House.of.Cards.S03E12

With just one week to go before the Iowa caucuses,

the latest Gallup poll has

Dunbar ahead by six points, 45 to 39,

with 16 percent still undecided.

That's a lot of undecideds so close to election day.

Dunbar has incredibly high favorability numbers here,

much higher than President Underwood's,

but I have spoken with many Iowans

who have doubts about her lack of experience

and whether she'll be able to stand up to a Republican candidate

with a substantial record.

Even so, the fact that she's still the frontrunner,

- having never run for office. - It's extraordinary.

Jackie Sharp's endorsement was a big coup.

It really helped her numbers with women.

We want you to have a much more active role during the events.

You'll go first, introduce the president,

stay with him the entire time,

and then participate in the Q and A.

I really shouldn't be answering questions.

Francis is the candidate.

Well, the truth is, your favorables are double what mine are,

so let's give the people what they want.

Well, if you think it will help.

I know it will.

Do you have a speech prepared? Do you have issue papers?

Everything is in the conference room.

Let's get started, then.

Have you had a chance to go over the list...

of replacements for Remy?

Oh, I can't focus on that right now.

I need to get through Iowa first.

Well, I have a suggestion, sir, that's not on the list.

Who?

Me.

Seth, you're invaluable as a comm director.

Well, that's just it, sir.

You need a media expert at the helm.

We're in an election cycle.

- Everything's about perception. - Seth--

I want to integrate the policy and the press teams.

I want to work with cabinet members and agency heads

on gearing every public statement towards our platform.

Mobilize our AmWorks allies in Congress.

A commitment list for future's legislations,

not just simple endorsements.

Look, this outlines in detail

what I would like to do as your Chief of Staff.

All I ask is that you consider it.

Well, of course I will. Thank you, Seth.

I appreciate you putting so much time into this.

Thank you, sir.

Thank you.

Robert.

Sorry I'm running late.

We hit some weather on the way back from Iowa.

I appreciate your coming here in person.

Especially during the... final rush.

Anything for you, Robert.

Have a seat.

Oh, thank you.

And, you know, it's good. I get a few hours with the kids.

So how does it feel to be back here?

I have to admit, I miss it a little.

Your dissent on Godfrey v. Kent was brilliant, by the way.

My clerks. They wrote it.

Every word.

So it's time.

Ruth says it is, but I knew before she said anything.

- When are you going to announce? - Soon.

But I'd like you... to say yes first.

- To what? - Replacing me.

This isn't the disease speaking.

I haven't forgotten you're running for President.

But Underwood...

I'm sure he'd nominate you in a heartbeat.

I am the frontrunner, Robert. Why would I drop out?

Because this position's for life.

Underwood is going to lose.

You think he'll go down easily?

And even if you get the nomination, the Republicans...

They'll... rip you apart.

I'm the swing vote. My seat is important.

You can make a lasting difference here.

That is exactly what he said.

His motivations were atrocious, yes,

but his logic was sound.

Your mind seems sharp as ever, Robert.

Except...

Except for the fact that I can't remember your name right now.

Heather.

Heather.

Will you continue to do the work I've done, Heather?

I can't.

If I'm honest with myself, it's that I want this too much.

I didn't realize it before I started running.

It is not that I've changed, Robert,

that ambition has clouded anything.

It is that I was blind to this until now, what I am meant to be.

And I am meant to be President of the United States.

Wouldn't you all like to hear from Claire first?

Thank you!

Francis and I so appreciate you all coming out here

on such a cold day and welcoming us with such warmth!

It's so good to be back in Iowa!

And I can feel it, with your support and enthusiasm,

there is no doubt that we are gonna take this state!

- Hello. - Good evening.

So pleased to have you staying with us again, Mr. President.

We always love coming here.

It's our favorite house in all of Iowa.

- If you need anything... - Thank you very much.

- Good night. - Have a good evening.

You were wonderful today.

They just adore you.

Good night.

Good night.

Yes, connect me with Tom Yates, please.

No, I'll hold.

Mr. President?

Where's the rest of it?

- Have you read it? - No, not yet.

Just this first chapter arrived.

Will you please read it first, sir? And then let's talk.

Are you sick? You sound hoarse.

Well, no, I'm not sick.

I haven't slept much.

All right, I'll call you tomorrow.

