

THE G.O.A.T
Season 1, Episode 10
"162"

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TITLE: 162

FADE IN.

EXT. WILLY WONKA FIELD, ATLANTA - DAY

SUPER: First Inning

The Statesmen visit the Atlanta Peaches. Cam Kendricks bats, with Richard Speck standing on second with one out. The pitcher, O'CONNER, shakes off a signal and throws a pitch well outside the strike zone for ball two.

Kendricks crowds the plate. O'Conner throws the ball even further outside. The count is 3-0.

O'Conner doesn't even try with the next pitch, they go ahead and walk Kendricks to put runners on first and second.

Alvin Huebner paces up and down the dugout.

HUEBNER

You see that? They aren't letting him hit.

Nobody responds.

HUEBNER (CONT'D)

Glover?

Craig Glover watches the game.

HUEBNER (CONT'D)

C'mon, Howell, you'd never do that?

Nothing.

HUEBNER (CONT'D)

Ferd?

Ferd Langwieler doesn't even flinch.

HUEBNER (CONT'D)

Really?

Beat.

HUEBNER (CONT'D)

Whatever.

He lumbers into the locker room.

On the field, Gus Bennett hits into a double play and the inning ends 0-0.

CUT TO:

SUPER: Second Inning

Conan "The Barbarian" Jones slowly walks out to the mound. In the background, one of the cult stickers that Ishmael made can be seen on the wall near the dugout.

Jones has a full count on the batter, THOMAS, and runners on first and second with no outs. He pitches and the ball just misses outside.

BISHOP

You gotta be kidding, Blue.

Umpire William Smith shrugs.

SMITH

Take your base.

Jones gets ready to pitch to the new batter, BRIDGES. He eyeballs the runner at third, RAYMOND, who is bouncing around, ready to go.

Jones throws to first to hold Thomas on. Safe.

Jones takes a deep breath and concentrates. The sound drops out and Jones fully relaxes. CLOSE on him while he breaths. He looks rested, younger, cleaner, stronger.

The pitch. The swing. Bridges lines a shot straight at Jones, who throws his glove up reflexively and catches the ball.

Quickly, he turns and throws to first, where Pulsipher tags the runner. Pulsipher turns and throws to Bishop at home. Raymond is caught halfway down the line.

Bishop throws to Gus Bennett at third. Bennett throws back to Bishop, who tags Raymond out for the triple play. The Statesmen go crazy and converge on Jones to celebrate, even though the scoreboard reads 0-0.

CUT TO:

SUPER: Fourth Inning

Kendricks stands at the plate with a 2-0 count. O'Conner signals for the intentional walk with nobody on and one out.

Ball four. In the dugout, Domingo Santana leans towards Glover.

SANTANA

Why do they keep walking him?

GLOVER

They're trying to win home field advantage in the first round.

SANTANA

Playoffs?

GLOVER

Yeah, they're one game behind Nashville. If they sweep us, they get to host in the first round. Otherwise...

Santana nods his head.

CUT TO:

SUPER: Seventh Inning

Kendricks is at the plate again. The new pitcher, CARTER, is behind 2-0. The score is still 0-0.

Carter throws a pitch low and away. Kendricks doesn't even think about swinging at it.

Once again, the Atlanta pitcher calls for the intentional walk and Kendricks is put on first with two outs.

CUT TO:

Jones stands on the mound with one out and two men on. He pitches to Thomas, who hits a high chopper to Santana at short.

Santana gets in front of the ball, but gets ready to throw too soon and takes his eye off the ball. He flubs it and runners are safe at every base.

CUT TO:

Savoy Bishop stands at the mound chatting with Jones.

BISHOP

How you doing? You got this?

Jones smiles, but it's not a particularly friendly smile.

JONES

I've got this.

Bishop stares at him for a moment, searching Jones' face. He doesn't find anything.

BISHOP
Good enough for me.

CUT TO:

Jones stares down Bridges with a 2-1 count. Jones takes a deep breath, the sound drops away and he throws the pitch.

Bridges hits a chopper to Santana, but this time the young player is ready. He easily fields the ball, flips it to Speck at second and Speck turns the double play.

Jones screams and leaps into the air like he just won the game. But there are still two innings left.

CUT TO:

SUPER: Ninth Inning

The score is still 0-0 when Kendricks comes up for the fourth time. The new pitcher, ROUTE, calls for the intentional walk without even attempting to throw to Kendricks. Even some of the home fans boo as Kendricks trots down to first.

In the dugout, Ferd Langwieler makes an announcement.

LANGWIELER
Kendricks just tied a record. Most walks in a regulation game.

HUEBNER
Now if he can turn one of those walks into a run.

Everyone ignores Huebner.

On the field, Gus Bennett grounds into a double play.

As they walk off the field, Kendricks throws his batting helmet in Bennett's general direction. If Gus notices, he doesn't say anything.

Harold Gray notices, though. He spits.

CUT TO:

Jones stands on the mound with the game still tied 0-0 in the bottom of the ninth. Gray and Howell stand next to him.

JONES
I'm still feeling great.

HOWELL

And you're still pitching great,
but this is your longest outing of
the season.

GRAY

We don't need you for this game. We
need you for the playoffs.

Jones nods and hands Howell the ball. He trudges off the
field, disappointed. Omar Wheeler runs in from the bullpen.

CUT TO:

SUPER: Twelfth Inning

Kendricks comes to the plate with Jason Doster and Richard
Speck on base. The score is still 0-0. The new pitcher NAM
immediately calls for the intentional walk of Kendricks and
the bases are loaded with one out.

In the dugout, Santana turns to Langwieler.

SANTANA

Does that break the record?

Langwieler flips through the papers on his clipboard.

LANGWIELER

Ties it.

SANTANA

I thought he tied the record last
time?

Langwieler looks at his notes again.

LANGWIELER

Four walks in a nine-inning game
does tie a record. Allen Towne set
it back in '90. But the record was
five for an extra inning game, set
by Bobby Brown in 2004.

SANTANA

So we only need, say, 15 innings to
get to the real record?

Laughter.

GLOVER

Bite your tongue. I'm ready to go
home and get some sleep. It's
getting late.

On the field, Gus Bennett now has a full count. Nam pitches and Bennett blooms a single into short right field. The Statesmen go ahead 1-0.

CUT TO:

Wheeler stands on the mound with runners on second (BENJAMIN) and third (WILBURN). Standing at the plate is all-star Cat Power.

With one out, Wheeler throws the pitch and Power hits a line drive off the right field wall. The runners score and Atlanta wins 2-1.

OPENING CREDITS.

A blue screen pops up with text that reads "Playoff Baseball: Catch It Quick!"

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Are you ready for some playoff
baseball?

The sound of a crowd cheering. The top half of the screen reads "Eastern Conference" and shows the logos and records of the Porters (89-73) and Statesmen (121-41) first and then the Colonials (93-69) and Smashers (89-73).

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Well playoff baseball is ready for
YOU!! First up, we have the Eastern
Conference battles. The dominant
D.C. Statesmen host the surging
Philadelphia Porters. Then the
Boston Colonials visit the
defending champion New York
Smashers!

The top half of the screen switches to "Southern Conference" and shows the logos of the Blues (90-72) and Peaches (90-72) on the top and the Blades (89-73) and Angels (94-68) on the bottom.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

The battle for the South starts
with the Nashville Blues visiting
the Atlanta Peaches, fresh off a
sweep of the Statesmen. In the
other match-up, the Miami Blades
visit the Texas Angels.

The top half of the screen switches to "Midwestern Conference" and shows the logos of the Monsters (88-74) and the Steel (92-70) on the top and the Wolves (76-86) and Ghosts (98-64) on the bottom.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

The Midwestern Conference features long-time rivals the Minnesota Monsters and the Detroit Steel. The winner will face off against the winner of the St. Louis Wolves vs. the Chicago Ghosts.

The top half of the screen switches to "Western Conference" and shows the logos of the Whalers (82-80) and Bulls (92-70) on the top then the Sentinels (81-81) and Cougars (104-58).

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

And finally in the Western Conference, where the San Diego Whalers will visit the California Bulls and the L.A. Cougars will host the Washington Sentinels.

The team logos go away to show the logo of the USBL.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Playoff baseball: Catch it quick!

SUPER: Games start Saturday!

INT. SPORTS CENTRAL STUDIO

Sports Central starts up with lots of whooshes and flags and sports images and bald eagles and such.

This leads us to the very futuristic and busy Sports Central set. Blue is the dominant color. At the desk are Inesta Morgan and Major Sumrell.

MAJOR

Welcome back.

INESTA

We thank you for watching Sports Central.

MAJOR

It may be Labor Day, but you won't be laboring--

INESTA

We interrupt this pithy headline
for a breaking news bulletin.

Major has no idea what's happening. Inesta grins. She stands
up and moves her chair back.

Then she takes a knee and pulls out an engagement ring.

INESTA (CONT'D)

Will you do me the MAJOR honor of
becoming my husband?

Major is shocked.

