

PINK REVISIONS: 1/24/00
BLUE REVISIONS: 1/18/00

THE WEST WING

"Celestial Navigation"

Teleplay by
Aaron Sorkin

Story by
Dee Dee Myers
&
Lawrence O' Donnell, Jr.

Directed by
Christopher Misiano

THE WEST WING

"Celestial Navigation"

CAST LIST

PRESIDENT JOSIAH BARTLET

LEO MCGARRY

JOSH LYMAN

SAM SEABORN

TOBY ZIEGLER

C.J. CREGG

*

CHARLIE YOUNG

GINGER

CAROL

BONNIE

DANNY

MARGARET

DONNA

ROBERTO MENDOZA

NESSLER

MAN

REPORTER #1

REPORTER #2

REPORTER #3

DEBORAH O'LEARY

REPORTER #4 (MIKE)

REPORTER #5 (KATIE)

FEMALE STUDENT

SAM

PETER

MACNAMARA

STEWARD

"Celestial Navigation"

TEASER

From the darkness we HEAR:

NESSLER (VO)

Good evening. Welcome to the third installment of this year's Margorie DuPont lecture series.

FADE IN:

1 INT. COLLEGE LECTURE HALL - NIGHT 1

A packed house in tiered, theater-style seating. NESSLER, a professor, occupies one of two chairs facing the audience. A small table, a couple of glasses and pitcher of water separates him from the empty chair to his right. A small microphone is clipped to his tie.

NESSLER

I can see by the size of the turnout that you're excited to meet tonight's guest, so let me dispense with some housekeeping as quickly as I can. Starting next week, my office hours are gonna be changing to Tuesdays, noon to one and Fridays--

JOSH is standing "backstage," talking into his cell phone.

JOSH

(into phone)

What are you talking about?

INTERCUT WITH:

2 EXT. D.C. STREET - SAME TIME 2

SAM's in the street with the cell phone to his ear trying to hail a cab.

SAM

(into phone)

He was arrested.

JOSH

(into phone)

For what?

(CONTINUED)

SAM

(into phone)
Drunk driving, resisting arrest and I
think disorderly conduct.

JOSH

(into phone)
You think?

SAM

(into phone)
This thing's about 30 minutes old, Josh,
we don't know what exactly happened.

JOSH

What do we know.

SAM

Mendoza doesn't drink.

JOSH

He was arrested for drunk driving.

SAM

Roberto Mendoza doesn't drink, Josh.

JOSH

How much does the press know?

SAM

They don't know anything.

JOSH

The cops haven't leaked it?

SAM

I swear to God, I don't think the
cops know.

JOSH

They don't know they arrested Roberto
Mendoza?

SAM

They don't know it's that Roberto
Mendoza.

A cab pulls over--

JOSH

(pause--looks around
helplessly)
I've got this thing now.

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: 2

SAM

I got a cab. I'll let you know what's
goin' on.

SAM hangs up.

SAM

(to the DRIVER)

The White House, please.

OUT TO:

3 INT. COLLEGE LECTURE HALL - CONTINUOUS

JOSH

(into phone)

Stay ahead of the pitch, Sam, and have
Toby page me. We don't even know if this
guy's called a lawyer. Is he sitting in
a jail cell? You're not there anymore,
are you. I'm talking to no one at all
right now.

JOSH snaps the phone shut and looks out at NESSLER.

NESSLER

For underclassmen enrolled in 304,
the TAs will be handing out--

OUT TO:

4 INT. LEO'S OFFICE - NIGHT

C.J. is there as SAM comes in--

C.J.

What happened?

SAM

This isn't as bad as you think, C.J.

C.J.

Was the President's nominee for the
Supreme Court just arrested for drunk
driving?

SAM

Yes.

C.J.

Then it's pretty bad, isn't it?

(CONTINUED)

SAM

Sure.

- C.J.

I thought he doesn't drink.

SAM

He doesn't drink.

C.J.

He was tonight.

SAM

C.J., we've vetted the man. I'm not saying he's not a heavy drinker, I'm saying he doesn't drink.

C.J.

Then what was he pulled over for?

SAM

Driving while being Hispanic.

C.J.

Does Toby know?

TOBY enters from another door--

TOBY

I've stepped off the edge of the world.

SAM

(to C.J.)

Yes.

TOBY

Where'd this happen?

SAM

Wesley, Connecticut.

C.J.

Why'd he refuse the Breathalyzer?

TOBY

'Cause he's a crazy man who's out to ruin my life.

SAM

Toby--

(CONTINUED)

TOBY
That's what he's out to do. Has anyone
posted bail?

 SAM
No.

 TOBY
Why not?

 SAM
They can't find a judge.

 TOBY
Why not?

 C.J.
He's not in Cook County, it's Friday
night in Wesley, Connecticut.

 TOBY
Believe me when I tell you, C.J., I will
figure out a way to blame this on you.

 C.J.
I have no doubt about that.

LEO enters--

 LEO
Have someone find his lawyer and talk to
him. Sam, there's an Air Force Lear jet
with its motor running. Fly to
Westchester County Airport, rent a car,
drive to Wesley and get the next
Associate Justice of the Supreme Court
outa jail. C.J., Sam sees one reporter
when he gets off that plane, I'm gonna
blame you.

 C.J.
Toby's got you covered there.

 TOBY
I'm going with Sam.

 LEO
Toby--

 TOBY
The judge and I are gonna have an
abrupt conversation.

(CONTINUED)

LEO
I want my phone to ring once every 15
minutes, I wanna know what's goin' on.

CUT TO:

5 INT. COLLEGE LECTURE HALL - NIGHT 5

JOSH is being introduced.

NESSLER
...where he worked as floor manager
for the House Minority Whip and Chief of
Staff for Congressman Earl Brennan. After
serving as senior political director for
Jed Bartlet's presidential campaign, he
was appointed Deputy White House Chief of
Staff. Please welcome Joshua Lyman.

The room breaks into APPLAUSE as JOSH takes his seat.

NESSLER
Josh, you're here to tell us what it's
like to work for the President.

JOSH
I'll do my best.

SMASH CUT TO:

MAIN TITLES

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

6 INT. COLLEGE LECTURE HALL - NIGHT 6

Apparently JOSH has just said something hilarious. The STUDENTS' LAUGHTER turns into APPLAUSE.

NESSLER

Josh, why don't you start by telling us about a typical day at the White House.

JOSH

The first thing I'll tell you is there's no such thing. There's a schedule and there's a structure to be sure, and to a certain extent it starts out as a nine to five job, but you can pretty much count on it getting blown to hell by 9:30.

Everyone LAUGHS.

NESSLER

Give us an example.

JOSH

I'll give you an example from this week. Anyone reading the papers the last few days has probably been following along with what we call The News Cycle That Wouldn't End. Depending on how you look at it, it started either with a Cabinet Secretary losing her temper, a committee chairman baiting her during a hearing, the President answering a question he shouldn't have, a dentist appointment, or me being stupid. For the record, I'd like to say that I don't think it was as much my fault as other people do. One thing's for sure: It started out as a bill signing ceremony in the mural room that was supposed to trumpet the President's vision for education reform.

CUT TO:

7 INT. PRESS BRIEFING ROOM - DAY 7

C.J. is at the podium while SAM and TOBY prep her. CAROL is sitting to the side.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM
Gimme the bullet points.

C.J.
I understand this, Sam.

SAM
Excellent.

C.J.
I really do.

SAM
I have complete confidence in you.

C.J.
Thank you.

