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"Continueds" at the page breaks on scenes that go from one
page to another.

BREAKING BAD

"No Mas"

Episode #301

Written by
Vince Gilligan

Directed by
Bryan Cranston

Production Draft
WHITE - 8/3/09

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BREAKING BAD

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Cast List

WALT
SKYLER
JESSE
WALTER, JR.
HANK
MARIE

THE COUSINS
GUS
DONALD MARGOLIS
CARMEN
PAMELA ORBIC
BARRY
GROUP LEADER
SAD-FACED GIRL
WIDE-EYED BOY
FRIENDLY GUY
FIRST ANCHOR
SECOND ANCHOR
THIRD ANCHOR
FIRST REPORTER
SECOND REPORTER
MIDDLE-AGED WITNESS
HOLLY
OLD MEXICAN MAN (Non-Speaking)

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Set List

Interiors:

WHITE HOUSE
LIVING ROOM
DINING ROOM
HIGH SCHOOL
CHEMISTRY CLASSROOM
GYMNASIUM
THE BEACHCOMBER
WALT'S STUDIO
LOS POLLOS HERMANOS
LAW OFFICE
ANTEROOM
LUXURY REHAB
THE ONION
SANTA MUERTE SHRINE
WALT'S AZTEK
TRUCK BED

Exteriors:

WHITE HOUSE
BACK YARD
DRIVEWAY
LUXURY REHAB
THE BEACHCOMBER APARTMENTS
LOS POLLOS HERMANOS
OFFICE BUILDING
MEXICAN DESERT
MEXICAN VILLAGE
EDGE OF TOWN
MEXICAN SHACK
GREAT OUTDOORS
BORDER DESERT

TEASER

1 BLUE SKY

1

Fills frame. A deep, polarizer blue with fluffy white clouds (hopefully), it's the kind of sky planes sometimes fall from.

We TILT DOWN from it to find...

EXT. MEXICAN DESERT - DAY

This isn't a border town, but farther south. There's nothing in the way of pavement or sidewalks -- just two red dirt roads that cross in the middle of nowhere, littered on both sides by old adobe and haphazard shanties.

It's too hot to do much of anything. A few scrawny chickens hunt and peck. A few RESIDENTS brave the midday sun... but we make out OTHERS in silhouette, sitting in the shade of porches and such, minding their own business.

This town has a kind of Old West feel. It might put us in mind of the opening to "The Wild Bunch." All is quiet. No activity of note. Not until...

... An OLD MEXICAN MAN comes crawling on his belly.

What a face. If Fellini were alive and directing spaghetti westerns, this is a face he'd cast. With skin tanned to the hue of a well-oiled catcher's mitt and wrinkles deep enough to hide M&Ms, this man is somewhere between seventy and three hundred years old. Here he comes, making his way on knees and elbows padded with a filthy swaddling of tied-on RAGS.

Why the hell is he crawling? Nobody's behind him, holding a gun to his head. He does it of his own volition. Dirty and dusty, grimacing into the broiling sun, prostrating himself, he moves slowly but deliberately. Left elbow left knee -- right elbow right knee -- he's been at it for hours.

As for the townsfolk, they couldn't care less. A bland-faced MESTIZO WOMAN crosses the street, side-stepping him as if he were a mud puddle. A beat-up truck casually steers around him. The old man pays no attention to them, either. All the while, his eyes never leave some unseen goal in the distance.

Heat haze shimmers around him. Right through the middle of town this *viejito* crawls -- a truly weird sight.

It gets weirder. Now we notice a SECOND CRAWLING MAN. He's younger, this one, but just as determinedly masochistic. As is a THIRD MAN... a FOURTH... and a crawling WOMAN or two.

All have knees and elbows makeshift-padded for long-distance prostration. And all, we notice, are headed in one direction. They take slightly different tracks, perhaps. Some crawl a bit faster, others slower. But they're all making for the same destination.

When a few additional CRAWLERS appear from one perpendicular alley or another, their paths soon converge with the others. For these pilgrims, all roads lead to Rome.

Soon, another out-of-place sight -- but this one actually elicits glances from the townsfolk. Cruising into view, parking in the center of everything is a shiny new MERCEDES COUPE. Probably you could trade the entire town for this car and still be a couple of grand shy.

In the Mercedes sit two youngish men. Wearing narrow-labeled Canali suits, their eyes hidden behind designer sunglasses, they take their styling cues from GQ Magazine, circa 1988.

We'll call these two THE COUSINS -- but picture them more as brothers, or maybe even identical twins. They are ice-cold bad-assedness personified. "Trouble" with a capital T, which rhymes with C, which stands for "Cartel."

They watch impassively as pilgrims crawl left and right around their car. These Cousins -- are they here to pull off a drug deal? Shake somebody down? Maybe commit a murder?

Nope. They climb out of their Mercedes. With a silent glance to one another... they get down on knees and elbows and CRAWL. They don't give a moment's worry to their expensive Italian suits.

As we TRACK LOW with The Cousins, we note their distinctive, hand-tooled COWBOY BOOTS. We watch as their SILVER TOE-CAPS press into the dried mud, leaving IMPRINTS.

MACRO-CLOSE on one of these imprints -- it's a perfect little HUMAN SKULL. Four tracks of skulls, one for each boot, stretch into the distance (*PRODUCTION NOTE: we may need to rent a specialty lens for this particular shot*).

2

EXT. MEXICAN VILLAGE - EDGE OF TOWN - DAY

2

Ten or fifteen pilgrims BELLY-CRAWL. The Cousins are among them. Now, finally, we see where everyone is headed.

A little SHRINE sits on the edge of town. It's just a squat adobe building, nothing fancy -- but it's painted in bright colors which really make it pop. One-third house of worship, two-thirds tourist trap, it's garish as hell.

3

INT. SANTA MUERTE SHRINE - DAY

3

At the doorless threshold, white-hot light blasts in from outside... and yet the interior quickly falls off into GLOOM. It's almost as if the sun is afraid to come any further.

Our pilgrims crawl in, joining others who are already here. The Cousins arrive, rising to their knees and removing their sunglasses. It's tight inside -- lots of sweaty, needy worshippers and scores and scores of flickering CANDLES, green, yellow and gold.

Everybody faces a sort of altar-wall at the front. Standing before them, greeting all with outstretched arms, is a skeleton in a lace dress and a veil. This is SANTA MUERTE, and these people have come a long, hard way to pray to her (*Although we're taking some liberties, this is a real cult down in Mexico, with believers numbering in the millions. Check it out on Google or YouTube*).

Stacked high at the Saint's feet are hundreds of offerings: tobacco, tequila and rum, fruit and flowers, coins, food. The altar-wall is thickly papered with yellowing letters, plus photographs old and new. These represent requests -- leave an offering, light a candle and say a prayer, then hope your request gets answered. All around, folks murmur in Spanish, talking to their beloved *La Nina Blanca*.

Taking their turn at the wall, the two Cousins have a request of their own. One pulls a fat candle from the pocket of his jacket, lights it and sets it at the Saint's feet. This candle stands out from all others, as it is BLACK.

The other Cousin produces a wrinkled sheet of paper. He folds it open and carefully tacks it to the altar-wall. Both men settle back, staring intently at it.

CLOSE ON the sheet. It's a drawing of a man's face. Kind of like a police sketch. Maybe it's a bit crude and homemade... but we instantly recognize this bald, average man. He has a mustache, dark glasses and a black, narrow-brimmed hat.

It's HEISENBERG, the drug-dealing alter-ego of WALTER WHITE.

Our two scary Cousins glare at Heisenberg. Off them, wrathful and unblinking, their lips moving in silent prayer... and us thinking "*Oh shit. THIS can't be good...*"

... We begin SEASON THREE.

END TEASER

ACT ONE

4

FUZZY, COLORED LIGHTS

4

Fill frame. We are MACRO-CLOSE on a TV SCREEN. We're so close, in fact, that its tiny PIXELS stand out INDIVIDUALLY. Many colors sweep through, making an unseen larger image.

ANNOUNCER'S VOICE

We interrupt our scheduled programming to bring you breaking news.

FIRST ANCHOR

Good afternoon. In the last several minutes, KABQ has received dozens of reports of what appears to be a crashed aircraft -- possibly two aircraft -- on Albuquerque's east side. As of yet details are scarce, but callers describe witnessing an explosion overhead, followed by falling debris. Visible now toward the Sandias are two large columns of smoke, which seem to indicate...

Throughout this and the FOLLOWING, we slowly PULL OUT from the television screen. We begin to make out faces, details. What follows is a MONTAGE of NEWS on DIFFERENT STATIONS.

It's a constant flow of different REPORTERS and ANCHORPEOPLE, all of them CROSS-FADING IN and OUT. The conceit is that we're watching ONE WEEK'S WORTH of coverage of this big, growing story -- this airline disaster which ended ep. 213.