MAJOR

Not just yes, but HELL yes!

They kiss and hug and really get a little inappropriate.

INESTA

Now that we're done with that, on
to Old Business. Sharon Alligood
joins us from New York to explain
the USBL Playoff format.

ALLIGOOD

How am I supposed to follow that?

MAJOR

I'm sure you'll do your best.

INESTA

Do you have the playoff details for
us?

ALLIGOOD

I do.

Laughter.

ALLIGOOD (CONT'D)

As you know, the top four teams in
each conference match up. 1 vs. 4,
2 vs. 3, best of 5. Then the
winners of those games play for the
various conference championships.
Those series are also best of 5.

MAJOR

That's the easy part.

Chuckles.

ALLIGOOD

The four conference champions are then re-seeded for the Final Four and you have 1 and 4 and 2 and 3 again. Best of 7, winners advance to the USA Classic for another best of 7.

INESTA

That wasn't painful at all.

MAJOR

Less painful than my last COVID booster.

Laughter.

The crawl at the bottom of the screen shows the following messages, on a loop:

"Decapitated body of Julie Croteau found in Arizona after exhaustive search"

"Marvel's Captain Japan sets Labor Day weekend box office record"

"Masked Singer's Honey Badger revealed to be Jello Biafra"

"Heat wave hits record number of deaths across the South"

"\$3.5T infrastructure bill passes Senate, goes to president next"

"QB Joe Biden leads Northsiders to 21-point comeback win"

"Ad man Adam Campbell found dead in Manhattan apartment"

INT. NBS NEWS STUDIO

Jeffrey Brack sits in the NBS News Studio, which is a lot less busy and more professional than the Sports Central set. Blue is still the dominant color, although it's softer here.

BRACK

There's no way to describe our lead story tonight other than heart-wrenching. This is the story of Leila Rassi, a woman who was brain-washed and indoctrinated into a cult. A woman whose mother went on TV to plead for her daughter to return.

(MORE)

BRACK (CONT'D)

A woman who broke free from a Satanic cult, the Order of the Crimson Ram. A woman who is with us now. Leila Rassi. Thank you for joining us, Ms. Rassi.

LEILA

Thank you for having me.

BRACK

How are you doing?

LEILA

I've definitely been worse.

Brack smiles sympathetically.

BRACK

Walk us through how you got involved with the Order.

Leila takes a deep breath.

LEILA

It started when I was in college...

INT. LEAH OWENS' OFFICE - DAY

Owens sits in her office drinking whiskey and watching the Statesmen play on TV. The sound is off, but she's paying attention. A knock at the door snaps her out of her daydreaming.

Ms. Richardson steps into the office and waits patiently.

OWENS

What can I do for you?

MS. RICHARDSON

It's about your friend, Ms. Muldoon.

Owens shrugs.

OWENS

'Friend' is generous.

MS. RICHARDSON

Yes. Well, I thought you would like to know...

Owens nods.

MS. RICHARDSON (CONT'D)
...that Ms. Muldoon was fired from
the Gazette.

Owens is taken aback.

OWENS
When was this?

MS. RICHARDSON
A few weeks back.

Owens raises an eyebrow.

OWENS
You find out why?

MS. RICHARDSON
No, it's all a little vague. I'll
keep my ears open for more.

Owens turns and looks towards the TV. Ms. Richardson doesn't
leave.

OWENS
Was there something else?

MS. RICHARDSON
Yes. I wasn't sure if you knew...

Owens nods.

MS. RICHARDSON (CONT'D)
...Jamelle fired Ashley Hernandez.

OWENS
What? Why?

MS. RICHARDSON
I just process the paperwork.

OWENS
Anything else?

MS. RICHARDSON
Did you see the new Forbes?

Owens smiles.

OWENS
I did. We are now the tenth most
valuable team in the USBL.

MS. RICHARDSON
Quite the accomplishment.

Ms. Richardson leaves. Owens immediately opens up her e-mail and starts scanning the subject lines.

INT. DALLAS-FORT WORTH AIRPORT - NIGHT

At gate A39, Ajax Cloud exits the plane that just arrived from Albuquerque. He pulls a large suitcase behind him and carries a large gym bag over his shoulder. He makes his way to the arrival/departure board and pulls out his ticket.

He looks and sees that that flight 4237 to London's Heathrow is "ON TIME." Cloud gives a pleasant smile and leaves the U.S. for the last time.

INT. ALEX LEVIN'S OFFICE - DAY

Captain Alex Levin sits in her office. Across from her are a Black woman, MINDY, and a Mexican-American man, FERNANDO. Both are in their mid-30s and dressed in the finest business attire.

LEVIN
...and we will not rest until Byars
and Till are brought to justice.

Mindy and Fernando nod approvingly.

MINDY
Good. We wouldn't want any bad
press at this point in the
campaign.

LEVIN
No need to worry about that. Let's
just say the editor over at the
Gazette is... shall we say...
friendly.

Laughter.

FERNANDO
As you know, we are a values-based
organization.

MINDY
And among our values are the
pillars that hold up civilized
society. Justice...

FERNANDO
 ...rule Of law...

MINDY
 ...drug-free schools...

FERNANDO
 ...AND drug-free kids...

MINDY
 ...safe neighborhoods...

FERNANDO
 ...clean streets.

MINDY
 We don't like broken windows, if
 you catch our meaning.

Levin nods eagerly.

FERNANDO
 Fear. That's what motivates our
 base.

MINDY
 They want someone to take charge
 and keep them safe.

Levin grins.

LEVIN
 Then you have found your woman.

MINDY
 Tell us more.

While Levin speaks, we see a montage of PDDC officers engaged in a manhunt. They break down doors. They arrest people. They harass homeless and poor people. They beat suspects. They use tasers and flashbangs. They throw tear gas grenades into what could be a drug den or could be multi-family housing. They are overmilitarized and the population they harass are all people of color in poor parts of town.

LEVIN
 Everyone knows that America PAC is
 a values-based organization. That's
 what I love about your work. I
 share those values and, I'm sure
 that, if elected sheriff of
 Arlington County, I will be a
 sheriff that America PAC will be
 proud of.

(MORE)

LEVIN (CONT'D)
I've already caught our
perpetrators. I've already made
everyone safe. Now it's time for MY
rewards.

Everyone grins. Big toothy grins.

LEVIN (CONT'D)
I'll just wait until a little
closer to election time to tell
them that we caught the
perpetrators of these horrible
crimes.

Polite laughter and knowing nods and smiles.

INT. THE PINCH - NIGHT

Brice Eversmith and Cody Paige sit at a private table
upstairs at the Pinch. Cody is in uniform, Eversmith is not.
Both Dan and Annie tend the bar.

CODY
How are you doing?

Eversmith takes a sip from her soda.

EVERSMITH
My life is exactly like it was
before I met you. Exactly how I
like it.

She fakes a grin.

CODY
I'm not buying it.

EVERSMITH
I need a favor.

CODY
Of course.

EVERSMITH
Of course you knew that I was going
to ask you for a favor or of course
you'll do the favor?

Cody takes a sip of her beer.

CODY
Both.

They both grin.

EVERSMITH

Okay, I need you to plant a bug in
Levin's office.

Cody nearly does a spit take. Eversmith claps her on the
back.

EXT. CARMESI MOLTO BUILDING, NEW YORK - DAY

The Carmesi Molto Building is one of the tallest buildings in
Manhattan. It is fully made of dull gray marble and the
windows are too small. Very little natural light gets
anywhere in the building.

The only break in the uniform exterior is the giant Carmesi
Molto logo on the front of the building, halfway up. The logo
consists of the stylized letters C and M, written in an
almost runic font. The letters look ancient and foreboding.

INT. CARMESI MOLTO BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER

Lekebra Benjamin waits at the security desk for the SECURITY
GUARD to get off the phone.

SECURITY GUARD

Can I help you?

BENJAMIN

I have an appointment. With Manda
Starr.

The Security Guard whistles.

SECURITY GUARD

You must be Lekebra Benjamin?

She nods. He stands up, clearly showing the holstered
revolver on his hip.

SECURITY GUARD (CONT'D)

Follow me.

He leads her towards the elevator bank, past it and around a
corner. Before them stands an elevator door unlike any other.
The heavy wooden frame is ornately carved and highlighted
with actual gold and silver. The wood is carved into various
runes and abstract images and maybe an image of the Devil.

Benjamin gets on the elevator and the guard leaves her as the
door closes.

She reaches to push the button and finds that there is only one button, labeled "The Nerve Center." She pushes it and the elevator starts to rise.

INT. CARMESI MOLTO OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Benjamin walks into Carmesi Molto's front office, which is completely black except for the crimson version of their logo in the center of the wall above the receptionist's desk.

The receptionist is Gayle Martin.

GAYLE

Ms. Benjamin?

BENJAMIN

Yes.

Gayle stands and escorts Benjamin into Starr's office. Stay with Gayle as the door shuts behind Benjamin. Gayle sits down at her desk and picks up her phone. It was on hold with Jamelle Lewis.

