

FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS

"From Ashes to Ashes to Dust... We Rise!"

(A Proposed Reunion Episode In Three Parts)

Written by
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Spec Script

EPISODE NOTES

In this reunion episode, the action takes place in 2016 -- five years after the series finale titled "ALWAYS" aired February 9th on DirectTV channel 101 and then re-aired July 15th, 2011 on NBC.

The episode is designed for a streaming platform (such as: Netflix, Amazon Prime, Hulu, Apple TV, etc.) with no commercial breaks. Therefore, there will be no act breaks within the hour long television drama format.

This episode is in three parts, which will run seamlessly within the body of the script. The running time of the episode is meant to be comparable to the running time of a feature length film.

PART ONE

OVER BLACK - "COMING HOME"

The familiar refrain of "DEVIL TOWN" plays -- a less upbeat, more menacing rendition than Tony Lucca's version.

CHYRON - "AUGUST. 5 YEARS LATER"

MONTAGE - WEST DILLON

-Shuttered businesses and boarded up windows.

-Structurally damaged homes and parklands.

-Nearby oil refineries closed due to structural damage.

-Herrmann Field lies in ruin -- goal posts knocked down; score board bent, smashed and sprawled across the field.

INT. WEST DILLON HIGH GYMNASIUM - AFTERNOON

West Dillon Panthers basketball team runs drills -- alley oops; bank shots; three-pointers; trick passes; lay-ups, etc.

EXT. OUTSIDE WEST DILLON HIGH - SAME

No one else in sight as a white TEENAGE BOY walks towards the front entrance to the school. He wears a rock and roll tee shirt, army fatigues, combat boots and a large camouflage backpack. A semi-automatic rests across his chest.

INTERCUTS: INT./EXT. LOCATIONS - WEST DILLON HIGH

The in between classes hustle and bustle: students attend to their lockers; teachers make their way from their break room to their classrooms; BO MILLER rummages through his locker.

Teenage Boy pushes the doors open at the front entrance to the school and makes his way down the now empty hallway.

COACH WASHINGTON, 40s, Black, tall, in great shape, addresses his players mid court--

COACH WASHINGTON

(re: the team)

I'm still waiting for y'all to wow me with some pick and roll action.

(re: specific player)

You need to hit that three-pointer every time.

(MORE)

COACH WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

Would've made all the difference
last year in that two-pointer loss
against Arnett Mead - that never
should've happened!

The sound of screaming and round after round of high capacity magazines unloading. Students, panicked, desperate, sobbing, hide under desks, clutch each other for safety.

COACH WASHINGTON (V.O.)

I don't think I need to remind
y'all that - since the almighty
football program has suffered one
major set back after another -
y'all are Dillons only hope for a
state championship season.

Screaming students, panicked, duck and cover as magazine after magazine unloads from an unidentified location.

Basketball players take off in all directions when they hear the sound of the semi-automatic inching ever closer.

Scattered bodies of slain students littered everywhere. Students sob and cling to each other, paralyzed with fear.

Bo Miller lies in a pool of blood.

Students rush towards the bodies of injured students gasping for breath. Cries for help and an "ambulance!"

Police patrol arrive outside. Police officers, rifles in hand, descend upon West Dillon High led by CAPTAIN CHAD CLARKE.

Police officers storm inside building. Teachers help them evacuate the remaining students -- panicked, sobbing, confused, devastated.

Students and teachers run in all directions outside towards police officers and away from the school. Utter mayhem!

The empty basketball court now fills up with officers. Teenage Boy is on his knees mid court with his rifle pressed against his chest. Before he can pull the trigger once more, officers apprehend him and wrestle him to the ground.

Captain Clarke and fellow officers drag Teenage Boy, in handcuffs, out of the school and into a squad car.

What is left of the student body and faculty watch, as the lone shooter is taken away by a combination of both West and East Dillon officers and squad cars.

All is quiet... except for the weeping.

SMASH TO:

EXT. TIM RIGGIN'S LAND - DAY

Those all too familiar rolling hills of Dillon. Some trees are knocked down. Riggin's house is structurally damaged; the roof almost completely torn off.

TIM RIGGINS looks out over his property. His hair is short. He sports a stubbled look. He swigs... a bottle of water. His pained expression on full display as he stares out at the vastness of his property.

SAMMY MEADE (V.O.)

I don't think anything could prepare us for this kind of inconceivable horror, folks. In all my years as a broadcaster, I have never experienced such devastating heartbreak as this...

INT. GARRITY CAR - DRIVING - DAY

BUDDY GARRITY drives through the streets of West Dillon, which seems like a ghost town.

SAMMY MEADE (V.O.)

Not even the once great Dillon Panthers state championship loses - or even Jason Street's paralyzing injury - could compete with this unspeakable tragedy and loss of such beautiful young souls. Cut down in their prime...

Buddy parks on the side of the road and weeps.

SAMMY MEADE (V.O.)

And it seems like the shooter - who will remain nameless, because why afford him any glory? Was targeting football players. As if the Panthers haven't had enough heartache dealing with budget cuts, loss of valued booster revenue, and those damn tornadoes and storms that ripped apart Herrmann Field...

Buddy turns off the radio and sits in silence.

CHYRON - "PHILADELPHIA"

INT. BRAEMORE COLLEGE - OFFICE OF DEAN OF ADMISSIONS - DAY

TAMI TAYLOR is dressed in a power suit; she downs a cup of coffee and wades through miles of paperwork on her cluttered desk. Her cell phone rings -- "JULIE."

TAMI

(answers)

Hey, baby girl. How's my grand-baby doing? I still can't believe I'm a... Wait - what? Honey, slow down...

(stands)

Oh-my-god!

INT. BRAEMORE COLLEGE - MAIN STUDENT CONCOURSE - DAY

Braemore College students and faculty stand in front of wall mounted televisions watching--

CNN ANCHOR (ON TELEVISION)

It's another day in America. Which means - another school shooting. This time in Texas...

Tami stands in shock as the news unfolds.

CNN ANCHOR (ON TELEVISION)

Known for their state championship high school football program, the district of Dillon - divided into an east and west side...

Tami shakes herself from her shock, grabs her cell phone and quickly dials. A CNN REPORTER is on the scene in Dillon.

CNN REPORTER (ON TELEVISION)

What we do know is that the shooter was a West Dillon High sophomore. Caucasian. Considered a lone wolf to fellow students and neighbors. With a history of...

TAMI

(on cell phone)

Babe. I don't know if you're watching the news right now. But you need to drop everything you're doing...

CHYRON - "LIBERTY-BELL UNIVERSITY. PHILADELPHIA."

INT. LIBERTY-BELL UNIVERSITY - FIELD HOUSE - DAY

COACH ERIC TAYLOR is in a meeting with HEAD COACH, 60s, of Liberty-Bell University's football program. He silences the ringing on his cell phone and listens to Head Coach address all his coaches... until his cell phone rings again.

HEAD COACH

Coach Taylor. You maybe want to put that on vibrate?

TAYLOR

(cell phone reads: TAMI)

Yes, Coach. Sorry about that. I thought it was.

Cell phone buzzes again...

TAYLOR

I'm sorry, Coach. It's the wife. She does this only when... I may need to take this.

Head Coach nods at him.

LOCKER ROOM

Taylor picks up the call--

TAYLOR

(on cell phone)

Honey. What's the emergency? I'm in the middle of a coaches meeting... Slow down. CNN? I don't care about CNN right now. The last thing I need is more political campaign bs... Dillon? Say that again... How many...? Son-of-a-bitch.

INT. COACHES MAIN OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Taylor stands in front of a bank of televisions and watches the CNN Reporter in Dillon detail the events.

CHYRON - "CHICAGO"

INT. SARACEN AND JULIE TAYLOR'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY

MATT SARACEN and his wife JULIE TAYLOR sit on their bed and watch CNN. Julie holds their BABY in her arms. Saracen holds Julie in his arms; she clutches her daughter close to her chest as she sobs. Saracen's mix of anger and utter confusion builds...

CNN REPORTER (ON TELEVISION)

At approximately 4 p.m. central standard time - just as classes were wrapping up for the day - the shooter...

Off Saracen's anguished expression--

Cheerleaders in action. Roaring crowds. Bright lights flood a football stadium.

All of this is on display -- as film cameras are rolling...

CHYRON - "TAMPA"

INT. COMMERCIAL SET - DAY

Commercial production crew move about, while producers and a director monitor the action from video village.

A football player is in full uniform, surrounded by cheerleaders in front of a green screen. The player takes off his helmet to reveal--

BRIAN "SMASH" WILLIAMS, with a soda can in hand, flashes that megawatt smile, pushes the soda can straight forward as if giving the entire world a fist bump.

DIRECTOR (O.C.)

And cut!

FIRST A.D. (O.C.)

Alright everyone! Back to one!

Smash's charm offensive turns all business as he immediately heads off-set to--

SMASH'S AGENT, 40s, stands off to the side of the action.

SMASH

You hear anything back about that contract negotiation?

SMASH'S AGENT

I did.

He takes enough time to let the mystery build...

SMASH

And, you going to tell me?

SMASH'S AGENT

I'm just holding out to see how hard you want me to hit back. Word on the street is that Dallas is looking to make an offer.

SMASH

So that rumor is for real?

SMASH'S AGENT

Hell, maybe even Houston too. Get ya even closer to home like ya always said ya wanted.

SMASH

Cowboys and Texans. Damn. So Tampa's looking to trade my ass, huh?

SMASH'S AGENT

If we keep high-balling our offer. But they want to match your price because, Brian, you're one hell of a running back.

SMASH

Tell me something I don't already know.

P.A. (O.S.)

Mr. Williams. They're ready for the next set up.

Smash's PR REP, female, 30s, enters the conversation--

P.R. REP

Smash.

SMASH

Hey, darling.

(to Agent)

I didn't know PR was going to be on set today.

She holds out her cell phone--

PR REP

You may want to take a look at this.

Smash, his Agent and his PR Rep watch from her cell phone the CNN report from Dillon.

Smash's expressions turns to anguish.

P.A. (O.S.)
Mr. Williams--

SMASH
(to: P.A.)
Y'all give me a minute! We gonna
need to put this show on hold!

The entire commercial production team turn back to look at Smash who is devastated by the unfolding narrative playing out on a cell phone screen.

Off Smash's pained expression--

CHYRON - "HOUSTON"

INT. CAMPAIGN OFFICE - DAY

A busy field office filled with volunteers phone banking and moving from desk to desk...

On the wall-- a banner reads "DE ROSA FOR A MORE UNIFIED TEXAS", which hangs next to a photo of Houston politician: LILIAN DE ROSA, 40s, Hispanic, in a light blue power suit, head held high, arms folded.

LYLA GARRITY, dressed for success -- no longer the naïve young cheerleader from Dillon, but a confident powerhouse political operative -- moves through the labyrinth of phone banks until she reaches De Rosa -- and they are on the move, "West Wing" style...

LYLA
How are you feeling today,
Congresswoman To Be?

DE ROSA
Enjoying this enthusiasm, Ms. Lyla
Garrity. Just a bit better since I
had my first cup of *café con leche*.

LYLA
I'm all about Starbucks decaf tea.

DE ROSA

And yoga, apparently. I envy how you always look like you just came out of an aerobics class and never manage to break a sweat.

LYLA

It's the pom-pom training. Never really leaves you. Speaking of - I want to introduce you to your newest cheer squad.

They arrive at a group of new volunteers who are about to get the "welcome to the team" speech...

DE ROSA

So, this is my new front lines...

The sound of collective gasps fills the air!

De Rosa and Lyla spin around to face the now silenced room, aside from the audible horror.

ON TELEVISIONS - AERIAL VIEWS OF DILLON

CNN ANCHOR (ON TELEVISION)

We have reports of at least nine students dead. Three wounded, and one in critical condition in East Dillon - which is still recovering from a devastating tornado...

Tears well up in Lyla's eyes as she watches the news unfold.

Off Lyla's tears--

Music up-- loud, pulsating speed metal.

CHYRON - "SOMEWHERE IN THE HOLLYWOOD HILLS"

INT. HOUSE IN THE HOLLYWOOD HILLS - DAY

A large, multi-bedroom home nestled into the hills of Los Angeles. It's not a mansion by any means; more college dorm living than *"Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous."*

Musical instruments, amps, mics, and weed paraphernalia scattered throughout the place, as various long-haired rocker types and female groupies move in and out where a--

Speed metal band cranks out some ear crushing, guitar fueled song. A sound engineer records on some makeshift recording equipment. The sound engineer in question is--

LANDRY CLARKE wearing a headset; he dons a beard, his hair is longer and he's heavier set than last we saw him.

While Landry is absorbed in the sounds coming through his headset, an attractive groupie approaches, removes his headset, whispers in his ear--

LANDRY
Are you serious?

LIVING ROOM

Landry watches the events unfolding on CNN with the same traumatized expression as his Dillon counterparts.

SMASH TO:

INT. WEST DILLON HIGH GYMNASIUM - NIGHT

Pin drop silence. The place is packed. The entire community engages in silent prayer.

TYRA COLLETE-RIGGINS -- wearing designer eyeglasses, dressed conservatively in a blouse and skirt, her hair a dark brown -- is flanked on all sides by silently weeping students.

EXT. OUTSIDE DILLON HIGH - NIGHT

The scene here is much noisier where those who aren't inside the school are outside holding vigil to the fallen.

Reporters from all major national news outlets are on hand.

Bright flood lights illuminate a riser set up for young students to take turns expressing outrage behind a podium.

INTERCUT: INT./EXT. LOCATIONS

CORRINA WILLIAMS -- who looks thinner and more upscale than last we saw her -- and her daughters, SHEILA and NOANNIE -- hold hands with each other as they listen to--

REV. GRADY, mid court, address the silenced crowd--

REV. GRADY
In this time of great pain,
devastating sorrow, and
unfathomable loss - it would be
understandable if we were to
question the existence of God...

Dillon sophomore GINA MONTEZ stands at the podium, while a swarm of her fellow PROGRESSIVE STUDENTS cheer her on.

MONTEZ

(into microphone; in tears)
 And, some wonder why it feels to us
 like our lives don't seem to
 matter! Because the politicians
 here in Texas care more about their
 guns than they do the lives of 13
 students... who were gunned down in
 the hallways and classrooms of
 Dillon for no god-damn good reason!

REV. GRADY

But, it is during these times when
 we need to remember that God has a
 plan for each and every one of us.
 That our prayers do not fall on
 deaf ears. That although we may
 not understand his plan. We know
 it is working for each and every
 one of us right here. Right now.

As reporters interview students and those who are there to
 mourn the fallen in front of the memorials to each of the
 nine -- attention is focused on grieving mother--

JACKIE MILLER stands in front of the memorial to her fallen
 son Bo, as news crews swarm in on her devastation.

JACKIE

I thought... moving back here from
 Austin would be a better
 environment for... my baby boy. He
 was always so fragile. The kids
 would pick on him. Because he
 was... different. But he was just
 starting to find his own voice...
 And now, my baby boy is gone. I'm
 sorry. I can't...

Jackie completely loses it. Students move in to hug her and
 lead her away from the swarm of reporters.

REV. GRADY

Our thoughts and prayers are with
 these children's parents tonight.

Tyra rolls her eyes at "thoughts and prayers."

REV. GRADY

Can I get an Amen?!

ENTIRE GYMNASIUM

Amen!

As Tyra's anger begins to mount, she is joined by--

BILLY RIGGINS and her sister MINDY COLLETTE-RIGGINS with their six year old son STEVIE and five year old TWIN GIRLS.

TYRA
(to Billy)
You ready for this?

Billy is a distracted bundle of nerves.

BILLY
Where's Tim?

INT. DILLON YMCA - NIGHT

A joint AA/NA MEETING is in full swing at the Dillon youth center. A few hands are up in the air among the seated circle of recovering addicts, led by chairperson--

REGINA HOWARD addresses newcomers--

REGINA
Well alright. Welcome, first-timers. We thank you for your courage and for taking the first step. So, let's hear from a few of our recent additions. Tim. You've been awfully quiet these last few meetings. Would you like to share... anything?

RIGGINS
Hi. My name's Tim.

The entire room stares at him, as he completely shuts down.

REGINA
You are so close.

RIGGINS
So - what? I'm supposed to say it and then, like, Beetlejuice suddenly appears?

