

FIRST MAN

Written by

Sandra Cook Jerome

INT. AIRPLANE -- NIGHT

SENATOR ANNA RHODES, early 40's, stretches out comfortably in the darkened business class section of a commercial flight. Hers is the only light shining in the section as she reads a book intently, pausing to highlight passages.

The gagging SNORE of her preppy, thirty-something assistant, TOMMY, causes her to flinch. She recovers and then carefully replaces his fallen blanket. After tucking in the sides, she smiles fondly at him.

She continues reading the book, which we can now see is titled, "Baseball for Dummies." Tommy wakens and frowns at Anna. He taps on his watch.

Anna smiles and gives him an "aye, aye" salute and puts the book down.

TOMMY

Are my clogged nasal passages
keeping you awake?

ANNA

Snoring. It's called snoring.

TOMMY

Barbarians snore, I breathe
laboriously.

Tommy leans in close.

TOMMY (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

(whispering)

Was I really snoring?

She shakes her head, no.

ANNA

It's the list.

He's excited - more like a small puppy than an executive assistant.

TOMMY

You want it, don't you?

She reaches up and turns out the light and fakes a SNORE.

INT. HOTEL COFFEE SHOP -- DAY

It's early morning and both Tommy and Anna look like two people who slept on the plane. Tommy frets over his dayplanner.

TOMMMY

I specifically requested that your room be ready by six.

Tommy perks up as a young man with bright white teeth, DREW McALLISTER, comes into the coffee shop. Tommy leans over towards Anna.

TOMMY

(whispering)

Show time.

Tommy starts preening Anna, but she slaps his hand away. Drew comes up behind Anna and squeezes her shoulder.

DREW

Long flight, Senator?

Anna unconsciously smooths out her skirt, but keeps firm eye contact with Drew.

ANNA

When you only have a day in each city, you've got to cut corners somewhere.

Drew turns to Tommy.

DREW

Let's hear Anna's list.

TOMMY

Breakfast at nine with the Bright Future Foundation then opening day.

Drew shakes his head as he gets up to leave.

DREW

Bright Future Foundation. You're looking too liberal. We need to warm up Walker, not look like a bunch of sissies.

ANNA

Want me to roof a house, pour some concrete, or plow some fields?

DREW

It's a short list, but it's still a list. You can ask to be taken off and run home to those bark eating tree huggers who elected you, Anna.

TOMMMY

Senator Rhodes is the perfect running mate for Vice-President Walker. She not only softens his image but brings him the states he needs, the female vote, and...

DREW

Save the speeches for the campaign. If you make it to the top of the list, then you better be ready to play ball. What do you say, Anna -- are you in the game?

Drew turns and leaves without waiting for an answer.

ANNA

Remind me why I wanted this.

TOMMY

This isn't just something you want, this is something you need.

ANNA

What I need is a shower and what I want is a nap.

He opens his cell phone and starts to preen her again.

TOMMY

Nap when you're ninety, but I must get you that shower.

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM -- DAY

Although she looks wrinkled, it's an energized Anna addressing a small group of BUSINESS PEOPLE who pick at their breakfast while she rattles statistics.

She doesn't need any note cards - this is a speech she's passionate about.

ANNA

Gun violence caused one hundred and twenty thousand deaths, fourteen thousand were children...

Anna stops and looks at her audience. She sees the boredom.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
 Last week I stopped at the local
 seven eleven. As I got out of my
 car, the guy in the truck next to
 me got out at the same time. He
 had a forty-five on his hip.

She steps away from the podium and closer to the group.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
 What kind of world do we live in
 where a guy feels that he needs a
 forty-five to buy a Slurpee?

One of the BUSINESSMEN in the audience lays down his fork.

BUSINESSMAN #1
 I object.

Anna has her prey in her sights. You can tell that she's
 been waiting for a good debate.

ANNA
 You object that our children feel
 safer in downtown Chicago than
 school cafeterias?

She moves in closer to the guy.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
 You object that our hospitals have
 to absorb eighty percent of their
 gun-trauma costs -- to the tune of
 four billion a year?

She is now right in front of him.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
 You object that a guy wants the
 right to own an AK-47 to protect
 his front lawn from dog poop?

She gives him a moment to think about this. He shakes his
 head.

BUSINESSMAN #1
 I own a seven eleven and we also
 sell fresh fruit, milk, flashlights
 and beer. I object that we get
 thought of only as place to get a
 Slurpee.

Anna LAUGHS with the group, picks up the guy's orange juice and makes a mock toast in his honor.

EXT. BASEBALL STADIUM -- DAY

It's the kick off of baseball season and the banner across the entrance of the small minor league baseball stadium offers attendees a free movie ticket and a discount to the nearby water park. All of them are freebies that have nothing to do with baseball.

At the side entrance to the park the team bus parks next to a tunnel. Young baseball PLAYERS get out and sprint into the tunnel carrying sports bags.

The last person off the bus, JAKE "FLASH" MACCOOK throws his sports bag over his shoulder and winces in pain. We can see a World Series ring on his finger as he rubs his shoulder and walks slowly towards the tunnel.

INT. LOCKER ROOM -- DAY

The young players release nervous energy horsing around boisterously while getting ready for the game.

Jake unpacks a pharmacy of ointments, pills, and bandages onto the bench next to where the aging team manager, PETE, works intently on his crossword puzzle.

PETE

Six letter word. Hawaiian fruit.

He's not really asking anyone.

PETE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Mango, coconut, kiwi...

JAKE

Papaya.

Pete nods and writes in the word.

PETE

Nervous?

JAKE

Jumpy, tense, fidgety. How many letters?

Pete puts down the puzzle.

PETE

First game of the season. You nervous?

JAKE

I'm too old for this shit.

Jake gestures at the crazy players who appear to be dressing one player in toilet tissue.

PETE

Nothing for you to be ashamed about. The farm system has given lots of players a second chance.

JAKE

Ever been to a real farm?

Pete nods.

PETE

Spent most every summer out in Iowa with my Uncle George.

JAKE

Ever seen any old animals on the farm?

Pete thinks hard.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Six letter word for what happens to old animals on a farm -- d - I - n - n - e - r, dinner.

Jake starts to wrap his wrist and winces in pain. He grabs his shoulder and rubs. Pete notices.

PETE

Go soak it.

Jake shakes his head, no.

JAKE

My contract says I've got to do the warm-up prance and dance for the crowds.

PETE

You worry about that shoulder and I'll worry about your contract.

EXT. BALLPARK PARKING LOT -- DAY

Cars start to fill the parking lot and people file into the stadium as a limo pulls up to the player's entrance. Tommy pops out of the car and helps a struggling Anna get out.

ANNA

Two hundred hotels in this town and I'm taking a shower here?

TOMMMY

I wasn't that one that let her speech run thirty minutes over.

Anna is excited and grabs Tommy's arm.

ANNA

Did you hear them? I got Republicans interested in gun control and the environment.

Tommy drags Anna towards the tunnel, waving his hand across his nose.

TOMMMY

This shower is the best thing you can do for the environment.

INT. LOCKER ROOM SHOWERS -- DAY

Jake soaks in a foaming steel jacuzzi. He SNORES loudly as three groupies sneak into the room. One groupie hands a camera to another one of the girls.

She pulls the other girl over with her to the side of Jake's jacuzzi. She pulls up her tiny top to expose some nicely formed breasts and the other girl does the same.

The girl with the camera takes the picture with a FLASH. Jake startles awake and smacks his head on the metal side.

The girls run out, LAUGHING. Jake drags himself out of the jacuzzi and puts a towel around his waist. He hears a SHOWER running. He shakes his head.

Jake turns around the corner and spots Anna in total bliss as she lets the hot water run down her face. She turns off the shower and reaches blindly for a towel on the ledge. Jake grabs a towel, rolls it up, and tosses it to her.

Anna is quick to grab it and tries to dry her eyes while still covering up.

ANNA

How much time do I have?

JAKE

Never enough.

Jake grabs another towel to hand to her and then steps into the shower as Anna opens her eyes. She SCREAMS. Jake does the only thing a guy like him knows how to do quiet a screaming female -- he grabs her and kisses her.

Anna pulls away, focuses in on Jake and her face softens. She leans towards him -- maybe returning the kiss, but slips on the wet shower floor and SCREAMS again. Jake reaches down to help her up as Tommy runs around the corner and bravely tackles Jake.

The groupies come back around the corner and snap pictures of the partially naked and screaming threesome.

Jake hears the opening MUSIC for the game and dashes towards his locker.

EXT. BASEBALL STADIUM -- DAY

Excited fans pack the stands. Each team's players line up along the baselines. Jake runs out and gets in line. He GASPS when he spots Anna following him. She wears the wet cat look well.

He gestures for her to get off the field, but freezes when the arranged press group starts taking pictures. She waves at them before taking her place next to him at the end of the line.

JAKE

You still look good.

He looks her up and down.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

With and without your clothes, but you picked an odd time to hit on me again.

ANNA

Hit on you? Don't you read the newspaper?

Anna puffs up, faces him and points a finger into his chest.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
 I am a United States Senator. One
 of the hundred most influential
 people...

Jake carefully holds her finger and gestures to the crowd.

STADIUM ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
 Today's first pitch will be thrown
 by the Senator from our visiting
 team's home state. Let's give a
 warm hand for Senator...

Anna pulls back her finger, turns away from Jake and gives
 the crowd a regal wave. She has turned back into the smiling
 politician.

STADIUM ANNOUNCER (O.S.) (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
 ... Anna Rhodes of Washington
 State.

Jake leads her to the mound while she smiles and waves at the
 stands. He leans in close to her.

JAKE
 How about a nice underhand toss?

Anna smiles sweetly, but her tone is all business as she
 locks on his eyes.

ANNA
 You think that because I'm a woman
 that I can't throw a baseball
 overhand? I'm neither some sissy
 nor the doe-eyed college freshman
 that fell for the big jock. I
 chair one of the most powerful
 Senate committees and I'm
 capable...

Jake shakes his head as he hands her the baseball.

JAKE
 Underhand because in the rush to
 get out here, I didn't put on a
 cup.

Anna steps up to the pitcher's mound, waving with one hand
 and continues tossing the ball a few inches into the air with
 the other.

When she reaches the mound, she pretends to spit on the ball,
 much to the delight of the crowd.

STADIUM ANNOUNCER
Ladies and Gentlemen, Senator Anna
Rhodes.

Jake jogs over to the catcher and says a few words. The catcher hands him his mitt and Jake takes a half crouching position behind home plate.

Jake punches the center of the mitt a few times for show and then sticks his mitt squarely out in front of him behind the plate.

Anna makes a forward bend and places the ball behind her back in concentration. The fans CHEER. Jake turns to make a remark to the players standing along the baseline.

JAKE
You can sure tell that it's an
election year and...

A photographer moves in close to Jake and snaps a picture. Distracted by the flash, Jake looks towards the camera as Anna makes the windup and burns an overhand curve ball.

Jake concentrates on protecting his crouch and instead the ball SMACKS into his chest and Jake falls backwards into the dirt.

Anna runs to him.

ANNA
Jake, Jake, I'm so sorry.

Jake winks at her, springs up and rubs his chest. He reaches down, grabs the ball and holds it up as the fans CHEER again. He has stolen the show. He turns and winks at Anna.

Jake starts to sign the ball as a few photographers start closing in. Anna takes the ball and pen from Jake.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
I'd be happy to give you an
autograph. Jake with a "k" isn't
it?

JAKE
Actually, could you make it out to
Buffi?

ANNA
Buffy with a "y"?

JAKE
With an "I".

Anna looks up and down at Jake.

ANNA

It figures that you would be with
someone who spells her name with an
"I".

She collects Tommy, makes one last wave to the fans and
smiles broadly for the photographers.

INT. STADIUM SKYBOX -- DAY

Anna and Tommy sit comfortably in a stadium skybox filled
with the city's ELITE. Anna watches the field intently as
Tommy head is tilted back and he SNORES.

Anna looks towards the field and Jake. She closes her eyes
and smiles.

ANNA

Jake MacCook. What a blast from
the past.

Tommy wakes up.

TOMMMY

Past? Blast, flash? What past?

She comes out of her trance and turns towards Tommy as she
taps the skybox glass window.

ANNA

I meant, how come they call him
Flash?

TOMMY

Being a pitcher, I doubt if it has
anything to do with speed -- at
least not on the field.

INT. LOCKER ROOM -- DAY

This has been a hard-earned victory for Jake's team. Jake
watches the hoopla from his locker as he finishes getting
dressed.

