



DEADLINE

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&

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COLD OPEN

INT. SENTINEL CONTENT HUB - DAY

A bustling, modern newsroom. Sleek lettering on the wall by the entrance: *SOUTH FLORIDA SENTINEL*.

DYLAN (23), enters. He wears a backpack, bike helmet. Walks with purpose. A guy who believes he can change the world.

We FOLLOW him as he makes his way through the start-up style space, turning down a dimly lit hallway. At the end is a door with a sign: "NEWS TEAM". Underneath, a hand-scrawled note: "aka dinosaurs".

Dylan opens the door to reveal...

INT. NEWSROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A gray, ugly office. Rundown. Tiny wall-mounted tube TVs play the local news. There are FOUR WORKSTATIONS.

WAYNE (60s) sits, punching keys on a typewriter. Desk messy, stacks of newspapers, some yellowed with age. He's got a big white beard, slight paunch, glasses.

DYLAN

Is Carla here?

Wayne holds up a finger. Continues typing. Dylan sighs, walks to the door at the end of the office with a sign: "Editor". He knocks and immediately enters, still wearing his helmet.

INT. CARLA'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

A tiny closet-turned-office. Crammed behind the desk is CARLA (40s), disheveled and hurried, her messy ponytail held together by a rubber band. She's on the phone, exasperated.

CARLA

Yeah, our account is only showing
seventeen total views for last month?

(beat)

Ok, so seventeen is accurate. Thanks.

She hangs up. Flops down onto the desk. Dylan appears in the doorway. Clears his throat.

CARLA (CONT'D)

(without looking up)

Helmet.

He takes his helmet off. Holds up an SD card.

DYLAN
I got the shooting on Broward.

Carla groans. Stands and pushes past him into the...

INT. NEWSROOM - CONTINUOUS

Dylan follows her.

CARLA
Where the fuck is my coffee?

DYLAN
The body was already gone. But
there was a lot of blood. It was
awesome... and sad.

CARLA
You're supposed to be in here
editing videos. Not out in the
field shooting them.

The intern, PETER (19), enters. He's carrying a tray of coffees. Carla grabs a cup.

CARLA (CONT'D)
Oh thank God.

Dylan holds out an SD CARD.

DYLAN
Just take a look.

Carla takes the card. Stares Dylan right in the eye and
CRUSHES THE CARD IN HER HAND.

DYLAN (CONT'D)
What the hell!?

She drops the plastic shards into a coffee. Peter hangs his head.

PETER
(mutters)
That was mine.

CARLA
(to Dylan)
If it doesn't involve you sitting
in *that* chair...

She points to Dylan's workstation. His chair is decrepit,
held together by DUCT TAPE.

CARLA (CONT'D)
 ...it isn't your job.

DYLAN
 But we could've used that footage.

GABBI (40s) enters. She's Cuban-American, confident. CAMERA around her neck. Knows she's the shit and can prove it. She hands Dylan a HARD DRIVE.

GABBI
 Shooting on Broward. Beat the police to the scene. Body looked like a Picasso. Hope you had a light breakfast.

Dylan looks at the drive in disbelief. A TYPEWRITER DINGS!

WAYNE
 The write-up's ready.

Wayne hands Dylan a few pages.

DYLAN
 Can you *please* start using a computer?

WAYNE
 Yeah, why not just fax my social security card to the Chinese?

GABBI
 (to Dylan)
 Honey, I've been married to him for twenty years he doesn't use the computer for *anything*. You should see the stack of *Hustlers* under our bed.
 (to Wayne)
 You're really missing out.

She gives him a peck on the cheek. He winks, checks her out.

WAYNE
 No I'm not.

Peter is mortified. Dylan stands there, hard drive in one hand, sheet of paper in the other. Defeated.

CARLA
 The fuck are you waiting for? Get to work.

END COLD OPEN

ACT ONEINT. NEWSROOM - DAY

Staff meeting. Carla stands before Dylan, Gabbi, and Wayne. Gabbi fiddles with gear. Wayne whittles. Dylan attentive.

CARLA

As we all know, the Sentinel is transitioning to content geared toward user engagement.

GABBI

Clickbait.

CARLA

But it is still committed to providing excellent and hard-hitting journalism on its website. And that's where we come in. We maintain a vital web presence--
(she can't do it)
You know what? You're right, it's fucking bullshit. Everything is apps now. Fucking Tinder. How am I supposed to compete with these Cancun spring break bitches...

She collapses back into a chair that Peter the intern has just presciently wheeled into place behind her. She sighs.

