

LET HER SPEAK

Based on a True Story

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FADE IN:

EXT. EAST TEXAS SUBURB -- DAY

A blinding sun. On a modest, residential street, waves of heat rise from the black-tarred pavement. Ramblers undulate in the haze. Spit-shone Edsels and Studebakers sit and bake.

SUPERIMPOSE: 1964

A GIRL jumps through a sprinkler. A FATHER wipes his brow, tosses a ball to his son. A DOG searches in vain for shade.

TOM, clean-cut, early 30s, opens his screen door. He peers across the street at a home, seemingly abandoned: Lawn overgrown, driveway littered with newspapers, shades drawn. A dried-out Christmas wreath still hangs on its front door.

He ponders the house for a moment, then goes back inside.

INT. GINGER'S LIVING ROOM -- DAY

In an airless, darkened room, a ceiling fan whirls noisily. Hanging lopsided: A faded poster for "The Music Man," its smiling trumpeteer falsely proclaiming good things to come.

On a threadbare rug, wearing nothing but a diaper, sits a toddler: WENDY, 14 months. Her large, wide eyes dart all about her. She is totally alert. She sees everything.

A few feet away: CHRISTOPHER, 5, and JOEY, 2, both shaggy-haired and food-stained. They sit just inches from a black-and-white TV set, where "Bugs Bunny" plays too loudly.

Slumped on a couch in back is GINGER, early 20s. Ghostly pale, wrapped in a thick sweater, she is anywhere but here.

CHRISTOPHER

Can we open a window?

Ginger pulls her sweater tighter.

CHRISTOPHER (CONT'D)

Mama?

Slowly, Ginger pulls herself up off the couch. She heads to the window, but stops. She turns and haphazardly scoops up Wendy in one arm. The child half-dangles in the air.

GINGER

(flatly)

It's time to go.

CHRISTOPHER

Go where?

But Ginger is already out of the room.

INT. GARAGE -- DAY

Ginger flips on the light to reveal a cramped, dusty garage. At center: A hulking, 1950 Chevy Bel Air, its curved, blue chassis covered in a thick coat of dust. She stares at it.

CHRISTOPHER

Where are we going, mama?

GINGER

Nowhere, we're...playing a game.

With Wendy still dangling in one arm, Ginger takes Joey by the hand. She walks over to the trunk and yanks it open.

GINGER (CONT'D)

Everybody in.

CHRISTOPHER

In there?

Without looking at him, Ginger nods. Eager for the chance to play, Christopher skips to the trunk and hoists himself in.

CHRISTOPHER (CONT'D)

Climb in, Joey!

Ginger helps Joey in. Then she lowers Wendy inside.

GINGER

Lie down. Like you're sleeping.

The boys do as they're told, but Wendy sits upright.

GINGER (CONT'D)

Sleep, baby.

Wendy stares right at her mother, and Ginger averts her gaze. She hurries into the driver's seat. Lowering the window, she tries to turn on the ignition. But the engine doesn't catch.

GINGER (CONT'D)

Come on!

Ginger tries again, pumping the gas. Still nothing.

GINGER (CONT'D)

Please, God!

The engine spurts, then catches. The exhaust pipe spits out a dark cloud of smoke.

CHRISTOPHER

Mama, the door's down!

Closing her eyes, Ginger forces herself to take deep breaths.

CHRISTOPHER (CONT'D)

Mama!

But Ginger doesn't answer. Then, from somewhere inside the house, the sound of a doorbell. Ginger opens her eyes.

EXT. GINGER'S HOUSE -- DAY

Tom stands on the front step, holding a loaf wrapped in foil. He presses the doorbell.

INT. GARAGE -- DAY

The doorbell rings again. Ginger forces her eyes shut. The garage begins to fill with smoke.

CHRISTOPHER

MAMA!

EXT. GINGER'S HOUSE -- DAY

Tom rings again. He knocks loudly, but no answer. He turns to go. But just as he does, the front door opens a crack.

GINGER

Yes?

TOM

Hi, Ginger.

(at her blank look)

It's Tom, from across the street.

I...just wanted to check on you.

Ginger says nothing.

TOM (CONT'D)

(holding out the loaf)

Tina made this for you. May I come in?

Ginger shakes her head 'no.'

TOM (CONT'D)

Ok, then.

He turns to go...then thinks better of it.

TOM (CONT'D)

Just for a minute.

INT. GARAGE -- DAY

With the engine still running, the smoke is thickening. The boys are crying. But Wendy sits there, upright, impassive.

INT. GINGER'S LIVING ROOM -- DAY

For a few moments, we see but do not hear Ginger and Tom. Seated on the couch, she cries while he looks on. Then...

GINGER  
He met her in community theater.  
His...leading lady.

TOM  
That's just fantasy. This is his  
real life. He'll come around.

GINGER  
No. This time is different.  
I can't raise them on my own! I...  
just can't.

TOM  
Why don't we say a prayer?

Tom kneels beside the couch. Ginger hesitates, then follows.

