

The Last Statesman

By:

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WGAW # 1409805

FADE IN:

INT. MEDICAL CLINIC - PATIENT ROOM - DAY

An agitated LOWELL BACHMAN (82) sits on the edge of a medical table, banging his heels on the base like an impatient child.

LOWELL
Ferguson, where the hell are you?
(loud)
Ferguson, can you hear me?
(louder)
Ferguson, God damn it!

DOCTOR ROBERT FERGUSON (50s), tall and lean, enters.

DOCTOR FERGUSON
Guess we can rule out any problems
related to your vocal chords.

Ferguson shines a light in each of Lowell's eyes.

LOWELL
So, what do I got - Alzheimer's?

DOCTOR FERGUSON
Take your shirt off. I want to hear
your heart. You still have one -
yes?

Lowell sneers as he removes his shirt. Ferguson puts his stethoscope on Lowell's chest. Lowell jerks back.

LOWELL
Jesus Christ! You keep that thing
in a freezer!?

DOCTOR FERGUSON
Sssh.

Ferguson listens intently.

LOWELL
So, Alzheimer's, right?

DOCTOR FERGUSON
(removing the scope)
No. The memory loss you described
is pretty normal for someone of
your age.

LOWELL
Dementia?

Ferguson checks Lowell's ears through a otoscope.

LOWELL
I think my Dad had dementia.

DOCTOR FERGUSON
Quiet please.

LOWELL
Hey, what's the difference between
them anyway? - Alzheimer's and
dementia?

DOCTOR FERGUSON
Doesn't matter. You don't have
either.

LOWELL
I want to know!

Ferguson pockets the otoscope in his lab coat.

DOCTOR FERGUSON
Will it shut you up?

LOWELL
Maybe.

DOCTOR FERGUSON
Close enough.
(off Lowell's nod)
Dementia is a progressive decline
in cognitive function. Alzheimer's
is different. In your brain, there
are these things called
neurofibrillary tangles.

LOWELL
In English for Christ's sake.

DOCTOR FERGUSON
Hmm. Well, dementia would be where
you have a toupee and you can't
find it no matter how hard you
look. Then someone points out that
it's been sitting on your head the
whole time.

LOWELL
Got it. And Alzheimer's?

DOCTOR FERGUSON
When you can't remember if you ever
had hair in the first place.

LOWELL

See, now that makes sense to me.

DOCTOR FERGUSON

You can't imagine my relief.

LOWELL

You're a shitty doctor.

Ferguson places his hands on Lowell's neck, feels his glands.

DOCTOR FERGUSON

Do you still have the nausea?

LOWELL

Yeah, maybe - some.

DOCTOR FERGUSON

What does some mean?

LOWELL

It means I throw up some. Not often. Maybe once a day or so.

DOCTOR FERGUSON

That's not normal.

LOWELL

I eat at a government run cafeteria. Vomiting's not all that rare.

DOCTOR FERGUSON

Any emotional changes - depression, anxiety - any erratic behavior?

LOWELL

That depends on who you ask.

DOCTOR FERGUSON

I'm asking you.

LOWELL

I'm pretty much the same guy I have always been.

DOCTOR FERGUSON

In that case, my sympathies to Tess.

Ferguson taps Lowell's knees with a medical hammer.

DOCTOR FERGUSON

Your reflex response isn't normal.

LOWELL
I'm old, nothing's normal.

Taking a few steps away, Ferguson moves to the side of Lowell and points three fingers in the air.

DOCTOR FERGUSON
Without moving your head, tell me
how many fingers I am holding up.

LOWELL
Knowing you, one.

DOCTOR FERGUSON
Lowell.

LOWELL
I can't tell - happy now?

DOCTOR FERGUSON
How long have you had problems with
your peripheral?

LOWELL
I don't know. A few weeks. Maybe
longer.

Ferguson rubs his chin, contemplates.

DOCTOR FERGUSON
I want to schedule you for an MRI.

LOWELL
No.

DOCTOR FERGUSON
Just as a precautionary measure.

LOWELL
Don't shit a shitter. I ain't
coming back in unless you give me a
good reason.

DOCTOR FERGUSON
Your symptoms - the vision
difficulties, the nausea --

LOWELL
You're still shitting.

Ferguson takes a breath - pauses.

DOCTOR FERGUSON
Your symptoms are commonly
associated with a brain tumor.

DOCTOR FERGUSON (CONT'D)
 Even though it's very unlikely, you
 need to have an MRI to rule it out.

LOWELL
 I think it's dementia. Don't see
 why you got to poke at me anymore.

DOCTOR FERGUSON
 Well, since you don't have a
 medical degree, let's go with my
 opinion for now.

LOWELL
 Fine, schedule the God damn thing.

DOCTOR FERGUSON
 You got a ride home?

LOWELL
 Karen's waiting for me outside.

DOCTOR FERGUSON
 Ah, she drew the short straw?

Lowell slowly raises his crooked old middle finger.

DOCTOR FERGUSON
 (as he leaves)
 Put your shirt back on. I don't
 want you scaring the nurses.

The door shuts. Lowell reaches for his shirt, then grabs his
 temple - a bolt of pain. He looks at the clock on the wall.

LOWELL
 Tick - tock.

EXT. MEDICAL BUILDING - DAY

A sedan parked curbed side. Lowell lumbers towards it, opens
 the front passenger door.

INT. SEDAN - DAY

KAREN MENDOZA (35), Hispanic, thick framed, busty, dressed in
 business attire in the driver's seat.

KAREN
 So, what did the doctor say?

LOWELL
 Nothing. You got the material for
 today's Board meeting?

KAREN

Yes, it's right there in the side compartment.

As Lowell grabs the folder from the side compartment, Karen turns the ignition on, pulls away from the curb.

KAREN

You were with him for an hour and he didn't say anything?

Lowell ignores her as he scans the contents of the folder.

KAREN

Did you hear me?

LOWELL

He said that I should try to keep conversation to a minimum.

KAREN

He did not.

LOWELL

Ssssh - doctor's orders.

Karen rolls her eyes - drives on.

INT. LOS ANGELES COUNTY BOARD HEARING ROOM - DAY

A large, ornate auditorium - nearly a thousand seats, most of them empty. There's just a few dozen CITIZENS in attendance.

Five identical posh work stations, all equipped with computer screens and microphones are arranged in a semicircle on an elevated dais - perfect for looking down at people.

Behind each of these stations, a COUNTY SUPERVISOR sits in a plush, high-back chair. They are:

- Lowell
- SUPERVISOR JAVIER FERNANDEZ (45), thin with sharp features.
- SUPERVISOR ABRAHAM JORDAN (55), tall and a bit too round.
- CHAIRWOMAN GLENDA JACKSON, (50s), prim and proper.
- SUPERVISOR GEORGE MCKINNEY (50s), thick hair, strong-jawed.

Their STAFF MEMBERS, some engaged in idle chat, some engaged in work, fill the space on both sides of the dais.

MARIA FLORES, (50), sits at a smaller station facing the Supervisors. Her clenched fists tremble in anger.

MARIA

Is anyone even listening?

Lowell turns his focus to Maria. The other Supervisors ignore her as they read, talk to staff, play with their phones.

Maria holds up a framed military picture of CORPORAL JAIME FLORES (then 18, bright and shiny).

MARIA

This is my son. At least show him respect.

Clerk of the Board, VALERIE PENNINGTON (40), sitting to the right of Maria, focuses on a digital timer. It reads: "3:00."

CLERK PENNINGTON

Time.

Jackson looks up from her smart phone.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

(forced smile at Maria)

Your time is up.

(at Pennington)

Who's next?

CLERK PENNINGTON

Edward Smith is here to testify on agenda item thirty-two.

MARIA

Let me finish.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

I am sorry, Ms. Flores. We allot three minutes per speaker.

(to the audience)

Is there a Mr. Smith here?

LOWELL

Glenda, what harm would there be?

Mckinney pockets his cell phone.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

(at Lowell)

You know that wouldn't be fair to the others here today. They've waited as well.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY (CONT'D)

The rule is three minutes and if we
start waiving that --

LOWELL

What? Total anarchy?

A dismissive sneer from McKinney.

Lowell looks towards Supervisors Fernandez and Jordan,
engaged in a side conversation.

LOWELL

Javier, Abraham, help me out here.

Jordan gives Lowell an approving nod.

SUPERVISOR FERNANDEZ

I'm fine with giving her more time.

LOWELL

Glenda, okay...?

MARIA

(shouting)

Give my son respect!

A deafening silence as the words echo in the room.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

(at Lowell)

Fine. But don't blame me when every
other speaker wants the same
privilege.

LOWELL

(to Maria)

Go on.

MARIA

My boy served two tours. He wasn't
the same since he returned. He
roamed the streets...Homeless.
Broken. Just broken.

Maria's eyes turn towards Karen, standing next to the dais.

MARIA

No tienen hijos? Dónde están sus
corazones?

LOWELL

(To Karen)

What did she say?

KAREN

(eyes focused on Maria)
Do they not have children? Where
are their hearts?

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

This is not even within the Board's
jurisdiction. It's really an issue
for the VA.

Maria rises from her seat, anger in her eyes.

MARIA

You know the VA is useless.
(pointing)
But not as useless as all of you.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

(at Jackson)
And this is what happens when we go
over the allotted time.

Jackson nods towards a nearby SHERIFF DEPUTY. He approaches
Maria, gently taps her shoulder - time to move on.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

Is there a Mr. Edward Smith here?

SMITH, in the audience stands, raises his hand. Jackson
motions him to come forward.

The Sheriff Deputy gently takes Maria's arm. Maria,
indignant, shoos it away - gathers her things.

LOWELL

Ms. Flores, let us get all your
information. I can have my staff
coordinate with the VA.

Maria makes her way down the center aisle towards the exit.

LOWELL

We can help your son.

Maria stops dead in her tracks - turns towards Lowell.

MARIA

If you were really listening ...
Shame on you. Shame on all of you.

Maria starts back towards the dais with a quick pace. The
Sheriff Deputy moves towards her.

MARIA
 (at Lowell)
 My son is dead. He died on a street
 in your district.

LOWELL
 Sorry. I didn't --

MARIA
 I didn't come here to help him. I
 came to help others. Why aren't
 you? You've been here for forty
 years. Why are there homeless
 veterans in your streets?

MARIA
 (points at Lowell)
 Persona inútil.

Lowell looks towards Karen.

KAREN
 (quietly)
 Useless person.

MARIA
 (at Fernandez)
 Persona inútil.
 (at Jordan - louder)
 Persona inútil.
 (at McKinney - louder)
 Persona inútil.
 (at Jackson - screaming)
 Persona inútil.

Jackson SLAMS her gavel.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
 Order!

MARIA
 (at Jackson)
 Pendeja!

One last look of disgust at the Supervisors before Maria,
 heads towards the exit.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON (V.O.)
 Mr. Smith. You have three minutes.
 You may proceed.

Lowell's eyes, frozen on Maria as she exits the auditorium.

MR. SMITH

Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm here
today....

INT. LOWELL'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Walls crammed with memorabilia from Lowell's forty years in
office - commemorative plaques, certificates and framed
photos of Lowell with celebrities and politicians.

Lowell sits at a small conference table, stares at it all.

Karen TAPS on the door jam, enters.

KAREN

Saw your light on. Thought you'd be
gone by now.

LOWELL

Nope, still alive.

KAREN

I didn't mean --

LOWELL

I know what you meant.
(checking his watch)
It's late. Call it a day.

Karen nods. Lowell returns his stare to the wall.

KAREN

Something going on?

Lowell extends his arm, taps the face of his watch.

KAREN

You need a ride home?

LOWELL

No.

KAREN

Because it wouldn't be a problem.

LOWELL

I'm good.

Karen starts to exit, stops.

KAREN

Why don't you let me drive you --

LOWELL
 For the love of God, go home
 already.

Just as she opens her mouth. Lowell points towards the door.

KAREN
 Fine, fine.

Karen exits. As her footsteps echo down the corridor,
 Lowell's face turns queasy.

He leans over, picks up small office trash can, sets it on
 his lap. A few seconds pass, then he violently vomits in it.

MOMENTS LATER

Lowell, dressed in a coat, a plastic trash bag liner, filled
 with vomit in hand, clicks on his office light and enters the

OFFICE CORRIDOR

Where he spots VICTOR GARCIA (55), dressed in a custodian's
 uniform emptying a trash receptacle.

LOWELL
 Hey, Victor.

Victor stops, turns.

VICTOR
 Yes, Supervisor.
 (spotting the bag)
 Again?

Lowell shoots Victor a sheepish smile.

LOWELL
 You got a cigarette?

EXT. HALL OF ADMINISTRATION/EIGHTH FLOOR BALCONY - NIGHT

An outdoor balcony circumventing the entire eighth floor of
 the Hall.

Lowell and Victor lean against a half wall, cigarettes in
 hand, as they look out at the city lights.

LOWELL
 You live in my District, right?

VICTOR
 Yes, Sir. I do. My whole life.

Lowell takes a drag.

LOWELL
What have I done for you?

VICTOR
For me? I don't understand.

LOWELL
Like, what ordinances have I passed
that have helped you?
(off Victor's look)
Maybe what programs have I
supported that you like?

VICTOR
I don't really know, Supervisor.
But you let me smoke out here.
That's nice.

Lowell looks out over the city. Takes another drag.

LOWELL
Yeah, I suppose there's that.

An awkward pause - Victor unsure what to say.

VICTOR
I gotta get back to work,
Supervisor.

Lowell nods as he continues to stare out over the city.

Victor removes a half pack of smokes from his uniform pocket,
stuffs them in Lowell's shirt pocket.

VICTOR
Just in case you need another.

INT. LOWELL'S HOUSE/BEDROOM - NIGHT

TESS BACHMAN (80), wakens, pats the area to her left - no
one's there.

Tess looks towards two glass doors that lead to a small
patio. She spots the silhouette of Lowell in a patio chair.
The ember from a cigarette glows in the darkness.

TESS
Lowell?

Tess slips on a robe, slides the doors open, steps into the

PATIO

TESS

Good Lord, you're smoking. What on earth has gotten into you?

LOWELL

(examining his cigarette)
Looks like tar and nicotine.
(off Tess' look)
Don't fret. I'm too old to get a long-term illness.

Tess sits down, waves her hand at the smoke.

TESS

It smells.

Lowell exhales, watches the smoke waft into the night air.

TESS

What's swirling in that head of yours? Wait, did Doctor Ferguson find something?

LOWELL

No - no, I'm fine.
(takes a drag)
You watch the Board Hearing today?

TESS

No, I was out with Carol. Did something happen?

LOWELL

Nothing ever happens. It's designed that way.

TESS

And that's why you're out here?
Because nothing happened?

Lowell looks off into the night air - in thought.

LOWELL

The mother of a veteran spoke at the meeting. Her boy died.

TESS

Afghanistan?

LOWELL

No - He died here. He was homeless, wandering the streets.

