

THE WEST WING

"pilot"

Written by

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THE WEST WING

"Pilot"

SETS

INTERIORS:

FOUR SEASON HOTEL
(GEORGETOWN)

LEO JACOBI'S DINING ROOM

LAURIE'S APARTMENT
Bedroom

WHITE HOUSE
Northwest Executive Entrance
Oval Office
Leo's Office
Press Briefing Room
Josh's Office
Roosevelt Room
Press Office
Press Secretary's Office
White House Mess
West Wings Hallway
Outer Office
Sam's Office
Corridor
Main Hall
Map Room

INT. GLASS OFFICE BUILDING
Office Corridor
Mandy's Office

RESTAURANT

EXTERIORS:

AFFLUENT STREET IN
CHEVY CHASE

GEORGETOWN

WHITE HOUSE

GLASS OFFICE BUILDING
(CONNECTICUT AVENUE)

UPSCALE RESTAURANT

THE WEST WING

"Pilot"

CAST

SAM

BILLY

LEO

MRS. JACOBI

C. J.

MARTY

LAURIE

SECURITY OFFICER

DONNA

JOSH

MRS. LANDINGHAM

BONNIE

MARGARET

TOBY

STAFFER

REPORTER #1

ECONOMIST #1 (FRED)

ECONOMIST #2 (LUTHER)

MANDY

DAISY

MOVING MAN

RECEPTIONIST

CHRIS

STAFFER #1

STAFFER #2

CATHY

STUDENT #1

STUDENT #2

MALLORY

CALDWELL

VAN DYKE

MARY MARSH

BARTLET

WOMAN

THE WEST WING

"Pilot"

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 INT. FOUR SEASONS HOTEL (GEORGETOWN) - NIGHT

1

The well-dressed and powerful are having after-dinner drinks in the hotel bar. SAM SEABORN, 31, is at a table having a conversation with a REPORTER he'd rather not be having. What Sam would rather be doing is talking to one of the two women at the bar, particularly the one who seems to be checking him out.

SAM

I don't think we're gonna run the table, if that's what you're asking.

REPORTER (BILLY)

It's not what I'm asking.

SAM

I know.

BILLY

Deep background. I'm not gonna come close to using your name.

SAM

You're not gonna come close to getting a quote, either.

BILLY

Why are we sitting here?

SAM

You sat down.

BILLY

Is Lyman on his way out?

SAM

I'm not talking about this, Billy.

BILLY

Who do I call? C'mon, just tell me who to talk to.

SAM

Well you could dial 1-800 BITE ME.

BILLY

Sam --

(CONTINUED)

1

CONTINUED:

1

SAM

Joshua Lyman's not going anywhere,
Billy, it's a non-story.

BILLY

You're lying now, aren't you.

SAM

Gee, Billy, that hurts. Why would
I lie to a reporter of all people?
Is that woman looking at me?

BILLY

Where?

SAM

Be cool. At the bar.

Billy turns 180 degrees in his seat and looks at her.

BILLY

Yeah. I think she was for a
second.

SAM

And I wanna thank you for the
casual way you did that just now.
She probably didn't notice that.

CUT TO:

2

EXT. AFFLUENT STREET IN CHEVY CHASE - DAWN

2

The sun is just beginning to rise over a large tudor.

3

INT. LEO JACOBI'S DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS ACTION

3

LEO JACOBI, 55 and professorial is eating cereal and
working on the crossword. His coffee cup is re-filled by
a maid.

LEO

Seventeen across is wrong. It's
just wrong, you believe that?

MRS. JACOBI steps in from the kitchen.

MRS. JACOBI

Telephone, Leo.

LEO

I'm in the shower.

(CONTINUED)

3

CONTINUED:

3

MRS. JACOBI

It's Potus.

Leo puts down the crossword and goes into the kitchen as we...

CUT TO:

4

EXT. GEORGETOWN - DAWN

4

C.J. CREGG is jogging down the sidewalk past the empty stores in the village. She's 38, compact and athletic and as she passes TWO MEN opening up a Starbucks, her BEEPER GOES OFF.

MAN #1 (MARTY)

Hey, C.J., how's it goin' this morning?

C.J.

(consulting beeper)

Not too bad, Marty. Listen, could I possibly use your phone?

MARTY

Sure.

CUT TO:

5

INT. LAURIE'S BEDROOM - LATER

5

LAURIE, the woman at the hotel bar, is sitting up in bed and smoking a joint. Sam steps out of the bathroom having just taken a shower.

SAM

The water pressure in there is really impressive.

LAURIE

I know.

SAM

You could run hydraulics in there.

LAURIE

(re: pot)

You want some?

SAM

I'm fine.

(CONTINUED)

LAURIE

I'm wasted.

SAM

And probably free of cataracts.

LAURIE

I get that. That's funny.

SAM

Thank you.

LAURIE

(remembering)

Oh God. Oh wait. I'm sorry -- your message -- your pager went off when you were in the shower. I thought it was mine so I hit the button.

Sam takes a look at the message --

LAURIE

'Potus in a bicycle accident. Come to the office.'

Sam starts getting dressed.

LAURIE

I memorized it in case I erased it by accident. Like I said, I'm completely baked and -- though I want you to know it's not like I'm a drug person. I just love pot.

SAM

Listen, Laurie, I gotta go.

LAURIE

It's -- you're kidding. It's 5:30 in the morning.

Sam is throwing on his shirt and jacket.

SAM

I know this doesn't look good --

LAURIE

Not that good, no.

SAM

I really like you and if you give me your number, I'd like to call you.

(CONTINUED)

LAURIE

Stay right here and you save yourself a call.

SAM

And it's not that I don't see the logic, but I gotta go.

LAURIE

'Cause Potus was in a bicycle accident?

SAM

Yes.

Laurie picks up the pad and pen from the night table and scratches out her number. She stands up and places it in Sam's breast pocket as she plants a kiss on him.

LAURIE

Tell your friend Potus that he's got a funny name.

SAM

I would, but he's not my friend, he's my boss. And it's not his name, it's his title.

LAURIE

'Potus'?

SAM

President of the United States.
(grabbing his coat)
I'll call you.

SMASH CUT TO:

MAIN TITLES.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

6 INT. WHITE HOUSE/NORTHWEST EXECUTIVE ENTRANCE - MORNING 6

Leo passes the metal detector.

SECURITY OFFICER

It's a nice morning, Mr. Jacobi.

LEO

Well we'll take care of that in a hurry, won't we, Mike?

