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THE TOWER

"Pilot"

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Network Draft: 3/31/08

The Tower

“ Pilot”

CAST LIST

SEAN CASTLEMAN
OLIVIA STEELE
RICHARD MARCH
ZOE CAFRITZ
ANYA

HOLLIS BOURGET
BRAIN DENNISON
D.A. BEN SHEFFER
DETECTIVE BASS
SONIA TAYLOR
CHELLE JENKINS
MAYOR HARPER
ELLEN HARPER
PROFESSOR SARAH WATERS

MIGUEL
PALLY
GARRITY

THE TOWER

“PILOT”

SET LIST

INTERIORS

CAR

CHICAGO FOUR SEASONS HOTEL
BAR
ELEVATOR

CRACK HOUSE
BROWN COW COFFEE SHOP

THE MIRROR
LOBBY
NEWS ROOM
BALCONY
RICHARD’S OFFICE
WOMENS ROOM
CONFERENCE ROOM
ANYA’S OFFICE

HOTEL BALLROOM
BILLY GOAT TAVERN
POLICE STATION HOLDING CELL

CITY HALL
DISTRICT ATTORNEY OFFICE
MAYORS OFFICE

OLIVIA’S APARTMENT

LAZY CAFÉ

TIKI’S BUILDING
STAIRWELL
APARTMENT

ROYCE’S DINER

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
LUNCHEON HALL
CAMPUS

EXTERIORS

CRACK HOUSE
BROWN COW COFFEE SHOP
CHICAGO – LAKE MICHIGAN
CHICAGO RIVER BRIDGE

THE MIRROR
NEWS ROOM
BALCONY

POLICE STATION
BILLY GOAT TAVERN
DD’S LIQUOR STORE
ROYCE’S DINER
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
CHICAGO STREET

THE TOWER (draft 3/31/08)

1 INT. CAR - MOVING - NIGHT (NIGHT ONE)

April in Chicago. Three guys drive through a shitty area in Chicago. Two black, one white. A sense of tension; menace. SEAN CASTLEMAN, the white guy, is 35, crime reporter for The Chicago Mirror -- our hero. He rides in the back seat of the beat-up car. He's good looking in a hard-bitten way, has a stillness about him, but his mind races like crazy, 24-7. He's currently killing the last inch of his Marlboro, staring out the window --

His phone vibrates. He hits ignore. There's someplace he's supposed to be, and it sure ain't here. Next to him is a silent, lanky, 20-year old, a mean fucking look on his face.

Driving is PALLY, 30, ex-con, street guy -- Sean's best source in this neighborhood --

SEAN
You see her tonight?

PALLY
Just the car.
(beat)
Hangs around a white dude sometimes.
Billy Love.

SEAN
Know where he stays?

PALLY
Nah.

SEAN
Work on that for me?

Pally nods. Sean texts in his phone: "Billy Love". Sends it. Looks at the guy next to him who's staring right back... doesn't trust Sean. Sean looks out the window as Pally slows the car. Points to a car parked in front of a crack house --

PALLY
That's it.

SEAN
City plates.

He gets out of the car --

2 INT. CHICAGO FOUR SEASONS HOTEL - NIGHT

An opulent wedding rehearsal dinner. Dinner's over, drinks flowing. Well-to-do, mostly white, expensively dressed crowd. OLIVIA STEELE, politics reporter for the Mirror, is 30, blond, beautiful in a smart, offhand way, fearless to the point of recklessness. Her green dress looks great on her, matches her eyes. There as a guest, she's getting her drink on at the bar. She toys with a pretty little silver pill box, then puts it in her purse. Looks at the text message she just received on her phone: "Billy Love".

She's approached by BRIAN DONOVAN, cocky banker. He's 32, probably a dickhead but cute --

BRIAN
What're you, working?

OLIVIA
No.
(puts her phone away)
Bad habit. Rude, too.

BRIAN
I'm Brian.

OLIVIA
The groom. I know. Olivia.

BRIAN
I don't know you, so you must be a friend of Julie's.

OLIVIA
Her family invited me. I cover the mayor's office.

BRIAN
Cover it?

OLIVIA
For the Mirror.

BRIAN
Ah.

He indicates Olivia's drink to the bartender --

BRIAN (CONT'D)
One of those?
(then)
I hate these things. Rather be home reading.

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED:

OLIVIA
Aren't you a banker?

BRIAN
Bankers read.

OLIVIA
Oh.

He looks at her, amused. Gets his drink, sips it. Olivia looks over at the bride, JULIE HARPER -- black hair, slim, gorgeous. Surrounded by guests --

OLIVIA (CONT'D)
So how'd you and Julie meet?

BRIAN
Book club.
(off her look)
Her dad. My firm handled a bond offering for the city.

OLIVIA
You know the mayor well?

BRIAN
Getting there. It's intimidating.

OLIVIA
I bet.
(then, casual)
Ever met his friend Billy Love?

Off Brian --

3 EXT. CRACK HOUSE - NIGHT

Sean approaches the house. MIGUEL, 32 -- knit cap tipped off his head, prison inked all to hell -- gets in front of him. Two THUGS linger in the b.g. Miguel parts his hoodie and makes sure Sean see the 9mm ghetto stick he's strappin'. Sean doesn't blink --

MIGUEL
Hey Five-0.

SEAN
I'm not police.

MIGUEL
No, huh?

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

SEAN

Just looking for someone.

Miguel ain't moving. Neither is Sean. A stand off that ends when Sean tries to push past him to the door. Miguel pops Sean in the jaw. Messy, unglamorous fighting ensues. Finally Sean pushes past Miguel, gets into the house --

4 INT. CHICAGO FOUR SEASONS HOTEL - BAR - NIGHT

Olivia and Brian are now side by side at the bar, two drinks later --

BRIAN

I was an English major. Wrote a thesis on Hemingway.

OLIVIA

So what went wrong?

BRIAN

No jobs.

OLIVIA

I have a job.
(off his look)
No good jobs.

BRIAN

The world is cruel to men who don't make money.

OLIVIA

Aw. Cry me a river.

BRIAN

Whatever. You're noble. I'm a jackass.

They smile, having a good time. But, Olivia gets up --

OLIVIA

Well, Brian. Good luck.

BRIAN

Where you going?

OLIVIA

I'm supposed to track someone down. Named Sherry?

BRIAN

Don't know her.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

OLIVIA
Never heard of her?

BRIAN
(shakes head)
Why do you ask?

OLIVIA
It's for a story on line items in
the city budget... it's boring.

BRIAN
So forget it. Stay here.

OLIVIA
I think it's bad form to flirt with
the groom at the rehearsal dinner.

BRIAN
You already said you were rude.

She smiles. Both are feeling the booze --

5 INT. CRACK HOUSE - NIGHT

Sean walks through the house. Glass vials crunch underfoot, little baggies in every corner like dead leaves. He moves through halls, rooms with mattresses on the floor -- women and men, black and white, smoking rock. He takes a close look at each white woman he finds --

SEAN
Sherry? Hey, you know Sherry? White
girl?

No luck. His phone vibrates again; this time he takes it --

SEAN (CONT'D)
Castleman.

ANYA (V.O.)
Where are you?