GAYLE

So like I was saying, you've GOTTA drop by and check this place out. You won't believe how modern the design is.

LEWIS (O.S.)

Sure, let's do it soon.

INT. MANDA STARR'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Starr's office is ancient. All of it. The furniture is antique and expensive. The books on the shelf are older than the classics. Everything is ornamental and ornate like the door and it all evokes things long dead and buried in the dust.

Benjamin is the youngest thing in the room. By quite a bit.

BENJAMIN

Miss Starr, allow me to introduce myself. My name is Lek--

Starr silences her with a hand.

STARR

I know you are, Ms. Benjamin.

BENJAMIN
Then you know why I'm here?

Starr nods.

STARR
You think you have something that
will help me. And that helping me
helps you.

BENJAMIN
To put it simply.

STARR
And what do you have?

Benjamin pulls out a flash drive and holds it up.

BENJAMIN
A complete list, including contact
information, of every single
shareholder and proxy vote for the
Statesmen's parent corporation.

Starr raises an eyebrow.

STARR
And your suggestion is that Owens
doesn't have firm control of 50
percent plus one of those votes?

BENJAMIN
It's close. There is no doubt about
47% of those votes. She owns them
outright.

Starr nods.

BENJAMIN (CONT'D)
Another 2.5% Are owned by people
that you'll never get to go against
Owens.

STARR
Did you include their information,
as well?

Benjamin nods.

BENJAMIN
About 5% or so are kinda up for
grabs. They won't be easy to get,
but if the right offer is made...

STARR
And what do you want?

BENJAMIN
A finders fee and...

Starr waves off the money.

BENJAMIN (CONT'D)
...if you buy the team, I want to
run it.

STARR
Sure, whatever.

Beat.

STARR (CONT'D)
I don't care. My interest in the
team doesn't extend beyond this
season.

Benjamin raises an eyebrow.

STARR (CONT'D)
We have a deal.

Benjamin smiles. And hands the flash drive to Starr.

EXT. PDDC PARKING LOT - DAY

Cody gets out of her Camry and locks it. Across the employee
lot, she sees Bill Tucker and Mitchell O'Reilly.

CODY
(under her breath)
Fuck.

Tucker and O'Reilly move toward her as if they were waiting
for her.

TUCKER
Hey Cody. Need to talk to you.

CODY
Please submit all complaints in
writing.

They all laugh, but nobody means it.

O'REILLY
Why are you still here?

Cody glares at him.

CODY
It's my job. I have rent to pay.

She walks past them towards the building.

TUCKER
Nobody wants you here.

O'REILLY
Yeah, you lost your last buddy.

TUCKER
Why don't you just leave?

Cody doesn't look back.

O'REILLY
Think about it. Do the smart thing.

Cody does turn and look at O'Reilly for a moment. He stares back. They keep staring. O'Reilly breaks first. She turns and goes inside.

TUCKER
A police precinct isn't always the
safest place to be, you know....

Out of Tucker's sight, O'Reilly raises an eyebrow at the threat.

INT. PDDC BULLPEN - LATER

Cody sits at her desk, glancing around nervously. Maybe the other cops ARE watching her. Maybe she's just paranoid.

She gets up and leaves the bullpen, going downstairs to the technology locker.

CODY
Dammit.

O'Reilly is working the locker.

O'REILLY
What do you want?

She stares at him for a moment.

O'REILLY (CONT'D)
I'm a busy man.

Cody holds up a finger and walks back upstairs. The CAMERA stays on O'Reilly. He scoffs as she leaves.

O'REILLY (CONT'D)
I don't have time for this
nonsense.

He flips through an issue of Maxim. Seconds later, O'Reilly returns. She's carrying a thick folder with her.

O'REILLY (CONT'D)
Thanks for coming back.

CODY
I didn't think--

O'REILLY
I was joking... idiot.

Cody frowns.

CODY
I need a wiretap kit.

O'Reilly sighs.

O'REILLY
What for?

CODY
That Stanfield case.

O'Reilly nods.

O'REILLY
You got the proper--

Cody pulls the top piece of paper from the folder and hands it to O'Reilly. He frowns.

O'REILLY (CONT'D)
Be right back.

He walks back into the locker. Cody chuckles to herself. O'Reilly comes back with a medium-sized black bag.

O'REILLY (CONT'D)
Sign the clipboard.

Cody does and O'Reilly hands her the bag. She waits around for a moment. O'Reilly grows annoyed.

O'REILLY (CONT'D)
You need something else?

She hesitates, then hands him the folder.

O'REILLY (CONT'D)
What's this?

CODY
Something you should read. Since
your name is in there. Several
times. As a witness.

O'Reilly frowns. He takes the folder and opens it. He starts flipping through the papers, growing more alarmed as he reads. Cody turns and walks away.

CODY (CONT'D)
Keep reading. We've got copies.
That one's yours.

O'Reilly is obsessed with whatever he's reading now and he ignores her as she leaves.

INT. VIVIAN CARLTON'S OFFICE - DAY

Cody sits in Vivian Carlton's office, her arms crossed and her face a permanent frown.

CARLTON
I'm glad you came back.

Silence.

CARLTON (CONT'D)
So this is going to be a challenge,
huh?

No answer.

CARLTON (CONT'D)
I don't know why you--

Cody stands up.

CODY
Nah, I tried--

CARLTON
But you--

Cody holds up a business card.

CODY
I'm not coming back.

CARLTON
I guess I'll be--

Cody hands the business card to Carlton. It's Shirley's card.

CODY
That... that is the card for one of
the top reporters at the Gazette.

Carlton raises an eyebrow.

CODY (CONT'D)
You say anything to Levin about me
skipping these useless sessions
and, well, my friend Shirley there
will be the reporter that will be
asking about your participation in
the cover up of multiple murders.

CARLTON
I can't believe you would--

Cody walks out of the office. Carlton looks down at the card.
Her eyes shift back and forth as she reads the card.

INT. CHAD'S HOUSE - DAY

Shirley sits across from Chad in his parents' basement.

SHIRLEY
So what's going on?

CHAD
So I've done some digging...

Shirley nods eagerly.

CHAD (CONT'D)
And what we've got here is what's
called a DDoS attack.

Shirley raises an eyebrow. Chad sighs.

CHAD (CONT'D)
A distributed denial-of-service
attack.

Shirley is lost.

CHAD (CONT'D)

Some dude, it's almost certainly a
dude, is attacking your servers and
overloading them with traffic so
they don't work.

Shirley is almost there.

CHAD (CONT'D)

They're using up all your bandwidth
so YOU can't access your own site.
And nobody else can, either.

SHIRLEY

Okay. Is my stuff lost? What can we
do about it?

CHAD

It's already done.

Shirley is taken aback.

SHIRLEY

What? Really? How?

CHAD

Easy. Grabbed your archives from
the Wayback Machine, got the newest
post from the e-mail you sent me
and set up a new site. Boom.

He shows her "From the Potomac," which is now live and
features her article revealing Cam Kendricks' abuse of Tina
Warren as the top story.

SHIRLEY

Wow. So that's live for everybody
to see?

Chad nods.

CHAD

It is.

Shirley ponders that fact.

SHIRLEY

Won't they just attack it again?

Chad laughs.

CHAD

Yeah, but they can't find it this
time.

Shirley is puzzled.

CHAD (CONT'D)
I've masked your server and
pathways to that server so well,
they're gonna need Neo to find
them.

Shirley nods, impressed. She pauses for a moment.

SHIRLEY
What did you think about the post?

Chad takes a deep breath.

CHAD
When I was 17... my cousin was
attacked.

Shirley nods sympathetically.

CHAD (CONT'D)
She was beaten... assaulted... and
murdered.

Shirley is shocked.

SHIRLEY
I'm sorry.

CHAD
Ever since then, every time I hear
about one of these stories, I think
about the fact that the victim was
someone's sister or daughter or
mother or wife. I--

SHIRLEY
Chad?

He recovers from being interrupted and gives her his
attention.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)
You know I love you, right?

CHAD
Uh... sure.

SHIRLEY
Not like that.

They both chuckle. Shirley laughs a bit louder.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)
This is important, though. All of
those women matter.

CHAD
That's what I said.

Shirley shakes her head.

SHIRLEY
No, it isn't. They matter DESPITE
their relationships to men.

CHAD
Oh.

SHIRLEY
Those women are human beings. They
have value independent of anyone
they know or are related to or
sleep with. They matter.

Chad sits in thought for a few seconds.

CHAD
Yeah. That makes sense. I didn't
mean--

Shirley waves him off.

SHIRLEY
I'm not worried about what you said
in the past, I'm worried about what
you say in the future.

Chad nods in understanding.

INT. STATESMEN LOCKER ROOM - DAY

It's early on game day, the locker room is mostly empty. Jones sits alone in front of his locker, still dressed in his street clothes. He looks around the room to confirm it's empty and opens his gym bag.

He reaches inside and pulls out a brand new bottle of Winstrol and a syringe and sticks them in his pocket. He zips up the bag and puts it back into his locker. He walks towards the bathroom, a guilty look on his face.