CARLA (CONT'D)

We're just here to keep the lights on for the literally tens of people who visit our website.

GABBI

So we're just supposed to keep busting our asses for nothing?

CARLA

Exactly.

WAYNE

Musicians on the deck of the Titanic.

CARLA

That's the spirit.

GABBI

Fuck that...

Dylan looks around the room. Dejected faces.

DYLAN

Gabbi's right. Screw that.

GABBI

I said "fuck".

DYLAN

Let's show them what we can do.
Wayne, you helped Woodward and
Bernstein take down a president.

WAYNE

Still remember their coffee orders.
Black, two sugars and black one
sugar. I'll never reveal which was
which.

DYLAN

And Gabbi, you have more Pulitzers
than anyone in this building.

GABBI

(shaking her head)
Lyle Weisman has three for his
listicles on female genital
mutilation in Somalia.

DYLAN

More than anyone in this room then.

Gabbi glances around the decrepit office. Nods, satisfied.

DYLAN (CONT'D)

And Carla, you've been here for
like a million years.
(catching himself)
Not a million years, obviously.
You're very young.

CARLA

C minus for effort. F for
execution.

Dylan stands dramatically, ready to bring his speech home.

DYLAN

The point is, we have the talent in
this room to do some serious
journalism. Everyone thinks we're
going to lose our jobs. Let's show
them what we can do.

For emphasis, he BANGS his fist on the back of his chair, which KNOCKS the backrest to the floor. He's surprised, but tries to play it off like he meant to do it.

CARLA
(unconvinced)
Great, what you got?

DYLAN
Picture this. Aleppo. Three-sixty
video--

CARLA
Stop. Who else?

WAYNE
(unenthusiastic)
Boat show starts today...

CARLA
No way. Leave that Mickey Mouse
bullshit to the digital team.

The door opens and ROGER (30s) enters. He's the Sentinel's editor-in-chief. The type of douche who's always holding a ball of some kind for some reason. Today it's a BASEBALL.

ROGER
What's up B-team?

CARLA
Roger. To what do we owe the
pleasure?

ROGER
Checking out the space. Thinking of
turning this into a new server room
once you all are, y'know.

He runs his finger across his throat. Behind him, a WORKER starts to measure the doorway.

ROGER (CONT'D)
Hey Wayne, think fast.

He tosses the baseball. Wayne doesn't even look up. The ball BANGS into the file cabinet behind him.

ROGER (CONT'D)
Too slow!

Peter brings Roger a coffee. Roger takes it.

ROGER (CONT'D)
Hey thanks.

Still smiling, he drops it into the trash can.

ROGER (CONT'D)
I'm not drinking this piss water.
We've got a Keurig B70 up on four.
Platinum. Thanks again, though.

CARLA
Roger, we're a bit busy.

ROGER
Great, well don't let me interrupt.

Carla turns back to the group. Opens her mouth to speak.

ROGER (CONT'D)
Hey, you guys are covering the boat
show today right?

CARLA
We weren't planning on--

ROGER
(to worker measuring
doorway)
Done? Too small? All good, we'll
put a ping-pong table or something
in here.

He turns back to Carla.

ROGER (CONT'D)
Boat show. Get it done. Counting on
you guys.
(beat, he laughs)
Not really, no one cares. But do it.

He leaves.

DYLAN
I'll cover the boat show!

CARLA
No you won't. Wayne, Gabbi. All you.

A VOICE comes over the POLICE SCANNER.

POLICE SCANNER VOICE (V.O.)
Calling all units. 10-91 in
progress at 1721 Sunrise.

WAYNE

Conine's...

POLICE SCANNER VOICE

Approach with caution. Suspect is believed to be armed and has multiple hostages.

Dylan lights up.

CARLA

Wayne, Gabbi you're on this now.

She glances at Dylan, waiting expectantly.

CARLA (CONT'D)

We'll get a stringer for the boat show.

Dylan's face falls.

EXT. FLORIDA TURNPIKE - DAY

A brown 1976 FORD CORTINA MK3 drives slowly in the right lane, holding up traffic on the two-lane highway.

INT. FORD CORTINA - CONTINUOUS

Wayne drives as Gabbi texts furiously on her phone, CLICKING with every keystroke. A JOHN FOGERTY CASSETTE plays.

WAYNE

You grabbed those double A's for my tape recorder, right?

Gabbi

Mierda. You can use my phone.

WAYNE

Ew. It's fine. I'll transcribe. Same plan as always?