SEAN
The gym.

ANYA (V.O.)
Got a shooting on the wires. Brown
Cow Coffee Shop. You want it?

SEAN
I'm there.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

Off Sean --

6 INT. CHICAGO FOUR SEASONS HOTEL - ELEVATOR - NIGHT

Olivia and Brian on opposite sides of the elevator, a pleasant looking couple in their 60s between them. The door opens, the couple gets out. Door closes. Alone now --

OLIVIA
You're getting married tomorrow.

BRIAN
That's tomorrow.

He moves toward her. She doesn't resist --

7 EXT. BROWN COW COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT

Crime tape, cop cars. Sean arrives, notebook open, smoking. Blood, welts on his face. Looks through the window at the murder scene; white guy shot, slumped over at a booth. Sean approaches DETECTIVE BASS -- 40s, work-a-day drone --

SEAN
Hey Bass.

BASS
Seany.
(nods)
Armed robbery turns homicide. DOA's
a fancy lawyer, William Valentine.

SEAN
What's a fancy lawyer doing on the
South Side?

BASS
Buying it.
(then)
Nice face.

SEAN
Looks good on me, right? What's
missing?

BASS
Register take. Jewelry off the pain
in the balls cashier.

SEAN
Can I talk to her?

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

BASS

She's all yours. Sonia Taylor.

Sean moves over to SONIA -- 22, black, highly invested in her long painted nails, flat-iron extensions and gaudy make up. She's sloppy, loud, thinks a lot of herself --

SEAN

Sean Castleman, Chicago Mirror.

SONIA

I had a gun put in my face!

SEAN

Tell me about it, Sonia.

SONIA

It was a girl, black. Took the register money and my rings. They were gold, too.

SEAN

Why'd she shoot the guy?

SONIA

He was like I ain't giving up my wallet, my briefcase. She said bam! He's dead.

SEAN

Only you two in the place?

SONIA

Yeah. I coulda died. I coulda died!

SEAN

Hey, you're brave Sonia.

Now a cop car pulls up. In the back seat is CHELLE -- 20, black, gray sweatshirt, knit cap. Dead eyes, fucked up teeth. The cop, GARRITY, gets out --

GARRITY

Picked her up two blocks away. Gun on her.

(to Sonia)

You recognize her?

Sonia walks up to the car, takes a look. She and Chelle stare each other down --

SONIA

That's her.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: (2)

CHELLE

Bitch!

The girls start screaming shit at each other. Bass, amused --

BASS

There's your happy ending.

SEAN

Just writes itself.

Sean goes inside the coffee shop --

8 INT. BROWN COW COFFEE SHOP - CONTINUOUS

Cops, techs are processing the scene. They see Sean, know him; it's cool he's there. He approaches the body. The DOA is 40s, well dressed -- Rolex watch, wedding ring. Sean jots something in his notebook. Sees two glasses of water on the table. Makes another note. Sean looks all around the booth, the floor. Looking for something. Doesn't find it. Which bothers him. Off Sean --

MAIN TITLES.

END TEASER

ACT ONE

9 EXT. CHICAGO - LAKE MICHIGAN - DAY (DAY TWO) (CHICAGO SHOOT)

Early Sunday morning. Olivia, barefoot, in her dress from the night before, takes a photo of the sunrise. Shoes on the ground next to her. Serene. Yet, wide awake --

10 EXT. BRIDGE - CHICAGO RIVER - DAY (CHICAGO SHOOT)

Empty streets and sidewalks. Sean drinks a cup of coffee, waiting for Olivia. Face still mangled from last night. She arrives, shoes in hand --

OLIVIA

Hey.

SEAN

Hey. Aren't you that big Pulitzer winner?

OLIVIA

Yeah, they mob me in the street. Anything last night?

SEAN

Saw the car. No Sherry.

OLIVIA

I didn't get any takers on "Billy Love".

SEAN

Work on anyone?

OLIVIA

The groom, mostly.

A beat. She can't quite meet his eye --

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

So who is he? This Billy?

SEAN

White guy. Some connect to Sherry.

OLIVIA

We really think the mayor's mixed up with this girl?

SEAN

Someone gave her keys to a city car.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

SEAN (CONT'D)

And she signed into the residence
three times this month.

OLIVIA

Moving between the mayor's mansion
and a crack house. Pretty weird.

SEAN

Buying? Delivering?

OLIVIA

Whatever it is, it's shady. So we
better be right.

SEAN

And we better be fast. I'm afraid
Richard's gonna flinch.

OLIVIA

Shut us down?

Sean shrugs. Then --

SEAN

You coming to the Tower?

OLIVIA

Nah, I got this wedding.

He looks at her. Her eyes are darting, not meeting his --

SEAN

Why you acting hinky?

OLIVIA

I'm not.

SEAN

That dress is inappropriate for Sunday
morning.

OLIVIA

So's that face.

They head off, different directions --

11 EXT. THE MIRROR - DAY (CHICAGO SHOOT)

The building that houses the prestigious newspaper where our
guys work, The Chicago Mirror. Sean approaches, tosses his
cigarette butt, goes inside --

12 INT. THE MIRROR - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Sean catches up with Managing Editor, ANYA, 45, brainy, no-nonsense, used to doing ten things at a time. He hands her a print-out of his story --

SEAN

That's some snappy reporting right there Anya.

As she takes it, walking with him toward the elevators --

ANYA

Called you nine times before you picked up last night.

SEAN

Hey I'm in demand.

ANYA

(speed reading)

DOA's William Valentine... partner at Shelton, Arndt and Bellamy...

SEAN

Big wheel with Chicago Democrats.

ANYA

Just bad luck, caught in a robbery?

SEAN

That's what the cops think.

ANYA

Take it down five inches?

SEAN

Thing is... I don't like it.

ANYA

Surprising.

SEAN

Something was off.

ANYA

Like?

SEAN

Well it's a robbery, but he's still got his shiny watch and wedding band.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

ANYA

Uh huh.

SEAN

Shooter took the cashier's cheap bling, left the good stuff.

They step on the elevator as Anya peruses his copy --

13 INT. THE MIRROR - NEWS ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Anya and Sean enter the news room, walk and talk --

ANYA

This would be A-1, but there was another murder last night. Monica Baker.

SEAN

Do I know who that is?

ANYA

Wife of Cliff Baker, golfer. They call him the Eagle?

SEAN

Yeah, yeah.

ANYA

Pregnant. Stabbed to death in her husband's Porsche.

SEAN

Pretty and white?

ANYA

Which means front page, so go see Stuart and knock it out.

Sean nods; she moves off. A beat, then he follows her --

SEAN

There's more to this shooting, Anya.

ANYA

Sean...

SEAN

This guy's law firm is on Michigan Avenue. Coffee shop's in murdertown. He wasn't there by accident.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

ANYA

Lose five inches and get into the
golf story.

SEAN

Yeah. Okay.

She moves off. But instead of going to see Stuart, Sean
heads right back to the elevator --

14 EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Sean emerges from the precinct, looks around. Finds Detective
Bass from last night out having a cigarette --

SEAN

Bass. You got a smoke?

Bass tosses him a pack --

BASS

Last one.

