

"THE INSIDER"

Written by

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FADE IN:

All we can see is black filling the screen... Black on black...

INT. A JEEP, LEBANON - DAY

And we're in a speeding SOVIET JEEP... Two men in front, shouldering assault rifles. HEZBOLLAH SOLDIERS... And there are three MEN in the back. A middle-aged Man wearing a tired suit and tinted sunglasses trying to hold on. And on either side of him, two Men, blindfolded. The man on one side is in his forties, hands pressed in the pockets of a well-travelled black-leather jacket... A stocky man, with the edge of a J.D. Salinger character, he's seen everything at least once. But even he has lost some of his self-confidence, here, turning his head, sensing the wind, a blast of Arabic music that disappears behind him... He's LOWELL BERGMAN. On the other side of the man in the tired suit is a lanky Man with a voltmeter around his neck, NORMAN.

EXT. THE BEQA'A VALLEY, BAALBEK, LEBANON - DAY

The Jeep races up narrow winding streets of a Lebanese village. It's shadowed by a Jeep in front, and in back, each carrying personnel armed with AK's and a few RPG's... And in the third Jeep are two blindfolded, not very threatening Lebanese soldiers. And as the speeding convoy passes a captured Israeli Armored Personnel Carrier covered with Arabic graffiti, looking down on them from huge murals are the stern visages of the Ayatollah Khomeini, and a Hezbollah religious leader, the Sheikh Fadlallah... And, suddenly the convoy skids to a stop... And blindfolded Lowell and Norman are roughly taken out, and pushed, stumbling, through the cloud of dust without sight... The lanky cameraman is stopped, told to wait, while Lowell is pushed past armed men guarding a small stone house, and inside...

INT. A HOUSE IN LEBANON - DAY

A round-faced Man in his mid-forties, with large-framed glasses, black hair and a grey-black beard, wearing a dull bend, a turban, sits informally at a kitchen table... It's the Sheikh Fadlallah whose face stares out at us from walls. A Gunman cradling an AK-47 sits in an incongruous purple armchair in a corner. A torn poster of the Seychelles is on one wall. Another Gunman stands by a window. Lowell is sat down in a chair at the kitchen table...

THE SHEIKH

Coffee?

LOWELL

Yeah... Thank you.

THE SHEIKH

How have you liked your stay?

LOWELL

(droll)

What I've seen... I've liked.

The Sheikh smiles. And the smile passes as quickly as it came. A steaming cup of coffee in a small Arabic demitasse is put down.

THE SHEIKH

Please to explain, why I should agree to interview... with pro-Zionist American media?

LOWELL

Because I think Hezbollah is trying to broaden into a political party right now. So you care about what you're thought of in America. And in America, at this moment in time, Hezbollah does not have a face.

(confident)

That's why.

And we've first realized this man is not a hostage; he's come here voluntarily.

THE SHEIKH

Perhaps you prove journalism objectivity and I see the questions first. Then I decide if I grant the interview.

LOWELL

(blunt)
No. We don't do that.

(beat)
You've seen "60 Minutes" and Mike Wallace. So you know our reputation for integrity and objectivity. You also know we are the highest-rated, most-respected, TV-magazine news show in America.

The Sheikh quietly looks out his glasses at him, studying him. And Lowell "closes":

LOWELL
So. Mr. Wallace. Should he get on a plane or not?

The Sheikh thinks it over and then...

THE SHEIKH
Tell him I will see him day after tomorrow.

LOWELL
That's good. That works.
(after a beat)
Uh, you know, I want to ask you something... I know it sounds odd... but...

It's quiet... too quiet...

LOWELL
Hello, Sheikh...?
(no answer)
Hello, Sheikh...?

Silence. He hesitates, starts to lift his blindfold... He lifts it. And he sees the Sheikh, and his gunmen, are gone.

The house empty. Only his Cameraman, the lanky man, left there, standing by the door still in his blindfold...

LOWELL
Norman.

NORMAN
What? What?

LOWELL
Take your blindfold off.

The lanky man does and we see the cameraman is Asian-American.

LOWELL
(sarcastic)
Welcome to the world.

Norman gives Lowell an ironic look and tests the local current at an electrical outlet.

NORMAN
Fluctuating all over the place.
Anywhere we shoot, here, it's gonna
be portable gennies and we'll run
cable...

Lowell nods and opens the curtains from this commanding height. Baalbek and the Beqa'a Valley below gold-domed mosques. A moment of triumph. He dials his cell phone...

MIKE WALLACE'S VOICE
(over)
Hello?

LOWELL
(into phone)
Mike, it's me. We're on...

And we hear people laughing and encouraging "go ahead... open it..."

INT. A LABORATORY, BROWN & WILLIAMSON, LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY -
DAY

We're in a SCIENCE LABORATORY... OUT OF FOCUS LAB TECHNICIANS, in white lab coats, celebrating a heavysset Black woman's birthday... Half her presents are opened. Balloons, incongruous, floating above the lab... And there's a sense that somebody is watching... And from the waist up, a disembodied figure comes into FOCUS behind a glass partition, as if quarantined, isolated, an expressionless MAN in his late forties, watching them...

INT. JEFFREY WIGAND'S OFFICE - DAY

The office soundproofed, he watches the people laughing, their lips moving. His hair not yet settled on grey, his face is changing, always interesting. Born in the Bronx, educated in Upstate New York, he retains little of the accent and much of the directness. He's JEFFREY WIGAND. He turns to

resume gathering things from his desk... some technical books, a medical text on asthma... putting them in his briefcase. And as he leaves the office, the silent party like a bizarre mime behind him...

INT. LOBBY, BROWN & WILLIAMSON BUILDING - DAY

Briefcase in hand, Jeffrey appears from the elevator from ABOVE, from WIDE and in FRONT, his eyes, frozen pools... And like a bad dream, a broad-shouldered Man, leaning against the wall near the reception island in a suit he's not comfortable in, wearing an earphone, saying something into a lapel microphone after Jeffrey's passed.

INT. WIGAND'S CAR, LOUSVILLE - DAY

Light mottled through trees reflects off the car window... Jeffrey's face goes in and out of the tunnel of light and shadow... down this tasteful, suburban Louisville street of neat houses and manicured lawns... He pulls into driveway behind a 3 series BMW. It's a grey French provincial replica...

INT. THE WIGANDS' HOUSE, FOYER - DAY

Jeffrey comes in and a young Girl, six, is watching television in the den... BARBARA.

WIGAND

Hi, honey.

BARBARA

Hi, Daddy.

WIGAND

What's new?

BARBARA

Ms. Laufer gave me a star today.

WIGAND

Yeah? What for?

BARBARA

For reading.

He pours himself a drink at a wet bar.

WIGAND

That's great... Little early for cartoons, isn't it?

BARBARA

Okay.

Dutiful, she shuts off the TV, going upstairs.

BARBARA

Deborah? Debbie?

He looks outside. A Woman is sitting on the back porch drinking wine, reading a paperback book, drinking wine.

There's something like a Hockney painting about her against the manicured lawns. Right now the Woman comes in. She's pretty, tall, languid, reserved, somebody it would be nice to wear on your arm. LIANE WIGAND. She has an odd delay between a thought and her speech...

LIANE

Oh, I didn't know you were home...
It's early... Isn't it?

He doesn't say anything...

LIANE

Gotta take Debbie to ballet...

And it all feels suburban, familiar. Suddenly there's a shout...

BARBARA'S VOICE

(over)
Mommy!

Jeffrey goes quickly up the stairs into...

INT. WIGAND'S HOUSE - DEBORAH'S BEDROOM - DAY

And a little girl, eight, sitting on the floor in a ballet leotard, her head back, wheezing, her neck muscles contracting and bulging, her face pale, lips white, and her eyes filled with fear as rapid, shallow breathing induces a sense of suffocation. DEBORAH WIGAND is having a severe asthmatic attack...

WIGAND

Sweetheart, c'mon. C'mon.

BARBARA

She was playing with my Pooh doll
again...

Jeffrey sits her on the side of her bed next to which is a Nebulizer, an air compressor to deliver medication via a tube into a circular mouthpiece.

The compressor whirs. Deborah breathes in the medication.

Jeffrey brushes the hair back from her face and wipes perspiration from her forehead as...

WIGAND

Slow down. Slow down. Slow down.
Breathe deep. Breathe deep. Slow
down, honey. Slow down. Slow down.

Liane rushes in with rolled-up towels, kneels in front of Deborah, smiling to mask anxiety, and goes into the bathroom with the towels and turns on full blast the bathtub's hot water. We don't know why yet...

Deborah's chest heaves. She's scared. Jeffrey gets in front of her and talks to her to arrest her attention.

WIGAND

Here we go. Deep breaths, deep
breaths.

BARBARA

She was playing with the Pooh doll.

WIGAND

Pooh's dusty, sweetheart... he's
dusty, and you breathed him in, okay?
So what's – what's happening to you
now is... cells called mast cells
told your lungs "don't breathe any
more of that dust in."

(beat)

...and the airways in your lungs are
like branches. And when the branches
close up, you get an asthmatic attack.
And, we give you medicine, and you
get better. Huh? Okay? You're better
already, aren't you?

And the medication's taking effect and she's calmer.

Liane, hands clasped in her lap, smiles at Deborah. Now she takes Deborah's hand and exchanges a look with Jeffrey.

Jeffrey's a good father, a natural caregiver.

WIGAND
Okay, baby?

INT. THE WIGANDS' HOUSE, LOUISVILLE - EVENING

Jeffrey, Liane and the two Girls silently eating dinner,
Deborah in a bathrobe.

DEBORAH
Can I go to dance tomorrow? I'm
better...

LIANE
...if you are, then I'll take Barbara
to soccer and take you to dance
after...

WIGAND
I can take her.

LIANE
Don't you have to be at the office?

WIGAND
(instead, getting up)
Is there any more rice...?

LIANE
(nods)
Yes, it's on the stove...

He goes into the kitchen, to the stove, seeing...

LIANE
Do you want more rice?

DEBORAH
Maybe later.

LIANE
How about you?

BARBARA
I'll take some.

WIGAND
Instant rice...?

BARBARA
Can I go over to Janeane's house?

LIANE

I'm sorry, darling, have you seen my coffee mug...?

WIGAND

Try the car.

And Liane going outside...

EXT. THE WIGANDS' HOUSE - EVENING

She opens Jeffrey's car looking in the front seat at the cup holders. She turns to leave and sees the backseat filled with two boxes and the books we saw him take...

LIANE

Uh, what are those boxes?

WIGAND

I'm going to the store. You need anything?

LIANE

What do you need at the store?

WIGAND

Soy sauce...

LIANE

Right now?

WIGAND

(meaning in the car)

That's my stuff from the office...

LIANE

Why did you take your stuff from the office?

WIGAND

(simply)

I didn't want to leave it there...

LIANE

(confused)

I don't understand.

WIGAND

(matter of fact)

I got fired this morning... Where

else am I gonna take it?

LIANE

Why? Who said?

WIGAND

(specifically)

Thomas Sandefur...

LIANE

(stunned, fearful)

What are we supposed to do...? What about our medical coverage; what about our health? What about our car payments? The payments on this house?

He looks at her. There's an unspoken moment when it seems he's desperate for her to ask how he's feeling... But she doesn't and now there's a wall up and the moment passes...

WIGAND

(a beat, specific)

There's a severance agreement... It includes cash payouts over time and continuing medical coverage...

(beat)

Sure you don't need anything?

LIANE

No, thank you.

She's stunned. He leaves. And as Liane's completely still, her accessories seeming literally to weigh her down, she wants to ask how he is, how he must be feeling, and she turns into CAMERA towards him to do that. But he's driven off down the street.

LIANE

Jeffrey...!

INT. ANOTHER HOUSE IN BAALBEK - DAY

The Sheikh, wearing a fresh white robe and skull cap, comes into the room...

THE SHEIKH

I am very pleased to receive you as my guest, Mr. Wallace.

MIKE WALLACE

Thank you for having us...

REVERSE: Norman's camera crew is setting up. MIKE WALLACE is there. A dangerous combination of intelligence, arrogance, and celebrity, there's a kinetic quality about him.

Wallace sits across from the Sheikh on a dais of patterned linoleum in incongruous armchairs against a wallpaper mural of a French formal garden. A Sound Technician wires the Sheikh and Mike with microphones. Norman says something to Lowell and then goes out.

NORMAN

I think I've got a problem with the genie. I have to go outside.

LOWELL

(going outside)
Norman...?

Mike turns his chair to face and slides it closer to the Sheikh's chair. The Head Bodyguard barks something in Arabic. The Interpreter says something back in Arabic. The Sheikh, absorbed in his notes for the upcoming interview, ignores all of this.

INTERPRETER

He says you must not sit so close.

MIKE WALLACE

What?
(re: Bodyguard)
I can't conduct an interview from back there.

The Bodyguard, bristling at Wallace's tone, barks more confrontational Arabic.

INTERPRETER

You must move back your chair.

MIKE WALLACE

Will you tell him that when I conduct an interview, I sit anywhere I damn please!

INTERPRETER

There is no interview.

As Mike leaps forward, moving inches from the Bodyguard's face with such sudden ferocity, even the Bodyguard flinches.

MIKE WALLACE
You! I'm talking to you!

More armed men start to enter.

MIKE WALLACE
What the hell do you think I am? A
78-year-old assassin? You think I'm
gonna karate him to death with this
notepad?
(to Interpreter)
Are you interpreting what I'm saying?

INTERPRETER
Yes.

LOWELL
We're there.

MIKE WALLACE
Good, well ask him if Arabic is his
second language.

LOWELL
(to Interpreter)
Don't interpret that!
(to both)
Hold it. Hold it. Hold it! Slow,
slow!!
(to the Sheikh)
Sheikh, do you mind... if you would
just turn your chair a little bit to
face Mr. Wallace?

The Sheikh looks up from his notes, nods, fixes his chair,
goes back to his notes...

LOWELL
Is that okay?

INTERPRETER
Okay.

LOWELL
(Bodyguard assents;
to Mike)
Are you ready? Or you want to keep
fucking around and warm up some
more...?

MIKE WALLACE

No.
(wry)
...that's got my heart started.

They know each other well. Lowell smiles. Wallace sits down.

LOWELL
Alright, Todd, give me the three-
button on Mike, please. Okay. We are
rolling. Okay, Mike.

They roll camera... "60 Minutes" ... "Hezbollah"...

MIKE WALLACE
(charming)
Sheikh Fadlallah, thank you so much
for seeing us.
(changes)
Are you a terrorist?

The Sheikh didn't expect the Mike Wallace opening shot between
the eyes. He recovers...

THE SHEIKH
Mr. Wallace, I... am a servant of
God.

That expression of incredulity...

MIKE WALLACE
A servant of God? Really...

Mike, tipping his glasses down while the hostile Gunmen,
cradling weapons, watch him through the doorway...

MIKE WALLACE
Americans believe that you, as an
Islamic fundamentalist, that you are
a leader who contributed to the
bombing of the U.S. Embassy.

The ballsiness of Wallace, asking these questions in this
place, is impressive...

EXT. BERKELEY - LATE MORNING

It's still. A MAIL TRUCK is stopped at an odd angle in the
street outside an older brick house with a bold redwood Big
Sur-like fence on a hillside. Beyond the truck is a forever
view of the Bay. A handle turns. Mail truck door opens.

Mailman, carrying a box, going through the gate. Doorstep.

Box is deposited there. It's quiet again. The BOX sitting nakedly by the front door...

INT. LOWELL'S HOUSE, BEDROOM, BERKELEY - LATE MORNING

Lowell, in sweat pants and an old tee shirt now, is on the telephone, still in bed... Newspapers, The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, San Francisco Chronicle, are spread all over... home as refuge. A tray with large cups of coffee is on a side table.

LOWELL

...everyone thinks Canadian Mounties ride horses and rescue ladies from rapids, Mike. They backed locals in Oka in a fight with Mohawks over building a golf course on their burial site. They beat up protesters at Kanasake...

(pause)

Where'd you hear that?

The other phone on a nightstand rings... A Woman in her forties, SHARON TILLER, enters, in a bathrobe, brushing her teeth. She answers it...

LOWELL

(droll)

Oh, someone took a poll? "Are all things Canadian boring...?"

SHARON

(to Lowell)

It's Stuart... he's in Mexico City...

LOWELL

Let me call you back...

He takes up the line... listening...

LOWELL

Yeah, Stuart... What New York bank?

A young Man in his early twenties wanders in...

JAKE

Hey Dad... Sharon...

Lowell waves at JAKE, his son.

SHARON
(to Jake)
No classes this morning?

LOWELL
Will he go on-camera and talk about
the Mexico City branch?

JAKE
I don't have to be there until ten-
thirty.

Lowell's son sits on the bed looking at part of a newspaper.

And another young Man, in his early twenties, with long hair
comes strolling in, Sharon's son, JOSIAH.

JOSIAH
Hi Mom, Lowell...

Lowell, still on the phone, waves to him.

SHARON
Hi, sweetheart...

Josiah sits on the bed too, reading the back of the sports
section Jake is reading... Another line rings, Sharon getting
it. The Boys, used to them, get up, and leave...

LOWELL
(into phone)
Will independent sources corroborate
that?

SHARON
Hello? Yeah...

EXT. THE BERKELEY HOUSE - MORNING

The Boys coming out of the house together... And seeing the
BOX by the door...

LOWELL'S SON
(shouts back inside)
Dad, you got a box out here...

And they go out the gate, talking, walking off along the
Berkeley street. The box left waiting by the door.

LOWELL

(looking at her
itinerary)
Let me see this... No, 'cause I gotta
know where you're going at all times.

INT. LOWELL'S HOUSE, BEDROOM, BERKELEY - MORNING

SHARON
(into phone)
I can't... I've got to fly to Boston
tomorrow.

Lowell comes with the box back to bed. He's already unwrapped
it. Inside are stacks of papers... He looks at the box cover.
No return address. An anonymous sender; not unusual for him.
He casually looks through the papers.

SHARON
Two p.m. Great. Bye-bye.
(hangs up)

LOWELL
(reading)
..."ignition propensity?"
(to Sharon)
...you understand any of this...?

He gives her some papers. We see formulas... scientific data
in tables...

SHARON
...no... this looks like a table of
temperatures... Who's this from?

LOWELL
(shrugs)
...it's anonymous. References to
"P.M."
(motions)
It's got to be Philip Morris, huh?

SHARON
I have to take a shower.

As he looks at the papers, Sharon goes into the bathroom...

INT. THE FEDERAL DRUG ADMINISTRATION AGENCY, CAFETERIA,
WASHINGTON - DAY

We see a MAN in his forties, eating a late lunch, getting
paged in a crowded cafeteria. An old 1930's WPA mural on the

wall... His pager goes off...

Doug Oliver walks across the cafeteria to a bank of pay phones and dials.

INT. LOWELL'S HOUSE, DEN - BERKELEY - MORNING

The phone rings. Lowell picks it up...

LOWELL

Yeah.

DOUG OLIVER

(into phone)

Hi, this is Doug Oliver...

LOWELL

Oh, hi, Doug... it's Lowell. I'm doing this story on fire safety... People burning up from falling asleep smoking. I received a shitload of scientific papers from inside Philip Morris... Anonymous. You or anybody in FDA know someone who can translate this stuff into English for me?

DOUG OLIVER

(beat)

...uh, yeah...

EXT. A BERKELEY CAFE - CLOSE: PAY PHONE

There's the sound of a phone ringing. PULL BACK to reveal Lowell outside a cafe with dry cleaning he collected over one shoulder. A LITTLE GIRL'S VOICE OVER (Deborah's) answers. "Hello."

LOWELL

Mr. Wigand, please.

There's a whisper... "Someone's calling for Daddy, Mom."

Behind Lowell is a humming Berkeley street. He gestures familiarly to a Server, who brings out his two take-out cappuccinos. Lowell nods his thanks, pays...

LOWELL

Thank you, Bob.

LIANE'S VOICE (OVER)

Who's calling?

LOWELL

My name's Lowell Bergman... I'm –

LIANE'S VOICE

Did you say Berman?

