

ENEMIES WITHIN

Written by Cat Vasko

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - EARLY EVENING

Golden hour works its magic on the gridded streets of a freshly constructed New Jersey subdivision. Every porch of every near-identical ranch house proudly displays an AMERICAN FLAG; as a breeze blows through, they LIFT IN SEQUENCE, almost seeming to hail a

PASSING TRUCK. Old, but maintained with pride.

INT./EXT. TRUCK - SAME

AARON GOLDMAN, early 30s, bites his lip, taps the wheel nervously. On the passenger seat next to him is a MYSTERIOUS, SMALL PACKAGE WRAPPED IN BROWN PAPER.

As he navigates a few turns, his ANXIOUS EYES, reflected in the rearview mirror, focus on a SEDAN a block back. Is it following? One minute he loses it, the next it appears. Heightening the paranoia is a SPEECH PLAYING FROM THE RADIO, a thundering baritone voice:

MYSTERY VOICE (RADIO)

After a world war has been won, men's hearts should anticipate a long peace -- and men's minds should be free from the heavy weight that comes with war.

The truck makes another turn. Aaron's eyes in the rearview, searching for the sedan. This time it doesn't appear. He's relieved, maybe even a little embarrassed at himself as the speech continues:

MYSTERY VOICE (RADIO)
(CONT'D)

But this is not such a period -- for this is not a period of peace. This is a time of "the cold war." This is a time when all the world is split into two vast, increasingly hostile armed camps.

Through the windshield, we see cars parked in the driveway of and on the street next to a house up ahead. Some kind of party. As Aaron parks the truck:

MYSTERY VOICE (RADIO)
(CONT'D)

The reason why we find ourselves in a position of impotency is not because our enemy has sent men to invade our shores, but rather because of the traitorous actions of those who have been treated so well by this nation.

One last check in the rearview: nothing. Aaron kills the ignition, swipes the box off the passenger seat and stows it in his pocket.

As he enters the house's front door, the sedan TURNS ONTO THE BLOCK. Slow, prowling. Two SILHOUETTED FIGURES inside, their faces obscured by the reflections of trees traveling over the glass.

INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE

Aaron walks through the empty house, more confident now, the flicker of a smile on his face as the sounds of a BACKYARD PARTY grow louder: music, laughter.

EXT. SUBURBAN BACKYARD

Emerging through the patio doors, Aaron finds a BIRTHDAY PARTY underway. At the sight of him, a PRETTY YOUNG WOMAN (JUDY) makes her way through the clusters of conversation and greets him with an ENTHUSIASTIC KISS.

Pulling away, in a teasing tone:

JUDY

Late for your own girlfriend's birthday?

Aaron pats his pocket, smiles enigmatically.

AARON

Had to pick up your present.

Seeing the outline of the small box, Judy's EYES WIDEN. She knows exactly what that means:

JUDY

Wait, are you ...

AARON

Don't spoil it -- ah, to hell with it.

Aaron DROPS TO ONE KNEE. A THRILLED HUM travels through the party guests as they all turn to look--

Judy clamps a hand over her mouth, tears in her eyes--

AARON (CONT'D)

Judy, from the moment we met--

And that's the moment when the two US MARSHALS come BURSTING THROUGH THE WOODEN GATE.

MARSHAL #1

Aaron Goldman!

Aaron's head jerks around to see the two marshals SWIFTLY ADVANCING ON HIM, one holding an OMINOUS-LOOKING MANILA ENVELOPE that he pulls away to reveal a SUBPOENA.

JUDY

(nervous)

Aaron, what is this--

MARSHAL #2

You are hereby issued a subpoena to appear before the United States Senate Subcommittee on Investigations regarding your work at Fort Monmouth -- and your relationship with *Julius Rosenberg*.

You don't have to know exactly who Rosenberg was or what he did -- the HORROR creeping across the faces of the guests is PLENTY as they all turn to Aaron as if they've never seen him before. Even Judy has gone PALE.

Aaron attempts to stammer--

AARON

I -- I think there's been some mistake--

MARSHAL #1

We don't make mistakes.

Holding out the subpoena:

MARSHAL #2

We can't leave until you accept it.

Aaron blinks in disbelief, but somehow his feet carry him the short distance to where the marshals stand. He reaches hesitantly for the document -- it might as well be red-hot magma to him -- so Marshal #2 THRUSTS IT INTO HIS HAND as Marshal #1 says contemptuously:

MARSHAL #1

Traitor.

Panning across everyone's STRICKEN EXPRESSIONS, Aaron's the MOST HORRIFIED OF ALL--

MYSTERY VOICE (PRE-LAP)

Today we can almost physically hear the mutterings and rumblings of an invigorated god of war.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CLASSROOM - SAME

A SCHOOLTEACHER leads her students in a bomb drill. They crouch under their desks as a transistor radio narrates:

MYSTERY VOICE (RADIO)

The mad moment has not yet arrived for the exploding of the bomb, which will set civilization about the final task of destroying itself.

INT. STREETCAR - SAME

Commuters heading home from work listen to the same address as it blares from the streetcar's speakers.

MYSTERY VOICE (SPEAKER)

There is still a hope for peace, if we finally decide that no longer can we safely blind our eyes and close our ears.

EXT. WASHINGTON DC STREET - SAME

MARGARET ADAMS, early 30s, pushes a YOUNG BABY IN A STROLLER, a brown paper package tucked under her arm. Pauses in front of an ELECTRONICS STORE -- every size of TV in the window display all showing the same thing--

SENATOR JOSEPH MCCARTHY, a man in his prime, addressing a BANQUET HALL from behind a podium, which he grips as if holding fast to America itself as he continues:

MCCARTHY (TV)

Today we are engaged in a final, all-out battle between Communistic atheism and Christianity.

INT. CLASSROOM - SAME

Under their desks, kids look at one another with frightened expressions as:

MCCARTHY (RADIO)

Ladies and gentlemen, the chips are down -- *they are truly down.*

INT. BARBER SHOP - SAME

BARBERS and their CUSTOMERS alike shake their heads in disapproval as the radio on the counter goes on:

MCCARTHY (RADIO)

It has not been the less fortunate who have been traitorous to this nation, but rather those who have had all the benefits America has to offer ...

INT. STREETCAR

Now all the commuters are STEALING GLANCES AT ONE ANOTHER over their newspapers.

MCCARTHY (RADIO)

This is glaringly true in the State Department. There the bright young men, born with silver spoons in their mouths, have been most traitorous.

EXT. WASHINGTON DC STREET

Margaret can't help but HOVER OVER THE BABY PROTECTIVELY as McCarthy goes on:

MCCARTHY (TV)

When our great democracy is destroyed, it will not be because of enemies without, but rather because of enemies within.

Shuddering, Margaret HASTENS ON.

AERIAL VIEW

FOLLOWING NOW as, pushing the stroller, Margaret winds her way through the city until she arrives in front of a MODEST TENEMENT BUILDING and DISAPPEARS INSIDE.

INT. ADAMS APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Margaret's husband JOHN G. ADAMS, mid-30s -- kind-faced and trim, with a hairline that's already beginning to recede -- has draped two outfits over the ironing board.

ON THE LEFT -- an Army uniform, Bronze Star affixed prominently to the lapel.

ON THE RIGHT -- a traditional suit and tie.

At the sound of the DOOR UNLOCKING, Adams looks up, smiles as Margaret pushes the stroller in.

ADAMS
My beautiful girls.

Margaret glances at the ironing board.

MARGARET
What do the others wear?

ADAMS
I was so nervous in my interview I didn't even notice.

As Margaret hefts the sleeping baby from the stroller and eases her into a waiting bassinet:

ADAMS (CONT'D)
If everyone else has on their greens I'll look disrespectful. If everyone else is in suits I'll look ostentatious.

Margaret lifts the bag. Balancing it on one hand, she removes the brown paper to reveal a SPLIT OF FANCY CHAMPAGNE. All she could afford. Smiling:

MARGARET
Why shouldn't you be ostentatious? A decorated veteran -- a graduate of law school -- a father -- and now counsel to the United States Army.

ADAMS
(re: the champagne)
You didn't have to do that.

MARGARET
You're right. I'm not sure there's much to celebrate. Did you hear Senator McCarthy's speech?

ADAMS
I caught the end.

MARGARET
Can that be right? Is it possible the government is riddled with spies?

ADAMS
The Soviets got to Rosenberg. Who knows where else they might have a foothold.
(re: the baby)
How was she today?

MARGARET

A wonderful monster. But the stroller
conked her out.

(realizing)

If I pop this now she'll wake up.

Adams laughs.

ADAMS

Maybe we'll get an hour after dinner.

MARGARET

Remember going out to eat?

PRE-LAP the faint sounds of CLINKING GLASSWARE, the LOW
MURMUR of adult conversation as Adams smiles wryly.

ADAMS

Dimly.

EXT. CAPITOL HILL CLUB - EVENING

The restaurant sounds still MUFFLED as ROY COHN, 27, lean
and hollow-eyed but not unattractive, approaches the
stone edifice of the famously Republican -- and exclusive
-- CAPITOL HILL CLUB. As a uniformed employee holds the
door for him with a respectful nod:

MARGARET (V.O.)

Someone holding the door for you ...

INT. CAPITOL HILL CLUB - DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

With the strut of a favored prizefighter hitting the
ring, Cohn passes through the club's dining room.

ADAMS (V.O.)

Table service ...

Obsequious BLACK WAITERS serve WHITE MALE PATRONS, some
of whom glance at Cohn curiously as he passes through. As
a young Jewish guy, he's unusual here, but not unwelcome.

As Cohn passes the BAR:

MARGARET (V.O.)

Cocktails just taste better when someone
else makes them for you.

If Cohn's gaze lingers on the HANDSOME BARTENDER, that's
his business and his business alone as he moves further
back to the club's

INT. SMOKING ROOM

Where a FOG OF TOBACCO SMOKE temporarily clears before him, revealing this establishment's INNER SANCTUM.

Leather armchairs in INVITING CLUSTERS. Well-dressed patrons selecting cigars from humidors.

And in the center of it all, a TIGHT SQUARE of FOUR UNITED STATES SENATORS. Three we view in profile, drinking whiskey and smoking cigars -- but mostly LISTENING ATTENTIVELY to the fourth. With his back to us, all we see is his COMBOVER and the fact that he clearly RULES THIS CONVERSATION, whatever it may be.

Cohn bears down on this group -- his step slowing, a hint of nervousness as he straightens his tie--

--and then the head of the table TURNS, revealing the man of the hour: SENATOR JOSEPH MCCARTHY. His 45 years look like 55 by today's standards: he's balding fast, rough-skinned and ruddy-cheeked, paunchy in the middle.

He's also at the top of his game, and everybody here knows it -- and so as his attention has shifted to Cohn, SO HAS EVERYONE ELSE'S. They regard him curiously as he manages to spit out:

COHN

Senator McCarthy. Thank you again for the very gracious invitation.

McCarthy waves this off with a friendly half-frown.

MCCARTHY

I've told you before -- it's Joe. Get you anything? Cigar? Cocktail? Bobby, we need another seat!

An ATTRACTIVE YOUNG WAITER comes scurrying over with a chair. Black, like all of the staff here. Cohn takes him in with an assessing gaze that lasts just a moment too long before smiling in a way that says, *I don't belong here either*. As he joins the table:

COHN

I'd take a gin martini, if it's not too much trouble.

BOBBY

Olive? Onion?

COHN

Twist of lemon, if you have it. And thank you.

Bobby smiles appreciatively before departing. Meanwhile, to the others:

MCCARTHY

Gentlemen, this is the man -- Roy Cohn.

The other senators look at Cohn with FRESH INTEREST. KARL MUNDT (age 52, R-South Dakota) removes his pipe long enough to say:

MUNDT

The mind that took down the Rosenbergs.

Cohn smiles modestly.

COHN

With all due respect, Senator Mundt, a jury of their peers made the decision. I merely helped present the facts.

MCCARTHY

What'd I tell ya? On top of everything else, he's humble. Unbelievable.

EVERETT DIRKSEN (57, R-Illinois) lowers his thick-rimmed glasses to take Cohn in.

DIRKSEN

But the masterstroke -- connecting the wife -- that was your work. Without you, she'd have walked free while he fied for both their crimes.

Cohn nods in polite acknowledgement as the youngest member of the group, CHARLES POTTER (36, R-Michigan) takes him in curiously.

POTTER

And now you've brought your talents here.

MCCARTHY

Roy'll be serving in a prosecutorial capacity, but you're already familiar with his work. It was his research into Communist infiltration in the State Department that first sounded the alarm.

COHN

I'm afraid I can't take all the credit for that either.

MCCARTHY

Yeah, he had company all right. You all know the Schines, the hotel family?

(off their nods)

Their oldest son David -- the heir apparent -- he and Roy musta visited every US embassy in Europe.

A nearly imperceptible electric hum travels from McCarthy to Cohn on this. It registers in the way Cohn's expression FREEZES FOR A MICROSECOND before giving way to a practiced, charming smile.

COHN

Fortunately, Schine-affiliated hotels were happy to comp us our rooms.

Cohn over-enunciates the plural on the last word to make sure it doesn't get lost in the hubbub. As if satisfied by this, McCarthy leans back in his chair, continues:

MCCARTHY

A guy like you is what we've been missing. Kind of mind that connects the dots, sees between the lines. Speaking of which -- first order of business.

Bobby returns bearing a martini on a tray. Cohn accepts it, sips before replying:

COHN

I'm at your service.

He quickly shoots Bobby an approving smile before returning his attention to McCarthy.

MCCARTHY

There's a fellow in the Army Counsel Office who could really be an asset to us when it comes to cracking the Fort Monmouth ring.

As Cohn opens his mouth to reply:

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

I know what you're gonna say. But he's new to the role.

MUNDT

A blank slate.

DIRKSEN

And you two have a lot in common.

POTTER

He's young like you. A JD like you. An outsider--

Potter stops himself when he sees the look flashing across Cohn's face -- surprise mixed with obvious hurt that Potter would state so openly that he doesn't belong. Swiftly correcting course:

POTTER (CONT'D)

--to our world. You can be his guide.

MCCARTHY

Adams. John G. Adams. After the Rosenbergs he'll be light duty. We get him on our side and there's no telling where we might wind up.

McCarthy glances at a painting over the room's fireplace. An oil rendering of THE WHITE HOUSE.

EXT. PENTAGON - MORNING

Adams -- wearing his suit -- pauses in front of the columns of the Pentagon portico in appreciation of the moment. A view of the river and DC beyond reflected in the glass doors.

INT. ARMY COUNSEL OFFICES - LATER

Adams sits in a chair facing a MASSIVE OAK DESK in an ELEGANT OFFICE. Raises a coffee mug to his lips as he glances around, taking in the details of the room: polished wainscoting, framed certificates attesting to Army service and awards, a window framing a gorgeous view of Arlington. Mounted over the desk is an OIL PORTRAIT of a bespectacled, white-haired man in a gray flannel suit.

Adams turns as the door behind him opens, admitting that exact man in that exact suit. This is ROBERT T. STEVENS, Secretary of the Army.

STEVENS

Counselor Adams. Sorry for the wait.

Stevens sits behind the desk. Adams BLINKS, for a moment seeing double. Nope. Not double. Just Stevens and the portrait of Stevens. Surreal.

Noticing Adams looking:

STEVENS (CONT'D)

I know. My wife.

Stevens squints downward at the papers on his desk.

STEVENS (CONT'D)

John Gibbons Adams. Bronze Star for service in Europe and Africa.

(peering at him)

You look a little old to have been drafted.

ADAMS

My brother was, so I enlisted.

STEVENS

Looking out for him. Noble.

ADAMS

I just did what anyone would do.

STEVENS

Don't be so sure. And speaking of men who were more than happy to stay on this side of the ocean -- you clerked for the Senate Armed Services Committee?

ADAMS

Two years, yes, sir.

STEVENS

Thankless work. So you must be familiar with the Subcommittee on Investigations.

ADAMS

Vaguely, yes, sir.

STEVENS

They need our help looking into the service records of some fellows at Fort Monmouth. Trying to trace who may have fed information to the Rosenbergs.

ADAMS

All I want is to serve in any capacity I can, sir.

Stevens levels his gaze at him, bemused.

STEVENS

Soldier. I may be a general, but we're not in the barracks anymore. You can speak freely.

ADAMS

I suppose I'd hoped for something a little more -- rigorous than clerking. A challenge.

STEVENS

It'll be plenty challenging, believe me. These guys are serious. They believe Communists are lurking among our ranks, and no amount of loyalty oaths can persuade them otherwise.

ADAMS

Are they right?

Methodically, as if carefully choosing his words:

STEVENS

I couldn't say.

Adams frowns at this, but before he can respond:

STEVENS (CONT'D)

The Subcommittee's hearings are closed, so I'll expect daily memoranda on their work. Be meticulous. Even details that seem unimportant to you may matter.

ADAMS

Yes, sir.

Stevens shuffles the papers on his desk, then stacks them officiously as if to say, *conversation over*.

INT. ADAMS' OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Adams enters his new office. File cabinets, a tiny window with a battered shade -- a far cry from the opulence of Stevens' space. The only hint of cheer is a fern resting on the desk, an unmarked envelope leaning on its pot.