SEAN

How's the Brown Cow going?

BASS

Done. Got the ID, notified the widow.
Onto the next body.

SEAN

Ever figure out who Valentine was
meeting?

BASS

Who said he was meeting someone?

SEAN

Two glasses of water. Two place
settings.

BASS

That neighborhood? Drug buy or tail.

SEAN

You sit down for coffee with a hooker?

BASS

I wouldn't personally blame him.
The wife's a linebacker.

SEAN

You guys find the briefcase?

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

BASS
What briefcase?

SEAN
He had one.

BASS
I didn't hear about that.

SEAN
I did. The cashier saw it.

BASS
Tell it the D.A.'s office. They
swooped in, took it over this morning.

SEAN
Sheffer grabbed it?

BASS
Someone in his camp.

SEAN
Fast work for the weekend.

BASS
(shrugs)
Bottom line, Brown Cow's over. I
just got a fresh one in Back of the
Yards. Happy Sunday, huh?

He tosses his cigarette butt, heads off. Off Sean --

15 INT. HOTEL BALLROOM - WEDDING - DAY

A beribboned, flower-filled affair -- only the best for the
mayor's daughter. All the guests are there, expectant.
Restless, actually, 'cause they've been waiting quite a while.

Olivia, cleaned up and dressed down, sits in the back row,
trying to lay low. By contrast, HOLLIS BOURGET -- 20s,
beautiful, Yale grad, Style reporter, considers herself Tina
Brown in the making -- wears a flashy dress and commands a
lot of attention as she arrives late, sits next to Olivia --

HOLLIS
How late am I?

OLIVIA
Pretty late.

Hollis scans the program, looks around. Eyes land on Olivia's
plain dress. Disapproval --

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

HOLLIS
Why are you wearing that?

OLIVIA
'Cause I have really bad taste.

Looks between them. They work together but sure don't like each other. The buzz of the crowd quiets as a matronly woman in a lovely gown, ELLEN, 62, stands before the guests. Mother of the bride. She's shaken up, red eyes --

ELLEN
Ladies and gentlemen. I don't know
quite how to say this.
(beat)
The groom has... called off the
wedding.

Gasps, surprise from the crowd. Hollis opens her glam purse, whips out a notebook. Off Olivia, more stunned than anyone --

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

16 INT. BILLY GOAT TAVERN - NEXT DAY (DAY THREE)

Olivia and Sean are paying for breakfast to go at this Mirror hang out. She's holding two photos of sunrises -- shuffles them back and forth. Sean is preoccupied, watching DISTRICT ATTORNEY BEN SHEFFER on TV, holding a press conference --

OLIVIA

I have to tell you something.

SEAN

Why is Ben Sheffer talking about the Brown Cow?

OLIVIA

Not here. Come on.

They grab their food, head outside --

17 EXT. BILLY GOAT TAVERN/STREET - CONTINUOUS (CHICAGO SHOOT)

They exit, and walk and talk. Up the stairs, to the street level, toward the Tower --

SEAN

It was a small time shooting. Why does the D.A. care?

OLIVIA

He's running for mayor. Vote for me, white guys don't get killed in the hood.

SEAN

Years too early for that.

OLIVIA

Maybe he plans ahead.

SEAN

Maybe it's not small time.

They've reached the Tower. She makes him focus --

OLIVIA

I have to tell you something.

They go inside --

18 EXT. THE MIRROR - NEWS ROOM - BALCONY - MOMENTS LATER

She's told him --

SEAN

The groom?

OLIVIA

It was just a fun thing.

SEAN

Uh huh.

OLIVIA

But then he's a no show at the wedding.

SEAN

Where is he now?

OLIVIA

No one knows. In the wind.

SEAN

Funny.

OLIVIA

Not really.

SEAN

Whose story is it?

OLIVIA

Hollis.

SEAN

Well she's a terrible reporter, she'll never find out.

OLIVIA

True. Okay.

(few beats, then)

So what's our next move on the Mayor?

SEAN

Run the street name Billy Love?

OLIVIA

I got it.

He's distracted, still thinking about the Brown Cow --

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED:

SEAN

I'm gonna work this other thing a while. This shooting.

OLIVIA

Yeah. Sure.

She nods. Then, a beat as he studies her. Some concern --

SEAN

Hey. Why'd you do that?

OLIVIA

I don't know.

SEAN

You're okay, right?

OLIVIA

Yeah.

Anya comes out --

ANYA

Nine thirty. You got budget lines?

They follow her inside --

19 INT. THE MIRROR - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

The daily Page One Budget meeting. About 20 editors and reporters. Anya runs it. Sean, Olivia, Hollis, all at the table. Sean hates these meetings, would rather be on the street. Restless, he jots in his notebook: "BROWN COW/DA SHEFFER?" --

ANYA

National -- Senate confirmation hearings. Metro -- two homicides, fire at Lincoln Park zoo. Style?

HOLLIS

Runaway groom follow up.

OLIVIA

Do we really need day two of that?

HOLLIS

Mayor's daughter stood up in front of 200 guests? Yes.

Sean writes in his notebook: "BRIEFCASE?" --

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

ANYA
You talk to the bride, Hollis?

HOLLIS
Still in seclusion.

ANYA
(to Olivia)
You're talking to Mayor Harper today.

OLIVIA
That's about city spending. Not the
wedding.

ANYA
Now it's about both.

OLIVIA
Okay.

Hollis doesn't like that. Neither does Olivia --

ANYA
Plus international, we got a front
page. We'll see art at 3:30.

She starts to end the meeting. Sean closes his notebook --

SEAN
So where's Richard?

ANYA
A meeting.

SEAN
With?

ANYA
Zoe Cafritz.

Glances exchanged. Everyone's heard the rumors --

OLIVIA
Is it true, she's gonna buy us?

ANYA
I don't know.

OLIVIA
We're going to be owned by a tabloid
queen?

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED: (2)

ANYA

Olivia, I'm not inside on this --

OLIVIA

We're the Mirror, Anya --

ANYA

Hey, I wouldn't like it either. I don't run the world. See you guys at 3:30.

Sean and Olivia exchange looks, as the meeting breaks up --

20 INT. POLICE STATION - HOLDING CELLS - DAY

Sean walks with Bass to the holding cells --

BASS

Why you wanna talk to this chick? All she's gonna do is stare at the floor, tell you to screw.

SEAN

Kicks.

They reach the cage where Chelle is. Bass lets Sean in --

BASS

Sean Castleman, Chelle Jenkins. Maybe you two'll fall in love.

He moves away as Sean sits opposite Chelle. Offers her a business card --

SEAN

I'm with the Mirror.

She takes the card --

CHELLE

You write reports?

SEAN

Yeah I do.

CHELLE

Well I got something for you.

SEAN

First I got something for you. Questions.

She folds her arms, waits --

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

SEAN (CONT'D)

What'd you do with the briefcase,
Chelle?

CHELLE

Briefcase?

SEAN

Belonged to the guy you shot.

CHELLE

I didn't shoot no one.

SEAN

Right, right.

CHELLE

You seen my jacket? I do robberies.
Liquor stores, not restaurants. And
never murders.

SEAN

Gotta graduate some time.