LOWELL

No, Bergman... B.E.R.G.M.A.N.... I'm
a producer with "60 Minutes" ...

LIANE'S VOICE

"60 Minutes"?

LOWELL

Yeah.

LIANE'S VOICE

"60 Minutes," the television show?

LOWELL

Yes.

Lowell waits for some moments, and...

INT. THE WIGANDS' HOUSE, LOUISVILLE - DAY

LIANE

(on phone)

He doesn't want to talk to you.

EXT./INT. BERKELEY CAFE - DAY

LOWELL

How does he know he doesn't want to
talk to me? He doesn't know what I'm
calling him about...

LIANE'S VOICE

He doesn't care to know.

And she hangs up. Lowell's motionless... And his interest
piqued, he sets down his cleaning. He calls back... The phone
rings and rings... A MACHINE picks it up... Jeffrey Wigand's
Voice: "This is the Wigands'... If you'd like to leave a
message or send a fax, start now..."

INT. THE WIGAND HOUSE, JEFFREY'S OFFICE, LOUISVILLE - DAY

And we see Jeffrey Wigand, sitting at his desk in his office,
working on his computer, hearing Lowell...

LOWELL'S VOICE (OVER)

(on the machine)

This is Lowell Bergman with "60 Minutes"... I'm doing a story on fire safety and cigarettes... I have scientific documents from a tobacco company, and I could use your help as a consultant explaining these documents to me... My number is area code 510-555-0199... I'll be there, at this number, in 10 minutes.

He hangs up. Jeffrey doesn't react, quietly working on his computer.

INT. LOWELL'S OFFICE, BERKELEY - DAY

Lowell's restless, waiting... And not getting a call back, he tries another tact. He writes a FAX, "Please call me at..." He writes his number down. He sends the Fax. He's still. It's quiet. And not getting an answer he gets up, starting to leave the room. And suddenly the fax machine RINGS... He turns. He reads a message emerging from the machine... "I can't talk to you..." He's quiet. He writes on a piece of paper... "Can't talk to me?" "Won't talk to me?" "Don't want to talk to me...?" As he faxes it back...

INT. THE WIGANDS' HOUSE, OFFICE, LOUISVILLE - DAY

Wigand reading the return fax from Lowell...

INT. LOWELL'S OFFICE, BERKELEY - DAY

Lowell, waiting... The fax machine rings again... He reads Jeffrey's answer. "Can't." "Won't." "Don't want to..." He's quiet, more than just interested, now. There's something beyond intriguing here. He turns. He looks through a stack of phone books for something... a nationwide 800 directory. He looks through it and dials Wigand's phone number again...

LOWELL

If you're curious to meet me...

INT. WIGANDS' HOUSE, OFFICE, LOUISVILLE - DAY

Wigand working on his computer... Lowell's VOICE on his answering machine...

LOWELL'S VOICE

(on machine)

...I'm gonna be in the lobby of the
Seelbach Hotel in Louisville, reading
The New York Times, tomorrow, at
five o'clock...

Lowell clicks off. And as Wigand sits at his computer, giving
no indication what he might do...

INT. THE SEELBACH HOTEL LOBBY, LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY - EARLY
EVENING

An old hotel with faded carpets. Lowell in the lobby reading
a New York Times, waiting... And instead of looking up every
time somebody passes, he looks down at people's shoes. A
pair of black wing tips walking by... A woman's high heels...
A pair of men's tasseled loafers. A lace-up brown. A pair of
tennis shoes. A cordovan wing tip. The pair of tasseled
loafers walking by again... And Lowell looks up...

And the Man in the tasseled loafers, turns away... It's
Jeffrey Wigand in a suit and a tie with a Fortune 500,
corporate-executive bearing... Lowell crosses to the
elevators. Wigand looks around the lobby and follows Lowell
in, and as the doors close...

INT. A HOTEL ROOM, LOUISVILLE - EARLY EVENING

LOWELL
(over)
Have you always lived in Louisville?

Brilliant late afternoon sunlight. We PULL BACK to see
Jeffrey, standing by a window, silently looking outside to
the left... Lowell, cool, waiting, hands in his pockets, in
the middle of the large room...

WIGAND
Mr. Bergman? What did you want me to
consult about?

A sudden KNOCK on the door...

WIGAND
(turns, suspicious)
Who's that?

LOWELL
(wry)
That's room service. They usually
knock first.

(calls)
Come on in... Over here, please.

Room Service brings in a tray with coffee. As Lowell signs the bill, the Room Service Waiter waiting, looks at Wigand...

Their eyes meet... The Waiter looks away.

LOWELL
Thank you.

And the Waiter leaves...

LOWELL
(pouring)
How do you like your coffee? Black?

WIGAND
Black, black...

Lowell gives him his cup of coffee.

WIGAND
Look, I really don't have that much time...

LOWELL
(nods)
Is there anything you want to know about me, Mr. Wigand...?

WIGAND
Like what? Your sign?

Lowell smiles.

WIGAND
I know what I have to know.

LOWELL
Just so I know you know, when I talk to people in confidence, it stays that way.

WIGAND
(abruptly)
How did a radical journalist from Ramparts Magazine end up at CBS?

Lowell looks at him, he does his homework...

LOWELL

I still do the tough stories. "60 Minutes" reaches a lot of people.

Wigand's quiet, measuring him.

WIGAND

(after a beat)

Let me see the documents...

Lowell gives him the box of papers... Wigand sits down, the box on his lap, quietly looking through them... flips to a different heading, consults a chart...

WIGAND

...this is a Fire-Safety Product Study for Philip Morris. Burn rates... ignition propensity... things of this nature.

(after a beat)

I could very easily explain this to you in layman's terms, because it's from another company...

He puts the papers down...

WIGAND

...but that's as far as I go...

LOWELL

Far as you go where?

WIGAND

(a beat)

This issue is a drop in the bucket. I can talk to you about what's in here. But I can't talk to you about anything else.

And Lowell knows something else is going on here...

WIGAND

(meaning Philip Morris documents)

I signed a confidentiality agreement. I honor agreements...

A lot more is going on here... Lowell nods, a good reporter...

WIGAND

Doesn't CBS have confidentiality

agreements, Mr. Bergman?

LOWELL

Between journalists and management, yes, I believe they do... but I don't take that seriously.

(after a beat)

Where do you work?

WIGAND

Did work.

LOWELL

(fast)

Did work.

WIGAND

(the bottom line)

How much would I get paid?

LOWELL

That, you have to discuss with CBS Business Affairs. But, for something like this, I would say anywhere between 10, 12 thousand.

Wigand nods "Okay."

WIGAND

Should I just take the documents now?

LOWELL

If you want to do it.

He turns to leave... Lowell gets the door for him... Wigand momentarily slows...

WIGAND

I worked as the head of Research and Development for Brown & Williamson Tobacco Company. I was a Corporate Vice President. Mr. Bergman...

And he goes out the door... Lowell's still. Wigand's job title resonates. Lowell turns to the window, casually looking into the early evening... and he comes face to face with what Wigand was staring at, The Brown & Williamson Tobacco Company Headquarters Building, lit up right across the street...

INT. CBS, A SCREENING ROOM - DAY

MIKE WALLACE

(on screen)

"President Assad of Syria said that difficult obstacles remain but that his country, quote, 'looks forward to a great, long peace with Israel.'"

TAIL LEADER. THEN BLACK. Suddenly lights come on.

Executive Producer DON HEWITT is suddenly on his feet. A veritable dervish, in constant motion...

DON HEWITT

(kissing Mike)

It's a Peabody, Mike. When you're dead and buried, Hezbollah is the one they're gonna remember you for...

Mike, used to him, ignores him, getting up, turning to leave, Hewitt on his tail... while...

LOWELL

(to his Editor)

...come in earlier on Mike's Marine barracks line when he's talking to Sheikh Mussawi...

MIKE WALLACE

You eating with us?

LOWELL

Yeah.

MIKE WALLACE

Bring a tie so they'll let us in the front door...

And Lowell gestures for an olive-skinned Woman in her late thirties, Lowell's assistant, DEBBIE DELUCA, to join them.

The eye contact on the way out says there's something important he needs to tell her...

EXT. CBS - DAY

There's a blast of NOISE. The City. Lowell, Wallace, Hewitt, Debbie, enter from the CBS lobby, moving through the reflections. Lowell is about to say something to Debbie, but BILL FELLING, Evening News' Assignment Editor, coming the

other way...

LOWELL

Debbie...

FELLING

Hey, Lowell.

Midstream, fast:

LOWELL

Oh, Bill... Main Justice is investigating a major New York bank. Laundering narco dollars out of their Mexico City branch. You want it for the Evening News?

FELLING

What about you, you got a crew already?

LOWELL

I'm gonna do a follow-up.

FELLING

Okay.
(leaves)

LOWELL

Catch ya' later.

EXT. 53RD STREET, NEW YORK - DAY

Lowell, crossing...

LOWELL

Debbie...

And, now, as they cross Madison...

LOWELL

(to Debbie; finally)

I want you to get legal onto CORPORATE CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENTS. Boundaries of their constraint. Kentucky state law about. I want you to drop everything.

DEBBIE DELUCA

(cuts in)

Okay.

Hewitt stops to buy a newspaper. He doesn't have change, Debbie does.

EXT. 55TH STREET (WESTBOUND), NEW YORK - DAY

And Mike, Lowell and Don bang into Michael's restaurant. We SEE them through the glass, being greeted, people shaking their hands, escorted by the maitre d' to their table as...

INT. THE BROWN & WILLIAMSON BUILDING, MAIN LOBBY, LOUISVILLE - DAY

Meanwhile, it's static. Still, frozen. Jeffrey sits in the RECEPTION AREA of The Brown & Williamson Tobacco Company headquarters. Complimentary cigarettes are arranged on tables. A dark quiet. The hush of big business. Standing in the background by a wall next to the banks of elevators, is an ever-present Man, another one, with an earphone and lapel microphone...

UNIFORMED SECURITY
(to Wigand)
Mr. Wigand, you can go up now...

He gets up, crossing to an elevator.

INT. THOMAS SANDEFUR'S OFFICE, BROWN & WILLIAMSON - DAY

THOMAS SANDEFUR
(re: his distraction)
Sorry. I'm accepting an award from the Retinitis Pigmentosa Foundation. It's going to kill the rest of my day.

THOMAS SANDEFUR is absorbed in spreadsheets of regional sales figures. Dark pouches are under his eyes. He doesn't look up. He doesn't look healthy. We're in a luxurious office with a view of Louisville. Jeffrey is waiting in a chair.

Sandefur is Brown & Williamson's CEO. Two LAWYERS, their briefcases, like weapons, close at hand, sit on a couch.

Their jackets are off. They wear expensive shirts.

THOMAS SANDEFUR
(finishing; looking up at Jeffrey)
So. You had a chance to play golf?

Surprisingly affable, Sandefur prides himself on his salesman's sunny manners. He has a mellifluous Georgia accent...

THOMAS SANDEFUR

(to the Lawyers)

Jeff's a premiere golfer... What are you, a two handicap?

WIGAND

(precise)

Seven...

THOMAS SANDEFUR

(to lawyer)

And, he gets out there and he has five strokes on us. He has more concentration than anybody I've ever met. It's spooky how he can concentrate.

WIGAND

I'd rather play than talk about it.

(beat)

What did you want to see me about?
I don't like being back here.

Sandefur smiles, used to him.

THOMAS SANDEFUR

Jeffrey says exactly what's on his mind. Most people consider what they're saying... social skills...

Jeffrey just charges right ahead.

(smiles, after a beat)

Now, I know you understood the nature of the confidentiality portion of your severance agreement with Brown & Williamson, Jeff...

WIGAND

Chapter and verse.

THOMAS SANDEFUR

(nods)

Yeah, I know you do...

(beat)

You know, I came up through sales. One of the reasons I was a great salesman, was I never made a promise

I couldn't keep.
(beat)
I knew that if I ever broke my promise
I'd suffer the consequence...

And there's a warning behind it...

WIGAND
(contained)
Is that a threat?

THOMAS SANDEFUR
...we worked together for, what was
it, three years...? Now, the work we
did here is confidential, not for
public scrutiny... any more than are
one's family matters...

WIGAND
(quietly)
You threatening my family, now, too?

THOMAS SANDEFUR
Now, don't be paranoid, Jeff.
(a beat)
About the direction of research here,
we may have had our differences of
opinion...

WIGAND
"Research..."
(smile + scorn)
You declare, as a badge of honor,
you don't even know what makes water
boil...

THOMAS SANDEFUR
That's why we hire scientists...

WIGAND
(interrupts, direct)
Okay.
(a beat, honest)
I don't believe you can maintain
corporate integrity without
confidentiality agreements. I was
paid well for my work. The health
and welfare benefits are good. The
severance package is fair. I have no
intention of violating my
confidentiality agreement and

disclosing that which I said I wouldn't.

THOMAS SANDEFUR

I appreciate all that, Jeff. But, upon reflection... we've decided to expand our zone of comfort with you.

And there's a seriousness that weighs heavily on the room...

THOMAS SANDEFUR

So we've drafted a supplement to your agreement... it broadly defines and expands in more detail what is "confidential." Nobody will be able to say, "Well, hell's bells, Margaret, I didn't know that was a secret..."

(beat)

We're very serious about protecting our interests.

(a beat)

We'd like you to sign it.

And he's acutely aware of the threat behind it...

WIGAND

(a beat)

And if I don't?

A LAWYER

(speaking for Sandefur)

If we "arrive" at the conclusion you're acting in bad faith? We would terminate, right now, payouts under your severance package. You and your family's medical benefits. And initiate litigation against you, Mr. Wigand.

WIGAND

Dr. Wigand.

A LAWYER

(a beat)

Dr. Wigand... after you've examined the document, you will see it is in your own best interest and you'll sign it.

Jeffrey slowly turns to face the attorney. And we see on his face the true nature of this man.

WIGAND

So, what you are saying is: it isn't enough that you fired me. For no good reason! Now you question my integrity? On top of the humiliation of being fired? You threaten me?! You threaten my family?!

(beat)

It never crossed my mind not to honor my agreement...

(turning, to Sandefur)

But I will tell you, Mr. Sandefur, and Brown & Williamson, too... Fuck me?

(a beat)

Well, fuck you!!

And with that he gets up, and leaves... And it's quiet...

A LAWYER

I'm not sure he got the message...

THOMAS SANDEFUR

(with total confidence)

Oh, I think he did.

EXT. A PHONE BOOTH, LOUISVILLE - DAY

Wigand picks up the phone and dials.

INT. THE NEW YORK RESTAURANT - DAY

They've finished lunch. Wallace and Hewitt are turned to talk to Sam Cohn and an older writer as suddenly Lowell's cell phone rings.

LOWELL

(answering)

Yeah...

WIGAND'S VOICE

(over)

...you fucked me!

LOWELL

Who is this?

EXT. A PHONE BOOTH, LOUISVILLE - DAY

WIGAND

(crazed)
...protect your sources...! You
screwed me! You sold me out!

INT. THE NEW YORK RESTAURANT - DAY

LOWELL
What are you talking about? Where
are you?

EXT. THE PHONE BOOTH, LOUISVILLE - DAY

WIGAND
Fuck you, too!

And he slams down the phone.

INT. THE RESTAURANT, NEW YORK - DAY

Lowell, holding the dead phone in his hand...

EXT. A GOLF DRIVING RANGE, LOUISVILLE - NIGHT

We see a brightly lit, golf driving range, empty, the wet grass under the lights vibrant, emerald green... A caged cart, with one big yellow headlight, like some kind of strange insect, drives across the range, picking up golf balls. And we see Jeffrey hitting golf balls, driving one after another, after another... His swing is powerful, angry, a lone golfer, trying to chill out. He pauses, spent.

Settling down, he exhales. Then, he looks down the way...

And he slows... He sees in the far distance, spot-lit, one other lone golfer, a Stocky Man, incongruously in a suit and tie, watching him... And the Man in the suit right then, with great power and a tremendous follow through drives a golf ball... The ball slamming into the steel net. And the lights SUDDENLY go out. The range closing for the night.

The "insect" comes to a stop. And it's quiet, dark. Jeffrey gathers up his clubs. He crosses, his golf shoes, the metal cleats, clicking on the pavement, toward the PARKING LOT.

And there's the sound of the clicking of golf shoes behind him. He turns. And the stocky Man in the suit, carrying a golf bag walking some distance behind him, staring at him.

Jeffrey comes to the parking lot. It's empty. Just Jeffrey's car, and despite all the empty spaces, another car, purposely or otherwise, parked right next to his. He crosses to his

car, getting in...

INT. WIGAND'S CAR - NIGHT

He drops the three clubs in the rear seat and settles behind the wheel. He turns. And he sees the Man in the suit has gotten in the car next to his. They look at each other. The Man, in no hurry, lights a cigarette, relaxes. It's malevolent as hell. And Jeffrey, suddenly, grabbing a golf club, jumps out of his car...

EXT. THE PARKING LOT, DRIVING RANGE, LOUISVILLE - NIGHT

Golf club in hand at the driver side window...

WIGAND

(motioning with the club, threatening)

Stay away from me! You stay away from me!

The Man starts his car, and drives off nonplussed. It's still. And as Jeffrey with the golf club stands in the empty parking lot, not knowing what's threatening him, something real, something imaginary...

EXT. THE WIGAND HOUSE, LOUISVILLE - WIDE SHOT: WIGANDS' HOUSE - EARLY MORNING

A violent rain's falling. And we see Jeffrey coming out of the house holding an umbrella over his little Girls. They start towards the car. There's the sound of a car door shutting. Liane, carrying lunch boxes, comes after them...

LIANE

Jeffrey, you forgot their lunches –

She slows, seeing someone. Jeffrey turns: it's Lowell.

He's surprised.

LOWELL

Mrs. Wigand, how do you do?

WIGAND

(to the girls, protectively)

Jump in, quick, c'mon...

LOWELL

I'm Lowell Bergman. We spoke on the

phone, remember?

The Girls climb in the car. Lowell crosses behind the Audi around the far side.

LOWELL

C'mere. I want to talk to you.

WIGAND

Good. I want to talk to you.

Jeff closes the door on his daughters and joins Lowell around the far side of the car.

WIGAND

(confronting him)

What do...

LOWELL

(running over)

I did not burn you. I did not give you up to anyone!

WIGAND

(continuing)

This is my house... In front of my wife, my kids?! What business do we have?

LOWELL

To straighten something out with you. Right here. Right now.

WIGAND

So, you didn't mention my name? You haven't talked to anybody about me?

LOWELL

Why am I gonna mention your name?

WIGAND

How did Brown & Williamson know I spoke to you...?

LOWELL

How the hell do I know about Brown & Williamson?

WIGAND

It happened after I talked to you. I do not like coincidences!

LOWELL

And I don't like paranoid accusations!
I'm a journalist. Think. Use your
head. How do I operate as a journalist
by screwing the people who could
provide me with information before
they provided me with it?

WIGAND

(skeptical)

You came all the way down here to
tell me that?

LOWELL

No. I did not. Big Tobacco is a big
story. And you got something important
to say. I can tell.

(a beat, personal)

But, yes. I did. I came all the way
down here to tell you: story, no
story, fuck your story, I don't burn
people.

It starts to rain harder. They look at each other. Jeffrey,
without saying a word, gets in the car. He backs out. Lowell,
left standing in the driveway with Liane in the rain. Liane
goes back into the house. And Lowell starts back across the
street to his car. There's a sound. He turns. Jeffrey's car,
having gone around the corner, has come back and stopped in
the street.

WIGAND

(after a beat)

Ride with me while I take the girls
to school...

Lowell hesitates, then gets into the car in the back seat.

INT. WIGAND'S CAR - MORNING

They drive away. Lowell, incongruously sitting in the back
seat with Barbara. Jeffrey and Deborah in the front seat.

And it's quiet, just the sound of the wipers on the window.

And as Lowell rides with them...

