

# *LORD OF THE SENATE*

"THE WEAK ARE ALWAYS ANXIOUS FOR JUSTICE AND EQUALITY WHERE THE  
STRONG PAY NO HEED TO EITHER"

by

Monty C. Floyd

"Red-Eye"  
(one-hour pilot)

CONFIDENTIAL/PROPRIETARY

Represented by Dentons Multinational Law Firm  
1221 Ave of the Americas, New York, NY 10020  
Mr. Charles 'Trip' Dorkey III, Esq.  
+ 1 212 768 6700

charles.dorkey@dentons.com/monty@carltonsseries.com

FADE IN:

EXT. HILL COUNTRY - TEXAS - 1959 - AFTERNOON

We see rolling rugged hills dotted with mesquite trees. The silence is broken by the deafening echo of five consecutive GUNSHOTS.

Beside a blue Chevy Fleetside pickup truck is the motionless body of a MAN, 40s. Blood creeps from his mouth. We glimpse his hat and .22 rifle before...

CREDITS ROLL OVER LORD'S THEME SONG

We view an animated, dreamlike sequence in dark tones. 1.) We follow a tall male silhouette to posh soirées with broads and powerful men who discreetly proffer stacks of cash. 2.) The taller silhouette gives the cash to a smaller male silhouette who sorts the stacks into a briefcase. 3.) Now we follow our silhouettes up a secret staircase where they pass other silhouettes on descent. 4.) At the top, it's clear we are inside U.S. Capitol dome looking down onto stacks of briefcases arranged like dominos. 5.) The shorter silhouette nudges a briefcase, causing all to tumble, the final briefcase popping open, cascading cash across the rotunda floor.

There is a pause, then the simple words in white lettering:

LORD OF THE SENATE

Washington, D.C. 1959

INT. RAY'S APARTMENT/KITCHEN - DUSK

We are in a homey, small abode. We HEAR giggling and see six pajama-clad KIDS (12,10,8,6,4,2) tickling a MAN on the floor. Breezing into frame is MARIA, 30s, plain creature of Hungarian decent. She removes her apron.

RAY

Okay, let daddy up.

And RAY MCKIGNEY rises. He is 30, simple and lanky. Tossing a red BALL at the kids, he smoothes his Sears suit and stands behind Maria, zipping her homemade dress. If we look closely we get the idea Ray's perpetually haunted by something slumbering within.

MARIA

I feel so common in this old thing.

RAY  
Let's see how this makes you feel.

And Ray proffers a stunning pearl NECKLACE.

MARIA  
Oh. Ray. It's gorgeous. But  
where did you get it?

RAY  
Gift from ole Senator rascal. A  
Texas crony gave it to him and he  
said Elizabeth has enough.

Maria allows Ray to fasten the necklace around her neck.  
They are happy. In love.

RAY  
Ya look like a million bucks!  
Don't she kids?  
(children nod)  
We best be runnin'. You  
knuckleheads go to bed when Jim  
says. We won't be late. Love  
ya'll.

KID  
Hey, don't forget you promised to  
take us to the park tomorrow.

RAY  
Scout's honor.

EXT. CAPITOL BUILDING - JANUARY - DUSK

Illuminated by lavender twilight the majestic building is a wonder to behold. We notice automobiles of the era as suited men in hats saunter past a cosmopolitan LADY who sweeps us into...

INT. TIME MAGAZINE PARTY - NIGHT

We're mingling with sophisticated Who-is-Who 'inside the beltway' crowd. There is music and the laughter and voices of people. We spy Ray, fidgeting with a straw in his tonic.

Meanwhile, Maria is looking about, feeling like a Ford in a Cadillac showroom. At that moment, a burly man, MR. BLACK, 30s resembling a disheveled scarecrow in blue suspenders, eases up.

MR. BLACK  
Where's Cole at?

RAY  
Yeah, he's not coming tonight.

Mr. Black growls and stalks off.

MARIA  
Why are we here?

Before Ray can answer, we see him, looming at the entrance like an heir to a dynasty -- COLE ASTON EASTLAND, 30s with slicked back hair and good looks.

Cole threads through the crowd in a tailored suit, casually but intently. He warmly shakes guests' hands, kisses gals' cheeks.

View on Ray's stunned expression now face-to-face with Cole.

On Maria. She can barely disguise her distaste for Cole. She pads away. Demanding an explanation, Cole withdraws a crumpled LETTER from his suit pocket. Pushes it toward Ray.

RAY  
Well, I, I, didn't think the senator would be interested.

COLE  
I placed this on Jack's desk so he would see it when he returns from Langley. You saw that.

There's an awkward pause. A familiar tension.

COLE  
Listen tight, when he becomes leader new resources must be tapped. Resources...

RAY  
Olwen Kendall is--

COLE  
--I don't give a shit if your moral compass goes haywire. I'm setting up people who can help Jack push his agenda and make us a lot of fucking money.

RAY

That's what beats me. I'm being left totally in the dark -- on everything. I'm gonna tell him tomorrow I refuse to be a pond in your corrupt...

COLE

It's pawn.

Cole's face grows cold, his eyes steeled and locked on Ray's. Then with a grin, he slips his arm on Ray's shoulder. Ray is overjoyed. Finally, he is being taken seriously. Right then, a CONGRESSMAN, 60, scruffy, grabs Cole's arm.

CONGRESSMAN

Who let you in this shindig?

COLE

Eh, slipped in the back with the help.

A moment before the Congressman laughs. Cole joins him, withdrawing a flat gun-metal CIGARETTE CASE.

CONGRESSMAN

Where is ole Jack? Need a word.

COLE

Congressman. Y'know Ray McKigney?

And Cole turns, his body stiffening, as though he is pleased with himself.

EXT. MOVIE THEATRE - NIGHT

We find two figures looming under a marquee with *Rio Bravo* in red letters. BROOKE RANDOLPH DAVENPORT, 20s a willowy, blue-blooded, spunky brunette, tightens her scarf. JOE WAGNER, 19, wholesome and unconfident with bushy hair, buttons his coat.

BROOKE

Thank you again for the movie. I love John Wayne.

JOE

I'm more a Ricky Nelson fan. Guess I get enough John Wayne at home.

Brook laughs good-naturedly. Joe looks at her blissfully.

BROOKE

What?

JOE

I like your laugh. Okay. So, uh, you'll talk to Ronald?

BROOKE

Sure. But, the bad-side of your dad is the last place I want to be.

JOE

His bark is worse than his bite. Besides, I'm not interested in working for mom's stations or this new oil company dad wants to buy.

BROOKE

What about school? You got into Georgetown!

JOE

I can do that later. Right now I wanna do politics.

BROOKE

But with Nixon? Tsk. I'll see what I can do.

JOE

Hey. You have time for a drink?

BROOKE

Sorry. I have early meetings.

JOE

(crestfallen)  
Okay then. Goodnight.

BROOKE

Night.

JOE

Oh. Good luck with the position.

BROOKE

Thanks, I need it.

We hold on Joe watching Brooke breeze down the street...

EXT. D.C. STREETS/YMCA - NIGHT

It is a raw January night about eleven o'clock. The streets are bare. We hear only FOOTSTEPS from black unpolished and scuffed wingtips. They are worn by an ominous SHADOW following Ray. His eyes dart about as he ducks into...

INT. YMCA MEN'S RESTROOM

Dank. Faceless MEN lurk under dim bulbs. Ray whispers to a DUDE. They disappear into a pay-toilet. For a moment there is silence, then suddenly -- THE DOOR IS KICKED OPEN! A flashlight beam illuminates Ray's face and we hold a beat.

EXT. LANGLEY HOUSE - NIGHT

The house is a pleasant two-story dwelling with an attached garage and manicured lawn dotted with lights. In the drive is a...

INT. CADILLAC ELDORADO BIARRITZ

Pleasured MOANS resonate behind steamed windows. We see a MAN and WOMAN embraced. Quick shots: Breasts. Interlocked lips. The glint of a U.S. SENATE INSIGNIA RING. Then a hand opens the door and cowboy boots hit the ground.

We travel up to SENATOR JACK WAGNER, 40s, towering with a handsome weathered face, and brooding attitude. The woman, ROSE WOOD, 30s, stunning and blonde, takes his hand.

WOMAN

Let's get you out of those boots.

GO TO:

INT. WASHINGTON STAR NEWS ROOM - D.C. - LATE NIGHT

And there is a buzz of activity for a Wednesday night. Teleprinter sings beside a senior REPORTER, flipping through arrest FILES. Suddenly, his eyes go big as saucers.

BACK TO:

INT. LANGLEY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATE NIGHT

Money lives here. The abode is modernly furnished. There's a fire roaring in the fireplace. Reclining nude on the sofa, Rose stares longingly at Jack who takes a pull of whisky.



