

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.