

Lancer's Down

by

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OVER CREDITS: The Dallas assassination of President Kennedy can never be viewed in isolation. It must be viewed in the context of the Chicago, LA, and Tampa plots against the president. The ghastly truth is President Kennedy was being methodically stalked in the final weeks of his life.

FADE IN:

INT. OFFICE SOMEWHERE IN D.C. - NOVEMBER 1963 -- NIGHT

It's dark. It is difficult to discern where we are. We hear voices coming toward a closed door. Light spills into the room and two FIGURES, lean, disciplined, enter. We surmise they are a secret outfit within CIA's black-ops.

A light illuminates the barren room with only a conference table. Fingers work a control pad, punching in a sequence of numbers.

Then a whining noise is heard as the floor, with table attached, begins to turn, flipping upside down. The door is suddenly secured by a steel door, locking into place.

We are now looking a large-scale MODEL OF DEALEY PLAZA. Every detail is precise; tress, cars, Hertz clock, faces on the miniature figures. It's eerie.

FADE TO:

INT. WHITE HOUSE BASEMENT - NOVEMBER 23, 1963 - 5:00 AM

A MAN is tossing FILES into an incinerator. Although his face is lit only by flickering flames, we surmise there is much on his mind. We glimpse boxes marked "Chicago/Tampa" in which he removes files.

This is a significant part of the story that we will understand later, with a lot of "if only's" -- if only the Secret Service had caught the men in Tampa and Chicago; if only they had advised other agencies of previous threats against the president, and mainly, if only they would have canceled the "City of Hate" trip.

EXT. CHICAGO TURN PIKE - NOVEMBER 2ND, 1963 -- MORNING

A cold and gray Chicago. Autos zip past. A black sedan with a Kojak light stops a white sedan. It eases stop on the shoulder. Now another black sedan arrives. White House senior SS agent ROY KELLERMAN, forties, gangly, man who moves and speaks slowly, exits his sedan, pistol drawn.

Meanwhile, two Chicago OFFICERS exit their sedan. The men approach a MALE behind the white sedan's wheel. He is instructed to open his trunk, which... reveals a .221 Remington Fire Ball pistol/rifle, and ammo.

CUT TO:

EXT. TAMPA BAY, FLORIDA/APT. COMPLEX - NOVEMBER 17TH -- NIGHT

The parking lot is littered with black sedans. Street lamps cast shadows on Tampa Bay police OFFICERS, and members of President Kennedy's Secret Service detail.

Agent CLINT HILL, forty, tall, laconic as a movie star, looks at Roy, and BILL GREER, mid-fifties; weak and obedient. Clint tosses Bill a .12 gauge pump shotgun.

CLINT

Be ready case anyone runs out.

Officer's footsteps clip-clap over the pavement toward --

INT. OCEAN DRIVE APARTMENTS - STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS

They stalk up a dimly-lit stairwell. Clint and Officer arrive at apartment 345. Clint cocks the hammer of his .38, as the Officer rears back and -- BAM -- kicks open the door.

INT. OCEAN DRIVE APARTMENTS - APARTMENT 345 - CONTINUOUS

The officers flood the two-room flat. Roy spots the SUSPECT dive out the window and bolt down the fire escape. He shouts out the window to Bill --

ROY

He's coming your way!

EXT. OCEAN DRIVE APARTMENTS/ALLEY - NIGHT

Bill jogs after the suspect, who is racing along an alley, scaling a chain-linked fence in one leap. Roy watches, pained, Bill slam into the fence, and collapse. Meanwhile --

INT. OCEAN DRIVE APARTMENTS - APARTMENT 345 - CONTINUOUS

Clint is studying a Czechoslovakian RIFLE and pistol/rifle like we saw in Chicago. Bill has entered the apartment to find Clint, peering out the window...

CLINT

And directly on our route, too.
Could you boys give us a moment?

The officers exit. Roy and Clint drill Bill a cold look, as he plops onto the sofa, rubbing his ankles.

BILL

I know, I'm, a, sorry.

CLINT

We needed Lopez.

BILL

I can't run.

CLINT

Being short-handed and all that's
been unfolding means we need
everybody sharp.

BILL

You may be one less come January.
Chief told me I gotta take two
physical examinations and a
department evaluation if I'm gonna
stay on. Roy, seems they don't
want me around anymore.

ROY

Sure you'll do fine.

BILL

If I lose this job I got nothing.
I can't do nothing but drive.

DAVE POWERS, forty, leprechaun-like, enters. He pads to the sniper's nest, shakes his head.

ROY

Lancer will be all right, Dave.
You know we'll look after him.

DAVE

I do, Roy. I do. Some of these
nut-jobs, though, they scare the
shit out of me. Jack thinks it's
funny. But I lose sleep over it.

CLINT

The boys and I, too.

DAVE

Listen, I spoke to the Chief and mentioned giving you a chance at your own detail.

Roy is caught off guard; cuts a suspicious look to Clint.

CLINT

You're our senior man. Need a chance to prove it.

ROY

Thank you both for putting in --

Suddenly, the door snaps open to AGENT RUFUS YOUNGBLOOD, thirty, big, husky roughneck, and EMORY ROBERTS, forty, glasses.

RUFUS

You playboys let Lopez slip out. Goddamn it, he could be the key to this whole Florida, Chicago plot and now he's running like a jackrabbit in the wind singing to Trafficante.

ROY

Ya sumsofbitches get the hell out!

Roy and Rufus stares contemptuously, then Rufus storms out in a fury, slamming the door that sends everything black --

EXT. WHITE HOUSE LAWN - PICNIC - NOVEMBER 20, 1963 -- DAY

The sun is bright, almost blinding. We see the lawn is littered with FAMILIES. Conversing WIVES care for tots, as a group of 10 MEN, the elite brotherhood of the White House Secret Service, median age forty, enjoy beer and burgers.

WIFE

I want a picture. Get together.

The Lancer detail line up. We'll meet all later, but for now, smiles, big smiles; last happy shot together. Click.

Bill is juggling balls for children, while Roy and Clint hold a jump rope for a little GIRL. Roy throws her into the air. She is laughing and giggling when Bill stalks up.

BILL

I bumped into the Chief. Is it me or is it strange he said our Chicago, Tampa reports should be dictated to Marjorie.

ROY

He thinks it best to keep them and the Milteer report in house with no paper trail.

We catch Clint and a young brunette SECRETARY exchange innocently lustful stares. Clint's smile evaporates as notices his wife, GWEN, late thirties, witness the incident.

ROY

Tasty little Jackie look alike.

CLINT

She is not and there is nothing going on.

BILL

Wallace in uniform said ya dropped off a box of chocolates.

CLINT

Goddamn, is nothing secret? By the way, where is June?

ROY

She's at her mother's. Truth is, she is talking about leaving.

CLINT

Because of the bike?

ROY

Sorta pushed her over the edge since I didn't check with her.

RUFUS

'Lancer' girls up for some ball?

Roy's POV of Rufus encircled by nine AGENTS of Johnson's ('Volunteer') detail. Agent GEORGE HICKEY shouts:

SA HICKEY

You're on!

DAVE

I have ten the Lancer boys beat the heck out of the Volunteer girls.

A football soars through the air. This agent runs, this one catches, a touchdown is scored. A Hail-Mary pass sails toward Roy. He's about to catch it when -- pow -- Rufus nails him. Roy is slammed to the ground. Clint hisses:

CLINT

What's the idea, Rufus?

Volunteer agents encircle the Lancer detail -- there is no love lost, and becomes less as the story unfolds. Rufus is extending his hand to Roy, helping him to his feet.

RUFUS

No hard feelings. Right, Roy? I mean, Roy and me we're both leading the Dallas detail.

SA HICKEY

Hey, I didn't hear. Congrats, Roy!

Off Emory's envious glare thrown at Roy...

EXT. ROY'S HOME -- DUSK

Roy's motorbike zips into the drive of a modest home. He sees JUNE, forty place a suitcase into the sedan's trunk. His DAUGHTERS eight and ten, race into Roy's arms.

JUNE

Girls. Get in the car.

She is now in the driver's seat, and closes the door. Roy leans into the window.

JUNE

I don't want talk. I hoped to be gone before you returned. Be careful tomorrow. I've been hearing bad things about Dallas.

The last rays of the setting sun caress Roy stripped to the core. He sinks, watching June drive away with his girls waving from the rear window.

INT. CLINT'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NOVEMBER 21ST, 1963 -- MORNING

Early morning sun filters in on modest furniture. The hands of a man button a shirt, belt slacks, and knot a tie. He slips into a jacket, pinning a color-coded Secret Service pin to his lapel. Holstering his .38 revolver, Clint steps back to consider his reflection in the mirror.

GWEN (O/S)
Clint, honey. Breakfast.

Something about his wife's voice makes him frown. Then the thought of something, or someone, makes him smile. Sucking in his stomach, Clint pats it, then squats, stretching under the dresser, snatching a pack of cigarettes.

INT. CLINT'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

It is your basic middle-income kitchen. Gwen is wearing an apron over her dress. She is preparing breakfast.

GWEN
Don't you look smart.

CLINT
This jacket look snug?

GWEN
It falls absolutely perfectly. I made your favorite eggs.

CLINT
I don't have an appetite.

GWEN
Are you trying to thin down because the most elegant and gorgeous lady in the world has a thing for my poopsy bear?

CLINT
(covering)
I gotta run. Roy's pulling his first supervisory; if I'm tardy he'll leave me on the tarmac.

Clint stops at the front door where Gwen helps him into his overcoat. She kisses him.

GWEN
Now be careful.

CLINT
I'll see you Sunday.

EXT. CLINT'S HOUSE/PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Clint pauses a moment on the steps. A cold wind whips up dead leaves. He inhales deeply the crisp air of this gorgeous November morning. Meanwhile...

INT. BILL'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM/PORCH -- DAY

Streams of light seep through the venetian blinds onto porcelain figures, and state fair plates. The room holds scratched furniture, tattered carpet. Doorbell chimes. A woman shuffles past. ETHEL opens the door to a MAN.

ETHEL

Bill. Someone's here to see you.

BILL

I told Roy I'd meet him at --

Bill is struggling an arm into his jacket.

ETHEL

-- It's not Roy.

Bill's face pales. He's looking at FBI AGENT SIBERT. Instantly dislikes this guy on sight.

FBI SIBERT

Bill Greer?

BILL

Yes.

FBI SIBERT

I'm agent Sibert with the FBI. You have a moment?

BILL

No, not now, now is not good. Sorry. I'm late for take-off.

FBI SIBERT

When would be a good time?

BILL

What's this about anyhow?

FBI SIBERT

Believe it's best if we have time to properly discuss.

BILL

I'll be back from Texas next week.

FBI SIBERT

Here's my card. Call me.

Bill closes the door. Bludgeoned. He slumps against the frame with droplets of sweat falling onto his shoes, as we jump to --

EXT. FT. WORTH - THE TEXAS HOTEL -- NIGHT

The Texas flag is illuminated by carefully placed spotlights atop the hotel. Inside, President Kennedy sleeps. Roy, Bill, SA Hickey and Clint sweep out the front door with a REPORTER.

BILL

Are you sure they are still serving? I'm really hungry.

ROY

Here, have some more peanuts.

BILL

If I eat anymore of your peanuts I'll turn into a goddamn squirrel. I need some meat and potatoes.

CLINT

It feels different not having Jerry (Behn, head of WHSS) around.

ROY

I guess every man needs a vacation, but, yeah, that he chose now to leave seems a bit out of sorts.

At this moment, Rufus, with eyes like a snake, and another AGENT stalk up.

RUFUS

Well, well there's the Lancer boys. Where you off to so late?

BILL

Whatta ya doing at this hotel?

RUFUS

Roy, we got a big one tomorra. You best get your sleep. Eyes of Texas are upon you and your boys, hate for there to be any slip-ups.

The agents trudge off, as Rufus says to other agent:

RUFUS

Those playboys. If a real emergency develops with Lancer their reflexes won't be in any condition to respond.

Back on our men, striding past Dallas police OFFICERS positioned around the hotel and into --

INT. PAT KIRKWOOD'S CELLAR BAR -- LATE NIGHT

A smoky unassuming lounge dotted by red bulbs. Semi-naked GIRLS stride past agents of President Kennedy's detail packed into a U-shaped booth. We meet PAUL LANDIS, SAM KINNEY, JOHN READY and GLEN BENNET.

SA LANDIS

Hear ol' rascal Nixon and Missus Crawford are over at the Empire.

SA BENNET

That's a piece of pie I'd like to munch.

SA KINNEY

You guys know it's seven hours before we have to clock in.

BOB SCHIEFFER, thirties, night police reporter for the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, joins.

SA KINNEY

Hey, Bob. Fellahs, make some room.

BOB SCHIEFFER

Figured you'd be at the Texas.

CLINT

We left th' firemen to watch Lancer.

BOB SCHIEFFER

Who needs a fresh brew?

SA READY

Got the 8-4 stretch so only H20 for us.

Chuckles. WAITRESS, wearing only underwear, strides past a sign that reads: "Evil Spelled Backwards Is Live." Roy watches Bill shuffle to a pay phone. He fumbles in his pocket for change. His fingers twitch as he dials.

BOB SCHIEFFER

Where's newbie?

SA LANDIS

Rybka? Emory has him on cars.

Bob distributes photo/news CLIPPINGS. ON a photo: President Kennedy's Tampa visit four days prior -- reveals the presidential limo with agents on the rear steps while General McHugh is wedged between agents in the front seat.

BOB SCHIEFFER
Co-worker in Tampa sent them over.

ON Roy watching Bill slide into the booth. His eyes slant into Bill with a hard curiosity. Bill simply jugs his beer.

SA LANDIS
I heard Johnson tried to fire
Duncan because the chopper was
late the other day.

SA READY
And you know what the Boss (JFK)
told him? To lay off the agents.

ROY
Boss told me in Tampa, "You guys
don't want anything to ever
happen to me, because then you'd
have to work for Johnson."

It's 3:30 AM. The agents are tired and tipsy.

SA BENNET
We got lucky in Chicago and Tampa.
Pray the Lord blesses us tomorrow.

SA HICKEY
I'll drink to the Lord blessing us.

EXT. DALLAS - MOTORCADE ROUTE/STREETS - NOV. 22ND - 7:00 AM

It is cloudy and drizzling. Dallas POLICE position "No
Parking" signs along the motorcade's route. Meanwhile...

INT. TEXAS HOTEL - HALLWAY - 8:15 AM -- MORNING

A figure in an overcoat strides purposely toward us. Clint
stops at Suite 850 conversing with a Secret Service AGENT.

CLINT
Morning. Everything well?

SA AGENT
Nice and dry, plan to stay so.

President Kennedy's valet, GEORGE THOMAS, a black older
gentleman, exits.

VALET
Good mornin', Mr. Clint.

CLINT
Morning, George. She in?