JACK

Now what I want you to do is go down there...

ROSE

...I've never been to Texas...

JACK

...and be friendly with Herman.

ROSE

As friendly as I am with you?

She kisses Jack sensuously on the neck. He withdraws.

JACK

We need this little oil company cause an old wildcatter friend of mine said they're about to find some oil, deep reservoir, maybe thousand barrels a day. We get in this cheap we can make a whole lot but this goddamn Marshall Harris is trying to talk ole Herman outta selling it to me. He's promising more cause he knows Herman's never saw a hundred-dollar bill he didn't like.

ROSE

Then just pay him more.

Jack looking skeptically at Rose.

JACK

Why the hell would I do such a damn thang when I got you and this?

(re: folder)

This is from a company boy. Gives a little peek into Herman's family scandals and dirty underwear. Study this and make a plan. Want you down there by Tuesday and Herman and I shaking hands on Sunday. You do this for me I'll take good care of you.

ROSE

You always do, Jack.

Suddenly the PHONE SHRILLS. Scares the hell out of us. Rose answers it.

ROSE  
 (into the phone)  
 Hello. Oh, sure. It's for you.

Jack with receiver to his ear; bludgeoned by crushing news.

JACK  
 (into the phone)  
 God Almighty. Git reliable people  
 applying pressure on the news-  
 hounds not to print. Say it's  
 hearsay, innuendo, character  
 assassination. Then locate that  
 Wallace file. Cole, git that now.  
 We don't know what we're dealing  
 with here but our livelihood  
 depends on it. I'll see you sunup.

Jack cradles the receiver glaring ahead with terrifying  
 resolve, confident that he has survived such threats in the  
 past and knows all the levers of power at his disposal.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. WASHINGTON, D.C. - MORNING

Cold morning. Sunrise. U.S. Capitol.

INT. CAPITOL BUILDING - SENATE CORRIDOR/ROTUNDA - CONTINUOUS

Moving down a wide corridor with open offices on either side  
 is Cole. He walks at a brisk clip, clutching an attaché case  
 imprinted with silver initials. Senate PAGE, 18, keeps pace.

COLE  
 ...They have an ex-commander of the  
 Cuban Air Force testifying. Take  
 copious notes and have them typed  
 and on my desk by day's end.

The Page veers down one corridor as we meet Maine SENATOR  
 SOPHIA TOWNSEND, 40s, an elegant creature with a modern flair  
 and provocative style. She and Cole stride toward us.

COLE  
 There's my favorite Senator. Trust  
 you had a Happy Christmas.

SOPHIA  
 Those *Sound of Music* tickets  
 certainly contributed.

COLE

Consider them, Senator a token of our ongoing corporation.

SOPHIA

It's Sophia.

COLE

I was hoping to count on your vote next week on the lease termination at Camp Swift, returning 100 acres to the original owners. The senator would also like to request you delay bringing SB34 to the floor.

And they stop in the ROTUNDA, a domed, circular room located in the center of the U.S. Capitol. Sophia stares at Cole standing with one hand on his hip like a Roman Emperor.

SOPHIA

Why does Jack care about my Honolulu Airport Extension bill?

COLE

He cares greatly about all public interests. (Sophia chuckles) As the newest member of the Republic, the senator believes the state should commence without tarnish. Lockheed Terminal has helped with planning and financing of the terminal. Because they will also be an operator, Senator Wagner wishes to avoid any apparent conflict of interest by proposing Lock and Harmon handle construction and Lockheed the day-to-day operations.

SOPHIA

Cole, darling. I may be one of the newest members of the club, but my dear Hunter, God rest his soul, told me all about Jack Wagner and his arm-twisting as subtle or as forceful...

COLE

Sophia...

SOPHIA

I know as a woman, and a registered Independent, both sides need me...

Cole sees he's never going to make a dent in his armor, tries a different tactic.

COLE  
If you get on board I can  
personally pledge substantial  
support to your upcoming primary.

SOPHIA  
You are a real prize.

COLE  
I realize you don't know me...

SOPHIA  
I knew your father...

COLE  
Sorry. But you will, and you'll  
see my word is golden and delivery  
spot on.

Sophia regards Cole with a mixture of concern and wariness.

SOPHIA  
I will give it consideration.

COLE  
I gotta run.

INT. JACK'S SENATE OUTER OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

And Jack storms into frame. He is disheveled and exhausted from the preparation of the disastrous news. He flies past his SECRETARY, 40s, boxing up Christmas decorations.

SECRETARY  
Good morning, sir. Happy New Year!

Jack automatically hands her his overcoat...

JACK  
Move ev'thang in Ray's office to my  
hideaway.

INT. JACK'S SENATE OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Littered with unopened boxes. It is masculine royal green with a private bathroom. Jack passes his pedestal desk...

JACK

Balls on th' son-of-a-bitch who did  
this must be gargantuan.

Cole is directing him to a fresh suit. Jack disappears into  
his bathroom as CLIFF BRADFORD, 60s, professorial, enters--

CLIFF

I spoke with Mona Hays at the *Star*.

And Cole's face pales.

CLIFF

She has the story.

And there's the sucker punch. Cole is bludgeoned. He  
fumbles for a cigarette as Jack enters.

JACK

I couldn't be more shocked if I'd  
heard Elizabeth killed the Pope.  
What about his wife?

COLE

Haven't been able to reach her.

JACK

Do we know this for certain?

Cliff nods almost imperceptibly. The men exchange concerned  
glances. We get the feeling something is troubling Cole.

JACK

A Morals charge? This is more than  
giving the ole handle a crank, huh?

CLIFF

Certainly set to become America's  
most famous tearoom arrest.

JACK

Thought I made it plenty clear to  
Duncan check on everybody I employ.  
Ray have a history of associatin'  
with pinks and pansies?

COLE

*Star* has a record of an arrest in  
'57 at the same locale.

JACK

This is an egregious situation we must git reined-in before it spreads and folks devour it like free caviar.

Jack is now perfectly dressed, chomping on a stogie. Cole smirks, points to Jack's SHIRT protruding from his zipper.

JACK

(tucking in shirt)

Only two sonuvfabitches with enough muscle and balls to pull something like this.

CLIFF

It is challenging to set up someone who is paying an impromptu visit to a public restroom.

JACK

My money's on Marshall Harris.

COLE

They have both confessed.

JACK

What was Ray's explanation?

CLIFF

Evidently, he went off his rocker.

JACK

Let's git him under a doc's--

CLIFF

--I have already admitted him into George Washington for hypertension and acute nervous exhaustion.

JACK

'Bout this other feller?

CLIFF

Abe Fabian. Sixty. Hungarian.

JACK

We git the papers to squash it?

CLIFF

They will be running for copy.

COLE

I know the *Tribune* will abstain on the basis Ray has kids.

JACK

We got anything on this *Star* gal?

COLE

(shakes his head)

I'll try to persuade her. If not lean on her editor, Carter Dunne.

JACK

See if we got any ties with folks who advertise with 'em.

COLE

For now I say we accept Ray's resignation before this builds.

JACK

He's gotta git outta here 'fore every oilman and rancher in Texas is wonderin' what kinda horse shit operation I'm running up 'ere.

CLIFF

I wouldn't use the term 'resignation' it confirms guilt.

JACK

You're the senate lawyer, do something. Get Duncan to run the top Dems past this Fabian see if he recognizes 'em, presumably to show he was part of a Dem frame-job.

CLIFF

I'll make a ca--

JACK

--Damn horn is not gonna do it!

CLIFF

Okay, boss. For now, though, I believe it best you see Ray.

Jack flips down a PHOTO of he and Ray holding a gigantic catfish.

JACK

I feel betrayed. I'm the godfather to his eldest if I see that jackass I'll kick him in the damn balls.

And the intercom BUZZES. Jack presses the button. We glimpse the *Washington Times: Rin-tin-tin Arrives With Boy Scouts.*

SECRETARY'S VOICE  
Mrs. Wagner is on the line, sir.

JACK  
Tell her I'll caw her later.

SECRETARY'S VOICE  
She is very persistent.

JACK  
Hell, send her through.  
(to Cole/Cliff)  
Somebody went to a lot of trouble here and I want who. Cliff, git over and see Duncan, tell him if he wants to keep that job at the Bureau he best find who's behind this.

As Cliff exits, Jack sees Cole's concerned look.

JACK  
Talk to my pollster and find out the impact of this o'ugly thang.  
(into phone receiver)  
Hullo. She called you? Wouldn't say anything, just wouldn't be available ... Because it's not sumpin' for you to git involved in. We've got the best minds working on it. I gotta go, have a lot to handle and don't need you creating more problems. Luv ya.