LOWELL (CONT'D)

I think she blames me.

(thinking)

Persona inútil... I think that's how you pronounce it.

(off Tess' look)

It means useless person.

(takes a drag)

I've been doing this for more than four decades now. What have I really accomplished? Nothing.

Tess reaches over, squeezes Lowell's hand.

Silence.

LOWELL

Aren't you supposed to say something inspirational bout now?

TESS

It's three in the morning. Give me a moment to think.

Lowell squeezes Tess' hand back.

LOWELL

Go ahead inside. I'll be there in a minute. Promise.

Tess stands, leans over, gently kisses Lowell on the forehead.

TESS

I know two things for sure. One, you've done plenty.

Tess starts towards the door.

TESS

And two, self pity is not you. Never has been. So, if there's something to be done - get to it.

Tess reaches the door, grabs the handle.

TESS

And please, throw away those awful cigarettes.

As Tess shuts the glass door, Lowell removes another cigarette from his robe pocket, lights it, tosses the match.

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

Crowded. The sound of clattering trays and murmurs of conversations fill the room.

Karen, note pad in hand, and Lowell, sandwich in hand and chewing vigorously, sit at a corner table.

LOWELL
(muffled, thru full mouth)
So, what did you find out?

KAREN
Her son did one tour in Iraq, one
in Afghanistan. He was discharged a
little over a year ago.

Karen notices sauce on Lowell's chin. She removes a napkin from the dispenser on the table - hands it to Lowell.

KAREN
Here.

LOWELL
What?

KAREN
Your mouth.

LOWELL
Christ, you're worse than a nanny.

Lowell takes the napkin, wipes his mouth.

LOWELL
Go on.

KAREN
He was living on skid row when he
died. Overdose. I've called --

LOWELL
(wincing)
You got any aspirin on you?

Karen fumbles through her purse, finds an aspirin bottle, pops out two pills.

KAREN
(handing pills to Lowell)
You okay?

Lowell pops the pills in his mouth, washes them down.

LOWELL
Just a headache. You were saying?

KAREN
I've called Maria Flores. No
response yet. I'll let you know as
soon as I hear from her.

Lowell nods. Karen checks her watch.

KAREN
The closed session meeting. You're
going to be late.

LOWELL
(standing to leave)
I'd rather be absent.

INT. CLOSED SESSION CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

The Supervisors sit at a large conference table. The County's
attorney, NEIL BEDFORD (60), distinguished, faces them.
Pennington sits in a chair next to him.

Lowell's at the far end of the table, obviously consumed by
something he's viewing on his laptop computer.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
So, you recommend that we settle at
two million?

ATTORNEY BEDFORD
Yes, I believe it is the best
course of action given the severity
of the injuries and the particulars
of the case.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
I'm going to call for a vote.
(looks towards Lowell)
Lowell?

INSERT LOWELL'S LAPTOP SCREEN

A video replay, on mute, of Maria Flores at the Board
meeting. As she points at Lowell the words "Persona inútil"
scroll on the bottom of the screen.

BACK TO SCENE

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
Lowell?

LOWELL
(not looking up)
I'm good.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
(at Pennington)
Record that as an aye.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY
Good God I'm tired of paying
settlements to inmates.

SUPERVISOR JORDAN
Maybe we should stop beating them.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY
The Sheriff claims his injuries
were from other inmates.

SUPERVISOR JORDAN
He was in solitary.

A TAP on the door. Lowell looks up from his laptop. Karen
peeks her head in, waves Lowell over.

LOWELL
Give me a minute.

Lowell reaches the door.

KAREN
(hushed tone)
Mrs. Flores has agreed to see me.
I'm on my way over there now.

Lowell rolls his hand in a get on with it motion.

KAREN
You told me to let you know the
minute I heard from her. Remember?

LOWELL
Oh yeah - right.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
Lowell, there is an issue before
us. Can we please move on?

LOWELL
Give me a God damn minute.
(to Karen)
She's agreed to meet with you?

Karen nods.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
Lowell, are you joining
us?...Lowell?

Lowell turns towards Jackson.

LOWELL
No. I don't think I am.

Lowell returns to the table, grabs his suit coat, scoops up
his laptop and heads for the door.

LOWELL
Don't really feel like playing
Supervisor anymore today.

INT/EXT. SEDAN - EAST L.A. NEIGHBORHOOD (PARKED) DAY

Karen turns off the ignition. Lowell looks out his window
towards a small adobe styled home.

KAREN
Ready?

LOWELL
I'm thinking that me coming was
maybe a mistake.

KAREN
What?

LOWELL
You heard her at the meeting.
(staring at home)
She hates us. We don't belong here.

Karen points down the street.

KAREN
You see that green house down
there, next to the liquor store?

LOWELL
Yeah.

KAREN
I lived there, till I was sixteen.

Karen points through the rear window.

KAREN
And that's City Terrace Park. I
fell off those swings.

Lowell turns around to look at where Karen is pointing.

LOWELL

And...?

Karen points out the passenger window.

KAREN

Over there is where I went to high school. See the wall?

LOWELL

Old, not blind, Karen.

KAREN

My brother got arrested, twice in fact, for vandalism - you know, graffiti. Looks like they've done a good job keeping it clean.

LOWELL

For Pete's sake, is their a point?

KAREN

The point is, I belong here and I am going in to see her. Now, I can go in alone, but I would be honored to have you with me.

Karen points to the front door of the adobe house.

KAREN

She would be honored as well.

LOWELL

Oh, Christ! You really do know which buttons to hit.

(mimicking Karen
sarcastically)

That's my house - that's my school - that's where my brother committed felonies.

KAREN

Actually, they were misdemeanors.

Lowell grabs the handle of his door, opens it to exit.

LOWELL

You're killing me.

INT. ADOBE HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Small, modestly furnished. Family photos on the wall. Most prominent of which, a framed military picture of Jaime Flores - the same one she displayed at the Board hearing.

Lowell, Karen and Maria on sofas around a coffee table with cups, a decanter and Mexican pastries.

GABRIEL FLORES (52), thick and large, stares at them with bitter, cynical eyes from a chair in the dining area.

MARIA

So when he got out, he stayed with us a month or so - not much longer.

LOWELL

Because...?

MARIA

He felt out of place here. Actually everywhere. He needed a --

GABRIEL (O.S.)

They don't give a shit.

All turn towards Gabriel.

MARIA

(in Spanish - subtitled)
You said you would be quiet.

Gabriel stands.

GABRIEL

(at Lowell)
Don't give her false hopes. She's suffered enough.

Gabriel walks away. The back door SLAMS as he exits the home.

Maria stands, goes to the picture of Jaime, lifts the bottom away from the wall and removes a hand written letter.

She returns to the sofa, hands the letter to Lowell.

MARIA

It's the last thing my son wrote to me before he died.
(as Lowell reads)
Don't tend to my suffering. Tend to my hopes.

INT. HAL'S PUB - NIGHT

Lowell and JACK, (77) on bar stools nursing the last of several beers. They're clearly tipsy.

HAL, the bartender, cleans glasses at the far end of the bar.

LOWELL

So I say to the guy, hey it was just self-defecating humor. And he says, hey fool, don't you mean self-deprecating humor? And I say - I say, no, I meant defecating cause I laughed so hard I shit my pants.

Jack slaps his hand down on the bar as he snorts a laugh.

JACK

I've got to remember that one.
(checks his watch)
Holy shit, it's getting late. I gotta get home soon - split a cab?

LOWELL

Yeah, yeah sure.
(to Hal)
Hey, Hal - last round for us.

Hal bends under the counter, pulls out two cold beers, places them in front of Lowell and Jack.

HAL

Close the tab?

LOWELL

Yeah, great - oh, and could you call us a cab?

Hal nods, walks away. Jack raises his bottle.

JACK

Last toast of the night. Your turn.

Lowell thinks for a moment before raising his bottle.

LOWELL

To homeless veterans.

JACK

(raising his bottle)
Wait, where did that come from?

Lowell lowers his beer, reaches in the pocket of his suit, removes the letter that Maria gave him.

LOWELL

Corporal Jaime Flores. Survived two tours in the Gulf. Died on skid row - alone and homeless. All he needed was a fort.

HAL

A fort?

LOWELL

A fort - barracks, whatever. When his mother collected his belongings from the Coroner she found this.

(holds up letter)

He wanted her to know why he couldn't just stay at home - with her. He said he needed to be with comrades. To be around those who had been through what he'd been through. That he needed the structure he was used to in the Army. That he needed a fort.

(pockets the letter)

That most the homeless vets he met needed one too. His Mom wants me to help them.

JACK

Not much you can do about that.

LOWELL

Oh, I'm building a fucking fort. If it's the last thing I do.

(reflects)

Which it may be.

HAL (O.S.)

Cab's here.

Jack raises his bottle, clinks it against Lowell's.

JACK

To Fort Los Angeles.

LOWELL

(clinking back)

And to Corporal Flores.

Jack and Lowell gulp down the remainder of their beers.

INT. OFFICE LOBBY - MORNING

Karen, carrying a briefcase approaches the secretarial desk outside Lowell's office. TRUDY (60), maternal, a bit overweight, looks up.

TRUDY
Good morning, Karen.

KAREN
Morning.
(nodding towards door)
Is he in?

TRUDY
Yes. But I'm not sure you want to go in there.

LOWELL (O.S.)
(shouting)
Where are the God damn aspirin!?

Trudy hands Karen two aspirin and a glass of water.

TRUDY
At least you'll be bearing gifts.

INT. LOWELL'S OFFICE - DAY

Lowell, at his desk, furiously writing in a notepad.

Karen approaches, hands Lowell the water and aspirin.

KAREN
You don't look so well.

Karen sits in a chair next to desk, opens her briefcase.

Lowell pops the aspirin in his mouth, takes a gulp of water.

LOWELL
You don't exactly look as fresh as a daisy either.
(as he writes)
What'd you find out.

KAREN
They're piloting a barracks for homeless veterans in Tulsa. Boston's considering it - but they have a closed military base they can use.

LOWELL
 (continuing to write)
 So, it's not so crazy.

KAREN
 No. Of course we need a little more
 information. I haven't had a chance
 yet to --

LOWELL
 No time for all of that.

Lowell rips a piece of paper from his notepad - rises.

LOWELL
 (handing paper to Karen)
 Have Trudy type that up and then
 get it to the other offices. I want
 to discuss it at the meeting today.

KAREN
 (as she reads paper)
 But the agenda's already posted.
 You know you can't add an item.

LOWELL
 Let me worry about that.
 (Yelling out)
 Trudy, where's the damn aspirin?

Karen looks at Lowell then to the corner of the desk and the
 now near empty glass of water.

KAREN
 You already took them.

LOWELL
 (re: glass)
 Hmm. Well I'll be.
 (re: paper Karen holds)
 Well, go on now. I need you to take
 care of that.

INT. BALLROOM - DAY

Filled with CITIZENS and tons of REPORTERS - all eyes on a
 stage in front of the room.

On that stage, GOVERNOR JASON BACHMAN (48), thin and fit. He
 stands underneath a banner: "REELECT GOVERNOR JASON BACHMAN."

STEVEN BAKER (40), buttoned down, perfectly groomed hair,
 watches Jason from the far corner of the stage.

JASON

I thank you all for your support over the last four years. Truly, I do. But a lot of work remains to be done. I would be honored to do that work for you.

APPLAUSE from the crowd.

JASON

Are you with me?

More APPLAUSE and CHEERS. Jason turns, catches Baker's giving him a thumbs up.

JASON

Hopefully you're money is as well.

LAUGHTER from the audience.

INT. COUNTY BOARD HEARING ROOM - DAY

Again, sparse public attendance. A news cameraman, noticeably bored, points a camera at the dais.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

The special meeting on the Health Department's budget is now in session. Ms. Pennington, please read the agenda.

CLERK PENNINGTON

Starting on page one of the posted agenda --

LOWELL

Madam Chair, before we start, I have an item I would like to add for discussion today.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

Madam Chair, a point of order. We can't deliberate an item that's not on the published agenda.

Supervisors Fernandez and Jordan nod their head in agreement.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

I am well aware of the procedural issue, Supervisor Mckinney.

(at Lowell)

Is it an emergency item?

LOWELL

Remember the mother who came here last week? The one begging for us to listen?

Deer in the headlights look from all Supervisors.

LOWELL

Her son, Corporal Flores died recently - on our streets.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

And...?

LOWELL

I want the Board to authorize funding to build barracks for homeless veterans. Karen gave copies of the item to your offices before the meeting.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

(with a chuckle)

Barracks.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

(at Lowell)

How is that an emergency item?

LOWELL

Because they're homeless now. Because we need to start now.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

(at Attorney Bedford)

Neil, you want to weigh in. It is your job after all.

ATTORNEY BEDFORD

Pardon?

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

(exasperated)

Is it legal for us to deliberate upon a non-emergent item that hasn't been posted on the public agenda?

ATTORNEY BEDFORD

No. Technically, the matter should be held for discussion next week.

LOWELL

Just let me finish my --

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY
Grandstanding?

LOWELL
There is no need for that, George.
I would think that after four
decades on this Board...

Lowell pauses, rubs his temple.

LOWELL
That, um... after four decades on
this Board you would give me some
leeway here.

Lowell stands, wobbles a bit - unsteady.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY
After four decades, I think that
you of all people would understand
the protocols.

Lowell places his palms firmly on the dais to steady himself.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY
Madam Chair, can we continue with
the regular agenda. That is, unless
you are really all that interested
in hearing another sermon from the
mount.

LOWELL
Fuck off, McKinney!

The Boardroom goes dead silent.

"FOCK OFF SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY" (typo intentional) scrolls
across two large video transcript screens on each side of the
Boardroom.

LOWELL
Fuck you and fuck your protocols!

The cameraman focuses in on Lowell.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
I won't have this in my Boardroom.

LOWELL
Christ, what have we become? We
can't deal with an issue?

LOWELL (CONT'D)

Every God damn Tuesday we just slip
our fat asses into these leather
chairs, playing with our phones as
we sip coffee that smells like
piss.

Jordan puts his cup of coffee to his nose, smells it. Finding
no odor, he takes a sip.

Lowell places his hand against his temple.

LOWELL

I, um - I need to leave.

As he clumsily grabs some papers from the dais, Lowell turns
to exit. Karen gently takes his arm.

KAREN

What's going on?

Lowell pulls away.

LOWELL

I'm fine. I just need some air. You
stay here. Make sure this thing
get's calendared for next weeks
agenda.

Lowell glowers at McKinney.

LOWELL

(flipping McKinney the
bird)

Persona inútil.

McKinney extends his arms in a what the fuck motion.

KAREN

(at Lowell - quietly)
Let me go with y --

LOWELL

Stay! Get this on the agenda.

Lowell lumbers away into the

THIRD FLOOR CORRIDOR

And, very wobbly, places his hands on the walls to steady
himself as he walks towards the elevators.