VALET
Almost ready. And if I may say,
looks mighty sparklin'. Ya boys
take care of my family now.

CLINT
We'll do our best. Mrs. Kennedy.
It's Clint.

MRS. KENNEDY (O/S)
Oh, do come in.

NOTE: Throughout the story faces of historical figures are not completely visible.

INT. TEXAS HOTEL SUITE - CONTINUOUS

Clint enters. The decor is in keeping, save for fifteen paintings and sculptures from Van Gogh, Monet, Picasso. He spots Mrs. Kennedy reading a NOTE from the president.

CLINT
Good morning.

MRS. KENNEDY (O/S)
Oh. Good morning. Let me guess.

CLINT
Yes, ma'am. President is
requesting your presence on the
mezzanine. Hey. Nice art.

MRS. KENNEDY
I thought last night they were just
good reproductions but I read now
they are from private collections
the hotel organized. Isn't that
sweet?

We hear the murmur of a crowd outside. Clint crosses to the window and pushes back the curtain. Below, people stand in a soft drizzle, as mounted police keep watch.

MRS. KENNEDY (O/S)
Some crowd, huh? Jack was
thrilled when he saw them.

Clint watches Mrs. Kennedy whiz past in a blur of pink, and secretly smiles.

He makes his way into -- BATHROOM discovering President Kennedy's St. Jude and St. Christopher MEDALLIONS, hanging on the shower head.

MRS. KENNEDY (O/S)
I'm beginning to worry about him.

Slipping medallions into his coat, he reenters frame.

CLINT
Yeah, why is that?

MRS. KENNEDY
Take last night for example, he was pacing the floor saying, "You know tonight would have been a hell of a night to assassinate a president." I said, Jack stop talking like that, you know that sort of talk bothers me. Then he said, "Suppose a man had a pistol in a briefcase." He then points a finger like a child shooting. I mean his fixation on that macabre topic.

CLINT
Well, ma'am, you know the President speaks of that subject candidly and at times humorously.

MRS. KENNEDY
And this...

Mrs. Kennedy holds up a book: *I Have a Rendezvous with Death*.

MRS. KENNEDY
I simply do not care for it.

CLINT
The boys and I don't either.

MRS. KENNEDY
The poignancy of men dying young seems to always move him, possibly because of Joe and Kick. Oh, have George keep out his Tweed jacket. Well, I do believe now I am ready.

CLINT
You look mighty pretty, ma'am.
Really nice.

Clint proffers Mrs. Kennedy a Cert. They pad out the door.

MRS. KENNEDY

Thanks a million for making it,
Clint. I always feel so much
more reassured with you around.

Inside he beams -- there's nowhere else he'd rather be.

CLINT

It's my pleasure. I appreciate,
Jackie you requesting me

INT. TEXAS HOTEL - MEZZANINE - MOMENTS LATER

ON a watch face. It reads 9:00. Pulling back is Roy,
standing tall and proud. He gives a crafty wink to Clint.

CLINT

There's the shift leader sporting a
sharp new suit.

ROY

You get Lace delivered to Lancer?

CLINT

Yup. You look as if your head
were about to come to a point.
June forget your pills?

ROY

I did, plus tossed and turned all
damn evening, then woke up to
this thundershower...

CLINT

That could work in our favor.
Keep the beatniks off the street.
Speaking of, anything noteworthy?

ROY

P.R.S. gave us zero. I'm serious
as a heart attack. They gave us a
void 'watch-list.' Not even a
K.K.K. nut-job.

CLINT

Hell, don't make sense.

ROY

Eh, we can only do our best. Need
to run in here grab something for
the girls.

INT. TEXAS HOTEL - GIFT SHOP

The men read the headline of *Dallas Morning News*: "Nixon Predicts J.F.K. May Drop Johnson."

ROY
That will tickle Johnson.

Roy selects two stuffed BEARS, and Certs.

ROY
Wintergreen, right?
(Clint grins)
I am a "Goddamn S.O.B."

As Roy's at the cash register, Clint withdraws a cigarette. He notices something inside the package. He unfolds a NOTE, and reads: "I love my chocolates. See you Tuesday at our spot." Clint blushes. Tucks the note into his pocket.

INT. TEXAS HOTEL - MEZZANINE -- SECONDS LATER

Clint and Roy are looking over the railing at the lobby full of people.

CLINT
I mean we're operating in an area where the threat spectrum has become even more challenging and they present us a goose egg.

ROY
When you're dealing with Ivy League yo-yos not much does. And I double-checked the damn report, too. And get this: when I ran it by Emory he didn't utter a damn peep, just grunted like a stuck sow and barked, "Report can't be wrong." Clint. I wanna share somethin' that stays 'tween you and me. I don't believe in hocus-pocus, but thinking of Tampa and Chicago...

FLASH TO:

PHOTOS OF GILBERT LOPEZ, potential Tampa assassin, and THOMAS ARTHUR VALLEE, Chicago. They portray similar traits to Oswald: anti-Kennedy, fanatical, armed, disgruntled.

BACK TO:

ROY

... Have this, uh, bizarre feeling,
for the Boss's safety today.

CLINT

Felt that yesterday. Know what
they say? Bad things run in
threes.

ROY

We make it through today and
tomorra and be done with Texas
I'll sleep a whole lot easier.

RADIO

Digest. Lancer and Lace are
ready to move.

E/I. DALLAS LOVE FIELD HANGER -- MORNING

We're looking at a bright clear sky of what's going to be a
gorgeous day. We see two bedazzling automobiles the
presidential limousine and follow-up car, Queen Mary. Hickey
and SA Kinney are performing a routine check on the Queen
Mary.

SA KINNEY

Mer was passing the pool the
other day when the Boss climbed
out of the water. There Mer...

Sliding under the Queen Mary, SA Kinney checks for
explosives.

SA KINNEY

... stood with a ten-cent Roy Tan
cigar saying, "Mr. President, I'd
be honored if you would accept a
cigar to celebrate the birth of my
new daughter." Boss says, "I
didn't know you and your wife were
expecting." He congratulates Mer
and takes the stogie. Shows how
the Boss differs from Johnson.

Hickey inspects the SHOTGUN, slides it under the front seat.

SA KINNEY

What about the top?

SA HICKEY

Emory advised Lawson said leave it
off unless "pissing rain."

SA Kinney is struggling to keep his eyes open. Hickey consults the AR-15. He repositions it beside his seat where in a few hours he will seize it.

EXT. DALLAS LOVE FILED - MOTORCADE - 11:00 AM -- MORNING

D.P.D. OFFICERS place some seventeen cars in order. There are OFFICERS on rooftops armed with rifles, while below a small CROWD with flags. SOMEONE points to the sky...

EXT. AIR FORCE ONE (ANGEL) ON APPROACH -- MORNING

We see Air Force One coming into frame. Wheels hit the tarmac -- touchdown. ONLOOKERS wave flags and signs.

INT. AIR FORCE ONE - REAR OF PLANE - 11:40 AM -- MORNING

Clint is watching Mrs. Kennedy place SUNGLASSES into her purse. Roy is consulting his watch. Dave Powers is filming KENNY O'DONNELL, taciturn, Boston Irish; second only to Bobby in the political guardianship, when President Kennedy grabs Dave and says:

PRESIDENT KENNEDY

Dave, put that away for a moment
and tell the Governor your saying.

DAVE

Governor, I always say, "I'm just
a newsboy who met a president."
(to the Kennedys)
You two look like Mr. and Mrs.
America. Don't look too long in
the same direction as it would be
too much for anyone to receive all
that attention at once.

KENNY

Mr. President. Now if anyone
tries to hand you something or
starts to grab you...

PRESIDENT KENNEDY

You worry about me too much,
Kenny. Chief Rowley has never
lost a President. Right, Clint?
Thank you for joining Jackie and
me. You know I sleep a little
better each night knowing you are
around, especially the way you
look after Jackie.

CLINT

It's my pleasure, sir. The way she's always on the move I never have time to be bored.

Clint proffers the president's MEDALLIONS to Mrs. Kennedy.

CLINT

Know he's never without 'em.

MRS. KENNEDY

You are always so thoughtful, Clint. Thank you.

Governor and Mrs. CONNALLY begin inching toward the door.

GOVERNOR CONNALLY

Here we go. Ya'll put on your Texas-sized grins now.

MRS. KENNEDY

I can't stand being around him. He'll talk about himself all day.

Off Clint's grin the airplane's door swings open to a...

EXT. AIR FORCE ONE - REAR RAMP STEPS -- MORNING

CROWD erupts as Mrs. Kennedy leads President Kennedy down the steps.

PRESIDENT KENNEDY

This doesn't look like an 'anti-Kennedy crowd.'

GOVERNOR CONNALLY

I told ya Texas was Kennedy country. There's th' mayor...

At the bottom of the steps await DIGNITARIES; VICE PRESIDENT AND MRS. JOHNSON. Mrs. Kennedy receives red ROSES.

MRS. KENNEDY

Three times I was greeted with bouquets of the yellow roses of Texas. Strange, here they give me red.

DAVE

I'll take them.

Dallas Police Chief CURRY strides up to Roy.

ROY
Any new problems or threats?

CHIEF CURRY
Nope. Gonna be a yellow rose day.

We hear a PRESS GUY complaining to a MAN in a suit.

PRESS GUY
How come our press truck has been pushed to number 11? It's always in front of the presidential limo.

Meanwhile, at the police staging area MOTOR OFFICERS encircle Rufus, and Emory, second in command today behind Roy.

RUFUS
Boys, we have some route and escort modifications. Instead of bracketing the presidential automobile with four motorcycles, today the four assigned to the president's car will remain at rear of the vehicle -- there will be no forward escorts.

EMORY
And you are to stay well in back and not let yourselves get ahead of the president's rear wheels under any circumstances.

Motor SERGEANT ELLIS turns to OFFICER BAKER with a perplexed look. Baker shrugs.

RUFUS
We want the crowds to get an unrestricted view of the President. And ya know, Vice President Johnson doesn't want anyone around him, especially motor officers.

SGT ELLIS
What about the homicide boys? My understanding they'd be behind th' Queen Mary.

RUFUS
Agent Lawson had them stand down.

General MCHUGH, Air Force Military Aide to President Kennedy, strides up. He taps Emory's shoulder.

GEN GODFREY MCHUGH
Emory. I have been advised I am
no longer riding in the limo.
What the hell's that about?

EMORY
That is an affirmative, sir.

GEN GODFREY MCHUGH
I always ride in the presidential
limo between the driver and agent
in charge.

EMORY
HQ has requested few people as
possible ride in the president's
car so that all attention would
be focused on the President to
accentuate full exposure.

GEN GODFREY MCHUGH
I don't like it one bit.

McHugh stomps past Clint, placing his overcoat into the
Queen Mary beside SA Kinney, seated behind the wheel.

CLINT
Ready for the big day?

SA KINNEY
I'd rather be sprawled on my sofa
in my undies with a cold
Milwaukee watching my Fightin'
Irish and napping.

CLINT
I'm struggling to stay awake.

SA KINNEY
I slid under the car earlier and
caught a cat-nap. Ready said
there's no watch-list.

CLINT
And get this, spoke with the
Chicago yesterday and they
discovered a Cuban angle to Valle
that was set to dispatch the Boss
on our way to Soldier Field.

Roy advises President Kennedy, working the rope line:

ROY
Mr. President. We should be
moving into the motorcade.

Roy turns to find Emory, gruff and mean.

EMORY
Your detail ready?

ROY
Emory. Let's not forget this leg
you're my deputy.

EMORY
Motorcade's ready.

I/E. PRESIDENTIAL LIMOUSINE - REAR SEAT - 11:50 AM -- MORNING

President and Mrs. Kennedy step inside the limo. Take
their seats behind Governor and Mrs. Connally.

Clint is at the left rear of the vehicle observing Mrs.
Kennedy slip on SUNGLASSES. He smirks to himself.

Roy slides into the passenger seat. Bill is seated behind
the wheel. Appears drowsy.

ROY
Where's the General?

BILL
Emory stuck him in 12.

ROY
Goddamn guy doesn't know his place.

BILL
General was fuming like a chimney.

ROY
Did you rearrange the Governor?

BILL
Lawson insisted this time Governor
and missus both ride jump seats.

ROY
Ya feeling tip-top?

BILL
Me? Oh, yeah. I, I, uh, couldn't
find the, uh, coffee.

ROY
It'll be a short trip. Everything fine? Looked rather unnerved last night on the phone.

BILL
Oh, yeah, yeah.

Roy offers Bill a bag of peanuts.

BILL
My darn ulcer is actin' up.

ROY
You should get it looked at.

BILL
With what? Little money we got goes to Ethel.

ROY
She see that doctor yet?

BILL
They're saying she may be real sick, Roy. They're saying she may not make it. Think of me losing her and this job. I'm struggling. I tell ya these days...

Dave leans over the limo speaking to Mrs. Kennedy.

DAVE
Be sure to look to your left, wave to the people on your side. If you both wave to the same voter it's a waste. This is more than parade, one year from now these folks will be going to the polls.

EMORY
READY THE MOTORCADE!

Dave positions himself in the Queen Mary beside Kenny.

KENNY
I have a feeling these Texans are going to love Jack.

DAVE
Hope you're right. I've had second thoughts about this trip.
(MORE)

DAVE (CONT'D)

Even asked him before we left Washington if we shouldn't cancel. Stubborn ole Irishman laced into me.

KENNY

He's cross Chicago was called.

DAVE

Look at Lyndon grinning in his sunglasses like everything's fine meanwhile the Rules Committee is roasting his aide.

KENNY

Jack's going to tell him when we get back. He wanted wait until this Texas trip is over.

DAVE

I like the sound of Kennedy/Sanford ticket.

KENNY

I like sending that country bumpkin back to the fields.

EXT. MOTORCADE - LEAVING LOVE FIELD - 11:55 AM -- MORNING

Motorcycle officers parallel the presidential limo. Clint and RYBKA walk alongside the rear, then Clint takes his position on the left forward running board of the Queen Mary for the 7.6-mile journey to catastrophe.

EMORY

Rybka. Secure the aircrafts.

Off Clint's perplexed look at Rybka standing down.

EXT. STREETS - MOTORCADE CEDAR SPRINGS ST. - 12:05 PM -- DAY

The motorcade encounters deafening, boisterous CROWDS.

INT. VICE PRESIDENTIAL CONVERTIBLE SEDAN -- DAY

At the wheel, Texas TROOPER; shotgun, Rufus, while in the rear is LBJ, Mrs. Johnson, and Senator YARBROUGH.

RUFUS

They wanted crowds, we got 'em.

LBJ (O/S)
I told ya Texas would deliver.

EXT. MOTORCADE/PRESIDENTIAL LIMO

Clint leaps from the Queen Mary's running board, and races to the limo's rear STEP. He clutches the hand-hold attached to the trunk. We see a POSTER: "Please, Mr. President stop and shake our hands." School CHILDREN surge onto the street.