Picking it up, Adams suppresses a fond smile, murmurs--

ADAMS

Margaret ...

But when he opens the card, his smile falters. The cramped, masculine handwriting reads:

COHN (V.O.)

John -- welcome to the team. Please join Special Consultant David Schine and I for lunch in the Pentagon dining room.

INT. PENTAGON DINING ROOM - LUNCHTIME

White tablecloths, hushed conversations. As Adams enters, scans the room:

COHN (V.O.)

Table by the window -- one o' clock.

Spying Cohn with DAVID SCHINE -- a cornfed, handsome 26-year-old -- Adams lifts a hand in greeting. As Cohn SMILES WIDELY, beckoning him over:

COHN (V.O.)

Yours, Roy Cohn, Chief Counsel to Senator Joseph McCarthy.

LATER

Adams, Cohn and Schine sit over the remains of what looks to have been a luxurious meal. The mood between them collegial, friendly as Schine concludes:

SCHINE

Of course my old man doesn't see the purpose in any of this. Wants me to take over the business instead.

Adams smiles.

ADAMS

I know the feeling.

COHN

What's your family's line?

ADAMS

We own a feed store. South Dakota. My brother runs it now.

Schine frowns magnanimously, as if struggling to equate this with his own family's empire. Moving on:

ADAMS (CONT'D)

But I have my own family. My wife and I met when we were serving overseas, and now we have a baby girl.

Cohn smiles, seems charmed by this.

COHN

I can almost see it -- a three-bedroom colonial, picture window, victory garden out back. Alexandria? Arlington?

ADAMS

We live here in the city. Renting.

COHN

Well, you won't have to endure that lifestyle for long. You know our boss has his eye on 1960. Anybody who's a friend to him on his way up--

SCHINE

Should get used to champagne linens in the halls of power.

COHN

Where do you hope your career takes you?

Adams is a little overwhelmed by their solicitousness.

ADAMS

I suppose -- one day I'd like my boss' job. Secretary of the Army.

COHN

That's all?

ADAMS

Providing for my family, serving soldiers like myself once upon a time -- that would be more than enough for me.

COHN

A man like you could make the laws, not just interpret them. I tell David the same thing.

SCHINE

Korea will be plenty of public service for one lifetime.

ADAMS

Drafted?
(off Schine's nod)
Sorry to hear that.

COHN

As was I. David's much more useful to America here than off in a foxhole somewhere. He ought to be a general. His headquarters a penthouse at the Waldorf. Don't you agree?

Cohn locks onto Adams, his friendly demeanor temporarily replaced with something else -- an intensity that Adams can't quite interpret. After a moment:

ADAMS

Room service would certainly beat MREs.

Cohn relaxes. Smiles gallantly.

COHN

And you'd know. Should we order dessert?

David shakes his head.

SCHINE

You and your desserts.

Cohn hails a passing waiter.

INT. ADAMS OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Rain SPATTERS HIS TINY WINDOW as Adams works diligently. At one hand is a CARBON LIST OF NAMES with FBI letterhead entitled SUSPECTED SUBVERSIVES; at the other is an accordion file spilling out CONFIDENTIAL SERVICE RECORDS.

Adams' finger marks where he is on the FBI list -- one LOUIS BAUM, whose service record Adams now consults. It's a long list of dates and postings, but one in particular catches his eye: LANDSTUHL AIR BASE, in GERMANY.

Thunder RUMBLES IN THE DISTANCE as Adams circles Baum's name on the list.

INT. COURTHOUSE BASEMENT - MORNING

A depressing, institutional room: peeling wood paneling, flyspecked overhead lights. In the room's center is a long table at which Dirksen, Potter, Mundt and their AIDES are seated, its center chair conspicuously empty.

Off to the side, Cohn and Adams sit together, watching as McCarthy, limping faintly as he paces about, continues his cross-examination of LOUIS BAUM. Mid-30s, sweating, clearly nervous.

MCCARTHY

Where do you work now, Lou?

BAUM

For the Signal Corps Supply Agency, sir.

MCCARTHY

And do you know a man named Aaron Goldman?

McCarthy is now LOOMING OVER BAUM, who looks terrified.

BAUM

I do. Fellows used to accumulate in the office until they had assignments, and that's when I first remember Goldman.

MCCARTHY

Was Julius Rosenberg one of the men who "accumulated"?

The COURT REPORTER clacks rapidly at her keys.

BAUM

I don't remember.

MCCARTHY

But you remember Goldman.

Once again, McCarthy's limp is visible as he circles Baum. Cohn murmurs to Adams in a low tone:

COHN

Shrapnel. The Pacific.

Adams' face registers respect at this. Meanwhile:

BAUM

I knew him better. Once we went out to dinner together with some other fellows.

MCCARTHY

And during this period of spending so much time with Goldman, did you suspect he was a Communist?

BAUM

I mean, I knew he was liberal--

MCCARTHY

Did that disturb you?

BAUM

I didn't really think much of it.

MCCARTHY

Did you ever go to the others and tell them you thought it was important to keep away from Goldman?

BAUM

I didn't see any reason to.

MCCARTHY

So your testimony is that at no time did you feel that he might be a Communist.

Baum is now recoiling from McCarthy's hulking presence.

BAUM

I wouldn't say that. I mean, you know, you never know exactly about people. Some people have more information than others, and you often find Communists are better informed -- they do more reading, they're more interested in politics ...

Baum trails off, realizing he's made a misstep.

MCCARTHY

So you had some doubt?

BAUM

Yes. There was some doubt.

MCCARTHY

Did you ever decide to break off your contact with him?

BAUM

As I said, he was just an acquaintance of mine--

MCCARTHY

I don't need a speech from you. I need you to answer my question.

BAUM

I saw him less, yes--

MCCARTHY

You saw him less because you thought he might be a Communist?

BAUM

There was a small element of doubt.

MCCARTHY

Did you ever go to anyone else and say, "It would be better to see Goldman less"?

BAUM

I saw him so infrequently--

MCCARTHY

Listen to me. Did you ever go to anyone--

BAUM

I don't know what you mean--

Exasperated, McCarthy THUNDERS:

MCCARTHY

Unless you be quiet until I finish asking these questions, I'm going to hold you in contempt of the committee. We have a lot of testimony about you, Lou, and you are going to tell us the truth or have your case submitted to a grand jury. Did you ever go to anyone and suggest to them that they see Goldman less because you thought he was a Communist?

When Baum finally speaks, it's in a tiny, browbeaten voice:

BAUM

No, sir.

MCCARTHY

Are you sure, Lou?

BAUM

Yes, sir.

MCCARTHY

All right, then. This will be submitted to the attorney general, with the request that it be submitted to the grand jury for an indictment for perjury.

McCarthy picks his briefcase up off the table and PATS IT VEHEMENTLY as he goes on:

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

Because we have the evidence here, the *sworn testimony*, that Goldman freely told you he was a Communist and discussed Communist ideas with you. Or had you forgotten about that?

Baum looks like he's going to faint.

BAUM

I'm sorry -- this whole thing is so strange--

MCCARTHY

If you change your mind and come in and decide to tell us the truth, you may. That's all. You can go.

Baum rises limply, tears in his eyes, as a FEDERAL AGENT takes him by the arm and leads him from the room. Cohn turns to Adams, looking satisfied.

COHN

Not bad.

As McCarthy begins chatting with the other senators:

ADAMS

So Baum was lying?

COHN

The stammering, the nervousness -- don't fall for it. They know looking pitiful is the best way to avert suspicion.

ADAMS

That's how Rosenberg acted?

COHN

The Rosenbergs, the Greenglasses, Perl, Sobell -- like they had a playbook.

ADAMS

And who exactly was Aaron Goldman?

COHN

Colleague of Rosenberg's. They worked side by side in the Signal Corps.

Adams looks impressed. Nodding to where McCarthy is still talking quietly with the other senators:

ADAMS

I should introduce myself.

COHN

Another time. Joe briefs the press personally after every session. Don't worry, he's well aware that your work was essential.

Calling McCarthy by his first name implies a certain familiarity. We know Cohn's posturing, but Adams doesn't, inquiring naively:

ADAMS

Wouldn't holding a public hearing be easier?

Cohn gives Adams a pitying look -- *oh my naive one.*

COHN

How could the Subcommittee work effectively with headlines advertising our every move? The spies would disappear through Berlin before we could get our hands on them. This approach allows for a strategic flow of information -- enough to keep the public informed, but not enough to tip our hand.

Adams watches thoughtfully -- even a touch admiringly -- as McCarthy leaves the room. *Clearly these guys know their stuff.*

INT. FRENCH RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Adams and Margaret sit across from Stevens and his wife DOROTHY (mid-50s, heavy brocade and jewels, serious rich-lady style). The remnants of a big, elegant meal on the table. As Stevens raises his wine glass in a toast:

STEVENS

To a very successful first month.

Raising her glass, Dorothy adds:

DOROTHY

And to your babysitter, for giving you a much-needed night on the town.

MARGARET

Amen.

Everyone chuckles, clinks. Then, to Adams:

DOROTHY

I hope this won't embarrass you, but Bob has positively talked my ear off about what a wonderful job you've done.

Margaret beams at Adams, proud, as he replies with his usual soft-spoken decorum:

ADAMS

That's very flattering.

DOROTHY

He sees a lot of himself in you.

STEVENS

I guess that's true. It's not everyone who survives a war only to come back for seconds from their country.

ADAMS

McCarthy did.

Stevens and Dorothy exchange a brief, hard-to-read look.

STEVENS

Yes. "Tailgunner Joe," that was his Senate campaign slogan, wasn't it?

DOROTHY

"America Needs A Tailgunner."

STEVENS

I'm sure we'll be hearing a lot more of that between now and 1960.

A strange silence descends. More about the absence of anything else to say than anything that's been said. Finally, in a bright, moving-on tone:

ADAMS

You know, Margaret served as well.

MARGARET

Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service. It's how we met.

DOROTHY

There was no option for women to enlist in our war.

MARGARET

It -- wasn't always easy. Some people aren't shy about wondering what kind of girl wants to wear a uniform.

Adams puts a hand over hers.

ADAMS

My kind, as it turns out.

Stevens and Dorothy exchange smiles. These two are sweet.

INT. STATLER HOTEL - LOBBY - SAME

The Statler is a classy hotel -- so classy that, traveling through its lobby, we find a pair of frosted glass doors, one for the "TEA SALON" and one for the "MEN'S BAR." This segregation is a mark of old-fashioned propriety ... which, ironically, makes the bar an ideal meeting place for a certain type of clientele.

Men like Cohn and Schine.

INT. MEN'S BAR

We find them standing together at the bar, cracking up over cocktails. There's nothing outwardly unusual about their appearance, nor is there anything outwardly unusual about any of the other men in the bar ... except for the fact that they're all paired off.

This is a safe place. A place where if you were spotted by someone not in the know, you wouldn't need an alibi.

Maybe that's why Cohn seems more relaxed than we've ever seen him. In this light, laughing, freed from the kind of eyeball-darting nerviness that marks his public interactions, he looks handsome, warm, kind.

And then, in a flash, the OLD ALERTNESS RETURNS as a pair of men squeezes past Cohn and Schine. These are JOHN MONTGOMERY and MARVIN BRAVERMAN, both mid-40s. Montgomery and Cohn meet eyes, clearly recognizing one another, before the two older men find a spot down the bar.

Schine, knowing in an instant what just happened, is nervous, asks in a low tone:

SCHINE

Okay?

Cohn nods, replies simply:

COHN

A friend.

Schine relaxes, reassured.

INT. ADAMS BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT

The baby sleeps in a bassinet next to the bed. Adams and Margaret are both sound asleep as well--

--until the phone RINGS, startling them both and awakening the baby, who begins to CRY.

As Adams picks up the phone, Margaret goes to the baby.

ADAMS

Hello?

He glances at his alarm clock. It's two a.m.

COHN (V.O.)

John? It's Roy Cohn.

ADAMS

Do you have any idea what time it is?

He looks over at Margaret, who's rocking the baby back and forth with an annoyed expression. Nodding, Adams picks up the phone base and carries it into the

INT. HALL

Shutting the bedroom door, Adams sits on the floor of the hall as Cohn responds:

COHN (V.O.)

Look at that. Sorry.

ADAMS

Trouble sleeping?

COHN (V.O.)

Sometimes. When something's on my mind.

Adams waits. After a moment:

COHN (V.O.)

It's just that David has to report for basic in a few days, and I was wondering if there'd been any progress on that matter we discussed.

ADAMS

What matter is that?

COHN (V.O.)

Getting him a direct commission. Making him an officer.

Adams frowns, confused.

ADAMS

I'm sorry?

COHN (V.O.)

I thought it might have come up tonight.

ADAMS

Tonight?

COHN (V.O.)

Your dinner with Stevens.

Whoa. Trying for a joking tone that's belied by a faint tremor in his voice:

ADAMS

You put a tail on me, Roy?

COHN (V.O.)

This is DC. Everyone knows who had dinner with who.

On Adams as he struggles to assimilate this:

COHN (V.O.)

We need to work together to keep David where he belongs.

ADAMS

I don't have any control over that sort of thing.

COHN (V.O.)

Don't underestimate yourself. Stevens likes you.

ADAMS

Is that all, Roy? Because, you know, we've got a baby--

COHN (V.O.)

Of course. My apologies for losing track of the hour.

CLICK. The line goes dead. Adams stares at the phone in his hand.

EXT. SCHINE HOTEL - MORNING

A green awning bearing the name ROYAL SCHINE HOTEL snaps crisply in the early morning breeze as Schine exits to deferential nods from the two DOORMEN--

--and is followed, a few moments later, by Cohn.

The two men don't behave as if they've ever met, much less know one another. Schine lights a cigarette. Cohn stands twenty feet away to hail a taxi.

But as one pulls up to the curb, Cohn pales at the sight of the figure exiting the backseat:

SENATOR DIRKSEN, whom he met at the club with McCarthy.

A HORRIBLE SILENCE FOLLOWS as Dirksen steps onto the curb, takes in Schine, Cohn, the space between them.

It would be less suspicious if they were talking. But the distance between them is conspicuous. It couldn't be more obvious what they were trying to do.

What they've been doing.

No one knows how to act. Schine continues smoking his cigarette as if nothing's wrong, but can't keep sneaking glances at the other two to see what's happening. Cohn's features are shifting wildly as he struggles to decide on a convincing way to play this off. Dirksen looks pained, but not surprised -- the face of a man finding out something he'd desperately hoped wasn't true.

It's been way too long now without a word uttered. Cohn's sweating as he realizes the only thing he can do is double down on the fiction.

ON COHN as he keeps his eyes straight ahead and moves toward the taxi, pretending Dirksen isn't there. He walks right by him, the man who praised him to the heavens in the back room of the club, and doesn't say a word.

ON SCHINE, taking the cue, stubbing out his cigarette and going back inside.

AND THEN ON DIRKSEN -- left alone in front of the awning, staring at the two doormen. Their SMILING VISAGES drive home how painfully close Schine and Cohn's ruse came to working. A silent opera just played out under their noses, and unlike the senator, they have no idea.

INT. TAXI - MOMENTS LATER

Cohn's face is frozen as the streets of DC pass by outside his window.

Then, out of nowhere, he SLAMS A FIST into the seat in front of him. One FAST, VIOLENT MOTION accompanied by a FURIOUS SNARL.

Then -- a stony expression of total control as he sits back hard. The DRIVER too stunned to react.

INT. ADAMS' OFFICE - LATER

Adams looks up from the paperwork on his desk as--

COHN (O.S.)
Homosexuals.

REVEAL him standing in Adams' doorway. He's trembling ever so slightly. Something's wrong, but Adams could never guess what if he tried.

ADAMS

I'm sorry?

COHN

Deviants. In the military. You and I both know they're there.

Hesitantly:

ADAMS

Of course I've heard rumors about certain fellows -- every soldier has, but--

COHN

Then you agree. There's a serious issue, one that's being overlooked.

ADAMS

I suppose, if I forced myself to think like the enemy--

COHN

That's exactly the kind of thinking Joe respects.

Then, as if he just thought of it:

COHN (CONT'D)

We should bring this to him.

ADAMS

I'm no wilder about the idea of perverts in the ranks than you are, but ... I don't know, Roy. This takes us into an ambiguous area.

COHN

Of course I defer to your expertise--

Adams frowns. There's more than one way to take that.

COHN (CONT'D)

--I just saw an opportunity for you to impress him with your initiative.

On Adams' face as he contemplates this, we hear Margaret replying in PRE-LAP:

MARGARET (V.O.)

But why?

INT. ADAMS APARTMENT - NIGHT

Adams and Margaret sit at their cluttered kitchen table, Margaret giving Rebecca a bottle.

ADAMS

To preemptively identify security risks. People with deeply held secrets could be vulnerable to Soviet blackmail.

MARGARET

If they're so deeply held, then how would a Soviet spy know?

ADAMS

There's always talk.

MARGARET

I was the subject of that kind of talk once.

Adams looks at her in surprise.

ADAMS

Really? Why?

MARGARET

My CO took a liking to me. But the feeling wasn't mutual.

