

"BREAKING NEWS"

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478 Vermont Ave
Berkeley, CA, 94707
510 604-3609

MAIN CHARACTERS

EAGLE NEWS – A 24 hour cable news network which recently became the only 24 hour news network after a recent merger/acquisition. News coverage is filled with dramatic graphics, hyped stories, and opinionated commentators. They were popular relative to other news networks but still gradually losing viewers.

JC – Arrogant, ambitious thirty-something man who was a successful Reality TV producer. He was hired by EAGLE NEWS to reinvent television news. He doesn't care or know anything about journalism. He has a strange combination of perky self-centered optimism and disregard for the feelings of others. He is mostly unconscious of his inappropriate sexual boundaries.

CINDY – Smart, sexy, tough, rough-talking, thirty-something woman. CINDY is an experienced journalist and news producer from the competitor (NATIONAL NEWS NETWORK) recently acquired by EAGLE NEWS. She's been fighting her whole career for more serious journalism. She realizes she is fighting a losing cause but she will never give up. She is JC's peer but she's supposed to learn how EAGLE NEWS produces news. She decided to stay with EAGLE NEWS to get information about their operation for a book she plans to write about the

state of journalism.

DALLAS STONE— Shy, artistic 15 year old boy. He's socially invisible (early in the movie he may even be shown black and white within a color scene). His mother, AMBER, was a stray 16 year old when he was born. The first half of his life was filled with chaos and scary scenes as he bounced around with his mother. Things have been calm for the past seven years.

AMBER STONE — Beautiful, lively, sexy, 31 year old mother of DALLAS. She pulled her life together after a turbulent start that extended through DALLAS' early childhood. During that time she learned to use sexuality as a tool. She gave up on romantic relationships but enjoys steady sexual partners. She enjoys fads and other lifestyle diversions, and she smokes a lot of weed to check her nervous energy.

DEBBI HEART — Sexy, smart, ambitious, slightly-heartless, determined 17 year old girl who is hell-bent on becoming famous. She gets very little attention from her single-parent mother who is a successful, workaholic professional. When DEBBI knows what she wants. Nobody can get in the way. She commands or cajoles people into helping her get what she wants.

CAT – Loveable, emotional, easily frightened, 17 year old girl who is DEBBI's best friend.

AMIR – Smart, savvy, 17 year old boy. He never really fit in with other kids at school. To overcome being a social outcast he learned to broker deals so everyone needs him. For the right price, he can satisfy any vice, obtain information, take care of problems, or broker illicit deals. He knows all the dirty secrets at and beyond school.

BO – Quirky, paranoid, lovable, not so bright, maintenance worker at Pittsfield High School. He is a stoner in his 40s and has a knack for being at the wrong place at the wrong time. He's had what many would consider a rough life but he rolls with everything. He's a street philosopher and a few steps from homeless.

POLICE CHIEF – Politically ambitious, not so smart, Chief of Police who is running for Mayor.

(B)

FADE IN:

EXT. SCHOOL — NEAR STOREROOM — LATE AFTERNOON

We see a close-up of DALLAS sweating, trembling, motionless like a deer in headlights. Pan around to see guns pointing at DALLAS from every direction. Police and Special Weapons And Tactics (SWAT) team are shouting in slow motion for DALLAS to put his hands in the air. We see part of something under DALLAS's shirt, strapped to his chest and a something that looks kind of like a remote control in one hand. We cut around to Police and SWAT team but do not show whole faces, just guns, arms propped up holding guns, and hands on guns with some trembling fingers, eyes, mouths. More slow-motion shouting for DALLAS to put his hands in the air. He's frozen. More shouting. He slowly starts to move his trembling arms. A shot rings out.

Freeze frame.

INT. EAGLE NEWS — STUDIO PRODUCTION AREA — SAME TIME

We see the studio of EAGLE NEWS which recently became the only remaining 24 hour cable news network. We see images of video cameras, cables, monitors, and other gear related to operation of a news studio. We see people scurrying around, some talking intensely to one another, some laughing, some

very focused on their work. We see a banner that reads, "WE'RE #1" but someone has crossed out the pound sign and inserted a line with written words "THE ONLY". The opening music enhances the hustle and bustle.

We stop with a shot of JAN, a big-chested, sexy female news anchor. She's on-air chuckling and seems to be talking to someone off screen. We pull out to see video cameras shooting JAN and JIM at their news desk. Jim is a young handsome co-anchor. The countenance of JAN and JIM changes suddenly. They turn to look off camera as if getting direction and reading something. They seem a little frightened and slightly disoriented.

INT. EAGLE NEWS — FRAME — STUDIO ON AIR

JAN

(turns, directly to camera but
occasionally looks down or away as
if getting information from O.S.)

We have some breaking news related to
the events unfolding

(pause)

There are reports of an explosion or
gunshot.

JIM

A loud noise. We learned ... there is
apparently ...

(pause)

something is happening, unfolding now,

JAN

Again, to recap for viewers just tuning
in.

(pause)

Earlier today we reported a shooting at
Pittsfield high school. We learned a
girl was shot by a younger classmate.
The shooter is holding hostages and is
wired with explosives.

We see an effect that looks like a rewind and stop abruptly
at --

INT. DALLAS' HOUSE — DALLAS' BEDROOM

Loud alarm clock goes off. We see the time 8:00am and
"Earlier that day" is displayed over the image. We pan
around the bedroom with DALLAS in bed motionless. There is
a collection of very close-up photos posted together that
show a girl's face (DEBBI). The collection is composed of
overlapping parts of eyes, ears, lips, nose, and hair. We

see DALLAS again, still motionless. We see his face, his eyes flip open and we see a blank stare, still motionless.

INT. DALLAS' HOUSE - KITCHEN - EARLY MORNING

AMBER is DALLAS' mother. She is flitting around scantily clad. She is simultaneously preparing breakfast and eating breakfast (fruit, yogurt, granola), drinking coffee, and occasionally taking a hit of a joint. For a while, we hear low garbled voices from the TV that is tuned to EAGLE NEWS. Then --

JAN (O.S.)

Yesterday congress passed the "Future Initiative for Growth with Lower Emissions for America's Future" bill.

INT. EAGLE NEWS - FRAME - STUDIO ON AIR

JAN is a classic all-American buxom pretty blonde, serious but sexy.

JAN

Wow, that's a MOUTHFUL.

(pause)

Representative LOUIS KRUPP says the bill has TEETH.

INT. EAGLE NEWS - FRAME - GOVERNMENT CONFERENCE ROOM

Clip of REP. LOUIS KRUPP standing at a podium with dozens of microphones, an American Flag behind him, and a banner that says "F.I.G.L.E.A.F. - THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT GREEN". He uses punctuating gestures as he speaks.

REP. LOUIS KRUPP

We brought THE BEST minds in industry together to HAMMER OUT these recommendations for AMERICA'S FUTURE. This bill has TEETH. I am confident that TOGETHER we CAN keep AMERICA BEAUTIFUL, continue to stoke the engine of growth, and give our grandchildren a BRIGHT GREEN future. GOD BLESS AMERICA.

INT. EAGLE NEWS - FRAME - STUDIO ON AIR

JAN

(to co-anchor)

Jim, what do you have?

JIM the male co-anchor fills the screen. He is a handsome, non-threatening all-American. Both anchors are now in the frame.

JIM

(smiling with one hand
unconsciously below the desk, to
JAN)

Well Jan, I'm holding onto MY Hummer.

They both chuckle. The frame switches to show JIM with two smaller overlaying windows. One window shows video looping several times with video footage of people walking through water flooded streets. The other window shows a map of a region with titled countries that include India, China, Vietnam, Australia, and Indonesia. There is a larger title, "Papua New Guinea" with a line pointing to the country.

JIM

(to camera, switches to artificial
serious)

The death toll continues to climb today
in

(slower and kind of phonetically
mispronounces Papua New Guinea)

Pap Uah New Gwin eeeA.

(back to his normal speaking
rhythm)

30,000 people are reported dead or
missing from flooding over the past two

days. America will air-lift food and blankets for the survivors, and has already provided local militias with additional equipment to keep order.

JAN

(with the same tone of the previous story)

Party girl Tokio Hyatt is scheduled to check-in to rehab today. This is a court-ordered rehab resulting from a DUI last month. EAGLE NEWS correspondent, Rich Pratt, is outside the Ms. Hyatt's residence and will report the event live. Let's check-in with Rich now...

INT. DALLAS' HOUSE — KITCHEN

AMBER

(loud to herself)

What's with that kid!

(shouting)

Turn off that alarm! Dallas, turn off your alarm! Turn it off!

(to herself)
fucking kid, turn off the fucking
alarm. Dallas!

She walks through hallway --

INT. DALLAS' HOUSE - OUTSIDE OF DALLAS' BEDROOM.

AMBER

(shouting into the closed door)
Dallas! Turn off the alarm. Turn it
off.

(pause)

Close your eyes. I'm coming in to turn
off the alarm. Close your eyes, I'm not
dressed. DALLAS, close your eyes.

She walks into the room.

INT. DALLAS' HOUSE - DALLAS' BEDROOM

AMBER turns off the alarm and lingers over DALLAS who has
his eyes closed. We see the collage of DEBBI's face in the
background and notice she resembles AMBER.

AMBER

(poking him)

Dallas you have to get up for school

your going to be late. Get up.

DALLAS

Go away.

AMBER

You have to get up, come on, get up.

I'm making breakfast. You want eggs?

DALLAS

(rolling over to face away from
her)

No! Go away, I'll get up.

AMBER

(turns away)

You have to eat something.

(joking, perky)

Fuel for school, kiddo.

AMBER exits. DALLAS gets up. He is an awkward 15 year old. We learn more about DALLAS as we follow him around the room while he gets dressed. His movements are not fluid. There are slightly creepy, artsy pictures of people on the wall. His photos are extreme close-ups of people. Hand-gestures, lips, ears, eyes, feet, arms, demonstrating recognizable things or emotions (clenched fist, hands covering face, legs lying stiff on the ground, eyes after crying). No

picture shows a complete recognizable face. Again we see the collage of photos, parts of DEBBI's face pasted together that shows a slightly distorted image of DEBBI's full face.

He's infatuated with DEBBI, a 17 year old girl at school who looks like his mother. He picks up an anime sketch he drew of DEBBI. In the drawing he is depicted as a warrior with weapons. He is carrying DEBBI his beautiful queen. The image has a hint of a romance novel cover. He rolls up the drawing and puts it in his backpack.

He goes to his closet and puts wires and other things into his backpack but we don't see the particular things. Some seem like flat blocks but not books. We pan around the room and see models of military helicopters and what appears to be a real casing from an exploded helicopter missile. We see DALLAS again putting his shirt on over some kind of gear. He puts on a necklace. The necklace is slightly longer than a choker and seems to be made of a thin rubber tube or wire. At the end is a roundish object that looks a little like a small eyeball.

INT. DALLAS' HOUSE — KITCHEN

AMBER continues to flit about. She takes a hit of a joint then her eyes lock on to the TV while she continues to

drink coffee. Her face is very expressive as she reacts to each element of the following story.

JIM (O.S.)

We know dog is man's best friend but we have a story of a GIRL and her dog, united again.

AMBER offers a slight giggle.

JAN (O.S.)

Here is the story of nine year old, Mary Lee Connors who lost her puppy at the Texas Red Poppy Festival.

AMBER reacts empathetically as if seeing a poster of a missing puppy.

INT EAGLE NEWS — STUDIO ON AIR

JAN

Three days and 20 miles later, Fluffy found her way back to Mary Lee.

(to JIM)

That's one happy little girl.

(pause)

Next a story about how some American corporations are greening our planet.

(pause)

Stick with us here at EAGLE NEWS.

AMERICA'S ONE and ONLY news network.

We see transition graphics in the background then move closer but, still in the studio.

EAGLE NEWS SLOGAN ANNOUNCER

(delivering the slogan)

"EAGLE NEWS - All the news you need to know."