TOM (CONT'D)  
Our Father, who art in Heaven...  
(looks at GINGER)  
Our Father...

GINGER  
Our Father.

INT. GARAGE -- DAY

Wendy's tiny face, encircled in dark smoke. She does not cry.

CHRISTOPHER  
MAMA!

INT. GINGER'S LIVING ROOM -- DAY

TOM  
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done--

GINGER  
On earth as it is in Heaven.

INT. GARAGE -- DAY

CHRISTOPHER  
MAMA PLEASE!

INT. GINGER'S LIVING ROOM -- DAY

TOM  
For thine is the kingdom, the power  
and the glory.

GINGER  
Now and forever.

TOM  
Amen.

A single tear runs down Ginger's face.

GINGER  
Amen.

TOM  
This is not the end, Ginger. Not for  
you, not for those kids. You can't  
give up. You can never give up.

INT. GARAGE -- DAY

A thick, dark haze; the children now barely visible. From a  
now-woozy Christopher and Joey, only whimpers.

Suddenly, out of Wendy, a SHRIEK: Huge, piercing, harrowing.  
A sound so much bigger than the tiny child herself.

INT. GINGER'S LIVING ROOM -- DAY

At Wendy's searing cry, Tom and Ginger startle. The sheer  
force of it shocks Ginger awake. It brings her back to life.

INT. GARAGE -- DAY

The door to the garage slams open, and instantly, Ginger is  
swallowed by the smoke. She lets out a cry: PRIMAL.

GINGER  
WENDY!

Gasping, frantic, she struggles to feel her way to the trunk--

GINGER (CONT'D)  
CHRIS! JOEY! I'M HERE!

--as Tom, entering the garage, is enveloped by the smoke.

TOM  
Oh my GOD!

Ginger smacks into the garage door. Desperately, she feels  
around for the handle. But in the haze, she cannot find it.  
Another PIERCING shriek from Wendy--

GINGER  
HOLD ON, BABY!

--and Ginger, FRANTIC, slams her full weight against the  
garage door. Again. And again. Until finally, it swings open.

Suddenly, a rush of air, light. And there's Wendy: Coughing, blinking, swept by her mother high into the sun.

The child opens her mouth impossibly wide, takes in a huge gulp of air. She is living. She is breathing. She is heard.

EXT. RUNNING TRAIL -- PRESENT DAY -- EARLY MORNING

The sun, just breaking over Austin. A long dirt trail stretches as far as the eye can see. Not a soul in sight.

We HEAR the rhythmic breathing of a runner--in, out, in, out. We FEEL the steady pounding of her feet, like we're inside her very head. And then we see the sneakers: HOT PINK and green. Demanding to be noticed, just like their owner.

Finally, we see the adult WENDY DAVIS: Blonde hair in a pony tail, eyes laser-focused straight ahead, pace unrelenting. A DYNAMO. One look at her and we know: Don't Mess With Wendy.

Her iPhone strapped to her arm, Wendy talks a mile-a-minute:

WENDY

Hey, so I was thinking, there's no way Perry can adjourn us till we vote on a new map so why are they pretending like we're all going home today, when the fact is he's gotta bring us back in a special--what?

(beat)

Oh, yeah. Morning.

EXT./INT. "JAVA JOINT" COFFEE SHOP -- EARLY MORNING

Bumper stickers on every wall: Anti-war, anti-nukes, anti-you-name-it. Wendy's favorite: "Eve was framed!" A sign: "Keepin' Austin Weird since 1995." At the counter, a heavily-tattooed, very pregnant barista, TRICIA, chatters to a MALE BARISTA.

TRICIA

We've thought of naming him Roy, for Roy Orbison, but settled on Willie--

Wendy barrels in, bypasses a long line of customers and goes right up to the counter.

WENDY

(into phone)

A.J.? Where are we on the payday loan guys?

TRICIA

--after Willie Nelson, natch.

WENDY

I want you to bring 'em in, sit 'em right there in front of me--

Standing at the ready, the MALE BARISTA hands Wendy her usual: An extra-large, extra-hot drip.

WENDY (CONT'D)  
 (to MALE BARISTA)  
 EXTRA hot?  
 (right back into phone)  
 --and see if they dare to tell me,  
 right to my face--  
 (hands coffee back to MALE  
 BARISTA)  
 Hotter.  
 (into phone)  
 --that charging a thousand percent  
 interest to people already on the  
 ropes isn't some fucking--  
 (aside, to MALE BARISTA)  
 Please.  
 (into phone)  
 --crime! "Legal" or not.

The Male Barista knows the drill: He's got another drink ready. In one swoop, Wendy snaps it up, slaps a fiver on the counter and heads back towards the door.

WENDY (CONT'D)  
 You think they'll have the balls to  
 say that to ME?  
 (turns back to TRICIA,  
 quickly)  
 You're having a girl.  
 (into phone)  
 TO MY FACE?  
 (to TRICIA)  
 Carrying high.  
 (into phone)  
 Let 'em TRY!