EXT. A RIVERSIDE PARKING LOT IN LOUISVILLE - WIDE REAR SHOT
MORNING

We see the Car's parked in a weed-strewn empty lot. Rain, pounding on it and the surface of the river beyond...

WIGAND'S VOICE

...and my little girl has acute asthma... Deborah. My eldest daughter.

INT. WIGAND'S CAR, LOUISVILLE - REAR TWO SHOT - MORNING

The Girls are gone. We enter mid-scene. Lowell's still in the back seat...

WIGAND

And, I'm unemployed. So I have to protect my medical coverage.

(the bottom line;
turning to look at
Lowell in the rear
seat)

...so I left them a message this morning. Their expanded confidentiality agreement? I will sign it.

LOWELL

They're afraid of you, aren't they?

WIGAND

They should be.

The sound of the rain...

LOWELL

(after a beat, trying
to make it easier
for him)

Talk to me outside the zone of your agreement?

WIGAND

(guarded)
Like what?

LOWELL

Like where'd you work before Brown & Williamson?

WIGAND

(a beat)
Johnson & Johnson. Union Carbide in Japan. I was general manager and

director of new products. I speak Japanese. I was a director of corporate development at Pfizer. All health-related.

(wry)

What else? Outside the "zone" ...?

LOWELL

I don't know... you think the Knicks are gonna make it through the semi-finals?

Wigand smiles... as their eyes meet in the rear view mirror.

A subtle connection... It passes...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. WIGAND'S CAR - WIDE FRONTAL - DAY

Jeff's car in the field, the giant Colgate-Palmolive clock behind. The rain stopped. Steam rises from the weed strewn empty lot. Lowell's in the front seat. And we get the feeling they've been talking for hours...

LOWELL'S VOICE

Just give me an example...

WIGAND

For example. James Burke, the CEO of Johnson & Johnson... when he found out that some lunatic had put poison in Tylenol bottles, he didn't argue with the FDA... He didn't even wait for the FDA to tell him. He just pulled Tylenol off every shelf of every store right across America. Instantly. And then he developed the safety cap... Because, look, as a CEO, sure, he's gotta be a great businessman, right? But he's also a man of science. He's not going to allow his company... to put on the shelf... a product that might hurt people.

(sarcastic)

Not like the Seven Dwarfs...

LOWELL

Seven dwarfs?

WIGAND

The seven CEOs of Big Tobacco...
they got up in front of Congress
that time... it was on television...

LOWELL

...and swore under oath that they
know nothing about addiction,
disease...

WIGAND

It was on C-SPAN. Yeah.

LOWELL

Okay, so, here you are... you go to
work for tobacco.

(after beat)

You come from corporate cultures
where research, really, creative
thinking, these are core values. You
go to tobacco... Tobacco is a sales
culture. Market and sell enormous
volume. Go to a lot of golf
tournaments. The hell with everything
else.

(beat)

What are you doing? Why are you
working for "tobacco" in the first
place?

WIGAND

(deadly honest)

I can't talk about it. The work I
was supposed to do... might have had
some positive effect. I don't know...
it could have been beneficial.

(bitterness there)

Mostly, I got paid a lot. I took the
money. My wife was happy. My kids
had good medical. Good schools. Got
a great house.

(simply)

I mean, what the hell is wrong with
that...?

He looks at Lowell, as if needing validation...

LOWELL

Nothing's wrong with that. That's
it; you're making money... you're
providing for your family? What could

be wrong with that?

It's quiet. After some moments...

WIGAND

I've always thought of myself... as a man of science. That's what's wrong with it.

LOWELL

Then... you're in a state of conflict, Jeff.

Jeffrey doesn't say anything.

LOWELL

Because, look, here's how it lays out: if you got vital, insider stuff the American people for their welfare really do need to know... and you feel impelled to disclose it and violate your agreement in doing so, that's one thing. On the other hand, if you want to honor this agreement, then that's simple. You do so. You say nothing. You do nothing. There's only one guy who can figure that out for you. And that's you. All by yourself.

Lowell's evenhanded... is it too evenhanded? As Wigand contemplates the edge he's standing on, they're quiet. Then Wigand sees the time...

WIGAND

I've got to go pick up the girls.
They only had half a day...

Lowell nods. Jeffrey starts the car. The windshield wipers screech on a dry window. Their eyes meet. As they drive off... we HOLD on the Colgate-Palmolive Clock.

INT. A KITCHEN AREA, CBS OFFICES, NEW YORK - DAY

We've entered mid-scene... A monitor on a cart plays a 1/2-inch VCR of a C-SPAN broadcast. Seven CEOs of Big Tobacco... in front of a bas relief of the American eagle. Each in turn swears nicotine is not addictive or he doesn't know anything about health risks, they're not sure, maybe, maybe not, etc...

LOWELL

He referred to this... the Seven
Dwarfs...

MIKE WALLACE

(over)

What "Seven Dwarfs?"

LOWELL

The seven CEOs of Big Tobacco...
Referred to this... Said they should
be afraid of him... I assume, afraid
of what he could reveal.

(to Staff Lawyers)

Now, you tell me. What does this guy
have to say that threatens these
people?

And, now, we see Lowell, Mike Wallace and Debbie DeLuca with
two staff Lawyers, MARK STERN and JOHN HARRIS, sitting around
a workstation used as an improvised eating area.

Beyond them are the "60 MINUTES" offices, workstations, piles
of material, television monitors hanging from the ceiling,
all tuned to CBS programming...

MIKE WALLACE

Well, it isn't "cigarettes are bad
for you"...

LOWELL

Hardly new news.

MIKE WALLACE

No shit.

LOWELL

What's this?

MARK STERN

(re: video)

What that is is tobacco's standard
defense. It's the "we don't know"
litany: "Addiction? We believe not.
Disease? We don't know. We take a
bunch of leaves, roll 'em together.
You smoke 'em. After that? You're on
your own. We don't know."

(beat)

So... tells me nothing.

(beat)

Besides, you'll never get what he's

got.

LOWELL

Why not?

JOHN HARRIS

Because of this guy's confidentiality agreement, he is never gonna be able to talk to you.

LOWELL

That's not good enough. This guy is the top scientist in the number three tobacco company in America. He's a corporate officer. You never get whistle-blowers from Fortune 500 companies. This guy is the ultimate insider. He's got something to say; he wants to say it; I want it on "60 Minutes."

JOHN HARRIS

Doesn't matter what he wants.

MIKE WALLACE

Am I missing something here?

JOHN HARRIS

What do you mean, Mike?

MIKE WALLACE

He's got a corporate secrecy agreement? Give me a break. This is a public-health issue, like an unsafe airframe on a passenger jet or... some company dumping cyanide into the East River. Issues like that? He can talk, we can air it. They've got no right to hide behind a corporate agreement.

(re: his coffee)

Pass the milk...

JOHN HARRIS

(does)

They don't need the right. They've got the money.

MARK STERN

The unlimited checkbook. That's how Big Tobacco wins every time. On

everything. They spend you to death.
\$600 million a year in outside legal.
Chadbourne-Parke. Ken Starr's firm,
Kirkland and Ellis. Listen. GM and
Ford, they get nailed after 11 or 12
pick-ups blow up. Right? These clowns
have never... I mean ever...

JOHN HARRIS

Not even once...

MARK STERN

...not even with hundreds of thousands
dying each year from an illness
related to their product... have
ever lost a personal-injury lawsuit.
On this case, they'll issue gag
orders, sue for breach, anticipatory
breach, enjoin him, you, us, his pet
dog, the dog's veterinarian... Tie
him up in litigation for ten of
fifteen years. I'm telling you, they
bat a thousand. Every time. He knows
that. That's why he's not gonna talk
to you...

Lowell's been quiet, thinking about something else... Now...

LOWELL

Okay, let's look through the looking
glass the other way...

MIKE WALLACE

What do you mean?

LOWELL

We got a guy... who wants to talk
but he's constrained.

(beat)

What if he were "compelled"?

MIKE WALLACE

(eating)

Oh, torture? Great ratings.

MARK STERN

What do you mean compelled?

LOWELL

(seriously)

I mean compelled by a Justice

Department, state courts, be a witness. That would cut through any confidentiality agreement, wouldn't it?

MARK STERN

Yeah...

DEBBIE DELUCA

What does that do?

LOWELL

What do you mean, what's it do?

DEBBIE DELUCA

What I mean is, like, how does it cut through the confidentiality agreement?

LOWELL

Because he has to reveal it in a court of law. It's on record, it's out. It's no secret anymore. So how can they restrain his speech or retaliate? It's out in the world...

MARK STERN

(nods)

If you could engineer it into the court record, you might have something. They would have a helluva time trying to restrain his speech then, wouldn't they?

Pause.

JOHN HARRIS

(still skeptical)

Yeah, but what venue? And where does he get – does he have killer attorneys?

LOWELL

I don't think he's got any attorneys.

MARK STERN

He's gonna need attorneys who aren't afraid of risking years of litigation. And millions of dollars of their own dough in legal costs...

LOWELL

What do you say, Mike? What do you think?

MIKE WALLACE

(pause)

Even if he gets the defense team, will he go for it?

INT. A HIGH SCHOOL CAFETERIA, LOUISVILLE - DAY

MRS. WATSON

...you're awfully overqualified, Dr. Wigand.

The aftermath of a high school lunch. Tables, covered with litter, as far as the eye can see. And we see Jeffrey sitting with a formidable Black Woman in her mid-fifties, the High School Principal, CYNTHIA WATSON, drinking cups of coffee...

WIGAND

(after a beat, awkward)

I'm trying to... start a new career... I believe I could be a good teacher...

She's quiet. She senses this applicant has a lot on his mind.

MRS. WATSON

Let me give it some thought...

WIGAND

(selling)

...and not a lot of companies in the health-care field hire ex-tobacco scientists.

She nods, studying him. They get up.

INT. THE WIGANDS' HOUSE, LOUISVILLE - DAY

The house is nearly empty. Liane, arms folded across her chest, is quietly standing in the empty living room. Jeffrey comes down the stairs...

WIGAND

That's it...

And it's quiet. And Liane holds herself, overcome...

LIANE

(beat)

That's where our babies were born...
Debbie took her first steps, right
there... in the grass.

And they're quiet.

LIANE

I didn't plan on this...

Liane looks at him, afraid. And as he moves to hold her.

WIGAND

Hey, hey, hey, c'mon. C'mon. We can
make this work for us. Okay? It's
just... it's a smaller scale.
Simpler... easier... more time. More
time together. More time with the
kids. More time for us, okay? It's
just... Can you imagine me coming
home from some job feeling good at
the end of the day? This is gonna be
better. This is gonna be better.

And instead of this downturn turning them against each other,
it brings them closer together. And as they stand in the
empty house...

INT. THE WIGANDS' NEW HOUSE - DAY

We see unpacked boxes in the small 1970's kitchen. Country-
western music is playing on a radio. And we see Liane busily
putting things away in a cabinet. And, then, stops and looks
out the window. She tightens a knob on a cabinet. There's a
moment of domestic peace for her as she sees...

EXT. THE WIGANDS' NEW HOUSE, THE BACKYARD - DAY

Jeffrey with the Girls in a part of the backyard, kneeling
in the dirt, planting a vegetable garden, putting in some
small tomato trellises. We see the house, now. It's a small,
one story. Deborah sees her mom and waves. It's an image
from the 1950's post-war boom. Liane waves back from behind
the pane of glass...

INT. WIGANDS' HOUSE #2, BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT

Jeffrey's asleep on his side next to Liane, her back to him.

His arm is draped over her, protectively. There's a sound.

He turns. And he sees Barbara in her nightgown, standing in

the doorway...

WIGAND

Hey, baby. What's wrong?

BARBARA

(terrified, whispers)

What's that outside, Daddy?

WIGAND

Did you see somebody or did you hear them?

BARBARA

I heard them.

WIGAND

Where?

BARBARA

In the backyard.

Fast, soundlessly, he's out of bed into old moccasins and trousers...

INT. THE WIGANDS' HOUSE, BASEMENT - LATE NIGHT

Jeffrey goes into a corner of the basement, around the corner from the furnace, where his "office" is now. Unpacked boxes are on the floor. He fumbles with the combination lock on a small gun safe, lifts the lid, taking out a hand gun. Barbara followed him.

WIGAND

Sit at Daddy's desk, okay? Why don't you just sit up at the desk. Get out some paper and draw me a picture, okay? What are you gonna draw me, baby? An animal, something like that? You stay down here until Daddy gets back... alright, Barbara? You stay down here.

He keeps it hidden from Barbara. He goes up the stairs.

EXT. WIGANDS' HOUSE #2, BACKYARD - LATE NIGHT

It's still. He steps further out onto the lawn with its dark shrubs and small tree in the corner.

INT. WIGANDS' HOUSE #2, BASEMENT - LATE NIGHT

Meanwhile, Barbara in the basement, starts as the water heater comes on, scaring her. She goes up the stairs to follow after her father...

EXT. WIGANDS' HOUSE #2, BACKYARD - LATE NIGHT

Meanwhile, Jeffrey has crossed towards the darker back corners. Sudden rustling. He spins, gun ready. And the yellow eyes of a RACCOON stare at him.

WIGAND
(to himself)
You almost got your damn head blown
off...

The raccoon defiantly bares its teeth.

Jeffrey starts to go... but he sees something and stops...

Meanwhile, Barbara has come to the sliding glass door...

Jeffrey sees one of the tomato trellises is crushed, stepped on... and in the vegetable garden's earth, are distinct, fresh, deep FOOTPRINTS...

BARBARA'S VOICE
Daddy...

Wigand steps between her and the garden, hiding it...

EXTREMELY CLOSE ON JEFFREY, as he covers, trying to keep from his daughter the invasion, trying to control his emotions...

WIGAND
(reassuring her)
It's just a raccoon, baby... nothing.

He crosses to her, putting his arm, around her, walking her back inside...

WIGAND
They're nocturnal. You know what
that means? That means that they
only come out at nighttime.

He locks the sliding glass door, takes a last look outside.

INT. LOWELL'S HOUSE IN BERKELEY - LATE AT NIGHT

The Phone suddenly RINGS. Lowell asleep, alone... He gets it...

LOWELL
(sleepy)
Yeah...

INT. WIGANDS' NEW HOUSE, HALLWAY - LATE AT NIGHT

It's dark, save a light from the living room. Liane, in bed, seemingly sleeping. And we see Jeffrey, just outside their door in the foyer, sitting on the floor against a curved wall, a drink at his side on the telephone... A man with no one to talk to...

WIGAND
(after a beat)
Lowell... Jeffrey Wigand...

INT. LOWELL'S HOUSE, BERKELEY - LATE AT NIGHT

Lowell sits up...

WIGAND'S VOICE
Is it too late?

LOWELL
No. No, it's okay... How's – how's
the new place?

INT. THE WIGANDS' NEW HOUSE - LATE AT NIGHT

WIGAND
The new place? New.

INT. LOWELL'S HOUSE, BERKELEY - LATE AT NIGHT

LOWELL
(intuiting)
You okay?

WIGAND'S VOICE
Sure.

Lowell knows he isn't...

LOWELL
You know, I was thinking of calling
you tomorrow, anyway.
(beat)
How are your kids handling the new

house?

INT. WIGANDS' NEW HOUSE, LOUISVILLE - LATE AT NIGHT

WIGAND

Good.

(beat)

You have kids?

LOWELL'S VOICE

We have a couple. One's hers, one's mine. Everybody uses a different name.

(wry)

Modern marriage.

(beat)

How's Liane?

WIGAND

She's okay.

He looks at Liane for beat. We SEE his POV in medium shot.

Then he moves and sits on the floor in the living room.

WIGAND

Hold on a minute, Lowell...

(after a beat)

...somebody... may be following me.

I don't know. They came on the property...

LOWELL'S VOICE

What do you mean followed you? Did you call the police?

WIGAND

I don't want to be paranoid... I mean, maybe it's a game. Some kind of mind game.

LOWELL'S VOICE

Well, what do you really think, though?

WIGAND

I don't know what the fuck I really think! Are they doing it? Is some crank doing it? Are they doing it to make me feel paranoid? Are they doing it for real and don't give a shit

what I think? I don't know! I don't
fucking know.

And it's quiet again.

INT. LOWELL'S HOUSE, BERKELEY - LATE AT NIGHT

Lowell sitting in bed on the phone, alarmed, sharing Wigand's fears.

LOWELL

Jeffrey, describe for me in detail
what happened.

INT. WIGANDS' HOUSE, LOUISVILLE - LATE NIGHT

And Jeffrey's emotions are back in check as...

WIGAND

Well, no, look... I mean, there was
a footprint. Forget it. It's probably
not important at all.

(beat)

You know, I got a job now. I'm
teaching high school. Japanese and
Chemistry.

(beat)

So, what were you calling about?

LOWELL'S VOICE

You called me.

He takes another drink...

WIGAND

No, you said you were going to call
me tomorrow. So, what about?

LOWELL

(after a beat)

Oh, yes, yes, yes, I did... I wanted
to talk to you. I wanted to hook up
and talk to you. About what we were
talking about in your car.

WIGAND

...okay.

LOWELL

(after a beat)

Makes you feel good? Putting what

you know to use?

Jeffrey's impressed by Lowell's perceptivity...

WIGAND

How'd you know that, Lowell?

LOWELL

It's obvious, isn't it?

He looks at Liane in the next room, asleep.

LOWELL

Hello. You there

WIGAND

Yeah... Look, thanks for talking.
I'm sorry I woke you up.

LOWELL

It's okay.

Jeffrey hesitates, holding the phone, then he hangs up...
but the phone RINGS right away.

WIGAND

Lowell...?

But there's thick silence.

WIGAND

Who is this? Do not call here! Do
not...

They hang up. And he realizes he's talking to a DIAL TONE.

He hangs up. And as he sits in the patch of light from a
street lamp, the gun in his hand on his lap, to be up all
night guarding his family...

INT. THEIR BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT

And past Liane's sleeping form down the hall into the living
room is her husband, his back to her, sitting in the trapezoid
of light. And as we DOLLY along her side, we come upon her
face and discover she's been up all along and her eyes are
pressed shut, her hands over her ears... her reaction to his
raging on the phone. She's far from "OKAY."

INT. A JAPANESE RESTAURANT, WASHINGTON D.C. - NIGHT

And we see Lowell and Wigand sitting in their stocking feet at a traditional Japanese table in a private screened room... A traditionally-dressed Japanese Waitress waiting to take their order... Wigand conversing with her in Japanese...

The Waitress formally nods, and leaves...

LOWELL

What did you get us?

WIGAND

Tempura...

And Wigand drinks some more saki.

WIGAND

The internet said you did graduate work in Wisconsin, then went to UC La Jolla with Professor... Marcus?

LOWELL

Marcuse. Yeah. He was my mentor. He had a major influence on the New Left in the late '60s... and on me, personally.

WIGAND

Next to your father?

LOWELL

My father? What the hell's that got to do with my father?

WIGAND

Is that why you became a journalist? Then you get to ask all the questions?

LOWELL

You charge by the hour?

WIGAND

My father was a mechanical engineer... most ingenious man I ever knew.

LOWELL

Well, my father left us when I was five-years old. He was not the most ingenious man I ever knew... Let's get back to Brown & Williamson. If you decide to go on "60 Minutes," I got to know everything about why you

got fired.

WIGAND

Why?

LOWELL

They're gonna dig up stuff from your past, they're gonna throw it at you. I got to know what they're gonna throw. You understand?

WIGAND

(concedes)

I drink. A couple of occasions more than I should have.

(thinks)

I was cited for shoplifting once.

But it was a mistake...

(hesitant, after a beat)

I pushed Liane one time. We were both stressed out because of the pressure. She went to her mother's.

(out of the blue)

I got fired because when I get angry I have difficulty censoring myself. And I don't like to be pushed around!

LOWELL

I'm not pushing you around!

(after a beat)

I'm asking you questions.

WIGAND

I'm just a commodity to you, aren't I? I could be anything. Right? Anything worth putting on between commercials...

LOWELL

(honest)

...to a network, probably, we're all commodities.

(beat)

To me? You are not a commodity. What you are is important.