Abrupt transition to commercial.

TV COMMERCIAL ANNOUNCER (O.S)

(much louder than Anchors)

Need help getting to sleep at night?
Groggy in the morning? Doctor
recommended Barbimeth has a patented
timed-release formula let's you sleep
hard and wake up fast. Contact your
doctor and sleep like a baby, wake like
a champion.

INT. EAGLE NEWS — STUDIO PRODUCTION AREA

They are on a commercial break. Make-up staff are touching up Anchors. We see CINDY standing next to JC while he is on

the phone. She's waiting to continue a conversation. With his finger JC motions to CINDY, "one minute". JC is on the phone listening to his manipulative boss, EXEC. During this scene JC looks away most of the time and occasionally at CINDY'S cleavage. He is using a laptop, text messaging with his cell phone, looking at large wall mounted monitors, and motioning commands to people. JC is not paying much attention to EXEC.

EXEC (O.S.)

...She's a good girl,

(aside)

and quite a nice little package.

(more serious)

You keep an eye on her, JC. Those NATIONAL NEWS folks can be too damned earnest but we need to keep a few around. Feel her out, son. See if she's willing to come on board with us.

JC

(auto-response)

Yes, sir

EXEC

See if you can wrap her up in

something, get her excited about what we do. She's a bright girl so you'll need to use some finesse.

JC

(fidgety auto-response)

Yes sir.

EXEC

Good boy. Okay, I'll call you next week.

JC clicks off the phone.

JC

(to CINDY)

I'm not running that story. It's too complicated. It's flat ... and it would kick up a lot of dust.

CINDY

You all are a bunch of spineless limp dicks. Man up JC. Take...

JC

(cutting her off, turning to her)

Nobody cares if crap gets dumped in a hole somewhere.

CINDY

Heavy metals and arsenic seeping into ground water.

JC

There's no energy in that story. There are no victims. There's nothing to show.

CINDY

Birth defects, high cancer rates,...

JC

Right, what do you show? There is nothing to show. That's my point.

CINDY

Your point is that you don't want to get scolded, get your fanny whacked by the big boys.

JC

Nobody is talking about this story. The company denies the charges. Why expose EAGLE to litigation?

CINDY

We're journalists. We have a boat-load

of documents and conversations showing political collusion. There's a line of payoffs to the mayor, to state reps, to US reps.

JC

Wow, you're like one of those little dogs that grabs an ankle and doesn't let go.

(smiling, looking her over)

but way sexier.

CINDY

(pointing to herself)

You have zero shot here.

(waving her hand to dismiss him)

So put your pecker in your pocket and move along little boy.

JC

(getting back to business)

Just watch me for a while. I'm supposed to teach you how we operate...

CINDY

TEACH! I'm suppose to watch how the hot shot reality television producer does

journalism. That'll be like watching a headless chicken do brain surgery.

JC

(looking away)

Whatever. I'm suppose to "show" you how we do the news at EAGLE.

(wanting to bat her down, a little angry)

Look, "NATIONAL NETWORK NEWS" doesn't exist anymore. You all lost. People preferred our product.

CINDY

And by people you mean politicians and corporations.

JC

(smiling)

Politicians and corporations are people too.

(pause, now a realist)

Don't get your panties in a bunch. It's just business.

(pause, instructive)

People don't watch TV to get news any

more. People can get whatever

(finger quotes)

"news" they want on the internet. We're
in the entertainment business.

(pause, happy to share his wisdom.

Looking at CINDY and her cleavage)

People want to be entertained. They
want to escape,

(getting in a groove)

root for people, watch fuckups fuckup,

CINDY

(shaking her head in disbelief,
interrupting)

You believe that shit coming out of
your mouth?

JC

It's true.

(pause, getting even more excited
about his mission, a little
sexually turned-on)

Cindy. Can I call you CIN? It's sexier.

CINDY

(responding to him getting turned

on by calling her "sin")

You are such a dick.

(pause)

I told you, I'm recording all of our conversations, right?

JC

Right. I'd love to be in your book.

Record anything you want, record everything. I have nothing to hide. It kind of turns me on.

(pause, moving on to offer more of his wisdom)

Anyway, CIN, news is evolving. It's the ultimate Reality TV show. A few billion people on a planet, a few rules, see what happens.

(pause, still excited)

Nobody knows what is going to happen next.

(turning to CINDY and her cleavage)

That's the drama. And it's real.

CINDY

Every once in a while can you look at

me, instead of my breasts?

JC

(didn't realize his fixation,
looks away very slight hint of
guilt, but not really guilty)

We get to show the audience what
happens next, and we need to make it
compelling. We keep it moving, we mix
it up, pull their heart strings, love,
hate, violence, sex...

CINDY

Don't wet your pants.

JC

(it doesn't really matter if
anyone is listening)

We're in the storytelling business,
Cin. I'm here to tell stories, pick the
right characters, scenes ... write the
narrative. The truth is not in the
facts. Truth is in the emotion.

CINDY

(sarcastic)

Thank you. I'm learning so much and

it's only our first week together.

CINDY's phone rings.

I'll let you be alone with your little
hard-on.

CINDY takes the call.

EXEC (O.S.)

Cindy, I just want to welcome you
aboard. I have a great deal of respect
for your work. You all had a fine
network. Some nice journalism now and
then.

(subtly laugh)

JC will show you how we do what we do
here. He's a good boy. Not the sharpest
tack in our drawer but he gets the job
done. If you're willing to play ball
you got a good shot at his job.

(pause)

And I want you to know my door is
always open. We don't have a lot of
hierarchy at EAGLE. My door is always
open for you.

INT. DALLAS' HOUSE — KITCHEN

AMBER and DALLAS are talking. AMBER is slightly more dressed than earlier. DALLAS is eating cereal out of the box one piece at a time.

AMBER

(to DALLAS but flitting around the kitchen, not really doing anything)

I don't understand why you have so much trouble getting up. I have to get you up almost every day. I saw some pills on the news. I'm going to call Dr. Romer to see if we can get you some.

(stops for a second to look at DALLAS)

Do you want me to make you some breakfast? How can you eat it dry like that. It's like a bird.

(opens the refrigerator, leans over exposing her breast a little)

Let me give you some milk.

DALLAS

No! I'm fine. I don't like milk. I have

a

(product placement)

Red Bull.

(pause)

I need money for lunch and after
school.

AMBER

(perky, looking at him)

Did you ask her out?

DALLAS

No. Mom, you're not like my life coach!

AMBER

I am your life coach. I want you to be
happy. You like that girl. I want you
to have her. You're cute. You're cool.
You're smart. Girls like that, it's
sexy.

DALLAS

I'm not cool. I'm shy. People don't
know who I am. I don't really like
people.

AMBER

You don't even know how cool you are.

You're awesome. Seriously, don't think girls really like the jocks. Jocks are just the only boys to ask-out pretty girls. I know. I was the pretty girl. And it hasn't changed. Boys haven't changed. I see those boys at your school...

(reading DALLAS)

What?

(pause, knows he doesn't want to hear her rant)

What?

DALLAS

I don't know. What if...?

(pause)

She doesn't even know I exist. Nobody knows I exist. Kids think I'm weird.

(pause)

I don't even know if I like her.

AMBER

You like her some. Did you finish that drawing with her? You're such a good artist. You should ask her out. It's good practice anyway.

(excited for him)

Give it to her today. Can I see it?

(catches herself)

No, sorry. Your life. I'm staying out
of it.

(pause, overwhelmed with love)

I love you so much.

EXT. SCHOOL PARKING LOT

DALLAS gets off the bus. Kids are in clusters outside the school. We see DALLAS in the middle of everyone but alone as he walks toward school through the parking lot. We see images of body parts like the photos in DALLAS' room, extreme close-ups of arms, legs, ears, exposed female belly buttons, hands... DALLAS is futzing with something, looking down into some kind of remote control in his hand. He starts to walk, occasionally looking down at his hand. He looks like he is oblivious to what is going on around him. A few kids are talking in clusters. His doesn't interact with anyone. Nobody really notices him, his personality is invisible. The bell rings and everyone slowly walks toward the door. In the distance, he and we see DEBBI walking and talking with her best friend CAT. DALLAS perks up and tries to look cool as he walks. He walks toward DEBBI and tries

to get her attention.

Now we see DEBBI and CAT closer up. DEBBI is a high school senior. She's determined to be famous someday, and willing to do whatever it takes to get there.

DEBBI

(to CAT)

I have to go talk to my "agent".

They laugh. DEBBI turns away from CAT and the approaching DALLAS who she doesn't notice. When DEBBI turns, a kid almost knocks into her but lurches away. The kid trips, stumbles off the curb and gets hit by a car just pulling out from dropping off another kid. DEBBI sees the whole thing happen but it doesn't phase her. She keeps walking. CAT and DALLAS also see the whole thing. CAT runs to the kid. The kid is not hurt badly but his arm looks a little contorted.

CAT

OH MY GOD, are you okay?

We see close-up images of the kid from DALLAS's POV. Then we see DALLAS walking toward the kid. In the distance we see DEBBI and move closer to her as she approaches AMIR'S slick black SUV and get's in the passenger side.

INT. AMIR'S SUV

We go into the SUV and see a slick high school senior, AMIR. The SUV is his office. He is talking into a headset, typing on his laptop, and occasionally reading and replying to text messages on his cell phone. When DEBBI gets in, AMIR smiles and nods to her. He gestures "one minute" just as JC would. AMIR has some mannerisms similar to JC but he isn't a dick.

DEBBI digs into her bag and pulls out a few DVDs. AMIR is still distracted. DEBBI pops a DVD labeled "\$" into the DVD player mounted in AMIR's SUV. The DVD starts to play with the sound off. We see them both looking at it but we can't see exactly what is happening. Then we see –

INT. DEBBI'S BEDROOM

She has a secret side job to earn money for the costs of building fame. DEBBI is videoing herself getting dressed. She's flirting with the camera. Turning away, changing clothes.

INT. AMIR'S SUV

AMIR looks at DEBBI. Shaking his head yes. He's still on the phone and typing. AMIR pushes fast forward on the DVD player. AMIR looks at the video, seemingly taking it all

in. It gets to the end. AMIR reaches to the DVD player, presses rewind then play in regular speed. He clicks off his phone and turns up the sound on the DVD.

INT. DEBBI'S BEDROOM

DEBBI

(looking slightly away from the camera, as if looking at the clock, very girlie)

Oh! I'll be late for school.

She offers a submissive giggle and a girlish wave bye, bye. Then turns off the camera.

INT. AMIR'S SUV

AMIR clicks the DVD off and ejects it.

DEBBI

Is that good enough for those dirty old perverts?

AMIR

Sweet. I'm a little worried for you. This is too good.

(giving advice)

You don't want to go too deep in that

business.

DEBBI

(handing him another DVD)

For "Hell's Kitchen".

We see AMIR look at the DVD which has a label "AUDITION,
HELL'S KITCHEN, SEASON 9".

AMIR

(looking at the DVD)

The show with the psycho chef? You want
to be on that show?

(turns back to DEBBI, skeptically)

You can cook?

DEBBI

(smiling defensively)

What? How hard is it to cook? It will
take me like a day to learn how to
cook. I told them I cook for my five
brothers and sisters. I paid my little
delinquent neighborhood kids to be in
it.

AMIR is shaking his head no in mild disbelief while
appreciating her doggedness.

DEBBI

(almost laughing)

What? Are they going to kick me off the show? I'll still get exposure. I'll sex it up. Even one episode would be something.

(moving on)

Have you heard from MTV? They have to pick me for one of those stupid shows.

AMIR

(calm, smooth)

Patience. These things take time.

DEBBI

(pleading)

What about "Survivor"?

AMIR

(quickly, knowing she doesn't take rejection well, hoping she will roll with it)

You didn't get on Survivor.

DEBBI

(disappointment, expressed as
anger)

So when the fuck where you going to
tell me?

DEBBI leaves slamming the door on exit. AMIR is not fazed.
He's back to his work. AMIR's phone rings and he picks up
the call.