He catches the eye of one of the reporters, SAM GRAY.

SAM

Hey, Flash. That was some action
out there.

Sam grabs a note pad from his pocket and moves over to Jake.

SAM (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Give me a quote that will get
picked up by the wire.

Jake picks up his jacket and drapes it over his shoulder.

JAKE
The shoulder has never been better.
I expect to be back in the show by
mid-season.

SAM
I meant that pitch from Senator
Rhodes.

Jake rubs his chest and grins.

JAKE
She really burned one in there.

SAM
You two had your heads close
together after that pitch. Give me
a little juice, Flash. What were
you two talking about?

JAKE
Foreign policy and the challenge of
balancing the budget.

Sam looks confused, but he also looks like the type of guy who is used to that. Frustrated, Sam scans the room for a more interesting interview and locks onto the winning home run hero, JIM CASEY.

SAM (CONT'D)
Jim -- hey, Jim Casey. That was
some action out there.

Sam chases after Jim Casey as Jake tosses his gear bag over his shoulder. Jake looks back at the top shelf of his locker and the baseball that Anna signed. He grabs it and looks for a moment at the signature.

JAKE
(to himself)
The press or politicians. It would
be hard to choose who to throw
gasoline on first if they both
caught fire at the same time.

INT. TEAM BUS -- DAY

Jake naps in the back of the bus on the way back to hotel as the rest of the inebriated players file on, bringing the celebration from the locker room with them.

Jim Casey and another player, LANCE KRUGER tumble into the seats in front and across from Jake. Jim knocks Jake's feet down.

JIM
Not a bad day for you, Flash.

Jim leans across the aisle.

JIM (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
We got some local groupies coming up tonight to party. Want me to save one for you?

JAKE
Just one?

INT. HOTEL BAR -- NIGHT

Jake and Pete sit on two bar stools watching a baseball game on the television. The pitcher throws a fast ball that ends in a home run for the batter. Jake takes a sip of his beer.

JAKE
Good to see my replacement is earning his keep.

PETE
It's all business. You need to heal that shoulder. The owners need to fill the seats for the farm team.

JAKE
So I'm the headliner next week at our opener along with a half-time appearance by the Dallas Cowboy Cheerleaders.

The television shows a clip of today's opening pitch by the local affiliate. Pete points to the television.

PETE
That congressman lady is big news.

JAKE
Senator.

PETE

Quite a looker too. Might help you get back to the show. Fill the seats.

Jake rubs his shoulder.

JAKE

I'll make it back on my own.

Jake takes a better look at the news feed. He motions for the bartender to turn up the television's volume.

NEWCASTER

(on television)

Tomorrow Vice-President Walker arrives here in South Bend for the dedication of the law library at Notre Dame. All eyes will be on Senator Anna Rhodes who...

Jake makes a cutting signal to the bartender who MUTES the television. Pete hops off the stool and drops some cash on the counter.

PETE

That's it for me. Some of us have to work tomorrow.

Jake gives a pretend rub to his shoulder.

PETE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

I still expect you there for warm ups. That kid needs some help tomorrow.

Jake gives him a little salute.

JAKE

You betcha, but I'd like to skip out early.

Pete gives him a hearty pat - to the other shoulder.

PETE

Hot date?

Jake shakes his head.

JAKE

Never seen Notre Dame.

PETE
Woman like that could be good for
you.

Jake also takes out some cash and lays it on the counter.

JAKE
(to himself)
She was -- once.

INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR -- NIGHT

Jake walks down the corridor of the hotel and passes an open hotel door. There is a party going on of young ballplayers and some baseball groupies. One of them spots Jake.

GROUPIE#1
It's Flash MacCook.

The groupie runs towards the door as Lance grabs her ankle from his position on the floor.

LANCE
Where ya going sweetie?

She easily breaks loose of his grip and makes it to the door as Jake unlocks his door down the hall.

GROUPIE#1
It is him. Flash -- Jake -- it's
me. Remember?

Jim Casey comes up behind her and puts his arm around her.

JIM
Relax honey, I heard Jake order
take-out earlier.

INT. JAKE'S HOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT

Jake undresses down to his boxers and stretches out on the bed. He flips through the channels on TV and finds a west coast baseball game in the final innings. He watches for a few minutes and then picks up the phone.

JAKE
(into the phone)
You got a movie channel here?

He points the remote at the TV and smiles.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Thanks.

He replaces the receiver and continues clicking through the channels. He reaches into his gear bag next to the bed for something and comes up empty.

He reaches over to his jacket hanging on the chair and performs another search. Smiling, he finds the object of his search -- a piece of candy. He unwraps it and pops it in his mouth.

He tosses the wrapper towards the wastebasket and misses.

EXT. HOTEL PARKING LOT -- NIGHT

Tommy and Anna get out of a limo. As the limo pulls away Tommy looks disdainfully at the hotel's exterior.

TOMMY

Even the Ramada has two stars.

ANNA

This is the heartland, Tommy. The limo is bad enough.

TOMMY

That taxi had vinyl seats.

As if on cue, a taxi pulls up and two working girls, RED and MORNING DEW tumble out of the back seat. They look like they have more miles on them than the worn taxi cab. The first girl, Red, gives Tommy a scan.

RED

Got a quick job upstairs but there will be plenty left for you if Mommy lets you stay up past your bedtime.

Tommy GASPS and pulls Anna towards the foyer door. Red gives her partner, Morning Dew a jab.

RED (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

We'll be done in a flash.

Red LAUGHS at her joke, but then turns her attention towards Tommy.

RED (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

You'd be a nice little after dinner snack, fella.

TOMMY

I never.

Red calls after Tommy as he holds the door open for Anna.

RED

One hour with the "Red" and you'll never go back.

INT. HOTEL ELEVATOR -- NIGHT

Tommy rushes Anna into the elevator and repeatedly pushes the "3" button. Just before the door closes, Red sticks a foot in the elevator. Morning Dew follows her in.

RED

Thanks for holding it for us. What a way to treat a lady.

Red looks over at the lit number "3" and smiles as the door closes. Tommy backs into the corner of the elevator. Morning Dew turns towards Red.

MORNING DEW

Any idea why they call him Flash?

Tommy starts to respond, but one look at Anna's frown and he pushes even further back into the corner.

INT. ANNA'S HOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT

Anna wakes with a startle. She sits up and turns on her night stand light. She picks up a photograph of a handsome man in a military uniform.

She kisses the photograph, but the tender moment is interrupted by loud LAUGHTER outside her hotel room door and the sound of running FOOTSTEPS up and down the corridor.

She MOANS as she lays back down and covers her head with a pillow.

INT. HOTEL COFFEE SHOP -- DAY

Anna struggles to stay awake as she skims through the newspaper and gulps down her coffee. Jake slides into the booth across from her.

JAKE

You've got to stop following me around. The press is going to mistake you for a groupie.

Anna glares at him.

ANNA

Because of you, I have circles under my eyes this morning.

Jake holds up his hands in surrender.

JAKE

Guilty. I still snore like a grizzly bear.

The two working girls, Red and Morning Dew are in the booth behind Jake. Anna points at them. Jake turns around and smiles at Red. She frowns at him.

RED

We're off the clock, Pal.

Anna leans across the table.

ANNA

She doesn't even remember you.

JAKE

Fifteen years in the show, two World Series rings, four times on the All Star team -- you'd think she recognize the famous Jake MacCook.

Red and Morning Dew finish their coffee and get up to leave, but Red hears this last comment. She approaches their table.

RED

Jake? Jake "Flash" MacCook?

Jake holds out his hand.

JAKE

You betcha.

RED

Thanks for the room and the dough, but we don't give rain checks for no shows.

The two leave. Anna is puzzled.

JAKE

I have an image to uphold. What would those kids on the team think if they found out that I watch old movies and do yoga instead of doing something like the "dew."

Jake points to the two working girls who can be seen getting into a taxi outside.

The waitress sets down the change tray and Anna holds out the coins for Jake, but closes her fist before he can take them. He grabs her other hand and it turns into an arm wrestling match.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

You still love the game, the challenge, the fight, don't you?

Anna's face is all determination, but there doesn't seem to be much effort from Jake.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

You win and you come up to my hotel room tonight.

Anna's jaw is clenched. She's winning. Jake fakes a near defeat.

ANNA

And what's up in your room that's the prize? You still got all that candy?

Jake uses his free hand to point to himself.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

You're the prize?

JAKE

You betcha.

ANNA

What's with this "betcha" stuff?

Jake takes a deep breath and brings their arms even and starts to overcome her.

JAKE

Spent five years in Minnesota.
Every other word was either "ya",
or "you betcha." If a pretty girl
wants to make you dinner and maybe
more, you say, "ya" and "you
betcha."

ANNA

You could also say, no?

Jake has almost pinned her arm to the table.

JAKE

You never did.

Anna starts a comeback, moving their arms upright.

ANNA

I should have.

Jake is surprised with her strength.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

So if I win, you're the prize? You
win, I'm the prize?

JAKE

You betcha. It's a win-win
proposition.

INT. LIMO -- DAY

A smiling and confident, VICE-PRESIDENT WALKER sits back
comfortably in a limo reading a file. Drew leans attentively
forward.

DREW

Guys love her, chicks trust her.
No skeletons and she brings you the
liberal West Coast vote.

WALKER

Boyfriends, lovers?

Drew shakes his head, no.

DREW

Don't think she ever got over her
husband's death. She's a loner,
that one.

(MORE)

DREW (CONT'D)

The few dates that she's been on
have been real snoozers -- a
college professor, research
scientist...

Drew flips through a file.

WALKER

How does that play?

DREW

If we handle this right and have
her seen with the right guys...

Walker holds up his hand.

WALKER

Anna won't like being handled.

DREW

Leave that up to me. That's what
the party pays me for.

INT. HOTEL COFFEE SHOP -- DAY

The arm wrestling match is over and Jake rubs his shoulder.

JAKE

Not nice to pull that trick.

ANNA

My husband taught me that. He
could also tear a phone book in
half.

JAKE

Big guy?

Anna shakes her head.

ANNA

Average, but safe and secure.

JAKE

You dumped me for safe and secure?
How did that work out for you?

ANNA

Safe and secure got me a husband
back in a body bag in too many
pieces to count.

JAKE

Sorry.

She lowers her head into her hands.

ANNA

I can't believe I said that.

Jake gently strokes her hand.

JAKE

I could be safe and secure. I
could be average.

Anna looks up, shakes her head, smiles and grabs her purse.

ANNA

Neither one of us is average. You
sleep with Madonna and I have
dinner with the next President.

JAKE

Are sure you didn't get that
backwards? I thought I found some
of the Vice-President's hair on my
pillow last night.

ANNA

Looking to add a Senator to your
conquests?

JAKE

After watching the news last night,
I was thinking much higher -- maybe
a VP?

Anna looks at her watch and then springs up.

ANNA

He'll be here in a few minutes,
I'll see what I can arrange.

EXT. HOTEL PARKING LOT -- DAY

The motorcade pulls into the hotel driveway just as Anna runs
out to the foyer. A frantic Tommy paces back and forth.

TOMMY

Where were you?

He starts circling Anna, performing an inspection.

TOMMY (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Is he gone? I don't want Walker to
see you with him.

ANNA
I thought you didn't know where I
was.

TOMMY
My sources tell me that he leaves a
trail of beer cans, bras, and
broken hearts.

ANNA
He's a baseball player, but you
make it sound like I just slept
with a Republican.

TOMMY
You slept with him?

ANNA
College. A different girl. Today
it was coffee. We were having
coffee.

TOMMY
Did anyone see you? Who knows
about you and this -- baseball
player?

ANNA
America's heartland loves baseball.

TOMMY
There are hundreds of better ways
to get some free press than
slumming with some jock.

A dark SUV pulls in first and two secret service agents get
out. One of them comes back to the limo and opens the door.
As Anna steps into the limo, she looks back at Tommy.

ANNA
You betcha.

INT. LIMO -- DAY

Anna sits across from Walker which has forced Tommy and Drew
tightly into the side seat.

WALKER
Enjoying your tour through the
Midwest?

ANNA
It's been amusing.

Walker pats the file on his lap.

WALKER
Pretty impressive fund raising for
a junior Senator.

Walker leans over and taps her arm.

WALKER (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Shouldn't even need a list. If it
were all up to me...

ANNA
Mr. Vice-President, I'd expect no
less either way.

WALKER
Have you talked to Sarah yet?

ANNA
That's my next stop. I don't know
who is more frightening...