ROY/RADIO
This is Digest. 100-X is stopping.

Suddenly, the motorcade grinds to a halt. Crowd swells toward the limo. President Kennedy exits. Agents establish a barrier around him with people right on them.

PRESIDENT KENNEDY
All right, let's travel on.

With President Kennedy in the limo, agents retake their positions. The motorcade continues down the street.

ROY
Look at Ready. He is double-pumping positions.

BILL
Emory probably left Rbyka behind just to spite you.

JAM TO:

E/I. TEXAS SCHOOL BOOK DEPOSITORY - DAY

The 'sniper's nest' looking onto the motorcade. The lead car is making a right off Houston onto Main. The presidential limo, moving shark-like, rounds the corner.

From President Kennedy's POV looming like an eerie beckon is the seven-story, red-bricked Texas School Book Depository. The Hertz clock perched atop: 12:24.

From Ready's POV on the Queen Mary's running board -- a MAN HURDLES off the curb, racing toward the limo, shouting to President Kennedy...

MAN
STOP! I MUST TELL YOU SOMETHING!

Ready reacts. BOLTS for the limo, TACKLING the perp, sending both slamming to the pavement. Meanwhile...

INT. PRESIDENTIAL LIMOUSINE - REAR STEP

Clint's POV of President Kennedy catching Mrs. Kennedy slip on her sunglasses.

PRESIDENT KENNEDY
 Jackie, people have come to see
 you and those mask your face.

Mrs. Kennedy tucks her sunglasses into her purse, as we --

E/I. LEAD CAR - ELM ST. -- DAY

Turns left. TSBD is immediate right. Curry's POV through windshield: Triple Underpass crowded with SPECTATORS.

EXT. PRESIDENTIAL LIMOUSINE - FRONT OF TSBD -- DAY

Onlookers observe Bill having difficulty with the sharp left onto Elm. He almost whacks the curb with the front right tire, stopping briefly the limo.

The homestretch. The agents now ease their guard. Ready briefly closes his eyes.

INT. QUEEN MARY TURNING ONTO ELM ST. - CONTINUOUS

Clint observes Emory jot '12:35 pm President arrives at the Trade Mart' in his shift report. Then Clint's attention finds 'UMBRELLA MAN,' and MAN under the "Entering Thornton Freeway" sign.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL LIMOUSINE - FRONT SEAT -- DAY

Bill is sweating, undone. He is gripping the steering wheel with both hands so forcefully seems it could snap.

ROY
 Unusual route Lawson and them laid
 out. Nice driving. Bill. You
 look peaked.

BILL
 I'm, I'm good. Just ready for this
 to be over with. We almost there?

ROY
 We're close. We are.

INT. VICE PRESIDENTIAL SEDAN - CONTINUOUS

Rufus, with a walkie-talkie to his ear, glances up to the HERTZ clock: 12:30. Behind him, LBJ oddly is already ducking below the window.

EXT. MOTORCADE - ELM ST. - SECONDS FROM TRIPLE UNDERPASS

Roy's POV the grassy area sloped upward to a small 3-foot concrete wall. He's sees a few MEN behind the fence.

Now all hell's about to break loose, so pay attention --

EXT. MOTORCADE - DEALEY PLAZA - 12:30 PM

THE FIRST SHOT CRACKS -

INT. QUEEN MARY - ATTACK

Ready (right running board) glances over his right shoulder to Landis behind him.

SA READY
Was it a firecracker?

SA LANDIS
I don't see any smoke.

EMORY
THAT WAS A RIFLE REPORT!

Clint (left running board) and Hickey (back seat) spin in a microsecond. Instantly. Alert. Tense. Look behind them.

INT. LEAD CAR - ATTACK

Chief Curry snatches the radio mic...

CHIEF CURRY
HQ this is Curry. Get a man on top of that triple underpass and see what's happened up there!

SHERIFF glances through the rear window witnessing a BULLET BOUNCE off the pavement beside the presidential limo.

INT. QUEEN MARY - ATTACK

Bennet, staring at the presidential limo, shouts:

SA BENNET
THE BOSS IS HIT!

Descending madness. ON Dave with a look of horror and shock.

DAVE
OH-GOD! I think the President's
been shot!

SA BENNET
Get a fix on a shooter!

Hickey SNATCHES the AR-15 from under the seat, snaps it to his shoulder, swinging blindly in search of a target --

INT. PRESIDENTIAL LIMOUSINE - ATTACK

Governor Connally SCREAMS as President Kennedy shouts:

PRESIDENT KENNEDY
My God, I'm hit!

Roy. His head snaps around and eyes bulge.

ROY
Get out of here! We've been hit!

Bill looks over his right shoulder; sees the president. Pisses himself. Roy's eyes glaze over. Instead of leaping atop the president, he clutches the radio mic with both hands, calling the lead car --

ROY
Lawson, we're hit! Get us to the
hospital!

INT. VICE PRESIDENTIAL SEDAN - RACING

Rufus, like a flash, catapults over the seat, throwing his body atop LBJ. Shouting to the driver:

ROY
Close it up! Close it up!

INT. QUEEN MARY - ATTACK

Emory's sees Hickey with the AR-15, while on the running board -- Ready's veins are throbbing -- gearing up --

SA READY
I'm gonna go!

Ready LEAPS off the right running board --

EMORY
NEGATIVE, READY! STAY ABOARD!

Alarminglly, Emory waves Ready to remount the running board.

Now Clint is gearing up, when --

SECOND SHOT RINGS -

Clint's POV President Kennedy as his head snaps to the left and back up. He notices SMOKE at the Grassy Knoll.

EXT. V.P.'S SECRET SERVICE FOLLOW-UP CAR - ATTACK

Three cars behind the limo, almost in front of TSBD, Johns BOLTS from his sedan. Gun drawn, he courageously sprints towards the vice president's car -- Meanwhile --

EXT. QUEEN MARY - ATTACK

Ready watches Umbrella Man PUMPING his umbrella open and closed. Seeing President Kennedy hunch forward, and Mrs. Kennedy lean toward him, Clint revs into motion --

CLINT
(to SA Kinney)
I'm hitting it!

READY
Get going!

With eyes ablaze, Emory spins to Clint --

EMORY
HILL! STAY ON BOARD!

But Clint bails. Fearless in the hail of bullets, he BOLTS toward the limo -- VERY FAST -- blur of pavement racing underneath his feet --

EXT. PRESIDENTIAL LIMOUSINE - ATTACK

Clint moving like a freight train. Stretching... almost landing a foot onto rear step when -- suddenly he SLIPS -- STUMBLES. But he doesn't break stride, instead he grabs the hand-hold just in time for --

THIRD, FOURTH, FIFTH SHOTS - THUNDERING - ECHOING

INT. PRESIDENTIAL LIMOUSINE - FRONT SEAT - ATTACK

ON Bill, ashen-faced. He turns over his shoulder, actually witnessing President Kennedy's fatal head shot -- BAM -- His eyes bug out. He heaves. Bile surges in his throat.

ROY

Get out of here! Fast!

Then, for a chaotic second, we notice the limo's BRAKE LIGHTS. The entire motorcade grinds to an uncertain halt.

We're in a momentary stillness, frozen SNAPSHOT allowing us to view: Bill and Roy hunched toward the windshield, shoulders tucked inward. Governor and Mrs. Connally are huddled on the floor. While Mrs. Kennedy, sits upright, cradling her dying husband in her lap.

EVERYTHING IS MOVING VERY FAST NOW --

EXT. PRESIDENTIAL LIMOUSINE - TRUNK LID

Mrs. Kennedy rises to her knees, and leans toward the back of the car for something. Clint is struggling to pull himself onto the moving limo. He grips the hand-hold and pulls himself forward, as Bill floors the limo -- the damn beast explodes forward like a rocket!

ALL WE HEAR IS THE WAIL OF THE QUEEN MARY'S SIREN

As Clint pushes Mrs. Kennedy into her seat, he sees the right rear portion of the President's head missing. With his forehead sweat-beaded, breath rapid, Clint flashes a thumbs down to the Queen Mary. His face crumbles like plaster, covering President and Mrs. Kennedy on the 3.9 mile hell-ride to Parkland.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL LIMOUSINE - SPEEDING

Roy's trembling hand is still clutching the two-way. He is sickly and undone; nailed to his seat.

ROY

Lancer is hit. Lancer is down!

Bill is hyperventilating, screaming:

BILL

HE'S DEAD! HE'S DEAD!

ROY

WATCH THE DAMN ROAD!

Clint suddenly realizes Governor Connally is shot.

CLINT
FASTER TO THE GODDAMN HOSPITAL!

INT. QUEEN MARY - SPEEDING

ON Emory's notebook crumpled on the floor. He turns to his agents, and commands:

EMORY
They got him! You and Bennett take
over Johnson soon as we stop.
Surround and protect the Vice-
President, get him to stay back.

EXT. MOTORCADE - SECONDS AFTER ATTACK - TRIPLE UNDERPASS

We see a group of CHILDREN waving at the motorcade. Three motor jockeys race toward us. ZOOM! Presidential limo; red grill lights flashing, FLAGS taut, PLOWS past --

The Queen Mary -- Hickey, standing with AR-15 while agents on running boards cling for dear life.

WE HEAR A SHRILLING TELEPHONE --

INT. PARKLAND HOSPITAL - NURSES'S STATION

Head nurse, DORIS NELSON, continues writing a report while tucking the receiver under chin.

NURSE NELSON/PHONE
Trauma station, nurse Nelson.

Off her pen, dropping...

EXT. MOTORCADE - STEMMONS FREEWAY - SPEEDING

The presidential limo is on the asses of three motor officers -- motor officers HIT the railroad tracks and go airborne. The limo sails over -- lands with a hard -- ba-boom. It's amazing how Clint manages to hold on.

INT. VICE PRESIDENTIAL SEDAN - RACING

Rufus is sprawled atop LBJ. Mrs. Johnson and Yarbrough are cowered on the floor.

RUFUS

The President has been shot.

LADY BIRD

Oh, no, that can't be!

SECRET SERVICE RADIO

Dagger keep Volunteer covered!

RUFUS

(to THP driver)

Our best protection is to stay
with that Presidential crew.
Have we passed the Trade Mart?

THP DRIVER

Yes. Going to the hospital.

RUFUS

I don't know how serious it is up
in the front car but when we arrive
at the hospital I'd like to get
outta the car and go into the
building and not tie in with other
people, and for you to stay close
to me and other agents.

LBJ

Okay, okay, pardner.

We begin to hear...

INT. PARKLAND HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR

Emergency STAT calls summoning all staff. NURSE spots the
limo through the window.

NURSE

That's them. They're here!

ORDERLY

Get some stretchers out there!

EXT. PARKLAND HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY ENTRANCE 12:35 PM -- DAY

Police cars, sirens WAILING, coverage from every direction.
Lead car and presidential limo fishtailing into the parking
lot --

I/E. PRESIDENTIAL LIMOUSINE - PARKLAND HOSPITAL

Bill jams on the brakes so hard Roy is slammed against the windshield. Bill is bitten with fear. Roy bolts out. It's LOUD. Voices collide in confusion and pandemonium. Roy begins commanding the agents --

ROY

Get us two stretchers on wheels and
set up a tight perimeter!

SA Kinney bails from the Queen Mary, charges for the limo.

ROY

Governor, don't worry everything is
going to be all right.

SA Kinney barks at Roy holding the Governor...

SA KINNEY

Move that son-of-a-bitch!

Emory reaches for Mrs. Kennedy holding President Kennedy.

EMORY

Okay. We need to get up!

Swallowing his venom, Clint grabs Emory's hand. Emory recoils. Gently lifts Mrs. Kennedy's elbow to observe the President. Then he pivots to Roy. Somehow in the silence a decision is made --

EMORY

You stay with the President. I'm
taking some of my detail and
securing Volunteer.

CLINT

Mrs. Kennedy. Jackie. It's Clint.
We really do need to get him out.
You have to let the President go.
These doctors need to take care of
him. Please. Let him go.

Mrs. Kennedy removes her wedding band. She slips it onto President Kennedy's finger.

CLINT

I'll look after him.

Clint sheds his coat, and drapes it over President Kennedy's head; only then does Mrs. Kennedy allow the President's body be removed.

SA Kinney is now wrapping President Kennedy up by his feet when suddenly he becomes sick and ceases assisting.

ROY

Someone else wrap his feet up.

The PRESS swarm the limo like vultures. CECIL STOUGHTON, White House photographer, barks:

CAPTAIN CECIL STOUGHTON

No pictures! Did you hear me?

SOMEONE (O/S)

We should wash the car.

SA KINNEY

No one is to touch this fucker!

Meanwhile, Kenny, Dave, Clint, Roy lift President Kennedy's body onto the stretcher. Landis' POV the limo's rear seat in a web of blood. He retrieves Mrs. Kennedy's sunglasses, and blood-stained note.

The scene is circus-like. Police are everywhere; some with walkie-talkies, others with rifles. Suddenly, the vice president's sedan barrels up, as --

INT. PARKLAND HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY ENTRANCE -- DAY

WE CRASH THROUGH SWINGING DOORS. There is always a commotion around trauma, but this is sheer bedlam.

ROY

WHAT ROOM?!

Dizzying forward momentum as we fly past a NURSE, pointing.

ROY

SOMEONE GET US A PRIEST!

There are officers with drawn guns scurrying along the corridor. President Kennedy's stretcher HIGHBALLS past with Mrs. Kennedy racing alongside. It slams into...

INT. TRAUMA ROOM ONE - CONTINUOUS

Like a thick fog, medical PERSONNEL engulf President Kennedy.

DOCTOR

We have the right occipital-
parietal damaged.

NURSE

I have a faint heartbeat!

DOCTOR (O/S)
Someone start a tracheotomy.

Nurse begins cutting open President Kennedy's shirt noticing a NICK in the tie's knot. Roy trudges to the corner; his muscle tense, his heart slamming around in his chest. He struggles to stop the tears clawing at his eyes.

NURSE
I have what appears to be an entrance wound in the midline, lower portion of the neck, below the Adam's apple.

DOCTOR PERRY
Go ahead and do over it.

Clint in his bloodstained white shirt, barks --

CLINT
Everyone leave the emergency ward except necessary medical staff!

NURSE
All unauthorized people out!!!

Roy's POV doctor astride President Kennedy applying CPR.

CLINT
Where's the nearest telephone?

Nurse Nelson is pointing to a doctor's office off Trauma Room One, as she says to Mrs. Kennedy:

NURSE NELSON
Perhaps you would rather wait out in the hallway...

Bill's a demon-eyed monster in constant vigilance over President Kennedy's body. He growls --

BILL
She's fine! She may stay in here!

Off Roy and Clint's stunned look at Bill. Meanwhile...