INT. EAGLE NEWS — KITCHEN/LOUNGE

JC and CINDY get coffee then stand and drink. Other people
are also in the kitchen/lounge

CINDY

I have a reporter with a story about
high school kids posting amateur porn?

JC

That works. People love Pedophilia.
Under age sex, immorality, kids in
danger.

(Moving his hands back and forth
between them at chest level)

See Cin, we can find common ground.

(pause)

Are kids really doing that? Are they good-looking kids? Where is this happening?

CINDY

We spent months investigating this story. I'm not going to let you splash a couple of cute faces on the screen. I can produce a half hour segment on this. It's not just about the kids. We traced some of the visitor traffic. It includes a few high profile people.

JC

High profile, like celebrity or high profile like, politician? Not everyone is fair game.

CINDY

Do you see any value in real journalism? Letting people know what is going on regardless of the consequences?

JC

(pointing, instructive)

That's what you all didn't get. You need to pick your targets carefully in this business.

CINDY

So you just show a bunch of puff-ball stuff.

JC

(defensive, animated)

Everyday we cover what happens in the world. Not just fluff. And, we'll cover political corruption. But it's not our job to dredge up every little mistake. We give officials a platform to talk directly to the people.

CINDY

LIE. You let them LIE directly to the people.

JC

(somewhere between ignoring and rolling with it)

When someone crosses the line they take

him down. They self-police.

(pause, a new defense)

People know politicians are crooks.

That's not news. If we reported every little bit of corruption we'd be out of business in a week.

CINDY

Wow, it's a vicious fuck circle.

Everyone is trying not to get fucked while they are fucking someone else.

(losing it, a little preachy)

I don't want to get too preachy but there is no democracy without a free press.

JC

(rolling his eyes, ready for a rant)

He we go.

CINDY

Right, here we fucking go.

(with increasing excitement)

This junk news is making people weak and sloppy. History isn't kind to

weaklings. If the meek inherit the earth it will be because it's inhabitable. Everyone else will have gone to another planet. Leave the meek to die a horrific, excruciating slow death.

JC

(sexually admiring her intensity)

Nice, I like you all charged up. Hey, we should grab lunch later. My treat.

INT. SCHOOL - LUNCHROOM DALLAS' TABLE - LUNCHTIME

DALLAS is sitting with his one friend, a geeky nerd who is obsessed with military paraphernalia and shooter video games. DALLAS is distracted while his friend talks excitedly about helicopters and military equipment. DALLAS keeps nervously putting his hand under the table as if fidgeting with something. Through out this scene we see images like DALLAS' body part photos. The images are a little edgier and cut together a more quickly to build intensity.

FRIEND

(enthusiastic)

Did you see that clip on LiveLeak? Holy

shit. This Apache throws a Hellfire missile at an SUV on a bridge. There are like three explosions. Pieces of the SUV are flying everywhere. They blow a big hole in the bridge and everyone is like "Hell yeah! Woooooo!"

INT. SCHOOL - LUNCHROOM AMIR'S TABLE

AMIR with mischievous kids looking at each other smiling, waiting for someone to speak. We see the group, then each face close-up. Stop at --

\$20 KID

Okay, I'll do it for \$20 bucks.

INT. SCHOOL - LUNCHROOM DEBBI'S TABLE

DEBBI is sitting with a few other girls and JEFF who is a jock.

DEBBI

(explaining how fame happens)

It doesn't matter if I have a chance of getting on the show. The more audition clips you send the more exposure you get. That's how it works. No pain no fame.

(she's parroting something she
heard somewhere)

You make your own luck.

(she looks away from her table and
gathers her things to stand up)

Well, I love you all but I have to go.

CAT

(to DEBBI)

Another rehearsal?

(to others at the table)

She got the Hamlet part at GirlsPlay.

(in her best attempt at
Shakespearian voice)

Will she be, or not she be, sluttress
of Reality TV?

INT. SCHOOL - LUNCHROOM DALLAS' TABLE

DALLAS sees DEBBI getting up from her table not far across
the room. His eyes are fixed on DEBBI except for an
occasional peek down at his hand that is still holding
something that looks like a remote control.

DALLAS

(a little creepy, distant,
mechanical)

I'm going now.

FRIEND

"Call of Duty" at my house after
school? Payback time. I figured out how
to blow away the guys in the Mosque.

DALLAS

(standing up, nervous, distant,
voice fades out)

Um, no, I ...

DALLAS walks toward DEBBI. Just as DALLAS approaches DEBBI.
We hear a loud series of popping, POP, POP, POP. Debbi is
startled. She spills something and slips. She goes down
hitting her head hard on the concrete floor. She is dazed,
almost unconscious, and starts bleeding from the head. A
kid yells.

LUNCHROOM SHOUTER 1

SHOOTER! He has a gun!

Total chaos erupts. Kids are screaming and running in all
directions. Some kids saw DEBBI fall to the floor hard.
DEBBI reaches her hand to her head. Then some kids see

blood smeared on her hands.

LUNCHROOM SHOUTER 2

She's bleeding! She's shot!

CAT panics and dashes to the nearest door. DALLAS sees blood on DEBBI'S hands and head. DALLAS is frightened at first then calmly picks DEBBI up in his arms like a cheap romance novel, and a little like the drawing he wanted to give her. Carrying DEBBI, DALLAS runs into the same room as CAT.

INT. SCHOOL - STOREROOM

The room is packed with lots of boxes. The room is for storage and has a handyman workshop area. There is a little sawdust on the floor, tools on shelves, and a few pieces of furniture in various states of being repaired. BO, a handyman maintenance worker, is sitting next to an open window getting stoned. He waves his hand to disperse the smoke when they enter, and burns his arm with the joint. A corner of the storeroom is BO's secret break area. There is a TV, comfy chair and a couch to nap on. It's all trashy. He has boxes to cover everything and he starts covering things.

On the other side of the room, DALLAS lays DEBBI down on

boxes that look comfortable. DEBBI is in a haze still almost unconscious. DALLAS is calm but concerned about DEBBI. CAT is freaked out, frantically running around the room looking for the door out.

DALLAS

(to DEBBI)

Are you okay?

DEBBI slowly nods her head yes.

DEBBI

(nodding yes, barely audible)

I think so.

On the other side of the room we see CAT, searching for a way out.

CAT

(frantic)

OH MY GOD, OH MY GOD, WHAT JUST
HAPPENED? WE HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE.

(she doesn't see a door)

OH MY GOD WE'RE TRAPPED!

(she notices BO, to BO)

HOW DO WE GET OUT OF HERE? SOMEONE JUST
LIKE SHOT UP THE LUNCHROOM.

BO

(calm, confused, pretty high)

What the hell are you saying? Little girl you need to relax. You scared the crap out of me.

(slightly scolding, defending his privacy)

I'm on my break here.

(now rambling out loud to himself)

I can't get five minutes without somebody calling me to fix something or change a goddamn light bulb, you can get a goddamn monkey to change a light bulb, teachers have all that education, can't change a light bulb. I'm a goddamn handy man, I got 10 years carpentry experience, I'm changing light bulbs here.

CAT pulls herself together a bit. She walks to BO who is now sitting. Squats to be at his level, and talks slowly as if to a child or someone who doesn't speak English.

CAT

(to BO)

Listen. Something very bad just

happened in the lunchroom. There is a bad boy going around shooting people. We need to get out of this room. Where is the fucking door?

BO

(he didn't really take any of that in except last sentence)

Oh. The door?

(stoner pause)

Didn't you come in through the door?

(baffled)

How did you get in here?

CAT

(loosing her cool)

Dude! The door to outside! Is there a door to the outside. A WAY TO GET OUT!

BO

(not liking her tone, calm)

That is not cool. I don't respond to that kind of verbal discourse, the whole shouting thing. I don't like that.

(pause)

Now, there are two doors.

(he points)

There's the door I think you came in
from which I thought was locked,

(pause, he points)

and there's a door over there behind
those boxes that's screwed shut.

(pause)

The lock is broken so I had to...

CAT

(resigns herself to fate)

Oh my fucking god we're going to die
here.

CAT looks toward DEBBI and sees blood on DEBBI'S hands and
head. She runs to DEBBI and sees more of the blood.

CAT

(high pitched scream)

DEBBI

(high pitched scream)

CAT

You got shot?

DEBBI looks at her hands.

DEBBI

(in shock, panicky)

Am I okay? Am I okay? What happened? Am
I okay?

CAT

You were shot!

DEBBI

Shot!

DALLAS

(eerie calm)

No, no you just slipped. You hit your
head. I think you're okay.

CAT

What are you a fucking doctor? She's
bleeding out of her ears.

DEBBI

What!

DALLAS

No, there's just a little blood but it
got smeared all over.

DALLAS takes a bottle of water from his backpack. He wets

his shirt and uses it to wipe off the blood from her ear, neck, and fingers. He's being very sensual without knowing it. Everyone calms down.

EXT. SCHOOL

A few police are already on the scene. They are really hyped up. There is a perverse thrill to the moment. Nothing like this level of drama has ever happen in this town. They have no idea what to do but they are trying to look like they have it under control. Kids are talking over each other to police about the "shooting".

KIDS

"A kid shot a girl".

"It was Dallas, Dallas Stone".

"It was Debbi. He shot Debbi".

"I saw the gun".

"He got her in the head, I saw blood".

"He dragged her into a room".

"I think he has a bomb".

Massive police activity builds. Police are talking to kids and surrounding the building. A group of police gather behind their cars across a large open area facing the storeroom.

We see RANDY arrive in his Police Chief SUV. He's a macho police chief running for mayor. We move closer to RANDY. He's a little rattled.

RANDY

(walking while talking on a cell
phone to his campaign manager)
... shots fired ... in the lunchroom of the
high school.

INT. ED'S OFFICE

ED is RANDY's campaign manager. We see him at his desk. Behind him we see campaign posters that have a picture of RANDY and the slogan, "Randy Fox, Strength and Faith We can Trust". We also see bumper stickers and other campaign material on ED's desk.

ED

Be calm. Be decisive. Take charge!
(pauses, repeating the campaign
slogan)
Stay on point. This could be an
opportunity. "Strength & Faith We Can
Trust". I'll be there in 10 minutes.

EXT. SCHOOL

RANDY clicks off his cell phone, and picks up his police radio.

RANDY

(still walking, now on a police radio, barking out orders and questions without waiting for responses)

Do we know how many shots? What is he holding? Where is the shooter? Nobody leaves the area. Seal the perimeter. I want a list of everyone who was in the school. Get an emergency warrant for the shooter's house.

He arrives at a cluster of police facing the storeroom. COP 1 is earnest and submissive.

COP 1

(knowing he's not being heard)

Sir, we don't really know what happened. We have conflicting reports from kids.

(pause)

Some say the pops were firecrackers not

gunshots.

(pause)

Some say a girl was shot or taken
hostage, and the kid has a bomb
strapped to himself.

(points to the storeroom door)

We think the kid is in that room. We
don't know who else is in there but we
heard two girls scream.

(pause)

The SWAT team is on their way.

RANDY

(macho)

We don't need a damn SWAT team. Let's
make contact.

COP 1

Shouldn't we, at least wait for a
negotiator, Sir?

RANDY

(cocky)

I'm not going to let this thing spin
out of control.

(he picks up a megaphone)

We have the building surrounded, kid.

(police behind him cringe at his

lack of subtly)

Open the door and step outside with

your hands in the air.

INT. SCHOOL - STOREROOM

Everyone is calm now. DEBBI is sitting up. There are old dusty Venetian blinds covering the windows. The blinds near DALLAS are open. BO is in his "break area". Blinds near BO are also open. BO heard the megaphone but didn't pay attention to what was said. He gets up to head to the window. His stoner brain is all over the place. Before he looks out the window, he turns toward DALLAS, DEBBI, and CAT.

BO

(shouting across the room)

Don't think you all are going to have sex here or any of that kind of thing.

