House.of.Cards.S04E08

I just love your writing, Tom,

ever since Scorpio.

I think it just gets better and better.

Oh, yeah? What else have you read?

All of them.

I thought the latest was brilliant, God's Cauldron.

- You read that? - In one sitting.

But what we'd really love to read

is your book on the Underwoods.

Well, it's changed. It's fiction now.

But based on them.

People might draw parallels.

Would the Underwoods find it flattering?

I don't think they'd be too happy with it.

How do you think it'll do?

- Who knows? - Better than God's Cauldron, I hope.

Sales were disappointing, weren't they?

In fact, they've been disappointing

on everything you've written the past ten years.

We can change that with this new book.

I'm not a political tool.

We didn't fly you up here because my wife's a fan.

I'm sure you had a notion of what we're after.

I didn't have any expectations.

I just came because I was curious.

Well, then let me satisfy your curiosity.

If your book can hurt the Underwoods,

we want it to be published before the election,

and we want it to be big.

Dana Treister, do you know her?

The editor of Vanity Fair.

That's right. She's a close friend.

And Ben Grant, founder of Pollyhop.

I saw the webcast.

They don't manipulate search results,

but let's just say a big spread in Vanity Fair...

Nice juicy excerpt,

profile on Thomas Yates, his literary comeback.

We're on the cover this month, but... next month it could be you.

I'm on the Marxist side of Democrat.

Why would I help a Republican?

You'd be helping yourself, Tom.

And if that helps us a little bit along the way,

what's the harm in that?

Senator Dean Austen of Ohio,

the leadership's top choice for running mate.

Twelve years in Congress,

helps us with a major swing state,

middle of the road, very few enemies,

and most importantly to them, long-time friend of the NRA.

Now his shortcomings are he's another middle-aged white guy,

underwhelming, unimaginative

and a long-time friend of the NRA.

So you can see how I feel about the leadership's choice.

Senator.

I'm honored, Mr. President.

I just have one major reservation.

- Claire. - Yes, sir.

Well, between you and me,

I'm not even sure this gun bill is gonna pass.

But if I'm being asked to support it,

you know the sort of hot water--

Yes, but I need you on the ticket

to balance our stance on guns.

We have to appeal to the Republicans as well.

And look, I'm not asking you to get behind the bill,

just not to publicly trash it.

I know this is an important issue to you.

It is important,

but not as much as an experienced

leader who can deliver Ohio.

Then consider me on board, sir.

We're not sure we can get this to the floor before the election.

That's the deal we made.

You get Austen, we get the gun bill.

We need a strong Senate version first,

so we don't have two weak bills going into reconciliation.

You want Austen, you will make this bill a reality.

Or, we can revisit the choice for running mate.

No... let us see what we can do.

I'll call Mitchell.

Gentlemen,

the future vice president.

- Congratulations, Dean. - Thank you very much.

- Welcome. - Thank you. Mrs. Underwood.

- Nice to meet you. - Very nice to meet you.

So, how's it going in here?

Well, I think we're in alignment. Wouldn't you say?

It's been a productive meeting.

So, let's talk about when we should announce.

I, uh, I need to soften the blow to the NRA

before we go public.

It's imperative we keep a lid on this.

No leaks until we're ready.

Just the four of us in this room.

And Claire, of course.

Well, I need to go do this quick interview.

Um, let me know how it goes with Mitchell.

All right, I'm sure you have some--

Oh, leave that open. It gets so stuffy in here.

Let's discuss the timing.

Was it you or the First Lady?

- First Lady all the way. - She thinks she can win me over?

She knows you'll hit harder than anyone else.

If she's still standing by the end, maybe the bill has sea legs.

- Kate. - Good morning, Mrs. Underwood.

How about we talk in the Roosevelt Room?

Support in the House is already wavering.

The public's losing interest in guns.

Don't you want to wait until we sit down?

Your staff only scheduled an hour. I want to make the most of it.

Oh, it's being used.

Let's find somewhere else.

Kate?

Well, historically, gun reform comes and goes in waves,

as you know, so I believe this time, it can be truly different.