EXT. NATIONAL STADIUM FIELD - LATER

The Statesmen host the New Orleans Creoles. There is currently a rain delay.

Kendricks sits at the end of the bench, inconsolable. He looks terrible. Tired. Unshaven. Dirty.

Bishop sits nearby.

BISHOP
You playing today, Cam?

Kendricks doesn't reply.

BISHOP (CONT'D)
Guess not.

KENDRICKS
Nah, they've got me sitting to let some of the young guys get some time in.

Bishop shrugs.

BISHOP
Nothing wrong with that.

Kendricks shifts back and forth on the bench. He clearly disagrees.

KENDRICKS
I'm pretty tired of losing.

BISHOP
Sure, we've lost five straight. No big deal, we still easily have the best record in the league. Gotta let the backups get some playing time. Hell, Doman got a hit last time. Only like his third on the season...

Bishop smiles towards Kendrick, but looks away when he sees that Kendrick is shaking with anger.

BISHOP (CONT'D)
It's closing day. We'll be full strength for the playoffs.

Kendricks picks up a bat and grips it VERY tightly.

KENDRICKS
I'm pretty tired of waiting.

Bishop stares at the grounds crew getting the field ready. Craig Glover walks toward their end of the dugout.

GLOVER

Purvis?

Chaka Purvis, sitting on the far side of Bishop from Kendricks, looks up.

GLOVER (CONT'D)

Rain's clearing up. Get warm.

He turns and walks the other way.

GLOVER (CONT'D)

Malay. Get warmed up, too. Just in case.

Purvis and Krishna Malay grab their hats and gloves and follow Glover.

CUT TO:

SUPER: Third Inning

Purvis stands on the mound with the game tied 1-1. There are two outs and the batter WISEAU has a 2-2 count. Purvis nods at catcher Haywood Doman's signal. Purvis pitches and Wiseau misses wildly to end the inning.

Doman comes off the field and high-fives a giddy Bishop, who waits for him at the top of the dugout steps

BISHOP

You guys are doing great.

Bishop turns to go back into the dugout and sees Betty Billups in the stands. He smiles and goes to wave to her, but he stops when he sees her with an ATTRACTIVE MAN. Some guy Bishop has never seen before. Bishop frowns.

CUT TO:

SUPER: Ninth Inning

With two outs, Malay pitches in a game that is still tied 1-1. The batter, LARROQUETTE, is ready to go. There is a full count, two outs and the bases are empty. Malay throws the pitch and Larroquette grounds to Bennett at third. Bennett makes the throw and the inning is over.

CUT TO:

The game is tied in the bottom of the ninth. It's the last game of the season and there are three outs left. On the mound stands the New Orleans pitcher CAPOTE. At bat is Ivan Pasco with a 3-0 count. Capote throws, but Pasco doesn't even think about swinging. Ball four. He walks to first. The New Orleans MANAGER walks on the field, signaling to the bullpen for a new pitcher.

CUT TO:

SISKO is the new New Orleans pitcher. Mario Gay stands at the plate with a 1-2 count. Sisko pitches and Gay singles to right.

CUT TO:

Pompey stands at the plate with a 2-1 count. Sisko throws and the ball barely misses outside.

SISKO

Dammit.

Sisko pitches again and the ball is low and away. Ball four.

CUT TO:

Steve Reeves stands at the place, bases loaded, no outs.

On the bench, Gray taps his foot nervously. Glover sits next to him.

GLOVER

All he has to do is NOT strike out.
Anybody can do that.

LANGWIELER

Except Whaley.

Laughter.

The new pitcher for the Creoles is MACKIE. Reeves takes his last practice swing and steps into the box. Mackie has inherited a 2-0 count. The pitch. Reeves drives it to deep right field.

The crowd goes crazy, everyone on the bench stands. The ball goes deeper, deeper and... the right fielder, WEATHERS, catches it. But Pasco scores from third and the Statesmen win the game 2-1.

On the bench, Kendricks grins despite himself. Bishop punches him in the shoulder. He walks onto the field to congratulate Doman.

As he goes up the steps, he turns to see if Betty is still in the stands. She is. And she's making out with the ATTRACTIVE MAN.

Bishop turns and walks into the locker room without saying anything to Doman or the other players.

INT. HAROLD GRAY'S OFFICE - DAY

Harold Gray sits at his desk, holding a spit cup. He spits. He stares at Alvin Huebner. He spits again. He stares some more.

GRAY

What do YOU think I should do with you?

HUEBNER

Well, if I were you--

GRAY

You know what a rhetorical question is?

Huebner furrows his brow.

HUEBNER

Sure I know--

Gray spits.

GRAY

You understand the situation we're in?

He holds up a hand.

GRAY (CONT'D)

That was another rhetorical question.

Huebner frowns.

GRAY (CONT'D)

I'd fire you right now if I could.

HUEBNER

But you can't.

Gray spits.

GRAY

What I can do is reassign ALL of
your duties to Glover.

HUEBNER

What? You can't...

GRAY

Already done.

HUEBNER

But that old relic--

Gray spits.

HUEBNER (CONT'D)

Let me retract--

GRAY

You couldn't carry Glover's jock if
you rented the big U-Haul, you
incompetent fuck. You are
dismissed.

Huebner stares at Gray. Gray spits. Huebner leaves.

INT. ALFREDO BRITO'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Brito stands in the kitchen, stir frying chicken and
vegetables for two. He picks up his phone and calls Ashley.
It rings several times, but no answer. Brito shrugs and goes
back to cooking. He grabs a glass of white wine and takes a
sip.

INT. VITO'S MAMA'S RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Ashley and Shirley sit at a secluded table, each eating
salads and drinking wine.

SHIRLEY

How have you been doing?

ASHLEY

Getting by. Found some temporary
work writing releases for some
press shop.

SHIRLEY

Where?

ASHLEY
Some company in New York. Carmesi
Molto.

SHIRLEY
Never heard of them.

Ashley shrugs.

ASHLEY
It's work.

She sips her wine.

ASHLEY (CONT'D)
I guess.

SHIRLEY
Did you see the post?

Ashley nods.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)
What did you think?

ASHLEY
You saw the video?

Shirley nods.

ASHLEY (CONT'D)
I'm sure I felt about the same as
you did.

SHIRLEY
Sorry. It took some time to get it
out. Some kind of DDoS attack.

ASHLEY
The Gazette doesn't have the tech
to prevent that?

Shirley takes a sip of her glass of wine.

SHIRLEY
I don't work for the Gazette
anymore.

Ashley is shocked.

ASHLEY
But the post was on 'From the
Potomac'. That doesn't have the
same owners?

SHIRLEY

No, they don't even know about it.

Shirley takes another sip.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)

I was fired.

ASHLEY

What?

Ashley takes a sip of wine.

SHIRLEY

Over the police report stuff.

Ashley sips her wine.

ASHLEY

I'm looking into hiring a lawyer
for my case.

Shirley peps up. She has an idea.

SHIRLEY

Don't do that. I've got a better
idea.

Shirley smiles.

INT. ALFREDO BRITO'S APARTMENT - LATER

In the kitchen, half the stir fry has been eaten. Two bottles
of wine are empty.

In the living room, Brito snores on the white leather couch.

INT. LEAH OWENS' OFFICE - DAY

Jamelle Lewis sits across from Leah Owens. Owens is simmering
with anger. If Lewis is aware, she doesn't let it show.

LEWIS

What can I do for you?

OWENS

You can get the hell out of my
stadium.

LEWIS

Didn't we already have this
conversation?

Owens laughs.

OWENS

That was before you colluded with an attempt at a hostile takeover of the team.

LEWIS

I don't have the slightest idea what you're talking about.

OWENS

You ARE a skilled liar. But not skilled enough.

LEWIS

Whatever I learned, I learned from Augustus.

Owens flinches at the name.

OWENS

Let's let sleeping secrets lie.

Owens smiles.

OWENS (CONT'D)

Your little plan didn't work.

LEWIS

Let's say I DO have a plan. You haven't begun to see it in action.

Owens laughs. She presses the button on her intercom.

OWENS

Security.

Lewis smirks and stands up, ready to leave.

OWENS (CONT'D)

I know about the proxy vote list.

LEWIS

That makes one of us.

Solly and Mackey come in and escort Lewis out.

INT. PDDC CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Captain Alex Levin sits across from Leila Rassi. Levin looks at the clock on the wall. Cody walks in and stops in her tracks. She looks back and forth from Levin to Rassi.

LEVIN

You don't need to be here.

CODY

I was asked to be here.

Levin furrows her brow.

LEVIN

I didn't ask you anything.

There are three empty chairs on Levin's side of the table. Cody takes the one closest to the door.

CODY

No, but Mr. Schur did.

Levin frowns.

LEVIN

Who the hell is Mr...

Two white men in their 30s walk in wearing Men In Black-style suits and shades. They also have earpieces like Secret Service agents.

SCHUR

Mr. Ariel Schur, director of the National Cult Readiness Task Force.