TOBY
Give him the bullet points.

C.J.
And I feel bathed in your confidence as well, Toby.

TOBY
C.J.--

C.J.
Forgive student loans to people who become teachers--

TOBY
And?

C.J.
--and spend at least three years teaching in a rural or inner city school. Give cash bonuses to people who leave other careers and become teachers. Provide Federal money for grants to individual school districts to use older, more experienced teachers to train younger, less experienced teachers and--

TOBY
You should note that half of all new teachers quit in the first three years.

C.J.
(brandishing)
It is right here on my index card, Toby.

(CONTINUED)

9 INT. C.J.'S OUTER OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

C.J.
Carol, let's move the briefing to one.

CAROL
You can't.

C.J.
Why not?

CAROL
You have the thing.

C.J.
Yes, and this is a perfect excuse to postpone the thing.

CAROL
You really don't want to do that.

SAM
You have a thing?

C.J.
I have a dentist appointment at noon.

SAM
What's wrong?

C.J.
Nothing's wrong.

SAM
C.J.--

C.J.
I'm experiencing some pain.

SAM
For how long.

C.J.
About a month now, but it'll go away by itself.

- SAM
When?

C.J.
When I die, Sam. Carol, cancel the appointment.

SAM
Carol, set the briefing for two o'clock
and keep the appointment.

C.J.
Sam--

SAM
Your teeth are the best friends you got,
C.J.

C.J.
They are?

SAM
Take care of them and they'll take care
of you.

C.J.
When did you start talking like this?

SAM
I'm nuts about dental hygiene.

C.J.
Get out now.

SAM
Okay.

SAM exits as we:

CUT TO:

10 INT. WEST WING CORRIDOR - DAY

10

As TOBY and JOSH head toward the communications bullpen.

TOBY
She called him a racist?

JOSH
She didn't use that word.

TOBY
What word did she use?

JOSH
Well, yes she used that word.

As they walk into--

11 INT. COMMUNICATIONS BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

11

TOBY
(calling out)
Bonnie. Ginger.

GINGER
Yes.

TOBY
Get me anything that might be on the wire
already about the HUD Secretary calling
Jack Wooden a racist.

BONNIE
You want it now?

TOBY
No, Bonnie, I want it at whatever
leisurely pace you two feel--

BONNIE
I'm just asking.

TOBY
I want it now.

BONNIE and GINGER go off.

TOBY
On C-SPAN she called Wooden a racist?

JOSH
No, no. Not just Wooden. She was pretty
careful to include all Republicans.

TOBY
Why are you good-humored about this?

JOSH
She was baited.

TOBY
I don't care.

JOSH
She was baited and she was right.

TOBY
Good for her.

DONNA comes in with some printouts.

(CONTINUED)

DONNA

Excuse me. Josh, did you know that Deborah O'Leary called--

TOBY

Is that a wire story?

JOSH

What's it say?

DONNA

(reading)

"Wooden's lengthy recitation of the problems confronting public housing drew an angry response from Secretary O'Leary." And here's what she said: 'Public housing has serious problems, Mr. Chairman, I don't deny that. But if you and your colleagues in the Republican Party--'"

TOBY

No.

DONNA

"--were as invested in solving the problems associated with poverty as you are in scoring political points on the backs of poor people and minorities, you might just see the value.' 'Are you calling me a racist,' Wooden shot back."

TOBY

"Of course not," she answered wisely.

DONNA

"'If the shoe fits,' responded the Secretary."

TOBY

Well, wasn't that clever of her.

SAM comes in with the wire report--

SAM

You guys know about Debbie O'Leary?

JOSH

Yes.

(CONTINUED)

SAM
You see the wire report?

JOSH
Yes.

(CONTINUED)

SAM

(reading)

"When reporters confronted Secretary O'Leary in the hallway outside the hearing room--"

TOBY

"She retracted her earlier comments--"

SAM

(reading)

"--she defended her earlier comments, saying 'The only thing that's been an abject failure is the Republican Party's willingness to offer serious solutions to the very serious problem of poverty and homelessness in this country.'"

JOSH

(to TOBY)

See? At least that time she stopped short of calling 'em racists.

SAM

(reading)

"And yes, I think that failure has been driven in large measure by racism."

TOBY

(calling out)

Bonnie! Ginger! Somebody page the spokes--where the hell are they?

BONNIE and GINGER come in with the wire service report--

GINGER

We got the wire report.

TOBY

Did you actually go the Associated Press building, 'cause you know we have a machine--

BONNIE

We're having computer problems.

TOBY

Page the spokesperson for HUD--

JOSH

Moralis.

(CONTINUED)

TOBY
--I need him now.

CUT TO:

12 INT. COLLEGE LECTURE HALL - NIGHT

12

JOSH
Donald Moralis, who's the spokesperson for the Department of Housing and Urban Development and who's wishing he hadn't gotten out of bed that morning, confirms what's happened. Now there's the matter of telling the President.

CUT TO:

13 INT. THE OVAL OFFICE - DAY

13

BARTLET
If the shoe fits?

TOBY
It gets a little bit worse actually.

BARTLET
(reading)
"When reporters confronted Secretary O'Leary in the hallway outside the hearing room..."
(he reads on for a moment)
Oh, come on.

LEO
Don't worry about it.

BARTLET
Leo--

LEO
I'll take care of it.
(to JOSH)
She's on her way here?

JOSH
She'll be here in a half hour.

CHARLIE steps in--

CHARLIE
Mr. President?

(CONTINUED)

BARTLET
Yeah, let's go.

They all start to head toward the mural room--

BARTLET
(to LEO)
If the shoe fits? That's the best she
could do?

They walk into--

14 INT. MRS. LANDINGHAM'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

14

LEO
Of her many transgressions, Mr.
President, let's not worry about she
resorted to cliche.

We HEAR a MAN announce from the Mural Room--

MAN
Ladies and Gentlemen, the President
of the United States.

BARTLET and his party walk into--

15 INT. MURAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

15

All the furniture has been cleared out and several rows of
folding chairs are set up. The PRESS is behind a rope line.
A small table is at the front where the President will
eventually sit and sign the bill.

Everyone stands and APPLAUDS as BARTLET walks in to a spray
of flashbulbs.

CUT TO:

16 INT. COLLEGE LECTURE HALL - NIGHT

16

JOSH
The President spoke briefly.
(thinks a second)
The President's never spoken briefly
in his life, but he spoke. He signed
the bill, he gave away the pens, and
then he took a few questions from the
press.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JOSH (cont'd)

Now before I go on, it should be noted that according to every poll conducted in the universe, the issue that concerns Americans more than any other is education. The President had just signed off on 700 million dollars in new money for education and had announced his plans for a series of aggressive education initiatives. What do you suppose the first question from the press was?

The STUDENTS call out "Deborah O'Leary," "The HUD Secretary," etc.

JOSH

You all get an "A."

CUT TO:

17 INT. MURAL ROOM - DAY

17

DANNY

Mr. President, do you agree with Secretary O'Leary that Congressman Wooden is a racist, and if not, do you plan on asking for her resignation?

BARTLET

Let me say that I have great confidence in Deborah O'Leary. She's done a terrific job at HUD, helping thousands of people make the difficult transition from joblessness and homelessness into more fulfilling and productive lives.

DANNY

I'm sorry, Mr. President, but you didn't answer the question.

BARTLET

I was hoping you weren't gonna notice that, Danny.

DANNY

I did, sir.