SECURITY OFFICER

Yes sir.

Leo starts walking through the corridors of the West Wing toward his office. Office doors are open along the hallways and staffers walk in and out. CNN and C-SPAN are on monitors.

Leo pops his head into an outer office and calls to the back --

LEO

(calling)

Josh!

DONNATELLA MOSS, Josh's assistant, walks in the door behind Leo. 25 and sexy without trying too hard, DONNA is devoted to Josh.

DONNA

'Morning, Leo.

LEO

Hey, Donna, is he in yet?

DONNA

Yeah.

LEO

(beat)

Can you get him?

DONNA

(shouting)

Josh!

LEO

Thanks.

(CONTINUED)

JOSHUA LYMAN shows himself in his office doorway and indicates that he's on the phone and he'll be just a second. A youthful 38, Josh is Deputy Chief of Staff and a highly regarded brain.

DONNA

What's the deal with the President?

LEO

They think it's just a sprain. He should be back later today.

DONNA

What happened?

LEO

He was swerving to avoid a tree.

DONNA

And what happened?

LEO

He was unsuccessful.

JOSH

Hey.

LEO

How may Cubans exactly have crammed themselves into these fishing boats?

JOSH

It's important to understand, Leo, that by and large, they're not fishing boats. You say fishing boats and you conjure an image of, well, a boat, first of all. What the Cubans are on would charitably be described as rafts. Okay? They're making the hop from Havana to Miami in fruit baskets basically, let's just be clear on that.

LEO

We are, and I think we all know where you stand.

JOSH

Donna's desk, if it could float, would look good to them right now.

(CONTINUED)

LEO

I get it. How many are there?

JOSH

We don't know.

LEO

What time exactly did they leave?

JOSH

We don't know.

LEO

Do we know when they get here?

JOSH

No.

LEO

True or false: If I were to stand on high ground in Key West with a good pair of binoculars, I'd be as informed as I am right now.

JOSH

That's true.

LEO

The Intelligence budget's money well spent, isn't it?

JOSH

Send the Coast Guard, Leo, come on.

LEO

The Coast Guard --

JOSH

I understand, but they're never gonna make it to our territorial waters.

LEO

(quieter)

How're you doing?

JOSH

I'm hanging in. Did he say anything?

LEO

Did he say anything?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LEO (CONT'D)

The President's pissed as hell at you, Josh, and so am I.

JOSH

I know.

LEO

We gotta work with these people, where the hell do you get off struttin' your --

JOSH

I know.

Leo takes a breath.

LEO

Al Caldwell's a good man.

JOSH

Al Caldwell wasn't there.

LEO

I'm saying you take everyone on the religious right, dump 'em into one big pile and label 'em stupid. When you piss off Mary Marsh, you piss off Al Caldwell and Caldwell is Mrs. Bartlet's man on teen pregnancy.

JOSH

It was stupid.

LEO

Yeah.

(beat)

Anyway. Hang in there.

Leo takes off down the hallway --

JOSH

I was right, though.

LEO

(over his shoulder)

Like I don't know that.

CUT TO:

7

INT. OVAL OFFICE - CONTINUOUS ACTION

7

Leo steps into the outer office where the President's private secretary, MRS. LANDINGHAM is at work with two young aides.

MRS. LANDINGHAM

Oh, Mr. Jacobi, have they done an X-ray?

LEO

Yeah.

MRS. LANDINGHAM

Is anything broken?

LEO

A \$4,000 state of the art Lynex titanium touring bike that I swore I'd never lend anyone.

MRS. LANDINGHAM

I don't understand. Did he --

LEO

The President's a clutz, Mrs. Landingham, he's a spaz.

MRS. LANDINGHAM

Mr. Jacobi, you know how I feel about that kind of talk in the oval office.

LEO

Yes, and I'm --

MRS. LANDINGHAM

Just in this room, is all I'm asking.

LEO

Yes. Bonnie --

BONNIE, one of the aides, follows Leo with a notepad through the Oval Office and the adjoining offices.

LEO

Could you call O.E.O.B. and tell them I can brief the Vice-President on the President's condition, and let's coordinate with Katey Simons office on the appointments, maybe we can hand some off to senior staff.

(CONTINUED)

7

CONTINUED:

7

BONNIE

Should I get everybody in?

LEO

Yeah.

(to his secretary)

Margaret, call the editor of the New York Times crossword and tell him that 'Khaddafi' is spelled with an 'H' and two 'D's and isn't a seven letter word for anything.

MARGARET

Is this for real or is this just funny?

LEO

Apparently it's neither.

CUT TO:

8

INT. LEO'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS ACTION

8

The White House Chief of Staff gets a nice office with a patio facing the South Lawn. A platter of pastry and coffee is on the table as the senior staff members start to filter in for their morning meeting.

8 or 10 staffers sit around the room with a few aides standing nearby. From time to time a secretary will slip in and hand someone a written message to be glanced over.

C.J. Cregg, the pretty, athletic jogger we met earlier, is the White House Press Secretary and enters in a business suit. She's with TOBY ZIEGLER, 40's, a ruffled and sleepless Communications Director. They join Sam, the Deputy Communications Director.

This is a close, if sometimes acrimonious group with Leo a leader much respected.

C.J.

Is there anything I can say other than the President rode his bicycle into a tree?

LEO

He hopes never to do it again.

Josh enters with Donna.

(CONTINUED)

C.J.

Seriously, they're laughing pretty hard down there.

LEO

He rode a bicycle into a tree
C.J., what do you want me to --
'The President, while riding a
bicycle on his vacation in Jackson
Hole, came to an arboreal stop' --
what do you want from me? Sam,
what do we know about the Cubans?

SAM

I don't know any more than Josh.
Somewhere between 1200 and 2000
Cubans began embarking from a
fishing village about 30 miles
down the coast from Havana.

STAFFER

Where are they headed?

JOSH

Atlantic City.

SAM

Miami, though it's not clear how
sophisticated their navigational
equipment --

JOSH

Navigational equipment -- 'That
way's north' is pretty much what
we're --

TOBY

Forget the voyage, okay, the
journey is not our problem.

C.J.

What's our problem?

TOBY

What to do when the Nina, the
Pinta and the Get-Me-the-Hell-
Outa-Here hit Miami.

LEO

Sam?

(CONTINUED)

SAM

We can cross our fingers and hope they have a valid passport, work visa and driver's license.

LEO

Sam --

SAM

We can't send 'em back. They'll go to jail if they're lucky.