Anna straightens her skirt.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
... my daughter or the press.

WALKER
Welcome to the fishbowl, Anna.

INT. NOTRE DAME LAW LIBRARY -- DAY

It's a circus of reporters, secret service agents, and the
city's elite. Vice-President Walker finishes his speech.

WALKER
Notre Dame is more than just these
majestic halls of learning, volumes
of great works...

He gestures towards the shelves of thick books.

WALKER (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
 ... it's also the home of the
 Fighting Irish. Here's to another
 winning season.

The crowd breaks out into APPLAUSE. Walker moves away from
 the podium and is quickly surrounded by REPORTERS.

REPORTER#1
 Mr. Vice-President, does Senator
 Anna Rhodes presence today mean
 that you've chosen her for a
 running mate?

The group of reporters turn towards Anna who has been
 standing along one of the walls in front of a door. Walker
 holds up a hand.

WALKER
 It's a little early to be talking
 about running mates when I haven't
 even declared my candidacy.

Walker heads over to Anna and the cameras start FLASHING.
 The secret service agents usher Walker out of the room and
 Anna stands almost frozen as the crowd follows the Vice-
 President and his group.

Anna takes a big breath and watches the room empty. The door
 behind her opens a crack and Anna turns quickly around. Jake
 holds a finger up to his lips.

JAKE
 Shhh...

He pulls her into the room.

INT. LAW LIBRARY STUDY ROOM -- DAY

Anna looks around frantically.

ANNA
 We'll be spotted.

He pulls out a Tasmanian "She-Devil" baseball cap and puts it
 on her head.

JAKE
 Your disguise. Let's duck out of
 here.

ANNA
 Where?

JAKE
One more time around the block
barefoot before the circus begins?

ANNA
I've already got my shoes on and
lots of clown suits to pack.

He holds a finger up to her lips.

JAKE
Shhh...

He traces the finger down to her chin.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
The circus tent is down for another
day.

Anna closes her eyes and he kisses her passionately. He
slips a hotel key into her coat pocket.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Come to my room tonight.

Anna is still in a trance, but starts shaking her head.

ANNA
Jake, I've got to be honest.

JAKE
I'm a stupid ballplayer and you're
a political shooting star. We've
got a few things to work out.

ANNA
First, there is no "we". Second, I
already have a full plate with the
election. Third, I've got a
daughter to consider, and fourth...

Jake places a finger on her lips again.

JAKE
Don't need a fourth, only three
strikes in baseball.

He gives her a tender kiss on the cheek.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Take care of yourself, Madam Vice-
President.

INT. ANNA'S HOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT

Anna packs her bags while an anxious Tommy gathers things and tosses them to her. She places the last thing in her suitcase and then reaches into her pocket.

ANNA
I've got an errand.

Tommy stops and grabs his dayplanner. He traces down the page with a searching finger.

TOMMY
No, no errand.

Anna gives a hearty tug on the suitcase zipper.

ANNA
It's personal, Thomas.

Tommy looks surprised by the use of his formal name. He studies Anna.

TOMMY
That baseball guy?

Anna nods as she picks an imaginary piece of lint from her dress.

ANNA
A quick good-bye.

Anna heads for the door. Tommy stands with both hands on his hips and sporting a serious frown.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Don't worry, I said quick.

She runs back and gives Tommy a quick kiss on the cheek.

TOMMY
That's why I'm worried -- they call him "Flash".

INT. JAKE'S HOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT

There's a SNAP of a towel as groupie #1 runs out of the bathroom wearing only a tiny cheap hotel towel. She laughs as she tumbles onto the bed. There is a KNOCK on the door and she bounces up.

GROUPIE#1
I got it.

INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR -- NIGHT

The door opens to a surprised Anna. She glances down at the key in her hand and back at the door.

ANNA
Six one five. Is this Jake
MacCook's room?

GROUPIE#1
Sure, it's Flash's room -- who are
you?

Anna makes an abrupt turn and storms down the hall. The door to the next room opens and a surprised and towel-clad Jake steps into the hall. The groupie giggles and ducks back into her room and closes the door.

Jake spots Anna and runs after her.

JAKE
Anna.

Anna stops and looks back at Jake. She shakes her head and continues.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Wait, Anna -- it's not...

Anna stops again and faces him.

ANNA
Not what it seems? That's just
Buffi with an "I" right? Oh no,
let's see -- it's your sister?

Jake points in the other direction.

JAKE
It's not -- the way out.

Anna stops, looks both directions then turns around. She holds her head up high and struts past Jake. He grabs her arm as she passes.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Let me explain?

Anna looks hard at Jake and his towel. In a swift and fluid motion, she grabs his towel and pulls the open door shut.

ANNA
Third strike.

Anna quickly ducks into the opening elevator while a naked Jake POUNDS on the next door.

EXT. HOTEL PARKING LOT -- NIGHT

Anna and Tommy wait for the driver to load their bags into the trunk. Pete stands to the side smoking a cigarette. Anna looks over at him as Tommy moves to oversee the loading of the bags.

ANNA
Those things will kill you.

PETE
I quit every year.

Pete tosses the butt away.

PETE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Start up again every season.

Pete comes closer and gestures towards the bags being loaded into the trunk.

PETE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Going to miss the game tomorrow,
Senator?

ANNA
Not much of a baseball fan.

PETE
Too bad. Jake really got some
exercise tonight running around
naked in the halls. He'll probably
pitch his best game tomorrow.

Pete rushes around her to open up the door.

PETE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Don't get to ride in limos much
anymore. Mind if I tag along to
the airport?

Pete doesn't wait for an answer and hops inside. He pokes his head out.

PETE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Great bar at the airport. I'll buy
you a drink while we wait for your
flight.

INT. LIMO -- NIGHT

Pete stretches out across from Anna.

PETE

This is nice.

ANNA

You're going to tell me that Jake is a great guy, he doesn't really chase women -- it's all a front for a heart of gold? He's so much more under the surface?

Pete shakes his head.

PETE

Nope, nothing deeper there and he's been around the block barefoot so many times that he's got blisters -- but Jake is the best friend a guy like me could ask for.

ANNA

Your honesty is refreshing, but Jake is a cliché. He was twenty years ago and nothing has changed. I'm the one that got away -- and I emphasize the word -- one. I know Jake's angle. He gets some good press with me and he's back to the majors.

Pete drops his head.

PETE

He's not going back up. That shoulder is shot. Jake knows it.

ANNA

What's he doing down here in the farm league?

PETE

They're forcing him to play. He has to complete his contract or he gets nothing.

The limo pulls up and Anna opens the door.

ANNA

Money, fame, and women. It's all Jake ever wanted. He's had it all. He doesn't need me.

PETE

What about you? What do you need?

Anna has one foot out of the car, but turns back and kisses Pete on the cheek.

ANNA

The Prince is not judged by his words or deeds, but by the people he surrounds himself with.

INT. COLLEGE COFFEE SHOP -- DAY

There isn't much resemblance between Anna and the black-clad, coed with frizzy hair sitting across from her, until you notice the same firm jaw and killer eyes.

SARAH RHODES pours sugar on the table and makes some swirls with her mess while Anna stares into her own coffee cup.

ANNA

Tell me about this Brad.

SARAH

He makes me smile.

Anna looks out the window and smiles at this thought. Sarah watches her mother's face softens. Anna switches back into business mode.

ANNA

I thought some basic stats would be nice.

SARAH

One head, two arms, two legs...

Sarah makes a small caricature out of the sugar. She's drawing the groin area.

SARAH (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

... do I go on?

Anna shakes her head. She adds a little more milk to her coffee. Buying time.

ANNA

You've read the recent press?

SARAH

Propaganda for the ignorant masses.

Now Sarah is fashioning a big ugly face with the sugar.

SARAH (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Brad tells me stuff. He reads.

ANNA
About me and the Vice-Presidency?

SARAH
Thought I'd hear it from you.

ANNA
I've left a dozen messages on your
machine.

Sarah leans back in the booth and puts her hands behind her head.

SARAH
Brad said that you've become a
baseball fan? Anything else you
want to tell me?

Anna looks like a deer stuck in the headlights. Her face turns red.

ANNA
Nothing.

Anna starts playing with the sugar to the amusement of Sarah.

EXT. BALLPARK PARKING LOT -- DAY

The team bus is loading outside the stadium tunnel at another ballpark. Jake is at the end of a line of players leaving the stadium tunnel. A huffing Pete catches up with him.

PETE
Hey, Flash.

Jake stops and sets his gear bag down.

JAKE
Take it easy. No room on the bus
for a casket.

Pete bends over for a moment and catches his breath. He reaches into his bag and pulls out an airplane ticket.

PETE
I was wondering if maybe you'd like
to fly home instead?

Jake takes the ticket and opens it up. He studies it, frowns and hands it back to Pete.

JAKE
Home is Washington State, not DC.

PETE
The head office thought you might
be willing do a few publicity stops
on the way home.

Pete tries to grab another breath.

PETE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Then you get a first class ticket
home and some nice bucks for
expenses.

Jake reaches into his bag and pulls out a folded up
newspaper. There is a headline that says "WALKER MAY TAKE
THE HIGH RHODES"

JAKE
Got anything to do with this?

Pete opens it up to display a flattering picture of Anna with
the Vice-President.

PETE
It's only a quick fund-raiser. The
guys upstairs want just one picture
with her.

Jake looks at the picture of Anna again and the ticket.

JAKE
Big bucks?

PETE
Could get you noticed.

Jake takes the tickets out of Pete's hand. He throws them
onto the ground.

JAKE
I've already paid my dues. I'm
throwing good shit out there. Our
opener is sold out.

Pete struggles to pick them up.

PETE
You're right. Shitty idea. Six
letter word for me -- stupid,
stupid, stupid.

Pete hits his forehead with the ticket envelope. Jake looks at Pete. It's a look of pure pity.

JAKE
Never did get a chance to say good-
bye.

Pete brightens up and swivels around.

PETE
And the company got you a limo, a
suite at the JW Marriott, a tux --
you'll look like a million bucks.

Jake tucks the tickets into his leather jacket.

JAKE
Tux, huh? If I remember correctly,
Anna is very critical about proper
attire.

PETE
You'll go?

JAKE
You betcha.

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM -- NIGHT

The room is full of banquet tables, all of them littered with the remains of an elegant meal. The guests are in a state of flux - some are still seated and others are mingling around an open bar.

A large double door opens onto a patio where we can see Anna standing beside Vice-President Walker who holds court with the press and a small amount of guests that are allowed through the open doors and around a lily pond.

Jake sits at a table on the far side of the room with two cigar puffing BUSINESSMEN. Jake picks at his plate as he tries to pay attention to both the businessmen while darting glances at Anna.

JAKE
You'd think for a hundred bucks,
they'd throw in some dessert.

BUSINESSMAN #1
Tonight's not about eating.

The second businessman points to a group of people that they know and gives Jake a hearty slap on the back.

BUSINESSMAN #2

Not about eating food at all. Look at Walker's people taking out those suckers over there.

Jake looks at the group and sees nothing unusual. There are two nicely dressed young men and four older women - all laughing and appearing to be enjoying themselves.

BUSINESSMAN #1

When Walker's boys get done with them, they'll be picked to the bones.

Businessman #1 stabs the remains of his cornish game hen and holds it up with glee. Jake shakes his head and backs up his chair.

JAKE

Gentlemen, it's been a pleasure.

Jake glances at his watch and gets up.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

It's getting a little late for a country boy like me.

Both men jump up together and smash out their cigars. They grab Jake by each arm.

BUSINESSMAN #1

It's only eight, west coast time and I promised my bud, Walter that I'd introduce you to the vice-pres.

BUSINESSMAN #2

The "V - P" is a big baseball fan.

They both steer him like a farm animal towards the open patio door.

EXT. HOTEL PATIO COURTYARD -- NIGHT

Anna looks understated in her simple, yet elegant black gown. She is controlled and poised as different groups of guests are introduced by Vice-President Walker.

Every once and a while, an aide makes a gesture to the press and they take a photo of the Vice-President or Anna shaking someone's hand.

With another wave from the aide, they sink back into the shadows, making their way carefully around the lily pond.

Anna whispers to Walker as a group returns back into the room.

ANNA
Plastics. Big dough in plastics today.

WALKER
I could feel it on his hands.

ANNA
The money or the plastic?

Anna offers a slight giggle as she greets an older couple, MABEL AND ARTHUR.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Mabel, Arthur.

She gives a light kiss on the cheek to Mabel.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
I had no idea you were in town.