Hopefully we can pull this off with seven ON-CAMERA talkers, rounded out with another few unseen LOOP GROUPERS. IMPORTANT! Our on-camera folks -- when they REPEAT -- should have WARDROBE CHANGES to help sell a passage of time.

FIRST REPORTER

... Crash investigators with the National Transportation Safety Board are expected on-site as early as this evening. However, officials warn that with a debris field of this magnitude, the investigation and clean-up may stretch well into the week. Meanwhile, Wayfarer Airlines has issued the following statement...

SECOND ANCHOR

... Boeing 737 was being re-routed, or "vectored" through the airspace, which is standard procedure according to a spokesman for the FAA. The eight-seat King Air 350 was a charter flight operating out of Saint George, Utah, bound for...

SECOND REPORTER

... Fatalities appear to be limited to passengers and crew. However, damage to property on the ground is widespread -- and in the case of the Vista Verde Apartment complex, which caught fire after being...

MIDDLE-AGED WITNESS

... It sounded like hail. Like heavy hailstones, just bump-bump-bump, all over the neighborhood. Crashing down, just little... pieces of things. God, I-I...

All through this, we round out our talking heads with some exceedingly well-chosen STOCK FOOTAGE.

Hopefully, we see firefighters and cops coming and going... black smoke rising... investigators working a crash site... tense and weeping crowds... news helicopter footage, etc.

It would also be nice to see our own familiar, moon-suited NTSB TECHNICIANS at work. However, just know that we're not going to repeat any footage of them we shot in season two.

Furthermore, any new aftermath stuff we do shoot should not be shot in Walt's neighborhood. The idea here is that debris rained all over Albuquerque. This was a city-wide disaster, and other neighborhoods fared far worse than Walt's.

THIRD ANCHOR

(in SPANISH, no subtitles)

... *We have confirmation now on one hundred sixty-seven deaths...*

FIRST ANCHOR

... Final death toll stands at one hundred sixty-seven, making Wayfarer Five-One-Five the worst air disaster in the United States since June of...

FIRST REPORTER

... One hundred and sixty-seven. This mid-air collision has left many wondering how such an accident could take place in a system with so many safeguards. Yesterday's recovery of the 737's flight recorder, or so-called "black box," will hopefully shed light -- though sources close to the investigation hint that human error on the ground may have played a factor.

SECOND REPORTER

... Gene, the allegations just keep coming that the collision which brought down Flight Five-One-Five was caused by improper air traffic control. It's a story which seems to be taking on a life of its own, yet so far federal...

SECOND ANCHOR

... Bombshell confirmation out of Oklahoma City today as the FAA officially confirmed it was indeed a lone air traffic controller's fateful mistake which brought about the crash of Wayfarer Five-One-Five. Let's go now to...

THIRD ANCHOR

(in Spanish, no subtitles)
... *Caused by an air traffic controller based right here in Albuquerque. Sources report the man's name as Donald Margolis...*

Now, flashing onto screen comes an old employee photo some enterprising journalist dug up. It's of DONALD, Jane's dad.

FIRST REPORTER

... Donald Margolis, a nineteen year veteran of the FAA's Air Route Traffic Control Center in Albuquerque. With a previously unblemished record which dates...

FIRST ANCHOR

... Source would only confirm Margolis recently returned to work after a five-week absence which was due to, quote, "a personal loss"...

Cut to bedlam. A scrum of REPORTERS moves along a hallway (or down a sidewalk -- indoors or out doesn't really matter). What's important is they're chasing DONALD and his ATTORNEYS. We watch this from the jogging POV of a NEWS CAMERA.

This is obviously footage we need to generate. Dressed in a suit, poor Donald is the proverbial deer in headlights as he gets showered with questions and has to push his way through. We feel so sorry for him. He looks lost and uncomprehending.

SECOND REPORTER

... Victims' families are loudly demanding answers. While it's now known that Margolis had recently lost a daughter to a drug overdose, there's little to indicate...

A photo of JANE, one taken in happier times, is broadcast.

SECOND ANCHOR

... Jane Margolis, aged twenty-six, apparently had a long history of substance abuse. Friends of the family say the death of his only child hit Margolis particularly hard. Coming as it did little more than a month before, many question the timing of his return to work...

5 INT. WHITE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MORNING - CONTINUOUS 5

Now, we finally begin to PULL BACK outside of this TV screen until we reveal that the television broadcasting all this news is the one in Walt's very own living room.

Before the TV sits the armchair. Although it's currently empty, up till recently someone has taken a long-term RESIDENCE in it.

We know this because of the detritus in and around it: a weary old blanket, a pillow, a half-eaten sandwich, eyedrops, a Kleenex box, soda cans, a coffee cup, a week's worth of scattered newspapers (hopefully, at least one of them has a FULL-PAGE COVER about the airline disaster).

Yes, somebody clearly spent the last entire, hellish WEEK in front of this TV. But who is that someone? Right now, a WIDE view of the house shows it DESERTED.

6 EXT. WHITE HOUSE - BACKYARD - MORNING - CONTINUOUS 6

Out here on the patio we continue to hear that TV NEWS playing faintly in the house. Without seeing inside through the curtains (as we obviously have a set/location mismatch), we PAN off the open sliding glass door to find...

... WALTER WHITE seated by his swimming pool.

It's been a week since the end of 213. The NTSB guys have long since come and gone. All is cleaned up except for Walt. Unshaven, unshowered, he sits alone in his bathrobe, engaged in an activity viewers may remember from our Pilot episode.

Walt lights MATCHES. He lets them burn, then tosses them in the pool. Several books' worth are in there already -- little black squiggles gently bobbing on the surface.

Walt is barely aware of what he's doing. He looks like shit and feels even worse. Self-loathing, bereft, haunted, he hasn't slept in days.

CLOSE -- Walt is down to his very LAST MATCH. His fingers pause, hesitating to tear it loose. Instead, emotion now wells up inside him... as does an IMPULSE.

Up he lurches from his chair, matchbook in hand. CUT TO:

7 EXT. WHITE HOUSE - BACKYARD - MINUTES LATER 7

BLACKNESS. CLANG! Suddenly we can see as Walt removes the lid. We realize we're INSIDE his CHARCOAL GRILL, looking straight up at Walt and the blue sky above. He yanks out the wire cook-top and tosses it, making room.

What is Walt dumping on us? Is this... wait... MONEY?

NEW ANGLE -- it is indeed. Emptying his familiar black duffel into the Weber, Walt is a man with a fever. Guilt and self-directed anger have whipped him to a frenzy. Wrapped stacks of bills pile Matterhorn-high. Some tumble to the ground. Walt grabs the strays, piling on every last dollar of his METH EARNINGS.

Splurp-splurp-splurp goes the lighter fluid, soaking all. There's a wild, "fuck it!" gleam in Walt's eyes as he tears loose the last match and strikes it to life.

He's not really gonna do this, is he? Oh, hell yeah he is. WHOOOOOMPH! Big orange flames. Walt stands by, watching with grim satisfaction as the top bills curl and blacken.

Funny how short-lived satisfaction can be. It quickly dawns on Walt -- *what the FUCK am I DOING?!* Eyes wide, he GRABS up the grill -- *AAH! Hot, HOT!!* -- stumbling with it toward the pool. A few wads of burning cash spill onto the pavement.

KER-BLOOOSH! Into the pool goes the grill and money in a fat sizzle of STEAM. Meantime, the sleeve of Walt's bathrobe has caught FIRE. He spins and flails it through the air, but it isn't going out -- so into the water he BELLY-FLOPS.

(Obviously, the particulars of this fire gag all depend on what we can actually pull off safely. To be determined.)

Walt pops back to the surface, looking like a drowned rat. He stands chest-high, frantically splashing water at the last few lumps of cash still BURNING poolside. Off our hero...

8 EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY 8

To establish. We're amongst the tall buildings downtown, though this particular one is NEW to us (let's also grab as many angles of our DEA BUILDING as we can while we're here).

9 INT. LAW OFFICE - ANTEROOM - DAY 9

A quiet, tasteful lobby. Currently the only client waiting, SKYLER sits here beside baby HOLLY, asleep in her carrier.

Skyler stares into space. This has been one hell of a week, one hell of a month. There's a lot on her mind right now -- all of it complicated and painful.

Of note: she wears a turquoise RIBBON pinned to her blouse. We CREEP IN on Skyler, utterly lost in thought. Until...

RECEPTIONIST'S VOICE

Ms. White? She's ready for you.

(Let's keep this receptionist completely offscreen so we can simply use a LOOP GROUP VOICE. Yay austerity!) Off Skyler, forcing a smile and rising to her feet, we CUT TO:

10 INT. LAW OFFICE - DAY 10

PAMELA ORBIC, attorney at law, smiles down at baby Holly, playing with her tiny hand.

PAMELA

You are one little cutie! Yes, you are. What, nine, ten weeks..?

SKYLER

(smiling)

Close. Two months to the day.

PAMELA

God, I love 'em at that age. You just wanna eat 'em up.