Tricia, stunned, stares at her belly.

MALE BARISTA  
 I wouldn't bet against her.

INT./EXT. LOBBY OF WILL'S APARTMENT BUILDING -- DAY

A DOORMAN holds the door open as Wendy strides into a sleek, modern lobby. She is still on the phone (of course).

WENDY  
 Sonya? Another thing--  
 (to DOORMAN, nods)  
 Henry.

DOORMAN  
 Senator.



WENDY

Wendy.  
(into phone)  
Another thing--

DOORMAN

Whatever you say.

WENDY

I say it every day.  
(into phone)  
--we need to hit 'em a hell of a  
lot harder on the school cuts.  
Why're we being so mealy-mouthed--  
(beat)  
Did you just say we're TIRED?  
(beat)  
Good. I didn't think so!

Wendy is already halfway to the elevators. The Doorman smiles to himself, shakes his head.

INT. WILL'S KITCHEN -- DAY

A minimalist, modern kitchen. A huge island. Standing above the stove is WILL WYNN, tall, boyishly handsome, still wearing the clothes he slept in. He makes breakfast.

Wendy barrels in. Guess what she's still doing?

WENDY

(into phone)  
--and tell him that, last time I  
checked, it takes 20 votes to screw  
us and they've only got 19, so--

Without breaking stride, she gives Will a peck on the cheek.

WENDY (CONT'D)

--if he needs a refresher course on  
counting, I will happily provide  
it, free of charge. Seriously, tell  
him that.

Will plates their breakfast: An omelet and hashbrowns for him. For Wendy: Just two hard-boiled eggs.

WILL

Have a seat.

SUPERIMPOSE: Will Wynn, former Mayor of Austin  
SUPERIMPOSE: Wendy's boyfriend

WENDY

And remind him that last time they  
tried to pull this--

Still standing, she stabs one egg with a fork, brings the whole thing up to her mouth, and takes a big, messy bite.

WENDY (CONT'D)  
(mouth full)  
--bullshit--

WILL  
Wendy!

WENDY  
What?

WILL  
Sit down. For a second.

WENDY  
(into phone)  
Talk more at the office.

Wendy hangs up--no goodbye. She sees the time on the clock--

WENDY (CONT'D)  
Shit, it's 7 already?

--gives Will a quick peck on the cheek--

WENDY (CONT'D)  
I'll take it to go.

--and before Will can even say a word, she's out the kitchen.

WILL  
You're welcome!

INT. WENDY'S OFFICE, RECEPTION AREA -- DAY

Wendy's office is textbook Wendy: To-the-point.

A poster: "A woman's place is in the House...and Senate." An old yard sign: "Davis for City Council." A newer one: "Re-elect Senator Davis." A magazine profile from "Texas Monthly" showing Wendy, mid-run: "She Runs, and She Won't Hide."

The one nod to sentiment: A photo of Wendy on election night; her parents on one side, her two daughters on the other.

Sitting at center is a receptionist: LUCY MINOR, 23. No-nonsense, attractive. On Lucy's left: Wendy's private office, door closed. On her right: The legislative office, shared by the rest of Wendy's staff. We'll meet them soon enough.

A young man in a cheap suit enters reception. He's JAVIER COSTA, 21, and he's clearly nervous. One look at Lucy-- the definition of unapproachable--only makes him more so. Before he can speak, the phone rings. Lightning-fast, Lucy picks up.

LUCY  
 Senator Davis' office, please hold.  
 (to JAVIER; impatient)  
 Yes?

JAVIER  
 Hi. Hi, umm--

Another line rings. Lucy motions for Javier to quiet.

LUCY  
 Senator Davis' office, hold please.  
 (to JAVIER; more  
 impatient)  
 YES?

JAVIER  
 Hi, I'm the--

Yet another line rings. Again, she motions for him to quiet.

LUCY  
 Senator Davis' office.  
 (beat)  
 I'll transfer you.  
 (to JAVIER)  
 Can I help you?

JAVIER  
 I'm the new inter--

LUCY  
 It's sine die.  
 (at his blank look)  
 You're starting an internship on  
 the last day of the session?

JAVIER  
 Well, I just got--

The phone rings again. Lucy motions Javier towards a couch.

LUCY  
 Sit.  
 (into phone)  
 Senator Davis' office?

INT. PRESS ROOM -- DAY

A sign on the wall: "Credentialed Press Only." Too many desks for the space, too many papers for the desks. Outdated, closed-circuit TVs tuned into the House and Senate floors.

At her cramped desk, LAURA KAMEN intently eyes her laptop. Nearby, her CAMERAMAN and a male REPORTER shoot the shit.

CAMERAMAN

My mom's gonna be pissed. I'd promised to take her to Vegas.

REPORTER

You're all class.

CAMERAMAN

She loves Vegas! She's got a gambling addiction.

REPORTER

I take it back. Very thoughtful of you.

(to LAURA)

What are you working on?