And he's begun to consciously or unconsciously "sell"...

LOWELL

You go public and thirty-million

people hear what you got to say,
nothing, I mean nothing, will ever
be the same again.

Wigand doesn't react.

LOWELL
You believe that?

WIGAND
(skeptical)
No.

LOWELL
You should. Because when you're done,
a judgment is going to go down in
the court of public opinion, my
friend. And that's the power you
have.

WIGAND
You believe that?

LOWELL
I believe that? Yes, I believe that.

WIGAND
You believe that because you get
information out to people... something
happens?

LOWELL
Yes.

WIGAND
Maybe that's just what you've been
telling yourself all these years to
justify having a good job? Having
status? And maybe for the audience,
it's just voyeurism? Something to do
on a Sunday night. And maybe it won't
change a fucking thing. And people
like myself and my family are left
hung out to dry. Used up! Broke,
alone!

LOWELL
Are you talking to me or did somebody
else just walk in here?! I never
abandoned a source!

WIGAND

I don't think you really understand –

LOWELL

(running over)

No, don't evade a choice you gotta make be questioning my reputation or "60 Minutes" with this cheap skepticism!

WIGAND

I have to put my family's welfare on the line here, my friend! And what are you puttin' up? You're puttin' up words!

LOWELL

Words! While you've been dickin' around at fucking company golf tournaments, I been out in the world, giving my word and backing it up with action.

Lowell is getting very close, in spite of the value of Wigand, to telling Jeff to take his story and stick it up his ass.

LOWELL

Now, are you going to go do this thing, or not?

Wigand abruptly rises...

WIGAND

(surprisingly mild)

I said I'd call the kids before they went to bed. Onisa...

And turning, he crosses the restaurant. And that's where it hangs.

INT. A CBS EDITING SUITE, NEW YORK - DAY

And we see we're watching footage in an on-line editing bay from what we will learn is Lowell's "N.O.P.D. Blue" on police corruption in New Orleans.

Lowell, TONY BALDO (his editor), Debbie and an intense YOUNG MAN wearing glasses, an Intern, looking at the cut. All the police are on horseback, lots of cops on horses. Lowell is waiting for a call to go through...

LOWELL

The stringer was supposed to be shooting B-roll on street cops in New Orleans. What's with all the horses?

TONY BALDO

Camera guy's got a thing about mounted police.

LOWELL

(re: horses)

Don't any of these guys ride in cars or walk?

TONY BALDO

How long did he stay on this?

LOWELL

What was he seeing?

DEBBIE DELUCA

(into phone)

Yes, hello... I'm trying to reach Mr. Richard Scruggs...

INT. A LEAR JET - DAY

And we see the PILOT, a fit-looking, unassuming man, wearing aviator glasses, in his late forties. A heavyset Man in his forties, riding up in the co-pilot's seat we'll come to know as RON MOTLEY. The Pilot's on a headset... He has a distinctive Southern accent...

THE PILOT

This is Richard Scruggs...

DEBBIE DELUCA

Could you hold on one second, please?

(to Lowell)

Lowell, I got him on the phone.

LOWELL'S VOICE

Hello, I'm Lowell Bergman.

RICHARD SCRUGGS

Hold on... Mobile approach... this is Lear November 643. Over.

CONTROL OPERATOR'S VOICE

(over)

Go ahead 643.

RICHARD SCRUGGS

(after a beat)

Request a flight level 220, on a heading of 284 degrees. Over.

(after a beat)

Mr. Bergman?

LOWELL

Yes, I'm right here. Could you call me back on a hard line?

RICHARD SCRUGGS

Alright.

LOWELL

Area code 212-555-0199.

RICHARD SCRUGGS

I'll call you then.

INT. A LOUNGE, PRIVATE AVIATION TERMINAL - DAY

Through the window, we see Scruggs' plane being refueled while Scruggs and Motley in a run-down lounge are talking on a SPEAKER PHONE with Lowell. They've taken over the Secretary's office for privacy.

LOWELL

(re: footage)

What do we do with that?

The phone rings.

DEBBIE DELUCA

I don't know.

RICHARD SCRUGGS' VOICE

(over)

Richard Scruggs...

LOWELL

...you filed a lawsuit against tobacco on behalf of the State of Mississippi, did you not?

RICHARD SCRUGGS

(nods)

That's right...

LOWELL

(after a beat)

Well, I'm working with someone, now, who was the former head of research at Brown & Williamson, a former corporate officer there.

RICHARD SCRUGGS

What's your interest in this, Mr. Bergman?

LOWELL

Well, he may tape an interview with us. And, we believe if his testimony showed up in a court record first, it would free him up from his confidentiality agreement and give him some protection.

MOTLEY

It could work. If it's public record, it's public record.

LOWELL

Yeah, and he's going to need legal representation.

MOTLEY

He sure as hell will.

RICHARD SCRUGGS

(a beat)

Has he decided to go public? Because let me tell you, we've been doing this for three years now, and we've worked with a lot of corporate cases involving whistle-blowers, so we know... Big Tobacco will do everything in their power to stop him. So, is your man truly committed?

LOWELL

Well, actually, no. Well, he's on the fence. That's the point.

Scruggs and Motley exchange a look... Motley shrugs...

RICHARD SCRUGGS

Well, we'd certainly be interested in making his acquaintance, but without knowing what he's going to

do...

LOWELL

Well, would you want him to call you? Or, you want to call him? How do you want to do it?

RICHARD SCRUGGS

(no nonsense)

It would be better if he called us.

LOWELL

Yeah.

RICHARD SCRUGGS

Alright?

LOWELL

Okay. Thank you.

At this moment, these two attorneys are unsold on the prospect of Jeffrey Wigand. Scruggs disconnects.

LOWELL

Shit...

INT. CBS EDITING SUITE, NEW YORK - DAY

LOWELL

(contemplating phone;
to Debbie re: show)

Oh, we need cops on the street. We don't need them on horses.

DEBBIE DELUCA

I don't know what he was thinking.

LOWELL

Oh, for God's sake, what has this guy got, a horse fetish?

DEBBIE DELUCA

Alright, alright.

LOWELL

Get me to New Orleans this afternoon.
I'll shoot the fucking thing myself!

TIGHTEN on mounted New Orleans police at crime scene, herding crowd.

INT. THE WIGANDS' NEW HOUSE, KITCHEN - TWILIGHT

Liane cooking dinner, making pasta. Ingredients, diced tomato, basil, are neatly ordered. She's waiting for water to boil. The kids are doing homework on the round table in the kitchenette. It's an idle moment. She's dazed-out watching them.

DEBORAH

What are you cooking?

LIANE

I'm cooking pasta primavera.

DEBORAH

Oh, I love that stuff.

And now she hears from the basement the BELL RING on Jeffrey's computer. It's a tiny bell, incessant... She crosses to the basement stairs.

LIANE

I'm going to have to go downstairs.

INT. WIGANDS' NEW HOUSE, BASEMENT OFFICE - NIGHT

Liane down the stairs, approaching Jeffrey's computer. And she SEES an incoming E-mail icon – a large letter with wings – flying repetitively across the screen.

The bell RINGING is louder. She calls-up the E-mail... On the screen in large RED letters:

WE WILL KILL YOU. WE WILL KILL ALL OF YOU. SHUT THE FUCK UP.

And now Liane is shouting and running up the stairs and...

LIANE

Debbie, Barbara... Debbie!

EXT. THE WIGANDS' HOUSE, LOUISVILLE - EVENING

Jeffrey, having arrived home from work, pulls the mail out of the mailbox, now stands, frozen, staring at something... And he sees, standing upright in the back of the mail box, like a monument of threat, a single hollow point .38 CALIBER BULLET.

He freezes... And simultaneously...

Liane and the Girls are running toward him... like in a bad

fucking dream. He's looking at them. Liane is saying something about E-mail, but his slow-motion attention is still arrested by the statuesque bullet. As they close on him...

EXT. NEW ORLEANS, THE FRENCH QUARTER - NIGHT

And we see Lowell lit by FLASHING POLICE LIGHTS. We're at a crime scene. Uniformed cops on horseback. Just arrived, the Cameraman's unloading his gear, preparing to shoot B-roll.

LOWELL

What happened?

COP

Dispatch received a call of shots fired in the area. Uniforms arrived on the scene and found this white male subject shot to death.

LOWELL

Was it gang related?

COP

There's no indication as far as a tag or an advertisement...

Police moving around as Lowell's cell phone RINGS...

LOWELL

(answering)

Excuse me. Yeah...

INT. WIGANDS' HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

WIGAND

They're terrorizing us. Death threats?! To my family? My kids?!

LOWELL'S VOICE

What are you talking about?

WIGAND

Someone put a bullet in my mailbox.

LOWELL

Jeff, call the FBI right away...

WIGAND

They do this with impunity!

LOWELL

Jeff...

WIGAND

They get to go home at night. What does it cost these people to do this to us? Nothing?! My girls are crying, so fuck them! I want to tape! I'm done thinking about it.

LOWELL'S VOICE

(frustrated)

I heard you. But I got to arrange a legal defense first. I got to get you to testify in court, get it on public record.

WIGAND

(cuts in)

Then hold it off the air until you got that. But I want to go to New York. And I want to go on the record. Right now!

LOWELL

Good. But Jeff...

WIGAND

I'll call them, Lowell.

INT. WIGAND'S HOUSE, LOUISVILLE - NIGHT

And two older, local FBI AGENTS #1 and #2 are sitting with Jeffrey in his living room...

FBI AGENT #2

Did you handle the round, Mr. Wigand?

WIGAND

Yes, I'm afraid I did.

FBI AGENT #1

We won't be able to lift usable prints.

FBI AGENT #2

Do you own a gun, Mr. Wigand?

WIGAND

A gun? Yes.

FBI AGENT #2

What caliber is your gun?

WIGAND

What caliber is my gun?

FBI AGENT #2

Yes, sir. What caliber is your gun?

WIGAND

(a dawning realization)

What does that have to do with the price of tea in China?

Now one of the kids is crying, Liane trying to calm her, takes her out of the room.

WIGAND

(a beat, realizing)

You think I put that bullet in the mailbox myself...?

FBI AGENT #2

If we could take a look, Mr. Wigand...

And he gets up... They follow him into the bedroom. He unlocks the side drawer on his night stand, taking out a gun, giving it to one of the Agents.

FBI AGENT #1

Why do you keep this gun?

WIGAND

I don't think it's unconstitutional yet to own a gun. I'm a target shooter.

FBI AGENT #2

That bullet was for a .38 caliber. Do you own a .38?

WIGAND

Yes, I do. A .38 Target Master. In my gun safe downstairs. A .45 Gold Cup. A .22 target pistol. So what?

FBI AGENT #2

(after a beat)

Do you have a history of emotional problems, Mr. Wigand?

WIGAND

Yes. Yes, I do.

(beat)

Yes, I get extremely emotional when
assholes put bullets in my mailbox...!

And we hear Liane's voice from downstairs...

LIANE'S VOICE

(upset)

I didn't tell you that so you could
just pick it up and take it away.
Jeffrey!

And we see Liane following FBI Agent #3, coming up the stairs
from the basement, and the Agent is carrying Jeffrey's
computer...

WIGAND

What's going on?

LIANE

I told him that you had an E-mail
death threat that said if you didn't
shut the "F" up, they were going to
kill you...

Agent #3 starts out of the house with the computer followed
by #2. Jeffrey runs out after them.

EXT. THE WIGANDS' HOUSE - NIGHT

WIGAND

(outraged)

You can't take that... It's personal
property...!

FBI AGENT #2 (OR #3)

We have a search warrant, Mr. Wigand.
There's been a death threat.

WIGAND

(after him)

...my files! Personal
correspondence...

Agent #3 ignores him, putting the computer in the trunk of
their car. And FBI Agent #1, the .38 bullet in a baggie,
comes out of the house.

WIGAND

...letters to my brother... my will.

His shoes slip on the grass and he falls. And the FBI are getting into their car. And NEIGHBORS have come out, watching them. Liane and the girls, standing halfway down the front lawn, the neighbors looking at them. She and Jeffrey look at each other. Will she go to him or not? She goes to him as he rises...

WIGAND

That computer has everything...

FBI AGENT #2

You alright, Mr. Wigand?

FBI AGENT #1

We need to take a look at your gun safe, Mr. Wigand.

EXT. NEW ORLEANS, THE FRENCH QUARTER - NIGHT

LOWELL

(interrupts)

I'm telling you, your agents in that office are acting improperly! Now, who are they trying to protect?

And we see a Man in his early forties, a neatly-dressed man who prides himself on his appearance, at his desk in the Bureau (FBI). BILL ROBERTSON. He's completely distracted, focused on agent travel orders...

BILL ROBERTSON'S VOICE

(over)

Let me tell you something, Lowell. Look, look, look. You're talking about two agents in a regional office in Louisville. I got the goddamn Unabomber threatening to blow up LAX! I gotta move 45 agents from all over the country into L.A. Alright? When I get a chance, I'll give it a look...

LOWELL

(heated)

You better take a good look! Because I'm getting two things: pissed off and curious! Now, any of these guys been offered jobs in corporate security after they retire? Either one of those guys have ex-agent pals

already in those jobs? Like, for instance, their ex-supervisor, who's already at Brown & Williamson as we fucking speak?

INT. BILL ROBERTSON'S OFFICE, WASHINGTON - NIGHT

BILL ROBERTSON

(beat)

I'll give it a look.

LOWELL

You're getting my drift?

BILL ROBERTSON

I'll give it a look.

He hangs up.

INT. DINING ROOM, THE FOUR SEASONS HOTEL, NEW YORK - NIGHT

And we slide by some elegant diners to fall onto Lowell and Mike Wallace with Jeffrey and Liane in the Hotel's dining room, having ordered dinner.

LOWELL

So, is everything okay?

MIKE WALLACE

How are the rooms? Comfortable?

LIANE

(to Mike)

Yes, very. You know, I enjoy your work so much... when you're talking to somebody, I always feel like I'm right there.

And she laughs...

MIKE WALLACE

Thank you for saying that...

LOWELL

Do you think we could talk about the taping? Tomorrow's taping, just so we can get it out of the way and order...

MIKE WALLACE

Yeah, well, questions will go toward what work you did there, why you were fired. And others will deal...

LIANE

(not sure she quite heard)
...taping?
(beat)
What are you taping?

WIGAND

I'm doing an interview.

LIANE

(whispers)
An interview! Do you know what they will do to us...! I thought... Sorry.

But she suddenly gets up and leaves, hurrying out of the dining room. And Jeffrey oddly doesn't move.

LOWELL

(trying to intervene)
Liane, this is a preliminary...
(after a beat)
You didn't tell her we were taping?
What did she think she was coming to New York for?

WIGAND

...to talk about it. To think about it. I had a plan to ease her into it. But, I really – I didn't know how to do that...

Jeffrey abruptly crosses to the nearby Bar.

LOWELL

Oh, man.

MIKE WALLACE

Who are these people?

LOWELL

(frustrated)
Ordinary people! Under extraordinary pressure, Mike. What the hell do you expect? Grace and consistency?

And Lowell leaves the table. And as Mike Wallace sits at the

table, looking around, wondering what the fuck he's doing there.

INT. THE BATHROOM, NEW YORK HOTEL - NIGHT

Liane folds her arms protectively across her chest...

INT. A STUDIO, CBS - MORNING

And we see a small TAPING STUDIO separated by flats and black curtains from other CBS News sets. Cameras are set up.

INT. THE STUDIO, CBS - DAY

And we enter mid-scene on Jeffrey in a more formal demeanor, sitting in a chair, Mike Wallace sitting across from him, under the lights, taping an interview. Lowell, off camera.

MIKE WALLACE

You heard Mr. Sandefur say before Congress that he believed nicotine was not addictive...?

WIGAND

(nods)

...I believe Mr. Sandefur perjured himself because I watched those testimonies very carefully.

Lowell's reaction. Jeffrey's statements are stunning and powerful revelations... and dangerous ones to make.

MIKE WALLACE

All of us did. There was this whole line of people... whole line of CEOs up there all swearing.

WIGAND

Part of the reason I'm here is I felt that their representation clearly misstated, at least within Brown & Williamson's representation, clearly misstated... what is common language within the company... we are in the nicotine delivery business.

MIKE WALLACE

And that's what cigarettes are for...?

WIGAND

A delivery device for nicotine.

MIKE WALLACE

A delivery device for nicotine. Put it in your mouth, light it up, and you're gonna get your fix...

WIGAND

You're gonna get your fix...

MIKE WALLACE

You're saying that Brown & Williamson manipulates and adjusts the nicotine fix, not by artificially adding nicotine, but by enhancing the effect of nicotine through the use of chemical elements such as ammonia...

WIGAND

(nods)

The process is known as "impact boosting..." While not spiking nicotine, they clearly manipulate it. There's extensive use of this technology, known as "ammonia chemistry." It allows for the nicotine to be more rapidly absorbed in the lung and therefore affect the brain and central nervous system.

INT. THE STUDIO, CBS - LATER

WIGAND

The straw that broke the camel's back for me and really put me in trouble with Sandefur was a compound called "coumarin." When I came on board at B&W, they had tried to transition from coumarin to a similar flavor that would give the same taste, and had been unsuccessful. I wanted it out immediately. I was told that it would affect sales, so I should mind my own business. I constructed a memo to Mr. Sandefur indicating I could not in conscience continue with coumarin in a product that we now knew, we had documentation, was similar to coumadin, a lung-specific carcinogen...

MIKE WALLACE

And you sent the document forward to Sandefur?

WIGAND

I sent the document forward to Sandefur. I was told that we would continue to work on a substitute, we weren't going to remove it as it would impact sales, and that that was his decision.

MIKE WALLACE

In other words, you were charging Sandefur and Brown & Williamson with ignoring health considerations consciously...

WIGAND

Most certainly.

MIKE WALLACE

And on March 24, Thomas Sandefur, CEO of Brown & Williamson had you fired. And the reason he gave you?

WIGAND

Poor communication skills.

MIKE WALLACE

And, do you wish you hadn't come forward? You wish you hadn't blown the whistle?

WIGAND

Yeah, there are times I wish I hadn't done it. There are times I feel compelled to do it. If you asked me would I do it again? Do I think it's worth it? Yeah, I think it's worth it.

INT. A HIGH SCHOOL SCIENCE CLASS, LOUISVILLE - AFTERNOON

Not too many kids paying attention. Meanwhile, Jeffrey has written his name on the blackboard.

WIGAND

Hi.

KIDS

(in unison)

Hi.

WIGAND

My name is Jeff Wigand. You can call me Mr. Wigand; you can call me Dr. Wigand – I have a Ph.D. in biochemistry and endocrinology; you can call me Jeff...

(beat)

Anything else you want to call me... you'll have to do so in private...

(a few kids smile)

Okay... I find chemistry to be magical. I find it an adventure. An exploration into the building blocks of our physical universe...

(beat)

So, how many of you have taken chemistry before?

Nobody raises their hands.

WIGAND

(easy smile)

Okay... I've never taught it before, so we're gonna be fine.

A couple of laughs... And we feel Jeffrey, for the first time is in a milieu that suits him.

WIGAND

Our first experiment is...

(holds up cigarette lighter)

...going to be measuring the molecular weight of butane...

INT. SCRUGGS' OFFICE

Scruggs' office is decorated with watercolors of Phantom jets and A-6s as Scruggs takes off his glasses...

CHARLENE

He's on line three.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL CORRIDOR

Jeffrey Wigand is on a pay phone in the corridor crowded with students...

RICHARD SCRUGGS

Hello.

WIGAND

Mr. Scruggs, Jeff Wigand. Lowell Bergman said I should give you a call...

INT. SCRUGGS' OFFICE

RICHARD SCRUGGS

My co-counsel, Ron Motley, and I have filed a lawsuit against the tobacco industry on behalf of the State of Mississippi to get the state reimbursed Medicaid costs for treating people with smoking-related illness.

(beat)

If you'd be interested in talking to us, we'd certainly like to talk to you...

WIGAND

When should we do this?