Although Pamela, like Saul Goodman, is smart and good at her job, that's where all similarities end. This woman is quiet, caring and professional -- the opposite of tacky, flashy and full of shit. Like Skyler, she wears a turquoise RIBBON.

The woman takes her seat. She and Skyler are arranged around a coffee table instead of across a desk from one another -- it's a setup that's meant to relax with its informality.

PAMELA

Alright. I usually open with "So sorry you're here..."

(off Sky's sad smile)

Where would you like to begin?

Skyler sighs and launches into it, a bit nervous.

SKYLER

I really just need this quick and easy. As quick as, you know, something like this can be.

PAMELA

Okay. Is that mutual? Does your husband go along with that?

(off Sky's hesitation)

Does he know?

SKYLER

I mean, he certainly knows we're separated. So...

PAMELA

Has he moved out?

SKYLER

We're in the process of moving him out. Yeah. Today, hopefully. In the meantime, my son and daughter and I are staying with my sister.

PAMELA

Wait. So you've moved out?

SKYLER

Well, just temporarily. Only until he could get his things together. That was supposed to be last week, but then came the crash, and...

PAMELA

Oh god, you weren't one of the --

SKYLER

(nodding)

-- Right beneath the flight path. We had debris land right in our yard, all over our neighborhood...

PAMELA

Mm. Terrible.

SKYLER

Apparently, you know, even... parts of bodies..? I mean, I couldn't bring myself to go over there.

PAMELA

Jesus. So awful.

SKYLER

God, I know. Anyway, I certainly wasn't ready to move us back. But... it's time. And we're driving my sister and her husband up a wall, I'm sure.

PAMELA

Well, you definitely want to maintain residency in your actual home. It just puts you in a better position in regards to custody. Two children, you said?

SKYLER

Yeah. Holly here, and a son in high school -- Walter, Junior.
(firm now)
They need to stay with me.

PAMELA

Okay.
(writes it down)
How long have you been married?

SKYLER

Sixteen years.

PAMELA

And it's not an apartment, it's a house that you live in?

(off Skyler's nod)

Do you own outright, or is there a mortgage, or do you --

SKYLER

-- Definitely a mortgage. We've got maybe fifteen years on it.

PAMELA

What about other debts or assets?

Do you feel you have a good understanding of you and your husband's financial situation?

Skyler hesitates. It's sure hard to answer "yes" given the mysterious hundred grand Walt used to pay his medical bills (see ep. 213). Pamela notes Sky's half-hearted shrug/nod.

PAMELA

Is your husband employed?

SKYLER

Yes. He's a high school teacher. Chemistry teacher.

PAMELA

Did you pay for any of his schooling? For instance, did you help put him through, maybe, a master's program or...

SKYLER

I pretty much supported us while he did some post-doctoral work. But really, here's the thing: I am not looking for any kind of loopholes, or, I dunno --

PAMELA

-- No, no loopholes. I just intend that every one of my clients get a full and honest accounting of what it is they owe, and what it is they own. To that end, I say let's leave no stone unturned.

(supportive smile)

You'd be amazed what I've seen partners hide from one another.

Though she tries to conceal it, Skyler's dismay is evident.

SKYLER

The financial end of things is something he and I can deal with. We'll split everything fifty-fifty and just be done with it. So...
(thin smile)
Yeah. Quick and easy's all I need.

Ohhh-kay. This attorney knows there's some very big detail that Skyler is choosing to leave out. The woman studies her for a moment -- then shoots gently, but straight.

PAMELA

Who're we looking to protect here -- you or your husband?

Nervous Skyler just stares at her, not answering. Finally:

PAMELA

Well. Think about that. And if you do choose to retain me, just know there's certain information I'll need if I'm going to represent you properly. Okay?

Skyler considers... then rises to her feet.

SKYLER

Okay. I will think about that.

Off the two of them shaking hands -- friendly, but strained:

11 EXT. WHITE HOUSE - DAY

11

All's quiet. As before, no debris or NTSB, all of which are long-since cleaned up, packed up and gone. However, as we focus on Walt's house, seen from here across the street...

... We realize we're looking at it past a WHITE STYROFOAM CROSS and an arrangement of wilting FLOWERS. This is a tacky but heartfelt REMEMBRANCE that sits in the front of a neighbor's yard. Perhaps placed where a body part was found?

Framing past this CROSS in f.g., we see a BLACK TRUCK motor into view and park in the driveway beside Walt's Aztek.

CLOSER ANGLE -- HANK climbs out of his truck. This is his black Jeep Commander, by the way. It's the one that got shot up by Tuco back in ep. 202, and this is the first we're seeing of it since it's been repaired. No bullet holes.

It's in way better shape than Walt's Aztek, by the way. Though we don't make a deal of it, the Aztek still has the BROKEN WINDSHIELD we noticed at the end of last season.

Hank stands by his truck a moment. He does not wanna be here right now. *Ah shit... let's go get this over with.*

12

EXT. WHITE HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY - CONTINUOUS

12

One last black shard of torched CASH floats in the pristine blue of the pool. A net dips into frame and scoops it up.

Walt has cleaned up everything. Surprisingly, that even includes himself. He's wearing clothes now. He's showered and shaved. There's no sign of anything amiss, and no sign of the money (and by the way, in the previous scene it should play that only a couple thousand bucks went up in flames).

Walt glances around, nods to himself. He's still miserable as hell, but at least all is in order. From inside the house, we hear the faint, insistent ringing of the DOORBELL.

Walt ignores it. Instead, he thinks to check the pool's skimmer basket. He kneels down, favoring his side (remember, he had lung surgery six weeks ago) and pulls the lid.

There are a few blackened specks of burnt bills... but what the heck is that WHITE THING rattling around in the flow at the bottom of the basket? Walt reaches, pulls it out.

Oh, god. It dawns on Walt what this is. Us, too. It's the plastic EYEBALL from the pink teddy bear. Missed by the NTSB cleanup crew, it's a macabre reminder of the airliner crash.

HANK (O.S.)

Walt? --

Here comes Hank into view from around the side of the house. Instinctively, Walt tucks the plastic eye in his pocket.

HANK

Hey, Buddy.

Walt rises, nods to his brother-in-law. Grim, uncomfortable silence. Again, Hank really does not want to be doing this. In his mind, this is coming between a man and his castle.

HANK

Listen, I, uh...

(he shrugs; *what to say?*)

... It's time.

Off Walt, staring at him... then lowering his head in assent:

13 EXT. WHITE HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY 13

An hour later. The rear hatch of Hank's Commander stands open. Inside, the back is packed with Walt's sad belongings: clothes, shoes, books and papers piled high in various boxes.

Parked next to it, Walt's own Aztek also has its hatch open and is filling up with stuff. Hank and Walt load both vehicles from a communal pile they've made atop the driveway.

Walt is listless and lagging. Hank moves faster, as he just wants to get outta here. He talks fast, too (he wears a turquoise REMEMBRANCE RIBBON, by the way).

HANK

... THE single SHITTIEST week since 9/11 -- hands-down. This is it! We're living it! I mean, and I say this with some authority, 'cause we definitely had some shitty weeks the last six months. But this right here? Call Guinness, man. Call... freakin'...
(runs out of words)

Jesus, am I talking too much? I am. But look. The situation between? -- and I am not asking, by the way. Not my business, I do NOT wanna get in the middle of you two. But this current situation? I say beat a little tactical retreat... regroup... you know? Absence makes the...

(gives up; helpless shrug)

Ah. I'm just pulling for you, man.

Walt says nothing. Is he even listening? There's one last item on the driveway left to load -- that infamous, big BLACK DUFFEL BAG (actually, it'd be nice if some second-to-last item hid the duffel from our sight until now).

Walt reaches down to pick it up, but Hank intervenes.

HANK

Whoa, no heavy lifting. I got it.

Hank hoists the duffel -- wow.

HANK

Jesus, whaddya got in this thing?
Cinderblocks?

Walt considers. Fuck it.

WALT

Half a million in cash.

Hank laughs, delighted Walt hasn't lost his sense of humor.

HANK

That's the spirit! --

Oof! He hoists the bag into the back of his Jeep, then slams the hatch. He heads for the driver's seat.

HANK

Alright. See you over there.

Walt manages a nod, watches as Hank climbs into his truck, cranks it and motors off. Walt listlessly closes the back of his own vehicle.

He pauses to gaze at his home sweet home. He stares up at it like a man headed off to the gallows. Wistful and burdened with regret, Walt would give anything right now for a redo -- for a chance to change the past.

But that's not possible, and he knows it. Walt heads for his Aztek, climbs in and starts it up. Off him, driving out of frame and leaving his home behind him...

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

14 EXT. LUXURY REHAB - MORNING 14

CLOSE ON a flat of FLOWERS. Brilliant yellow and blue, they stand out against the rust-red soil as HANDS plant them.

We reveal these hands belong to... JESSE. Kneeling low, he labors intently, lost in his work. He'd make a pretty good gardener if he put his mind to it.