LAURA

Rough cut of my interview with Dan Patrick.

REPORTER

You mean Dan "Goeb." The guy changed his name to "Patrick"--

LAURA

'Cuz it sounded better on talk radio, I know. Watch this.

On Laura's screen, a video of her alongside a man identified by chyron as STATE SENATOR DAN PATRICK (R). With a suspiciously full head of hair and a booming voice, he looks every bit the televangelist he should've been.

LAURA (ON SCREEN) (CONT'D)

*You've parlayed a career in conservative talk radio to a seat in the Texas Senate, and now there's speculation you'll challenge Lieutenant Governor Dewhurst for renomination in next year's Republican primary.*

DAN PATRICK (ON SCREEN)

*What the Lord has in store for me, only He knows.*

REPORTER

Well maybe you should ask him.

DAN PATRICK (ON SCREEN)

*But I do know one thing: David Dewhurst is not a conservative. He's what they call a..."moderate."*

CAMERAMAN

Ooh, the M-word!

DAN PATRICK (ON SCREEN)  
*He's not guided by principle; he's  
 guided by the middle of the road.*

LAURA  
 Here it comes.

DAN PATRICK (ON SCREEN)  
*And in Texas, the only thing the  
 middle of the road's good for is  
 yellow lines--*

DAN PATRICK (CONT'D)  
 --and dead armadillos.

REPORTER  
 And dead armadillos.  
 (beat)  
 Original.

REPORTER  
 So much for Dewhurst. Hundred bucks  
 says next primary, he's road kill.

CAMERAMAN  
 My mom'll make that bet.

INT. DEWHURST'S CHAMBERS -- RECEPTION AREA -- DAY

Gold lettering on a wood-paneled wall announces: "Lieutenant Governor David Dewhurst, President of the Senate."

Everywhere, the trappings of power. The seal of the great State of Texas. A flag nearly as big as Texas. Framed photos of a politician in action: Cutting ribbons, shaking hands with George W. Bush, posing with Governor Rick Perry.

A young RECEPTIONIST answers the phones. STAFFERS come in and out of adjoining offices.

RECEPTIONIST  
 Good morning, Lieutenant Governor  
 Dewhurst's office, may I help you?

INT. DEWHURST'S PRIVATE OFFICE -- DAY

Leaning on his antique desk: LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR DAVID DEWHURST. Tall, patrician, impeccably groomed, he looks more Ivy League president than Texas pol (except he's got his family photos turned outwards, right where we can see them).

At his side: TED HEBERT. He may dress as nattily as his boss, but Hebert's got the heart of a street fighter.

DEWHURST  
 (reading a memo)  
 "David Dewhurst shares my  
 conservative values." 44%?

SUPERIMPOSE: Lieutenant Governor David Dewhurst (Republican)  
 SUPERIMPOSE: President of the Senate

TED  
It gets worse.

SUPERIMPOSE: Ted Hebert, Chief Counsel

DEWHURST  
"David Dewhurst is too willing to  
compromise." 58%  
(beat)  
Since when is 'compromise'--

TED  
The C-word? A while now.

DEWHURST  
What's happening, Ted?

TED  
Simple. If the voters move right  
and you don't move with them, then  
you've moved left.

DEWHURST  
(lets this sink in)  
Is there any good news?

TED  
Well...data shows most GOP voters  
haven't heard of Dan Patrick.

DEWHURST  
But they will. As soon as he  
declares.

TED  
That's why we have to act--now. In  
the special. Blow it out!

DEWHURST  
What do you mean, blow--?

TED  
Joe Republican doesn't give a shit  
about redistricting! That's just  
jargon. But school vouchers...  
campus carry...abortion--ESPECIALLY  
abortion! Now you're talking. Now  
you've got his attention!  
(beat)  
It's time, boss. It's time to  
fucking GRAB their attention.

INT. STATE CAPITOL HALLWAY -- DAY

Everything's bigger in Texas, especially the State Capitol:  
We're in an extra long, extra wide hallway, chandeliers  
hanging from the ceiling. On the walls, WPA murals depict the  
brave men (of course, only men) who made Texas...well, Texas.

Against the checkered, black & white marble floor, hot pink Laboutins move impossibly fast. In her tailored, equally pink Chanel suit, we barely recognize Wendy. She cleans up nice.

SONYA GROGG, a young Wendy-in-the-making, struggles to keep up with her boss. Oncoming STAFFERS dart out of their way.

SONYA

Sorry, new shoes, could we slow--

Wendy looks at her: Slow down?

SONYA (CONT'D)

Never mind.

SUPERIMPOSE: Sonya Grogg, Chief of Staff

Walking towards them: SENATOR RODNEY ELLIS--African-American, a quintessential gentleman. He gives Wendy a big smile and sticks out his hand, as if to grab something from her.

RODNEY

Where's the baton? I'll take us home!

SUPERIMPOSE: Senator Rodney Ellis (Democrat)

WENDY

You're goin' in the wrong direction, Rodney.