(turning back toward the window,
out loud to himself)

Goddamn, I thought I locked that door.

(he peaks out between blinds,

finally taking in the scene
outside, out loud to himself)
What the fuuuuuck! What is going on?
Holy fffffffuuuu.
(slow deliberate, curious)
That is a serious posse of lawmen.
(growing paranoia)
... big guns in hand,
(pause)
pointed this way.
(pause, with stoner paranoia,
turns and shouts toward CAT)
Hey little girl. What did you say is
going on here? This looks like some
serious shit.
(pause, remembers a little of what
CAT said, toward CAT but mumbled
to himself, incredulous)
You want to go out there?
(reaches for his cordless screw
driver which has gun-like shape,
still mumbling to himself)
I'll unscrew the door but I wouldn't go
out there with those hyped-up, trigger-

happy mother fuckers...

(looks over toward DALLAS, DEBBI,
and CAT)

Hey, little girl?

BO starts to walk toward CAT. He realizes he is exposed to an open window. Deeper paranoia kicks in. He ducks so he is under the window level.

EXT. SCHOOL — POLICE BARCADE

COP 2

(looking through binoculars,
hyped)

Sir, sir, I saw someone at the window.

Adult male.

(pause)

He had something, looked like maybe, a
handgun.

RANDY

I thought shooter was a kid.

RANDY

(to COP 1)

What's the kid's name?

COP 2

Dallas Stone.

RANDY

(into megaphone)

Dallas nobody else needs to get hurt here. Let us send someone in to get the girl you shot.

(aside to cops nearby, trying to demonstrate wisdom and leadership)
See I'm feeling him out. Let's see what he's got.

COP 2

(sees DALLAS)

Sir, I see the kid id'ed as the shooter. He's got blood on his shirt.

(pause)

something under his shirt

(pause)

... oh, shit, there is a wire hanging out ... and ... I can't ... could be some kind of remote trigger.

RANDY

(into megaphone)

DALLAS, stay calm. Nobody wants anybody
else to get hurt.

COP 3 (O.S.)

(over police radio but also gets
broadcast over the megaphone)

I have a head shot.

RANDY quickly moves radio away from megaphone.

INT. SCHOOL - STOREROOM

DEBBI is coming out of her haze now. CAT is still a little frazzled. DALLAS is calm, standing exposed to a window with open blinds. No one except BO heard what was said on the megaphone. BO runs to push DALLAS away from the window. On his way to save DALLAS, BO bangs his thigh into the corner of a desk. The desk is in the middle of the room because it is being repaired.

BO

(screaming in pain, flailing
across the room, and yelling
toward Dallas)

Down! Get down Kid! They're going to

start shooting.

DALLAS moves to avoid BO who ends up on the floor near DALLAS. We see a close-up of BO from DALLAS' POV. BO is looking up at DALLAS.

BO

(looking up toward DALLAS)

Is your name DALLAS kid?

DALLAS

(to BO, while helping him get back
on his feet)

Yeah. Are you okay?

BO sort of has his balance. Everyone is away from the window with the open blinds.

BO

(seeing that no one is now exposed
to an open window, turning to
everyone)

They were about to start shooting.

BO limps over to close the open blind. He is still holding his cordless screw driver.

EXT. SCHOOL — POLICE BARCADE

RANDY

(into megaphone)

DALLAS. Do you have the girl who was shot? Let us get her to a hospital son. You don't want to make this any worse than it already is now.

INT. SCHOOL - STOREROOM

DEBBI and CAT hear the megaphone and are stunned. DALLAS gets curious and walks to peek out the window. DEBBI and CAT are far enough away from DALLAS to talk without him hearing. DEBBI's cell phone rings. She clicks it on.

DEBBI

AMIR. What's happened out there? Did someone get shot?

EXT. SCHOOL

AMIR is off to the side of a crowd. He has a view of the storeroom.

AMIR

Where are you? Are you okay?

DEBBI (O.S.)

Accept for my bloody head I'm fine.

AMIR

(concerned)

What happened? Do you need help?

DEBBI (O.S.)

I'm fine. I just slipped when the shots were fired. I'm in some disgusting room with CAT, a janitor, and some other kid.

AMIR

So you ARE in that room.

(pause)

A bunch of kids are saying Dallas shot you?

INT. SCHOOL - STOREROOM

DEBBI

(to AMIR)

Wait, wait, they think I was shot?

AMIR (O.S.)

It's crazy out here. There's a whole story that DALLAS is wired with a bomb

and has you hostage. And some of the police believe it.

DEBBI

So who was the shooter?

AMIR

There weren't any shots. It was firecrackers. I have video of the whole thing.

DEBBI

I think the kid I'm with is Dallas. They think he is a shooter?

CAT

(hovering around DEBBI, frightful
whispering so DALLAS doesn't hear)

How do you know he isn't?

(pause)

Okay, let's get out of here.

AMIR

It's this big dramatic scene out here.

DEBBI

(a light goes off in her brain, to
AMIR)

Wait.

(pause, growing excitement)

I'm in it.

(pause, more excited)

I'm in the scene.

(pause, plotting)

Is the TV news out there?

CAT

What are you talking about? OH MY GOD
YOU'RE DELIRIOUS! Are you delirious?!
Oh my god we are so going to die.

AMIR (O.S.)

(looking around)

I don't see any yet but they will
definitely be here. This is huge. I've
never seen this many cops. It's a crazy
scene.

DEBBI

(to AMIR, breakthrough
opportunity)

I could get on TV. We can get this on
TV if we set it up right. Call me when
the TV people get here.

(she clicks off the phone, she's
getting more excited, to CAT with
a far off stare)

We can't leave now. It's a school
shooting, a fucking tragedy. I'm the
star victim.

(pause, to herself out loud,
looking out to nowhere)

I need to figure this out. Is there a
TV in here?

(to BO, louder and commanding)

Hey, janitor dude! Is there a TV in
here?

BO is unscrewing and removing boards covering the storeroom
door.

BO

(muttering out loud to himself)

...then the Fire Marshal will come in and

arrest my ass...

(delayed reaction to DEBBI's
request, slightly irritated)

Now they want to watch TV?

(turns toward DEBBI).

First of all, little girl number 2, I'm
not a janitor. I'm a Maintenance
Engineer,

(pause, turning and stepping back)

or you could say I'm a Handyman or a ...

His speech is interrupted when he steps on a board with
protruding screw that pushes deep into his foot. BO
screams.

SHIT, MOTHERFUCKER, SON OF A BITCH,
COCKSUCKER, GOD DAMN, ASS LICKER

We see a board stuck to the bottom of his foot.

INT. EAGLE NEWS — STUDIO PRODUCTION AREA

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

JC, we just got a possible school
shooting over the wire.

JC

(automatic response to PRODUCTION

ASSISTANT)

See who we have in the area.

(to someone off screen)

Tell Tokio we're ready in 15 minutes.

(turns in another direction to
someone off screen)

What do we have after Tokio?

INT. EAGLE NEWS — STUDIO ON AIR

JIM

We're expecting Tokio Hyatt to exit the
building any minute now.

JAN

I'm anxious to see what she'll be
wearing. What do you wear to rehab?

JIM

Knowing Tokio, I'm sure it won't be
much.

They chuckle.

JAN

Well, I'm sure she'll have something
from her line of Tokio Hyatt signature
accessories. She has the cutest bags. I

bought two.

(guilty giggle)

Let's take a look at some of the
designer's Tokio has worn recently.

(Product placement)

We see a screen with multiple windows showing Tokio Hyatt
in different clothes, each window has a title with the
designer name.

EXT. SCHOOL — NEAR POLICE BARCADE

Police are still talking with kids outside the building.
SWAT arrives and takes positions around the building. ED is
talking with RANDY away from other police.

ED

It doesn't matter what happened.
Whether there is a shooter. What
matters is people think a shooter is in
that room. There is a sense of crisis.
A TV crew is coming. They want a story.
This is a big opportunity for your
campaign. This is great exposure. You
need to drag this thing out a bit. At
least get a news conference where you
can put out your message.

RANDY

Ed, maybe we got a crazy kid in there.

ED

(leans in as if whispering)

Nothing happened. Some kid got a video of the whole thing on his phone. It was just a few firecrackers. I had to pay the kid 20 bucks to see it, then another 100 bucks for him to delete it.

(plotting)

But you keep it real out here. It's the perfect situation. Everyone is safe. You show your leadership, "Strength and Faith We Can Trust".

RANDY

(getting the idea now, smiling a little)

Yeah, we'll do a rescue.

ED

Yeah, that's a great idea. You can take a hard line. No negotiation.

(pause)

Maybe you lead the rescue operation

yourself. How fucking great is that?
You can take the lead and be the hero.
You'll take mayor in a landslide. Hell,
we can run with that story all the way
to state senate.

RANDY

(dreamy)

Maybe Governor.

EXT. SCHOOL — PARKING LOT

We see local television news crew arrive.

INT. SCHOOL — STOREROOM

DEBBI's phone rings and she clicks it on.

AMIR (O.S.)

They're here.

DEBBI peaks out the window and sees the TV news crew.

DEBBI

(super excited, to everyone in the
room, as if they would all be
excited)

They're here! They're here!

(to herself)

Okay breathe.

(to AMIR)

Hold on a second

She pulls the phone from her ear and turns to everyone in the room.

(to BO, turning on a bit of her sexy charm)

Hey, handyman dude. IS there a TV in here?

We see BO by his hidden refrigerator, getting a beer. BO is really having a hard time getting around now. On one side his thigh is injured. On the other side he has a punctured foot still attached to the board with the screw. He turns toward DEBBI holding his beer against the burn he got when they first entered the room. In defeat, he points to the TV which is in plain view by the couch in his "secret" break area.

DEBBI

(perky, coquettishly apologetic that she didn't notice it)

Oh!

(satisfied)

Great. That'll work.

(one more logistical question to

BO)

Does it have cable?

We see BO nod yes as he shuffles to the couch with his beer in one hand the cordless screwdriver in the other, and a board attached to his foot.

We see DEBBI talking on the phone again.

(back to AMIR)

I thought of a great scene.

(she slinks off so others can't
hear)

I go out the door with Dallas close behind me as if he has a gun or something. When we get out, I flip around, do some karate move and push him to the ground.

(pause)

That's badass. Right? And, I'll sex it up. I'll be like that Charley's Angels movie.

AMIR (O.S.)

Do you know karate?

DEBBI

(like why does he ask stupid
questions)

I'm an actor. I'll make some moves.

DEBBI makes a karate like gesture while walking back to
peak out the window. She peaks out.

EXT. SCHOOL

AMIR

Hey, this is good, people get excited
when you look out the window.

DEBBI (O.S.)

Oh, right, I need to stay in character.
Was I smiling? I want to look like a
hostage but not desperate.

AMIR

Remember, everyone thinks you were
shot. Just give them a few teaser shots
for now.

DEBBI (O.S.)

Right, maybe I should be a little weak,

a little desperate at the beginning.
That will show my range.

(almost panicking with excitement)

I need a time to rehearse.

AMIR

You can do some test shots now. I have
someone shooting. Look out at one
o'clock.

We see a kid taking video of the storeroom.

Try a few takes. We'll see what it
looks like. I'll call you when the TV
crew is setup.

EXT. SCHOOL — TV CREW AREA

Kids are hovering around the TV van hoping to get picked to
be on TV. SUSAN SHARP a TV reporter takes charge of her
crew. AMIR is behind SUSAN SHARP listening. LUNCHROOM
SHOUTER 1 and 2 are with \$20 KID alongside AMIR.

SUSAN SHARP

(to assistant and camera crew)

Okay, I want the best looking kids. No
disgusting zit-faced kids. I want one
distraught sobbing girl, and a kid that

can confidently talk about what
happened.

(to TV ASSISTANT)

Call EAGLE, we should have video in 10,
ready to go live in 30.

TV ASSISTANT

Who am I calling?