Jesse looks better -- physically -- than when we last saw him. He's off the junk and his color has improved. No dark circles under his eyes. His hair is neat and noticeably SHORTER (keep in mind that though it's been a week since 213 ended, it's been six weeks since we laid eyes on Jesse).

We can't say he looks happy, however. Not miserable, either. He is simply... existing. Call it "autopilot."

WIDE on Jesse, tiny in frame as he and other PATIENTS go about their pleasant rehab chores. The terra cotta ONION BUILDING is behind them. It'd be nice if we could get this during a striking sunrise or sunset. Over it, PRELAP:

GROUP LEADER (V.O.)
Who's here for self-improvement?

15 INT. LUXURY REHAB - THE ONION - MORNING 15

Later. Focus on Jesse, who is one patient in a circle of ten. All these folks wear somewhat similiar GREEN clothes. The effect should play like an attempt at *esprit de corps*.

GROUP LEADER
C'mon, gimme a show of hands. Who among you is here hoping they can actively improve who they are?

Sure. Sounds good. Patients tentatively raise their hands until everyone does it. Jesse, a million miles away, catches on a beat behind the others and raises his hand, too.

GROUP LEADER
Yeah..? See, that's your first mistake. You should be here to learn self-acceptance.

Up till now, it's like Jesse wasn't even here. But that last line breaks through, just a little.

It's subtle, but... off Jesse, starting to pay attention:

16 EXT. WHITE HOUSE - MORNING 16

We're low in the street, looking up at the house. The Aztek is gone. A fragment of yellow POLICE LINE TAPE -- a reminder of the air disaster -- lazily skitters through frame in f.g. (PRODUCTION NOTE: split-diopter shot?)

17 INT. WHITE HOUSE - DINING ROOM - MORNING 17

Skyler and WALTER, JR. eat breakfast. There's no place setting at Walt's empty chair -- a glaring absence.

Nearby where mom can keep an eye on her, baby HOLLY lies in her carrier or somesuch, fidgeting happily. Skyler ventures the occasional glance at her teenaged son -- who will NOT fucking look at her throughout this entire scene.

Talk about the cold shoulder. All Walter, Jr. knows is that his mom kicked his dad out of the house and won't say why.

Stony, stony silence. Skyler tries for chipper.

SKYLER

Honey, want another waffle..?

(a beat)

Still got the iron out. I could cut up some bananas...

Jesus, homemade waffles, even. Unfortunately, this does nothing to thaw Walter, Jr. Now, their kitchen phone RINGS.

SKYLER'S VOICE

Hi, you've reached Walt, Skyler, Flynn and Holly! Please leave us a message.

WALT'S VOICE

Uh. Hey. Hello, everybody! Good morning! I was just... checking in. Thought I'd uh, pass along the current contact information. I mean, certainly you can always reach me on the cell, I've always got that on, but in terms of a mailing address... I am here at "The Beachcomber," and you know what? It's actually very nice! Very pleasant. Not as high-end as the Oakwood, but you know, not so corporate. So, uh. Gee, yeah. That address. That address is...

Throughout this, Skyler remains poker-faced for the sake of her son -- no obvious displays of displeasure. Junior rises to his feet, gathers his crutches and heads for the phone.

SKYLER

Would you please just --

She changes her mind about stopping him. It doesn't matter anyhow. Ignoring his mom as studiously as she ignores her husband's message, the teenager picks up the receiver.

WALTER, JR.

Hey Dad, it's me.

(listens a beat)

No, I'm not okay. I don't know what the hell is going on! Nobody tells me jack-shit around here!

SKYLER

Flynn...

Walt, Jr. still won't look at her. Strictly into the phone:

WALTER, JR.

Whatever. I don't even care anymore. Can you just give me a ride to school?

SKYLER

I'll take you to school.

WALTER, JR.

(into phone)

Yeah. No, I'm ready now.

SKYLER

Flynn, I'm taking you to school.

WALTER, JR.

(into phone)

Alright, I'm here. See you soon.
Bye.

He hangs up. Having utterly blown off his mom, Junior clunks into the living room and sits waiting, glowering at the front door. You can practically see the black storm cloud of petulance hovering over his head.

Skyler remains seated at the dining table, struggling to stay patient. Off her, frustrated and grieving and not allowed by circumstance to even explain herself to her son...

18 INT. THE BEACHCOMBER - WALT'S STUDIO - MORNING 18

CLOSE ON SANDWICH FIXINGS. Peanut butter gets spread on one slice of bread... strawberry jelly gets spread on the other. Walt stands here in the tiny kitchenette, making his lunch. He's dressed for work. His cell phone lies nearby.

Jesus. Is Walt making a sandwich, or is he assembling a communications satellite? He works at this thing like it's some challenge of the utmost importance to humanity.

Peanut butter and jelly go on just so, in equal proportions. The two slices are carefully mated. Off come the crusts, sliced with a sharp knife. Only now, there's trouble -- one side of the sandwich is a little jagged. Walt frowns down at it, fiddling with the loose edge. He nervously strokes at his mustache -- *what to do? What to do?*

Wow. OCD, anyone? As Walt stands here, we cut WIDE behind him, taking in this dreary little furnished apartment. This is the kind of place middle-aged bachelors go to die.

BZZZZZZZZZ -- we hear the faint vibration of a CELL PHONE. Walt turns our way, comes looking for it. He finds it in the bottom of a suitcase -- it's his second, DRUG PHONE, still sealed in its ZipLock baggie from when he had it hidden in the toilet tank at home.

BLEEP! The sound of a TEXT MESSAGE getting left. Walt peers at the phone in his hand. His eyes narrow.

Walt's POV: CLOSE ON the cell phone's tiny screen. One word appears -- "POLLOS."

Uh-oh. It's GUS, Walt's high-volume meth buyer at Los Pollos Hermanos. It's okay if you don't remember, as we'll spell it out later. In the meantime, just know that getting this call for a meeting doesn't sit well with Walt. He's in no mood to think about the life of crime which got him here.

Walt tosses the bagged phone back in its suitcase and returns to worrying over his sandwich.

19 INT. HIGH SCHOOL - CHEMISTRY CLASSROOM - MORNING 19

The door opens immediately before us, revealing a waiting class of CHEMISTRY STUDENTS. We FOLLOW HANDHELD, Michael Mann-style, just over Walt's shoulder as he crosses the room to his desk at the front. He rounds to face everybody.

WALT

Well. Good morning. I apologize
for running a bit late, I uh...

Walt trails off as kids start CLAPPING for him. It begins with one or two teacher's pets, but quickly spreads via peer pressure to the ENTIRE CLASS. Kids are applauding Walt's return to work after lung surgery.

We finally show Walt's face... and the surprise it contains.

WALT

Uh. T-Thank you, I...
(forces a smile)
Thank you. It's good to be back.

He gives a little "settle down" motion -- he appreciates the sentiment, but as he's not feeling much like a hero these days, it makes him uncomfortable. He simply wants to get back to work so that he can bury himself in it.

WALT

Alright, so where'd you leave off
with your substitute? Esters? Did
you get as far as esters..?

As he checks some paperwork, the building's P.A. SYSTEM crackles to life overhead. It's assistant principal CARMEN.

CARMEN'S VOICE

*May I have your attention, please?
Good morning, everybody. As all of
you know... very well... last week,
our city suffered a terrible
tragedy. One that none of us will
probably ever forget. And that is
why, this morning, we are going to
take a little time out of our
schedule, and we are going to come
together as a family. Just to
check how everyone is doing.*

Walt glances up through his eyebrows -- say what?

CARMEN'S VOICE

*So, teachers, please accompany your
students to the gym -- in a quiet,
orderly fashion, please. And...
let's rap.*

Students glance to one another, then quietly rise to their feet and gather their belongings. Off Walt, dreading this:

20 INT. HIGH SCHOOL - GYMNASIUM - MORNING - LATER

20

CLOSE ON a familiar face -- BARRY, the student from ep. 207. The one to whom Walt said "Don't bullshit a bullshitter." Here he is, sitting cross-legged on the gym floor, speaking into a RADIO MIKE. And yes, he's at it again.

BARRY

... I just find it, you know, really, really hard to... concentrate. In the aftermath. Because of all the horrors, you know, we... perceived. They really get inside your brain, and uh...
(sad shrug)

In college, they have this thing where if your roommate kills himself -- like, if you come home and find him hanging in the closet or whatever? It's basically an automatic A. For you. And I just think that that level of compassion is... I just think it's something to think about. So...

Throughout this beautiful plea for understanding, we PULL BACK from Barry to include the STUDENTS and FACULTY around him. This gym is packed to the rafters. Kids fill the bleachers, and the rest sit here on the floor like Barry.

Faculty members mostly stand (save for a few "hip" teachers, who sit on the floor with their kids). Lots of those present wear turquoise REMEMBRANCE RIBBONS. CARMEN does. You can bet Barry's got one, too.

Walt does not. He stands near Carmen, who moderates this affair. Walt's arms are folded as if he's hugging himself -- as if he's trying to squash the discomfort he feels around "sharing."