ADAMS

You never told me that.

Margaret shrugs, turns her attention back to Rebecca. After a moment, rubbing his temples:

ADAMS (CONT'D)

It's a thread I'm afraid to pick at. Everyone has secrets.

MARGARET

Why stop at secrets? We can barely afford formula -- does that make us susceptible to Soviet overtures if money's involved?

Adams winces. That hurt. Trying his best to explain:

ADAMS

Roy thinks it's a chance for me to get closer to Joe.

MARGARET

Joe's not your boss.

ADAMS

He will be one day.

(beat)

I don't want you to have to live like this. It's not -- this isn't what I promised you.

Now it's Margaret's turn to look at him in surprise. After a moment, slowly, so it sinks in:

MARGARET

John. You're *everything* you promised me.

He looks up at this. Anguish turning to gratitude on his face.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

I don't care if I have to clip coupons or do my own mending. I don't care if we spend the rest of our lives in these four walls. All I care about is that when she asks us someday about this time, we won't have to lie.

He smiles faintly.

ADAMS

What would I be proud to tell our daughter.

(beat)

I like that.

Margaret smiles back. Then, reassuringly:

MARGARET

Go to Stevens. Tell him what's been happening. Even if he doesn't know what to do, at least you'll have done everything you could.

Adams nods, already relieved.

SMASH TO:

INT. STEVENS' OFFICE - MORNING

Adams sits across from Stevens. He's clearly just unloaded everything. After a moment, slowly:

STEVENS

They've got you right where they want you.

On Adams' face as the relief we saw before turns back to alarm:

ADAMS

I don't -- help me understand.

STEVENS

Refuse them and you'll be in their crosshairs. Go along with them and they'll have something they can use against you down the line.

ADAMS

But Schine, the homosexual issue -- they were Roy's requests.

STEVENS

Can you prove it?

Adams falls silent. Stevens goes on, fuming:

STEVENS (CONT'D)

They don't respect service -- not one of them. They think soldiers are just people who were too stupid or poor to find a way out of it.

ADAMS

McCarthy has a leg full of shrapnel--

STEVENS

(impatient)

McCarthy fell off a ladder during a line-crossing party. The only battle he ever fought in was the war on syphilis.

Seeing how taken aback Adams is by all of this, with a regretful sigh:

STEVENS (CONT'D)

I thought I was protecting you.

His voice heavy with dread now:

ADAMS

From what?

Stevens is silent a beat, as if deciding how much he should say. Then:

STEVENS

You remember Millard Tydings? The senator from Maryland?

ADAMS

The one who was photographed with the president of the Communist Party?

Stevens can barely contain his derision.

STEVENS

Millard Tydings is from so much money they used to call him MyLord as a joke. He's about as much a Communist as McCarthy is a war hero.

Off Adams' continuing lack of comprehension:

STEVENS (CONT'D)

The photo was doctored. Fake. That's how Joe and his cronies work. They're too stupid to win on their own merits, but when it comes to underhanded tricks their brilliance knows no bounds.

Adams is stricken by this. Stevens attempts to rally, saying in a comforting tone:

STEVENS (CONT'D)

It's all right. This is why I wanted a man on the inside. I just didn't think they'd usher you into their circus quite so aggressively.

ADAMS

You could have trusted me with the truth.

STEVENS

Now I know that.

(beat)

If you're wondering -- yes, this is it. The last moment you can quit and still claim ignorance. I wouldn't fault you. All I'll say is that if you stay, you'll have the chance to protect the Army in a way no general ever even dreamed of, against a threat so insidious it might just do what two world wars couldn't.

ADAMS

That's not what I was wondering.

(beat)

I was wondering where to start.

Stevens holds up his hands.

STEVENS

You'll have to tell me.

INT. COURTHOUSE BASEMENT - MONTAGE

Day after day, Adams sits silently next to Cohn in the basement room of the courthouse, watching as McCarthy berates INTERVIEWEE AFTER INTERVIEWEE:

MCCARTHY

Were you ever a member of the Communist party?/Why did you sign that petition?/Your clearance level went up to top-secret?/And you saw Goldman at this dinner party? Who else was there?

One by one, the interviewees respond:

INTERVIEWEES

I plead the Fifth./I invoke my Fifth Amendment rights./I don't want to answer that question./I don't recall.

Finally we land on McCarthy THUNDERING FURIOUSLY at an unseen interviewee:

MCCARTHY

You are not going to play with the Fifth Amendment, sir!

REVERSE TO REVEAL his subject: PHILIP RUBIN, mid-40s, timid and terrified.

PHILIP

I don't intend to, sir.

MCCARTHY

I don't intend that you will. Do you realize that if you were not an associate of Goldman's, you wouldn't be incriminating yourself by answering the question? You'd merely say no.

PHILIP

I just stand on the Fifth Amendment.

McCarthy SEETHES. Adams leans forward.

MCCARTHY

Mr. Rubin, following your time in the Signal Corps you were hired at Public School 50 as a history instructor?

PHILIP

That's correct.

MCCARTHY

Did you know that teachers who refuse to say whether they're Communists are fired?

Philip's silent. After a moment, in a softer voice:

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

You're a bachelor, isn't that right, Mr. Rubin?

Adams glances sharply at Cohn. But Cohn is staring across the room, studying Dirksen's reaction to this change of subject. After a moment's hesitation:

PHILIP

That's right.

MCCARTHY

And you were born in -- 1911?

PHILIP

Yes ...

MCCARTHY

It's interesting that a man your age is still unmarried. I wonder what our colleagues in the Department of Education would make of that.

Adams scrawls on his pad: NEED TO TALK TO YOU. Passes it to Cohn, who takes it in with an impassive look as:

PHILIP

Fifth Amendment. I cite the Fifth Amendment.

Really wound up now:

MCCARTHY

One final question: in view of the fact that we are at war with communism, and a great number of our young men have sacrificed in that fight--

His limp is suddenly EXAGGERATED, THEATRICAL.

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

--do you think any decent American, a law-abiding American without troubles or perversions, would keep from government officials his knowledge of any possible members of the Communist conspiracy?

Philip stares at her feet, bright red.

PHILIP

I cite the Fifth Amendment on that.

MCCARTHY

(contemptuous)

I'd like to see some of these Fifth Amendment cases tried in Russia. Try citing it there.

INT. MENS' ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Adams practically shoves Cohn into the men's room, then locks the door behind them.

ADAMS

What was that all about?

COHN

Philip Rubin worked in Aaron Goldman's department. His initials are all over their carbons. Who knows what else he had access to--

Adams waves him off impatiently.

ADAMS

Not that. The "unmarried" part.

Cohn smirks. All the confirmation Adams needs.

ADAMS (CONT'D)

You took the homosexual issue to Joe behind my back?

COHN

He needed to know.

ADAMS

Know what, Roy? What is there to know?

COHN

You told me yourself that every soldier knew at least one homosexual.

ADAMS

That isn't what I--

COHN

Of course, I'd be happy to tell him I think it's a dead end. *If.*

Adams bites his lip. Angry.

ADAMS
I already told you--

COHN
David's never had to fight a day in his
life. For anything. If he goes to
Korea ...

Cohn's tough facade temporarily gives way to just a hint
of vulnerability as he stumbles to finish the sentence:

COHN (CONT'D)
... he'll come back in a coffin.

Adams studies Cohn's face. Looking into the other man's
genuinely haunted eyes, it's suddenly all coming clear to
him -- the intimacy, the threats, the accusations.

Realizing what's happening, Cohn swiftly resumes his
PITBULL Demeanor, snarls:

COHN (CONT'D)
And that would hurt the Subcommittee's
work. Either you get him the commission,
or we will *wreck the Army*.

With that, Cohn SPINS ON HIS HEEL and leaves. Adams' jaw
is dropped, his countenance pale as he watches him go.

EXT. COURTHOUSE - EVENING

Adams exits the courthouse, still shaking from Cohn's
threat. As he makes his way down the steps:

ELLIE (O.S.)
Excuse me, um, Mr. Adams?

Adams turns to see ELLIE FRANK, mid-20s with the perky
look of a steno pool secretary, descending the steps
behind him, notepad and pen in hand. In a nervous rush:

ELLIE (CONT'D)
I'm Ellie -- Eleanor -- um, I'm Miss
Frank and I'm on the Washington desk for
the Milwaukee Journal. Actually I *am* the
Washington desk. And by desk I mean stack
of fruit crates in my apartment.

Adams raises an eyebrow at this. Misinterpreting his
look, she goes on hastily:

ELLIE (CONT'D)

I know what you're thinking, but none of the men were willing to move.

ADAMS

Actually, I was thinking that Senator McCarthy is briefing the press pool right now. That's where you should be.

Adams turns to walk away. But Ellie follows.

ELLIE

I've been to the briefings. But here's the thing about them, and I don't mean any offense--

Adams raises a hand to stop her.

ADAMS

We shouldn't talk about this here.

INT. GREASY SPOON - LATER

Ellie continues chattering away in between VORACIOUS BITES of a burger and fries. Clearly starving.

ELLIE

My problem is that I haven't been able to confirm almost any of the Senator's facts. Mr. Cohn doesn't think I'm important enough to sit in on the Subcommittee's hearings, so I can't check them myself--

She pauses to swallow.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

--and every time I've tried to verify them independently I've come up short. But the Milwaukee Journal is Senator McCarthy's hometown paper, so we'd look stupid if we were the only ones not running stories about him. My only option is to file without confirming the facts and then run a retraction later.

ADAMS

You've been publishing retractions?

ELLIE

It's my job.

Noticing Adams smiling:

ELLIE (CONT'D)

What? Is there something on my face?

She frantically dabs at her lips with a napkin.

ADAMS

No. I was just thinking you remind me of my wife.

ELLIE

I assume that's a compliment?

ADAMS

Best one I can give.

Ellie smiles at this before going on:

ELLIE

The problem is retractions are bad for business. My editor prints them, but they're always buried. Who wants their newspaper to look like it's constantly making mistakes? Nobody.

ADAMS

So what's the question?

Ellie polishes off her burger, continues with her mouth still full:

ELLIE

It just seems strange to me that the Army's okay with McCarthy implying that it's full of traitors and spies.

ADAMS

(careful)

The Army's goal is to protect the country through thorough cooperation with the Subcommittee on Investigations.

ELLIE

Right ... except the way it comes off to anybody who's thinking about devoting their talents and skills to the United States of America is that they'd better not read too much or talk too openly about politics or be married or god forbid *unmarried* or go to dinner parties unless they've fully vetted the background of every single guest or have attended a single mandatory union meeting back in 1938 even if not going to it would have meant losing their job.

She pauses to ram french fries into her mouth. In an impressed tone:

ADAMS

You've done your research.

ELLIE

I have, and I know that not one of these witnesses has turned out to be guilty of a damn thing. Everybody does. But you'll never see that printed, because nobody's more aware than the writers themselves of how hard McCarthy will come for them if they cross him. It's a nice line, "protecting the country," but the country is the people, and from where I'm standing the people don't seem protected at all.

Ellie stops, reddens. *Maybe that was too far.* Adams peers at her for a moment. Then:

ADAMS

Eleanor Frank, was it? From the Milwaukee Journal?

ELLIE

Ellie.

(beat)

Am I in some kind of trouble?

Adams rises.

ADAMS

No. Just wanted to be sure I remembered.

(beat)

Keep it up.

He departs before Ellie can react to this.

INT. SENATE BUILDING - ARCHIVE - NIGHT

A basement room lined with institutional shelves housing bankers' box after bankers' box of documentation. Adams scans their labels until he finds the one he's looking for: 1953 SUBPOENA RECORDS, CO - CZ.

Aaron Goldman's file is easy to find, given that it's about three inches thicker than the rest. Adams opens it, browses the titles of the mimeo-d documents:

GOLDMAN, AARON - HARVEY SACHS TESTIMONY
GOLDMAN, AARON - HAYM G. YAMINS TESTIMONY

GOLDMAN, AARON - BARRY BERNSTEIN TESTIMONY

On and on they go. Adams flips further back, past the hearing records to a document with an FBI HEADER:

SUSPECTED SUBVERSIVES

It's the same list of names he was working from before. Behind it is Aaron's LOYALTY QUESTIONNAIRE. Adams pulls it out, reads the questions aloud to himself:

ADAMS

Foreign travel. Foreign investments.
Membership in clubs, organizations and
unions. Contributions to causes. Magazine
and newspaper subscriptions. Are you now
or have you ever been a member of the
Communist party.

Aaron's form is just a LONG COLUMN OF NOS. But whose wouldn't be? Adams moves on to another item in the file, frowning his brow as he reads the title:

ADAMS (CONT'D)

Cleared personnel ...

The document has the same header as the list of suspected subversives, but different introductory copy. The date is also different -- it's some SIX YEARS EARLIER than the date on the subversive list.

Swiftly, Adams stuffs both documents into his briefcase. Glances around, paranoid, before replacing the bankers' box, taking care to align it perfectly with those on either side so that it looks undisturbed.

EXT. STATE ROAD - MORNING - AERIAL VIEW

Adams' car travels up the coastal highway. Out of DC, headed north toward Jersey.

INT. ADAMS' CAR

As he drives, a pop song by the Kavaliers jangles:

*See that guy with the red suspenders
Driving that car with the bright red fenders
I know he's one of those heavy spenders
Get that Communist, Joe*

Annoyed, Adams SILENCES THE RADIO.

EXT. JERSEY APARTMENT BUILDING - AFTERNOON

Adams climbs the steps to a decrepit apartment building, then knocks on one of its doors. As he waits, his eye falls on the MEZUZAH mounted to the frame.

After a moment, the door opens to reveal our man from the introduction AARON GOLDMAN. And he has fallen a LONG way since then. Unshaven, in boxers and suspenders, he clutches a beer in spite of the early hour, squints suspiciously at Adams before saying:

AARON

Help you?

ADAMS

I'm so sorry to disturb you, Mr. Goldman. My name's John G. Adams. I'm general counsel to the US Army.

AARON

A lawyer.

ADAMS

It's my job to represent the Army's interests in Senator McCarthy's hearings.

AARON

Then you're too late.

Aaron starts to swing the door shut. Swiftly:

ADAMS

All I'm attempting to do is reconstruct their investigation.

Aaron considers this a moment. Then:

AARON

I guess it can't get worse.

He holds the door open for Adams.

INT. AARON APARTMENT - LATER

Aaron sits on the unmade bed while Adams sits in the only chair. Removing a pad and paper from his briefcase:

ADAMS

What led the Subcommittee to believe you're a Communist?

Coleman immediately turns hostile at the sound of that last word, fires back:

AARON

You tell me.

ADAMS

You didn't get any inkling, any sense from their line of questioning.

AARON

You're gonna turn it around on me. I know how you people work.

Adams purses his lips. After a moment:

ADAMS

I'll be candid with you, Mr. Goldman. I know how I introduced myself -- but I'm coming to you today in a personal capacity, not an official one. I need to understand how a man who devotes himself to bettering his country winds up being accused of the worst kind of treachery.

(beat)

This is only Army business insofar as that's what you and I, and countless others, have in common. I'm not here for you. I'm here for us.

Aaron takes this in. After a moment, with a heavy sigh of resignation:

AARON

Best I can tell, it has to do with a tiny period of time when I got in the habit of taking my work home with me. I was angling for a promotion -- impress my girl's family. You know.

ADAMS

I do.

AARON

Except the Subcommittee said that stuff surfaced later in the USSR. They said I musta passed it to the Rosenbergs.

ADAMS

If they had any evidence of that, you'd be in prison already.

AARON

No kidding.

He swigs from his beer before continuing:

AARON (CONT'D)

McCarthy brought me in, kept patting at that briefcase of his claiming the evidence was inside. After about the tenth time I just blew up. I took my responsibilities seriously. I believed in what we were doing. To hear someone say otherwise ...

ADAMS

You had every right to be angry.

AARON

I embarrassed him, so he torpedoed me. I can't find work, not now that my name's been in all the papers. They practically chased me out of my neighborhood with pitchforks. And my girl ...

Aaron gathers himself before continuing, on the verge of half-drunken tears:

AARON (CONT'D)

Bet you didn't know you can't sell back a diamond ring for what you paid. They gave me thirty percent.

Adams is silent a moment. Then:

ADAMS

I'm sorry. But I have to ask. Are you sure Julius Rosenberg couldn't have wound up with documents you took home, through no fault of yours?

AARON

I didn't even know the guy. I'm not sure I ever so much as nodded at him in a hallway.

ADAMS

Can you prove it?
(off his face)
Right. How could you.

AARON

That's the magic trick. How can you ever prove what's in your mind?

On Adams' hopeless face as he takes this in, PRE-LAP the sounds of men's voices talking--

INT. CAPITOL HILL CLUB - SMOKING ROOM - NIGHT

-- as Cohn sits in one of the leather armchairs near the fireplace, quietly studying the room. FOLLOWING HIS GAZE, HEARING WHAT HE HEARS as snatches of conversation drift his way--

--On TWO YOUNGER MEN talking:

YOUNG MAN #1
A real piece of work, blonde.

YOUNG MAN #2
(smirking)
Natural? Or didn't you find out?