CHELLE

That cashier got reason to lie on
me.

SEAN

Chelle, I care about the briefcase.
You took it from the scene --

CHELLE

And I care about that bitch not
tellin' stories, 'cuz what I did to
her man.

SEAN

Which was?

Chelle buttons up --

SEAN (CONT'D)

Between us.

CHELLE

I robbed her stupid boyfriend, Double
D.

(off look)

Three times. So the other night,
she snitch me out when someone killed
the white dude.

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED: (2)

SEAN

I gonna get traction if I look into this?

CHELLE

You look into that, maybe I see about your briefcase.

SEAN

Thought you weren't involved, Chelle.

CHELLE

Wasn't. But I know what goes on.

SEAN

So maybe we help each other.

Off Sean and Chelle --

21 INT. MAYOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Olivia with MAYOR HARPER. He's 52, white, formidable, and presently, furious. Compulsively reading blogs on his laptop --

MAYOR HARPER

You want a quote? I'll give you a quote. I'm going hunt this guy down.

OLIVIA

Not very mayoral.

MAYOR HARPER

(off computer)

"Julie Harper, scorned woman."
"Mayor's daughter humiliated." Damn it.

OLIVIA

Maybe "She's better off without him"?
"She dodged a bullet"?

MAYOR HARPER

More like took a bullet. She drifts around the house, doped up on Xanax.

OLIVIA

You don't want me to write that.

He snaps down the top of his laptop, walks to the window --

MAYOR HARPER

What a mess. And makes me look like a weak son of a bitch.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

OLIVIA

Maybe it's too soon for a statement
on this.

The mayor exhales, change gears --

MAYOR HARPER

So. What're you writing about?

OLIVIA

Payroll records.

MAYOR HARPER

What about 'em?

OLIVIA

There's a line item in your personnel
budget for a Sherry Worthington?

She watches him closely --

MAYOR HARPER

Uh huh.

OLIVIA

I don't know that name.

MAYOR HARPER

I think she's janitorial.

OLIVIA

At 90 thousand a year?

MAYOR HARPER

I really don't know. I'll have
someone find out.

OLIVIA

It's a lot of money to not know about.

MAYOR HARPER

This is a bad time, Olivia. I should
be with my family.

OLIVIA

So you don't know this Sherry.

MAYOR HARPER

That's what I just said.

OLIVIA

Right. Thank you, Mayor.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: (2)

Olivia gets up --

MAYOR HARPER
Do you know this guy? Brian?

OLIVIA
(quick)
Brian? No. Not at all.

MAYOR HARPER
Who does he think he is, doing that
to my girl?

OLIVIA
I don't know.

MAYOR HARPER
I'm going to find him. Get to the
bottom of what the hell happened.

Off Olivia nodding, hiding her sinking feeling --

22 INT. CITY HALL - DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - DAY

Sean paces in the waiting area, been there a while. A career SECRETARY watches him warily. He tries to disarm her with a smile. Unsuccessful. Suddenly from the inner office D.A. BEN SHEFFER blows out -- late 40s, a distinguished, confident charmer in an expensive suit. Sean falls in step with him --

SEAN
Sean Castleman, Chicago Mirror.

SHEFFER
Most people make an appointment.

SEAN
I'm here about Valentine.

SHEFFER
My days, nights, all very tight --

SEAN
Can we walk?

As they do --

23 INT. CITY HALL - CONTINUOUS

They walk through the magnificent, bustling building --

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

SEAN

I'm following up on the Brown Cow shooting.

SHEFFER

Senseless. Tragic.

SEAN

I know you're pretty interested in this one.

SHEFFER

I'm interested in any crime that occurs in our city.

SEAN

But also, you and the victim were associates at the same law firm, sixteen years ago.

SHEFFER

Yes. I knew William.

SEAN

Any idea what he was doing so far from his own backyard?

Sheffer stops, sighs. Finds a private alcove to duck into --

SHEFFER

It isn't pretty.

SEAN

I can take it.

SHEFFER

Off record.

(off Sean's nod)

I know exactly what he was doing.

SEAN

Okay.

SHEFFER

He had a girlfriend. Black. A court reporter who lives on the South Side.

SEAN

Uh huh.

SHEFFER

There's a lovely wife and two kids that don't need to hear that.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: (2)

SEAN

Then why hold a press conference?

SHEFFER

Rich white guy killed by random violence, attention must be paid.

(beat)

This isn't news, Sean. It's unsavory, human weakness.

SEAN

I just don't think that's the whole story.

Sheffer considers Sean. Then shrugs, friendly --

SHEFFER

You don't owe me anything. I'll just ask, one guy to another -- don't follow this. It'll just embarrass good people.

SEAN

Well we have different jobs.

SHEFFER

Understood.

(beat)

I sure enjoy your articles.

He saunters off --

24 INT. THE MIRROR - NEWS ROOM - DAY

Olivia works at her computer. Hollis, impeccably dressed as always, slides her chair over to Olivia's --

HOLLIS

Guess who's in Richard's office?

OLIVIA

Pretty busy here, Hollis.

HOLLIS

Zoe Cafritz.

Olivia looks up. Through the glass windows in a corner office we see the Mirror's Editor-in Chief RICHARD CHASE, 50, rumpled, revered -- talking with ZOE CAFRITZ -- 50s, chicly dressed and coifed, a scrappy, gutsy broad beneath the polish --

OLIVIA

So that's the dragon lady.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

HOLLIS
She's self-made. Gotta admire that.

OLIVIA
I do?

HOLLIS
I think things would be a lot less
stodgy around here with her in charge.

OLIVIA
You don't care that we've been family-
owned for three generations?

HOLLIS
No. Time for a change.

OLIVIA
I don't see why.

HOLLIS
Everyone's online. Not reading
papers. We need an injection.

OLIVIA
Hollis.

HOLLIS
What?

OLIVIA
You and I shouldn't talk about this.

HOLLIS
They're coming this way.

Hollis intercepts Richard and Zoe as they approach --

HOLLIS (CONT'D)
Ms. Cafritz, I'm Hollis Bourget,
Style reporter.

ZOE
Hi Hollis.

HOLLIS
Came from the Star Ledger last year.
J-school at Columbia.

But Zoe's looking past her, at Olivia. Who doesn't look up
from her computer --

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED: (2)

RICHARD

Olivia?

OLIVIA

Hi. I got a straight denial from the mayor on Sherry.

RICHARD

Let's meet on that later.

OLIVIA

I think we're ready to run.

RICHARD

Someone I want you to meet.

Zoe puts out her hand. Olivia takes it --

ZOE

Zoe Cafritz.

OLIVIA

Olivia Steele.

ZOE

The Pulitzer winner.

Hollis steps back, bruised --

OLIVIA

That's me.

ZOE

That was a very smart series.

OLIVIA

Oh, you read it?

A beat. Zoe ignores what may have been an insult --

ZOE

You didn't get nervous when Alderman Russo threatened to sue?

OLIVIA

No.

RICHARD

I got nervous. She could have gone further. We reined her in.

Zoe nods; studies Olivia. Then --

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED: (3)

ZOE
I look forward to New York.

OLIVIA
New York?