She gives his hand a playful slap.

RODNEY

Aren't we just goin' around in circles?

WENDY

Feels like it.

(to SONYA)

So, what are you hearing?

SONYA

We'll sine die at around 5 o'clock.

WENDY

(dismissively)

So everyone can get to their parties.

SONYA

Well, they'll have to drink fast. Word is, Perry'll call the special session as soon as tonight.

WENDY

And keep us how long? Another week?

SONYA  
We're hearing 30 days.

Wendy stops in her tracks. Sonya accidentally keeps walking.

WENDY  
30 days? On redistricting?

SONYA  
(teasing)  
Well, if you'd just let 'em chop up  
your district like they wanted,  
we'd all be going home today. But  
no, you had to go and sue!

WENDY  
(dead serious)  
We don't need a whole month to pass  
a new map, Sonya. Something's up.

SONYA  
Like...what?

WENDY  
Nothing good.

INT. PRESS ROOM -- DAY

Laura, at work at her desk. Her phone buzzes. She picks up.

LAURA  
Laura Kamen.

VOICE OF TED  
Laura, it's Ted Hebert.

LAURA  
(surprised)  
Oh. Hi.

VOICE OF TED  
Your crew still here?

LAURA  
You mean my camera man? Yeah.

VOICE OF TED  
Good. Come up to Lieutenant  
Governor Dewhurst's office. He's  
got some news for you.

LAURA  
What kind of news?

VOICE OF TED  
You'll want to hear it.



LAURA  
We'll be there in ten.

VOICE OF TED  
Five.

We hear the 'click' of Ted hanging up.

CAMERA MAN  
What the hell was that about?

LAURA  
My money's on...Dewhurst, not going  
down without a fight.

INT. STATE CAPITOL HALLWAY -- DAY

We pick up with Wendy and Sonya still moving a mile-a-minute.

WENDY  
Call Kirk's guy, what's he hearing?

Rounding the corner: SENATOR LETICIA VAN DE PUTTE--Latina,  
confident, big-boned. The three women converge and, without  
missing a beat, keep moving-and-talking.

LETICIA  
Slow down, Davis. I got a few on  
you.

SUPERIMPOSE: Senator Leticia Van De Putte (Democrat)

WENDY  
(to SONYA)  
--then why not?  
(to LETICIA)  
I keep telling you, start running  
with me--

LETICIA  
And I keep telling you, I only run  
when I'm chased--

WENDY  
Well, no-one's going anywhere,  
Dewhurst may hold us a month--

LETICIA  
But that makes no--

WENDY  
--sense, right, unless he's--

LETICIA  
Adding to the agenda, but only  
Perry--

WENDY

--can do that, right, but if Dewhurst needs him to, which he does--

LETICIA

--Perry'd do it, but I haven't heard that he has--

WENDY

--but I bet he will.

SONYA

Oh my God, is this how you two talk to each other?

They pass an open door and see STAFFERS huddled around a TV--

WENDY

Hold up.

--and Wendy walks in like she owns the place.

WENDY (CONT'D)

What's going on?

On TV: Dewhurst addresses reporters. Wendy motions the staffers out of her way and stands right in front of the TV.

DEWHURST (ON SCREEN)

--light of these extraordinary times, I have written to Governor Perry asking him to expand the agenda of this special session to include legislation around concealed carry, educational choice, and...life.

Sonya and Leticia join Wendy in front of the television. Wendy's eyes bore into the screen.

LAURA (ON SCREEN)

Lieutenant Governor, you know better than anyone: It takes two-thirds of the Senate to bring up any bill, and you certainly don't have two-thirds agreement on these hot-button issues.

DEWHURST (ON SCREEN)

Yes, well, for this...very special session, the two-thirds rule will be waived. We'll operate under a simple majority.

LETICIA

Mother--

LAURA

*That's...unprecedented.*

DEWHURST

*Well, you know what they say:  
Desperate times call for--*

WENDY

*Desperate politicians.  
(to SONYA and LETICIA)  
He's gonna try to steamroll us.*

INT. WENDY'S OFFICE, RECEPTION AREA -- DAY

Javier nervously eyes Lucy, who still pays him no attention.  
He opens his mouth, and Lucy senses small talk coming.

LUCY

*(not looking up)  
Nope.*

Wendy barrels in, Sonya right behind her.

WENDY

*Call every Democratic office, make  
sure they know.  
(to LUCY)  
Get me Kirk Watson on the phone.  
(to SONYA)  
Clear the decks, put the whole  
staff on this.  
(calling out)  
AJ! Ben!*

Two young men dash out of the staff office into reception:  
The bespectacled policy wonk, AJ LEWIS, 30, African-American;  
and the fast-talking, headline-chasing BEN CAMP, 28.