--On a MIDDLE-AGED POLITICAL TYPE ordering a drink:

POLITICAL TYPE
Four Roses? Surprised you even stock that swill. Old Fitzgerald's the only bourbon worth drinking.

--On a WELL-DRESSED OLDER MAN making a pitch to a JUNIOR CONGRESSMAN:

OLDER MAN
Anyone who's anyone will tell you House experience is just vocational training for more lucrative work.

Interrupting Cohn's focus on these two:

MCCARTHY (O.S.)
Roy. I see my sponsorship was a success.

Cohn looks up sharply to see McCarthy approaching, an OVERSTUFFED BURLAP SACK under one arm. As he sits in the chair opposite Cohn's, in a cautious tone:

COHN
Yes. I'm a member in my own right now.

MCCARTHY
I think that's healthy. Institutions have to change with the times.

His tone implies that this is a minority viewpoint.

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)
Speaking of which. Your work on the lavender lads.

Cohn is frozen, silent, waiting for the hammer to fall.

And then McCarthy lifts the burlap sack and DUMPS ITS CONTENTS ONTO THE FLOOR BETWEEN THEM. It's mail, letters from all over the country, some handwritten, some typed. Cohn only has to glance at the pile for words like DEVIANTS and FAGGOTS to jump out at him.

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

It appears that this issue might just be more profitable than communism.

COHN

That's gratifying to hear.

MCCARTHY

The constituency is on fire. It's three-quarters of my mail. The message is clear: the American people *will not stand* for this kind of moral aberration. Not in the Army ... or anywhere else.

Cohn nods slowly. Seeing his words have had their intended effect, McCarthy sits back in his chair, satisfied. Just then, Bobby, the waiter from Cohn's first visit, APPROACHES, putting on a friendly smile.

BOBBY

Roy. Great to see you again.

Cohn glares at Bobby icily.

COHN

That's Mr. Cohn.

Taken aback by this shift in demeanor:

BOBBY

I'm so sorry, Mr. Cohn. Martini with a twist coming right up--

COHN

No. We'll take two glasses of Old Fitzgerald. Neat.

Bobby leaves. McCarthy seems surprised, but also impressed -- he had to change himself to fit in too, once upon a time. After a moment:

MCCARTHY

I see some of myself in you, Roy.

Cohn's gaze cuts over to him, alert and eager, as McCarthy goes on:

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

We're different -- of course. But this room is full of men from the right families, with the right names, who went to the right schools and had places waiting for them in the right universities. They were born to be here. We had to earn it.

COHN

That's very flattering. Thank you.

Bobby returns with their whiskeys, swiftly retreats before he can be subjected to another tongue-lashing. McCarthy DOWNS HIS DRINK IN ONE, then traces a finger around the lip of the glass.

MCCARTHY

Power is a circle -- and we're the circle-breakers. Don't forget that.

Cohn nods, then POPS HIS DRINK SWIFTLY in a studied imitation of McCarthy, only to COUGH as it hits the back of his throat. McCarthy smirks, amused.

INT. ADAMS APARTMENT - SAME

Meanwhile, Margaret is comparing the two documents Adams took from the Aaron file while Adams feeds the baby. Holding them up to the light:

MARGARET

This language on the first page -- it's not some kind of departmental boilerplate. This is an exact copy.

ADAMS

How can you tell?

MARGARET

Whoever wrote up the original, their typewriter had a loose K. It's off on both versions.

ADAMS

(impressed)

I didn't notice that.

Continuing to examine them:

MARGARET

There's also a halo around the date on the later version. It's faint, but if you look closely you can just see it.

ADAMS

What does that mean?

MARGARET

Someone went over the original date with correction tape, typed in the date they wanted, then made a carbon to cover their tracks. It's an old trick.

(squinting)

Speaking of old tricks -- you can see faint lines here and here. Scissor marks.

ADAMS

Scissor marks?

MARGARET

Whoever it was cut up the original, then reorganized the pieces.

ADAMS

Doctored it, you mean.

MARGARET

That's my best guess.

Adams sits heavily back in his chair, briefly jarring the bottle from Rebecca's mouth. She starts to WAIL and he quickly replaces it. Then, as she continues eating:

ADAMS

Someone took a list of cleared Army personnel, then rearranged it and changed the date and title to make it look like they'd never been investigated before.

MARGARET

I think so. Yes. Why would somebody do that, though? Couldn't they just reopen the investigations if they had evidence?

ADAMS

Sure. If they had evidence.

A silence descends as Margaret takes this in. Then:

MARGARET

So these people are one hundred percent innocent. The only thing connecting them to the Rosenbergs is proximity.

ADAMS

Not even that, in some cases.

MARGARET

Then prosecuting them is illegal. Right?

ADAMS

They're not technically being charged with anything. These aren't trials, they're hearings. Closed hearings.

MARGARET

So nobody gets wind of the truth.

ADAMS

Everyone sees what McCarthy wants them to. A noble crusade against corruption at the highest levels, starring a war hero who's the only one brave enough to protect the country from itself.

Another silence. Then:

MARGARET

So what can you do about it?

ADAMS

Stevens said the best way to protect the Army is to maintain the appearance of cooperation.

MARGARET

What happened to what we'll tell Rebecca?

Stressed to the breaking point, Adams explodes:

ADAMS

That doesn't matter anymore! What matters is protecting us! Her, you!

Rebecca BURSTS INTO TEARS. Pulling her from Adams' arms with an admonishing glare:

MARGARET

Shhh. It's okay. That wasn't meant to scare you. Shhh.

In a more moderate, but still heated tone, Adams presses:

ADAMS

Look what Roy did to Ethel Rosenberg. They could accuse either or both of us. And then Rebecca -- Rebecca--

He can't bear to get the rest out. Pained:

ADAMS (CONT'D)

If she lost us -- if we lost her--

Margaret meets eyes with him, finally seeing it.

MARGARET

If someone took her away from me ...

ADAMS

That's just it. Being willing to die for the cause means you have nothing else to live for.

Margaret takes this in. Tears running down her cheeks now.

MCCARTHY (PRE-LAP)

Information has come to our attention that you may be a homosexual. What comment do you care to make?

INT. COURTHOUSE BASEMENT - DAY

McCarthy paces. Dirksen, Potter and Mundt off to one side, watching, rapt; Adams sits at the table opposite them, looking unhappy. After a moment:

MCCARTHY

Well, Mr. Montgomery?

REVERSE TO REVEAL: John Montgomery, the "friend" Roy met eyes with in the men's bar. He's VISIBLY TERRIFIED.

MONTGOMERY

I don't know how to answer that without knowing what the information is.

EXT. COURTHOUSE ENTRANCE - SAME

Cohn JOGS LIGHTLY up the steps, checking his watch -- he's running late. Meanwhile:

INT. COURTHOUSE BASEMENT

McCarthy looms intimidatingly over Montgomery.

MCCARTHY

You have a roommate, isn't that right, Mr. Montgomery?

MONTGOMERY

To share expenses.

MCCARTHY

You work in the State Department. Your salary's a matter of public record.

Just then, Cohn enters -- and FREEZES when he sees who's in the hot seat today. Montgomery shoots him an ANGUISHED LOOK before refocusing on McCarthy.

MONTGOMERY

I'm saving for a bigger place.

Cohn takes a seat next to Adams, whispers:

COHN

Why is John Montgomery here? He was never a soldier.

Pointedly not meeting Cohn's eyes:

ADAMS

It appears the cancer is spreading.

Meanwhile:

MCCARTHY

You and your roommate host a lot of gatherings, from what we understand.

MONTGOMERY

Who told you that?

MCCARTHY

Gatherings with no women present.

MONTGOMERY

Did you talk to my neighbors?

MCCARTHY

We make whatever inquiries are necessary to protect the country.

Dirksen cuts a glance at Cohn, sees he's tense, sweating. But that's nothing compared to Montgomery, who, realizing he's boxed in, attempts desperately:

MONTGOMERY

That's all in the past. I -- I used to drink. I've turned over a new leaf.

McCarthy cocks his head.

MCCARTHY

So you've reformed.

MONTGOMERY

Yes. Yes. I've reformed.

There's a tense beat of silence. Then:

MCCARTHY

That's good, Mr. Montgomery.

Montgomery looks relieved. But Cohn doesn't.

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

Perhaps you might make a gesture to us that shows how reformed you are.

MONTGOMERY

Anything. Please. I just don't want to lose my job.

MCCARTHY

You must've associated with other men of unconventional morality. Men who've not seen fit to regain their self-control.

Montgomery's eyes flick briefly to Cohn as McCarthy goes on solicitously:

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

Perhaps you'd be so kind as to give us some of their names.

Cohn is a DEER IN HEADLIGHTS NOW. A single pointed finger is all that stands between Montgomery and freedom, and both of them know it. Montgomery raises his eyes to Cohn, his expression impossible to read.

And then:

MONTGOMERY

I can't do that.

McCarthy PURPLES.

MCCARTHY

Say again?

MONTGOMERY

I -- I can't do that.

MCCARTHY

So you're siding with your fellow faggots, is that it?

(MORE)

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

Hardly the picture of reform. Now, imagine this, if you will, Mr. Montgomery: it's not Senator McCarthy but Comrade Malenkov who knows your disgusting inclinations, the unplumbable depths of your depravity. The consequences for you are the same: pariahship, leperdom, the loss of your current and future career, and that's to say nothing of what will happen to your little girlfriend. But the consequences to America are quite different.

On Cohn's frozen expression:

MCCARTHY (PRE-LAP)
(CONT'D)

The only way to defang the Soviets now is to publicize these men's perversions such that there's nothing left for a bad actor to exploit.

EXT. COURTHOUSE ENTRANCE - EARLY EVENING

McCarthy speaks from the top of the steps to a RAUCOUS CROWD OF REPORTERS -- AND FANS. Many are carrying signs scrawled with HOMOPHOBIC SLOGANS. Triumphantly reveling in the attention and approval:

MCCARTHY

Make no mistake, boys -- if you're against McCarthy you're either a Communist or a cocksucker.

You'd think that final vulgarity would generate some shock or disapproval -- but it ONLY RILES THE CROWD UP EVEN MORE.

INT. GEORGETOWN TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

A rectangle of light falls across the dark foyer as Marvin Braverman enters, KEYS JINGLING. He flips on the overhead light--

--and LETS OUT AN AGONIZED, CHOKED SCREAM.

RACK FOCUS to reveal the feet dangling in the extreme foreground. Montgomery's hung himself from the second-floor landing.

On Braverman's ANGUISHED, GUTTURAL WAIL--

INT. ADAMS APARTMENT - BEDROOM - SAME

Adams and Margaret are reading next to one another in bed when the phone once again begins to RING. Both of them TENSE VISIBLY at the sound.

MARGARET
Don't answer it.

ADAMS
I have to.

MARGARET
You know who it is.

ADAMS
That's why.

Reaching over to pick up the receiver, without even asking who's on the other end:

ADAMS (CONT'D)
What do you want now, Roy?

INT. SCHINE HOTEL BAR - LATE NIGHT

Adams and Cohn sit at the otherwise empty bar. As the bartender serves their drinks:

ADAMS
Isn't this David's last night before basic?

COHN
He's in New York. With family.
(beat)
It was my idea.

Adams nods, says nothing. After a moment:

COHN (CONT'D)
How worried should I be?

ADAMS
I made it back in one piece. I'm sure he will too.

When Cohn doesn't reply:

ADAMS (CONT'D)
Is that why you wanted to see me?

COHN

No.

Cohn slides something across the bar: a file marked "MAJOR IRVING PERESS."

ADAMS

What is it?

COHN

Open it.

Adams obeys. A loyalty questionnaire, like the one he read from before, is the top page. Under the question "Are you now, or have you ever been, a member of the Communist Party?" someone has simply scrawled:

5TH AMENDMENT

COHN (CONT'D)

We can't become so distracted by potential threats that we lose focus on genuine ones.

ADAMS

(careful)

I think that's correct.

COHN

So you agree that Doctor Peress is worth looking into.

ADAMS

Doctor?

COHN

He's a dentist at Camp Kilmer.

Adams' stare is unwavering as he replies:

ADAMS

I couldn't agree more.

Adams signals to the bartender, reaches for his wallet -- until Cohn stops him with a hand.

COHN

I don't pay in David's hotels.

It's meant as a boast, but Adams knows what it really means, and wants Cohn to know he knows. The words are simple, but the tone is loaded as Adams meets eyes with him, replies:

ADAMS

I see.

Cohn holds his gaze.

INT. STEVENS' OFFICE - THE NEXT DAY

Stevens examines a carbon of the loyalty questionnaire from the night before as Adams says:

ADAMS

I don't know how Roy got it.

STEVENS

The FBI requisitioned all of the Loyalty Board's records. Someone there's feeding them these pathetic little crumbs.

ADAMS

Just the issuing of these subpoenas has ruined peoples' lives. Isn't there anything we can do?

Stevens peers at him over his glasses.

STEVENS

You all right, John?

Adams hesitates a beat before saying simply:

ADAMS

It's getting to me. The subterfuge, the double-talk ... I'm not that guy. I never wanted to be that guy.

Stevens nods. Looks genuinely affected by this.

STEVENS

I'm ordering you to take some R and R.

ADAMS

What about Irving Peress?

STEVENS

Draft a memo from me to the US Marshals' Office. If the Army says we have no reason to be suspicious, they won't proceed, and that'll be the end of that.

(beat)

I meant it about the vacation.

Adams shakes his head.

ADAMS

I don't think it's a good time.

STEVENS

It's never a good time. But taking a break from the day-to-day will help you remember the big picture. And that's going to be important.

He taps the questionnaire.

STEVENS (CONT'D)

You've done your part with this. Leave the rest to me.

Finally convinced, Adams smiles, exits.

INT. ADAMS APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Margaret enters, pushing the stroller, to see Adams holding up two airline ticket pamphlets and a Rebecca-sized swimsuit. With a beguiling smile:

ADAMS

Feel like getting out of town?

Margaret CLAPS HER HANDS DELIGHTEDLY.

MARGARET

What for?

ADAMS

Does a guy need a reason to take his wife and daughter to the beach?

Off Margaret's charmed smile, the ROAR OF A JET ENGINE carries us over to the

EXT. KEY LARGO BEACH - DAY

Where Adams and Margaret help Rebecca build a sandcastle. Stretching out in the sun:

MARGARET

Let's never go back.

ADAMS

Sold.

EXT. HOTEL BALCONY - NIGHT

Adams and Margaret sit on the balcony enjoying the view of the ocean, each with a glass of champagne. In the room behind them, Rebecca sleeps in a crib.

Clinking his glass against Margaret's:

ADAMS

Cheers.

MARGARET

To our first--

She's cut off by the sound of the PHONE RINGING. Rebecca begins to WAIL.

INT. HOTEL ROOM

As Margaret picks up Rebecca, Adams answers the phone.

ADAMS

Hello?

COHN (V.O.)

We have a problem, John.

Adams PALES. Margaret looks at him questioningly.

ADAMS

How did you know where I am, Roy?

Margaret's brow furrows.

COHN (V.O.)

You know David's family owns a much nicer hotel just down the beach.

ADAMS

I'm sure I couldn't afford it.

COHN (V.O.)

You wouldn't have to pay.

ADAMS

That's a generous offer, but we're content where we are. If that's all--

COHN (V.O.)

I'm holding a very interesting memo from Stevens.

Adams is FROZEN IN PLACE as Cohn goes on:

COHN (V.O.)

It's a challenge to our subpoena of
Irving Peress.

Adams hesitates a beat too long before replying in an
attempt at a lighthearted tone:

ADAMS

Last I checked, you weren't a US Marshal.

COHN (V.O.)

How I got it isn't important. Why it was
written in the first place is.

(beat)

There's only one explanation that seems
credible to me: Stevens is trying to
protect this Communist, possibly to
obfuscate the truth of how and why he was
promoted to major.

ADAMS

He was promoted automatically--

The words are barely out of Adams' mouth before he's
realized his mistake. Meeting eyes with Margaret:

ADAMS (CONT'D)

... wasn't he?

That was weak and Adams and Cohn both know it. Trying to
regain his footing:

ADAMS (CONT'D)

I was clerking for the Armed Services
Committee when Congress passed the
Doctors' Draft Act. Senator McCarthy even
voted for it.

COHN (V.O.)

Your recall is incredible.

Adams is silent, trying to think on his feet as--

COHN (V.O.)

Joe's briefing the press in ten minutes.
I'm asking you -- as a friend -- do you
think he should he mention the suspicion
this casts on Stevens, as the author of
this memo?

Adams squeezes his eyes shut, agonized, before replying:

ADAMS

I wrote the memo. Stevens never even read it. He signs a thousand pieces of paper just like it every day.

Adams waits. After a beat of silence:

COHN (V.O.)

I see.

ADAMS

I looked into it -- like you wanted me to -- and didn't see any cause for concern. Nothing in his record raises red flags. And he's, you know, a *dentist*.

There's another silence. Adams holds his breath. Then, at long last:

COHN (V.O.)

I understand.

Adams exhales. Margaret looks at him questioningly. He gives her a thumbs-up: *all's well*.

COHN (V.O.)

