

**28**  
a political action thriller

Written  
by  
Steve Fisher

fish@stevefisher.info  
646-320-7775

FADE IN:

EXT./INT. HOMEMADE UNDERGROUND BUNKER - DAY

Dawn breaks on a HOSTAGE RESCUE TEAM encircling a PVC pipe that sticks five feet out of the ground.

SUPER: "ELECTION DAY 2028 - WHITE CITY, TEXAS"

The Team's handsome, strapping, leader AMES WIEDNER (35) covertly drops a wire snake camera down PVC pipe.

INTERCUT: WITH NEARBY MOBILE COMMAND CENTER

Agents watch a GRAINY VIDEO ON MONITOR: In a 6 by 8 feet underground bunker, a disheveled, unshaven white HOSTAGE TAKER (40's) paces, gripping a rifle. Near him, a FIVE-YEAR-OLD LATINO BOY quietly cries.

Ames communicates with Hostage Taker via PVC pipe. He's as tough as they come, but the warmth of his voice and the light in his eyes reveal a man with a moral center and a soul full of humanity. He's one of the good guys.

AMES  
(with Philly accent)  
Jimmy, Good Mornin'.

HOSTAGE TAKER  
Ain't good at all.

AMES  
You don't know that. Things might  
go your way.

HOSTAGE TAKER  
They're gonna elect that black  
bitch, I know it. Might as well get  
this over with.

AMES  
People'll be very sore with you,  
Jimmy.

HOSTAGE TAKER  
Standin' up for God-given rights?

AMES  
We're all grateful for that,  
friend, but you don't wanna harm an  
innocent young person doing it.

HOSTAGE TAKER

No choice.

Ames gestures to Teammates, and they widen the circle.

HOSTAGE TAKER (CONT'D)

Ames, you still there? Keep talkin'  
or I'll do it. Ain't foolin' now.  
This'll be on you, Ames. All you.

Hostage Taker aims the rifle at the Boy, who WAILS.

Ames gives the cue.

Hostage Taker puts his finger on trigger.

EXPLOSION. Top of underground bunker blows off. Disoriented  
Hostage Taker staggers away from Boy. Ames shoots him in leg.

Teammates jump down into space. One apprehends Hostage Taker.  
Another hands Boy up to Ames, who hugs and comforts him as if  
he were his own child.

INT./EXT. A 24-HOUR WHITE CITY BAR - LATER

COUNTRY MUSIC. Ames and his Team down a round of shots, then  
resume drinking draft beers. Serious buzz going.

HRT TEAMMATE #1

Why didn't you take that bastard  
out?

AMES

I did take him out --

HRT TEAMMATE #1

"Of commission." I know, I know. I  
mean "out-out."

AMES

Hostage Rescue Team motto, son.

HRT TEAMMATE #2

We have a motto?

AMES

*Servare vitas!*

HRT TEAMMATE #2

I don't speak German.

AMES

"Save lives."

HRT TEAMMATE #3

That doesn't include the bad guys.

AMES

Yeah. It does.

HRT TEAMMATE #1

The Bureau's best shot, wasted on --

AMES

-- "a bleeding heart liberal." And my wife calls me "a right-winger." That's the problem with this country. No grey. Everything's black or white. I say --

EVERYONE

-- "Lots of things are true."

LAUGHTER

Their attention is drawn to the TV.

ON BAR TV: TWO LOCAL MORNING SHOW HOSTS ON COUCH

LOCAL MORNING SHOW HOST #1

"This could be an historic day if, if, America elects a black woman president. And while the outcome in the Senate is uncertain as well, Dems are expected to pick up enough votes in the House to secure the largest majority in its history, giving them an opportunity to push gun control legislation. Since the *Uvalde* massacre here in Texas back in 2022, the country has seen a significant rise in mass school shootings. Last week, a gunman in Michigan killed thirty-three high school students."

LOCAL MORNING SHOW HOST #2

"Regardless of what side of the issue you're on, everyone can agree gun violence in America is now an epidemic of staggering proportions."

Ames gets a face time call on his iPhone. He walks through the bar to the exit as he answers it.

ON IPHONE SCREEN

His gorgeous, very progressive mixed-race wife JULIANNA WIEDNER (40), sits at her desk at a high-powered D.C. firm.

AMES

Hey, babe. Hold on.

INTERCUT: OUTSIDE OF BAR / JULIANNA'S OFFICE

JULIANNA

Little early for that, isn't it?

AMES

Says the mimosa queen. We're celebrating.

JULIANNA

Child's okay?

AMES

Safe in his mother's arms.

JULIANNA

Thank God.

AMES

Doesn't our child have her play tomorrow?

JULIANNA

Yes, and I can't be there. SCOTUS argument.

AMES

I can. Flying out at noon.

JULIANNA

Great, you'll make Caroline and Kidder's Election Night party.

AMES

I gotta stop at the office first. I'd be pushing it.

JULIANNA

What else is new? Sidwell's Director of Admissions will be there. We need to kiss up.

AMES

For first grade?

JULIANNA

These moms are cutthroat.

AMES

Gross.

JULIANNA

Whatever it takes.

The adorable DAISY GRACE (5) appears in the screen holding her equally adorable kitten in front of her face.

AMES

How do you like going to work with Mommy, boo?

DAISY GRACE

"I'm not boo! I'm Kitten!"

PHONE RINGS.

JULIANNA

I gotta take this.

AMES

Love you guys.

EXT./INT. 28 COMPOUND (IDAHO) - SAME - TRACKING

HOME SHOOTING RANGE

28 MEMBERS, with their AK-15's, FIRE away, just missing their targets. But JOY "WHEELER" MALAY (47), NAILS her's. Terrific confidence, terrific body, terrific shot.

SUPER: "AMERICAN FALLS, IDAHO"

Wheeler walks across property. Her doberman pinscher joins her. She observes various 28 MEMBERS run her obstacle course, repel off the side of her rancher. It's a busy place.

A DRONE

flies over property, unnoticed by Wheeler and colleagues.

INSIDE RANCHER - WHEELER'S OFFICE

She sits at her desk. Dog lies at her feet.

COMPUTER SCREEN

shows RiteWars.com, featuring election-themed news, all kinds of topics spun to bait right-wing extremists.

WHEELER'S POV: A live-stream video embedded on site. CAPTION: "KING JOHNS INTERVIEWS GRANDSON OF SENATE MAJORITY LEADER."

She CLICKS on it.

VIDEO: slick intro featuring RiteWars' logo and THEME, images of father Alan Johns and son King shooting AK-15's, plug for RiteWars merch: t-shirts, mugs, vitamins. Then...

LIVE STREAM OF INTERVIEW:

KING JOHNS

"Happy Election Day, America. I'm King Johns, sitting in for my father who's on the campaign trail with the president. Get to the polls and vote 'cause you know the friggin' libs will -- twice. We're live with my new best friend "Dick the Third," the youngest person ever to be elected president of YRSO, whatever the hell YRSO is."

DICK THE III

"Young Republican Senator's Organization. Each Republican Senator nominates one family member between the ages of 18 and 29. I represent my grandfather."

KING JOHNS

"Who just happens to be Senate Majority Leader, Rich MacDonald."

INTERCUT: WITH RITEWARS.COM STUDIO

KING JOHNS (mid 20's), an unkempt, bearded, right-wing conspiracy theorist, interviews the clean cut, all-American Southern boy RICHARD "DICK THE III" MACDONALD (19).

DICK THE III

YRSO is the future of the Republican party, King, safeguarding for our generation the conservative values this country was founded on.

KING JOHNS

Which are under attack. Especially gun rights.

DICK THE III

Dems are definitely coming after them if they win big today.

KING JOHNS  
 And with the left, the means  
justify their sick ends. "Let's  
 stage another school shooting!"

Wheeler shakes her head in disgust.

KING JOHNS (CONT'D)  
 You know what I say. Dead kids  
 don't trump my constitutional  
 rights.

Dick the III half smiles, half cringes.

KING JOHNS (CONT'D)  
 What? They're not dead. Say it with  
 me... "child actors."

DICK THE III  
 King, you gotta join YRSO for its  
 annual meeting. Tuesday, January  
 2nd. Old Senate Chamber.

KING JOHNS  
 "Old Senate Chamber." Sounds fancy.  
 How'd ya score that venue?

DICK THE III  
 Helps when you're the...

BOTH  
 "Senate Majority Leader's  
 grandson."

KING JOHNS  
 January 2nd? I'm there.

Wheeler jots something down. (We don't see what.)

EXT./INT. AIRPLANE OVER D.C. - NIGHT (LATER)

Final descent. Ames looks out the window at the

U.S. CAPITOL

bathed in streaks of color from setting sun. He takes in the

STATUE OF THE LADY "FREEDOM"

that crowns the building.



CU: A ROBED WOMAN WEARS A MILITARY HELMET WITH STARS, TOPPED OFF BY EAGLE FEATHERS, TALLONS HANGING. SHE HOLDS A SHEATHED SWORD IN RIGHT HAND, A LAUREL OF VICTORY AND SHIELD IN LEFT.

INT. GEORGETOWN BROWNSTONE - NIGHT (LATER)

Privileged KINDERGARTEN PARENTS stand around a

BIG SCREEN TV:

MSNBC REPORTER

"As expected, Democrats are wracking up huge margins in the House. In the Senate, it looks like Republicans will keep their majority of one. But the big news is the White House. Now that Florida's been called early, the country is on track to elect the first woman president, of color no less, shattering not one but two glass ceilings."

HUGE APPLAUSE.

Ames enters to everyone's backs. His eyes narrow.

AMES'S POV: Julianna rather cozy with a GOOD LOOKING MAN. They both turn and see Ames and put some space between them.

BACK TO SCENE

HOST HUSBAND (O.S.)

There's Die Hard.

HOST HUSBAND gives Ames bro hug. HOST WIFE, a peck on cheek.

HOST WIFE

What can I get you?

Ames declines. She spots his pistol under his blazer.

A buzzed Julianna, with glass of wine, hugs Ames, sort of.

HOST HUSBAND

I don't know how you two do it.

JULIANNA

What?

HOST HUSBAND

(indicates Ames)

NRA member of the year.

(MORE)

HOST HUSBAND (CONT'D)  
 (indicates Julianna)  
 Sues the NRA. Republican.  
 Communist.

AMES  
 I guess love conquers all.

JULIANNA  
 (to Host Wife)  
 Hey, what about that weekly play  
 date? The girls get along so well.

HOST WIFE  
 I don't want to impose.

JULIANNA  
 Don't be silly. How 'bout tomorrow?

HOST WIFE  
 To be completely honest, we're just  
 not... comfortable with Zoe at the  
 house with... you know...  
 (indicates Ames's gun)  
 guns around.

AMES  
 We don't have guns "around."

HOST WIFE  
 I'm sure. Still. Sorry.

INT. WIEDNER CONDO - LATER

VESTIBULE

LANA (60's), their Russian nanny, gets a kiss from Julianna.

JULIANNA  
 Best nanny, ever.

LANA  
 Best little girl, ever. *Svidaniya*.

JULIANNA  
*Ciao*.

Lana exits.

DAISY GRACE'S ROOM

Ames finds Daisy Grace awake, her kitten curled up, asleep.

AMES

Daisy Grace Wiedner, why are you awake?

DAISY GRACE

I'm waiting for my song.

AMES

You need beauty rest for your big debut.

DAISY GRACE

Better get singing then.

AMES

(kneels, sings)

"LITTLE DAISY GRACE, DADDY'S ANSWERED PRAYER; IT'S A MEAN, COLD WORLD, BUT DON'T YOU FRET, I WOULD NEVER LET A SINGLE SOUL HARM A SINGLE HAIR UPON YOUR HEAD. AND I WILL KEEP YOU WARM ALONG THE WAY; I'LL FIND THE SAFEST PLACES FOR YOU TO PLAY. AND WHEN YOU FALL, SEE YOU'RE OKAY. LITTLE DAISY GRACE, TAKE MY HAND, C'MON. DADDY'S PRAYER GOES ON AND ON."

He gives her a kiss. She CLEARS THROAT. He kisses kitten.

DAISY GRACE

I love you, Daddy.

AMES

Love you more, boo.

ON BALCONY OVERLOOKING CAPITOL

Ames enters to find Julianna drinking a glass of wine.

JULIANNA

You're a better mom than I am.

AMES

Over compensating for my own train wreck of a mother.

JULIANNA

That's our problem. I'm not old enough to be your mommy.

AMES

Close.

JULIANNA

Fuck you.

AMES

That kitten is so damn cute.

JULIANNA

Eh.

AMES

How did I end up with someone who hates animals?

JULIANNA

How did I end up with someone who loves guns?

AMES

(indicates wine)

That must be number five. You always start in on the firearms at five.

JULIANNA

It's affecting her social life.

AMES

Babe, she's in kindergarten.

JULIANNA

We said if we had kids, you'd get out. Join Capitol Police.

AMES

You said. I'd still have to carry. But I think Capitol Police carry water guns.

JULIANNA

No more traveling. Working insane hours.

AMES

Like you.

(gets a look)

What? You don't work too much?

JULIANNA

I already said I'm a terrible mom.

Ames takes her in his arms.

AMES

You're an amazing mom. Who also happens to be an amazing lawyer. We can both try and work a little less. Play a little more.

Ames kisses her neck. Julianna pulls away, bruising his ego. He names the adulterer in the middle of the room.

AMES (CONT'D)

You should have told me he was going to be there.

JULIANNA

I didn't know.

AMES

Could have texted. You were busy chatting.

JULIANNA

We said hello to each other.

AMES

Seemed more than hello.

JULIANNA

I gotta finish something.

Julianna exits. Ames drops his head, forlorn.

LATER

Ames lies in an empty bed, frustrated, horny.

EXT. 28 COMPOUND (IDAHO) - NIGHT (LATER)

A van pulls into the driveway behind a parked Subaru. A male, ARMED 28 MEMBER (30's) gets out, followed by Wheeler's dog.

Wheeler opens front door. Dog runs up to her. 28 MEMBER #1, 28 MEMBER #2 and 28 MEMBER #3 exit the house. Under careful eye of ARMED 28 MEMBER, they carry a metal trunk from back of van into the house. On it,

RUSSIAN WRITING

AERIAL SHOT: A drone hovers over driveway, undetected.

INT. WIEDNER CONDO (D.C.) - KITCHEN - DAY

Ames makes breakfast. Daisy Grace, wearing a wool sweater, plays with kitten. On table set for 3 people, copy of *Washington Post*. HEADLINE: "HERSTORY! FIRST WOMAN PRESIDENT!"

DAISY GRACE  
Promise me you'll walk Kitten.

AMES  
Since when do cats get walked?

DAISY GRACE  
She's gonna learn to sit on the toilet, too.

AMES  
Before you?

DAISY GRACE  
Ha, ha.

AMES  
When are you gonna name her?

DAISY GRACE  
I did! "Kitten."

He serves the breakfast, covers her in kisses.

AMES  
You're a kitten. And a boo and a world famous actress.

DAISY GRACE  
There's a cast party afterwards.

AMES  
Am I your date?

DAISY GRACE  
Yes!

Julianna enters, kisses Daisy Grace on head and exits.

JULIANNA (O.S.)  
Break a leg, Daiz!

DAISY GRACE  
"Break a leg?"

AMES

You say it when you want someone to have a good performance.

DAISY GRACE

What's wrong with "Good Luck?"