Jack slams down the receiver on the cradle with such strength the desk shudders. He pours bourbon into his 'Stop Whining' mug, studying Cole looking like a young prince.

JACK  
Goddamnit, this will splinter the whole coalition and fuck our chances on me becoming leader. I wanna call a vote tomorra.

COLE  
I'll do some wrangling. Tomorrow will be tough.



JACK

Seems ya got the entire  
smorgasbord.

And Cole's eyes dance with a mad gleam.

COLE

I'd like to move on Peter Kelly at  
Pan Am and Kendall with the vending  
machines.

Jack turns back to the blinds, peeks out to a killer view of  
the Mall and Washington Monument.

JACK

Add Lock and Harmon for Bill Black.

COLE

Already in motion.  
(a beat)  
Went through his office. Nothing.

JACK

We gotta do better than that. That  
file is our goldmine. If someone  
got ahold of it be the end of the  
ballgame. There's highly-  
classified papers in there we're  
not supposed to have but we're  
gonna need down the line. We don't  
know if the police are gonna search  
Ray's house, or this is a blackmail  
thing... hell, he's exposed to the  
wind.

COLE

Any chance he'd sing?

JACK

Shit no. Ray's as loyal to me as  
they come. Now Grant Stockdale  
opened boxes at First National and  
State; keys and box digits in that  
Budweiser mug.

(a beat)

I've fostered you boys like you  
were my own. Don't go letting  
something happen to you, pardner  
'cause if you break down ev'thang  
in my world comes crumbling down.

Hold on Jack and Cole's involved eyes, then fade to...

INT. SENATE CORRIDOR - DAY

A group of SUITED MEN ogle at four twenty-year-old GIRLS striding past. One is Brooke, two are extras, the other is MARCIE DE ROSA, Hispanic, sassy, yet mousey.

MARCIE

Gee, I'm living the dream. I haven't really set no goals.

BROOKE

I believe she was referring to the male persuasion.

GIRL

You should lock one in because after session starts the decent ones disappear like free booze.

GIRL 2

Preferably a congressman with stellar committees.

BROOKE

An attractive girl can go out seven nights if she is so inclined. She can go with a male fellow worker who prefers not to take his wife, or be window dressing, more if she prefers. A girl in D.C. can go as far as her scruples...

As the girls round a corner they bump into Cole.

COLE

Well, what a lovely surprise.

BROOKE

Good day, Mr. Eastland.

COLE

Ms. Davenport.

MARCIE

How-de-do!

Marcie playfully punches Cole on the arm, allowing us to glimpse a cigar BURN on her left hand. Cole hasn't once stopped looking at Brooke.

MARCIE

Don't you look spent.

COLE

Is my little monster learning the ropes?

MARCIE

The gals are providing me with all the howling insights. Oh, yeah. You are joining us tonight, right?

COLE

Afraid not this evening.  
(Marcy pouts)  
Next time for certain.

GIRL

Come, girls. We best be going.

MARCIE

A'right. See ya around campus.

COLE

I'll be around.

As the girls breeze from frame, Cole snatches Brooke's hand, sweeping into his arms.

COLE

(re: Senate side)  
What brings you to the dark side?

And Brooke returns a limp hug.

COLE

It's been three weeks and that's the reception I get. Why the look? I should be the one upset.

BROOKE

Why you?

COLE

Heard you went to the picture show.

BROOKE

Tsk. With Joe. He's a friend.

COLE

I may be off base here but you should find out where you stand with him. Personally, I think he has a crush on you.

BROOKE

So, what? Lots of men do. Albeit there's only one the feelings are reciprocal.

PEOPLE pass between them.

COLE

Anyway... what's happening at the office?

BROOKE

Not much.

(Cole rolls his eyes)

No, he hasn't said anything and it's driving me absolutely mad.

COLE

Why don't you ask him?

BROOKE

The men are always around. I did write a letter and put on his desk.

Impressed by her determination yet amused by her naïveté.

COLE

They're drips, especially Dick Schubert.

BROOKE

I wouldn't be surprised if took my letter before Clark could read it.

COLE

He feels threatened. I'd say something to him.

BROOKE

Who knows maybe one day I'll be the particularly determined sort clever enough to have Wellesley roommates.

COLE

So that's it. Thought I told ya.

We understand "male/female roommates" in 1959 carries connotations it does not today.

COLE

Mary Jo (Kopechne) and Nancy moved in directly before recess.

BROOKE

Which one is your 'cousin?'

COLE

Com'on. There was no way I could land a loan as a swinging single in northwest D.C. without a fib. Wait till you see this pad has this enormous backyard, glorious for summer, which, Friday, we're having a Mod party and I want you there.

A passing MAN gawks at Brooke. She returns a wink. Like a hound off his leash, Cole pulls Brooke toward him.

COLE

When are you inviting me over to your place?

BROOKE

When you can behave.

(stops his advance)

I heard Jack may have the votes.

(Cole is kissing her neck)

It's not difficult to know which of Jack's boys deserves the praise.

While Ray may have beautiful children he doesn't have that Senate legacy.

(Cole goes frosty)

I'm merely joshing. I think you and Ray make a splendid team.

COLE

Made.

Not a conversation Cole care to have. So he grabs Brooke's hand and leads her into--

HIDDEN STAIRWAY

BROOKE

Are you out of your mind?

Cole folds Brooke into him, pushing her skirt over her garter. She leans close enough to tease but too far to pay-off. Her lips are millimeters from his. Cole's breath quickens as Hope presses her body hard against his. Then, she kisses his nose and with an odd laugh, utters:

BROOKE

Be a good boy now and stay out of mischief.

On that, Brooke breezes out the door leaving Cole in a shade of blue ecstasy. Meanwhile...

INT. SENATE CHAMBERS FOYER - DAY

A PHOTOGRAPHER, 30s, breezes past a jovial African SERGEANT-AT-ARMS, 60s, parked at his desk.

SGT-AT-ARMS  
Whoa-ho. Where you think you're going with that Kodak?

PHOTOGRAPHER  
Meeting Senator Wagner, Bill Black, inside. Bill earned that degree and is shoving off today.

SGT-AT-ARMS  
Kudos to him, but Rule IV of the rules regulating the Senate wing of the Capitol forbids the taking of pictures of any kind in the Senate Chamber and surrounding rooms.

PHOTOGRAPHER  
Senator Wagner said bring a camera.

Jack and BILL BLACK, 20s, a paragon of the classic Ivy League graduate, whiz past the Sergeant-at-Arms and into...

INT. SENATE CHAMBERS - CONTINUOUS

The center of political power. Mahogany desks are arranged in a semicircular pattern.

Sergeant-at-Arms says to the Photographer:

SGT-AT-ARMS  
You'd better hope Joe Duke doesn't open that door and look down, he'll wreck us, he will.

JACK  
Take it from there and Bill and I will position ourselves 'bout here.

Big smiles. Jack and Bill pose beside the President Pro Tem's chair. Click.

JACK  
Drop two copies with my secretary by day's end, now, ya, hear?

Photographer and Sgt-at-Arms exit. Jack plucks peppermints from the 'candy desk.' Offers Bill one.

JACK

Bill, you're a young, polished go-getter whose fortitude I value. 'Tween us, I set the wheels turning at Lock and Harmon to secure the Hawaiian airport in your name.

BILL

That will kick things off.

JACK

Incidentally, Cole's been talkin' with Ed Levinson--

BILL

--At the Fremont? Ed's terrific.

JACK

Little vending machine firm called So-Corp outta Houston; buddy Grant Stockdale runs it. He and Cole have come up with a dandy concept to provide automatic food and drink machines to companies working on government contracts. I'll see they're awarded the lion's share.

BILL

Sounds not only outstanding but lucrative. How do you see me fitting in?

JACK

If it hits the scale Grant expects we'll need helluva lot more machines. Understand, Kendall owns a company that constructs 'em. Perhaps you could speak with Rosario set up something with him

BILL

Absolutely! I'll ring them today.

JACK

We offer him a percentage off the top or stocks. We git in for one dollar a share, public pay around sixteen. There's enough honey in the pot so everyone can be greedy.

DISSOLVE TO:

## INT. ST. PATRICK CATHOLIC CHURCH - AFTERNOON

A woman dips her fingers into the holy water, and blesses herself. She is ELIZABETH WAGNER, 40s, aristocratic, southern, blonde, absolutely stunning. She floats down the aisle under the high ceiling, past art and pews of praying PARISHIONERS, stopping at the Altar aglow with candles.

There is a large coin box to pay for lighting candles. She deposits a \$100 bill into the box, and with great dignity, ignites eight candles amongst a tier of many.