Arthur pushes Mabel aside to give Anna a big hug.

ARTHUR
It's the only way I get to see my Senator.

ANNA
That's not fair. I'll be home Monday for three weeks.

MABEL
About time. We were beginning to wonder if you forgot which Washington is home.

An aide gestures for a photograph and Anna puts them between her and the Vice-President.

ANNA
How about a quick pose for the home newspaper?

ARTHUR
Never hurts the campaign to be seen with a couple of Medicare recipients eh?

The cameras FLASH and Anna gives Arthur a kiss on the cheek too.

ANNA

I doubt you'd need Medicare with
your name on the hospital.

Arthur leans into the kiss with glee.

EXT. HOTEL PATIO COURTYARD -- NIGHT

Jake's escorts get him to the patio door. The trio are immediately granted access onto the patio and guided around the pond toward Walker and Anna. The aide perks up with the approach of Jake.

He gives a nod to one of the photographers who doesn't wait for the perfect moment and takes a quick SHOT.

Jake jumps backwards in surprise and lands in the pond with a SPLASH.

Cameras FLASH as a wake of water cascades over Anna. She SCREAMS and dashes towards the door.

INT. OUTSIDE HOTEL ELEVATOR -- NIGHT

Anna drips onto the marble floor as Tommy frantically pushes the "UP" button. Jake runs after her, also leaving a trail of water.

JAKE

Hold up, Anna. I've got to ask you something.

Tommy keeps on pressing the button.

TOMMY

No, no, no. The press will be here any second.

Anna turns and confronts Jake. She takes a deep breath and stands tall. It's a big speech moment.

ANNA

Jake, we've got to face the facts. Sure, there's was once an amazing attraction that seems to have resurfaced, compounded by incredible circumstances that threw us together, but we're oil and water, fire and ice...

The elevator door opens and Jake steps in and pulls Anna with him.

JAKE

Save the clichés for your campaign,
I was only wondering if I could dry
off in your room. I'm already
checked out of the hotel.

INT. ANNA'S HOTEL ROOM -- EVENING

Anna comes out of the bathroom in a big fluffy robe. She's
drying her hair with a towel. Jake stands at the window clad
in just a towel.

ANNA

You look just like the naked guy
reported at my last hotel, but if
you'd remove that towel, I could be
sure.

Jake starts to undo the towel.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Down boy.

JAKE

Seems to be the position I'm always
in around you, Senator.

ANNA

Gotten pretty used to being on top?

JAKE

I'd be happy to yield the floor to
the Senator from Washington State.

Jake goes over to the bed, sits down and bounces once.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

One more time around the block
barefoot?

He pats the spot next to him.

ANNA

Or maybe one last run down the
hallway naked?

Anna sits in the desk chair instead.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

I'd apologize if I didn't think
your innocence was a rare occasion.

She picks up the phone and dials a few numbers.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
 (into the phone)
 Clothes for room eight three two?

She replaces the phone and pours herself a glass of water.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
 Ten minutes.

JAKE
 Plenty of time for the Flash.

Anna holds up an imaginary camera and makes a CLICK sound.

ANNA
 Speaking of a flash...

JAKE
 You remember that my Mom was a
 photographer?

Anna nods.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
 She basically captured every moment
 of my childhood with a antique
 flash Brownie camera.

ANNA
 The ones with the pop out bulbs?

JAKE
 You betcha. Real hot pop out
 bulbs. She would click, wind, pop
 out, and then reload -- all in
 seconds.

Jake gets up from the bed and picks an apple out of a fruit
 basket on the desk. He takes a bite of it and starts
 chewing.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
 I got hit so many times with those
 bulbs that my mom would yell
 "Flash" after the picture and I'd
 duck.

He stops chewing, looks at the apple and tosses it in the
 trash.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
 Still a natural reaction, when I
 see a flash -- I jump.
 (MORE)

JAKE (CONT'D)

Wasn't a problem in high school or college - day games and no flash. In the pros, they take pictures day and night - and love giving out stupid nicknames.

ANNA

Must be tough while you're pitching.

JAKE

Too far away.

Jake looks at Anna. Her robe is slightly open and her hair is sexy in its state of disarray. He moves closer to the desk.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Gotta be close to get to me.

Anna looks at him in his towel. For an aging ballplayer, the towel fits well. She smiles and sets down the glass of water.

ANNA

How close?

He pulls her up into his arms and holds her tightly. There is a KNOCK at the door. Anna pops out of the trance and breaks away from his embrace. She dashes to the bathroom.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

That's Tommy. Tell him I'll be out in five.

Anna closes the bathroom door as Jake opens the door to a frantic Tommy holding their evening attire.

TOMMY

You two close to being ready?

JAKE

Very close, before you interrupted.

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM -- NIGHT

Jake and Anna enter the ballroom. They have changed back into their dry formal wear. CONVERSATION in the nearby area stops and all eyes are on the pair.

The group of photographers from the patio are huddled around Vice-President Walker at the front of the room but they take notice and start moving towards Anna and Jake.

ANNA

One picture and you're outta here?

JAKE

That was the deal. Little promo
for the ball club. Got a red eye
home with a first class ticket.

ANNA

Glad to see you're getting what you
came for.

JAKE

First class, full fare. No penalty
for changes.

Anna spots a group that she knows and gives a polite wave.

ANNA

Looks like they made it worth your
while.

JAKE

Too obvious?

Anna continues surveying the room. The photographers are
closing in on the pair and look for a sign. Anna waves them
over.

ANNA

Too tempting.

Jake brightens up just as the photographers arrive and the
shot is picture perfect.

JAKE

I'd be happy to oblige.

He doesn't even flinch with the FLASH of their cameras.

INT. ANNA'S HOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT

The evening activities are over and Anna, Tommy and Jake flow
into the room. Jake lays down on the closest bed and
stretches out.

JAKE

This is cozy. Just the three of
us.

Tommy doesn't notice the inference. He is busy organizing
Anna's suitcase.

TOMMY

Early flight -- let's get this done tonight.

Anna walks over to Tommy and gently touches his arm.

ANNA

I can handle it.

Tommy straightens up and takes notice of Jake.

TOMMY

This won't do.

He looks sternly at Anna.

TOMMY (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

He was just supposed to wait until the car comes.

Anna herds Tommy towards the connecting doors.

ANNA

You should get a good night's sleep.

TOMMY

My sources say that there could be reporters.

ANNA

We'll keep our feet on the ground.

Tommy looks over at Jake again. Jake flips his shoes off in defiance. Anna holds onto the door handle.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Would you feel better if I left this open?

Tommy pivots and slips through the door. He closes the door with a SLAM. Anna turns towards Jake and picks up a towel from the floor.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

He's just doing his job.

JAKE

You're going to have to show me his job description someday.

Anna holds the towel up in front of Jake.

ANNA
Jealous? Let he who has no sins
cast the first towel.

Anna tosses the towel on the bed.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
You should have told me that night
that you had loaned out your hotel
room to another player. If Pete
hadn't insisted on riding in my
limo back to the airport...

Anna moves over to the bed and sits down next to him. Jake
takes her hand in his.

JAKE
Not everything has to be a Senate
inquiry.

ANNA
We have to talk about this.

JAKE
What's this?

Anna points to Jake and herself.

ANNA
This. You and me. The campaign.
Our differences.

JAKE
You mean I like plastic and you
like paper?

ANNA
Gun control, foreign trade, charter
schools.

Anna shakes her head sadly.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
It's not that we don't agree, it's
that we don't even know what we do
or don't agree on.

JAKE
Is there a you and me?

ANNA
I don't know. Maybe.

JAKE

When can I see you again?

ANNA

I'm meeting with Walker tomorrow.

JAKE

Does seeing you again depend on that?

ANNA

It's complicated. They do a packaging sort of thing.

JAKE

You've got to get me approved?

ANNA

I've worked my whole life to get here. There's more at stake than a shiny ring.

Jake looks down at his World Series ring. He pulls it off his finger and tosses it the bed before grabbing his clothes.

JAKE

Keep it. It's gold. Consider it a campaign contribution.

As he head for the door Anna grabs his arm.

ANNA

Wait.

Jake stops and looks in her eyes. She drops her hand. He walks out the door.

INT. BLAIR HOUSE DINING ROOM -- DAY

Anna looks nervous as she sits alone in a small private dining room. The table is set for two. She touches the flowers in a small vase and leans forward to smell them.

A side door opens, she jumps up, spilling the flowers, vase, and water. The water runs down her skirt. Vice-President Walker runs to her aid, but the water spills onto his pant leg.

WALKER

Looks like we're in for a wet ride.

Anna quickly discards the wet napkin and recovers with a firm handshake.

ANNA

Mr. Vice-President, I didn't get a chance to apologize last night.

Walker gestures for her to sit down and she is relieved to be able to hide her skirt.

WALKER

That's not why I asked you to breakfast. Within the next few weeks, I need to announce my running mate.

Walker surprises Anna by topping off her coffee before filling his own.

WALKER (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

You in?

ANNA

No rules or conditions? I don't have to bring Drew the broomstick of the wicked witch of the west?

WALKER

Lately Drew has been requiring the firstborn male child.

Anna tries to stifle a GIGGLE with no luck.

WALKER (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

If you want it, it's yours.

ANNA

You betcha -- I mean, I'm honored, Mr. Vice-President.

INT. ANNA'S OFFICE -- DAY

Tommy and Anna jump up and down and hug each other. Tommy holds her at arm's length.

TOMMMY

You did it.

She pulls him back close to her and hugs him.

ANNA

We did it.

Tommy pulls away.

TOMMMY

I don't want to hold you back.
You've got to consider the whole
country. There isn't much of a gay
vote in Peoria.

Anna pulls him back to her again and another hug.

ANNA

I don't care what they think. You
got me this far and we're going
there together.

TOMMMY

What about Drew?

ANNA

I don't think he's gay.

INT. DREW MCALLISTER'S OFFICE -- DAY

Anna and Tommy are dwarfed by the amount of dry erase boards,
computer printouts, and empty fast food containers in this
office. Drew writes frantically on a dry erase board.

DREW

Stylist, speech writers, travel
planner.

He looks sternly over at Tommy.

DREW (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

You're getting this, right?

Tommy looks over at Anna for approval. Anna gets up and
looks at the board.

ANNA

I'm not sure about all this.

Drew attacks.

DREW

You said yes. You told the big guy
that you're in. Now you belong to
me.

ANNA

I've been through four elections.

Now Drew has his victim.

DREW

You lost two of those. I tell you
what to wear, what to say.

Drew sits on the edge of the desk and towers over Tommy and Anna. An empty fast food bag drops to the floor.

DREW (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

I tell you what to eat, where to
sleep. I don't lose elections.

Drew looks down at Tommy who has now been frightened into opening his dayplanner.

DREW (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

You've got two weeks to put your
affairs in order and organize your
life, and then...

Drew pauses and makes eye contact with Anna for emphasis.

DREW (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

... the campaign is your life and I
control it.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE DREW'S OFFICE -- DAY

Tommy is still shaken from the encounter with Drew. Anna tries to calm him.

TOMMY

An animal.

ANNA

I think he heard that.

Tommy jumps slightly, but notices Anna's smile.

TOMMY

You didn't tell him about Sarah or
Jake.

ANNA

You heard Drew. I have a couple of
weeks. Sarah arrives in a few
days, and Jake -- Jake is the past.

TOMMY

Is he? What happened to the new
and improved Anna? The Anna that
does what she wants?

Tommy pulls out a few tickets to a baseball game from his dayplanner and holds them up.

TOMMY (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
These were in your briefcase.

ANNA
So what if I plan to catch a few games when we get back in town?

TOMMY
This is not what Drew meant about putting your affairs in order.

Anna snatches the tickets from Tommy.

ANNA
No crime in enjoying America's number one past time.

She takes off down the hall HUMMING. Tommy scampers after her.

TOMMY
You mean baseball, right?

EXT. BALLPARK PARKING LOT -- DAY

Back at the home field, Jake walks comfortably out of the tunnel after a game. A couple of kids wait at the top of the tunnel, but one is much taller than the rest - it's Anna in a "She Devil" baseball cap that Jake gave her and sunglasses.

Jake stops for a few autographs.

JAKE
Enjoy the game, guys?

KID#1
Did you really mess up Griffey's forty-seventh home run last year?

KID#2
What's it like to pitch to McGwire?

Jake signs some autographs, but darts a glance at Anna who is in the shadows. Finally, the kids get what they want and drift away. She wears the World Series ring.

JAKE
You lost, Senator Rhodes?