SUSAN SHARP

I don't have a name. Call, 212 786-7437

We see AMIR overhear the number and punch it into his
phone.

We follow TV ASSISTANT as she starts weaving through the
crowd of kids. She is on her phone and looking at kids.
Some kids that are not suitable to be on camera are trying
to say something to the TV ASSISTANT.

UGLY KID 1

It's a mistake. There weren't any
shots.

UGLY KID 2

She slipped.

TV REPORTER ASSISTANT finds a dumb, handsome, macho jock.

TV ASSISTANT

(to JEFF)

Can you tell me what happened?

INT. EAGLE NEWS — FRAME — STUDIO ON AIR

The story breaks, interrupting regular programming. Anchor is mediating discussion between two opposing views on an issue. Each of them appear in a window in the frame.

JIM

(to TV opinionators, looking
slightly off camera)

Jus ... I ... sorry ... I need to cut you off
right their.

(turns, directly to camera but
occasionally looks down or away as
if getting information from O.S.)

We have some breaking news. There has
been school shooting. This is just
coming in. All we know now is that
there has been ... a shooting ... at
Pittsfield High School. Our sister
station KNFX in Pittsfield is on the
scene so we should be getting more
information shortly. Again, we have

just learned about a shooting at
Pittsfield High School, in Pittsfield,
California. We don't know if anyone was
injured. We will track this story for
you as it develops ... wait ... wow! This
is ... We just learned a girl was shot by
a younger classmate. The shooter is
holding hostages and threatening to
blow up the building.

(turns to Gordon, one of the
opinionators)

What do you make of this? Will it ever
stop? Gordon do we need to let everyone
carry a gun? Will that stop these
tragedies?

GORDON

Absolutely. I don't have the details of
this particular incident but the kid is
not going on a rampage if he knows
everyone is armed. Let me just say
this? I grew up on a farm. I knew how
to handle a gun before I was nine years
old. When you deny individuals the
right to bare arms it is a death

sentence. Everyone is a sitting duck except the crazy people. If kids at that school carried guns this would not have happened.

OPINIONATOR 2

(breaking into the conversation)

How can you say that? You can't say that?

GORDON

I just did.

OPINIONATOR 2

How are more guns going to stop this kind of horrific tragedy?

GORDON

Simple. As soon as that crazy kid pulls his weapon. BAM. He's out. In these cases, there is always enough time after the assailant pulls his weapon before he starts shooting. Go back. Go back. Look at the final reports of all the other incidents. Have you looked at those reports?

OPINIONATOR 2

No.

GORDON

Look at those reports. Plenty of time
for someone to shoot the shooter.

OPINIONATOR 2

But this is just one type of case. If
nobody has a gun the kid throws a punch
instead of a bullet.

GORDON

Oh, so then it's okay to beat a girl!

OPINIONATOR 2

That's not what I said.

GORDON

That is exactly what you said.

OPINIONATOR 2

I said ... my point was ... you can't kill
someone with a punch.

(pause)

And if everyone has a gun and shoots
when someone pulls a gun wouldn't the
shooter shooting the shooter get shot?

GORDON

(ignoring the counter argument)

You think if guns are banned, criminals will stop carrying guns because they are illegal?

OPINIONATOR 2

No, I think with fewer guns around there will be fewer spontaneous shootings.

GORDON

You are in lala land. Have you ever owned a gun? Have you ever had a gun pointed in your face? Have you ever even been in a fist fight? No! You grew up in a cushy apartment in Manhattan reading your New York Times. Way far away from the bad guys. You don't know what it's like on the streets.

OPINIONATOR 2

Actually, I grew up in east LA where I saw my cousin murdered in a gang war.

GORDON

Oh, you grew up in LA where people are

even more out of touch with reality.

INT. EAGLE NEWS — STUDIO PRODUCTION AREA

Fade out on-air voices, pull out to JC with CINDY. They both have a cell phone on one ear. JC is motioning with his hands for CINDY to continue talking.

CINDY

The police haven't given us any details. They haven't even confirmed there was a shooting. There are contradicting statements. Hell, this could be a prank to get out of school.

JC

(shouting off screen)

I want titles coming in from the next commercial set. Get someone on titles.

(intense, slightly maniacal, still shouting off screen)

And keep feeding me. I want everything on the storyboard.

(to CINDY)

Watch. I feel like we can make a good story here.

CINDY is still on the phone and walks away. JC walks toward PRODUCTION ASSSISTANT who is in awe of JC's confidence and power. They probably had sex with each other at least once in the past. She is a little turned on sexually during this scene.

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

(excited by the drama, on the
phone, sitting, looking up to JC)
JC, local has video. Ready for go-live
in 20 minutes.

(pause)

And there is a kid who called with some
back-story and video of a hostage.

JC

Get it. Get everything.

PRODUCTION ASSITANT

He wants to be paid.

JC

What the hell does he have?

She hands the phone to JC.

(on the phone to AMIR)

Why the fuck should we pay you?

(listening, smiling, covers the

phone mouthpiece, to PRODUCTION
ASSISTANT)

I love this kid. Did you check if the
mother was really a Playmate?

(PRODUCTION ASSISTANT shakes her
head yes, back to AMIR)

We have a standard rate for material.

(pause, listening)

We can get this all ourselves. You're
just saving us time.

(pause, listening)

I can give you a 20 percent premium but
I need to talk to the girl before we
wire the money.

(pause)

No. We just need to confirm it is
DEBBI.

(pause, he hands the phone back,
to PRODUCTION ASSISTANT)

Pay him. I want everything he has.

(pause)

And let me know when we can work
directly with DEBBI.

(excited, turns back to CINDY)

I have a good feeling about this. We can make something happen.

(to PRODUCTION ASSISTANT)

What about the Chief? Did you feel him out?

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

Yes, he's on board. He's running for Mayor. We're dealing with his campaign manager. He wants a live 20 minute news conference before we start.

JC

That's ridiculous. He has nothing to talk about. I won't give him more than 3 minutes live until we see what he brings.

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

He also has an idea for a rescue.

JC

No. No. He'll do what we tell him to do. We decide how this thing ends.

(pause)

And we haven't made any decisions yet.

That is not negotiable. Otherwise the deal is off. We'll pull the cameras.

(turns away, pause, then turns back)

And if AMIR's window shot of the DEBBI is any good, loop it behind everything. We need to start the draw.

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

(excited, pleased with her self, to JC)

Done.

JC

(to PRODUCITON ASSISTANT)

That's my girl.

INT. HOMES AND PUBLIC PLACES

The general public is drawn to the "breaking news". We see people drawn to televisions at airports, diners, lobbies, senior citizen centers, and group work places like auto repair shops.

EXT. SCHOOL — TV CREW AREA

TV ASSISTANT brings JEFF to SUSAN SHARP. JEFF's friends, SIDEKICK 1 and SIDEKICK 2 are with him. Other kids,

including LUNCHROOM SHOUTER 1, follow and swarm in front of the camera. SUSAN is happy with the selection of JEFF because he has a good look.

SUSAN SHARP

(to TV ASSISTANT and JEFF)

Great.

TV ASSISTANT

(to SUSAN SHARP)

He has the headline, but he needs help with details. He's pretty good with color commentary.

A bunch of kids say they know details about what happened.

KIDS

(a chorus of volunteers)

I know what happened.

I know.

I saw the shooting.

TV ASSISTANT

(to SUSAN SHARP while gesturing to

LUNCHROOM SHOUTER 1)

He has the story.

SUSAN SHARP

(smiles at LUNCHROOM SHOUTER 1)

Great. Just step to the side of him.

(points to JEFF)

Great. Perfect.

(turns to cameraman, pointing to

LUNCHROOM SHOUTER 1)

I don't want him on screen.

(points to SIDEKICK 1 and SIDEKICK

2)

Just the other two.

SIDEKICK 1 and SIDEKICK 2 get excited.

JEFF

(to SIDEKICK 1 and SIDEKICK 2)

Idiots. You can't smile. You have to
look sad or angry.

SUSAN SHARP

(still facing crew)

We need to deliver this in 5 minutes.

(turns back to JEFF)

Just relax. We'll do a few takes. If
you don't know the answer ...

(points to LUNCHROOM SHOUTER 1)

he can whisper it to you. Great.

(turns to cameraman)

Go.

(looking into the camera, walking
back to JEFF)

I'm standing here with one student who
was touched by this terrible tragedy.

Can you tell us what happened?

We see JEFF with SUSAN holding a microphone in front of
him. Along side JEFF are SIDEKICK 1 and SIDEKICK 2, one sad
the other angry. JEFF has a great TV presence,
appropriately excited, looks into the camera and turns his
head occasionally to look at the school. He is animated
without moving off camera.

JEFF

(his best impression of an
appropriate emotion for the
moment)

It was horrible. It happened so fast.
He had several weapons. A friend of
mine saw the bomb strapped to his
chest.

(SIDEKICK 1 and SIDEKICK 2 are

nodding their heads yes)

It was crazy ... we never thought something like this could happen at Pittsfield High School.

SUSAN SHARP

I know this is hard for everyone here. Can you describe the scene of the shooting?

JEFF

(looks to LUNCHROOM SHOUTER 1, then looks down, pauses)

LUNCHROOM SHOUTER 1

(whispering)

It happened in the lunchroom, there were 3 shots. He took hostages to the storeroom.

JEFF

(takes a few deep breathes, looks at the camera, slightly emotional to cover the pause).

Sorry. It's just hard.

(pretends to pull himself
together)

We were in the lunchroom and POP, POP,
POP, 3 shots, someone saw the bomb so
everyone ran out quick. The shooter
took hostages into a side room and
bolted the door.

SUSAN SHARP

We can't imagine how scary that must
have been.

JEFF

(switching to brave emotion)

We weren't scared. Our first reaction
was to disarm him but he ran out too
quickly and bolted the door, and the
bomb. The police wanted everyone out.
The police were here in like 20
seconds. I just want to say how much we
appreciate our police for their rapid
response.

SUSAN SHARP

(giving guidance for his
performance)

Good. Good. Now I'm going to ask you
about the shooter and the victim.

LUNCHROOM SHOUTER 1

Dallas Stone and...

SUSAN SHARP

(quick to JEFF)

Don't say their names.

(pause)

Tell me what are they like, are they
good students.

(pause, back into her TV
interviewing voice)

Can you describe the shooter?

JEFF

(a hint of somber)

He was a loner. He seemed a little
weird but...

LUNCHROOM SHOUTER 1

(whispering)

He's into military games and hardware.

JEFF

I guess you never know. He played a lot of shooter type video games.

SUSAN SHARP

(to JEFF)

Great. That was great.

(to crew)

I think that's good enough for now. Get a few more girls crying with boys consoling them, then send it up to EAGLE.

INT. EAGLE NEWS — FRAME — STUDIO ON AIR

Large screen in background shows them coming back from commercial with the dramatic graphic and headline, "TRAGEDY AT PITTSFIELD HIGH". We then see a multi-window screen with separate images of JAN, DOCTOR KROUSE, and a meaningless loop of police and kids running at the scene of the school.

JAN

With me via satellite is Dr. Julia Krouse, an expert on child violence. She recently authored, "Your Son Is A Killer".

We see the book cover in one window of the screen.

(turns to DR. KROUSE)

Doctor Krouse, what do you make of all this? A 15 year old boy shooting a female classmate?

DOCTOR KROUSE

Well, this incident doesn't surprise me. In my book, "Your Son Is A Killer", I explain that boys are genetically predisposed to kill,

(incoherent)

violence, drugs, video games, broken homes, single mothers...

JAN

(interrupting)

Oh, we should tell our audience we just learned the shooter's mother is Amber Stone, a former Playboy Playmate and a single parent.

One window on the screen switches to show a sexy picture of AMBER when she was a Playmate.

DOCTOR KROUSE

(interrupting)

An environment with sex, drugs, who
knows...

JAN

(interrupting)

AMBER was a Playmate 10 years ago. Are
you saying Playboy Playmates shouldn't
ever have children, or that single
parents should give up their children?