## EXT/INT. PHONE BOOTH/HOSPITAL/BANK/OFFICE- AFTERNOON

This sequence reveals Cole's urgency to locate the file, and stop Mona Hays. He appears stressed, tense and becomes more so as the story unfolds.

- 1.) Cole in a phone booth ringing Ray's house.
- 2.) Cole at the hospital nurse's station; refused admittance to Ray's ward.
- 3.) Cole waltzing from the bank with a red folder.
- 4.) Cole delivers flowers to MONA HAYS, 20, ginger hair and glasses. He shows a photo of Ray's family. He's working her. Mona seems convinced to dump the story.

CUT TO:

## INT. SENATE ROOM 207 - LATE AFTERNOON

The room is cozy with walls paneled in American black walnut. Chuckling SENATORS puff on cigars.

We find Kansas SENATOR GORDON MORSE, 50, bowtie, quick with a quip and a curse. He speaks with Florida SENATOR HOWARD EVANS, 60, brilliant white hair and intelligent.

## SENATOR EVANS

If everyone abstained from voting  
on the grounds of personal  
interests, ya couldn't get a quorum  
in the Senate on any subject.

Other SENATORS enter and pour whisky into crystal glasses. A beat later. Cole waltzes in.



SENATOR MORSE

(re: Cole)

Talk about one of the sleaziest, most compulsively ambitious strivers on the Hill. Always clutching that black attaché case imprinted with those damn sparkling silver initials.

SENATOR EVANS

I highly suggest you change your tune. That's Jack's boy now.

SENATOR MORSE

If I've said it once, said it a hundred times: Wagner owes anything to one human other than Elizabeth, it is Ray McKigney. This fella, he panders to Jack's worse impulses. You know what I heard last night at supper? That he's looking to push Spector out of his leadership role without a goddamn vote! I won't allow that manic cowboy and his hardscrabble Texas cadre to--

SENATOR EVANS

--Stanley, if I were you, my concern would be Ray's special file. That is probably a better blackmail tool than the Bulldog's (Hoover). Jack is a mastermind capable of controlling those encyclopedic documents whereas others could become reckless with, oh, a certain Miami reading.

Off Senator Evans' grimace, we find Cole chatting with PETER KELLY, 30, athletic, tweed jacket and specs.

PETER

Everyone knows he appreciates your talents.

COLE

One I keep optimal is future projects. For instance, I hear you're considering expanding casinos into the Caribbean, specifically Dominican.

PETER

Cole, Pan Am is an airline... (Cole rolls his eyes) If we're speaking off-record then perhaps our subsidiary InterContinental could be interested.

COLE

Pete. Do you like to gamble?

PETER

I'm usually unlucky, but, yes.

COLE

I'm talkin' big time. (pulls Peter in) Pete, I.C. has twenty-three hotels in the Caribbean, two that house casinos which have been set up to lure tourists into the hotel; tourists who would use PAA to get there. But the company doesn't want to run the casinos because they are considered unseemly. Therefore, they want someone who doesn't mind getting their hands soiled pulling the levers. (notes Jack, entering) My guy is Castro's casino director. Frank assures it's days before Castro kicks Trafficante and the boys out. Now when he does we need to be prepared, ready to move the Riviera and others up the road, creating an offshore Caribbean gambling paradise surpassing anything in Havana or what Moe D. and the Desert Inn are doing in Las Vegas.

PETER

You do seem to be the man with the contacts and insider knowledge.

COLE

I'm the best you've ever seen. What we'll do is run the I.C.'s casinos while starting up one of our own with controlling interest.

PETER

I like it.

COLE

I told Jack you would. Can I count on you?

PETER  
I'll see what I can do.

COLE  
I want your answer Monday noon  
high.

And we now settle on Jack and Senator Evans.

JACK  
What's on your mind, Howard?

SENATOR EVANS  
Ya ever have any indications?

JACK  
Of what, his sickness? Goddamn it,  
no! Wouldn't have had him around...  
Ya tellin' me you did?

SENATOR EVANS  
There were times, I detected  
gestures or mannerisms.

JACK  
This unholy surprise sounds kind of  
fishy in terms of three Morals  
officers just happening to be  
looking over a transom at midnight  
to find my staffer with his shorts  
around his ankles.

SENATOR EVANS  
A frame-job? Considering your list  
of admirers...

JACK  
There's only one with golden balls.

SENATOR EVANS  
Why would he want to smear Ray?

JACK  
Goddamnit, Howard this is not about  
damaging Ray it's about destroying  
me and my reputation by consorting  
with those kinda nutcases.

SENATOR EVANS  
You must be swift and decisive,  
otherwise you lose leadership  
votes.

JACK

A good stiff breeze on my rosy cheeks keeps me on my toes.

SENATOR EVANS

Some Members have ambivalent reactions. They are calling for the Bureau to investigate, citing concerns they had been unaware of Ray's previous offense in the same Washington men's room two years previously. Moreover, Baxter is intoning this could be a national security breach considering those people are not allowed the clearance Ray held.

JACK

Baxter best keep his damn paws off my Intel. Committee or I'll chop his pecker off.

SENATOR EVANS

Jack, that kind of arm-twisting has an expiration. Some would like a guarantee this won't harm your move into leadership. We have some powerful legislation coming to the floor.

JACK

Ya tell them simpletons I'm gonna find out who did this and swear to the Almighty himself...

Now Sophia has entered the room. The men straighten themselves, seem uneasy in her presence. She spies Cole and pads directly over.

COLE

Surprised to see you here.

SOPHIA

Why? I, too, like a drink. Old Stag rocks.

COLE

Kentucky bourbon girl.

SOPHIA

About your favor earlier, I'm willing to help if you can do something from me.

COLE  
Sure. Anything. Name it.

SOPHIA  
Since November there has been a '56  
Jag parked in my spot.

COLE  
That's your favor? (laughs) To move  
a car. Done. I'll ring Tony and  
have it moved before dinner.

SOPHIA  
I am anxious to see this.

COLE  
My magic does impressive.

SOPHIA  
It belongs to Senator Baxter.

Cole shoots a skeptical look to Sophia. She smirks. Her  
eyes have a fierce and lustful shine.

SOPHIA  
Good luck, Merlin.

Jack pads over to Cole just as Sophia walks off.

JACK  
She's a dandy looking ole broad.

COLE  
Baxter is descending on your  
medical bill.

JACK  
Aw, now th' S-O-B is going to wreck  
this damn bill and we're gonna be  
left with our dicks in the wind  
over the sickly.

COLE  
He's also voting against. No way  
we can get a vote tomorrow.

JACK  
I want you to git your own cozy  
little file starting with him.

COLE  
I believe I may have located it.

JACK  
Goddamn, that's news!

COLE  
Large red enve--

JACK  
--Na, nope. Big accordion kind.

COLE  
I'll stay on it. I had a chat with the *Star* gal, sold her this, promised that, believe she's gonna drop it.

JACK  
Damn good news. Let's pray the others follow suit. Son, I recognize you've been riding shotgun. Ray was a Boy Scout, nuts and bolts. When it comes to good old-fashioned political instincts and drive, you've made a niche for yourself just like your daddy did by providing infinite value.

INT. SENATE CORRIDOR - SECONDS LATER

Jack and Cole are striding along checkered marble tiles, past massive mahogany office doors, some open, most closed.

COLE  
We're gonna make a good team.

JACK  
Like chiffon and cut glass.

COLE  
I bumped into Mondale. He flipped Sonny Boy to support SB34.

JACK  
Fantastic. Let's send...

COLE  
You did. An engraved Cartier lighter reading: 'Thanks for sticking behind us, JW-'

JACK  
That-a-boy. Also, speak to Clint--

COLE  
 --I did. Last week...

Jack pushes his eyebrows skyward over Cole's overstep.

COLE  
 ...When we went over those cotton allotments leases. I'm telling you if this plays right we're looking at a windfall.

JACK  
 Keep that close to your vest. Those agriculture boys like Henry Phillips get word Billy'll be hoeing cotton on a chain-gang.  
 (pats his stomach)  
 Say, ya think, uh, I've put on some weight? Don't fucking laugh.

COLE  
 If it's funny, I'll laugh. Maybe a couple here. And oh, there. Why?

JACK  
 Charlie's nagging me to slim down, even suggesting cut a piece or two of pecan pie outta my diet.

COLE  
 If Elizabeth is one thing she is astute.

JACK  
 A'right, smartass let's head over to the Q and grab a soda pop.

GO TO:

INT. TEXAS CONGRESSMAN CLARK'S OFFICE - LATE AFTERNOON

The room is lit by cold afternoon light. On the wall is a plaque: 'If you serve your country then you serve yourself.'