AMES

Then you've jinxed them. Something terrible will happen.

DAISY GRACE

Like breaking a leg?

AMES

Exactly.

DAISY GRACE

I think after I'm an actress, I'll be president.

AMES

"Daisy Grace for president! Kitten for vice-president!"

INT. CAPITOL MONTESSORI SCHOOL - LOBBY (LATER)

Ames walks in, spots an anxious, clammy SECURITY GUARD.

AMES

I'm here for the play.

SECURITY GUARD

Cafeteria.

AMES'S POV: He notices a bulky backpack by Guard's feet, but is distracted by Daisy Grace from across the hall.

DAISY GRACE (O.S.)

DADDY, HURRY!

BACK TO SCENE

Ames rushes by her and her fellow performers. They wear unwieldy cardboard costumes: Washington Memorial, White House, Lincoln Memorial. Daisy Grace is the U.S. Capitol.

CAFETERIA - LATER

PIANO ACCOMPANIMENT OF "GOD BLESS AMERICA." APPLAUSE. A bunch of KINDERGARTENERS take their bows.

Ames gets phone call. He ducks out, answers as he walks to

DAISY GRACE'S CLASSROOM

He looks inside the empty classroom, all set up for party.

AMES

I'm an idiot. On my way.

He hangs up. Daisy Grace runs into Ames's arms.

DAISY GRACE

Did I break a leg?

Ames shows two fingers, smothers her with kisses.

DAISY GRACE (CONT'D)

Now for the cast party!

AMES

Honey, I'm sorry. Daddy has to run.

DAISY GRACE

I thought you had the day off.

AMES

So did I. We'll have another cast party tonight.

Big hug and kiss. He hands her off to TEACHER, and exits.

DAISY GRACE

Promise to walk Kitten?

Ames nods, blows her a kiss.

MONTAGE - QUANTICO (VIRGINIA) / 28 COMPOUND (IDAHO)

-- QUANTICO'S "HOGAN'S ALLEY" -- Ames uses rope and grappling hook to climb an impossible wall as CANDIDATES watch in awe.

-- 28 COMPOUND -- Wheeler puts on a 70-pound, camouflaged backpack. 28 MEMBERS observe.

-- QUANTICO'S "HOGAN'S ALLEY" -- Ames leads Candidates in a mock execution of a search warrant.

-- 28 COMPOUND -- Wheeler runs her homemade obstacle course with the backpack on.

-- QUANTICO'S "HOGAN'S ALLEY" -- During search, a TRIGGER HAPPY CANDIDATE "kills" a FELLOW CANDIDATE.

-- 28 COMPOUND -- A sweaty, sexy Wheeler completes the obstacle course. 28 Members APPLAUD.



EXT. QUANTICO PARKING LOT - LATER

In his car, Ames gets a call. He answers it. It's his boss, the "f-bomb" dropping FBI DIRECTOR (50'S).

FBI DIRECTOR  
Can you come in?

AMES  
So much for a day off.

FBI DIRECTOR  
It's that Idaho paramilitary group.

AMES  
Which one?

FBI DIRECTOR  
The one we can't get a fucking handle on.

AMES  
*Twenty-eight?*

FBI DIRECTOR  
There's chatter leading back to them about assassinating the President-elect on Inauguration Day.

AMES  
I love this country.  
(looks at watch)  
I've gotta a little time before I get Daisy Grace off the bus.

INT. J. EDGAR HOOVER BUILDING - CONFERENCE ROOM

Ames sits around a table with FBI/HRT COLLEAGUES and FBI Director. Ames keeps an eye on his watch.

FBI DIRECTOR  
We're not a hundred percent sure it's *Twenty-eight's* chatter. But we do have this. Sent anonymously. We think from a disgruntled member.

IPHONE CLIP ON MONITOR:

WHEELER  
(with a Philly accent)  
"This is about the Wets denying us our freedom.  
(MORE)

WHEELER (CONT'D)

It is up to the Drys to take action. If we don't, Lady Freedom is going to crumble under the weight of this tyranny."

BACK TO SCENE

COLLEAGUE #1

What's with the "Wets?" and "Drys?"

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT comes in, whispers in FBI Director's ear.

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

Local hostage situation. School.

Ames indicates his watch to FBI Director, slips out.

EXT./INT. WIEDNER CONDO - STREET CORNER

Ames, with Kitten on a leash, waits for the bus. No show.

DISTANT SIRENS

Ames looks at his watch. Strange.

VESTIBULE

His phone rings. He answers it, puts Kitten down.

AMES

What part of "day off" do you...

Terror in his eyes. He leaps for car keys and flies out.

INT. 28 COMPOUND (IDAHO) - LIVING ROOM

Wheeler and 28 Members watch the breaking news on Fox.

ON TV SCREEN:

FOX REPORTER

"The suspect, a twenty-one year old security guard at the school. On Facebook postings since taken down, he was demanding the President-elect publicly state she will not infringe on gun rights."

BACK TO SCENE

28 Members look to Wheeler, who looks straight ahead.

EXT./INT. CAPITOL MONTESSORI SCHOOL - TRACKING

Ames races into parking lot: S.W.A.T. teams, ambulances, police vehicles, hysterical parents and kids, media.

HELICOPTER FLYING OVERHEAD

Ames runs towards building. FBI Director intercepts him.

FBI DIRECTOR  
Ames, we've got this.

FBI Director indicates Julianna approaching. Ames turns.

JULIANNA  
Where's my Daiz? WHERE'S MY DAIZ?  
WHY AREN'T YOU IN THERE?

FBI DIRECTOR  
The Crisis Negotiation Team is  
making progress.

HAMMERING OF AK-15

Julianna collapses into FBI Director's arms. Ames takes off.

FBI DIRECTOR (CONT'D)  
AMES!

Ames steamrolls through police tape.

HALLWAY OF SCHOOL

Ames makes his way to Daisy's classroom.

METROPOLITAN POLICE OFFICER  
Sir, you can't --

Ames throws him out of the way and proceeds.

AMES'S POV: SECURITY GUARD we saw earlier, lying in the hallway face down in a pool of blood.

DAISY'S CLASSROOM

Ames looks in.

AMES'S POV: No kids. No blood.

BACK TO SCENE

He's relieved. But then he turns a corner, and FBI and HRT Colleagues are looking in a

FACULTY RESTROOM

AMES'S POV: He approaches it.

HRT TEAMMATE #1 (O.S.)  
Ames, don't...

REVERSE SHOT: He walks in. We don't see what he sees. Rather we see the light drain out of his eyes.

FADE TO:

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

AERIAL SHOT: A large group of MOURNERS walk from grave site.

The last few people throw daisies into grave: FBI Director, Lana, Host Husband and Host Wife.

BACK TO SCENE

Julianna refuses to throw her daisy in, holds on to it.

Ames throws in his daisy.

AMES'S POV: daisies covering a little coffin.

FADE TO:

INT. WIEDNER CONDO - DAY

LIVING ROOM

Julianna and Ames sit on opposite sides of couch and stare at

TV SCREEN

A windy Macy's Day Parade in New York City.

GIGANTIC BALLOON OF "PUSS IN BOOTS"

half-deflated, as parade handlers try to take control of it.

DINING ROOM

On table, a take-out Thanksgiving meal, hardly touched.  
Kitten, on the table, nibbles.

LIVING ROOM

Ames mindlessly switches the channel.

TV SCREEN

CABLE NEWS REPORTER

"House Democrats are focused on an aggressive gun control agenda in response to the most recent school shooting that killed fifteen D.C. Kindergarteners three weeks ago."

Ames shuts the TV off, gets up.

AMES

I'm going back to work tomorrow.

JULIANNA

(dazed)

You are?

AMES

I have to, babe. For my sanity.

JULIANNA

(auto-pilot)

Okay. Whatever you want to do.

BEDROOM - LATER

Lying in bed, Julianna cries quietly. Ames spoons her. He then kisses her neck, tries to make love. She gets out of bed, offended by his advances. Major frustration for Ames.

Kitten, in her cat bed in the corner, watches all of this.

INT. J. EDGAR HOOVER BUILDING - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Ames walks into a meeting led by FBI Director. Colleagues look at him with great empathy, surprised to see him.

SMART BOARD: SURVEILLANCE PHOTOS OF 28 COMPOUND, WHEELER

FBI DIRECTOR (O.S.)

Local ATF have a command post in the back of a school across the highway from the compound. This is the leader.

COLLEAGUE #1

Female...

FBI DIRECTOR  
Goes by "Wheeler." Biggest concern?  
Intel indicates she's got someone  
embedded in Capitol Police. Screen  
name, "Pissed Boy."

COLLEAGUE #2  
Whoa.

COLLEAGUE #3  
Any relation to the Proud Boys?

FBI DIRECTOR  
Probably. These right-wing crazies  
are all inbred. Putting the pieces  
together... an Inauguration Day hit  
on the President-elect at the  
Capitol. But until we're a hundred  
percent sure the assassination chat  
is *Twenty-eight's*, we don't have  
enough for a warrant. We need  
someone out there yesterday.

AMES  
I'll go.

Everyone looks, surprised again.

LATER

Just Ames and FBI Director in the room.

FBI DIRECTOR  
It's too fucking soon. You need to  
take more time.

AMES  
I need to do something.

FBI DIRECTOR  
Like take care of Julianna.

AMES  
She doesn't want my care.

FBI DIRECTOR  
I thought you two were doing okay.

AMES  
Barely. And that was before.

FBI DIRECTOR  
These kind of things can destroy a  
marriage. Which is why you gotta --

AMES

-- NO. If I have to walk to Idaho to prevent another parent from feeling what I'm feeling right now, I'm going to Idaho. And anywhere else wacko extremists are plotting to blow away presidents or someone's child. That's my purpose now. Or there is no purpose.

FBI DIRECTOR

We still don't know for sure if it's 28. This Wheeler chic could be running a fitness boot camp.

AMES

So I'll go and find out.

INT. WIEDNER CONDO - NIGHT (LATER)

KITCHEN TABLE

Julianna stares at leftovers on her plate. Ames, energized, chows down. Kitten, curled up in corner, watches.

JULIANNA

How are you eating like that?

AMES

I'm hungry.

Julianna shoves her plate away.

AMES (CONT'D)

I fly to Idaho tomorrow.

JULIANNA

You're kidding, right?

AMES

We think that *Twenty-eight* group is planning something big for Inauguration Day.

JULIANNA

It hasn't even been a month.

AMES

Three weeks, four day. You said whatever I want to do.

JULIANNA

As usual.

AMES

Really?

JULIANNA

I don't know how you could go back to that job.

AMES

So I'm not supposed to eat or pick up a gun again?

JULIANNA

A gun killed our daughter.

AMES

Not fair.

JULIANNA

No.

AMES

A gun in the hands of an insane person killed our daughter.

JULIANNA

I'M SO FUCKING SICK OF THAT ARGUMENT. You don't think this country has a gun problem?

AMES

Yes. That's why I'm going to Idaho.

JULIANNA

I thought we'd use the time off to start a foundation.

AMES

Just what the world needs. Another charity in memory of a dead kid.

JULIANNA

Our dead kid.

AMES

Like that Sandy Hook doctor who retired to run the foundation named after his son?

JULIANNA

Yes.

AMES

He blew his brains out. He realized he wasn't going to change anything.



JULIANNA

You have to try. Unless you just don't care.

AMES

STOP IT. Right now, I can't worry about saving the world. I have to save myself.

JULIANNA

AND WHAT'S GOING TO SAVE ME?

AMES

I'VE TRIED. YOU DON'T WANT TO TALK. YOU DON'T WANT TO...

JULIANNA

FUCK?

AMES

YEAH.

JULIANNA

I'M SORRY I HAVEN'T BEEN HORNY SINCE OUR DAUGHTER HAD HER BRAINS SPLATTERED ACROSS A BATHROOM WALL.

AMES

(tries to hold her)  
The doctor said intimacy heals.

JULIANNA

(resists)  
NOTHING WILL HEAL THIS. NOTHING.  
(beat)  
I'm asking you not to go. But if you do, take the cat.

AMES

To Idaho?

JULIANNA

I don't want it here...

AMES

Julianna --

JULIANNA

(bloody murder)  
I. DON'T. WANT. IT. HERE.

AMES

Okay, babe. Okay. But I'm going. Because I have to.

JULIANNA  
Because you want to.

AMES  
I have to.

INT. SMALL AIRPLANE - DAY

Ames boards with Kitten in a travel case.

LATER

Plane makes its descent into American Falls, Idaho. Ames looks out window: bleak landscape.

INT. UBER CAR

AMES'S POV: desolate terrain.

LATER

He passes a SIGN: "WELCOME TO AMERICAN FALLS, IDAHO."

INT. AMERICAN FALLS HOTEL - AMES'S ROOM

In a room as depressing as the landscape, he finishes changing into bland teacher attire: bad tie and blazer.

He heads for door. Kitten follows him.

OUTSIDE HOTEL ROOM DOOR

Ames locks door. MEOWING.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. UBER CAR

Ames eyes 28 Compound across a two-lane state highway. Next to him, Kitten in travel case.

Car turns into lot. SIGN: AMERICAN FALLS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

EXT./INT. AMERICAN FALLS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Ames heads for entrance.

AMES'S POV: LITTLE GIRL in a tutu holding hands with FATHER.

## SCHOOL LOBBY

He's greeted by LOCAL ATF DIRECTOR (40's), dressed like a teacher as well. Little girls and parents buzz about.

LOCAL ATF DIRECTOR  
 (hand shake)  
 Thanks for coming.  
 (indicates Kitten)  
 And this is?

AMES  
 Kitten. That's her name.

LOCAL ATF DIRECTOR  
 Must have forgot it's "Bring A Pet  
 To Work" Day.  
 (gestures at busy hallway)  
 Dance school rents the building  
 every Saturday. Big recital today.

LITTLE GIRLS in tutus run up to Kitten in her travel case.

LITTLE GIRL #1  
 She's so cute.

LITTLE GIRL #2  
 Can we pet her?

DANCE TEACHER (O.S.)  
 Let's go girls.

## MAKESHIFT SURVEILLANCE COMMAND CENTER

There's a row of monitors with live images of 28 Compound across the street. An eager, baby-faced ROOKIE ATF AGENT (23) keeps an eye on them. Surveillance photos on wall.

AMES  
 (to Rookie ATF Agent)  
 You look like you go to school  
 here.  
 (gets a smile)  
 What's the latest?

Local ATF Director gestures Rookie to play a video clip.

LOCAL ATF DIRECTOR  
 Middle of the night delivery.  
 Never good.

We watch what we saw live earlier: 28 Members taking the metal trunk out of the van and into the house.

ROOKIE ATF AGENT  
Whatever it is, it's heavy.

AMES  
Could be anything.

Ames's phone rings. Facetime from FBI Director.

FBI DIRECTOR  
Good news. Assassination chatter  
isn't 28's. We made arrests last  
night in Virginia. Group called  
"28th."

AMES  
I flew to American Falls, Idaho  
with a cat, ruining my marriage,  
for nothing. Great.

LOCAL ATF DIRECTOR  
What about our Capitol Police  
"Pissed Boy?" He isn't buddies with  
Wheeler?

FBI DIRECTOR  
Still unclear.

LOCAL ATF DIRECTOR  
We'll keep an eye on her.

FBI DIRECTOR  
Come on home, Ames.

EXT./INT. AMERICAN FALLS PET STORE

Ames walks Kitten on her leash towards store.