Sir?

Excuse me. Sir?

I forgot why I came in here.

The orange juice.

That'll be two twenty-five.

Yeah.

"The Fourth of July means nothing anymore.

Overcooked hot dogs

and fireworks that always leave you disappointed.

Bite-size American flags made in China,

halfheartedly waved by five-year-olds

who'd rather be playing Minecraft.

But the third of September, that's a date which matters.

It's the day, three decades past,

that a redneck from Gaffney married a debutante from Dallas.

And the Earth's axis tilted that day,

though neither they, nor we, knew it at the time.

Here's a woman who describes her vows

as a suicide flirting with a bridge's edge.

And a man who wears his wedding ring as a badge of shame,

for the debutante deserved more.

But truly, what more could she desire?

Together, they rule an empire without heirs.

Legacy is their only child."

Come in.

He sent you a copy, too?

I thought this was supposed to be about you, not us.

The whole thing was a mistake.

We revealed too much, Francis.

I should've never put you in that position.

I'll put an end to it.

Do you think he was right?

About what?

"A cold fusion of two universal elements,

identical in weight, equal in force.

United they stand. A union like none other.

The unsplittable atom of American politics."

Well, he was right about some things.

I should go speak to him face to face, soften the blow.

She did an event in Oelwein yesterday

and our people say you

could barely hear her with all the cheering.

How badly can she hurt us?

They only need a point or two and he's in the margin of error.

So we need to attack her.

The UN stuff slid right off. We need something new.

Let's talk to Jackie.

Thank you for coming. How was your trip?

Good for me. A little rough for my mom, though.

She's not used to seeing me more than two days in a row.

She actually ran out of questions.

I'm jealous. Have a seat. It's been nonstop here for me.

Full-time job here.

Doing surrogate appearances for Heather in California.

We could really use you, Remy.

A recruiting session?

You can't be surprised.

I was hoping you just wanted to see my face.

We can't offer you as much as you made at Glendon Hill,

but we can offer you a lot more than you made at the White House.

I'm not interested.

That was fast. Even for you.

- Where'd you land? - Nowhere.

I'm out, Jackie. No more politics.

You know you don't mean that. It's who you are.

That's what I thought, too, for a long time.

I don't even know if I'll stay in DC.

What are you gonna do?

That's the best part. I have no idea.

I'll save you the trouble of trying to convince me.

Claire Underwood.

We need to hit her hard.

You want dirt. I don't have any.

You must.

If I did, I don't know if I'd shovel it your way.

But I don't. They never let me in the inner circle.

She pressed him, but nothing.

I find it hard to believe

that we don't have a single thing we can use.

Our OPPO team has looked at every article,

every piece of footage going back 25 years.

Researched acquaintances, family, the works.

If it's out there, we would've found it.

Wait. There is one thing.

What?

Hello?

Doug. It's been a while.

- What do you want? - The journal.

What would it take?

You said you would never do that to another woman.

- How much? - You're offering money?

If that's what you want.

Betrayal doesn't come cheap.

Name a figure.

What do you like to read?

Do you read?

Yes, I read.

Oh, thank you, Meechum.

- You hate it. - I didn't say that.

You wouldn't fly back from Iowa just to say, "Good job."

Well, look, you've only turned in 21 pages,

and the book was supposed to be finished by now.

It took me this long to figure out what the book is really about.

And what it's about, is the two of you.

We have to start over.

Start over?

The book was supposed to be about America Works.

Now, you said you wanted to try a different approach.

I was skeptical, but then I went along with it and now,

you've handed over to me the beginning of a book...

about my marriage?

Well, do you want it fast, or do you want it right?

I told you I've never written anything in less than a year.

Yeah, and in a month's time,

you're gonna say you've come up with some new idea.

No, this is it. You and Claire.

The marriage.

That's the key that unlocks everything else.

If I had wanted an exposé about my personal life,

I would've hired a staff writer from Us Weekly.

Well... hold on a minute. This is not tabloid bullshit.

You said, in this room, you wanted an original voice.

I am giving it to you.

You're not narrow-minded, Mr. President.

I know you can appreciate what I'm trying to do.

Right, but see, that's the problem right there.

This is about what you're trying to do.

What your needs and... what did you call it?

- Your addiction. - That's not true.