EXT. TRAUMA ROOM ONE/CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Dave parks Mrs. Kennedy in a chair beside Kenny.

KENNY
I'm going to locate a phone and notify the attorney general.

DAVE

Yes. That's what we should do.

KENNY

Think you should stay with her.

Dave witnesses commotion in President Kennedy's room, and is brought back to focus by Mrs. Kennedy, pushing on the door to see if she can see or hear something. Suddenly a DOCTOR bursts from the trauma room into the corridor --

DOCTOR

He's still breathing!

MRS. KENNEDY

You mean he may live?

The doctor returns into the trauma room, as Dave sees a blur of MEN spinning toward him. The Trade Mart Secret Service (7) detail have arrived and are escorting U.S. CONGRESSMEN GONZALEZ, BROOKS, THORNBERRY, THOMAS AND CARTER into a holding room. Trailing them, McIntyre, Bennett, Rufus, hustling LBJ and Mrs. Johnson directly into --

INT. PARKLAND HOSPITAL - LBJ'S HOLDING ROOM -- DAY

Agents begin drawing shades, and evacuating PATIENTS.

RUFUS

I'm sorry folks. United States Secret Service. You are going to have to depart this room.

Emory enters, crosses to LBJ and Rufus.

LBJ

... We must look upon this in a sense that it might be a sort "Communist conspiracy" taking place of some nature, and that all security must be taken.

RUFUS

This parallels what we had in Chicago and Tampa.

EMORY

Sir, if I may interject. No one knows whether this is a widespread plot to assassinate the leading men in the United States government. I think we must take every precaution.

(MORE)

EMORY (CONT'D)

I don't believe the President will make it. I haven't been able to get a definite answer but it looks bleak.

RUFUS

Perhaps, sir, you should...

EMORY

We may have to swear you in, sir.

RUFUS

Remember the attempt on the life of the Secretary of State, Seward, at the time of Lincoln's assassination. The only place we can be sure you are safe is the White House. Oh. The girls. Where are they?

MRS. JOHNSON

Lynda is at the University of Texas, Lucy at her high school, in Washington.

RUFUS

Someone get in touch with headquarters have guards assigned to them immediately.

LBJ

Get Thornberry and Brooks in here. And someone go get coffee for me and Lady Bird.

RUFUS

Johns, you on that? Emory, get a report from Roy on Lancer's status and protocol for extracting the President's body if that becomes the case.

LBJ

Tell Roy to let me know of any developments right away.

Emory and Johns exit. ON Rufus, almost weeping, as...

INT. PARKLAND HOSPITAL CORRIDOR/TRAUMA ROOM ONE

We see a doctor racing toward Trauma Room One when Ready, stationed at the door, goes toe-to-toe with an FBI AGENT attempting entry.

SA READY
Step the fuck back!

FBI AGENT
I'm with the FBI.

SA READY
I don't give a goddamn! You get
outta my face!

Ready **SHOVES** the Agent. Fisticuffs ensue. Hickey races over, shoves the Agent to the floor with his AR-15.

DOCTOR (O/S)
You are certain the throat injury
is not an entrance point?

INT. PARKLAND HOSPITAL - DOCTOR'S OFFICE/TRAUMA ROOM ONE

Roy and Clint are observing the activity from within a small office off the trauma room, of doctors and nurses surrounding the dying president.

DOCTOR 2
No. I am not.

NURSE
I've got dilated, fixed pupils.

Roy nods for Clint to close the door. They look at each other something like shock. Roy is humiliated, defeated.

ROY
Ya mind contacting the White
House, get them to keep a
continuous line open? I need a
minute.

Clint tucks the receiver under his chin and dials. We hear Clint ad-libbing as Roy **SLAMS** his fist into a cabinet.

CLINT/PHONE
It's Jerry.

Roy wavers a bit. Takes the receiver from Clint's hand.

ROY/PHONE
Jerry. Listen. We've had an
incident here in Dallas. The
President and Governor have been
shot. Right now we're in the
emergency room of Parkland Memorial
Hospital.

(MORE)

ROY/PHONE (CONT'D)

It was a flurry of shots. I don't know how many shooters. Mark down the time -- 12:38, which would be 1:38 Dallas time. I am sorry -- Washington time. He's on the table now. As soon as I hear something. Clint has switchboard keeping this line open. All right, I'll do it.

Roy cradles the receiver. He stares at Clint with the delusion the crises is containable.

ROY

He's not going to make it is he?

Roy eyes Clint's blood-stained JACKET on the floor.

ROY

Looks like we need to, uh, locate ya a new one. You can't wear that.

Clint picks up the jacket. Removes his cigarettes, discovering the note. He crumples it, and tosses into the rubbish bin.

CLINT

Well, I'll have to, uh, have to get this entire suit cleaned when I get back to Washington that's what. Have it cleaned.

Clint lights a cigarette.

ROY

Where did we go wrong? I mean how'd this happen?

CLINT

There's no playbook for today.

ROY

It was out of our hands. Right? What were we supposed to do? Our detail can't watch open windows.

CLINT

This entire trip was flawed from the get-go. Protocols were ignored -- no watch-list, deleted squad car, changes in motorcade's order, removal of the press, Cecil Stoughton, Dr. Burkley... Hell, McHugh forbidden to ride with you.

(MORE)

CLINT (CONT'D)

No amount of caution or security
could have saved the Boss today;
cards had Dallas his last trip.

ROY

Clint, they killed him, shot right
there in broad daylight like a dog
in the street.

We hold on the agents when -- suddenly -- like that -- the
phone SHRILLS -- startles them. Roy snatches the receiver --

ROY/PHONE

Kellerman. Yes. Doing fine,
sir. Mater of fact, he is. It's
the A.G.

CLINT/PHONE

Hello, sir. Actually. It is
quite serious. No, sir he is
not conscious....

Ready enters.

SA READY

I thought you'd better know
D.P.D. is talkin' 'bout
impounding 100.

ROY

What? No fucking dice.

SA READY

They're claiming evidentiary rule.

ROY

Screw the bastards.

SA READY

I'll let you deliver that message.

ROY

What you do is advise Kinney, I
mean now, to expedite its
departure back to Washington;
he's in charge of the motorcade.
I have no intentions of keeping
the Boss and Mrs. Kennedy here
longer than necessary.

SA READY

The locals are going to have
serious reservations...

ROY

You let me handle the locals. And
tell Bill to pull himself together
and get out watch his vehicle.

Ready exits. Roy is making a quick calculation of evidence
and evacuation.

EXT. PARKLAND HOSPITAL/LIMO - EMERGENCY ENTRANCE -- DAY

Bill. He shuffles out. He is pale and sickly, witnessing
the disorder of a beehive after it's been broken. He sees
people weeping, REPORTERS snapping photos, presidential
limo observed by a throng of black NURSES.

SA Kinney tosses Roy's sack of teddy bears to the ground,
removing the limo's bubble-top from the trunk. He the begins
washing black stains of blood snaking across the rear seat.

Meanwhile, an OFFICER 1 is examining what appears to be a
BULLET HOLE in the windshield.

OFFICER 1

Looks like you could almost fit a
pencil through it.

Ready strides past Bill toward SA Kinney --

SA READY

Roy said ready the motorcade.

SOMEONE

Looky here. There's a bullet
hole in the windshield.

Pouncing toward SOMEONE, Bill squares off.

BILL

It's a 'fragment' not a hole.
Now you morons get away from the
car or I'll arrest your beatnik
asses!

SOMEONE 1

Take a good look at history boys.
That's the carriage that swept our
president straight into the
afterlife.

SA KINNEY

Can some of you officers give us a
motor escort for this and 679 back
to Love Field?

SGT ELLIS

Let us know and we'll facilitate.
There's your priest.

Bill blinks through his sweat at FATHER HUBER and others.

SA KINNEY

Father Huber? Right here.
(to Ready)
Can you see they reach the
President? And if you see Bill,
tell him to get his ass out --

SA Kinney's sentence breaks off. He spots Bill staring at the limo's rear seat, as we follow...

INT. PARKLAND HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - SECONDS LATER

The priests thread through a host of people cramming the corridor. Roy languishes at the nurse's station doing paper work. When like a blur, Emory passes. Roy spins --

ROY

Emory. Hey. Hold up.

With eyes like a snake, Emory grunts, and stops.

ROY

I've been lookin' for you.

EMORY

I'm busy looking for O'Donnell.

ROY

What's the big idea...?

A NURSE strides up to Roy.

NURSE

Excuse me, sir. We need the
President's blood type --

EMORY

-- It's the same as mine -- blood
group O Rh Pos. Here's how
things are going to --

ROY

-- I am Acting Agent In Charge --

EMORY

-- Now's not the time for a third-
stringer to be self-indulgent --

ROY

-- Don't you hang this on me --

EMORY

-- We don't know whether this is a plot -- maybe they're after Johnson, maybe not -- we don't know. But for now I say we secure him on the plane and back to the White House.

ROY

And I'm directing you to stand fast until I assess all avenues.

Roy looks coldly at Emory, who returns a smug glare. Bill bolts from Trauma Room One, shouting...

BILL

Roy!!! Roy!

Roy pivots, SMASHING into a nurse --

ROY

Goddamn it!

INT. PARKLAND HOSPITAL - TRAUMA ROOM ONE - CONTINUOUS

The chaotic frenzy has eased. Things are solemn. Someone snuffles, watching a nurse cover President Kennedy's body with a sheet. Bill slouches down the wall. A doctor nods, affirming Roy's greatest fear. Roy consults his watch, and leans into...

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - TRAUMA ROOM ONE

Where Clint is on the phone.

CLINT/PHONE

I think it's safe to cancel all the President's future stops.

ROY

Clint. Tell Jerry that this is not for release and not official, but, uh... The man is dead.

CLINT/PHONE

Did you hear? I'll call ya back.

ON Clint. He replaces the receiver in an emotional beat, shaking his head gravely at Kenny.

KENNY

I can't believe it. I can't believe it. He's really gone. Roy, Clint, he's not, is he? Gone?

Kenny deposits himself into a chair, and weeps. Clint proffers a handkerchief; the enormity of the day, setting. Roy chokes on his words.

ROY

Let's try to keep it together 'till we get the Boss home.

CLINT

We should, uh, think how's the best way to handle this.

ROY

Situation needs be to dry-cleaned. Extraction is the initial step.

CLINT

What are the protocol guidelines?

ROY

There's none.

KENNY

Oh, Clint can you contact Angel and advise no press be admitted? We should cancel Jack's --

CLINT

I already took care of it.

ROY

We can't expect Mrs. Kennedy to stay here while the state performs an autopsy. That could be days.

KENNY

Considering we're operating off protocol...

ROY

I don't want these local boys probing around on our boss. He's none of their concern. The President belongs home.

KENNY

Will you obtain a casket?

CLINT

Let me contact the attorney general
and I'll get on it. What about
Johnson?

ROY

I say he holds here until we're
airborne. With the artillery at
this locale threat level is nill.

CLINT

May have difficulty selling that.

KENNY

Roy, Dave and I want you. You're
in charge. Take us home.

ROY

You can count on me.

Roy struggles for his game face. Clint and Kenny exit. Roy
picks up the phone receiver. He musters the courage, then
spins the dialing wheel. It rings.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Hello.

ROY/PHONE

Dorothy. It's Roy.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Oh, hello, Roy.

ROY/PHONE

Is, a, is June there?

WOMAN'S VOICE

No, no she is not. She went to the
market.

ROY/PHONE

Okay then. When she comes back
just let her know I called. I
wanted to hear, hear her voice, and
tell her I love her.

WOMAN'S VOICE

That's sweet. I certainly will.

ROY/PHONE

You might want to turn on the news.

INT. PARKLAND HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR -- LATE MORNING

Leather shoes glide over tiled floors. We pan up to Bill pacing like a mad man. He strides to Mrs. Kennedy, who looks up to Bill dropping to his knees.

BILL

Oh, Mrs. Kennedy, oh my God! Oh, my God! I didn't mean to do it, I didn't hear, I should have swerved the car, I couldn't help it!

We sweep with Dave and Mrs. Kennedy into --

INT. TRAUMA ROOM ONE - 12:57 PM

Father Huber enters to Mrs. Kennedy and doctors, staring at President Kennedy. He performs the Last Rites. Roy and Emory look on. A NURSE folds and places President Kennedy's clothing, wallet and WATCH into a shopping SACK. She is handing it to Clint, when Bill snatches it.

BILL

I'll look after it.

DR. CLARK

The time of death is 1:00.

EMORY

All right. We need --

ROY

-- Everyone to clear the room.

Roy's jaw tightens. He holds Emory in his gaze. Emory is about to speak when Clint steps up, saying bluntly:

CLINT

Emory. Roy's got the helm on this. Dave and Kenny's orders. Let him do his job. Today's hard enough.

A tense moment passes before Emory scoffs, and exits --

CUT TO:

MALCOLM KILDUFF, DEPUTY PRESS SECRETARY, moves deliberately down the hospital hall. He slows as he nears a doorway. He hesitates before crossing the threshold into...

INT. PARKLAND HOSPITAL - LBJ'S HOLDING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Malcolm discovers Rufus huddled around LBJ. Mrs. Johnson and Taylor, sip coffee in the corner.

MALCOLM KILDUFF

Ah... Mr. President.

Mrs. Johnson immediately SHRIEKS. Malcolm's voice drops as the devastation plays on his face.

MALCOLM KILDUFF

Mr. Kennedy has passed.

RUFUS

For God's sake when does this end?!

LBJ

Someone make a note of the time.
A'right. What's our next step?

Emory enters the room.

MALCOLM KILDUFF

Considering most of the Cabinet
is airborne en route to Tokyo.
I'd suggest we try to contact
Salinger.

EMORY

I have already made arrangements
with Dallas to have unmarked
police cars for the presidential
party to return to Love Field.

LBJ

Well, and how about Mrs. Kennedy?

EMORY

When I spoke with O'Donnell he
advised Mrs. Kennedy would not
leave the hospital without the
President's body. He suggested
you go to the plane and they will
follow aboard the other plane.

LBJ

I don't wanna go off and leave
Mrs. Kennedy in such a state.
We'll go but will and wait until
Mrs. Kennedy and the body are out
at Love Field.

MALCOLM KILDUFF

Sir, do you think it's all right to announce the President's...?

LBJ

No, Mac, I think we better wait a few minutes. I think I'd better get outta here and back to the plane before you announce it.

MALCOLM KILDUFF

Then I'll hold off until I receive confirmation from the agents you are safe and secure.

RUFUS

I've ordered the airport secured and planes prepared for takeoff.

MALCOLM KILDUFF

I better get back... uh, I'll track down the items you requested, sir.

LBJ

Good job, Mac.

Malcolm exits. Emory and Rufus congeal around the president-in-waiting.

RUFUS

Sir, we feel the bigger concern is Kenny; he still outranks everyone but you.