Facetime call from Julianna. Ames lights up.

IPHONE SCREEN:

AMES  
Hey, babe.

JULIANNA  
You got there okay?

AMES  
Yeah, thanks. Listen --

INTERCUT: WITH WIEDNER CONDO

JULIANNA

-- I've thought a lot about things.

AMES

Me too. Maybe I shouldn't have come. I'm just trying to hold on.

JULIANNA

I understand. So I hope you will too. When you get back, I'd like you to move out.

AMES

What?

JULIANNA

I'm not saying we're over. I just need some space.

AMES

I've been giving you nothing but.

JULIANNA

Maybe the only thing holding us together was Daisy.

AMES

I thought it was love.

JULIANNA

Me too. Until you went to Idaho even though I begged you not to.

AMES

I went for Daisy.

JULIANNA

Come on, Ames. You went for you.

AMES

Lots of things are true. I'm doing this for all of us. Every parent who's...

JULIANNA

Well, I'm doing this for me.

AMES

And him?

JULIANNA

NO.

AMES

You're with him now, aren't you?  
Didn't take you long.

JULIANNA

If you were so worried about him,  
you shouldn't have left.

AMES

You can't touch me, but you're  
fucking him again.

JULIANNA

I'm not. I can't do this.

Julianna hangs up.

PET STORE CHECK OUT LINE - LATER

Ames, with a small bag of cat food in one arm, and Kitten in the other, stands in front of Wheeler buying dog food. He notices her great body, but doesn't realize who it is.

PET STORE MANAGER

(discreetly)

Declined.

WHEELER

Can I just put it on credit?

PET STORE MANAGER

Not with your balance...

Wheeler, embarrassed, looks at Ames. Holy shit. It's her. Ames is immediately taken by her, and her with him. An unexpected, visceral, physical chemistry between them.

WHEELER'S POV: She notices he has a ring on.

BACK TO SCENE

AMES

I can cover you.

WHEELER

Are you sure?

AMES

No problem.

WHEELER

Thank you.

PARKING LOT

Ames walks out. Wheeler leans against her Subaru.

WHEELER (CONT'D)  
Not every day a hot guy offers to  
"cover you."

She LAUGHS loudly. Everyone in parking lot turns. Ames turns red, but finds it all very sexy. She offers her hand.

WHEELER (CONT'D)  
Wheeler.

AMES  
(hesitates)  
Doug.

WHEELER  
(pets Kitten)  
Soooooo cute. How 'bout dinner?  
(to Ames)  
You're invited too.

AMES  
Who's paying?

Another ATTENTION GETTING LAUGH from Wheeler.

WHEELER  
Home-cooked. My place is just up  
the road.

AMES  
Sure. I'll just change.

INT. AMERICAN FALLS HOTEL - AMES'S ROOM

Ames has FBI Director on speaker. He finishes changing.

FBI DIRECTOR  
I've got fruit of the poison tree  
concerns.

AMES  
She invited me. And she's no longer  
under investigation, right?

FBI DIRECTOR  
She's still a person of interest.

AMES  
So I can poke around. Find out what  
this "wet" and "dry" business is  
all about?

FBI DIRECTOR

Okay, but don't do anything fucking stupid. We have enough paramilitary group headaches.

Ames hangs up. He looks in mirror. Takes another shirt button down.

He looks at ring, thinks, slides it off, sets it down.

Kitten stares at him.

AMES

Don't look at me with that tone of voice.

Kitten MEOWS.

ELEVATOR - MOMENTS LATER

Waiting for elevator, more MEOWING from room.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. SUBARU - TRACKING

Wheeler and Ames drive. In the back seat, Kitten.

WHEELER'S POV: Ames no longer has a ring on.

BACK TO SCENE

AMES

Didn't think Idaho girls drove Subarus.

WHEELER

They don't. But Philly girls do.

AMES

I actually knew that.  
(clarifies)  
Your "o's" are a dead give away.

WHEELER

Yours too.

AMES

I grew up in Delaware County.

28 Compound comes into sight.



WHEELER

How'd you end up in American Falls,  
Idaho?

AMES

(indicates school)  
Long term sub position. Start on  
Monday. How 'bout you?

WHEELER

A teacher! What subject?

AMES

Phys Ed.

WHEELER

I might have actually liked gym.

EXT./INT. 28 COMPOUND - TRACKING

They pull into driveway.

INSIDE RANCHER

Ames and Wheeler's dog lock eyes, size each other up.

AMES

Friendly?

VICIOUS BARK, teeth showing.

AMES (CONT'D)

Guess not.

Wheeler's PHONE RINGS.

WHEELER

Make yourself at home.  
(to dog)  
Midnight, come!

Dog follows Wheeler out back.

AMES'S POV: Through window, he assesses expansive property:  
shooting range, obstacle course, repelling equipment.

BACK TO SCENE

Ames takes the opportunity to snoop around.

He comes upon Wheeler's Office. He looks through window  
again: Wheeler engrossed in an argument. He's got time.

## WHEELER'S OFFICE

He looks around room: lots of manuals about guns; a book: *Training like a Green Beret*.

BARKING. Ames turns around: dog at office door. He exits.

WHEELER (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
I'm so sorry. Argument with my ex.  
Hope you don't ever have to deal  
with that nonsense.

## KITCHEN

AMES  
Looks like I'm headed in that  
direction.

WHEELER  
Thus the disappearing ring.

AMES  
You're good.

WHEELER  
Sometimes.

## LIVING ROOM - LATER

A FIRE ROARS. They sit on couch, finish their second bottle of wine. On coffee table, remains of a good hearty meal. Above couch, on wall, impressive rack of guns. Another toast.

WHEELER (CONT'D)  
"To Saturday Night not being the  
loneliest night of the week."

AMES  
"To... let's see...  
(puts it out there)  
our president-elect."

GLASSES CLANG. Ames digs a bit more.

AMES (CONT'D)  
What do you think about her?

WHEELER  
Woman. Of color. Love her.

AMES  
Pretty progressive agenda.

WHEELER

Politicians can't bring about real change. That's gotta come from us. And you know what the key is?

AMES

Tell me.

WHEELER

A deadline. You can't cross a finish line that hasn't been drawn. Plato said, "If it were not for the contest, a poet I would not be." I'm telling you. It's all about the deadline.

AMES

So, you love dogs, deadlines...  
(indicates rack of guns)  
and guns.

WHEELER

(indicates guns)  
I don't love them. But unfortunately, they're necessary. Like men.

BIG LAUGH.

WHEELER (CONT'D)

(she pets her dog)  
You said your wife doesn't like cats. What about dogs?

AMES

Even less.

WHEELER

There's something very wrong with someone who doesn't love animals.

Ames gets up. He brings dishes into the

KITCHEN

AMES

Well, thank you for a lovely evening. My only complaint is we didn't talk more about you and this "Emergency Preparedness" school you're running. Next time.

WHEELER

You're welcome to crash here.  
Plenty of room with everyone gone  
for Thanksgiving.

AMES

Thanks, but...

Wheeler attacks him. They french kiss. In between...

AMES (CONT'D)

I can't.

WHEELER

There's a reason you took that ring  
off.

AMES

We're going through a tough time.

WHEELER

Me too.

Wheeler drops to her knees.

BEDROOM

They rip each other's clothes off and have rough, carnal sex.  
EXPLOSIVE CLIMAX.

LATER

DISTANT MEOWING wakes Ames up. Wheeler is out cold.

HALLWAY

He pokes his head into each room, mostly bedrooms. He follows  
the MEOWING into a

STORAGE ROOM WITH DOOR SLIGHTLY AJAR

He finds rows and rows of fire arms and other standard  
S.W.A.T. equipment: rope, grappling hook, flashbombs. He  
spots Kitten and grabs her. On the way out...

AMES' POV: The metal trunk with Russian writing he saw in  
surveillance video. He puts Kitten down, opens up the trunk.  
Inside: what looks like an H-912 backpack for carrying a  
small nuke. To verify, he unzips the backpack. But then...

WHEELER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

DOUG?

BACK TO SCENE

He grabs Kitten and heads for exit. Wheeler appears. Maybe a little suspicious? He kisses her tenderly.

BEDROOM

They have sex again. This time it's loving, gentle.

THEIR POV: The intimacy heals a bit of the hurt in both of them. It's a hurt that unmistakably come from the same exact, profound place.

EXT. AMERICAN FALLS HOTEL - PARKING LOT - DAY

Wheeler and Ames sit in her car.

WHEELER  
Good luck, Teach.

AMES  
Thanks, babe.

Wheeler lights up at this term of endearment.

AMES (CONT'D)  
Sorry, that's what I call my --

WHEELER  
-- I don't expect anyone home for a few days. Why don't you come by after school tomorrow?

AMES  
It's gonna be a long Monday.

WHEELER  
Exactly.  
(no response)  
Well, you're welcome anytime. Day or night.

AMES  
I'll keep that in mind.

She kisses him. He gets out of the car.

WHEELER  
Catch you later, babe.

He smiles.

INT. AMERICAN FALLS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - COMMAND CENTER  
Ames, Local ATF Director, Rookie ATF Agent sit around a  
LAPTOP: ZOOM MEETING WITH FBI DIRECTOR

FBI DIRECTOR  
Let's see this metal trunk.

Local ATF Directors shares his

SCREEN

PHOTO SLIDESHOW: 28 Members taking the metal trunk out of the  
van and into the house. Ends with: RUSSIAN WORDS ON TRUNK.

LOCAL ATF DIRECTOR  
Don't want be "russian" to any  
conclusions, but...

Rookie ATF Agent rolls his eyes and yet another dad joke.

AMES  
He thinks it's a backpack nuke.

SCREEN

GENERIC PHOTO: H-912 TRANSPORT CONTAINER WITH MK-54 SADM  
INSIDE.

LOCAL ATF DIRECTOR  
H-912 transport container holding a  
Mk-54 SADM.

ROOKIE ATF AGENT  
SADM?

LOCAL ATF DIRECTOR  
Special Atomic Demolition Munition.

ROOKIE ATF AGENT  
Cool!

AMES  
If that's what it is. I'm not so  
sure.

FBI DIRECTOR  
You didn't get a look inside the  
container.

AMES  
Tried.

LOCAL ATF DIRECTOR  
Russian writing on metal container  
equals nuke.

FBI DIRECTOR  
What kind of damage can it do?

AMES  
It'll take out a city block. And a  
hundred thousand people, give or  
take.

FBI DIRECTOR  
How the fuck would she have gotten  
her hands on one?

AMES  
Black market. Russians lost track  
of eighty of them when the USSR  
fell apart.

LOCAL ATF DIRECTOR  
Very expensive. She's got access to  
cash. A lot of it.

AMES  
If that's what it is.

FBI DIRECTOR  
(give Ames a knowing look)  
Someone's been charmed. These  
things difficult to detonate?

AMES  
Can be with those Russian  
batteries...

ROOKIE ATF AGENT  
You've handled one? Super cool.

Local ATF Director gives Rookie a "dad" look of annoyance.

AMES  
They need to go off outdoors for  
maximum impact.

FBI DIRECTOR  
We've gotta search.

AMES  
What about "fruit of the poisonous  
tree" concerns?

FBI DIRECTOR  
She invited you in.

ROOKIE ATF AGENT  
 Sounds like it.  
 (elicits LAUGHS)  
 Sorry.

FBI DIRECTOR  
 Go for it.

Mixed feelings for Ames.

LOCAL ATF DIRECTOR  
 When?

AMES  
 (resigned)  
 If we do it tomorrow morning, she  
 should still be alone in the house.

LOCAL ATF DIRECTOR  
 Easy.

EXT./INT. 28 COMPOUND - TRACKING - NIGHT

Early morning before dawn. Big bright Idaho moon shines down on Ames, Local ATF Director and Rookie ATF Agent crossing the state highway with flashlights.

COMPOUND FRONT DOOR

Ames takes a deep breath. Local ATF Director and Rookie ATF Agent stand behind him. KNOCK.

SILENCE.

LOCAL ATF DIRECTOR  
 (whispers)  
 No dog?

Ames goes to knock again, but Wheeler answers.

AMES'S POV: He shines flashlight in her face. For a split-second, she smiles at the sight of him. But then she realizes it's not a booty call.

BACK TO SCENE

AMES  
 Federal Bureau of Investigations.  
 We have a court order to search the  
 premise, ma'am.



WHEELER  
I liked "babe" better.

Wheeler inspects the warrant, then hands it back, gestures them in with a sarcastic smile.

VESTIBULE

WHEELER (CONT'D)  
I've heard it's hard to make ends meet on a teacher's salary without a little moonlighting.

Ames leads his colleagues into the...

STORAGE ROOM

WHEELER (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Every gun's legal.

Ames heads straight for where he saw the metal trunk with the Russian writing on it. Trunk is gone. Fuck.

DRIVEWAY

Same van we saw in surveillance video pulls up. Same ARMED 28 Member gets out. Like before, dog gets out behind him.

STORAGE ROOM

Agents search room high and low. Wheeler enters.

WHEELER (CONT'D)  
Looking for something in particular?

Local ATF Director gestures Rookie ATF Agent.

ROOKIE ATF AGENT  
I'm sorry ma'am, I have to ask you to step into the hallway with me.

He leads her out into the

HALLWAY

FEROCIOUS BARKING. They've startled the ARMED 28 Member and the dog. ARMED 28 Member draws his gun.

Dog lunges at Rookie. He FIRES involuntarily. YELP. Dog down.

AMES (O.S.)  
FBI!

SLOW MOTION: Ames sees ARMED 28 Member about to shoot Rookie

QUICK FLASH: AMES'S POV of him eyeing Security Guard, and then backpack.

Ames FIRES. ARMED 28 Member falls.

Local ATF Director rushes into hallway and finds both Rookie and Ames frozen, stunned. He calls 911.

Wheeler cries over dog. Ames snaps out of trance, notices Wheeler's attentiveness to an animal over a human being. He rushes to Armed 28 Member. But it's too late. He's dead.

LOCAL ATF DIRECTOR

We need an ambulance at 820 Tyhee Ave, American Falls. 820 Tyhee Ave.

DOG WIMPERING.

WHEELER

My sweet boy. My sweet, sweet boy.

AMBULANCE SIRENS

FADE TO:

INT. AIRPLANE OVER D.C. - DAY

Ames looks through window covered in rain drops.

AMES'S POV: Statue of Freedom atop the U.S. Capitol, with a foreboding grey sky behind her.

INT. J. EDGAR HOOVER BUILDING - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Ames rubs his eyes while FBI Director lays into him.

FBI DIRECTOR

What the fuck was a kid with no warrant experience doing there?

AMES

I didn't invite him.

FBI DIRECTOR

It was your fucking detail.

(beat)

The guy you hit died this morning.

(reaction from Ames)

What happened to just taking them out of commission? "*Servare vitas!*"

AMES

I don't know.

FBI DIRECTOR

A dead right-wing extremist is one thing. But a dead dog? Do have any idea what kind of settlement your friend Wheeler's going to get. You just funded her AK-15 fetish for the next hundred years.

AMES

What was I supposed to do? A kid who doesn't shave yet was about to have his head shot off.

FBI DIRECTOR

He fired first. And what do we have to show for it? Where the fuck is this "backpack nuke?"

AMES

(springs up)

I don't fucking know. But I know where I am. Out.

FBI DIRECTOR

What do you mean, "out?"

AMES

Of the Bureau. I'm done.