DOCTOR KROUSE

(looking truly like all her talk
is meaningless blather)

I'm not saying anything...

We pull out to see more of the studio and see DOCTOR KROUSE
who is in another part of the studio, not "via satellite".

INT. EAGLE NEWS — PRODUCTION AREA

JC is walking through the production area with CINDY. In
the background we see on air images and the sign that
reads, "Welcome, National News Network associates, together
we are the news".

JC

(into phone)

I want to drive this into primetime.
This story has a lot of potential. We
have great leverage. I want at least
three scenarios for the ending.

CINDY overhears this and stops walking.

(JC continues into the phone)

I'm on my way.

JC flips off the phone. CINDY starts walking and catches
up.

CINDY

What's happening?

JC

You should come to this. You can help
us keep it real.

CINDY

(her head is spinning)

Wait, wait

She grabs his arm.

Stop!

(pause)

What's happening? "Scenarios for the ending"? You prep for different endings? Maybe you should put some effort into finding out what the fuck is going on. Which, so far, is nothing.

(pause)

I'm pretty sure this is a prank or some kid heard a noise, freaked, then it snow-balled.

JC

(slightly disappointed but ever the optimist)

Cin, Cin, why are you being so old school? I want to show you the future, my special sauce. You should come. I want you to come. See me work my magic.

INT. SCHOOL – STOREROOM

We see shots of DEBBI that include hands, neck, lips, legs, ear. DALLAS is looking down at a remote in his hand. The remote has a small screen. DEBBI is pleading intensely for DALLAS to go along with her plan. Her hand is not quite innocently on his leg. As he listens, DALLAS is overwhelmed

by the situation and smitten by the close contact with
DEBBI.

DEBBI

(her most sexy pleading, to
DALLAS)

Please, oh, please, I need you.

(pause)

Nothing bad can happen. I really want
this. You can give me what I want most.

(pause)

I will soooo love you for this.

CAT (O.S)

(from across the room)

Hey get your hand off his leg girl.

He's a minor.

DALLAS

(to DEBBI)

Can't they arrest us for false..

(doesn't know the legal term)

for making up a story?

DEBBI

No, no, we didn't, they.. we're just
going along with it. The cops are cool

with it. Everybody wants this to
happen. It's great TV.

(she notices the remote DALLAS is
holding)

What is that?

DALLAS

(showing her)

It's a video remote.

DEBBI

(a little confused but always
happy to see herself on screen)

How does it have a picture of me?

DALLAS

(he shows her a tiny lens at the
end of his necklace)

I use the remote to see the image,
zoom, and move the lens,

(shifts excitedly into techie
geek)

it's a six millimeter lens with one
millimeter gyroscopic sensors for
stabilization...

DEBBI

(interrupting)

So you have like lots of video of me? I
want to see what you have.

DEBBI looks O.S., sees something she doesn't like and she turns angry. We see the TV with EAGLE NEWS. There is a looping video clip in the background taken from AMIR's video camera. It shows DEBBI when she made an appearance at the window. DEBBI's face is pixilated.

DEBBI

(surprised, to self)

Why aren't they showing my face?

(irritated, looking around to
everyone)

Why aren't they showing my face?

BO is on the couch with his leg propped up on a box, a board still attached to his foot. There are some first aid supplies on an adjacent box.

BO

Maybe it's one of those deals where
they need to notify your parents before
they can show who you ...

DEBBI

(doesn't let BO finish the
sentence)

Fuck! My fucking mother!

(pause)

She's fucking in Maui with her cell
phone off.

(picks up her phone to call AMIR,
and talking out loud to herself
with urgency)

Amir you need to fix this shit.

BO

You got some mouth on you honey.

DEBBI

(angry with the situation,
dismissive to BO)

Screw you.

BO

(he's rolling with everything now)
Do the flirty little girl thing. I like
that girl better.

BO's legs turns slightly.

(wincing)

Motherfucker.

DALLAS

(to BO)

You have to let me take out the screw.

We see a closer image of BO's foot from DALLAS' POV.

BO

(knowing it needs to be done and
will be painful)

Okay kid. Let's do this thing.

(handing DALLAS the cordless
screwdriver)

slowly, it's all set, don't press, just
let it do its thing, and hold the board
steady.

BO turns toward TV, his eyes widen. He raises his hand for
DALLAS to stop.

(to DALLAS)

Wait. Hold on kid.

(pause, reacting to the TV,
shaking his head, slightly
exasperated but not surprised)

Fuck me. Here we go.

BO pulls rolling papers and a small bag of weed out of this pocket.

INT. EAGLE NEWS — FRAME — STUDIO ON AIR

We see a split screen with JAN on one side and a picture of BO looking like a criminal with the subtitle "hostage?".

JAN

...again, we just learned that one of the hostages has a criminal record. The man, Booker T. Randolph, is a school janitor.

(transition pause)

Very little information has come from the scene of this tragic event but we're filling in what we can, and we have boots on the ground.

(pauses briefly, turns slightly)

We have a live report from our sister station, KNFX, in Pittsfield, California. Susan Sharp is standing by, Susan.

We see SUSAN in a window on screen, then --

EXT. SCHOOL — TV CREW AREA

Local TV news start live broadcast interspersed with pre-recorded interviews.

SUSAN SHARP

(into camera)

JAN, earlier today, a 15-year-old student, now identified as Dallas Stone, drew a small handgun and shot a female classmate. The incident took place in the school lunchroom just after noon at,

(points to school)

Pittsfield High School. The shooter then proceeded to take a number of hostages, threatened to explode a bomb. Police are keeping quiet about details but they say,

(she looks down as if to notes)

they consider the student a terrorist and they will not negotiate under any circumstance.

JAN (O.S.)

So there's a standoff. What about the

girl who was shot?

SUSAN

That's right JAN, the situation now,
here, is a standoff.

(slight pause)

We do not have confirmation on the
condition of the classmate. Our sources
indicate she may have been shot in the
head before being taken hostage.

Students and parents are stunned.

EXT. SCHOOL — EARLIER IN THE DAY

SUSAN pauses to wait for pre-recorded video. We see video
of good looking kids crying and comforting each other. Then
to a segment of JEFF talking.

JEFF

(on pre-recorded video)

We were in the lunchroom then POP, POP,
POP, 3 shots.

EXT. SCHOOL — TV CREW AREA

JAN (O.S.)

Thanks Susan, for that update.

SUSAN SHARP

This is Susan Sharp reporting live from
Pittsfield, California.

The red camera light goes off. The shoot is over.

(pauses, to crew and herself)

I rocked. That was great. I nailed it.

Live. On the BIG stage. Woooo!

INT. EAGLE NEWS – FRAME – STUDIO ON AIR

We see a split screen with JAN and a video loop showing various scenes including, police running and pixilated DEBBI. Another window cycles between, BO looking like a criminal with the title "hostage?", AMBER with the title "Mom Was A Porn Model". Then DOCTOR KROUSE appears in a window on screen.

JAN

Let's get back to Doctor Krouse.

Doctor, I interrupted you earlier. You
were talking about how broken homes
fuel this kind of violence.

We see DOCTOR KROUSE in a frame.

DOCTOR KROUSE

Well, in my book,

(she holds up the book)

"Your Son Is A Killer", I explain it is not so much that the home fuels violence. The violence is innate. The problem with the broken home, a single mother, without a father, the boy can't seriously be threatened with death. A chemical change occurs in the brain when a young boy is terrified by a man in the house, and that has a dampening affect on the boy's violent tendencies. Violence quells violence. We all know that.

INT. EAGLE NEWS - CONFERENCE ROOM

The EAGLE NEWS conference room is glassed in and looks out to the on air studio and production areas. JC is in the room with two of his staff, JESSIE and BRUCE who are both wearing telephone headsets and typing on laptops. They think JC is an asshole but they are obedient showing phony respect and suppressed resentment. JC is standing in the room and talking to JESSIE and BRUCE

JC

(hyped up, scolding)

We've been ready with live shot for
over an hour and we haven't made
anything happened. We're still on act
one. We're going to loose the audience.
What's after KROUSE?

(pause, arrogant, frustrated with
the lack of competence,
condescending instruction to
BRUCE)

Do you have DEBBI on the phone yet?

BRUCE sheepishly nods yes, presses a few keys, and points
to JC to indicated he transferred DEBBI to him. JC's phone
rings.

JC

DEBBI?

INT. SCHOOL - STOREROOM

DEBBI

(excited)

Yes.

JC (O.S.)

Hi this is JC. I'm sure AMIR told you
who I am.

AMIR (O.S.)

Yes, yes. We're waiting on the phone 10
minutes for you.

JC (O.S.)

(surprised)

Amir? We agreed I would have direct
contact with DEBBI.

AMIR (O.S.)

Yes. You may talk directly. I'm just
here to

(pause)

chaperone.

DEBBI

Amir is my agent.

JC (O.S.)

Okay, whatever.

(pause)

DEBBI I want to do a little teasing
now. Are you ready for that?

DEBBI

What do you want me to do?

AMIR (O.S.)

First, now that you have "direct"
contact, we want to see DEBBI's face
without the pixilation.

INT. EAGLE NEWS - CONFERENCE ROOM

JC

(slightly irritated)

Right, right. They are doing that now.

JC gestures to BRUCE who is also on the conference call.

BRUCE nods and gestures back that he is on it.

(to DEBBI)

So in the meantime, let's go over what
I want you to do for the teaser.

DEBBI (O.S.)

(eager)

I'm ready for anything.

JC

Okay, good. I want you to mix some kind
of liquid that looks like blood.

DEBBI (O.S.)

Oh, that's easy I can use my own blood.

JC

(appreciating her sacrifice)

Good, good. It just needs to look realistic. You don't need to draw much blood. You can mix it with water.

DEBBI (O.S.)

No, no, my head is bloody. I can use that.

JC

(a little off guard)

Whatever you're comfortable with.

(pause)

I want you to go to the window and write something in blood with your fingers. Maybe wipe the window first so it's more legible. No, don't wipe. It'll be better to smear the dirt.

DEBBI (O.S.)

Oh, that's good, I like that. What should I write? I don't want to write help. I don't want to seem helpless.

JC

(irritated by her demand)

You'll do what I want...

(catches himself, he knows she is
key to making things happen)

no, no, I don't want you to be
helpless.

INT. SCHOOL — STOREROOM

JC (O.S.)

(trying to be amenable)

Let's. How about?

(he can't help but give orders,
with jolly confidence)

No, no, I just want you to write, "he
has a bomb".

AMIR (O.S.)

Okay DEBBI, they're showing the clip
without pixels over your face.

JC (O.S.)

(a little commanding)

Okay DEBBI. Go to the window now.

DEBBI

I need to get the blood.

JC

First, just go show your face then pull
back. I want to get peoples' attention.

DEBBI walks toward the window. She turns to CAT.

DEBBI

(to CAT)

Get some water. Then stand behind me
with it.

DEBBI approaches the window.

EXT. SCHOOL — CROWD

Crowd reacts when they see something at the window.

CROWD

Ooooh, look.

It's the girl.

INT. EAGLE NEWS — ON AIR SCREEN

We see a closer image of DEBBI. She appears and disappears
from the window then starts writing.

JIM (O.S.)

Apparently...we think...this is the girl
who was shot. She appears to be okay.

JAN (O.S.)

She must be terrified.

JIM (O.S.)

I'm sure. Certainly.

JAN (O.S.)

She seems to be writing something now.

JIM (O.S.)

(growing alarm)

We believe...we learned she is writing
with what appears to be blood...her own
blood.

JAN (O.S.)

Can you make out the words Jim?

JIM (O.S.)

Seems like...I can't quite...

(pause, elongated pronunciation)

he

(pause)

has...

JAN (O.S.)

She's crying out for help.

INT. EAGLE NEWS - CONFERENCE ROOM

JC

(very pleased with himself)

This is awesome! Half the TV's in the country will be tune-in to see this.

(especially pleased with himself, giddy)

Young, pretty girl writing in blood.