Texas Congressman BRADLEY CLARK, 30s, a curly blonde and poster boy for morality. He is parked behind his desk.

Three 40-year-old Administrative Assistants: AA 1, AA 2 and DICK SCHUBET, an anti-social animal forced to be social are seated across from Clark.

CLARK

I have some exciting legislation for the second session of the 86th Congress. Fellas, where is Brooke? Did anyone mention...?

Dick is snatching an APPLE from a monstrous FRUIT BASKET.

CLARK

Hold it right there. Dick, I want you to see personally that United Fruit basket is delivered to the switchboard ladies.

Dick frowns, tosses the apple into the basket. There is a KNOCK at the door. Brooke surreptitiously peeks inside.

BROOKE

Oh. I am sorry.

CLARK

No, please. Come in. With Phil out, I need everyone helping with press and getting out our agendas.

Dick grunts. AA 2 grudgingly offers Brooke his chair.

BROOKE

Thank you, I can stand.

CLARK

Regarding the fruit basket I would like this office to stand out from the pack, to show we are not for sale. This means no gifts, of any domination, from lobbyist or special interest groups. We all clear? Good. Now Tom, how's it coming with Smith?

AA 1

Should have a draft next week.

CLARK

I would also like to see how we could help Senator Kennedy. I don't want us a part of this "Stop Kennedy" coalition Stevenson, Symington and Humphrey have started. Dick, why the long mug?

DICK

I agree with Mr. Harris we hold back our support.



CLARK

While I appreciate your opinions I have confidence in Kennedy's vision; his philosophical outlook is precisely what the Democratic Party needs.

BROOKE

If I may. Perhaps we should show we are ready for prime time.

CLARK

All right, Brooke. Elaborate.

BROOKE

Perhaps we reach out to his campaign and offer our help. Maybe book some rooms at the Ambassador for the convention this summer.

Dick is openly disturbed. Glares sourly at Brooke.

CLARK

I like it. I do. You take the reins on that project. One other topic, which dovetails on campaigns...

There's suddenly an anticipatory feeling in the room.

CLARK

Now before you get too excited I have not made a decision. However, I have been given the idea more thought. So with that said, we should start devising a campaign strategy. One that can beat Jack Wagner. I feel '62 is our year to make a move.

BROOKE

Ha! Make a move in '62. That's a fun slogan.

CLARK

Yeah, it is.

Brooke smirks at Dick.

CLARK

We have an opportunity to do something two years ago that impossible.

(MORE)

CLARK (CONT'D)

Jack will be difficult to unseat, we all know that, therefore it's imperative we highlight his wedge issues: how he fails to deliver on education, health care; how he caters to his cronies in D.C., but most importantly, and this is the cherry, his blatant bankruptcy of ethics on, and, particularly off, the Senate floor.

AA 1

Reads like a Cato and Caesar novel.

BROOKE

That's a juicy magazine feature; playing the good versus evil. I could pitch it to *Life*.

CLARK

I suggest you men take notes. This is exactly the type of thinking this office needs. Yikes. I have a committee meeting in ten minutes. Thank you all.

Clark hustles out a side door as Brooke and the men exit the main door, padding into...

INT. HOUSE CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

...Where Brooke, mustering her courage and says:

BROOKE

Dick. May I speak with you?

DICK

Not now, doll, I'm in a big rush.

BROOKE

It will only take a moment.

Dick stops, rolls his eyes, parks his hands on his hips.

BROOKE

I was wondering what I did, or is there a reason why you dislike me?

DICK

Got nothing to do with emotions. It's simply a fact we don't need you and your Ivy Leagueness in the office.

(MORE)

DICK (CONT'D)

I can handle press and I'll be doing so next week. Clark and I are having dinner tomorrow.

BROOKE

Obviously, it is the congressman's decision but I studied and feel I am qualified...

Dick laugh so hard tears stream from his eyes. He turns and ambles toward AA 1 & 2, who, too are laughing. Off Brooke's defeated look, we dissolve to...

EXT. STREETS OF D.C. - TWILIGHT

The light outside is very cold and failing. Leaves whip past BUSINESSMEN striding past Jack and Cole.

JACK

Get on with it, damn it!

COLE

Joe's trying to get on with Nixon.

JACK

Hadn't mentioned it to me.

COLE

Cause he knows how you'd respond.

JACK

I leaned on him to squash his nonsense and git his ass back to that school I pulled a lot of strings to git him into. I have high hopes for my kids and they don't entail crawling through political shit trenches like their daddy. Tell Ronald not to hire him.

COLE

He wants to steer his own ship.

JACK

That's stupid as all-get-out.

COLE

Give him a little slack to run.

JACK

Anyway. 'Bout Ray. I know damn well this was a calculated attack by that cocker-sucker Harris.

COLE

We can't prove it was him.

JACK

Probably knew of his disease and where he cranked the old handle and notified the police had them give him an arrest copy. He's a pole cat hustler like his o'daddy.

EXT. CARROLL ARMS HOTEL - EVENING

Six-story colonial building. Buick pulls up and Mr. Black steps out. Right then, Jack spots Maine SENATOR ALBERT BAXTER, 50, Gregory Peck-look alike.

We stay on Cole and Mr. Black, noting his wing-tipped shoes.

COLE

What are you doing here?

MR. BLACK

Had to see you.

COLE

I told you about us in public.

MR. BLACK

My source at the P.D. says a captain is trying to obtain a warrant for his apartment.

COLE

(sinks)

You're fuckin' kidding.

MR. BLACK

He's hoping for a trove of homo-porno material. They plan to hit his place tomorrow.

We feel the tension ratchet and clock ticking.

COLE

Find out what judge he's talking to and let me know. What about getting into the hospital or my note?

MR. BLACK  
Gotta guy working on it. I say  
it's in the house. If I'm right,  
ya best hustle.

COLE  
What number is it?

MR. BLACK  
5C. She's there.

COLE  
She doesn't like me.

MR. BLACK  
Neither does this Mona gal.

COLE  
I spoke with her...

MR. BLACK  
My guy at the paper says she's been  
talking with the editor all day.

COLE  
You think she's gonna run it?

MR. BLACK  
(shrugs)  
If you had a story like this would  
you sit on it?

And Cole's freaking about losing control.

MR. BLACK  
I do have some good news...

Meanwhile, Jack stalks like a bull elephant toward Baxter.

JACK  
Albert.

This is the 'handling.' Jack hurls his powerful stature in  
close, millimeters from Baxter's face, eyes widening and  
narrowing, eyebrows rising and falling, stunning his victim.

JACK  
I don't know where the hell you got  
the temerity to try and sandbag me  
but I don't have time for your  
chickenshit shenanigans.

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

Maybe the holiday Egg Nog sent ya little loony causin' ya to forget who's running this ship and who the deckhand is but Ray McKigney is a solid of a man you will find and he would never compromise his loyalty to me or his duty to this country and I don't wanna hear another peep from your hatch or I'm gonna ream you like I reamed Barry Smith by...

People pass, staring.

JACK

...Bringing forth a complaint to Ethics Committee how you purchased M.G.I. stocks at insiders' rate and the \$9000 mink bought by a lawyer representing the company that your wife wore to the Marine Christmas Ball. Don't cause me any more trouble I gotta enough to handle.

(then; a grin plays)

And on the Medical Assistance bill. Can't you go with us, sweetheart? I know you have to save face but goddamn it you need to vote with me once in a while -- just one time. Have mercy on me. Please. Beg ya.

(Baxter resigns)

God bless ya. Why don'tcha come up to the club sometime and I'll buy you a soda pop or two.

Cole rests his hand on Jack's lower back, nudging him into the hotel where we HEAR conversations and piano strains...

INT. CARROLL ARMS HOTEL - QUORUM CLUB - SECOND FLOOR

The quintessential gentlemen's bar littered with MEN in suits. BARTENDER mixes a Manhattan. Over there, a scantily clad WAITRESS reveals her cleavage to Marshall and a muddled-aged MAN parked on a settee.

Jack and Cole stride into view. Cole scans the joint with an investor's approval.

COLE

This is going to pay off like a Las Vegas slot.

And Jack's expression changes from bliss to angry frustration when he spots Marshall.

JACK  
I'm gonna remedy this chicken-shit  
parlor game--

As quick as a stiletto, Cole grabs Jack's arm. Jack cuts a stern glare. Cole releases his grip.

COLE  
Hang on. Press hounds get word it  
drives the story to nightly news:  
"Senator assaults department store  
magnet over queer affair."  
Important thang is nothing is to  
jeopardize our future plans. I  
believe that dustup would.