AJ

*You saw it?*

WENDY

*He's going after all of it. Call  
the unions, the gun control guys,  
the choice groups, tell 'em all  
hell's about to break loose. How  
many anti-choice bills did we block  
this session?*

AJ

*Six, I think.*

WENDY

*Well, pull 'em up, they're all  
coming back.  
(to BEN)  
(MORE)*

WENDY (CONT'D)

Draft a release: 'Lieutenant Governor Dewhurst is usurping the rules of the Senate to advance an extremist agenda and prop up his political career--

BEN

Wow, that's--

WENDY

What?

BEN

Like, guns blazing.

WENDY

Saddle up, Ben.

(to SONYA)

Cancel everything on my schedule.

SONYA

How long?

WENDY

30 days. Same for everyone here.

As Javier tries to follow the volleying, tennis match style, Wendy finally notices him. Looking him up and down:

WENDY (CONT'D)

Who the hell are you?

On the young man's face: Terror. Wide-eyed, he opens his mouth to attempt an answer, but Lucy hands Wendy the phone.

LUCY

I've got Senator Watson.

WENDY

Kirk, Wendy. You saw what he's doing, right?

INT. "BETTY KING" COMMITTEE ROOM -- DAY

Like the opening of "Hill Street Blues," but with Senators: The daily briefing of the chamber's 12 Democrats.

Alongside Wendy, Leticia and Rodney, they include Senate veterans JUDITH ZAFFIRINI, Latina--a soft-spoken, Elder Stateswoman-type--and JOHN WHITMIRE, scrappy and instinctual.

At the head of the room is their gruff, no-nonsense leader, SENATOR KIRK WATSON, as dry as he is whip-smart.

SUPERIMPOSE: 3 weeks later

KIRK

Alright, everybody take a seat.  
Let's get this over with.

SUPERIMPOSE: Senator Kirk Watson (Democrat)  
SUPERIMPOSE: Minority Leader

Senators take seats, but Wendy remains standing.

KIRK (CONT'D)

Well, folks, if you liked losing on guns and losing on schools, you're gonna love losing on this one. The big finale: Senate Bill 5. To take us through this shit-show, I've called in a fancy Harvard lawyer.

Several Senators chuckle in recognition.

KIRK (CONT'D)

By way of...where?

WENDY

Tarrant County Community College.

KIRK

We'll ignore that part.

Wendy walks to the front of the room and stands before her colleagues. She holds up a bill more than two inches thick. She waits a moment, lets the size of it sink in.

WENDY

Here's a dilemma: Say you're intent on taking away a woman's right to choose. Except you can't legally take it away, that's the Supreme Court's job. What do you do?

LETICIA

Run for office in Texas.

WENDY

(holding up bill)

Senate Bill 5. A slew of cannily crafted, totally unnecessary regulations on women's health clinics in Texas. How wide the hallways have to be. How many elevators they need to have.

JUDITH

What elevators?

SUPERIMPOSE: Senator Judith Zaffirini (Democrat)

WENDY

Well, exactly. These are small, community-based clinics we're talking about. The places women go for routine care: Cancer screenings, vaccinations, contraception. Poor women, uninsured women. And yes, when a woman makes that most personal of all decisions to terminate her pregnancy, it's these clinics she turns to. These guys know that. Just like they know--

JUDITH

This bill would bankrupt the clinics. Shut them down.

WENDY

Bingo.

JOHN

How many are we talking about?

SUPER: Senator John Whitmire (Democrat)

WENDY

45 clinics in Texas today. After this bill: Five.

RODNEY

You're kidding. In the whole state?

WENDY

268, 597 square miles. No clinics in huge swaths of Texas. The poorest, most desperate communities, where care is already so scarce. Now imagine: A rural woman, a woman in poverty, faced with the most difficult decision of her life. Suddenly, she needs to get herself clear across the state--

LETICIA

And wait there--

WENDY

--and wait there! Remember, the law already forces a woman to submit to a sonogram--a vaginal probe, no less--and wait 24 hours before she can return--

LETICIA

To that doctor, and none other.

WENDY

How on earth is she going to do that if the clinic's hundreds of miles from home? She can't. She won't. Which is exactly what these guys are counting on. So I ask you again: What do you do when you can't legally take away a woman's right to choose?

RODNEY

Make it impossible for her to exercise it.

WENDY

Exactly. You chip away at it, bit by bit, till it's as good as gone.

A silence falls over the room.

KIRK

So there you have it.

RODNEY

What's the timing?

KIRK

We vote Friday. Dewhurst's got his simple majority, and then some.

RODNEY

And we can't filibuster...

JOHN

Not with a whole week left.

KIRK

Nope. He's timed this all out. Got to, with that nutter Dan Patrick on his heels. Talk about no choice.

WENDY

(beat)

Is that a joke?

KIRK

'Scuse me?

WENDY

So Dewhurst is the victim here?

LETICIA

Wendy--

KIRK

Are you being serious right now?

WENDY

We shouldn't feel sorry for him--

KIRK

Who said anything about feeling sorry for him? I'm pointing out the obvious: There's 12 of us, there's 19 of them.

LETICIA

Guys--

WENDY

So we just roll over.