All the data's filtered here, within these walls.

My analysts do a first pass, but ultimately,

I do the final round myself.

Our biggest concern is security.

Top-grade firewall, same as you guys use at NSA headquarters.

What about internal security?

I'm the only one with full access.

So, if you do find anything,

how do you communicate that to us in a secure way?

In person.

I'll come to Fort Meade myself, or you come here.

No hardware leaves the premises.

Can you walk us through how the filtering algorithms work?

We'll take firearms, for instance.

If we start with everyone who legally owns a gun,

track geo-location patterns through their phones,

we start to put together a portrait

of where gun-owners live, eat, shop, everything.

From this, we predict everyone who might want a firearm,

but who isn't registered.

They're likely to exhibit the same behavior as people who are.

You can use that for people who are interested in Arabic,

uh, wanna travel to the Middle East,

who are disillusioned with the U.S. Government...

So the same techniques that

we're using for our international surveillance.

Yes...

but far more advanced.

Okay, turn a little bit towards me, Mrs. Conway.

Right.

You look great, Hannah.

- What about the candidate? - Don't get me started, Will.

- You're really photogenic. - I know.

Franny Wallace, senior year.

- The all-Goldfish diet. - Did you have these put here specially?

We roll out the platinum carpet, darling.

I wonder what Franny's up to now.

Hmm, not the Editor of Vanity Fair, I'll tell you that.

Or about to be the First Lady.

Come a long way, haven't we?

Yeah, Will and I, um... Will and I appreciate your doing this.

It's not charity.

This issue will sell like crazy with you two on the front.

Well, I feel like I should return the favor.

A night in the Lincoln Bedroom?

A story.

You have a copy for me?

An excerpt.

- I need the whole book. - That's all you get.

Conway got the same thing.

- That was a mistake, Tom. - They came to me.

But they don't get to publish... without my approval.

So what do you want?

- A meeting. - For?

You're just a messenger, Doug.

You got your message.

One week.

Thanks for the coffee.

Mrs. Underwood, welcome.

Thank you so much for recording this robocall.

It'll go a long way in getting this bill passed.

Well, thank you for all the extraordinary work you're doing.

Uh, where would you like me?

Uh, Sally will show you where we set up for the recording.

Right this way, Mrs. Underwood.

LeAnn...

What is that?

Names, phone numbers, emails.

A quarter million fresh targets.

A quarter million? Where'd you get this?

No return address.

It's 50 times the names that we have.

Is it legit?

Looks like it. We made sample calls.

Hello, this is Claire Underwood.

I need to confess something...

something I'm not proud to confess.

When I was sitting beside my husband in the hospital...

all I thought about was me.

My fear. My pain if I was to lose him.

And it was selfish.

I-- I wasn't thinking about everyone else

who had gone through that fear and pain,

who had to sit where I was sitting

because a loved one was shot by someone who shouldn't have a gun.

I'm ashamed because I've never done anything about it.

I'm ashamed of how many lives we could've saved.

How many families we could've kept from suffering.

We should all be ashamed, every one of us,

because the blood is on all of our hands,

and doing nothing is the same as pulling a trigger.

We need to do something.

And that means changing the law.

Senator Austen's office.

More than 500 since this afternoon.

From our district?

We have it light.

I'm hearing that other offices have gotten over a thousand.

Senator Austen's office. I will take a message.

Francis.

You really shouldn't.

Oh, one won't kill me.

Did you finish it?

Yeah.

One part really caught my eye.

"A chasm opened up between them,

a hallway less than ten yards wide.

But it might as well have been a thousand miles.

A well-appointed no man's land

with a plush carpet and high ceiling between two bedrooms.

In it were two centuries of ghosts,

all the Presidents and First Ladies before them.

But also the ghost... of their marriage.

A thirty years' war that left them both dead inside

and this dead space between them."

He's perceptive.

Uncanny.

Well, it's not who we are. Not anymore.

People will want to believe it's true even if it's false.

What do you think it is he wants to accomplish?

He came here one night, after I'd asked you to resign.