REGINA
More like we all say--

ENTIRE MEETING
Hi Tim!

REGINA
Now it's your turn.

RIGGINS
And I'm an... occasional alcoholic.

A familiar voice booms out belonging to--

WAVERLY GRADY leans forward--

WAVERLY
Jesus Christ, Tim. Why can't you
just own this? Like you owned
every defensive line you ever
played against.

INTERCUT:

Billy now stands at the podium and addresses the crowd; his
hands shake as he reads from a crumpled up piece of paper...

BILLY
Being the Dillon Panthers' head
coach for the past few years has
been the greatest joy of my life.
Aside from raising my boy and my
two baby girls. Who are the light
of my life. Aside from my wife of
course.

Tears flow with ease for Mindy as Tyra holds her hand.

Waverly is in the middle of a share--

WAVERLY
I was on a roll there for a while.
I'd mix a good cocktail. The
antidepressants with the weed.
Which eventually went from the
prescription to the street when the
insurance company dropped my
coverage. It was pretty easy to
score in Dallas. Houston. Austin.
L.A. I basically bounced around
for a few years. But ya can't keep
the preacher's daughter away from
the nest for too long. So, I came
back - just in time for... The
ironic thing is that: I love guns--

RIGGINS
Me too.

Billy Riggins completely breaks down.

BILLY

Although I couldn't deliver y'all a state championship. Our super teams came pretty damn close - twice. But, when I came into the job - after Coach McGill... passed away and the great Coach Taylor.... Well, I had some giant shoes to fill. I replaced some legends... and I wish to God they were here today. Because I sure could use their words of wisdom...

RIGGINS

I knew one of those kids real well. I used to teach him how to box to defend himself when he was a little kid. Guess what I should've been doing is teaching him how to run from bullets. But as fast as I could run on the field, pretty sure I couldn't out run that. So, yeah. Alright. I'm an alcoholic. And, I'm not making any excuses for it. My wife wants me to come here. So - here I am. And, I still don't want to take anybody's guns away. 'Specially not mine. So, I guess... thank y'all for listening.

Not a dry eye in the crowd, as--

BILLY

I just lost eight of my best players. They're never... coming back. The other three are wounded. And my star QB is just... just barely hanging on. My heart... is broken. My town... is broken. Our team... is broken. I am... lost.

Amidst a sea of sobbing faces--

Buddy Garrity can't take any more of this shit and heads out.

INT. BUDDY'S BAR - LATER THAT NIGHT

Buddy sits on a bar stool in his bar full of bar patrons. He's had a few too many as he pulls out his cell phone, hesitates, then dials.

INT. TAYLOR HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Taylor and Tami lie asleep, as Taylor's cell phone rings.
Tami wakes up first--

TAMI

Babe... babe. Your cell.

TAYLOR

(more than half asleep)
What...? What's going on?

TAMI

The phone, babe.

TAYLOR

I thought that damn thing was on
vibrate.

TAMI

No. You always forget. It's on
ring.

TAYLOR

Well who the hell is calling me at
this time of night?

(answers)

This better be important.

INTERCUT:

Buddy downs one more shot--

BUDDY

Oh, damn. It's good to hear your
voice again.

TAYLOR

Buddy?

TAMI

Is that Buddy Garrity--?

TAYLOR

Buddy. Do you have any idea what
time it is?

BUDDY

No, Eric. I haven't looked...
(looks at watch)

Well, looks like it's midnight here
in Dillon--

TAYLOR

Yeah, which means it's... 1 a.m. here in Philadelphia. Where I now live. Remember that? With my wife and daughter. Remember them?

BUDDY

I sure do. I sure as hell do. And, I miss y'all something awful. Honest to God--

TAYLOR

Well... well I miss you too, Buddy. I mean, on occasion--

BUDDY

Did you watch the news reports, Eric? Did you see what that son-of-a-bitch maniac did to our kids? Huh, did you see that?

TAYLOR

Yes. I... saw. And, it's a damn tragedy. One of the saddest things I've ever seen--

TAMI

Is he okay?
(loud)
How is everybody doing? I'm sorry we didn't call sooner. We should have called--

BUDDY

Is that Tami? I can hear her. Hi, Tami--

Tami is right up on his cell that they are now sharing.

TAMI

Hey, Buddy. I cannot begin to say how devastated we are by all of this.

BUDDY

Tami, you have no idea how hard it's been since y'all left. Look, I'm sorry to have woken you both. But - well. There's just this... this hole in my heart. And, it's growing larger every day. And, it's like - it's like the gates of hell just opened up and swallowed Dillon whole.

(MORE)

BUDDY (CONT'D)

Our economy is devastated from nearby oil refinery closures. Practically the whole town is out of work or looking for work. The Booster dollars are all but dried up. And, there are state wide budget cuts affecting the football program. About the only thing we got left is basketball. Can you believe that? Basketball.

TAYLOR

Listen, Buddy. I hear what you're saying, and I'm so sorry about all of it. Honest to God I am. But we're all the way out here in Pennsylvania. I swear. If I had millions of dollars I'd send just about every dollar of it to y'all--

TAMI

Of course we would. We still love y'all so much--

BUDDY

Then would ya... would ya consider coming back?

Taylor and Tami stare at each other in silence...

BUDDY

I don't mean move back. That's not what I'm saying. I know ya got ya lives there. I know you're a college coach now, Eric. Which is so damn great. It's what you've been working towards your entire career. And, Tami is helping kids get into a great college. But would ya just consider coming back? Just for a few days? To give this town a badly needed boost. In only the way the Great Coach Taylor can deliver.

They continue to stare at each other, helpless.

TAYLOR

Well, we'd have to think about that one. We got a lot going on here--

TAMI

Yeah, Buddy. We can think on that.
We can maybe move some things
around--

TAYLOR

We'll have to see about moving
things around. The season just
started up again--

TAMI

We are right at the beginning of
the first semester--

BUDDY

I... I understand. Listen, I'm
sorry I called. It was way out of
line of me.

TAMI

No. No, Buddy--

TAYLOR

Come on now, Buddy. You're like
family to us--

BUDDY

I'll let you both go. Forget I
called. Y'all take care now.

Buddy abruptly hangs up. He takes a moment, then hurls an
empty shot glass at a mirror behind the bar. Bartender
ducks. Everybody in the place hits the deck.

TAMI

Babe. You know what we need to do.

TAYLOR

I can't talk about this right now.

TAMI

Honey. We're not those kinds of
people--

TAYLOR

I know the kind of people we are--

TAMI

We help the people that we care
about in times of need.

TAYLOR

Why don't we go back to sleep and we'll think about all of this with a clear head in the morning.

TAMI

That's probably a wise idea.

They both lie back down, stare at the ceiling...

TAMI

We should have called first.

Taylor gets out of bed.

INT. TAYLOR HOME OFFICE - LATER THAT NIGHT

Taylor looks around the walls at various memories from his Dillon days: photos; banners; newspaper clippings, etc.

A photo on the wall of himself as a young football player in uniform standing next to his father -- his old man's arm around his shoulder, smiling proudly.

He turns on his laptop. A video clip comes on--

SEASON 5 - EP 10: "DON'T GO"

REPORTER (2010)(ON COMPUTER)

What do you want to say to your fans here at East Dillon?

Taylor watches himself being interviewed on his laptop.

TAYLOR (2010)(ON COMPUTER)

You look around and you see the community here and young players I have playing for me and the character they've got and no matter where they are, no matter where this community goes, that's home.

Taylor looks back to the Dillon memories on his wall.

TAYLOR (2010)(ON COMPUTER)

And I can tell you that after this game I'm going to come home. To Dillon. And that's where I plan to stay. At home in Dillon.

Taylor closes the lid to his laptop and stares at his wall.

EXT. PARKING LOT - PHILADELPHIA - MORNING

Taylor walks from his car towards the Liberty-Bell University field house...

VOICE (O.S.)
Coach Taylor?

Taylor spins around to face a man in a sharp suit. He recognizes the man right away:

HOWIE ROSEMAN, General Manager of the Philadelphia Eagles--

ROSEMAN
(hand extended)
Howie Roseman.

TAYLOR
(shakes his hand)
Sure. I know who you are. What's the General Manager of the Philadelphia Eagles doing in the parking lot of Liberty-Bell--?

ROSEMAN
I'm buddies with your boss. He has nothing but great things to say about his quarterback coach Taylor. From Texas.

TAYLOR
Is that right? Well that's awfully nice of him to say. I'm certainly enjoying the opportunity--

ROSEMAN
I'm sorry to hear the news. About that school shooting. It's just the worst. You used to coach there. Took them to a few state championships if I'm not mistaken.

TAYLOR
I did. Impressed you know that.

ROSEMAN
I've done my research.

TAYLOR
Well, I can't say you haven't caught me off guard on my way to work--

ROSEMAN

We're looking for a new assistant quarterback coach to come on board with us this season. And, I got you on the short list.

TAYLOR

How short is this list?

ROSEMAN

Very. Like two names short.

INT. OFFICE OF THE HEAD OF BRAEMORE - DAY

HEAD OF BRAEMORE sits at his desk in a contemplative state, when Tami knocks on his open door--

TAMI

Doctor Tate? May I come in?

HEAD OF BRAEMORE

Tami. Please.

TAMI

I... hate to disturb you. I just wondered if I could have a word--

HEAD OF BRAEMORE

What does it take? Huh, Tami? How many more kids have to die before something gets done?

TAMI

I understand exactly what you're saying, Doctor--

HEAD OF BRAEMORE

I have young ones. You have Gracie. They're going to grow up in this insane climate.

TAMI

That's exactly what I wanted to talk to you about--

HEAD OF BRAEMORE

It could happen here. At any moment. Am I supposed to have armed guards in every classroom? Or worse. Start sending professors to target practice?

TAMI

Doctor, I was wondering if I could maybe take a little time off. I know it's the beginning--

HEAD OF BRAEMORE

Yes. Yes. Of course. You need to go back. You need to visit these people. Maybe talk some sense to that crazy gun culture. I'm sorry. I don't mean to be culturally insensitive.

TAMI

No. Not at all. I totally agree. So, it's okay with you if I--

HEAD OF BRAEMORE

Absolutely. We'll handle things. Take the time you need.

Tami looks relieved.

HEAD OF BRAEMORE

But you better come back to us. We need you here. You've become irreplaceable to me, Mrs. Taylor.

INT. AMERICAN AIRLINES AIRCRAFT - IN-FLIGHT - MORNING

Taylor, Tami and GRACIE TAYLOR sit in coach on their way to Austin, TX.

TAMI

You sure you're okay with this? That your job is not in jeopardy?

TAYLOR

They're going to have to do without me for a few days is all. It will give that assistant coach a chance to get his feet wet. Been gunning for my job since I got there.

TAMI

That's what I'm concerned about.

TAYLOR

Well, I maybe got something on the horizon might change the situation.

TAMI

Coach Eric Taylor. Are you hiding something from your wife?

TAYLOR

Not hiding. Just don't want to say anything too soon. Jinx something--

TAMI

How good is this situation?

TAYLOR

Very good. Very, very good.

INT. DELTA FIRST CLASS - IN-FLIGHT - DAY

Smash Williams enjoys some star treatment and top-shelf amenities on his way to Austin.

INT. BURBANK AIRPORT (BUR) - SOUTHWEST GATE - MORNING

Landry Clarke waits in the queue with all the low-cost carrier customers to board his flight to Austin.

EXT. CHICAGO O'HARE (ORD) - DEPARTURES - DAY

Saracen and Julie hop out of their Über. Julie holds their baby as they deal with getting all their belongings out and into the United terminal.

INT. JET BLUE A320 AIRCRAFT - JFK, NY - AFTERNOON

A wheelchair rolls onboard where JASON STREET is being slowly lifted out of his wheelchair and into his seat.

Standing at the back of the aircraft in the aft galley is a Jet Blue flight attendant watching Jason being lifted into the chair. The flight attendant in question is--

BECKY SPROLES stops everything she is doing when she sees Jason...

As Jason gets settled into his seat, Becky kneels down next to him--

BECKY

(whispers)

Is there anything I can get for you, Mr. Street?

JASON

No, I'm fine...

(realizing)

Wait. I know you. Oh-my-god.
You're from Dillon. Tim's...
friend. What are you doing here?

BECKY

I work here.

JASON

Wow. That's... fantastic. So,
you're a stewardess?

BECKY

No. What is this? 1955? We
prefer In-Flight Crew Member.

JASON

Oh, I'm so sorry. In-Flight Crew
Member. Please forgive me.

BECKY

I'll give you a pass this time.

JASON

So... why here?

BECKY

I moved to New York a few years
back. Thought I'd try my luck on
Broadway. And so - here I am.

JASON

Ah, waitressing not enough of a
challenge for you, huh?

BECKY

The perks aren't as good.

JASON

Right. The free travel. Speaking
of, you thinking about heading back
home? Due to the... circumstances?

Becky suddenly gets a pained expression on her face--

BECKY

I've... already dealt with enough
loss in Dillon. I can't really take
much more.

Jason realizes something isn't quite okay with Becky; she
stands up and pulls herself together--

BECKY

I have to help put some bags in overhead bins. It's really great to see you, Jason.

JASON

Yeah. You too...
(looks at her name tag)
Becky--

BECKY

Sproles. My name's Becky Sproles.
(walking away)
From Dillon.

Becky heads back to the aft of the cabin, waits, then opens the door to the--

LAVATORY

Becky faces the mirror, tries desperately to compose herself. While she stares at herself in the mirror--

SERIES OF FLASHBACKS

-LUKE CAFFERTY exits a bus in military uniform looking hard and battle worn as Becky meets him at the terminal...

-Luke sits on the edge of a bed, his face in his hands. Becky attempts to console him, but he pushes her hand away...

-Luke gets into a bar fight, while Becky, Mindy and Billy attempt to break it up...

-Luke gets back on that bus in military uniform and as the door closes on him -- Becky breaks down in tears...

-Becky lays a red rose on a gravesite.

TOMBSTONE - "LUKE CAFFERTY: 1993-2014"

Back to LAVATORY

Becky's in tears. A knock on the door. Becky quickly composes herself and readjusts to face passengers.

INT. AUSTIN AIRPORT (AUS) - BAGGAGE CLAIM - AFTERNOON

Jason rolls his wheelchair towards the carousel. Becky walks past him with her crew. Jason and Becky see each other. Before Becky disappears from view -- she walks back to him--

BECKY

Tell everyone back home that I love them and I'm sorry for all the loss. And that Becky Sproles is doing just fine in the Big Apple.

JASON

I will. For sure. Maybe I'll see you again on the way home.

BECKY

Or, maybe on Broadway back in New York. Ya never know.

JASON

Ya never know. Bye Becky.

BECKY

Bye Jason.

EXT. AUSTIN AIRPORT - ARRIVALS - AFTERNOON

Jason waits curbside as a black SUV pulls up. Driver's side window rolls down, and a familiar face pops his head out--

HERC

(to Jason)

Hey crippled quarterback. You need a ride?

JASON

(rolls up to SUV)

Yeah crippled psychopath. Hey where's the SUV limo I ordered?

HERC

Aw, you ain't big time enough of an agent for that kinda treatment.

JASON

Oh, is that right?

HERC

What'd ya do? Pack the wife and kids?

JASON

Turns out - I'm solo. Long story.

HERC

Uh-oh. Troubles in east coast paradise?

INT. HUNTSVILLE PENITENTIARY - VISITATION ROOM - AFTERNOON

Seated at a table in an orange jumpsuit is ORNETTE HOWARD, bearded and greying; he coughs a lot and looks frail as he waits for his visitor to arrive.

INT. HALLWAY TO VISITATION ROOM - SAME

VINCE HOWARD passes hardcore inmates. A Latino inmate stops and stares at him, long and hard.

OFFICER (O.S.)
Hey, Reyes! You got a ton of
family here to see you, again.

BOBBY REYES turns from Vince Howard and acknowledges--

BOBBY REYES
On my way. Did my moms show?

OFFICER (O.S.)
Doesn't look like it this time.

Vince Howard keeps moving towards--

VISITATION ROOM

Vince saddles up across from his--

VINCE
Hey, Pop. Been a while. How ya
holding up?

Ornette flashes his son a great big grin.