BARTLET

Then I'll tell you that I agree that the Republican Party doesn't have a comprehensive program to combat poverty in this country.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BARTLET cont'd)

That being said, there are countless Republicans working hard to change their party's legacy on some of these issues, and I hope to work with them to do just that.

DANNY

Well I'm sure that was an answer to some question, Mr. President, it just wasn't an answer to mine.

CUT TO:

18 INT. COLLEGE LECTURE HALL - NIGHT

19

JOSH

If we'd just stopped it right there. "Sorry, the President can't take questions right now." "We'll cover this in the briefing." "The building's on fire." But for some reason, it took us all a moment to realize that there was no Press Secretary in the room.

CUT BACK TO:

19 INT. MURAL ROOM - DAY

19

BARTLET

Frankly, I think she went too far in assigning motive to Congressman Wooden and the Republican Party.

REPORTER #1

Will you be speaking to her?

BARTLET

She'll be meeting with Leo McGarry.

REPORTER #2

Will he ask her to apologize?

BARTLET

An apology'd be appropriate.

LEO

(to himself)

Ah, holy hell--

(to JOSH)

--get him off.

JOSH

(quickly)

Sam.

(CONTINUED)

REPORTER #3

And if she doesn't apologize, will you--

SAM

Folks, we're gonna cover all this at the two o'clock briefing. The President's late for a lunch with the U.N. Ambassador. I'm sorry.

BARTLET

Thank you, everyone.

The PRESS is shouting "Mr. President," "Will you fire her," "Sir," "If she doesn't apologize," etc.

BARTLET and the rest head out the door into--

20 INT. MRS. LANDINGHAM'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

20

As they walk--

BARTLET

That went pretty well.

LEO

We'll fix it.

TOBY

Sam.

SAM

Yeah.

TOBY

The U.N. Ambassador's in Portugal.

SAM

Okay. Yes. Well. My bad.

TOBY

Yeah.

CUT TO:

21 INT. COLLEGE LECTURE HALL - NIGHT

21

JOSH

Eight words: "The President's not taking any questions right now"--if we'd just stepped in 30 seconds sooner--

JOSH's cell phone RINGS.

(CONTINUED)

JOSH

That's me. I'm sorry. I--there's a thing. I have to answer this now. This'll take just a second. This is weird, I know, but... anyway.

JOSH speaks quietly into the cell phone--

JOSH

Yeah.

INTERCUT WITH:

22 INT. RENTAL CAR - NIGHT

22

SAM is driving and TOBY's riding shotgun with a map open on his lap talking into a cell phone. They're driving on the New England Thruway.

TOBY

Yeah, it's me.

JOSH

Are you there yet?

TOBY

We're lost.

JOSH

You're lost?

SAM

We're not lost.

TOBY

You're from Connecticut, what exit do we want for Wesley?

JOSH

(beat)

What?

TOBY

We missed the exit.

SAM

We didn't miss the exit.

JOSH

Toby, I'm kind of in the middle of something here.

(CONTINUED)

TOBY
Just tell me--

 JOSH
You bet, buddy. Call me when you
know something.

JOSH hangs up.

 JOSH
 (to NESSLER and
 the STUDENTS)
Sorry about that.

 NESSLER
Can you tell us what that was about?

 JOSH
The trade deficit. Where was I?

 NESSLER
If you'd only gotten there 30 seconds
sooner.

 JOSH
The day would've gone a lot differently.

JOSH starts pouring himself a glass of water as he speaks.

 JOSH
The President had said Secretary O'Leary
should apologize. The press wanted to
know if she'd be fired if she didn't
and we didn't have an answer. She was
coming up to the White House for a
showdown. This is what the day was about
now. And the day was about to get worse.
'Cause I was about to step to the plate.

He takes a sip of water as we:

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

23 EXT./EST. NEW ENGLAND THRUWAY - NIGHT 23

SAM and TOBY'S rental speeds through the night.

24 INT. RENTAL CAR - NIGHT 24

TOBY's got the map open on his lap.

TOBY
We're going the wrong way.

SAM
No, we're not.

TOBY
We're supposed to be going East.

SAM
We're going East.

TOBY
How do you know we're going East?

SAM
The sun rises in the East.

TOBY
It's dark outside.

SAM
Also that bright star in the Northern sky is Polaris.

TOBY
So what?

SAM
I'm using celestial navigation.

TOBY
Hey. Galileo. Get off at the next exit and turn the car around.

The car speeds on as we:

CUT TO:

25 INT. LEO'S OFFICE - DAY 25

MARGARET steps in...

(CONTINUED)

MARGARET
Leo?

LEO
Yeah.

MARGARET
Secretary O'Leary is here.

LEO
Thank you.

MARGARET steps out and a moment later DEBORAH O'LEARY enters.
She's a strikingly handsome black woman in her late 40s.

O'LEARY
Leo--

LEO
Madam Secretary.

O'LEARY
I can't believe he did that, Leo.

LEO
Debbie--

O'LEARY
How could--

LEO
You're pissed at us?

O'LEARY
How could he publicly demand that I
apologize without hearing my side of
the story first.

LEO
We blew the press event, we'll cop to
that, but Debbie, I got a video tape
of your side of the story.

O'LEARY
The man is a racist.

LEO
Maybe so.

O'LEARY
Maybe?

LEO
Debbie--

O'LEARY
He's using his oversight authority to spit at poor people and minorities, which in his mind are the same thing--

LEO
Look--

O'LEARY
He's doing it because he can, and he's doing it because he can score points with his narrow-minded constituents.

LEO
His narrow-minded constituents are also our narrow-minded constituents.

O'LEARY
Oh, for cryin' out loud, Leo, when are you guys gonna stop running for president?

LEO
When angels dance on pinheads, Debbie. We need their votes on any number of issues, including, by the way, the budget for the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

O'LEARY
Attacking HUD is code for attacking blacks.

LEO
Thanks. Having been born yesterday on a turnip truck--

O'LEARY
Do you not think it is my role as the highest ranking African-American woman in Government to point it out when--

LEO
I think, Debbie, that role, first and foremost, is to serve the President. A task today at which you failed spectacularly.

O'LEARY
Leo--

(CONTINUED)

LEO
You're gonna apologize.

O'LEARY
(pause)
I'm sorry.

LEO
(pause)
Not to me, Debbie.

O'LEARY
I called it like I saw it.

LEO
Well, now you're gonna apologize for
it.

O'LEARY
I can't.

LEO
You can.

O'LEARY
I won't.

LEO
You will.

O'LEARY
Is this an order?

LEO
You're doin' great work, Deb. The
President's nuts about you, always has
been. He'll cry for three minutes after
he fires your ass and then he'll say
what's next.

O'LEARY
Leo, if I have to go and ask Wooden
for forgiveness, he's gonna lord it
over me from now until the end of time.

LEO
That's the cost of doing business.

O'LEARY
(pause)
Can I write it?

(CONTINUED)

LEO
Sure, but then you'll have to read it.

O'LEARY
Cameras?

LEO
Yes, ma'am.

O'LEARY
(pause)
Done.

LEO
Deb. He's been trying to provoke you for months. When you give in to him, you surrender the high ground.

O'LEARY
(beat)
How did it happen?

LEO
You forgot what your grandfather taught you.

O'LEARY
What's that?

LEO
Never argue with a drunk or a fool.

O'LEARY
(beat)
Is the President very angry with me?

LEO
Mostly he's upset that you couldn't come up with anything better than "If the shoe fits."

And O'LEARY enjoys the first LAUGH she's had all day. LEO smiles...