GABBI

You distract the police, I get the shots?

WAYNE

Yep-- wait, what?

GABBI

Nothing.

WAYNE

Just promise me you won't get us arrested, ok?

GABBI

Would that really make you feel better?

Wayne sighs. CRANKS UP the Fogerty.

INT. NEWSROOM - DAY

Dylan at his desk, editing. Dejected. From Carla's closed office door...

CARLA (O.S.)

Goddammit!!

Dylan stops, listens. Beat. Carla emerges from her office.

CARLA (CONT'D)

Stringer was in a car accident.

DYLAN

(excited)

Really? Do you want me to cover that?

CARLA

Can you at least try to act sad? His two-year-old daughter was in the car.

Dylan tries to look serious.

CARLA (CONT'D)

She was thrown through the windshield. Carseat bounced for two hundred yards before landing in a swamp.

Dylan is horrified.

CARLA (CONT'D)

She's fine, they found her giggling. Those carseats are indestructible. But I need you to cover the boat show.

Beat.

CARLA (CONT'D)
 Anywho, you got your wish. Get over
 to the boat show. Keep it simple.
 Don't fuck it up.

Dylan jumps to his feet.

DYLAN
 I won't let you down.

CARLA
 Then you'd be the first.

EXT. CONINE'S CORNDOGS - DAY

A restaurant with a GIANT SIGN showing ex-Florida Marlins
 outfielder Jeff Conine eating a corndog. "Conine's Corndogs".

The parking lot is SWARMING WITH POLICE. The brown Cortina
 pulls up. The doors open as Wayne and Gabbi exit.

WAYNE
 Let's meet back here, ok?

He turns to see she's already gone. He watches her duck under
 the POLICE TAPE, sneaking toward the restaurant. Camera at
 the ready.

Wayne approaches the police line. Finds SHERIFF SCOTT (40s),
 big biceps, bigger beer-belly. Scott nods hello.

WAYNE (CONT'D)
 Hey Sheriff. How's the family?

SHERIFF SCOTT
 When I left my premises this A.M.,
 their vitals looked sound.

WAYNE
 Good to hear. What do we got?

SHERIFF SCOTT
 Six hostages. Started at
 approximately oh-nine hundred. No
 demands yet. We're attempting to
 establish a comms channel.

WAYNE
 Anyone hurt?

SHERIFF SCOTT
 No confirmed casualties, but we can
 confirm that the suspect has bitten
 at least two hostages.

WAYNE

Biting people? Who is this sicko?

SHERIFF SCOTT

A sniper team is ready to neutralize the threat if it tries anything.

WAYNE

It?

A SCREAM from the restaurant. Gabbi runs out, camera in hand.

GABBI

It's an ALLIGATOR!

WAYNE

(to Sheriff Scott)

It's an alligator?!

SHERIFF SCOTT

I can neither confirm nor deny that the suspect is an alligator.

WAYNE

Why?!

SHERIFF SCOTT

It could be a crocodile.

EXT. BOAT SHOW DOCKS - DAY

DOZENS OF FANCY BOATS line the docks. OLD WHITE PEOPLE mill about, champagne flutes, hors d'oeuvres, and centuries of unchecked privilege.

OLD WHITE WOMAN

Lovely.

OLD WHITE MAN

(pointing)

Starboard.

Scanning along the CROWD, we find Dylan standing behind his CAMERA ON A TRIPOD. He's distracted, playing on his PHONE.

A LITTLE GIRL (7) approaches. She's holding an ICE CREAM CONE in one hand and a BALLOON in the other.

LITTLE GIRL

Is this for the news?

DYLAN

(still playing on phone)

No. This is definitely not news.

(MORE)

DYLAN (CONT'D)

It's just a chance to prove myself
so that someday I may get to cover
some real news.

The girl stares at him blankly. Ice cream dripping.

LITTLE GIRL

You sound depressed.

BEEP. Dylan's PHONE DIES. He groans, pockets it.

DYLAN

What do you want? Where's your mom?

LITTLE GIRL

She's buying a boat for my little
brother.

DYLAN

Well go find her, I have to focus.

The girl sticks out her tongue. Walks away.

Dylan looks THROUGH THE VIEWFINDER and sees...

A beautiful YACHT anchored several feet off the dock. The
name on the stern reads "DIANE II".

DYLAN (CONT'D)

(mutters)

How on earth could anyone screw
this up?

He PRESSES STOP. Grabs the camera off the tripod and...

BOOM!!! THE DIANE II EXPLODES IN A MASSIVE FIREBALL.