EXT. OUTSIDE CORRINA WILLIAM'S HOME - AFTERNOON

Smash steps out of a black town car in front of a relatively up-scale home in the wealthiest part of Dillon.

INT. CORRINA WILLIAM'S HOME - SAME

Corrina -- dressed in designer clothes, her hair is immaculate -- opens the front door of her home--

CORRINA
My baby.

SMASH
Momma. You look amazing.

Smash's two sisters walk down a flight of stairs.

CORRINA

Girls. Your brother is finally home.

SMASH

Good to be back in our new digs. Just wish it could be under less tragic circumstances.

CORINA

Don't I know it, baby. What have the people of Dillon done to anger Lord Jesus so much?

SMASH

Momma, it ain't about that--

NOANNIE

Come on, momma. Not this again--

SHEILA

This doesn't have anything to do with Jesus, momma.

INT. CLARKE RESIDENCE - AFTERNOON

MARY CLARKE opens her front door to the sight of--

MRS. CLARKE

Landry. Oh, it's so good to have you home.

LANDRY

Hey, mom. Yeah I'm glad I could make it. But not glad... you know.

Chad Clarke appears in his police captain uniform--

CAPT. CLARKE

There's my boy. Straight out of Hollyweird.

LANDRY

Hey, dad. Look at you. A captain now.

CAPT. CLARKE

Yep. Look at you. Your hair is... long. Is that a beard?

LANDRY

I guess so. Guess a few things have changed about me.

CAPT. CLARKE

I'll say. Your mother cooked the entire fattened calf. Which it looks like you won't have a problem with.

LANDRY

That's... funny.

Mrs. Clarke leads her son towards her kitchen--

MRS. CLARKE

Oh stop, Chad. I'm sure you're hungry though. How was the flight? Did they feed you?

LANDRY

It was... real nice. I had the peanuts. They're honey roasted.

INT. HOTEL SUITE - DOWNTOWN AUSTIN - AFTERNOON

Matt and Julie have already settled in to their two room suite as they hear a knock on the door. Julie opens the door to the sight of her family... and the hugs begin!

JULIE

(beyond excited)

Mom. Dad.

TAMI

Aaaah. My baby girl.

TAYLOR

There's my gorgeous daughter--

TAMI

I need to hold my grand daughter.

TAMI

Who can believe I just said that--?

JULIE

(re: baby)
Here she is--

TAMI

Hey Matt--

Julie lifts up her daughter, hands her to Tami.

SARACEN

Hey... hey, Mrs. Taylor.

TAMI

Matt. I told you about that. It's Mom. Come on now.

SARACEN

I'm sorry. Hey... Mom. Hey--

TAYLOR

You can still call me Coach.

SARACEN

Right. Okay--

TAYLOR

I'm just kidding. How ya doing
Matty? You still keeping that arm
warmed up just in case?

SARACEN

Uh, yeah. Actually. I joined
a flag football league on
Halsted. That's a street in
Chicago--

TAMI

Eric. Isn't she just the
most precious thing ever?
Does she need to be changed?
I think maybe--

TAYLOR

Flag football huh? I guess
they don't like to hit too
hard in the arts district--

JULIE

I just changed her--

SARACEN

No. I don't play with
artists. These guys all
played ball in college.

JULIE

She slept the whole way on
the plane. I was so happy.

JULIE

Hello, Gracie. Do you still
remember me?

GRACIE TAYLOR

You're my big sister. Julie.

TAMI

Oh look. There's a kitchen in here
and everything. Who's hungry?

INT. HUNTSVILLE PENITENTIARY - VISITATION ROOM - AFTERNOON

Vince faces his father.

ORNETTE

I'm thinking, I may get outta here
come springtime.

VINCE

And, ya don't plan on coming back
again after that?

ORNETTE

Come on now. Give your old man a break.

VINCE

A break? You want a break?

ORNETTE

Yeah, I'm asking for...

Ornette's cough a bit disconcerting.

VINCE

Pop. Pop--

ORNETTE

I'm okay. It's just the... the air in here--

VINCE

Man, stop trying to play me. I know ya sick. I just... I can't watch you die in here. I can't...

ORNETTE

I just said come springtime--

VINCE

Yeah, I heard that before. But I see the same pattern. Over and over again. The same pattern--

ORNETTE

You think it's been easy for me?

VINCE

Don't start, alright--

ORNETTE

You out there. Playing arena ball. Couldn't even get yourself into the big leagues after all I did to get you into a top-ranked college--

VINCE

What you did? What you did? Man, I don't know why I even come here any more...

Vince gets up to walk away--

ORNETTE

Son. I'm sick. Okay. You're right. I got... I got... the poison.

(MORE)

ORNETTE (CONT'D)

It's in my lungs. That's where they say it's at. I don't know how much time I got left.

Ornette completely breaks down, though he doesn't want the other inmates to see him sobbing.

ORNETTE

I just don't want to die in here. Promise me I won't. That you'll... talk to somebody.

VINCE

(sits)

I'll... try to come see ya again, Pop. But I can't make any promises.

ORNETTE

(pulls it together)

I liked... I liked watching you play those arena games. But... I still... I still believe you gonna make it to the big time. I'm not giving up on you. You my son. You my boy. I ain't gonna let you fall.

OFFICER (O.S.)

Howard. Times up.

Vince remains seated; he and his father share one last look before they take Ornette back to his cell.

As Vince is leaving, he passes a LAWYER, 40s, who sits down to wait for an inmate to arrive -- the inmate in question is:

SANTIAGO HERRERA arrives, sits across from his lawyer.

LAWYER

Santiago. How are they treating you?

SANTIAGO

Same way they always treat me in every joint I ever been in. Same situation. I just should have stayed away from this neck of the woods longer this time.

INT. HOTEL SUITE - DOWNTOWN, AUSTIN - NIGHT

As the Taylor/Saracen family eat a meal together in their rented "home" in Austin for the evening, the tv is on in the background. Whatever conversation they are engaged in comes to a halt as their collective attention is focused on--

MSNBC - "THE LAST WORD WITH..."

LAWRENCE O'DONNELL (ON TELEVISION)

Following up on that school shooting that thrust the town of West Dillon Texas into the national spotlight just a few days ago - claiming the lives of nine innocent students. We are still trying to figure out what motivated a young man to commit such an unfathomable act of violence. Meanwhile, in Washington, Republican politicians still refuse to consider enacting the most common sense gun laws.

EXT. OUTSIDE DILLON POLICE HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

A chaotic and vitriolic scene as protestors face off against each other. On one side are the progressive students, led by Gina Montez who demand stricter gun laws. On the other side are second amendment and death penalty advocates.

Dillon Police keep the two shouting sides from attacking each other as Captain Chad Clarke arrives on the scene and heads inside...

INT. DILLON POLICE HEADQUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

... through his precinct and stops in front of--

DETECTIVE'S OFFICE

DETECTIVE WILLS, DETECTIVE TAMBOR and DETECTIVE BLAIR -- back in town from Midland to help out -- burn the midnight oil.

TAMBOR

If he was going after football players why the other kids?

WILLS

Bad aim.

BLAIR
Or, just a sociopath on a rampage.

TAMBOR
He definitely had a point to make.

WILLS
Or, maybe he didn't.

Capt. Clarke stands in the doorway--

CLARKE
Fellas. Detective Blair. Welcome
back to Dillon.

BLAIR
Hey, Captain. Nice to be back.

TAMBOR
What's the good word?

CAPT. CLARKE
We think the boy may finally be
ready to talk. You get any more
intel on the parents?

WILLS
The mother went MIA a few years
back. Just snapped and took off.
Hasn't been seen or heard from.

BLAIR
The father also took off after he
saw the news reports of the
shooting. But we tracked him down
over there in Durango. He's part
of some secessionist movement that
took him in after--

CAPT. CLARKE
Secessionist? Like Texas seceding
from the Union, that sort of thing?

TAMBOR
Exactly that.

TAMBOR
Guy's been stockpiling glocks, semi
and fully automatics. Everything
but muskets.

BLAIR
Including muskets. You name it.
He's got it.

WILLS

Bump stocks. Closets full of magazines. The whole nine yards.

CAPT CLARKE

Apple doesn't fall far. So, why the beef with the football players?

WILLS

We got a hunch this crop of jocks weren't as championship quality as your Dillon Panthers of yore.

TAMBOR

Panthers this year had a reputation for being first class bullies and second-rate players.

WILLS

So, the kid was one of their main targets for hazing and whatnot.

BLAIR

Seems he made the cut. But, was basically harassed until he quit the team in humiliation.

CAPT. CLARKE

I'm thinking you should get the coaches in here. Maybe shed some light on what made this kid snap. While I try and get him to open up.

TAMBOR

You got it. Any word on how the injured are doing?

CAPT. CLARKE

Shaken up. But recovering.

WILLS

And the one in the ICU?

CAPT. CLARKE

Slipped into a coma. Our thoughts and prayers are with the parents.

TAMBOR

Hear your boy is back in town. How's he doing?

CAPT. CLARKE

That is yet to be determined. Gentlemen. Keep up the good work.

INT. BUDDY'S BAR - NIGHT

Buddy's fallen even deeper into a drunken stupor.

Time passes as--

-Buddy's eyes open and close as he sits on a barstool, while someone talks his ear off...

-Buddy makes a female uncomfortable by being a little too close for comfort. Bartender steps in to drag him away...

-Buddy falls down next to the bar as patrons rush over to lift him up, and put him on a bar stool...

Riggins pulls Buddy up--

RIGGINS

Alright, big boss. Time to get you home and into bed.

BUDDY

I'm fine... I'm fine, Riggo. Don't ya worry 'bout ole Buddy Garrity.

ON TELEVISION

Nightly news report plays on the television behind the bar: interview show from a news affiliate out of Dallas. A female INTERVIEWER, 40s, blonde, conservative, is in the middle of a remote interview with Lyla Garrity, live from Houston.

At the bar-- the tv is mute as Lyla answers questions. Buddy and Riggins stare up at the tv--

BUDDY

Is that... my daughter on the tv?

RIGGINS

I believe it is.

BUDDY

Hey. Somebody turn that up. Turn... where's the god-damn remote...?

Bartender scrambles for the remote and turns up the volume...

INTERVIEWER (ON TELEVISION)

You are aware, Ms. Garrity, that your candidate has an F rating from the NRA. In Texas, that's pretty much a political death knell.

LYLA (ON TELEVISION)

What I am aware of is that my candidate believes in protecting the rights of gun owners regardless of the smear campaign from the NRA. But, she also wants to see some common sense gun regulation--

INTERVIEWER (ON TELEVISION)

Common sense regulations or restrictions? Some are claiming that candidate De Rosa wants to take away gun rights all together--

LYLA (ON TELEVISION)

That's just an outright falsehood. She never said anything even remotely...

While the back and forth continues on television--

BUDDY

Would you look at that. My baby girl is on the tv. Talking about gun rights. In Texas. And, it's a wonder to anyone why I drink?

RIGGINS

Makes me kinda regret getting sober myself.

BUDDY

What the hell is happening in our world, Tim Riggins?

RIGGINS

I guess... it's changing, Buddy. In a place where nothing ever does.

Riggins continues to stare at Lyla on television.

DISSOLVE TO:

A long procession of hearses drive through Dillon towards...

EXT. MEMORIAL SERVICE - HERRMANN FIELD - DAY

... where it seems the entire district has assembled to pay their respects, filling out the stands and the field.

News vans are close by, but reporters keep their distance.

A small contingent of Dillon police are on hand.

Parents clutch the children still with them as they sit in front of framed photos of the ones they tragically lost.

Three injured students sit together on a makeshift riser.

In the crowd-- the Taylors and Saracen; the Riggins, including ANGELA COLLETTE; the Williams; Jason with JOANNE STREET and MITCHELL STREET; Landry and Mrs. Clarke; Vince and Regina Howard; Buddy, joined by BUDDY JR., PAM GARRITY, her husband KEVIN and TABITHA GARRITY; the MERRIWEATHERS: VERNON, BIRD, CALLIB, DARIUS and ANDRE; Luke Cafferty's parents: TOM CAFFERTY and MARGARET CAFFERTY.

Lyla sits with Lilian De Rosa and a political entourage that includes former Dillon Mayor LUCY RODELL.

The entire proceeding resembles a presidential inauguration. REV. LOCKE is in mid sermon--

REV. LOCKE

(reads)

... we therefore commit his body to the ground to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust; in sure and certain hope of the Resurrection to eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ...

Walking onto the field, like an invading army, are the progressive students led by Gina Montez.

Dillon police immediately establish a barricade.

MONTEZ

We aren't here to cause trouble.
We just want to show our respect.

Reporters take notice. Cameramen turn their cameras on.

MONTEZ

We just have a few things we want to say.

Buddy looks on the students with slight contempt.

BUDDY

(to Buddy Jr.)

Great. Just what we need. The revolutionaries.

Taylor and Tami observe the students with curiosity.

The students climb onto the riser and stand next to the Injured Students. Gina stands in front of a bank of microphones.

MONTEZ

(reads a statement)

We are here in solidarity with the families of the students we lost. And, because of one senseless act by a heartless boy - armed with his father's arsenal of destruction - they're no longer a part of our collective story here in Dillon...

The parents of the fallen are in tears.

MONTEZ (V.O.)

To laugh like dumb kids. To kiss the one they love. To call for a ride when it's too late to walk home. To celebrate after a big win against a rival team right here on this field...

The three injured are also in tears.

MONTEZ (V.O.)

Though our hearts are filled with gratitude for the lives that were somehow spared...

INT. EAST DILLON HOSPITAL - ICU - SAME MOMENT

Panther QB, WINSTON JAMES (think: a Cam Newton type), in a coma. Winston's MOM and DAD, both in their 30s, sit at his bedside, hoping and praying.

Back to HERMMANN FIELD

MONTEZ (V.O.)

We're all too painfully aware that one of our own still lies in waiting between heaven and earth...

Dillon Police move in. Pastor Locke waves them away.

MONTEZ

We've been asked to send thoughts and prayers. But for us, that is not enough. For us, what we want is justice. What we want is--

Pastor Locke places his hand on the microphones--

REV. LOCKE
Now is not the time.

MONTEZ
Then when is the time? Huh,
Pastor? When--?

REV. LOCKE
Not. Now. Not. Here.

Gina relents, then leads her fellow progressive students, in unison, off the riser and away from the field.

News cameras continue to roll.

It's later. The assembled crowd share moments with the parents and console each other as Herrmann Field transforms into a town gathering.

Buddy stands in the bleachers next to Lyla, along with De Rosa and Rodell.

LYLA
Dad. This is the woman I've been working for. Lilian De Rosa. Buddy Garrity.

DE ROSA
Hello, Mr. Garrity. It is such a pleasure to meet Lyla's father.

BUDDY
State Senator De Rosa. I'm certainly intrigued to meet the Texas Democrat Lyla thinks actually has a shot against a Republican.

LUCY RODELL
Why is that such a shocker, Buddy? You supported me all those years. And, I did just fine.

BUDDY
You never ran for Congress, Lucy.

LUCY RODELL
Maybe I should. It is the year of the woman after all.

Riggins and Tyra, seated, eyeball the crowd. They SPOT: Jason, Landry and Saracen talking to family and friends.

RIGGINS
 Seven. He showed.
 (re: Landry)
 Oh look. Your boyfriend's back.

TYRA
 Quit it.
 (re: Lyla)
 Oh look. There's your holly-roller
 girlfriend. Slumming it with us
 common folk.

RIGGINS
 Who's that lady she's with?

TYRA
 Babe, you really need to keep up on
 current affairs. That lady is a
 politician running for Congress.

RIGGINS
 So that's who she was talking about
 on tv.

TYRA
 Yeah. Who else would it be? You'd
 love her. I hear she hates guns.

RIGGINS
 And, she's running for office. In
 Texas.

TYRA
 Yep. And, she's got my vote.

Vince spots Taylor, makes his way over to--

VINCE
 Hey, Coach.

TAYLOR
 Well I'll be damned. Look at you.
 Vince Howard in the flesh. Man,
 you bulked up. Looks like you're
 ready to do some serious damage.

VINCE
 Well, ya know. I keep it 100.

TAYLOR
 Hey, I'm sorry about what happened
 with Oklahoma--

VINCE

We don't need to talk about that.

TAYLOR

Understood. But you're doing good?
You're playing ball, right?

VINCE

It's been... good.