LEO
Good luck.

O'LEARY
Thank you.

O'LEARY walks out as we:

CUT TO:

26 INT. COLLEGE LECTURE HALL - NIGHT

26

JOSH

So that shoulda been it, right? C.J. Cregg does the two o'clock briefing, tells 'em Secretary O'Leary has an apology for Congressman Wooden, all questions about the matter'll be handled by her spokesperson, Donald Moralis, and re-directs their attention to the 700-million bucks of yours we just spent on teachers. Who here has had emergency root canal?

CUT TO:

27 INT. JOSH'S OFFICE/BULLPEN AREA - DAY

27

JOSH is sitting at his desk, his head buried in work. There's a tap on the door. JOSH doesn't look up when he says--

JOSH

Yeah.

C.J.

Josh?

JOSH looks up. C.J.'s standing in the doorway. Her cheeks are stuffed with cotton and gauze. Articulation is a severe challenge for her right now.

JOSH

What the hell happened?

C.J.

I had woot canow.

JOSH

What happened to your cheeks?

C.J.

I had woot canow.

JOSH

And why are you talking like that?

-C.J.

I had woot canow!

JOSH

Yeah, I heard you the first time, I was just amusing myself.

(CONTINUED)

C.J.
I can suggest some other things you
can do with yourself.

JOSH
Are you in pain?

C.J.
I had woot canow!!

JOSH
You're gonna need to stop saying
that 'cause you just look and sound
so ridiculous.

C.J. is talking to JOSH as he walks in and out of his office
with various business.

C.J.
I have to cancel the bwiefing.

JOSH
You can't.

C.J.
Look at me.

JOSH
You'll be great.

C.J.
I can't do the bwiefing.

JOSH
Why not?

C.J.
'Cause I can't even say bwiefing.

JOSH
You can't cancel the briefing. You
gotta wrap up O'Leary, you gotta
move 'em back to the bill signing.

C.J.
Joshua...

JOSH
(pause)
I'm sorry, did you just say my name?

C.J.
You really think I can do it?

(CONTINUED)

JOSH
Don't be insane, C.J., you're not going into a press briefing looking like Bullwinkle.

C.J.
So once again you were just having a little fun.

JOSH
Yeah.

C.J.
Ha ha ha ha ha ha....

JOSH
When can you take the cotton out?

C.J.
Two hours. I'll have Carol cancel the briefing.

JOSH
No, we're still doin' it.

C.J.
Who?

JOSH
Me.

C.J.
No way.

JOSH
C.J.--

C.J.
You get hostile.

JOSH
I get hot stuff?

C.J.
Hostile, hostile, you get hostile.

JOSH
I don't get hostile. I don't get randomly hostile. I get hostile when hostility is called for.

C.J.
Let Sam do it.

(CONTINUED)

JOSH
Sam went to Foggy Bottom.

C.J.
What's he doing in Foggy Bottom?

JOSH
Sorry, I just wanted to see if I
could make you say Foggy Bottom.
He's working with the speechwriters.

C.J.
Toby?

JOSH
Toby's with Leo and the President.

C.J.
Josh--

JOSH
"Hey there, cats and kittens, it's
Josh Lyman comin' at you with your
two o'clock briefing."

C.J.
Josh. Please. Be careful. Try very
very hard not to destroy us.

JOSH
(beat)
You shouldn't say that, C.J., you
got a great body.

C.J. hangs her head as JOSH heads off--

JOSH
Here we go!

CUT TO:

28 INT. PRESS BRIEFING ROOM - DAY

28

The PRESS is milling around.

CAROL (OVER PA)
Please take your seats. We'll start
the briefing. Please take your seats.

REPORTERS are taking their seats as JOSH enters from the
back. He runs into DANNY.

(CONTINUED)

DANNY
Josh.

JOSH
Hey.

DANNY
You're not gonna do this.

JOSH
Do the briefing?

DANNY
You're not gonna do this.

JOSH
I talk to reporters all the time,
Danny.

DANNY
You really don't want to do this.

JOSH
Lemme tell you something, mi compadre.
You guys have been coddled. I'm not
your girlfriend, I'm not your camp
counselor, I'm not your sixth grade
teacher you had a crush on. I am a
graduate of Harvard and Yale, and I
believe that my powers of debate can
rise to meet the Socratic wonder
that is the White House Press Corps.

DANNY
(pause)
Okey-doke.

JOSH
(walking up to the
podium)
Good afternoon everybody, would you
take your seats, please. C.J. had a
dental emergency so I'll handle the
briefing today.

The PRESS immediately begins to shout "Josh!" "Josh!"--

CUT TO:

29 INT. COLLEGE LECTURE HALL - NIGHT

29

JOSH

I'd like to say a couple of things in my own defense. First of all, everything was fine. I dispensed of the Deborah O'Leary matter with ease and poise. I opened the room to questions, while imposing a discipline I felt had been lacking in C.J.'s briefings.

CUT TO:

30 INT. PRESS BRIEFING ROOM - DAY

30

JOSH

I'm gonna take one question a piece.

REPORTER #4 (MIKE)

Josh.

JOSH

Mike.

MIKE

When was the last time the President had a cigarette?

JOSH

Mike, you sure you want your one question to be that stupid?

CUT TO:

31 INT. C.J.'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

31

C.J.'s watching the monitor in disbelief--

C.J.

Oh, my God.

REPORTER #5 (ON MONITOR)

It's not a stupid question, Josh. If the President is gonna continue to be so adamantly anti-tobacco--

CUT TO:

32 INT. PRESS BRIEFING ROOM - SAME TIME

32

REPORTER #5 (KATIE)

--why is it unreasonable to ask if he's a smoker?

(CONTINUED)

JOSH

The President quit smoking years ago.

REPORTER #3

He bummed a cigarette from me on Air Force One two days ago.

JOSH

(beat)

Well, then.

(beat)

Jonathan.

JONATHAN

You're not gonna answer Katie's question?

JOSH

I'll look into it. Danny.

DANNY

Josh, economists worry that the continuing drop in unemployment will create increased pressure on wages, in effect driving them up. Is the President worried that this could lead to a resurgence of inflation?

JOSH

Let me emphasize the President is pleased that unemployment has dropped another point-five percent. As a result--

DANNY

And I'm sure we all join the President in his joy. But I'm wondering, does the President have a plan to fight the resulting inflation.

JOSH

The President is doing everything in his power to maintain the robust economy that's created millions of new jobs, improved productivity and kept a lid on inflation.

REPORTER #5 (KATIE)

But he has no plan to address inflation specifically.

(CONTINUED)

JOSH
24 Ph.D.s on the Council of Economic
Advisors, Katie, they have a plan to
fight inflation.

DANNY
Is the reason you won't tell us about
it that it's a secret?

JOSH
Yeah, Danny, we got a secret inflation
plan.

CUT TO:

33 INT. COLLEGE LECTURE HALL - NIGHT

33

JOSH
I guess that's pretty much when the
wheels came off the wagon.

NESSLER
Josh, right here is a good time to
take our break. Everybody, stretch
your legs for five minutes. The
sign-in sheets for 202 are in the
lobby. If you smoke, apparently you
can bum a cigarette on Air Force One.
Let's have a hand for our guest,
Joshua Lyman. Five minutes means
five minutes.

Off the STUDENTS' APPLAUSE, we:

CUT TO:

34 EXT. COLLEGE LECTURE HALL - NIGHT

34

STUDENTS are spilling out into the fresh air. JOSH comes out
as well, finding a private area and dialing his cell phone.
A couple of FEMALE STUDENTS standing 30 feet away catch his
eye.