KIRK

You think I "roll over"?

RODNEY

Hey now, we're all on the same team here--

KIRK

Except some of us called dibs on moral outrage.

WENDY

There's nothing wrong with a little outrage here--

KIRK

You think I'm not outraged? You think I like showin' up every day just to lose, over and over--

WENDY

What I'm saying is--

KIRK

That Wendy Davis is the only one courageous enough to fight!

WENDY

(trying to keep her cool)  
That's not what--

KIRK

That's exactly what you're saying! Trust me, Senator, I can fight! I can god damn fight! Difference between you and me is, I can also count.

RODNEY

That's enough, Kirk.

Wendy seethes, but she holds her fire. For now.



INT. WENDY'S OFFICE, STAFF AREA -- DAY

Like a dorm room at exam time: Four messy desks, facing each other, piled sky high with papers.

Sonya, AJ, Ben and Lucy huddle around a TV tuned to the Senate. By their faces, they look to be watching a funeral.

SUPERIMPOSE: 3 days later

On the TV: The female SENATE SECRETARY stands at a podium on the dais. (Note: As is customary during votes, we do not see the Senate itself, just a tight shot of the dais).

SECRETARY (ON SCREEN)  
Senator Deuell.

We HEAR (but do not see) various Senators voting.

VOICE OF BOB DEUELL (O.S.)  
Aye.

SUPERIMPOSE: "Vote on Senate Bill 5"

SECRETARY (ON SCREEN)  
Senator Deuell, aye. Senator  
Patrick.

VOICE OF DAN PATRICK (O.S.)  
(thundering)  
AYE! AYE!

SONYA  
We get it, asshole.

SECRETARY (ON SCREEN)  
Senator Patrick, aye. Senator  
Watson.

VOICE OF KIRK (O.S.)  
No.

SECRETARY (ON SCREEN)  
Senator Watson, no. Senator Davis.

A pause...and Wendy's voice comes booming out of the TV.

WENDY (O.S.)  
NO!

AJ  
Whoa.

SECRETARY (ON SCREEN)  
Senator Davis, no.

The Secretary prints out the vote, passes it to someone just above her. The Senate camera pulls back to reveal Dewhurst, on the dais, presiding.

DEWHURST (ON SCREEN)  
*On this motion, the ayes are 20, the  
 nos are 11. The bill is agreed to.*

He brings the gavel down: THUD. He smiles, then applauds. We hear GOP Senators following suit. The camera stays tight on Dewhurst. What Wendy is thinking, we can only guess.

INT. STATE CAPITOL HALLWAY -- DAY

A relieved Dewhurst and buoyant Ted head to their office.

TED  
 Felt good, didn't it?

DEWHURST  
 It did, actually.

They pass Republican Senator ROBERT DUNCAN--your typical "aww, shucks!--regular-guy" type--who gives them a big thumbs up.

ROBERT DUNCAN  
 Great job, Mr. President!

SUPERIMPOSE: Senator Robert Duncan (Republican)

DEWHURST  
 Thanks, Bob. Team effort!  
 (to TED)  
 What's the latest on the House?

TED  
 A hearing tomorrow, and a vote on  
 Monday.

DEWHURST  
 They're taking up our bill, right?  
 No changes?

TED  
 That's the agreement.

DEWHURST  
 Good. I don't want this coming back  
 to us. Let's get it on Perry's desk  
 and be done with it.

Walking their way: GOP SENATOR DONNA CAMPBELL. Stern-faced, cuddly as a cactus, she's nothing if not a true believer.

DONNA CAMPBELL  
 (coolly)  
 Congratulations, Mr. President.

SUPERIMPOSE: Senator Donna Campbell, M.D. (Republican)

DEWHURST

All in a day's work, right, Dr.  
Campbell?

DONNA CAMPBELL

We haven't had many like that  
around here.

DEWHURST

(tightly)  
Well, it's a new day.

DONNA CAMPBELL

Let's hope so.

They all keep walking. As soon as Campbell's out of earshot:

DEWHURST

A walking colonoscopy, that one.

TED

Forget her.  
(handing him an iPhone)  
Take a look at this.

DEWHURST

What is it?

TED

A map showing all the clinics  
that'll shut down when the bill  
becomes law. Some abortion group  
sent it out.

DEWHURST

Do we...respond?

TED

Respond? You say 'damn right!' You  
tweet it out--claim victory!

Ted takes back the phone, starts typing away.

TED (CONT'D)

"We fought to pass SB 5 through the  
Senate..."

DEWHURST

"And this is why."

TED

You're getting the hang of this.

EXT. STATE CAPITOL GROUNDS -- DAY

With the Capitol looming behind them, Wendy and Sonya sit on a park bench. Wendy stares into the distance, at nothing.

SONYA

Can I get you something? You haven't eaten anything all day.

Wendy says nothing.

SONYA (CONT'D)

You wanna talk about it?

For what feels like a long time...silence.