Anna holds out a note pad.

ANNA
Anna with two "A"s, please.

Anna takes off the World Series ring and hands it to him.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Can we talk?

Jake puts the ring slowly back on his finger.

JAKE
Not much of a talker, but if you're
open to some other ideas, I know
just the place.

EXT. MOUNTAIN STREAM -- DAY

Anna and Jake sit beside a bubbling mountain stream.

JAKE
How much time do you have?

ANNA
Two weeks and Walker makes the
official announcement.

JAKE
The circus begins.

Anna grabs a few pebbles and starts skipping them into the stream.

ANNA
I start walking the tightrope.

JAKE
Am I the safety net or the breeze
that can tumble you?

ANNA
Both.

Anna gets up and starts to run towards a little footbridge crossing the river.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Last one to the cabin cooks dinner.

Jake catches up with her just as she reaches the bridge, but the bridge is too narrow for both to cross at the same time. With a giant leap, Jake almost spans the stream.

His last step is partially in the stream and he sprays both of them with water.

INT. JAKE'S RUSTIC CABIN -- DAY

Jake fries some fish while Anna comes out of the bedroom, tying her robe. The large room contains a comfy seating area around the fireplace and a small kitchenette.

ANNA

I guess I should always bring a change of clothes when I'm around you.

Jake stops his culinary arts and loops his arm around her waist.

JAKE

Or no clothes at all.

He gives her a kiss on the neck as some SMOKE starts rising from the pan.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

You're hot.

A few flames start to pop up in the pan.

ANNA

You're on fire.

JAKE

I know.

Anna pushes him away, and runs towards the stove. Jake walks casually to the kitchen sink and gets out a fire extinguisher.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Happens all the time. I make everyone hot.

Jake cleans up the remains of the burnt and foamed dinner while Anna puts a couple frozen dinners into the microwave. She crosses the room and notices a photograph of a beautiful blonde holding a golden retriever.

ANNA

Buffi? Buffi with an "I"?

Jake nods his head.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
She got the baseball I signed?

Another nod.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
She's quite beautiful.

JAKE
You betcha.

Jake walks over and admires the photograph.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Especially with a baseball in her
mouth.

Jake turns the photo towards Anna. We can now see that the dog has a baseball in her mouth. Anna breaks out into a grin.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
That's my sister, Karen holding
her. We share custody of Buffi
during baseball season.

Anna picks up a pile of straps with buckles. She inspects it.

ANNA
I hope this leash belongs to Buffi
and isn't some sex toy.

Jake brightens as he places his arm in one of the loops.

JAKE
I invented this while in physical
therapy. It lets me hit the ball
when my shoulder is frozen. I'm
testing it on some kids with
muscular dystrophy.

Anna looks at another photograph on the wall. It's Jake with a team of disabled kids.

ANNA
You never got married? Never had
any kids?

JAKE
No to both -- too scared.

ANNA

As you should be. I'm bringing mine to the game tomorrow.

JAKE

Meeting the kid. Are we getting serious?

Anna grabs her clothes and heads to the bedroom.

ANNA

I want you to see the whole package before you decide.

Jake calls after her.

JAKE

Then I can come in and watch?

EXT. BASEBALL STADIUM -- DAY

Anna, Tommy and Sarah sit in the stands, behind home plate and a few rows up. Jake pitches what may be another win for the home team. Tommy keeps score and rarely looks up.

SARAH

He's got a nice bod, Mom.

ANNA

Sarah, it's not like that.

SARAH

That's not what my sources say.

Sarah leans forward and gives Tommy a wink. Sarah studies Jake a little more intensely. She turns and looks at her mom. Anna wears her baseball hat.

SARAH (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Not bad for an old jock.

ANNA

He's younger than me and much more than just a ball player. He was a bright med student when the offer came.

TOMMMY

You know that there is an inverse relationship between intelligence and sports ability.

Tommy gives Sarah a little wink and bump on the shoulder. Anna didn't seem to hear it as she watches Jake throw the final strike. Both Tommy and Sarah notice her interest. The crowd goes crazy as he racks up another win for the team.

EXT. STADIUM TUNNEL -- DAY

Members of the team are filtering out and heading towards their cars. Jake is one of the last out and is surprised by a group of reporters.

REPORTER#1

Jake, Hey Flash.

There are a few FLASHES and CLICKS from the cameras as Jake moves towards the group. Jake jumps slightly but recovers quickly.

REPORTER#2

Jake, a few words?

Jake throws his gear bag over his shoulder and approaches the group. He is beaming from the attention.

JAKE

Enjoy the game? I guess three wins in a row for me is a pretty big record?

REPORTER#1

Actually, we didn't catch the game.

Jake appears confused, but as he looks carefully at each reporter, he notices that they are not dressed like the normal sports writers. These guys are political reporters.

REPORTER#2

We'd like to ask you about Senator Rhodes.

REPORTER#1

How long have you known the Senator?

REPORTER#3

Do you think Walker will ask Senator Rhodes to be his running mate?

Jake turns back to the tunnel just as the grate is being brought down. He looks back towards his car and the path is blocked by the reporters.

REPORTER#1

Jake, have you spoken to Senator Rhodes about the possibility that Walker will make an announcement next week?

Jake walks back to the reporters and faces the group.

JAKE

Sorry guys, thought I forgot something. Now what were your questions?

Anna, Sarah and Tommy walk at a fast pace across the parking lot towards Jake and the group.

REPORTER#1

The Senator?

Anna and Tommy arrive just as the reporters start to get fired up.

JAKE

If you don't mind, I have a shoulder to soak and this lady here is the real star today.

Jake makes a half bow to Anna and a graceful exit as the reporters surround Anna. She gives him a wave good-bye as he strides to his car. He tips his baseball cap then ducks into the car.

INT. ANNA'S DINING ROOM -- NIGHT

The dining room is casual, warm, and decorated in contemporary country. Sarah holds the hand of a handsome young man, BRAD. Anna gets up to start clearing some of the dishes.

ANNA

How did your interview go?

Brad reaches down and gets some papers from his backpack.

BRAD

Here's Microsoft's offer.

Jake studies the contract and WHISTLES.

JAKE

This is three times what a starting ballplayer makes.

BRAD
Look at the stock options.

Brad flips to the last page.

BRAD (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
I've got to give them an answer in
a week.

Anna motions for Sarah to meet her in the kitchen.

INT. ANNA'S KITCHEN -- NIGHT

The kitchen is off the dining room through a swinging door. It is warm and inviting. Anna removes two pies from the oven as Sarah stacks the dishwasher.

ANNA
This is wonderful news.

SARAH
That offer was for Brad. I'm not
moving back here.

ANNA
I thought you two were getting
serious.

Sarah closes the dishwasher.

SARAH
You thought wrong. What about
Jake? You knew him in college?

ANNA
Before I met your dad.

SARAH
You and a jock. I can't believe
it.

ANNA
He wanted to go into sports
medicine, but didn't have the
money.

SARAH
He chased the big bucks.

Sarah closes the dishwasher and sets it to run as Anna finishes cutting the pie and placing pieces with a scoop of ice cream on small plates.

SARAH (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Do you think he'd give everything
up for you?

ANNA
Why would he have to?

Sarah picks up all four plates with the expertise of a
waitress.

SARAH
Dad wouldn't. It got him killed.

INT. ANNA'S DINING ROOM -- EVENING

Sarah comes back into the room with the dessert. Anna
follows with coffee.

JAKE
If you need some place to stay
while you're getting settled, I've
got a nice cabin at the lake and
I'm never there.

BRAD
I might take you up on that.
What's the rent?

JAKE
Actually, I have some computer work
you could do for me in trade.

Sarah slams down the pie plates. Some of the pie spatters on
Jake. He brushes it off.

SARAH
You've decided? That's it? You're
moving here?

BRAD
The Microsoft offer was pretty
good.

SARAH
You're chasing the big bucks?

Anna moves to the front of the table. It appears that she is
about to address a large audience.

ANNA
Brad is just thinking of the
future. This is your home.
(MORE)

ANNA (CONT'D)

It's a great job offer. It's close to us and you could transfer.

SARAH

Does everyone think they know what I should do?

She puts down her fork and picks up the plate, and then blasts through the kitchen door leaving it swinging.

EXT. ANNA'S BACKYARD GARDEN -- NIGHT

Sarah squats in Anna's garden furiously pulling out weed after weed. Anna joins her and starts pulling a few out slowly. The moonlight softens her face.

ANNA

Say the word, and I'll tell Walker that I'm out.

SARAH

You'd do that for me?

ANNA

I'm a Senator so I can try to make this place a world that your kids can live in. As Vice-president, I'll be heard. If I lose you in the process, then what was the use?

Anna brushes some dirt from Sarah's face.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

We already lost so much.

SARAH

I didn't mean that about Dad.

Sarah glances back at the house.

SARAH (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

How about that one? Is he a keeper?

ANNA

It's complicated.

SARAH

It's not complicated, it's a yes or no answer. Do you want him near you?

(MORE)

SARAH (CONT'D)

You're supposed to be this big powerful senator and you can't even decide if this guy makes you happy or not?

INT. ANNA'S KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Anna pours Jake a cup of coffee.

ANNA

I like him. He'd be good for her.

Jake nuzzles her on the neck.

JAKE

Like I'm good for you.

Anna enjoys the affection, but then turns serious.

ANNA

We need to talk.

Jake turns up the passion.

JAKE

Save it for the Senate floor.

She pushes him away.

ANNA

I'm serious. You need to decide if this is what you want.

He pulls her close to him.

JAKE

This is what I want. If prancing around in a clown suit means that you and I go upstairs right now, then count me in.

He kisses her neck.

ANNA

It's not entirely up to me. There's Walker's people, Tommy, the party...

All further objections are muffled by Jake's kisses.

INT. ANNA'S OFFICE -- DAY

An uncomfortable Jake sits on the couch tossing Anna's Koosh ball into the air. He wears a cheap suit. Anna finishes a phone conversation as Tommy arranges chairs in a semicircle around Anna's desk.

He frowns at Jake, walks over to him and awkwardly intercepts the next toss.

JAKE

Hey.

TOMMY

Jake, this is important.

Jake gets up and starts following Tommy around the room. He mimics Tommy's strut behind his back much to the delight of Anna who tries to keep control on the phone.

ANNA

(into the phone)

In a few minutes -- I don't know --
yes, he's here and he looks
gorgeous.

She gives Jake a big wink. Jake takes a slight bow.

TOMMY

She was talking about me.

Tommy brushes some lint off of Jake.

TOMMY (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

You need a lot of work. First this
suit.

Jake looks down at his suit.

TOMMY (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

This is a summer suit and the color
is so wrong for your skin tone.

JAKE

It's sixty degrees today. In this
neck of the woods that is summer.

TOMMY

It's fall. Way too late for this
suit regardless of the temperature.
We'll go shopping together next
week if today goes well.

JAKE

No way. Guys don't shop together.

Tommy puts a hand on Jake's arm and squeezes it.

TOMMY

Like it or not, big boy - if Walker's people decide you're in, we'll be together a lot during the next few months.

JAKE

What do you mean, "in"?

ANNA

I tried to talk about this last night. Walker's people need to decide if you'll be used as a campaign asset. If not, then we'll keep our relationship low key. It will be hard -- we'll only get to see each other when I get a chance to rest. But, if you're a campaign asset, then you'll be able to travel with me after the season is over -- we'll be together. They'll be able to photograph us together -- you could help the numbers to our advantage.

Just then the office door blasts open as Drew and his team fill the room. Drew comes across the room and grabs Jake's hand and shakes it.

DREW

Flash.

The team of suits circle Jake and take notes. Drew hands Anna a sheet of paper.

DREW (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

It plays well with our focus group. Rekindled college romance. Here's the background on your relationship, Jake's political views, and your revised schedule.

The team gives Tommy their notes. As quickly as they arrived the team and Drew leave. All three stare at the door.

ANNA

Welcome to the circus.

INT. ANNA'S DINING ROOM -- DAY

Anna sits at the table which contains stacks of papers, coffee cups, and the remains of morning snacks. Jake paces back and forth tossing the Koosh ball up in the air.

JAKE

That is an issue that the Senator feels strongly about and is best answered by Anna herself.

ANNA

Great. Referring to me as both the Senator and Anna is brilliant. Now, on the issue of pro-life.

JAKE

That is an issue that the Senator...

Jake is interrupted by Tommy coming in from the kitchen laden with a stack of suits.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

No way.