RICHARD
Zoe will be at the luncheon.

OLIVIA
Are the Moores going?

RICHARD
I don't know about that.

OLIVIA
Actually I'm not sure I'm going,
either.

Zoe stares. Hollis reacts; what is she doing? --

OLIVIA (CONT'D)
Nice meeting you.

She moves off. Richard watches her, displeased --

25 EXT. DD'S LIQUOR STORE - DAY

Sean with Sonia the cashier, outside her boyfriend's crappy liquor store. She's all decked out with new rings and shit --

SONIA
Citizen Profile?

SEAN
That's right.

SONIA
I get my picture in the paper?

SEAN
Maybe.

SONIA
'Cause sometimes people ask me if
I'm a model.

Sean has a police report --

SEAN
I see your boyfriend's store got
robbed three times this year, Sonia.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED:

SONIA
That's Double D's business.

SEAN
You know who did the robberies?

SONIA
Nope.

SEAN
Well it's a real coincidence. Chelle
Jenkins. Who you ID'd for shooting
that white man.

SONIA
So?

SEAN
You know lying about something like
that's a crime, Sonia?

SONIA
Is this for my Citizen Profile?

SEAN
Yeah. Maybe I profile you as a
scumbag --

SONIA
Forget you!

SEAN
-- who tried to get revenge for her
man by making a false ID on Chelle.

She starts shaking, getting scared --

SONIA
You gonna tell the police?

SEAN
Thinking about it.

SONIA
I can tell you something! If I can
be helped on this.

SEAN
I'm tight with Bass.

SONIA
(exhales, few beats)
It wasn't for real a robbery.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: (2)

SEAN

No?

SONIA

Someone dropped me two hundred bucks.
Showed me a picture. Said call this
number when he gets here.

SEAN

And you did.

SONIA

Ten minutes later this girl blows
in.

SEAN

So Valentine was targeted.

SONIA

She wanted the briefcase. And he
didn't want to give it up for nothing.

SEAN

Who was she, Sonia?

SONIA

Tiki. Mean, crazy girl. Shooter
for hire.

SEAN

That's real helpful.

SONIA

This mean Chelle's getting out?

SEAN

Yeah. So Double D better lock up.

Off which --

26 INT. OLIVIA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Olivia puts her two photos of sunrises up on her refrigerator.
Labels them: #1 and #2. Doorbell rings. Checks the clock:
past midnight. Opens the door. It's the groom, Brian --

BRIAN

Hi.

OLIVIA

You... can't be here.

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

BRIAN

Why not?

Olivia rushes him inside --

OLIVIA

Come in here. Come in!

She shuts the door behind him --

BRIAN

That was easy.

OLIVIA

No. That's not what that was.

A few beats. He smiles --

BRIAN

How are you?

OLIVIA

The whole city's looking for you.

BRIAN

I know.

OLIVIA

Why did you do that?

BRIAN

Because of you.

OLIVIA

We met that night!

BRIAN

And it was great. Right?

OLIVIA

Well.

BRIAN

I'm on my way to Julie's. I'm going to tell her there's someone else.

OLIVIA

No! Don't do that.

BRIAN

I have to. I can't hide out forever.

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED: (2)

OLIVIA
Brian, I write about the mayor. I
can't be involved in this.

BRIAN
We can't keep that up.

OLIVIA
We?

BRIAN
Yeah. Olivia. I'm deranged over
you.

OLIVIA
Well stop it. You're a slick, cocky,
banker. Why are you acting like
this?

BRIAN
I don't know.

He laughs. Walks a few steps into her apartment, which alarms
her --

OLIVIA
Can we talk tomorrow? When you're
not crazy anymore?

BRIAN
We can talk.

OLIVIA
Okay. Good.

He should leave now. But --

BRIAN
Can I sleep on your couch?

OLIVIA
No.

BRIAN
Can I sleep in your bed?

OLIVIA
No!

BRIAN
No?

He looks at her. She weakens --

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED: (3)

OLIVIA
I mean...it's a bad, bad idea.

BRIAN
No worse than what we already did.

OLIVIA
No. That takes the cake.

BRIAN
I won't tell.

A few beats. The guy's charming --

OLIVIA
Oh, crap. Me neither.

Off Olivia, letting him stay --

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

27 INT. THE MIRROR - NEWS ROOM - DAY (DAY FOUR)

Olivia enters, checks the clock; after ten. She's frazzled, not looking her best. Finds an IM waiting on her computer screen: "Olivia: please see me. Richard". She looks over to his office. Sean's in there with Anya and Richard. Throws down three photos on her desk... three sunrises --

28 INT. THE MIRROR - RICHARD'S OFFICE - DAY

Sean, with Richard and Anya --

SEAN

The ID was tossed, Chelle Jenkins got out last night. Street name on the real shooter is Tiki.

ANYA

Why didn't I know you were still working this?

SEAN

Well.

He searches. No adequate answer --

RICHARD

She's your editor, Sean.

ANYA

And I don't like cowboys.

SEAN

I know.

(beat)

There's a bigger story. I know it.

ANYA

But that's not publishable.

SEAN

So I'm working on it.

ANYA

And I got a paper to fill every day. I need copy from you. Inches.

SEAN

This Brown Cow thing's a heater. The D.A.'s whitewashing something.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED:

RICHARD
Sheffer's involved?

SEAN
He shut the cops down on it. Doesn't
want the briefcase pursued. Doesn't
care that Valentine was set up.

ANYA
Even though he knew the guy.

SEAN
Tried to float me a story about a
girlfriend -- doesn't check out. I
think he knows why Valentine was
killed. I think it's all about that
missing briefcase, and Sheffer doesn't
want it found.

RICHARD
Well. If you can blow it up...

SEAN
It'll be a lot of inches, Anya.

ANYA
Get some facts involved.

He nods. Olivia appears in the doorway --

RICHARD
Come in, Olivia.

She enters, a nod to Sean as he exits. To Anya --

OLIVIA
Sorry I missed Budget.
(off her nod)
What's up?

RICHARD
The Pulitzer luncheon.

OLIVIA
Yeah?

RICHARD
You're going.

OLIVIA
Not if the Moores aren't.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED: (2)

RICHARD
The Moores don't own the paper
anymore. Zoe Cafritz does.

It's like a gut shot --

OLIVIA
It's official?

RICHARD
Yes.

OLIVIA
She's not even a journalist.

ANYA
She's a business woman.

RICHARD
We can't control it, Olivia. We can
only navigate it.

OLIVIA
It's embarrassing.

A few beats. None are happy about it; but Anya and Richard
are practical --

RICHARD
Book a ticket to New York, plan a
speech, be there.

Olivia bites her tongue; faintly --

OLIVIA
Yeah.

RICHARD
Anya?

Olivia looks at Anya. Didn't know this meeting was a two-
parter. Quietly --

ANYA
You've been wearing the same blouse
a few days now.

OLIVIA
So?

ANYA
So are you sleeping?

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED: (3)

OLIVIA

Yes.

ANYA

And you're doing what you're supposed to do?

OLIVIA

Yes.

(to both)

It was three years ago.

RICHARD

Okay.

OLIVIA

I'll change my shirt.