He said he was obsessed.

Or maybe he wants back in.

You felt something for him.

Maybe for a moment.

- Did you? - No, I don't think so.

I felt...

I felt like he saw me.

Me, too.

Mr. Barnes.

I couldn't stop thinking, since you called...

about Zoe.

- I guess I want answers. - That-- That's what I want, too.

- What is it you want to know? - Was there... a relationship?

With Underwood?

When she was 17, just before she went off to school...

she found out I was having an affair.

Sales rep, some drug company.

Blonde. You know.

This isn't, you know, on the record.

No... No, not if you don't want it to be.

You said she found out.

She gave me three days to tell her mother, or she would...

I'm sorry, I had a few drinks.

- Did you tell her? - Yeah, I told her.

We split up.

Zoe didn't talk to me much after that.

I don't know anything about Underwood.

I'm the last person she would've told.

I wish I would've... made more of an effort...

to reach out to her.

Are you driving, Mr. Barnes?

Yeah.

- I'm almost home. - You should pull over.

Did you find out anything?

Anything you can tell me?

She didn't have a lot of friends at the Herald.

Um, from what I can gather,

she didn't have any close friends at all.

I spoke to some people in her neighborhood...

but nothing so far.

Will you?

- If you... - Yeah, of course, of course.

If you think of anything...

Yeah.

Then what were you doing there?

If I do a meeting at the White House,

I don't have to explain myself, Julia.

This bill might pass.

- I realize that. - Are you helping them?

Absolutely not.

- Julia. - Mrs. Underwood.

Sorry, I'd shake your hand, but I just got back from a run.

Listen, I wanted to say,

I know our meeting last time didn't go very well,

and that's on me. It was rude, what I said,

and I hope you'll accept my apology.

Have a seat, please.

You ever been in the residence before?

The personal touch isn't going to bring me on board.

Neither will a few thousand calls to Congress.

84,000 in less than 24 hours.

But let's put that aside for a moment

- and talk about your good friend. - Who?

- Senator Austen. - He told me. Running mate.

Oh, not just running mate.

You said I wouldn't have to support this bill.

Yes, but a lot can change in a day, Dean.

We had no idea there'd be this sort of groundswell.

Julia Melman was all over

my ass even for being in the same room as you.

Did you tell her?

- I had to. - Christ, Dean...

It was that, or make an enemy for life.

She's upset, but I think she'll come around,

unless you make me endorse

closing the gun show and Internet loopholes.

Then she'll go ballistic.

Dean wouldn't do that. We've poured millions into his campaigns.

And now he doesn't need you anymore.

Are you trying to intimidate me? To get us to back down?

No, I have an offer.

Ohio's a tough state for Democrats.

Julia's been very good to me.

Loyalty's important, I understand,

but your loyalty has to be with me now.

I just can't do it.

All right, then we'll cancel the announcement.

I'll find someone else to be my running mate.

No, I mean, I... I just can't support this bill.

Oh, but you see, the two go hand in hand now.

So, are you on the ticket or not?

What if the gun bill passes in the House, but not the Senate?

In return for what?

You convince the senator to pull out.

Now, the leadership wants him, and we've played nice,

but the president and I want Cathy Durant.

She's a much stronger candidate.

You're willing to abandon your own bill?

If it's means beating Conway or beating you,

that's not a hard choice.

I already told Dean that

I could live with him being running mate.

How do I backtrack?

Just watch the news tomorrow.

You made the right choice.

- I hope so. - Well, don't hope so, know so.

And I'll have Seth send you a copy of the speech.

You can show the senator out now, thank you.

Yes, sir.

- Oh, I'm sorry. - It's okay. Come in.

- What did he say? - He'll do it. What did she say?

That she'll think about it.

How do we know she won't tell him our plans?

I told her if she does,

we'll make sure the bill goes through the Senate.

Can you hand me a towel, please?

- Meechum's hand. - What?

I traced it on a wall downstairs... A while back.

They've painted over it. Oh, never mind.

Francis, I've been thinking about Yates.

The Conways have everything.

They have their children, their videos, their Twitter.