Dylan jumps, startled, accidentally TOSSING THE CAMERA up in
front of him. He reaches to grab it. Gets a hand on it. Then
another. Bobbles. Then drops it. CRACK.

Off his shocked expression...

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWOEXT. DOCK - DAY

The camera lies on the ground, BROKEN. Dylan picks it up, the LENS falls off. His face drops.

Chaos all around. SIRENS. FIREMEN swarm. BYSTANDERS gawk.

FEMALE BYSTANDER

Thank god no one was on board. How could this happen?

MALE BYSTANDER

No idea. But I'm sure that guy got it all on tape.

He points to Dylan, dazed, broken camera in hand. Behind him, SEVERAL NEWS VANS arrive on the scene.

MALE BYSTANDER (CONT'D)

(calling to Dylan)

What channel will your video be on?

Dylan looks like he's going to be sick.

ON TV SCREEN

Grainy SECURITY CAMERA FOOTAGE of the boat explosion. In the foreground, we see Dylan drop the camera. PULL OUT to reveal we're watching the wall-mounted TVs in the...

INT. NEWSROOM - DAY

Dylan sits at his computer. Next to him on the desk is the BROKEN CAMERA. Carla behind him, furious. They both watch...

ON DYLAN'S COMPUTER SCREEN

FOOTAGE of the Diane II, pre-explosion. The video ends with the boat still very much unexploded.

BACK TO SCENE

Dylan silently counts on his fingers: 1...2...3.

DYLAN

And that's where it exploded.

Carla hangs her head.

DYLAN (CONT'D)

Beautiful boat. Wonder what happened to Diane I. New boat? Or new wife?

CARLA

Let me just see if I can wrap my head around this shit show. Not only did you miss the shot...

DYLAN

(correcting)
Just missed.

CARLA

You also managed to break a seventeen hundred dollar lens.

DYLAN

It all happened so fast. Everyone was startled.

CARLA

(pointing to TV)
That little girl seems pretty unfazed.

ON TV SCREEN

The same shot as before. We now notice the LITTLE GIRL with the balloon and ice cream cone. THE BOAT EXPLODES, Dylan jumps, the girl doesn't react at all.

DYLAN

Almost as if she expected it.

Carla glares.

EXT. CONINE'S CORNDOGS - DAY

An OFFICER with a megaphone, stands behind her car door.

OFFICER

Here Tebow, Tebow, Tebow. Here boy.

From inside, we hear a loud SNARL. SCREAMS. A CRASH.

HOSTAGE (O.S.)

Please stop! It does NOT like that!

Outside the perimeter, Wayne and Gabbi talk to Sheriff Scott.

SHERIFF SCOTT

The suspect then entered through the vehicular service casement.

WAYNE

(to Gabbi)
Drive-thru window.
(MORE)

WAYNE (CONT'D)
 (to Sheriff Scott)
 The gator's name is Timothy Tebow?

SHERIFF SCOTT
 Affirmative. With two "E's". Like
 Chalamet.

WAYNE
 Who?

SHERIFF SCOTT
 Elio? From *Call Me By Your Name*?

Wayne's puzzled. Sheriff Scott's face lights up, losing his professional demeanor.

SHERIFF SCOTT (CONT'D)
 Oh. My. God. You have to see it! I
 have the DVD in my car. I'll show
 it to you.

GABBI
 How about you show us how a gator
 got through the window!?

SHERIFF SCOTT
 Yeah, I've got the security tape of
 that too. Which one first?

Gabbi and Wayne stare, dumbfounded.

SHERIFF SCOTT (CONT'D)
 Ugh, of course. Gator footage first.
 Get it outta the way. Good thinking.

INT. NEWSROOM - DAY

Dylan, feeling sorry for himself, sits at his computer,
 editing boat show footage. NEWS COVERAGE plays on TV.

TV REPORTER (V.O.)
 ...police have not yet identified a
 suspect...

Dylan freezes. Staring at his computer screen. Eyes wide.

INT. CARLA'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Carla slumped in her chair. Dylan enters, excited.

CARLA
 No.

DYLAN
You're gonna want to see this.

DYLAN'S COMPUTER SCREEN

Footage from the dock. A SUSPICIOUS MAN (ballcap pulled low, wearing a backpack) walks past the DIANE II. As he does, he **TOSSES HIS BACKPACK INTO THE BOAT.**

INT. NEWSROOM - DAY

Dylan and Carla watch. Her jaw drops. Dylan smiles.