INT. LOWELL'S OFFICE - DUSK

Lowell on the sofa, hands folded on his chest, eyes closed - as still as can be - nearly rigid.

A TAP on the door - it's Karen. Spots Lowell and tip toes over. She studies his chest. It's moving up and down.

Karen exhales in relief.

LOWELL
(eyes pop open)
Meeting finally over?

Karen jerks back.

KAREN
Jesus! You scared me!

Lowell sits up, rubs his neck. Karen takes a seat.

LOWELL
Think I got a cramp.
(trying to loosen neck)
You get my item on next week's
agenda?

KAREN
Yes. Abraham agreed to move it.

LOWELL
Good - good.

KAREN
Speaking of the meeting. I've
gotten a lot of requests from
reporters asking if you wanted to
make a statement.

LOWELL
(energized)
On the barracks?

KAREN
No - no. On what happened at the
meeting. The swearing.

LOWELL
Yeah, tell them I want to know why
they normally don't ever give a
good shit about what happens in the
Boardroom?

LOWELL (CONT'D)

Ask them why someone has to make a fool out of them self before they find it of any interest?

KAREN

You have to admit that it was a bit out of the ordinary. I think you need to address it.

LOWELL

Okay. Tell them they can kiss my old wrinkled ass.

KAREN

Okay, so no statement.

(beat)

I e-mailed one to Trudy. You know, just in case you change your mind.

LOWELL

I won't.

Lowell lays back down, closes his eyes.

LOWELL

Turn the lights off on your way out. They're bothering me.

Lowell closes his eyes. Folds his hands on his chest.

KAREN

Well, all righty then. No statement.

Karen heads towards the door - stops.

KAREN

If you change your mind on the press release, all you have to do is let Trudy know and she'll --

Lowell open his eyes's, turns towards Karen. The look of dismissal sends the message. Karen shrugs, exits.

EXT. STATE CAPITAL BUILDING - DAY

A black limousine with tinted windows pulls up to the curb.

Steven Baker approaches.

INT. LIMOUSINE - DAY

A CHAUFFEUR at the wheel. Jason in the backseat.

Baker opens the passenger car door, slides in.

JASON
Good morning, Steven.

BAKER
Good morning, Governor

The Chauffeur puts the limo in gear, drives forward.

BAKER
Did you see the Times today?

JASON
You mean did I read about my Dad?

BAKER
Front page.
(reading)
"Supervisor Bachman Outburst."

JASON
I read it.

BAKER
This is not good timing.

JASON
There was a good time for my Dad to
shout fuck off in the Boardroom?

The Chauffeur laughs.

CHAUFFEUR
Sorry, Sir.

BAKER
With all due respect, you need to
take this seriously. Californians
don't want a Governor with a crazy
father.

Jason shoots Baker a look of disapproval.

BAKER
Sorry, I didn't mean that.

Baker removes his smart phone from his pocket, hands it
towards Jason.

BAKER
Someone posted the clip on You
Tube. It already has more than a
thousand hits.

JASON
 (refusing the phone)
 Unless he's also strangling a cat,
 it's not going to have a long shelf
 life.

BAKER
 Jason, we've just started fund
 raising. The last thing we need --

JASON
 Stop worrying. My Dad's an icon in
 L.A. It was a one day outburst.

BAKER
 Still, a phone call wouldn't hurt.

INT. LOWELL'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - DAY

Lowell at the table, phone to his ear.

LOWELL
 (into phone)
 I'll just tell them I was sick or
 something. Don't worry.

Tess enters, places one plate of food in front of Lowell and
 another next to him - takes a seat.

LOWELL
 (into phone)
 No. There's no way I'm going to
 apologize.
 (listening)
 Okay, I will.

Lowell ends the call, tosses his cell on the table.

LOWELL
 Jason says he loves you. On his way
 to a fund raiser. He'll call you
 tomorrow.

Lowell grabs his knife and fork - digs in.

TESS
 Apologize for what?

LOWELL
 (chewing - mouth full)
 Huh?

TESS
 What did Jason want you to
 apologize for?

LOWELL
 I might have swore in the Board
 hearing - at Mckinney.
 (another bite)
 The prick.

TESS
 Might have or did?

LOWELL
 Did.

TESS
 How bad?

LOWELL
 F-bomb.
 (chewing)
 You know what the worst thing about
 it is?

TESS
 The public embarrassment?

LOWELL
 McKinney wasn't embarrassed.

TESS
 I didn't mean him. I meant --

LOWELL
 It pisses me off, you know. No one
 gives a crap about what we do, or
 worse yet, what we don't do.

Lowell uses his knife to take his agitation out on his steak.

TESS
 You're losing me.

LOWELL
 We pass all kinds of laws that help
 people and all kind of laws that
 screw em. The press don't care. But
 I do something like yell fuck at a
 Board hearing and then they're
 crawling up my ass. It's like the
 only way to get attention for an
 issue is to act crazy.

TESS

Well that's not a good alternative.

Lowell stops eating, leans back - takes it in.

LOWELL

Hmm.

TESS

Lowell, what are you thinking...?

LOWELL

Steak's good.

INT. LOWELL'S OFFICE - DAY

Karen drums her finger on the top of a a small conference table. There's a binder of material in front of her.

The sound of running water emanates from behind the door of Lowell's office bathroom.

KAREN

(calling out)

The meeting's going to start soon.

The bathroom door opens. Lowell, patting his face down with a towel appears. He wears an ornate, full-length judge's robe.

Lowell, approaches the conference table, takes a seat - oblivious to the dumbfounded look on Karen's face.

LOWELL

You got the amendment to the motion?

Karen slides the binder towards Lowell. He opens it.

LOWELL

(as he reads)

Perfect. And you've cleared it through Bedford? I can add it today?

KAREN

Yes, of course.

(a beat)

You're wearing a robe.

Lowell looks up from the binder - broad smile.

LOWELL

I am indeed. Quite splendid, don't you think?

Lowell returns to reading the material in the binder.

KAREN

Well yes - sure, just not for the Board meeting. Please, put on your suit. It is a very nice one.

LOWELL

You of all people should not patronize me. The suit is too tight anyway. Makes my fat ass look fatter. Besides, it's not like I criticize your appearance.

KAREN

That's not the point. Wait - what's wrong with my appearance?

LOWELL

Your breasts are too large. Ever think about that?

KAREN

(crossing her arms)
Um, frankly - no, I haven't really given that a lot of thought.

LOWELL

We should talk. You know what mentoring is - yes?

KAREN

Of course.

LOWELL

So as a mentor, I get to be honest with you, kind of a no holds barred, man to man discussion. Although, obviously you aren't really a man.

KAREN

Thank you for that, I think.

LOWELL

So, I've had this thought for a long time. It just seemed kind of improper to mention it. But I finally figured out, I don't give a shit about proper anymore.

KAREN

Yeah. I'm kind of sensing that.

LOWELL

Anyway, one day you'll want to run for office, or maybe even get some corporate job. So, assuming you want to move up, those things...

Lowell points at Karen's chest.

LOWELL

Well, frankly they are just too large. I don't know what it is, but men don't - or can't, - maybe it's a biological weakness - anyway, men can't seem to take a woman with big, you know...

(pointing)

Seriously. And if you ask me, the women are even worse. Ipso Facto, you need to do something. Shrink them down or maybe wear clothing that highlights them less.

(reflecting)

I think they make that now.

KAREN

I don't know what to say.

LOWELL

I'm sure that no one has cared enough to tell you that before.

KAREN

No, I'm pretty sure you're the first.

Karen gets up from her chair.

KAREN

Okay then...Look, this has been - um - just great mentoring. Now, about the robe --

LOWELL

Consider it glued on. You know, all I got on underneath are the boxers. It's actually kind of relaxing.

KAREN

What are you up to?

LOWELL

Just trying to get attention for a good cause.

(off Karen's confusion)

LOWELL (CONT'D)

It only took me forty years, but I finally realized that all the press wants is the circus. So, I'm giving them one today. Had Trudy alert several reporters ahead of time.

Lowell stands, waves down the length of his robe.

LOWELL

And what's a circus without a clown?

KAREN

Please - don't.

LOWELL

(heading towards his desk)
I'm wearing the damn robe.

INT. COUNTY BOARD HEARING ROOM - DAY

Much more press attendance than the week before, including two television crews from local news stations.

Lowell and Karen enter.

LOWELL

(to Karen)
See, what did I tell ya.

A cameraman focuses his lens on Lowell as he walks towards his seat at the dais.

Lowell fluffs his robe as he sits down. Several members of the crowd point at him.

SUPERVISOR FERNANDEZ

What in the world?

SUPERVISOR JORDAN

(To Fernandez, quietly)
My God, he's really lost it.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

I am calling to order the meeting of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. All please rise and face the flag.

All rise, face the large American Flag in the corner.

A VIETNAM VET, dressed in army formals recites the pledge.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

Ms. Pennington, you may now read the agenda.

CLERK PENNINGTON

Madam Chair and members of the Board, we will start the agenda on page five, meeting of the Housing Authority. Items one through six are before you.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

Moved by Supervisor McKinney, seconded by Supervisor Jordan, hearing no objections, so ordered.

CLERK PENNINGTON

Item number seven is a motion introduced last week by Supervisor Bachman regarding homeless veterans.

Jackson turns towards Lowell. She's taken aback - obviously the first time she has noticed the robe.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

(shaking her head)

You're holding it because...?

LOWELL

I have an amendment to the original motion. Karen has already provided it to you and your staff. I would like to introduce it for the record.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

Proceed.

Lowell picks up a copy of his motion.

LOWELL

(reading)

Recently, the mother of Corporal Jaime Flores came to this boardroom begging for our help. We, of course ignored her. Per our standard...

(looks at McKinney)

Protocol....

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

(under his breath)

Oh, for Christ's sake.

LOWELL

(reading)

"Jamie Flores was a homeless veteran. One of nearly two thousand in the streets of Los Angeles alone. As much as six thousand County-wide. Studies have shown that the primary cause of this problem is the lack of transition from battlefield to home front.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

What studies?

With his right hand, Lowell holds up the motion to shield the audience from seeing his left middle finger saluting McKinney.

LOWELL

Mine.

(back to reading)

Other jurisdictions are exploring the feasibility of using barracks as transitional housing for homeless veterans in order to --

SUPERVISOR JORDAN

You want us to build a fort?

LOWELL

Yes, well - no. It doesn't have to be a fort exactly. Barracks is a better term. Something with a military feel. Something that veterans are accustomed to. Something familiar. You know, regimens and structure. And services, we could locate them right in the barracks rather than having them --

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

Please finish reading your amendment.

LOWELL

(points at motion)

It's all there. Oh, and Karen has binders of research material. This thing has already been done in Tulsa. They're looking at it in Boston.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

At a minimum, the specific recommendation has to be read in for the record.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

Yes, we're all so excited about voting for a fort.

This draws a sneer from Lowell.

LOWELL

(at Jackson)

Fine. Blah, blah, blah and...

(reading)

I therefore move that, one; the Board authorize the construction of barracks dedicated to housing and transitioning homeless veterans and two; immediately appropriate twenty-five million dollars to start this effort."

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

I move that this item be continued until budget deliberations in June. It really needs to be considered in context with all of the County's spending priorities for next year.

SUPERVISOR FERNANDEZ

I'll second that.

LOWELL

What?

SUPERVISOR FERNANDEZ

Lowell, in all fairness, none of us really have had the time to review the proposal in detail. I don't think the request for a delay is unreasonable.

LOWELL

This can't wait for June. You know it's a problem now! One in plain sight. One you can see everyday on every freeway off-ramp.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

Ms. Pennington, please call the roll on Supervisor McKinney's motion.

CLERK PENNINGTON
The motion is to continue item
seven until budget deliberations in
June. Supervisor McKinney?

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY
Aye!

CLERK PENNINGTON
Supervisor Bachman?

LOWELL
No!

CLERK PENNINGTON
Supervisor Fernandez.

SUPERVISOR FERNANDEZ
Aye.

CLERK PENNINGTON
Supervisor Jordan?

LOWELL
Abraham, you of all people know
that this is critical. How long did
you serve - ten years, yes?

SUPERVISOR JORDAN
Don't lecture me on this issue,
Lowell. With all due respect,
you're a little late to the party.
Aye.

CLERK PENNINGTON
Madam Chair?

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
Aye. The motion passes four to one.
Supervisor Bachman's motion will be
continued until June.
(to Pennington)
Next item please.

LOWELL
I object.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
You object? You can't object to an
approved motion.

LOWELL

Yes I can.
(standing up)
I'm wearing a robe.

The news cameras focus in on Lowell.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

Ms. Pennington, please continue
with the agenda.

LOWELL

I object - I object - I object!

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

Supervisor Bachman - please.
We have a very full agenda.

Lowell rises from his chair.

LOWELL

I'm pretty sure that the good
citizens in the audience do not
give a damn about ninety-nine
percent of the items on this agenda
since it ain't their agenda - it's
ours.

(towards the audience)

By applause, who would like to
discuss building barracks for our
homeless soldiers?

The audience applauds loudly. Jackson pounds her gavel.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

Order - order. The motion to
continue the item passed. There
will be no more discussion on it
today.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

Can we please move on?

LOWELL

One more minute please.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

This is ridiculous.

LOWELL

I would like to take this time to
apologize for my outburst last
week.

(taking his seat)

LOWELL (CONT'D)

Recently, I have been diagnosed
with a psychological disorder.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

(sarcastically)

I am shocked.

LOWELL

Yes, sadly it seems I have
Tourette's Syndrome.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

That does it. I've had enough.
Glenda, move to the agenda and,
Lowell, please, you do not have
Tourette's Syndrome.

LOWELL

Eat shit, McKinney. Ooops,
Tourettes.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

Stop it.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

Okay, here we go again. That is not
acceptable.

LOWELL

Fuck you. Sorry, I can't control
it.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

And, just as a word to the unwise -
since you seem bent on making up
this nonsense, if you had
Tourette's, you would be
stuttering.

LOWELL

Oh. Well then, I ma-ma-ma-meant fu-
fu-fu-fuck you!

The audience erupts with laughter and applause.

Jackson pounds her gavel.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

Order - Order. There will be no
more outbursts in the Boardroom.

LOWELL

(to the audience)

I'm going down to the cafeteria to
discuss my motion.

LOWELL (CONT'D)

I welcome all members of the audience to come and discuss any ideas they have. The press may find it interesting as well as I am pretty sure I'm not done cursing yet.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

That is highly inappropriate.

LOWELL

Oh well. As I've already stated I'm sick.

(to the audience)

I'm going to change first. I've been told I have a very nice suit. I'll be down there in ten minutes.

People in the audience start making their way to the doors. News camera crews pack up their equipment and follow.

INT. HALL OF ADMINISTRATION/EIGHTH FLOOR CORRIDOR - LATER

McKinney and Jackson stand in the middle of a long, walnut paneled, corridor.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

I'm telling you, you need to take control of this.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

And exactly what is it that you would have me do, George?