There are very few people who understand us.

Meechum... was one.

Tom is another.

Eight...

Seven. Nice.

Mr. Long Pants.

Mr. Nice Shoes. Go! Go, go, go.

- Go! - Are you hungry?

No money. You need to go. You and your money, go.

- I'm calling the cops. - All right, all right.

- The cops, right now... - All right, all right.

- I'm calling the cops. - All right, all right.

Ma'am...

I'm Officer Tom.

You called for me?

There was a man here.

A very bad man.

- Do you live on this block? - Thirty-three years.

Did you ever see this bad man on your block?

Did you ever see this bad man on your block?

All right.

What about this woman? Did you ever see her?

- Pretty. - Yes, yes, she is.

Whore!

- Go away! - Why'd you say that?

- Go away. Go away. - Why'd you say that? Tell me.

Tell Officer Tom. Why did you call her that word?

Go away!

Built this myself, with my son.

He's doing El Capitan next spring.

Free-climb.

I feel like running for president

is like climbing a cliff without a safety rope.

How is it the press don't know you're here, by the way?

Just like you, General,

I take Sundays off to spend time with family and friends.

Or to make new friends.

Look, Governor, I know you still want me to resign.

But I was wrong to threaten that.

Dreyer told me ICO took over another oil field this week.

They're growing.

Dreyer shares a lot with you, doesn't he?

This is happening on your watch, General.

The president isn't acting and you can't force him to.

Not if you stay.

If you resign, though, I promise it'll only be temporary.

Once I get political, I can't cross back over the line.

I don't mean a recommission.

I mean making you my running mate.

Thank you.

- Have you read it? - Just an excerpt. It's powerful.

And it'll be controversial. Say yes and I'll show you.

The Telegraph would never let me.

- Same parent company, both our titles. - Doesn't matter.

Paper is strict when it comes to moonlighting.

It does matter, because my dad is on the board.

One call to your editor...

There... there are plenty of people who would jump at doing this.

Not who know him intimately.

My new election correspondent,

he saw you and Yates sneaking off on the campaign trail.

Yates will open up to you.

I'm sure you know what buttons to push.

It's a conflict of interest.

My dad showed me that article you wrote.

The one that never went to print where you called him a tyrant.

Some of us have built our careers on our reputations,

not by having their daddies give them a magazine to play with.

Or by cozying up to old school chums, right?

I've heard it all before.

You may not like me, you may not like the Conways,

but I have to believe you can stomach us better

than another four years of President Underwood.

- Well, the writing is good. - I know.

Not good enough to strong-arm a president.

Well, good enough to get me in this room.

I thought Francis made it very clear to you,

you were not to challenge us.

Yeah. He said he would tell the world

I didn't write Scorpio.

I hope you understand

that we can't allow you to print this before the election.

I do.

Then why did you want to meet?

I need an ending.

I have one I can live with, but not the one I love.

- Because it's false. - Well, it's true that you left.

If I left, I wouldn't be here.

I don't believe for a second

you went to visit your mother because she was sick.

And why is that?

Because you never mentioned her one time to me.

Saying nothing says a lot sometimes.

Well, what if the story isn't about how she left,

but how she came back.

Just because you're here doesn't mean you're here.

Well, wouldn't you like to know?

Don't you want your ending?

Are you gonna tell me about it?

About the two of you? No lies.

No, I'm not going to tell you anything.

You can observe, like you did before.

The difference is everything you see this time will be yours.

And in return, we would like something.

Speeches. We need someone who knows us...

and knows our voices.

A speechwriter? You're kidding.

It's the only way to justify you being with us...

in case the press ask.

You want to keep an eye on me.

Well, I think that's fair. Don't you?

If you're keeping an eye on us?

So you gave us a week. We'll give you a day.

It was right here, on this very spot,

that I was shot with two bullets

from an illegally obtained handgun.

Secret Service Agent Edward Meechum,

a marine and my friend,

was slain with the bullets from that very same gun.

The public support...

for the First Lady's... Universal Background Check Bill

has been deafening in these last few days.