DYLAN
Boom.
(beat, off her look)
Sorry, bad choice of words.

CARLA
Have you shown this to anyone?

DYLAN
No, but we gotta get this up asap.
No one else has this.

CARLA
Hold on. We don't know anything yet.

DYLAN
We have this Jared-from-Subway-
looking dude throwing his backpack
into that boat, which then exploded
forty five minutes later.

CARLA
I know you're new to this whole
journalism thing, but we need to
verify that this is the bomber
before splashing his face all over
every channel in South Florida.

DYLAN
(starry-eyed)
Every channel...

Roger enters, furious. He vigorously squeezes a TENNIS BALL.

ROGER

Can someone please explain to me why the hell I'm watching grainy-ass footage of my shooter dropping my camera, on every network, while we miss the biggest story in the entire history of the Marino's Marina Boat Show?

DYLAN

It's my fault. But look at this--

Carla SLAMS her hand on the back of Dylan's chair, KNOCKING the backrest off and sending him tumbling to the floor.

CARLA

Look at this chair. How the fuck are we supposed to cover news under these conditions!?

ROGER

You want better chairs? Make me some money. Or at least cut my losses. Pick someone to fire.

CARLA

That's easy. The intern.

Peter appears behind her, holding a TAKEOUT BAG. Carla jumps, startled. She snatches the lunch bag.

PETER

I'm unpaid.

CARLA

Jesus, you scared me. What's with you? Always sneaking around.

(to Roger)

If all you cared about was money you'd have closed this shithole years ago and hired a dozen more fuckface millennials to make videos counting down the top 5 gluten-free cupcake recipes for your cat or whatever the fuck.

Dylan watches, mouth agape. Roger speechless.

CARLA (CONT'D)

Without us, you're the editor-in-chief of a shitty, regional, limp-dicked BuzzFeed. You need us to convince daddy that you're running a real grown-up news organization.

Roger fumes. He winds up and THROWS the tennis ball hard into the ground. It immediately BOUNCES back and HITS HIM IN THE FACE. He lets out a GUTTURAL CRY and STORMS OFF.

DYLAN

That was...

CARLA

If you say badass I'll murder you.

DYLAN

Dangerous. What if he fires us?

CARLA

You idiot, weren't you listening?
He can't fire us.

DYLAN

Why didn't you show him the tape?

CARLA

Because he'd just throw it online
and let it spread like wildfire.

DYLAN

How many people do you think would
see it?

CARLA

Hundreds of thousands. Maybe
millions.

Dylan can't believe it.

CARLA (CONT'D)

The internet loves a good
conspiracy theory. Reddit would
tear this guy's life apart.

DYLAN

And you seriously don't think this
is the bomber?

CARLA

It doesn't matter what I think. We
can be 99 percent sure. But it
isn't a hundred.

DYLAN

But--

CARLA

I said no.

Carla hands Peter the hard drive.

CARLA (CONT'D)
Send a copy to the police. Hang onto
the drive till Wayne gets back.

Peter takes the drive and exits. Carla looks at Dylan.

CARLA (CONT'D)
You tell no one about this.

Dylan nods reluctantly. She walks away. Dylan's gaze settles
on Peter PLACING THE HARD DRIVE ON HIS DESK. He gets an idea.

EXT. CONINE'S CORNDOGS - DAY

Wayne, Gabbi, and Sheriff Scott stare at a laptop on the hood
of a SQUAD CAR. Wayne scribbles in his notepad.

LAPTOP SCREEN

SECURITY CAMERA FOOTAGE shows a MAN STUFF A GIANT ALLIGATOR
into the drive-thru window. He jumps into his TRUCK and
immediately SLAMS into the car in front of him. Then quickly
REVERSES into the CAR behind him.

EXT. CONINE'S CORNDOGS - DAY

The video ends. Wayne and Gabbi stare, mouths agape.

SHERIFF SCOTT
Call Me By Your Name time?

WAYNE
Wait, who was that guy?

SHERIFF SCOTT
The gator's accomplice. He's in
custody.

GABBI
Is that him over there?

Gabbi points to a SQUAD CAR about a hundred yards away. In
the backseat, we can see a quintessential FLORIDA MAN (tatted
face, handlebar mustache).

SHERIFF SCOTT
Due to the nature of the ongoing
investigation, I cannot--

GABBI
(shouting)
Hey! You in the car!

SHERIFF SCOTT
Ma'am! Stop right there!

The FLORIDA MAN shouts back through the cracked window.

FLORIDA MAN
(shouting to Gabbi)
Youse a lawyer!?