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

All I know is that Bachman's been holding court in the cafeteria for more than four hours now. You're supposed to be in charge and he's making you look like a fool.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

Don't be so presumptuous. I've been doing this for a good long time. And, I am nobody's fool.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

Well, you can't just let this....

McKinney spots Karen and Tess walking towards them.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

Ah, Jesus.

Karen and Tess reach McKinney and Jackson.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY
Karen, Tess - so nice to see you.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
Tess, you look lovely. How are you doing dear?

TESS
Fine, thank you, Glenda. I'm just here to see Lowell.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
I think he's still downstairs.

TESS
Downstairs?

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY
Yes, he is having a special get together.

KAREN
Tess, we should be going. We can wait in his office. Supervisors, please excuse us.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
Of course.

Karen escorts Tess down the hallway. McKinney and Jackson wait until they are out of earshot before resuming.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY
You can't let this go on, Glenda. Take charge.

INT. LOWELL'S OFFICE - DAY

Tess and Karen on the sofa. Hot tea and cookies are on the table. Tess picks up her cup, takes a sip.

TESS
I like what you've done to your hair. You added a tint - yes?

KAREN
Thank you. Yes, just a touch.

Lowell enters.

LOWELL
Tess, what are you doing here?

KAREN

I brought her. She asked for a ride.

LOWELL

(to Karen)

Why in tarnation would she need a ride here? Why in the hell am I asking you? Tess?

TESS

I got a call from a nurse at Robert's office today. She told me that they have been calling your office all week to get an MRI scheduled and that you won't call them back. I told her you weren't scheduled for any tests, that she must be mistaken.

LOWELL

Ah yeah - that. I've been meaning to tell you --

TESS

Then I got Robert on the phone. He said you need to have one done right away.

LOWELL

What the hell happened to precautionary measure?

TESS

What?

LOWELL

Damn it, he's got no business discussing my personal medical business.

TESS

He thought you had already told me. Now you tell me, what is going on?

LOWELL

Look, it's - uh - uh. It was that I didn't want to worry you over nothing. It's no big deal. They don't even know if I have a problem yet. I've just been a little dizzy lately - a few headaches is all. They just want to rule things out. Karen, help me out here.

KAREN

Perhaps you could persuade her if you had your robe on, Sir.

This garners a sneer from Lowell.

TESS

I knew something was wrong. I knew it - your behavior lately. You haven't been yourself.

LOWELL

I'm fine. You should have seen me at the meeting in the cafeteria.

TESS

Why would you be holding meetings in the cafeteria?

LOWELL

Because the Board wouldn't let... Never mind, that's not what's important. What is important is that for the first time in a long time I feel energized. I feel like I've never had more clarity. I don't know what it is. I just see things clearer now. Ask Karen. I was just telling her about the problem with her breasts earlier.

TESS

Karen, you have a problem with your breasts? Good God, tell me it's not cancer.

KAREN

My breasts are just fine. The Supervisor was just concerned that they were too large.

TESS

Lowell!

LOWELL

Well Christ, just look at them. Oh never mind. The point is that I am as crisp as ever. There is nothing for you to worry about. Nothing.

Tess walks over to Lowell, pinches his cheek very firmly. Lowell grimaces.

TESS
You mind your Ps and Qs, Lowell
Bachman. Other people private parts
are none of your concern.

Karen nods in approval.

LOWELL
(cowering)
I was just trying to help.

TESS
And I don't care if you and Robert
talk baseball or how cute the nurse
is or whatever it is you men all
talk about. But when he is talking
to you as a Doctor, he's talking to
the both of us. And if you ever
don't tell me what Robert says when
it comes to your health, and I mean
everything he says, I'll - well - I
don't know what I would do, but I
know you'll regret it.

Tess releases Lowell's cheek and picks up her coat.

TESS
Now, you call them back before you
leave this office today and get
that MRI scheduled.

LOWELL
A guy ought to be able to have some
privacy with his Doctor.

TESS
Otherwise, don't you bother coming
home tonight. You got that, mister?

LOWELL
Yes, today. I got it.

TESS
Karen, would it be too much a
bother for you to take me home.

KAREN
Of course not.

Karen walks to Tess, takes her hand.

Lowell rubs his cheek where Tess pinched it.

LOWELL
That really hurt you know.

Karen and Tess head for the door.

KAREN
 (to Lowell)
 I think she was just mentoring.

INT. JASON'S OFFICE - DAY

Jason at his desk, phone to his ear.

JASON
 (into phone)
 No, it's okay. I have to be in Los Angeles on Monday anyway.

Baker appears at the door. Jason waves him in.

JASON
 (into phone)
 Okay, I'll see you soon.
 (listening)
 Love you too.

Jason hangs up.

BAKER
 Problem?

JASON
 That was my Mom. My Dad needs to have an MRI.

BAKER
 That doesn't sound good.

JASON
 He's had a little dizziness, some nausea - headaches. It might be nothing, but they want to rule some things out. Hey, what time is the press conference with Congressman Rizzetti on Monday?

BAKER
 We're supposed to be there by nine. They'll have about a half hour of the usual ceremonial stuff, you take a few photos, make a few supportive comments and we're done.

JASON
 Good, that will work. You don't mind getting back a little late do you? I need to see my Dad.

BAKER

Of course.

An awkward silence.

BAKER

My sources at ABC tell me that Kimmel's doing a bit on your father tonight. I assume Fallon will as well. Some guy's put together a YouTube channel - Lowell Bachman's best moments - something like that. The LA Times is running a --

JASON

Your point?

BAKER

We can't have this in the news every week. The next fund raiser's in six days and we aren't even close to selling out. Doesn't that tell you something?

JASON

It might have something to do with a thousand dollars for a piece of chicken.

BAKER

Your father wore an ornamental robe in a televised Board meeting as he was telling a fellow Supervisor to eat shit.

JASON

It's not an ornamental robe. He got it as a gift from a State Supreme Court Justice. Four years ago I think.

BAKER

I've gotten two dozen calls from donors on this today alone.

JASON

And what is it exactly that you would have me do?

BAKER

Convince him to act proper - dignified. How could he disagree?

JASON

You really don't know my father
very well.

INT. MEDICAL EXAMINATION ROOM - DAY

Lowell lays prone on an MRI machine. A male medical
TECHNICIAN hovers over him. Doctor Ferguson observes.

MEDICAL TECHNICIAN

Okay Mr. Bachman, in a moment I am
going to slide you in. I need for
you to keep very, very still. Okay?

LOWELL

Let's just get it over with.

TECHNICIAN

It should only last about thirty
minutes or so.

The Technician slides the MRI chute holding Lowell under the
MRI canopy. The upper half of his body now encased.

TECHNICIAN

All right, it's going to be a bit
noisy. You must stay absolutely
still. Here we go.

The Technician turns on the MRI, starts taking readings.

LOWELL

Ferguson, you shouldn't be here,
the other guy is enough. I ain't
paying double.

(beat)

Ferguson, can you hear me?

Exasperated, the Medical Technician turns off the machine.

Ferguson walks over to the machine, slides the chute holding
Lowell back out from under the canopy.

DOCTOR FERGUSON

What part of stay still didn't you
understand?

LOWELL

Just want you to know I ain't
paying two people for a job one
fella could do. I know how you guys
pad bills.

DOCTOR FERGUSON
I am not here on charge. I only
came as a favor to Tess. One I am
already starting to regret.

LOWELL
Okay, as long as we are clear.
(to the Technician)
Go ahead.

TECHNICIAN
You're sure this time?

LOWELL
Yes, damn it. I said so didn't I?

DOCTOR FERGUSON
(to the Technician)
At this point, I'd be shocked if
you found any brain matter.

Lowell scowls at Ferguson. The Technician slides Lowell back
under the MRI canopy.

TECHNICIAN
(starting the machine)
Okay, here we go again.

LOWELL
You know you should have never told
Tess about this.

TECHNICIAN
Oh, Jesus Christ.

The Technician slides Lowell back out.

LOWELL
(to Ferguson)
Seriously, you're my Doctor.

TECHNICIAN
(to Ferguson)
I'm going outside for a break. Let
me know when you two figure this
out.

The Technician shakes his head in disbelief, walks to the
door, exits. The door SLAMS shut behind him.

DOCTOR FERGUSON
Look it old man, I'm your family
Doctor. Tess is part of the family.

DOCTOR FERGUSON (CONT'D)
 Now you tell me, how the hell could
 I have guessed that you would not
 have told her. And, let me be very
 clear on this, you should have.

LOWELL
 Yeah, well, that's my business. You
 ever hear of patient privacy?

DOCTOR FERGUSON
 You ever hear of duct tape?

LOWELL
 What?

DOCTOR FERGUSON
 Duct tape. Because that is what I
 am going to put over your mouth if
 you can't keep it shut long enough
 to get this MRI done.

LOWELL
 Screw you. I'm leaving.

DOCTOR FERGUSON
 You want me to call Tess?

LOWELL
 See if I care.

Ferguson removes his cell phone from his slacks, flips the
 top open and starts to punch in a number.

LOWELL
 Fine - Fine. Do the damn thing.

DOCTOR FERGUSON
 You'll shut up?

LOWELL
 Just get the boy back.

Ferguson leaves the room to retrieve the Technician.

LOWELL
 But I ain't paying you for this.

EXT. RESTAURANT - DAY

A dark sedan pulls up to the valet in front of the
 restaurant.

A valet opens the door. RAYMOND LITTLETON, (50s), heavysset,
 emerges from the car.

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

McKinney sits at a table. He takes a sip from a glass of scotch. Littleton approaches.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY
Good afternoon, Raymond - drink?

LITTLETON
No thanks. How are you doing,
George?

Littleton takes a seat.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY
You been watching the news lately?

LITTLETON
Actually, that's what I wanted to
talk to you about. I think you may
be taking the wrong approach with
Bachman?

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY
I'm taking the wrong approach?
Did you see what he is doing to our
Board hearings?

LITTLETON
No one gives a shit about your
Board hearings.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY
They do and --

LITTLETON
They don't. And this is what they
see. An old, beloved grandfatherly
man. One who is starting to lose
it. His wheels wobbling, almost
ready to come off. Sad theater for
sure. But the worst part is you
playing the role of the stoic anti-
hero. Waiting for just the right
moment to grind your heel over the
poor old bastard.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY
That's a bit of an exaggeration.

LITTLETON
You're playing Goliath to his
David. That's foolish.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

Why is the Party concerned? I'm not facing a vote anytime soon.

LITTLETON

But the Governor is.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

And?

LITTLETON

I kind of have an interest in him not being re-elected.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

Of course.

LITTLETON

You know, from the Governor's perspective, this thing with his father is very unfortunate. If it keeps up, the poor bastard won't be able to have a simple news conference without being swarmed with questions about his crazy father. That is, assuming that Supervisor Bachman is still conducting the orchestra in your beloved Boardroom. So, I don't want you taking away Lowell Bachman's baton. Not when we have the perfect candidate to unseat the Governor.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

I can appreciate that, but you have to understand --

LITTLETON

You. You're the candidate, George.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

Me?

LITTLETON

You're a popular Supervisor in the largest County in the State. You have a strong, reassuring look about you. You would make an excellent candidate.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

Raymond, I'm flattered. But I really don't see --

LITTLETON

That is assuming you can put your gun back in the holster. I want you to be the empathetic colleague, not the prudish Dean. Everyone hates the Dean, George. Just take Bachman's insults with grace.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

It'll make me look weak.

LITTLETON

It'll make you look noble. And once we get it out that you may be running, it'll make Lowell seem like he's merely his son's attack dog.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

I hadn't considered that.

McKinney takes a sip of scotch.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

Do I announce - running that is?

LITTLETON

Not yet. We need to let this percolate. I'll work the rumor side of the house; drop a few hints here and there. In good time, the press will come to you. We need to let this stew a bit. Okay?

A pause as McKinney contemplates. He then nods.

LITTLETON

Good. Now I think I'll have that drink.

INT. LOWELL'S OFFICE - DAY

Lowell and Supervisor Jordan sit in chairs across from each other, their feet resting on the coffee table.

SUPERVISOR JORDAN

So, basically, I'm just wondering if everything is alright. You know, are you feeling okay?

LOWELL

Why would you ask?

Jordan shifts in his chair - uncomfortable.

SUPERVISOR JORDAN

Why are you making me go through this? Tourettes? Really? And the swearing in the Boardroom. I know that you're not a prude, but c'mon. And there's the back and forth with McKinney. And the robe, man. You wore a robe in the Boardroom.

LOWELL

Well, it worked.

SUPERVISOR JORDAN

Worked?

LOWELL

Did you read the Times this morning?

Jordan shakes his head. Lowell slides a copy of the LA Times across the coffee table.

LOWELL

Look at the two headlines above the fold.

Jordan picks up the paper.

SUPERVISOR JORDAN

(reading)

"Supervisor Bachman loses control in Boardroom."

LOWELL

And the other?

SUPERVISOR JORDAN

(reading)

"The County may examine barracks for homeless veterans."

LOWELL

I'll take the trade-off.

SUPERVISOR JORDAN

So, this is all to get a motion passed. Do you think your reputation is worth that?

LOWELL

How long have you been on the Board now, Abraham - twenty years?

SUPERVISOR JORDAN

Eighteen.

LOWELL

Eighteen, good enough. You get done what you wanted?

SUPERVISOR JORDAN

I'm proud of what I have done, if that's what you're asking.

LOWELL

I'm asking did you make the difference you came to make?

SUPERVISOR JORDAN

Not all - no. But there's time.

LOWELL

Well, I envy you that luxury.

SUPERVISOR JORDAN

Look, just tell me man to man that you aren't sick and I'll leave it at that.

LOWELL

The truth is, I really don't know. But I know the clock is ticking. That part is undeniable.

SUPERVISOR JORDAN

We're all a bit over the hill.

LOWELL

God, I hate that saying.

SUPERVISOR JORDAN

It's just a saying.

LOWELL

But it's wrong. It implies that you've climbed. That life's an arc. It's not a fucking arc. It's just a God damn straight line. One where you can see where you started and see where you're ending.

SUPERVISOR JORDAN

Meaning?

LOWELL
 Meaning I think I'm just acting
 like a fella who can see both ends
 of the line.

INT. LOWELL'S OFFICE/BATHROOM - DAY

The door to the private bathroom door is half open.

Lowell sits on the toilet, flipping through a newspaper. He wears a formal shirt and tie - no pants.

INT. LOWELL'S OFFICE - DAY

Jason and Steven Baker enter. Jason spots a pair of dress slacks strewn over the office chair.

JASON
 Dad?

LOWELL (O.S.)
 In a minute.

A moment passes. Then several FLUSHES are heard.

JASON
 Dad, it's me.

Lowell emerges from the bathroom.

