim pulls keys out of lining of his jacket. Jim inserts key in lock.

Jim's CELLPHONE RINGS.

Jim pulls out phone he pushes open door into-

59 INT. JIM'S LIVING ROOM-NIGHT

CELLPHONE RING ends as door swings open-

Maggie with gun pointed and phone to ear, jumps.

GUNSHOT.

Jim ducks.

JIM
What the hell?

MAGGIE
Jim! Thank God.

JIM
You shot me.

MAGGIE
You weren't supposed to be home til
after one.

Maggie walks back to the couch and flops, disarming her gun.

JIM
You shot me!

MAGGIE
Are you hurt?

JIM
There's a bullet in my wall .

MAGGIE
Are you hurt?

JIM
No.

MAGGIE
You are not hurt. I did not shoot
you.

JIM
You shot at me.

OLD LADY
(O.S.)
Is everything okay?

MAGGIE
I shot at an intruder.

JIM
(to the Old Lady)
We're fine. Just a
misunderstanding.
(to Maggie)
I'm not an intruder. It's my
apartment.

MAGGIE
I thought you were a Patriot.

MAN
(O.S.)
I heard a shot.

Jim opens the door. He shows the neighbors in the hall that
everything is fine.

JIM
(to Neighbors)
We're all good. Thanks.

Jim waves and closes the door.

JIM
(to Maggie))
Why didn't you call?

MAGGIE

I called.

Jim checks phone.

JIM

One missed call. At the same time
you shot at me.

MAGGIE

You should have answered my call.

JIM

I was distracted by a bullet
whizzing by my head.

MAGGIE

How close did I get? I'm still
learning to shoot.

JIM

Not very close. You should get a
refund. You brought a gun into my
apartment.

MAGGIE

I have a license.

JIM

To bring a gun to my apartment?

MAGGIE

For protection in my home.

JIM

Why didn't you tell me?

MAGGIE

It wasn't your business.

JIM

That's a big thing to keep secret.

MAGGIE

I was taking care of myself.

JIM

When did you decide to get a gun?

MAGGIE

After Africa.

JIM

Shit.

MAGGIE

I was alone. And I was angry.

JIM

I know.

MAGGIE

And scared. I was really scared.

JIM

I know.

MAGGIE

I needed to protect myself.

JIM

So you got a gun?

MAGGIE

So I got a gun. That's why people get guns. Because they're scared. A bunch of scared people walking around with guns. Trying hard to be tough. Not good people and bad people. Right people and wrong people. No. It's mostly just scared people with guns.

JIM

That's the story we need to do.

60 INT. WILL'S BEDROOM- NIGHT

Will lays in his robe smoking a cigarette listening to the Talking Heads. Mackenzie strips down as she enters the room.

MACKENZIE

I thought you weren't going to smoke in here.

WILL

I wasn't.

Will rolls over to face Mac as she climbs into bed.

WILL

(Continued)

I haven't been playing it safe.

MACKENZIE

No.

WILL

It's a trial. The media has the power to impact the trial.

MACKENZIE

Bullshit. Society has the power to influence the trial. We have the power to influence society.

WILL

The media is exploiting the trial to manufacture content.

MACKENZIE

Chickenshit.

WILL

The lobbyists have taken-

Mackenzie covers her ears. Their voices raise.

MACKENZIE

Blah blah blah blah blah

WILL

over and they're using this public trial-

MACKENZIE

Blah blah blah Chicken shit. Safe.

WILL

for their political agendas.

MACKENZIE

Safe safe safe.

Will and Mac are face to face. The cigarette drops on the bed.

Mac jumps out of bed. Will attacks the cigarette putting out the small fire.

MACKENZIE

You shouldn't smoke in bed.

Will climbs back in bed as Mackenzie grabs her things for the bathroom.

WILL
I know. I know.

MACKENZIE
It's dangerous.

Mackenzie closes the bathroom door.

61 INT. BULLPEN- DAY

Everyone works at their desks. Jim arrives with cell phone to ear. Maggie follows.

HALLIE
(O.S)
Leave a message.

TONE.

JIM
(into phone)
Trying to reach you. Guess you're busy.

NEAL
Hallie not answering?

JIM
I've been calling all morning-

Neal drops a NEWSPAPER on Jim's desk and waits.

Jim looks at the paper. There is a PHOTO of Hallie smiling.

HEADLINE says: WHITE PATRIOTS HATE GROUP FUND VIOLENCE ON MINORITIES

JIM
Shit.