EXT. WIGAND'S HOUSE #2, LOUISVILLE - TWILIGHT

Jeffrey drives up the block and onto his driveway. Seeing a MAN in a suit, an ear piece in his ear, disappearing around the corner of his house, Jeffrey leaps out of the car. But the front door's open. So instead of chasing after, he runs inside...

INT. THE WIGAND'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY/TWILIGHT

And he sees another Man is in the living room...

WIGAND

Who the hell are you?! What are you doing in my house?!

And he sees Lowell enter from the dining room...

LOWELL

It's okay, Jeff.

SECURITY GUARD

Mr. Wigand, you need to speak to...

LOWELL

(wry)

It's okay. You got your own security

now...

Wigand catches his breath.

WIGAND

Lowell, I can't afford –

LOWELL

...they "volunteered." A friend owns a large security company.

TALIFARO

How are you doing, Mr. Wigand? I'm Jon Talifaro. There'll be three of us on detail.

LIANE

(crossing through)

I'm going to the store. Please explain our new "houseguests" to your children.

And Wigand looks at Lowell... Barbara comes into the living room and holds onto her father's leg.

WIGAND

I called Richard Scruggs in Mississippi...

LOWELL

I heard.

WIGAND

I'm going to be a witness for them in their litigation. So I'm going to fly to Pascagoula to give a deposition...

LOWELL

I know. I'm going to go there tonight...

WIGAND

Did you have a good day?

DEBORAH

Yes, I did. I had a great day.

WIGAND

Coffee, Lowell?

LOWELL

Yeah.

(to kids)

Want to play that game we were playing before? You know, I think you got it up to five. I was ahead of you.

She goes over and holds his hand. And as he holds her hand, seeing what his life has become, he looks up and his glance connects with Lowell...

INT. THE KITCHEN, THE WIGANDS' HOUSE - NIGHT

We see out the window a Security Guard, incongruous, walking by. And we see Liane, finished with the dinner dishes, silently wiping off the sink. There's a pall you could cut with a knife. A moment, and Jeffrey comes in the kitchen door from the garden... He stops to wash his hands in the sink.

LIANE

Please don't wash your hands in the sink.

WIGAND

Where should I wash them?

LIANE

Use the bathroom.

WIGAND

What's the difference...

LIANE

That's for food.

But he ignores her, washing his hands... And she turns the water off. He turns it back on. He thinks, then turns it off. Then she turns it on.

LIANE

Leave it on! Just leave it on, okay?!

And she turns and leaves the room, coldly, all her anger repressed. For Jeffrey, everything else and now this? The running faucet.

EXT. THE WIGANDS' HOUSE, LOUISVILLE - LATE NIGHT

The house on the quiet suburban street. A Security Guard, incongruous, a noticeable bulge where his shoulder holster

is, sitting watch under the porch light on the small front porch in a metal porch chair.

INT. THE BASEMENT, THE WIGANDS' HOUSE - LATE NIGHT

And we see Jeffrey, unable to sleep, sitting at his desk, alone in the basement, listening to classical music. He instinctively turns. And he sees Liane, in her bathrobe, has come down to sit on the basement stairs. He looks over at her. And he thinks she's come down to make up. And all she really wants him to do is say, "I need you..." But he can't... And like ships that pass in the night, nothing's said. It's quiet. She puts her hands protectively in her robe pockets. And she starts to cry...

LIANE

I don't think I can do this... I want to stand by my husband... I really do, Jeffrey. But I don't think I can do this anymore. I am so sorry...

WIGAND

Can we talk about this when I get back?

LIANE

Yes... Jeffrey.

She goes back up the stairs. And as Jeffrey sits in the basement, and the music plays.

INT. THE LOUISVILLE AIRPORT - DAY

We see Jeffrey and his Security Man. He passes a small Filipino Woman in a nurse's uniform and a Man in clerical garb, who hands him a small American Flag, asking for donations. And, now, he passes through the metal detector.

He nods thanks and walks towards us, relaxing, looking behind every so often to see if anybody is following him. As he passes Gate 3, he HEARS over his shoulder...

THE MAN

(friendly)
Jeff...?

Jeffrey turns and the Man throws a sheaf of SUBPOENAS at his chest...

THE MAN

(nasty)
You've been served.

And he turns and walks off. And as Jeffrey looks down at the subpoenas...

INT. RICHARD SCRUGGS' KITCHEN - 7:00 A.M.

Jeffrey is sitting with Scruggs and Motley in Scruggs' kitchen around a semi-circular counter. Coffee and sweet rolls. It's casual. No one's dressed for court. Scruggs has been looking through the sheaf of subpoenas. About Motley, we sense power held in reserve.

RICHARD SCRUGGS

Now, what this one is, is a temporary restraining order, a gag order, issued by a Kentucky court.

Meanwhile, a movie-star handsome man in shirtsleeves and a tie, a coffee cup in his hand, enters and sits casually on the arm of a chair.

RICHARD SCRUGGS

(introducing)
Jeff Wigand, Michael Moore.

MICHAEL MOORE

Good to meet you, Dr. Wigand.

RICHARD SCRUGGS

Mike's our Attorney General down here.

(to Moore)

I was just explaining to Jeff, they got a Kentucky court to issue a gag order to stop his deposition today.

MICHAEL MOORE

Right.

RICHARD SCRUGGS

Now, they tried to get the Mississippi Court to honor it, but the judge threw it out...

(to Jeffrey)

However, for you, there is a more perilous effect to the Kentucky gag order...

MICHAEL MOORE

(after a beat)
Dr. Wigand, you do understand what could happen, don't you?

WIGAND
I'm not free to testify... here...?

MOTLEY
That's right. If you violate the Kentucky order, when you step foot back in Kentucky, they can find you in contempt and they can incarcerate you. And you ought to know that.

And Jeffrey fairly turns white, it's never occurred to him he might go to jail...

WIGAND
Jail?

RICHARD SCRUGGS
Possibly, yes. That is one of the possible consequences of your testifying here today. That's right...

WIGAND
How does one... "go... to... jail?"
What does my family do? Go on welfare?
If my wife has to work? Who's going to look after the kids? Put food on the table? My children need me. If I'm not teaching... there's no medical... no medical... even on co-pay, that's like... Tuition...

MICHAEL MOORE
Dr. Wigand, listen, you may not be able to do this thing. As I understand from Dick, you're our key witness. And, I hope you don't withdraw. I guess we'd all understand if you did...

(at watch)
Guys, I've got to go. I'm gonna be late for court. I'll see y'all a little later. Dr. Wigand, good luck.

He leaves. And Jeffrey's quiet, frightened. Having shaken the departing Moore's hand, he now turns away from Scruggs and Motley, thinking about consequences.

RICHARD SCRUGGS
I know what you're facing, Jeff.
And, I think I know how you're
feeling...

Jeffrey's skeptical anybody could know "how it is" ...

RICHARD SCRUGGS
(low, personal)
In the Navy I flew A-6's off
carriers... In combat, events have a
duration of seconds, sometimes
minutes... But what you're going
through goes on day in and day out.
Whether you're ready for it or not,
week in, week out... Month after
month after month. Whether you're up
or whether you're down. You're
assaulted psychologically. You're
assaulted financially, which is its
own special kind of violence. Because
it's directed at your kids... what
school can you afford... How will
that affect their lives. You're asking
yourself: Will that limit what they
may become? You feel your whole
family's future's compromised...
held hostage...
(after a beat)
I do know how it is.

EXT. RICHARD SCRUGGS' HOUSE, PASCAGOULA, MISSISSIPPI - DAY

A white, traditional, Southern house, with a veranda and gables... a large front lawn with weeping willows. And we see Lowell, hands in his pockets, not an insider or an outsider, waiting alone on the expansive lawn. The front door opens.

A Mississippi State Trooper, putting on his round brimmed hat comes out and crosses the driveway. Then Jeffrey coming out with Motley. Motley talks to him on the veranda for a moment and then heads towards his car. Meanwhile, Jeffrey comes down over to Lowell on the lawn.

And Jeffrey looks off, across the street from the house, at the Gulf. And we see the street is blockaded by Mississippi State Police cars. An armed camp. Other men in suits, Lawyers and state officials, wait. Ron Motley gets in his car and drives away.

LOWELL

You attract a crowd.

WIGAND

(smiles, wry)

Yeah, great.

LOWELL

I heard about the Kentucky gag order...

WIGAND

I don't know what to do.

And they're quiet, a breeze of the Gulf ruffling their coats... He looks out at the water, a cargo container ship passing by. He watches its slow progress...

And Jeffrey quietly starts to walk off across the lawn, hands in his pockets, shoulders bent, head down, thinking... And Richard Scruggs comes out, tying his tie, to wait beside Lowell...

DAY
EXT. COURTHOUSE, CANTY STREET, PASCAGOULA, MISSISSIPPI -

Motley's car parks, and he and an Assistant are approached by a flurry of media from the parking lot behind us, crossing Canty Street to intercept him. And we SEE the lot is jammed with Mercedes-Benzes, Town Cars and limousines belonging to the 150-200 Big Tobacco, Wall Street lawyers. Some hang out by their cars, killing time. It's a tailgate party. Beyond them are trucks and vans with satellite dishes supporting the media circus. They're all here for Jeff's deposition. The scale of it dwarfs the plebeian storefront with its sign "Temporary Jackson County Courthouse" ... into which Motley enters...

EXT. RICHARD SCRUGGS' HOUSE, PASCAGOULA, MISSISSIPPI - DAY

Jeffrey contemplating.

INT. COURTROOM, PASCAGOULA, MISSISSIPPI - DAY

One TOBACCO LAWYER, an Edward Bennett-type while waiting is on his cell phone...

TOBACCO LAWYER

(into phone)

Hold on a second...

(seeing Motley enter;

to Jr. Lawyer)
Would you please ask Mr. Motley if
he expects his witness to appear or
not...?

JR. LAWYER crosses to Motley.

EXT. SCRUGGS' HOUSE, DOCK - DAY

Jeffrey alone on the jetty, looking out to sea. Trying to
decide, trying to untangle identity and consequence. A moment.
He turns, crossing to Lowell and Scruggs. Then it's the three
men, standing on the lawn. Time seems to slow... all of them
aware it's a critical decision, personally and historically...

WIGAND

(severely conflicted)

I can't seem to find... the criteria
to decide. It's too big a decision
to make without being resolved... in
my own mind.

They're quiet. Jeffrey, getting nowhere. Lowell offers...

LOWELL

Maybe things have changed...

Long pause on Jeffrey as he contemplates his future. And
something just got resolved. He asks Lowell, rhetorically...

WIGAND

What's changed?

LOWELL

(unsure)

You mean... since this morning?

WIGAND

No. I mean since whenever...

Nothing's changed. Wigand looks at them. He found his own
answer.

WIGAND

Fuck it. Let's go to court.

And Dick Scruggs and Lowell look at this normal, somewhat
flawed, very courageous man...

RICHARD SCRUGGS

(to unseen staff)

Dr. Wigand would like to leave now.

And there's a sudden flurry of activity. Jeffrey and Scruggs walk to a Mississippi State Police car. Lowell gets into his car and drives away, separately. Police, State Officials, run to their cars. Cars starting, lights flashing, Wigand's car pulls into position.

INT. SCRUGGS' CAR - JEFFREY - DAY

in the back seat with Scruggs. The driver's a State Policeman. Jeffrey watches the small town of empty lots, old buildings, a 1930's Deco school pass by. It's all heightened, especially vivid to his eyes somehow. And he exhales heavily to calm himself, to focus...

EXT. THE COURTHOUSE, PASCAGOULA, MISSISSIPPI - DAY

Some of the Tobacco Lawyers, their jackets off, still hanging across Canty Street by their cars. And now they see the police lights turning, coming around a corner, moving towards the courthouse. The caravan stops. First, Scruggs gets out. A moment, then Jeffrey appears. And the Reporters pounce on Jeffrey, cameras flashing... Mississippi Police leading him through the crowd... Moore appears at courtroom door (already there). And as he's whisked away into the courtroom.

INT. THE COURTROOM, PASCAGOULA, MISSISSIPPI - DAY

The tobacco lawyers become dead quiet. Cell phones are hung up. Newspapers are put away. Jackets are donned. This is now very serious business. Motley meets Jeffrey, all eyes on him.

MOTLEY

Okay, Jeff, I'm going to sit you down at that table over there. I'm going to start as fast as possible. I don't want to give them a chance to get another restraining order, okay? Let's go.

MICHAEL MOORE

Good luck, Doc.

Motley calmly motions Wigand to take a chair. He settles in.

STENOGRAPHER

Please stand. Raise your right hand...
Do you swear to tell the truth, the
whole truth and nothing but the truth,

so help you God?

WIGAND

I do.

STENOGRAPHER

You may be seated.

MOTLEY

You understand, Dr. Wigand, you are under oath. This is a sworn deposition. There's no judge. It's not a trial.

(understatement of
the century)

Will you state your name for the record.

WIGAND

(after a beat)

Jeffrey S. Wigand.

He spells it for them...

EXT. THE COURTHOUSE, PASCAGOULA, MISSISSIPPI - DAY

Lowell, waiting with the other journalists...

PHOTOGRAPHER

Got any idea what's going on in there?

LOWELL

No, I don't have a clue.

INT. THE COURTROOM, PASCAGOULA, MISSISSIPPI - DAY

Motley still conducting the inquiry... And the tobacco lawyers, like a pack of dogs, waiting to pounce...

WIGAND

That is correct.

MOTLEY

In other words, it acts as a drug?

TOBACCO LAWYER

Object to the form of the question!

MOTLEY

It acts as a drug on the body?

TOBACCO LAWYER
Object to the form!

MOTLEY
It acts as a...

TOBACCO LAWYER
Object!

MOTLEY
There an echo in here? Your
objection's been recorded. She typed
it into her little machine over there.
It's on the record. So now I'll
proceed with my deposition of my
witness. Does it act as a drug?

TOBACCO LAWYER
(shouts)
Dr. Wigand. I am instructing you...
(to Wigand)
...not to answer that question in
accordance to the terms of the
contractual obligations undertaken
by you not to disclose any information
about your work at the Brown &
Williamson Tobacco Company. And in
accordance with the force and effect
of the temporary restraining order
that has been entered against you to
by the court in the State of Kentucky!
That means you don't talk!
(beat)
Mr. Motley, we have rights, here...

MOTLEY
(explodes)
Oh, you got rights and lefts! Ups
and downs and middles! So what?! You
don't get to instruct anything around
here! This is not North Carolina,
not South Carolina nor Kentucky.
This is the sovereign State of
Mississippi's proceeding. Wipe that
smirk off your face! Dr. Wigand's
deposition will be part of this
record. And I'm going to take my
witness' testimony! Whether the hell
you like it or not!
(to Wigand)
Answer the question, Dr...

WIGAND

(slams it home)

Yes. It produces a physiological response, which meets the definition of a drug! Nicotine is associated with impact, with satisfaction. It has a pharmacological effect that crosses the blood-brain barrier intact...

MOTLEY

Thank you, Doctor. Thank you.

EXT. THE SCRUGGS' HOUSE, PASCAGOULA, MISSISSIPPI - NIGHT

Lowell stands on the porch looking out at the rain. There's a slight sound. He turns. And Jeffrey's come outside. He stands leaning on the porch railing, looking out at the rain and windswept trees. They're quiet. They share a look.

They nod to each other. The smallest nod of accomplishment.

And they're there on the porch, alone, outside the house in Pascagoula, Mississippi.

INT. CBS EDITING ROOM, NEW YORK - AFTERNOON

We see Lowell, unusually buoyant in the same clothes as yesterday. He's working with Tony Baldo on a cut of the show, the net result of his architecture of events, his combination of persuasion and integrity...

We see on the Avid monitor a single of Jeffrey...

WIGAND

(on monitor)

"Part of the reason I'm here is I felt that their representation clearly, at least within..."

LOWELL

Run that Sandefur piece on "nicotine's not addictive." Run that on-camera. Then cut right to Wigand with "I believe they perjured..." Then go wide to the CEOs all taking the oath. Back on Jeff and play the pause after the word "felt" on the B-side...

Widen to include Debbie DeLuca, the Intern, two other Editors,

Felling. They have gathered behind Lowell in the doorway. This is a hot show and it's generated excitement among Lowell's co-workers. And while Baldo cuts, we see...

INT. CBS, CORRIDOR OUTSIDE EDITING ROOM - DAY

...the group has spilled out the doorway, watching Lowell's story come together. Beyond them, approaching, is Mike Wallace, coming to work...

BILL FELLING
(leaving)
...helluva show, Mike. Explosive material.

People separate as Mike pushes in. Lowell sees Mike. While Tony Baldo is making the edits on the Avid...

LOWELL
(to Mike)
It went great in Mississippi, Mike.

MIKE WALLACE
Good.

Don Hewitt enters from the corridor without jacket.

DON HEWITT
I heard Wigand's deposition got sealed.

LOWELL
Yeah, they argued he was going to reveal the secret formula of "Kools" to the world.
(seriously)
"Sealed" doesn't hurt Scruggs' litigation, and since we're the only ones with the story, I believe we're sitting on an exclusive.

MIKE WALLACE
I like that...

DON HEWITT
Corporate has some questions. We've got a meeting at Black Rock first thing in the morning.

LOWELL
When's the air date?

DEBBIE DELUCA
(to Lowell)
Excuse me, Lowell. Sharon's on line
3.

LOWELL
Tell her I'll call her back in ten.

BALDO
Here we go.

Baldo now runs Lowell's edit of the above sequence. And we SEE THE IMMEDIATE IMPACT.

Sandefur in CLOSE-UP states "I believe that nicotine is not addictive." Wigand in matching CLOSE-UP states "I believe he perjured himself." Then all seven CEOs of Big Tobacco stand up and raise their hands and take an oath in front of Congress to tell the truth while Wallace says "...the whole line of people, the whole line of CEO's up there, all swearing that." And Wigand says off-screen with great emphasis "Part of the reason I'm here is I FELT"... and it cuts to Wigand for a pause that makes the word "FELT" resound and, then, he goes on to say on-camera "that their representation clearly misstated what they commonly knew. We're a nicotine delivery business." We see the combination of art and truth woven into impact that has an audacity that's stirring and beautiful...

EXT. LOUISVILLE - DUSK

We see an anonymous rental car moving through downtown Louisville.

INT. THE RENTAL CAR - NIGHT

It's Jeffrey in the front seat, driven by one of his security men. He's coming home under the cover of darkness. They pass a FLAMING CAR on the freeway shoulder. Jeffrey turns to stare at it. They turn off onto city streets and stop at a light. Jeffrey's nervous. Jeffrey instinctively turns. A Police Car stops alongside. The Policeman looks at him.

Eyes meet. Jeffrey looks away. The signal takes forever.

It changes. And as the Police Car moves off...

EXT. WIGANDS' HOUSE - NIGHT

The car's stopped at the curb. Jeffrey gets out. He starts

up the walk, and the Second Security Guard quickly crosses the lawn to intercept him...

And Jeff opens the door going inside, anxious to be home...

INT. WIGANDS' HOUSE - NIGHT

The house is quiet, dark. Too quiet. Too dark. Something isn't right. He crosses to one of the children's rooms... the master bedroom. The lights are on. Both rooms are empty. He goes into the kitchen and sees a note that's been left for him... He opens it. He sits heavily in a chair, reading the note. The Security Guard peers... And as Jeffrey sits in the silent house, the hero come home...

INT. THE CONFERENCE ROOM, CBS - DAY

We're at a table. Mike and Lowell laugh at some joke while HELEN CAPERELLI, CBS GENERAL COUNSEL, enters with the President of CBS News, ERIC KLUSTER.

HELEN CAPERELLI

Shall I send for coffee? Sorry I'm late.

MIKE WALLACE

No, no, we're fine...

HELEN CAPERELLI

Are you sure?

Also there is Don Hewitt. Caperelli is too well put together, too practiced, too polished.

They nod. They don't need coffee.

HELEN CAPERELLI

Alright, I thought we'd get together because there's a legal concept that has been getting some new attention recently, "tortious interference."