TOBY

We'll be lynched in -- what -- at least --

SAM

-- probably three Congressional districts.

TOBY

No way do we take the seats we want in Florida.

JOSH

To say nothing of the fact that it's wrong.

SAM

Plus that.

JOSH

What about Texas?

SAM

I hear ya but I wouldn't worry about it.

LEO

Sam, I want you to stay on this throughout the day. Keep Josh in the loop.

SAM

The thing is, my day's a little tight right now --

TOBY

Deal with it.

SAM

And I'm happy to, but isn't this --

(CONTINUED)

LEO

Sam --

SAM

No, I'm just saying isn't this more of a military area?

TOBY

Military?

SAM

Yeah.

TOBY

You think the United States is under attack from 1200 Cubans in row boats?

SAM

I'm not saying I don't like our chances.

TOBY

It's mind-boggling to me that we ever won an election.

LEO

Pat Thomas doesn't know whether to call up the Guard. We're gonna set up a conference call in a half-hour.

JOSH

He shouldn't.

SAM

They're not gonna be strong enough to cause trouble.

C.J.

You send in the Guard and you create a panic situation.

TOBY

I agree with Josh and I agree with Sam and I agree with C.J. and you know how that makes me crazy.

LEO

Yeah I do.

(CONTINUED)

TOBY

They're running for their lives.
You don't have to start a game of
'Red Rover, Red Rover' with
Castro, but you don't send the
National Guard. You send food.
And you send doctors.

LEO

Sam, see that I.N.S. is working
with the Red Cross and the Centers
for Disease Control.

SAM

Our point guy from C.D.C.'s on the
phone right now, I can --

LEO

Go talk to him.

SAM

(over)
-- talk to him.

Sam exits down the hallway --

LEO

Moving on...

CUT TO:

A dozen or so REPORTERS are standing and sitting about,
mostly talking to each other. A few are in the back on
lap tops and telephones.

Billy is holding court with three Reporters.

REPORTER #1

I think you're wrong.

BILLY

I had drinks with Sam Seaborn last
night.

REPORTER #1

Seaborn said Lyman's getting
fired?

BILLY

That's not what I said.

(CONTINUED)

9

CONTINUED:

9

C.J. steps up to the podium with some papers --

C.J.
(calling them to
sit)

Folks.

Two aides begin passing out press packets --

REPORTER #1

The President'll take him behind the woodshed, but he's not gonna fire him.

C.J.

Good morning. Dr. Ronald Haymen, H-A-Y-M-E-N, Chief of Obstetrics at Case Western Hospital, has diagnosed the President with a mild sprain in his left ankle, sustained while cycling into a large tree. The details can be found in the copies of the pool report that Linda and Suzanne are distributing, along with pool photographs of President Bartlet resisting the help of a Secret Service agent, then falling down again. By all means, enjoy yourselves. Item 2:

REPORTER

C.J. --

C.J.

It's a light day, Chris, let's just get through this then I'll take a couple of questions.

CUT TO:

10

INT. JOSH'S OFFICE - DAY

10

Josh is at his desk, playing a videotape back and forth on a television monitor. The tape is of his previous night's appearance on Meet the Press. He appears opposite a well-groomed, middle-aged woman named MARY MARSH.

MARY MARSH (V.O.)

(on TV)

Not any God I pray to, Mr. Lyman.
Not any God I pray to.

(CONTINUED)

JOSH (V.O.)

(on TV)

Lady, the God you pray to is too busy getting indicted for tax fraud.

And just as Mary Marsh starts to have a cow, Josh stops the tape, re-winds it, and starts to play it again.

Josh looks up. Donna's standing in the doorway with a mug of coffee. Josh stops the tape.

DONNA

You shouldn't have worn that tie on television. It bleeds.

JOSH

I don't think the tie was what got me in trouble.

DONNA

Yeah, but I've told you a zillion times.

JOSH

What's that?

DONNA

It's coffee.

JOSH

I thought so.

DONNA

I brought you some coffee.

JOSH

What's going on, Donna?

DONNA

Nothing's going --

JOSH

Donna --

DONNA

I brought you some coffee.

JOSH

Close the door.

Donna closes the inner office door,

(CONTINUED)

JOSH

Donnatella Moss. When did you start working for me?

DONNA

During the campaign.

JOSH

And how long have you been my assistant?

DONNA

Two and a half years.

JOSH

And when was the last time you brought me a cup of coffee?

Donna thinks...

JOSH

It was never, you've never brought me a cup of coffee.

DONNA

(picking up mug)

If you're gonna make a big deal out of --

JOSH

Donna. If I get fired I get fired.

There's a knock at the door.

TOBY

It's Toby.

DONNA

(quietly)

You won that election for him. You and Leo and C.J. and Sam.

TOBY (O.S.)

Open the damn door.

DONNA

(nodding at door)

And him.

Donna opens the door.

JOSH

Thanks for the coffee.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED: (3)

10

DONNA

You're welcome.

She goes to her desk.

TOBY

Donna brought you coffee?

DONNA

(over her shoulder)

Shut up.

Toby steps into the office.

JOSH

What's up?

TOBY

What'd I say before you went on the air yesterday?

JOSH

Don't get cute with Mary Marsh.

TOBY

I said don't get cute with Mary Marsh. I said Al Caldwell's not to be treated like a revival tent clown.

JOSH

Al Caldwell wasn't there.

TOBY

He was sure as hell watching.

JOSH

Toby, I already took Leo's morning beating, what do you want from me?

TOBY

I want you to keep your job.

JOSH

How?

TOBY

I'm gonna make a suggestion that I think might help you out. But I don't want this gesture to be mistaken for an indication that I like you.

(CONTINUED)

JOSH

I understand.

TOBY

(carefully)

In preparation for a Sunday morning radio address on family values, my office --

JOSH

When did that get on the schedule?

TOBY

Listen to me --

JOSH

When did it get on the schedule?

TOBY

It's the regular Sunday morning --

JOSH

Yeah, but when did we schedule family values?

TOBY

We scheduled it, Josh, after you gave your smug, taunting, you know, calamitous performance on 'Meet the Press.'

(beat)

America for Better Families, the AAF and Al Caldwell, Mary Marsh, I invited them for a coffee this afternoon with a couple of the speech writers to talk about --

JOSH

What they want to hear.

TOBY

Yes.

JOSH

Ssh. If you listen carefully you can hear two centuries of presidents rolling over in their --

TOBY

Come to the meeting.

JOSH

No.

(CONTINUED)

TOBY

Come to the meeting and be nice.