I'm a fucking genius.

(to BRUCE)

Okay, call and tell the chief we're going to him right after this.

(turns toward JESSIE, to her cleavage)

Are you ready to show me something yet?

JESSIE

(cowed)

Yes, we have three scenarios depending on who you want to be the star: standard SWAT break-in, shooter's mother breaks through police line to

stop her boy, DEBBI's boyfriend jumps through the skylight to rescue her.

JC

Did we get the mother on board?

JESSIE

Not exactly. Police are holding her. She's like a wild cougar. We would just let her go. She'll go straight for the door.

JC

It doesn't work. There aren't any good follow stories.

(pause, more cutting about the "stupid" idea)

And she's saving the shooter. Nobody wants the shooter saved. And why would the chief let her make him look incompetent?

(pause, to JESSIE)

Didn't think that one through did you? Good thing you're cute.

(pause)

But, the mother running. We want to see

the mother running at some point. Let's have her bounce toward the hand-cuffed boy. Two cameras, front and side. Then maybe the police pin her.

(pause)

Why do I have to come up with all the good ideas?

(pause, to JESSIE)

What else?

JESSIE

The chief wants to lead..

JC

(interrupting)

The chief! Who gives a flying fuck what the chief wants. What does he know about drama.

(arrogant)

Everyone wants to write the story.

BRUCE

(to JC, with a bit of ass-kissing)

I like your boyfriend rescue idea best.

JESSIE

(more ass-kissing)

Me too. Yeah, it's brilliant. Then we have great follow with DEBBI and the boyfriend. That could almost be a weekly segment. We could have people hassle them, boyfriend defends her, gets arrested ... alcohol, under age sex ...

JC

(appreciating himself)

yeah that's pretty good stuff. The first thing off the top of my head.

(he gives JESSIE a condescending and inappropriately stroke on her head and back)

Get on the phone with AMIR.

(he starts to walk away then turns back)

Don't give him the whole script. Just tell him what we need a boyfriend to do. See if he cast that good-looking jock we used earlier. We need a good presence. The boyfriend will be the

star.

BRUCE

(to JC)

Our agreement with Amir is that DEBBI
is the star.

JC

(to BRUCE)

You say what you need to say, when you
need to say it.

(pause, to JESSIE)

Can you handle Amir? You need to assure
him DEBBI will star. Just make sure we
get the boyfriend to hit his spots.

(pause)

And I want to talk with DEBBI again.

(pause, he sees CINDY coming
toward the room, to JESSIE)

Let's have Cin look over the script.

EXT. SCHOOL — NEWS CONFERENCE AREA

The news conference has not started. We see the full scene
with the TV camera, people milling around, and spectators.
RANDY is on a slightly raised stage and behind a podium
with mounted microphones. RANDY's campaign poster is tacked

to the podium. RANDY is holding notes and talking with, ED, his campaign manager who is in front of the stage. Behind RANDY we see the school with an American flag. There is a tree slightly behind RANDY to the side and it has an American flag mounted on it. There are a few cops herding people so they won't be in view of the camera. ED shouts off screen.

ED

(looking off screen)

Can we get a few more microphones setup here. Just a couple more would be fine.

(he turns in a different direction)

We want a flurry of flashes as he walks up to the podium. Let's test the flashes.

We pull and see a bars of flashes mounted on tripods. Then we see a flurry of flashes. We still see RANDY in the background, he raises his hand to shield his eyes from the flashes.

(turning back to the podium)

Okay, we're almost ready, get in position.

RANDY stands in front of the microphones. Just as ED is directing RANDY, someone comes in view and places another stand with more microphones.

(to RANDY)

No, no, you walk up to the podium just after we go live.

RANDY looks around, confused, he's not sure if ED is talking to him. Finally, RANDY points to himself to confirm ED is talking to him. RANDY nods his head to indicate he understands. He walks off the podium. Just as RANDY starts walking away, TV ASSISTANT shouts,

TV ASSISTANT

LIVE in

(pause)

THREE

(pause)

TWO

(pause)

ONE

RANDY didn't hear his cue. He turns and stands in ready position off camera. There are two cops next to him. They nudge him to go. RANDY resists, looks toward his campaign manager who is waving like crazy for RANDY to walk up to

the podium. RANDY collects himself and goes into macho character. He approaches the podium very self-assured. Two cops follow him and stand behind him.

INT. EAGLE NEWS — CONFERENCE ROOM

JC, BRUCE, JESSIE, and CINDY are turned toward a TV monitor that is in the room. CINDY is looking down confused and horrified, reading the scenario JC and his team developed. CINDY pulls JC aside as RANDY starts talking. Through this scene we mostly see JC talking to CINDY and others, but we shift audio focus at times to RANDY on TV.

JC

(appreciating the stagecraft)

The set design is nice. Okay, let's see what he's got.

CINDY

(to JC)

What is this? I don't even understand what this is? What is it?

JC

(thinking CINDY doesn't like the
scenario)

We can still make changes. You don't
think it will work?

RANDY (O.S.)

... in control here on the scene. People
have put a great deal of faith in me to
resolve this tragedy. I can assure
everyone I have the strength to see
this through so every man, woman, and
child is safely brought home.

(pause)

And trust that I will not negotiate but
will capture the assailant so that
justice will be done. God, entrusted..

JC

(turning toward TV, ignoring
CINDY, to himself)

What's happening here?

(talking to JESSIE)

He's off script. He's way off script.

(not happy but always optimistic,
to JESSIE and BRUCE)

Okay, okay, we can work with this but I
want to start before he tries to jump
us with his own rescue scene. JES, get
AMIR, we're going early.

(he turns to CINDY, smiling)

We're still working out the kinks.

(quoting Donald Rumsfeld)

You go to war with the army you have,
right? Can't always control reality.

(points to TV)

This is just filler anyway. We had to
throw a bone to the chief. He's
basically a good guy. Cooperative.

CINDY

(awakening realization, toward JC,
to herself out loud)

You are out of your mind. You are
literally crazy. This can't be...

JC

(barking instructions to BRUCE)

I want to go full screen. We see
something on the roof, zoom in on roof,

the boyfriend drops down, back to the full shot of door. When it opens zoom into through the door. They should be in position so we see some action, then follow out.

(pause)

DEBBI says they have video inside too. We'll play that in the seven o'clock hour.

RANDY (O.S.)

...I put my faith in God so that the citizens of Pittsfield may put their faith in me, and rely on my strength to deliver us...

BRUCE

JC, Tokio Hyatt has called a bunch of times. She's pissed we're holding her.

JC

She can't see we're covering a crisis? Jesus. The world doesn't revolve around her sweet ass. Tell her we may bump rehab to tomorrow but keep the cameras on location. If this school thing runs

out of juice later we may want to
follow her to a club tonight.

INT. SCHOOL - STOREROOM

They are all watching EAGLE NEWS. DEBBI and CAT are
standing. BO and DALLAS are on the couch watching.

RANDY (O.S.)

... Thank you. God bless America.

BO

(to DEBBI)

I don't get why you want to be on TV so
bad.

(pause)

Trust me. No point being famous if
you're not rich. It's just a big
hassle. People come...

DEBBI

Well, you know what. Nobody wants to
look at a big loser janitor. So maybe
it doesn't matter what you think.

BO

See now, that's just mean. That's what
happens to people if they don't keep

their head. It gets worse when you get more famous. That girl Tokio Hyatt, now she's all messed up on drugs.

DEBBI

Well you know what. Everybody loves "THAT GIRL". People want to see her, want to be her. People follow her. People do what she does. People love her.

BO

Well, it don't always work that way. Someone put a video of me on that YouTube site. They catch you doing something stupid then everyone is like, "hey, you're the stoned dude who...".

(correcting DEBBI's earlier assertion)

And, little girl number 2, plenty of people want to look at me. That video got like 50,000 hits.

EXT. SCHOOL — NEWS CONFERENCE AREA

RANDY and ED are talking.

ED

(to RANDY)

...yeah, no, I think it went really well.
We'll fix a few things for the next
spot. That will be longer. We'll have
the whole rescue to cover.

RANDY

Yeah, for the rescue, I don't like the
boyfriend on the roof thing.

ED

No, don't worry. We're going to preempt
that. I have someone working on a
script. EAGLE will be live so we can do
whatever we want.

INT. SCHOOL - STOREROOM

DEBBI's phone rings. DEBBI walks away to take the call.

DEBBI

(to AMIR, into phone)

Boyfriend? What?

(emphatic)

No, no, no! A boyfriend rescue would
make him the star.

AMIR (O.S.)

It's a role. You're the damsel in
distress.

DEBBI

No! This is my chance for a breakout
performance. I don't want to get pigeon
holed into being the helpless girl.

(pause)

So, it will be a live shot, right?

(pause)

So, okay then it doesn't matter. We can
agree to anything. I'll do whatever I
want. That's perfect.

(pause)

I need to get ready.

DEBBI clicks off the phone and walks towards the sink area
to apply the finishing touches on her "victim" hair and
make-up.

EXT. SCHOOL – POLICE AREA

Police attention seems to be heightened in preparation for
some kind of action. RANDY is barking out commands
directing his troops into position. ED walks up to RANDY
and they begin to talk and walk away from other police.

ED

(loud whisper to RANDY)

...That's right. Good, sounds like you got it down. So EAGLE is live now. They asked us to get the boyfriend in position.

RANDY

Who is the boyfriend? Where is he?

ED

We're holding him.

RANDY

What if they got another boyfriend?

ED

(a little frustrated with his candidate)

Don't worry about the boyfriend. How are they going to get a kid on the roof without us?

RANDY

Yeah, I guess. Good point.

ED

Anyway, I think this is a good time to

start. Let's start in the next five minutes.

INT. SCHOOL — STOREROOM

DALLAS is sitting on the couch next to BO. The board is off BO's foot and his foot is wrapped in a bandage. DALLAS occasionally looks away toward DEBBI.

DALLAS

(to BO)

How's your foot? Do you need anything?

BO

I'm fine.

(pause, stoned, philosophical)

Another couple thousand years and no one will remember any of this shit.

BO picks up and lights a partially smoked joint. He takes a hit then instinctively offers some to DALLAS.

BO

(apologizing to DALLAS)

Sorry kid, I should have offered some earlier.

DALLAS

No thanks. I don't smoke.

BO

Yeah, you're a good kid.

(back to stoner wisdom sharing)

another 100,000 years and they'll look back to us like we were monkeys.

(pause, in a lower tone)

So I noticed the way you've been looking at that girl. Seems like you got the hots for her.

(rambling like a stoner)

She's a little tiger. You sure you want to go there?

(not waiting for an answer)

I guess she's a hottie. If I were your age I'd go crazy if I could get a shot at that.

(DALLAS is getting uncomfortable,
stoner pause, revelation)

You know what? She's looks kind of...

(stoner pause)

right, I get it.

(stoner pause, stoner revelation)

She's your mother. They say we're all after someone like our mother. It's

some crazy psychological shit.

(with emphasis)

And your mother is hot.

(DALLAS is really uncomfortable,
pause, catching himself)

No, sorry, forget that. I don't want to
make it weird for you. Anyway, you
should go for it.

(pause, fatherly)

You should go ask her out now before
all the action, before she gets
"famous". She owes you one. Go for it.

DALLAS

I don't know. Maybe when it's over.

BO

(more fatherly advice)

Kid, there is never a good time. If you
asked her this morning you might not be
sitting in this shit hole surrounded by
the Pittsfield gun club.

(pause)

Just go do it. What's the worst that
could happen?

DALLAS feels really awkward from this conversation. He's happy to get up from the couch. He's conflicted about whether to ask out DEBBI. He tentatively walks to his backpack and pulls out a rolled up drawing.

INT. EAGLE NEWS — CONFERENCE ROOM

JC is in the room with BRUCE and JESSIE.

BRUCE

(to JC)

Okay, everyone is in position. We are ready to go.

They all turn to watch the TV.