TAYLOR

Nothing wrong with arena ball.
I've known a bunch of top-notch
players went in that direction.

VINCE

It's money, ya know.

TAYLOR

Sure. Sure it is.

Vince's look betrays a hardness.

TAYLOR

You sure you're okay?

VINCE

Yeah. I'm great. Couldn't be
better.

TAYLOR

Well, it's really great to see you,
Vince.

VINCE

You sure about that?

TAYLOR

Yeah. Why wouldn't--?

VINCE

I mean... sounds like I may have,
ya know, let you down or some--

TAYLOR

No. What are you talking about?
You didn't let me down.

VINCE

Not like I didn't try for the pros.

TAYLOR

I don't doubt that. Not at all.

VINCE

I might not be a Smash Williams...

Smash Williams appears--

SMASH

Is that Coach Taylor?

TAYLOR

Smash Williams. How you doing?
Man, it's good to see you boys
again. Hey, have you met Vince
Howard? He was my star quarterback
on the Lions.

SMASH

Nice to finally meet you, Vince.

VINCE

Hey, man. That's what's up. Ya
got ya Tampa game on.

SMASH

You know it, baby.

VINCE

But, I also hear they maybe be
looking to part ways?

SMASH

Ya heard that, huh? Maybe been
watching too much ESPN, baby. A
little too much Steve A. Smith.

VINCE

No, I just know some people.

SMASH

Oh, you know some people? Okay.

VINCE

Yeah I know some people...

Coach steps in to break up the mounting tension--

TAYLOR

Alright. Loving the camaraderie
between my two star players. This
is real nice. Best of the Panthers
meets best of the Lions. Back on
this field no less. It's a
beautiful thing.

Vince and Smash continue to size each other up.

Buddy's in private conference with former mayor Rodell and two slick and polished boosters for the Panthers -- PETE WARREN and JIMMY FIELDS, both in their 50s.

JIMMY

Most of the booster dollars are now being funneled to the basketball program since this... incident.

BUDDY

That son-of-a-bitch kid should get the death penalty.

PETE

I also have it on good authority that state-wide budget cuts could eliminate the entire competitive state championship program. At least at the public school level.

BUDDY

How the hell can they do that?

PETE

Well, a lot of it has to do with who your daughter's aligned herself with.

BUDDY

What? That De Rosa woman?

JIMMY

Hear she's gunning to re-allocate should she get into office.

BUDDY

Son-of-a-bitch. My daughter is in bed with the enemy. I don't understand it. I raised her on Panther football.

LUCY RODELL

For god-sake. Will you men stop being such whinny little crybabies. Why do you think I've been getting so chummy with the fiery Latina from Houston? I'm trying to show her the error of her ways. She's just a little misguided is all.

JIMMY

Misguided is an under statement. She's a god-damn communist if you ask me.

LUCY RODELL
Hyperbole much Jimmy Fields?
She's got her reasons. I'll point
her in the right direction.

JIMMY
Problem is - all the dollars and
infrastructure are starting to go
towards the charter schools.

PETE
Which means - we should take the
offer.

BUDDY
What offer is that, Pete?

LUCY RODELL
I was meaning to tell you before
Pete let the cat out of the bag.
There's an offer on the table from
the Dunston Valley Cardinals for a
televised pre-season match.

JIMMY
A nationally televised game.

PETE
Covered on ESPN.

BUDDY
You don't say.

LUCY RODELL
Because of recent events the
national spotlight is on Dillon.

BUDDY
And, the Cardinals want to
capitalize on it for their own self-
preservation I'll bet.

JIMMY
We're not the only program under
the knife.

BUDDY
Huh? But, we aren't ready to face
the Cardinals. They went to state
last year and they got the best
young quarterback in the state.

JIMMY

Second best. The best is in an ICU
in East Dillon right now.

PETE

In our humble opinion.

BUDDY

Well, how the hell are we supposed
to cobble together a good enough
team - after losing eight of our
best players and three that are in
god-damn body casts - with the,
let's be honest, subpar coaching
staff and piss-poor caliber of
players available to us between
West and East Dillon combined?

They contemplate their situation, until--

JIMMY

Well, there is that basketball
team.

Buddy's wheels start turning.

Attention is now focused back on the field, where Tami and
Taylor -- who spots his FORMER PLAYERS one by one -- are
being inundated with handshakes and pats on the back.

Jason Street rolls his wheelchair further in as Riggins,
Billy, Landry, Smash, Vince, as well as DALLAS TINKER, are on
hand to show their respects.

Tyra and Lyla hug Tami. Tyra all but loses her shit when she
sees Julie's baby.

Saracen and Landry hug it out.

Riggins and Street smile brightly at each other.

TAYLOR

Man, I did not realize how much I'd
missed y'all. Seeing your faces
brings back so many good memories.
I'll tell you what.

Taylor now has the attention of the entire assembled crowd as
Buddy steps up and puts his arm around him.

BUDDY

Perhaps you'd like to say a few
words to the fine people of Dillon
who miss their favorite coach?

TAYLOR

I don't know about that, Buddy.
I'm just here like everybody else
to show my respects--

BUDDY

There's a microphone right up
there...

BUDDY

It would mean the world to
those of us who miss you and
are still grateful for all
you did for this town if you
could step right on up there
and just say a few words in
our time of need...

TAYLOR

I know there are microphones
everywhere, Buddy. There's
also camera crews and the
national media everywhere and
I really don't need to draw
that much attention to me
being here...

From out of nowhere-- a caravan of pickup trucks roars onto
the field filled with--

Masked men waving confederate flags. They let out the rebel
yell, while they fire blanks into the air with toy rifles and
paint balls from paint guns.

Chaos ensues as the assembled crowd scream and scatter in all
directions.

VOICE IN THE CROWD (O.S.)

(shouting)

They're blanks. They're just
firing blanks

Masked men hurl a flaming tire out onto the field as well as
a flaming stuffed panther. When the panther hits the ground
-- it explodes into a cacophony of firecrackers!

Masked men throw M-80S from their pickup trucks.

Masked men hold up signs that read-- "DON'T MESS WITH OUR
SECOND AMENDMENT RIGHTS"; "PANTHERS = ALL ROAR. NO BITE!"

Masked men throw footballs off their pickup trucks that
explode into firecrackers as the Dillon squad cars take off
down the road after them...

Taylor and the entirety of the Panthers and Lions contingent
stand in utter confusion and horror -- while local and
national news record the entire event.

Black out.

END OF PART ONE

PART TWO

OVER BLACK - "REUNION"

CHYRON - "ONE DAY LATER"

INT. DILLON POLICE HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Capt. Clarke walks through his busy precinct, passing a bustle of activity. He stops when he gets to a--

HOLDING CELL

Inside sit five men, early 20s, dressed mainly in flannel.

Detective Wills walks up next to him.

CAPT. CLARKE

These are the boys from Dunston?

Wills leads him away from earshot of the perps.

WILLS

That's their story. But, I checked their priors and seems like most of them are local boys.

CAPT. CLARKE

From Dillon?

WILLS

If not born and raised at least with enough of a history.

CAPT. CLARKE

Well, why in the hell would they claim to be from Dunston then?

INT. BUDDY'S BAR - DAY

Buddy hosts Jimmy and Pete at the bar as they down beers.

INT. RENTAL CAR - DRIVING - DAY

Tami drives and Taylor rides shotgun.

TAMI

I don't mind staying a few extra days. I can do some work remotely and FaceTime with my assistant.

TAYLOR

We're three weeks out from opening day. I got to get back before they give my job to some upstart trying to prove himself.

TAMI

If you need to get back we can. I just wanted to spend a little more time seeing if I can be of help.

TAYLOR

Ya know it's not always easy being married to a saint. You realize that, right?

TAMI

I know, babe. But you seem to manage.

They pull up to--

PARKING LOT - BUDDY'S BAR

TAYLOR

Now, I got to see what Buddy wants. I'm not really comfortable being put in some kind of savior role. I'm a football coach. Not a god-damn crisis counselor.

He hops out.

TAMI

Love you, hon. Have fun with Buddy.

INT. BUDDY'S BAR - DAY

Taylor enters the bar, looks around. Buddy spots him, walks over--

BUDDY

Eric. Damn, it's good to have you back in town.

Buddy walks Taylor over to the bar.

TAYLOR

Nice to be back. Place looks a little different.

BUDDY

Made some improvements. Thought about putting up some stripper poles just out of spite. Eric. You remember Pete and Jimmy?

TAYLOR

Faces look familiar. Boosters?

PETE

(shakes hands with Taylor)
Stepped in during your days with the Lions.

JIMMY

(shakes hands with Taylor)
I made sure Joe McCoy found his way to Dallas.

TAYLOR

Well, I guess I owe you one then.

JIMMY

That's what we were kinda hoping--

BUDDY

What Jimmy here means to say is - we have a sort of unorthodox proposition for you, Eric.

TAYLOR

Unorthodox?

BUDDY

Yessir.

TAYLOR

And, what might that be?

BUDDY

Well, why don't you just sit down here for a minute and we'll get you set up.

(to Bartender)

Get Coach here a beer... or three.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

Tami, some items in hand, steps up to the register and stares long and hard at the girl at the checkout counter swiping her items.

TAMI

Epyck?

EPYCK lifts her eyes from the items she's swiping and gives Tami a long, hard stare.

INT. BUDDY'S BAR - DAY

Buddy's in full pitch mode--

BUDDY

We just need a little help convincing the basketball coach to lend us some of his players for this one big game.

TAYLOR

Buddy. I endured pretty much every one of your harebrained schemes over the years. But, this one just about takes the cake.

BUDDY

Tell me it didn't work with Hastings Ruckle.

TAYLOR

That was one player. You're talking about an entire team.

PETE

Not the whole team. Just the ones that blend in well on the football field.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

Tami's still at check out--

TAMI

So, things are working out for you?

EPYCK

Well, as long as I keep a steady job and don't shoot up... anything.

TAMI

That's just great. Happy to hear it. It's really good to see you--

EPYCK

You want to know what really keeps me on the straight and narrow?

TAMI

Yes. Of course. I'd love to know.

EPYCK

Come by the East Dillon Clubhouse tomorrow night around 8:30.

TAMI

Isn't that... the boxing ring?

EPYCK

Sort of.

INT. BUDDY'S BAR - DAY

Taylor is now about three beers in--

TAYLOR

Look. If I do this. Talk to this guy--

BUDDY

Coach Washington. He's a real - hard nut to crack.

TAYLOR

If I talk to this Coach Washington. What makes you think he'll give a damn what I have to say?

JIMMY

Everybody here knows about you, Coach. You're a living legend.

TAYLOR

Even a basketball coach from Houston?

PETE

Your reputation proceeds you.

TAYLOR

I got to be honest with y'all - and what I say now does not leave this bar. You understand me? I've felt like - ever since I got my job as a quarterback coach - that my ass was on the line from day one. It was like TMU all over again.

(MORE)

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

Thing is though, I'm finally settled in there and the head coach and I get along. But, if I stay away too long I could jeopardize some - opportunities further down the line. You get what I'm saying?

BUDDY

Completely understand. But if you could just do this one thing with us before you head back to Philly.

JIMMY

And, there's the other thing.

BUDDY

Jimmy--

TAYLOR

What other thing?

JIMMY

If we could get some help putting together a better coaching staff.

Taylor looks gobsmacked, then busts into an amused laugh; it's all just too damn surreal for words.

INT. POLICE STATION - SOLITARY CONFINEMENT - DAY

RAND OLSEN, 17 (the lone shooter), unkempt and messy, sits staring at the prison wall. Capt. Clarke opens the door with two armed guards by his side--

CAPT. CLARKE

Son. We spoke with your father.

Rand breaks from his eerie concentration--

RAND

(screams at top volume)
Why won't you just leave me be here in the nothingness...?

CAPT. CLARKE

He said he wishes it was him in here and not you...

RAND
 (reciting from memory)
 There comes a time in the
 affairs of humankind when it
 becomes necessary to throw
 off the yoke of tyranny which
 has insidiously taken over
 the governments of the world.
 That moment has arrived.

CAPT. CLARKE
 He said he's sorry that he
 said those hurtful things to
 you, Rand. We're not here to
 name call or to hurt you. We
 just need to know how you got
 the guns. Did your father
 help you? Was it his idea?

INT. BILLY RIGGIN'S HOUSE - DAY

Detectives Wills and Tambor interview Billy at his home.

TAMBOR
 You were the head coach of the
 Panthers.

BILLY
 Still am... the head coach.

WILLS
 Not trying to put you on the
 defensive here, Coach. Just trying
 to figure out what could have made
 this kid snap.

BILLY
 Well for starters... y'all want
 something to drink?

Mindy enters with a pitcher of sweet tea.

TAMBOR
 Got anything stronger?

Mindy gives Billy a look.

WILLS
 He's kidding.

It's later.

BILLY
 You had to see this kid hit.

TAMBOR
 How so?

BILLY
 All head first and like he was
 seeking revenge for something.

FLASHBACK - HERRMANN FIELD

Practice drills. The Panther defensive line wear orange dickies and stand in 5-2 formation. Rand as a defensive end--

-Breaks through the offensive line and spears the running back, head first.

-Power drives up the middle and spears the center, head first.

-Blitzes and spears QB Winston James, head first.

Billy rushes onto the field of play--

BILLY

(yells)

Olsen. How many times do I have to tell you? Hit with your shoulder. Your shoulder. Your god-damn shoulder. Like this--

Billy hits Rand shoulder to shoulder and knocks the kid on his ass. Rand springs up, head rams Billy in the gut!

Back to BILLY'S HOUSE

BILLY

He wasn't exactly a favorite among the other Panthers.

FLASHBACK - PANTHER LOCKER ROOM

-Panthers, out of uniform, have Rand pressed against the lockers and take turns slamming his head against them.

-Alone, Rand aggressively slams his head into the lockers.

Back to BILLY'S HOUSE

WILLS

Any contact with the father?

BILLY

That guy? Yeah. Total nut-job.

FLASHBACK - HERRMANN FIELD

Practice. Panthers run drills while PANTHER COACHES observe. BRAD OLSEN, 40s, angry white guy in the bleachers yells--

MR. OLSEN

Stick him, Rand. Don't let 'em
push you around.

Rand gets distracted. Billy and his coaches take notice.

BILLY

Mr. Olsen. I told you about this.
Practices are private.

MR. OLSEN

Come on, Rand. Pull your head out
of your god-damn ass and hit that
son-of-a-bitch.

BILLY

(yells)
Mr. Olsen--

MR. OLSEN

My tax dollars pay your god-damn
salary. May not be a free country
any more. But I'll be damned my
boy don't learn to hit properly.

BILLY

Excuse me--

MR. OLSEN

Do your god-damn job, Riggins. Or
I'll come down and do it for you.

All the Panthers stand and stare at Mr. Olsen, and then at
Rand who throws off his helmet and storms off the field.

Back to BILLY'S HOUSE

WILLS

What did he mean by do your job?

BILLY

Guy's an armchair Madden - and a
total... Nazi if you ask me.

SERIES OF FLASHBACKS

-Brad Olsen at a political rally with Rand holds a sign that
reads-- "SECEDE! TEXAS OR SECESSION!"...

-Brad Olsen at a firing range with Rand as they fire off
rounds from semi-automatic rifles...

-Brad Olsen, teaching his son to box, open hand slaps Rand
over and over again in the face...

-Rand watches, from a distance and hidden from his father's view, Brad put a semi-automatic back into their basement closet filled with firearms and magazine clips.

Back to BILLY'S HOUSE

WILLS

So, you cut him from the team?

BILLY

Had I known he was going to...

Wills and Tambor both look at each other.

WILLS

Well thank you for your time,
Coach.

TAMBOR

And, thank you for the tea.

Tambor smiles at Mindy, who gives him a "get the fuck out of my house" look back. Wills and Tambor exit.

BILLY

So - what? It's somehow my fault
this kid went cuckoo for Cocoa
Puffs?

Mindy rushes over to console him--

MINDY

No, baby. No one is saying that.

BILLY

Like if I had kept him on the team
these kids would still be alive?

MINDY

Of course not. None of this is
your fault.

BILLY

I should have seen the signs. I
did see the signs. I could have...
said something.

Billy completely breaks down as Mindy hugs him tight.