No, it is true. I hired you to do a job,

which was to get me votes.

Yesterday, not six months from now.

Now, look, it's no big deal. It didn't work out.

But I promise you, you will be paid in full.

Thank you, Tom.

This deserves to be finished, and it deserves to be read.

Well, I just happen to disagree with you.

Are you afraid of what I wrote?

Afraid? No.

It's just no one's business.

Well, you can't bury it.

I won't allow that.

You're in an intimate relationship with Kate Baldwin,

isn't that correct?

I've never said anything because I presume that you can

separate your personal life from our professional arrangement.

But before you start getting any reckless ideas,

why don't you just remember one thing: I own this material.

And if you attempt to share it with anybody,

and I mean one single word,

litigation will be the least of your worries.

I mean, after all, I don't think either of us

wants any controversy about the authorship of your first book.

Do we?

Meechum, will you please escort Mr. Yates out?

And good luck to you, Tom.

Too bad about the book.

You don't really mean that.

No, I don't.

Mr. Grayson is on the line, sir.

What was that?

Mr. Grayson is on the line, sir. He says it's urgent.

He's on line one, sir.

Seth?

All right. I better stay in Washington.

Let Vaughn know.

Get me Claire.

You think the timing is strategic?

Well, he and Dunbar are close.

Do you have any idea who you're going to nominate?

We'll go through our master list in the morning,

but this'll take me off the campaign trail.

I won't be in Iowa for a day or two. You're okay to cover me?

Yes, of course. I'll keep waving my pom-poms.

Well, you're a saint to do it without me,

but it's probably best.

They like you even better.

Did you speak with Tom?

I did. He didn't take it well, but I made it very clear.

I read it again. The chapter.

Let it go. We're done with him.

Claire?

Sorry. Uh, the last event went quite long.

I'm fading.

Well, you get some sleep. We'll talk tomorrow.

Okay. Good night, Francis.

Good night.

This is a nice surprise.

Now a bad time?

Not at all. How did you get in the building?

Nobody called me.

The receptionist. Scorpio is her favorite book.

Of course, it is.

What are you working on?

Covert operation in the Jordan Valley.

Your boy Underwood has refused to confirm or deny,

but take a look at that.

That's a letter to the family of Justin Nix.

Navy SEAL who died the same day as the covert operation.

Signed by the president.

Says it was a training exercise.

I just got off the phone with a source in the DOD

and they said there were no SEAL training exercises that day.

His death is the only

military KIA reported on October eighteenth.

Am I shattering your illusions about the guy?

He fired me.

What? Why?

I didn't want to e-mail it to you.

This is it?

The first chapter.

Justice Jacobs served our nation with duty and distinction.

And when the Court was strongly divided,

as it was many times during his 23 years on the bench,

it was his swing vote

that created legal precedents that will last for centuries.

Now, it will not be an easy seat to fill, but fill it I must.

Sir.

Dunbar's people just reached out to me.

She's back in Washington and she wants to meet with you.

What for?

She wants to talk about the nomination.

She wants to propose someone.

Yes. Herself.

Find a time. And find somewhere discreet.

I don't want anyone on staff seeing her.

Good morning. I'm Claire Underwood.

Uh, I just changed her diaper.

I haven't had a chance to wash my hands.

What is her name? She's beautiful.

- Kayla. - Kayla. And what's your name?

- Suzie. - Hi, Suzie.

Well, I just wanted to thank you so much for your support.

It means so much to my husband and me.

I don't support him.

I saw the signs out front.

Those are my husband's. I support Heather Dunbar.

When we vetted the house, the husband was here.

Um, would you ever consider changing your mind?

I'm sorry, Mrs. Underwood,

I don't really want to be on TV or in the papers.

My apologies about that.

Would you mind if I just came inside?

No cameras, just me?

I guess so.

We need to do a sweep of the house first, ma'am.

No. And they stay out here.

Hello, Heather.

How's Robert?

He's sad.

But at least he's making his exit with grace.

Those were some very nice things

you said about him during your press conference.

Well, what was it you said to me...

about, uh, making things palatable?

- The obscene. - Ah, yes. The obscene.

Well, it is obscene, a mind like his losing its sharpness.

I didn't expect the Oval, but this is interesting.

This is where Petrov and I smoked cigars during the summit.