FBI DIRECTOR

Cut it out.

AMES

If I can't trust my own judgement --

FBI DIRECTOR

-- Temporarily. You didn't get to where you are at age thirty five without impeccable judgement.

AMES

I slept with her.

FBI DIRECTOR

So she is running a fitness boot camp. Very hot for forty-six.

Ames throws his badge on the desk and walks out.

FBI DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

Ames.

FADE TO BLACK:

SUPER: "FIVE WEEKS LATER"

INT. 28 COMPOUND - WHEELER'S DESK - NIGHT

In search engine duckduckgo.com, Wheeler types: "IDAHO  
COMPOUND DEADLY SEARCH WARRANT"

WHEELER'S POV: a long list of articles comes up. She clicks  
on: "AGENT QUILTS BUREAU OVER FATAL SEARCH."

INSERT: ARTICLE ABOUT AMES

"Leading the search warrant was  
Ames Wiedner, father of Daisy Grace  
Wiedner, one of the fifteen  
kindergartners who perished in the  
Capitol Montessori School shooting.  
Wiedner reportedly quit the Bureau  
over the botched search. Sources  
say he will join the Capitol Police  
first of the year."

EXT./INT. U.S. CAPITOL - TRACKING - DAY

An unshaven Ames, dressed in a police uniform, walks up the  
EAST GRAND STEPS

looking up, eyeing the pediment above his head.

AMES'S POV: THE SCULPTURE OF THE LADY "FREEDOM."

Same woman portrayed in the statue crowning the U.S. Capitol  
building.

He enters the building into the expansive

ROTUNDA

He looks up at the breathtaking

DOME

taking in the fresco of

GEORGE WASHINGTON

looking down on him. He then eyes, another version of the

LADY "FREEDOM"

CU: This one is especially fierce. A helmeted, caped lady fights with a raised sword and shield in the colors of the U.S. flag. She tramples on

TYRANNICAL FIGURES

Ames does a 360 to take in the

*HISTORY OF AMERICA* FRESCO

starting with yet another version of

THE LADY "FREEDOM" NEXT TO CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

He then notices the violent

*DANIEL BOONE* FRIEZE

LATER

NEW RECRUITS gather for an orientation tour led by DANIEL MOLAN (51), a fit, handsome lieutenant with Capitol Police.

The group walks into

NATIONAL STATUARY HALL

Statues surround them. Ames's eye goes to yet another

LADY "FREEDOM"

She seems to be everywhere. The group heads down the

HOUSE STAIRWELL

to the

CRYPT

This circular space filled with

FORTY COLUMNS

mesmerizes and disorients. Ames notices the famous

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CLOCK IN GLASS CASE

It's just about

TWELVE NOON

They stop at a locked

UNMARKED DOOR

Molan unlocks it using the code pad.

MOLAN

This is not a part of the public  
tour. Access can only be arranged  
through a Congressional office.

They enter, and walk up the 356 steps of the

SECRET DOME STAIRWELL

LATER

Two-thirds of the way up, they make a pit stop at the

FIRST VISITOR'S BALCONY

They look at people below in the Rotunda. Ants. Big drop.

They continue up

MORE STEPS

to the

ROOF

They take in the magnificent

VIEW OF THE CITY

AMES'S POV: The Mall, the Supreme Court Building, Washington Monument, Lincoln Memorial, Pennsylvania Avenue.

He looks up at the

OUTER BALCONY

and

THOLOS

Atop that, the

STATUE OF THE LADY "FREEDOM"

He looks at the INSCRIPTION: "E PLURIBUS UNUM."

AERIAL SHOT: STATUE OF THE LADY "FREEDOM"

with New Recruits surrounding her. Bees around their Queen.

ROTUNDA - LATER

WHEELER'S POV: We don't see that it's Wheeler, but someone is clearly tracks Ames exit the building.

INT. AMES'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Ames lies on couch looking at TV. Kitten sleeps on his chest. Still unshaven, he and the apartment make for a sad sight.

TV SCREEN: YEAR IN REVIEW MONTAGE

"AULD LANG SYNE" UNDERSCORE. Images from the past year. Up comes grid of photos of 15 murdered kindergarteners, including Daisy Grace. Ames switches channels.

TV SCREEN: ROCKIN' NEW YEARS EVE

Count down in Times Square. Everyone's drunk and happy.

ANDERSON COOPER

Ten... nine... eight... seven...  
six... five... four... three...  
two.... one...

Ames turns the TV off.

He thinks for a minute, picks up his phone, puts it down. Picks it up again, calls Julianna. She answers.

INTERCUT: WITH WIEDNER CONDO

AMES

I just wanted to leave you a message, wish you a Happy New Year. I figured you'd be out.

JULIANNA

No.

AMES

Well, at least the year's behind us.

JULIANNA

Thank God. How are you? How's the new job?

AMES

Officially start tomorrow. Although, with more snow coming, who knows?

JULIANNA

You need someone to walk Kitten?

AMES

That'd be great, thanks. I'll leave a key under the mat.

(beat)

You'll be happy to know, I won't be carrying.

JULIANNA

A gun? Really? Wow.

AMES

Just don't trust myself right at the moment.

JULIANNA

Capitol Police is okay with it?

AMES

For now. How are you?

JULIANNA

This King Johns thing has me sick.

AMES

Who's King Johns?

JULIANNA

Alan Johns' spawn.

AMES

The asshole who went around saying Sandy Hook was a hoax.

JULIANNA

His son's taken over where he left off. Don't look him up. It'll piss you off.

AMES

How's the foundation paperwork going?

JULIANNA

It's in.

AMES

Good for you. Alright, I'll let you go. Take care of yourself.

JULIANNA

You too.



They both linger.

BOTH  
Maybe we could...

AMES  
Have dinner?

JULIANNA  
I'd like that.

AMES  
Great. Good night.

JULIANNA  
Thanks for calling.

LATER

Ames googles: "KING JOHNS." He clicks on a YouTube video.

YOUTUBE VIDEO

KING JOHNS  
"Sandy Hook, Uvalde, Capitol  
Montessori. FAKE. STAGED. NOT REAL.  
We need to mobilize or lose this  
country. Join me January 2nd where  
I'll be live on Instagram from the  
Old Senate Chamber with patriot  
"Dick the Third" for exclusive  
access to the Young Republican  
Senator's Organization annual  
meeting. And don't forget to visit  
our online store. Those  
Ritewars.com socks are going fast."

Ames throws his laptop across the room. CRASH.

EXT./INT. U.S. CAPITOL COMPLEX - DAY - TRACKING

EAST SIDE

Ames, dressed in a uniform, waits in falling snow, at the

"WAR AND PEACE" SCULPTURE

He looks at the Greek man and woman turned away from each other.

Molan appears. They shake hands, walk.

MOLAN  
Lieutenant Dan Molan.

AMES  
Crossing Guard Ames Wiedner.

MOLAN  
We've never had a request to not carry.

AMES  
You've never had an officer who's lost a child to gun violence.

MOLAN  
I can't tell you how sorry I am.

AMES  
Thanks.

SENATE GRAND STEPS

They walk up. People stream in and out of building.

AREA OUTSIDE OLD SENATE CHAMBER

Molan indicates entrance.

MOLAN  
You'll post out here.  
(indicates his wrist)  
Make sure they have a YRSO band.

They walk through the door.

OLD SENATE CHAMBER

Ames looks up at the

LARGE SKYLIGHT

in the magnificent ceiling and the brass chandelier hanging from it. He then takes in the rest of the room...

A small but breathtaking semicircular space, 75 by 50 feet, decorated in crimson and gold. Period mahogany Senate desks on tiers, two galleries in the front and back of the room facing each other, carpet of gold stars.

The focus of the room: the Senate President's Dais: a regal chair and desk sit under a canopy. On the Dais's lower tier, another desk for two people.

Around room, up in galleries, AGENTS sweep for bombs.

MOLAN (CONT'D)

I'll be in here with a few other guys. Told them not to come in with the weather. They know the drill.

INT. AREA OUTSIDE OLD SENATE CHAMBER - NIGHT (LATER)

Molan, alone in a deserted building in the middle of the night, locks door of Old Senate Chamber, then walks away. With every move, an ECHO.

INT./EXT. AMES'S APARTMENT - DAY

Ames looks out window, Kitten in his arms.

AMES'S POV: An avalanche of snow, with more coming down.

LOCAL D.C. REPORTER (O.S.)

"D.C. is under eighteen inches of snow, with more on the way. The first session of the new Congress has been rescheduled for Friday..."

QUICK FLASHBACK: At the top of a hill, Julianna and Daisy Grace on a toboggan. Ames gives them a push and then hops on. LAUGHTER as they fly down the hill.

BACK TO SCENE

Tears stream down Ames's face. Kitten licks up some of them.

INT. U.S. CAPITOL WELCOME CENTER - DAY

Capitol Police process long lines at metal detectors.

King Johns interviews Dick the III live on Instagram. CAPITOL POLICE OFFICER gestures for them to stop.

KING JOHNS

SO MUCH FOR A FREE COUNTRY!

INT. U.S. CAPITOL - SENATE CHAMBER

Senators, family members stream in. Lots of hugging, kissing.

King Johns captures Senator MacDonald embracing Dick the III.

AREA OUTSIDE OLD SENATE CHAMBER

YRSO MEMBERS pass Ames on way in. He checks for wrist bands.

AMES'S POV: King Johns videoing Dick the III.

KING JOHNS  
 "We are live from the U.S. Capitol,  
 entering the Old Senate Chamber!"

BACK TO SCENE

Ames glares at King Johns. He videos him.

KING JOHNS (CONT'D)  
 Thanks for your service, officer.

INSIDE OLD SENATE CHAMBER

Molan stands guard at Center Entrance Door. 28 MEMBER #1 stands near Dais; 28 MEMBER #2 at Far Floor Right Door; 28 MEMBER #3 at Far Floor Left Door. All three are incognito, dressed in Capitol Police uniforms. We don't recognize them.

INTERCUT: WITH KING JOHN'S INSTAGRAM LIVE STREAM

King does a 360 degree pan. Dick the III emcees.

DICK THE III  
 Visitor's Gallery. Ladies' Gallery.

KING JOHNS  
 "Where they belong!" Cancel me!  
 Cancel me!

Seated YRSO members wave as King Johns pans across the tiers of desks, on which there are place cards indicating the state each YRSO member represents. Many states have two reps.

DICK THE III  
 Original desks. 1819.

KING JOHNS  
 "When men were men!"

King Johns focuses in on the regal Senate President's chair.

KING JOHNS (CONT'D)  
 "I want this seat."

Dick the III sits down in it.

YRSO Members break out into "HAIL TO THE CHIEF."

King pans upwards, above the Dais canopy, to the

1823 PORTHOLE PORTRAIT OF GEORGE WASHINGTON

presiding over the room.

KING JOHNS (CONT'D)  
 "The man, the myth, the white,  
privileged legend, like it or not."

SENATE PRESIDENT'S DESK

GAVEL. Dick the III presides.

DICK THE III  
 Welcome Young Republican Senators.  
 I'm told we've got perfect  
 attendance, despite the snow. Does  
 that bode well for the future of  
 American conservatism, or what?

CHEERS, APPLAUSE. It's a rowdy crowd.

DICK THE III (CONT'D)  
 You are sitting in the very room  
 where the Hayne-Webster debates of  
 1830 took place. What did Senator  
 Hayne defend?

YRSO MEMBERS  
 STATES RIGHTS! STATES RIGHTS!

DICK THE III  
 I want to welcome my very special  
 guest who is making sure YRSO is  
 all over social media today, RITE  
 WARS' KIIIIING JOOOOOOOHNS!!!

HUGE, ROWDY CHEERS AND APPLAUSE.

DICK THE III (CONT'D)  
 We've got a jam-packed day ahead of  
 us. First, let's check out what's  
 happening down the hall.

Lights dim.

TWO LARGE MONITORS IN THE FRONT OF THE ROOM  
 show the floor of the Senate.

SENATOR MACDONALD (O.S.)  
 "Senators-elect, please rise."

BACK TO SCENE

Molan locks the Far Floor Right and Far Floor Left Doors.

28 members discreetly retrieve AK-15's that are hidden in the period stoves around the room.

Out of nowhere, PISTOL FIRE. It takes out one of the smaller skylights. Glass crashes down. Everyone looks up.

YRSO MEMBERS' SCREAMS are immediately quashed by 28 Members who put their fingers to their lips and hover with AK-15's aimed in their direction. Silent panic from these young people who are now hostages.

28 Member #1 hovers over Dick the III and King Johns. He's assigned to these two very valuable hostages.

AREA OUTSIDE OLD SENATE CHAMBER

Ames, deciding whether he heard something or not, instinctively reaches for a gun he's not carrying.

He walks into the

OLD SENATE CHAMBER

and proceeds down center aisle. He tries to assess what's going on. Hostages are staring at him. Weird.

Molan follows behind him.

Eyes in the back of his head, Ames turns and kicks Molan's gun out of his hands, takes him hostage. But then he notices the three 28 Members with their AK-15's pointed right at him. He lets Molan go, puts his hands up.

WHEELER (O.S.)

"Ames."

Ames looks up into the Ladies' Galley and sees Wheeler in Capitol Police uniform and armed: an AR-15 strapped across her chest, a pistol in hand.

WHEELER (CONT'D)

Much sexier than "Doug."

Ames is dumbfounded. And impressed.

WHEELER (CONT'D)

We're going to make a great team.

Wheeler gestures Molan to get him out of the room.

WHEELER (CONT'D)

Talk soon, babe.

AREA OUTSIDE OLD SENATE CHAMBER

Ames radios.

AMES

"Mass hostage situation, Old Senate Chamber. Do not engage. Active, barricaded shooters. Repeat, do not engage."

OLD SENATE CHAMBER

Wheeler addresses Hostages.

WHEELER

I am truly sorry about this. That our country is so ill, we end up... here.

(indicates cell phones)

Text your mothers, let them know you're okay.

Hostages look at each other in disbelief.

WHEELER (CONT'D)

You're welcome to post, live stream. This is all about raising awareness, you know? Just, no calls.

Hostages, frozen, just stare at her in disbelief.

WHEELER (CONT'D)

Go on.

With trepidation, Hostages text, take photos, video. Surreal.

INT. SENATE CONFERENCE ROOM

CHAOS. The room buzzes with TECH GUYS setting up a command center: laptops, monitors, etc...

LEADERSHIP of the various agencies and forces sit around the table: Metropolitan Police Chief, Capitol Police Chief, Crisis Negotiation, Hostage Rescue Team Chief, etc...

FBI Director sits at one end of the table addressing the ATTORNEY GENERAL (60'S), a straight-laced suit, at the other.

FBI DIRECTOR

We've got the area cordoned off, sir. Everyone but law enforcement and members of Congress have been evacuated.

Ames walks in, heads turn. He looks at FBI Director.

AMES  
Our friend Wheeler.

FBI DIRECTOR  
Idaho? You're fucking kidding me.  
(to Attorney General)  
Sorry, sir.

AMES  
She has three 28 colleagues with  
her. And a very able tour guide in  
Lieutenant Molan.

CAPITOL POLICE CHIEF  
Jesus Christ.

AMES  
A.k.a. "Pissed Boy?"

ATTORNEY GENERAL  
What's his ax?