Everyone turns to look at Schur. No one expected him to be there.

SCHUR (CONT'D)

This is my associate Lavi Weiner. This interview is under the jurisdiction of the Task Force.

LEVIN

Under whose direction?

SCHUR

The president of the United States of America.

Everybody is duly impressed.

SCHUR (CONT'D)

I asked Ms. Paige to be present for our interview with Ms....

He looks towards Leila Rassi.

LEILA
Rassi. Leila Rassi.

Weiner writes down everything Schur says and everything said in response.

SCHUR
If you don't mind, we'll skip the basic details. I assume you've been asked all those questions already.

Leila nods.

SCHUR (CONT'D)
What we're most interested in is the history of the Order. We have some of the details, but we understand that you are an expert on the Order's history?

LEILA
Everybody is. They make us study it. Over and over again. And we have to pass tests or there are... consequences.

Weiner looks up from his transcription.

SCHUR
Give us the highlights.

Leila takes a deep breath.

LEILA
Everyone rightly associates Mudgett Holmes with the Order, but he wasn't alone. The other founders included John Bender, Samuel Green, William Kelly, Stephen Richards and Edward Ruloff.

Weiner writes everything down.

LEILA (CONT'D)
It's widely reported that the men came together to create a social club, like the Jaycees or 4H or something, but it wasn't that simple. They always had bigger, darker goals.

SCHUR
Like what?

LEILA

They were always a values-based organization, long before everybody was saying that. But their values weren't based on anything recognizable. They were governed by their cardinal virtues: family, hedonism, anarchy, masculinity, freedom, wealth and purity.

Cody raises an eyebrow.

LEILA (CONT'D)

The founders were dedicated to the purity and supremacy of the white man. Women, of any race, were sex objects. But women and nonwhite men were separate. Inferior.

SCHUR

And they're still dedicated to those cardinal virtues today?

Leila nods.

LEILA

More than ever. The story from that blog post said that the Order radicalized in the late 40s? Well, that's true. And it's how all this stuff connects. It's the crux.

SCHUR

How.

LEILA

Baseball.

Schur and Weiner exchange a look.

SCHUR

You have my attention.

LEILA

The founders were all big baseball fans. It was the only vice they had. They called it "the sacred game." So when they radicalized in the 40s, that wasn't random.

CODY

Jackie Robinson.

Everyone turns to look at her.

LEILA

Yes. They said he spoiled the purity of the sacred game. That led them realize... to BELIEVE that the apocalypse they were planning for was coming much sooner than they thought. They abandoned this life as meaningless and dove heavy into the hedonism and anarchy. If you knew the list of mysteries that the Order was the real cause of...

SCHUR

I have some idea.

Everyone turns to look at him.

LEILA

Mudgett died in the mid-50s. As he died, he told his followers that anarchy must rule. And baseball must be a tool of the deconstruction. And that's what they've pursued since.

SCHUR

Who's in charge?

Leila shrugs.

LEILA

No one knows. It's a big secret.

WEINER

Did Mudgett have any sons?

Leila shakes her head.

LEILA

No. But he had a daughter. Ever since Mudgett died, the organization has been run by a robed figure with a mask. Uses one of those voice changers. Nobody's ever seen the figure without the mask. Not and lived to tell about it.

WEINER

You think it's the daughter?

Leila nods.

LEILA

I know the rules say it has to be a man, but how would anybody know? She has a tiny body. I've seen her move. You can't convince me she's not a woman. Nobody would believe me, but I'm convinced.

Weiner scribbles furiously.

EXT. THE TILL FAMILY HOME - DAY

A press conference has been set up in front of the home of Pervis Till. In addition to Till's family, Clifford Byars' family is also present. Between them, more than a dozen people stand alongside lawyer BENJAMIN STUMP.

STUMP

Once again, thank you all for joining us today. This has been one of the toughest summers in recent memory. It's been trying for everyone.

Murmurs of assent.

STUMP (CONT'D)

But it has been more of a challenge for some families, such as the Till family and the Byars family. Today, we are here seeking justice for these families.

Till's mother, JUNE, cries.

STUMP (CONT'D)

PDDC declared these vibrant young men to be serial killers. To be cult members. To be violent predators. But these are lies. And we're all tired of the lies.

The families and various onlookers start getting more and more fired up.

STUMP (CONT'D)

That's why I've filed lawsuits on behalf of both families. And I'm in talks with the family of a third victim. The PDDC will not continue to brutalize the Black and brown people of the nation's capital...

Schur and Weiner stand at the back of the crowd. Weiner is filming the press conference.

SCHUR
You get all that?

WEINER
Every bit.

SCHUR
Background checks on everyone?

WEINER
My people are already on it.

Schur nods and turns back towards the press conference.

INT. THE PINCH BASEMENT - NIGHT

Near the entrance to the Pinch basement, bartender Dan stands chatting with Shirley. Sitting at a table in the middle of the room are Chad, Eversmith, Cody and Ashley.

DAN
You expecting anyone else? Or is
this it?

Shirley looks back towards the table and shakes her head.

SHIRLEY
It's just us.

DAN
Cool. I'll keep it private down
here.

SHIRLEY
Thanks, Dan.

He shuts the door on his way out and Shirley grabs a seat at the table.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)
Okay, where do we start?

ASHLEY
I'm new here. I'm only just
starting to grasp the scope of
this.

EVERSMITH
The scope of this is something
we're all wrestling with.

A moment of silence.

SHIRLEY

Ashley, the most important thing to keep in mind is that this isn't all about Cam Kendricks.

Ashley raises an eyebrow.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)

He's mixed up in all of this, sure, but this is about the deaths of... how many people?

She looks around. Nobody has a number.

CHAD

I'd have to do some calculations.

Silence.

SHIRLEY

So what do we know that Kendricks HAS done?

ASHLEY

We've seen the video.

CODY

He assaulted Tina Warren. Is she okay?

SHIRLEY

No one knows. I went to her house, but she hasn't been there.

EVERSMITH

Who shot the video of the abuse?

ASHLEY

Maya Marin, a friend of Warren's.

EVERSMITH

And where is she?

CODY

She's dead.

Everyone whirls around to stare at her.

CODY (CONT'D)

We interviewed a whistleblower down at the precinct, a Leila Rassi.

(MORE)

CODY (CONT'D)

She told us that Marin was killed
in some kind of ceremony.

CHAD

So did they kill Warren, too?

The room sits quiet for a moment.

CODY

Rassi didn't say anything about
Warren. Or Kendricks, really. She
knew everything about the cult, the
Order of the Crimson Ram, but
nothing about Kendricks, although
she said he looks familiar.

CHAD

(chuckling)

The most famous baseball player in
the world?

Cody shrugs.

CODY

She wasn't watching much baseball.
Being in a cult and all. And he's
only been famous for, what, six
months?

SHIRLEY

Let's not get too distracted. So we
know Kendricks is scum, but we know
that he didn't kill at least one of
the victims. Do we really think he
murdered the other three dozen
people?

Silence.

ASHLEY

Well, he's sure as hell not
innocent.

EVERSMITH

Clearly he's not working alone.

SHIRLEY

So who else is in on it?

EVERSMITH

Maybe we don't speculate on that
for now?

CODY

What?

EVERSMITH

The only evidence we have puts serious doubt on our main suspect. And we know the suspects the PDDC is focused on aren't the real killers. You've seen the documents, those men are dead.

Silence.

EVERSMITH (CONT'D)

Do we know who has been feeding us information? The FTP server? The envelopes?

Cody and Shirley both shake their heads.

EVERSMITH (CONT'D)

We've got a media expert, a journalist, a hacker and two cops, I think we can do our own research, right?

Nods.

EVERSMITH (CONT'D)

Then let's find out. For real.

SHIRLEY

I'm in.

ASHLEY

Let's do it.

INT. SEEDY MOTEL OUTSIDE AKRON - DAY

Dwayne McDaris is fully showered and dressed and is ready to leave his motel room. McDaris flosses at the bathroom mirror. His phone rings.

MCDARIS

McDaris.

He listens for a second.

MCDARIS (CONT'D)

I know who you are.

He listens again. Something shocks him.

MCDARIS (CONT'D)
You can't do that--

Beat.

MCDARIS (CONT'D)
On what grounds?

He can't believe what he's hearing.

MCDARIS (CONT'D)
That's ridicul--

He frowns.

MCDARIS (CONT'D)
Well, you'll be hearing from my
lawyer.

He furrows his brow.

MCDARIS (CONT'D)
Why do you need to contact MY
lawyer?

McDaris shakes his head.

MCDARIS (CONT'D)
Suing me? What the hell--

McDaris looks at his phone.

MCDARIS (CONT'D)
Hello? Hello?

It's dead. McDaris throws his phone onto the room's other
twin bed.

MCDARIS (CONT'D)
No wonder the news is dying.

Beat.

MCDARIS (CONT'D)
Dammit.

He grabs his laptop and brings up a web browser. He types in
"how to monetize online videos."