LOWELL
 God damn water saving toilets. What
 a waste of time. Every shit is now
 a two or three flusher. Think of
 all the time people waste looking
 over their God damn toilet to make
 sure that the crap has gone down.
 You ought to ban those things, son.

JASON
 I'll make a note of it.

LOWELL
 (insincerely)
 Steven, a pleasure to see you.

BAKER
 Supervisor.

Lowell walks to his desk, grabs his slacks, starts to put them on.

LOWELL

(to Baker)

Look, it's not often I get to see my boy. You don't mind running along now do you?

JASON

Go ahead, Steven.

Baker exits the room.

LOWELL

(fastening his belt)

That was easy. I thought he was going to be at least a two flusher. Have a seat.

Jason takes a seat.

JASON

How was the MRI?

Lowell plops into a large leather chair.

LOWELL

Have you seen your mother yet?

JASON

No, but I will, as soon as we're done...The MRI?

LOWELL

Was like being in a real noisy coffin. I imagine that if you croak in there, they can just button you up and drop you straight in the ground.

JASON

When do you get the results?

LOWELL

It'll be a week or two. You know how these things work. Look, I'm sure I'm fine.

JASON

Okay, but you'll let me know as soon as you do.

LOWELL

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

JASON

I do need to talk to you about something else.

LOWELL

You're still in the will.

A smile from Jason. Then it fades as he wrings his hands.

JASON

It's just that there's been a lot of press about you lately. And it hasn't exactly been flattering.

LOWELL

And?

JASON

And, we're worried about the impact it may have on, well on...

LOWELL

Your reelection.

JASON

I know it sounds self-serving. But Steven seems to think it's an issue.

LOWELL

I really don't like that prick.

JASON

He's fine. He's just looking out for my best interests.

LOWELL

Uh-huh. So what is it that you and Steven want?

JASON

Maybe a time-out. Take a break for a while. Heck, with all your medical problems, maybe it's time to slow down.

LOWELL

You mean stop embarrassing you.

JASON

That's not what I meant. It's just that when I get into the middle of the campaign, there can't be any baggage.

LOWELL

Baggage?

JASON

It's just a term they use.

LOWELL

I know that. Christ, I was running campaigns when you were in diapers.

JASON

Then you know what it's like. We're connected. We share the same name. If you're in the news because you told someone to go fuck themselves, I might as well have said it.

LOWELL

The name sure as hell came in handy when you were first running for Governor.

JASON

That's not exactly true.

LOWELL

I see. That's why you ran as Jason Lowell Bachman.

JASON

Well, in all fairness, that was before you became a fake judge, got Tourette's and told a fellow Supervisor to fuck off.

LOWELL

Just part of a grand plan.

JASON

What - a plan to throw away a reputation you spent your lifetime building? You want me to just sit quietly and watch you do that?

LOWELL

Yes. I want you to sit quietly. No need watching if you don't want to.
(shouting out)

Trudy! I need my briefing papers.
(to Jason)

You need to see your Mom.

JASON
So you won't consider toning it
down?

LOWELL
No, I am too God damn old for
eloquence. TRUDY!

Trudy enters - clearly frazzled - exasperated.

LOWELL
Ah, there you are. I need the
briefing material.

TRUDY
(points at Lowell's desk)
I put it there an hour ago.

LOWELL
Hmm. So you did.

Trudy shakes her head, mutters to herself as she exits.

JASON
Well, your mind seems to be made
up.

LOWELL
What's left of it.

Jason stands.

LOWELL
You're leaving?

Jason walks to Lowell. Gives him a kiss on the forehead.

JASON
Yeah, Pop. I need to go make some
eloquent statements at a library
opening. Make sure you get those
test results.

LOWELL
Yeah, yeah - I will.

INT. COUNTY BOARD HEARING ROOM - DAY

Filled to capacity. Now a news crew from CNN joins those from
local stations. The circus is definitely taking shape.

Lowell, seated at the dais, deep in thought - writing.

McKinney approaches, leans in, close to Lowell's ear.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY
 So, Lowell - what'll it be today?
 Leprosy maybe? Maybe you got some
 limbs falling off?

LOWELL
 (not looking up)
 Leave me alone. I'm preparing.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY
 How about diabetes? You know you
 could get all light-headed. Maybe
 faint in front of all these cameras
 that you're whoring to.

Lowell stands - defiant, ready for a fight.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY
 Settle down, cowboy. Just making
 small talk. Settle down.

McKinney returns to his own seat.

MOMENTS LATER

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
 Please read in the agenda, Ms.
 Pennington.

LOWELL
 Point of order, Madam Chair, I have
 an item to add for discussion today
 - the veteran barracks program.

All the cameras focus on Lowell.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
 Lowell, you know that item was
 continued until June.

LOWELL
 I forgot.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
 You forgot - really? Very well. Ms.
 Pennington, please proceed.

LOWELL
 Point of order, Madam Chair. I
 thought we all agreed last week we
 would skip the regular agenda to
 discuss the veteran barracks
 program.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
No, I just told you that.

LOWELL
I forgot.
(rising)
Unfortunately, I have been
diagnosed with a memory disorder.

SUPERVISOR FERNANDEZ
(under his breath)
Here it comes again.

LOWELL
And I would beg your indulgence,
Madam Chair. I believe that I am
entitled to a reasonable
accommodation.

Jackson looks at Lowell in complete disbelief.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
What is it?

LOWELL
A reasonable accommodation is --

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
No. What is your disorder?
I can't believe I'm even asking.

LOWELL
Oh, thank you, Madam Chair. I have
Alzheimer's.

Jordan leans over to Fernandez.

SUPERVISOR JORDAN
That was my guess.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
Alzheimer's?

LOWELL
Yes, Madam Chair.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
I thought you had Tourette's.

LOWELL
I still suffer from that disorder
as well.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
 You have Tourette's and
 Alzheimer's?

LOWELL
 Sadly, yes. So, didn't we all agree
 last week that we would discuss the
 veteran barracks program?

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
 We did not. And you do not have
 Tourette's and Alzheimer's.

McKinney makes the "you're crazy" circle with his finger.

LOWELL
 I know I do.
 (beat)
 Because I almost forgot what a fu-
 fu-fu-fucking ass hole McKinney is.

The audience erupts in laughter.

A very controlled McKinney merely smiles.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
 Lowell, for the sake of your own
 dignity, please - just leave.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY
 I think you should give him a
 little leeway, Glenda.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
 What?

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY
 I, of course, share your concern.
 There is a great deal of important
 business we're not getting to.
 Perhaps if we give him the floor
 for five minutes or so a meeting to
 get whatever he needs to get out of
 his system we can --

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
 Really, George?

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY
 I know. It's frustrating and you
 have been more than patient.

LOWELL
 So we can discuss the barracks
 motion?

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

No, we cannot!

LOWELL

Okay-dokay.

(to the audience)

At noon today there will be a gathering at City Terrace Park to get public input. I'll be handing out background information. Oh, and there will be hot dogs and hamburgers, so bring the kids and tell your friends. We're having several other events this week. If you can't make the rally today, make sure you make one of them.

(to Jackson)

I'm done. It's all yours.

MONTAGE - A SERIES OF COMMUNITY EVENTS

CITY PARK - DAY: Hundreds of PEOPLE, all ages, mill about. Some are obviously veterans, dressed in their old uniforms.

Smoke from several barbecues wafts in the air. Picnic tables are filled with people eating.

Lowell holds court with group of people as he stands underneath a large banner that reads: "BARRACKS FOR HOMELESS VETS". Standing next to him are Maria and Gabriel Flores.

COMMUNITY CENTER - NIGHT: Filled to capacity. Karen weaves in and out of the crowd handing out pamphlets. Lowell stands on a small stage, a microphone in his hand.

LOS ANGELES CATHEDRAL - DAY: Lowell and Karen hand out proposals to people as they leave the church.

CAFETERIA - DAY: Another lunchtime meeting with constituents.

END MONTAGE

INT. RADIO STATION STUDIO - DAY

Surrounded by glass with a radio console in the middle.

The RADIO HOST, wearing radio headset sits at the center of the console. Lowell, also with a headset sits to his right.

Karen monitors the interview from a few feet away.

RADIO HOST

Now, there have been some that question both the cause and the solution.

LOWELL

Am I supposed to guess what you're thinking?

Karen shoots a concerned look. Gives him a "bring it down a notch" motion with her hands.

RADIO HOST

Well, it's simply this. Some, like yourself perhaps, believe that these folks are in the situation they are - homeless, that is because they're veterans.

LOWELL

And...?

Lowell winces in pain - something's wrong.

RADIO HOST

Some believe that they're homeless people who just happened to be veterans.

LOWELL

(rubbing his eyes)
Does it really fucking matter?

In a panic, the Radio Host hits the red bleep button.

KAREN (O.S.)

Oh, no.

RADIO HOST

(into a microphone)
We're going to break. More with Supervisor Bachman after these messages.

VOICE (O.S)

Three minutes.

The Radio Host, obviously angry, remove his headset.

RADIO HOST

C'mon, man. You can't talk like that on the radio.

Lowell squeezes his eyes shut, grabs both sides of his head.

LOWELL

Ah, fuck me.

Lowell removes his headset and tosses it on the console.

RADIO HOST
What's going on?

LOWELL
I'm sorry. Really.

Lowell spots a trash can, walks to it, bends over and vomits.

KAREN
Oh, my God. What's wrong?

Lowell waves his hand in a leave me alone gesture. Wipes his chin with his sleeve.

LOWELL
I gotta go.

Lowell stumbles out the exit.

KAREN
(to the Radio Host)
I'm sorry. We'll make it up to you.

Karen grabs her briefcase from the floor, heads for the exit.

RADIO HOST
What the hell am I supposed to do
for the rest of the hour?

INT. SEDAN - DAY

Karen opens the door, jumps into the driver's seat. Lowell sits in the passenger seat, eyes closed.

KAREN
I'm taking you to the hospital.
You're sick.

LOWELL
And you're delusional. Take me to
the office.

Karen, inserts the key in the ignition, starts the car.

KAREN
No! We're going to the emergency
room. Put your belt on.

Lowell gently places his hand on Karen's forearm.

LOWELL
Karen, let's not do this.

KAREN

Do this? I don't even know what I'm supposed to do. Tell me you're not sick.

Karen grips the wheel very tightly, fights the urge to cry.

KAREN

God damn it! Why won't you tell me what's going on?

LOWELL

Towards what end?

(off Karen's look)

You're around me more than anyone. We both already know that I'm sick.

KAREN

That's why we should --

LOWELL

And we both already know that there isn't anything in an emergency room that's going to change that. Now, I get my MRI results soon. You'll be the second to know - right after Tess.

KAREN

You should be resting.

LOWELL

But I need to be working. Please, let's go back to the office.

(beat)

I don't have time to waste.

Karen composes herself, pulls the car away from the curb.

KAREN

Put your belt on.

INT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION/BEDROOM - NIGHT

JILL BACHMAN (40), propped up in bed, reads a novel. On the other side of the bed, Jason with a phone to his ear.

JASON

(into phone)

You know you can't say that on the radio.

INT. LOWELL'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - NIGHT

Lowell, dressed in a tattered bathrobe, forages in the refrigerator as he holds a phone to his ear.

LOWELL
(into phone)
I suppose.

Lowell removes a piece of chocolate cake, grabs a fork from the counter and takes a seat at a dinette table.

INTERCUT BETWEEN JASON AND LOWELL - BOTH ON PHONE

JASON
Why didn't you finish the
interview?

LOWELL
Got called away. County emergency.

JASON
You're lying.

Lowell takes a large bite of cake, rolls his eyes in ecstasy.

LOWELL
(mouth full)
Yeah, of course I am.

JASON
What is it about this barracks
thing? Is it really worth it?

LOWELL
(takes another bite)
What do you mean? Worth what?

JASON
Your reputation.
(beat)
My re-election.

LOWELL
Milk.

JASON
What?

LOWELL
Give me a sec.

Lowell goes back to the fridge, removes a carton of milk, returns to the table as he takes a gulp from the carton.

JASON

Hello?

LOWELL

Look, I ain't trying to solve world hunger here. I'm just trying to get one fucking barrack built for homeless vets. It shouldn't be this fucking hard to do something this small.

JASON

It's always been this hard. You more than anyone should know that. Tell me your done with the antics.

TESS (O.S.)

(shouting from upstairs)
Lowell, you're not eating the cake are you?

LOWELL

Oh shit, busted. Gotta go.

Lowell hangs up, puts the milk back in the fridge, wipes his mouth with his sleeve.

LOWELL

(shouting upstairs)
No, dear.

INT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION/BEDROOM - NIGHT

JASON

(into phone)
Hello?...Hello?

Jason ends the call.

JASON

(to Jill)
He hung up.

Jill reaches over, turns off the lamp on her nightstand.

JILL

Stop worrying about it. There's nothing you can do.

Jason turns off the lamp on his nightstand. The room is now dark. A moment passes.

JILL

Besides, he might just be right.

INT. LOBBY OUTSIDE BOARD HEARING ROOM - DAY

Jordan and Fernandez chit-chatting at the doorway leading to the Boardroom. They spot Lowell and Karen approaching, their arms interlocked.

Lowell wears dark sunglasses and taps the floor with a walking cane (the type used by the blind).

SUPERVISOR JORDAN

Oh my God.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

I thought this would just run its course.

SUPERVISOR FERNANDEZ

Apparently, it is a very long course.

Lowell and Karen arrive at the door.

SUPERVISOR FERNANDEZ

Lowell, Karen, good morning.

Karen nods. Lowell rotates his head back and forth, feigning as if he is trying to get the direction of Fernandez's voice.

LOWELL

Javier, is that you? Javier?

SUPERVISOR FERNANDEZ

Yes. Lowell. Please don't do this again.

McKinney reaches the doorway.

LOWELL

I smell bad cologne. It is very familiar.

(sniffing the air)

McKinney, is that you? Say something.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

You couldn't have done us all a favor and gone with being a mute?

McKinney enters the Boardroom. Jordan rolls his eyes, follows him in.

LOWELL

Abraham? Did you leave?

SUPERVISOR FERNANDEZ
 He's gone, Lowell. Oh Christ, what
 I am saying?

Fernandez turns, enters the Boardroom.

INT. COUNTY BOARD HEARING ROOM - DAY

The meeting is underway, the room filled to capacity with
 members of the public and the press.

Lowell, still wearing his dark glasses and holding his cane
 holds center stage.

LOWELL
 (at audience - theatrical)
 And so, it is with great sadness
 that I inform you of my blindness.
 It is not unlike the blind eye this
 Board has turned to our homeless
 veterans. We have lost sight of our
 purpose. We have lost our vision.
 Since once again, we will not be
 allowed to discuss it at this
 meeting, we will hold a forum for
 the barracks program later this
 week at the Watts Community Center.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
 (To Pennington)
 Please, call the agenda.

LOWELL
 In my condition I am obviously
 going to need a ride to the
 community center. Supervisor
 McKinney, will you be able to give
 me a lift? George, are you there?
 Speak up. George?