GABBI
No. Did you do this!?

SHERIFF SCOTT
Sir! Do not answer her!

FLORIDA MAN
Yup, that was me alright!

GABBI
Why'd you do it?!

WAYNE
Gabs, please.

Sheriff Scott stands in front of her, waving his arms.

SHERIFF SCOTT
Stop! You're undermining an
officer! La! La! La!

FLORIDA MAN
They shorted me a corn nuggie.

GABBI
What's your name?!

FLORIDA MAN
Jackson Dieters!

WAYNE
(to Sheriff Scott)
So the entire movie takes place in
Italy, huh?

SHERIFF SCOTT
(to Gabbi)
One more word and I swear I'll lock
both your asses up!

The SHUTTER CLICKS as Gabbi starts SNAPPING photos.

SHERIFF SCOTT (CONT'D)
That's it!

Sheriff Scott grabs Gabbi's arm, CUFFS her.

GABBI

I didn't say anything.

Wayne sighs, drops his notepad. Turns around and puts his hands on his head.

GABBI (CONT'D)

This is why I didn't promise.

INT. ROGER'S OFFICE - DAY

On the wall is a FRAMED PHOTO of Michael Jordan dunking next to a Steve Jobs MOTIVATIONAL POSTER. Below them is a MINI-BASKETBALL HOOP.

Roger stands with his foot up on the desk, power stance. He squeezes a MINI-BASKETBALL. Dylan sits before him on a BEANBAG CHAIR.

ROGER

And you're absolutely sure this guy in the video is the bomber?

DYLAN

Only ninety-nine percent, but I was thinking we could run it with a disclaimer--

ROGER

Relax, I'm kidding. The mystery is what sells. And what do you mean "only" ninety-nine percent!? That's basically a hundred.

Dylan smiles, relieved.

DYLAN

Plus, releasing it to the public could lead to more information.

ROGER

(shrugs)

Sure, I guess. Wade!

He shoots the mini-ball at the hoop. Misses wide. The ball bounces to Dylan.

ROGER (CONT'D)

Wind got that. Someone must have a window open.

Roger holds out his hand.

ROGER (CONT'D)
Gimme the goods.

Dylan holds out the ball.

ROGER (CONT'D)
Not that. Where's the tape?

DYLAN
Before I hand it over, I need to
know what I'm getting out of this.
I'm going against Carla here.

ROGER
Bold. I like it. You wanna see how
the big dogs play? Alright, I'll
show you the kennel.

Beat.

DYLAN
Is that--

ROGER
I just mean the newsroom.

DYLAN
Oh ok.

ROGER
And then we see that tape.

DYLAN
Deal.

They shake hands.

ROGER
Feed me!

Roger runs for the mini-hoop, Dylan tosses him the ball and
SLAM! Roger BANGS into the wall, knocking the Jordan poster
to the floor with a CRASH.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREEINT. SENTINEL CONTENT HUB - DAY

Roger leads Dylan around the sleek, cool newsroom. INDIE POP MUSIC. Some HIPSTERS play with NERF GUNS. Dylan wowed.

ROGER

You see, in here, we have fun.

A PING-PONG BALL bounces over. He grabs it. Tosses it back.

ROGER (CONT'D)

Nice shot, Tanner! Kai, what'd I tell you about that backhand, babe?

(to Dylan)

We like to think we're not just sharing content, we're sharing joy.

He walks on. Dylan follows with a dazed smile.

COMPUTER SCREENS

QUICK CUTS of asinine, GIF-laden lists, quizzes, and polls.

- 10 Zaniest Facts about the Homeless Crisis.
- 23 Most Problematic Instagram Filters
- 9 Active Shooter Drills only 00's kids will remember.

ROGER (V.O.)

I know it's not the "hardest hitting" stuff. But we have to go where the clicks are.

We land on a screen: "*QUIZ: WHAT CHRONIC DISEASE ARE YOU MOST LIKELY TO CONTRACT BASED ON YOUR ZODIAC SIGN*". PULL OUT to reveal we're in the...

INT. SENTINEL CONTENT HUB - DAY

The SCREEN is just one among DOZENS, each belonging to a different YOUNG EDITOR, focused on creating clickbait.

ROGER

If we don't get clicks, we don't get advertisers, which means we don't make money. And then they all lose their jobs. We're just giving people what they want.

Dylan's face falls as he has the realization. Horror.

ROGER (CONT'D)

This is the A-Team. The creme de la
creme of advertorial viral content
creators based in SoFla.