INT. LEAH OWENS' OFFICE - DAY

Shirley sits across from Owens.

SHIRLEY

Thanks for agreeing to see me again. I had a few questions to ask you and it felt better to ask in person.

OWENS

No problem, my door is always open.

SHIRLEY

Okay, I'm going to have to put on my serious reporter hat now.

Owens chuckles.

OWENS

Okay.

SHIRLEY

On the record?

OWENS

On the record.

SHIRLEY

Evidence has come to light that one of your players, Cam Kendricks, is guilty of domestic assault.

Owens holds a poker face as well as she can.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)

What is your response Kendricks' crime?

OWENS

Alleged crime.

SHIRLEY

I've seen the video.

OWENS

So have I. That could be anyone.

SHIRLEY

I hope you're right, but what if you aren't? Do you want to say something official. On the record?

Owens thinks for a moment.

OWENS

Yes. The team, it's staff and players categorically condemn any and all acts of violence and abuse. We abhor, in particular, violence against women, as an organization run by women. Cam Kendricks is innocent until proven guilty and, to my knowledge, he has neither been arrested nor charged with anything at this time.

Owens stands up and pours herself a glass of whiskey. She takes a sip.

OWENS (CONT'D)

That sufficient?

SHIRLEY

Thanks. I assumed your response would be something similar to that. Had to ask.

OWENS

Understood.

Owens pours a second glass of whiskey and hands it to Shirley.

OWENS (CONT'D)

Speaking of your job, I heard that you've recently found yourself without gainful employment.

Shirley blushes.

SHIRLEY

Disagreement with management.

Owens takes a sip of whiskey.

OWENS

I can continue paying you your current salary if you can do some investigative work for me.

Shirley is both intrigued and skeptical.

OWENS (CONT'D)

Nothing illegal, I assure you.

Shirley warms up.

SHIRLEY

Sure... I seem to have more free time this week than last. What's the gig?

OWENS

I need to learn everything possible about a person. Like dig into the deepest crevices and find the slime and scum that a normal investigator wouldn't even know to think of.

Shirley raises an eyebrow.

SHIRLEY

Um... sure. Who is it?

Owens slides Jamelle Lewis' card across the table. Shirley picks it up and stares at it.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)

Nothing illegal, you say?

Owens nods. Shirley pockets the card. Owens takes a sip of her whiskey.

OWENS

One more thing...

She gestures towards the brooch in the portrait.

OWENS (CONT'D)

If you see this brooch....

EXT. ROW HOUSE, SOUTHEAST D.C. - DAY

Tucker and O'Reilly stand outside a row house. The street is quiet as most people are at work. They ready themselves outside the front door of the last house on the block.

TUCKER

(quietly)

This is the last one.

O'REILLY

(also quietly)

Good. This is pointless.

TUCKER

Not if we catch the perp.

Tucker laughs quietly. O'Reilly doesn't.

TUCKER (CONT'D)
I'm kicking it in on three. One...
two...

O'Reilly frowns.

O'REILLY
You don't want to knock first?

TUCKER
Nah, Levin approved a no-knock.

O'Reilly is skeptical.

TUCKER (CONT'D)
Three.

He grins as he kicks in the door. The CAMERA stays outside as the two cops go in, guns raised.

A large naked Black man, KENNETH, walks into the room, he's toweling off and wet from a shower.

O'REILLY
Freez--

Tucker shoots three times. Kenneth falls backwards out of the frame. Tucker walks out of the frame and fires two more shots.

O'Reilly never fires his gun.

INT. PDDC BULLPEN - LATER

Cody sits at her desk, talking on the phone.

CODY
Yeah, it JUST happened.

Beat.

CODY (CONT'D)
Again.

Snell walks in and overhears. Cody doesn't notice. Snell stays out of site and creeps closer to hear better.

CODY (CONT'D)
He says the guy was armed, but he was naked. O'Reilly hasn't made a statement yet. Out sick.

Beat.

CODY (CONT'D)
 Yeah, we'll get into the details later. Maybe we should get everybody together again? Seems like new details are pouring in.

Beat.

CODY (CONT'D)
 Yeah. I'll set it up.

She hangs up.

SNELL
 Who the hell was that?

Cody whirls around to see Snell. They exchange snarls.

CODY
 Not that it is any of YOUR business, but I was speaking with another officer.

Snell acts as menacing as she can.

SNELL
 Sounds like you were talking about things you have no business talking about.

Beat.

SNELL (CONT'D)
 Again.

It takes everything Cody has not to attack Snell.

SNELL (CONT'D)
 You're thinking about it, aren't you?

Cody says nothing.

SNELL (CONT'D)
 Stay out of it.

CODY
 You know I'm going to tell the truth... about him.

SNELL
 Tucker wasn't charged with anything.

CODY

You already know how he's going to be charged in shooting that JUST happened?

Snell is taken aback. She recovers.

SNELL

Justice is swift.

Snell walks out of the room. At the door, she stops and looks back at Cody.

SNELL (CONT'D)

You should remember that.

INT. NATIONAL STADIUM BANQUET ROOM - NIGHT

The banquet room is packed: players, wives, children, press, staff, hangers-on. Most people have finished their meals of chicken, beef or vegetarian. The wine still freely flows, though.

Harold Gray stands at the podium. He's a bit happier than usual, what with the empty bottles of wine that congregate on the head table. Gray's been talking for a while and the audience is getting a bit rowdy.

GRAY

Once again, Eddie Parker, our pitcher of the year.

The audience applauds loudly.

GRAY (CONT'D)

Vernon, get me four more Eddie Parkers and we'll win 100 every year.

PARKER

Thanks, skip!

Parker takes his trophy and heads off stage. The crowd continues to applaud. Gray holds up his empty wine glass.

GRAY

Garcon? Can we get some more wine up here?

The crowd laughs.

GRAY (CONT'D)

Okay, next up, we have this year's Most Valuable Player. Just a few of the records he set this year: 270 hits, topping... Iwata Satoru's record, set in 2004. Our guy led the league in both doubles, with 73, AND home runs, with 75. He hit so well this year that other teams walked him a record 239 times. And he fell one RBI short of the 191 driven in by Huey Lewis in 1930. He wasn't perfect, though, as he also set the record for most times striking out in a season.

The audience laughs.

GRAY (CONT'D)

He made up for it by helping old Vernon out. Sixteen wins in your rookie season is nothing to sneeze at. It was tied for fifth in the conference. Not too shabby.

A WAITER arrives on the dais and pours Gray another glass of red wine. Gray waits and then takes a sip while the audience restlessly watches. The waiter turns to walk away, but Gray grabs the bottle and sets it on the table next to the podium.

GRAY (CONT'D)

Without any further ado, the player of the year, as if there was any suspense, is Cam Kendricks.

The audience gives Kendricks a standing ovation while he walks onto the stage to get his trophy.

CUT TO:

Gray finishes his glass of wine and claps Kendricks on the back. The audience doesn't stand again, but they loudly cheer him as he goes off stage.

GRAY (CONT'D)

Okay, are we ready for the awards for Best Vendor and Best Stadium Seat Cleaner?

Gray laughs at his own joke. The audience is drunk enough to laugh along.

GRAY (CONT'D)
But seriously, Chuck Emerson cleans
seats with the best of them.

Fewer laughs from the audience, more self-congratulatory
laughter from Gray.

GRAY (CONT'D)
Our real last award is for Comeback
Player of the Year. This is, by
far, the hardest award to win.

The CAMERA focuses on Conan "The Barbarian" Jones.

GRAY (CONT'D)
To win this one, you can't just be
good. Any player can be good. No,
to win this award, you have to be
good, LOSE that, and then get it
back. I couldn't do that, could
you? But our winner tonight did it
against strong odds. Among the
strongest. He nearly got his
seventh 20-win season.

The scene cuts to Black, but Gray keeps talking.

GRAY (CONT'D)
He bashed the competition this year
like he always has in the past.
Your Comeback Player of the Year
is...

The sound cuts off mid-sentence.

EXT. NATIONAL STADIUM EXTERIOR - LATER

Kendricks and Bishop walk out of the stadium alone. They're
both quite drunk and it's clear that the event is still
happening inside.

BISHOP
Dude, that's so awesome. Can I see
it?

Kendricks shrugs and hands Bishop his MVP trophy.

BISHOP (CONT'D)
What, you've never won one of these
before?

KENDRICKS

It's a team award. It doesn't really matter.

Bishop stares lovingly at the trophy.

BISHOP

I celebrated every MVP trophy I got.

KENDRICKS

Got a few did you?

BISHOP

Tons. In football, too. The competition isn't as stiff in Oklahoma.

Bishop notices a smudge on the trophy and wipes it off with his shirt. He starts humming "Little Red Corvette," by Prince.

KENDRICKS

Parkour!

Bishop looks up and Kendrick runs towards a street light. He leaps up onto the three feet high concrete base of the light and swings around it.

BISHOP

Dude, you are way too drunk to do parkour.

Beat.

BISHOP (CONT'D)

Do you even know how to parkour?