That's where he put his out on the wall.

So, Seth tells me you want the nomination.

No. I just said that to get in the door.

Robert thought you'd say yes in a heartbeat

if it meant me dropping out of the race.

But the decision you have to make

is whether you'll drop out or not.

And why would I do that?

I know Claire lied about the abortion,

and I have the journal to prove it.

I'm giving you an opportunity to bow out gracefully,

just like Robert.

But you have to do it before the caucus.

I'll give you three days.

I have no idea what you're talking about.

The one you asked Doug to destroy.

I wouldn't be so certain that he did it.

So...

you're finally one of us.

One of who?

The men. In their smoky back rooms.

And even if there was a journal...

you don't have it in you.

Make whatever assumption you want.

Well, Robert was right. I would offer you the nomination.

You should take the advice of a smart man.

Three days, Mr. President.

Think about Claire.

Show me out, please.

She can go after me all she wants,

but she goes after Claire,

I'll slit her fucking throat in broad daylight.

Like when he pardoned Walker, and that other guy, the rich one.

- Raymond Tusk. - Yeah, him.

I mean, those were bad people, and he let them off the hook.

And then he says he's not running and he does.

Well, it's a little more complicated

than the way you're putting it.

There's a lot of variables

that go into making decisions like that, and...

I can tell you I was right beside him and he was agonizing.

I'm sorry. She's hungry.

I still breastfeed my girl.

- Go outside, please. - Ma'am?

Just go outside.

I can go out too, if you like.

No, it's okay.

As long as you don't mind seeing some boob.

Does she have any brothers or sisters?

No, this is the only one.

James and I have been trying for a while.

Had some trouble getting pregnant.

- James is your husband? - Yeah. He goes by Jim.

But I like James better.

Well, he must trust my husband. He's supporting him.

James doesn't know what that word means.

- Trust? - Yeah. The whole town knows it.

He runs after anything in a skirt.

Which I don't mind so much, to be honest.

I mean, I've had a fling or two myself.

What I don't like is how he lies about it.

And then, when he asks me if I've been with someone

and I say yes, he flips out.

Like there's some kind of double standard.

I mean, he wants to dog Christy Mulligan

in the back of her brand new Escalade?

Fine. Why shouldn't I be able to give Kyle Beckenbauer some head

for building Kayla's crib?

I'm sorry.

This is what happens when you don't sleep for three months.

You two fight? You and your husband?

Every married couple fights.

I mean, really fight. Like, the cops get called.

Or they would, if he wasn't the president.

'Cause I mean,

the sheriff is practically a family member at this point.

Now we're fighting about the damn election.

Like those stupid yard signs.

Sometimes, I wish I could just pull up stakes and leave him.

But I can't. Why not?

Because of this little one.

Last in vitro we did, I said to myself,

if this one doesn't work, I'm outta here.

We had to double mortgage the house to pay for it.

But it worked. And... here I am.

If I was like you... didn't have a kid...

Can I tell you a secret?

No mother will admit this, but sometimes I fantasize,

like, like this pillow here...

I mean, and when Kayla was in her crib.

Two minutes. That's all it would take, and I could go.

And I wouldn't be stuck to a man I want to leave,

rubbing lotion on my nipples, they're so raw.

I could start over.

Of course, I don't mean it. I mean, I'd never to do that.

But... you have thoughts.

You know what, Suzie,

I think I've taken up too much of your time.

You know I'm not serious, right?

Of course.

I'm sorry. I'm just...

I'm so tired.

You're a really good listener.

I wish you were running for president.

Hey, you can tell them I'm for your husband if you want.

I probably won't even caucus.

Good luck to you, Suzie.

Mrs. Underwood, did she change her mind?

No, she stuck to her guns.

But you can't blame a woman for having conviction.

The president just called for you.

I'll call him back from the car.

Listen to me. What I'm about to say, I don't want you to panic.

What is it?

The journal. Dunbar claims she has it.

- But how? - I don't know.

It looks like it might have been Doug.

- He was supposed to-- - I know. It's hard for me to believe.

No, Francis. This can't happen.

Meechum is tracking him down now.

Sweetheart, listen to me.

No, the whole thing, it-- The whole thing--

All she did was make the threat.

That doesn't mean she actually has it.

Whatever you have to do. Just fix it, Francis.