TWO EDITORS turn and smile in unison, Stepford-like, before
turning back to their screens. Roger pats Dylan on the back.

ROGER (CONT'D)

Keep up the good work and soon
you'll be up here with the Varsity
squad.

HIPSTER GIRL EDITOR

(excited, for some reason)
Squad goals!

ROGER

Nice one, Juniper.

They high-five. Dylan repulsed. Roger doesn't notice, claps
him on the back again and they keep moving.

ROGER (CONT'D)

So where's that footage?

DYLAN

I... forgot it down in the office.

ROGER

Cool. Lead the way, homie.

DYLAN

Really, you don't have to come.

ROGER

Dyl. Carla's gonna find out
eventually. Just let it happen.

He smiles reassuringly. Dylan returns a nervous smile.

INT. COP CAR - BACKSEAT - DAY

Gabbi and Wayne in the backseat with Jackson sandwiched
between them. He's naked. Tense silence.

JACKSON

Trouble in paradise?

WAYNE

My wife seems to think rules don't
apply to her.

GABBI

I know the rules apply to me. I just think they're stupid.

JACKSON

Amen, sister.

WAYNE

I wish they assigned Dylan instead.

GABBI

You do not mean that.

JACKSON

Who's Dylan? I bet he has nice teeth.

WAYNE

Dylan doesn't get me arrested!
Dylan listens to direction!

GABBI

I am who I am, take it or leave it!

JACKSON

Girl, we are just two peas.

Beat.

WAYNE

Why are you naked?

JACKSON

Cause I took my drawers off to run away faster. Duh.

Jackson nudges Gabbi.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

Men, amirite?

GABBI

Please don't touch me.

INT. CARLA'S OFFICE - DAY

Carla on the phone. Through the open office door, she sees Dylan and Roger enter the newsroom. She watches, suspicious.

CARLA

Alright. Thanks Detective.

INT. NEWSROOM - SAME

Dylan searches through a PILE OF HARD DRIVES on Peter's desk as Roger waits.

DYLAN
Ah, found it.

He turns to hand the HARD DRIVE to Roger and sees Carla emerging from her office. She sees the drive.

CARLA
What are you doing?

ROGER
The kid's proving he can make it in this biz.

CARLA
I wasn't talking to you.

She levels her gaze at Dylan. He gulps.

DYLAN
You never give me a chance.

CARLA
And you think this proves you deserve it?

She stares hard at Dylan. He matches her gaze. Defiant. He slowly hands the drive to Roger, who takes it. Chuckles.

ROGER
Kid wants to play with the big dogs. Look for your name on TV, D-train.

He leaves.

CARLA
You want to know why I never give you a chance? Because you think you've earned something. But you haven't. You have no idea how hard I had to fight to get to where I am.

DYLAN
Carla wait--

CARLA
I thought maybe you could have been a real journalist. If I squinted. Now I know what you really are.

She goes into her office, shuts the door. Dylan is crushed.

INT. COP CAR - BACKSEAT - DAY

Wayne looks out the window, annoyed. Gabbi glances over at him guiltily. Between them, Jackson sleeps. SNORING. His head tips over so that he's leaning against Wayne's shoulder.

GABBI

I'm sorry I got us arrested. You were right, I was wrong.

WAYNE

Stop. There's no need to apologize. You're the best because you're persistent.

GABBI

My persistence got us both arrested.

WAYNE

Yes, that was less than ideal. I don't want you to change though. I could probably be more persistent.

GABBI

We balance each other.

JACKSON

Looks like we both made mistakes today.

Wayne and Gabbi are startled, thought he was asleep.

GABBI

I'll try to tone it down, but at least I got some beautiful shots of that gator.

Wayne nods to a group of COPS huddled around her camera.

WAYNE

Not for long.

GABBI

Great. There go my photos.

EXT. CONINE'S CORNDOGS

Sheriff Scott holds Gabbi's camera, thumbing through PHOTOS FROM THE CRIME SCENE.

SKINNY OFFICER
Oooh! I want that one.

FAT OFFICER
If we let them off, you think
she'll send these to us?

In the b.g., a SWAT team files past, assault rifles drawn.

SHERIFF SCOTT
How about this one?

FAT OFFICER
Dang, that's a profile pic, sir.

SWAT COMMANDER (O.S.)
Breach!

We hear an EXPLOSION, followed by GUNFIRE.

SHERIFF SCOTT
Am I crazy to think I kinda look
like Armie Hammer here?

SKINNY OFFICER
Not at all, sir.