Jack nods in agreement, as the preppy MANAGER, 30 approaches.

MANAGER  
Evening fellahs!

COLE  
Did you let him in?

MANAGER  
Mr. Harris? Yes.

COLE  
Is he a fuckin' member?

At this moment, Marshall and the Man approach. It's bad timing. There is hatred between Marshall and Jack.

MARSHALL  
Take our seat. I'm certain after  
the day you had your knees are a  
little weak.

Marshall laughs good-naturedly tapping Jack with a rolled NEWSPAPER. Then with a hardened face he allows it to flutter into Jack's hand as he exits.

JACK  
That goddamn bastard sure likes  
seeing folks squirm.

COLE  
Let's not forget who sent a funeral  
wreath to his wedding.

And Cole and Jack repair to the settee. WAITRESS proffers highball glasses. Jack tosses the newspaper.

COLE

As we were coming in, I received some belated Christmas cheer that should brighten matters.

JACK

Yeah, what's that?

COLE

The FCC granted your twenty-four-hour monopoly broadcasting rights.

JACK

I'll be a skinned coon. That'll send Charlie to cloud nine. Also makes a dandy uptick in revenue. Pass the word I'd like the chairman taken care of, something really nice now. Some that acreage in Lubbock, perhaps.

Clad in a black low-cut dress and mesh stockings, a GIRL with deceptively cold beauty passes.

JACK

Now that's what I call a great-looking specimen of femininity.

COLE

Endowments made by God himself.

JACK

Scoot over here, kid and learn somethin'. Understanding human nature that is crucial in our business. See you gotta be able to figure out what folks gonna to do before they do it. Take that fella over yonder, watch his hands and eyes. Most substantial thang a man has to say is what he's trying not to say.

We snatch snippets of an intoxicated GIRL 20s ad-libbing to a CUSTOMER. The Manager approaches Cole.

MANAGER

Marcie is at the door.

Cole looks toward the entrance. Marcie indicates with urgency she must speak privately. Cole pads to her.

Meanwhile, directs the Manager to remove drunk girl.



DRUNK GIRL  
 WHATSAMATTER your wife won't--

Manager grabs the girl and whisks her out. Cole returns to the settee. His face says this is very serious. He collects the newspaper from the floor and reads the headline. Cole's face contorts and he grows deathly sick.

Jack snatches the paper: 'SENATOR'S AIDE IN TEAROOM ARREST.'

COLE  
 I, I didn't know it was dropping.

JACK  
 Eh, they sure-the-hell got me  
 dangling on the end of a string.

COLE  
 Dems are playing the security angle  
 big since Fabian was a Hungarian.

JACK  
 Hell, Ray ain't Guy Burgess.

Cole sits there a moment, blinking excessively.

COLE  
 What's our move?

JACK  
 Why don'tcha draft a statement for  
 Cliff. Something like everybody  
 has problems with family and  
 friends. Some have mentally  
 retarded brothers, some alcoholic  
 friends. And we regret this  
 situation.

COLE  
 I'm afraid that's not going to  
 satisfy our constituents. Under  
 these circumstances you should  
 deliver the statement. People know  
 your hard-lined stance on national  
 security and how you'd never  
 jeopardize it. Also, a, Elizabeth  
 released a statement.

Looking funeral, Jack rises and straightens himself.

JACK  
 Welp, this is one of those days  
 I'll never git back.  
 (MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

Better run home start working the phones and thinking of way to salvage my career.

Manager pads up, holding a TELEPHONE.

MANAGER

Excuse me. Senator Wagner. You have a phone call.

Jack presses the receiver to his ear.

JACK

(into the phone)

This is Wagner. I didn't know. A'right now I gotta clean up an ole mess.

Jack cradles the receiver. Stares disheartened at Cole.

JACK

That was Evans. This is a major setback. Catch ya in the mornin', pardner.

COLE

Jack. If you do change your mind and see him, don't lace into him. He's been banged up as it is.

Jack stalks off as we hold on Cole's troubled look, hearing:

ELIZABETH (V/O)

"My heart is aching today for someone who has reached the end point of exhaustion in dedicated service to his country. I have known Ray McKigney for ten..."

EXT. WASHINGTON, D.C. - NIGHT

From the air, we dip, soar over the shimmering city. We push in on a SEDAN moving along Georgetown's toniest neighborhood.

ELIZABETH (V/O)

"...Years and he is an incredible man, devout Catholic, father of six and happily married husband..."

EXT. IDYLLIC GEORGETOWN HOME - NIGHT

Warmly-lit two-story job. Lights glow within. Tires of the sedan roll quietly to a stop. Door opens. Jack exits, stalking past a high school CHEERLEADER YARD SIGN.

INT. WAGNER HOME - FOYER - NIGHT

French decorator Henri Samuel has done the house in the style of Louis XVI. The maid, MILLIE, African American, 60, greets Jack, and takes his coat.

JACK  
Thank ya, Millie. Is Dior home?

MILLIE  
No, sir. She has cheerleading this evening.

JACK  
Millie, could you bring me some...

Right then, the front door opens.

JACK  
...Pecan pie?

Elizabeth breezes in. Jack looks at her. She takes his breath away. They kiss. Elizabeth turns her back to Jack, who helps her from her coat. She is wearing a magnificent pale rose violet Cristóbal Balenciaga gown.

ELIZABETH  
You're looking at the chairwoman of the Children with Disabilities.

As Elizabeth removes her diamond earrings, we glimpse her cross necklace.

ELIZABETH  
Sorry, I didn't know you would be home so early. I helped the volunteers clean up. I recognize that face. You cannot possibly be cross with me.

JACK  
I told ya not to git involved.

ELIZABETH  
You should know that in times like these I never sit idle.

(MORE)

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

(in French) Millie, could you be so kind as to bring up some jasmine tea?

MILLIE

(in French)  
What about Jack's pecan pie?

ELIZABETH

(in French)  
Do you see that spare tire around his waist?

Millie covers her smirk. Elizabeth kicks off her shoes. We see her bare feet climbing the stairs. Jack follows past a cavalcade of family photos of the Wagner's two sons and daughter.

JACK

This is the biggest damn mess I've ever seen in my life.

ELIZABETH

I was absolutely speechless and close to tears when Maria rang.

INT. WAGNER BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

By now, Jack and Elizabeth are in their enormous chamber with two antique armoires, four-poster bed; works of fine art. Jack sinks onto the bed.

JACK

Charlie, this whole thang worries the hell outta me.  
(pops three Tums)  
My damn ulcer is actin' up.

Elizabeth runs her hand over the Jacquard of rose garland on blue silk wall covering. She crosses to the night-table, puts on the lamp, lights an ultra-slim cigarette and folds one leg under. Sits on the floor in front of Jack.

ELIZABETH

Perhaps the exhaustion of your trip amplifies matters.  
(a beat)  
I find myself caught between utter disgust and unyielding compassion. I was an hour at the church.

JACK

I can't fuckin' fathom it.

ELIZABETH  
 (puffs, waves smoke away)  
 All of us face challenges.

JACK  
 But hell we don't revert to  
 psychopathic behavior to tackle  
 'em. Good God, he's this short of  
 the lunatic asylum.

Jack turns on the television, gloomily stares at Jack Paar.

ELIZABETH  
 I do not believe Ray nor his  
 actions are psychopathic. I  
 believe they are a cry for help.  
 We all use our internal power to  
 move forward and try to respond  
 best we are equipped to horrible  
 situations and delicate subjects.

Jack is preoccupied. Elizabeth is concerned.

ELIZABETH  
 I would like you to offer Ray the  
 number two job at KWTX.

JACK  
 Reminds me a piddlee'o bit of  
 respectable news came from the FCC.

ELIZABETH  
 It did! That is indeed marvelous!  
 See. Even more reason to reward  
 Ray. He has worked so--

JACK  
 --Nope, nope. I can't and won't.

ELIZABETH  
 You can and you will, JW. It's  
 imperative you make a gesture of  
 support characterizing Ray's  
 behavior as a temporary period of a  
 nervous breakdown.

JACK  
 I don't think it's wise to appear  
 be defending him. Just can't win!

ELIZABETH  
 Now is not about politics, now is  
 about your friend.

(MORE)

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

Now is when we light a candle for Ray and Maria and conceptualize what those poor children are going through... You are Jimmy's godfather. Imagine Joe, Broderick or Dior having to experience such atrocity. It completely breaks my heart.

JACK

I hate it, too, but the average farmer or worker just can't support me if I seem to be condoning this type of cockeyed conduct.

ELIZABETH

Remember what you always say about Americans. Besides, it only accentuates your loyalty. A gesture of support on our part is critical to hold our forces together. Maria is terrified you will ruin their lives.