JOSH

Why?

TOBY

So C.J. can put it in the papers.

(beat)

I'm in charge of the message around here. It's my job to tell the President that the smartest thing he can do from a P.R. standpoint is show you the door.

(beat)

Come to the meeting. Be nice. Keep your job.

JOSH

(pause)

Yeah, I'll be there.

Toby turns to leave --

TOBY

Oh look at this.

Toby takes out a small newspaper clipping --

JOSH

What's that?

TOBY

One of the kids in the news office clipped it from the Journal. Guess who left Lennox/Chase to start consulting in town?

Josh looks over the article...

TOBY

She's leasing office space at the D.N.C., she's just moving in today.

JOSH

Who's she working for?

TOBY

I'm checking it out.

Josh looks at it a moment longer... smiles...

JOSH

It's a good picture of her.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

11 EXT. WHITE HOUSE - ESTABLISHING - DAY 11

CUT TO:

12 INT. ROOSEVELT ROOM - DAY 12

A meeting between Leo and some economic advisors is just breaking up.

LEO

The President's gonna read this W.B.O. revenue analysis and say that his Council of Economic Advisors were put on the planet to make astrologers look good.

Josh slips into the room --

ECONOMIST #1

Talk to the man at Treasury.

LEO

Luther. Ball park. One year from today. Where's the Dow?

ECONOMIST #2 (LUTHER)

Tremendous. Up a thousand points.

LEO

Fred. One year from today.

ECONOMIST #1 (FRED)

Not good. Down a thousand.

LEO

A year from now, one of you is gonna look pretty stupid.

LUTHER

No doubt about that.

LEO

(ushering them out
the door)

Get out. Go.

The Economists say their good-byes and leave as Sam slips in...

(CONTINUED)

SAM

(to Josh)

There's a storm system moving into the South Florida area.

LEO

See, with any luck the Cubans'll turn around and live to defect another day.

JOSH

Yeah, 'cause they're probably all tuned to the National Weather Service, but that's not what I'm here for.

LEO

What's on your mind?

JOSH

We gotta look at the whole field for just a second 'cause I think there's a chance we're about to get tagged.

LEO

With regard to what?

JOSH

Re-election. Don't let Lloyd Russell push the President over to the right.

LEO

Lloyd Russell?

JOSH

Yeah.

LEO

You take him seriously?

SAM

His numbers are starting to get impressive.

JOSH

Hollywood likes him. He can raise money.

LEO

It's too early for him to run. He'll wait out another term in the Senate.

(CONTINUED)

JOSH

30 second hypothetical. You're Lloyd Russell, newly-crowned prince of the white suburban woman, upper middle-class black man and the environmental lobby. You're young, professorial, telegenic and connected, and you're no friend of the sitting President. What do you think?

LEO

Think about running for president, but --

JOSH

And if you're thinking about it, who do you call?

LEO

You.

JOSH

I've got a job.

LEO

For the moment.

JOSH

Who do you get?

LEO

Well I'd never get her 'cause she's making 650,000 dollars a year at Lennox/Chase, but I'd get Mandy Hampton.

JOSH

You'd be smart.

LEO

I should give her a call, we lost touch after the campaign.

JOSH

You're in luck.

LEO

Is she in Washington?

JOSH

She just got here today.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED: (3)

12

LEO
What's she doing?

JOSH
Working for Lloyd Russell.

It takes Leo about two seconds to take this in... he opens the door and calls across the hall.

LEO
Margaret, get Senator Russell's office on the phone.

Josh and Sam start down the hall together...

SAM
How you doin'?

JOSH
I wish everybody'd stop asking me that.

SAM
I'm not everybody.

JOSH
I'm fine.

SAM
(smiling)
Mandy's in town.

JOSH
Yeah.

SAM
I wouldn't worry about it. She's probably just here 'cause she wants your job.

Sam goes into his office as we --

CUT TO:

13 EXT. GLASS OFFICE BUILDING (CONN. AVE.) - DAY

13

as we ESTABLISH the Washington business district.

CUT TO:

14 INT. OFFICE CORRIDOR - DAY

14

as a MOVING MAN pushes a dolly loaded with cartons past a RECEPTIONIST and down the hall. He stops when he gets to Suite 1401, where a workman is putting the finishing touches on the office door stencil reading: MADELINE HAMPTON CONSULTING.

15 INT. MANDY'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS ACTION

15

The office is smaller than what Mandy's grown used to, and at the moment, nearly every square foot of it is covered by moving cartons. Stacks of them. Everywhere.

In the middle of it stands MANDY HAMPTON, a fine-looking, instantly-likable woman in her mid-to-late-30s. With her is her assistant, DAISY REESE, a chain-smoking 25-year-old super-brain.

Daisy is looking at her boss and mentor, waiting to hear her take on the office space dilemma. Mandy looks around one last time before rendering her analysis.

MANDY

This is daunting.

The Moving Man has been waiting patiently.

MOVING MAN

This is the last load.

DAISY

Hey look, Mandy, the cartons finally got here.

MOVING MAN

Where would you like these?

DAISY

A corner office in the Chrysler Building.

MANDY

You can leave them right there.

The Moving Man unloads the cartons and hands Daisy the receipt over the following:

MANDY

We had a plan. Didn't we have a plan?

DAISY

Yes.

(CONTINUED)

MANDY

Tell me the plan.

DAISY

Mark each carton with a letter of the alphabet. Note that letter on a list that corresponded to a description of the carton's contents.

MANDY

Right. Perfect. Yes, and that way we separate the materials we need right away from the stuff we can put in storage.

DAISY

Excellent.

MANDY

Yes.

DAISY

So here's my question for you: Where did you put the list?

MANDY

(pause)

Boy, the devil's in the details, ain't it?

DAISY

Oh, man, Mandy, please try and remember where you put it. This list can save me enormous --

MANDY

I know where I put it, that's not the problem.

DAISY

Where did you put it?

MANDY

In one of these cartons.

DAISY

I quit.

MANDY

It's not gonna be that hard, it's just gonna take a few extra man hours.

(CONTINUED)

DAISY

I'm gonna be kneeling on the floor, sorting through flow charts and tracking polls for...

(calculates)

... ever. Okay? I'm gonna be opening boxes forever. So it's a good thing I went to school for 18 years.

MANDY

The plan looked promising on paper.

DAISY

Start with the cartons on your side, we can work our way toward the middle.

Mandy is glancing at a newspaper...