INT. LOWELL'S OFFICE - DAY

Lowell, feet propped up on his desk, reading a brief.

TRUDY (O.S)
 (voice from intercom)
 It's Doctor Ferguson on line two
 for you.

Lowell flips a page, continues reading.

TRUDY (O.S)
 (voice from intercom)
 Supervisor, you have a call.

LOWELL
 (shouting)
 What?

TRUDY (O.S)
 (voice from intercom)
 I said It's Doctor Ferguson on line
 two for you.

LOWELL
 (shouting)
 Tell him I'll call him back. I'm
 busy.

TRUDY (O.S)
 (voice from intercom)
 He says he needs to talk to you
 now.

LOWELL
 (louder)
 I said later!

Trudy bursts into Lowell's office, clearly frustrated.

TRUDY
 First, all you have to do is press
 that nice big gray button if you
 want to talk to me. If you prefer
 shouting, I can just have the
 intercom disconnected and order a
 bullhorn. And second, he said now
 and that he would stay on the line
 tying it up all - well I'm not
 going to curse like he did, but
 that he would tie it up all bleep,
 bleep, day if you don't talk to
 him.

LOWELL
 Damn it. All right already.

Trudy turns, storms out of the office. Lowell punches a
 button on the phone, picks up the handset.

LOWELL
 What? What the hell couldn't you
 wait for?

INT. DOCTOR FERGUSON'S OFFICE - DAY

Ferguson at his desk, phone to his ear.

DOCTOR FERGUSON
 I need you to come into the office.

INTERCUT BETWEEN LOWELL AND DOCTOR FERGUSON

LOWELL
Just spit it out.

DOCTOR FERGUSON
We should talk in person.

LOWELL
Sometimes you Doctors just don't get it. You don't think that you haven't already told me something by not telling me anything?

An awkward pause.

LOWELL
Well, are you going to talk or just wait for me to die on the line?

DOCTOR FERGUSON
There is a tumor.

LOWELL
Cancer?

DOCTOR FERGUSON
We won't know for sure until we do surgery, take a biopsy and...

LOWELL
God damn it, Robert, hoist up your panties and give me an answer. Is it cancer?

DOCTOR FERGUSON
Based on the image and growth pattern, more than likely. Regardless, we're going to need to schedule surgery to remove the tumor. We'll do a biopsy. If it comes back positive, chemo - eight weeks I would think. After that --

LOWELL
After that, you put me back in the tube. But only after my head has been split open and my body poisoned. Then you tell me - oopsy daisy, looks like you're fucked anyway.

DOCTOR FERGUSON
 After that we'll do another MRI and
 hopefully I'll be able to tell you
 we got it.

Lowell leans back, runs his hand through his hair.

LOWELL
 It's actually kind of a relief.

DOCTOR FERGUSON
 A relief?

LOWELL
 Yeah. I thought I was just losing
 my mind. Now, I can put my finger
 on it. I'd rather be a dead eighty-
 one year old than a healthy crazy
 one. You know what I mean?

DOCTOR FERGUSON
 Yeah, I think I do.
 (beat)
 You're okay? I mean if you need to
 talk to....

LOWELL
 Put your tissue away, lady. I'm
 fine.

DOCTOR FERGUSON
 Alright then. Oh, before I forget,
 Tess has been calling the office
 this morning for the results. You
 need to talk to her.

LOWELL
 You say a word to her and I will
 personally come down to your office
 and knock you back to yesterday.

Lowell hangs up.

LOWELL
 (shouting)
 Trudy! I need some paper and an
 envelope.

TRUDY (O.S.)
 Intercom.

INT. COUNTY COUNSEL OFFICE - DAY

Bedford, eating a sandwich at his desk. Jackson walks in.

ATTORNEY BEDFORD
Supervisor.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
Do you have a minute? Oh, I didn't
mean to interrupt your lunch.

ATTORNEY BEDFORD
Not a problem. Please - come in.

Jackson enters, takes a seat across from Bedford.

ATTORNEY BEDFORD
(wiping his hands)
What can I do for you?

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
This needs to be private.

ATTORNEY BEDFORD
Of course.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
It's in regard to Supervisor
Bachman. I need you to do some
research.

ATTORNEY BEDFORD
Regarding?

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
I need to know if a Supervisor can
be involuntarily removed from
office. Like as a result of them
being unable to perform their
duties. Get back to me by --

ATTORNEY BEDFORD
They can be.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
That was a bit quick. How did you
know that off hand?

ATTORNEY BEDFORD
You're not the first to ask.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
What? Who?

ATTORNEY BEDFORD
I'm not at liberty to say. As you
can imagine, that request was also
private.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
Was it Mckinney?

ATTORNEY BEDFORD
Again, I really can't say.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
Fine. What is the process?

Bedford opens the file drawer on the side of his desk,
removes a folder and opens it.

ATTORNEY BEDFORD
Here's the staff report.
(reading)
*"The County Code allows for the
removal of a member of the Board
should the Board find that member
to be incapacitated --"*

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
Please - summarize.

ATTORNEY BEDFORD
Basically, the Board has the
authority to request a public
hearing on the capacity - the
competency if you will, of any
Board member. But, it takes at
least four affirmative votes to
make that hearing happen.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
Then what?

ATTORNEY BEDFORD
Well, after the public hearing, the
Board votes on whether the subject
Supervisor is in fact unable to
fulfill their duties. If four
members vote yes, then the Board
requests the Governor of California
to appoint a replacement.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
The Governor makes the replacement?

ATTORNEY BEDFORD
Ironic, huh?

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
You're confusing irony with
coincidence.

INT. OFFICE LOBBY - DAY

Trudy at her desk. Karen approaches.

KAREN
Is he ready?

TRUDY
He's not going to the rally.

KAREN
What?

TRUDY
He went home. Right after he got
off the phone with Doctor Ferguson.
(hands Karen the envelope)
He left this for you.

Karen opens the envelope, removes a note. Her hands tremble a bit as she reads.

TRUDY
I'm worried.

INT. HALL OF ADMINISTRATION/EIGHTH FLOOR CORRIDOR - DAY

Karen's heels echo on the tile floor as makes a determined pace down the corridor. She reaches and enters the:

LOBBY OUTSIDE SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY OFFICE

And spots A RECEPTIONIST at the front desk, phone to her ear.

KAREN
Is he in?

The Receptionist cups the phone receiver with her hand.

RECEPTIONIST
Yes, let me check if he's --

KAREN
(walks past desk)
Thanks.

RECEPTIONIST
Available.

Karen reaches McKinney's office door. Takes a deep breath, taps on the door jam and enters:

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY'S OFFICE

McKinney looks up from his desk.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY
Ah, Miss Mendoza, what an
unexpected surprise. Please - sit.

Karen takes a seat across from McKinney's desk.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY
What I can do for you?

KAREN
I feel uncomfortable asking. But I
need a favor.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY
Go on.

KAREN
I want you to rescind your motion
delaying the discussion on the
veteran's barracks program.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY
And why would I do that?

KAREN
He just needs to have the item
addressed. I'm sure that his
behavior will change once he gets a
real chance to --

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY
Did he send you?

KAREN
No, of course not. And I'm pretty
sure he wouldn't be too happy to
know that I'm here.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY
Where is he? At one of his little
circuses? I hear that he has
several little community get-
togethers this week.

KAREN
No, he's home. Look, Supervisor --

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY
I'm sorry, Karen. I'm afraid I just
can't help you on this.

KAREN

You go way back with him. You've served together for a decade. You know he's not himself.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

Sorry. The answer is still no.

KAREN

With all due respect, that is a shame, Supervisor.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

You know what I find a shame, Karen? Do you?

(growing anger)

I find it a shame that we haven't had a proper Board hearing in a month. I find it a shame that the Board room is filled with cameras and newsmen and, contrary to what Lowell thinks, they don't give a rat's ass about his pet issue. They're just waiting for the clown to dance.

KAREN

He's not a clown. You know better.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

Well he certainly is dancing for them like one, now isn't he?

KAREN

If this continues, it's really your fault. Not helping is - is inexcusable.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

Hmm, somehow I think I can live with that burden. Wait, let me think for a minute - yes, I'm certain I can.

Karen's eyes narrow in anger. She starts to speak - thinks otherwise. She stands, heads towards the door.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

Karen.

Karen stops, turns around.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

It's time to hitch your career to a different wagon. The wheels are coming off of this one.

INT. KAREN'S OUTER OFFICE AREA - MOMENTS LATER

THERESA SANCHEZ, (30) sits at a desk just outside Karen's office. Karen approaches.

THERESA

A reporter from the L.A. Times called. He was wondering if you had any comment on --

KAREN

(walking past)
Later.

THERESA

He said that he's already left three messages.

KAREN

Later!

Karen enters:

HER OFFICE

Shutting the door behind her. She leans up against the closed door, presses her hands to her face - weeps.

INT. LOWELL'S HOUSE - DAY

Lowell and Tess on the sofa, his arms wrapped around her.

LOWELL

Everything's going to be fine. We'll beat this. Just like we have everything else, you and me. I promise.

Tess straightens up, wipes tears from her eyes.

TESS

I think you should cut back. I want you to save your strength.

LOWELL

I can't. I've already got events scheduled - for the barracks.

TESS

Karen can handle whatever needs to be done. You know that.

LOWELL

I want to do it. I need to do it.

TESS

Why? What's it about this issue that's gotten such a hold on you? I've never seen you so consumed.

Lowell doesn't speak for a moment, as if this is the first time he has really thought about it.

LOWELL

I'll be God damned if I know.

(thinking)

Maybe because I want a last chance at doing something real...Let me get this done, Tessy. Then I'll rest. I promise.

TESS

On one condition. We see Robert and he gives the okay. Deal?

Lowell nods. Tess stands. Straightens her skirt.

TESS

We need to call Jason. You promised him you would let him know.

INT. STEVEN BAKER'S RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Baker points a remote at the TV, clicks it.

ON THE TV SCREEN

DANIEL DAVIDSON, a CNN Reporter at the news desk.

DAVIDSON

Another raucous day at the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors this week as Supervisor Lowell Bachman once again grabbed center stage.

A still shot of the "blind" Lowell Bachman fills the screen.

DAVIDSON (O.S)

This has been a continuing confrontation, often very heated, between Supervisor Bachman and the rest of the Board members, most notably Supervisor George McKinney.

Then a clip of the Board meeting where Lowell says he forgot what a fucking ass hole McKinney was - curse words bleeped.

DAVIDSON

Lowell Bachman is of course the father of California Governor Jason Bachman, who is currently involved in a reelection bid.

A still shot of Jason appears on the screen.

DAVIDSON

We are joined now by Los Angeles County Supervisor George McKinney.
(turning towards McKinney)
Thank you for joining us,
Supervisor.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

Thank you, Daniel. It's my pleasure.

BAKER

God Damn it!

INT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION/FOYER - NIGHT

A doorbell RINGS. An attendant opens the door. Baker walks in, hands his coat to the ATTENDANT.

INT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jason sits on a sofa, his feet propped up on a coffee table. Jill leans up against him, her head nestled in his chest.

They watch a large screen television on the opposite wall.

Baker enters.

JASON

Evening, Steven. How was the drive?

BAKER

Fine. Thank you.

Jason picks up a remote, clicks off the television.

JASON
(to Jill)
You mind?

JILL
Of course I do, but that's not
going to matter now is it?

Jill stands, leans over, gives Jason a kiss on his forehead.

JILL
Steven, try not keeping him up all
night.

As Jill exits, Jason stands, walks to a small wet bar. He
drops ice cubes in a small glass, pours scotch in it.

BAKER
So you saw the CNN interview?

Baker takes a seat.

JASON
Yes, I did. Drink?

BAKER
No thank you.

Jason takes a sip.

JASON
Suit yourself.

BAKER
I think McKinney's running and I
think he is going to exploit this
thing with your father.

Jason swishes the ice cubes in his glass, admiring the CLINK,
CLINK, CLINK they make against the side of the glass.

BAKER
How can you be so calm?

JASON
He has a brain tumor.

BAKER
Pardon?

JASON
My Dad. He needs surgery. It'll
probably be within the next two
weeks or so. Damn it, I knew it.

Jason finishes off his scotch.

BAKER

Not to be indelicate, but does this mean he'll be stepping aside from the Board for awhile?

JASON

Nope. He's going to work right up till the surgery. And no, I'm not going to ask him not to, if that's what's rolling around in your head.

BAKER

It was.

(deep exhale)

So, you want me to work on a press release - coordinate with his office on it?

JASON

He wants to keep his condition quiet. No press release.

BAKER

There needs to be one. The public would understand his erratic behavior. It would --

JASON

I intend on respecting his wish.

BAKER

(confused)

Then what is it that you need?

JASON

I want you to start doing some research on this homeless barracks thing. They're running something like it in Boston. I think Tulsa might have a pilot as well. Anyway - current strengths, weaknesses, funding levels - that type of thing.

BAKER

Sir, due respect - but anything that your office would do at this point would surely be seen as favoritism.

JASON

You have a point.

BAKER

And?

JASON

I don't care. Please, just get me
the research.

INT. SUPERVISOR CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON'S OFFICE - DAY

Jackson at her desk, studying briefing material.

VOICE (THROUGH INTERCOM)

Mr. Bedford on line one.

Jackson picks up the receiver.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

Thank you for returning the call.

(listening)

I want you to draft a copy of the
motion we discussed. I'm going to
introduce it at the next meeting.

(listening)

Yes, I'm sure.

Jackson Punches the intercom button.

VOICE (THROUGH INTERCOM)

Yes, Supervisor.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

Please call all the Supervisors and
see if they can meet with me
immediately. Wait, don't call
Bachman.

VOICE (THROUGH INTERCOM)

Supervisor McKinney's not in today.
I think he has that CNN thing.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

Yes, of course he does. Okay,
Fernandez and Jordan.

VOICE (THROUGH INTERCOM)

I'll take care of it, Supervisor.

Jackson rests her face in her hands.

INT. DOCTOR FERGUSON'S OFFICE - DAY

Ferguson at his desk writing on a prescription pad. Lowell
and Tess sit across from him.

DOCTOR FERGUSON

There are some drugs that can help manage the symptoms until the surgery.

LOWELL

Sure would have been nice if you gave them to me a damn month ago.

TESS

Lowell, he's only trying to help.

LOWELL

Well, Christ, why was he holding out on the magic pills?

DOCTOR FERGUSON

Because we didn't know what was wrong with you a month ago. As I recall, you thought you had Alzheimers.

LOWELL

Dementia - I'm pretty sure I said dementia.

DOCTOR FERGUSON

Well, we don't just throw darts at a problem hoping to get it right.

LOWELL

Plus, you get to charge for more office visits this way.

DOCTOR FERGUSON

If only there were a drug for being a pain in the --

TESS

Robert, you were saying.

DOCTOR FERGUSON

Of course, Tess.