JACK

Figured my days of being a janitor were in the rearview mirror.

ELIZABETH

There are always going to be messes to clean up. I would like you to see Ray.

(Jack grumbles)

I realize this whole situation terrifies you.

Elizabeth takes Jack's hand and puts it on her chest. She closes her eyes. This comforts Jack.

ELIZABETH

You're not the only powerful man who hasn't felt what you are feeling. You know when Jesus dealt with people with moral problems, like dear Ray has, he always dealt tenderly. When you contact him, do offer my love and understanding.

Elizabeth drifts into the bathroom, closing the door behind her. Jack uses this time to come to some conclusions.

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. RAY'S APARTMENT/HALLWAY - NIGHT

A moment elapses on the empty corridor, lit by eerie green neon lighting. We hear footsteps. Cole comes into view. He stops rigidly and looks back, then knocks on apt 5C.

Maria opens the door in her housecoat. She says nothing, but her face expresses disfavor. Cole pads inside. It is dark, and quiet. We HEAR a loud metallic TICKING of a timer throughout the scene.

COLE

I'm, uh, sorry about Ray.

Maria glares and stalks to the kitchen. She is pouring this morning's coffee grounds from a filter into a fresh one.

COLE

If I, could get the...

At this moment, a red BALL rolls and settles beside Cole's shoe. His face drains seeing Ray's children in the doorway. He stares at the eldest, struck by gravity and the extent.

MARIA

Kids. Go to bed.

Cole is dragged into focus by Maria proffering a lumpy accordion-style envelope. Cole's real objective. This is what he was meant to find -- the WALLACE FILE. Cole takes the envelope and pads to the door.

MARIA

Ray mentioned a man in suspenders.

Just as Cole is opening the door a deafening ALARM rings; scares the shit out of him -- spooks us. He studies Maria.

MARIA

(silencing the timer)

At the party a man asked for you.

Her eyes bores into Cole's like hot daggers.

MARIA

He was wearing suspenders.

Cole swallows hard and blinks, then walks out, closing the door behind him.

## INT. RAY'S APARTMENT/HALLYWAY - CONTINUOUS

Cole sags against the wall, struggling to stay sane. He peeks into the envelope stuffed with land deeds, receipts, damaging information on payouts and shadow logs on cotton allotments, incriminating photos of politicians; CIA-stamped documents ('Secret National Intelligence: Political Stability in Central America.') Most notable, .32 caliber PISTOL inside a police evidence bag.

Cole's jams the folder against his chest and buttons his Navy peacoat, as we move to...

## EXT. WASHINGTON STREET/PHONE BOOTH - NIGHT

Jolly party-goers float past Cole inside a phone booth. He is sweating and pale. Right then, something catches his eye. He cradles the receiver and stalks across the street.

People bundled in coats pass. Now we see the object of Cole's stare. It is Dick balancing the fruit basket. He is heading directly toward Cole. He stops.

DICK

Eastland?

COLE

Dicky-boy.

DICK

What the hell do you want?

COLE

Information.

DICK

Get an encyclopedia. I gotta get home.

COLE

(his hand on Dick's arm)  
Did you see a letter on Clark's desk?

DICK

Get your hands off me.

COLE

The press secretary's position. Brook's keen on it and rumor has it others aren't. Perhaps someone, accidentally may have tried to thwart her efforts.



DICK  
I don't know nothing about no  
letter.

With a voice capable of physical harm.

COLE  
I think you're a fucking liar.

Dick grows uneasy. His eyes dart about.

DICK  
We don't need no broad messing  
things up in the office.

Like that, Cole KNOCKS the fruit basket from Dick's hand.  
The wicker basket thuds to the ground. Dick's eyes light.

Cole doesn't blink. He GRABS Dick's tie delivering three  
rapid gut PUNCHES. Dick is crouched over, gasping for air.

Cole straightens himself.

COLE  
Here's the deal: Clark receives the  
letter within the next hour.

DICK  
You're gonna pay for this,  
Eastland.

Then, smiling in a friendly way Cole lobs a stick of  
dynamite.

COLE  
I could tap-dance across your face  
or... because you're a God-fearing  
man and upstanding Deacon at the  
First Calvary Baptist Church whose  
congregation would be aghast to  
discover of your sinful par-takings  
of alcohol in Havana.

Cole proffers Dick a PHOTO.

COLE  
Have Clark offer Brooke the job by  
the ten o'clock news.

Off Dick's soured and pained face we...

FADE TO BLACK

EXT. GEORGE WASHINGTON HOSPITAL - NIGHT

A glowing ten-story building. We HEAR a siren of an approaching ambulance. It eases to a stop beside a TAXI. Jack steps out; his coat open despite the raw weather.

EXT. HOSPITAL ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

Jack looms under a streetlamp as Ray shuffles from the darkness. He steps forward after a contemplative beat

On Ray's lifeless and medicated eyes. His hospital gown peeks from under his coat. Jack stalks up to Ray, very close. A tension-filled beat pass -- AND THEN -- without any warning, with all his strength--

JACK PUNCHES RAY!

Right in the stomach with his fist. Ray buckles and slides along the wall, gasping. Jack towers over him, nostrils flaring.

JACK

Any jackass can kick a barn down  
but Lord if ya didn't almost  
destroy the goddamn farm.

Ray looks up, terrified; eyes squeezing out tears.

RAY

Um, ah, I swear on my mother's soul  
I didn't mean to disappoint you. I  
feel sick. I'm humiliated. It's a  
terrible regret and disservice to  
you and my family and th' country.  
I'm, I'm just so sorry, senator.

JACK

Lucky for you Americans have short  
memories. Now. How ya makin' it?

RAY

I'm struggling, lord, I'm fighting.  
I am. There is a, a bright spot,  
however, Mr. Hoover sent over the  
prettiest flowers you've ever seen.

Jack throws a curious stare, hoisting Ray to his feet.

JACK

The ole bulldog came personally?

Ray nods his head like a doll on a dashboard.

JACK

Well, Charlie sends her prayers.

RAY

Oh, please thank her for me. She's always so supportive and kind.

(moment passes)

I, I suppose I went about my business too quietly. Spent too many evenings combing through legislation instead of joining the whirl of the Georgetown social set.

JACK

I have great affection for you, son. However, now it is imperative you stop and think matters through. From here on, ya gotta make the right calls.

RAY

I'll do anything you tell me.

JACK

You can start by not giving any damn interviews... 'specially stands for Maria. Don't need any more headlines. All that'll do is remind folks you got a goddamn Morals charge against ya.

RAY

Those reporters, they, they sure can inflict pain with their pens.

JACK

Idea of ruining folks is recreation past-time in this city.

RAY

I was thinking... maybe, ah, it's best if I were where they couldn't get to me.

JACK

Hell, you've been as good a man as I've ever had. You're havin' a change of life don't wanna go and throw the entire thang away. Those bastards have called you plenty of handles don't allow 'coward' into the mix.

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

Anyway, you should be thinking about those kids and you dig outta of this mess and can he'p them.

And Ray slides down the wall, sitting on his haunches. His hands tremble as he lights a cigarette.

RAY

I have. Believe me, that's all I've been thinking about. I've been doing the math and the numbers don't add up. That's how come I was toying with the notion ole Ray is worth more for everyone with the unliving.

SNOW begins to fall. It coats the bare trees and sidewalks. Jack withdraws an ENVELOPE from his inside jacket pocket.

JACK

That there is ten thousand. With that New York one -- you got that, don't ya?

RAY

Yes, sir, under my mattress.

JACK

Well that makes twenty thousand dollars. That's more than most folks earn in five years. Now it's an investment in your kids' future not some kinda Swiss shopping account for the missus. Got that? Now tomorra I want ya to ring Clint, git him to tell you where's the best place to park that. Play these cards tight and it offers a measure of peace and stability to those kids that's who I care about.

As Ray rises to embrace Jack.

RAY

Oh, senator. Senator! Jesus! It will! Thank you. I'll call Clint.

Jack awkwardly pats Ray's back. Nudges him away.

JACK

We do favors for each other. Now tighten up and look at me. Give me time I may be able to find some employment.

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

Maybe on the ranch or a new oil company I'm buying from Herman Brown.

RAY

You've always been so good to me. Treated me like a son. Our days of fishing Lake Nasworthy and the family BBQs are some of my most treasured memories. I look back on them often and can't help but grin.

JACK

Those were grand ole times.

They are comfortable together, almost.

RAY

And Cole, he's okay with everything? I know we've had our differences on scheduling and procedures but at the *Time* party last night I saw he was trying to bring me into the light...

And curiosity pushes Jack's eyebrows skyward.

JACK

There's one thang though I need you to clear up without goin' into goddamn specifics.