Enjoy the rest of your vacation.

ADAMS

Thanks, Roy.

Adams hangs up. His hands are SHAKING.

MARGARET

What was that?

ADAMS

Nothing. Just -- Roy being Roy.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - AFTERNOON

Adams, Margaret and Rebecca enter from the beach, wrapped in towels and shaking off sand. Approaching the front desk, where the middle-aged OWNER stands in front of a wall of keys on hooks:

ADAMS

Two-Fifty-Eight, please.

The owner narrows his eyes at him.

OWNER

You're Adams, right? John Adams, from DC?

ADAMS

Yes ...

OWNER

This John Adams?

The owner tosses a newspaper onto the counter. Adams and Margaret both PALE when they see the BLARING HEADLINE:

WHO PROMOTED PERESS?

McCarthy Alleges 'Shocking' Army Conspiracy to Protect Communist Infiltrators

Beneath, the opening paragraph names Adams almost immediately, with Stevens' named tossed in as well. The source it's quoting is, of course, ROY COHN.

Adams lifts his eyes to the owner.

OWNER (CONT'D)

Your room's no longer available.

Infuriated, Margaret explodes:

MARGARET

You can't do that!

OWNER

I don't want your red money.

Hefting Rebecca:

MARGARET

What about her? Are you really going to strand us on this island with a baby?

OWNER

Maybe you all should have thought about what's best for her before hopping in bed with Commies and traitors.

(beat)

I want that room vacated in an hour. I can make this worse if I have to.

Adams and Margaret exchange defeated looks.

EXT. BUS STOP - LATER

Adams and Margaret try to calm a SQUALLING REBECCA as they wait in the hot sun for the bus to Miami.

FADE TO:

EXT. ADAMS APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

A cab pulls up to the curb. Adams unloads the luggage from the trunk while Margaret climbs out carefully, trying not to wake Rebecca in her arms. Everyone sunburnt, exhausted, downtrodden.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER

As the family heads down the long hall toward their door, a GHOSTLY MALE VOICE seems to echo back at them. All the neighbors are watching TV -- and all the same program, from the way it sounds. But the actual words are impossible to discern.

Arriving at their door, Adams inserts his key, then pushes -- only to find the door WON'T OPEN. Instead, it yields slightly, then SPRINGS BACK.

With a worried frown -- were they robbed? What's happening? -- Adams TRIES AGAIN, throwing his weight into it this time. Finally the door SLOWLY PUSHES INWARD, as if fighting some unseen force.

INT. ADAMS APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Adams and Margaret flip on the light. The living room appears intact. Silent.

But the door. THE DOOR.

In shoving it open, Adams has pushed aside a SNOWBANK OF MAIL. So high it BLOCKS THE LETTER SLOT, a heap of HUNDREDS UPON HUNDREDS OF POSTCARDS. They spill onto the rug, their laminated backs sliding against one another as Adams and Margaret meet eyes.

The hell?

Leaning down, Adams plucks one from the top of the pile. The front depicts a wide avenue lined with palms, BEVERLY HILLS in corny lettering. Flipping it over, Adams sees three words handwritten in ALL CAPS:

WHO PROMOTED PERESS?

On the address line, the sender has hastily scrawled:

ADAMS, WASHINGTON D.C.

Paling, he grabs another one. Mount Rushmore on the front, the same message on the back:

WHO PROMOTED PERESS

In a panicky tone:

MARGARET

John? What is all this?

But all Adams can see is the handwriting on postcard after postcard, some of it feminine, some masculine, some gouged in as if in anger, some misspelled:

WHO PROMOTED PERESS
who promoted peress
WHO PROMOTED PERESS?
WHO PROMOTED PERRESS

Meanwhile, that GHOSTLY VOICE is still echoing down the hall, traveling in through the open front door. As Adams continues staring in shock at the postcards, Margaret moves to the TV, flips it on to reveal

MCCARTHY GIVING A PRESS CONFERENCE (TV)

He stands at the top of the courthouse steps, Cohn hovering behind him, addressing the usual CLAMORING CROWD OF REPORTERS AND SUPPORTERS BELOW.

MCCARTHY

The Red conspiracy within the United States Army has come to the forefront as the most acute threat facing our union. Fifth Amendment Communists are actively promoted by men with no business wearing the uniform of this great nation, and I promise you today we will hold every last one accountable -- the Loyalty Board, General Zwicker, Robert Stevens and of course, *John G. Adams*.

A smirking Cohn GAZES RIGHT INTO CAMERA as McCarthy emphasizes Adams' name, almost as if seeing right through the lens to the

INT. ADAMS APARTMENT

Where Adams and Margaret meet eyes as the CREAKING OF MULTIPLE DOORS reminds them theirs is open. Peeking out into the hall, Adams sees NEIGHBOR AFTER NEIGHBOR opening their doors to STARE ACCUSINGLY AT HIM.

He opens his mouth to speak--

--and the neighbors' doors SLAM SHUT AGAIN. Deadbolts are shot into place, chain locks slid across.

INT. ADAMS BEDROOM - LATER

Rebecca SCREAMS as Margaret HASTILY RE-PACKS HER SUITCASE. Adams is PACING FRANTICALLY.

ADAMS

There's my parents' place in Sioux Falls.
I doubt anyone would look for you there.

MARGARET

Your dad isn't exactly my biggest fan.
What about my sister?

ADAMS

Falls Church isn't far enough.

This throws Margaret. Pausing to look him in the eye:

MARGARET

What exactly do you think might happen?

ADAMS

I don't know. All I know is I won't be able to do anything until you two are somewhere no one can get to you.

Margaret takes this in in silence. Then:

MARGARET

Willa.

ADAMS

Your friend from basic?

MARGARET

She and her husband have a farm in Indiana. Even if someone were to go back that far, she went by her maiden name in those days.

INT. UNION STATION - LATE NIGHT

Next to an idling train, Adams kisses Margaret goodbye, then leans down to kiss the baby in her arms.

MARGARET

I'm scared.

ADAMS
You'll be safe there.

MARGARET
I'm scared for you.
(beat)
Come with us.

Adams gives her a pained expression.

ADAMS
You know I can't.

MARGARET
I know what I said before, but ... it
wasn't at our doorstep then.

ADAMS
It'll be on our doorstep forever if I
don't do something. It'll follow us the
rest of our lives.

A WHISTLE announces the train's imminent departure.
Urgently:

MARGARET
Tell me you have a plan.

ADAMS
Half-baked. Better than nothing.

Margaret cocks her head at this, but just then:

CONDUCTOR (O.S.)
All aboard!

Adams kisses Rebecca, then Margaret. Seeing in her eyes
how badly she needs this:

ADAMS
It's all going to be okay. I'm going to
be okay. I promise.

Margaret doesn't look satisfied.

MARGARET
How will I know that when I'm halfway
across the country?

Helping her off the platform, then leaning in for one
last kiss:

ADAMS

If everything goes the way I'm hoping it will, believe me, you'll know.

As the train begins to CHUG SLOWLY FORWARD, separating them inch by inch and then foot by foot--

SMASH TO:

INT. GREASY SPOON - LATE NIGHT

Adams slams a stack of typewritten paper down onto the table between him -- and ELLIE.

Looking at it with wide eyes:

ELLIE

What is this?

ADAMS

My boss asked for daily accounts of everything I've witnessed since being assigned to the Subcommittee on Investigations. These are my memoranda. Unedited. In order.

As Ellie eagerly reaches for it, though, Adams places a hand on top of the stack, stopping her.

ADAMS (CONT'D)

You said yourself what you'd be risking with a story like this.

ELLIE

(prompt)

I don't care.

ADAMS

I want you to think carefully about it. This could end your career in DC.

Ellie snorts laughter.

ELLIE

My career in DC.

ADAMS

Isn't that why you came here? To build a career?

Ellie's silent a beat. Then:

ELLIE

I live in a luggage room. Did I tell you that before?

Adams shakes his head.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

Off the lobby of my building. Someone converted it by adding a toilet and a shower and a sheet of plywood. That's where I go every afternoon after the briefing, to get my daily dispatch written in time to run it down to the Adams Morgan Western Union.

ADAMS

Okay ...

ELLIE

The others all go to the Press Club. They eat, drink, compare notes, gossip, write whenever they get around to it, file their stories from the in-house bureau. It's supposed to be really nice. Classy.

ADAMS

Why don't you go?

Ellie gives him an *are you serious* look before grabbing the papers, pulls them toward herself. This time, Adams doesn't stop her.

ADAMS (CONT'D)

As long as you're sure.

She puts the papers in her bag. With finality:

ELLIE

I'd rather go down doing something than survive doing nothing.

INT. COURTHOUSE MEN'S ROOM - EARLY MORNING

Adams enters, positions himself at the mirror. Steeling himself for the day to come. As the door behind him opens, he raises his eyes to the mirror to see--

--COHN. An anger to his gait and a viciousness to his expression as he SLAPS A NEWSPAPER ONTO THE SINK IN FRONT OF ADAMS.

COHN

Just what do you think you're up to,
John?

Looking down, Adams sees it's an issue of the MILWAUKEE JOURNAL, the front-page headline BLARING:

MCCARTHY SURROGATE ROY COHN THREATENED TO 'WRECK THE ARMY' OVER REFUSAL TO PROVIDE FAVORS

Beneath is a byline: **Eleanor Frank.**

Still SEETHING:

COHN (CONT'D)

How's your wife going to feel when she finds out you had an affair with a bottom-tier stringer for a pinko mouthpiece rag?

Adams turns around to face Cohn, fires back:

ADAMS

Hoping for a home field advantage here in the men's room, Roy?

They hold each other's gazes for a long moment. Then, practically SPITTING OUT THE WORDS:

COHN

You're a real man, aren't you. Letting a little girl do your dirty work while you cower in the shadows.

ADAMS

I'm not cowering. I'm standing right here in front of you, telling you to your face that you've gone too far.

COHN

There's no "too far" when it comes to protecting this country.

ADAMS

Even if that were true -- the only person you're protecting is yourself.

(beat)

Imagine, for a moment, that you're being scrutinized as harshly as the poor witnesses you drag down to this basement. Someone's doing to you what you're about to do to Peress, interrogating your past and present -- where you've been -- who you've been there with ...

Cohn SNARLS IN RESPONSE:

COHN
Don't threaten me.

Holding up his hands in a placating gesture:

ADAMS
I know you think McCarthy's your way in,
but he'll turn on you in a heartbeat if
you give him a reason.
(beat)
And we both know there's a reason.

There's a silence. Cohn SIMMERS, FURIOUS. Then:

COHN
Do me one favor, will you, John? When
you're jobless, homeless, when your wife
has ripped your sobbing baby from your
arms on her way out of your life for
good, when all the doors of the world are
slamming in your face and you're coming
to the sinking realization that you'd be
better off at the bottom of the Potomac
than continuing to walk this earth
alone -- when that moment comes, *and it
will come, John*, remember -- your fate
was decided right here. In my -- what did
you call it? Oh, right: my "home court."

With that, Cohn SLAMS OUT.

INT. COURTHOUSE HALLWAY - LATER

Striding with furious purpose, Adams approaches IRVING PERESS, early 40s, who's sitting on a bench outside the basement hearing room with a STRICKEN EXPRESSION. About as mundane-looking a guy as you can imagine, except that he's SWEATING BULLETS.

ADAMS
Dr. Peress?

Peress' head jerks up.

PERESS
Is it my turn?

ADAMS
They'll let you know.

PERESS

You're not part of they?

ADAMS

Vehemently not. I'm here to protect you,
if I can. I'm John Adams.

Peress eyes him distrustfully.

PERESS

Big shoes to fill.

ADAMS

I'm sorry?

PERESS

"Liberty, once lost, is lost forever."

Adams cracks a comprehending smile.

ADAMS

My namesake.

PERESS

Do you like quotations? Another of his
comes to mind: "Property monopolized, or
in the possession of a few, is a curse
upon mankind."

Adams clocks this for the admission it is. After a
moment:

ADAMS

I think you'd be best served to plead the
Fifth, Dr. Peress.

PERESS

I invoked the Fifth on my loyalty form.
Didn't do much for me.

ADAMS

It's different in a hearing. If you
answer just one of their questions, you
yield the privilege altogether.

PERESS

I do?

ADAMS

They'll do everything they can to provoke
you. And once they trick you into
responding, they won't stop until they've
come for your wife, your son, your
practice and your reputation.

Peress looks up at him. Red-eyed.

PERESS

I'm just a dentist, Mr. Adams. I'm no one's idea of a spy.

Adams hesitates a beat. Then:

ADAMS

Why did you write that? You knew what answer they wanted. No matter what your beliefs may be, you knew all you had to do was lie. Why risk it?

Peress replies simply:

PERESS

Because. It's my right.

Just then, the door to the basement room opens to reveal Cohn. His eyes narrow when he sees Adams sitting next to Peress on the bench.

COHN

Dr. Peress. We're ready for you now.

INT. COURTHOUSE BASEMENT - LATER

The usual scene, but with more REPORTERS than ever before -- though no Ellie. Adams, seated on the other side of the room from Cohn, looks on in tense silence as McCarthy grills Peress.

MCCARTHY

Why didn't you complete your loyalty questionnaire, Dr. Peress?

PERESS

I take the Fifth.

MCCARTHY

It's a simple question. Did you not complete it because you're not loyal to the United States? Because you don't believe in freedom or democracy?

PERESS

I take the Fifth.

MCCARTHY

Dr. Peress, plenty of your fellow dentists were sent overseas, and yet you were given a post at Camp Kilmer, is that correct?

Peress is silent.

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

Who made that decision? Who gave you that preferential treatment?

PERESS

I take the Fifth.

MCCARTHY

You believe your answer to that question might incriminate you? Or are you worried about incriminating someone else?

Peress remains silent. Outraged now:

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

Answer the question, Dr. Peress! What silent actor within the leadership of the US Army saw to it not only that a Fifth Amendment Communist was able to enlist, but that he was subsequently promoted and granted special favors?

Peress glances at Adams. McCarthy briefly follows his gaze before hefting his briefcase, continuing intensely:

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

Because I have the evidence, right here, of a conspiracy to promote and protect subversive elements that--

PERESS

If anyone in this room is a subversive, it's you!

Adams SITS STRAIGHT UP, McCarthy PURPLES DANGEROUSLY as Peress goes on heatedly:

PERESS (CONT'D)

I don't know what you have in that briefcase, but I know what you don't -- the United States Constitution. If you did, you'd know that remaining silent is a right guaranteed every American, a privilege enshrined by our founding fathers that you're now trying to equate with guilt.

(MORE)

PERESS (CONT'D)

What does that say about your loyalty,
Senator? What does it say about your
belief in democracy?

A MURMUR RISES from the spectators. Infuriated, McCarthy
barks out:

MCCARTHY

You're dismissed for the day, Dr. Peress.

Peress rises, turns to the gallery.

PERESS

To quote the Book of Psalms--

MCCARTHY

I said *you've been dismissed*--

PERESS

(trembling)

"His mischief shall return upon his own
head, and his violence shall come down
upon his own pate."

Peress turns back to meet Adams' gaze before departing,
still SHAKING VISIBLY. Meanwhile, Cohn SCURRIES TO
MCCARTHY'S SIDE, whispers in his ear while glancing at
Adams. They confer. A long, tense beat.

Then, as McCarthy finally breaks away from Cohn, with a
sinister smile:

MCCARTHY

The Subcommittee calls its next
witness ...

(enjoying this)

Counselor Adams.

Adams shakes his head, replies calmly:

ADAMS

You can't do that, Senator.

McCarthy BELLOWS, ENRAGED:

MCCARTHY

You are ordered to take the stand and be
sworn in!

Adams remains seated, staring McCarthy and Cohn down.

ADAMS

You'll have to subpoena me, just like you
would anyone else.

Once again, Cohn whispers in McCarthy's ear. Then:

MCCARTHY

As chairman of this committee, I hereby bar the Army from these sessions. If you have anything else to say to us--

He gestures at the empty witness chair. Adams eyes it for a moment before grabbing his briefcase and walking out.

INT. STEVENS' OFFICE - NIGHT

Adams and Stevens sit with the paper between them. The door to Stevens' office closed, his window looking out on night in DC. Stevens taps the paper pensively. Finally:

STEVENS

I asked for daily memoranda.

ADAMS

I know.

STEVENS

(tapping Ellie's byline)

It appears you were sending them to the wrong person.

ADAMS

I'm taking a page out of their playbook.

Stevens raises an eyebrow, waits.

ADAMS (CONT'D)

They make an accusation. Once it's printed, it's as good as a verdict. Now whoever they're after is on the defensive: senators, the State Department, writers, the Army, homosexuals ...

Adams hesitates before continuing:

ADAMS (CONT'D)

... whoever. The only common denominator is everyone's too afraid of them to fight back, and the more the person has on the line, the worse it gets.

Stevens nods in unhappy comprehension. After a moment:

STEVENS

So now it's our word versus theirs.

ADAMS

Someone's going to have to adjudicate.

Stevens nods slowly, seeing where Adams is going.

STEVENS

The Senate. Where they've already seen to it that there's no one with the authority to hold a hearing but them.