Kendrick leaps down from the light and is running full speed. He jumps up onto a four-foot brick wall that separates the parking lot from an access road.

And falls over it and crashes to the ground on the other side, out of sight. Bishop rushes towards him.

BISHOP (CONT'D)

Cam!

Bishop arrives at the wall, looks over and sees Kendrick laying on the ground laughing.

KENDRICKS

Totally okay. I probably meant to do that.

BISHOP

The whole playoffs flashed before
my eyes. We lost. Badly.

Kendricks stands up and brushes himself off. He's okay. He's still laughing. Bishop starts to laugh a bit, but it's half-hearted.

KENDRICKS

Don't worry, rookie, I'm fine.

He holds out his arms to show the damage is nonexistent.

BISHOP

(under his breath)

I've been here three years. I'm not
even remotely a rookie.

KENDRICKS

(under HIS breath)

Besides, it's impossible for me to
get hurt.

Bishop raises an eyebrow and stares at Kendricks.

KENDRICKS (CONT'D)

Now where's my car?

EXT. SPIKE JOHNSON'S GYM - DAY

From the outside, Spike Johnson's Gym doesn't look like a gym. It looks like an abandoned warehouse. It sits across from a strip mall that includes a liquor store, a bail bondsman and a storefront church. Everything in the neighborhood is dirty and rundown, trash everywhere, homeless people drinking and sleeping in the alley.

INT. SPIKE JOHNSON'S GYM - MOMENTS LATER

Spike Johnson's gym isn't fancy and it isn't new, but it has everything you need to train as a boxer. More than a dozen BOXERS, with various TRAINERS, spar and work out.

Watching over them all is SPIKE JOHNSON. McDaris has no problem spotting the man in charge and makes a beeline for the older man, easily in his late 60s. He'd still kick the shit out of the likes of McDaris, though.

McDaris makes his way across the gym, in awe of the boxers.

JOHNSON

I assume you are Dwayne McDaris?

MCDARIS

I am. I want--

JOHNSON

Come this way.

Johnson walks into the back room. McDaris follows.

CUT TO:

The storeroom is dusty and crammed with cardboard boxes and shelves and all the old boxing equipment you could imagine. Johnson pulls half-crushed box off of a top shelf in the back of the room. The side of the box says "Dan Cooper."

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

Whatever in there you want is yours.

Johnson walks away.

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

Don't dawdle.

McDaris is alone with the box, which he quickly opens. Not much inside. Some boxing trunks, a robe, a pair of worn gloves, an envelope held closed with a brad.

McDaris opens the envelope and pulls out a laminate badge. He wipes the dust off of it and it CLEARLY shows Cam Kendricks, looking only a few years younger. The name on the badge says "Dan Cooper."

A few other papers, a high school transcript, the deed to a property, a detailed record of Cooper's boxing career, a birth certificate. McDaris stares at the date of birth, which reads June 6, 1969.

McDaris puts everything back into the box and takes it with him as he leaves.

INT. SHIRLEY MULDOON'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Shirley picks up her phone and calls Jones. He picks up.

SHIRLEY

Hey.

JONES (O.S.)

It's late.

SHIRLEY

Just checking in. You've been looking pretty rough out there lately.

JONES (O.S.)

It's almost over.

Shirley frowns.

SHIRLEY

That's not a great answer.

JONES (O.S.)

I came back to get to the playoffs. I got to the playoffs. Things are going great.

Silence.

SHIRLEY

If you say so. Don't sacrifice yourself. It's just a game.

Jones laughs.

JONES (O.S.)

It's a few more games. Then I'm done.

Shirley is skeptical.

INT. SUNDAY SPORTS CHAT SHOW STUDIO

The lights shine down on host Michael Weisman and his guests. Behind him is a giant sign that says: The Sunday Sports Chat Show.

WEISMAN

Hello everyone and welcome to this week's Sunday Sports Chat Show.

Next to Weisman is David Tessell.

WEISMAN (CONT'D)

With me today are four of our regular panelists: David Tessell from the Chicago Dispatch-Times...

TESSELL

Greetings from the Windy City.

WEISMAN

...Sharon Alligood of NBS...

ALLIGOOD

Thanks again for having me.

WEISMAN

...Jonnie Travis of Denver
Tribune...

TRAVIS

Back again, one more time!

WEISMAN

...and Edith Merman of ABS.

She nods to the camera. Weisman turns and looks into the camera.

WEISMAN (CONT'D)

Okay, first question. What is your
take on the new 'Kendricks Rule'
that the USBL has adopted?

ALLIGOOD

For those who don't know, the
Kendricks rule, which was just
introduced for the playoffs, limits
the number of intentional walks
that can issued to one batter in
the same game to one. The penalty
for a violation would be that the
batter and all runners would be
awarded two bases.

TESSELL

I'm for it. Intentional walks have
no place in real baseball. They're
a loophole. I hate loopholes.

MERMAN

There is definitely a problem. Not
sure this is the best solution, but
there IS a problem.

TRAVIS

It seems like a big logistical
nightmare. Can you imagine umpires,
in the heat of a game, trying to
determine whether or not a walk was
"intentional"? I smell a fiasco.

WEISMAN

Next question. Are the Statesmen in trouble?

The entire panel laughs.

MERMAN

They're playing the Porters first. They won't have any problems winning against maybe the weakest team in the playoffs.

ALLIGOOD

Michael, you've been on this bandwagon all season. And every time you ask, they keep on winning. They went 121-41, best record ever. And you still don't believe in them?

She scoffs.

TESSELL

Yeah, but they just went through a five-game losing streak. They really are limping into the playoffs. Don't forget that they set a record for time on the disabled list this year, too.

TRAVIS

Gray was resting the starters during that skid. Almost like they were trying to lose on purpose. You can't count that.

WEISMAN

David, you seem like you have a bone to pick. What's your concern?

Beat.

TESSELL

Okay, I'll say it. I think the Statesmen are cheating.

The panel explodes with umbrage.

MERMAN

Ridiculous. Billups investigated Kendricks. Nix did, too. Nobody found anything. He passed every drug test with flying colors.

ALLIGOOD

But that's Kendricks, what about the rest of the team? They set all-time records for most hits, most home runs, most RBIs and most runs. Some of those records have stood for more than 70 years. Not saying I agree with David, but those numbers ARE strange.

TESSELL

I'll take it. Besides, maybe Kendricks' real innovation is to find a new way of cheating that can't be caught.

TRAVIS

Like what, magic?

Laughter.

INT. NATIONAL STADIUM HALLWAY - DAY

Owens walks through the hall, scrolling through her text messages. Gray comes out of the locker room and almost bumps into her.

GRAY

Hey... uh... sorry.

OWENS

I didn't even see you.

GRAY

(under her breath)
No surprise there.

OWENS

I watched your movie, Major League, a while back...

Gray chuckles.

GRAY

Not my movie, but it is a classic.

OWENS

You guys won the pennant. I guess you're expecting to see me naked now or something like that?

Gray laughs.

GRAY

That's not exactly how the movie went, but I'll take it.

OWENS

Maybe...

Gray's eyes grow huge.

OWENS (CONT'D)

Maybe I'll do a strip tease for your wife instead?

Gray is taken aback.

OWENS (CONT'D)

I'm guessing she's like that a lot more than you would...

She walks away. Gray stares after her.

INT. PDDC BRIEFING ROOM - DAY

Ariel Schur and Lavi Weiner stand at the front of the room. Levin sits near the front, but is part of the audience. She's not happy about it. Only officers are in the room, other than the Task Force members. The cops buzz nervously.

SCHUR

Don't worry, this won't be a long meeting

The buzz dies down.

SCHUR (CONT'D)

Starting tomorrow, we will be interviewing every single officer in the precinct. See my associate, Mr. Weiner, to sign up for a time. These interviews are mandatory.

Grumbles.

LEVIN

You heard the man. Line up.

The officers groan and moan, but they comply.

Schur pulls Cody into the hall, where no one can hear them.

SCHUR

I understand you were the one who brought Rassi in?

CODY

It wasn't much of a thing, she came to me.

SCHUR

Still counts.

His charming smile is disarming.

SCHUR (CONT'D)

I also understand you might have some details about this case that I don't currently have?

Cody lights up.

CODY

I just might.

Schur turns to go back into the briefing room.

SCHUR

Let's set up a meeting. Monday.

Cody nods. Schur is gone.

INT. JAMELLE LEWIS' OFFICE - NIGHT

Lewis sits at her computer when a red and black notification appears in the top right corner of her screen, independent of any program. She launches the Tor browser and brings up the gray website. In the center of the website is simply a button that says "read." Lewis opens it. It says "tonight."

Lewis closes the browser, grabs her jacket and rushes out of her office.

EXT. NATIONAL STADIUM EXTERIOR - LATER

From around the stadium, a near-silent, custom black limousine pulls up. Lewis gets in.

Sitting in the back of the limo is Starr, dressed in a black robe. Her face is covered with a mask and her voice is modulated with a voice box.