(beat)

If two people have an agreement, like a confidentiality agreement, and one of them breaks it because they are induced to do so by a 3rd party, the 3rd party can be sued for damages for interfering... hence, "tortious interference."

DON HEWITT

Interfering? That's what we do.

LOWELL

I think what we're trying to tell you is that it happens all the time. This is a news organization. People are always telling us things they shouldn't. We have to verify if it's true and in the public interest... And if it is, we air it.

MIKE WALLACE

After we corroborate it. That's why we've never lost a lawsuit and run a classy show.

(impatient, now)

Anything else?

HELEN CAPERELLI

And "60 Minutes" verification is exact. And precise. And I don't think it would hurt to make sure you're right... on this one.

DON HEWITT

Why? You think we have liability? What's the CBS News' position, Eric?

ERIC KLUSTER

There's a possibility, it's rather remote...

HELEN CAPERELLI

But one we have to check on, Mike. I've retained outside counsel to do exactly that. On a segment, I might add, that's already rife with problems...

LOWELL

What does that mean? "Rife with –
?"

HELEN CAPERELLI

I'm told unusual promises were made to Wigand.

LOWELL

No, only that we would hold the story until it was safe for him...

HELEN CAPERELLI

(cuts in)

And, I'm told there are questions as to our "star witness" veracity.

LOWELL

(trying to control
his anger)

His "veracity" was good enough for the State of Mississippi.

HELEN CAPERELLI

(historic)

Our standards have to be higher than anyone else's, because we are the standard... for everyone else...

Whatever that means...

LOWELL

(wry)

Well, as a "standard" ... I'll hang with "is the guy telling the truth?"

HELEN CAPERELLI

Well, with tortious interference, I'm afraid... the greater the truth, the greater the damage.

LOWELL

Come again?

HELEN CAPERELLI

They own the information he's disclosing. The truer it is, the greater the damage to them. If he lied, he didn't disclose their information. And the damages are smaller.

LOWELL

Is this "Alice in Wonderland"?

MIKE WALLACE

You said "on this one." What about "this one"?

And Lowell hears a changed note in Wallace's voice. After a beat.

HELEN CAPERELLI

(familiar, seductive)
If this holds up, and it very well
may not, Mike... but, if it did. And
we aired this segment? And CBS was
sued by Brown & Williamson? I think
we could be at grave risk.

MIKE WALLACE

(a beat)
How grave?

HELEN CAPERELLI

(and she's been waiting
for this)
Well, at the end of the day... because
of your segment... the Brown &
Williamson Tobacco Company... could
own CBS.

As if on cue, the alarm on Helen Caperelli's watch beeps.

She glances at it.

HELEN CAPERELLI

You know, I am sorry. But I'm due
upstairs.

She gets up, gathering her things.

LOWELL

Is CBS corporate telling CBS News do
not go to air with this story?

HELEN CAPERELLI

You're getting ahead of yourself.
We're all in this together. We're
all CBS. We'll find out soon. Thank
you, gentlemen.

And taking up her briefcase, she leaves. Don and Mike rise.

LOWELL

"Tortious interference"? Sounds like
a disease caught by a radio.

DON HEWITT

(to Mike)
Lunch?

MIKE WALLACE

Sure.

(to Lowell)
Don't worry, we call the shots around here.

Lowell finds himself angry and alone. He crosses to the window and pulls out his cell phone and goes to work.

DEBBIE DELUCA'S VOICE
(over)
Hello?

LOWELL
(into phone)
Debbie, it's me. I want you to check some filings and give me John Wilson's number at Bear-Stern.

INT. CBS, HEWITT'S OFFICE - DAY

LOWELL
What now?

DON HEWITT
Kluster's coming over.

Hewitt's on an unrelated call. Lowell crosses to look out the window, a manila folder (the filing) under his arm with whatever he found out, like a bomb, feels distant from these people. The door opens, and Eric Kluster, the President of CBS News enters...

ERIC KLUSTER
Hello, Lowell, Mike, Don.

Hewitt hangs up the phone.

ERIC KLUSTER
There has been so much soul searching about this Wigand, I've decided we should cut an alternate version of the show without his interview.

LOWELL
So, what happened to Ms. Caperelli's checking with outside counsel first, all that crap?

ERIC KLUSTER
That's happening. And, hopefully we won't have to use the alternate, but we should have it in the can.

LOWELL

I'm not touching my film...

ERIC KLUSTER

I'm afraid you are.

LOWELL

No, I'm not...

ERIC KLUSTER

We're doing this with or without you, Lowell. If you like, I can assign another producer to edit your show...

Lowell's stunned. He looks like he's been hit with a hammer...

LOWELL

Since when has the paragon of investigative journalism allowed lawyers to determine the news content on "60 Minutes"?

DON HEWITT

It's an alternate version. So what if we have an alternate version? And I don't think her being cautious is so damned unreasonable.

ERIC KLUSTER

(wry)

So, now, if you'll excuse me, gentlemen, Mr. Rather's been complaining about his chair again.

(laughter)

As they start to leave...

LOWELL

(mild)

Before you go...

And Lowell takes out...

LOWELL

I discovered this. SEC filing...

(he gets their attention)

For the sale of the CBS Corporation to Westinghouse Corporation.

MIKE WALLACE

What?

DON HEWITT

Yeah, I heard rumors.

LOWELL

It's not a rumor. It's a sale.

(rhetorical answer)

If Tisch can unload CBS for \$81 a share to Westinghouse and then is suddenly threatened with a multibillion-dollar lawsuit from Brown & Williamson, that could screw up the sale, could it not?

ERIC KLUSTER

(serene)

And what are you implying?

LOWELL

(to Kluster)

I'm not implying. I'm quoting. More vested interests...

(reading from SEC filing)

"Persons Who Will Profit From This Merger...

(beat)

Ms. Helen Caperelli, General Counsel of CBS News, 3.9 million. Mr. Eric Kluster, President of CBS News, 1.4 million..."

DON HEWITT

Are you suggesting that she and Eric are influenced by money?

LOWELL

Oh, no, of course they're not influenced by money. They work for free. And you are a Volunteer Executive Producer.

DON HEWITT

CBS does not do that. And, you're questioning our journalistic integrity?!

LOWELL

No, I'm questioning your hearing! You hear "reasonable" and "tortious

interference." I hear... "Potential Brown & Williamson lawsuit jeopardizing the sale of CBS to Westinghouse." I hear... "Shut the segment down. Cut Wigand loose. Obey orders. And fuck off...!" That's what I hear.

DON HEWITT

You're exaggerating!

LOWELL

I am? You pay me to go get guys like Wigand, to draw him out. To get him to trust us, to get him to go on television. I do. I deliver him. He sits. He talks. He violates his own fucking confidentiality agreement. And he's only the key witness in the biggest public health reform issue, maybe the biggest, most-expensive corporate-malfeasance case in U.S. history. And Jeffrey Wigand, who's out on a limb, does he go on television and tell the truth? Yes. Is it newsworthy? Yes. Are we gonna air it? Of course not. Why? Because he's not telling the truth? No. Because he is telling the truth. That's why we're not going to air it. And the more truth he tells, the worse it gets!

DON HEWITT

You are a fanatic. An anarchist. You know that? If we can't have a whole show, then I want half a show rather than no show. But oh, no, not you. You won't be satisfied unless you're putting the company at risk!

LOWELL

C'mon, what are you? And are you a businessman? Or are you a newsman?! Because that happens to be what Mike and I do for a living...

MIKE WALLACE

Lowell.

LOWELL

(runs on)
"Put the corporation at risk"...?
Give me a fucking break!

MIKE WALLACE
Lowell.

LOWELL
These people are putting our whole
reason for doing what we do... on
the line!

MIKE WALLACE
Lowell!

LOWELL
What?

MIKE WALLACE
I'm with Don on this.

And there it is.

EXT. LOWELL'S HOUSE, BERKELEY - AFTERNOON

We see Sharon in a vegetable garden in their side yard...
She turns, seeing him standing behind her...

After a moment. She knows.

SHARON
What's wrong?

LOWELL
They're killing the Wigand
interview...

SHARON
What?!

LOWELL
They're pretending it's process.
Bullshit, it's foregone.

SHARON
(beat)
What are you and Mike going to do?

LOWELL
I'm alone on this...

SHARON
(beat)
Oh, baby...

And the phone RINGS... Sharon goes in the house to get it...

She comes back out...

SHARON
(after a beat)
Jeffrey Wigand...

INT. LOWELL'S OFFICE, BERKELEY - LATE AFTERNOON

LOWELL
Jeffrey...

INT. A HOTEL ROOM, LOUISVILLE - NIGHT

And we see Wigand looking rough, unshaven, sitting on a couch in a hotel room. And we see his belongings, clothing, some boxes, a bottle of vodka, his computer, what's left of his world, are around the room.

LOWELL'S VOICE
Jeffrey, how are you? How's the family, okay?

WIGAND
There is – there is no family.

LOWELL'S VOICE
What do you mean there is no family?

WIGAND
Liane has filed for divorce...

INT. LOWELL'S OFFICE, BERKELEY - LATE AFTERNOON

And Lowell's dead quiet.

INT. THE HOTEL ROOM, LOUISVILLE - NIGHT

WIGAND
And, so, I moved out... I see the girls a couple of days a week...

LOWELL'S VOICE
(concerned)
Where you staying now?

WIGAND
(sarcastic)
Our favorite hotel, honey... I checked
into Room 930. Odd choice? Huh?

And we don't know what he means by that...

INT. LOWELL'S OFFICE, BERKELEY - LATE AFTERNOON

The last of the daylight shadows his office.

LOWELL
(after a beat)
I don't know how to say this, Jeff,
except to just say it right out, so
I'll say it. They do not want to air
it.

WIGAND
(stops)
What?!

LOWELL
B & W may have threatened
litigation... CBS is on the block...
(a beat)
But you, I mean, I know how...

WIGAND
No.

LOWELL
No? No, what?

WIGAND
I do not think that you "know" for
me... what it is to walk in my
shoes...
(beat)
...for my kids to have seen it...
for them to know why I've put them
through what I did... the public
airing of that... the testament to
why I did what I did... you're telling
me is not going to see the light of
day.

Lowell's quiet. And Jeffrey starts to hang up...

LOWELL
Jeff...

And Jeffrey hangs up.

INT. JEFFREY'S HOTEL ROOM, LOUISIANA - (PROCESS) - NIGHT

Jeffrey silently sitting in the chair. We COME AROUND and see why he's been purposely sitting there. Why he's chosen this room. Directly across the street is the Brown & Williamson Building. The lights are on. The building lit up. And in an upstairs office Brown & Williamson lawyers, moving around a conference room, talking. And as Jeffrey looks out the window...

EXT. A SMALL TOWN, UPSTATE NEW YORK - DAY

A peaceful, suburban street. Small houses. A PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR (P.I.) from IGI, in a raincoat, getting out of a car, going up the walk. He knocks on the door. Some moments. A Woman in her late forties, handicapped, in an electric cart answers the door...

P.I.
Mrs. Wigand?

THE WOMAN
It hasn't been Mrs. Wigand for some time.

P.I.
Well, I'm an investigator and I was – I was wondering if I could ask you a couple of questions about that?

THE WOMAN
Alright...

INT. JOHN SCANLON'S PUBLIC RELATIONS FIRM, A MEDIA ROOM, NEW YORK - DAY

And on a TELEVISION SCREEN, SUSAN WIGAND, the woman in the electric cart, giving a taped interview to the P.I....

SUSAN WIGAND
...seven months after we were married we found out that I had multiple sclerosis...

We PULL BACK to see John Scanlon and his Staff watching the tape... His firm's logo, public relations campaigns for some of his high-profile clients are on the walls. Scanlon's on the phone talking with somebody as the tape runs...

P.I.'S VOICE

(over; on television)

And, you had a daughter, Diane, with him, is that correct?

SUSAN WIGAND

(on television)

Yes, in 1973.

JOHN SCANLON

(on the phone,
whispering)

...come on, Tommy Sandefur told me himself, he's not gonna allow Brown & Williamson to be demonized to the American public, so I told Peter Jennings and I... hold on...

He stops, listening to the videotape...

P.I.'S VOICE

(on television)

Would it be fair to say when he divorced you he left you in a precarious situation? You had multiple sclerosis; you had a small child to raise.

JOHN SCANLON

(ignoring that part;
to staff)

Mention that part in the executive summary and in the chapters "First Wife" and "Estrangement of Daughter."

(beat; into phone)

So, I was telling Pete, I said,
"You've been taken in by this guy..."

SUSAN WIGAND

(on television)

Yes...

(beat)

But you have to understand, the divorce was something that we both wanted...

JOHN SCANLON

He's a total bullshit artist. He's a shoplifter. He's a convicted shoplifter.

And as we end in a sea of documents, affidavits, court records, all from Louisville, all about Jeffrey. We understand the war has only been begun...

INT. CBS, "60 MINUTES," CORRIDOR, LOWELL'S OFFICE - MORNING

Lowell, in his office, his door open for anyone to see him, an immovable force, sitting behind his desk. Hewitt appears in his doorway...

DON HEWITT
(after a beat, cold)
So, what are you going to do?

LOWELL
Well, what do you think I'm going to do? Quit in protest? I'm not going to do that.

DON HEWITT
(surprised)
You're taking "no" for an answer?

LOWELL
No. I'm not going to take "no" for an answer. No.

DON HEWITT
Then what are you going to do?

Hewitt looks at him...

LOWELL
I'm staying right here. Doing my job. Fighting to get my show on the air. You don't like it? Hey, I'll tell you what... fire my ass...

DON HEWITT
End up in a high-profile lawsuit with Lowell, the First Amendment martyr? I don't think so.
(laughs)
Take a look at this... This is a summary of a dossier that's being prepared.

And he gives him a copy of it.

DON HEWITT

He would lie about his whole life...?
Who's going to believe him about
anything he says...?
(a beat, and the coup
de grace)
The Wall Street Journal's doing a
major story and I think the Post.
You backed the wrong horse...

He turns and starts off along the hall. As he goes...

DON HEWITT
(his parting shot)
The version without his interview is
going to air the week after next.

Lowell watches him walk away. Debbie enters.

DEBBIE DELUCA
What was that about?

LOWELL
Get me Wigand.

DEBBIE DELUCA
Sure.

LOWELL
...fuck is this? Fuck!

INT. THE PHONE BOOTH, HIGH SCHOOL, LOUISVILLE - DAY

LOWELL'S VOICE
(on the phone, upset)
You never told me you were married
before... that you had a daughter...

And Wigand is in the phone booth at the High School...
students walking by...

WIGAND
(outraged)
Well, how is that any of your
business?! That is not something
that you people need to know!

His voice carries, a student looks over...

INT. LOWELL'S OFFICE - DAY

LOWELL

(frustrated)
Oh, you know what we do or do not
need to know? Since when have you
become a media expert?

INT. THE PHONE BOOTH, LOUISVILLE HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

WIGAND
(upset)
What do you want to do, Lowell, look
up my ass, too...!

And he realizes he's said it too loud, a couple of passing
students stop, looking at him...

INT. LOWELL'S OFFICE, CBS - DAY

LOWELL
Oh, my God.

WIGAND'S VOICE
(after a beat, lowering
his voice, but
contentious)
You're not even on this anymore...
What do you care?

LOWELL
Jeff! Wake the fuck up! Everybody is
on the line here. If they can catch
you in a lie, they can paint
everything with that brush. Do you
understand? Everything you say!

WIGAND
I told the truth!

LOWELL
Everything... you... say! And I can't
defend you, man, with one hand tied
behind my back! Because you keep
from me... what they can discover.
And they will discover everything!
Believe me.

INT. THE PHONE BOOTH, LOUISVILLE HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Wigand's quiet. He looks out the phone booth. After some
moments...

WIGAND

(meaning his first
wife and their child,
upset)
...I was young. I was young...
confused... We didn't handle it the
right way...

INT. LOWELL'S OFFICE, NEW YORK - DAY

LOWELL
(after a beat)
She sued you for back payments of
child support?

INT. THE PHONE BOOTH, LOUISVILLE HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

WIGAND
She did not sue me. We had a dispute
over money... I settled it, she
dropped the complaint...
(angry)
Any other questions?

And we'll go back and forth...

LOWELL
Yes. Did you lie about being on the
American Judo Team in the Olympics?

WIGAND
What?

LOWELL
Some public relations guy got a hold
of a tape of an interview... where
you're saying you were on the American
Judo Team in the Olympics...?

WIGAND
(explosive)
What kind of shit is this? I was not
on the team, I sparred with the
Olympic Team... okay?

And we see, unbeknownst to Wigand, the P.I. in the raincoat,
who interviewed his ex-wife, coming out of an administration
office, walking towards us along the hallways...

LOWELL
Alright... the ABC Telemarketing
Company?

WIGAND
ABC...?

LOWELL
ABC Telemarketing Company.

WIGAND
(the absurdity)
A can opener! A \$39.95 can opener. I
canceled payment... It was junk.
(sarcastic)
You ever bounce a check, Lowell?
You ever look at another woman's
tits? You ever cheat a little on
your taxes?
(a beat, angry)
Whose life, if you look at it under
a microscope, doesn't have any
flaws...?

The P.I. in the raincoat passes Jeffrey, now, and doesn't
even glance at him...

LOWELL
That's the whole point, Jeffrey.
That's the whole point. Anyone's.
Everyone's. They are gonna look under
every rock, dig up every flaw, every
mistake you've ever made. They are
going to distort and exaggerate
everything you've ever done, man.
Don't you understand?

WIGAND
(shouts)
What does this have to do with my
testimony?

LOWELL
That's not the point.

WIGAND
What does this have to do with my
testimony?! I told the truth! It's
valid and true and provable!

LOWELL
That's not the fucking point, whether
you told the truth or not! Hello...?

WIGAND

I told the truth... I told the truth.

And Wigand's quiet, a deep, dark depression. The school bell RING snaps him out of it...

WIGAND

(after a beat)

I've got to teach class. I've got to go. I've got to teach class.

LOWELL

(undaunted)

And I've got to refute every fucking accusation made in this report before The Wall Street Journal runs.

(a beat)

I am trying to protect you, man!

Wigand's quiet.

WIGAND

(after a beat, the killer)

Well, I hope you improve your batting average.

And he SLAMS the phone down. And as he stands in the phone booth, like a man in a glass booth, all alone...

EXT. CBS BUILDING, ROOFTOP - DAY

ON the door to the roof. It SLAMS open. An enraged Lowell enters and walks out into the cold rain. Like a prize-fighter, shoulders hunched against the cold, he buries his hands in his jacket pockets. He crosses to the edge of the roof high above the city. He's pissed off. He takes out his cell phone. He dials... Lowell hears background NOISE...

INT. WALL STREET JOURNAL - NEWS MEETING - DAY

Twenty sub-editors and section heads sit and stand in a clear area... One of them, a large man, is CHARLIE PHILLIPS on a cell phone.

CHARLIE PHILLIPS

Hello?

LOWELL'S VOICE

(cautious)

It's Lowell. Are you guys planning

to do a piece on a former top executive in Big Tobacco?

CHARLIE PHILLIPS

You caught me in a news meeting.

LOWELL

Well, are you or are you not, Charlie?

CHARLIE PHILLIPS

You bet we are. And I can't talk to you now.

LOWELL

We gotta hook up.

CHARLIE PHILLIPS

Sure. Where?

LOWELL

P.J.'s.

CHARLIE PHILLIPS

I'll be there.

INT. A PHONE BOOTH, NEW YORK - NIGHT

A busy New York street. Light mist. And we see Lowell is on the phone in a phone booth...

LOWELL

Yeah, I got it. 500 pages of it. They looked in every corner of this guy's life... from a spousal abuse charge, to shoplifting, to a traffic ticket he got once for running a red light. It's Terry Lenzner's outfit, IGI. Jack, listen to me. Their strategy: discredit this guy, ruin his reputation in The Wall Street Journal, and then nobody will ever listen to what he's got to say about tobacco. He's dead. Unless I can get this thing knocked down.