FEMALE STUDENT
You're great.

JOSH
Thanks.

JOSH finishes dialing as we:

INTERCUT WITH:

35

INT. RENTAL CAR - NIGHT

35

They're on back roads now. TOBY's reclining back in his seat as far as it will go, pretty much resigned to spending the rest of his life in this car. His cell phone RINGS.

TOBY
(into phone)
Yeah.

JOSH
What's going on?

TOBY
Sam feels we're zeroing in on it.

JOSH
You haven't found it yet?

TOBY
We've been navigating by the North Star, which turned out to be the Delta Shuttle from LaGuardia. It's a miracle we're not in Nantucket right now.

JOSH
Toby, how hard can it be to find the Wesley police station?

TOBY
I don't know, Josh. But while we're looking, can you tell me a little more about the President's secret plan to fight inflation?

JOSH
How long before you let up on me about that?

TOBY
It's gonna be a little while I would think.

JOSH
Call me when you know something.

TOBY hangs up his phone.

SAM
There's a store open up there. I'm gonna pull over and ask 'em if they know where the Wesley Police Station is.

(CONTINUED)

TOBY

Or you could just pull in over there
at the Wesley Police Station and
ask them.

SAM

(seeing it)

Hey.

TOBY

Yeah.

SAM

Look.

TOBY

Yeah.

SAM

We found it.

TOBY pops his seat up straight.

TOBY

Let's get this done and get outa here.

The rental car pulls into a small parking area in front of a
low-slung building. The sign outside reads: WESLEY POLICE
DEPT. - WESLEY FIRE DEPT.

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

36 INT. WESLEY POLICE STATION - NIGHT

36

A police officer (OFFICER PETER) is sitting at the desk of the otherwise sterile and in no way intimidating suburban police station. PETER's a young guy and is looking over a newspaper. He looks up as TOBY and SAM walk in. TOBY stands in back and SAM goes right to the desk to do the talking, taking out his wallet on the way.

SAM

Good evening.

PETER

Good evening.

SAM

(producing I.D.)

My name's Sam Seaborn, I work for the President of the United States. Is your Watch Commander around?

PETER

(beat)

Is this a joke?

SAM

No.

PETER

You walk in here and tell me you work for the President?

SAM

Officer Peter, we're in a certain amount of trouble tonight, and the only thing I've got going for me is that you're in more trouble than we are. My name is Sam Seaborn, I work for the President, and the sooner you reach the conclusion that I'm telling you the truth, the better off we're all gonna be. Why don't you get your Watch Commander.

PETER folds up his paper and puts it on the desk, then disappears into a back room.

There's silence as SAM and TOBY wait...

Then...

(CONTINUED)

SAM

Lemme tell you something. If we'd stayed on the Merritt Parkway instead of getting off at exit 29 and going east through Greenwich, I don't think we'd have wound up in Bridgeport so many times.

TOBY

(pause)

Shut up.

PETER comes out of the back room with MACNAMARA.

MACNAMARA

I'm Sergeant MacNamara, can I help you folks?

SAM

Sergeant, I'm Sam Seaborn, I'm the Deputy White House Communications Director, that's my boss, Toby Ziegler.

MACNAMARA

I'm not really in a mood for a joke right now.

SAM

I know how you feel. You've got Roberto Mendoza locked up back there.

MACNAMARA

Sir, please state your business here or I'm gonna have to ask you to leave.

SAM

My business is to tell you to unlock the cell and gimme Mendoza.

PETER sees something on the front page of his newspaper.

PETER

Sergeant?

MACNAMARA

You come in here, ten o'clock at night, you tell me you're from the White House and I'm just supposed to--

PETER

Sergeant.

(CONTINUED)

PETER shows him the newspaper. The blood drains from MACNAMARA's face as he looks at TOBY, who's staring back at him.

He looks back at the newspaper: Above the fold is a picture of BARTLET drafting a letter at his desk in the Oval Office. Standing right over his shoulder is TOBY.

MACNAMARA and PETER are frozen in the headlights.

SAM

Sergeant, you arrested a Federal Judge who's the President's nominee for the U.S. Supreme Court.

Reality is beginning to set in for MACNAMARA.

The phone RINGS. And RINGS again.

SAM

You should get that. That's gonna be the Governor of Connecticut.

CUT TO:

37 INT. PRESS BRIEFING ROOM - DAY

37

Various REPORTERS are shouting. JOSH wants to kill himself.

REPORTER #1

Josh, when will the President unveil his secret plan?

JOSH

There is no secret plan.

REPORTER #2

You said--

JOSH

I was talkin' to Danny, I was kidding.

REPORTER #3

These are people's jobs we're talkin' about, Josh, you wanna give us a straight answer?

JOSH

I honestly can't remember the question.

(CONTINUED)

REPORTER #3

Given the reduction in unemployment,
does the President have a plan to fight
the ensuing inflation--

REPORTER #2

--and if so, why's he keeping it a
secret.

JOSH glances over at DANNY, who flashes him a little "Dude, I
kinda told you so" look.

CUT TO:

38 INT. WEST WING CORRIDOR - DAY

38

The door to the Press Briefing Room is opened from the inside
by CAROL and JOSH flies out, still hearing shouted questions
at his back.

DONNA's waiting for him.

DONNA

Oh my God, Josh. I mean, oh my God.

The two of them are walking quickly toward JOSH's office.

JOSH

I can fix this.

DONNA

How?

JOSH

I can fix this.

DONNA

I don't think you can.

JOSH

This'd be a great time to feel a
little support from you, Donna.

DONNA

You have my support, Josh.

JOSH

Do I?

DONNA

Yes.

(CONTINUED)

JOSH
Okay. Good. That's a start. Tell me
what you think I should do right now.

DONNA
Go into your office and come up with
a secret plan to fight inflation.

JOSH
That's support, Donna? That's--

C.J. comes out of her office--

C.J.
Joshua!

JOSH
(recoiling)
Yeah, that's the face I wanted to see
right now.

C.J.
What the hell happened in there?

JOSH
C.J.--

C.J.
You compwetwey impwoded.

JOSH
(pause)
What'd I do?

DONNA
You completely imploded.

JOSH
I wouldn't say completely.

C.J.
You were vague. You were hostile.
You were bewidgawint--

DONNA
(to JOSH)
Belligerent.

C.J.
Do you know what it's gonna take for
me to fix this?

They go into--

39 INT. JOSH'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

39

JOSH
I'm gonna fix this.

C.J.
No you're not. You're not ever awowed
in my pwess woom again!

JOSH
Donna, call Toby's office and find
out if he was watching.

DONNA exits and BOOM! We hear a door fly open off screen--

TOBY
Where the hell is he?

JOSH
(calling to DONNA)
Never mind.

TOBY walks in--

JOSH
Toby--

TOBY
Have you fallen on your head?

JOSH
Listen--

TOBY
Have you fallen down and hit your
head on something hard?

JOSH
I feel bad about this.

TOBY
Well then I guess that's all that
matters.

JOSH
Hey--

TOBY
That was some pretty good television,
Josh. I think four network news
directors are gonna bear me out on
that tonight.

(CONTINUED)

JOSH
I really think it's not as bad as
you're making it out to be.

C.J.
A seaquit pwan to fwite infrathon??!!!

TOBY
(beat)
'Kay, C.J.? For a little while, just
write it down.