MINDY

The kid's messed up. That's all.
Nothing anybody could have done.

EXT. GRAVE YARD - DAY

Saracen and Julie stand in front of a tombstone. Julie reaches down and places a rose on the gravesite, breaks down in tears. Saracen hugs her tight.

FLASHBACK - HOSPITAL

Saracen sits next to the bedside of--

MRS. SARACEN, her eyes open and close, her breath shallow.

Saracen holds her hand. SHELBY SARACEN enters the room and watches her son cry by his grandmother's bedside.

SHELBY

I know this hurts, Matt. But you've been there for her every step of the way.

SARACEN

I'm sorry... I'm sorry I went away, grandma. I'm so sorry.

Mrs. Saracen's eyes open--

MRS. SARACEN

Joel... Joel. I'm ready for the dance tonight, hon. I wore my best dress for you. Do you see it?

She looks right into Saracen's eyes--

MRS. SARACEN

Do you see me, Joel? Do you see me?

Saracen breaks down. Shelby moves in to comfort him.

Back to GRAVE SITE

Saracen's tears flow with ease.

JULIE

Matt. Do you ever wonder what it would be like if we never left Dillon?

SARACEN

Honestly. I'm just so glad we did. I mean, I love our life now, Julie. I love Chicago and our baby and... and... and the place that we live... and all our new friends.

JULIE

Yeah. Me too.

SARACEN

I wouldn't move back here if you paid me a million dollars.

JULIE

Yeah. Me too. I'm just so sad for all those parents. It could be us one day.

SARACEN

Don't even think that. It's not going to happen. She's going to grow up. Have kids of her own... and she'll visit our gravesite and... and cry her own tears about our dead asses.

JULIE

Well, statistically speaking... you'll die first.

They laugh as they continue to stare at--

TOMBSTONE - LORAINNE SARACEN

INT. COLLETTE RESIDENCE - SUNSET

Riggins lies on the couch watching tv. Tyra enters, dressed in her work clothes, and throws her keys on the counter.

RIGGINS

Hi dear. How was work?

TYRA

You know, Tim. Slouched on the couch is really not a good look for you. Did you move at all today?

RIGGINS

I took the garbage cans out to the curb for pickup in the--

TYRA

Something's got to give, Tim. You can't just lie on my mother's couch all day while I'm at work dealing with these brokenhearted kids.

RIGGINS

I'm going to find a job...
eventually.

TYRA

Are you? Are you even looking?

RIGGINS

Yeah, Tyra. I've been looking. But
the job market isn't really booming
for someone with a record.

TYRA

Well, the sooner you find something
that doesn't involve alcohol, drugs
or guns the sooner we can put a
roof back on our house so we can
get the hell out of my mother's--

ANGELA (O.S.)

I can hear you. Why don't you
consider Austin? Or Houston? Tons
of jobs there - record or not.

TYRA

Why don't we, Tim?

RIGGINS

Dillon is our home. That's where
our house is, Tyra--

RIGGINS

Dillon is where my land is.
Dillon is where our family
is. We have roots here in
Dillon that go back for
generations.

TYRA

You mean the house with the
giant hole in the roof
insurance won't cover? I
thought it was Texas forever.
Not Dillon forever.

ON TELEVISION

A commercial featuring Texas (SEN) TED CRUZ in which Cruz
uses a semi-automatic machine gun to cook some bacon.

Tyra, livid, grabs her keys, throws them at the screen,
screams at the tv, then storms out of the room. Riggins
remains on the couch and continues to channel check.

INT. COACH WASHINGTON'S HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Taylor, Buddy, Pete and Jimmy sit across from an annoyed
Coach Washington in his easy chair. MRS. WASHINGTON, 40s,
Black, enters with a tray full of drinks.

BUDDY

This is awfully kind of you, Mrs. Washington.

TAYLOR

It certainly is. We appreciate the hospitality.

Mrs. Washington smiles brightly at them. Mr. Washington gives her the stink eye, and she promptly exits.

BUDDY

Coach Washington. We sure do appreciate you taking the time--

COACH WASHINGTON

Save me the hard sell, Garrity. Since ya coming into my home. Drinking my beverages. Asking for my time. So you can - what? Poach my players?

BUDDY

Well, we--

PETE

We really just want to borrow 'em.

COACH WASHINGTON

Borrow?

JIMMY

Just for one game.

COACH WASHINGTON

(turns to Taylor)

These fools are serious?

Again, Taylor can't think of anything to do but laugh.

INT. EAST DILLON CLUB HOUSE - NIGHT

Tami enters a packed house filled with mixed race rowdy fans of both genders. Tami observes the crowd with a mix of curiosity and horror.

In the center of the space-- an MMA CAGE that's not quite ready for primetime as it looks like it was put together with chicken wire and duct tape.

MMA ANNOUNCER, 50, steps into the cage--

MMA ANNOUNCER

(yells)

Ladies and gentlemen. Are you
ready for tonight's main
attraction?

The fans go nuts as the referee enters the cage first,
followed by two female fighters -- one of which is: Epyck.

INT. BUDDY'S BAR - NIGHT

Front door swings open. Street and Herc roll inside to the
sight of--

A Panthers and Lions reunion is in full swing. The remaining
PLAYERS from back in the day, who never left Dillon, shoot
the shit, drink beers, listen to music. Smash sits with his
sisters. Saracen and Julie sit with Landry. Tyra and Riggins
have a space reserved for Street. Vince Howard hangs with
Dallas and some East Dillon homies.

INTERCUT:

TAYLOR

I think I can make this real simple
for everyone involved, and then I
got to hop on a plane back to
Philadelphia before I lose my job.
When I was a coach of the East
Dillon Lions we recruited a wide
receiver from the basketball team
named Hastings Ruckle--

COACH WASHINGTON

You borrowed a player?

TAYLOR

That's right. Now he had every
intention of playing on both Lions
teams. I don't know where that boy
is now. But I know he went to a
state championship as an East
Dillon Lion before that run ended--

COACH WASHINGTON

I'm going to stop ya right there,
Coach Taylor of the once great
Dillon Panthers and East Dillon
Lions. Those days - they gone.

(MORE)

COACH WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

They in the past, and the reason I was brought in from Houston is because the era of basketball championships has begun here in Dillon. Y'all digging me?

Tami is mesmerized by the energy in the room, as Epyck and her rival go to battle in the cage -- punching and kicking the crap out of each other!

Jason and Herc are in the thick of it--

HERC

This guy here shows up without the wife. Without the kid. Just a sorry sack of solo sadness.

JASON

Oh man. The only sack of solo sadness is this guy right here. At least I have a kid... and a wife.

HERC

Verdict's still out on that one.

TYRA

Is everything okay at home, Jason?

JASON

Everything is... I really don't want to talk about that. I came back to support the families here.

RIGGINS

Yeah, because why else would you come back to this shit-hole town and all us sorry sacks of sadness?

TYRA

Tim.

Pete and Coach Washington are going head to head--

COACH WASHINGTON

Those days are over. Sorry boys. You should think about sending whatever remains of the football team my way--

PETE

More state championships than any basketball team in any year. Come on, Coach. Be reasonable--

Taylor turns to Buddy, who looks like he's going to leap up and strangle Coach Washington.

Landry, Saracen and Julie share a basket of fries.

SARACEN

And there's, like, this amazing theater scene.

LANDRY

Since when are you into theater?

JULIE

He's gotten into it. Oh, and there's such a great music scene--

LANDRY

There's no music scene in L.A.

JULIE

No, I know there's a music scene--

SARACEN

You'd love the scene in Chicago.

LANDRY

I bet I would. But, y'all should come to L.A. sometime.

JULIE

Yes and you should come to Chicago.

LANDRY

Well, I think I'll take you up on that offer. Thank you, Julie.

JULIE

This is so weird. Sitting here in Dillon talking about our lives in L.A. and Chicago.

LANDRY

It's like we're grown-ups.

SARACEN

Well, at least two of us are.

LANDRY

What are you saying, Matt?

SARACEN

Nothing. It's just that I admire how you're a perpetual college student living the dorm life in L.A. It fits your personality.

LANDRY

Helps me to maintain my youthful charm and good looks.

The front door opens -- Lyla enters with Buddy Jr.

Epyck has her Rival in a headlock and is about to completely choke her out... before her rival pulls out of it and punches Epyck square in the nose -- spraying blood onto the mat!

The back and forth continues between the boosters and the basketball coach until--

BUDDY

I'm going to stop y'all right there. I know you're a great basketball coach and I have every intention of attending each one of your regular season games and cheering you on. But we brought my friend Eric here because he's a true championship coach, and--

COACH WASHINGTON

Excuse me?

BUDDY

I mean you no disrespect. But this town was built on football. It's in our DNA. It's what Dillon is made of, and every Panther that ever wore one of these championship rings can tell you: Dillon is football. So, we're asking you, with all due respect, to put a hold on starting basketball practices five months before your regular season starts to allow some of your best players to join us to play one televised football game that can draw attention to what this town is actually made of.

Every Panther and Lion is on the dance floor SINGING along to Bruce Springsteen's live version of "DRIFT AWAY."

During the "DRIFT AWAY" sing-a-long--

-Lyla walks over and smiles at Riggins, Tyra and Jason who welcome her with open arms...

-Landry looks uncomfortable and out of place...

-Saracen and Julie hold each other tightly on the dance floor, very much in love...

Smash walks over to Vince and his crew.

SMASH

Hey, Howard. You planning on sticking around town for a minute?

VINCE

Why you asking me? Aren't you supposed to be in Tampa? Pre-season and all.

SMASH

Look, I'm not trying to start static. Just wondering if you wanted me to talk to some people I know?

Vince checks in with his Eastside crew, who stare hard at the Westside Panther.

VINCE

I'm good. I mean - I'm always up for meeting new people.

SMASH

I can always put in a good word.

Attention in the bar turns-

ON TELEVISION

A CFL game: TORONTO ARGONAUTS vs MONTREAL ALOUETTES.

CFL ANNOUNCER (ON TELEVISION)

There's much hype about the starting QB for the Aloues. The Args faced JD McCoy before on the Tiger-Cats when he was an up-and-comer cut from a team in the States his rookie year.

JD MCCOY runs onto the field and into the Alouettes huddle.

The entire bar goes completely apeshit!

SMASH

Who's that they cheering about?

VINCE

Just another Panther asshole couldn't make it in the NFL.

Jason watches Smash and Vince getting chummy from a distance.

HERC

What ya got going on in that big
brain of yours, QB?

JASON

That opportunities abound, Herc.
Just got to remain patient.

Coach Washington is out of his chair on his feet.

COACH WASHINGTON

Y'all come in here asking me to do
you a favor. Never once before
this showed me the respect that
I've earned with all my rings.
Bring in Mr. Big Shot here with all
his white boy charm--

TAYLOR

Hold on a minute, Washington. This
doesn't need to go there.

COACH WASHINGTON

Oh, it doesn't? You think because
you've coached a bunch of Black
kids you understand what they go
through out of uniform and how hard
it is to get the level of respect
you get just by being born white?

This just took a turn none of them were expecting.

COACH WASHINGTON

I'm a Black coach of a majority
Black basketball team in Texas that
has a shot at a state championship.
But, you want me to risk one of
them getting injured on the
football field - their heads bashed
in, possibly concussed and out for
the season - to play some racist,
redneck school in some national
televised game because another
crazy white boy shot up another
school filled with Black kids.

JIMMY

Those kids were white too.

COACH WASHINGTON

I understand that. But your QB's
not. Is he? Neither are two of
those injured kids. I ain't going
to let that happen to my players.

(MORE)

COACH WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

No telling what those damn fools in Dunston are bound to do next.

Jimmy and Pete look at each other.

JIMMY

We can assure you - each one of them will have our full protection. We give you our word that nothing--

TAYLOR

You have my word as well. I'll make sure nothing happens to a single one of those boys. If you help us get some of them on the team. You have my word.

Buddy stares with curiosity at Taylor who's suddenly adopted a more determined attitude.

COACH WASHINGTON

I'll need some time to - contemplate this situation.

Tami is now all in, cheering her on! Epyck has her Rival back in a headlock, her face covered in blood -- this time her rival concedes to defeat. Ref calls the match and lifts Epyck's arm high up in the air. Epyck enjoys a victory lap around the ring. Tami enjoys her cathartic moment.

Back at Buddy's-- the old crew seated at a table together. Tyra and Riggins aren't drinking. Everyone else is.

RIGGINS

(re: Saracen and Landry)

So what's it like being a big city hipster? Did y'all have to fill out membership cards?

JULIE

You didn't hear? There's a whole initiation ceremony.

SARACEN

We burn CDs and cassette tapes. All we're allowed to own is vinyl.

They all laugh. Landry laughs a little bit longer than all the rest, and more aggressive. They all take notice.

TYRA

So. Lyla. What's it like to be a big time political operative?

LYLA

I don't know about big time.

RIGGINS

You're on the tv and everything.

LYLA

So is Smash. Smash is on the tv.

JASON

He sure is. Word on the street is he'll be getting even more tv time.

SMASH

What you heard, Street? 'Cause I know you agents talk.

JASON

Just that you're negotiating--

SMASH

We don't need to talk about that right now.

TYRA

Excuse me, boys. Hijacking the conversation as usual. It's ladies night. I want to hear about Lyla's candidate.

JULIE

Yeah, tell us what it's like to work in the political trenches in an election year.

LYLA

Well, y'all should come to the next debate and see what it's like...

The entire time, Landry has been stewing and brewing and waiting for the right moment--

LANDRY

Or, how about we talk about our past? Remember what that was like? When we all lived in Dillon and pretended like football was the most important thing in our lives and, like, nothing else in the world really mattered.

(MORE)

LANDRY (CONT'D)

Or, about that one time I killed that guy and threw his body over a bridge and I didn't go to jail because the cops went easy on me since I was the police sergeant's son. Yeah, that was pretty hysterical.

The air in the room has been completely sucked out as they all stare at a drunken Landry -- especially Tyra who is about to lose her shit.

JULIE

What is he talking about?

SARACEN

Nothing. He's just had a few too many tonight.

TYRA

Yeah, Landry. You've had one too many tonight. Maybe Tim should give you a ride home. Shouldn't you, Tim?

LANDRY

(laughs)

Ha. I'm just kidding around. Just playing bust nuts with my old pals from Dillon. Back together again. We ought to do this again every five to 20 years... when there's another school massacre--

RIGGINS

Alright, Lance. Time to get you home.

LANDRY

But, I'm not done with my beer yet.

RIGGINS

Yeah. You are.

As Riggins goes to take Landry away... Landry springs up and pushes Riggins back--

LANDRY

I said I'm not done with my beer yet. I'll decide when it's time for me to go...

He looks at all of his old classmates staring back at him.

LANDRY

And, I think I'm done now.
 (to Tyra)
 But, not because you told me I am.
 Because I decided that on my own.

Landry and Tyra lock eyes.

LANDRY

Y'all have a good rest of your
 evening.

Landry stumbles out of Buddy's. Riggins starts to go after him, but Tyra stops him and heads--

EXT. OUTSIDE BUDDY'S BAR - CONTINUOUS

Tyra pursues after Landry--

TYRA

Hey. Where do you think you're
 going? You can't drive like that.

LANDRY

Are you enjoying your life? Huh,
 Tyra? Is everything great with the
 sober husband and the high school
 counseling job?

TYRA

You don't need to take all of your
 misplaced anger out on me. Or
 bring up things in the past that
 should remain in the past.

LANDRY

I'm glad you can leave it there
 because - as far away as I get from
 this place - it's not far enough.
 So, why don't you go back in there -
 to your life--

TYRA

You don't think I wanted get out of
 here, Landry? You don't think I
 had plans as well?

LANDRY

Then why did you stay?

TYRA

Because I built a life here. I
 help - those kids. I help people.
 I make a difference. Here.

LANDRY

Well, I'm - I'm going to go now.

TYRA

Let me drive you.

LANDRY

I can walk. Thanks. I know my way. Goodnight, Tyra. Good seeing you again.

Landry disappears into the night, and back to--

INT. CLARKE RESIDENCE - LATER THAT NIGHT

Both Capt. Clarke and his wife, in their bathrobes, stare at their front door as Landry, outside, tries to open it.

MRS. CLARKE

Do you think that's Landry?

CAPT. CLARKE

Well of course it's Landry.