STARR

Do I know you?

Lewis takes a deep breath.

LEWIS
Do we ever know anyone?

The figure nods and extends a hand. Lewis reaches out and does the secret handshake.

STARR AND LEWIS
(simultaneously)
Beherit chemosh mastema.

Lewis sits back and relaxes.

STARR
Are you aware that Owens is digging
into your background again?

LEWIS
She won't find anything. What about
the shock jock?

STARR
Taken care of.

Starr extends a gloved hand. In it is a flash drive. Lewis takes it.

LEWIS
What's this?

STARR
Evidence.

INT. LEAH OWENS' OFFICE - DAY

Lewis sits across from Owens, nearly bouncing in her seat. The flash drive Starr gave to Lewis is plugged into Owens' laptop and Owens watches a video.

The video shows Benjamin's computer screen from over her shoulder. It's still clear it's Lekebra. On the computer, Benjamin is looking at a spreadsheet of the proxy holders with contact information. She closes the program, pulls a flash drive out of the side of the computer and walks out of the room.

LEWIS
If you check the non-video file,
you'll see it's some kind of proxy
holder spreadsheet.

OWENS
Where did you get this?

LEWIS

I'm sure if your research, you can find out. Maybe hire a private investigator?

Owens' voice drips with acid.

OWENS

What do you want?

LEWIS

Fire Benjamin.

OWENS

You know I can't.

LEWIS

Double check with the lawyers. Pretty sure that video violates SOME kind of clause or another.

Owens takes a deep breath.

OWENS

I will look into it.

Lewis smiles slyly.

INT. BETTY BILLUPS' APARTMENT - NIGHT

Betty opens her front door to find Bishop standing before her.

BETTY

Hi.

BISHOP

Hey.

They stand quietly for several moments.

BETTY

You going to come in?

Bishop hesitates.

BISHOP

You alone?

She stares at him for a moment.

BETTY
Not that it's any of your
business...

He doesn't look away.

BETTY (CONT'D)
But I AM alone.

Bishop hesitates. Then he goes inside.

CUT TO:

They sit on the couch, facing each other.

BETTY (CONT'D)
You seem to be having some trouble
with all this.

Beat.

BISHOP
Yeah.

BETTY
It's pretty common. Going from
monogamy to poly isn't easy for
anyone.

BISHOP
Yeah.

BETTY
I know of a support group?

Bishop shakes his head.

BETTY (CONT'D)
I have some female friends that
would DEF be interested in you.

Bishop frowns.

BETTY (CONT'D)
Sorry. Just joking. Kinda.

BISHOP
I didn't like it.

BETTY
Why not?

BISHOP
Because...

BETTY
Because I'm "yours"?

Bishop thinks for a second.

BISHOP
No. I don't know. I was raised--

BETTY
I don't live on a farm, Savoy.

He's wounded.

BISHOP
I don't like feeling like this.
Small.

BETTY
That's how you make other people
feel when you don't respect their
wishes.

BISHOP
What about my wishes?

BETTY
What about them?

BISHOP
Don't they matter?

BETTY
They matter.

BISHOP
Then what?

Betty sits up and looks him in the eyes very closely.

BETTY
My own wishes matter more. It's my
life and I'm the one who has to
live it.

Bishop stares at her for a few seconds then looks down at the
floor. For a while.

BISHOP
I guess I have some things to
figure out.

BETTY
Yes. You do. Call me when you DO
figure them out. I'm sure you will.

Bishop isn't sure, but he nods before he gets up to leave.

INT. STATESMEN LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Bishop and Huebner come rushing into the locker room. They are soaking wet.

HUEBNER

You picked a hell of a night for
batting practice.

Huebner starts peeling off his wet clothes.

BISHOP

I didn't know a hurricane was
coming.

Bishop dries off with a towel.

HUEBNER

Really? It was all over the news.
Hell, this year, there's been a
major hurricane like every other
week.

BISHOP

Too many double headers.

HUEBNER

I don't hate 'em.

Bishop realizes that his necklace of animal teeth isn't around his neck. He pats his pockets, even though he doesn't have any pockets.

BISHOP

Dammit.

Huebner looks up. He's down to his skivvies now and wraps a towel around himself.

HUEBNER

What's up?

Huebner heads towards the showers.

BISHOP

I... I think I dropped something.

HUEBNER

Get it in the morning.

BISHOP
(under his breath)
I can't.

Huebner is gone. Bishop rushes out of the locker room.

CUT TO:

Bishop walks through the dugout, looking for his necklace. It's not there. He braces himself and carefully walks onto the field. The intense rain makes footing treacherous and Bishop almost falls.

He sees the necklace near the on-deck circle. The going is slow, but he grabs it and makes his way back to the dugout.

Bishop steps out of the rain and finds himself face-to-face with Kendricks. Bishop is startled, but quickly recovers.

KENDRICKS
What are you doing out in this,
Bishop?

Bishop holds up the necklace.

BISHOP
Getting my necklace. What about
you?

KENDRICKS
I... uh... forgot my... watch. It
was my father's watch.

BISHOP
You have to get it now?

KENDRICKS
You had to get your necklace?

BISHOP
Yeah, but it's irreplaceable.
Definitely nothing else like it.

KENDRICKS
Same for me. This isn't just any
watch. It was passed down through
my family. My dad, he was a POW,
and he went to extreme measures to
keep the watch when he was over
there. If he could keep the watch
through all that, I can handle a
little rain...

Bishop completely buys the story.

BISHOP

A lot of rain. But, yeah, wow,
that's one hell of a story. You
HAVE to get it.

Kendricks is exasperated and getting wetter.

KENDRICKS

Obviously.

BISHOP

Where'd you lose it?

KENDRICKS

Uh... over near Union Station?

BISHOP

After we got back from Atlanta?

KENDRICKS

Yeah. Gotta get going...

BISHOP

We've been back for, what, four
days now? It's gotta be gone.

KENDRICKS

The... uh... security guard must've
found it. He called.

BISHOP

Now?

Bishop looks waves towards the storm.

KENDRICKS

He's going out of town or
something.

Bishop isn't buying it, but he can't quite put his fing--

LIGHTING CRASHES !!!

Bishop looks up, but Kendricks is gone.

EXT. UNION STATION - DAY

The hurricane still rages the next morning. The sun is up,
but it's hard to see through the dark clouds and heavy rains.

Officer Anne Snell leaves the Station, carrying a box of donuts and a coffee. She's wearing rain gear, but it isn't doing much good.

She goes down a side street to her waiting patrol car. She gets in and the donut box isn't too soaked. She takes a big gulp of coffee.

A HOMELESS MAN appears out of nowhere and bangs on her window. She spills coffee on herself.

SNELL

Motherfu--

The Homeless Man bangs on the window harder. He's getting soaked but is determined to talk to Snell.

SNELL (CONT'D)

(yelling)

Back away from the car!

She pulls out her Glock and taps it against the window. The Homeless Man backs away. Snell gets out of the car, pointing the gun at him.

HOMELESS MAN

Don't shoot! Don't shoot! You have to come! There's a head!

SNELL

What?

HOMELESS MAN

There's TWO heads. And bodies. C'mon!

The Homeless Man turns and runs. Snell considers ignoring it, but follows.

A few seconds later, they arrive at a bridge overpass and they duck beneath it and out of the rain. Several HOMELESS PEOPLE huddle to stay out of the hurricane, but they are all at one end of the dry area, staring at the other end.

Snell moves closer and looks. She stops and vomits. She takes some deep breaths to recover and composes herself.

SNELL

Get out of here.

HOMELESS MAN

What?

She turns towards the other homeless people.

SNELL

All of you. Get out of here.

HOMELESS MAN

But the storm?

Snell holds up her gun and waves it for all to see.

SNELL

I said go.

HOMELESS MAN

Screw that, I'm not--

Snell fires her gun towards the sky and the homeless people scatter into the storm.

Snell takes a deep breath. She pulls out her phone and turns towards the crime scene. She snaps several pictures.

The CAMERA pans to reveal two crudely-severed heads hung from the overpass with wire. One is a man and another is a woman, both white in their mid-30s.

Snell looks towards a hedge just beyond the overpass and notices something. She walks towards it, back into the rain and slips past the hedge.

SNELL

Fuck!

On the ground are the bodies of the man and woman. If there was any blood, the rain has washed it away. Snell holds her phone up and takes a few more pictures.

CUT TO:

Snell uses napkins to dry her hair off while she talks to dispatch.

DISPATCH (O.S.)

You said two? Definitely dead?

SNELL

Their heads have been cut off. I'd say they're pretty fucking dead.

DISPATCH (O.S.)

Sorry.

SNELL

Hurry up. The crime scene is totally FUBAR because of the hurricane.

DISPATCH (O.S.)

Will do.

Snell takes out her phone and opens up her e-mail. She composes a message to Cody Paige and attaches the pictures of the murder scene. She hits send and puts her phone down.

She opens the box of donuts, takes out one with sprinkles. She takes a bite and washes it down with coffee.

FADE OUT.