LBJ

Then cut him off.

RUFUS

And Roy?

LBJ

He is about as loyal a man as you could find, but dumb as an ox.

EMORY

Clint's a good one.

LBJ

His place is saddled with Jackie.

RUFUS

(re; Emory)

This is who we want as our ally.

LBJ
Suits me, pardner.

Patting Emory's shoulder.

RUFUS
Sir, when we go I'd prefer you stay below window level, close with me. I'm going to stick to ya like glue. I'd also prefer if Mrs. Johnson go in another car accompanied by Emory.

LBJ
Whatever you think but let's get this done.

EXT. CORRIDOR/TRAUMA ROOM ONE - 1:25 PM

We see Justice of the Peace, THERON WARD, being escorted by Roy. They stop at the door. Ward attempts to enter the room but Roy stops him.

ROY
Here's fine, judge.

Judge views President Kennedy's body from the doorway.

ROY
I'd like to request you go ahead and release the President into Secret Service custody.

JUDGE WARD
I'm afraid it's not that simple. I will have to first consult with Dallas District Attorney Wade before I can do any such thing.

ROY
You got fifteen minutes.

End of discussion. Judge strides off. Roy enters the room. He stares at President Kennedy, overhearing two DOCTORS; one is DOCTOR PERRY...

DOCTOR PERRY
I noted that he was in critical condition from a wound of the neck, which initially I believed was an entrance point, and of the head.

DOCTOR CLARKE

Could that be done by one shot?

DOCTOR PERRY

One missile appeared to be coming at him. The wound seemed to be an entrance wound in front of the throat.

DOCTOR CLARKE

Have you heard who's performing the autopsy?

We see though the door's window Clint about to enter when he catches agents, led by Rufus and Emory, ushering LBJ into --

EXT. PARKLAND HOSPITAL - GARAGE - 1:26 PM

Waiting unmarked station wagon, driven by Chief Curry.

INT. UNMARKED POLICE STATION WAGON - CONTINUOUS

LBJ crouches in the rear seat. Also in the auto: Congressman Thornberry, Brooks and Bennett. Rufus slides into the passenger seat.

As the station wagon pulls away, Congressman Thomas waves after the car. He leaps into the front seat. Station wagon speeds off on a bright, warm, autumn day. Meanwhile...

INT. TRAUMA ROOM ONE - 1:30 PM

Roy is leaning on the counter fighting not to completely fall apart. Clint enters to a NURSE cleaning up.

CLINT

Hope the coffee soothes Bill's nerves; looks like he could fall apart any moment.

ROY

Sorry. What was that?

CLINT

(to the nurse)
You mind leaving us?

Roy, in the midst of his own regret, looms over the president's body, mumbling...

ROY

Your dead, dead like an
extinguished dream, and I...
(looks at Clint)
...I failed to stop 'em taking him.

CLINT

It's a great blow to your heart, I
know but right now we can't chew on
the past we have cleaning up to do.

ROY

My stomach is doing cartwheels.

CLINT

Can I grab you a sandwich?

ROY

I can't eat nothing.

CLINT

Like a Cert?

The warm lines around Roy's face and mouth deepen. He
takes a Cert.

ROY

I feel like a piñata with my... Oh,
I was able to get this for you.

Proffering Clint a suit JACKET. Clint slips into the jacket.

ROY

One of the quacks said to keep
it. Might be a little big.

CLINT

Actually, I think it's fine. Not
too snug. I hate when they're
snug. I need some wiggle room.

ROY

You did an outstanding job out
there today. While you'll be
getting your own detail I'll
probably be fired, or worse,
demoted to Fraud.

CLINT

Listen, Roy --

ROY

It don't make any sense. My
mind... It was elsewhere and --

CLINT

All of us have --

ROY

-- June left. She took the girls. Watching them leave. I cried myself to sleep that night in the girls' room.

CLINT

Geeze. Roy. I'm terribly sorry.

ROY

It's my fault. I'm never there, and when I am I'm too tired to take her out on a proper date or buy her things a woman needs then I buy a motorscotter. Seems minor in comparison to what we witnesses but, I had to tell somebody.

CLINT

When we get back how about you and I take a few days to go fishing that little spot outside the city.

ROY

Where Bill fell off the dock.

CLINT

Looked like a swamp rat.

The men laugh, letting off some tension.

ROY

I'd like that. I'll need that.

CLINT

There's an Bureau fella out there looking to speak with you. I advised him you were tied up.

Roy's face contorts. He bites his lower lip.

CLINT

I wouldn't worry too much. Operational procedure.

ROY

Not solving anything standing here. Best bring Emory up to speed on --

CLINT

-- Roy. He, uh, and Rufus are en route to Love Field with Volunteer.

Roy is floored. He can't believe his ears.

ROY

That man is out of his mind.

(then;)

Nurse. Nurse!

Nurse sweeps into the room. Roy with a decisive, undefeated voice instructs:

ROY

I need ya to prepare the President be moved.

NURSE

Ah, one moment, sir.

ROY

He had no authorization...

CLINT

Situation's got us all unsound --

Doctor breezes into the room.

DOCTOR

Pardon me. I understand you would like us to prepare the President for removal from the hospital.

ROY

Forthwith.

DOCTOR

Unfortunately, we have yet received authorization to move the remains...

ROY

I'm authorizing it.

DOCTOR

With all due respect, the state authorities will need to perform an autopsy, which is state law in the state of Texas before the body leaves this hospital.

ROY
Never the mind the legal matter.
You personally prepare my
President.

The doctor exits, as Kenny enters.

CLINT
I'm going to grab some fresh air.

ROY
How's Lace holdin' up?

KENNY
Like an oak.

ROY
Best piece of news I've heard.

KENNY
Anyway, I wanted to pass on Bobby
ordered the Oval Office and
National Security Council files
be packed. They will be shipped
to a sealed office tonight.

ROY
We're in this together. Anything
my men can do, don't hesitate.

KENNY
We've seen a lot in the last two
years, haven't we?

ROY
Rufus speak to ya 'bout moving
Volunteer?

KENNY
Earlier, yes, but not since we
spoke. Why?

Clint pokes his head through the door --

CLINT
Kenny. Mac is about to make the
official announcement.

KENNY
Be right there.

ROY
They are en route to Love Field.

KENNY

What? Now? Those Goddamn bumbkins and their cheap theatrics. I didn't authorize any movement. I would have ran it by you first, Roy.

ROY

You seen Bill?

KENNY

He's not good. He's this close to buckling. Tell you, Roy, I'm concerned.

ROY

'Tween us, he found out Ethel as stomach cancer. Days are numbered.

Right then agents wheel a bronze CASKET into the room. Doctors and nurses wrap President Kennedy's body in white sheets, as we move out to...

INT. PARKLAND HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR -- DAY

Bill is struggling to drink his coffee. His hands tremble. He's pacing in the corner when an FBI AGENT approaches.

FBI AGENT

Excuse me. Agent William Greer?

Bill's face drains. He stares defiantly.

FBI AGENT

You are Bill Greer, correct? I'm with the Dallas FBI office. I was wondering if you had a moment --

Right then, Clint crashes through the trauma room's doors toward awaiting AGENTS.

CLINT

Roy's ready to move. Clear and secure all corridors en route to the emergency entrance. Bill, drop that coffee, we're rolling.

FBI AGENT

It's imperative I speak to you and Agent Roy Kellerman. I'll be waiting in the cafeteria.

As the FBI Agent strides off... The trauma room doors open to Clint, Dave and Kinney pushing the casket forward. Bill falls into step beside Mrs. Kennedy and Admiral Burkely.

Roy heads the entourage down the corridor where they are confronted by Dr. EARL ROSE.

DR. ROSE

Look, I'm sorry. I simply cannot allow you to remove the body from this hospital.

ROY

My name is Roy Kellerman. I am Special Agent In Charge of the White House detail of the Secret Service. This is the body of the President of the United States and we are taking him with us back to Washington.

There is a tense pause. Dave is growing impatient. The agents are sweating.

DR. ROSE

As Chief Forensic Pathologist of this hospital I say again; you are not taking the body anywhere. That is not the way things are. When a homicide occurs in the state of Texas, like this one, a required autopsy is performed.

A D.P.D. OFFICER sidles Dr. Rose.

POLICE OFFICER

Folks, if these people say you can't take the body then you cannot remove the body.

BILL

GODDAMMIT! Get your ass out of the way before you get hurt!

ROY

The family should not have to go through this.

DR. ROSE

My sympathies to the family but those are procedures and we are going to enforce that law. You cannot lose chain of evidence.

NURSE attempts to escort Mrs. Kennedy away but ADMIRAL GEORGE BURKLEY, White House Medical Officer, pulls her back.

DR. ROSE

The body stays.

ROY

You are going to have to come up with something a little stronger than the law won't allow me to take my friend's body.

Roy drapes his jacket, and grips the handle of his pistol. His men follow suit by draping their coattails behind their holstered pistols. But Bill, he unsnaps the leather strap and grips his handle. His nostrils flare. Manic. His fingers twitching like he may draw and fire any moment.

ROY

He's the President and he is going with us.

The police officer advances but Clint halts him with --

CLINT

This is the deceased President of the United States; you can have sympathy and waive your laws.

Mrs. Kennedy slips her hand around Clint's arm, who squeezes her hand. And as if the chaos around Roy didn't exist, he leads the entourage and casket out the doors...

EXT. PARKLAND HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY ENTRANCE - 2:04 PM

ON the casket being slid into the HEARSE. Mrs. Kennedy, Admiral Burkley and Kenny ride in back with the casket.

INT. HEARSE - CONTINUOUS

AGENT is behind the wheel. Roy is in the passenger seat, cradling the radio.

ROY

Angel this is Digest. We are en route from Parkland with Lancer and Lace. Advise D.P.D. to permit ambulance and follow-up car through the fence only. And Tiger to have Angel ready for takeoff at once we're on board.

As the hearse is about to pull away, a MAN taps on the passenger's window. Roy rolls it down.

MAN

I will meet you at the mortuary.

ROY

Yes, sir. See you there.

EXT. AIR FORCE ONE - LOVE FIELD - LBJ'S ENTOURAGE -- DAY

The station wagon roars into view, and shutters to a halt. Agents establish security around the aircraft with long rifles, as Rufus and LBJ bolt up the steps and into --

INT. AIR FORCE ONE - CONTINUOUS

Where two STEWARDS greet them.

LBJ

Tell Swindal the aircraft will not leave without Kennedy's body.

RUFUS

Start pulling down shades.

LBJ

I need a phone with a secure line. Then get me Bobby Kennedy.

Rufus and LBJ glide down the aisles, and into --

COMMUNICATION 'SHACK' ROOM

LBJ plops in a chair with his back toward us, as Rufus makes a call. Someone answers. Rufus says 'Vice President Johnson calling.' Ad-libs. He listens, then hangs up.

LBJ

I wanted to speak to Bobby.

RUFUS

They advised Mr. Kennedy was in no state to really assess these constitutional matters and stated his assistant, Nick Katzenbach, said, "The President can do whatever the president wants to."

LBJ

Well, sounds like I better get
freshened up to be sworn in as
president.

Rufus escorts LBJ down the plane, who enters the
president's

PRIVATE BEDROOM

He disappears into the lavatory, as Rufus takes this moment
to exhale, and wipe sweat beads from his forehead. He
notices the Texas newspapers JFK read on the floor.

CUT TO:

EXT. LOVE FIELD - AIR TOWER -- DAY

AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER slowly rises, cranes forward. His
POV the hearse returning President Kennedy to where he
greeted fans hours earlier. He bows his head in respect.

E/I. AIR FORCE ONE - 2:13 PM

The hearse eases to a stop. Agents, police and military
PERSONAL converge. A grim-faced Roy locates Clint.

ROY

You, Landis, Bill, O'Leary and
myself are staying with Lancer
and Lace. Rufus's taking Stout's
boys to Volunteer.

Clint, seeing Emory has officially overtaken command, offers
Roy a reassuring arm. We pan faces of the Secret Service
detail, ashen-faced puppets in gray scared with guilt.

ON Bill shuffling around; a pathetic creature clutching the
paper sack containing the President's clothes.

ROY

Okay. Let's, uh... Place the
President aboard.

WE ARE NOW LOOKING DOWN, WATCHING FROM THE PLANE DOOR --

The agents hastily load President Kennedy's casket up the
steps. It seems at moments it might almost tumble.

Now the casket is placed aboard...

INT. AIR FORCE ONE - CONTINUOUS

The aft door eases closed and it's dark a moment, then someone opens a blind. Light floods Clint leaning over Mrs. Kennedy seated by the widow. He eyes PHOTOGRAPHER on the tarmac.

CLINT

Look at that? I'll go get that sonofabitch!

Gently squeezing his arm.

MRS. KENNEDY

No, Clint. I want them to see what they have done.

CLINT

Fore I forget. Landis got these from the car.

Clint proffers the sunglasses and note. Mrs. Kennedy allows Clint to read the note, which states: the president apologies for not being with Jackie on their tenth anniversary nor her miscarriage, and that he promises to end his affair with Mary Meyer upon their return.

Clint struggles to contain his emotions, as Kenny strides past with General McHugh.

KENNY

General, if we have clearance have the Colonel take off.

GEN GODFREY MCHUGH

Affirmative.

INT. AIR FORCE ONE - REAR COMPARTMENT - 2:18 PM

We're just behind the private bedroom, in front of a bank of bathrooms. The casket is situated in rear of the aircraft. The corridor outside the bedroom is only a few feet from, and in plain sight of the casket.

Kenny is crouching over the casket when he looks up to see LBJ and Mrs. Johnson coming down the aisle from the private stateroom. He shakes his head in disgust.

Dave eyes the Johnsons moving to the breakfast nook where Mrs. Kennedy looks up from reverie, almost shocked.

KENNY

Their temerity. Who invited them aboard, anyway? They have their own plane.

DAVE

I never said anything, nor insinuated. When I spoke to Emory at the hospital there was no mention of which of the two planes he should use, nor any mention Johnson was considering waiting for Jackie and the President to be on the same plane with him before he left Dallas.

KENNY

This is Emory and Rufus's work.

DAVE

Seems odd seeing them onboard.

KENNY

Vile and vicious SOB got what he's always wanted. But we're going to take it back in '68.

Dave overhears LBJ telling a congressman --

LBJ

Well, it's all right. Bobby says I have to be sworn in now. This was actually Bobby Kennedy's idea not mine. Emory.

Emory glides past Kenny and leans into LBJ...

LBJ

I'm expecting Judge Hughes any moment. Make sure she can get through th' security lines.

DAVE

Did you hear that? He's going to be sworn in right now.

INT. AIR FORCE ONE - PRIVATE BEDROOM -- FIVE MINUTES LATER

LBJ is sprawled on the bed making certain MARIE FEHMER, his secretary, has the oath of office typewritten correctly.