Capt. Clarke heads to the door and opens it to the sight of: Landry hunched over with the key in the door.

LANDRY

I'm - I'm sorry. Did I wake you?

CAPT. CLARKE

Landry what in the hell are you...
(looks at the driveway)
...did you drive in your condition?

LANDRY

I walked.

MRS. CLARKE

All the way from Buddy's?

CAPT. CLARKE

Mary. Put a kettle on, please.

Landry's Mom heads to the kitchen.

CAPT. CLARKE

Do you have any idea what time it is?

LANDRY

I'm kinda on West Coast time.

CAPT. CLARKE

There is no dispute about that.
Listen, son. I don't know whether
you're smoking dope or on other
drugs or whatever the hell else you
do out there in California. But I
raised you better than this.

LANDRY

You sure did. Taught me right from
wrong. So - what? Now I'm
living... wrong?

CAPT. CLARKE

You're not exactly moving forward
as far as I can tell.

LANDRY

Maybe if you came out and visited
you can actually see where I live
and how I live.

CAPT. CLARKE

I've seen enough to get the idea.
But while you're staying under my
roof - you won't come home like a
drunken fool. Now go sleep it off.

LANDRY

I'm an adult, dad.

CAPT. CLARKE

Then act like it. Don't you have
any idea what I'm dealing with?
What this town is going through?

LANDRY

Well, you have a way of making
things go away. So why don't you
make... all this go away...

Landry hits the couch... and is out cold.

Black out.

END OF PART TWO

PART THREE: "FIRST HALF"

OVER BLACK - "NEW RECRUITS"

CHYRON - "MONDAY"

INT. WEST DILLON HIGH GYMNASIUM - DAY

Taylor, Billy and the entire football coaching staff stand on the court. Buddy, Pete and Jimmy sit in the stands.

The entire basketball team file in and gather mid court. Coach Washington walks in front of them--

COACH WASHINGTON

Y'all are probably wondering why I called you here when I said there would be no practice this week. I'm sure y'all are familiar with the football coaching staff and you probably remember Coach Taylor from when you were young'ns...

BILLY

(whispers to Taylor)

I just want to say how great it is to have you back lending your expertise.

TAYLOR

(whispers back)

I appreciate that, Billy. But let's hear what Coach Washington has to say.

COACH WASHINGTON

So, here's the situation. The Panthers football... organization. They need some assistance in light of recent events. Now, they've asked me to extend an invitation to fill in their ranks...

PETE

(whispers to Buddy)

We don't need all of them.

BUDDY

(whispers back)

Calm down, Pete. We'll get there.

COACH WASHINGTON

I already expressed my concern should any of y'all get injured and not be able to play in our regular season. But, I'm gonna leave the decision up to you. Which of you would like to play Panther football in a nationally televised game?

Every basketball players' hand shoots up!

BASKETBALL COACH

Ya got to be kidding me.

TAYLOR

Coach. Mind if I step in?

Coach Washington heads off the court, slams open the doors, and out of the auditorium he goes.

TAYLOR

Gentlemen. We appreciate your enthusiasm, and your wanting to help out Coach Riggins and his staff. But, they're going to hold a try-out to find replacements...

DESHAWN EVANS, 17, Black, raises his hand--

TAYLOR

Son?

DESHAWN

You going to be stepping in as coach?

TAYLOR

No. I got to head back to Philadelphia to my job--

BILLY

What Coach Taylor is saying is - he's going to help out as much as he can. But, I'm the one in charge. I'm going to want to see who has what it takes to play Panther football.

DESHAWN

But, I think we all would want to play if Coach Taylor hung around.

BUDDY

While we all agree with your enthusiasm regarding the great Coach Taylor - he's got other places to be. What we need to hear right now is if y'all are willing to be on the football field to see which one of you will make the cut?

Now only half of the hands go up in the air.

PETE

(whispers)
Perfect.

EXT. HERRMANN FIELD - AFTERNOON

Try-outs. On the field is the CURRENT PANTHER FOOTBALL TEAM. Walking on the field, padded up, are the players from the basketball team. The air is thick with tension. Billy has his coaches lined up, observing how the boys interact with each other. Taylor and Buddy sit in the stands.

TAYLOR

You know I have to leave tomorrow.

BUDDY

As all good things must come to an end... again. But, damn it was great having you back.

TAYLOR

It was actually really nice being back.

BUDDY

I knew you'd feel that spirit again.

TAYLOR

Regardless. Life's about making way for the next opportunity.

BUDDY

Oh, you got something big brewing on the horizon. I can feel it.

TAYLOR

I'm not saying that. I'm just saying - take for instance Billy Riggins over there.

They observe Billy talking loudly to his current players and his potential new ones.

TAYLOR

Y'all gave him a shot and he made something out of it.

BUDDY

You're wrong, Eric. That's the problem right there. The whole thing seemed to fall apart as soon as he stepped in as head coach. What we desperately need is new blood. Both on the field... and on the coaching staff.

TAYLOR

Well, you still have tons of fresh young players you can choose--

BUDDY

Times have changed. Can you believe the parents don't want their kids playing football any more? They're worried about...

Before he can finish his sentence -- a fight has broken out on the field! Lots of pushing and shoving! One of the football players has one of the basketball players on the ground -- punching him over and over again!

Taylor and Buddy rush onto the field to help the coaches break up the fight. When the ruckus finally settles down, Billy gets in the faces of all of his current players--

BILLY

(yells)

What the hell is wrong with you idiots? This type of behavior is what caused all of our god-damn problems in the first place

Billy pulls it together, as all eyes are on him.

BILLY

This is not what Panther football is about. You want to make some noise and show how big and tough you are? Then do it against the god-damn Dunston Valley Cardinals on live tv. Show the rest of the world that you're a great football team and not a bunch of bullies that can't play well with others.

Billy continues to fume, as all his current players bow their heads -- some of them are in tears.

BILLY

I know y'all have been through a lot. More than any kid your age should have to endure. But, I'm going to need y'all to rise up. Seize this moment. And, be champions. Both on the field... and off.

Each of the players on the field contemplate Billy's words.

CHYRON - "AUSTIN"

INT. UNIVERSITY AUDITORIUM - AFTERNOON

A political debate. A packed house. Behind podiums on the stage is the Republican candidate for Dillons congressional district: BOB TRUHETT, 60s, white, ultra-conservative. Truhett's Democratic challenger: progressive Lillian De Rosa.

Back of auditorium-- Tami, Julie and Tyra sit near Lyla, who monitors the event next to members of her campaign team.

TRUHETT

Of course we should build the wall. Should've been built years ago.

DE ROSA

Mr. Truhett is unaware, apparently, the wall would run right through many of his supporter's land. Making them part of Mexico.

TRUHETT

My liberal opponent is apparently unaware most of her supporters are from Mexico. Here illegally.

A mixture of applause and boos from the crowd. Tami, Julie, Tyra and Lyla are all annoyed by Truhett's remarks.

DEBATE MODERATOR (O.S.)

We're going to have to ask you all again to please refrain from audible responses.

INTERCUTS:

Billy, along with Taylor, who is now completely in on the action, run the wannabe players through a--

SERIES OF PRACTICE DRILLS

-Football players, wearing orange dickies, tackle one basketball player after another...

-Basketball players try their best to push the sled -- most fall to their knees...

-Football players hold up blocking shields, as the basketball players run into them -- most of them get knocked to the ground on impact. Coach Taylor yells--

TAYLOR

(to basketball players)

Stay on your feet. Keep your head up. If you get knocked down. Get right back up again.

BILLY

(to basketball players;
yells)

Do not, under any circumstances, make contact with the crown of your head. Use your shoulders.

Heading onto the field-- Riggins, Smash, Saracen and Jason join the coaches.

JASON

We heard the Panthers are auditioning new recruits. Thought we could lend some seasoned eyes.

TAYLOR

News always did travel fast around this town.

(to Smash)

You still here?

SMASH

I made a few phone calls. Let's call it - emergency outreach. It's a good PR move.

Jason stares curiously at Smash.

The appearance of Smash causes a stir among the players who head over to take selfies and shake hands with the NFL rising star running back. As try-outs continue on the field--

TRUHETT

I'm a businessman. Not a Big Government politician--

DE ROSA
 So, why do you want Big Government
 in our bedrooms, and in my womb?

Loud reaction from the college auditorium crowd. Lyla cringes a little bit. Tyra looks over at her.

DEBATE MODERATOR (O.S.)
 People, please--

TRUHETT
 You want to talk about controlling
 people's lives? She wants to take
 your guns away.

DE ROSA
 Not true.

TRUHETT
 She even wants to end high school
 football programs across the state.

The three ladies look over at Lyla who shakes her head.

A group of female soccer players, in uniform, observe try-outs on the outer track where cheerleaders usually rehearse.

As the players on the field continue running through drills, the soccer players disperse -- except for one--

Sophomore KAREN MAYS walks onto the field and approaches--

BILLY
 Hold up. This is a private
 practice. You can watch from over--

KAREN
 I want to try-out for the big
 televised game.

She has the full attention of all the players and coaches.

BILLY
 Excuse me?

KAREN
 You need a kicker, right?

BILLY
 I think we have that covered...
 (to an Assistant Coach)
 Do we have that covered?

Assistant Coaches shake their collective heads, "no."

KAREN

I kicked a 65 yarder on this field
messing around with my brothers.

BILLY

65...? Show me.

Time cut-- sure enough, Karen Mays nails a 65 yarder straight
through the center of the goal posts.

All jaws collectively drop.

Billy takes a conference with Taylor--

BILLY

Can we do that? Can we have a
female player?

TAYLOR

I don't think there's any rules
against it far as I know.

All the men on the field, who aren't sure what to do, talk
amongst themselves. Karen waits for their decision, as the
players stare at her. After a brief conference--

BILLY

We're going to have to do some
research to find you a proper
uniform. Probably on the Internet.
Amazon... or...

Karen loses her shit and jumps into Billy's arms!

BILLY

Okay-okay. Just - show up for
practice on time. Every time.
Padded up.

Karen continues her enthusiastic celebration, as the rest of
the Panther football and basketball players stand in awe of
this recent development. While back in Austin--

DE ROSA

I never said we should eliminate
high school football programs
entirely--

DEBATE MODERATOR (O.S.)

You said we should take a look at
cutting back funding for various
sports and reallocate--

DE ROSA

Reallocate some of those funds to things like books and teachers' salaries.

This gets wild applause from the majority of the crowd.

DEBATE MODERATOR (O.S.)

Could you please elaborate on a quote from a magazine article in which you stated that high school football in Texas has become a serious health crisis?

DE ROSA

I'll say this: I'm as much a fan of football as the next Texan. Hell, I am a Texan. I'm from Houston.

Cheers from the crowd!

DE ROSA

This is a very personal matter for me. My brother - who played football all his life - was diagnosed with CTE. We're also discovering more and more students suffering from brain as well as spinal cord injuries...

The three ladies, once again, turn directly to Lyla, while--

Jason Street watches practice from the sidelines.

Smash has a few of the players in a huddle--

SMASH

Now, we gonna fire a few running plays at ya. Memorize 'em fast. Then my QB, he gonna hand it off to you. Hopefully, your O line will remember how they supposed to block. Ya got me?

From out of the pack of football players--

VOICE (O.S.)

Just give me the ball. I'll take care of the run game.

SMASH

Oh, really?

(to Billy)

(MORE)

SMASH (CONT'D)

Hey, Riggins. Did ya know ya got a young Smash Williams in this pack?

BILLY

Which one is that?

SMASH

What's ya name, playa?

The young Black running back takes off his helmet--

MILES SHEPARD

Miles. Miles Shepard.

SMASH

(to Billy)

Miles...

FLASHBACK - SMASH'S OLD HOUSE

SEASON 1 - EP 14: "UPPING THE ANTE"

Taylor and Smash are seated, talking to Young Miles (2006).

MILES SHEPARD (2006)

Remember the name, Coach. Miles Shepherd.

TAYLOR (2006)

Miles Shepherd...

TAYLOR (2006)

Shepherd.

MILES SHEPARD (2006)

Yep. That's my name.

TAYLOR (2006)

Alright. I'll tell you what. You give me a call when you get out of peewee.

MILES SHEPARD (2006)

I'll do that, sir.

TAYLOR (2006)

Nice.

Young Miles walks over to Smash--

MILES SHEPARD (2006)

Smash. You want to play? I need a challenge dawg.

Back to 2016

BILLY

Yeah. That's Miles Shepard. He's definitely my Smash Williams.

TAYLOR

Miles...? Well, I'll be damned.

SMASH

Looks like this kid made it out of peewee, Coach.

TAYLOR

Well, where was my phone call?

Miles smiles back at Taylor.

TAYLOR

Alright. Let's run some plays, Miles. Whatta ya say?

Candidates shake hands. Tami, Julie and Tyra remain seated.

TAMI

So, the choices are: the racist businessman who loves guns and football, or the Latina female who wants to give money to teachers but cut funds for high school football.

JULIE

Is there a third option?

TYRA

I love her, and I see why Lyla does as well.

JULIE

But she doesn't exactly seem like a Jesus freak.

TYRA

That's not it.

TAMI

What do you think it is, Tyra?

TYRA

Daddy issues, Mrs. T. It's the daddy issues vote.

Both Tami and Tyra consider, then simultaneously nod their heads in agreement.

Tami eyeballs the room and sees a familiar face--

JOE MCCOY, with other big money donors, shakes hands and takes pictures with Bob Truhett. Feeling the heat of her gaze -- McCoy notices Tami in the crowd. The two lock eyes, until McCoy can't take her piercing gaze any longer.

A football soars through the air. Taylor stands behind his son-in-law, who guns one bomb after the other -- passes mostly dropped by the basketball players.

TAYLOR

(whispers)

Still got that arm, Matty.

SARACEN

Let's see who can go long.

Saracen fires a rocket into the end zone where Deshawn Evans pulls some Odell Beckham shit with a one-hander -- the first moment of excitement for the coaches!

BILLY

(yells)

Yeah. That's what I'm talking about.

Joining them on the field-- Vince Howard and ELDEN CRUMPLER arrive, with a contingent of high school age Black players.

VINCE

Y'all looking for some players.
But ya over looked the Eastside.

Elden walks over and shakes hands with Taylor and Buddy.

ELDEN

Ready for a rematch?

Five padded up EAST DILLON TEENAGERS stand, helmets in hand.

BILLY

(whispers to Riggins)

Do they even go to this school?

RIGGINS

(whispers)

Does it even matter at this point?

BILLY

(to Vince)

Where'd they learn to play?

One of the teenagers named MAURICE DEXTER speaks up--

MAURICE
Carrol Park.

Taylor stares at Maurice.

FLASHBACK - CARROL PARK

SEASON 4 - EP 9: "THE LIGHTS IN CARROL PARK"

Scrimmage match between East Dillon Lions and local kids from East Dillon. Taylor watches Vince get picked--

TAYLOR (2010)
(to Elden)
What's that kid's name?

ELDEN (2010)
Maurice.

TAYLOR (2010)
Hey Maurice. Come'ere.

Young Maurice runs over.

TAYLOR (2010)
How old are you?

MAURICE (2010)
Thirteen.

Time cut--

TAYLOR (2010)
(to Elden)
You make sure he comes over and
sees me?

ELDEN (2010)
Yeah. You got it.

Back to 2016

TAYLOR
(to Elden)
I guess you kept your promise.

It's later. More passes, only this time it's one of the younger football players -- ANDREW REEVES, 16, handsome white kid -- trying for the QB slot. The kid's got an arm. Both Maurice and Deshawn catch one bomb after the other; excitement among the former Panther players and coaches is unanimous.

Buddy can hardly contain himself--

BUDDY

(to Taylor and Billy)

That's two solid wide receivers. I see about three potential star running backs. And, looks like at least one hot shit QB to replace Winston James.

TAYLOR

Don't get too excited. We still need a defensive line.

Coach Washington suddenly appears on the sidelines, joined by a few more players. Big kids. Solid. Sturdy. Linebackers.

TAYLOR

Coach Washington?

COACH WASHINGTON

Figured you'd need a defensive line. These ones are good pickup players.

The coaches and Buddy absorb his generosity.

COACH WASHINGTON

Y'all know I played ball in college, right? All American. Tore my rotator cuff. Discovered my love for b-ball...