ADAMS

They'll have to recuse themselves. Hire outside counsel.

STEVENS

And be the ones who have to answer the questions for once.

Stevens eyes Adams appraisingly.

STEVENS (CONT'D)

This was a risk--

ADAMS

I know, and I'm truly sorry--

STEVENS

--but I wouldn't have confirmed Miss Frank's facts if I wasn't reasonably convinced you had a plan.

(off Adams' surprise)

Nice girl. A little eager.

Adams gives Stevens a small, appreciative smile.

FADE TO:

INT. STREETCAR - LATE AFTERNOON

Our commuters headed home from work listen to a news broadcast blaring from the streetcar's speakers:

ANCHOR (RADIO)

... shocking allegation that Senator Joseph McCarthy and top aide Roy Cohn sought preferential treatment for colleague G. David Schine ...

EXT. INDIANA FARMHOUSE - FRONT PORCH - SAME

Margaret, holding Rebecca, and her old friend WILLA sit on the porch listening to a portable radio, cornfields undulating behind them:

ANCHOR (RADIO)

... with Army counsel John G. Adams alleging that Cohn threatened to "wreck the Army" if their demands were not met.

INT. BARBER SHOP - SAME

Barbers and customers listen in rapt fascination--

ANCHOR (RADIO)

McCarthy and Cohn counter-allege that Adams and Secretary of the Army Robert T. Stevens sought to prevent the exposure of Communist infiltrators and spies ...

INT. CLASSROOM

The schoolchildren equally rapt--

ANCHOR (RADIO)

... using Schine as a hostage to blackmail the Subcommittee on Investigations. Said McCarthy on the Senate floor ...

EXT. INDIANA FARMHOUSE - FRONT PORCH - SAME

Willa glances at Margaret, who cradles Rebecca against herself protectively as:

MCCARTHY (RADIO)

The Department of the Army is not doing this. It is two civilians in the Army, and they should be so named. These are not the Army-McCarthy hearings--

On Margaret RISING TO GO INSIDE -- her expression pained, can't hear another word--

MCCARTHY (RADIO) (CONT'D)

--they are the Stevens-Adams hearings, and I move we refer to them as such.

At the sound of the Senate ROARING ITS APPROVAL, Willa hastily FLICKS OFF THE RADIO.

INT. CAPITOL HILL CLUB - SMOKING ROOM - NIGHT

As McCarthy enters the smoking room, his Republican colleagues, Cohn already ensconced among them, RISE IN UNISON TO APPLAUD. Rising to give McCarthy his place at the prominent center table, in an obsequious tone:

COHN

True leadership. That's what the people want to see.

DIRKSEN

Roy and I have been talking. We think 1960's in the bag already. But he had a brilliant idea to push us over the edge.

McCarthy cocks his head.

MCCARTHY

I'm listening.

COHN

You have the support of your colleagues. The party, the press. Everyone who sees you speak sees you in the Oval Office. Why not let the public see it as well?

MCCARTHY

I'm not sure what you mean.

COHN

I met a fellow. He works for the American Broadcasting Company.

On McCarthy, a GREEDY GLINT in his eye ...

INT. ADAMS APARTMENT - BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

Adams tosses and turns. Unable to sleep. And then -- the distant sound of SHATTERING GLASS. Sighing, he gives up, drags himself out of bed.

INT. ADAMS APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM

As Adams, bags under his eyes, sleepily pulls the newspaper from where it's been wedged in the mail slot, his face registers surprise at the headline:

ARMY HEARINGS TO BE TELEVISED IN FULL

Beneath, the subhead:

**MCCARTHY STATES AMERICAN PUBLIC SHOULD JUDGE ADAMS,
STEVENS "WITH THEIR OWN EYES"**

Beneath is a photo of Adams getting into his car outside the Senate building -- *a photo he clearly didn't know was being taken.*

Just then, Adams hears it again: GLASS SHATTERING. Cocks his head -- it sounds close ...

CUT TO:

EXT. ADAMS APARTMENT BUILDING - EARLY MORNING

Adams, in his bathrobe, stands next to his car, parked outside at the curb. The windows have been BUSTED OUT; broken glass is STREWN EVERYWHERE. Someone's hastily scrawled across the side in DRIPPING RED SPRAYPAINT:

TRAITOR

On Adams, a lonely, bedraggled figure in the empty street, glancing up and down helplessly--

CUT TO:

INT. STEVENS' OFFICE - DAY

Adams and Stevens, both in uniform, sit on one side of the desk; on the other is a very young LITIGATOR, his eyes flitting back and forth between the men's military decorations in an intimidated manner. After a moment, delicately:

STEVENS

We were hoping your firm might send someone more senior.

LITIGATOR

None of the other guys wanted to do it.

ADAMS

But you do?

LITIGATOR

I heard the hearings are gonna be on all three TV networks at once. That true?

Stevens and Adams exchange a look. Next.

CUT TO:

SAME SCENE, DIFFERENT CANDIDATE

This time it's a middle-aged LAWYER with a combover. Something oily about him, like a used-car salesman.

ADAMS

We just want to be sure there's nothing in your background McCarthy and Cohn could zero in on.

LAWYER

Nothing. Squeaky clean.

STEVENS

You're sure. No past incidents, anything that could be perceived as unsavory or suspicious ...

The lawyer gets a HUNTED EXPRESSION.

LAWYER

You talked to my ex-wife?

On Stevens and Adams, despairing now--

CUT TO:

INT. ADAMS' OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Adams stares down at a long list of lawyers' names and corresponding firms. Every single one **CROSSED OFF** except for the last. Visibly anxious, Adams dials, listens:

ADAMS

(into phone)

Yes, hello, Mr. Zucker? My name is John G. Adams and I'm calling in regards to the upcoming -- hello?

A DIAL TONE emits from the phone. Adams **SLAMS IT BACK INTO ITS CRADLE**, frustrated.

Taking a deep breath, he buries his face in his hands--

--and the phone begins to RING. He swiftly picks it up.

ADAMS (CONT'D)

Mr. Zucker, thank you so much for calling back--

(listening)

Oh. Sorry. Please put him through -- what did you say his name was, again?

INT. TRAIN - DAY

Stevens and Adams sit opposite one another on a train speeding north.

STEVENS

I've never heard of Hale and Dorr.

ADAMS

They mainly do property law.

Stevens bites his lip. Not happy.

STEVENS

Who'd McCarthy and Cohn get for this display they've concocted?

ADAMS

They, uh -- they had their pick, I hear. They went with Ray Jenkins.

STEVENS

Isn't he the one they call--

ADAMS

The Terror of Tellico Plains. Yes, sir.

That kills the conversation for the rest of the trip.

INT. HALE AND DORR LAW OFFICES - DAY

Stevens and Adams sit stiffly on a leather couch in reception. After a moment, a fresh-faced, boyish associate greets them. This is FRED FISHER, 32.

FISHER

I'll take you to the conference room.

As Stevens and Adams trail him down the hall:

FISHER (CONT'D)

I'm glad you came. I'm the one who alerted Mr. Welch to this opportunity.

ADAMS

You were?

FISHER

I was a member of the Lawyers' Guild. They don't take kindly to abuse of the Fifth Amendment.

Stevens and Adams exchange a look.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM

A stately conference room lined with legal texts. JOSEPH WELCH, mid-50s, sits across the polished wood table from Stevens and Adams. He's grandfatherly, patrician, looks like he was born wearing tweeds and a bowtie.

STEVENS

Mr. Welch, I'm curious why a lawyer of your ... stature would reach out to us about this case.

Welch's voice is gentle, measured.

WELCH

I'm not sure I have a rousing answer for that. I'll merely say that the law has been my life, and I don't enjoy seeing it bent until it breaks.

ADAMS

The lawyer for the opposition--

WELCH

Mr. Jenkins. Yes. From what I understand, his fame derives from his skill at getting murderers acquitted.

ADAMS

Never lost a case.

WELCH

Reveals a bit of a guilty conscience, no? And tells you something about their strategy. Mr. Jenkins succeeds by smearing his clients' victims.

STEVENS

With that in mind, what do you think your strategy might be?

WELCH

Well, I suppose I'll come down to DC, think up some questions to ask, and if I don't like the answers, I'll ask a few more.

Stevens bites his lip. Not liking this at all. Swiftly moving on:

ADAMS

The young man who brought us in here--

WELCH

One of our most promising associates.

ADAMS

He mentioned belonging to a union.

Welch peers at Adams over his spectacles.

WELCH

That contagious, is it?

When neither Stevens nor Adams replies, Welch gives a courtly nod, rises.

WELCH (CONT'D)

Well, gentlemen, I can't say I wouldn't understand if that disqualified me, given the tenor of the national conversation. I'll give you a moment to confer.

He departs. As soon as the door is shut behind him:

STEVENS

This can't be the best we can do.

ADAMS

I know what you had in mind -- some litigator we'd have to keep on a leash so he didn't tear out McCarthy's throat--

STEVENS

(heated)

Two hundred twenty-five thousand, three-hundred and twelve. That's how many of this nation's sons are currently stationed in Korea. They believe we can be trusted. Their families believe we can be trusted. This isn't about what I want, it's about the compact we've made with the American people.

Adams fires back, equally heated:

ADAMS

And if we get in a barroom brawl with them in front of the entire country? Where would that leave our compact with America? If they win their way, they win. If we win their way, *we've still lost.*

Stevens sits back hard at this. Thinks. A tense moment. Then:

STEVENS

That liberal -- he can't be anywhere near his team.

ADAMS

Of course not.

STEVENS

And you'll prep him. Make sure he understands he's not filing deeds in Boston anymore.

ADAMS

Yes, sir. Of course.

Stevens goes to the door, cracks it and asks someone O.S.:

STEVENS

Could we see Mr. Welch again?

Then, shutting the door and turning back to Adams:

STEVENS (CONT'D)

Jenkins will have eaten us alive by the time he's done straightening his bowtie.

CUT TO:

INT. SENATE CAUCUS ROOM - MORNING

CLOSE ON a china ashtray emblazoned with the slogan:

IF IT'S AMERICAN, IT'S WORTH PROTECTING

Pull back to REVEAL that it's one of many, all placed at EVEN INTERVALS along a U-shaped configuration of LONG, POLISHED WOODEN DESKS.

We're in an ORNATE SPACE, high-ceilinged and Corinthian-columned, with massive oak doors. The only people currently in the room are CAMERAMEN, who quietly, methodically assemble audio and visual equipment amid a GROWING HUBBUB from the

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE

Where a HUGE CROWD has gathered outside the oak doors. Members of the public and the press MILL AROUND CHATTING in anticipation. Among them we find Ellie, teetering to the side because of her overstuffed shoulder bag.

INT. SENATE CAUCUS ROOM

From a more modest set of doors at the room's rear, the subjects of the hearing enter: McCarthy and Cohn, trailed by their lawyer RAY JENKINS (50s, jowly, with vicious eyes); Stevens and Adams, trailed by Welch; and then every member of the Senate and their aides, including Dirksen, Potter and Mundt.

As the senators take their usual seats, Mundt positions himself at the head of the center desk; McCarthy, Cohn and Jenkins sit on one side, while Adams, Stevens and Welch take the other.

Meanwhile, the cameramen rush around training cameras on the witnesses and adjusting desk-mounted microphones.

No one says a word until Mundt finally gives the order:

MUNDT

Open the doors, please.

The oak doors are opened and the PUBLIC AND PRESS COME RUSHING IN, all shoving at one another to get the best seats. Ellie chooses one where she has a clear line of sight to Adams, who shuffles his notes nervously.

Mundt looks around for a gavel. Finding none, he lifts an ashtray and uses it to RAP ON THE WOODEN TABLE. Immediately, RED LIGHTS ILLUMINATE on all the cameras. They're rolling.

When Mundt speaks again, his tone is dry, almost as if he's irritated to even be there.

MUNDT (CONT'D)

It is the purpose of this investigation to make a full and impartial effort to reveal that which is true and to expose that which is false. We will begin by examining the Army's timeline of--

MCCARTHY

Mr. Chairman, a point of order.

McCarthy smiles unctuously at the nearest camera.

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

The so-called timeline is labeled "filed by the Department of the Army." As a former serviceman myself, I find that misleading in the extreme.

(MORE)

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

The *real* Army should be deeply resentful that a few Pentagon politicians attempting to disrupt our investigation are calling themselves "the Department of the Army."

MUNDT

Noted. Thank you very much, Senator.

Welch placidly jots down a note. Unconcerned. Stevens shoots Adams a frustrated look.

MUNDT (CONT'D)

Mr. Jenkins, you may call your first witness.

Jenkins rises, moves to stand so that he's addressing McCarthy. In a MONEYED, SLOW SOUTHERN DRAWL:

JENKINS

Senator McCarthy, perhaps you could contextualize for us your attempts to unmask communism within the US Army.

MCCARTHY

Gladly. The thing we must remember, Mr. Jenkins, is that this is a war which a brutalitarian force has won to a greater extent than any brutalitarian force has won a war in the history of the world before. For example, Christianity, which has been in existence for two-thousand years, has not converted or convinced nearly as many people as this Communist brutalitarianism has enslaved in one hundred and six years. And they're *not going to stop*.

He pauses to leer at the cameras before going on:

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

I know many of my good friends seem to feel this is a sort of game you can play, that you can talk about communism as if it's ten-thousand miles away. But it's right here with us now.

He glances pointedly at Adams and Stevens.

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

Unless we make sure there's no infiltration of our government, then just as certain as you sit there, in the period of our lives, you will see a red world. There is no remote possibility of this ending except by victory -- or by *death for this civilization.*

The room is silent. Rapt.

INT. GREASY SPOON - NIGHT

As Adams and Ellie take their usual booth, the TV mounted over the counter blares the news:

NEWSCASTER (T.V.)

A riveting first day of the Stevens-Adams hearings ...

Ellie wolfs down her cheeseburger with her perpetual brink-of-starvation enthusiasm, but Adams' burger goes untouched. His expression is hangdog as he asks:

ADAMS

I think I already know the answer to this, but--

ELLIE

(mouth full)

Not well. Not well at all. And according to the guys from ABC, it was the most-watched thing on TV.

ADAMS

Today?

ELLIE

Ever. Where'd you guys find that lawyer? He acts like a small-town librarian. Looks like one, too.

Adams rubs his temples miserably.

ADAMS

He's not what I'd hoped he'd be.

(beat)

Don't print that.

ELLIE

I won't. But it would be nice if you had something to give me that they couldn't just as easily deny.

(MORE)

ELLIE (CONT'D)

It's your word versus theirs that they're not the noble crusaders they've made themselves out to be, and Mundt is sure giving them plenty of airtime to make their case.

As if on cue, the TV replays a segment of McCarthy's speech from earlier that day:

MCCARTHY (T.V.)

The average American can do very little insofar as digging Communist espionage agents out of our government is concerned. They must depend on those of us who they send down here to man the watchtowers of the nation.

The camera cuts to a shot of Adams burying his face in his hands. Across the table from Ellie, real-time Adams has also buried his face in his hands.

INT. SENATE CAUCUS ROOM - DAY

The same packed-to-the-rafters room, red lights on TV cameras shining, smoke drifting upward from hundreds of cigarettes. Jenkins is questioning Stevens:

JENKINS

Now, Mr. Secretary, that was not a part of your pattern to hold this boy David Schine as a sort of a hostage?

STEVENS

Certainly not. And if he was a hostage, so have hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of young Americans been hostages when they're doing their duty in the service of their country.

MUNDT

You may well just face it: the implication here is that you were trying to buy off this committee from investigating the Army--

MCCARTHY

Mr. Chairman, point of order.

Adams' cheek slumps into his microphone. Welch remains silent, taking notes.

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

I think that question is completely improper and unfair. The implication is that this chairman could have been bought off. All the evidence is that this chairman could under no circumstances have been bought off.

CUT TO:

SAME ROOM, NEW DAY

Jenkins is now cross-examining Adams, who speaks carefully, in a controlled tone:

ADAMS

Mr. Cohn became extremely agitated, extremely abusive, about the fact that the Army was not agreeing to a special assignment for Schine.

At his and McCarthy's table, Cohn is SMIRKING AND SHAKING HIS HEAD as if he's never heard anything so stupid.

JENKINS

And when you told Mr. Cohn that you were unwilling to accommodate his requests, what was his response?

Doing his best to ignore Cohn, Adams replies:

ADAMS

He responded with vigor and force--
(beat)
"We will wreck the Army."

Jenkins slowly turns to face Cohn, who is ROLLING HIS EYES DISMISSIVELY.

JENKINS

Mr. Cohn, do you deny or affirm this?

COHN

I'm sure that I did not make that statement -- and I'm sure that Mr. Adams, or anybody else with any sense, could not ever believe that I was threatening to wreck the Army or that I even *could* wreck the Army. I say, sir, that that accusation is ridiculous.

Adams starts to respond, but Jenkins CUTS HIM OFF:

JENKINS

Mr. Adams, a charge has been made against you that in order to pacify the Subcommittee on Investigations, you offered up bigger bait from time to time. To wit, homosexuals in the Army.