NEAL
My story.

JIM
I knew nothing about this.

Maggie reads the story.

NEAL
You gave her our story.

JIM
I had no idea.

MAGGIE
Bullshit! Unnamed source?

JIM
I didn't-

NEAL
We know who that is.

MAGGIE
They've funded legal counsel for
twelve murderers.

NEAL
I knew this was a story.

MAGGIE
Where'd she get that? We didn't
have that.

NEAL
We suspected.

MAGGIE
But we didn't have it. Jim, where'd
she get that?

JIM
She won't answer her phone.

MAGGIE
No shit. She stole our story based
on your conversations. You think
she's going to answer calls from
her unnamed source.

JIM
I was off the record. We were
always off the record. She crossed
her heart.

NEAL
Maybe she crossed her fingers.

MAGGIE
You can't cross your fingers on
whether something is on the record.

NEAL

If you cross your fingers, it's not a lie.

MAGGIE

It's still a lie. It just doesn't count.

NEAL

It protects you from going to hell when you lie.

JIM

It only works for white lies.

MAGGIE

And people under 10.

JIM

She didn't cross her fingers. We were off the record. I always thought we were off the record.

MAGGIE

Who's she been working with?

JIM

She's been doing a piece on the Southern Poverty Law Center.

MAGGIE

The Southern Poverty Law Center?
The Southern Poverty Law Center?
You gave fed our story on a white hate group to your girlfriend journalist who was working with the Southern Poverty Law Center?

JIM

We were off the record.

Maggie hits Neal.

MAGGIE

Why didn't we think of that? They track hate groups.

NEAL

That was the next step.

MAGGIE

Next step? The first step was erasing my identity, and decorating

MAGGIE
with swastikas. Making me wear a
wig. Jeopardizing my life.

NEAL
I see now I should have reversed
them.

JIM
Always start with research.

MAGGIE
(to Jim)
YOU are not off the hook.

NEAL
You're the one who gave away our
story.

MAGGIE
(to Neal)
And you're the one who is stupid.

Maggie walks away.

NEAL
(calling to Maggie)
I wouldn't say stupid.

Maggie ignores him.

NEAL
(Continued)
So now she's not talking to me?

JIM
I don't think she's talking to
either of us.

NEAL
I'm not stupid.

JIM
Mmm. She tried to shoot me last
night.

NEAL
Really?

JIM
Sort of. Yeah.

Neal takes the newspaper.

NEAL

I don't think I'm talking to you
right now.

As Neal walks away...

Jim dials Hallie. It goes straight to Voicemail. He hangs
up.

JIM

Nobody is.

Mackenzie appears with a newspaper in her hand.

MACKENZIE

Jim, can I talk to you?

JIM

(to himself)

I spoke too soon.

(to Mackenzie)

I'm sorry. I thought I was off the
record.

MACKENZIE

She didn't.

JIM

I trusted her.

MACKENZIE

She betrayed you. And now it looks
like you betrayed us.

JIM

Am I fired?

MACKENZIE

You should be.

JIM

I can quit.

MACKENZIE

Don't you fucking dare.

JIM

You want to be the one to fire me.

MACKENZIE

I want to be able to trust you. I
want to know you are on my team.
Because you are one of the best
producers I have worked with.

JIM

I wanna make good news again.

MACKENZIE

Did you give her the story on purpose? To punish me? And Will?

JIM

I wouldn't do that. But if we're no longer doing the news here, I'm willing to go somewhere that is.

MACKENZIE

Then go.

Stand off.

JIM

Maggie has a gun.

MACKENZIE

What?

JIM

Maggie tried to shoot me.

Mackenzie turns to look for Maggie.

MACKENZIE

Maggie?

Jim turns Mac around and walks her away.

JIM

Shhh. Maggie bought a gun after Africa. Maggie has been walking around with PTSD. And she tried to shoot me last night.

MACKENZIE

Oh God. But that doesn't excuse you giving Hallie-

JIM

THIS is what's going on. THIS is what's happening. People are scared. Violence is happening, because we are all so self-absorbed that we don't even notice in our workplaces and families, how bad things have become.

MACKENZIE

I need to know I can trust you.

JIM

You can trust me.

MACKENZIE

Hallie?

JIM

If she'd take my calls, I would
break up with her.

Mackenzie strokes Jim's shoulder.

MACKENZIE

I'm sorry. You looked good
together. You should ask out
Maggie.