MANDY

Did you know there's a town in Iowa with 841 residents, each and every one of whom are named 'Miller'?

DAISY

(pause)

Mandy, I'm like this close to setting you on fire.

MANDY

How do you suppose they get their mail delivered?

DAISY

Who gives a damn!

The RECEPTIONIST appears in the doorway.

RECEPTIONIST

Excuse me.

MANDY

Hi.

RECEPTIONIST

Hi, I'm Alegra, I'm the receptionist for the floor.

MANDY

Mandy Hampton. This is my assistant, Daisy Reese.

(CONTINUED)

15

CONTINUED: (3)

15

RECEPTIONIST

This place is awful.

DAISY

It'll be fine once we get a few more cartons of crap in here.

RECEPTIONIST

I guess your phones aren't turned on yet. There's a call for you at the reception desk. Joshua Lyman from the White House.

MANDY

That didn't take long.

CUT TO:

16

INT. PRESS OFFICE - DAY

16

A mid-size room with a half dozen staffers. Billy and two other REPORTERS are waiting at the door as C.J. approaches.

C.J.

Guys, I don't have a lot of time to answer questions right now.

REPORTER (CHRIS)

C.J., has --

C.J.

But that shouldn't stop you from asking them anyway. Chris?

CHRIS

Has the President had any reaction to Josh on the show?

C.J.

None that I'm aware of.

CHRIS

Do you know if --

C.J.

Seriously, that's it. I'll get you the wheels-down time when I've got it.

C.J. walks through the room and into her office where Toby's waiting for her.

TOBY

They're picking up the scent?

C.J.

Billy is. The rest of 'em are
picking up Billy's scent.

TOBY

Josh said he'd come to the coffee
this afternoon.

C.J.

Keep him cool.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

18 EXT. WHITE HOUSE - DAY 18
ESTABLISHING.

CUT TO:

19 INT. WHITE HOUSE MESS - DAY 19

This small, wood-paneled dining room has about a dozen tables and is staffed by Navy stewards.

Sam is finishing up lunch with TWO congressional liaison STAFFERS.

STAFFER #1

(to Sam)

Don't use those stats.

STAFFER #2

The assault stats.

STAFFER #1

The assault stats are wrong.

SAM

We got them from your office.

STAFFER #2

And we got them from HUD.

SAM

And they're wrong?

STAFFER #2

Even if they were right, don't use 'em.

SAM

Well, A) Let's make 'em right, and, B) Why can't I use 'em?

STAFFER #2

The 76-year-old grandmother.

STAFFER #1

Every time we use those assault stats, Carr and Gilmore come back with --

SAM

Who's the 76 year-old --

(CONTINUED)

STAFFER #2

Everyday, 17,000 Americans defend themselves with a gun, including --

SAM

That's flatly untrue.

STAFFER #2

-- including a 76-year-old grandmother in Chicago who defended herself against an intruder in the middle of the night.

STAFFER #1

Just don't use the stat.

Sam's secretary, CATHY, a pretty Asian-American, slips in and stands behind Sam during the following...

SAM

The 76-year-old grandmother doesn't defend herself with a modified AK-47 assault rifle, Larry. Not unless she's defending herself against Turkish rebels.

CATHY

Excuse me.

SAM

You guys know my assistant, Cathy?

STAFFER #1

We talk a lot on the phone.

CATHY

Yeah, hi.

(to Sam)

I need you for just a second.

SAM

(to the Staffers)

Call me at the end of the day.

Sam and Cathy exit the dining room together --

CUT TO:

Sam and Cathy talk on the way to Sam's office...

(CONTINUED)

CATHY

Leo's wife called.

SAM

Oh God. This woman hates me.
What'd I do?

CATHY

You tried to hit on her at a
Democratic fund raiser.

SAM

Yes, I meant recently. Why did
she call?

CATHY

She wants you to --

SAM

I didn't know who she was. How
long am I gonna be crucified for
that?

CATHY

Well, a little while longer
anyway, 'cause --

SAM

Most women, I would think, would
be flattered that --

CATHY

Yeah, I think Leo was especially
touched that you --

SAM

What'd she want?

CATHY

She was supposed to give some
students from her daughter's
fourth grade class a tour. She
can't make it. She wants you to
do it.

SAM

I can't.

They walk into the offices of the White House
communications staff --

CUT TO:

CATHY

You have to. They wrote essays.

SAM

No really, I can't. I'm not a good tour guide. I don't know anything about the White House.

CATHY

You wanna call Mrs. Jacobi and tell her that?

Sam's PAGER BEEPS --

SAM

Oh God, please let this be a national emergency.

Sam picks up a phone and punches in the number on his pager... a woman picks up --

WOMAN (V.O.)

Champagne Escorts.

SAM

(beat)

Uhm, hi. You paged me?

WOMAN (V.O.)

Who is this?

SAM

This is Sam Seaborn.

WOMAN (V.O.)

I'm sorry. There's been a mistake.

SAM

Who's this?

WOMAN (V.O.)

Champagne Escort Service.

SAM

(a little worried)

Okey-doke.

Sam hangs up...

SAM

(to Cathy)

Page me.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

CATHY

Where are you going?

SAM

I'm standing right here. Page me
and punch in my number.Cathy does as she's told. Sam watches his pager.
Nothing.

CATHY

You switched pagers with someone.

SAM

A woman's about to call me and
she's not gonna know why. Put her
through.

Sam goes into his office and closes the door.

CUT TO:

22 INT. SAM'S OFFICE - DAY

22

Sam paces a moment before the PHONE BEEPS. He picks it
up.

SAM

(into phone)

Hello?

LAURIE (V.O.)

Hello? You paged me?

SAM

(into phone)

Laurie?

LAURIE (V.O.)

Who is this?

SAM

(into phone)

It's Sam. Sam Seaborn.

LAURIE (V.O.)

Hiiiiii.

(happy)

You called me.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

22

SAM
 (into phone)
 Yeah, actually you called me. And
 that's because you have my pager.
 And I have yours.

LAURIE (V.O.)
 (pause)
 Uh-oh.

SAM
 (into phone)
 Yeah. Can I come by real quick
 and see you?

CUT TO:

23 EXT. UPSCALE RESTAURANT - ESTABLISHING

23

CUT TO:

24 INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

24

A crowded lunch spot for Washington power. At a table,
 TWO female college STUDENTS are looking at a magazine
 cover.

STUDENT #1
 It's him.

STUDENT #2
 I'm going over there.