I will, I promise you that.

But in the meantime, you have to come back here.

I need you to get to the plane. You have to come back.

I don't want you there, out on the road, if we get blindsided.

Claire? Claire.

I'll come home.

You go straight to the plane. We'll say you weren't feeling well.

Okay.

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,

the courage to change the things I can,

and the wisdom to know the difference.

Keep coming back. It works if you work it.

So?

You honestly believed he'd go for this?

Yeah.

The writing is good. And it's honest.

But what candidate in their right mind

would want something like this out there?

I need you to write about it. That he's trying to suppress this.

- What you need is sleep. - Do this for me, Kate.

- I can't. It's a conflict of interest. - Come on.

The moment we slept together, we crossed the line.

Fuck the line!

I'm not risking my reputation because your book is dead.

Oh, no. Not dead.

I'm gonna finish it.

I'll change the names if I have to, call it fiction.

He's the President of the United States.

- So what? - He crushes people.

Let this go. Just start something new.

"Start something new."

Jesus... Christ, you don't get it.

I do it all the time.

My editor passes on a story, I move on to the next one.

I'm so fucking disappointed in you right now.

Me?

I'm the one trying to save you from your own delusions.

That's exactly what he said.

Maybe he's right.

I almost felt something for you.

Come in.

Let me take your coat.

Can I get you anything? Something to drink?

No. No, I'm good. Thanks.

I appreciate the home visit, but I'm not gonna change my mind.

No, no. I didn't think you would.

Something wrong?

I don't know what to do.

I figured...

when I asked you to join the campaign,

I just assumed you would say yes.

That the two of us, we would be working together.

And...

I... I...

I can't stop thinking about you.

You're married, Jackie.

For the wrong reasons.

I thought you loved each other.

Not like this.

I'm not the person I want to be.

You're who you need to be. Look at what you've achieved.

But you did it. You gave it all up.

In a heartbeat.

We're different people.

You should go.

Put this behind you.

I guess it was naive to think that we could remain close.

So this is it?

Yeah. It is.

Jackie?

Jackie...

She says she has it.

She doesn't.

How do I know there aren't other copies?

Where do you keep your cigarettes?

In the bowl up there.

Why didn't you destroy it when I first asked you to?

I don't know.

Something stopped me. Maybe I would need it one day.

For you. To prove my loyalty.

You told her. I'd hardly call that loyalty.

I had to show her I was serious.

The journal was a way to do that.

I never came close to putting it in her possession.

Anything else I should know?

I'm sober. It's been 87 days.

I meant in regards to Dunbar.

It is related. This is a tight race.

Make me your Chief of Staff.

You promised.

You promised there'd be a place for me here when I was ready.

That was before you fell off the wagon

and walked in here with that journal.

I've made mistakes.

I've fallen down more than once,

and you've always been there to pick me up.

But you've been falling down for the past year, too,

and you need someone to pick you up this time.

It's not Remy. It's not Seth.

It's me, Frank.

And how can I know I can ever trust you again?

Because I just lit two million dollars on fire.

We expect higher than usual turnout, anywhere from 180 to 220.

The higher the turnout, the better.

We're stronger with women and students.

- We've got a GOTV-- - Excuse me, I have to take this.

Doug?

I have an update regarding the journal.

What is it?

A message from the president.

I have only one thing to say.

Go fuck yourself.

Christ, that felt good.

Start putting together a shortlist

of potential nominees for the court.

You already...?

I'm on it, sir.

Claire.

Want me to have them make you something

from the downstairs kitchen?

No, I ate on the plane. Just feeling a little warm.

It'll pass.

What did Doug say?

It's destroyed.

I watched him burn the page myself.

- What about copies? - He says there aren't any.

And you trust him?

He had ample opportunity to do us real damage and he didn't.

- But he held onto it for so long-- - I believe him, Claire.

I believe him.

And I'm gonna make him my Chief of Staff.

Are you out of your mind?

We need him, Claire. We need him now more than ever.

He betrayed us, Francis!

He told Dunbar about me.

To gain her trust, not betray ours.

Look, Doug is the only person we've ever been able to trust,

and he played this very smart.

He never put us in any real danger.

The journal is gone. She can't do anything.

Why didn't you ask me before you brought him back?

- Bec-- We're discussing it now. - After you hired him!