He's in the minority. This faculty and these kids (aside from Barry) take this thing seriously. These students listen intently and respectfully. And why not? The air disaster truly has brought all of them together emotionally.

Carmen gets her microphone back from Barry. Moving on...

CARMEN

Okay. Thank you, Barry. Who wants to go next? No judgements, guys. Just say anything and everything that's on your mind.

A few hands go up. Carmen smiles supportively as she hands her mike to the nearest -- a SAD-FACED GIRL.

CARMEN

Here you go, Honey.

SAD-FACED GIRL

(into microphone)

I-I... I just keep asking myself,
"Why did this happen?" I mean...
if there's a God and all, why does
He allow all those innocent people
to die for no reason?

Seated on the lower bleachers, WALTER, JR. pipes up angrily.

WALTER, JR.

Who said anything about God? It
was some stupid air traffic
controller! --

SHOUTS of agreement go up -- righteous anger directed at Donald Margolis. "*Sue him!*" "*Lock his ass up!*" Stuff like that. CLOSE ON Walt, whose silent discomfort increases.

WALTER, JR.

Yeah, put him in jail! What's God
gotta do with it? --

CARMEN

L-Let's, let's keep things secular,
if we could. Stick with feelings.

SAD-FACED GIRL

Whatever. Anyhow, I haven't really
been sleeping much. Does anybody
else have that..?

(murmurs of agreement)

I-I just keep hearing that... that
sound. That boom. I was close
enough to hear it, like five or six
blocks away. It just plays over
and over in my head, like it won't
ever stop.

Her girlfriend beside her gives her a big, supportive hug. Throughout this crowd, sniffles and downcast faces. A few girls shed tears. A few boys look like they want to.

Walt, too, is affected -- but in a somewhat different way. Unbeknownst to everyone here, there's a guilt component to Walt's suffering. And if he were to shoulder it completely, it would probably kill him outright.

Therefore, he's got to fight it off. He's gotta breathe deep and go to his own private Idaho... and count the minutes until this goddamned, emo-porn assembly is over.

Carmen hands her microphone to a WIDE-EYED BOY.

WIDE-EYED BOY

Um. My neighbor? He heard the crash and he came outside, and he found, like, this seat? Like, this airline seat? Like you have on a airliner? And like, it was sitting perfectly upright in his front yard, right next to his Sea-Doo? 'Cause he's got, like, a Sea-Doo. And this seat had a pair of legs still buckled into it.

(ominous nod)

Human legs.

That tears it. Big, ragged SIGH from Walt.

WALT

Jesus H. Christ.

Shortly, Walt comes to realize people are looking his way. *Oh crap -- did I say that out loud?*

Sweet Carmen gives him a supportive little smile -- *you okay?* Covering nicely, Walt nods, manages a weak smile in return.

WALT

Just. Moved.

CARMEN

(into her mike)

Maybe we should hear from the faculty as well. Certainly this tragedy affected not only our students. Mr. White, would you like to say something..?

(before he can beg off)

And welcome back, by the way.

We're so glad to have you back.

She motions to everyone, and now -- *oh, fuck* -- yet again, people are APPLAUDING Walt! Carmen hands him the microphone.

Walt would rather play handball with his testicles, but no such luck. There's no escape. He's committed. And so...

WALT

Well. I guess I just wanna say...

(shrug)

... Look on the bright side.

"The bright side?" People frown, glance at one another. Silence. Walt clears his throat and goes for it.

WALT

Yeah. First of all, nobody on the ground was killed. An incident like this, over a populated urban center? That right there, that's some sort of minor miracle. So...

(*ooh, I got another one!*)

Plus, neither plane was full.

What, the 737 was something like, I believe, two-thirds full? Yeah?

Maybe three-quarters? At any rate, what you're left with casualty-wise is the fiftieth-worst air disaster. Tied for fiftieth, actually. There were actually fifty-three crashes through history that are just as bad or worse.

(*come on, people!*)

Tenerife. Anybody ever hear of Tenerife, in the Canary Islands?

In 1977, two fully loaded 747s crashed into each other on

Tenerife. You know how big a 747 is? Way bigger than a 737 --

and we're talking two of them!

Mind-boggling, really. Almost six hundred people died. Any of you ever even heard of that? I doubt it! Because you know why? People move on. They move on.

(nodding)

And we will, too. We'll move on.

We will get past this. Because that's what human beings do! We survive, and-and we survive and we overcome. So. Yeah.

Deep, hopeful breath -- *gee, that went pretty well!*

The way these eight hundred kids stare at him gets Walt realizing... *too soon?* Students are confused. Weirdered out. Walter, Jr. slouches on his bench, worried for his old man.

Carmen gently takes the microphone away from Walt. Off a squeal of MIKE FEEDBACK, then silence:

21 EXT. MEXICAN SHACK - DAY

21

Sun beats at the dust. We're looking at a squat, tumbledown hut built of adobe. Maybe we're on the edge of that village from the Teaser. Maybe not (as per schedule). Regardless, this is where live the poorest of the poor.

MOTHER sits in the deep shadow of the doorway, shucking corn. FATHER and teenaged SON hunker under the open hood of an ancient pickup truck. If they can get this rusty piece of crap running, it'll be a miracle.

The nine year-old DAUGHTER yanks stray tufts of grass and sits feeding them to a skinny GOAT tied to a post. Silence. It's too hot to talk, and these folks have nothing to say to each other anyway.

Patting her goat, the daughter is the first to notice the CLOUD of DUST coming their way from up the road. She slowly rises to her feet, stands watching as...

... A familiar MERCEDES purrs to a stop in front of the shack. Now the whole family turns to look. Father and mother stare, nervous, not blinking.

Here come the scary COUSINS, climbing out of their coupe. Taking their time. Oh god, are they gonna murder this entire family?

No, wait... they walk past everyone. Without a word, without a glance, they head for... a sagging CLOTHESLINE in the yard.

Off come their Canali suits. Not shy at all, these two strip down in the middle of the yard. Shiny PISTOLS in oxblood shoulder holsters get revealed. The Cousins hang them on whatever's convenient. Their fine clothes get dropped in the dirt as this bewildered family stands watching.

Now that they're down to silk boxer-briefs and wife-beaters of the finest Egyptian cotton, the two Cousins take their pick of the ragged CLOTHES which hang on the line.

The teenager is about to complain -- but his father knows better. With a curt shake of his head, he shuts up his son just as the boy opens his mouth.

Soon, the two Cousins are dressed just like this family -- dirt-poor and INCONSPICUOUS. The only thing that stands out about them are their SKULL-TOED COWBOY BOOTS. Yeah, they're keeping those babies. Plus the guns, of course.

Leaving their suits on the ground where they dropped them, the Cousins head back the way they came...

... Pausing when they get to the nine year-old daughter. They stop before her and her goat. Too curious and innocent to be scared, she just stares up at them.

In b.g., her parents fidget, seeing this -- but they don't dare come closer.

One Cousin glances to the other, then down at the girl. It's like that moment in the 1930 "Frankenstein" -- is the Monster going to play with the fraulein, or drown her in the lake?

Neither, it turns out. Instead, he bends down and hangs something on one of her goat's HORNS.

It's the fancy key to the MERCEDES. He gives it a twirl and walks off, leaving it spinning. CLOSE ANGLE PAST this KEY, left dangling here in f.g. as the Cousins leave it behind.

The family slowly gathers, watching the Cousins depart in their "new" clothes. These two scary, silent men have apparently left their expensive car in trade -- or maybe they just don't need it anymore. Without so much as a look back, they walk off on foot, headed for parts unknown.

Off these strange events...

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

22 EXT. WHITE HOUSE - AFTERNOON 22

Skyler's Grand Wagoneer is in the driveway. Marie's blue VW Beetle is beside it, parked where Walt's car used to belong.

The Aztek motors into frame, pulling to a stop behind these two vehicles. It sits there, idling.

23 INT. WALT'S AZTEK - AFTERNOON - CONTINUOUS 23

Walt stares at the house through his spiderwebbed windshield. Walter, Jr. remains where he is, his backpack in his lap. Instead of getting out, he studies his old man with concern.

Finally, feeling eyes on him, Walt turns to his son.

WALT

How's your Aunt Marie doing?

WALTER, JR.

(a beat)

Fine. I guess.

WALT

You say hello to her for me, would you?

Junior keeps watching his dad. Walt is subdued, yet tries to be chipper. The effect is inadvertently sad.

WALTER, JR.

(another beat)

Why don't you just come inside?
It's your house.

Boy, Walt surely would like to do just that. Instead:

WALT

No, I uh... nah.

He smiles faintly. Worried for his dad, and also disappointed in him (in that way Jim Backus disappointed James Dean by wearing the apron in "Rebel Without A Cause"), Walter, Jr. gathers his stuff and exits the car.

Walt gives a big, fake smile as he waves goodbye -- *everything's fine!* He lingers here a moment, not sure what to do next. It's not like he has anywhere to go.