JIM

She just tried to shoot me.

MACKENZIE

I've done far worse to Will.

Will enters.

WILL

Gimme a story. I'm ready.

MACKENZIE

You sure? The verdict's not out.

WILL

But it will be. And it'll be
innocent.

JIM

We've got a story.

WILL

Do I look like I have fire?

MACKENZIE

I see a little smoke behind your
ears.

WILL

I don't want to be safe. I don't
want to ever hear you call me safe
again.

JIM
Do I still work here?

MACKENZIE
Do you?

Beat.

Jim walks toward the team.

JIM
Maggie, bring the Marissa Alexander
piece. Kendra, you got that piece
on Racial Profiling? Gary, Stand
Your Ground is on.

The team kicks into urgent work mode.

WILL
This is going to be a good show.

MACKENZIE
It better be.

Mackenzie kisses Will on the cheek.

62 INT. CHARLIE'S OFFICE- NIGHT

Charlie watches NEWS NIGHT in his office.

WILL
(on television)
Tonight we await the verdict while
the jury deliberates. We know
George Zimmerman killed Trayvon
Martin. But jury must decide
whether Zimmerman pulled the
trigger in self defense, or with
nefarious intent in his heart.

63 INT. CONTROL ROOM- NIGHT

Mackenzie and Technicians watch Will on the monitor.

WILL
(on television)
The case has raised questions in
our communities and our country.
Does gun ownership protect us?
Statistics tell us that for each
one percentage point increase in

WILL
 proportion of household gun
 ownership the firearm homicide rate
 increased by point nine percent.

64 INT. BULLPEN- NIGHT

Maggie and Jim and team watch Will on TV.

WILL
 (on television)
 Are all people treated equally in
 the eyes of the law? George
 Zimmerman may be found innocent for
 shooting a young black man, but
 African American woman, Marissa
 Alexander, was sentenced to 20
 years in jail when she fired a
 warning shot in the same state.

65 INT. CHARLIE'S OFFICE- NIGHT

WILL
 (on television)
 Only through open acknowledgment of
 faults in our system and ourselves
 and willing discussion of our
 issues can we work toward a better
 America. And tonight, I vow that we
 at ACN commit to leading those
 discussions. Whatever the verdict
 in this case. I'm Will McAvoy.
 We'll be right back.

Charlie toasts to the TV.

CHARLIE
 'Atta Boy.

66 INT. CONTROL ROOM- NIGHT

Mackenzie and the Technicians watch Will.

TECH DIRECTOR
 Are we back?

MACKENZIE
 (into microphone)
 Are we back?

WILL
 (on the monitor)
 We're back!

Mackenzie does some version of a happy dance.

MACKENZIE
 We're back!

67 INT. STUDIO- NIGHT

WILL
 Am I on fire yet?

MACKENZIE (O.S.)
 Burning down the house.

68 INT. BAR- NIGHT

Maggie and Jim at the bar.

JIM
 Are you okay?

MAGGIE
 I'm going to be. (beat) Are you
 okay?

JIM
 I will be.

MAGGIE
 I guess you're single.

JIM
 I am.

MAGGIE
 So am I.

Jim and Maggie stare at each other both wanting to say something. They turn to the television.

CRUMP
 (on television)
 This morning, Martin Luther King's
 daughter, Dr. Bernice King, tweeted
 me a message that read Today is a
 defining moment for the status of
 my father's dream. Whatever the
 Zimmerman verdict is, she tweeted,

CRUMP
 in the words of my father, we must
 conduct ourselves on the higher
 plane of dignity and discipline.
 Trayvon Martin will forever remain
 in the annals of history. Next to
 Medgar Evers and Emmett Till as
 symbols for the fight for equal
 justice for all. In conclusion,
 for Trayvon to rest in peace, we
 must all be peaceful. Thank you.

Jim gathers his things.

JIM
 I'll walk you home.

Maggie gathers her things then stops.

MAGGIE
 Do you wanna go out sometime? On a
 date. Us.

JIM
 I really do.

MAGGIE
 Thank God.

Jim and Maggie leave.

JIM
 Just leave the gun at home.

MAGGIE
 Deal.

They exit.

69 EXT. HANG CHEW'S- NIGHT

Jim and Maggie walk down the misty New York street. Jim reaches out and takes Maggie's hand. They walk into the night holding hands.

Jim's cell phone vibrates. He looks at it. A call from HALLIE. He denies it.