Anna gets up and takes the first suit off the pile. She unzips the case and holds it up to Jake.

ANNA

Honey, you'd look magnificent in these suits.

JAKE

What's wrong with my suits?

ANNA

I'd just like to see what you'd look like in them.

He leans over and whispers in her ear.

JAKE

I'd look even better in your sheets.

Anna gives him a playful slap on the hand.

ANNA

Down boy. Look how they bring out the blue in your eyes.

JAKE

Don't try to handle me.

Jake tosses the suit back onto the table.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
I saw the notes from the Walker
people. Dark blue only. Keep it
simple for the guy.

Anna unzips another case and brings out another blue suit.

ANNA
These will fit you like a glove.

Anna lets her hand sweep across Jake's buttocks as she brings the next suit up in front of him. She gives him a sly smile.

JAKE
Should have known better than to
get involved with a politician.

EXT. MUNICIPAL LIBRARY -- DAY

Anna and Jake stand side by side on a stage next to a podium as a portly guy at the microphone introduces Anna. "Walker - Rhodes" posters are positioned behind them. Tommy sits in a chair towards the back of the stage.

A photographer crowds up to the front to take a picture. Jake gives him a warm smile and puts his arm around Anna.

The photographer motions to Jake to move aside. Jake steps to the right thinking the photographer wants just him. He strikes a pose.

The guy turns and takes a shot of Anna alone. The photographer gives Jake a "thumbs up" thanks.

Anna steps up to the mike and she takes it out of its holder. She walks closer to the edge of the stage to make eye contact with the audience.

ANNA
Thank you, Jim. Today is not just
a day...

Tommy gets up from his chair and approaches Jake. He leans toward him and whispers in Jake's ear.

TOMMY
(whispering)
Remember, always stand about two
steps behind Anna when she's on the
stage.

Jake nods and takes a couple more steps back. Jake spots some kids playing Frisbee on the lawn next to the stage. Jake hops down off the side of the stage and joins them.

ANNA

... for literacy, but a day for the children.

Jake is getting some great throws in as the kids scramble to catch the Frisbee.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Children to read, children to discover...

In response to the urging of the kids for a "sky" Frisbee, Jake winds up and sends one high into the air. It spirals down.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

... most importantly, children to be children.

The Frisbee drops down right on her head, knocking Anna to the stage floor. A Secret Service agent dives at the object.

The cameras FLASH as a pile of Anna, the portly guy, the Frisbee and the agent attempt to untangle themselves. Jake runs up on the stage and pulls Anna out of the pile.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Damn, damn, damn.

Jake makes a cutting motion across his throat.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

What the hell do you mean? I hate those damn secret baseball signals.

JAKE

Your microphone is live.

Anna stares at the microphone still in her hand.

EXT. CAMPAIGN TRAIL - MONTAGE

Anna, Jake and Tommy hit the campaign trail.

Pie eating contest that turns into a pie throwing contest with Anna getting the last pie in the face.

Jake chopping wood and he turns it over to Anna who gets the ax stuck in the block.

Anna leading a prize bull around the ring. Jake rides the bull.

Anna operating a fork lift with Jake jumping on the forks as they go up, causing the fork lift to tip and Anna jumping off.

Anna judging a dog show until the dogs break out of formation and jump on Jake.

INT. ANNA'S OFFICE -- DAY

Anna walks around the room with some papers in her hand. Tommy sits on the couch watching her. He mouths each word as she says it.

ANNA

This center will mean that Olympic hopefuls in the Northwest....

TOMMY

Aspiring Olympic athletes.

Anna looks down at the papers.

ANNA

Aspiring Olympic hopefuls.

TOMMY

Athletes.

Anna plops down on the couch.

ANNA

I hate canned speeches, tell Drew that I'm going to wing it.

TOMMY

With the last five fiascoes, we need some controlled successes.

Anna kicks her shoes off and puts them on the coffee table.

ANNA

The dog show wasn't Jake's fault.

TOMMY

What was he doing with a steak in his pocket?

ANNA

Leftovers. Jake gets hungry later.

Tommy gets up from the couch and grabs his dayplanner.

TOMMY

How about we send Jake...

Tommy flips forward a few pages.

ANNA

I want him beside me.

TOMMY

Honey, we're talking about a new Olympic aquatic center. Water. Water and Jake don't mix.

ANNA

I want him beside me.

TOMMY

Water, indoors, flash photography.

INT. OLYMPIC SWIMMING COMPLEX -- DAY

The stands are full of spectators as Anna, Vice-President Walker and other politicians are sitting on a stage on the other side of the pool.

Six swimmers stand casually at the end of the lanes while the other swimmers are finishing a few laps. Jake and four wives are sitting together in a semicircle behind the stage.

Jake leans into the group and WHISPERS to the politicians' WIVES. They all break out in LAUGHTER. Anna pokes her head around the corner of the stage as one of the wives loops her arm in Jake's.

WIFE#1

You are just too precious.

Jake leans into her.

JAKE

Just makes you want to take me home, doesn't it?

GIGGLES from the wives as Anna abruptly turns around and grabs Tommy. She points at the unruly group and Tommy rushes over and addresses the wives and Jake.

TOMMY

Before the race starts, Vice-President Walker and Senator Rhodes will go down those steps...

Tommy gestures to the steps at the front of the stage.

TOMMY (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
 ... then cut the ribbon at the
 other end. Then you wives go
 around this side of the stage.

Tommy takes a few swishing steps as an example.

TOMMY (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
 Follow a few steps behind your
 husbands.

Tommy realizes his slip up. He flicks an imaginary piece of lint off of Jake.

TOMMY (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
 You know.

He looks back down at the clipboard.

TOMMY (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
 The race starts and then you each
 stand two steps behind your husband
 for the photo shoot. Any
 questions?

Jake raises his hand. Tommy points to him like a school marm.

JAKE
 Can I use the bathroom please?

INT. OLYMPIC SWIMMING COMPLEX RESTROOM -- DAY

Jake washes his hands as two swimmers leave the showers. They both toss their team swimsuits into a large laundry hamper and grab fresh ones off a shelf above.

After they leave, Jake notices that a clean swimsuit has fallen to the floor. He starts to replace it on the shelf, and then smiles.

INT. OLYMPIC SWIMMING COMPLEX -- DAY

The ribbon has just been cut and the race is about to begin. Tommy looks frantically for Jake. Tommy comes up behind Anna and starts to whisper in her ear.

The crowd starts CHATTERING. In the pool adjacent to the lap pool, Jake climbs the high dive. The press and photographers rush to the side of the dive pool.

TOMMY

I was just going to tell you that
Jake is missing.

Wearing just a skimpy Speedo, Jake reaches the top platform.

The cameras FLASH, but Jake doesn't seem to notice. He executes a perfect dive with the exception of the gigantic splash that covers the crowd and press.

INT. ANNA'S OFFICE -- DAY

Anna and Tommy both stare out the window. Anna starts to take a bite of a candy bar. She stops and tosses it in the trash instead.

ANNA

Let me see the list, what time did
he say?

TOMMY

Eleven.

Anna looks at his watch.

ANNA

Can't be good.

TOMMY

I told you, Jake is baggage.

ANNA

I need him.

TOMMY

Honey, you've got to decide. What
do you want more?

Drew walks in followed by his little clones. They are all wearing dark navy suits.

Drew lays a newspaper on her desk. There is the picture of Jake in a Speedo diving off the high dive at the opening of the Aquatic Center.

ANNA

He's trying, Drew.

DREW

Be honest, Anna. Jake doesn't have
a clue.

Drew picks up the paper and looks at it again.

DREW (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Not a clue. Schmuck has no idea
how much the public loves him.

TOMMY
What about all those people who got
wet?

Drew gives Tommy the "stare" that makes him melt into the
couch.

DREW
We're here to plan Jake's
appearances. Right now he's the
campaign's biggest asset.

EXT. ANNA'S BACKYARD GARDEN -- DAY

Anna digs in her garden as Jake lays peacefully on the lawn
beside the garden. The sun is shining and he closes his eyes
in contentment.

ANNA
You're done for the season anyway.

JAKE
I feel like some movie prop.

ANNA
Just until the election. That's
all I'm asking.

JAKE
Why?

ANNA
I want you beside me.

JAKE
Let's go inside, then.

ANNA
You have only one thing on your
mind.

JAKE
Always been honest about that. No
hidden agendas. No politics from
me.

Jake rolls over on his side on the grass and props his head
in his hand.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Let's play ball.

EXT. LITTLE LEAGUE BALLPARK -- DAY

The stands are crowded with a lot more people than would normally attend a little league baseball game. The park looks brand new and there is a banner that says "Litchfield Park Welcomes Senator Rhodes."

Anna stands in front of a make-shift podium while Jake and Tommy stand next to the players who are lined up smartly in their new uniforms.

ANNA
Facilities like this mean that
children have room to play.

Jake turns around and notices some neighborhood kids hanging on the backstop fence. They become animated when he gives them a wave.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Room to grow, room to be the
children that...

Jake leaves Tommy and walks over to the kids.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
... we all hope for - the children
of our future. Let us now dedicate
this field...

The kids come around the backstop.

JAKE
Hey, guys.

A couple grab his hand and give him a hearty shake.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
How come you guys aren't on the
team?

Jake gestures towards the smartly dressed little league team.

BOY#1
It costs two hundred bucks.

Jake WHISTLES.

JAKE
Two hundred to play baseball?
Times have really changed.

Anna glances back at Jake, but tries to ignore the chatter.

ANNA
... to the children of Litchfield
Park.

The crowd CHEERS and the little group around Jake has grown to about ten kids.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
I'd like to ask my dear friend,
Jake "Flash" MacCook to toss out
the first pitch in this first
practice game of the Litchfield
Park Panthers.

Jake moves up to the microphone.

JAKE
A little change of plans.

Anna steps back a few steps and looks for Tommy. Tommy is already hurrying towards the microphone.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
I think watching a practice game of
the same team is boring.

Jake starts to remove his jacket.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
What do you think?

The crowd CHEERS.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
I'd like to challenge the Panthers
to a real game against a real
ballplayer.

He motions to the neighborhood kids to come forward.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
With a few of my helpers here.

Tommy has reached the microphone and is shaking his head. He leans towards Jake and whispers.

TOMMY

These kids are not -- this is an
exclusive planned development...

Jake returns to the microphone with his arm around Tommy.

JAKE

I'll even take this skinny kid on
my team. Let's play ball.

INT. HOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT

Anna stands by the door looking at her watch while STEAM and
SINGING is coming through in volumes from the bathroom.

ANNA

I thought you said ten minutes.

A toweled Jake emerges from the fog.

JAKE

Can you believe Tommy got a hit in
the ninth to tie it up?

Jake comes over and hugs Anna.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

I could get jealous.

He snuggles her neck. Anna pulls away.

ANNA

Today was not good.

JAKE

Tommy says Walker's ahead ten
points over the Judge. The press
loves me. What about you?

ANNA

This is not how I wanted to be
elected.

JAKE

I thought it was Walker who was
running for president.

ANNA

I don't want to be window dressing
for Walker. I have my issues, gun
control, education, elder care.

JAKE (CONT'D)
 You think I'm a screw up?

Anna turns and opens the hotel door.

ANNA
 We're due downstairs in fifteen
 minutes.

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM -- NIGHT

Jake stands by the buffet table looking at all the fancy food while Anna shakes hands at the door. He pokes at some of it but eventually gives up on finding something edible. He opens the door to the patio.

EXT. HOTEL PATIO COURTYARD -- NIGHT

Tommy and Drew stand at the courtyard wall with their backs to Jake. He decides to sneak up behind them. A good scare looks like fun. Jake freezes at the last moment.

DREW
 If it weren't for Ahab, that guy
 would be history.

TOMMY
 Ahab? Moby Dick?

DREW
 Apple Pie, Hot Dogs, and Baseball.
 Anna carries the West. Walker's
 got the East. Jake carries the
 baseball states. After the
 election, he will have served his
 purpose. Anna's a smart girl, she
 knows what sells.

Jake backs up slowly and slips back into the ballroom.

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM -- NIGHT

Jake storms over to Anna.

JAKE
 Time out.

Anna looks down at her watch and back at her admirers.

ANNA

Athletes have great timing. Jake's right, I've got a flight to catch.

Anna breaks away from the group, guided by Jake. Instead of paying attention to him, she signals Drew and Tommy who have come back in from the patio. Tommy rushes up with a cell phone up to his ear.

TOMMY

Limo's out front. No time to get your bags.

Tommy turns towards Jake who stares at Anna in close conversation with Drew.