CAPITOL POLICE CHIEF  
January Sixth. He was Brian  
Sicknick's mentor - the officer who  
died that day. And he watched his  
partner get walloped by a metal  
pole. The day he was due back to  
work, Molan found him in his  
apartment. Shot himself. He's  
pissed.

ATTORNEY GENERAL  
So he helps some right-wing nut  
take family members of U.S.  
Senators hostage?

TECH GUY  
A video's been posted.

ONE OF THE MONITORS

28.com website. Wheeler's frozen face is on an embedded  
video. Above it, a clock ticking down...

INSERT: "23 HOURS, 41 MINUTES, 33 SECONDS."

**[This clock appears throughout film, on computer screens,  
monitors, news stories, ticking down in real time.]**

Below the embedded video, a number in a box.



INSERT: "1896."

It ticks up one, to "1897."

**[This number also appears throughout film, tracking gun deaths - ticking up one every five minutes in real time.]**

BACK TO SCENE

Senate Majority Leader MacDonald and the HOUSE SPEAKER, a woman in her 70's, enter, white as ghosts.

MONITOR: WHEELER'S VIDEO OF DEMANDS

WHEELER

"Below me, you see the number of people who have been shot by a fire arm in America since January 1st -- four days ago. That number will tick up one every five minutes.

QUICK FLASH: With AMES'S POV, we finally see what he saw: a pile of DEAD CHILDREN and DEAD TEACHER in Faculty Restroom.

BACK TO SCENE

WHEELER (CONT'D)

In Australia, twenty seven people die each year from gun violence. In Japan, six. In America, forty-five... thousand. Every single day in our country, there is a mass shooting. Every four days, a school shooting.

QUICK FLASH: AMES'S POV of blood, flesh splattered on walls.

WHEELER (V.O.)

American exceptionalism, indeed.

BACK TO SCENE

WHEELER

Ten years ago, Supreme Court Justice Stevens published a New York Times article urging the repeal of the Second Amendment as the only way to stop the tyranny of guns in this country.

QUICK FLASH: Of AMES'S POV, spotting Daisy Grace's wool sweater drenched in blood. He attempts to retrieve her from pile, but colleagues stop him. He crumbles.

WHEELER (V.O.)

It has been my purpose to achieve this goal. And in twenty-four hours, that mission will be realized with the passage of the 28th Amendment to the United States Constitution. So that no parent will ever have to live through what too many have already.

BACK TO SCENE

WHEELER

It may seem audacious, even delusional. But this nation has always been a nation of dreams, and of laws. To that end... Step One.

CU: Of both Wheeler's eyes and Ames's eyes. It's as if Wheeler is talking directly to Ames. She has his attention.

WHEELER (CONT'D)

Congress will pass a joint resolution with the exact verbiage you'll find here on 28.com. The time for debate is over. The time to end the madness? Now."

BACK TO SCENE

SENATOR MACDONALD

She's crazy.

TECH GUY

Crazy has two hundred million views.

Ames's phone rings. He answers.

INTERCUT: WITH OLD SENATE CHAMBER LOBBY\*

**[\*An area behind the Senate President's Dais separated by panels, offering Wheeler privacy from the Hostages.]**

WHEELER

Surprise!

AMES

I'll say. I'm in a meeting.

WHEELER

I bet you are.

AMES

What are we doing here?

WHEELER

Amending the Constitution.

AMES

You don't really --

WHEELER

-- Trust the process, Ames. It's all laid out in Article Five. Very straightforward.

Ames puts phone on speaker, sets it on table.

AMES

You're on speaker now.

WHEELER

I deal with you. Only you, babe.

Everyone's taken aback by "babe." Ames gestures "crazy."

SENATOR MACDONALD

Senate Majority Leader MacDonald here.

WHEELER

Ronald!

Suppressed smile from House Speaker.

SENATOR MACDONALD

Rich. Miss, if you'll release those young people, I promise an open-minded discussion on how we can address gun violence.

WHEELER

You've had forty-four years to open your mind. I did the math, Senator. Since you were elected, one million, nine hundred and eighty-one people have died because of the reckless gun culture you've so eagerly helped maintain to ensure your perpetual re-election.

ON MONITOR

Number in box on 28.com website ticks up to "1898."

WHEELER (CONT'D)

Pardon me, one million, nine hundred eighty-two. But, I so appreciate having your attention.

(beat)

We'll be making use of the closest restroom. Do keep the area clear. Any rush on the room, any rescue attempt, the first to die will be your grandson, Senator. My colleagues and I are prepared to sacrifice our lives for this cause. Along with others. Do not test us.

(beat)

Babe, call me when you're alone.

Wheeler hangs up.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Babe?

SENATOR MACDONALD

She's bluffing.

HOUSE SPEAKER

Because she's a woman.

SENATOR MACDONALD

Because she's a mother who hates guns. She's not shooting anyone's child.

HOUSE SPEAKER

You're willing to take that chance? With your own grandson?

SENATOR MACDONALD

Never let a crisis go to waste. Attack that Second Amendment.

HOUSE SPEAKER

If you'll excuse me, the House has a resolution to pass.

FBI DIRECTOR

Clear the room.

Room clears.

FBI DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

I'll get you blueprints of the Old Senate Chamber. What's below it, above it. What else?

FBI Director offers Ames a gun. He doesn't take it.

AMES

I didn't say I'm in.

FBI DIRECTOR

You heard her. She'll only deal with you. You have to talk her down.

AMES

Maybe I don't want to talk her down.

FBI DIRECTOR

I get it.

AMES

I'm supposed to risk my life for that smug, little prick King Johns who says my daughter's death was staged? Why should I stop the one person who might just put an end to the endless carnage.

FBI DIRECTOR

Because she's a fucking terrorist.

AMES

Is she?

FBI DIRECTOR

Yes. She is. You told me your sole purpose is to stop wacko extremists from killing other people's children. One's down the hall.

Ames walks out.

FBI DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

Walking away again.

AMES

Lose a child, then talk to me.

EXT. OUTSIDE U.S. CAPITOL - CONTINUOUS

It's a media circus. Capitol Police, S.W.A.T. Teams have their hands full pushing crowds, protesters away, barricading area. Reporters and Cameramen do there thing everywhere.

## NEWS REPORTER

"...the grandson of Senator Majority Leader Rich MacDonald, and 49 other family members of Republican Senators are being held hostage in the Old Senate Chamber. King Johns, son of right-wing conspiracy theorist Alan Johns, is reportedly also a captive."

INT. AMES'S APARTMENT - LATER

Ames comes in, finds Julianna there taking of Kitten's leash.

JULIANNA

(gives him a hug)  
Thank God you're okay.

AMES

She says she'll only negotiate with me.

JULIANNA

Why you?  
(Ames sputters)  
Because you've lost a child.

AMES

She says we'll make a great team.

JULIANNA

Maybe you would.

AMES

She's obviously insane.

JULIANNA

Like she says, you'll make a great team. Have you seen her website? She seems pretty fucking sane to me.

AMES

You don't really think she's --

JULIANNA

-- going to get a Twenty-eighth Amendment? Why not? The Twenty-first repealed the Eighteenth.

AMES

Prohibition was not enshrined in the Bill of Rights.

JULIANNA

Neither is gun ownership. "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State --"

AMES

-- Here we go.

JULIANNA

"... the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed." When we did away with militias --

AMES

-- "and created a professional, standing army," --

JULIANNA

-- the Second Amendment became obsolete. Until the '70's when the NRA launched --

AMES

-- "the most successful marketing campaign in American history."

JULIANNA

Until now. Her plan is completely thought-out, strategic, constitutionally sound. Much more effective than a "charity named after a dead kid."

AMES

Using blackmail.

JULIANNA

Welcome to Capitol Hill. It's called lobbying. NRA's been holding a gun to the Republican Party's head for sixty years.

On her phone, Julianna pulls up the 28.com website.

JULIANNA (CONT'D)

"Section 3: No law shall be adopted that abolishes this amendment." Once this thing passes, there's no undoing it.

AMES

That can't be constitutional.

JULIANNA

It is. It's also brilliant.

AMES

You're telling me --

JULIANNA

-- Congress can turn the United States into a monarchy with a King if it has a two-thirds majority, and three-fourths of the states ratify it. It's only a matter of math.

AMES

I cannot be a part of using gun violence to end gun violence.

JULIANNA

I can. Law enforcement does. You're always saying "lots of things are true." It's true, what she's doing is wrong. It also may true that it's the only way to end this national quagmire of gun violence.

AMES

If I go back, will you take care of Kitten?

JULIANNA

Of course.

Ames phone rings. Facetime call from Wheeler.

AMES

This is her.

(indicates Kitten)

You could just take her home with you.

JULIANNA

Pushing it.

Julianna pecks him on kiss, exits. Ames answers the call.

INTERCUT: WITH OLD SENATE CHAMBER LOBBY

WHEELER

You alone?

AMES

Yes, but you're not. You've with fifty hostages.



WHEELER

Fifty-one including our friend King Johns. I want to express my condolences for your loss of Daisy Grace.

AMES

Thank you.

WHEELER

Losing a child is a parent's hell on earth. But gun violence. It's a hell you never stop reliving.

AMES

I appreciate the goal here. But --

WHEELER

-- When Sandy Hook happened, and no legislation got passed, I thought, "If twenty-two first graders being gunned down in their classroom doesn't move Congress, what will?"

AMES

Some states tightened restrictions.

WHEELER

Thirteen states loosened them. Loosened.

AMES

Legislation passed after *Uvalde*.

WHEELER

They tightened background checks - a little. Pathetic. We're a very, very sick country, Ames.

AMES

Yeah.

(beat)

What about food, water for our "Young Republicans."

WHEELER

Takes three weeks without food to die.

AMES

Three days without water.

WHEELER

This will be over by noon tomorrow.

AMES  
Seems optimistic.

WHEELER  
Not when they have a deadline. And we have their children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews...

AMES  
You do. I can't be a part of this. It's too complicated.

WHEELER  
It's not. Not now. But I need your help to pull it off. Besides, you owe me for killing my dog.

AMES  
I didn't --

WHEELER  
-- And a colleague. Almost as egregious. Lucky you're cute.

She takes Ames aback by her callous detachment.

PING on Wheeler's phone. She looks at it.

WHEELER (CONT'D)  
House is in session. Get back here and be a part of history, babe.

She hangs up. Ames turns on the TV.

ON TV:

TV REPORTER  
"Though the Capitol has been shut down, members of Congress remain in the building under heavy security. I'm told a House vote is imminent, but on the Senate side of the building, crickets."

He has an epiphany. He goes into the

BATHROOM

dials FBI Director and puts it on speaker. He takes off his shirt and begins to shave.

INTERCUT: WITH FBI DIRECTOR

FBI DIRECTOR  
Where are you?

AMES  
In the bathroom shaving.

FBI DIRECTOR  
You have a fucking date?

AMES  
Sort of. Wheeler's lost a child to  
gun violence.

FBI DIRECTOR  
You've identified her, because we  
haven't?

AMES  
I just... can tell. It's in her  
eyes. Look at every Philly mass  
shooting in the last fifteen years.

FBI DIRECTOR  
Philly?

AMES  
I could use a Wawa hoagie.

FBI DIRECTOR  
What the fuck are you talking  
about?

AMES  
Send over someone from Behavioral.

FBI DIRECTOR  
You're in.

AMES  
Yeah.

INT. HOUSE CHAMBER

House Clerk presides on the Dais.

HOUSE CLERK  
(reading)  
"Section 1: The Second Amendment is  
hereby repealed. Section 2: This  
amendment shall be ratified by  
three-fourths of the state  
assemblies by January Sixth at  
12:00 noon.

(MORE)

HOUSE CLERK (CONT'D)  
 Section 3: No law shall be adopted  
 that abolishes this amendment."

INTERCUT: WITH OLD SENATE CHAMBER

Wheeler, 28 Members, Hostages, watch on monitors.

HOUSE CLERK (CONT'D)  
 All in favor say, "Yea."

It's a clear majority.

HOUSE CLERK (CONT'D)  
 All against, say, "Nay."

A small minority vote "Nay".

HOUSE CLERK (CONT'D)  
 The "Yeas" have it, the resolution  
 passes.

GAVEL.

Hostages are relieved by the vote.

Big smile from Wheeler. She fills up with tears as she makes  
 eye contact with each of the 28 members around the room.

WHEELER  
 It's happening.  
 (to Utah Female Hostage)  
 It's really happening.

UTAH FEMALE HOSTAGE  
 Congratulations.

WHEELER  
 You too.

INT. AMES'S APARTMENT - LATER

An FBI PSYCHOLOGIST sits with Ames. They watch on the

TV SCREEN

A live shot of the

ELIPSE IN FRONT OF THE WHITE HOUSE.

Thousands of ELIPSE PROTESTERS, on both sides of issue, face  
 off. Tense. Media from all over world cover it.

CHEERS GO UP.

JAPANESE NEWS REPORTER

(in Japanese)

"You heard half the crowd reacting to the historic House vote passing a resolution to repeal the Second Amendment. Around me, elation from some, outrage from others, and from everyone, shock at the events unfolding in America."

BACK TO SCENE

Ames turns the volume down. He picks up Kitten.

AMES

Sorry. Where were we?

FBI PSYCHOLOGIST

Your history with the leader.

AMES

I spent a little time with her. Socially. For the most part she was fun, easy-going.

FBI PSYCHOLOGIST

Flirtatious?

AMES

Bordering on inappropriate. Overly familiar. Crude.

FBI PSYCHOLOGIST

Any drawing attention to herself?  
(clarifies)  
Loud talking, laughing so everyone knows what a great time she's having?

AMES

Yes. What are you thinking?

FBI PSYCHOLOGIST

Bipolar? Narcissistic Personality Disorder? Possibly Dissociative Identity Disorder.

AMES

What causes that?

FBI PSYCHOLOGIST

Childhood Abuse. Or some kind of intense trauma.

AMES

Losing a child to gun violence?

FBI PSYCHOLOGIST

Then she could just be a pissed off  
mama bear. You know how they get  
when someone messes with their  
cubs. Kill one of them? Look out.

AMES

Yeah.

EXT./INT. U.S. CAPITOL COMPLEX - TRACKING

EAST LAWN

Ames makes his way through a gathering of PROTESTERS.

GUN SHOTS. SCREAMS.

A GUN RIGHTS PROTESTER waves the gun he just shot in the air.

GUN RIGHTS PROTESTER

COME AND TAKE IT!

Like lightening, Ames does. He tackles and subdues him.

Capitol Police arrive and take over. Ames walks away, packs  
the firearm on his body.

MOMENTS LATER

NORTHEAST ENTRANCE STEPS

FBI Director meets Ames.

FBI DIRECTOR

You were right. She lost a son in a  
2017 Pennsylvania supermarket  
shooting.

AMES

How'd you find her?

FBI DIRECTOR

Her ex-husband found us. Saw the  
video, called MacDonald's Office.  
He put him on the next Amtrak out  
of Philly.

AMES

She could have brought me a Wawa  
hoagie.

STAIRWELL UP TO SENATE CONFERENCE ROOM

AMES (CONT'D)  
What's her real name?

FBI DIRECTOR  
Malay. Joy Malay.

AMES  
Apropos. Any prior record?

FBI DIRECTOR  
One incident right after she lost her son. Charges dropped. Oh, and they have a twelve year-old daughter.

OUTSIDE SENATE CONFERENCE ROOM

THEIR POV: Down hallway, beyond GUARDING FBI AGENT, 28 Member #1 escorts MALE HOSTAGE to bathroom, gun to his head.