Curious stares among the coaches, Buddy, etc.

COACH WASHINGTON

I'm just saying - I don't have a problem with the game. But you better get their asses back on my court before my regular season. You dig?

BILLY

(shakes his hand)

You have my word. Thank you, Coach. Thank you.

Try-outs continue-- more drills. More runs. More passes. More tackles. More FORMER PLAYERS, from back in the day, join the coaches on the field. Time passes as the sun sets.

BILLY

Alright. Everybody huddle up.

All the young players fall into place -- dirty, sweaty, exhausted.

BILLY

Ya'll showed a lot of heart out there. That hasn't gone unnoticed. We got three weeks to rise up and show the world what it means to be a Dillon Panther. Now, get cleaned up. Go home to your families.

As each young hopeful exits the field -- Taylor's former players, one by one, shake his hand.

Time elapses. Night falls. Lights flood Herrmann Field where the former Panthers and Lions state champions from back in the day throw the ball around... one more time.

INT. CORRINA WILLIAM'S HOME - LATER THAT NIGHT

Smash watches--

ESPN - SPORTS CENTER

SCOTT VAN PELT (ON TELEVISION)

Now the news that's rocked the NFL. Four super agents have been found guilty of offering gifts to college players to sign exclusive contracts placing current contract negotiations for several rising star NFL players in jeopardy.

On television-- the faces of four super agents, including Smash's Agent.

Corrina enters the room. Smash promptly turns off the tv.

CORRINA

Baby, you still up?

SMASH

It's only 10 o'clock, mamma.

CORRINA

I thought it was early to bed early to rise for you NFL stars.

Smash looks sullen. Corrina takes notice.

CORRINA

Not that I don't love you visiting, but when you heading back to Tampa? Don't you got a pre-season game?

SMASH

Sit down, momma. I got to talk to you about something.

CORRINA

What's wrong, baby? What'd you do?

SMASH

I didn't do anything, momma. I'm trying to talk to you--

CORRINA

I hope this has nothing to do with leaving Tampa Bay. 'Cause you know I'm planning on moving into that beach house we talked about.

SMASH

I'm going to get you a beach house, regardless--

CORRINA

Regardless? Regardless of what?

SMASH

That's what I'm trying to tell you.

A knock is heard on the front door.

CORRINA

Now who could that be at this hour?

Smash opens the door to the sight of--

Jason Street holding a 12-pack.

SMASH

Seriously, Street?

EXT. OUTSIDE CORRINA WILLIAM'S HOME - MOMENTS LATER

Jason and Smash down those beers.

SMASH

They're saying it's my attitude. That I'm not blending in with the program. I'm a showboat.

JASON

It's most likely about the cap.

SMASH

'Cause I'm an up-and-comer--

JASON

They're also eyeing that first round pick out of Florida. Your representation was likely making promises he couldn't deliver.

SMASH

Damn, Jason. Damn.

JASON

You know there are always other offers. Other teams.

SMASH

But, now I got that stink on me.

JASON

That can easily be dealt with.

SMASH

You making deals, Street? That what you doing?

JASON

I'm just wondering if you're even interested in having the conversation?

SMASH

No telling what I'll agree to after we finish this twelve pack.

JASON

Then cheers.

CHYRON - "PHILADELPHIA. ONE WEEK LATER"

INT. LIBERTY-BELL UNIVERSITY - FIELD HOUSE - DAY

Taylor approaches the closed door to the Head Coach's office. Knocks. Head Coach opens--

TAYLOR

You wanted to see me, Coach?

HEAD COACH

Yeah, Eric. Come on inside. Let's have a conversation.

HEAD COACH'S OFFICE

Taylor listens, as Head Coach says things to him that we aren't privy to.

It's later. Taylor exits the office. Closes the door. Takes a moment before laughing to himself.

CHYRON - "ESPN. MIAMI. ONE WEEK BEFORE THE BIG GAME"

INT. ESPN "LAB" OFFICE - MIAMI, FL - DAY

A bustle of activity where JESS MERRIWEATHER stops in front of an editing suite and watches unedited video footage of--

-A rowdy crowd of Dunston Valley students hold a giant stuffed monkey wearing a Dillon Panther jersey...

-Students hang the stuffed monkey by a noose...

-The stuffed monkey explodes into a cacophony of fireworks...

-Dunston Valley students scream racial epithets while they hold up a sign-- "DILLON PANTHERS = NOT ENOUGH BULLETS."

Jess takes in the video footage with a mix of shock and horror, as an ESPN producer named MARK, 40s, good natured white guy, approaches her--

MARK

Jess. I was just looking for you.

JESS

Hey, Mark. What's up?

MARK

(re: footage)

I guess they didn't get the memo we solved our racism problem.

Jess's still trying to absorb the images.

MARK

So, Jess. You've been wanting more on-camera opportunities.

This instantly pulls her focus--

JESS

Yessir.

MARK

Sir? So formal. How very Texas of you. That's your home town, right?

JESS

Dunston?

MARK

No. The other place. Dillon. You're from there correct?

JESS

I... was. Yeah. Before Dallas.

MARK

How'd you like to do some on-camera for the Dillon game on ESPN 2?

JESS

How would I...? I would. Yes. I would like... I'd love to do that... sir... Mark. Yes.

MARK

Love the enthusiasm. This will be a great opportunity to try your hand at interviews and analysis.

Mark's on the move again.

JESS

Thank - thank you for the opportunity... Mark.

As Jess absorbs this personal game changer--

The images from Dunston on monitors--

MATCH CUT TO:

A night-time high school football rally in progress where Dunston Valley students--

-Burn Panther jerseys in effigy...

-Sing a RACIST SONG equating the Panthers players to "monkeys" and "gorillas"...

-Wield toy semi-automatic rifles that fire paint balls at enlarged photos of former Panthers gunned down and injured in the shooting, including quarterback Winston James.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. EAST DILLON HOSPITAL - ICU - NIGHT

Winston lies in bed. Winston's Mom talks to the head nurse. Winston's fingers twitch... eye lids twitch... eye lids slowly open -- he looks around the room.

INT. MAXIMUM SECURITY PRISON - NIGHT

Inmate Rand Olsen, shackled hand and feet, being led by armed guards through the prison while a lineup of convicts yell, laugh and spit at him.

INT. OLSEN RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Armed officers storm into Brad Olsen's home to find him... dangling on a rope tied to his neck attached to the ceiling!

MATCH CUT TO:

Stuffed monkey, wearing a Dillon Panthers' jersey, dangles from a rope in the--

INT. DILLON PANTHERS' FIELD HOUSE - MORNING

Panthers coaching staff arrive to find the place totally trashed. Racial epithets graffitied all over the walls. His face filled with rage-- Billy...

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. BILLY RIGGIN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

... drunk and unhinged, practically tears apart his living room, as Riggins tries to contain him; his arms wrapped around his brother's chest as Billy fights to free himself. Tyra and Mindy are also on hand--

MINDY

Billy. Your kids are still awake. You want them to see their father acting like an animal?

BILLY

I'm going to drive over to that town with a shotgun and a god-damn flame thrower and torch it to the ground.

RIGGINS

That'll be real good footage for
the nightly news.

Billy finally tires himself out, collapses onto the couch.

MINDY

Babe, you have got to get a handle
on your anger issues, pronto. This
entire town is depending on you to
maintain your cool.

RIGGINS

And if that fails, you can always
beat the living crap out of the
Cardinals on the football field.
That's the way we did it.

MIND

On live tv, babe. That's the best
revenge, and you know it.

TYRA

Don't let those racist assholes
beat you before giving those kids a
chance to play.

A knock on the door.

Billy opens it to the sight of--

BILLY

Coach Taylor?

TAYLOR

You want to beat these sons-of-
bitches, Billy? I know exactly how
to win.

Black out.

PART THREE: "SECOND HALF"

OVER BLACK - "WE RISE!"

CHYRON - "TMU STADIUM. 2ND QUARTER. 2 MINUTE WARNING"

Friday night lights illuminate the sold-out crowd that packs--

EXT. TMU FOOTBALL STADIUM - NIGHT

TMU hosts the nation-wide televised event on ESPN 2.

SCOREBOARD -- CARDINALS: 17 - PANTHERS: 3

On the Panthers sideline-- Billy as head coach, joined by the Panthers coaching staff, along with Riggins, Jason Street and Taylor filling in as offensive coordinator for this one game.

On the Cardinals sideline and bench-- Cardinals players, Cardinals coaching staff, and their head--

Coach BILL MCGREGOR, steely-eyed and determined, stares daggers across the field of play at Taylor.

FLASHBACK - TAYLOR'S HOUSE

SEASON 2 - EP 4: "BACKFIRE"

It's 2007. Taylor stands at his front door confronted by a pissed off Coach McGregor who has just been handed his walking papers from the Panthers--

MCGREGOR (2007)

...I know you were involved in this thing and maybe you had your reasons maybe you didn't. But I want you to know that I have a family too and you just remember that. I'll be seeing you again.

Back to 2016

The two rival coaches lock eyes with each other.

INT. MERRIWEATHER RESIDENCE - DALLAS - NIGHT

Virgil Merriweather and his sons watch--

Jess delivers the sideline report--

JESS (ON TELEVISION)

A devastating 1st half for the Dillon Panthers as the state champion Dunston Valley Cardinals - led by coach McGregor - completely dominated.

Back on the field--

SERIES OF PLAYS

... demonstrate the ass whooping the Cardinals delivered the Panthers during the 1st half.

-Right out of the gate, the Cardinals charge down field. Panthers defense seem confused by three quick run plays and one solid pass. Cardinals put the first points on the--

SCORE BOARD -- CARDINALS: 7 PANTHERS: 0

-QB Reeves takes a snap under center, fumbles the snap -- Cardinals pounce...

-Reeves looks to pass, can't find anyone open, runs, gets tackled, fumbles... Cardinals recover for a touchdown!

SCORE BOARD -- CARDINALS: 14 PANTHERS: 0

In the crowd-- disappointment registers on the faces of: Tami, Julie, Saracen, Tyra, Mindy and Angela Collette.

On the field-- Cardinals have the ball at the 30, 3rd and long. Panther DE jumps off-side. Yellow flag. Cardinals gain 10 yards and a 1st down.

In the crowd-- Buddy loses his shit; watching with him: Jimmy, Pete, Lucy and a bunch of boosters.

Line of scrimmage-- another Panther linemen jumps off-side. Yellow flag. Another 10 yards and a Cardinal 1st down.

Panther sideline-- Billy and Taylor losing their shit!

JESS

The Panthers defense couldn't seem to keep from jumping off-sides.

On the field-- Cardinals kick a field goal.

SCOREBOARD -- CARDINALS: 17 PANTHERS: 0

In the stands-- Lyla, disappointed, watches the game with De Rosa and her political team. Joe McCoy, rooting for Dunston, watches with Truhett and his donor entourage.

On the field-- Panthers offense face the Cardinals defense on the line. Reeves gets in place for the snap. Each of the Cardinals in unison make the sound of machine gun fire.

-Cardinals defensive line use various racial slurs against the predominantly Black Panther offensive line...

-Panther linemen stand straight up and shove the Cardinals. Yell flags all over the place...

-A series of 20 yard penalties push the Panthers back to practically their own end zone.

JESS

It's been a schoolyard brawl out here as the Cardinals have clearly gotten into the Panthers' heads.

SERIES OF PLAYS

-Refs jump in to pull players off of each other for unnecessary roughness after the whistle.

JESS

The only silver lining for the Panthers has been a place kicker named Karen Mays.

-Karen kicks a field goal from the 50 yard line -- 3 points for the trailing Panthers with a little over 5:00 on the clock at the end of the 2nd quarter.

ANNOUNCER #1 (V.O.)

You heard that correctly, folks.
That kicker - who just nailed a bull's eye straight up the middle - her name is: Karen Mays.

INT. BUDDY'S BAR - NIGHT

Huge crowd of Panther fans watch the replay of Karen's field goal and go completely ape-shit!

ANNOUNCER #2 (ON TELEVISION)

To use a basketball term: that was nothing but net for this sophomore gal who is also a star winger on the Dillon girls' soccer team.

Back at the 2:00 minute warning -- Billy stands next to Taylor who delivers the play himself to Andrew Reeves--

TAYLOR

(to Reeves)

Alright, this is what we're going to do. Action 22. Tomahawk. You got it?

REEVES

Yeah. I got it.

BILLY

You sure you got it?

REEVES

Yeah, Coach. I got it.

BILLY

Alright. Get back out there. Show us what you got.

JASON

You can do this, Drew. Use that golden arm of yours.

BILLY

(to Jason and Taylor)

You think he's got this?

JASON

I have no clue.

TAYLOR

I hope to god he does.

Taylor stares across the field at McGregor who smirks back with delight.

In the huddle-- Reeves is joined by half back Miles Shepherd; Black full Back JAMAL HENSON; wide receivers Maurice Dexter and Deshawn Evans; white tight end JAYDEN SCOTT and five linemen: three Black and two white players.

REEVES

Action 21. Tomahawk. On one.

MILES SHEPARD

21 or 22?

REEVES

20... 2.

JAMAL

(to Miles)

That's a fake to you.

MILES SHEPARD

No shit, Jamal.

REEVES
 Again. Action 22. Tomahawk. On
 one. Ready. Break.

They run to the line.

DESHAWN
 (to Maurice)
 This one's mine.

MAURICE
 Wait - what?

Maurice and Deshawn are standing in the wrong positions.
 Jamal notices -- gestures to Deshawn, "cross over!"

Cardinals defense read the play -- Maurice instead of Deshawn
 crosses over and now the two are standing side by side.

Before the center can hand off -- Reeves drops back into
 shotgun.

TAYLOR
 (yells to Reeves)
 No. What are ya doing?

RIGGINS
 Where the hell are those receivers
 going?

Deshawn and Maurice, confused, stutter step and run towards
 the center as Reeves calls hike -- catches as the entire
 Cardinal defensive line charge him.

Reeves looks for receivers, who are out of position, tries to
 hand off to Shepherd, but can't find him -- waggles out of
 the pocket, aims at the air and fires.

Pass is knocked down by a Cardinal linemen.... Ball bounces
 around the field, as the Cardinal defensive line fall on top
 of it... Ball bounces loose and continues to bounce...

... until, Jayden lunges for it, gets swallowed up in a pile
 on... Refs pry the pile apart... Jayden has the ball!

ANNOUNCER #1 (V.O.)
 Looks like Panther tight end Jayden
 Scott has the ball.

ANNOUNCER #2 (V.O.)
 That's the first lucky break for
 this struggling Panther offense.

A collective sigh of relief from the entire Panther bench and supporters in the stands, and at Buddy's, etc.

0:00 left on the clock.

Jess continues her sideline report--

JESS

Panthers couldn't get a drive going before the end of the 1st half.

Panthers head to the locker room.

ANNOUNCER #1 (V.O.)

The problem for the Panthers isn't with the defense. Who have - by some miracle - managed to hold the Cardinals to only 17 points. It's this offense that can't seem to get anything going.

INT. FIELD HOUSE - TMU LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

The dejected and demoralized Panthers -- sweaty, bloody, exhausted -- hang their collective heads.

ANNOUNCER #2 (V.O.)

Surprising since the great Coach Taylor is back on the Panther sideline calling plays for Coach Riggins.

Panthers coaches find a quiet corner to strategize.

ANNOUNCER #1 (V.O.)

That's the big stunner of this game. Taylor was given a pass by the coaching staff at Liberty-Bell University to join the Panthers. In light of the tragedy in Dillon.

In the stands-- Buddy and the Boosters, anxious, nervous.

ANNOUNCER #2 (V.O.)

Which leads us to half-time in which we honor the nine fallen students and pay tribute to the Panthers who survived the shooting.

INTERCUT: INT/EXT. LOCATIONS

TMU LOCKER ROOM

Billy storms over to his players--

BILLY

(over the top anger)

Don't do that. Hang your heads.
Raise your god-damn heads. Look at
me when I'm talking to you.

ON JUMBO SCREENS - ESPN PRODUCED TRIBUTE

A docu-drama, underscored by dramatic music. Parents, teachers and students offer tearful remembrances of the ones they lost.

On the field-- the four surviving players, including Winston James who is in a wheelchair.

Billy's still on a rampage--

BILLY

You get all your anger out with one
roughness call after another?