JC

(excitedly appreciating himself)

This is going to be my masterpiece.

INT. SCHOOL - STOREROOM

DALLAS approaches DEBBI who is still prepping and feeling pressured to start.

DEBBI

(to DALLAS, as he approaches)

Thanks you soooo much for doing this.

Oh, yeah, and I want to see those

videos but I need to get ready.

(turns, commanding)

Don't show these scenes to anyone
before I see them.

(realizing implications of DALLAS
having the video)

We can't put these out unedited. I need
to have the rights...

DALLAS

(shy but interrupting)

So, I, before this all happened, I was
about to, in the lunch room, I was
coming over to ask you if you would,
sometime, want to do something, and I
drew this for you.

CAT is hearing all of this too. DEBBI reacts with a "are
you kidding" smile then takes the drawing. DEBBI and CAT
look at the drawing.

CAT

Ooooooh, that is so cute. What is that
you and DEBBI? DEBBI you are like so
warrior queen...

DEBBI hands the drawing back to DALLAS.

DEBBI

(laughing, belittling)

What are you like 12?

(turning back to the mirror,
pause, to DALLAS dismissive)

Can you ask BO if he has any more
bottled water? I don't think he likes
me.

DALLAS is humiliated, crushed. Paralyzed at first then
wanting to cry, then angry. He runs toward the door. DEBBI
turns. Sees DALLAS run.

DEBBI

(high-pitched scream)

DEBBI runs to stop DALLAS but can't get to him before he's
out the door.

EXT. SCHOOL — OUTSIDE STOREROOM

DALLAS is frozen. We see the opening scene of the movie. We
see a close-up of DALLAS sweating, trembling, motionless
like a deer in headlights. Pan around to see guns pointing
at DALLAS from every direction. Police and Special Weapons
And Tactics (SWAT) team are shouting in slow motion for
DALLAS to put his hands in the air. We see part of

something under DALLAS's shirt, strapped to his chest and a something that looks kind of like a remote control in one hand. We cut around to Police and SWAT team but do not show whole faces, just guns, arms propped up holding guns, and hands on guns with some trembling fingers, eyes, mouths. More slow-motion shouting for DALLAS to put his hands in the air. DALLAS is frozen. More shouting. DALLAS slowly starts to move his trembling arms. A shot rings out.

INT. SCHOOL — STOREROOM

The shot from outside went through the window and hit BO in the arm. We see BO grab his arm at first in slow motion, then regular speed.

BO

MOTHER FUCKER! SON OF A BITCH! GOD

DAMN! TRIGGER HAPPY SONS A BITCHES!

BO is hopping around, limping from previous injuries.

EXT. SCHOOL — OUTSIDE STOREROOM

DEBBI ran toward the TV camera but she was quickly taken to the ground (to protect her) by a member of SWAT. She's trying to get away because she knows she's not visible to the camera. The SWAT guy thinks she's delirious.

DEBBI

(writhing, like a crazy person,
trying to free herself)

Let me go! Let me go you idiot! This is
my scene. Let me go you fucking
asshole.

INT. EAGLE NEWS – STUDIO ON AIR

We see the same scene as we saw when the movie opened with
EAGLE NEWS on air.

JAN

(turns, directly to camera but
occasionally looks down or away as
if getting information from O.S.)

We have some breaking news related to
the events unfolding

(pause)

There are reports of an explosion or
gunshot.

JIM

A loud noise. We learned ... there is
apparently ...

(pause)

something is happening, unfolding now

EXT. SCHOOL — WIDE SHOT TOWARD STOREROOM

We see SWAT running into the storeroom. We see the back of a SWAT guy who is holding DEBBI down. DALLAS is on the ground pinned down handcuffed and surrounded by a few members of SWAT. CAT is trying to protect DALLAS. She is yelling at SWAT members and trying to push them away from DALLAS.

INT. EAGLE NEWS — CONFERENCE ROOM

JC is pissed. He's in the room with BRUCE and JESSIE.

JC

(to no one in particular)

What the hell happened?! God damn it.
This is not the script. Where is the
boyfriend? Get AMIR on the phone. I
want to talk to the chief. Why can't
people follow a simple god damn script?

(to JESSIE, scolding)

Did you give them the right fucking
script?

(to BRUCE)

Cut to commercial. Call Tokio. Tell her
we'll be ready in 5 minutes.

(to BRUCE and JESSIE)

Do you think you can handle that scene
by yourselves or do I need to babysit
everything you do?

CINDY walks into the conference room. JC tries to pull
himself together. JC is disappointed and angry but trying
not to show it. Trying to brush it off he starts to act
like a drunkard.

(walking to CINDY, shifting to his
ever optimist side, to CINDY's
cleavage with a smile)

Well, sometimes reality happens.

(pause)

Hey, Cin, let me buy you a drink. Get
to know each other a little better.

Loosen up.

(getting a little bolder, sloppy)

You can't resist me forever, Cin. I'll
give you something good for your book.

(diving off the cliff)

See if I can find where you're hiding
that microphone.

CINDY

(ignoring his request, smiling a

little)

What are you going to do with yourself

JC?

JC

What do you mean?

CINDY

(looks at a her watch)

Oh, he hasn't called you yet. Whoops.

My bad.

JC

I don't understand.

CINDY

(almost empathetic for his general
obliviousness)

That is so true.

JC's phone rings. CINDY is almost overwhelmed with
anticipation of the coming scene.

JC

(confused, slowly reaches to click
on phone)

EXEC (O.S.)

JC, I was planning to come see you but

I have to leave early today.

(pause)

I got word from above that we're shifting things around a bit. They feel like it's time to mix things up.

(pause)

EAGLE is the big fish now but the swamp is still draining.

(pause)

Some of these NATIONAL folks have good ideas. We're going to try a few different things. Get some new blood to run things.

JC

I don't understand.

EXEC (O.S.)

It's just business. Nothing personal. I think you're a good kid. You did some great work for us.

(pause)

We're just moving in a new direction.

(pause)

We got to get on board with this whole citizen journalism thing.

JC

(almost pleading)

I'm sorry the whole school shooting scene got screwed up today. Just a few too many loose ends.

EXEC (O.S)

Hell, no, it's got nothing to do with that, whatever happened there. It's just business JC.

(pause)

That WAS a bit of a screw up today. We had a contract with Ms. Hyatt for a mid-day spot. But, that's not such a big deal.

JC

So,

(pause)

I don't understand.

EXEC (O.S.)

(aside, to self)

Jesus.

(back to JC)

JC, I lost track of time. I need to

run. You can talk to CINDY about wrapping up.

JC

Wait, what are you saying?

EXEC hung up. JC stands dazed. He slowly lowers the phone down as his arm goes limp. CINDY is chipper.

CINDY

You know JC, today was really interesting.

JC

(still dazed, misunderstanding CINDY, trying to defend himself, believing exec was unhappy with his performance)

I thought so. Right? I thought we did okay under the circumstances.

CINDY

(ignoring his comment)

That

(finger quotes)

“school shooting” was completely covered by people in the event.

(pause)

I found out, the kid you almost killed wears a video camera? And a bunch of people have video of police and other kids at the scene. There is even video of the

(finger quotes)

“shooting”.

(pause)

A lot of that stuff is already posted on the web. And I have audio of your bogus coverage.

(pause, mildly excited)

That’s interesting don’t you think?

It’s the real story from every perspective.

(pause)

I think that’s interesting.

JC

(still confused about EXEC conversation)

What about me?

CINDY

(forgetting his fate, or

pretending to forget)

What about you?

(pause)

Oh, right.

(satisfying to replay JC's words)

It's just business, JC.

EXT. SCHOOL – POLICE BARCADE

Police are clearing people from the scene. RANDY's campaign manager ED is handing election material (bumper stickers) to spectators. Cameras are off. The TV crew starts packing up.

EXT SCHOOL

DEBBI is being consoled by AMIR. She has been crying.

DEBBI

(through tears)

Why can't anything be the way "I" want?

Just once. Just one time, I want to be

"That Girl".

AMIR

(to DEBBI)

Maybe we can get you on a show to talk

about this experience.

(pause)

Your picture was on TV. Millions of people saw your face.

DEBBI

(pulling herself together some)

I guess. It's a start.

(a little more invigorated)

Yeah, we need to figure out how to make something from this.

(starting to scheme)

We need to get Dallas' video.

Pull out to see DALLAS, no longer handcuffed, being hugged by an inappropriately dressed AMBER. She left her house in a panic without proper attire.

BO is led out of the storeroom by COP 2. BO is limping. His shot arm is bandaged and his hands are cuffed in front of him. He smiles when he sees DALLAS and AMBER. COP 2 is leading BO to a car which is toward AMBER and DALLAS. COP 2 can't help but admire AMBER.

BO

(as he is approaching, to AMBER)

Hey, miss. That's a good boy you got.

DALLAS

(to BO)

Are you okay? What happened?

BO

Oh, I'll be fine. They just found a
little bag of weed.

(he turns his shot arm toward

DALLAS)

Trigger-happy motherfuckers shot me.

AMBER

(she touches his arm)

Oh, you poor man.

BO

It's okay, I'm going to sue the shit
out of these bastards.

COP 2 has stopped and is smiling like an idiot at AMBER and
tipping his hat.

COP 2

Ma'am. Sorry about the mix up with your
boy.

BO

(to DALLAS)

Hey, don't get all messed up about that girl. She can't appreciate you yet. She's got a lot of stuff to work out. I'm pretty sure that other girl likes you though.

(pause)

You just have to ask when you feel it kid. Most of them tell you to get lost. You just let it roll off you. It's just a speck of time. Our whole life is a speck on a billions years of universe.

BO and COP 2 move on toward the car.

AMBER

(to DALLAS, looking toward BO)

He seems like a nice man.

DEBBI and AMIR walk toward DALLAS and AMBER. AMIR is mildly trying to stop DEBBI because he thinks the timing is not right, and doesn't trust DEBBI's approach to the task of getting DALLAS' video. DEBBI walks up to DALLAS and AMBER. AMIR hovers behind DEBBI, monitoring the conversation.

DEBBI

(her best attempt at being
apologetic, a little exhausted,
sweet)

Dallas. I'm really sorry. I was just so
stressed. You're so sweet. And I really
like your drawing. I want it. And the
video, I'd like to see your video.

(pause, perking up, shifting)

I'm performing at GirlsPlay Saturday
night. I want you to come.

(sees that DALLAS has not
recovered, more enthusiastic)

I'm playing Hamlet. Come on. How can I
make you come? I can get you a seat in
the first row.

AMBER

(to DEBBI)

That's so nice.

(kind of covering for DALLAS)

I think we're all a little out of it
right now.

DEBBI

(to AMBER, demonstrating

exhaustion)

Whew. Yeah, I'm still spinning.

(shifting awkwardly)

Oh, Mrs. Stone I didn't know you were in show business. Can I talk with you sometime about how you broke through? Are you still in the business?

AMIR

(sensing the inappropriate direction of the conversation, tugging DEBBI arm, pulling her away)

Debbi we need to go.

(to AMBER)

Nice to meet you Ms. Stone. You are truly a beautiful woman. Even more beautiful in person.

AMIR starts to lead DEBBI away by the arm. DEBBI turns back toward DALLAS.

DEBBI

(to DALLAS)

I mean it Dallas. I want you to come Saturday. We can hang out after. Bring

your drawings. And I want to get those videos.

DALLAS

(to AMBER)

I want to go home.

INT EAGLE NEWS — FRAME — STUDIO ON AIR

We see a multi-window display. In one window we see a helicopter view tracking a white limo. In another window we see a loop of Tokio Hyatt getting in to a limo. In another we see JAN. There is a story title, "Journey To Rehab".

JAN

(with the same seriousness as any other story)

If you are just tuning in, we have a breaking story. EAGLE NEWS has learned that party girl, Tokio Hyatt, is on her way to rehab. EAGLE NEWS has exclusive coverage of Ms. Hyatt's journey to rehab.

FADE OUT:

THE END