Look. I know this must have been harrowing for you,

- but listen, it is ov-- - No. I don't--

I'm starting to question all of it, Francis.

What any of it is worth. What... what are we doing this for?

For this house.

For the presidency.

Now, look, if you need to take a few days off, that's fine.

You do not have to come with me to Iowa tomorrow.

No. Of course, I'll be there.

Welcome back, Doug. Congratulations.

Thank you.

I just wanted to get a heads up on

when you'd like to make the formal announcement.

Let's do it after the caucus.

I don't want to draw any attention away from the campaign.

You probably shouldn't attend the press briefing today.

No. I'll take off before then.

Here, you should see this.

This just came out ten minutes ago.

Have you shown the president?

I drafted up some talking points.

I figured you'd want to brief him.

I'll be in my office.

Seth.

The president told me you asked for the job.

Yeah, I didn't realize that you were in contention.

I don't want you to resent me.

Hey, I'm a professional.

Let me know if you want any changes made to the talking points.

I'm sure they're good.

You can share 'em with the president.

You don't want to look 'em over first?

No. I trust your judgment.

I can tell you that the shortlist is coming along,

and it is my intention to nominate someone

within the next two or three weeks.

It's very important that we do this quickly,

so that the Senate has time for their hearings.

And we shouldn't leave that seat empty too long anyway,

while the Court is still in session.

- Mr. President? - Sara.

Mr. President, would you comment on Ms. Baldwin's article

about the Jordan Valley operation?

I think Ms. Baldwin's article

is really nothing more than speculation.

- But the evidence... - I'm sorry?

But the evidence she presents is convincing.

Evidence? A letter?

Unfortunately, I have to write letters like that

more often than I would like.

And I don't think it's proof of anything more than

I reached out to the family of a young man

who sacrificed his life for our country

and for which I am eternally grateful.

Mr. President?

Well, Ms. Baldwin, it is your article we're discussing.

I suppose I'd get hammered

if I didn't allow you to ask a question.

Thank you, Mr. President. My question is very straightforward.

You mentioned in the letter

that Lieutenant Nix died in a training exercise.

You signed this letter with your own hand.

Can you tell us in all honesty that this is how he died?

I can tell you that

this is exactly what the Pentagon reported to me.

And beyond that, it's not the policy of this administration

or the Department of Defense to discuss any specifics

about any Special Forces deaths.

May I ask one more, please?

I believe we're finished with that subject now.

It's about Iowa.

Yes, all right. Go ahead.

Your wife has been doing a lot of events.

Did she resign her post at the United Nations

because you think she's more valuable as a campaign asset

than an ambassador?

Claire has been doing a lot of events, that is true,

as she has in every campaign that I have ever run.

I'm hoping, I suppose my strategy is that if the American people

can see that I was smart enough

to marry an extraordinary woman like Claire,

well, they might think I'm smart enough

to be President of the United States.

As for the ambassadorship,

that was entirely her decision, not mine.

She enjoys campaigning, and I'm looking forward to getting back

to Iowa with her a little later today.

Thank you all very much.

We know he's somewhere near Caracas.

I need him back.

The Venezuelans haven't been cooperating.

We have extradition.

Doesn't mean they'll enforce.

Then get me a precise location.

Why?

It doesn't concern you.

It does concern me. There are a lot of people

at the agency who are embarrassed that

he crossed the border without us knowing.

That's not my problem.

Was it you? Passport lock?

The only other agency that could've lifted it is Homeland.

I know you have friends there.

I have friends everywhere.

I'm not gonna help you clean up your mess, Doug.

Not if you helped him escape.

This isn't a request.

I'm Chief of Staff to the president now.

- He hasn't announced anyone. - He will.

And if you want my first official task

to be finding your replacement, so be it.

If not, you tell me where Gavin is.

I watched the press conference this morning.

I think the Baldwin article will blow over.

A non-story. No legs.

You said it was my decision to resign.

Well, it was, wasn't it?

I mean, at least that's how we presented it.

I spoke with a woman yesterday in Iowa, who...

said she couldn't support us...

because she doesn't trust you.

Well, I'm not the first politician that some people don't trust.

We've been lying for a long time, Francis.

Of course we have. Imagine what the voters would think

if we started telling the truth.

Not to them.

To each other.