INT. A HOUSE IN SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

A townhouse with a commanding view of the Bay. And we see a broad-shouldered man in his late forties sitting at a desk on the phone. JACK PALLADINO. His wife, SANDRA SUTHERLAND, sitting across from him on another phone. They're Private

Investigators...

LOWELL

To make it even a little more attractive, I don't know if you're ever gonna get paid.

SANDRA SUTHERLAND

Is there any truth to any of it?

LOWELL

That's a good question. "Is there any truth to any of it?" I doubt it.

PALLADINO

What's their deadline?

LOWELL

Soon.

Palladinos exchange looks; she nods.

PALLADINO

Fax me the summary.

LOWELL

That's great, Jack.

Lowell hangs up and walks towards us to enter...

INT. BAR - NIGHT

CLOSE on Lowell entering, moving through the crowd of sports writers, feature writers, sub-editors, etc. He comes upon a rugged-featured man, JIM COOPER from The New York Times, sitting next to Charlie.

JIM COOPER

Hey, Lowell.

LOWELL

How are you, Jim?

JIM COOPER

Hey, listen, I hear you guys are sitting on something sensational over there.

Lowell looks at Cooper quizzically.

LOWELL

Really? Hi, Joan.

Just then Jim's wife enters. They exchange greetings.

JIM COOPER

Hi, baby.

LOWELL

Catch you later.

Cooper and his wife leave. Charlie and Lowell are alone in the crowded bar.

LOWELL

When's your deadline?

CHARLIE PHILLIPS

Monday.

LOWELL

Push it.

CHARLIE PHILLIPS

What? Forget it.

LOWELL

It's a smear campaign, Charlie.

CHARLIE PHILLIPS

It's drawn from a selectively circulated...

LOWELL

(cuts in)

Oh, it's real selective... about as hard to get a hold of as the Manhattan phone book.

CHARLIE PHILLIPS

Well, it's authoritative and is overwhelmingly documented.

LOWELL

And it's bullshit. And if I'm right, are you going to put the Journal's reputation behind a story that's going to blow up in your face?

CHARLIE PHILLIPS

I'll take a look at what you got. But I'm not moving any deadlines

'cause you say so.

That's the way it lays. In a different, personal tone...

CHARLIE PHILLIPS

Are you all right?

LOWELL

Yeah. Catch you later.

INT. A COFFEE SHOP, LOUISVILLE - DAY

And we see a Policeman sitting at the counter having a cup of coffee...

SANDRA SUTHERLAND

Officer Murabchick?

He turns as Sandra Sutherland sits at the counter to the left of him.

SANDRA SUTHERLAND

Officer Muravchick. How are you? I'm Sandra Sutherland.

POLICEMAN

How do you do?

SANDRA SUTHERLAND

Fine, thank you. I'm doing a background check. Mind if I sit down?

INT. COURTROOM, LOUISVILLE - LATE AFTERNOON

An older Man is on the bench. He's just recessed his court.

As everybody streams out, going against the tide is Jack Palladino. He approaches the judge, crossing to a side door...

PALLADINO

Your honor, could I have a word with you? You presided in a dispute over support payments...

INT. A COFFEE SHOP, LOUISVILLE - DAY

POLICEMAN

Jeffrey Wigand? Yeah, I cited him.

INT. EDITING ROOM, CBS - DAY

DAN RATHER

(on monitor)

CBS is under criticism, because the CBS News program "60 Minutes" will not be presenting an interview...

Lowell's destroying his own work product, taking apart his creation that we saw earlier to be so impactful. Tony gets a call as Hewitt enters.

DON HEWITT

What the hell are you doing?

LOWELL

What does it look like I'm doing?
I'm editing.

DON HEWITT

No, not that. I'm talking about the Associated Press. They got this story that we pulled this interview and they talked to Mike and I. Did you tell them that we were lying?

LOWELL

No. I should have. I told them I disagreed with you, Mike and Kluster that this segment is as good as the original. I'm not lying for you. I'm not gonna shut up for you. Not on any of it.

DON HEWITT

Hey! I'm not going to fire you, okay?
Take a vacation. Now!

INT. LOWELL'S OFFICE - EVENING

A suitcase is on the floor. Lowell, finishing packing up his things from his office.

MIKE WALLACE'S VOICE

(over)

Lowell. I decided to preface Sunday's show. I did three minutes on the "Evening News." You'll want to see it.

(BEAT)

Where you going?

And he sees Wallace has stopped at his door...

LOWELL

I've been banished. In lieu of being fired.

MIKE WALLACE

(disinterested)

I took off on Tisch. I took off on corporate. They'll know they're not going to see everything on Sunday night...

LOWELL

I don't know. How does that get Wigand on the air?

MIKE WALLACE

(goes up)

Do me a favor, will you? Spare me, for God's sake. Get in the real world. What do you think? I'm going to resign in protest? To force it on the air? The answer is "no." I don't plan to spend the end of my days wandering in the wilderness of National Public Radio.

(beat)

That decision I've already made.

VOICE

(from corridor; to Mike)

It just started, Mike...

Wallace waves Lowell's remark aside and exits. We dwell on Lowell until he exits...

INT. CBS CORRIDOR - EVENING

...into the hall. Dan Rather introduced Mike. As Lowell exits, we SEE Hewitt, Kluster and Caperelli outside of Hewitt's office watching... Lowell, disgusted, takes a cursory look and moves towards the elevator. But he hears...

MIKE WALLACE'S VOICE

(over)

Where's the rest? Where the hell's the rest?!!

Lowell turns to see Wallace shouting up at the monitors in

disbelief...

MIKE WALLACE

You cut it! You cut the guts out of what I said...!

Wallace moves in on Kluster...

ERIC KLUSTER

It was a time consideration, Mike...

MIKE WALLACE

Time? Bullshit! You corporate lackey! Who told you your incompetent little fingers had the requisite skills to edit me! I'm trying to Band-Aid a situation, here, and you're too dim to...

HELEN CAPERELLI

(interrupts, familiar)

Mike... Mike... Mike...

MIKE WALLACE

"Mike?"

It was a big mistake. Now, he turns on her. Zeroing in, getting closer...

MIKE WALLACE

"Mike?" Try "Mr. Wallace." We work in the same corporation doesn't mean we work in the same profession. What are you gonna do now? You gonna finesse me? Lawyer me some more? I've been in this profession fifty fucking years. You and the people you work for are destroying the most-respected, the highest-rated, the most-profitable show on this network!

EXT. THE EAST RIVER - NIGHT

A Range Rover pulls up. Charlie Phillips gets out. He crosses to Lowell who's been waiting by his own taxi.

LOWELL

Here.

He hands Charlie a folder with the brown notebook inside that is the partially complete Palladino/Sutherland/Lowell

work product.

LOWELL

These are their leads, their sources.
I want you to have your reporters...

CHARLIE PHILLIPS

Suein Hwang and Milo Geyelin.

LOWELL

Have them make their own calls.
They'll find that these sources have
a different story than the one that's
in the dossier...

(demands)

Push the deadline, Charlie...

Charlie starts looking through the Palladino/
Sutherland/Lowell work product. Meanwhile...

CHARLIE PHILLIPS

I'll push it for a week. Let Milo
and Suein go through it.

INT. WIGANDS' HOUSE #2, KITCHEN - DAY

LIANE

What do you want to buy him for a
gift?

BARBARA

He's into kind of little cars, that...

LIANE

That remote control thing?

BARBARA

Yeah.

LIANE

Alright, we'll do that tomorrow.

BARBARA

Mom.

LIANE

Yes, baby?

BARBARA

There's Dad, on TV.

INT. A BAR, LOUISVILLE - DAY

And we see Jeffrey in a quiet Bar. The television's on, the sound low, the midday news. As Jeffrey looks up and sees his photograph on TELEVISION. In his LOCAL WORLD the impact is:

LOCAL NEWSCASTER

And in local news, WLKO Louisville has gained access to a five-hundred-page dossier on former Brown & Williamson research head Jeffrey Wigand detailing charges of spousal abuse, shoplifting...

And Jeffrey looks as if something just detonated inside of him.

We're looking at Mike Wallace sitting in front of a backdrop on "60 minutes," on a television...

INT. HOTEL ROOM, LOUISVILLE - NIGHT

And Jeffrey sitting alone in the hotel, watching the show...

MIKE WALLACE

(on "60 Minutes")

"...thousands of documents from inside the tobacco industry have surfaced over the past year, documents that appear to confirm what a former..."

And as we look at Jeffrey's face, set in stone...

INT. THE CARIBBEAN BUNGALOW - DAY/NIGHT

MIKE WALLACE

(on "60 Minutes")

"...US Surgeon General and the current head of the Food and Drug Administration have been saying. We learned of..."

INT. DON HEWITT'S HOUSE, THE HAMPTONS - NIGHT

And Don Hewitt in his house in the Hamptons, alone in his bedroom, watching the show...

MIKE WALLACE

(on "60 Minutes")

"...a tobacco insider who could tell us whether or not the tobacco industry

has been leveling with the public..."

INT. MIKE WALLACE'S APARTMENT, NEW YORK - NIGHT

MIKE WALLACE

(on "60 Minutes")

"...that insider was formerly a highly-placed executive with a tobacco company..."

INT. HOTEL ROOM, LOUISVILLE - NIGHT

MIKE WALLACE

(on "60 Minutes")

"...but we cannot broadcast what critical information about tobacco, addiction and public health he might be able to offer. Why? Because he had to sign a confidentiality agreement with the tobacco company he worked for..."

INT. MIKE WALLACE'S APARTMENT, NEW YORK - NIGHT

Mike Wallace is in his study, watching the show alone. As we slowly move in on Mike, seeing himself on television...

MIKE WALLACE

(on "60 Minutes")

"The management of CBS has told us that knowing he had that agreement..."

And the look on his face says: HE DOES NOT LIKE THIS.

INT. THE CARIBBEAN BUNGALOW - DAY/NIGHT

Lowell silently watching the broadcast...

MIKE WALLACE

(on "60 Minutes")

"...if were to broadcast an interview with him, CBS could be faced with a multibillion-dollar lawsuit..."

INT. HOTEL ROOM, LOUISVILLE - NIGHT

Jeffrey, watching the show...

MIKE WALLACE

(on "60 Minutes,"

from the interview

with Wigand...)
"The fact is, we are not allowed even to mention his name or the name of the company he worked for and, of course, we cannot show you his face... '...and your confidentiality agreement with...(blip) is still in force?'"

And all we can hear is an ELECTRONICALLY-ALTERED VOICE and the BLANKED-OUT image of a man...

WIGAND'S VOICE

"Yes, it is."

MIKE WALLACE

(on "60 Minutes")

"So, what are they gonna do? Sue you for making this appearance?"

WIGAND

"I would bet on it."

MIKE WALLACE

(on "60 Minutes")

"The former executive has reason to bet on being sued, for major cigarette manufacturers..."

Jeffrey, motionless... A man, no longer with a face or a voice... And as he gets up, and quietly turns off the television...

INT. MIKE WALLACE'S APARTMENT, NEW YORK - NIGHT, LATER

Wallace, hasn't moved, still in his chair. He stares, ignoring the CBS programming, on the phone, making a call...

EXT. THE CARIBBEAN BEACH - NIGHT

Lowell, walking up the sand, his cell phone rings.

LOWELL

Yeah.

MIKE WALLACE

You disappeared on me. How long you staying?

LOWELL

(absurd)

I disappeared on you?

MIKE WALLACE
(meaning the show)
Alright. What did you think?

LOWELL
(after a beat)
I think it was a disgrace.

The look on Wallace's face says he thinks so, too. It's obvious. He hangs up the phone.

EXT. LOWELL'S BUNGALOW, THE CARIBBEAN - NIGHT

Lowell is on the phone, now. The moon lights the water, the empty beach. He listens as a phone, through STATIC, RINGS and RINGS and RINGS.

INT. WIGAND'S HOTEL ROOM, LOUISVILLE - NIGHT

And we hear the phone RINGING. We slowly PAN across the hotel room. We see on the floor a pair of men's tasseled loafers... A discarded sport jacket... And we see Jeffrey, barefoot, sitting in a chair in the center of the room. He's looking out the window at B&W. The curtains are blowing...

And he's still... The sound of the phone RINGING and RINGING...

EXT. THE BEACH, THE CARIBBEAN - NIGHT

AN OPERATOR'S VOICE
(over)
Sir, there's still no answer in that room.

LOWELL
Alright. Get me the manager's office...

INT. THE HOTEL MANAGER'S OFFICE, LOUISVILLE - NIGHT

HOTEL DESK CLERK
David? David, you've got a call on line 4. I think you better take it.

A thin Man answers the phone.

THE HOTEL MANAGER
This is David MacDougal. How can I help you?

LOWELL'S VOICE

Mr. MacDougal, my name is Lowell Bergman. I'm a producer for "60 Minutes"... I'm concerned with a friend of mine who's staying at your hotel right now.

INT. THE HOTEL CORRIDOR, LOUISVILLE - NIGHT

And we see the Hotel Manager, walking along with a Security Guard, and now KNOCKING on Jeffrey's door...

And when there is no response, the Manager nods to the Security Guard, the Guard using a pass key, unlocking the door. But the door stops, the chain-lock drawn. The Manager looks in through the chain... and he can see Jeffrey sitting in the chair...

THE HOTEL MANAGER

Mr. Wigand? Mr. Wigand?

Jeffrey's still. The Manager quickly takes a cell phone from the Security Guard.

EXT. THE CARIBBEAN - NIGHT

Lowell, standing on the beach anxiously waiting.

THE HOTEL MANAGER'S VOICE

(over; upset)

I think I need to call the police.
He won't respond...

LOWELL

No, no. Don't call the police!
(urgent)
Just tell him I'm on the phone with you... My name is Lowell Bergman...
Just tell him that.

INT. THE HOTEL CORRIDOR, LOUISVILLE - NIGHT

THE HOTEL MANAGER

(through the door,
frightened)

Mr. Wigand... Mr. Bergman is on the telephone.

Jeffrey's quiet.

EXT. THE CARIBBEAN - NIGHT

LOWELL

Did he hear you?

THE HOTEL MANAGER'S VOICE

(over)

You're breaking up. I can't hear you.

Lowell goes deeper into the water.

LOWELL

What about now?

THE HOTEL MANAGER'S VOICE

(over)

What?

LOWELL

Hello, can you hear me now?

INT. WIGAND'S HOTEL ROOM, LOUISVILLE - NIGHT

And now the walls behind MORPH into a green daytime garden, the garden behind his house. And as we DOLLY AROUND Wigand, more walls MORPH into the side yard, and, turning slowly, he sees Barbara and Deborah in the emerald-green grass. They stop and smile, then they stare at us, at their father. And he looks at his children, at an idyll lost... The chair, the man are the only real objects left in the view from inside his head...

EXT. THE CARIBBEAN - NIGHT

Lowell anxiously moves along the beach, trying to be heard, the phone chattering with static...

LOWELL

(alarmed)

What's happening?!

THE HOTEL MANAGER'S VOICE

(over; afraid)

He doesn't seem to be listening...

LOWELL

(on the cell phone,
shouts, urgent)

Alright, now listen to me. I want you – I want you to tell him, in

these words: get on the fucking
phone...!

THE HOTEL MANAGER'S VOICE

(over)
I can't say that!

LOWELL

No, you can. Tell him to get on the
fucking phone!

INT. THE HOTEL CORRIDOR - NIGHT

THE HOTEL MANAGER

(at the door, to
Jeffrey, loud)
He told me to tell you, to get on...
the fucking phone...!

And even he's surprised by his language. And suddenly Jeffrey gets up, unlatches the door, grabs the phone from the Hotel Manager. Wigand in the hotel corridor, Lowell standing knee-deep in the water...

WIGAND

(on the phone, angry)
You manipulated me into this...!

LOWELL

That's bullshit, Jeff!

WIGAND

You greased the rails!

LOWELL

I greased the rails for a guy who wanted to say yes. I helped him to say yes. Alright. You're not a robot, Jeff! That's all. You got a mind of your own, don't you?

WIGAND

(running on)
"Up to you, Jeffrey. That's the power you have, Jeffrey. Vital insider information the American public need to know." Lowell Bergman, the hot show who never met a source he couldn't turn around.

LOWELL

(running on)
I fought for you... and I still fight
for you.

WIGAND
You fought for me...?!
(running on)
...you manipulated me... into where
I am now... staring at the Brown &
Williamson Building. It's all dark.
Except the 10th floor! That's the
legal department. That's where they
fuck with my life!

LOWELL
(beat)
Jeffrey, where you going with this?
So where you goin'?
(quiet)
You are important to a lot of people,
Jeffrey. You think about that. You
think about them.

CLOSE ON JEFFREY: standing in the room with the blowing
curtains...

LOWELL
I'm running out of heroes, man...
(after a beat)
Guys like you are in short supply.

And for the first time, Wigand smiles.

WIGAND
(a beat, wry)
Yeah, guys like you, too.

And the grave situation passes.

WIGAND
(after a beat)
Where are you, anyway?

LOWELL
I'm on a leave of absence. Forced
vacation.

WIGAND
(a rare laugh, his
sarcasm)
You try and have a good time.

LOWELL
(droll)
Yeah. Yeah, I will.

INT. THE CARIBBEAN BUNGALOW - DAY/NIGHT

Sharon's cooking across the room... And there's just the sound of the ceiling fan turning.

LOWELL
"I'm Lowell Bergman, I'm from '60 Minutes." You know, you take the "60 Minutes" out of that sentence, nobody returns your phone call. Maybe Wigand's right. Maybe I'm hooked. What am I hooked on? The rush? "60 Minutes"? What the hell for? Infotainment. It's so fucking useless, all of it.

SHARON
(a beat)
So, it's a big country with a free press. You can go work somewhere else.

LOWELL
Free press? Press is free... for anyone who owns one. Larry Tisch has a free press.

SHARON
Get some perspective, Lowell.

LOWELL
I got perspective.

SHARON
No, you do not.

LOWELL
From my perspective, what's been going on and what I've been doing is ridiculous. It's half-measures.

SHARON
You're not listening.
(beat)
Really know what you're going to do before you do it.

And as the fan squeaks, turning... Lowell stares at Sharon.

WE SEE SNOW IS ON THE GROUND.

EXT. LINCOLN, MONTANA - DAY

Between two curved colonnades of SNOW-covered trees drives a rental car. CLOSER, it's Lowell. His POV spots a dirty SUV and he pulls into park across from a coffee shop in this out-of-context mountain town. His pager beeps. He looks at it.

He detours from the coffee shop to a pay phone on the corner of the Moose Lodge.

DEBBIE DELUCA'S VOICE

(over)

I've got Richard Scruggs on the phone...

LOWELL

Patch him through.

RICHARD SCRUGGS' VOICE

(over)

Well, Lowell, you are not going to believe this...

INT. A COURTROOM + ROTUNDA, MISSISSIPPI - DAY

And we see the back of a crowded courtroom. Richard Scruggs is standing in the rear amongst bailiffs and witnesses, talking on his own cell phone.

RICHARD SCRUGGS

The Governor of Mississippi is suing his own Attorney General... to abandon litigation against Big Tobacco...

LOWELL

Oh, good...

Waiting media are relaxing as Scruggs continues to Lowell...

RICHARD SCRUGGS

(after a beat)

But, now that the version without Jeff ran... what's the chance of getting his interview on the air...?

(beat)

Hello?

Sudden STATIC. Scruggs now exits the building, past the metal detector, seeking better reception.

LOWELL
Yeah, I'm here.

EXT. COURTHOUSE STAIRS, MISSISSIPPI - DAY

RICHARD SCRUGGS
What chance is there of getting Jeff's interview on the air...?

LOWELL'S VOICE
(droll)
Less than great.

And the courthouse doors suddenly burst open, Michael Moore and his attorneys coming out. Scruggs comes further down the steps so he can hear, away from Michael Moore who begins answering questions from the Press.

RICHARD SCRUGGS
(after a beat)
...I'd be lying to you if I did not tell you how important it was in the court of public opinion...