Ferguson slides the prescription towards Tess.

DOCTOR FERGUSON

Okay, this one is for his headaches. Make sure you he takes it with food and only as needed.

TESS

Okay, got it.

Ferguson writes out another prescription. Slides it to Tess.

DOCTOR FERGUSON

And this one is for nausea. Two times a day with water, full glass.

LOWELL

What are you giving them to her for? I'm the patient.

DOCTOR FERGUSON

Well, with your dementia and all, I just thought it might be better if a sane person was in charge.

LOWELL

Well, at least I'm not practicing Voodoo medicine.

TESS

You two stop it now.

LOWELL

Well, he started it.

Ferguson shoots Lowell a sneer.

DOCTOR FERGUSON

Tess, of course - you're right.

LOWELL

News flash Doc, I need the prescriptions. She ain't around me most of the day.

DOCTOR FERGUSON

(at Tess)

Is that how you keep your sanity?

LOWELL

Give em to me!

TESS

Lowell, Karen's picking me up at the house. She'll take me to the pharmacy and she'll have your pills for you during the day. Okay?

LOWELL

Fine.

DOCTOR FERGUSON

I probably should also prescribe a sedative.

LOWELL

I don't need a sedative.

DOCTOR FERGUSON

Not for you - for Tess. If I had to live with you I'd need a horse tranquilizer.

LOWELL

Yeah, well. If I had to live with you I'd --

TESS

Boys!

INT. LOWELL'S OFFICE - DAY

Lowell at his desk, on the phone.

Karen appears in the doorway holding a bottle of water and a pill box. Lowell motions for her enter.

LOWELL

(into the phone)

Great, that sounds good.
I appreciate it - thanks.

Lowell hangs up.

Karen taps out two pills, hands them and the water to Lowell.

KAREN

Make sure you drink the whole bottle.

Lowell takes the pills, gulps down the water.

LOWELL

Got to hand it to the quack, these things have worked pretty good.

KAREN

Is there anything else you need for the Board meeting?

LOWELL

Yeah, I need you to find me one of those people who do the sign language thing. You know, for the deaf.

KAREN

A sign language interpreter?

LOWELL

Yeah, whatever they're called.

KAREN

For the Board hearing? For the one that starts in just thirty minutes from now?

LOWELL

Yes, don't be daffy. For the meeting today.

KAREN

Where am I going to find someone who knows sign language?

LOWELL

C'mon, there are ninety thousand employees in this County. Gotta be one somewhere.

KAREN

Yes, but they're not all standing here in this room at the moment. Besides, why on earth would you need a sign language interpreter?

Lowell looks at Karen over his glasses.

KAREN

Fine - fine. I'll find you one. God knows where, but I'll find you one.

INT. LOWELL'S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - DAY

Tess sits on the sofa with CAROL (75).

CAROL

So, are you going to be able to make the lunch at Glenda's Thursday?

TESS

I wouldn't miss it.

A teapot WHISTLES from the kitchen.

TESS

Oh - it's ready.

Tess leaves the sofa, goes to the kitchen.

CAROL

(shouting towards kitchen)
You know last time she served that awful chili. I had indigestion all night.

CAROL (CONT'D)

Hopefully, she'll make something a little milder this time. Did it bother you at all?

(beat)

Tess?

The CLATTER of a tray and teacups hitting the floor emanates from the kitchen.

CAROL

Dear God!

Carol rushes towards the

KITCHEN

And spots Tess, sprawled on the floor, unconscious.

CAROL

Tess!

INT. LOS ANGELES COUNTY BOARD HEARING ROOM - DAY

At capacity. News crews jockey for position.

Lowell walks to Pennington, gives her a hand written note. Pennington looks confused, starts to hand the note back.

Lowell waves his hand in an insistent manner, walks back to his chair. A SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETER stands next to him.

CLERK PENNINGTON

(into the microphone)

Madam Chair, members of the Board, Supervisor Bachman has asked me to read a statement in for the record.

Pennington waits for a moment for a response. There is none as Jackson is distracted talking to staff.

CLERK PENNINGTON

Madam Chair?

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

Fine - whatever, proceed.

CLERK PENNINGTON

(hesitantly)

Okay - a statement from Supervisor Bachman.

The sign language interpreter signs as Pennington speaks.

CLERK PENNINGTON

(reading)

"Sadly, today I must announce that I have suffered a severe medical disorder, a consequence of which is an inability to speak as well as deafness. Yes, I have gone deaf. Totally and completely deaf. So deaf that I cannot even hear.."

Pennington stops and looks at Lowell.

CLERK PENNINGTON

(to Lowell)

I can't read this.

Lowell points to his ear, makes an expression that indicates he cannot hear her.

The Sign Language Interpreter translates for Lowell.

Lowell circles his hand at Pennington in a *go ahead* motion.

CLERK PENNINGTON

Madam Chair. Excuse me, Madam Chair, I don't think --

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

I would like to get this over with. It's already going to be a hard day. Please, proceed.

CLERK PENNINGTON

Okay.

(reading)

"So deaf that I cannot even hear Supervisor McKinney when he bellows like a jackass."

Fernandez laughs out loud, almost spitting out his coffee. Laughter from the audience, including the news crews.

CLERK PENNINGTON

(reading)

"Therefore, today I will be using the services of an interpreter. I would appreciate it if during your comments today you would speak slowly so that he may stay up to speed."

Jackson shoots the Interpreter a forced smile.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
Thank you, Ms. Pennington. Now I
have a motion --

CLERK PENNINGTON
(reading)
"P.S."

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
There's more?

CLERK PENNINGTON
A little. Should I stop?

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
No, finish it.

CLERK PENNINGTON
(reading)
*"P.S. - I believe that the deafness
I am now suffering, while certainly
unfortunate for me, is truly
symbolic of the deaf ear this Board
has turned towards the good
citizens of Los Angeles County. We
hear yet we do not listen. May God
save our souls. The end.
Sincerely, Lowell Bachman."*

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
Is that it?

CLERK PENNINGTON
Yes, Madam Chair.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
Thank you. I have a motion.
(clears throat)
Supervisor Lowell Bachman has
dedicated more than forty years of
service to the citizens of Los
Angeles County. I greatly admire
him for that service.

SUPERVISOR JORDAN
As we all do.

Jackson closes her eyes, takes a deep breath - continues.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
Sadly, over the past several weeks,
Supervisor Bachman's actions have
not been those of a rational man.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON (CONT'D)

They have been unprofessional and disruptive. As Chair of this Board, I feel responsible for protecting its credibility and its ability to function.

The audience grows silent - you could hear a pin drop.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

Mr. Bedford, will you please have your staff provide a copy of the motion to the other Supervisors.

ATTORNEY BEDFORD

Yes, Madam Chair.

Bedford hands several pieces of paper to a female STAFFER. She circles the dais handing a piece of paper to each Supervisor.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

I will read the motion into the record.

(reading)

"Los Angeles County Code Section 2.20 allows for the removal of a Supervisor that, for reasons of incapacitation, is no longer able to fulfill their duties. The same code section requires the Board to open public hearings on the matter. Therefore, in accordance with section 2.20, I move that this Board initiate such hearings with respect to Supervisor Lowell Bachman within two weeks and pursuant to that same Code section, should he be deemed incapacitated, request the Governor of California to appoint a replacement at the earliest possible point. Four votes are required for approval."

(to Lowell)

I am truly sorry, Lowell.

Lowell bows his head - as if he understands.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

Ms. Pennington, call the roll.

CLERK PENNINGTON

(trembling)

Yes, Madam Chair. Supervisor Fernandez?

SUPERVISOR FERNANDEZ
With regrets, aye.

CLERK PENNINGTON
Supervisor Bachman?

Lowell shakes his head. Pennington looks to Jackson.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
Just record him as a no.

CLERK PENNINGTON
Supervisor McKinney?

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY
No.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
You're voting no?

CLERK PENNINGTON
Supervisor Jordan?

SUPERVISOR JORDAN
Well, since there are already two
no votes should we continue? I
mean, we have to have four votes
for the motion to pass.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON
(To McKinney)
You're really voting no?

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY
I don't believe Supervisor Bachman
is incapacitated. I do believe he
is manipulative and unless that is
in violation of the County Code I
see no reason to --

LOWELL
Maybe I'm both.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY
A miracle. He can hear now.

The Interpreter signs as McKinney speaks. Lowell gently grabs his hand, gives him a nod - no need for further signing.

LOWELL
Yes, thank you, George. Must have
just been some ear wax or
something. Madam Chair, I have a
question for Counsel related to
your motion.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

The motion is obviously not going to pass, Lowell. Four votes are required.

LOWELL

Nonetheless, please indulge me for a moment.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

For a moment? Really?
(slumps back in chair)
Fine, proceed.

LOWELL

Mr. Bedford, I assume that since the roll has not been completed, the motion is still open for amendment.

ATTORNEY BEDFORD

That is correct.

LOWELL

And I assume that since the issue of incapacitation requires a public hearing, that any amendment to the motion would also be part of such hearing - yes?

ATTORNEY BEDFORD

Well, yes - of course.

LOWELL

Good. I have an amendment to Madam Chair's motion. Some of you may recall that a while back, I proposed a motion to build barracks for homeless veterans. I really haven't mentioned it in awhile, so I will ask Karen to pass out a copy to refresh your memories. Karen, if you would please.

Karen circles the dais as she passes out a copy of Lowell's motion to each Supervisor.

LOWELL

I move that my barracks motion be added as an amendment and, as such, be heard concurrently at the hearing to discuss my incapacitation.

LOWELL (CONT'D)

In addition, the public will be allowed to testify at that hearing on both matters should they so desire.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

He can't do that.

ATTORNEY BEDFORD

Technically, he can.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

Is there a second?

(re: no response)

No one?

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

Looks like there's not. We should move on with the agenda.

LOWELL

(to Jordan)

Abraham, I'm just trying to make the difference I came here to make.

SUPERVISOR JORDAN

(with a warm smile)

I'll second the motion.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

This is asinine.

LOWELL

You should watch your language - poor protocol, George.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

The motion to hold an incapacitation hearing related to Supervisor Bachman has been amended to include a hearing on the barracks program. Seconded by Supervisor Jordan. Ms. Pennington, please call the roll.

CLERK PENNINGTON

Yes, Madam Chair. Supervisor Fernandez?

SUPERVISOR FERNANDEZ

Aye.

CLERK PENNINGTON

Supervisor Bachman?

LOWELL

Aye.

CLERK PENNINGTON

Supervisor McKinney?

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

No!

CLERK PENNINGTON

Supervisor Jordan?

SUPERVISOR JORDAN

Aye.

CLERK PENNINGTON

Madam Chair?

Jackson leans back in her chair, turns and looks at Lowell. She moves her microphone away so the audience can't hear her.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

(to Lowell)

Well played, Supervisor.

Lowell gives Jackson a wink. Jackson straightens up, returns the microphone back towards her.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

Aye. Please read the results in for the record, Ms. Pennington.

CLERK PENNINGTON

The amended motion is approved on a four to one vote. The public hearing to be scheduled for two weeks from today.

The din of murmurs from the audience.

Karen, cell phone to her ear ends a call. She frantically rushes over to Lowell, whispers in his ear.

Lowell's eyes grow wide with concern as Karen speaks. Karen takes his arm and then quickly exit the Boardroom.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

(seeing the commotion)

The Board will be in recess for ten minutes. Mr. Bedford, can I see you please?

ATTORNEY BEDFORD

Yes, Madam Chair.

Bedford approaches Jackson. She cups her hand over her microphone.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

Who was the other Supervisor who asked you about the code section?

ATTORNEY BEDFORD

Again, Madam Chair - it was a private request.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

May I remind you that you serve at the pleasure of the Board.

ATTORNEY BEDFORD

And...?

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

I am not feeling very pleased.

ATTORNEY BEDFORD

Bachman. It was Supervisor Bachman. He thought it was the only way...

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

To get his hearing on the barracks.

Bedford nods.

INT. HOSPITAL/CORRIDOR - DAY

Just outside a patient room. Karen has her phone to her ear.

KAREN

(into phone)

She's going to be fine. They said it was just a mild stroke. There's no loss of sensation. No other impairments.

(listening)

They're going to put her on blood thinners. Keep her here a day two just to make sure everything's okay.

Karen looks through the window of the patient room door.

KAREN

(into phone)

No, she's sleeping now.

INT. JASON'S OFFICE - DAY

Jason at his desk, phone to his ear.

JASON
 (into the phone)
 Okay. Thanks, Karen. I really
 appreciate you looking after...
 (smiles)
 Both of them I suppose.
 (a chuckle)
 Okay. I'll be down in a few days.
 Just as soon as the budget passes.

Jason hangs up. From the corner of his desk, he picks up a framed photo of him Lowell, and Tess at his Inauguration - stares at it a moment.

JASON
 Hmm.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Tess in bed, asleep. Lowell in a chair at her side. His hand gently resting on top of hers.

LOWELL
 You're going to be fine, Tessy.
 Just fine.
 (a beat)
 You remember when I first ran for
 office. You baked all those God
 damn cookies - chocolate chip. We
 must have banged on a thousand
 doors a day you and me. They didn't
 much like me, but they loved the
 cookies. I knew your feet hurt. I
 knew you were tired but you never
 said a word - not a word. You just
 listened to me ramble on and on.
 (wipes a tear)
 No more doors to knock on, Tessy.
 I promise.

INT. NEWS STUDIO - NIGHT

HAL FREEMAN (50), thick white hair, seated at a small table surrounded by television cameras.

Across from him, A MAKE-UP WOMAN applies the final touches to McKinney's face.

VOICE (O.S)
 We're ready in two.

MAKE-UP WOMAN

Okay, you look good.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

Thank you.

Make-up Woman exits.

VOICE (O.S)

Thirty seconds.

FREEMAN

Thank you for coming.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

My pleasure.

The local news opening MUSIC is played.

VOICE (O.S)

And - we're on.

FREEMAN

Welcome to LA Live. I'm your host, Hal Freeman. There is big news both in local and State politics. We are joined this evening by Los Angeles County Board Supervisor George McKinney, who late this afternoon announced his candidacy for Governor. Welcome, Supervisor.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

Thank you.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - SAME TIME

Lowell, slumped in a chair across from Tess' bed, watches the McKinney interview on the muted hospital room television.

The scroll on the bottom of the screen reads: "SUPERVISOR GEORGE SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY ANNOUNCES BID FOR GOVERNOR."

Lowell picks up the TV remote, clicks the sound on.

INT. NEWS STUDIO - SAME TIME

FREEMAN

You were the only Supervisor voting against the hearing related to Supervisor Bachmans' competency to serve. Why the no vote?

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

Because faking illnesses may be manipulative, but it is not a sign of incapacitation. It's merely a sign of irresponsibility.

FREEMAN

His anger has often been directed at you - on occasion, it has gotten very personal. Has there been bad blood between you and Supervisor Bachman?