She moves off, defensive --

29 INT. THE MIRROR - WOMEN'S ROOM - DAY

Olivia buttons up a fresh shirt. Dutifully takes three pills from her silver pill box, fills a paper cup with water. A moment, then she tosses the pills down the drain. Pours the water down after them. Exits --

30 INT. THE MIRROR - NEWS ROOM - AFTERNOON

Sean and Olivia step off the elevator, take-out salads in hand. They walk through the news room --

OLIVIA

So you think this dead lawyer was a delivery boy for Sheffer.

SEAN

But Anya won't print it.

OLIVIA

Carrying what? What's in the briefcase?

SEAN

Drugs? Money?

OLIVIA

Speculation.

SEAN

Which is why she won't print it.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

OLIVIA
I don't think Sheffer's that dirty.

SEAN
Everyone's dirty.

OLIVIA
But he's the D.A., wants to be mayor.
He's not dealing.

Richard and Zoe Cafritz come to the center of the news room --

RICHARD
Gather around, everyone?

Sean and Olivia exchange looks. As people hang up phones, get up from their desks --

SEAN
(re: Richard)
What'd he say about Sherry?

OLIVIA
I think he's hedging.

SEAN
Uh oh.

She nods. By now everyone is quiet, gathered around. Anya and Hollis among the crowd --

RICHARD
It's no use trying to keep secrets from journalists, so I imagine you all know Zoe Cafritz is the new owner and publisher of the Mirror.

A pause. Where applause might be expected. Doesn't happen --

RICHARD (CONT'D)
Zoe?

He gives the floor to Zoe --

ZOE
Hi everyone. I'm Zoe Cafritz. And I know my reputation precedes me. I publish gossip rags. Make pots of money off movie stars knocking up their nannies. I don't care about real news, I don't even understand real news. I probably don't even read the paper.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED: (2)

This is aimed at Olivia. Olivia gets it --

ZOE (CONT'D)

You're worried I'll tarnish the prestigious Mirror. Because I'm so shallow. Stupid. Well guess what? You don't become a female CEO, who was not to the manor born, by being ignorant. I know some things.

Some guilty faces. Some still defiant --

ZOE (CONT'D)

I don't need another tabloid, I have three. The value of this newspaper is it's prestige. It's excellence. Pulitzers. I want more of that. So I'm gonna throw my money at this paper. Reopen the bureaus that have been closed, freeze the buy outs. My goal is not to tart up the Mirror, but for the Mirror to be the best. Pure and simple.

Surprised faces. Then, some applause. People gather around Zoe, shake her hand.

Olivia hangs back with Sean --

OLIVIA

Richard's making me go to the luncheon with her.

SEAN

He's right. Don't let her ruin that for you.

OLIVIA

Yeah.

SEAN

She bought the paper. She can't buy the Pulitzers.

Off Olivia --

31 INT. LAZY CAFE - NIGHT

Olivia enters the tiny, dim cafe. Finds Brian at a corner table. Sits with him --

BRIAN

Romantic lighting. I get it.

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED:

OLIVIA
Brian.

BRIAN
Olivia.

OLIVIA
We gotta settle this thing.

BRIAN
And do what?

OLIVIA
Say goodbye. Never tell anyone.

BRIAN
That doesn't work.

OLIVIA
The mayor is furious. He'd murder
me if he found out.

BRIAN
You and me both.

OLIVIA
Look, Brian. you know I'm not the
reason you didn't get married.

BRIAN
I do?

OLIVIA
You sabotaged your wedding.

BRIAN
Come on.

OLIVIA
You wanted to screw things up. You
wanted out.

A few beats. Then --

BRIAN
I loved her. A lot. She got me
ninety-six percent of the way there.

OLIVIA
But not a hundred.

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED: (2)

BRIAN

And then meeting you, I thought here's someone who could get me all the way.

OLIVIA

Look, talk to her. But don't tell her about this. That just twists the knife.

BRIAN

And gets the mayor pissed off at you.

She looks at him a beat. Then --

OLIVIA

I'm gonna tell you something since we're not going to see each other again.

(beat)

I'm sick. And sometimes I do things I shouldn't. And that was part of this.

He absorbs this --

BRIAN

Oh.

OLIVIA

It's complicated.

He nods. Then gets up, starts to go. But turns back. Both feeling the regret --

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

It'll fade.

BRIAN

If it doesn't... I might be back.

He goes. Off Olivia, watching him --

32 INT. TIKI'S BUILDING - STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Dingy, dirty building. Sean follows Bass and two officers up the stairs to Tiki's floor --

BASS

You gonna tell me how you put this together?

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED:

SEAN

Depends on if you're gonna make me hang back.

BASS

Ain't sitting in the car, are you?

They've arrived at the door. Bass indicates for Sean to crouch. Bass and two other officers bang on Tiki's door --

BASS (CONT'D)

Chicago P.D.! Open up, Tiki!

Scuffling from inside. The cops kick in the door, charge in. Shouts, a window opening. A moment later, Bass runs back down the stairs, past Sean --

BASS (CONT'D)

She's out the fire escape.

A beat as Sean looks at the busted down door. He really shouldn't go in, but --

33 INT. TIKI'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Sean goes in. The place is small, crappy -- and empty. He crosses to the window, sees the police cruiser in the alley. Bass and the other officers, guns out, pursue Tiki on foot.

He looks around the apartment, his gaze settling on a briefcase. Etched initials on the clasps: WFV. William Valentine's briefcase. Few beats. Should he?

He looks around, to be sure he's alone... then opens the briefcase. Inside he finds: Baby photos. A smiling little girl. He sifts through them, baffled. What the fuck do these mean?

Then, he hears gunshots on the street. Looks out the window --

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

34 INT. ROYCE'S DINER - MORNING (DAY FIVE) (CHICAGO SHOOT)

A cramped diner where the city's movers and shakers gather for coffee and breakfast. D.A. Sheffer sits with several city cronies. Sean approaches him, envelope in hand --

SEAN

How do you want to do this?

SHEFFER

(to his cronies)

Excuse me a minute.

He stands, follows Sean outside --

35 EXT. ROYCE'S DINER - CONTINUOUS (CHICAGO SHOOT)

As they exit --

SHEFFER

Whatever you think you know, it's wrong.

SEAN

That so.

SHEFFER

I said leave Valentine alone.

SEAN

I don't always follow instructions.

Sean opens the envelope, takes out the baby photos from Valentine's briefcase. A long beat as Sheffer absorbs them --

SEAN (CONT'D)

Cute kid.

SHEFFER

No comment.

SEAN

Funny you don't ask where I got these.

SHEFFER

We're past that. What do you want?

SEAN

Answers.

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED:

SHEFFER

Last guy who knew all the answers
ended up dead in a coffee shop.

SEAN

Who's the kid?

SHEFFER

Your problem is you think you have a
story. But you don't know what it
is.

SEAN

Is she yours?

SHEFFER

Come on.

SEAN

You got unsavory weaknesses, Sheffer?
Had your pal Valentine covering up
your mess?

SHEFFER

You got the wrong guy.

SEAN

But the right story.

SHEFFER

Whatever you have, it's the short
play.