SAM comes in--

SAM
We've got a problem.

TOBY
No kidding.

SAM
Not Josh.

JOSH
Praise God.

SAM
Though I gotta say telling a reporter
his question's stupid isn't like a
page outa Dale Carnegie or anything.

JOSH
Thank you.

TOBY
What's the problem?

SAM
You're not gonna like it.

TOBY
Sam, believe me, the only thing
that could make this day worse is
if Roberto Mendoza got involved.

SAM is looking at TOBY...

TOBY
What'd he do?

CUT TO:

40 INT. COLLEGE LECTURE HALL - NIGHT

40

JOSH

Roberto Mendoza is the President's nominee to fill Crouch's seat on the Supreme Court. The President put Toby in charge of his confirmation, which is a huge responsibility. A failed confirmation for the Court is a body blow to a Presidency. Besides which, he's a brilliant jurist and we badly want him on the bench. The confirmation process is a tough needle to thread, you gotta make a lot of friends, and Supreme Court nominees don't speak before their confirmation. They let the White House speak for them. Something Toby's had a little bit of trouble teaching Roberto Mendoza.

CUT TO:

41 INT. ROOSEVELT ROOM - DAY

41

TOBY, SAM, JOSH and C.J. are sitting at the table as LEO comes

in--

LEO

He said the President was wrong?

C.J.

He said the Pwesident was wong to make Secwetewy O'weewee apowogize. He said--

LEO

What the hell--

TOBY

C.J.
(to SAM)
Tell him.

SAM

He said the President was wrong to make Secretary O'Leary apologize.

LEO

To who?

SAM

To Wooden.

(CONTINUED)

LEO
I'm sayin' who did he say it to?

TOBY
The Chicago Tribune.

LEO
I thought he's on vacation.

SAM
He is.

LEO
I thought he's on vacation in Nova Scotia.

SAM
He is.

LEO
They called him in Nova Scotia?

SAM
Yeah.

LEO
How the hell did they find him in Nova Scotia?

JOSH
They have telephones in Nova Scotia, Leo, it's not Amish country.

LEO
(beat)
I really think of all the people in the building, Josh, you wanna be the last one to speak right now.

JOSH
You bet.

There's a long, long silence before C.J. pipes up quietly...

C.J.
The Pwresident needs to be bwiefed on the events of the day.

TOBY
(slowly)
C.J.... so help me God... if you say the words "president" or "briefed" again...

(CONTINUED)

LEO

(pause)

All right. The President lands in New Orleans in an hour and a half. There'll be no press at the labor conference, and when he's done, he's getting right back on the plane and coming home. Wheels-down is three a.m. he'll be in the Residence by 3:30.

JOSH

(beat)

Can I say something?

LEO

What?

JOSH

A lot of this is our fault, and the President's probably not gonna take this very well, and we want you to know that we're gonna be there with you in spirit tomorrow morning.

LEO

You're gonna be there with me in every way imaginable, Josh.

JOSH

You bet.

LEO

(exiting)

Seven a.m.

CUT TO:

42 INT. COLLEGE LECTURE HALL - NIGHT

42

JOSH

And if you read the papers, you know this isn't the first time this had happened. In the eight weeks since the President named his nominee, Judge Mendoza has, on various occasions, publicly criticized the American Bar Association, the AFL-CIO and the New York State Legislature. Three organizations without which this President wouldn't have been elected.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JOSH (cont'd)

Putting out the Deborah O'Leary fire from earlier in the day was the only thing we'd been successful at, and Judge Mendoza had just--

JOSH's cell phone RINGS...

JOSH

--he'd just, you know, started it up again. I'm really very sorry, I have to take this.

JOSH stands with the phone and turns away.

NESSLER

You know an interesting thing about what Josh had just mentioned...

NESSLER keeps the class' focus as JOSH talks off to the side.

JOSH

(into phone)

Yeah.

INTERCUT WITH:

SAM

Josh.

JOSH

Yeah.

SAM

We're in.

JOSH

Where is he?

SAM

Toby's talking to him now.

CUT TO:

PETER slides the bars open and TOBY stands there staring. ROBERTO MENDOZA is lounging on the cot, his head propped up against the wall. Toby would like very much to administer a thorough beating. He doesn't move.

(CONTINUED)

TOBY
evenly)
Hello, Mr. Justice. How are you?

MENDOZA
I'm incarcerated, Toby, how are you?

PETER
Do you need anything, Mr. Siegler?

TOBY doesn't take his eyes off MENDOZA...

TOBY
No. The Judge and I are gonna have
a chat.

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

45 INT. COLLEGE LECTURE HALL - NIGHT

45

JOSH

The hardest job in the White House is the President. The second hardest job is not Chief of Staff, it's not National Security Advisor and it's not Press Secretary, though I'm gaining a certain amount of respect for press secretaries.

Everyone LAUGHS.

JOSH

The hardest job in the White House belongs to a 21 year-old kid named Charlie Young. He's what's called the President's body man, his personal aide. He's with the President morning to night, he has a range of responsibilities, all of them difficult, but the one he hates the most is this: From time to time it's his job to wake the President up in the morning. And on this particular morning, the President had gone to sleep only three hours earlier.

CUT TO:

46 INT. MRS. LANDINGHAM'S OFFICE - MORNING

46

CHARLIE'S standing at his desk doing a couple of things at once, including waiting for someone to pick up on the other end of the phone he's holding.

OPERATOR (OVER PHONE)

Good morning, White House. Operator #4, how may I direct your call?

CHARLIE

Good morning, Helen, it's Charlie.

OPERATOR (OVER PHONE)

Hey, babe. How was New Orleans?

CHARLIE

The President did very well.

OPERATOR (OVER PHONE)

Have you been to sleep yet?

(CONTINUED)

CHARLIE
Since when?

OPERATOR (OVER PHONE)
Since yesterday.

CHARLIE
(laughing)
Good one, Helen. It's time for the
President's wake-up call.

OPERATOR (OVER PHONE)
Lucky you. Lemme put you through.

INTERCUT WITH:

47 INT. BARTLET'S BEDROOM - MORNING 47

The curtains are drawn and BARTLET's sound asleep when the phone on his nightstand RINGS. Once... Twice... CHARLIE knows this isn't gonna be an easy one... Three times...

BARTLET picks up the phone. He's not so much groggy as he is wide awake and totally asleep at the same time. It's not a stone cold lock that he knows exactly who he is or what he does for a living at the moment.

BARTLET
(into phone)
What?

CHARLIE
Good morning, Mr. President, it's
Charlie. I hope--

BARTLET
I mean what could you possibly want right
now?

CHARLIE
Sir, it's 6:30 a.m. and I--

BARTLET
In the morning?

CHARLIE
Yes, sir. And I wanted to remind you that--

BARTLET
I mean what in the name of everything
holy could you want right now?

(CONTINUED)

CHARLIE

I wanted to remind you that you have a seven a.m. meeting in the Oval Office with senior staff, followed by your security and intelligence briefings and a meeting with the Chairman of the Fed. Would you like me to have the stewards bring you some coffee and the Washington Post?

BARTLET

(pause)

Who the hell is this?

CHARLIE

Sir--

BARTLET

And what could you possibly want?!

CHARLIE

Sir? I need you to dig in now. It wasn't a nightmare. You really are the President.

BARTLET

(pause)

Okay.

CHARLIE

I'll have a steward bring the coffee to your room.

BARTLET

I'll get up now.

BARTLET hangs up the phone and goes back to sleep.