24 INT. WHITE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON - CONTINUOUS 24

We peek out between the CURTAINS, out the front window at Walt's Aztek as it backs out of the driveway and motors off down the street. We reveal MARIE watching Walt go (*is there a way we can shoot this bit on location, then continue with the scene on our soundstage set?*)

Marie turns to Skyler, who sits across the way on the sofa.

MARIE

He's gone.

Skyler nods, a bit less tense now. As the front door unlatches, Marie quickly steps away from the window, makes like she wasn't spying. Walter, Jr. enters, his mood dark.

MARIE

Hey, Flynn! How's tricks?

WALTER, JR.

How's what?

MARIE

Tricks. It's an expression. How are you?

Not up for small talk, the teenager turns on his mom.

WALTER, JR.

Why you gotta treat him like this?

SKYLER

(quiet, yet patient)
Well, hello to you, too.

WALTER, JR.

I'm asking you a question! W-Why you gotta be like this?! Why can't you just TALK, even?!

MARIE

Flynn. Hey.

Marie points a warning finger at her nephew. *Ah, fuck this!* That's what the kid is thinking as he blows off both of them and powers away on his crutches to his bedroom.

Skyler sighs, just sits here. Marie glances at her and considers, then joins her on the sofa. Silence for a moment.

SLAM! There goes Junior's bedroom DOOR, closed and locked. Once Marie is sure she and her sister have privacy...

MARIE

Wow. Out of the mouths of babes,
huh?

(as Sky starts to stew)

Try not to hold it against him.
Poor kid's probably dying of
curiosity. I guess it's only
natural for him to be wondering,
you know. Wondering... what could
have possibly gone so wrong that...

SKYLER

(overlapping her)

Marie... Marie.

Marie finally throws up her hands.

MARIE

Well, I'm sorry! How am I supposed
to help you get over this if you
won't even tell me what Walt DID?

SKYLER

I don't remember asking you,
alright? You wanna be supportive?
Be supportive without all this
prying, for god's sake.

MARIE

"Prying." Oh, that's very --
(turns on a dime)
Did he cheat on you? He cheated on
you, didn't he?

Skyler abruptly rises and exits frame, headed for the kitchen or somesuch. Marie remains behind, calls after her.

MARIE

He must have! Why not just say
it?! --

Off Marie, left stewing now:

25

EXT. GREAT OUTDOORS - NIGHT

25

SPARKS. Brilliant red and orange. Hundreds of them. They rise through frame leaving crooked, whizzing trails across the night sky. We TILT DOWN and find their source...

... A crackling BONFIRE. We sense people sitting around it in the darkness. We get flickering glimpses (*This is a scene that can shoot pretty much anywhere, even in the grasslands surrounding Q Studios. Our schedule will determine*).

GROUP LEADER (O.S.)

It's that voice inside your head.
Man, it's that sneaky, rat-bastard,
twenty-four-seven voice.

We FIND the LEADER of this rehab group. He's the same guy we heard leading the discussion during the previous scene at the Onion. Perhaps we never showed his face that time around. Perhaps we're seeing it for the first time now.

He's a middle-aged guy. Probably younger than he looks. This is a dude who has clearly lived what he preaches.

GROUP LEADER

You guys know what I'm talking about. That voice that tells you you're not good enough.
(makes a face)
"Not good enough?" Not good enough for what? Not good enough to be what, President of the United States? Alright, so maybe you aren't that good.

A few dry chuckles from the men and women present. Among them, reveal JESSE... who isn't laughing, who isn't engaged.

He simply stares into the fire. We view him THROUGH it.

GROUP LEADER

But now... are you good enough to deserve your share of basic human happiness? Are you good enough to be okay with who and what you are?
(pokes at the fire)
I say yes.

Silence from the group... all of whom want to believe this.

All except Jesse, who snorts and gives a little shake of his head. Just enough for our Group Leader to notice.

GROUP LEADER

Of course, it doesn't matter what I say. It's your voice. You're the only one who hears it. Which makes you the only one who can fight it.

Finished poking at the fire, the man turns to our hero.

GROUP LEADER

We never hear from you, Jesse.
Tell me I'm fulla shit, man, I
don't mind. Just... whaddya say?
Let us in on it.

Thus (gently) put on the spot, Jesse glances around at the others -- a few of whom nod supportively. Self-conscious, Jesse shrugs and turns it around.

JESSE

So, like... what makes you the
expert?

GROUP LEADER

(friendly)

I don't think I ever said I was
that.

JESSE

Yeah, but you're the one sitting
here, right? Telling us thus and
so, be happy, forgive yourself,
blah-blah.

(low, yet intense)

You ever really hurt anybody? I
don't just mean disappointed your
mom or whatever. Did you ever
really... hurt someone?

There's a fierceness, an anger in Jesse's eyes now. It's nothing we've ever quite seen from him. It's the anger he directs at himself because of Jane.

The Leader stares at Jesse through the flames. He considers a moment. Then, simply and plainly...

GROUP LEADER

I killed my daughter.

This surprises Jesse. The others, too. The man continues.

GROUP LEADER

It was July 18th, which is my
birthday. July 18th, 1992. I was
high on cocaine and I was drunk.
Coke wasn't an issue, because I had
bought two grams the night before
as a birthday present to myself. I
had plenty left.

(MORE)

GROUP LEADER (CONT'D)

But I was out of vodka -- and this was Portsmouth, Virginia, where instead of selling liquor in the supermarkets, they have ABC stores. Which close at five PM. And right then it was about four forty-two.

(a beat)

So, I'm arguing with my wife -- "Go to the ABC for me, it's my birthday! C'mon, they're not gonna sell to me!" And she's saying no, no. So I'm pissed. And the clock is ticking, so I jump in my truck.

(off everyone's silence)

And she's playing at the, my six year-old daughter, she's playing down at the end of the driveway.

Dead silence, save for the crackling fire. Story over.

Finally, Jesse speaks. He's not judgmental or condemning, he simply wants to know:

JESSE

How do you not hate yourself?

GROUP LEADER

I did hate myself -- for years. But it didn't stop me drinking and getting high. It just made me do it that much more.

(a beat)

Self-hatred, guilt... it accomplishes nothing. It only stands in the way.

JESSE

Stands in the way of what?

GROUP LEADER

True change.

Off Jesse, maybe just now beginning to see the light...

26

EXT. THE BEACHCOMBER APARTMENTS - DAY

26

To establish. This is a view from the parking lot, with Walt's empty Aztek parked in foreground.

Seen inside or out, this place is cookie-cutter bland and depressing. Let's hope Walt doesn't have to live here long.

27

INT. THE BEACHCOMBER - WALT'S STUDIO - AFTERNOON

27

CLOSE ON the TEDDY BEAR EYEBALL. It stares up at us from the palm of a man's hand.

Alone in his new apartment, Walt sits here on the end of his bed, the plastic eye in hand. He's still dressed for work, having just returned from it. Now... unfortunately... he's got the whoole afternoon to himself.

He worries the eye in his fingertips, gazing down at it. Lost in thought. Steeped in regret.

A KNOCK at the door rouses him. Walt tosses the eyeball in a suitcase that lies open at his feet (Walt's belongings are arrayed about the floor, as if unpacking them might give this new living arrangement a sense of permanence).

CLOSE PAST the EYE in f.g. as Walt goes to answer the knock.

He opens the door, revealing SKYLER. It's a surprise visit. Walt is stunned to see her, and very happy.

WALT

Skyler. Hey.

She nods hello, reserved. Uncomfortable, yet polite.

SKYLER

Is this a good time to talk?

WALT

Uh... sure. Come in. Please.

He ushers her inside, closing the door behind them.

WALT

Sorry the place is such a --

SKYLER

-- No, I should have called first.

WALT

You know, still unpacking. Finding places for everything.

SKYLER

Sure.

WALT

(nods; glancing around)
But it's comfortable. Yeah.

Her eyes can't help glancing around the place -- but not appraisingly. She certainly doesn't "tour" it, as she's not here out of curiosity. This whole situation makes her sad.

WALT

You want something to drink?

SKYLER

No, I'm fine.

WALT

I've got coffee. Coffee and tap water. Beverage-wise, all bases covered. Coffee with a tap water chaser, perhaps..?

He smiles, trying to be droll and relax them both. Skyler politely plays along, managing a smile in return.

SKYLER

I'm fine. Thanks.

WALT

(reading her reserve)

Uh. Should we... sit down?

SKYLER

Yeah. Let's sit.

Walt pulls together a couple of chairs (maybe detouring in a very brief attempt to make the bed). They both sit.

Skyler is running this show, and her discomfort is apparent as she tries to find the right way to begin. The silence, meanwhile, is killing Walt. So...

WALT

Skyler, I have made some very bad, very... short-sighted... decisions. Chief among them was lying to you. About what I was doing for our family. But that's over. Those days are over, so...

(raps for emphasis)

... Full disclosure. Yes. Let's talk.