REVERSE TO

Mrs. Kennedy. She is looming in the doorway observing LBJ, who is reclined on the bed, dictating to Marie. He spots Mrs. Kennedy and is up like a shot.

LBJ

Miss Fehmer, uh, that will be all. My apologizes. I should check on our guest up front. Pardon me.

LBJ slides past Mrs. Kennedy. Meanwhile --

INT. AIR FORCE ONE - COCKPIT -- DAY

Colonel Swindal is performing his pre-flight check when Malcolm enters --

MALCOLM KILDUFF

Colonel, can you shut down those engines, please?

Hearing the engines being killed, General McHugh, enters.

GEN GODFREY MCHUGH

What's the hold up? The body's aboard. We're ready for lift off.

COLONEL SWINDAL

Sorry, sir. Mac said stand fast.

GEN GODFREY MCHUGH

Mac's not in charge of this bird, now is he?

MALCOLM KILDUFF

General, the President wants to hold off until the swearing in.

GEN GODFREY MCHUGH

Colonel, may I remind you, as Brigadier General I out rank you.

COLONEL SWINDAL

I am well aware, sir.

GEN GODFREY MCHUGH

Good. Now crank up this bird.

COLONEL SWINDAL

General, with all due respect, today's been difficult on all us...

(MORE)

COLONEL SWINDAL (CONT'D)

I'd like to honor the new president's request, if don't mind. Sir.

SOMEONE

It's so hot. I'm burning up.

INT. AIR FORCE ONE - PRESIDENTIAL CONFERENCE ROOM -- DAY

It is sweltering. There are almost two-dozen people packed around LBJ and Mrs. Johnson.

Roy spots Rufus. We feel the growing intensity as he confronts him.

ROY

Rufus. You, Emory and I will have a talk when we get back about your breach of chain-of-command. Now who are all these people? Why are they here?

RUFUS

We're working on a manifest.

ROY

That should have been done before any of these people set foot on the steps.

RUFUS

Case you haven't noticed there's a lot unfolding.

ROY

My men will take over and --

RUFUS

-- Roy. You don't got the reins anymore. We do --

Roy explodes. He grabs Rufus by the collar. Shoves him against the wall. Clint scrambles to pull Roy off. Roy releases Rufus, who simply smirks. Kenny pads to Clint.

RUFUS

It's a few days before I'm SAIC and when that happens you bet your balls you're working Fraud.

KENNY

Clint, will you advise the Colonel make sure they don't let anybody board except the judge, under any circumstances? Isn't that Chief Curry? Seems he should be interrogating that Oswald fella...

CLINT

My thoughts exactly.

Clint strides off. Roy looks on as an AIDE nudges Kenny.

AIDE

That who they're calling a hero?

KENNY

He is. Listen, when you have moment could you ascertain everything on the Lincoln assassination and funeral protocol? We'd like to start making the arrangements.

AIDE

Sure thing, Kenny. Oh, Roy, I was looking for you. We received a call from the FBI. They will meet you at the hospital. Let me know if you need anything.

Off Roy dropping his head, contrite, struggling.

INT. AIR FORCE ONE - SWEARING IN - CONF. ROOM - 2:38 PM

The overcrowded room is suffocating. People fan themselves. LBJ is looking for someone.

LBJ

Now we need Mrs. Kennedy. Someone find her, right away.

MRS. KENNEDY

Here I am.

Mrs. Kennedy takes her place next to LBJ.

SOMEONE

We need a Bible. Does anyone have a Bible?

DAVE

Oh, uh, one moment, I'll get one.

Dave returns with what he believes is a Bible, but it is actually President Kennedy's Book of Common Prayer.

Clint observes Roy assist Cecil Stoughton, White House photographer, struggling to fit everyone into the official photograph, while Mac crouches with a microphone. He also notices Mrs. Kennedy's uncomfotableness and misery.

CLINT

You should get in. That's history being made.

COLONEL SWINDAL

My president is back there in that box.

CLINT

Going to be tough adjusting.

COLONEL SWINDAL

Clint, I heard what you did. It was extremely admirable.

CLINT

I was merely performing my duty.

COLONEL SWINDAL

From what I heard he was slaughtered like a sacrificial lamb.

CLINT

He was executed with absolutely no respect.

COLONEL SWINDAL

Folks are calling you a hero.

CLINT

If I were we'd be hearing a man with a Boston accent tell Johnson to get his fat ass off his plane.

Roy watches Judge SARAH HUGHES administer the 36-word oath in 28 seconds. He sighs as LBJ becomes officially the President of the United States.

Men nudge past Roy to shake hands with the new President. He smirks, catching Mrs. Johnson slip the Prayer Book into her handbag as a memento.

LBJ

Now let's get on to Washington.

EXT. AIR FORCE ONE DEPARTS - 2:47 PM

The engines roar to life. The big bird barrels down the runway escorted by police. The plane glides into the blue.

FADE TO:

EXT. DALLAS FREEWAY - RETURN OF CARS - AFTERNOON

The sky glaring indigo. Motorist stop their cars and stare, as motor officers escort the presidential limousine and Queen Mary past.

INT. QUEEN MARY - EN ROUTE TO LOVE FIELD -- AFTERNOON

Behind the wheel, SA Kinney; the shock of the day setting.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL LIMOUSINE -- AFTERNOON

At the wheel, Hickey leans forward and rubs his hand over the spider-webbed CRACK in the windshield.

EXT. C-130 TRANSPORT PLANE/LOVE FIELD -- AFTERNOON

Twenty minutes later. The presidential limousine and Queen Mary disappear inside the plane, as we dissolve to...

INT. AIR FORCE ONE - REAR COMPARTMENT - 4:00

A bottle of J&B scotch. Its contents poured into a glass emblazoned with the Presidential Seal. The glass is placed on a tray with other glasses and carried by the Steward we saw earlier. He carries the tray down the corridor into the rear compartment where Kenny removes two.

Dave, Kenny and Mrs. Kennedy keep vigil beside the casket, while Roy, Clint, Bill, Landis are in adjacent seats.

Kenny offers Mrs. Kennedy a glass of Scotch. She refuses.

KENNY

Jackie. I think it will help.

MRS. KENNEDY

Oh. It tastes like creosote.

Mrs. Kennedy notices BLOOD on Dave's jacket.

MRS. KENNEDY

Oh, Dave my mind is racing. I would like an Irish band at the funeral. Will you check that? Perhaps perform the song the choir sang we first arrived in Ireland. Do you recall the name?

BILL

"The Boys of Wexford."

MRS. KENNEDY

Thank you, Agent Greer.

DAVE

I have a book of Irish poems at home which Jack loved. I'll find an appropriate one.

MRS. KENNEDY

I really did enjoy the one which was read at John's christening.

BILL

"When the storms break for him, may the trees shake for him, their blossoms down; and in the night that he is troubled, may a friend wake for him, so that his time be doubled; and at the end of all loving and love, may the man above give him a crown." I'm not one to remember things like that the reason that stuck with me is the Boss' face when it was read... he looked at you and John-John and Caroline and it was a look that he was the happiest, proudest man on the earth and I thought I wished I could ever know that feeling.

Bill's emotional tidal wave hits Roy and Clint, speaking in a far corner. Clint is studying Mrs. Kennedy. Roy's voice sounds hoarse from stress and shouting.

ROY

She's an incredible woman. Braver than me.

CLINT

I've always admired her but today, well, she's a pillar of fortitude.

ROY

Anyway, what I was saying is that I realize I'm no investigator but I wanna look into it see if I can't put some pieces together to make sense of today.

CLINT

I'm not certain if we ever will.

ROY

I'm going to make it my business to scour all those Tampa, Chicago files to find some answers. On the way over I was thinking of Milteer. Those surveillance recordings. You hear 'em? A few weeks ago I labeled him a nut-job. Clint, he tells Willie Somersett a plot 'was in the working,' that the president could be killed 'from an office building with a high-powered rifle.' If those come out in an investigation... we're sitting on a powder-keg of responsibility. Then you add elements of Chicago and Tampa. And from the sound of this Oswald he shares similarities with Vallee and Lopez -- doesn't add up.

CLINT

No, it doesn't. Perhaps all three cities had a man, to, uh, take the fall. I'm confident, like you, it wasn't one nut-job who orchestrated this.

FLASH TO:

INT. OFFICE SOMEWHERE IN D.C. -- NIGHT

We're looking again at the large-scale model of Dealey Plaza. The streets are clearly named. What stands out is why the motorcade turned off Main street, which runs directly to the Trade Mart, and down Elm in front of the TSBD and Grassy Knoll, making that challenging left turn. There are cars on Main street representing the motorcade.

We glimpse the two figures from the top of the story. The voice speaks of authority and experience.

VOICE

I thought it best to give you a visual overview.

As the Voice speaks, his hand moves the limo and Queen Mary, which have figures of agents on the running boards.

VOICE

At 12:30 the motorcade makes this left turn forcing the limo to slow, to an almost complete standstill. After the turn your lead car should maintain limo speed around 12. No faster. We have three primary mechanic teams and a back-up. Team one is positioned on the third floor of the Dal-Tex building.

We see three figures in the window.

VOICE

Team two positioned on the sixth floor of the book depository. This is where our boy is, advised to remain in the building until his handler contacts him. As the limo nears this area...

A finger points to the Grassy Knoll and fence, where behind, are three figures.

VOICE

Team three will be positioned behind this fence. I expect teams one and two to dispatch the target. However, if the limo reaches this point and the target is up, we have two spotters on the curb that will signal both team three and the driver by opening and closing an umbrella, indicating to fire and to brake.

The finger points to the Expressway sign.

VOICE

Here team three makes the kill shot. Back-up unit, Zulu is positioned here.

The finger is pointing to the left side of the street, directly in front of the underpass. The hand repositions the limo to the TSBD.

VOICE

After the initial report, this vehicle (LBJ's car) stops in front of the book depository preventing other vehicles to pass. I understand you're set. Any last questions? We missed opportunities in Chicago and Tampa, but we control Dallas.

Off the president's figure waving, we go --

BACK TO:

INT. AIR FORCE ONE - REAR COMPARTMENT -- DUSK

Roy snaps from the fog to Clint tapping his elbow. The men study Bill, cradling the paper sack. He is pacing in front of the lavatory door. Kenny exits, startled to find Bill, shoving the sack toward his face. Kenny peeks into the sack seeing President Kennedy's clothes. Clint enters the lavatory, as Roy reaches for Bill's shoulder.

ROY

Bill. Bill.

BILL

Hey, Roy.

ROY

How are you coming along?

BILL

I'm not. I'm coming completely undone. I'm so ready to get off this damn plane. Those engines. Are they killing you ears. I can't hear anything but a roar and gun shots.

ROY

You gotta pull yourself together. Keep tight for a few more hours.

BILL

Roy. The FBI want to talk to us... they wannna interrogate us. What do they want with us? They think we had something to do with it?

His jaw tenses. He blinks, empty and defeated.

ROY

This thing is ballooning all over the place. I got word an agent will meet us at the hospital. Nothing we can do but answer their questions. Let's keep it together now. Keep our story tight. Don't reveal more than our operational procedures. Don't elaborate. Simple, precise answers. Bill, fate has already arraigned against us. There is no cavalry coming.

Bill clutches Roy's arm, squeezing it, hard, as we fade...

EXT. HORIZON -- DUSK

The C-130 floats into a veil of dark red clouds bleeding across the sky.

INT. C-130 TRANSPORT PLANE - IN FLIGHT

There's a pulsating ROAR. A few CREW line the jump seats. SA Kinney studies a small photo of his parents with President Kennedy. He looks up to find the loading SERGEANT. SA Kinney gives the sergeant a reassured pat, then pads to

REAR OF C-130

Where a faint light illuminates the presidential limo covered by a dishwater dull film. SA Kinney cogitates. He opens the right rear door, and scans the inside. Closes the door. Walks to the other side and does the same. A moment passes, he returns to the right rear door.

Sliding into the limo, into Governor Connally's seat, SA Kinney feels something brush against his shoe. He gets on his haunches, peers underneath the jump seat. ON his face. It drains. He gently brings into frame a SKULL FRAGMENT. It is clean as a pin and resembles a clay pot piece. SA Kinney takes a dazed beat before slipping the fragment into his suit pocket.

EXT. AIR FORCE ONE ARRIVES AT ANDREWS - D.C. - 5:58 PM

Aerial of D.C. Purple and pink hues. The runway is coming up -- and touchdown --

EXT. ANDREWS AIR FORCE BASE, MARYLAND/AIR FORCE ONE -- NIGHT

Air Force One glides over the tarmac. Official cars line the runway. Air Force One's rear door opens. A lift TRUCK eases to the plane. It rises to receive the casket.

We see Clint, Roy and agents struggling to fit the casket through the door. The casket is now situated inside the ambulance.

Men assist Mrs. Kennedy to the left rear door of the ambulance, where the door is locked. A mad scramble ensues. Mrs. Kennedy, BOBBY KENENDY and Clint climb into the rear of the ambulance. Behind the wheel is Landis with Roy and Bill riding shotgun.

The escorted ambulance glides forward, as an Army HELICOPTER zips overhead carrying LBJ.

LBJ (V/O)

'This is a sad time for all people. We have suffered a loss that cannot be weighed. For me, it is a deep personal tragedy. I know that the world shares the sorrow that Mrs. Kennedy and her family bear. I will do my best. That is all I can do. I ask for your help and God's.'

EXT. THE WHITE HOUSE -- NIGHT

The helicopter is whipping up foam from a water fountain. It settles on the south lawn. Rufus and Emory lead LBJ past John and Caroline's SWING SET. Meanwhile --

EXT. BETHESDA NAVAL HOSPITAL - MOTORCADE - 6:55 PM

The motorcade arrives. The ambulance eases to a stop in front of the main entrance. Mrs. Kennedy, Bobby, Clint and Landis, exit the ambulance and enter the hospital.

EXT. BETHESDA NAVAL HOSPITAL - LOADING DOCK - CONTINUOUS

The ambulance reverses to a stop. An awaiting SOLDIER nods to Roy and Bill, exiting the ambulance.

ROY

What's the hold up?

SOLDIER

Well, they don't know where the autopsy room is.

ROY

You gotta be kidding me.

SOLDIER

It's an awful big joint.

FBI O'NEIL

Agent Roy Kellerman?

Roy turns to find FBI agents O'NEIL and Sibert, whom we recognize from the top of the story. He covers his trepidation with:

ROY

Who wants to know?

FBI O'NEIL

FBI Agents O'Neil and Sibert.
Spoke with your Chief who stated
we could find you here.

ROY

This is Special Agent, Bill
Greer.

Bill wears a mask of contained fury eyeing Sibert.

FBI O'NEIL

We're here to assume jurisdiction
over any violations that might
fall within our purview.

BILL

What the hell is that supposed to
mean?

FBI SIBERT

It means we will need to speak
with both of you at some point,
preferably, privately, tonight.

ROY

Tonight's gonna be tough.

FBI O'NEIL

Bureau procedure.

ADMIRAL BURKLEY (O/S)

How embarrassing...

Strolling forward with Navy PERSONAL...

ADMIRAL BURKLEY

The morons finally located the room and keys. Gentlemen, let's move our President inside.

The four agents slide the casket from the ambulance onto a carriage and into the hospital.

BOBBY KENNEDY (V/O)

I don't believe the accused assassin, this Lee Harvey Oswald, acted alone.

EXT. BETHESDA NAVAL HOSPITAL - 17TH FLOOR -- NIGHT

Clint's POV Bobby under a dim light, secured phone pressed to his ear. Family members console Mrs. Kennedy.

BOBBY KENNEDY/PHONE

December 1st is off. You are to abort AMWORLD and dismantle MacDill's quick-strike force. There will be no further discussion. That is an order. One more thing, John (CIA Director John McCone) I want to know from you personally, did your boys kill my brother? I hope for your sake you're right, otherwise I'll spend the rest of my life dismantling your agency and exposing your agents.

Bobby hangs up. Clint observes him speak to Evelyn.

BOBBY KENNEDY

I know it was not a 'he' who killed my brother - but 'they.' Evelyn, first thing tomorrow I need you at the office. Lyndon's people will be digging around in the President's desk and I would like everything out. You should also secure some storage space including some security vaults. I've already had the filing cabinets removed.

EVELYN

Sure, Bobby. I can go over there tonight if you would like.

Clint strides to Mrs. Kennedy. He is carrying President Kennedy's favorite Tweed JACKET. He stands a moment watching her before she looks up.

CLINT

We thought, you, uh, it might offer you a bit of comfort.

Mrs. Kennedy cradles the jacket.

INT. BETHESDA NAVAL HOSPITAL - MORGUE -- NIGHT

President Kennedy's body is wheeled into the morgue. The room is lined with porcelain slabs; on one rests a child's body. Roy, Bill, Admiral Burkley, FBI Agents, O'Neil and Sibert ease the casket to stop under a blinding light. Admiral Burkley unlocks the casket. The men lift the body onto an autopsy table, surrounded by DOCTORS.

DOCTOR

I will ask at this time that all personnel with the exception of medical officers needed in the taking of photographs and x-rays are requested to leave the autopsy room immediately.

ROY

I will take full possession of all photos and x-rays.

GENERAL BURKELY

Gentleman, Mrs. Kennedy has only given permission for a partial inquest at this time.

Army Colonel FINKE enters, begins examining the body.

ROY

Excuse me. Why is an Army colonel here?

COMMANDER HUMES

I requested Colonel Finke. He is chief of the military environmental pathology division and chief of the wound ballistics pathology.

COLONEL FINKE

It appears Parkland performed a tracheotomy... um, note there appears to be a wound.

COMMANDER HUMES
Are you the agent in charge?

ROY
That's right. Roy Kellerman.

COMMANDER HUMES
Did you ascertain from the
Parkland doctors about this?

ROY
I did not.

COLONEL FINKE
That was derelict, Agent Kellerman.

JUMP TO:

INT. OLD EXECUTIVE OFFICE BUILDING -- NIGHT

LBJ is reclining behind his desk. He is engaged on a phone
to Hoover. Rufus is sorting FILES.

LBJ/PHONE
I am giving you complete control of
the case. I want the FBI to make a
full investigation and report to me
immediately. Now how many shots
were fired? Any of 'em at me?
They were aiming at the President?
A'right. Thank ya again, and let
me know as soon as ya hear more on
this Oswald fella.

LBJ hangs up the receiver, looks at Rufus.

LBJ
Ruf, talking to you like a brother:
Bulldog thinks it's a conspiracy.

RUFUS
With all the shots not surprised.
Would you like these moved to the
Oval Office or your residence?

LBJ
Let's move those to the house.
I'll tell you something about
Kennedy's murder that will rock
you... Kennedy and Bobby was
trying to get Castro with this
coup and the Tampa boys got word
of it. Castro hit first.

(MORE)

LBJ (CONT'D)

That's right, Hoss. Now, I'm going to jot John and Caroline a letter and you are to see that it gets to them. Where is Emory? I have something he could handle.

RUFUS

Ah, lemme check out here...

INT. OLD EXECUTIVE OFFICE BUILDING - RESTROOM - CONTINUOUS

ON Emory. He is studying his reflection in the mirror. His face is marked by guilt and agony. Rufus enters.

RUFUS

There you are. Boss has something... Ya a'right?

EMORY

Yeah, I'm fine. Good to go.

RUFUS

I need you to clear something up for me and then we're never goin' mention it again.

EMORY

Yeah, what's that?

RUFUS

Did you command Ready and Hill to stand down on the first reports?

Emory's face contorts. Body convulses.

RUFUS

That's not the answer I wanted. What was going through your mind? Where were your instincts, your training for Gods sake?

EMORY

I don't know.

RUFUS

You're a senior agent and that's the best you got?

EMORY

What are you looking for?

RUFUS

Some answers.

EMORY

I made a bad call.

RUFUS

I'm wanting to know if you'll do it again.

EMORY

I can't offer a reason why. I just know it's a decision that will stalk me for the rest of my living.

RUFUS

We've find ourselves in uncharted waters here. The only Secret Service detail to lose a president. We gotta find a script and stick to it; never waver in our overall story. We gotta protect our own no matter the assaults or how many fronts they come at us on. We stick together and stick to our story; all on the same page. We gotta protect our own especially goes for ole Bill and Roy. God he'p 'em.

LBJ yells O/S: "Rufus!"

RUFUS

Come'on, Boss got something for ya.

FADE TO:

INT. BETHESDA NAVAL HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR -- NIGHT

The hall is submerged in dim, misty light filled with shadows. An ORDERLY mops at the far end. We see Clint leaning against the wall, smoking a cigarette. Dave is on his hunches, leaning against the opposite wall. A long beat of silence.

CLINT

We should have been more forceful about canceling today.

DAVE

I keep thinking the same. I'll share a secret with you. I got down on my knees two days ago and begged him to call it off. He pulled me up by my jacket and said, "I want them cower me."

And Bobby strides into frame.

BOBBY KENNEDY
Hey, boys.

DAVE
Bob.

BOBBY KENNEDY
Need you to do something for me.

DAVE
Sure, anything.

BOBBY KENNEDY
In effort to assure the casket
doesn't turn into a historic
relic for the morbidly curious I
would like it eradicated. It has
no evidentiary value and doesn't
need to be preserved. I would
like it disposed of at sea.

DAVE
I'll take care of it first thing.

BOBBY KENNEDY
Have Roy assist you with the
logistics. I don't care for
Rufus to find out and tell
Johnson.

Evelyn appears in the BG.

EVELYN
Bobby. Dean Rusk is on the phone.

BOBBY KENNEDY
I'd better take that. Thank you
both for bringing my brother
home.

The men observe Bobby's silhouette fade away.

DAVE
How's Jackie?

CLINT
Incredible. Her presences and
strength is absolutely
remarkable. Not certain how she
keeps going but she does.

DAVE

The moment she's alone she's going to lose it. I keep thinking of her removing that dress. We should have Mary retrieve it first thing in the morning. Better after she goes to sleep. I'll tell her.

(a beat)

There were a lot of shots, weren't there?

CLINT

Maybe five, six.

DAVE

Clint, would the bubble-top have saved him?

CLINT

It might of slowed down the projectiles, but... I, really don't know. I'll have to think about it.

DAVE

I can't seem to get rid of these fantastic flashing imagines. Jackie out on the car like she was. It pains me to think if you had not made this trip. Between us, Clint, you're the only one who performed their duty. Jack would have been proud of you. He would. You saved our Jackie.

Clint fights back tears, as Dave embraces him.

INT. BETHESDA NAVAL HOSPITAL - MORGUE

There is a blinding light, so bright it hurts our eyes. Colonel Finke adjusts the overhead lamp. He is examining President Kennedy's throat wound. Bill, Roy, and the FBI agents look on. At times, Roy seems nauseas, and uneasy.

FBI O'NEIL

Do you have a firm opinion as to whether it is an entrance wound or exit wound or whatever?

COLONEL FINKE

My opinion, and that's all it is since I am not familiar with the procedures at Parkland...

(MORE)

COLONEL FINKE (CONT'D)
if I were simply to see the wound
in its unchanged state, I would
think it were an entrance wound.
But with the wound in its current
state is merely a calculated guess.

FBI SIBERT
Why, because a bullet from a low
velocity rifle, like the one
thought to have been used,
characteristically makes a small
entrance wound?

Admiral Burkley cradles a phone receiver.

ADMIRAL BURKLEY
That was Bobby again. He's
growing impatient and ready to
take his brother's body.

Childlike, Bill traces his fingers over President Kennedy's x-rays.

COMMANDER HUMES
It appears from the blood
formation here Parkland may not
have examined the backside.
Let's say we do that now.

And the body is turned over...

FBI SIBERT
What is that on the upper back?

FBI O'NEIL
Appears to be a wound.

Caked blood cleared from the President's back. Roy leans
in for examination. ON the WOUND somewhere below the right
shoulder blade, extending no further than an inch or two.
There is no exit point.

FBI O'NEIL
Seems peculiar we haven't been able
to locate any missile.

ADMIRAL BURKLEY
Note a second wound occurred in the
posterior back at about the level
of the third thoracic vertebra.

COLONEL FINKE

This wound is measured to be 14 cm. from the tip of the right acromion process and 14 cm. below the tip of the right mastoid process and progresses forward into the neck.

COMMANDER HUMES

The missile which entered here had only traveled a short distance because I can feel the end track with my finger.

COLONEL FINKE

The trajectory of the missile entered at this point a downward position of 45 to 60 degrees. There are no lanes for an outlet of this entry in this man's shoulder.

ROY

Would it have been possible while he was on the stretcher if someone was pressing on his chest missile would have worked itself out?

COLONEL FINCK

I suppose possible, yes.

COMMANDER HUMES

Agent Kellerman, you said the doctors performed a cardiac massage, right? Then that missile worked its way out through external cardiac massage. There is no other explanation for a bullet of that description and wound with no exit point.

Leans over and whispers to Roy.

ADMIRAL BURKLEY

With what I've seen here and earlier at Parkland he was shot by more than one gunman. Your men couldn't have prevented this.

Roy returns an appreciative look.

INT. BETHESDA NAVAL HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - NOV. 23RD - 2:45 AM

We find Roy, drunk with fatigue, and FBI O'Neil midway through his interview.

ROY

Securing all windows is impossible. Only time I've heard it done is in Teheran with Eisenhower in '59. I assure you our Dallas measures were most stringent.

FBI O'NEIL

As ranking agent with the president's detail you were responsible for the presidential security in Dallas, that correct?

ROY

That is.

FBI O'NEIL

Now going back to the moment you heard the first shot. How do you know it was the President's voice that said, "I'm hit. Get me to a hospital?"

ROY

Look, I was with the man for three years, know his voice like I know my own. Sides, he was the only man in the back seat of the car who spoke with a Boston accent.

FBI O'NEIL

What did you do when he called out?

ROY

I turned around and he has got his hands up here like this.
(right hand up toward his neck)
In fact, both hands were up in that direction; this one is like this here (indicating the left hand is up above the head).

FBI O'NEIL

By his collar?

ROY

Yeah.

INT. BETHESDA NAVAL HOSPITAL - CAFETERIA - CONTINUOUS

FBI Sibert is observing Bill slouched against a soda machine. It appears he could break any moment. He is toying with the change dispenser.

BILL

At first, uh, you know I... thought it was a motorcycle backfiring. They do that you know? Backfire.

FBI SIBERT

But now you are confident they were rifle reports?

BILL

Yeah!

FBI SIBERT

And the reports came from the right side of the limousine?

BILL

I have been shot at before and believe me if you are shot at you know where that bullet is coming from. These came from the right.

Bill knocks around the room. He catches a look at Sibert's report. Paranoid. He grits his teeth.

BILL

Hey, are those my stats? Are you writing down my statistical information? What are you insinuating? That, um, I'm some sort of suspect in the President's killing!?

FBI SIBERT

Calm down, Agent Greer. This is simply a formal report.

BILL

'Formal' my ass.

FBI SIBERT

Agent, please. Let's focus on the topic at hand. Now, was there any reason or obstacle that hindered you from following your Agency's protective actions?

BILL

I don't have no comment, you know.

FBI SIBERT

Is it not Secret Service protocol, regulations, for the agent driving, to accelerate the limousine and speed away from dangers such as sniper fire? Agent Greer. Is that correct? Isn't the driver trained to expedite the protectee from danger?

BILL

If you know so damn much fill out the report yourself.

FBI SIBERT

However, during the duration of rifle fire and bullets whizzing into the open limousine you failed to accelerate, and may have even, by some reports, slowed down. Would you say that's accurate?

BILL

Yeah, no, that's bullshit they don't know what they're talking about.

FBI SIBERT

We have witnesses stating they observed the limousine slow down, even stop after the initial shot.

BILL

Y'know that's bullshit is what.

FBI SIBERT

Conversely, Jean Clint, the most proximate witness to the limo, stated, "The motorcade came to almost a halt at the time the shots rang out." James Chaney stated that the limousine "After the shooting, the car stopped completely." Mary Woodward, a journalist with the *Dallas Morning News*, states, "Instead of speeding up the car, the car came to a halt after the first shot." Agent Greer. Are you differing with those witness' statements?

Bill's temper soars. He goes toe-to-toe with Sibert.

BILL

I floored the damn beast! I floored it! Now, I'm tired of talking about this.

FBI SIBERT

Stand back Agent Greer. Now let us suppose hypothetically, could your foot have slipped from the accelerator when you were looking back at the President? You did look back at the President?

BILL

Jesus! I'm so goddamn worn out with this. Yes! I heard this noise. I thought, uh, that is was backfire and then I heard it again and that's when I glanced over my shoulder and saw Governor Connally like he was starting to fall.

FBI SIBERT

Were you able to see anything of President Kennedy as you glanced to the rear?

BILL

No, I didn't see anything of the President. I didn't look, I, I wasn't far enough around to, to see him.

FBI SIBERT

When you started that glance are you able to recollect whether you started to glance before or simultaneously with or after that second shot?

BILL

I suppose simultaneously, you know, when I had seen him. It seemed like in the same second almost that something had hit, you know, whenever I turned around. I saw him start to fall.

FBI SIBERT

The President? Did you step on the accelerator before, simultaneously, or after Agent Kellerman instructed you to accelerate?

BILL

Guess the same.

FBI SIBERT

So that it was your reaction to accelerate prior to the time -- you had gotten that instruction? Do you recollect whether you accelerated before or at the same time or after the third shot?

Bill looks at Sibert like he's crazy. Snaps impatiently:

BILL

I can't say! I don't know!