CUT TO:

48 INT. COMMUNICATIONS BULLPEN - DAY

48

SAM is in his office as TOBY passes his door--

SAM

Toby.

TOBY

Did you talk to Mendoza?

SAM

Yeah.

(CONTINUED)

TOBY
Is he getting over here?

 - SAM
Yes.

 TOBY
What time?

 SAM
Day after tomorrow.

 TOBY
Sam--

 SAM
I know.

 TOBY
I want him here now.

 SAM
He's gotta drive down from Nova Scotia.

 TOBY
He's driving?

 SAM
Yeah.

 TOBY
'Cause he doesn't know there are
airplanes now?

 SAM
He's with his wife and kid. They're on
vacation. They like the car.

 TOBY
He's driving from Nova Scotia to
Washington.

 SAM
Yeah, and he wants to make a quick stop
in Connecticut.

 - TOBY
Why?

 SAM
He likes to go antiquing.

48 CONTINUED: 2,

TOBY

pause

Well...

(beat)

I really don't know what to say to that.

CUT TO:

49 INT. FOYER OUTSIDE BARTLET'S BEDROOM - MORNING

49

A STEWARD is standing outside the door waiting with a coffee service. CHARLIE comes around the corner--

STEWARD

Charlie--

CHARLIE

Oh, come on.

STEWARD

I've been knocking every few minutes or so. I don't hear the shower running either.

CHARLIE

Thanks, Billy, gimme a minute would you?

The STEWARD steps away from the door as CHARLIE knocks and then lets himself into--

50 INT. BARTLET'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

50

CHARLIE goes up to BARTLET's bed and gives him a little shake.

CHARLIE

Mr. President?

CHARLIE shakes him.

CHARLIE

Mr. President?

CHARLIE shakes him.

CHARLIE

Mr. President?

CHARLIE shakes him.

(CONTINUED)

BARTLET

Charlie, are you aware you're committing a Federal crime right now?

CHARLIE

I'll take my chances with the Feds, Mr. President, it's seven o'clock.

BARTLET

How did you know the First Lady wasn't gonna be naked when you came in here? Come to think of it, where the hell's my wife?

CHARLIE

Argentina.

BARTLET

That's right.

CHARLIE

Senior staff in the Oval Office, sir. Now I'm gonna stand here while you get out of bed, take a shower and get dressed, Mr. President.

BARTLET

(getting up)
Have you slept yet?

CHARLIE

No, sir.

BARTLET

Good.

CUT TO:

51 INT. MRS. LANDINGHAM'S OFFICE - MORNING

51

LEO, TOBY, JOSH, SAM and C.J. are sitting or standing around the room in quiet dread.

After a long moment...

JOSH

(to C.J.)
How's your mouth?

C.J.

Well... the swelling's gone down. On the other hand, the painkillers have worn off.

(CONTINUED)

Another brutally long silence...

LEO
He's driving from Nova Scotia to
Washington?

SAM
Yeah.

LEO
How does a person do that?

SAM
My guess is he'll take the Trans Canada
Highway to New Brunswick, then maybe
catch the 1 and take the scenic route
along the coast of Maine. 95 through
New Hampshire to the Mass Pike and then
cross over to the Merritt Parkway around
Milford.

They're all staring at SAM.

TOBY
There's something kind of freakish about
you, you know that?

SAM
(beat)
Yeah.

BARTLET comes in, followed by CHARLIE. He doesn't stop
walking as he says--

BARTLET
I'm tired, I'm cranky and my wife's
in Argentina. Let's get this over with.

They follow him into--

52 INT. THE OVAL OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

52

Everyone has settled into a kind of semi-circle around the
President. BARTLET's waiting for someone to speak.

BARTLET
(pause)
What?

LEO
Mr. President, we experienced a few
public relations... what's the word--

(CONTINUED)

TOBY
Catastrophes.

LEO
--incidents in the few hours you were
away last night.

BARTLET
(beat)
What kind of incidents?

LEO
Josh?

JOSH
Yeah.
(beat).
Ah. First, I'm happy to tell you that
the incident involving Secretary O'Leary
and Congressman Wooden has been dispensed
with. Though not really, and I'll get to
that at the end. Sam asked C.J. to move
her briefing to two o'clock so we could
fold in the teachers. C.J. had emergency
root canal surgery at noon and so was
unable to brief.

BARTLET
Who did?

JOSH
I did.

BARTLET
Oh, God.

JOSH
Yeah. Long story short, you're gonna
be reading a bit today about your secret
plan to fight inflation.

BARTLET
(beat)
I have a secret plan to fight inflation?

JOSH
No.

BARTLET
Why am I gonna be reading that I do?

JOSH

It was suggested in the press room
that you do.

BARTLET

By who?

JOSH

By me.

BARTLET

(pause)

You told the press I have a secret
plan to fight inflation?

JOSH

No. I did not. Let's be absolutely
clear. I did not do that. Except, yes,
I did that.

BARTLET

Josh--

JOSH

Sir, there was this idiotic round robin
about--It was sarcastic, there was no way
they didn't know that. They were just
mad at me for imposing discipline and
calling them stupid.

BARTLET

(beat)

Okay. Before we go. C.J., if blood is
gushing from the head wound you just
received from a stampeding herd of bison,
you do the press briefing.

C.J.

Yes, sir.

JOSH

Mr. President--

BARTLET

A secret plan to fight inflation?

- JOSH

Sir, there was no turning them back.
I denied it for a half-hour and they
wouldn't take no for answer.

BARTLET

Were you clear?

(CONTINUED)

JOSH

I was crystal clear. They said, "Do you think if the President has a plan to fight inflation that it's right to keep it a secret?" I said, "Of course not."

BARTLET is staring at JOSH in amazement...

BARTLET

Are you telling me that not only did you invent a secret plan to fight inflation... but you don't support it?!

JOSH

(beat)

When you put it like that--

TOBY

Mr. President, much as we would love nothing more than to stand here and watch you... beat the living crap out of Josh, there's actually a bigger fish to fry.

BARTLET slumps down in his chair...

BARTLET

What'd Mendoza do?

TOBY

He told the Chicago Tribune that you were wrong to admonish Debbie O'Leary and make her apologize.

BARTLET

I didn't! He did!

LEO

You told me to.

BARTLET

You said you were gonna fix it.

LEO

I did fix it.

BARTLET

Well, it's broken again, Leo.

TOBY

Frankly, sir, that's 'cause your nominee for the Supreme Court's handling himself in a manner that's totally unprofessional.

(CONTINUED)

BARTLET

We will have the first of what I think will be a series of discussions about professionalism another time, Toby. Where's Mendoza?

SAM

He's on his way.

BARTLET

Right now?

SAM

Yes, but he won't be here 'til the day after tomorrow.

BARTLET

Day after tomorrow?

SAM

Yes, sir.

BARTLET

Is he coming in from Neptune?

SAM

He's vacationing with his wife and son and they'd prefer to take a... leisurely drive through Eastern Canada and New England, stopping for some antique shopping in Connecticut.

(pause)

I imagine he'll take the Trans Canada Highway to 95 and--

TOBY

Sam.

BARTLET

(calmly and evenly)

Okay. We will wait for Mendoza. In the meantime, C.J., you will untangle the press corps--

C.J.

Yes, sir.

BARTLET

--and we will hope that nothing happens today to make this worse, though I certainly wouldn't bet the house on it.

(beat)

That is all.

(CONTINUED)

ALL
Thank you, Mr. President.