Adams COLORS. Losing his cool:

ADAMS

He did that. That was *his* idea. He came to me with some story about the Army grouping homosexuals on their own base--

JENKINS

That base isn't in Tennessee, is it?

TITTING ECHOES through the room. Faintly amused:

ADAMS

No, sir. Not in Tennessee.

SENATOR MCCLELLAN, seated in the gallery, chimes in:

MCCLELLAN

Point of order, let's exclude Arkansas too.

Adams meets eyes with Cohn as the room ERUPTS IN LAUGHTER. Cohn is frozen with a half-smile on his face, his eyes darting around to assess everyone else's reaction as:

ADAMS

I can do that, sir.

MUNDT

The chair would like to raise a point of order on behalf of South Dakota.

Now Cohn is JOINING IN THE LAUGHTER -- but it doesn't reach his eyes. Looking right at him:

ADAMS

I can exclude all of the states of all of the members of this committee.

APPRECIATIVE CHUCKLES RESOUND. When the laughter finally dies down:

MR. JENKINS

So it's your contention that you did not instigate the investigation into the lavender boys.

ADAMS

I did not.

MR. JENKINS

We got a firm answer on that, didn't we?

ADAMS

That is correct, sir. And you'll always get a firm answer on that.

JENKINS

You remember it distinctly.

ADAMS

Yes. Distinctly.

JENKINS

It's interesting you say that. Because a memorandum between yourself and Mr. Cohn from the time period in question indicates the opposite. Senator McCarthy, do you have that memo?

McCarthy pats his briefcase smugly.

MCCARTHY

We'll be entering it into evidence tomorrow, to give everyone the weekend to peruse it at their leisure.

Adams colors. Cohn raises an eyebrow at him as if to say, *your move*.

ADAMS

I'd like to see it.

JENKINS

Mr. Adams, as a fellow jurisdoctorate surely you're aware of the process for entering an item into evidence--

ADAMS

I don't care. If he really has it in his briefcase, he can show it to us.

MCCARTHY

Mr. Chairman, point of order--

Adams SLAMS A HAND ON THE TABLE, rattling the china ashtrays and causing Welch to STARTLE. Welch opens his mouth to advise him -- don't -- but Adams DOESN'T SEE, is too busy FIRING BACK:

ADAMS

No. No. No more points of order. He's refusing to show the memo because it won't exist until tonight, when they write it. They do this all the time. They're specialists at it.

MCCARTHY

I won't allow you to filibuster these hearings, Mr. Adams--

ADAMS

You'll see. It won't be an original, it'll be a carbon--

MCCARTHY

(thundering)

Mr. Chairman!

Mundt RAPS ON THE TABLE.

MUNDT

Mr. Adams, Senator McCarthy has the floor.

Adams opens his mouth to respond, but Welch places a warning hand on his shoulder, shakes his head.

MCCARTHY

Never in my entire political career have I seen such a combination of salesmanship and threatening. Mr. Adams clearly told Mr. Cohn that if we agreed to lay off our investigation of the Communist infiltration at Fort Monmouth, he would give us the homosexuals instead.

At this, Adams shoots a look at Cohn, but his facial expression betrays nothing.

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

Now, Mr. Adams' exact motivation for this is not the subject of this hearing, and I don't intend for it to be. But Mr. Cohn and I discussed it, and we agreed that to give in to his threats would send a signal to other Communists that these same kinds of tactics would be effective. So we decided that under no circumstances would we accede, and we retained the memo in case Mr. Adams one day attempted to deny his backroom double-dealing. Did we not, Mr. Cohn?

COHN

Yes. That's correct.

A SCANDALIZED MURMUR rises from the gallery. Adams FUMES.
Cohn STARES HIM DOWN: *Not so funny now, are you?*

INT. STEVENS' OFFICE - NIGHT

An after-hours strategy session between Stevens and Adams. Whatever Stevens just proposed has left Adams in a nervous silence, chewing his lip. Finally:

ADAMS

Do you think he'll do it? Finally, after all this time?

STEVENS

If I appeal to him as a fellow serviceman, then yes. I think maybe he will.

INT. GREASY SPOON - LATER

Adams and Ellie sit hidden in a booth in the back.

ELLIE

I'm not sure I understand.

ADAMS

It's constitutional law. The three branches of the government are forbidden from exercising power over one another, to preserve checks and balances.

ELLIE

So your hope is that the President--

ADAMS

--will invoke his right as Commander in Chief to protect the Army.

ELLIE

Couldn't he have done that before?

ADAMS

It's not that simple. If Eisenhower publicly takes a stand against McCarthy he's damaging his relationship with the Republican majority. He wouldn't have thought it was worth it before. He may not think it's worth it now.

ELLIE

So you're betting it all, and on national TV no less.

(beat)

Why are you telling me all of this?

ADAMS

I'm a veteran and a Republican, but I can't get into the Capitol Hill Club. You're the only journalist in this mess printing retractions, but you can't get into the Press Club.

He tries on a smile.

ADAMS (CONT'D)

It seems only fair that we should get a club of our own.

Ellie tries on a smile too.

INT. SENATE CAUCUS ROOM - A FEW DAYS LATER

The hearings continue. Jenkins is now "questioning" Roy Cohn as senators and spectators look on intently and red lights on cameras glow.

JENKINS

And how did you come to suspect the Army of sheltering subversives in the first place, Mr. Cohn?

COHN

We were slipped a list of suspected Communists generated by the Army itself.

JENKINS

"Slipped"?

A COURIER enters through the wooden doors bearing an envelope. He beelines through the crowd toward Stevens' and Adams' table. Meanwhile, not noticing:

COHN

By an anonymous source within the FBI.

The courier hands Adams the envelope. Adams and Stevens exchange a look.

JENKINS

So you did not, as Secretary Stevens and Mr. Adams have implied, scurrilously interrogate anyone without due cause.

COHN

Absolutely not, sir. We'll gladly enter the list into evidence--

Adams interrupts:

ADAMS

If I might, Mr. Chairman, we'd like to read out a letter from a concerned party regarding Mr. Cohn and Senator McCarthy's items of "evidence."

Opening the envelope to remove a typed piece of stationery bearing the PRESIDENTIAL SEAL:

ADAMS (CONT'D)

This is a letter addressed to the Honorable Secretary of the Army.

McCarthy, Cohn and Jenkins all exchange looks -- this feels ominous. Adams goes on:

ADAMS (CONT'D)

"You will instruct employees of your department that in all of their appearances before the subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Government Operations regarding the inquiry now before it, they are not to testify to any confidential conversations or communications or to produce any documents or reproductions. I direct this action so as to maintain the proper separation of powers between the executive and legislative branches of the government, in accordance with my responsibilities and duties under the Constitution."

He briefly meets eyes with Ellie in the press gallery before finishing:

ADAMS (CONT'D)

"Sincerely, Dwight D. Eisenhower."

This gets the room HUMMING AGAIN. Cohn whispers in McCarthy's ear as Mundt HAMMERS HIS GAVEL for silence.

MUNDT

Thank you. The chair will now recognize Senator McCarthy or Mr. Cohn.

McCarthy takes a deep breath. Stevens and Adams glance at one another -- this is it, this is the moment, how can he possibly weasel his way out of this one?

And then, slowly at first but swiftly gaining momentum:

MCCARTHY

Mr. Chairman, I must admit that I'm somewhat at a loss as to what to do at this moment. One of the subjects of this inquiry is to find out who was responsible for succeeding in calling off the hearing of Communist infiltration in government. At this point, I find out there's no way of ever getting at the truth. The--

(with significance)

--*iron curtain* is pulled down, so we can't tell what happened. We've got a tremendously important question here, Mr. Chairman. That is, how far can the President go? Who all can he order not to testify? Then any president -- we don't know who will be president in 1960, or for that matter 1956 ...

McCarthy CHUCKLES MODESTLY as if to say, *We all know I'm talking about myself at this point.* The room LAUGHS JOVIALY ALONG WITH HIM. He's managed to turn even this rebuke to his advantage, and Adams and Stevens know it.

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

Any president can by an executive order keep the facts from the American people. I don't believe this is the result of President Eisenhower's own thinking. I'm sure if he knew what this was all about, he would not sign an order saying you can't tell the Senate committee what went on when they cooked up those charges against Mr. Cohn and myself.

(getting louder)

Someone, for his own benefit, should contact him immediately and point out to him that he and I and many of us--

(theatrical now)

--campaigned and promised the American people that we would no longer engage in government by secrecy, whitewash and cover-up. The American people *will not stand for this.*

The room ERUPTS INTO CHEERS, led by prominent Senate Republicans LEAPING TO THEIR FEET AND APPLAUDING.

In the press gallery, Ellie looks sick.

MUNDT

(banging gavel)

Let's recess for lunch. These hearings
will resume in one hour.

EXT. DC STREETS - LUNCHTIME

Adams paces the crowded streets, dipping his face into his collar whenever he passes anyone so they won't be able to recognize him.

Arriving at a bridge over the Potomac, he follows the walkway until he's standing over the deepest part of the river. Stares down at the flowing water, agonized--

--until he hears a voice from behind him.

WOMAN (O.S.)

Are you okay?

Startled, Adams spins around to see a MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN leaning out the window of her stopped car. In the passenger seat is a TWELVE-YEAR-OLD GIRL who looks on curiously as her mother repeats, worried:

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Sir? Are you okay?

Adams attempts a reassuring smile.

ADAMS

Just getting some air.

The woman stares at him skeptically a moment longer before putting the car in gear.

INT. CAUCUS ROOM ANTECHAMBER - AFTERNOON

Adams enters--

--only to FREEZE IN HIS TRACKS at the sight of the room's lone inhabitant:

MCCARTHY.

They've never been alone together before. As the man at the center of all this meets eyes with his adversary, Adams really sees him for the first time.

His THINNING HAIR, slick with product and sweat.

His REDDENED CHEEKS, crisscrossed by broken capillaries.

His WATERY EYES, which narrow ever so slightly as he angles them upward -- wincing in the light.

He doesn't look like a monster capable of architecting the death of democracy. He looks like an old drunk.

Both wait for the other to speak first. Finally, in a gentle, measured tone completely unlike the bellicose persona he projects in front of the cameras:

MCCARTHY

It's already over, John.

Adams is still frozen. Paralyzed.

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

You didn't want to do those faggots a favor. Didn't want to take orders from a cocksucker. I understand.

Adams blinks, manages to stammer out:

ADAMS

That's not -- I didn't--

MCCARTHY

No need to play coy. Everybody knows. He doesn't even have the decency to be embarrassed by it.

McCarthy slams his famous briefcase down on a table, flips the latches to open it. Adams is wide-eyed -- trembling -- what's going to come out of it, what fresh hell is this man about to inflict--

--and then the lid springs open, revealing:

A PINT OF WHISKEY, half-empty.

AND NOTHING ELSE.

No documents. No folders. No notes. Just a flat glass bottle that McCarthy uncaps, SWIGGING GREEDILY as if renewing his very life force.

Noticing Adams watching, McCarthy wipes his lips with the back of his hand, then replaces the bottle. As he relatches the briefcase:

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

Go on, John, run out and tell all the cameras--

(MORE)

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

(feminine voice)

"He's a liar, Joe's a liar!"

(regular voice)

Just like how you ran to Daddy when you got in over your head. Look where that got you. You've made yourself look stupid, you've made Bob look like a helpless functionary, you've made the Army look like dithering paper-pushers whining about this and that technicality instead of fighting for freedom, and you still won't concede?

Adams wants to shrivel in the face of this invective, but forces himself to reply:

ADAMS

What do we have to lose?

There's a silence.

And then McCarthy CHUCKLES SOFTLY. His voice quiet, dangerous, amused as:

MCCARTHY

So that's it, is it. You think you have nothing left to lose.

McCarthy turns to go. This is meant to be his ending note, his final threat.

But then Adams, seeming to surprise even himself, steps forward to BLOCK HIS WAY. Squaring himself against him, locking eyes even as he struggles to control the tremor that's crept into his tone:

ADAMS

Go on, then. Tell me. What are you going to come for? I want to hear it. Not from Roy, from you.

McCarthy opens his mouth--

--then SHUTS IT AGAIN. Redness rises into his cheeks. A flush -- is it the booze hitting his bloodstream?

Or is it embarrassment?

Adams steps aside as if to say -- *your move. Stay and fight, or walk out.*

McCarthy's silent a moment longer.

And then he WALKS OUT.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - NIGHT

Adams BANGS FRANTICALLY on a hotel room door. After a moment, it opens to reveal Welch, jacket off and collar open, blinking in a baffled fashion. Excitedly:

ADAMS

Shame.

WELCH

I'm sorry?

Adams pushes past him.

INT. WELCH'S HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Adams paces the neatly kept room as Welch watches, wide-eyed.

ADAMS

I couldn't understand why McCarthy put up with Roy. Why he didn't cut him loose at the first sign of trouble. And then I realized -- Roy's his ideal weapon, because Roy feels no shame.

WELCH

And you think McCarthy does.

ADAMS

It's all over him, I just never saw it until now. He's ashamed of himself, of his cowardice and his lies and the fact that he can't win without cheating. So he drinks and he bloviates and when he just can't stand himself for one moment longer, he sends Roy in to do what even he's too ashamed to.

Welch takes a moment to think by removing his glasses and wiping them clean. Then, replacing them:

WELCH

So what are you proposing?

INT. ADAMS APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Leaving the stairs, Adams glances down to see that his apartment door is STANDING WIDE OPEN. Light from inside FALLS IN A TRAPEZOID onto the dingy hall carpet.

He pales. Advances slowly, cautiously. There's SOUND COMING FROM INSIDE -- thumping, clinking, rummaging.

Tentatively approaching, Adams calls out:

ADAMS

Whoever's in there--

But he stops short when he comes up even with the door.

It's MARGARET, with Rebecca in her arms.

Both adults' faces crumple at the sight of one another. In a flash, Adams' arms are wrapped around his wife and daughter, holding on like he never wants to let go again.

MARGARET

I thought you might be upset with me.

ADAMS

(eyes squeezed shut)

This is what I didn't know I needed.

Between them, Rebecca babbles contentedly.

INT. SENATE CAUCUS ROOM - AFTERNOON

Jenkins is "questioning" Roy Cohn as senators look on intently and red lights on cameras glow.

JENKINS

How did you come to focus your investigation on Fort Monmouth?

COHN

I'm sure everyone here is familiar with the Rosenberg case.

At his table, Adams glances into the gallery and meets eyes with Margaret, who's sitting next to Ellie in the press section. Jenkins goes on:

JENKINS

It was your assumption that the Soviet scheme at this defense plant was more extensive than anyone knew.

COHN

Not an assumption. A fact revealed in cross-examination of witnesses.

JENKINS

You're aware that the Army believes some of these witnesses to be falsely accused.

COHN

I'm aware that it's in the Army's interest to spread that untruth, yes.

JENKINS

Very well. Thank you, Mr. Cohn.

As Jenkins retakes his seat:

MUNDT

We'll adjourn for the afternoon's Senate vote--

Just then, Welch surprises the room by RISING. With a courtly half-bow, in an exceedingly polite tone:

WELCH

Mr. Chairman, I believe I have the right to briefly cross-examine the witness?

Mundt stares down Welch, irritated. With a sigh:

MUNDT

You may proceed.

WELCH

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welch steps out from behind his table and approaches Cohn. His manner as courteous and genteel as always -- but from the way he LOCKS EYES with Adams before speaking, it appears they just might have a plan.

In the gallery, Margaret shoots Adams an APPROVING SMILE before giving Ellie a nudge, as if alerting her.

WELCH (CONT'D)

Mr. Cohn, I was wondering if you could tell us what is the exact number of Communists or subversives that are loose today in our defense plants?

In a DEEPLY REGRETFUL TONE:

COHN

I don't know.

Adams gives Welch an encouraging look -- *don't stop there*. Welch goes on:

WELCH

Roughly, if you don't mind.

COHN

I can only tell you, sir, about those we know about.

WELCH

That's ...

Welch paces back to the table. Adams passes him a note. Reading from it:

WELCH (CONT'D)

... that's a hundred and thirty, isn't that right?

Clocking this newfound cooperation between them:

COHN

I'm going to try to particularize for you, if I can--

WELCH

I'm in a hurry, Mr. Cohn.

Off Cohn's surprised expression:

WELCH (CONT'D)

I don't want the sun to go down while they're still in there. Do you?

Cohn's briefly frozen by this shift in tone--

--and then, seeming to re-calibrate his manner accordingly, he CHUCKLES CONDESCENDINGLY.

COHN

I'm afraid we won't be able to work that fast, sir.

Welch begins to pace. As he does, he seems to GAIN CONFIDENCE, going on incredulously:

WELCH

Aren't you alarmed at the situation?

COHN

Yes, sir, I am.

WELCH

Nothing could be more alarming, could it?

With all the earnestness in the world:

COHN

It certainly is a very alarming thing.

WELCH

So will you now, before the sun goes down, give those names to the FBI and have those men put under surveillance?

McCarthy stands, red-faced.

MCCARTHY

Point of order.

MUNDT

Senator McCarthy, you have the floor.

McCarthy rises, attempts to CROWD WELCH with his bulk, edging him away from the cameras.