They walk into the...

SENATE CONFERENCE ROOM

On one end of the conference table, uniform: kevlar vest, and helmet, eye protection, impact gloves; firearms: pistol, sniper rifle, AK-15; climbing equipment: ropes, grappling hook, etc...

On the other end of table, a blueprint for the Old Senate Chamber and environs: venue, around, above, below it.

In middle of the table sits WILL MALAY (48), Wheeler's ex-husband, in mid-conversation with Senator MacDonald. Will's dressed in an expensive suit. A white collar with money.

AMES  
(shaking hands)  
Ames Wiedner.

WILL MALAY  
Will Malay.

AMES  
Your ex-wife goes by "Wheeler?"

WILL MALAY  
Wayne Wheeler is her hero.

SENATOR MACDONALD  
Prohibitionist credited with  
getting the Eighteenth Amendment  
passed.

FBI DIRECTOR  
(to Ames)  
"Wets" versus "Drys."

AMES  
(to Will Malay)  
I'm very sorry about your son.

WILL MALAY  
She's always been anti-gun. After  
Sandy Hook, she was petrified  
something like it would happen to  
us. And then it did.

AMES  
She was with him...

WILL MALAY  
(nods)  
They were grocery shopping. She  
couldn't recall anything about it.

AMES  
Nothing?

WILL MALAY  
(shakes head)  
It was as if it never happened. She  
never uttered Remy's name again. As  
if he never happened. Doctors said  
she "detached." For survival. But  
she only detached from the details  
of that day and Remy, not the  
issue. She read Justice Stephens'  
New York Times article and became  
obsessed with his idea of repealing  
the Second Amendment.

AMES  
How did she end up in Idaho?

WILL MALAY  
One day, she just vanished - with a  
lot of money.

AMES  
Enough to fund a paramilitary  
group?



WILL MALAY

And then some. Up until a few weeks ago, I hadn't heard from her in twelve years. She just fell off the grid.

AMES

Hard to imagine a mother having no contact with her child. Especially after losing one.

WILL MALAY

That's why, according to the doctors. Joy was pregnant with Alicia when we lost Remy. She wouldn't breast feed her, pick her up. More detachment.

FBI DIRECTOR

Why did she suddenly reach out after all this time?

WILL MALAY

To tell us to go into hiding.

AMES

You should have.

WILL MALAY

When I questioned why, she flew into a rage.

AMES

Does she have a history of mental illness?

WILL MALAY

Not at all. I mean, she was always a handful. Loud. Flair for the dramatic. Impulsive. In a good way. Mostly.

SENATOR MACDONALD

She showed up with a gun at the home of the shooter who took their son's life.

WILL MALAY

I didn't even know she had a gun.

SENATOR MACDONALD

Threatened to kill the assailant's parents.

WILL MALAY

She didn't, thank God. She said she  
"just couldn't go through with it."

SENATOR MACDONALD

Mister Malay, do you think she's  
capable of killing someone?

WILL MALAY

No. She just... is desperate for  
change.

MacDonald gives Ames and FBI Director a "told you so" look.

AMES

Well, thank you for coming in.  
(hands him his card)  
We'll be in touch.

WILL MALAY

However we can help.

On the back of a business card, Will writes.

INSERT: CAPITOL HILL HOTEL, ROOM 333. 610-328-1559.

BACK TO SCENE

Will slides it over to Ames.

AMES

Where's your daughter?

WILL MALAY

At the hotel.

AMES

Who else knows where you're  
staying?

WILL MALAY

No one.

AMES

Keep it that way.

INT. D.C. TAXI CAB - CONTINUOUS

TAXI DRIVER'S POV: He spots Will Malay on his phone.

CAR HORN BEEP. Taxi Driver flashes his lights. Will sees it,  
puts his phone back in his pocket and gets in cab.

WILL MALAY  
Capitol Hill Hotel, please.

LATER

Taxi Driver pulls over on an abandoned side street and puts the car in park. Will Malay looks up from phone, confused.

Taxi Driver turns and puts a BULLET in Malay's head.

INT. OLD SENATE CHAMBER

King Johns gets a text from "DAD" on his IPHONE: SHE'S CRAZY, BUT ISN'T KILLING ANYONE. HISTORY OF THREATS. ALL BLUFFS. STAND YOUR GROUND."

King Johns returns the text: "SHOULD I LIVE STREAM?"

Alan Johns responds: "HELL YES! DONATIONS ALREADY THRU ROOF."

Wheeler sits in the Senate President's Chair. Hostages stare at AR-15 she grips in her hands. Dick the III and King Johns sit at the desk for two on the bottom tier, below Wheeler.

KING JOHNS'S POV: He opens his Instagram app. Hits the red button: "LIVE IN 3, 2, 1..." He tracks Wheeler.

BACK TO SCENE

To King Johns, without looking at him.

WHEELER

A little fundraising, Mister Johns?  
(winks to Hostages)

While we wait on the Senate, I thought we'd have a little pop quiz on this little miracle.

(she indicates her AR-15)

I'll ask the questions and you answer. Raise your hands please. You can take the girl out of the Catholic Church but you can't take the Catholic Church out of the girl.

(beat)

You look nervous. You're all gun people. This'll be easy.

Wheeler walks around room, puts on a show. Unnerving.

INTERCUT: WITH RIGHTWINGERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY WATCHING THE LIVE STREAM ON RITEWARS.COM;

FBI DIRECTOR AND COLLEAGUES IN CAPITOL POLICE COMMAND CENTER  
IN BASEMENT; JULIANNA AT HOME; AMES IN SENATE CONFERENCE  
ROOM.

WHEELER (CONT'D)

Question number one. "How many  
football fields does an AR-15  
bullet travel in one second?"

(beat)

No one? Six! Six football fields!  
In one second. Crazy, right?  
Completely cccrrraaazzzyyy.

Question number two. I'll make this  
one easier. True or false. "When a  
bullet from an AR-15 bursts into  
the chest cavity, it shreds lung  
tissue, severs nerves and vessels  
and causes massive bleeding,  
tumbling down a chaotic path in the  
body, destroying the large veins  
that carry blood back to the  
heart." True or false?

Wheeler zeros in on a Texas Male Hostage.

WHEELER (CONT'D)

Texas.

TEXAS MALE HOSTAGE

True.

WHEELER

You are correct. Texans know their  
guns, bless their hearts. This is  
fun, right? Okay, Question Number  
Three. Multiple choice. "Six-year-  
old Noah Pozner was found in a  
Sandy Hook faculty room in a pile  
of dead first graders. Noah's  
autopsy revealed bullets entered A)  
his left hand, causing it to be  
mangled beyond recognition B) his  
upper right back, where they broke  
into fragments, instantly filling  
his body with blood C) his face,  
causing complete destruction of his  
head. Or D) All of the above."

Wheeler gestures to a SOUTH DAKOTA FEMALE HOSTAGE.

SOUTH DAKOTA FEMALE HOSTAGE

D?

WHEELER

D for "damn right Dakota!" All of the above.

(beat)

Now, it's hard for us to grasp what it must have been like to be Noah in those moments leading up to all this. But let's try. Everyone close your eyes.

Every hostage does. Terrifying.

WHEELER (CONT'D)

Good! No cheating. You're imagining some deranged person with an AR-15 walking about. You can't see them, but you can hear them. At any minute, bullets could be ripping through your flesh. Stomp. Stomp...

KING JOHNS

(still filming)

You're delusional.

Everyone is horrified at King Johns' provocation. Air leaves room. Wheeler maintains her calm.

WHEELER

Why's that, King?

KING JOHNS

You think you're going to get rid of a thirty billion dollar industry?

WHEELER

And what do you think the cost of gun violence is to the U.S. Economy every year? Two-hundred billion.

Wheeler's RING TONE startles everyone: "I'VE GOT YOU BABE.\*"

**[\*Wheeler has set Ames's call to this Sonny and Cher classic]**

WHEELER (CONT'D)

Excuse me.

Wheeler answers the phone as she walks into the

LOBBY BEHIND THE SENATE PRESIDENT'S DAIS.

INTERCUT: WITH AMES IN SENATE CONFERENCE ROOM

WHEELER (CONT'D)  
 (ebullient)  
 The House passed the resolution.

AMES  
 And every gun shop in America will  
 be sold out in an hour.

WHEELER  
 400 million guns in this country,  
 Ames. What difference does it make?

AMES  
 I'm sorry about Remy.  
 (catches her off guard)  
 I met with your ex.

WHEELER  
 He's in D.C.?

AMES  
 With Alicia.

WHEELER  
 (agitated, detached)  
 Fucking idiot. I warned him.

PING on Wheeler's phone. She looks at it.

WHEELER (CONT'D)  
 Ronald MacDonald's coming on the  
 Senate floor. Call me later, babe.

INT. SENATE CHAMBER

Senator MacDonald at the podium.

SENATOR MACDONALD  
 In 2017, Miss Malay showed up,  
 armed, at the home of the shooter  
 who killed her son, and threatened  
 to take his parents' lives. But in  
 the end, she - in her words - "just  
 could not go through with it." Her  
 ex-husband says she is "not capable  
 of taking another person's life."  
 And that makes sense, folks,  
 doesn't it? No mother who wants to  
 see the end of gun violence, who's  
 lost a child to gun violence, is  
 going to kill someone else's child  
 with a gun.

(MORE)

## SENATOR MACDONALD (CONT'D)

In light of these revelations, and the fact that our God-given constitutional right to bear arms is at stake here, I urge my colleagues to vote "Nay" on this bill that would repeal the Second Amendment. Permanently repeal the Second Amendment. Otherwise, we will be sending a dangerous message that threats of gun violence can sway this body's opinion on any issue at all.

LATER

Senate Clerk begins voting roll call.

SUPERIMPOSED VOTES ON SCREEN:

YEAS 0 VS. NAYS 0 VS. PRESENT 0 VS. NV. 0

**[Yeas and Nays ticks up with each new vote.]**

SENATE CLERK

Abate.

ABATE

Yea.

SENATE CLERK

Arnold.

ARNOLD

Yea.

SENATE CLERK

Beadle.

BEADLE

Nay.

MONTAGE - SENATE VOTING

-- FBI Director and Colleagues watch in Command Center.

FBI DIRECTOR

Thirty-three nays will sink it.

-- a MAN watches on his computer somewhere in America.

-- A WOMAN watches on her iPad

-- Ames watches on monitor in Senate Conference Room

-- CUSTOMERS watch in a diner  
 -- Wheeler, Colleagues, Hostages watch in Old Senate Chamber.  
 -- A BUNCH OF TEENAGERS watch on their phones  
 -- Julianna watches on her computer.

SUPERIMPOSED VOTES ON SCREEN:

YEAS 41 VS. NAYS 29 VS. PRESENT 0 VS. NV. 0

Leach. SENATE CLERK

Yea. LEACH

Mack. SENATE CLERK

Nay. MACK

Mann. SENATE CLERK

Yea. MANN

McClure. SENATE CLERK

Nay. MCCRANE

McCrane. SENATE CLERK

Nay. MCCLURE

McDonald. SENATE CLERK

Nay. SENATOR MACDONALD

Nays tick up to 33. MacDonald's vote kills the bill.

JULIANNA  
 Damn it.

INT. OLD SENATE CHAMBER - LATER



FLOOR

Hostages, terrified, stare at final vote tally on monitors.

LOBBY BEHIND SENATE PRESIDENT'S DAIS

Wheeler looks at her phone, pacing.

WHEELER'S IPHONE SCREEN: She watches King John's live stream taking place a few feet away, on other side of panel

KING JOHNS

(discreetly, whispering)

Proud of the Senate for standing up to this wack-job. She's armed, but she ain't dangerous. Just a hysterical psycho-mom. Now get out there and protest. And donate to RiteWars.com. Right now."

Her phone rings. "I'VE GOT YOU BABE." Wheeler picks up.

AMES

Now what?

WHEELER

Time for a Zoom call. You, me, Ronald MacDonald and Grimace.

AMES

Grimace?

WHEELER

Alan Johns.

AMES

Why Alan Johns?

WHEELER

Trust the process, babe.

AMES

I'll call MacDonald.

WHEELER

I knew you'd make a good teammate.

AMES

I'm trying. But Wheeler, if there is any loss of innocent life...

WHEELER

Loss of innocent life is why we're here, Ames.

INT. CAPITOL HILL HOTEL - ROOM 333 - CONTINUOUS

An empty suite. This is an expensive room.

BATHROOM

ALICIA MALAY (12), Will Malay and Wheeler's daughter, looks at her phone in front of mirror. She oozes privilege, a little too experienced for her own good.

ALICIA'S POV: Her latest Instagram post. It's her gesturing a gun to her head. CAPTION: "WHEN YOUR PSYCHO MOM YOU'VE NEVER EVEN MET TAKES 51 PEOPLE HOSTAGE."

HOTEL DOOR OPENING.

ALICIA

Dad?

She exits the bathroom into the

SUITE

Three NRA-LINKED GUNMAN kidnap her. They cover her mouth. MUFFLED SCREAM. Duct tape, cloth bag over her head.

INT. OLD SENATE CHAMBER

Wheeler escorts King Johns into the Senate President's chair.

WHEELER

You said you wanted this seat.

Wheeler gestures to Dick the III to start zooming on phone.

INT. SENATE CONFERENCE ROOM

Senator MacDonald and Ames sit at the table in front of laptop.

Standing off to the side, out of view of the laptop camera: FBI Director and the other leaders. They watch...

ONE OF THE MONITORS: THE ZOOM CALL

Three windows: MacDonald and Ames; Alan Johns; King Johns sitting in the Senate President's chair, looking defiant.

INTERCUT: WITH OLD SENATE CHAMBER

WHEELER (O.S.)

Let everyone say hi, Dick.

Dick the III pans the tension-filled room and captures Hostages waving under duress. He lands back on Wheeler.

WHEELER (V.O.)

Senator, you can tell from our faces that we are very disappointed with your vote on the resolution.

SENATOR MACDONALD

Ma'am, I could not in good conscience pass a bill that takes away one of the most basic freedoms the Constitution affords us.

(indicates her gun)

Yourself included.

PING on Senator's phone.

WHEELER

Not even when a loved one's life is in danger?

Senator reads his text, feigning shock.

SENATOR MACDONALD

Yours too, I'm very sorry to say.

Everyone looks at Senator MacDonald quizzically.

WHEELER

They have her.

SENATOR MACDONALD

(to room)

Her daughter, Alicia.

Everyone reads the breaking news on their phones.

WHEELER

I knew they'd grab her.

AMES

Who?

WHEELER

Senator?

SENATOR MACDONALD

I have no idea.

AMES

We're the only ones who know they're in D.C.

SENATOR MACDONALD

Are you implying -- ?

AMES

(reads article on phone)

If the Senate passes the resolution, they're saying they'll kill her.

(comes at Senator)

You son of a bitch.

WHEELER

Thomas Jefferson said, "The soil of freedom must be watered not only by the blood of our enemies, but the blood of patriots."

Everyone looks at her, processing, in disbelief.

WHEELER (CONT'D)

No negotiating, gentlemen. Big things require big sacrifices.

ALAN JOHNS

Your own child?

She walks to King, sits on desk. Dick the III tracks her.

WHEELER

And what of your own child, Mister Johns? You eventually retracted your lucrative position that Sandy Hook was staged, albeit under threat of court action. But now your son has taken up the mantle.