The Two Students grab the magazine as we FOLLOW them OVER
 TO Josh and Mandy's table.

STUDENT #2
 Excuse me.

STUDENT #1
 We're sorry to interrupt your
 lunch --

STUDENT #2
 We're juniors at Florida State --

STUDENT #1
 We're with a poly-sci group
 that's --

STUDENT #2
 He doesn't care.

(CONTINUED)

Mandy is grinning at Josh, who's enjoying this.

STUDENT #1

We just wanted to say we think you're excellent, and could we have your autograph.

She puts down a copy of Washington Magazine, which has Josh's picture on the cover above the caption: THE PRESIDENT'S MAN.

JOSH

Sure.

(nodding with his head as he writes)

This is Madeline Hampton. She's excellent, too.

STUDENT #1

Oh yeah. Oh God, yeah, from the campaign.

STUDENT #2

Didn't you guys used to be a thing?

STUDENT #1

(can't believe it)

Jennifer!

STUDENT #2

Is that personal?

MANDY

Girl friend, he was the love of my life. But he done me wrong. So I sent him packing and said don't you come back no mo', no mo'.

The students are in over their heads...

JOSH

She used to steal money from me.

STUDENT #1

Really?

JOSH

Yeah. Thanks a lot for stopping by.

As they go back to their table --

(CONTINUED)

STUDENT #1/STUDENT #2

Nice meeting you, 'by, etc.

MANDY

Listen. You called me. What do you wanna know? Is Lloyd gonna run?

JOSH

I really don't care one way or the other, he's a lightweight. I just --

MANDY

You don't like him.

JOSH

Not when I can't use him, no. I just want to know how much trouble he's gonna be on the budget.

MANDY

You should get to know him.

JOSH

I've got enough friends.

MANDY

Not these days you don't.

Suddenly this stopped being fun. Josh regards Mandy for a moment.

JOSH

Leo doesn't think --

MANDY

I'm not talking about what's good for the White House, I'm talking about what's good for you.

(beat)

You're a Fulbright Scholar, Joshua, are you honestly the one adult in America who doesn't think you're about to be fired?

JOSH

Did you just call him Lloyd?

MANDY

When?

JOSH

Just now.

(CONTINUED)

MANDY

I don't remember. What does it --

JOSH

It's unusual for you that you would call a senator by his first name to a third party.

MANDY

A third party?

JOSH

You know what I'm saying?

MANDY

No, but as long as one of us does --

JOSH

You're dating Lloyd Russell.

MANDY

(beat)

Yes.

JOSH

(pause)

Wow. That's great.

MANDY

Are you gonna freak out?

JOSH

No, not at all.

(pause)

It's just that I always thought he was gay.

MANDY

No you didn't.

JOSH

Yeah I did.

MANDY

He's not gay.

JOSH

Are you sure?

MANDY

I'm very sure.

(CONTINUED)

JOSH

He seems effeminate to me.

MANDY

He happens to be very athletic.
Plenty masculine.

JOSH

I think he's a woman.

MANDY

You lost your cool on T.V. Do
what Toby's telling you to do.

JOSH

There was one job for the two of
us and the President gave it to
me. I'd think you'd be the last
person who'd want to see me keep
it.

MANDY

The New York Times is gonna
release a poll in the next few
days that brings your unfavorables
up to 48 percent.

JOSH

This is the first I'm hearing of
it.

MANDY

That's right.

JOSH

Who'd you get this from?

MANDY

We don't play for the same team
anymore.

JOSH

Hang on. One minute you're giving
me career advice, the next
you're --

MANDY

I'm here for a while, Josh. And I
want you at your fighting weight
when I start bitch-slapping you
guys around the hallway.

Josh smiles and takes a bite of his food...

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED: (5)

24

JOSH
You and Lloyd Russell?

MANDY
(beat)
Yeah.

CUT TO:

25 INT. LAURIE'S APARTMENT - DAY

25

as LAURIE, in jeans and Georgetown sweatshirt, answers the KNOCKING at the door. Sam is standing there in his overcoat.

SAM
Hi.

LAURIE
Hello.

SAM
Can I come in?

LAURIE
Sure.

Laurie lets Sam in the door. Sam stands awkwardly for a moment, resting a hand on the serving bar separating the kitchen from the living room.

SAM
This is a nice apartment.

LAURIE
You saw it last night.

SAM
Yeah, and I really like it.

LAURIE
Thanks.

SAM
It makes very good use of space.
You know the way the ladle and the
other utensils are on the peg
board.

(CONTINUED)

LAURIE

Yes.

(beat)

The ladle didn't actually come with the apartment. It's mine.

SAM

Sure.

LAURIE

Yeah.

SAM

So can I ask you something?

LAURIE

Am I a hooker?

SAM

No. No. What I was gonna say was this: Is it possible, that in addition to being a law student and part-time bartender, that you are what I'm certain would have to be a very high-priced call girl. I, by the way, make no judgements. But the thing is, with my job...

(beat)

You see, ever since the advent of the printing press --

LAURIE

Yeah.

SAM

Yes?

LAURIE

Yeah, I'm sorry. I shoulda told you. I wanted you to like me.

SAM

I did. I do.

LAURIE

That's sweet.

SAM

It's true.

LAURIE

Stop rhyming.

Sam looks at her. He really does like her...

(CONTINUED)

SAM

I gotta go.

He waits a moment, then moves to the door...

LAURIE

Sam?

SAM

Yeah?

LAURIE

You've got my pager.

SAM

Right.

They exchange pagers...

LAURIE

Thanks.

SAM

Listen, I don't know how often
or... anyway --

LAURIE

Sam. Go. You don't know who I
am. I get it.

SAM

It's just that people in the media
would pay a lot of money for --

LAURIE

I know. Go. It's okay.

Sam turns and goes. Laurie closes the door behind him as
we --

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

26

INT. NORTHWEST EXECUTIVE ENTRANCE - DAY

26

Cathy is waiting for Sam when he walks through the door and passes the metal detector.

CATHY

You're late.

SAM

I'm having kind of a weird day.

CATHY

Leo's daughter's class is waiting with their teacher and a couple of the parents in the Roosevelt Room.

SAM

I don't know what to say to them.

CATHY

You're supposed to tell them about the building and its history. Do you need anything?

SAM

I need someone to tell me about the building and its history.

CATHY

Just fake it.

They're outside the door to the Roosevelt Room.

SAM

Which one is Leo's daughter?

CATHY

What does it matter?

SAM

I want to make a good impression. What does she look like?

CATHY

I don't know.