Everyone exits through different doors. JOSH stays behind a moment.

JOSH
Mr. President?

BARTLET looks up...

JOSH
I just wanted to say I was sorry and that this mess will be cleaned up in an adult and professional manner.

BARTLET
Good.

JOSH
(beat)
If anyone asks you, you quit smoking years ago and the cigarette you bummed on Air Force One was for a friend.

BARTLET
(pause)
Get out.

JOSH
You bet.

JOSH exits as we:

CUT TO:

53 INT. COLLEGE LECTURE HALL - NIGHT

53

JOSH
And that was it.

NESSLER
What happened to Judge Mendoza?

JOSH
I'm sorry?

NESSLER
Did the judge get here from Nova Scotia?

(CONTINUED)

JOSH

He's on his way right now. Actually he's spending the night in Connecticut to do some antiquing.

NESSLER

Well, I think everyone would agree that was a hell of a day. And I'm sure you're relieved it didn't get any worse than that.

CUT TO:

54 INT. LEO'S OFFICE - NIGHT

54

The same scene from the opening--

LEO

Have someone find his lawyer and talk to him. Sam, there's an Air Force Lear jet with it's motor running. Fly to Westchester County Airport, rent a car, drive to Wesley and get the next Associate Justice of the Supreme Court outa jail. C.J., Sam sees one reporter when he gets off that plane, I'm gonna blame you.

C.J.

Toby's got you covered there.

TOBY

I'm going with Sam.

LEO

Toby--

TOBY

The judge and I are gonna have an abrupt conversation.

CUT TO:

55 INT. WESLEY POLICE STATION - NIGHT

55

SAM is standing casually with a cup of coffee. MACNAMARA and PETER stand awkwardly behind the desk.

MACNAMARA

He's been in there a little while now.

(CONTINUED)

SAM

(beat)

Yeah.

There's a long silence...

MACNAMARA

I was the one that pulled him over, you know. His driving was erratic.

(beat)

I'm still not entirely convinced he hadn't been drinking.

SAM

Well, you got a problem there.

MACNAMARA

What's that.

SAM

Judge Mendoza has chronic persistent hepatitis, which is a non-progressive form of liver inflammation. If he'd had enough to drink to blow a point-one on the blood-alcohol he'd be dead right now.

(pause)

This is good coffee.

CUT TO:

56 INT. JAIL CELL - NIGHT

56

TOBY

Why didn't you take the Breathalyzer?

MENDOZA

I was driving within the speed limit, I was driving on the right side of the road, I have valid tags and registration, and as far as I know there is not a warrant for my arrest in Connecticut.

TOBY

Judge--

MENDOZA

Absent just cause, Toby, a Breathalyzer is an illegal search and a civil rights violation.

TOBY

So you give Barney Fife a hard time to make a point?

(CONTINUED)

MENDOZA

It's a point worth making.

TOBY

Not now.

MENDOZA

Yes now. Right now.

TOBY

One phone call, Judge. "Toby, this has happened, tell 'em my name's Roberto Mendoza and the President's named me to the bench!"

MENDOZA

I got pulled over 'cause I look like my name's Roberto Mendoza and I'm comin' to rob your house!

TOBY

(pause)

Let's go.

MENDOZA

(pause)

Let's go where?

TOBY

Home. Let's go home.

MENDOZA

I'm not goin' anywhere.

TOBY

Judge--

MENDOZA

I'm under arrest, Toby.

TOBY

Not anymore, let's go.

MENDOZA

You pull all the strings you want, you're not doin' it for me, man. Come Monday morning I will avail myself of the criminal justice system for which I have worked my entire adult life.

TOBY

Judge. Due respect. Get up, get your things, and let's go.

(CONTINUED)

MENDOZA

I'm staying in this cell for the weekend, Toby. I'm appearing in front of a judge, and I'm getting the case dismissed. If the President has a problem with that, tell him to shove it up his ass.

TOBY

You're being--

MENDOZA

My kid was in that car, Toby!

And TOBY's nearly blown back by the force of Mendoza's emotion.

MENDOZA

(pause)

I was cuffed and patted down in front of my nine year-old boy. And he and his mother watched while they put me in a squad car and took me away.

TOBY

He's also seen you wearing a robe with a gavel in your hand.

MENDOZA

He doesn't understand that, he doesn't know what that is. He understands the police, he watches TV. That's what he's gonna remember. That they handcuffed his father. So America just got one more pissed-off guy with dark skin.

TOBY

(pause)

Robbie and Laura, where are they right now?

MENDOZA

They're at a motel a few miles.

TOBY

(pause)

There's nothing about this that doesn't stink. If it were me, I'd want to extract vengeance, and I'd say let justice be done. I'd also want to spend some time in a dark room alone. So that I didn't have to face my wife and my son and have them see my humiliation.

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TOBY (cont'd)

Bob, I can't get it done if this is a story. I can't get it done.

(beat)

There's nothing about this that doesn't stink. And nothing about this that wouldn't be better if you were a Justice on the Supreme Court.

(beat)

Lemme take you to the motel. Go see your boy.

We HOLD a moment before we:

CUT TO:

57 INT. WESLEY POLICE STATION - NIGHT

57 *

SAM, MACNAMARA and PETER are much as they were before. After a moment...

PETER

So. Can I ask? A guy in your job. Do you know missile codes and that sort of thing?

SAM takes a sip of his coffee...

SAM

Yeah.

PETER

(beat)

Outstanding.

TOBY and MENDOZA come out from a hallway--

SAM

Good evening, Mr. Justice.

MENDOZA

Hey, Sam.

TOBY

(to the cops)

He's got some personal items?

PETER

Yes, sir.

PETER goes to wherever he goes to get Mendoza's things.

TOBY

This is your lucky night, officers.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TOBY (cont'd)

There isn't gonna be a report, there isn't gonna be an investigation, no one's getting suspended and no one's filing a hundred-million dollar lawsuit against the county that they would almost surely win. But in this room, you're gonna apologize to Mr. Mendoza. Then you're gonna get in your squad car, you're gonna follow us, and you're gonna apologize to his son.

MACNAMARA

Judge Mendoza, we sincerely apologize for our mistake.

MENDOZA

Thank you.

TOBY

Let's go.

SAM

I also gotta say you guys could do a better job marking the exits on the thruway.

TOBY

Let's go.

MACNAMARA

We'll be behind you.

MACNAMARA and PETER go out the back. MENDOZA is putting together his personal things.

SAM starts dialing his cell phone...

MENDOZA

You know, Toby, if there's no reason you guys have to go back to Washington, you could spend the night up here.

TOBY

What's up here?

MENDOZA

Aw, there's great antiquing.

MENDOZA is done and heads for the door.

TOBY

You're killin' me, Judge. You're absolutely killin' me.

(CONTINUED)

SAM
(into phone)
Josh. It's over.

And they're out the front door as we:

CUT TO:

58 INT. COLLEGE LECTURE HALL - NIGHT

58

JOSH is on his phone. He smiles...

JOSH
(into phone)
Yeah.
(beat)
Good.

JOSH hangs up and puts the phone away.

JOSH
(to the STUDENTS)
That's the last time the phone'll ring.

NESSLER
Josh--

JOSH
There's a part of this story that I
didn't tell you. I can't. Trust me, it
doesn't involve... I just can't for a
little while. Ask me back again after
the Senate confirms Mendoza. You really
should hear it, it's a good story.

NESSLER
Why don't we take some questions.

JOSH
Yeah.

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF SHOW