ALAN JOHNS

Please understand, we're performers.

WHEELER

Me too. Apparently we're all performers.

(to King Johns)

Your Highness. Sandy Hook? Uvalde? Montessori? Were they all actors?

CU: Ames's eyes narrow.

BACK TO SCENE

## KING JOHNS

It doesn't matter whether they were  
or weren't. Dead. Children. Do.  
Not. Trump. My. Constitutional --

-- BANG.

MONTAGE - ECHO AND IMAGES

As we hear the BULLET ECHO throughout the Capitol we see:

-- Washington in the fresco on the Rotunda dome, looking down

-- The Lady "Freedom" in the same fresco, her sword raised,  
trampling on tyrants

-- The 44-foot-high monument outside Capitol of female statue  
"Grief" with head on shoulder of male figure "History."

INT. OLD SENATE CHAMBER

QUIET CRYING FROM HOSTAGES.

A shaken Wheeler gazes at King lying dead in a pool of blood  
near the knocked over chair. She looks up. REVEAL: 28 MEMBER  
#1 holds the gun he used to put a bullet in King Johns' head.

28 MEMBER #1

(to Hostages)

One of those dead children was  
mine.

INT. SENATE CONFERENCE ROOM

Senator MacDonald, pouring with sweat, heads for door.

ON SCREEN

ALAN JOHNS

SENATOR!

MacDonald stops.

ALAN JOHNS (CONT'D)

Pass that resolution, and my son's  
death was for nothing.

MacDonald continues out the door. Everyone follows except...

FBI Director and Ames, alone in room:

FBI DIRECTOR  
I'm thinking about that backpack.

AMES  
Word leaks of the possibility of a  
nuke on site, those cowards in the  
Senate will run for the hills. Let  
them pass the resolution first.

FBI DIRECTOR  
How can we not say something now?

AMES  
It may not have even been a nuke.

FBI DIRECTOR  
But if it was... and Pissed Boy  
arranged for it to be brought in.

AMES  
If she gets her amendment, she  
won't have any reason to make use  
of it.

FBI DIRECTOR  
Her amendment or your amendment?

AMES  
All of our's.

FBI DIRECTOR  
Lots of things are true, huh?

AMES  
Yeah.

FBI DIRECTOR  
Sometimes just one thing is true.  
Sometimes things are black and  
white. She took an innocent life.

AMES  
Innocent?

FBI DIRECTOR  
Someone's child. And she's willing  
to take more. Including her own.  
You can only play for one team,  
Ames.

AMES  
Look at the security footage. See  
if the backpack came in the  
building.

FBI Director exits.

Ames has an epiphany. He pulls out card from Will Malay:  
ROOM 333. 610-328-1559. Ames dials. It rings: "YOU'VE  
REACHED THE VOICE MAIL OF WILL MALAY -- "

He pops up, shoves some S.W.A.T. equipment in a duffle bag  
(rope, hook, etc... ).

EXT. STREET OF D.C. - NIGHT

Ames runs down street. PHONE RINGS.

INTERCUT: WITH WIEDNER CONDO

JULIANNA

Internet's saying she executed King  
Johns.

AMES

I had a front row seat.

A slight smile creeps onto Julianna's face.

AMES (CONT'D)

What's happening with the Senate?

JULIANNA

News says it's about to vote.

He hangs up.

EXT./INT. CAPITOL HILL HOTEL - TRACKING

Ames arrives at the up-scale boutique establishment.

ELEVATOR

He gets in along with a HOTEL GUEST ON PHONE watching an  
online news report.

IPHONE SCREEN: IMAGES OF VIOLENT PROTESTS AROUND THE WORLD

ONLINE REPORTER (V.O.)

"Standoffs between gun rights and  
gun control groups around the world  
have resulted in over two hundred  
casualties."

THIRD FLOOR

He searches for, locates: ROOM 333.

He listens. Doesn't hear anything. He counts the number of doors to end of hall, then exits down a stairwell.

HOTEL - BACK PARKING LOT

Looking up at facade, he counts from the end room.

He scales balconies, with the help of rope, grappling hook.

He reaches Room 333. Discreetly looks in.

TWO PEOPLE HAVING SEX

Wrong floor. He climbs one more floor up.

INT. SENATE FLOOR

Senate Clerk presides over a voice vote.

SENATE CLERK  
All in favor, say "Yea."

Unanimous vote of "Yea."

SENATE CLERK (CONT'D)  
All against, say "Nay."

No "Nay" votes.

SENATE CLERK (CONT'D)  
The "Yeas" have it, the resolution  
passes.

GAVEL.

EXT. TIMES SQUARE (NEW YORK) - SAME

HUGE CELEBRATORY ROAR from GUN CONTROL PROTESTERS.

INT. OLD SENATE CHAMBER - SAME

Big smile from Wheeler, watching her phone. Relief from hostages.

EXT./INT. CAPITOL HILL HOTEL - CONTINUOUS

ROOM 333

NRA-LINKED GUNMAN #1 hears a TAP on the sliding glass door. He brushes it off, goes back to playing his game on phone.



Another TAP on the sliding glass door. Gunman comes to the door, slides it open, walks out. No one. He takes in the crisp winter night, views of D.C.

Ames throws him over the balcony. THUD.

AMES'S POV: Gunman lies on ground. Not dead, but banged up.

SUITE

Ames walks in, opens the door to the

BATHROOM

He opens the shower curtain, find Alicia lying there. He takes cover off her head, unwraps her, hugs her.

ROOM DOOR UNLOCK. Ames gestures for Alicia to be quiet. Closes the shower curtain.

SUITE

NRA-LINKED GUNMAN #2 heads for open balcony door.

BATHROOM

NRA-LINKED GUNMAN #3 walks into the bathroom. Ames aims for his leg. BANG. Gunman goes down.

NRA-linked Gunman #2 barges into the bathroom. Ames pushes him back into the

SUITE

Ames zeroes in on his midsection. BANG. He goes down.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. WIEDNER CONDO - TRACKING

AMES'S POV: He KNOCKS on door.

AMES (O.S.)

It's Ames.

He lets himself in with his key.

JULIANNA (O.S.)

Resolution passed the Senate.

Julianna appears to find standing there with Ames..

ALICIA

DAISY GRACE'S BEDROOM - LATER

Alicia sleeps in Daisy's bed.

KITCHEN

AMES

What happens next?

JULIANNA

I think what should happen next is  
I meet with Wheeler face to face  
and offer to represent her.

AMES

You're kidding, right?

JULIANNA

Waco. Didn't a lawyer go in --

AMES

Yeah, look how that turned out.  
What happens next with the process?

JULIANNA

The states start ratifying. Or not.  
We need thirty-eight of the fifty.

AMES

And then...

JULIANNA

And then we have a 28th Amendment.

AMES

By killing an innocent young man.

JULIANNA

Innocent? He said Daisy's death --

AMES

Doesn't make it right.

JULIANNA

You're telling me it didn't feel  
good to see that piece of shit die  
like our daughter did?

No answer. She indicates the counter on 28.com website.

INSERT: "1987."

JULIANNA (CONT'D)  
Nineteen hundred and eighty-seven  
people. In five days. What's one  
more if it gets this done?

AMES  
You sound like her.

JULIANNA  
I am her.

Ames retrieves a handgun from a closet and loads it.

Julianna turns up the TV.

SPLIT TV SCREEN: ABC EVENING NEWS REPORTER AND SHOTS OF  
DIFFERENT STATE CAPITOLS.

DAVID MUIR  
"You're seeing shots of state  
capitols around the country, where  
legislatures are headed into all  
night sessions."

NEW IMAGE ON SCREEN: PICTURE OF BILL MALAY

DAVID MUIR (CONT'D)  
"And the man who is believed to be  
the ex-husband of 28's leader was  
found shot to death in a cab on M  
street earlier this evening."

BACK TO SCENE

Ames offers her the gun.

AMES  
Nineteen hundred and eighty-eight.  
Lock the door.

Julianna takes the gun. Ames exits.

EXT. GEORGIA STATE CAPITOL - NIGHT

GEORGIA PROTESTERS are in each other's faces. A gun control  
advocate holds a SIGN: "WE'VE COME TO GET THEM."

A fight breaks out. GUNFIRE. GUN CONTROL PROTESTOR goes down.

INT. SENATE CONFERENCE ROOM

Ames looks at the blueprint of the Old Senate Chamber.

AMES'S POV: the large skylight in the ceiling.

BACK TO SCENE

His phone rings. Wheeler face timing.

WHEELER

This isn't how I wanted it to go, babe. I guess it's true what they say about making sausage and passing bills. It's not pretty. But we're grinding it out.

AMES

Your ex is dead.  
(beat)  
Alicia's safe.

WHEELER

You found her.

AMES

Apparently I only save other people's children.

WHEELER

You know I'm doing this for Daisy.

AMES

We gotta release the hostages of any state who ratifies.

WHEELER

Why would we do that?

AMES

Good will.

WHEELER

Fuck good will. Maximum pressure. They know they have until noon tomorrow. I think they understand now we're not playing around.

AMES

What want this to end well.

WHEELER

No. We want a Twenty-eighth amendment. Nothing else matters.

AMES

Releasing hostages of states that ratify will be an incentive for states that drag their feet.

PING on Wheeler's phone: "DELAWARE FIRST STATE TO RATIFY"

WHEELER

Delaware. First again.

AMES

Release Delaware's hostages.

WHEELER

It's the Young Republican Senator's Organization, babe. There are no Delaware hostages.

AMES

Right.

WHEELER

You're so tired. You gotta rest. There's time. We've got thirty seven to go. We'll talk in the morning.

AMES

The backpack.  
(gets her attention)  
Is it on the premise?

WHEELER

(evades)  
Get some sleep.

AMES

You're not inspiring sweet dreams.

WHEELER

Trust --

AMES

-- the process.

FADE TO:

INT. CAPITOL POLICE COMMAND CENTER - DAY  
FBI DIRECTOR and Colleagues look at a  
MONITOR

that shows a map of U.S. Thirty-one states are solid green. Others are yellow. Three are blinking yellow: New Mexico, Iowa and Nebraska.

INTERCUT: WITH SENATE CONFERENCE ROOM

Ames lies on the floor asleep.

ON A MONITOR: FBI DIRECTOR

FBI DIRECTOR  
Rise and shine.

AMES  
(stirs)  
What time is it?

FBI DIRECTOR  
Eight a.m.

AMES  
(springs up)  
Jesus. Where are we?

FBI DIRECTOR  
Seven states away from a 28th  
Amendment.

AMES  
You're joking?

AMES'S POV: U.S. MAP ON MONITOR

ON ANOTHER MONITOR: CNN NEWS

Ames turns it up.

ANDERSON COOPER  
"In the nineteen states where Dems  
have bi-cameral control,  
ratification came swiftly. States  
with split houses have been  
trickling in all night. But none of  
the states where Republicans  
control both houses have yet to  
ratify."

Ames turns it down.

AMES  
Has Wheeler released anyone?

FBI DIRECTOR  
Looks like she's about to.

ON ANOTHER MONITOR: AREA OUTSIDE OLD SENATE CHAMBER

Twenty-five Hostages file out past the Guarding FBI Agent.  
They're received by BEHAVIORAL UNIT PERSONNEL.

INT. SENATE CONFERENCE ROOM

Ames facetimes Wheeler.

INTERCUT: WITH OLD SENATE CHAMBER

"I'VE GOT YOU BABE" on Wheeler's phone. She picks up.

AMES

Thank you.

WHEELER

Good team. Thirty one down, only  
seven to go.

AMES

It's always impossible until it's  
done.

EXT./INT. NEW MEXICO CAPITOL

NEW MEXICO PROTESTORS on both sides of issue surround the  
building.

NEW MEXICO HOUSE FLOOR

A bi-cameral session watches the

MONITOR ON NEW MEXICO HOUSE FLOOR: NEWS FOOTAGE OF FREED  
HOSTAGES.

ANDERSON COOPER (V.O.)

"Half of the hostages have been  
released..."

LATER

On dais, the NEW MEXICO HOUSE MAJORITY LEADER stands with  
gavel.

NEW MEXICO HOUSE MAJORITY LEADER

All in favor, say "Yea."

A clear majority vote "YEA."

NEW MEXICO HOUSE MAJORITY LEADER (CONT'D)

The resolution is hearby ratified.

GAVEL.

MONTAGE - STATE LEGISLATURES VOTING "YEA"

-- IOWA STATE CAPITOL -- A majority vote "YEA." GAVEL.  
 -- NEBRASKA STATE CAPITOL -- A majority vote "YEA." GAVEL.  
 -- INDIANA STATE CAPITOL -- A majority vote "YEA." GAVEL.  
 -- OHIO STATE CAPITOL -- A majority vote "YEA." GAVEL.  
 -- ARIZONA STATE CAPITOL -- A majority vote "YEA." GAVEL.  
 -- VERMONT STATE CAPITOL -- A majority vote "YEA." GAVEL.  
 -- WISCONSIN STATE CAPITOL -- A majority vote "YEA." GAVEL.

WISCONSIN SENATE CLERK  
 The resolution is hereby ratified.

GAVEL

INT. OLD SENATE CHAMBER

Dick the III, looking at his phone, calls out states. The hostages representing those states line up door.

DICK THE III  
 "New Mexico, Iowa, Nebraska,  
 Indiana, Arizona, Vermont,  
 Wisconsin."

WHEELER  
 (to hostages)  
 One state away.

28 colleagues and YRSO members together APPLAUD the welcomed news. A surreal sight.

Wheeler gestures for Molan to let the lined-up hostages exit the venue. He does.

Inside, 26 of the 50 hostages remain.

WHEELER (CONT'D)  
 This is all going to work out just fine.



INT. CAPITOL POLICE COMMAND CENTER

Ames enters and is escorted by FBI Director to the Capitol Police Chief who is in front of a

MONITOR

He plays security footage of Molan bringing the metal trunk we saw at the Idaho compound through police entrance of U.S. Capitol.

FBI DIRECTOR/AMES

Fuck.

NEWS REPORTER (O.S.)

"We cut away to the West Virginia state house for breaking news.

They turn to

ANOTHER MONINTOR

News program cuts away to outside West Virginia State House, where a line of STATE SENATE PRESIDENTS stand at a news conference swarmed with media. WEST VIRGINIA STATE SENATE PRESIDENT (70's) at podium. Thick accent.

WEST VIRGINIA STATE SENATE PRESIDENT

"I'm speaking this morning not just as West Virginia's State Senate President, but as the spokesperson for the Senate Presidents of the twelve states that stand behind me. Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Mississippi, Idaho, Montana, Oklahoma, North Dakota, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Wyoming and West Virginia have all signed  
(holds up a document)

"The Thirteen" Agreement," vowing not to vote on a resolution that threatens to strip Americans of their right to bear arms."

AD LIBS OF REPORTERS SHOUTING QUESTIONS. CAMERA CLICKS.

EXT. WEST VIRGINIA STATE HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

West Virginia State Senate President picks up his phone.

INTERCUT: WITH SENATOR MACDONALD IN A HELICOPTER

Both have to shout to be heard above the CHOPPER NOISE.

SENATOR MACDONALD  
WHAT THE FUCK DO YOU THINK YOU'RE  
DOING. YOU DIDN'T TALK TO ME FIRST?