We have heard from thousands and thousands of voices,

and today, we would like to add one more voice to that chorus.

And it is a powerful voice.

Senator Dean Austen of Ohio.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I've been a member of the NRA since I was a teenager.

I've always been a fierce advocate for gun rights.

But today I want to offer my strong support

for the First Lady's bill.

Here you go.

- Let me ask you another question. - I'm tellin' you, man,

if you say she lived on the block, I believe you.

But she must not have liked pizza,

'cause I don't remember ever seein' her face.

Not her. President Underwood.

Oh, Christ, I can't get away from this guy.

His wife just called me. Robocall about guns.

You ever seen him around this neighborhood?

Oh, yeah. All the time.

With the Queen of England, Friday nights, after bowling.

When he was in Congress.

Nah, never once.

I would've remembered. I'm good with faces.

- Parmesan? - Over there.

I saw this guy a few times, though.

- The senator? - No, the, uh, the dead guy.

The Secret Service guy.

In here?

Yeah, a while back. He used to stop in for coffee.

Never any pizza, just coffee.

- You're positive? - Yeah. I told you, I'm good with faces.

"The wheels lifted, and within seconds,

Washington fell away, disappearing under a blanket of haze and smog.

Forehead pressed to the window,

she imagined this was exactly

how it must have looked a thousand years ago,

when the sun rose above the clouds

and there was nothing but a swamp beneath.

From this height, with this view,

she could be anywhere.

But the important thing is she was anywhere but there."

- You want another? - Yeah.

Did he say why?

Okay, thanks, Dana.

Yates pulled out.

Said he came to an agreement with the Underwoods.

He was playing us off each other.

We could still leak the excerpt.

It's too risky. If we get away with it, great.

If we don't,

we look like opportunists fucking over an acclaimed novelist.

It's not worth it.

Do you think it's true, that chasm between them?

Who knows?

I love that writing.

- I wish I could've read the rest of it. - I hated Scorpio.

- It was beautiful. - It's garbage.

- Why? - The main character's a pussy.

- Will, you know I hate that word. - He is.

He lets his best friend kill himself. He does nothing?

He was in pain. He was going to die anyway.

It doesn't matter. It's cowardly.

I think he was brave. And his friend.

And I think Yates was brave to write it.

Brave is never giving up. You fight, no matter what.

So, Kate Baldwin was willing if Yates was in?

Yeah, Dana was giving her 20,000 words.

I think we can pivot.

How?

Get her back on the phone.

- Julia. - Olivia, I didn't know you were in town.

Oh, just a little visit.

I miss seeing Dean's face sometimes. Don't tell him that.

- Will you give us a few minutes? - No, she should stay.

Oh, I know you have things to discuss.

Like your husband withdrawing from the ticket.

That's why she's in town, right? For the announcement.

I know the press conference must've caught you off guard,

but the president didn't want you to know.

- He thought you'd organize a protest. - He was right. I would've.

My plan was to sit down, talk this out before the announcement.

There isn't gonna be an announcement.

You... you can't waltz in here--

We've raised $20 million

for your husband since he was a freshman.

That gives me the right to waltz in whenever I want.

- Show some respect. - Honey, please.

No. This is what we wanted.

- What we've worked for. - When Underwood loses,

you'll spend the next two years fighting off a primary opponent.

Every one of our 200,000 members in Ohio will turn on you.

By the time you've lost this office,

Olivia's law firm will go tits up.

Don't forget, we pushed most of your clients your way.

He got cold feet. What can I do?

Convince him to change his mind.

He wouldn't listen. He says the NRA came down hard on him.

Because you had him do the press conference.

No, that was Austen's idea, not mine.

I told him to lay low,

but he said if he was in, he wanted to be all in.

The idea was to balance the ticket.

Well, we can't do anything about Austen.

The question now is who do we get to replace him?

Go back to the list?

He was fine, but I'm not enthused by anyone else on that list.

Let's not go back to square one, Mr. President.

We have a good list.

Everybody can get behind those names.

It's common sense.

The only problem with common sense is that it's so... common.