RAY

Sure. Anything.

JACK

That ah, other fella, know him?

RAY

No, sir. Never seen him before.

JACK

But ya frequented th' joint?

Combating the paralysis of a lifetime of clandestine guilt.

RAY

I couldn't stop. It settled on me like a wicked addiction and I couldn't do anything about it. Like a priest who can't feel the holy water I kept saying to myself, you can't keep this secret. You need help.

(MORE)

RAY (CONT'D)

You're a God-fearing family man.  
But I couldn't walk away. It had  
too powerful a hold on me.

JACK

That sunuvabitch satan's shackled  
us all with demons.

RAY

But that night it was strange.  
Like when I was putting Maria into  
the car I heard this voice say, "Go  
home." But I couldn't. The  
disease was pulling me while my  
mind was pushing me to go home.  
Then when I was walking down the  
stairs my heart was pounding,  
almost about to jump out of my  
chest -- for a moment, for a split  
second, I thought of leaving 'cause  
something did not feel right. Mean  
sure, I always had bats in my gut  
but this time -- felt like someone  
was watching me. It was like that  
all night. When Maria I were at  
the party she commented about my  
looking around all the time. I'm  
overthinking it or these crazy meds  
are making my brain unhinged. It  
happened so suddenly. The cops  
kicked open the door, and...

JACK

Ya think it was frame-job?

RAY

(quietly)

I do, sir. There was this chubby  
guy with suspenders. He was at the  
party.

JACK

Think he followed ya?

RAY

He, ah, asked for Cole.

This hits Jack where he lives.

JACK

Sometimes fate plays us a puzzling  
deck of cards. Listen up.

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

I can't stand to see ya roasted slowly so tomorra I'll give a statement declaring you are no longer with my office due to exhaustion and fatigue. Now what 'bout that file?

RAY

I received Cole's note and rang Maria. Nobody's looked at the file. I-I promise. I kept it hidden inside this big turkey roaster Elizabeth gave us. Don't tell her we've never used it. (chuckles) It was bigger than our oven.

JACK

You're a good man, son. But for now. I gotta turn my back on ya.

Jack places his hands on Ray's shoulders. Tears streak his face as he stares deeply into Jack's patriarchal eyes.

JACK

Take care of those kids, pardner.

RAY

Senator. Can you do me one favor? Tell the kids I'm sorry I didn't take them to the park and I'll make it up.

At that moment, Jack turns his back on Ray and stalks down the alley. Meanwhile...

EXT. STREETS OF D.C. - NIGHT

Beautiful silence. Everything is blanketed in a light SNOW. Taxi rolls along an empty street, passing...

EXT. BROOKE'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Cole is anxiously waiting outside the building. The front door opens to Brooke in her nightgown. Her hair is drawn back. Cole is a shell of himself from the top of the story.

BROOKE

What the devil are you doing here?

COLE

Sorry. Hope it's not too late.

BROOKE  
Come in. It's freezing.

COLE  
I can't.

They regard each other without a word.

COLE  
I'm having a weird day.

BROOKE  
Everyone is reading about it.

COLE  
I wanted to tell you.  
(she looks away; stung)  
I want you leave you out of the  
fold again.

BROOKE  
And you? How are you holding up?

COLE  
I didn't come here to dump my  
burdens on you.

BROOKE  
Then why did you?

Cole is trying to say something, get something started, but it's difficult. Brooke studies him, curious yet patient.

COLE  
The other night at Monocle you said  
something that didn't resonate with  
me until an hour ago.

BROOKE  
And what was that?

COLE  
You said, "the higher one climbs,  
the more difficult it is to find  
happiness."

And Cole looks at her with deep anxiety. His lips are dry.

COLE  
You were right; Ray does have  
beautiful children.

It takes Brooke a moment. Her face conceals the sudden awe she feels. A long beat.



BROOKE

Ray is the kindness, sweetest man  
on the Hill.

COLE

I'm not proud.

BROOKE

What possibly could he have done to  
drive you to commit such a  
barbarous act?

COLE

We're not talking settling  
accounts. This was a strategic  
protection move. The gossip was  
staring, accusations forming --  
only a matter of time--

BROOKE

--Before what, the perfect  
opportunity presented itself? Do  
you realize you have ruined his  
life?

COLE

Certainly, someone in your position  
sees the ramifications of having a  
man with Ray's tendencies working  
for a powerful, conservative  
Senator destined for the national  
stage.

BROOKE

You're missing the point. It's not  
about knocking people off the  
ladder it's about doing what is  
right.

COLE

My loyalty is to Jack Wagner. I'd  
do anything to protect him.

Brooke smiles a bit sadly to herself.

BROOKE

That is what worries me.

COLE

A son like to please his father.

BROOKE

And soldiers their ruler.

COLE

Christ, Brooke, you know me. I'm like a mathematician. I never make a move before calculating every possible outcome, angle and collateral damage.

BROOKE

Seems your miscalculation destroyed a father of six.

COLE

Look, all I did was make the call. What was supposed to be simple evolved into complicated -- the press was never to be involved. I was shocked as hell when I heard Mona Hayes had the story. My police contact was to furnish me the arrest file, which I would present to Ray, who would resign. I already had a job lined up for him at Pan Am! I had no qualms with Ray other than him being a Boy Scout and tight scheduler.

Cole's voice is showing genuine fatigue.

BROOKE

So what are you saying?

COLE

I'm saying somebody set me up.

And hold on Cole. Now Brooke threads her fingers through his.

COLE

A copy of the arrest file. That's how the press got it.

BROOKE

Who would do that?

COLE

One of the arresting officers snitched to someone.

BROOKE

To who?

(off Cole's knowing look)

Tsk. Marshall has no qualms with Ray.

COLE

Wake up. This move is about taking down Jack.

BROOKE

Sounds very conspiratorial. Have you told Wagner? You must tell him right away.

COLE

God, I can't do that.

BROOKE

You must and you will. Jack Wagner needs you more than you he. Please, come in, your lips are turning blue.

And he takes her hand, smiles. God, she is beautiful.

COLE

Sorry I let you down.

BROOKE

The mark of a great man is remedying his mistakes.

(a beat)

Maybe now is not the best time to share this. Congressman Clark just rang. I got it!!!!

COLE

Ha, ha! Congratulations! That's the kind of news I needed.

BROOKE

He was so kind.

COLE

I'm proud of you.

BROOKE

He said, "This position justifies the faith I've always had in you."

COLE

Next week we'll paint the town red.

BROOKE

I'm holding you to that.

And then a bewildered look marks Brooke's face.

COLE  
What is it?

BROOKE  
Nothing. Well. Doesn't it seem  
peculiar he would call me instead  
of telling me in person?

COLE  
What difference does it make when  
you got the job.

A tender moment slips between them. Her smile tells Cole  
that she might be into a relationship.

COLE  
I best be running.

BROOKE  
Take care of yourself because I'm  
going need you around.

As Cole flips up his collar, we hold a beat on his eyes  
before dissolving to...

INT. WAGNER BEDROOM - NIGHT

A sliver of moonlight falls across Elizabeth in her  
nightgown. She takes a pill bottle from the night-table and  
pops three PILLS. Extinguishing the lamp, she tucks into  
bed, caressing Jack's pillow, whispering:

ELIZABETH  
"Saint Michael the Archangel,  
defend us in battle. Be our  
protection against the wickedness  
and snares of the devil."

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. - BRIDGE - POTOMAC RIVER - NIGHT

It is snowing fluffy flakes. The streets glitter like wet  
coal. We settle on Jack, looming at the center of the  
bridge, staring at the frigid Potomac.

ELIZABETH (V/O)  
"May God rebuke him we humbly pray;  
And do thou, O'Prince of the  
Heavenly Host..."

There is a quiet wind. Car lights flash by. We HEAR  
footsteps drawing near and see Cole.

He stands still, clutching the Wallace file under his arm; a brave man doing his best, but panic is slowly seeping out.

ELIZABETH (V/O)

"...By the power of God thrust into hell Satan and all evil spirits who wander through the world for the ruin of souls. Amen."

Cole opens his mouth to speak but can't. The tension ratchets. Jack reads Cole, looking like Judas Iscariot -- he had no idea, not in his wildest imagination Cole would ever do something like this.

We see their fate is unclear and bleak. However, there is something mesmerizing witnessing their vulnerability. They don't have to discuss the significance of what has transpired because they know the other feels and understands it.

We glimpse in Cole the great evil lurking under his polished veneer as the show's theme song comes up on Jack, pained and disappointed. He stalks down the street, leaving us on Cole, exhausted and clutching the Wallace file.

FADE OUT:

**END OF PILOT**