TOMMY (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

You take her luggage home. I packed her a new bag for tomorrow.

Now Jake is angry. He grabs Anna by the arm.

JAKE

We need to talk now.

Anna still doesn't notice that he's upset, but she pats him on the hand holding her arm.

ANNA

I know you wanted to come on this trip, but I need you to take Sport to the groomers. You both have photo shoots tomorrow afternoon.

Anna reaches up and touches Jake's hair.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

You should see the barber too.

JAKE

Who is window dressing now?

The trio take off for the foyer without answering Jake, leaving him stunned.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Just call me Ahab.

INT. POSH BUSINESS OFFICE -- DAY

The office is rich, tasteful, and laden with sports memorabilia.

Sitting behind the desk is Florida Marlin's team owner ORVIS MATTSON, early sixties, smoking a cigar with his feet on the desk.

Jake stares at one of the many pictures on the wall. He taps on it.

JAKE

Ninety-one. Playoff game.

ORVIS

If I remember correctly, I had to have four stitches after you cracked that champagne bottle on my head.

Jake returns to the desk and opens his duffel bag. He pulls out a champagne bottle and sets it on the desk.

JAKE

Heck, someone with a normal head would have had twenty. Your head must be solid wood.

Orvis strokes the champagne bottle. He turns back to his credenza and picks up a piece of paper.

ORVIS

Spring training is tough for a guy your age -- but I owe you. You make it through spring training and you're in.

JAKE

Keep it quiet?

ORVIS

We'll do our best, but you're today's news.

JAKE

Is that the reason you're giving me another shot at the show?

ORVIS

I'm a businessman. You're worth ten thousand tickets a game even without the VP. If she wins, then I hit the mother lode.

JAKE

The deal I want is okay?

Orvis nods.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
I don't want anybody to know how
you're paying me.

INT. JAKE'S RUSTIC CABIN -- DAY

Brad looks at a large collection of pictures on the wall.

BRAD
Hard not being in the show anymore?

JAKE
There are trade-offs. Playing on
the farm team let me spend more
time here, working on my project.

BRAD
It's nice here.

Brad doesn't look that happy.

JAKE
Go get Sarah. Book her flight.
Get her here.

Brad shakes his head sadly.

BRAD
Can't. You should know that. The
Senator is just like her daughter.
They're like cows.

JAKE
Cows?

BRAD
You try to push a cow away from you
and it will step towards you
squarely on your foot. Broke a toe
that way.

JAKE
Just a piece of advice, son.

Jake gets up and puts a fatherly hand on Brad's shoulder.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Try to avoid using farm animals,
especially cows, in your analogies
about women. Call her.

INT. AIRPORT WAITING AREA -- DAY

An anxious Sarah searches the waiting area. Finally she spots Brad and waves furiously. Brad sees her and rushes into her arms.

SARAH

What's the news from the battle?

BRAD

The press love him. Walker's people love him. Even Tommy is starting to love the big guy.

SARAH

Tommy?

BRAD

It's amazing what happens when you pick the skinny kid for your team.

SARAH

My mom?

Brad shakes his head. Sarah leans her head on his shoulder.

SARAH (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

She makes lists. After Dad died she made a list of everything she wanted to accomplish. Falling in love again wasn't on the list.

EXT. AIRPORT CURB -- DAY

Jake stands next to his Jeep as Brad and Sarah come out of the door. Jake reaches into the back of his Jeep and grabs a bright orange hunter's vest and slips it on. He throws his arms up in surrender.

SARAH

Tough going?

JAKE

It's been open season on Jake. Didn't want to take any shots from you too.

SARAH

Relax big guy. I save all my frustrations to take out on Brad.

JAKE

I see the family resemblance.

SARAH

Give her time. I know this election has been tough. She can't be any harder than the fans.

Jake shakes his head.

JAKE

When I'm on that mound pitching, I know exactly what it takes to strike a guy out. Sometimes I've got it, sometimes I don't...

Jake grabs her bag and tosses it into the back.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

... but I always know what it takes.

Coming out of the terminal is a photographer and a reporter. They spot the trio and smile to each other.

INT. JAKE'S JEEP ON A MOUNTAIN ROAD -- DAY

Jake drives as Sarah and Brad are cuddled close together in the back seat. Jake adjusts the mirror politely and looks out the side mirror.

JAKE

Damn.

He slams on the brakes.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD -- DAY

Jake stands over a deer with a rifle. Brad has his arm around an upset Sarah.

SARAH

You have to kill it?

JAKE

It's suffering. It was hit by a car hours ago. Look at all the blood.

Jake gives Brad a nod towards the Jeep. Brad walks Sarah back towards the car. A GUNSHOT causes Sarah to jump.

INT. JAKE'S RUSTIC CABIN -- DAY

Sarah wanders around the room looking at the pictures on the wall and other mementos.

JAKE
You look surprised.

Sarah looks around.

SARAH
No animal heads on the wall.

JAKE
I don't hunt for sport. Baseball is a sport. Both teams get to use a bat. We start arming the animals and then I'll call hunting a sport.

SARAH
What about the guns, vest, camouflage pants?

JAKE
You saw why I used a gun today. The vest is to keep me from getting shot during my morning jog during hunting season and the pants...

Jake looks down at his well-worn attire.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
... are comfortable. Let's get you home before Momma hears from the press that you're in town.

INT. ANNA'S BACKYARD GARDEN -- NIGHT

Sarah and Anna are in the garden, picking some lettuce.

SARAH
Your garden is doing well.

ANNA
It's surprising, given how little attention I pay to it.

SARAH
Do you expect the same results from Jake?

Anna slumps onto a bench.

ANNA

There are two of him. The one that I adore and the other one that frustrates the heck out of me.

SARAH

Adore?

Anna nods.

SARAH (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

You said you'd give it all up if I asked you -- what about if he did?

ANNA

I don't know.

SARAH

Did Dad ever ask?

Anna shakes her head, no. Sarah drops her head.

SARAH (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

I blamed you for pushing him away -- getting him killed.

ANNA

It's easier than blaming someone who is gone. Your father was a soldier. I couldn't keep him from going off to war.

Anna gets up and pulls Sarah close to her, SOBBING.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

I'm sorry I did this to you, to your dad -- and now to Jake. I don't want to keep him from playing baseball, but every move, every word, every hair that is out of place is in the next morning's newspaper.

Sarah hugs her and then pulls back and examines Anna. She pushes back some of Anna's stray hairs and wipes away the tears.

SARAH

I'd hate to see this mess in print, so we better get to work on your hair for the debate.

INT. COLLEGE THEATER -- NIGHT

Anna looks exhausted, yet confident as the debate with THOMPSON is wrapping up. The MODERATOR checks her notes.

MODERATOR

One last question for Mr. Thompson with a two minute rebuttal for Senator Rhodes.

Anna takes a sip of water. She's ready.

MODERATOR (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Mr. Thompson, you've been a long-time supporter and member of the NRA. What would your White House policy be regarding gun control?

THOMPSON

The NRA promotes the safe and legal use of firearms.

Thompson reaches into his podium and pulls out a newspaper.

THOMPSON (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

My opponent would like to see all guns taken away from every law-abiding citizen who only wants to protect their home and family.

Anna strains to see what is in the newspaper that Thompson is holding.

THOMPSON (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

My opponent also runs around with a guy who uses guns to illegally hunt out of season in State Parks.

Thompson triumphantly holds up a headline that says "OPEN SEASON FOR FLASH". It's a PICTURE of Jake standing over the injured deer holding a rifle.

ANNA'S DINING ROOM -- NIGHT

Anna comes into the dining room where Brad and Sarah are having a late dessert and tosses the newspaper across the table.

ANNA

He killed a deer.

Sarah gets up and another newspaper falls to the floor at Anna's feet.

SARAH
Let him explain.

Anna picks up the second newspaper, but pauses when she sees a headline "FLASH to SPLASH." As she reads on, her frown grows deeper and deeper.

ANNA
Damn.

Jake pops into the room carrying a large piece of pie.

JAKE
You rang? Thought I heard one of my names.

Jake turns to Sarah and Brad.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Can't remember if I'm "Shit" or "Damn."

Anna is furious.

ANNA
You've been pretty busy. First you went hunting, and then you ran off to Florida to sign with the Marlins?

JAKE
You've got it all wrong.

Jake picks up the paper and smiles at his picture.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
First I went to Florida and then I killed the deer. Great picture, wouldn't you say?

Sarah and Brad have already backed out of the room.

ANNA
You used me to get noticed by the show.

Jake tries to take her into his arms.

JAKE
You never asked me about my dreams. Take a deep breath and let me explain.

ANNA

How can you call returning to the majors a dream? You were already there. You have the World Series rings, you had groupies chasing after you. Is that what it's all about? You want the attention, the glitter?

Anna grabs the newspaper and throws it hard on the table.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

What's the press going to say about this? Rhodes loses to the "Boys of Summer?" I look like a fool.

JAKE

It's not about you.

Jake tries again to take her into his arms, but she grabs the other newspaper.

ANNA

This is all about me. I hate guns, I hate hunters, I hate poachers. You did this to embarrass me.

Jake reaches over to the credenza and pulls out a third paper. It's a picture from the day they met and when the two groupies took a picture of Anna, Tommy and Jake in the shower.

JAKE

I'd say this was much more embarrassing. When this came out you explained it calmly to everyone. Why can't I do the same now? Did you even ask me what I was going to do after my contract was over?

ANNA

You'd be with me, fulfilling my dreams of a better world.

JAKE

I have dreams too.

Jake leaves.

INT. HOTEL SUITE -- NIGHT

It's election night and Brad, Sarah, Drew, Walker, Tommy, and Anna are huddled around a television set.

DREW

You brought in the West, just like
I said you would.

Drew gives Anna a tap on the arm.

DREW (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Surprisingly, Ahab still delivered
the Midwest. Nobody noticed that
he was gone -- they figured he was
getting ready for spring training.

ANNA

Ahab? I've heard that before.

DREW

It's what I liked to call your jock
boyfriend. Apple Pie, Hot Dogs and
Baseball wins the Midwest every
time, Ahab - A - H - A - B. You
were smart to replace him with the
kid. Reminded the voters that you
were a sad war widow.

Drew reaches over and gives Sarah a punch.

DREW (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

To think we were worried about you.
You clean up real good kid.

Anna stands up, angry.

ANNA

Get out.

Drew ignores her and turns his attention back to the television.

DREW

Cool down. Seven years from now
you'll be begging me to handle all
your little screw-ups.

Anna nods to the two Secret Service men on the other side of the room. They come on each side of Drew and help him up. Anna confronts him.

ANNA

The people I love are not screw-ups, and you will never handle anyone for me again.

With another nod, the agents remove Drew from the room. Sarah gets up and hugs her mother.

SARAH

You did it. Getting rid of Drew wasn't even on your list.

ANNA

I would think that as the second most powerful person in the most powerful country in the world that I could stick up for my own daughter.

INT. ANNA'S OFFICE -- DAY

Anna goes through a pile of files and mail as Tommy comes in with a stack of newspapers.

TOMMY

It really happened. I pinch myself and I still have to read these to believe it.

Anna gets up and stands behind Tommy. She glances at the newspaper headline that reads "WALKER/RHODES WIN-FIRST FEMALE VP".

Tommy flips to the local section of the newspaper.

TOMMY (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

My sources say, he's still in town.

There is another small headline, "FLASH PREPARES FOR MARLIN'S SPRING TRAINING CAMP".

ANNA

It's just the newspaper, not your sources.

Anna reaches over and grabs the stack of newspapers from Tommy.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

How can this worthless stack of paper run our lives?

EXT. SPRING TRAINING CAMP FIELD -- DAY

Jake is one of the last players on the field. He walks over to the PITCHING COACH and three other PITCHERS. A few of the younger guys recognize him.

PITCHER#1

Flash.

PITCHER#2

Didn't know you'd be here.

PITCHER#1

I was there in the stands during the playoffs in eighty-eight.

They circle around him like curious school children.

PITCHER#1 (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

My dad had to put me on his shoulders.

The guy freezes and stares awkwardly at his feet. Jake takes a ball out of his jacket pocket and tosses it to the kid.

JAKE

Let's see what you've got.

The pitching coach walks up to the kid and takes the ball from him. He tosses it back to Jake.

PITCHING COACH

I'm a little more interested in what you've got, old man.

EXT. SPORTS BUILDING -- DAY

Jake walks to the sports building with his jacket draped on his shoulder. The kid pitcher catches up with him. He punches Jake in the arm. Jake winches and replaces his jacket that has slipped down.