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

We have served together for many, many years and have always treated each other with the utmost respect - until recently that is.

FREEMAN

Because of your objection to his homeless veterans program.

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

I suppose that is what he would have people believe. Look, for the record, I am not against assisting homeless veterans. Unlike Supervisor Bachman, I served - proudly. I just wanted the matter to be discussed in conjunction with all of our other budget priorities in June - just like the other Supervisors. Yet I seem to be the sole target of his verbal assaults.

FREEMAN

Because?

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY

It's not hard to connect the dots here. My name has been mentioned for some time, along with others of course, as a potential gubernatorial candidate. I think that Supervisor Bachman's tirades against me are politically motivated - pure and simple.

FREEMAN

You really believe that?

SUPERVISOR MCKINNEY
And I find that disturbing. I find
that the fact that his son, the
Governor, has been silent on the
matter, equally disturbing.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - SAME TIME

LOWELL
(at the television)
You manipulative fuck!

Tess awakens.

TESS
Lowell, people can hear you.

LOWELL
Tessy!

INT. JASON'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Jason and Baker watch the CNN interview with McKinney.
As it ends, Jason clicks the remote, the TV goes black.

JASON
Well, you got to give him credit
for creativity.

BAKER
Indeed.

JASON
Look, we'll need to put the
campaign on hold for a few days. I
need to get down to L.A. I know you
think I should --

BAKER
No. You should go. We'll manage.

JASON
So, it's going to be McKinney.

BAKER
He's going to be a very strong
candidate.

JASON
I've never run against a weak one.

EXT. LOWELL'S HOUSE - DAY

A car parked in the driveway. Karen, carrying a suitcase exits the driver's side. Lowell exits the passenger side.

They both go to the rear passenger door. Karen opens it. A WALKING CANE sticks out. Lowell nudges Karen out of the way.

LOWELL

Let me.

Lowell extends his arm inside the car. It's taken by Tess.

DRIVEWAY

Lowell, escorts Tess, using a cane, towards the front door. Karen follows, suitcase in hand.

LOWELL

How about I just carry you over the threshold for old times sake?

TESS

Old is the operative word, dear.

LOWELL

You know I could do it.

TESS

Of course you could.

EXT. SACRAMENTO AIRPORT - DAY

A limousine pulls up to the terminal curb. An unusual amount of SECURITY PERSONNEL on the walkway.

The rear passenger door opens. Jason emerges.

REPORTER ONE (O.S.)

Governor, any comment on McKinney's announcement?

Panning back we see what the Security personnel were there for. To keep away a small horde of reporters, mics sticking out - cameras rolling.

REPORTER TWO

Why is your father insulting McKinney?

REPORTER THREE

Is his behavior hurting your campaign?

REPORTER ONE

Is he faking his illness?

Jason smiles, gives a confidant wave to the Reporters as he makes his way towards the terminal doors.

INT. LOWELL'S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - NEXT DAY

Tess on the sofa watching TV. Lowell at a desk in the corner, writing something.

Tess mutes the TV.

TESS

What time is Jason picking you up for your appointment?

LOWELL

(as he writes)
Should be here any minute.

TESS

Is he staying with us tonight?

LOWELL

Yep.

TESS

That's nice.
(a beat)
Now no politics between you two. I'd liked to have just a normal family dinner.

LOWELL

(still writing)
Well, for that you would need to start with a normal family.

TESS

What are you working on?

Lowell stops - looks at Tess.

LOWELL

A resignation letter. It's time I stayed home and took care of you.

TESS

Oh no, don't you dare, mister. I wouldn't forgive you if you stopped because of me. And you still got things to get done.

LOWELL
Tess, it's time.
(points to his head)
I know.

INT. DOCTOR FERGUSON'S OFFICE - DAY

Lowell sits on a medical table. He wears a hospital gown, slit open in the back.

LOWELL
Hey! I'm getting a draft here!

Ferguson, carrying a clipboard, enters.

DOCTOR FERGUSON
I'd say keep your pants on, but we both know that's too late.

LOWELL
Hilarious. So?

DOCTOR FERGUSON
The tests look fine. You're vitals are good, especially for someone as old as you are.

LOWELL
I could still kick your ass.

DOCTOR FERGUSON
Brave words from a man wearing a gown.

LOWELL
You want a go at it?

DOCTOR FERGUSON
No, I don't.
(looking at clipboard)
Doctor Wynn will be performing the surgery two weeks from today. After you recover from that, we'll start the chemo.

LOWELL
I mean it. I could really kick your ass.

DOCTOR FERGUSON
No doubt. You got a ride home or do you need me to call someone?

LOWELL
Nope. Jason's waiting outside.

DOCTOR FERGUSON
Not bad, you got the Governor of
California as your personal
chauffeur.

LOWELL
Just another reason you shouldn't
screw with me.

Ferguson puts his hand on Lowell's shoulder.

DOCTOR FERGUSON
We're going to beat this thing. And
I am going to be there with you
every step of the way. I wanted you
to know that.

LOWELL
There's something you should know.

DOCTOR FERGUSON
And...?

LOWELL
If I die, I told Tess to sue you.

DOCTOR FERGUSON
Figures.

LOWELL
Now don't get all pussy on me
again. Okay?

DOCTOR FERGUSON
(as he exits)
I can't believe we're going to save
your sorry ass.

INT. LOWELL'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - MORNING

Jason, with a cell phone to his ear, sits at a table as he
reads a ballot initiative stamped: "DRAFT".

JASON
(into the phone)
Yeah, the initiative looks great.
Get staff start working on it right
away. We're going to need a million
signatures and we don't have a lot
of time.
(listening)
I should be back up there by the
end of the week. Thanks, Steven.

Jason takes a sip of coffee as he picks up the LA Times.

Lowell, in a opened bathrobe, enters, pours himself a cup. He takes a seat across from Jason.

LOWELL
 (points at the newspaper)
 Did you read it?

JASON
 Yeah. Let's see.
 (reading from paper)
*"Supervisor Mckinney requests both
 Supervisor Bachman and the Governor
 to cease personal attacks."*

LOWELL
 What an ass. Thinks he can make a
 fool out of me.

JASON
 (still reading)
 When we all know that's your job.

LOWELL
 Son, look --

JASON
 I'm kidding. And he's not doing
 anything we wouldn't.
 (puts down paper)
 He's going to be a tough candidate

LOWELL
 Definitely a two flusher.

JASON
 If not three.

Lowell takes a sip of coffee.

LOWELL
 I'm sorry if all this has hurt you.
 I never intended for you to be
 collateral damage.

JASON
 Not to worry. I've got a lot of
 arrows in the quiver.

LOWELL
 What are you talking about?

JASON

Well, for one, I share the same name as a prominent elder statesman hailing from the great County of Los Angeles. As you reminded me, that worked out pretty well last time. And --

LOWELL

We both know I've pretty much screwed the pooch on the name.

JASON

And, two - I got a great new cause.

Jason slides the initiative folder towards Lowell.

LOWELL

What's this?

JASON

It's a draft initiative. We're going to try to get it on the ballot in June, assuming we can get a million signatures by then. It's going to be a big part of my campaign.

LOWELL

This is for...

JASON

A State-wide program for barracks for homeless veterans.

LOWELL

Son, you sure about this?

JASON

Actually, it was Steven's idea.

LOWELL

Baker?

JASON

Yeah. He called it - what was it? Oh yeah, he called it sinking outside the box. Anyway, we got some closed bases that can be used, other buildings that could be converted.

LOWELL

That's perfect.

JASON

And as it turns out, Steven says that your barracks idea polls real well. People like it.

LOWELL

I've always liked that guy.

Jason gives Lowell a look of comic disbelief.

JASON

So, I'm going to need your help on the initiative. I'm going to need you to stump with me. Are you in?

LOWELL

I'm in. But, I'll be there as a private citizen.

JASON

What are you talking about?

Lowell runs his hands through his wiry hair - thinks.

LOWELL

I'm resigning, next week. After the motion is heard.

JASON

Now? After all this?

LOWELL

Well, for one, there's the matter of this melon ball I got to get out my head. I ain't going to be walking around the Boardroom puking from the chemo every five minutes.

JASON

Everyone would understand.

LOWELL

And it's time. I'm old. I'm tired.

Jason nods - he gets it.

LOWELL

You know when I resign, you gotta appoint someone to fill my spot - least till the next election.

JASON

I know.

LOWELL

You should appoint Karen Mendoza.

JASON

Hmm. Karen.

LOWELL

She'd be perfect. She knows the District already. Got a good heart, good brains. I think her breasts are a bit too large but she'll overcome that?

JASON

What?

LOWELL

Never mind, your Mom doesn't want me talking about it. Last time she nearly tore my cheek off. Hush, hush - okay?

JASON

Sure. I don't think that will be a problem.

LOWELL

So Karen, you'll think about it?

Jason nods. Lowell finishes his coffee, stands - starts to walk away - stops.

LOWELL

You know, there was a time when I really believed I was going to be a difference maker - really change things. Next thing you know, one term blends into the next. And wala, before I know it I'm a crazy old man with no legacy.

JASON

Dad, c'mon...

LOWELL

Don't be just be a politician, son. It shouldn't be a profession. It ought to be a vocation. Be a statesman. We need them.

Jason nods as he takes it in.

LOWELL

I'm going to sneak outside and have a cigarette. Make yourself useful and cook us up some breakfast.

Lowell gets up and starts to leave the room.

LOWELL

(shouting back)

And don't you dare tell your Mom I'm smoking.

JASON

(under his breath)

Unless the stroke took away her sense of smell, I'm pretty sure she'll figure it out on her own.

INT. LOWELL'S OFFICE - DAY

Karen helps Lowell with his neck tie.

LOWELL

Enough already. It's fine.

KAREN

No, it's crooked. Just stay still for a minute.

LOWELL

You got sixty seconds.

KAREN

You sure you're ready to do this?

Karen completes the tie, admires her work for a moment and pats Lowell on the chest.

LOWELL

No doubts.

Karen picks some lint off of Lowell's vest and gives him a final once over.

KAREN

There - perfect. Now, grab your suit jacket. You don't want to be late for your last meeting.

Lowell leans over, gently kisses Karen on her cheek.

LOWELL

Thank you, Karen. Thank you for everything. I know that I haven't been easy to work with sometimes.

LOWELL (CONT'D)

Especially lately, and I wanted you to know...

KAREN

Me too. Me too, Lowell - but we've got to go.

Lowell nods, walks over to his closet, opens it and removes his suit jacket. He spots the robe he had worn weeks ago.

LOWELL

I'll leave the robe in here. Just in case you ever need it.

A warm smile form Karen.

INT. COUNTY BOARD HEARING ROOM - DAY

The meeting, underway, is filled to capacity - media and public. Maria and Gabriel Flores sit in the front row.

Karen watches from the side of the dais holding Tess' arm.

CLERK PENNINGTON

The amendment to allocate funds for a barracks for homeless veterans passes by a vote of three to two, Supervisors McKinney and Jackson voting no.

The audience CHEERS and claps. Maria embraces Gabriel.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

(hitting the gavel)
Order.

Tess takes Karen's hand, squeezes it - victory. Jackson cups her hand over her mic.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

(at Lowell)
Congratulations, friend.

Lowell gives a slight, respectful bow of his head.

CLERK PENNINGTON

The motion related to the incapacitation of Supervisor Lowell Bachman is now before you.

CHAIRWOMAN JACKSON

Call the roll, Ms. Pennington.

LOWELL

Madam Chair, if I could beg your
indulgence for a moment.

(off Jackson's look)

I promise, no fooling around.

Jackson nods.

LOWELL

I want to apologize to my fellow
Supervisors.

Lowell looks directly at McKinney.

LOWELL

Well, to most of them.

Lowell picks up a bottle of water, takes a large gulp.

LOWELL

My behavior lately can only be
described as unprofessional. I
would like to say that I don't know
what got into me. But I can't. That
would be a lie. The fact of the
matter is that I know exactly what
got into me. I also know this. I
don't want to put the Board through
this distraction anymore. A vote on
this motion is not needed.

(beat)

I am resigning, effective
immediately.

Lowell takes another sip of water - his hand trembles a bit.

LOWELL

Recently, I have been diagnosed
with a medical disorder. A real
one.

INT/EXT. LIMOUSINE - L.A STREET (TRAVELLING) - DAY

A DRIVER at the wheel. Jason in the front passenger seat,
focused on his smart phone - answering e-mails.

Tess and Lowell, looking haggard, frail sit in the back seat.

SUPER: SIX MONTHS LATER

LOWELL

(at Jason)

Don't you have some governing
you're supposed to be doing?

JASON
 (at the Driver)
 Maybe we ought to just drop him off
 at the next corner.

TESS
 Stop it, boys. Don't ruin this.

LOWELL
 I'm just saying --

TESS
 Ssssh!.

INT. KAREN ANDERSON'S SUPERVISOR OFFICE - SAME TIME

Karen at her desk reading briefing material. Trudy enters.

TRUDY
 You need to get going. The Board
 meeting's going to start any
 minute.

KAREN
 Thanks, Trudy.

Karen walks over to the closet. Opens it to remove her
 jacket. She spots Lowell's robe hanging on the hook. She
 touches the sleeve, feels the cloth between her fingers.

TRUDY
 You miss him too?

KAREN
 Yeah. I do.

EXT. L.A CITY STREET - SAME TIME

The limousine pulls up along the curb, greeted by SECURITY
 PERSONNEL.

The limo's trunk pops open. Jason and the Driver exit
 simultaneously. As Jason opens one passenger door, the Driver
 removes a wheelchair from the trunk - rolls it towards Jason.

EXT. BACK OF THE BARRACKS BUILDING - DAY

A large red-bricked structure still under construction.
 Scaffolding on the side of the building.

Jason pushes Lowell, in a wheelchair, towards that structure.
 On the other side of the chair - Tess, gingerly keeping pace
 with a walking cane. Security personnel follow behind.

They reach the front corner of the building - turn, stop and take in the scene:

- An AMERICAN flag perched high atop a flagpole snapping in the breeze.

- A small crowd, various ages, several wearing military caps. At the front - Gabriel and Maria Flores. To the side, several REPORTERS and CAMERAMEN. They all face a large podium with the State of California's seal on it.

- Behind the podium - a banner: "THE JAIME FLORES BARRACKS - DEDICATION CEREMONY."

JASON

Look at what we did, Dad.

LOWELL

We? I'm, surprised the proposition passed at all the way you stumbled into victory.

JASON

Hey, I still won.

LOWELL

Yeah, but by only ten thousand votes. Good thing you had my name going for ya.

Jason places his hand on Lowell's shoulder.

JASON

Yeah - it was.

Jason pushes Lowell's wheelchair forward.

JASON

It's your legacy, Dad.

LOWELL

(points at the Flores)
No, it's theirs. And their son's.

Lowell reaches his back, places it on Jason's.

LOWELL

Thank you.
(a beat)
For being a statesman.

FADE OUT.