SWAT COMMANDER (O.S.)
All clear!

SHERIFF SCOTT
What filter should I go with?

INT. FORD CORTINA - DAY

Silence. Wayne drives. Gabbi looking through her photos.

WAYNE
Chinese tonight?

GABBI
That works.

INT. NEWSROOM - DAY

Carla's door still closed. Dylan at his desk, trying to glue
together pieces of the broken camera. They fall apart. He
groans.

Peter approaches with a sympathetic look.

DYLAN
The toilet at the end of the hall
is clogged.

Peter nods. Turns to go.

DYLAN (CONT'D)
I didn't do it.
(beat)
Third stall.

Roger enters, livid, football in hand. He winds up and CHUCKS THE FOOTBALL at Dylan, who ducks just in time. The ball WHIZZES past and HITS PETER, bouncing into a lamp, which CRASHES to the floor.

PETER
Sorry.

Roger shakes the HARD DRIVE at Dylan.

ROGER
What the hell is this?

He plugs the drive into a nearby computer. It doesn't play.

ROGER (CONT'D)
How do you...? Computer, play.

DYLAN
You have to select the file.

ROGER
I'm used to a Mac.

DYLAN
That is a Mac.

Roger, flustered, CLICKS around. Carla emerges from her office. Watches quietly. The VIDEO PLAYS.

ON THE SCREEN

A video shows Peter seated at a desk talking straight to camera as he opens a brown lunch bag.

PETER
Hey everyone. This is my mandatory internship video diary for Professor Kolcheck's "Intro to Journalism". Day one thirty seven.

He starts eating his TUNA SANDWICH.

PETER (CONT'D)
Saw another dead body this morning.
Almost didn't puke...

BACK TO SCENE

Carla stifles a laugh. Roger glares at Dylan.

ROGER

I sat through an hour of this
waiting for a boat to explode!

DYLAN

Peter must've accidentally
overwritten the footage.

Hearing this, Peter's shoulders slump. Roger turns to him.

ROGER

You're fired!

CARLA

You can't fire him.

ROGER

You did this. You made the intern
wipe the drive to keep me from
getting that footage.

CARLA

Get the fuck out of my newsroom.

Roger looks around the crappy office. SMACKS the chair. It doesn't move. PUNCHES it. Nothing. Dylan TAPS THE CHAIR and it COLLAPSES. Roger glares at Dylan.

ROGER

I was wrong. You're not a big dog.
You're a small dog.

He storms out. Dylan stares at Carla. Reaches into his pocket and pulls out an IDENTICAL HARD DRIVE. Hands it to her.

DYLAN

Here's the real footage. Do
whatever you want with it.

CARLA

What you just did, that's what a
real journalist does.

He nods: apology accepted. The police scanner SQUAWKS.

POLICE SCANNER VOICE (V.O.)

All units. Fire in progress at the
SeaBreeze Trailer Park. Possible
meth lab explosion in the unlicensed
daycare center. Requesting hazmat.

Dylan looks excitedly at Carla. Holds his breath. Beat.

CARLA

No fucking way. Are you serious?

Dylan's face falls.

CARLA (CONT'D)

You think just because you almost did a stupid shitty thing but then at the last minute didn't, that means I should suddenly trust you with that?

(to Peter)

Call Wayne and Gabbi.

DYLAN

But you said--

CARLA

I said you're a journalist. I didn't say you were a good one. Want to prove it? Tomorrow's day two of the boat show.

DYLAN

They didn't cancel?

CARLA

Apparently the revenue it brings in makes it too big to fail.

Dylan thinks for a second. Nods, straightens up. Salutes.

CARLA (CONT'D)

Did you just fucking salute me?

DYLAN

No.

Beat. Carla stares. Dylan makes a beeline for the door.

CARLA

Helmet!

Dylan returns, grabs the helmet off his desk and leaves. Carla smirks.

END OF ACT THREE

TAG**INT. NEWSROOM - NIGHT**

Peter sits down to record another video diary. Speaking straight to camera.

PETER

(genuinely cheerful)

Hey guys, this is my internship video diary for day three twenty seven. Just finished censoring the photos from the daycare meth lab fire. And it's only 11:45, which means there's still fifteen minutes left to celebrate my birthday.

He holds up a CUPCAKE with a single lit CANDLE. As he starts to blow it out...

SNAP!

The CHAIR BREAKS. His FACE SMACKS into the desk, CRUSHING THE CUPCAKE, before falling out of frame.

SMASH TO BLACK.

END OF SHOW