SAM

Okay, I really want to thank you for your help.

CUT TO:

A dozen nine-year-olds are sitting around the large table along with two parents and young teacher, MALLORY O'BRIEN.

Sam enters --

SAM

Hi, I'm sorry to be late.

MALLORY

Mr. Seaborn, I'm Mallory O'Brien.

SAM

Hi.

MALLORY

And these are the fourth graders at Clearlake Elementary School who wrote the best essays on why they wanted to visit the White House.

SAM

Well that's just great, why don't we get started.

Throughout this, the nine-year-olds will be transfixed by Sam, without understanding a word that he's saying. Mallory and the parents will grow slightly concerned.

SAM

My name is Sam Seaborn and I'm the Deputy Communications Director. What does that mean exactly? Well, to begin with, I'm a counselor to the President, mostly on domestic matters, though generally not security-related. I work with Toby Ziegler, the Communications Director and C.J. Cregg, the Press Secretary, on crafting our message and getting it out through electronic and print media, and while my functions here are generally perceived to be politically skewed, it's important to remember that it's not the D.N.C., but rather your tax dollars that pay my salary.

(pause)

So I work for you whether you voted for us or not.

(CONTINUED)

MALLORY

Mr. Seaborn, maybe you could give us some history.

SAM

Sure. Well. I graduated law school seven years ago and started working for Dewey/Ballentine where I --

MALLORY

Actually, I'm sorry to interrupt, actually I meant a history of the building.

SAM

Of the White House.

MALLORY

Yes.

SAM

Sure. Well. The White House, as you know, was built several years ago. Mostly, if I'm not mistaken, out of cement. The room we're in right now is the Roosevelt Room, named for our 16th President, Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

MALLORY

Kids, sit tight for a second, I need to speak to Mr. Seaborn.

Sam follows Mallory out into the corridor --

MALLORY

I'm sorry to be rude, but are you a moron?

SAM

In this particular area, yes.

MALLORY

The 16th President was Andrew Johnson and the Roosevelt Room was named for Theodore.

SAM

(beat)

Really?

(CONTINUED)

MALLORY

There's like a six-foot painting on the wall of Teddy Roosevelt.

SAM

I shoulda put two and two together. Look the thing is, while there are really a great many things I can speak about with authority, I'm not very good at talking about the White House.

MALLORY

You're the White House Deputy Communications Director and you're not good at talking about the White House?

SAM

Ironic, isn't it.

MALLORY

I don't believe this --

Mallory starts to go back in --

SAM

Wait, wait. Do me a favor. Please. Can you point out Leo Jacobi's daughter?

MALLORY

Why?

SAM

If I could make eye contact with her, make her laugh, you know, see that she has a good time, it'd go a long way toward making my life easier.

MALLORY

These children worked hard. All of them. And I'm not very inclined at the moment to make your life easier.

SAM

Ms. O'Brien, I understand your feelings, but please believe me when I tell you that I'm a nice guy who's having a bad day.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SAM (CONT'D)

I just found out that the New York Times is about to publish a poll which tells us that a considerable portion of Americans believe the White House has lost focus and energy. A perception that's not likely to be altered by the video footage of the President riding a bicycle into a tree. As we speak, the Coast Guard is fishing Cuban refugees out of the Atlantic Ocean while the Governor of Florida wants to blockade the Port of Miami, my best friend's about to get fired 'cause he went on television and made sense, and to top it all off, it turns out I accidentally slept with a prostitute last night. Now would you please, in the name of compassion, tell me which one of those kids in there is my boss's daughter.

MALLORY

That would be me.

SAM

(deadpan)

You.

MALLORY

Yes.

SAM

Leo's daughter's fourth grade class.

MALLORY

Yes.

SAM

(pause)

Well this is bad on so many levels.

CUT TO:

This is the grand, red-carpeted hall, off of which are the official receiving rooms. Josh, Donna, C.J., Toby and a few aides walk briskly down the West Wing.

(CONTINUED)

C.J.

They're gonna try and bait you,
Josh, you understand what I'm
saying?

JOSH

Lloyd Russell. Yeah, that'll
last.

C.J.

Are you listening to me?

JOSH

(repeating)

They're gonna try and bait me.

C.J.

There's some press in there. They
want you to say something
arrogant.

TOBY

Like he needs baiting for that.

C.J.

Hi, good afternoon.

This is said as they turn into the open doors of --

The REVEREND AL CALDWELL along with MARY MARSH, JOHN VAN
DYKE and a few other Christian family reps are seated or
standing and sipping coffee. Billy and a few reporters
stand at the side.

TOBY

We apologize for running a bit
behind today.

CALDWELL

That's quite all right. How's the
President's health?

C.J.

It's a mild sprain, he'll be fine.

CALDWELL

Good, good. You all know Mary
Marsh and John Van Dyke.

C.J.

Yes.

(CONTINUED)

They all say their hellos...

TOBY

Reverend Caldwell, we're happy that you and some of your colleagues could talk with us today. As you know, the President makes a usual Sunday morning radio address, and in a few weeks we've scheduled --

CALDWELL

Toby, if I may interrupt... the goals and the spirit of Christian and family oriented organizations in this country, while embraced by a great and growing number of its citizens, have been met with hostility and contempt by this administration. Yesterday morning, on the television program 'Meet The Press,' that contempt was given a voice and a face and a name.

(to Josh)

I'm referring of course to you, sir.

JOSH

Yes, I know, and I'm glad you brought that up, Reverend.

CALDWELL

I was surprised at you, Josh. I always counted you as a friend.

JOSH

And I'm honored by that, Reverend. First, let me say that when I spoke on that program, I wasn't speaking for the President or this administration, that's important to know. Second, please allow me to apologize. My remarks were smug and self-righteous. I was going for the cheap laugh, and anyone who's willing to step forward and debate ideas deserves better than a political punchline. Mrs. Marsh, you deserved better in my hands, and I apologize.

(CONTINUED)

MARY MARSH

Well... I suppose the final justice is that you'll probably lose your job.

CALDWELL

Now, Mary --

JOSH

No, sir, she's right, I probably will.

MARY MARSH

You people... that New York sense of humor, it always --

CALDWELL

Mary, there's absolutely no need --

MARY MARSH

Please, Reverend, they think it's smart -- smart talk -- but nobody else does.

JOSH

I'm actually from Connecticut.

TOBY

Yeah, but she meant Jewish.

A stunned silence. Everyone stares at Toby.