Wow. Does he really mean that? Probably not, because:

WALT

You wanna... you wanna start?

Yes, Skyler will start. She reaches into her purse and pulls out a folded three or four sheets of PAPERWORK which she hands to Walt. He stares down at them, his jaw slackening.

We glimpse the top sheet. CLOSE in raking, SHALLOW-FOCUS: "Application for Divorce." Walt sighs. Then, abruptly --

WALT

W-Why are you doing this?! Why are you, why are you thinking this way? Is this to punish me?! --

SKYLER

-- I'm not punishing you, Walt.

WALT

This is punitive, is what this is! We are happily married! I --
(thumps at his chest)
I am happily married! I love you! I would do anything for you! Will you not... consider..? Jesus! I mean, you come waving papers in my face when there is a whole other, entire SIDE to this thing! There is your side and then there is my side, and you haven't even heard my side yet! Haven't heard it at all!

SKYLER

You're a drug dealer.

She says this quietly, evenly -- shocking us. Walt blinks.

WALT

Uh, no. Why would you... what?

Skyler just stares at him. Silence for long, excruciating seconds. We realize she is searching his face for some sign, some hint, that her suspicion is true.

Walt realizes this, too. And now, one of the world's great liars can't summon the poker face he so desperately needs.

Instead... his eyes falter, then lower. Skyler wins this stare-off -- giving her her proof. There's no victory in it for her. Stunned to almost a whisper, she slowly nods.

SKYLER

Yeah. Yeah. Where else could you possibly make that kind of money?
(after another moment)
Marijuana..? That Pinkman kid..?

His silent expression inadvertently tells her "try again."

WALT

No..? My God, Walt. Cocaine..?

She won't let up. Though her voice goes from soft to barely audible, her eyes keep boring right through him. Finally...

WALT

Methamphetamine.

(off her reaction)

I manufacture, I'm not a dealer,
per se.

He mumbles this self-consciously. It ain't helping. Walt lowers his eyes, unable to meet his wife's gaze any longer.

Skyler takes a slow, steadying breath. Barely holding it together, she rises and heads for the door. Walt bolts from his seat and follows, stopping her.

WALT

Skyler, there's-there's a lotta angles to this, alright? It is complicated. Let's just sit back down and talk it through.

SKYLER

I'm gonna make you a deal, Walt.
I won't tell Hank... or your children... or anybody else.
Nobody will ever hear it from me.
But only if you grant me this divorce and stay out of our lives.

WALT

Skyler...

SKYLER

I mean it. You understand?
(breathing faster)
Now lemme the hell out of here
before I throw up.

She's not exaggerating. Walt reluctantly steps aside. Quickly, Skyler is out the door and gone.

Off Walt, left all alone way down here at rock-bottom...

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

28 EXT. LUXURY REHAB - MORNING 28

The big onion building glows roast beef-red in the morning sun. Before it, small in the distance, Jesse stands holding his suitcase. Today is his check-out day. He's surrounded by STAFF and fellow PATIENTS who shake his hand. A few folks even hug him, and he lets them.

Having made his goodbyes, Jesse walks toward us... and we simultaneously slide over to reveal WALT in f.g., waiting behind the wheel of his parked Aztek.

(I know there's no road this close to the onion that would allow us an easy spot for the Aztek. However, if we lay planks or somesuch and carefully roll it into position in the rock garden outside the building, that should work -- as we neither need a drive-up nor a drive-off in this scene.)

Off Jesse headed our way... CUT TO:

29 EXT. DESERT ROAD - MORNING 29

A vista of parched hills and fluffy white clouds (hopefully). The actual area around the onion casino may work fine for this.

Walt's Aztek motors through frame, tiny in the distance.

30 INT. WALT'S AZTEK - DRIVING - MORNING 30

Walt drives and Jesse rides shotgun, neither one of them talking or even looking at each other. It's a long, deep silence -- though not borne of animosity.

These two guys have a lot on their minds. Walt is stewing in his own private hell brought about by his impending divorce, and Jesse...

... Well, Jesse is impossible to read. The word for Jesse right now is "inscrutable." We simply can't tell what he's thinking, or how he's feeling.

This is a new day since the end of act three, by the way. Walt's wardrobe should reflect it.

Jesse's eyes gradually come to focus on Walt's spiderwebbed WINDSHIELD.

JESSE
(a beat)
Your windshield's broken.

WALT
(a beat)
Yeah.

Good answer. A couple of Rain Men, these two. More silent driving. Eventually...

WALT
Going back to your apartment?

Jesse shakes his head no. Walt needs no further elaboration. After all, he understands the apartment is where Jane died.

After another beat, Walt broaches...

WALT
You wanna stay with me?
(then)
For a night or two -- just till you
get back on your feet.

Jesse is confused -- *stay with you and your family?* Off him:

31 INT. THE BEACHCOMBER - WALT'S STUDIO - MORNING 31

The door opens and Walt enters, Jesse behind him. Walt shuts and locks the door as Jesse drops his bag and glances around.

Feeling the need, Walt gives some grudging background.

WALT
Skyler and I are taking a little
break.
(off Jesse's nod)
A little friction in the marriage.
Strictly temporary. Just taking a
little break.

Jesse nods again. If he cares one way or the other, he's not showing it. Walt goes from not wanting to talk about his situation to being mildly bugged by Jesse's disinterest. Walt is definitely the needy one today.

Okay, whatever. Walt changes the subject.

WALT

Your money. Saul is keeping it for you, so as soon as you're feeling better...

JESSE

I'm better.

WALT

Good. That's good. The uh, the rehab..? It helped?

JESSE

Yeah. I'm done using.

WALT

Excellent. That's very good, Jesse. That's excellent.

(gingerly)

You know... as bad as things got, maybe... it was a wake-up call. For both of us. And now we, we go on with our lives and we...

(nodding)

... Back to the straight and narrow.

Jesse, hard to read throughout, just stares at Walt. Does he buy any of that? Quietly:

JESSE

You been following this airplane crash?

Jesus, let's not talk about this. Walt reluctantly nods.

JESSE

You know it was Jane's Dad who accidentally crashed them together? 'Cause he was so torn up?

Walt's voice grows intense with conviction.

WALT

Let me stop you right there, okay? You are not responsible for that. Not in any way, shape or form. I am up to date on this thing -- probably far more so than you -- and there were a lot of factors at play there.

JESSE
(not buying it)
Yeah?

WALT
Absolutely. An entire chain of events had to occur. Fail-safes -- fail-safes and redundancies are built into such a system. No one person, no one cause can be... attributed! For instance, there was some sort of collision radar on the jet that may not have been working properly. That is public record! Look it up!
(snorts; shrugs)
Something like this was bound to happen. Air routes in this country are routinely overcrowded, the whole system runs on antiquated, 1960s technology -- really, I blame the government!

One senses Walt has honed this argument over many days of desperately selling it to himself. He's nearly convinced.

Jesse doesn't buy it, however. Nor does he need to.

JESSE
You either run from things or you face them, Mr. White.

WALT
(wary)
What exactly does that mean?

JESSE
I learned it in rehab. It's all about accepting who you really are.
(then)
I accept who I am.

WALT
So who are you?

No anger or bitterness or self-flagellation. Jesse gives a little shrug and answers, plain and sincere.

JESSE
I'm the bad guy.

Simple as that. Walt stares at him, troubled.

Jesse stirs, on to other business.

JESSE
(thumbs at the bathroom)
I gotta take a leak. Mind if I..?

Walt nods distractedly -- *go ahead*. Jesse disappears into the bathroom, closes the door behind him.

Left alone, Walt sits here considering. That "bad guy" line really resonates with him. But not in a good way. Try as he might, it's a hard one to shake off.

BZZZZZZZZZZ -- a familiar VIBRATION gets Walt's attention. He looks to his suitcase, lying open nearby.

After a moment, a faint BLEEP. Reluctantly, Walt reaches down and digs underneath some clothes. He comes up with his DRUG PHONE in its ZipLock bag. He checks the readout.

Walt's POV of the phone -- once again, the little screen reads "POLLOS."

Off Walt, snapping out of it and growing determined:

32 EXT. LOS POLLOS HERMANOS - DAY 32

We establish our familiar fast food restaurant we recall from episode 211. Walt's Aztek is prominent in the parking lot.

33 INT. LOS POLLOS HERMANOS - DAY 33

Walt sits alone in his same window booth. A tray of food is before him, untouched. He's not here to eat. Instead, his eyes linger on someone across the restaurant.

Walt's POV -- GUS moves from table to table, checking on his few DINERS (it's between mealtimes and the restaurant is quiet). The consummate owner/manager, Gus has a smile for everyone. He's concerned that their Los Pollos experience is first-rate. He takes his time... but he's headed our way.

Walt sips his soda, waits. Soon, Gus is standing over him. Like all concerned citizens, Gus wears a REMEMBRANCE RIBBON.

GUS
Is the food to your satisfaction?

WALT
Very much.

GUS

Good to see you again.

Gus offers his hand, and they shake.