Winston's Dad is interviewed in the docu-drama, accompanied by still photos and a highlight reel of Winston in action!

WINSTON'S DAD (ON JUMBO SCREENS)

My son, Winston. He's got it all.
Can throw like Rodgers. Run like
Wilson. Read coverage like Brady.
He's the entire package. Destined
for the NFL. That's my boy.

Billy's not done yet--

BILLY

These guys call you names. Suck it
up, and deal with it.

In the stands-- Gina Montez and progressive students are in tears as they watch themselves on the jumbo screens recall the days events.

Dunston Valley kids laugh at their misfortune.

BILLY

That's why they've been kicking
your asses for two solid quarters.

The surviving Panther players lined up on the 50 yard line are met with wild applause.

BILLY

That ends right here. Right now.
The 2nd half belongs to us.

The Dunston Valley kids laugh and boo at the players on the field, and get angry looks from Panther supporters.

Billy regroups; he goes from a 10 to a 2--

BILLY

There's this ancient story about a bird - mythical creature from Greek or Roman times. I'm not really sure. But the point is, this bird: the Phoenix. When it dies, its nest burns in flames and from those ashes a baby phoenix rises up. That is who we are. We are that phoenix rising from the ash. Because no one... could kill us.

All the Panthers have their heads up. Their demoralized look has been replaced by a look of steely resolve -- an unmistakable hunger in all their eyes.

BILLY

You all... are survivors. You
all... are Dillon Panthers. You
all... are champions.

Billy turns to Taylor--

BILLY

Clear eyes.

Billy turns to his brother--

RIGGINS

Full hearts.

Riggins turns to Street--

JASON

What can't we do?

Panthers reply, sheepishly--

PANTHERS

(in unison)
Can't lose.

JASON

(yells)
What?

PANTHERS
 (a little louder in unison)
 Can't lose.

TAYLOR
 (screams)
 Not good enough.

PANTHERS
 (scream in unison)
 Can't lose.

TAYLOR
 (screams)
 You're god-damn right.

Panthers huddle together on one knee, all hands in.

BILLY
 Like a phoenix - we what?

PANTHERS
 (scream in unison)
 We rise. We rise. We rise.

TAYLOR
 (screams)
 Again.

PANTHERS
 (scream in unison)
 Clear eyes. Full hearts. Can't
 lose.

The sound of their cheer reverberates and echoes through the--

INT. TMU TUNNEL - NIGHT

Panthers storm through on their way back onto the field --
 met by the roar of the crowd!

Before they hit the field-- Taylor stops Billy--

TAYLOR
 Hold up a sec. You designed your
 playbook around Winston's skill
 set. But, that's not going to cut
 it with Reeves. He's got a good
 arm. But, the kid can't run as
 fast or read the coverage like
 Winston and he can't take snaps
 from under center. So, I suggest
 that we--

BILLLY

Simplify it. Go strictly I-form.
Single back. Basic shotgun. Run
Shepard down their throats and give
Deshawn and Maurice a chance to
make plays in space.

Taylor flashes Billy that megawatt smile, hands on Billy's
shoulders--

TAYLOR

Proud of ya, son.

Billy fights back tears--

BILLY

Let's go beat these sons-of-
bitches.

CHYRON - "2ND HALF. CARDINALS: 17 PANTHERS: 3"

ANNOUNCER #1 (V.O.)

Seems to me in order for the
Panthers to beat McGregor's
dominate defense they'll have to
rely on a ground and pound offense.

ANNOUNCER #2 (V.O.)

Right. Panthers do have a power
tool in their arsenal. Shepard's
run game. Yet, with Reeves arm,
Evans and Dexter can still go wide.

Jess interviews Winston James--

JESS

You think your Panthers still have
a chance of a "W" today?

WINSTON JAMES

Hell yeah we can still win this
thing. My boys Miles and Jamal can
pull this off - fo' sho'.

JESS

Do you think Andrew Reeves will be
able to--?

WINSTON JAMES

Look. Reeves... he young, hungry
and he can throw. He'll be a'ight.
We got this. Panther Power, baby.

SERIES OF PLAYS

Panthers receive the kick-off, run a basic draw play.

-Shepard jukes through a bunch of Cardinal tackles for a 1st down...

-Two more plays: 1) Reeves hands the ball to Shepard 2) Shepard breaks a long run -- 1st down at the 30...

-Reeves hands the ball off to Shepard again -- 1st down...

-Two more run plays 1) hand off to Jamal... 2) hand off to Shepard -- Cardinals shut both runs down...

-Reeves attempts to do a draw play on 3rd and 5 -- hands off again to Shepard...

-Shepard breaks through the middle... touchdown Panthers!

SCOREBOARD -- CARDINALS: 17 PANTHERS: 10

Fans in the crowd, and watching in their homes, go apeshit!

In the stands-- Buddy is beside himself. Tami and company overjoyed. De Rosa's now fully into the game. McCoy's annoyed. Truhett and company are... mostly drunk.

On the Panthers sideline-- Billy, bench players and coaches go nuts! Taylor calm, cool and collected, looks over at---

Cardinal sideline-- McGregor is livid!

Karen kicks off.

SERIES OF PLAYS

-Cardinals drive down field -- Panthers stop them on 3rd and long.

Cardinals kick a field goal.

SCOREBOARD -- CARDINALS: 20 PANTHERS: 10

Panthers get the ball back. They run a--

SERIES OF ACTION PLAYS

On the Panthers sideline-- Taylor and Billy in conference with Reeves--

TAYLOR

Play action. Power right. 15.
Apache.

SERIES OF PLAYS

-Reeves calls the play in the huddle...

-Reeves guns a long ball up the right sideline...

-Deshawn, covered by two safeties, jumps up, catches, runs for 20 yards...

-Another play action-- this time Maurice catches the ball, quick cuts around safeties for another 10 yards...

-Pass play-- Reeves looks, but can't find anyone open. Finally spots Jayden for a quick toss...

-Skying upwards-- Jayden stiff arms a tackle and runs down field 15 yards for a Panther 1st down at the 20...

SERIES OF SHORT RUN PLAYS

1) hand off to Shepard, no yards... 2) hand off to Jamal, no yards... 3) hand off to Shepard, who runs for a few yards but is taken down just shy of a 1st down.

-Slant play-- receivers in the outside I-formation. Maurice and Deshawn finally pull off the Tomahawk cross. Maurice catches, but is knocked down just shy of the 1st down.

Karen chip shots it in for an easy Panther field goal.

SCOREBOARD -- CARDINALS: 20 PANTHERS: 16

The crowd is on their feet!

5:00 left on the clock in the 4th Quarter.

MONTAGE OF PLAYS

A back and forth battle ensues between the Cardinals and Panthers -- neither team can get past 3rd down as the clock winds down to 3:00.

Both sidelines are going nuts!

Fans watching at home are up on their feet!

Panthers have the ball at the 25.

SERIES OF QUICK PLAYS

1) short run by Jamal... 2) quick pass to Jayden...
3) long pass to Deshawn... is dropped... 4) hand off to Shepard, who takes it...

... all the way down to the red zone. 2:15 on the clock.

-Reeves hands it off to Jamal, who gets crushed by the Cardinal defensive line...

-Reeves, out of the shotgun, can't find anyone open, bootlegs to the sideline to stop the clock...

-Reeves again can't find anyone open, breaks a few tackles, finds Jayden open in the end zone, throws... Jayden can't hold on to the ball...

It's 4th down on the Panther 1 yard line...

On the Panther sideline-- Taylor has Billy's ear--

TAYLOR

If I were you. What I'd do. I'd kick a field goal. Do an onside kick and get it back.

Billy contemplates his suggestion, then--

BILLY

Well, then I'll be me and make my own decision. We're going for it.

TAYLOR

If we're going for it...

Moments later in the huddle-- Reeves calls the play--

REEVES

We're doing Ambush.

All players absorb the information with vigorous head nods.

REEVES

Ready. On one. Let's win this.

-Panthers line up in a pistol formation -- hike...

-Reeves fakes a hand off to Jamal...

-Maurice runs across field...

-Reeves tosses to Maurice...

-Shepard crosses behind Maurice, who tosses to him...

-Shepard sweeps to the right side, stops...

-Shepard fires the ball in the air...

... football soars... into the end zone, where Deshawn, single coverage, leaps up for a one-handed catch...

... brought down hard by a Cardinal safety.

Touchdown panthers!

Karen kicks the extra point.

SCOREBOARD -- CARDINALS: 20 PANTHERS: 24

1:50 remaining on the clock.

Cardinals sideline-- McGregor, beyond pissed, turns on his players--

MCGREGOR

(yells)

What the hell is wrong with you
lazy sorry excuses? You had this
in the bag. You're state champions
so act like it. Now, you better
get out there and win this game.

SERIES OF PLAYS

Cardinals aggressively drive down field -- one run play and long pass after another down to the 10 yard line with a 1st down and 30 seconds left on the clock.

At the line of scrimmage-- Panthers defensive line consists of Jamal at middle linebacker. Maurice at corner back.

CARDINAL TACKLE #1

(to Jamal)

Hey, Henson. How many bullets did
you dodge?

Maurice overhears the taunting of Jamal.

CARDINAL TACKLE #2

(to Jamal)

Yo, monkey. Not so fleek without
your thug homie Winston, huh?

CARDINAL TACKLE #1

(to Jamal)

Yeah. You Sambos don't dance as
fast without him.

Jamal remains steady on the line despite the taunting.

Cardinal QB takes the snap under center, looks around, can't find anyone open as the Panthers have every man covered... Finally spots an open man on the 5, winds back, throws...

... is picked by Maurice! He runs the ball all the way down to the 20 yard line, before being taken down by almost the entire Cardinal offensive line.

ANNOUNCER #1 (V.O.)

Maurice Dexter with a pick to take it down to the 20.

The crowd goes nuts! The Panther sideline goes nuts! Viewers at home go nuts! Jess goes nuts!

ANNOUNCER #2 (V.O.)

I can not believe what we just witnessed here today. This is history in the making, folks.

ANNOUNCER #1 (V.O.)

An improbable comeback from this make-shift Panther team - which appeared at times to be put back together with duct tape and a stick of chewing gum.

ANNOUNCER #2 (V.O.)

Their heads may have been bowed, but their spirit definitely not broken.

Panthers decide to take a knee to run out the clock.

On the last kneel-- a Dunston linemen jumps over the line and tackles Reeves!

Nothing but shocked expressions from fans in the stands, and at home watching the game.

On the field-- pushing and shoving ensues.

ANNOUNCER #2 (V.O.)

Well, this is certainly a disappointing turn of events.

ANNOUNCER #1 (V.O.)

This to me is a symbol of what I fear may be happening across the country. A general lack of civility. Of which high school football is not immune.

Panthers decide not to engage with the Cardinals and continue their celebration.

Billy and Riggins run onto the field to celebrate with their victorious players; they hoist Maurice high up in the air.

Billy runs over to shake McGregor's hand... McGregor refuses to shake his hand, and storms towards the locker room.

McGregor passes Taylor, who also tries to shake his hand. McGregor stops and stares -- it looks as if he's going to slug Taylor... then storms off the field into the tunnel.

Taylor spots Jess on the sideline--

TAYLOR

(to Jess)

So, you're in the big time now.

Jess all but jumps into Taylor's arms--

JESS

I was rooting for y'all. But I couldn't be too obvious about it. Um, Coach. I just wanted to say - I wouldn't even be here if it weren't for you. So thank you.

Taylor smiles brightly and hugs Jess some more.

Nothing but overjoyed Panther fans in the stands, and Panther players and coaches on the field.

As the those bright Friday night lights slowly fade to...

Black out.

OVER BLACK - "TWO MONTHS LATER. NFL REGULAR SEASON. WEEK 8. SUNDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL"

INT. BUDDY'S BAR - NIGHT

Buddy watches Sunday Night Football on NBC.

ON TELEVISION

AL MICHAELS and CHRIS COLLINSWORTH cover the play-by-play: PHILADELPHIA EAGLES vs the DALLAS COWBOYS.

On the Eagles sideline-- Taylor stands among various Eagles players and coaches.

CHYRON - "AT&T STADIUM. DALLAS, TX."

Live from the Dome!

On the Eagles sideline-- Taylor as an assistant coach.

On the Eagles bench-- Vince Howard, in an Eagles uniform, sits next to second, third and fourth string players. Vince, as a backup QB, grabs a football to warm up his arm.

On the Cowboys sideline-- Smash, in a Cowboys uniform, next to various first string Dallas Cowboy offensive players.

MONTAGE - INT./EXT. LOCATIONS

-Buddy watches on tv-- Taylor. Vince. Smash...

-Billy and Riggins watch the game. Tyra and Mindy drink margaritas with STRIPPERS from the Landing Strip...

-The roof of their house now fully repaired...

-Billy and Riggins cheer when they see on tv-- Taylor on the sidelines. Vince warming up his arm...

CHYRON - "BEACH FRONT PROPERTY. SOUTH PADRE ISLAND, TX."

-Corrina Williams entertains a house full of guests; everyone present jumps from their seats when they see on tv-- Smash standing on the Cowboys sideline...

-As the moon rises on her beach house that faces the Gulf of Mexico...

-Standing near Smash on the sidelines in AT&T Stadium-- two familiar players rolling second string for the Cowboys:

RAY "VOODOO" TATUM warms up his arm and laughs and smiles with ANTWONE BELTRAINE as they stand among a pack of various first string Cowboy offensive players...

CHYRON - "HOBOKEN, NJ"

-Jason watches the game, in the living room of his condo, with his young son NOAH STREET who tosses a Nerf football back and forth with his dad. Jason sees on tv: Smash.

JASON

Look, Noah. See that guy. Daddy just signed that guy.

NOAH STREET

That's Smash Williams. You know Smash Williams?

JASON

Sure do.

-The game is on in the background as Landry, back at his house in the Hollywood hills, plays ear crushing speed metal with his fellow musician house-mates.

-A group of Texas inmates at Huntsville penitentiary watch the game. As soon as Vince appears on tv, inmate Ornette Howard loses his shit to anyone who will listen--

ORNETTE

That's my boy. You see that? You see my son? Fly, Eagles, fly.

CHYRON - "SPORTS BAR. RUSH STREET. CHICAGO"

-Julie and Saracen watch the game among a packed crowd of rowdy millennial Chicagoans. Julie points with excitement when they see on tv: Coach Taylor.

-Buddy watches, with that same childlike expression, this game that he's worshipped his entire life.

BUDDY

Swear to Christ - I love this game.

Black out.

OVER BLACK - "CODA: ONE MONTH LATER"

INT. TAYLOR HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Tami sits up in bed watching CNN as Taylor tries to sleep.

ON CNN

Presidential debate. DONALD TRUMP and HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON square off--

HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON (ON TELEVISION)

Just awfully good that someone with the temperament of Donald Trump is not in charge of the law in our country.

DONALD TRUMP (ON TELEVISION)

Because you'd be in jail.

Tami shakes her head--

TAMI

What is happening? This is insane.

Taylor still has his back turned towards the wall.

TAYLOR

Honey. Please turn the tv off.

TAMI

I'm sorry, hon. I just can't stop watching this train wreck. How can a man speak to a woman like that?

Taylor sits up, aggressively rubs his head--

TAYLOR

You have to turn this off. This is how I've been falling asleep every night for the past two months.

TAMI

I know, babe. But this is so important.

TAYLOR

I know it's important. But I can't get any sleep. I got to be rested for these games we got coming up--

TAMI

It's just amazing to me that Gracie will grow up...

TAYLOR

You're not paying attention to anything I'm saying--

TAMI

... thinking that she too can be president one day. It actually makes me consider getting into politics myself.

TAYLOR

Please don't - don't do that.

TAMI

I think I'd like to get involved with a campaign. Like Lyla Garrity. I really would.

TAYLOR

No way I'm go to be a - Michelle Obama.

TAMI

Oh, you'd definitely be more of a Barbara Bush.

Taylor turns back over and puts a pillow over his head. As the debate on CNN drones on-- Tami continues to watch.

TAYLOR

Babe. Please turn the tv off and
turn out the light. Please.

TAMI

It really is amazing. We're
finally going to have a woman
president. In my lifetime.

She turns off the lamp on her nightstand -- leaving the glow
from the tv to highlight the hopefulness on her face.

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF REUNION EPISODE