PITCHER#1

What a day.

JAKE

You're looking good, kid.

PITCHER#1

I meant you. You've still got the burn.

The kid hits his mitt with his other fist.

PITCHER#1 (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
 A few of us are going to McBees --
 you coming?

Jake looks at the young eager face and smiles.

JAKE
 Sorry. I've got a date with Audrey
 Hepburn.

PITCHER#1
 Name's familiar. Is she hot?

Jake shakes his head and walks away.

INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR -- NIGHT

Jake heads toward his hotel room. In front of him a couple of groupies are hanging on to some of his teammates. One extra groupie is lagging behind. She turns and spots Jake.

GROUPIE#2
 Want to party with us?

Jake has reached his room and inserts the card into the lock. He just smiles and enters his room alone.

INT. JAKE'S HOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT

Jake lays on his bed with an ice pack on his shoulder, still fully dressed in his workout clothes. The television is tuned to the "All Movies - 24 Hours a Day" channel. He is sound asleep.

EXT. SPRING TRAINING CAMP FIELD -- DAY

Jake throws the ball back and forth with the kid. He winds up and burns a fast one into the kid's mitt. The kid pulls his hand from his mitt and blows on it.

PITCHER#1
 Ease up old man.

JAKE
 I thought you said "show me the
 stuff".

PITCHER#1
 I meant for you to aim it at my
 mitt instead of my head.

The pitching coach walks over to Jake. He motions for the kid to take a break.

PITCHING COACH
Looking good, Flash.

JAKE
Still got about three quarters of a tank left in this arm.

Jake rubs his shoulder and arm.

PITCHING COACH
Got to admit that I don't like rehab jobs, but you still got some stuff. You did it -- you're back in the show.

INT. JAKE'S HOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT

Jake looks into the mirror.

JAKE
Ladies and gentlemen -- starting today as pitcher for the Florida Marlins...

He fakes a wind up pitch, throws the imaginary baseball and grabs his shoulder in pain.

He grabs an ice pack and heads over to the television. He starts clicking through the channels until he finds the movie channel. He sits down on the edge of the bed for a few moments then changes the channel to CNN.

BROADCASTER (V.O.)
For the second time since taking office, President Walker again showed his confidence in Vice-President Rhodes by sending her to Europe to meet with foreign...

Jake clicks to another channel.

INT. ANNA'S OFFICE -- DAY

Anna works on a computer while Tommy paces back and forth.

TOMMY
You need to review this schedule, we leave for the talks in two weeks.

Anna looks up.

ANNA
It doesn't make sense.

She rubs her forehead.

ANNA (CONT'D)
I wish I had paid more attention
during my accounting classes in
college.

Tommy comes over to the screen and puts his hand on her
shoulder.

TOMMY
Leave it alone. Sign it. Walker's
team of auditors prepared this.
It's a formality.

ANNA
Election laws are not a formality.

Anna taps at the screen.

ANNA (CONT'D)
I don't know half of these
organizations. Foundation for a
Better Society? OpenSource.com?
Who are these people?

Tommy guides her to the door as he checks his dayplanner.

TOMMY
Ask Walker, he waiting.

INT. PRESIDENT'S DINING ROOM -- DAY

President Walker ushers Anna to a table filled with bountiful
breakfast. A few aides are in the room, but they stand
discreetly to the side out of earshot.

Walker affectionately pats Anna's hand.

WALKER
We're off to a great start. Our
first three bills look like they're
going to pass including your gun
control legislation.

ANNA
We're quite a team.

WALKER

Speaking of teams, you made the right choice with that ball player. He served you well, but no way would he past the scrutiny of this town.

Walker gets up and takes a coffee pot from the cart. He pours Anna more coffee.

WALKER (CONT'D)

It's a little hard to live in a fishbowl. Everything we do is watched.

ANNA

Is this about the filing?

WALKER

It takes money to get elected. You have to get elected to get your programs through. It's a price we pay.

ANNA

You mean, they paid?

Walker pushes the filled coffee cup closer to Anna.

WALKER

Sign the forms. They pay attention when we file late.

Anna ignores the coffee and stands up.

ANNA

Mr. President, I'm not signing it until I've checked out that soft money.

WALKER

You jump back into a bed with a college jock in the middle of a campaign and you're calling me dirty?

ANNA

I didn't jump into bed with Jake.

WALKER

Maybe that's why he didn't stick around. Ballplayers are used to getting it quicker than three strikes.

(MORE)

WALKER (CONT'D)

It was only a matter of time before he would have been an embarrassment to us. If Orvis hadn't come through...

ANNA

Orvis? The Marlins?

WALKER

He made the choice. It's always the money or the fishbowl that wins.

Walker tosses the photograph from that first day in the shower of a naked Anna with both Jake and Tommy on top of her.

WALKER (CONT'D)

Sign the form.

INT. JAKE'S RUSTIC CABIN -- DAY

Jake opens up the door, drops his gear bag and finds Sarah and Brad cuddled by the fireplace. Sarah jumps up and comes over and hugs Jake.

SARAH

I'm glad you're back.

Brad leans over the couch with an outstretched hand.

BRAD

You tossed away some big bucks.

All three turn towards a commotion going on at the door.

A frazzled Pete is being carried into the room. Secret Service agents are on each side causing Pete's legs to dangle frantically.

PETE

I was taking a piss.

Sarah nods at the two and they drop Pete to the ground. They politely exit.

JAKE

I told you they'd be out there somewhere. Sarah has no choice.

SARAH

I make them stay hidden. This cabin has been a lifesaver since the circus began.

BRAD

Not too bad of a commute for me to Microsoft.

JAKE

Speaking of Microsoft...

Jake pulls out some papers from his gear bag.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

...I got the grant.

Sarah and Brad jump up and hug him.

JAKE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

My camp is a go. That's why Pete came back with me. The Marlins even agreed to donate some -- not as much as the first deal, but enough that I can also test out some of my inventions.

EXT. YOUTH BALLPARK -- DAY

Pete stands next to the catcher making some notes on a clipboard as Jake works on the mound with a kid in a wheel chair. He makes some adjustments to a robot arm on the chair that holds a baseball.

A white car pulls up outside the fence and parks. After a few moments it moves over to the side fence, followed by a dark SUV.

Pete looks over at the car as Jake shows the kid how to release the ball.

PETE

Every morning this week. Go talk to her.

JAKE

She's the one who tossed me out. Let her throw out the first ball.

The ball snaps out of the robotic arm and hits Pete in the side of the head. He drops to the ground. Anna jumps out of the car as Jake runs towards Pete.

They reach him at the same moment. Pete fakes a loud MOAN, but then spots the Secret Service agents following Anna. He pops up and dusts himself off.

PETE
See boys, no damage done.
Everything is fine.

The agents keep an eye on Anna as they let Pete guide them away to leave Anna and Jake alone.

ANNA
You didn't take the Marlin's job.

JAKE
All that glitters is not gold...

ANNA
... all who wander are not lost.

Anna looks around the field.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
This is a pretty good dream. Why
didn't you tell me this was the
reason you signed with the Marlins?

JAKE
I shouldn't have to.

The HORN blasts from the car as Tommy sticks his head out and points to his watch. She reaches into her coat pocket and pulls out the Tasmanian "She-Devil" baseball cap and puts it on Jake.

ANNA
Time to play ball.

Anna kisses Jake and runs towards the car and SUV.

INT. ANNA'S CAR -- DAY

Tommy opens up his dayplanner as Anna gets behind the wheel.

TOMMMY
So much to do.

Anna nods as she continues to watch Jake.

TOMMMY (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
I'm made seven different lists.

Anna reaches over and flips to a new page.

ANNA

Start a new list. We're going to make everything right.

INT. AIRPLANE -- DAY

Anna and Tommy sit in the front of the plane going over some papers. Tommy looks at his watch.

TOMMY

You know the press asked for twenty minutes.

ANNA

How are they taking it?

TOMMY

My sources say...

Tommy looks at his notes.

TOMMY (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

... I mean, Maryann says that she's read the report and he has no other choice but to resign.

Anna gets up and smooths out the wrinkles in her skirt.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Let's go entertain the troops.

Tommy steps aside and follows Anna towards the back of the plane. Anna pushes aside the curtain and the members of the press corp perk up. Anna leans against the first seat and gives a seasoned reporter, TOM WRIGHT, a squeeze on the arm.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

How's the food, Tom?

Tom reaches for his note pad frantically as Anna reaches down and picks up a small piece of mint candy from his tray and pops it into her mouth.

TOM WRIGHT

So does President Walker's last minute absence mean that...

Anna holds up her hand.

ANNA

I think any comments on the activities of President Walker should be reserved for President Walker.

MARYANN, a stout woman in her fifties, raises her hand. Anna gives her a nod.

MARYANN

I understand that you had originally planned to be leaving today for China. Does the cancellation mean that President Walker is resigning?

Anna moves down the aisle and gets closer to Maryann. She spots some candy wrappers in the aisle. Anna stoops down and picks them up. She studies them.

ANNA

My trip to China was canceled due to a forecasted typhoon.

MARYANN

Are you replacing President Walker at the opening of the National Arts Center?

Anna looks back at Tommy who has been tapped on the shoulder by an Air Force steward. Tommy follows the steward towards the front of the plane.

Anna moves towards the rear of the plane where an anxious ROOKIE REPORTER from CNN is frantically waving his arm. She smiles gently at him and gives him a nod.

ROOKIE REPORTER

Madam Vice-President, Mr. Rush said this morning in an exclusive interview with CNN...

There are more candy wrappers on the floor. In the middle of the wrappers is one unopened piece of candy.

ROOKIE REPORTER (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

... that President Walker has admitted to taking campaign contributions from...

The kid pauses to check his notes. Anna leans over to look around the kid. Jake slouches down in his seat and pulls down the brim of his baseball cap.

ROOKIE REPORTER (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
... the Foundation for a Better
Society.

Anna gets frustrated and moves around the kid. She reaches up and tips back the "She-Devil" baseball cap of Jake who provides a sheepish grin.

JAKE
Is there a movie on this flight?

INT. AIRPLANE RESTROOM -- DAY

Jake sits on the tiny sink counter while Anna is pinned against the door.

ANNA
This was your plan? This doorknob
is cutting into my back.

JAKE
Can't be as bad as what this faucet
is doing to me.

Jake shifts uncomfortably.

ANNA
You wanted to talk. This is the
only place where nobody can hear
us.

JAKE
I never said talk. I wanted to be
alone with you.

Anna takes off his baseball hat.

ANNA
Was it the hat that changed your
mind?

JAKE
That along with daily phone calls
from Sarah, Brad, and Tommy -- the
new uniforms for the kids, the
change of zoning so I could open up
the camp, and the case of my
favorite candy. Sending men with
guns to pick me up was the deciding
factor.

ANNA

I know how to get elected, I know how to get a bill passed. I don't know why it took me so long to figure out how to get what I wanted.

Anna kisses him passionately. The plane starts to descend.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

We have a lot to talk about, but we have to go up front now.

JAKE

Too bad, this faucet in my behind was starting to feel good.

EXT. AIRPLANE -- DAY

The plane is in a secured area with two limousines and buses waiting. Two Secret Service agents stand at the bottom of the steps, with Sarah and Brad, while another five agents hold back the hoards of reporters.

Anna pauses at the top of the stairs. She turns to Jake.

ANNA

Are you sure you want this?

JAKE

I asked you didn't I? Sure I either had a gun or water faucet in my back...

ANNA

I couldn't tell you everything -- but are you in?

JAKE

I'm here for the whole game, even if it goes into extra innings. Pete will run the camp while I'm in Washington with you.

Anna turns her head up and receives a gentle kiss from Jake.

ANNA

I love you.

JAKE

I love you too, Madam Vice-President.

ANNA

That's what I couldn't tell you.

The crowd of reporters slowly surges forward and they start SHOUTING.

REPORTER#4

Does Walker's resignation for legal reasons...

REPORTER#5

When will you...

REPORTER#6

Who will be your new Vice-President?

Anna places her hand gently against Jake's face.

ANNA

Hello, First Man.

Together they descend the stairs and at the bottom, a podium has quickly been positioned between Anna and the reporters.

The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court waits next to the podium holding a bible. Anna and Jake approach the podium arm-in-arm.

As Anna adjusts the microphone, Jake takes two steps back. Anna looks back at Jake.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Ready?

Jake gives her a little salute.

JAKE

You betcha.

FADE OUT: