

## INT. SANDRA WARREN'S OFFICE - DAY

Sunlight floods the penthouse cathedral of an office, glinting off the soft, brushed gold trim on the walls. The space is a testament to minimalist, scholarly power—vast, quiet, and immaculate.

SANDRA WARREN (late 30s) stands by the floor-to-ceiling windows, looking down at the city. She wears a simple, brutally expensive cashmere sweater, holding a porcelain mug. She is the picture of untouchable, calm authority.

The door opens. JOHN MICHAELS (50s) enters. He's a career bureaucrat, his suit rumpled, his face a mask of sweat and political terror. He's trying to hold it together, but he's unraveling fast.

<center>JOHN</center> > Sandra. We have a situation. A significant one.

Sandra doesn't turn. She takes a slow, deliberate sip from her mug, making him wait. The silence stretches, amplifying his anxiety.

<center>SANDRA</center> > Breathe, John. Panic is a poor investment. Now, what is the liability that you've mistaken for a problem?

<center>JOHN</center> > (He pulls out his phone, stabbing at the screen.) > This isn't a line item, Sandra, it's a five-alarm fire! Operation ANTHEM. The rally. There's crystal-clear footage of advanced, unmarked fighter jets. The Pentagon is screaming. They're VSI's, aren't they? My people are saying you don't operate that kind of hardware.

Sandra finally turns. A flicker of amusement dances in her eyes. It's not a smile; it's the look of a biologist observing a frantic specimen.

<center>SANDRA</center> > Your people are correct. We don't. It was a third-party asset. The variable was introduced, the desired outcome was achieved, and the narrative was successfully shaped. The transaction is complete.

<center>JOHN</center> > Third party? *Who*? We didn't authorize a third party! The plausible deniability is compromised if—

<center>SANDRA</center> > (Her voice is smooth as silk, but it cuts him off completely) > The deniability is perfect *because* no one knows whose they are. It's a ghost story, John. And ghost stories are exceptionally useful assets. I would advise you to stop asking questions about clearance levels you no longer possess.

The quiet, friendly finality in her tone is a clear warning. John, sweating, pushes past it.

<center>JOHN</center> > I am your client! My neck is on the line for every asset you deploy!

<center>SANDRA</center> > (A genuine, quiet laugh escapes her lips. It's utterly chilling.)  
> John... you hired me to manage a hostile takeover of a G7 nation. Your *neck* was on the line the moment you made the call. Don't be naive. It's unbecoming.

He takes a step closer to her immense white quartz desk, his voice rising with impotent fury.

<center>JOHN</center> > I will not be managed! I need to know whose jets—

He stops cold. His eyes fix on the massive, wall-mounted digital display behind her desk. It shows a series of crisp, live satellite feeds. One, in particular, has a data overlay he recognizes. A horrifying, technical dread washes over him.

<center>JOHN</center> > (Whispering) > What is that feed?

<center>SANDRA</center> > Situational awareness.

<center>JOHN</center> > (His face drains of color as he squints, rushing towards the screen.) > That telemetry... that's a STRATCOM signature. That's... no. What the hell is a USSF-247 'Silent Sentry' doing on your wall? *How* do you have access to that? That is a black-level US Space Force asset! It requires a direct executive order to task!

Sandra watches his meltdown for a long beat. Her composure doesn't crack into anger; it hardens into something colder. She walks calmly around her desk.

<center>SANDRA</center> > Authorized? John, you're still thinking in terms of permissions. That's... quaint. We don't ask for access. Aegis has it.

The statement is simple, delivered with the calm certainty of a law of physics. It's more terrifying than any shout. John just stares, the geopolitical horror of the breach compounded by her nonchalance. In that moment of stunned silence, she delivers the final, precise cut.

<center>SANDRA</center> > Aegis is a predictive tool. It models outcomes based on all available data. *All* of it. For example, it predicted a 78.4% probability that you would come to my office today, flustered and unprepared. > (She pauses, her eyes locking onto his with surgical cruelty.) > It also predicted your wife would file for divorce within six months. The pool boy was an unfortunate but statistically significant variable.

It's not just an insult; it's a data point. The professional violation is instantly, brutally eclipsed by the personal. John stumbles back as if struck, slumping into one of the gold-trimmed visitor's chairs. He's been gutted, professionally and personally, in under a minute.

<center>JOHN</center> > (Voice shaking, a broken whisper) > My God... We wanted a scalpel... and we hired... you.

Sandra arches an eyebrow, her lips curling into a tiny, mocking smile. She's already won, and now she's just running up the score.

<center>SANDRA</center> > That sounds dangerously close to unauthorized dissent, John. We wouldn't want a negative entry on your performance review, would we?

That's the final blow. The insult, wrapped in the bureaucratic language he lives by, completely disarms him. There's nothing left to say. He's been outplayed, outclassed, and utterly neutered.

John stares at her, his mouth half open, then just shakes his head in defeat. He gets to his feet, turns without another word, and walks out of the office, closing the door quietly behind him. Beaten.

Sandra watches him go, her expression unchanged. She walks back to the window, takes another sip from her mug, and looks down at the city below—the master historian, once again, observing her work.

[SCENE END]