MCCARTHY

Mr. Welch knows, as I have stated dozens of times, that the defense plants have the information. The problem is their failure to act. Now the only thing we can do is try and publicly expose these individuals so that they will be gotten rid of. And you *know that*, Mr. Welch.

Welch holds his ground, replying calmly:

WELCH

I don't know that, Senator McCarthy. If the evidence against these men is so undeniable, then can't the FBI put them under surveillance before sundown?

McCarthy opens his mouth to respond, but Cohn SHAKES HIS HEAD AT HIM, indicates with a subtle nod: *Sit down, Joe.*

Adams suddenly looks NERVOUS. *Cohn's on to them.*

As McCarthy reluctantly takes his seat, Cohn TAKES OVER, his SMOOTH COOL the opposite of McCarthy's NEAR RAGE.

COHN

Sir, if there is a need for surveillance I can well assure you that Mr. Hoover and his men know a lot better than I.

He pauses to look into the nearest camera as he concludes:

COHN (CONT'D)

I do not propose to tell the FBI how to run its shop. It does it very well.

Welch's tone has gradually shifted from courteous to overly solicitous.

WELCH

It really does, doesn't it, Mr. Cohn?

Cohn nods confidently.

COHN

When the need arises, yes, sir.

WELCH

So will you tell the FBI that there is a case where the need has arisen?

As this exchange continues, Adams watches McCarthy closely. The other man's eyes are now DARTING AT HIS BRIEFCASE LONGINGLY.

Meanwhile:

COHN

There is no need for me to tell the FBI what to do about this or anything else.

Adams SCRIBBLES SOMETHING on a sheet of memo paper. Tears the paper off, hands it to an aide as Cohn goes on:

COHN (CONT'D)

And I'd respectfully submit that this line of questioning is a waste of the Senate's time, as well as the American people's.

The aide gives Welch the paper. Welch takes his time reading it, then BALLS IT UP AND DROPS IT ON THE GROUND CARELESSLY.

When he speaks again, his cadence is even SLOWER, MORE GENTEEL than ever before. He puts LONG PAUSES between words, almost as if he's INTENTIONALLY TRYING to take forever.

WELCH

Mr. Cohn -- if you wouldn't mind telling me *one last time* ... whenever you learn of a Communist -- or a spy -- anywhere ... is it your policy to get them out as -- fast -- as -- possible?

Not even bothering to conceal his annoyance now:

COHN

Of course we want them out as fast as possible.

WELCH

So ... from now on -- whenever you learn of one of them, Mr. Cohn ... I beg of you, will you -- tell -- somebody -- about -- them -- quickly?

McCarthy JUMPS UP, ENRAGED--

--and Adams can't help but BREAK INTO A GRIN as he once again utters those familiar words:

MCCARTHY

Mr. Chairman, *point of order.*

Mundt opens his mouth to speak, but McCarthy doesn't bother to wait this time. Moving so he's in plain view of one of the TV cameras:

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

In view of Mr. Welch's request that the information be shared once we know of anyone who might be performing any work for the Communist Party, I think there's something he needs to know.

Welch spreads his hands out invitingly.

WELCH

By all means.

MCCARTHY

He has in his law firm a young man named Fred Fisher -- whom he recently *recommended* to join him as an aide in these hearings--

Adams and Margaret meet eyes. *Here it comes.*

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

--who has been for a number of years a member of an organization called the Lawyers' Guild which has been named the *legal bulwark of the Communist Party.* It's an organization which always swings to the defense of *anyone* who dares to expose Communists.

McCarthy glances around the room to see how this information is being received before continuing in his usual unctuous manner:

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

Knowing that, Mr. Welch, I just felt that I had a duty to respond to your "urgent request." We are now letting you know that your man did belong to this organization for three or four years. And I don't think you can find *anyplace, anywhere*, an organization which has done more to defend Communists, to defend espionage agents, and to *aid the Communist cause*, than the man whom you wanted down here at your right hand.

(beat)

Now, I hesitated bringing that up. I did. But I have been rather bored with your phony requests to Mr. Cohn here that he personally get every Communist out of government before sundown. Therefore, we will give you information about the young man *in your own organization*. I am not asking you at this time to explain why you tried to *foist him on this committee*. Whether you knew he was a member of that Communist organization or not, I don't know. I assume you did not, Mr. Welch, because I don't think you have any conception of the danger of the Communist Party. I don't think you yourself would ever knowingly aid the Communist cause. I think you are unknowingly aiding it when you try to burlesque this hearing in which we are attempting to bring out the facts, however.

WELCH

Senator McCarthy ...

Welch pauses as if to muster the strength to go on. Then, speaking slowly and deliberately:

WELCH (CONT'D)

I think until this moment I never really gauged your cruelty or your recklessness.

McCarthy REDDENS as Welch goes on:

WELCH (CONT'D)

Fred Fisher is a young man who went to the Harvard Law School and came into my firm and is starting what looks to be a brilliant career with us. When I requested he join me for these hearings, I asked him, "I don't know anything about you except that I have always liked you, but if there is anything funny in your life that would hurt anybody in this case, you speak up quick."

Welch glances at Adams, who is watching intently.

WELCH (CONT'D)

Fred Fisher said, "Mr. Welch, when I was in law school and for a period of months after, I belonged to the Lawyers' Guild," exactly as you have suggested, Senator. Knowing what Mistert Adams and Stevens had told me about your methods, I asked him to remain in Boston. Little did I dream you would be so callous as to do an injury to him anyway.

(beat)

It is true he is still with my firm. It is true that he will continue to be with my firm. It is, I regret to say, equally true that he shall always bear a scar needlessly inflicted by you.

Every eye in the room is trained on Welch. No one has ever seen anyone respond to McCarthy in this way.

WELCH (CONT'D)

If this is how you comport yourself with the eyes of the nation upon you, I shudder to think what you've done behind closed doors.

As Welch says these words, Adams is MOUTHING THEM ALONG WITH HIM. We realize -- *he wrote these lines.*

WELCH (CONT'D)

I can only hope that your colleagues in this room were as unaware as the American people.

McCarthy GLANCES AROUND THE ROOM to see how this is going over. EVERY ONE OF HIS COLLEAGUES AVOIDS EYE CONTACT. He turns SCARLET WITH HUMILIATION as Welch goes on:

WELCH (CONT'D)

I like to think of myself as a kind man,
but if they knew, then their, and your,
forgiveness will have to come from
someone other than me.

The LONG SILENCE that follows this monologue is broken
only by the sound of reporters FERVENTLY SCRIBBLING.
After a moment, STAMMERING SLIGHTLY:

MCCARTHY

Mr. -- Mr. Chairman.

The other senators are now staring at Mundt with enormous
interest. Clearly embarrassed:

MUNDT

We, uh, do need to get to that vote--

MCCARTHY

Mr. Welch talks about my being "cruel and
reckless." But the real recklessness was
his, when he covered for this young man.
All I'm doing is giving his record--

WELCH

Your knowledge of how he spent his post-
collegiate years is remarkably thorough.

MCCARTHY

We dug into everyone in your firm.

A SHOCKED MURMUR echoes through the room. McCarthy
REDDENS, realizing he's made a misstep, as Welch RAISES
AN EYEBROW, responds with disdain:

WELCH

What a noble use of the taxpayers' money.

Now McCarthy's fellow senators are SHAKING THEIR HEADS IN
DISGUST, either earnestly or in a display for the
cameras. Desperate to regain the control:

MCCARTHY

This Lawyers' Guild is the foremost legal
bulwark of the Communist Party--

His voice DRIPPING WITH DERISION:

WELCH

Let us not assassinate this lad further,
Senator. You have done enough.

McCarthy OPENS HIS MOUTH to bloviate further--

--but Welch cuts him off, GOING IN FOR THE KILL.

WELCH (CONT'D)

Have you *no sense of decency*, sir, at long last? Have you left no sense of decency?

The chamber is SILENT ONCE AGAIN as this sets in. After a beat of HUMILIATED MUSTERING, McCarthy attempts:

MCCARTHY

I know this hurts you, Mr. Welch--

WELCH

I think it hurts *you*, sir.

MUNDT

We do need to adjourn for the vote--

MCCARTHY

I'd like to finish this--

Some of the senators in the chamber have begun to RISE. A quick PUNCH IN reveals that they're being led by none other than Dirksen and Potter, neither of whom look back as they SWIFTLY MOVE FOR THE DOORS.

As other senators begin to GATHER THEIR THINGS, with INCREASING DESPERATION:

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

Mr. Welch talks about "any sense of decency." If I've, uh, if I've said anything which is not the truth, then I would like to know about it ...

McCarthy glances around. Sees more of the senators RISING, TALKING AMONGST THEMSELVES. *Ignoring him.*

Trying once more:

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

Since its inception the Lawyers' Guild has never failed to rally to the legal defense of the Communist Party--

Now others are rising -- spectators, members of the press. The operator of the camera nearest McCarthy removes his eye from the viewfinder to light a cigarette.

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

--and individual members thereof. Now, that is not the language of Senator McCarthy, Mr. Welch--

The room is EMPTYING NOW. As Margaret is ushered out the door along with the other members of the public, she turns back to search the floor for her husband. When her eyes find Adams', she SMILES. Proud.

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

--that is the language of the House Un-American Activities Committee, a very esteemed committee ...

But Welch is POINTEDLY no longer listening either; he turns to Adams and WHISPERS A QUESTION IN HIS EAR. Then, off Adams' SUCCINCT NOD, they both STAND.

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

And I can go on with more citations ...

Adams and Welch are WALKING AWAY FROM THEIR TABLE now.

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

It seems that Mr. Welch is *pained so deeply* he thinks it is improper for me to give the record ...

Adams looks back at McCarthy one last time before following Welch to the door. He's STILL TALKING, even though hardly anyone's left in the room.

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

... the Communist front record of the man whom he wanted to *foist upon this committee* ...

Adams turns away as McCarthy trails off, defeated:

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

Well, uh, I guess now it's time for all of us to go and ... vote.

The camera operator with the cigarette looks McCarthy in the eyes as he takes a LONG, INSOLENT DRAG.

Then he extinguishes the red light on his camera.

EXT. RUSSELL SENATE OFFICE BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER

As Adams and Welch exit the building, Welch is THROGGED BY MEMBERS OF THE PRESS, all shouting questions at once:

PRESS (MULTIPLE)

Mr. Welch! Right here, Mr. Welch!/Into the camera, Mr. Welch!

Adams descends the steps, passing right by the crowd as if he's nobody. No one asks him any questions. Popping flashbulbs are aimed elsewhere.

At the curb, Margaret's waiting behind the wheel of their car. Still unnoticed, Adams gets in and shuts the door, and the car PULLS AWAY. The only one to see him go is a beaming, triumphant Ellie.

FADE TO:

EXT. WASHINGTON DC - AERIAL VIEW - MORNING

The rising sun washes the city in gold. It's a new day, not just for Adams, but for everyone.

INT. STREETCAR - SAME

The commuters on the streetcar listen as the radio news renders its final verdict on the hearings:

NEWSCASTER (RADIO)

In the end, Senator McCarthy's absurd concoction of a plot to thwart his investigation of Communism in the Army was supported by nothing save his own dull recital of it.

INT. CLASSROOM

The students with their teacher listen as:

NEWSCASTER (RADIO)

The picture presented of him was sharp and frightening.

INT. BARBER SHOP

On the inhabitants of the barber shop now:

NEWSCASTER (RADIO)

His accusations were shown to be motivated not by national security, but rather by personal animus and petty grudges.

One of the barbers from before SHAKES HIS HEAD.

INT. ADAMS KITCHEN

Adams feeds Rebecca her breakfast as Margaret reads from the Washington Post:

MARGARET

"Once considered the favorite to succeed President Eisenhower in 1960, the man his party hung their hopes on exposed himself as the malicious, craven figure DC insiders have long known him to be."

She sets the paper down, revealing the blaring headline:

'SHOCK AND DISGUST' AS MCCARTHY'S TRUE NATURE REVEALED

Beneath is a byline: **Eleanor Frank, staff writer.**

FADE TO:

INT. ADAMS BREAKFAST NOOK - SIX YEARS LATER

Adams, in a nicer, more tailored suit than before, listens to the radio with Rebecca, who's now 7, a little girl in pigtails. We're in the breakfast nook of their suburban home. Margaret, dressed for a job of her own in heels and a skirtsuit, CLACKS IN BUSILY to clear the breakfast dishes as:

NEWSCASTER (RADIO)

The news now, apparently official -- Senator John F. Kennedy was declared the winner of the presidential race at 7:19 a.m. Eastern standard time.

REBECCA

We have a new President?

MARGARET

Finally.

Just then, the phone on the wall RINGS. Margaret clicks over to pick it up as Rebecca asks Adams:

REBECCA (B.G.)

Did you and Mommy vote for him?

ADAMS (B.G.)

We did.

MARGARET (F.G.)
Hello?

REBECCA (B.G.)
Why?

MARGARET (F.G.)
(frowning)
I'm sorry, who?

ADAMS (B.G.)
Because the country is changing, and
that's a good thing--

Meanwhile, Margaret has placed her hand over the phone receiver and interrupts to say, in a way tone:

MARGARET
(to Adams)
John. It's *him*.

Adams narrows his eyes. Takes the phone from Margaret and extends the cord into the

INT. DINING ROOM

Shutting the connecting door, Adams says:

ADAMS
Hello?

COHN (O.S.)
Hello, John.

INTERCUT WITH

INT. COHN'S NEW YORK APARTMENT

Opulent bordering on garish. A view of the city just visible between carelessly swept together velvet drapes. Cohn is draped on a Louis Quatorze sofa in a smoking jacket, the remnants of what looks to have been quite a party scattered around him. In a hoarse, hungover voice:

COHN
Remember me?

ADAMS
Quite well.

Cohn raises an eyebrow at the animosity in his tone.

COHN

I just thought I should call to mark the occasion.

ADAMS

What occasion is that?

REVEAL that Cohn is watching something on the TV opposite his sofa: KENNEDY'S ACCEPTANCE SPEECH.

COHN

This day should have been his. Ours.

ADAMS

That was never going to happen.

COHN

Don't sell yourself short. I've been keeping tabs on you over the years. There's a reason you've been so successful.

ADAMS

Your approval means the world to me.

COHN

Ever think about trading up? I've got a nice little outfit going here in New York.

ADAMS

No thanks--

COHN

I could start you at forty grand. Do you know how you can live for forty grand? Not to mention the doors my name opens. There's a whole world you don't know about, John. Not yet.

ADAMS

I guess you finally got what you wanted.

COHN

It's what everyone wants.

ADAMS

I'll stick with what I have.

COHN

Ah. Yes. The little family. David's married with kids now too, did you hear?

Adams can't help but look slightly saddened by this.

COHN (CONT'D)

A beauty queen. She worked fast.

(beat)

I know I crossed a line that day in the men's room, mentioning your wife and baby. I regret it.

Adams is silent a moment. Then:

ADAMS

I regret something I said that day as well.

COHN

Sometimes I think I should get married. It's becoming more conspicuous not to.

In the dimness behind Cohn, a YOUNG MAN STAGGERS THROUGH, half-naked. Cohn waves him away as:

ADAMS

It doesn't matter what other people think.

COHN

I wasn't asking for your advice.

Cohn ERUPTS INTO A COUGHING FIT. Wincing at the sound:

ADAMS

Roy, are you all right?

COHN

Overindulged last night. You know how people drink at wakes. I enjoyed calling around for your number, though.

ADAMS

I really have to--

COHN

Alexandria. Three-bedroom colonial?

ADAMS

As a matter of fact, yes.

HOLDING ON COHN NOW, his tone increasingly TAUNTING, the old edge creeping back in:

COHN

I can just picture it now. House after house of happy little families. No divorcees or, god forbid, *bachelors*.

(MORE)

COHN (CONT'D)

No Jews, I'm guessing, although I'm sure everyone's very open-minded. No Negroes, of course, except maybe as help. What a noble crusade you undertook, preserving freedom for all Americans as long as they're just like you.

(beat)

Hello? John?

But there's no answer from the other end. Cohn looks at the receiver. TAPS IT. Nothing.

Sighing, he HANGS UP THE PHONE. Dials again. This time he gets a BUSY SIGNAL.

Off his face as it HARDENS--

INT. ADAMS DINING ROOM

CLOSE ON the receiver of the phone -- left off the hook on the living room floor.

EXT. ADAMS HOUSE - SAME

Adams and Margaret help Rebecca into the car. Margaret waves hello to the family next door, who are in the midst of the same routine. Lemony sunshine, kids laughing, American flags snapping on porch after porch ...

Cohn wasn't right. But he wasn't wrong, either.

CUT TO BLACK.

THEN:

John G. Adams had a long and prestigious career in public service, working as a lawyer, consultant and educator. He died in 2003.

Joseph McCarthy, who at his peak was supported by fifty percent of Americans, was formally condemned by his Senate colleagues and is now viewed as one of the most shameful and ignominious figures in political history. He died of cirrhosis in 1957.

Roy Cohn went on to work for George Steinbrenner, John Gotti, Rupert Murdoch and Roger Stone, amongst many others, but his most famous client was Donald Trump.

He died of AIDS in 1986.