WEST VIRGINIA STATE SENATE PRESIDENT  
SENATOR, I UNDERSTAND HOW YOU MUST  
FEEL. OUR PRAYERS ARE WITH YOU AND  
YOUR FAMILY --

SENATOR MACDONALD  
I DON'T WANT YOUR FUCKING PRAYERS.  
I WANT WEST VIRGINIA TO RATIFY.

WEST VIRGINIA STATE SENATE PRESIDENT  
SIR. IT'S A MATTER OF PRINCIPLE.

SENATOR MACDONALD  
IT'S A MATTER OF WHETHER YOU WANT  
THE STORY OF THAT BOY YOU FUCKED ON  
THE FRONT PAGE OF EVERY WEST  
VIRGINIA PAPER TOMORROW MORNING.  
I'M LANDING IN TWENTY MINUTES. CALL  
A JOINT SESSION. NOW.

Senator MacDonald hangs up the phone.

INT. SENATE CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Ames gets a call from Wheeler. He answers.

INTERCUT: WITH SENATOR'S LOBBY BEHIND DAIS

An unhinged Wheeler paces.

WHEELER  
So they're playing hard ball. Like  
they're the thirteen fucking  
original colonies or something.

Julianna walks into the room. Ames puts his finger to his  
lips.

WHEELER (CONT'D)  
Well, we can play hard ball back.

AMES  
What are you thinking?

WHEELER

(she looks at watch)  
Starting at eleven am, every five minutes, we "water the soil of liberty" until one of those fucking states ratifies.

AMES

Babe, you kill a state's hostage, that state will never ratify.

Ames looks at Julianna. She mouths: "BABE?"

WHEELER

We only need one more state and we have a Twenty-eighth Amendment to the United States Constitution. I like our odds. They've got to know we are not fucking around.

AMES

I know you have the backpack.

WHEELER

There's gotta be a deadline. Call Ronald MacDonald and let him know the plan. Every five minutes.

They hang up.

JULIANNA

Where's the bathroom?

AMES

You left Alicia alone?

JULIANNA

I'm going in there and offering Wheeler representation.

AMES

No you're not.

JULIANNA

Grieving mother to grieving mother.

AMES

There's no way she's going to --

JULIANNA

-- If she knows she has a lawyer who understands her, she might stand down.

AMES

You're not going in there. I am.

Ames facetimes Attorney General.

AMES (CONT'D)

Sir, I'm requesting a green light  
on a rescue.

Julianna mouths "Bathroom," slips out of the room.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

How are you going to do that?

AMES

I have a plan.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

MacDonald won't allow it.

AMES

The Senate Majority Leader's  
running the FBI now?

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Excuse me.

AMES

In five minutes, another hostage is  
going to be dead.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

He's landing in Wheeling as we  
speak to get this done. Just sit  
tight.

AMES

In ten minutes, another hostage.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Sit. Tight.

INT. AREA OUTSIDE OLD SENATE CHAMBER - TRACKING

Julianna approaches the Guarding FBI Agent.

JULIANNA

Restroom?

GUARDING FBI AGENT

Ma'am, this area is off limits.  
There's another restroom across the  
Rotunda.

JULIANNA  
It's an emergency.

GUARDING FBI AGENT  
I'll have to radio my supervisor.

He radios. Julianna really needs to go, but she sees an opportunity. She looks at the Old Senate Chamber door.

INT. SENATE CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ames studies the blueprint of the area above the Old Senate Chamber.

CU: the large skylight and five smaller ones.

GUARDING FBI AGENT (O.S.)  
MA'AM!

Ames jumps up.

INT. OLD SENATE CHAMBER - TRACKING

Heads turn. Hostages in shock to see

JULIANNA

standing there, with her hands up.

BACK TO SCENE

Molan and 28 Members have guns pointed at her.

JULIANNA  
(to Wheeler)  
I wanna help. I'm Ames's wife,  
Julianna Wiedner. I understand --

WHEELER  
(highly agitated)  
-- You obviously don't understand  
what Ames and I are after here.

JULIANNA  
I know he wants this to end without  
any more bloodshed. It may seem  
that there's no way out of this.

WHEELER  
There's only one way out.

JULIANNA  
A judge will be empathetic --

WHEELER  
-- I'M THE FUCKING JUDGE.

Wheeler steps over King John's body, picks up the Senate President's Chair and throws Julianna in it.

Wheeler looks at watch: 11:17am. She puts down her AK-15 on lower desk, pulls back drapery that hangs from it, and retrieves the backpack. She puts it on.

JULIANNA  
(to Molan)  
I need to use the restroom. Really.  
Please.

Wheeler gestures to Molan to take her. They exits.

WHEELER  
(to Dick the III)  
Call grandpa, Dick.

Dick the III calls Senator MacDonald.

All Hostage eyes are on the backpack on Wheeler's back.

WHEELER (CONT'D)  
(to Hostages)  
Whatever it is, it can't be good,  
right?

Dick the III puts his phone on speaker.

INTERCUT: FLOOR OF WEST VIRGINIA STATE HOUSE

SENATOR MACDONALD  
Hello?

WHEELER  
Ronald.

SENATOR MACDONALD  
Miss Malay...

WHEELER  
Wheeler.

SENATOR MACDONALD  
My apologies. Miss Wheeler.

WHEELER  
Just Wheeler.

SENATOR MACDONALD

Forgive me. Wheeler. West Virginia's legislature is in session. I'm here on the floor.

WHEELER

Well, let West Virginia's legislature know it has about forty minutes.

SENATOR MACDONALD

We may need a little more time.

WHEELER

I made it clear when all this started Ronald, twenty four hours.

SENATOR MACDONALD

Please, I'm begging you, just another hour.

WHEELER

DID YOU EVEN READ THE FUCKING BILL YOU PASSED, YOU CLOWN? After twelve noon, the resolution is no longer valid. Decision time.

(to hostage, manic)

Once someone asked Louis Armstrong what gave him inspiration? You know what he said? "Forget about inspiration, man. Give me a deadline."

(looks at watch)

It's after eleven. I've missed one myself.

She looks around room.

WHEELER (CONT'D)

Texas.

Wheeler comes down the Center Aisle.

WHEELER (CONT'D)

They have to know we mean business.

TEXAS FEMALE HOSTAGE starts to stand, but TEXAS MALE HOSTAGE stops her, and stands instead. Wheeler points her pistol at his head. She's shaking.

## WHEELER (CONT'D)

Know that tomorrow a parade of Republicans will march through Fox News station offering your family their "prayers" and telling America "this is not the time to point fingers, but to come together and address the epidemic of mental illness in this country."

She fingers the trigger, but hesitates. Just as she musters up the courage to do it...

MASSIVE CRASH. Ames breaks through the

SKYLIGHT

repelling down on a rope tied to a roof beam.

28 MEMBER #1 takes aim at Ames, but Ames shoots first. BANG.  
28 MEMBER #1 goes down.

28 MEMBER #2 shoots at Ames, misses. BANG. Ames shoots. BANG.  
28 MEMBER #2 goes down.

The Guarding FBI Agent enters the room.

From the Ladies' Gallery where he was napping, 28 MEMBER #3 SHOOTs and kills the Guarding FBI Agent.

28 MEMBER #3 then turns to take out Ames.

HAMMERING OF AK-15

28 MEMBER #3 falls off the gallery onto one of the Senatorial desks. THUD.

AMES'S POV: TEXAS MALE HOSTAGE with 28 MEMBER #1'S AK-15.

## IDAHO MALE HOSTAGE

I got five of these at home.

Wheeler, paralyzed by all this, shakes it off. She throws a flashbang across the room at Ames's feet.

EARDRUM BREAKING NOISE. Space fills with light and smoke, disorienting Ames and Hostages.

Wheeler uses her AK-15 to blow open the Far Floor Left door. She exits with Dick the III at gunpoint.

Ames and the Hostages shake off the flashbang.



AMES  
(to hostages)  
GO!

Hostages run out of the Center Entrance Door.

Ames uses his AK-15 to blow open the Floor Right Door that leads to the

INT. STAFF RESTROOM

Ames walks in.

Molan has Julianna at gunpoint behind the door.

MOLAN'S POV: Ames searches stall. Molan throws another flashbang.

MORE EARDRUM-BREAKING NOISE. More light, smoke, disorientating Ames further.

AMES'S POV: SEVERE EAR RINGING, blurred vision.

He struggles to get out of the room.

INT. CBS NEWS CONTROL ROOM

MONITORS

of the city evacuating.

CBS NEWS REPORTER (O.S.)  
"The entire city is being evacuated based on unconfirmed reports that a nuclear device could be launched from the Capitol at any moment."

INT. U.S. CAPITOL

HALLWAY

Ames makes his way through the deserted building. He dodges a BULLET from Molan. ECHO. Ames pursues them into the

ROTUNDA

He dodges another ECHOING BULLET from Molan, pursues them into the

NATIONAL STATUARY HALL

MORE ECHOING BULLETS. Ames takes cover from statue to statue. It's as if one of the statues is firing at him, but he can't tell which one.

He spots Molan and Julianna behind one of the statues. He takes a SHOT at Molan. Misses.

He pursues Molan and Julianna down the

STAIRWELL THAT LEADS TO CRYPT

Ames dodges an ECHOING BULLET from below.

He takes another SHOT at Molan. He misses.

JULIANNA (O.S.)  
PUSHING IT!

CRYPT

Ames finds himself once again in that disorienting sea of

FORTY PILLARS

He darts from behind one pillar to another, barely missing FLYING, ECHOING BULLETS. One hits the

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CLOCK

The hands freeze at: "11:44AM."

Ames gets a third chance. FIRES. Hits Molan in mid-section.

AMES'S POV: From behind a pillar, he spots Wheeler and Dick the III waiting at the

UNMARKED DOOR

that accesses the 365 steps that lead to the dome and roof. A wounded Molan, holding his mid-section, opens the door, and the four of them disappear behind it.

BACK TO SCENE

Ames runs over to closing door, just misses it. He takes the

STAIRWELL

and enters the

ROTUNDA

He throws the grappling hook and rope up to the First Visitor's Gallery and begins climbing.

SECRET STAIRWELL

Molan lies on a landing, bleeding.

WHEELER

We gotta go.

ROTUNDA

Ames climbs up over into the

FIRST VISITOR'S GALLERY

He looks down from where he just climbed. Yikes. He throws his grappling hook up into the

SECOND VISITOR'S GALLERY

And climbs again.

He reaches the balcony, and hears

LABORED FOOTSTEPS

nearby in the

STAIRWELL

Ames hides, watches Wheeler and Dick the III pass by. He waits for Molan and Julianna, who lag behind. Ames lets Molan pass, and then he pulls him backwards. They tumble down the stairs. Julianna gets knocked down in the process.

On a stair landing above, Wheeler looks back at all of this, and then keeps going with Dick the III.

Ames and Molan end up in the Second Visitor's Balcony, and fight. Molan gains the upper hand and prepares to throw Ames over the balcony, but Ames gains the upper hand at the last minute and sends Molan over. 180 feet drop. THUD.

Julianna appears.

AMES

(to Julianna)

Make sure the city is completely evacuated.

Julianna exits down the stairwell.

Ames continues up the

STAIRWELL

EXT. STREETS OF D.C.

HONKING. City is a parking lot of cars trying to leave.

People rush into Metro station.

GRATING MILITARY HORN. A military tank forces heavy traffic to clear a path as it moves down Pennsylvania Avenue.

EVACUATION VOICE (V.O.)  
 "USE THE METRO TO EVACUATE  
 IMMEDIATELY."

EXT. OUTSIDE BALCONY OF U.S. CAPITOL

Wheeler holds gun at Dick the III's head.

DICK THE III'S IPHONE SCREEN:

Senator MacDonald on the screen. In b.g., Legislators voting.

WHEELER  
 How are we doing, Ronald?

Dick the III's phone goes dead. Out of juice.

Ames appears and holds up his phone for Wheeler to see.

AMES  
 West Virginia just ratified.

WHEELER  
 Really?

AMES  
 Really. You have a Twenty-eighth amendment.

Tears stream down Wheeler's face. She stops aiming her gun at Dick the III. He exits down the steps.

WHEELER  
 We have. I told you. It's all about the deadline.

AMES  
 You did it.

WHEELER  
 But... did I do good?

Ames struggles to answer.

WHEELER (CONT'D)  
King Johns. It wasn't me.

Ames reacts with surprise to this reveal.

WHEELER (CONT'D)  
I just couldn't do that. For me,  
it's always been about saving  
lives, you know?

AMES  
Yeah. I know.

Wheeler takes off backpack and climbs up on the railing.

Ames runs to backpack and unzips it, revealing ticking clock.

INSERT: 0 HOUR, 1 MINUTES, 45 SECONDS.

She teeters, almost falls off.

AMES (CONT'D)  
Wheeler, please get down. We gotta  
deal with this.

WHEELER  
I gotta see her.

AMES  
Who?

WHEELER  
(indicates statue)  
Lady Freedom.  
(she glimpses it)  
So beautiful.

AMES  
Minute, thirty seconds, Wheeler.

WHEELER  
Now I remember what Remy said to  
me.

AMES  
Remy?

WHEELER  
My son. When we came face to face  
with the shooter.

AMES  
What did he say?

WHEELER

"I don't want to be here, Mommy."  
I couldn't answer him. I was  
frozen. But the gunman said, "Well,  
you're here."

This hits Ames like a ton of bricks. Wheeler indicates his  
gun.

WHEELER (CONT'D)

"I don't want to be here."  
(she indicates his gun)  
Please.

Ames shakes his head.

Julianna appears on the balcony with Molan's AK-15 in her  
hand. Wheeler turns to her, indicates Julianna's gun.

WHEELER (CONT'D)

(pleading with her)  
You understand. "I don't want to be  
here."

JULIANNA

I understand. I understand.

WHEELER

So... please...

Julianna shakes her head.

WHEELER (CONT'D)

PLEASE!

AMES

Wheeler, everything's going to be  
okay.

WHEELER

(suddenly calm)  
Yeah. Yeah it is.

HAMMER OF AK-15.

SLOW MOTION. Wheeler floats backwards to the tune of her own  
AK-15 HAMMERING A LONG ROUND OF BULLETS INTO HER OWN BODY.

Ames rushes to the backpack nuke.

INSERT: 0 HOURS, 0 MINUTES, 11 SECONDS.

10-9-8... Ames tries to turn the Safe-Arm control knob from  
"Arm" to "Safe." It won't turn.

7-6-5... Ames exerts maximum pressure to turn the knob. It won't budge.

4-3-2... One last try. The knob falls off into Ames's hand.

1... A yellow light flashes and BEEPS three times.

EXTENDED BEEP. Light turns solid red...

Then nothing. Nothing at all.

AMES  
Russian batteries...

Ames and Julianna embrace.

EXT. U.S. CAPITOL

Ames and Julianna emerge to find an APPLAUDING THROG of Media, law enforcement. FBI Director gives them a blanket. They share it, and walk through the crowd, across the Capitol lawn, straight on home.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. WIEDNER CONDO - BALCONY - TRACKING - NIGHT

Julianna and Ames sit on couch, take in view of U.S. Capitol.

Kitten sits on Ames's lap. He pets her. And then Julianna reaches over, does the same.

Ames puts Kitten on her lap.

JULIANNA  
Pushing it.

Ames puts Kitten on the floor and makes advances on Julianna. She's receptive. Kitten runs into

DAISY GRACE'S BEDROOM

and jumps up onto the bed where Alicia Malay reads. Kitten snuggles up with her.

FADE OUT

END SCREENPLAY