I think we can do better.

Who?

Cathy Durant.

Now, Louisiana's not a swing state, I know that.

But she is still a national figure,

she helps us with the women's vote,

and I trust her.

What about guns?

I don't think she's ever had a strong position.

It's better than that. She's never uttered a word on the issue.

We checked.

- I like it. - So do I.

- But I had another thought. - Who?

Not "Who." How.

I don't think I should choose her.

I think the party should choose her.

Not an open convention.

Look, Bob, let's...

We have to face the fact that

my health is gonna be a major liability for us.

No matter who becomes the running mate,

they could well end up being president.

Now, that is a...

a scenario that I don't even like to fathom,

but we can't escape it.

And if it's such an important decision,

why not let the party make it?

Because it'd be a free-for-all.

No, no. We make it so that Cathy wins.

We'll just make it look like the party chose her.

And think of the coverage. We'll own the news.

You want the convention to be a circus.

Oh, Bob, I'm not sure if you've noticed or not,

but politics is no longer just theater, it's show business.

So let's put on the best show in town.

Great.

Will you give me a salute, General?

Active military aren't allowed to speak to the press.

He delivered his resignation this morning.

No shit.

We're gonna break it online as soon as the president accepts it.

Not often a monthly gets raw meat like this, huh?

His phone's gonna blow up.

But you get the exclusive.

- Sorry about Tom. - I'm not.

Thank you, General.

All right, we're gonna go set up for the...

Good afternoon, General. Kate Baldwin.

Shall we?

So, the main issue that Mrs. Underwood

has been focusing on is guns, obviously.

We've got some talking points we've been using,

- so you'll want to... - I'm sorry, is there any water?

Yes.

I'm a bit hungover.

At least I'm not still drunk.

Want some?

Uh, we're fine.

Right.

So...

to the talking points.

What is it?

Excuse me for a moment, gentlemen.

What I want to communicate mostly is about the death toll,

with personal stories, things that connect with--

Claire.

- Tom. - Mr. President.

Can we speak?

I'll, uh... I'll leave you to it.

Does she actually give a shit about guns?

What's that got to do with anything?

We knew this was a possibility.

He's gonna make a lot of noise. It's Conway, I'm sure of it.

Problem isn't Conway, it's LeAnn.

She pressured us to cancel the air strike.

We chose our path, Doug. Let's not second-guess it.

No offense, Mrs. Underwood, but she's doing damage.

I think we should replace her.

She's the reason we're gonna pass the gun bill.

Sir? I just got this from Dana Treister,

the editor of Vanity Fair.

Not sure what it means...

He's gonna make that son of a bitch his running mate.

- What's goin' on? - I'll see what I can dig up on him.

No. He was fully vetted

when he was commissioned for the Joint Chiefs.

No, you go with Seth and draft a statement on the resignation.

- Yes, sir. Let's go. - What's going on, Doug?

And it's LeAnn's fault.

He never would've resigned if it wasn't for her.

See what you can find.

On the general? The president said we shouldn't.

On LeAnn.

Hey, I don't wanna get involved in some cage match--

I thought we had an understanding. Your obedience.

I'll see what I can do.

Do you agree with Doug? You're having reservations about LeAnn?

Less about her and more about Tom.

But I told you I trust you on this, so I'm trusting you.

- Has the leadership agreed yet? - They're skeptical.

We can use this.

Well, gentlemen, if there was

any doubt about an open convention, let it go,

because we're gonna wanna bury this news.

Brockhart has just resigned.

And the general is about to appear on the cover of Vanity Fair.

Imagine what Conway can do with that.

Conway! Conway! Conway!

Thank you for coming.

Thank you for coming. Thank you! Thank you!

Thank you for coming out.

- Dana just sent me this. - So great to see you.

The story broke.

- Hello. - Isn't my wife perfect?

Thank you.

Let her know how perfect you think she is!

Stop it.

You're too much!

- Thank you! Thank you! - Conway! Conway! Conway!

Yeah, I know, Fausto.

I get exhausted just thinking about it, too.

All right.

A journey of a thousand miles.