SEAN

What's the long?

Sheffer looks at a newspaper machine with the Mirror displayed
the window; small smile --

SHEFFER

Read your own paper.

Sheffer goes back into the diner. Off Sean, vexed --

36 INT. THE MIRROR - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Page One meeting. Anya at the helm, Zoe observing. Sean,
Olivia, Hollis all there. The front page from that morning
is on the table, huge headline: "Two Years With A Killer: My
Conversations With Eagle Baker" by Stuart Yosowicz --

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED:

SEAN

When did "Conversations with Eagle Baker" make A-1?

ANYA

Late edition.

ZOE

It'll sell a lot of papers.

OLIVIA

Thought we just wanted to be the best.

ZOE

We also want to keep the lights on.

Olivia and Zoe look at each other. This could be war --

ANYA

Any other budget lines? Sean?

SEAN

No.

Which displeases Anya --

HOLLIS

I'm on to something. A maid at the Four Seasons saw a blond woman going into Brian Donovan's room with him, night of the rehearsal dinner.

Olivia blinks --

ZOE

Really.

HOLLIS

And the bride is decidedly brunette.

ZOE

Hm.

HOLLIS

So the hunt is on for the mystery blond.

ANYA

Back at three-thirty.

The meeting breaks up. Sean exits quickly, Anya watching him. Hollis approaches Olivia --

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED: (2)

HOLLIS
Who was wearing green that night?

OLIVIA
Green?

HOLLIS
The blond was wearing a green dress.
You were there, right?

OLIVIA
That's not something I'd notice.

HOLLIS
Well there have to be photos.

Hollis start to go. Olivia calls after her --

OLIVIA
Never seen you jump like this, Hollis.
Thought we were just a stop on your
way to Vanity Fair.

HOLLIS
That's the hope.

OLIVIA
So why you treating this like
Watergate?

HOLLIS
Because Zoe takes me seriously.

OLIVIA
Uh huh.

HOLLIS
And this is the kind of story I could
sell to Vanity Fair.

OLIVIA
Trashy.

HOLLIS
I'm actually a good reporter, Olivia.

Olivia doesn't respond, which insults Hollis. She goes.
Off Olivia, aware that she's about to be exposed --

37 EXT. THE MIRROR - BALCONY - DAY

Sean looks out at Chicago. Lights a cigarette. A few
moments, then Anya comes out --

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED:

ANYA
Where's my big story?

SEAN
Sorry.

ANYA
What happened last night?

SEAN
Tiki's dead. Shot by the cops.

ANYA
Good for Valentine's murder?

SEAN
(nods)
I'll write a few inches.

ANYA
And the briefcase?

SEAN
Still missing.

He looks at her, standing by the lie. He's going underground on this. She stares back, hoping she can believe him --

SEAN (CONT'D)
I didn't get the story, Anya. I was wrong.

ANYA
So you gonna let it go? Get back on the streets for me?

SEAN
Yeah. Absolutely.

She nods, goes back in. Off Sean, just getting started --

38 INT. OLIVIA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Sean works at his lap top at Olivia's kitchen table as Olivia gets ready to leave town. He's poring over old headlines from the Mirror --

SEAN
What did Sheffer mean, read your own paper?

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED:

OLIVIA
You shouldn't have shown him the pictures.

SEAN
Why not?

OLIVIA
You weren't ready.

SEAN
I was.

OLIVIA
You didn't get much for it.

He sighs, frustrated. Watches as she lines up four photos of sunrises on her refrigerator --

SEAN
What's with those pictures?

OLIVIA
Sunrises.

SEAN
I can see that.

OLIVIA
Four in a row. And not a wink in between.

SEAN
Olivia.

OLIVIA
I feel fine.

SEAN
That's not okay --

OLIVIA
I'm fine, and I don't want to talk about it.

She leaves the kitchen. He doesn't like it, but lets it go. Returns to the articles. Finds something that grabs his attention --

SEAN
What's Sheffer's relationship to Mayor Harper?

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED: (2)

Olivia returns, pulling on a coat --

OLIVIA
Good soldier.

SEAN
But he wants to be mayor, eventually.

OLIVIA
He's waiting in line.

SEAN
Maybe he's sick of waiting.

He shows her a headline from an old Style section. Reads --

SEAN (CONT'D)
"Mayor's Daughter Engaged."

OLIVIA
Do we have to bring that up?

He shows her a photo of about twenty smiling family members at an engagement party. Reads the caption --

SEAN
"The Harper and Donovan families at the engagement party at the Art Institute."

OLIVIA
Okay.

He points to a young woman in the photo, far off to the side. About six months pregnant --

SEAN
Who's that?

OLIVIA
Don't know.

SEAN
She's pregnant.

A few beats --

OLIVIA
You think it's the mayor's baby?

SEAN
And maybe that's Sherry.

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED: (3)

OLIVIA

Sean.

SEAN

Connects our cases.

OLIVIA

I think it's a leap.

SEAN

(beat)

Yeah. Crap.

He slumps. Exhausted, and nothing to show for it --

OLIVIA

I gotta get to O'Hare.

He nods, closes his lap top --

39 INT. COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY - LUNCHEON HALL - DAY (DAY SIX)

The Pulitzer luncheon at Columbia Journalism School. Elegant tables, an academic crowd. Olivia, Richard, Zoe, Anya, and Sean are seated at the Chicago Mirror table. Olivia and Sean finally have Richard's attention --

OLIVIA

We getting the go ahead on Sherry?

RICHARD

It's not a story yet.

She and Sean exchange looks --

OLIVIA

He signs her into the mansion. Pays her 90K a year. Yet told me flat out he doesn't know her.

RICHARD

Tell me why, then it's news.

SEAN

He's lying. That's news.

Zoe's been chatting with Anya, but listening in. Now --

ZOE

You two are going after a big fish.

OLIVIA

Biggest in the city.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED:

ZOE
The mayor's an old friend of mine.

ANYA
(beat)
Nice man.

ZOE
Lovely.

RICHARD
Let's talk back in Chicago.

Olivia and Sean exchange looks; is Zoe's connection going to shut them down on this?

Now PROFESSOR SARAH WATERS, 50s, classy, takes the podium --

WATERS
On to Distinguished Local Reporting
by an Individual.

That's Olivia. Sean smiles at her --

WATERS (CONT'D)
New York Times columnist Nina Fein
was scheduled to present this award
but was called out of town. But a
most welcome substitute has stepped
in... Zoe Cafritz.

Zoe approaches the podium as the crowd applauds. Olivia
can't believe it; she's livid --

OLIVIA
Oh this is wrong.

SEAN
Easy.

OLIVIA
Doesn't get more wrong than this.

Sean sighs, has to agree. Zoe, at the podium --

ZOE
It's wonderful to be so warmly
welcomed by this community. Thank
you.

Olivia blinks. Looks at Sean --

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: (2)

OLIVIA

It's too much.

SEAN

Just get through it.

ZOE

From the Chicago Mirror, my new home,
for her series on Alderman Russo's
tax evasion trial -- the Pulitzer is
awarded to Olivia Steele.