TOBY

When she said 'You people and your New York sense of humor,' she was talking about me and you, Josh.

JOSH

You know what, Toby, let's just not even go there.

CALDWELL

There's been an apology, let's move on.

C.J.

Please.

(CONTINUED)

MARY MARSH

In my opinion, in the opinion of millions upon millions of American families, being able to walk to our corner newsstand and buy pornography for three dollars is too high a price to pay for freedom of expression. In my opinion, and in the opinion of millions upon millions of Americans, we ask you: Where is it written that a school can't allow time for children to sit in silent prayer?

TOBY

The First Amendment.

VAN DYKE

The First Commandment?

C.J.

Amendment.

VAN DYKE

'Cause the First Commandment is 'Thou shalt not kill.'

CALDWELL

John --

MARY MARSH

That's the Second Commandment. The First Commandment is 'Honor thy father.'

TOBY

I said 'amendment.'

VAN DYKE

'Honor thy father' is third or fourth.

MARY MARSH

Then what's first?

And from the doorway, a MAN, standing with the help of a cane, speaks...

MAN

'I am the Lord your God. Thou shalt worship no God before me.'

(CONTINUED)

And the Man, of course, is PRESIDENT JOSIAH (JED) BARTLET, democrat of New Hampshire, and a descendant of one of the original signers of the Declaration. Looking every bit the country lawyer, you wouldn't immediately guess that he's brilliant, which he is. While the left hand is lulling you with folksy charm, you don't even hear the right hook coming.

To the right and two paces behind Bartlet is Charlie, holding a duffle bag and a briefcase. Nineteen-years-old, fresh-faced in a Brooks Brother suit, CHARLIE is taking a year off from Georgetown to work as the President's personal aide.

BARTLET (MAN)

Boy, those were the days, huh?

Everyone is standing --

CALDWELL

Good afternoon, Mr. President.

BARTLET

Al. What do we got here, C.J.?

C.J.

Well, we've got some hot tempers, Mr. President.

MARY MARSH

Mr. President, I'm Mary Marsh of the A.B.F. I was just posing this question: If I can get pornography for three dollars at any newsstand, isn't that too high a price to pay for a free pass.

BARTLET

No, it's not.

MARY MARSH

I see.

BARTLET

On the other hand, I do think three dollars is too high a price to pay for pornography.

C.J.

Why don't we all sit down.

BARTLET

No, let's not. They won't be staying that long.

(CONTINUED)

Another frightened silence while everyone waits to hear what Bartlet has to say...

BARTLET

(to Caldwell)

Al, how many times have I asked you to denounce the practices of a group calls themselves The Lambs of Christ?

CALDWELL

Sir, it's not up to me to --

BARTLET

Crap. It is up to you.

Leo and Sam, with Cathy in tow, appear in the doorway and slip quietly into the room.

BARTLET

My wife, Abbey, she never wants me to do anything while I'm upset. Twenty-eight years ago, I come home from a bad day at the State House. I tell Abbey I'm going out for a drive. I get in the station wagon, put the car in reverse, pull out of the garage full speed. 'Cept I forgot to open the garage door. Abbey didn't want me to drive while I was upset and she was right. She was right yesterday when she told me not to get on that damn bicycle when I was upset, but I did it anyway, and I was just about as furious as I've ever been in my life. Seems my granddaughter Annie had given an interview in one of those teen magazines, and in between rock stars and makeup tips, she talked about her feelings on a woman's right to choose. Now Annie, all of thirteen, has always been precocious, but she's got a hell of a head on her shoulders and I like it when she speaks her mind, so I couldn't understand it when her mother called me in tears yesterday. I said, 'Elizabeth,, what's wrong?' She said, 'It's Annie.'

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BARTLET (CONT'D)

Now I love my family and I've read my bible so I want you to tell me: From what part of scripture do you suppose the Lambs of Christ drew their divine inspiration when they sent my thirteen-year-old granddaughter a bloody Raggedy Ann doll with a knife stuck through its throat.

(pause)

You'll denounce these people, Al. You'll do it publicly. And until you do, you can all get your fat asses outa my White House.

Everyone is frozen.

BARTLET

Charlie, show these folks out, would you.

MARY MARSH

I believe we can find the door.

BARTLET

Find it now.

Mary Marsh, Van Dyke, Caldwell and the others make a slow, silent exit.

CALDWELL

(quietly to Leo)

We'll fix this.

LEO

See that you do.

They're gone.

JOSH

Okay, can I just say that, as it turned out, I was the calmest person in the room.

TOBY

She was calling us New York Jews, Josh.

JOSH

Yes, but being from Connecticut, I didn't mind so much. You, C.J., on the other hand, were brilliant.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JOSH (CONT'D)

I especially liked the part where you said absolutely nothing at all.

C.J.

You mean I forgot to mention that Mandy's sleeping with Lloyd Russell?

SAM

Really?

JOSH

Yeah, I'm gonna put an end to that.

BARTLET

'Hi, Mr. President, how was your trip? How's the ankle?'

DONNA

How's Annie?

BARTLET

(beat)

Annie's upset, Donna, thanks for asking.

During this, Margaret, Leo's secretary, brings him a note which he'll read over.

BARTLET

Seems to me we've all been taking a little break. Thinking about our personal lives or thinking about keeping our jobs. Nothing wrong with taking a break, breaks are good, and I know how hard you all work.

Leo slips Bartlet a note.

BARTLET

You know, I was thinkin' about this time Annie came to me with a news clipping. Theologians in South America were very excited because a little girl in Chile had sliced open a tomato, and the flesh of the tomato spelled out the Lord's Prayer.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BARTLET (CONT'D)

The theologians commented that they thought this was an extremely impressive girl. Annie commented that she felt this was an extremely impressive tomato. I don't know what made me think of that.

During that story, Bartlet glanced at the note he was handed and now tells the rest of the group about it.

BARTLET

(matter-of-fact)

Naval Intelligence reports approximately 1,200 Cubans left Havana this morning. Approximately 700 turned back due to severe weather, some 350 are missing and are presumed dead, 137 have been taken into custody in Miami and are seeking asylum.

(beat)

With the clothes on their backs, they came through a storm. And the ones that didn't die want a better life and they want it here. Talk about impressive.

(beat)

My point is this: Break's over.

Bartlet turns to leave and stops to give Josh a paternal pat on the shoulder.

BARTLET

(smiling)

'... Too busy getting indicted for tax fraud.'

(beat)

Don't ever do it again.

Bartlet is gone, followed by Charlie, as we --

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END