FBI SIBERT

Was it at about that time that you heard the third shot?

BILL

Just as soon as I turned my head.

FBI SIBERT

Did you notice that the President had been hit?

BILL

No. I didn't know. I knew we was in trouble. Then, uh, I realized there was something really wrong. I tramped on the accelerator. I cannot remember even the other shots or noises. I did not see anything happen behind me anymore because I was occupied with getting away. I'm beat, been up twenty-four hours and my president's been murdered. He's been massacred and you're pissing around 'bout a report when you should be tracking down his killers.

Sibert's eyebrows go upward.

FBI SIBERT

Then let's stop.

BILL
Good-bye then.

FBI SIBERT
Agent Greer. That's all my
questions now for Dallas. But
regarding my visit to your house
the day before yesterday. I have a
couple more.

Bill is spent. On edge. He falls back into a chair knocking
another chair over. He kicks it across the floor.

Agent Sibert picks up the chair. Sits across from Bill.
Leans forward, with a real intense gaze. And like a needle
into a vein, asks:

FBI SIBERT
Were in you in Miami recently?

Bill's go demonic. Seems he could strangle Sibert.

FBI SIBERT
Were you at the Doral Country Club?

BILL
What the fuck are you talking
about?

FBI SIBERT
Agent Greer. Could you answer my
questions? Were you recently in
Miami?

BILL
Yeah. I was with the Goddamn
President of the United States.

FBI SIBERT
I understand from the president's
travel records he did not visit the
Doral Country Club. I do, however,
show you were there with an
associate of Santo Trafficante, Mr.
David Ferrie and a, Mr. Frank
Hamilton. Is this true?

BILL
No.

FBI SIBERT
No, you weren't at the Doral
Country Club, or no, you were not
with the named men?

Bill rises and kicks his chair across the room. Agent Sibert leaps to his feet. It's staring contest.

FLASH TO:

INT. DORAL COUNTRY CLUB - MIAMI -- DAY

We see Bill and two MEN lunching at a private table on a terrace overlooking a magnificent golf course. Bill has his napkin tied around his neck. He is savoring a succulent ribeye and vintage Champagne.

MAN

This is a golden opportunity, Bill.

MAN 2

More Champagne?

Bill nods. Man 2 overfills the glass with Champagne. Bill leans over and sips from the glass.

MAN

With Ethel's failing health and you found wanting at the agency, combined with lack of capital to remedy either problem...

MAN 2

All we're asking is slow the limo, and perhaps brake if our guy indicates for the cameras to get the best shots of the president.

MAN

More potatoes?

MAN 2

The DNC is putting together a magnificent film highlighting the young, go-getter president. And Texas, they really want to play up the state. We need Texans votes.

MAN

The film is helmed by a Hollywood big-shot.

BILL

But why you asking me to help?

MAN 2

Billy. You honestly believe Johnson, Hoover and Rowley will help with a political film showcasing our beloved president? They wouldn't, would they?

MAN

What do you say, Bill? Can we count on you to come through?

A bulging envelope is slid across the table.

FLASH BACK TO:

INT. BETHESDA NAVAL HOSPITAL - CAFETERIA - CONTINUOUS

Bill breaks the stare with Agent Sibert. He rises, and stalks from the room.

INT. BETHESDA NAVAL HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR -- NIGHT

Meanwhile, Roy and FBI O'Neil are in the same spot they were when we left them.

ROY

Quite frankly we were on a first-name basis. For the President it was "Jack" and it was "Roy" when there was nobody around, one on one, one on two. When anybody else was around it was naturally, "Mr. President."

Roy. Clawing back tears. He struggles to light a smoke.

FBI O'NEIL

Agent Kellerman, I know you are drained just a few more questions -- the Big Man will skin me if I don't come back with something. Hope you understand. So, after you heard the initial reports what was going through your mind, what were your actions?

ROY

My decision was to get the President to a hospital because he needed medical treatment.

FBI O'NEIL

And did you?

ROY

You betch ya. We took off. I have driven that car many times and I never cease to be amazed with the weight of the automobile plus the power that is under the hood; we just literally jumped out of the goddamn road.

FBI O'NEIL

Understand we have to cover all basis here. Can you think or were there any reasons, obstacles that would hinder you from following your Agency's protective actions? Forgive my frankness, but it seems from our interviews you failed miserably to perform the protective functions expected of you.

Roy sinks. There is a tense pause.

FBI O'NEIL

You don't need me to tell ya the agent in the passenger front seat is supposed to protect the president by pushing him down or throwing his body over his. It is my understanding you sat completely frozen.

ROY

You listen. If I thought that I was needed back there there wouldn't have been an obstacle strong enough to hold me back.

FBI O'NEIL

Would you say you performed that duty? Did you preform your duty?

CLINT (O/S)

Agent, if you want someone to blame start looking up the chain.

Clint looms in the threshold.

CLINT

Start asking why the president and the vice president were permitted in the same city in slow, open vehicles in close proximity to each other. Common sense dictates the hazards, yet today it was permitted to happen and that's only the tip of the iceberg. There's an overabundance of mistakes and missteps that transpired today compiling into a massive ball that propelled down the mountain crashing into our detail and killing the President of the United States. We've had two potential assassination plots in three weeks with two subjects in two separate cities that have similar bios as this Oswald you have in custody. I don't believe in coincidences but it's not my job as a field agent to worry about things above my pay-grade. The Bureau ought to investigate at the top of the food chain and leave us boys at the bottom alone; we've been through enough.

FBI O'NEIL

I'll take that under advisement, Agent Hill. Gentlemen, get some rest.

Agent O'Neil offers Roy a reassuring pat, and strides out the door. Roy looks haggard and weak; shell of a man from the top of the story.

CLINT

You wanted to see me?

ROY

I thought you might want to look at the Boss before he's put away.

CLINT

How ya holdin' up?

ROY

Like I spent a week at a proctologist.

SOLDIER wheels President Kennedy's MAHOGANY CASKET past.

ROY

I cautioned him just this morning not to be so open with the crowds. He smiled and said, "That if someone wanted to kill him all they would have to do was use a scope rifle from a high building." The sonofabitches didn't even give him a chance to hug his wife and kids goodbye. When I see my girls and June I'm never gonna let 'em go.

Roy and Clint enter...

INT. BETHESDA NAVAL HOSPITAL - MORGUE -- NIGHT

It is late. The doctors and military personal are exhausted. Roy corals all personal in the room.

ROY

Gentlemen. I would like to ask that what you have witnessed in this room tonight be kept intensely private. (distributes forms) I have a statement here, a letter of silence from the family that I would like to ask you to sign. The statement pledges no one will discuss the details of what they saw at the autopsy...

DOCTOR

Twenty-five years?

ROY

That's reasonable.

The men grumble and grunt. They sign the documents and everyone leaves the room. Clint and Roy are now alone with President Kennedy's body. Clint touches President Kennedy's hand as he says:

CLINT

Mr. President. This is my mistake; my error. I am sorry. I'm sorry, Boss I couldn't have been 0.5 seconds faster than I would have been the one who took the bullet. I'll miss you, sir.

Roy digests the irony of Clint's guilt.

ROY

What you did today was exhibit enormous bravery and great presence of mind. You did exactly what was expected of you. You did what me and the rest of 'em should have but gravely failed to. Guess somewhere along the 200,000 miles we traveled with him we neglected the first rule of security: lost our reflexes. People aren't going to forgive us. I don't know where I was today. My training left me; didn't think of climbing over the seat -- never once occurred to me. For a shift leader to lose your sole objective I'll certainly go down in the history books but not the way I would have hoped.

CLINT

We'll be hounded by whispers of this day forever.

ROY

We got many of tearful nights and angry dawns ahead.

CLINT

I'm already sinking into a depression in which I'm just praying there is a bottom.

Clint removes Mrs. Kennedy's wedding band from President Kennedy's finger. He studies it, then slips into his pocket.

CLINT

I'll head up to prepare Lace.

Bill looms in the doorway. He cuts a glare to Clint, who exits.

BILL

Look at that smug look. He blames me -- they all do. It's like they can look right through me and see the idiot I am.

SOLDIERS now enter to prepare the body for transport. Roy and Bill drift into the corner.

ROY

You listen here: there were six people in that car, five know what happened. You gotta say you had a lapse in judgment. Period. There is no way to reverse this kinda thing.

BILL

Roy. I'll tell ya for an instant all my training left me... I lost it -- I was absolutely helpless, afraid to move... I fuckin' froze. I'm too old for this, my reflexes are slow. I saw projectiles striking the streets... shells coming from multiple shooters, shots coming from every direction: one came right through the goddamn windshield! Listen to me, goddamn it! I saw it. I saw the shot -- the one that blew the Boss's head off. I saw it. It came from the front. High-powered rifle. Shot right through the windshield into his neck. I got so fucking scared, uh, I couldn't move. I saw that man's head explode... My God. I think I'm going looney.

ROY

Stop it! Listen to me, don't ever mention anything you said again. Got it? That's not going to help you or the agency.

BILL

They smell the blood on me. See the way Jackie looked at me? It's like I pulled the goddamn trigger.

ROY

You've witnessed a traumatic incident -- you're exhausted and your body's shutting down.

BILL

Thirty-five years and I just froze, I just fucking froze...

Off Bill sliding down the wall, rocking back and forth.

INT. BETHESDA NAVAL HOSPITAL - 17TH FLOOR SUITE -- NIGHT

Meanwhile, Clint discovers Mrs. Kennedy sitting in the corner quietly reciting, *I Have a Rendezvous with Death*.

CLINT

We are preparing to return to the White House.

MRS. KENNEDY

Clint, you don't happen to have a handkerchief?

CLINT

No. But I do have a Kleenex.

MRS. KENNEDY

Does he look okay?

CLINT

He looks fine, ma'am. Jackie, I would have done anything for him. I'm sorry, I couldn't have been faster getting to the car.

MRS. KENNEDY

Oh, Clint, please don't think that. You did exactly what was expected of you today. You did. I'm very proud of you, and Jack, he would have been, too. You allowed John and Caroline to keep their mother. I will forever be in your debt.

Mrs. Kennedy holds Clint's hand, as we fade to --

EXT. THE ELMS - LBJ'S HOUSE - 3:30 AM

This sophisticated English fieldstone Tudor home backs to Glover-Archbold Park. It stands on over one-half acre in the heart of Wesley Heights. Armed agents prowl the premises.

INT. THE ELMS - HALLWAY

A single chair sits in front of a closed door. Behind that door sleeps the 36th president. A man pads into frame and sinks into the chair. After the longest day of his life, Rufus sits in eerie silence staring vacantly into space, as we fade...

EXT. BETHESDA NAVAL HOSPITAL - MORGUE -- NIGHT

Roy is collecting the autopsy records and x-rays when the phone rings. He answers it.

ROY/PHONE

Kellerman. Yes. I can do that.
Yes, sir, I do know where they are.
I will take care of it forthwith.

Roy cradles the receiver; displeased with his new assignment. Like a good soldier he collects the papers as SOMEONE enters.

SOMEONE

Where do you think you're going
with those?

ROY

To the White House.

SOMEONE

No, no. Those are the hospital's,
more importantly, Navy documents.
Now hand them over.

A sense of bravado in the face of defeat.

ROY

He's our man; everything belongs in
the White House.

Roy brushes past Someone, and strides out the door, as...

EXT. WHITE HOUSE - WEST GATE - 4:24 AM

PEOPLE stand grim-faced outside the gate as we hear TAPPING of shoes. A MARINE honor guard moves up the drive, dotted by kerosene flares. An ambulance eases up to...

INT. WHITE HOUSE - EAST ROOM - 4:34 AM

The casket is now positioned atop the Lincoln catafalque. A Catholic PRIEST instructs altar BOYS to light candles.

Bobby opens the casket lid. George, the valet, laboring through his ineffable grief, methodically attends to the man lying before him in a coffin. He makes one final adjustment to Kennedy's handkerchief so it looks the way the president always insisted, with the monogram concealed.

Mrs. Kennedy comes into view. Clint hands her a pair of scissors.

She snips a lock of President Kennedy's hair, and straightens his blue pin-stripped suit. Clint tucks the scissors into his pocket, as we return to where we began...

INT. WHITE HOUSE BASEMENT - NOVEMBER 23, 1963 - 5:00 AM

A MAN is tossing FILES into an incinerator. It is Roy lit by flickering flames. He snatches files from the "Tampa" box. He studies them. He paces. He actually considers not destroying the files. Hesitantly, he tosses them into the flames. Clutching a tape that reads: "Milterr," Roy sinks to a chair feeling powerless; isolated from his superiors and subordinates -- a destroyed and damned man.

INT. WHITE HOUSE - RESIDENCE FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Clint is standing at the threshold of Mrs. Kennedy's door. She runs her hand over his blood-soaked shirt.

Clint withdraws the wedding band from his pocket. He places it into Mrs. Kennedy's hand. As she is searching for something, we glimpse a single red rose bud inside her purse. She presents Clint President Kennedy's religious medallions. He's floored.

CLINT

Oh, no. I couldn't...

MRS. KENNEDY

He would have wanted it.

CLINT

Look at me as the conservator. If you ever need them back. I, I will be here when you awake. I am will look after you, Jackie. You can count on that.

MRS. KENNEDY

That offers me great comfort. Jack never signed your inauguration copy, did he? If you will bring it tomorrow I will sign it for you.

CLINT

Do you need anything? Then please, get some sleep -- for me.

She takes his had suddenly, openly, surprising him.

MRS. KENNEDY

Yes, sir, Clint Hill. Good night,
and thank you.

Mrs. Kennedy closes the door. Clint releases a heavy sigh and drops to his knees. Resting his head into his hands, he falls back against the wall and closes his eyes.

EXT. POTOMIC RIVER - BRIDGE -- EARLY MORNING

It's cold and gray. A light fog hangs above the river. We hear the sound of footsteps, and find Bill walking determinedly toward the bridge. He places one hand on the railing and pulls himself up. He is now standing atop the railing looking down thirty feet to the freezing waters. The wind whips his jacket open; his tie flutters; he is a wreck.

GO TO:

EXT. ROY'S HOUSE -- EARLY MORNING

The streets are quiet. A rumble of a motorbike comes into view under a crimson sky. Roy pulls into the drive. Using his last drops of strength, he shuffles toward the front door.

Fumbling for his key, he is startled by the opening door.

His eyes fill with tears because there, standing in the threshold is June. Roy struggles for words. June pulls him into her.

JUNE

I'm sorry. It's so horrible.

Roy collapses into his wife's embrace, and weeps, as we fade...

To the White House photo of smiling agents, and the words....

"For the greatest enemy of the truth is very often not the lie -- deliberate, contrived, and dishonest -- but the myth -- persistent, persuasive, and unrealistic." John Kennedy, 1962

FADE OUT:

THE END