Olivia moves toward the podium amidst applause. Zoe moves off, as Olivia takes a moment. She could probably hold it together despite four days of no sleep and no meds; but she lets her recklessness take over --

OLIVIA

It's an honor, thank you.

(beat)

I dedicate this to the Moore family,
who just sold the Mirror after 81
years. Yes, like most newspapers in
the country, we're being bought and
sold like commodities. Corporate
minds seem to have decided that
journalism should be a business,
instead of a service. That sales
matter more than stories. That's
not our tradition -- I hope it's not
our future.

Richard, Sean, Anya react; what is she doing? --

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

In our case, our new owner is a
tabloid mogul. She's here today,
basking in glory she had nothing to
do with. But may have a lot to do
with ending.

The crowd is hushed, people exchanging glances. Richard starts to get up, to shut her up. Zoe stops him --

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

I won't be around to watch that, I
just couldn't. But I do have a
parting story. It's appropriate
because it's trashy, sordid, someone
respectable falling from grace. In
this case, it's me.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: (3)

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

I may have won a Pulitzer, but I'm also the "mystery blond". Yes, I slept with Brian Donovan at his rehearsal dinner. I'm the reason the mayor's daughter was jilted on her wedding day. I'm a whore.

Gasps, laughs, uneasy silence. This chick has gone haywire. Olivia looks at Zoe --

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

That'll keep the lights on.

She leaves the podium, heads for the exit --

40 EXT. COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - DAY

Olivia leaves the Journalism building, happily liberated. Manic, elated. Crazy eyes. She takes off her shoes, starts walking barefoot. Zoe appears behind her, on her heels --

ZOE

No way, Olivia. Nice try, but no way.

OLIVIA

I don't work for you.

ZOE

Oh yes you do. You're not fired and you're not quitting. And you're going to stop moping and mouthing off like a damn baby.

Olivia stops, faces her --

OLIVIA

Excuse me?

ZOE

Pull yourself together. See your doctor, take your pills, clean the hell up. Then get back to work.

OLIVIA

Don't act like you know me.

ZOE

You're talented. And sharp. But you have no discipline. And that could screw your whole career.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED:

OLIVIA
Boy, you know a lot.

ZOE
Yeah I do.
(beat)
I want your story on the mayor.

OLIVIA
Thought he was your friend.

ZOE
And I want you to break it, and win
another prize for it.

OLIVIA
Maybe I will, for someone else.

ZOE
No other paper's gonna let you tell
that story. It's too frightening.
Too expensive if a lawsuit comes
from it.

OLIVIA
So why would you take it on?

ZOE
'Cause I'm bold. Like you.
(beat)
You want to do fearless journalism?
You need me. A publisher who doesn't
get nervous. Who's willing to get
sued, and has the money to fight it.
Someone with a big wallet and big
balls, and I've got both.

A face off. Two hard as nails women, taking each other in --

OLIVIA
Let's see about that.

She walks away, shoes in hand. Zoe watches her, not sure
what she means --

Sean has come from the building. He waits for Olivia, who
heads toward him. As she reaches him --

SEAN
Where's your silver box?

OLIVIA
I gotta do something first.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED: (2)

Off Olivia and Sean, as they start walking --

41 INT. THE MIRROR - NEWS ROOM - NIGHT

Olivia and Sean are back in the news room, Olivia typing at a computer, Sean going through their various notes on the Mayor story. We see key phrases in their written notes, and up on Olivia's screen: "Mayor authorized payments" "Sherry Worthington drug arrests" -- "Mayor denies knowing her".

After a final huddle, Sean nods. Olivia hits "Send". The story is delivered. And now she takes out her silver pill box, and swallows her three pills, as Sean watches.

42 INT. ANYA'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Anya receives Olivia's story on her computer. Headline: "Unknown 'Employee' Paid \$90,000 Annually by Mayor." Off her reaction... it's a ballsy story --

43 INT. BILLY GOAT - MORNING (DAY SEVEN)

A clerk fills the newspaper rack with copies of the Mirror, with Olivia's story up front. Richard's in line with a cup of coffee, glances at the bold headline --

44 EXT. DD'S LIQUOR STORE - MORNING

Sonia with Double D as he lifts the cage that covers his store, opening up for the day. A bound stack of Mirrors is out front. Sonia primps and gabs away as Double D hauls the stack of papers inside --

45 INT. SHEFFER'S OFFICE - MORNING

The career secretary brings Sheffer his morning paper and messages. Sheffer takes the stack, eyes the headline with a poker face. Then disappears behind the doors of power --

46 EXT. POLICE STATION - MORNING (CHICAGO SHOOT)

Bass chats with other cops, his coffee on top of a Mirror box, a stack of that morning's papers inside, waiting to be bought --

47 INT. MAYOR'S OFFICE - MORNING

Mayor Harper reads the story online, fuming...and nervous. His phone lines lighting up like crazy on his desk --

48 EXT. CHICAGO STREET - MORNING

Brian walks to work among a bustling crowd, reading Olivia's article on his Blackberry --

49 INT. THE MIRROR - NEWS ROOM - MORNING

Hollis sifts through the newspaper, passing by Olivia's story as she searches for her own article. Deep in the Metro section, there it is: "Fiancee Of Mayor's Daughter Linked To Local Reporter". Buried. Zoe arrives for the day, a folded Mirror tucked into her purse. Hollis smiles dutifully, as Zoe passes her --

50 INT. OLIVIA'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Olivia is fast asleep in bed. The sun rising outside her window --

51 EXT. THE MIRROR - LATE AFTERNOON

Sean leaves work, the front page tucked under his arm. Then sees Chelle, leaning against the building. Waiting for him --

CHELLE

I didn't forgot ya.

SEAN

I'm covered on the briefcase.

CHELLE

I know. Just saying I was gonna keep my part.

SEAN

That's cool.

Chelle looks up at the Tower --

CHELLE

This where they make the paper?

SEAN

Yeah. The Tower.

CHELLE

How you get a job like that?

SEAN

Grad school. Start at a small paper. I worked in a London bureau before I got here.

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED:

CHELLE

London.

He nods. She lingers --

SEAN

You know, I always need contacts.
Sources.

CHELLE

Uh huh.

SEAN

Especially in your neighborhood.

CHELLE

Where all the crap goes down.

He nods; it's true --

CHELLE (CONT'D)

I hear a lot.

SEAN

So maybe we could stay in touch.

CHELLE

I don't got one of them cards.

SEAN

No, huh?

CHELLE

But I could give you my cell.

SEAN

Why don't you put it in?

He hands her his phone. She puts in the number. As she finishes, the phone rings. Shows the name "Pally" --

CHELLE

Someone named Pally.

SEAN

I better take that.

CHELLE

See you then.

She moves off. Sean watches her go, as he talks to Pally --

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED: (2)

SEAN

Hey.

PALLY (V.O.)

Hey I got a photo for you. Of that
Billy Love.

SEAN

No kidding.

PALLY (V.O.)

Send it to your phone?

SEAN

Yeah, thanks.

PALLY (V.O.)

Coming now.

Sean hangs up. Lights a cigarette. The phone rings, a photo comes in. He looks at it...can't believe his eyes. It's William Valentine -- the Brown Cow DOA.

THE END