GUS

May I..?

Walt motions to the seat opposite -- *by all means*. Gus sits down with him. Smooth. If anyone in the place is paying attention... and they certainly aren't... they'd think Gus is spending a few moments with an associate, and nothing more.

Gus keeps his voice low, but not to the point of whispering. After all, this is his place. He knows the Muzak and the sizzle of the fryers will cover up anything he says.

GUS

I have an offer that I think will interest you.

WALT

I'm actually not here to, uh...

Walt sighs, starts over. He wants to say this exactly right.

WALT

I am here because... I owe you the courtesy, and the respect... to tell you this personally.

(a beat)

I'm done. I'm done with, ah...

(voice lowers)

... Cooking.

Gus shows no reaction. No dismay, no anger. He simply listens. Walt watches him, then continues.

WALT

It has nothing to do with you. I find you extraordinarily professional, and I appreciate the way you do business. I'm making a change to my life, is what this is. I'm at something of a crossroads, and it's brought me to a realization.

(off the silence)

I am not a criminal. No offense to people who are, but...

(shaking his head)

This is not me.

Gus gives a little nod -- *not happy news, but fair enough.*

GUS

I'd like you to hear my offer,
notwithstanding.

WALT

It won't change my mind, I'm sorry.

GUS

Three million dollars for three
months of your time.

Holy crap!! Holy... WHAT? Did we just hear that right?!
Walt blinks. Stares. *Uhhh...*

GUS

Three months, then out.

WALT

Three million.

Gus nods. Walt sits here, stunned. A beat of silence.

GUS

May I take this as a "yes?"

We're thinking it's leaning that way, definitely. And yet...

... And yet, Walt's expression saddens. Darkens. He gives a tiny little shake of his head. Soft, half to himself:

WALT

I've got money. I've got more
money than I know how to spend.
What I don't have is my family.
I've got to put my life back
together. Somehow.

(looks up at Gus)

You understand..? The answer is
still "no."

Gus sits here surprised -- as much surprise as his practiced poker face will reveal. He's not angry or determined, however. He considers, then gives a barely perceptible nod.

Walt offers his hand.

WALT

Thank you.

Gus takes Walt's hand, shakes. He rises from the booth.

GUS

Enjoy your meal.

Walt watches him go. The perfect manager, Gus immediately returns to his work. There's no last glance back at Walt -- it's as if their meeting never happened. Life goes on.

Walt sits here another moment, mulling the enormous figure he just turned down. He wonders how the hell he's ever gonna get back to where he wants to be. He's torn, that's for sure. Torn and worried and depressed.

He rises, busses his tray as he heads for the exit. Off his uneaten meal getting tossed in the trash with a CLUNK:

34 BLUE SKY 34

Fills frame. A deep, polarizer blue with fluffy white clouds, it's the kind of sky planes sometimes fall from.

In the same camera move as our Teaser, we TILT DOWN from it to find, this time...

EXT. BORDER DESERT - DAY

We're in a desolate stretch of nowhere. No people, no signs of civilization. Maybe there's only a faint dirt road. Maybe there's not even that.

Into this frame drives a weatherbeaten old cabover truck. It's loaded high with bales of straw. It stirs up a modest trail of dust as it grinds along through hill and dale.

There looks to be no one in this truck except the Anglo DRIVER. But looks can be deceiving.

35 INT. TRUCK BED - DRIVING - DAY 35

We peek out through a thin CRACK between bales of straw. Through it, we glimpse overexposed desert whizzing by outside. Three quick BUMPS jiggle us -- *whump, whump, whump!*

FRIENDLY GUY (O.S.)

That's it! Did you feel it?

PULL BACK to reveal a sweet-faced young Mexican -- call him FRIENDLY GUY -- who peers out through the crack, holding it open with his hands. He lets it go, turns toward us.

Everything he says is in SPANISH, SUBTITLED.

FRIENDLY GUY

Texas! I've made this trip three times, and every time there's three big bumps, and that's how you know! We are officially in Texas!

Reveal... Friendly Guy is talking to the TWO COUSINS, who sit directly across from him. Both men are dressed as we last saw them, in purloined laborer's clothes.

Yay, celebrate! Friendly Guy holds up his knuckles, meaning to bump fists with the Cousins. They stare at him blankly.

Ohhh-kay... Friendly Guy sheepishly lowers his fist, giving up on that idea.

WIDE -- there are twelve to fourteen BORDER-CROSSERS packed in this truck bed. Inside what turns out to be a fake load of straw, there's enough space in the middle for these folks to fit knee-to-knee. It's not a comfortable way to travel. But this coyote operation is taking these poverty-level men and women (no kids) to where they want to be -- America.

People sit quietly, enduring the heat and minding their own business and nervously hoping to make their destination. Friendly Guy is the only one talking.

The Cousins mostly ignore him. He's annoying, but harmless.

FRIENDLY GUY

This time I got a job waiting for me. I got a cousin who's got a body shop. Yo, that's for me, Homes! They call me "Banana Peel" 'cause I paint 'em slick. I do pearlescent, color-shift, you name it. I'm the best!

(low, but boasting)

I painted cars for some of the biggest gangsters in Michoacan.

Friendly Guy smiles proudly, feeling big. *But enough about me!* Glancing down at the Cousins' BOOTS, he gives a whistle.

FRIENDLY GUY

*Wow, those are beautiful boots! Not much good for working, but...
(peers closer now)
Hey, what's on the toes there?
Little silver...*

Friendly Guy's CLOSE POV -- four silver toecap SKULLS stare up at us, just as cold and impassive as their owners.

Friendly Guy does something unusual now. He shuts up. In fact, his whole demeanor instantly changes. He goes from excited and gregarious...

... To nervous and aloof. He finds someplace else to look other than the Cousins. He glances down at his watch, quite ready for this ride to be over.

What did he just recognize, seeing these boots?

One, maybe two other folks turn and glance our way, curious at what brought on the abrupt silence. The Cousins notice.

Off these two formidable men, glancing at each other meaningfully...

36

EXT. BORDER DESERT - DAY - CONTINUOUS

36

WIDE on the desert as the beat-up truck motors through frame, tiny in the distance. A faint POP-POP-POP-POP-POP-POP-POP gets our attention. The driver's, too.

The truck brakes to a stop, dust rising high. The Driver clambers out and hurries to check his load. We make out his faint "Hell's going on in there?!" It gets carried to us on the wind, along with another round of POP-POP-POP-POP-POP.

The driver takes off running, headed back the way we came.

CLOSE on STRAW BALES -- they get kicked loose, tumbling down off the back of the truck and revealing the two Cousins, shiny PISTOLS in hand. They lazily drop down out of the truck, in no particular hurry. Yeah, sure, the driver seems to be getting away...

... Until one Cousin takes careful aim and BLAM! He nails the running man square in the back. The guy goes down hard, flat on his face. Moaning softly, he begins to CRAWL.

This Cousin takes his time as he walks after the crawling driver. After all, it's too hot to exert yourself in this heat. Seen through shimmying HEAT HAZE, his pistol glinting in the sun, he gradually closes on the man.

Meanwhile, the other Cousin goes the opposite way, rounding to the side of the idling truck. Appraising one of the vehicle's saddlebag FUEL TANKS, he takes aim and... BLAM!

GASOLINE trickles out of the fresh hole in the bottom of the tank. The Cousin unscrews the filler cap, letting the air pressure equalize -- now the gas comes pissing out with a loud, fast GLUG-GLUG-GLUG!

The sand beneath gets thoroughly soaked. A dark and deadly MUD PUDDLE grows.

BLAM! We jump as the first Cousin unceremoniously executes the wounded driver. He holsters his pistol and starts back.

The second Cousin lights a cigarette as he stands waiting. Off him, we catch an oblique glimpse inside the darkened truck bed, where...

... The gas tank isn't the only thing DRIPPING. Passengers slump on their seats or lie on the floor. Everyone is dead.

The second Cousin offers the first a cigarette. They stand here in the GLUGGING shade of the truck, getting their bearings. They aren't particularly proud of what they've just done. They don't feel bad about it, either. It's just a necessity, is all. They've got secrets to keep.

The first Cousin lights his cigarette, considers the MATCH burning down between his fingers...

... Then drops it in the puddle. WHOOOOOOMP! Gasoline CATCHES FIRE, boiling away at the fuel tank above.

Our two scary guys start off on foot, headed in the direction the truck was taking them. They walk, they don't run -- despite the flames rising behind them. A couple of cool customers, these two.

FLAMES lick higher... higher... HIGHER... until:

KA-BOOOOOMP!! The old truck goes up like the Fourth of July. Flaming bales of straw trace lazy, smoking parabolas through the heavens. Up rolls an orange Nagasaki FIREBALL. Not much in the way of evidence gets left behind.

Shimmering like a couple of ghosts through the heat haze, the two Cousins walk away from us. Headed north into Texas, and New Mexico beyond.

Off these two wraith-like figures, slowly receding into the burning desert...

THE END