EXT. THE PHONE BOOTH, LINCOLN, MONTANA - DAY

LOWELL
(a beat)
...and I'd be lying to you if I didn't tell you, I'm about out of moves, Dick...

RICHARD SCRUGGS
All right. See you...

INT. CAFE, LINCOLN, MONTANA - DAY

Lowell walks right in and up to a booth and a COUPLE in hiking pants and hiking boots. They look up at him...

LOWELL
Hi. So, what are you folks doing here in Lincoln?

And we sense something is all wrong here.

MAN GEOLOGIST

(affable)
Geology survey.

LOWELL
(nods)
Geology. Yeah? Really?

WOMAN GEOLOGIST
How about you?

LOWELL
(direct)
I work for CBS News.

MAN GEOLOGIST
(after a beat)
Oh, yeah?

Lowell nods. They look at each other and they both know there's a lot more than meets the eye. And as Lowell gets up and leaves...

EXT. A PAY PHONE, LINCOLN, MONTANA - DAY

And we see Lowell on the PAY PHONE again.

LOWELL
Just ran into two of your
"geologists." Geologists whose hands
aren't all chewed up...?

BILL ROBERTSON'S VOICE
(over)
Lowell?

INT. THE FBI, BILL ROBERTSON'S OFFICE, WASHINGTON - DAY

And we see Bill Robertson's on the phone...

BILL ROBERTSON
Do not... screw this up. We are a
week away from an arrest...

EXT. THE PAY PHONE, LINCOLN, MONTANA - DAY

LOWELL
So, I'll hold it... And...

BILL ROBERTSON'S VOICE
(over; on the phone)
We'll give you a heads up before we

launch.

LOWELL

How long?

BILL ROBERTSON'S VOICE

(over)

Three hours.

LOWELL

You got a deal.

(hangs up)

INT. LOWELL'S ROOM, MOTEL, MONTANA - NIGHT

Lowell is in a T-shirt and sweat pants, sitting in an old, re-upholstered-one-too-many-times chair in a room barely big enough for a chair, a bed and the TV/VCR combo on the cheap dresser. It's playing Lowell's cut of the full Wigand interview. He watches the show that will never see the light of day.

MIKE WALLACE'S VOICE

(over)

"...like the testimony before Congress of Dr. Wigand's former boss, Brown & Williamson's Chief Executive Officer, Thomas Sandefur."

THOMAS SANDEFUR

(in CLOSE-UP)

"I believe that nicotine is not addictive."

WIGAND

(in matching CLOSE-UP)

"I believe Mr. Sandefur perjured himself... Because I watched those testimonies very carefully."

Then it cuts to all seven CEOs of Big Tobacco raising their hands and taking the oath in front of Congress to tell the truth while...

WALLACE'S VOICE (OVER)

"All of us did... there was this whole like of people, the whole line of CEOs up there, all swearing that."

WIGAND'S VOICE

"Part of the reason I'm here is I

FELT..."

And the PAUSE after the word makes "FELT" resound, and as it CUTS TO Jeffrey ON CAMERA saying...

WIGAND

"...that their representation..."

And Lowell FREEZES after the image... He gets up, looking out the window through the curtain with the spill from the neon motel sign. Outside are horse trailers. He goes back to watching the show... standing there... in touch with his own creative work product and the ideas inherent in it in this decision-making process that we feel is critical to him.

Turning, he dials the phone and we intercut with...

JIM COOPER'S VOICE

(over)

Hello?

LOWELL

Jim, it's Lowell.

INT. NEW YORK TIMES - NIGHT

JIM COOPER

Hey! Where are you?

LOWELL'S VOICE

(doesn't answer)

Remember that night at P.J.'s ? You asked me if we were sitting on something "explosive"?

(beat)

Well, we're not "sitting on" it.

(beat)

CBS corporate leaned on CBS News which yanked an interview we did with a top-ranking tobacco scientist. A corporate officer. They are trying to close down the story.

JIM COOPER

(sarcastic)

You mean, "60 Minutes" is letting CBS corporate decide what is or is not news?

(beat)

What's Wallace think about this, or Hewitt, or...?

LOWELL

How prominent? What kind of placement?

JIM COOPER

Oh, c'mon, Lowell. This is The New York Times. I don't know...

LOWELL

Well, until you do, all I can tell you is what you already know... they will not air an interview.

JIM COOPER

Call me back in ten.

Lowell hangs up. Re-dials.

INT. DEBBIE DELUCA'S APARTMENT - NEW YORK - LATE NIGHT

Debbie answers, intercutting with above...

LOWELL'S VOICE

Debbie. It's me...

DEBBIE DELUCA

Hi. What time is it?

LOWELL'S VOICE

Oh, it's late.

DEBBIE DELUCA

That I know. When are you coming back?

LOWELL

I can't get out of here til mid-morning. I'll be in tomorrow night...

(beat)

Listen, could you call a number for me, it's in Mississippi...

DEBBIE DELUCA

Okay. Hold on a second... What is it?

INT. NEW YORK TIMES - NIGHT

Jim Cooper's workstation. His phone rings. He grabs it.

JIM COOPER

Hello?
(beat)

LOWELL'S VOICE
Lowell.

JIM COOPER
Alright, Lowell. Page one. Editorial's
interested. Let's talk.

INT. MOTEL, LINCOLN, MONTANA - NIGHT

LOWELL
Here's how it works. You ask me
questions. I tell you if you're wrong.

JIM COOPER'S VOICE
(over)
Okay.
(pause)
Lowell?

LOWELL
Yeah?

JIM COOPER'S VOICE
(over)
You're sure you want to do this?

LOWELL
Why?

JIM COOPER'S VOICE
(over)
Hey, it doesn't work? You've burned
your bridges, man.

LOWELL
You ready...?

JIM COOPER'S VOICE
(over)
Okay... About this whistle-blower...
Did Mike and Don go along with the
corporate decision?

No answer.

JIM COOPER'S VOICE
(over)
Lowell?

LOWELL

Did I tell you you were wrong?

JIM COOPER'S VOICE

(over)

No.

(beat)

I'm assuming the cave-in begins with the threat of litigation from Big Tobacco. Are we talking... are we talking Brown & Williamson, here?

MOVING CLOSER into the face of Lowell. His gaze falters.

His eyes go back to the motel TV mutely frozen on the show.

Whatever he's seeing there, his gaze is steadfast.

EXT. STREET, NEW YORK - 5:30 A.M.

Newspaper box is loaded with The New York Times.

EXT. HOTEL, NEW YORK - 5:30 A.M.

Cab pulls to curb and a raincoated Man emerges. We SEE he carries a copy of this morning's New York Times.

INT. A HOTEL ROOM, NEW YORK - DAWN

A suitcase is half-unpacked on the floor... a sleeping figure... There's a knock. Irritated, a sleeping Lowell gets up to answer it. He looks through the security peep hole. He opens it. And Mike Wallace, a newspaper under his arm, is standing in the doorway.

MIKE WALLACE

Did I get you up?

LOWELL

No, I usually sit around in my hotel room, dressed like this at 5:30 in the morning, sleepy look on my face.

There's an awkward quiet. Mike enters. He slows, looks around.

MIKE WALLACE

How many shows have we done? Huh? C'mon, how many?

LOWELL

Oh, lots.

MIKE WALLACE

Yeah, that's right.

LOWELL

But in all that time, Mike, did you ever get off a plane, walk into a room, and find that a source for a story changed his mind? Lost his heart? Walked out on us? Not one fucking time! You want to know why?

MIKE WALLACE

I see a rhetorical question on the horizon.

LOWELL

I'm going to tell you why. Because when I tell someone I'm going to do something, I deliver.

MIKE WALLACE

Oh, how fortunate I am to have Lowell Bergman's moral tutelage to point me down the shining path. To show me the way.

LOWELL

Oh, please, Mike...

MIKE WALLACE

(beat)

Give me a break!

LOWELL

No, you give me a break! I never left a source hung out to dry, ever. Abandoned. Not 'til right fucking now! When I came on this job, I came with my word intact. I'm gonna leave with my word intact. Fuck the rules of the game! Hell, you're supposed to know me, Mike. What the hell did you expect? You expect me to lie down? Back off? What, get over it?

MIKE WALLACE

In the real world, when you get to where I am, there are other considerations...

LOWELL

Like what? Corporate responsibility?
What, are we talking celebrity here?

MIKE WALLACE

I'm not talking celebrity, vanity,
CBS. I'm talking about when you're
nearer the end of your life than the
beginning. Now, what do you think
you think about then? The future?
"In the future I'm going to do this?
Become that?" What "future"? No.
What you think is: how will I be
regarded in the end? After I'm gone.

He trails off. They look at each other.

MIKE WALLACE

Now, along the way I suppose I made
some minor impact.

(beat)

I did Iran-Gate and the Ayatollah,
Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, Saddam,
Sadat, etcetera, etcetera. I showed
them thieves in suits.

(beat)

I've spent a lifetime building all
that. But history only remembers
most what you did last. And should
that be fronting a segment that
allowed a tobacco giant to crash
this network?

(beat)

Does it give someone at my time of
life pause?

(simply)

Yeah.

And the look on Wallace's face is "It did. Whether it should
or should not... what difference does that make? It did."
And we realize only now that he has not come to argue.

LOWELL

Mike... in my...

MIKE WALLACE

(low)

You and I have been doing this
together for fourteen years.

And he gives Lowell a copy of The New York Times.

MIKE WALLACE

This is today's New York Times.

(beat)

In it is the whole sordid story of
what went on inside our shop.

Lowell looks down at the page. The headline is "'60 MINUTES'
ORDERED TO PULL INTERVIEW IN TOBACCO REPORT."

MIKE WALLACE

And in the editorial... It accuses
us... of betraying the legacy of
Edward R. Murrow.

Turning, he walks out and down the hallway. Lowell looks at
the newspaper.

INT. THE COMMUTER HELICOPTER - MORNING

The helicopter approaching Manhattan. John Scanlon sitting
with Hewitt, both of them reading The Wall Street Journal
Wigand article.

DON HEWITT

(troubled)

They conclude most of it seems pretty
unsubstantiated...

(looking at him,
sickened)

You're full of shit, John.

INT. COFFEE SHOP, NEW YORK - MORNING

Lowell at a table littered with New York Times, New York
Daily News, etc. His phone rings...

LOWELL

Yeah.

INT. A CITY BUS, NEW YORK - MORNING

Broadway backgrounds streak past Debbie DeLuca's head as she
rides, talking on a cell phone, The Wall Street Journal in
her hand.

DEBBIE DELUCA

...front page. There's a picture of
Wigand. Article's entitled, "Getting
Personal," by-lined to Suein Hwang

and Milo Geyelin. Wait, hold on a second, Lowell.

Debbie hits "call waiting."

DEBBIE DELUCA

Yeah. Yeah, sure. I'll see if I can find him. Hold on...

(beat; to Lowell)

Yeah, Don's looking for you...

LOWELL

Good.

DEBBIE DELUCA

The sub-heading is, "Brown & Williamson Has a 500-Page Dossier Attacking Chief Critic." It quotes Richard Scruggs calling it "the worst kind of an organized smear campaign against a whistle-blower."

INT. COFFEE SHOP, NEW YORK - MORNING

EXTREMELY CLOSE Lowell.

DEBBIE DELUCA'S VOICE

(over)

"...a close look at the file, and independent research by this newspaper into its key claims, indicates that many of the serious allegations against Mr. Wigand are backed by scant or contradictory evidence..."

EXT. STREET, NEW YORK - MORNING

As Lowell hails a cab in a WIDE ANGLE and runs towards us, jumping into the cab...

INT. DON HEWITT'S OFFICE - DAY

DON HEWITT

The news division has been vilified in The New York Times, in print, on television, for caving to corporate interests!

We PULL BACK and we see that Lowell's with Hewitt in Hewitt's office...

DON HEWITT

The New York Times ran a blow by
blow of what we talked about behind
closed doors! You fucked us!

LOWELL

(shouting)

No, you fucked you! Don't invert
stuff! Big Tobacco tried to smear
Wigand; you bought it. The Wall Street
Journal, here, not exactly a bastion
of anti-capitalist sentiment, refutes
Big Tobacco's smear campaign as the
lowest form of character
assassination! And now, even now,
when every word of what Wigand has
said on our show is printed, the
entire deposition of his testimony
in a court of law in the State of
Mississippi, the cat totally out of
the bag, you're still standing here
debating! Don, what the hell else...
do you need?

And Hewitt, looking around.

DON HEWITT

Mike, you tell him...

MIKE WALLACE

(simply)

You fucked up, Don.

And Don's taken off stride...

DON HEWITT

(recovers fast)

Hey, it's old news! Stick with me.
Like always, we'll be okay. These
things have a half-life of fifteen
minutes...

MIKE WALLACE

No, that's fame. Fame has a fifteen-
minute half-life...

(droll)

Infamy... lasts a little longer.

Lowell looks at Wallace.

MIKE WALLACE

We caved. It's foolish. It's simply
dead wrong.
 (in his face, so
 there's no doubt)
Now, this is what we're going to do.
We're going over to Black Rock...

INT. A HIGH SCHOOL SCIENCE CLASS, LOUISVILLE - AFTERNOON

Jeff is in front of his class, teaching...

WIGAND

Okay, so let's get back to it.
Alright, now, what we saw there was...

INT. LAX - ECU: LOWELL - NIGHT

Tired, his suitcase at his feet. We don't know if he's coming
or going. He's at a pay phone in the more-deserted-than-not
airport.

LOWELL

(into phone)
They canceled the six o'clock.
(beat)
I don't know why. I'm on the 8:10.
I should be home... 9:30. I'll see
you then. Love ya'. Bye...

He hangs up and ambles over to a lounge with a few travelers
sitting in it.

MIKE WALLACE

"CBS Management wouldn't let us
broadcast our original story and our
interview with Wigand because they
were worried about the possibility
of a multi-billion dollar lawsuit
against us for tortious
interference... But now things have
changed."

INT. JEFFREY WIGAND'S APARTMENT, LOUISVILLE - NIGHT

A small apartment. Jeffrey dishes out second helpings of
pasta primavera into two pasta plates and brings them into
the kitchenette to his girls, Deborah and Barbara. And now
we SEE AND HEAR the small television on the table playing
"60 Minutes" and...

MICHAEL MOORE

(on television)
"...in my opinion, is an industry
that has perpetrated the biggest
fraud on the American public in
history."

Deborah looks proudly at her father.

Wigand's gotten up and gone out of the kitchenette. He has stopped for a moment around the corner in the hallway. His kids can't see him. We can. And he watches them and his eyes get shiny and start to tear. And as he stands there, watching his girls at the kitchen table witnessing their father's hard-earned "truth" on television, we realize that of all the audiences, his girls are the one he cares about most...

INT. AIRPORT LOUNGE

And Lowell in his moment of victory is watching his "60 Minutes" double segment on a departure lounge television with his feet resting on his suitcase, next to a Chicano woman with two kids and her mother and an older man with a beard and cane. An airport cleaner stops to watch, too. Lowell glances at him...

Unbeknownst to these viewers, arrested by the content on the television screen, is that the man who made it sits casually among them, watching his work.

INT. LOWELL'S HOUSE, KITCHEN, BERKELEY - NIGHT

Sharon sits at the kitchen table. She watches in a far corner a small countertop television. It's "60 Minutes," the full show entitled "Jeffrey Wigand, Ph.D." and on the top right, "PRODUCED BY LOWELL BERGMAN." As Sharon continues watching the television playing on the counter, the emotional currents within her remaining unrevealed...

INT. MIKE WALLACE'S STUDY - ON MIKE WALLACE - NIGHT

watching the show. He sees himself...

MIKE WALLACE
(to Wigand)
"You wish you hadn't blown the
whistle?"

WIGAND
(on television,
hesitating)
"There are times... I wish I hadn't

done it. But there are times that I feel compelled to do it..." "I've – if you asked me if I would do it again or if it's – do I think it's worth it. Yeah. I think it's worth it."

Wallace, satisfied, rises to refill his glass, as...

INT. AIRPORT LOUNGE

Lowell watching show in airport.

INT. A SURVEILLANCE VAN, LINCOLN, MONTANA - NIGHT

And we see the FBI Agent, BILL ROBERTSON on the phone.

BILL ROBERTSON

I promised you a three-hour heads-up... well, here it is. Have a camera crew standing by in Helena, Montana on Tuesday and I'll give you a three-hour head start. Alright? By the way, that was a hell of a good show tonight...

INT. LOWELL'S HOUSE, BERKELEY - NIGHT

LOWELL

(nods, trustworthy)

Thank you, Bill.

And he quietly hangs up. And it's still. Sharon's laid down, closing her eyes. They lie close together. After some moments, she opens her eyes and lets us know what she's been thinking...

SHARON

(understated)

You won.

This time he isn't droll.

LOWELL

Yeah?

(a beat)

What did I win?

There's an odd look on his face, not the look of a victor.

He shuts off the light. And as they lie close together in

the dark in each other's arms...

WE'RE LOOKING AT THE FAMILIAR CBS EYE ON A TELEVISION SCREEN.

AND THEN THE WORDS: "SPECIAL REPORT."

INT. MASTER CONTROL ROOM, CBS - DAY

Lowell, entering through machine rooms, into a state-of-the-art Master Control Room. On a wall are fifty or more monitors, in the humidity-and-temperature-controlled nexus of CBS operations. And it's jammed with people, witnessing a fast-breaking, major news event. Mike Wallace stands near Felling. Lowell crosses past Felling and stands next to Mike Wallace.

And we see footage of a handcuffed, bearded, barefoot Man... THEODORE KACZYNSKI, the UNABOMBER, being taken in by the FBI. A director counts down. Dan Rather launches...

DAN RATHER

"Reporting from CBS World News headquarters in New York, good afternoon. There has been a major break in the case of the so-called 'Unabomber.' CBS News has learned that a remote homesite outside Lincoln, Montana has been under FBI surveillance..."

BILL FELLING

Thanks for this. You know, we beat everybody. ABC, NBC, CNN.

Mike motions Lowell out into the corridor so they can be alone.

INT. CORRIDOR, CBS - DAY

The control room and crowd are seen through the glass wall.

After some moments:

MIKE WALLACE

That Canada story? Still interest you?

LOWELL

(nods)
Everything interests me.

Mike nods... Lowell puts his hands in his jacket pockets...

After some moments...

LOWELL
I quit, Mike.

Mike's startled.

MIKE WALLACE
Bullshit.

Lowell shakes his head "no."

MIKE WALLACE
C'mon, it all worked out. You came
out okay in the end...

LOWELL
I did? What do I tell a source on
the next tough story? Hang in with
us. You'll be fine... maybe?

They look at each other. Lowell says to Mike, intimately,
what he knows Mike knows...

LOWELL
What got broken here... doesn't go
back together again.

Lowell's heartfelt regret. He starts to leave. They look at
each other.

LOWELL
So, uh...

And Lowell moves off along the hallway, the monitors all
showing CBS programming. He doesn't even look back...

A legend appears:

CARD #1:

SUBSEQUENT TO THE EVENTS DRAMATIZES HERE, THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY
IN 1998 SETTLED THE LAWSUITS FILED AGAINST IT BY MISSISSIPPI
AND 49 OTHER STATES FOR \$246 BILLION.

CARD #2:

ALTHOUGH BASED ON A TRUE STORY, CERTAIN EVENTS IN THIS MOTION
PICTURE HAVE BEEN FICTIONALIZED FOR DRAMATIC EFFECT.

THE SOURCE OF THE DEATH THREATS AGAINST THE WIGANDS NEVER WAS IDENTIFIED AND NO ONE WAS EVER CHARGED OR PROSECUTED.

CARD #3:

IN 1996 DR. WIGAND WAS NAMED TEACHER OF THE YEAR IN KENTUCKY.

CURRENTLY, HE LIVES IN SOUTH CAROLINA.

CARD #4:

LOWELL BERGMAN IS A CORRESPONDENT FOR THE PBS SERIES FRONTLINE AND IS ON THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT BERKELEY.

THE END