WENDY

I was a senior in high school. I'd just moved in with my boyfriend. My mother was not happy. I don't blame her. She took me to JC Penney one day...a peace offering. I remember trying on these jeans and then...losing my balance. Like I was gonna faint. I thought I had the flu but my mother just knew, even before I did. 'Wendy Jean, you're pregnant.' And before I knew it, there I was. Living in a trailer park with a man I didn't love and who didn't love me. Children, with a child of our own.

She turns to Sonya, looks right at her.

WENDY (CONT'D)

I know what happens to these women, Sonya. I know. This can't be over, you understand me?

Sonya, trying to hold it together, can only nod.

INT. STATE CAPITOL HALLWAY, HOUSE SIDE -- NIGHT

A closed hearing room door. A COMMITTEE STAFFER, 24, stands guard outside. WOMEN wait in line to get in, but because the line rounds the corner, we do not see just how long that line is. NEWS CREWS, including Laura and her Cameraman, stand by.

LAURA

How do I look?

CAMERAMAN

Fine.

LAURA

Just 'fine'?

CAMERAMAN

Yeah. Fine.

LAURA

You talk to your wife like that?

CAMERAMAN

Ex-wife.

LAURA

Shocker.

CAMERAMAN

Three, two--

He signals 'go.'

LAURA

Good evening, Tim. From across Texas, women have descended on this House committee hearing to speak out against what they say is an assault on their constitutional rights.

INT. STATE CAPITOL HALLWAY -- DAY

Wendy and Sonya power-walk towards the hearing--

WENDY

Wait, how many?

SONYA

I'm hearing hundreds. Lining up all day, some since last--

--and rounding the corner, stop dead in their tracks.

WENDY

Holy....shit.

We see what they see: A seemingly ENDLESS line of women, stretching as far as the eye can see. Young women, old women, even girls; women of every race, from every walk of life.

Slowly, Wendy walks up the line, taking time to look at each woman. One by one, the women meet her eye. They don't yet know who Wendy is, but she sure as hell knows who they are.

Wendy and Sonya finally reach the hearing room door. As Sonya moves to open it, a young COMMITTEE STAFFER steps in her way.

COMMITTEE STAFFER

We're full.

SONYA

This is Senator Davis.

COMMITTEE STAFFER  
I can't let anyone else in.

SONYA  
Maybe you didn't hear me. Senator  
Davis, here to listen to the  
testimony.

COMMITTEE STAFFER  
She's not a member of this  
committee. Or this chamber.

SONYA  
Since when has that made any  
difference?

COMMITTEE STAFFER  
Since now.

Sonya is literally speechless. Wendy, betraying nothing,  
steps towards the staffer...till she's awkwardly close.

WENDY  
See those women? Standing all day,  
all night even, just for the chance  
to address the men in that room. And  
here's you, trying to keep me from  
hearing what they've got to say. Now,  
you may think you're playing some  
kind of hero here, but trust me--  
(motions to WOMEN in line)  
--those women, they're the heroes.  
(steps closer to him)  
You're just the guy who got the  
fuck out of the way.

He looks at Wendy, as if trying to hold his ground...then  
gets the fuck out of her way.

INT. HEARING ROOM -- NIGHT

Wendy and Sonya enter, quietly taking their place against the  
back wall, where dozens of WOMEN stand, waiting to testify.  
On a dais, a bunch of white guys--sorry, REPRESENTATIVES--  
yawn and check their watches. Their CHAIRMAN visibly fidgets.

Below, at a witness table, a succession of WOMEN testify. In  
QUICK CUTS, we see snippets of their stories...and Wendy  
listening intently to each.

WOMAN #1  
My mother, a crack addict, watched  
as her dealer raped me. I was 13  
years old.

WOMAN #2

--my husband would beat me so badly that, every night, I went to bed wondering if I'd live to see the sunrise. How could I bring a child into that home?

WOMAN #3 (LATINA)

--the coyote who brought me across the border demanded my body. Payment. I arrived in Laredo: No family, no English, and pregnant.

WOMAN #4

--our home had been foreclosed on. We had no jobs, no car, and no shelter that would take a family of four. Another child was out of the question.

WOMAN #5

--by law, I was forced to watch my baby on sonogram, even though my doctor had already told me that she would not, she could not survive--

REPRESENTATIVE

(to CHAIRMAN, barely  
bothering to whisper)

How many more of these? We've been here all day, for Chrissake!

CHAIRMAN

What am I supposed to do? You see the cameras out there!

REPRESENTATIVE

Who's in charge here?

(nods to the WOMEN)

Them, or you?

WOMAN #6

I prayed to my God. I did not make my choice lightly. No woman ever--

CHAIRMAN

Ok, thank you.

Murmurs from the women. Wendy fixes her eye on the Chairman whispering to Republican colleagues. Something's going down.

CHAIRMAN (CONT'D)

(clears throat)

It's the judgment of the chair that...the testimony has grown repetitive. We're adjourned.

He bangs down the gavel, dashes for an exit behind the dais.  
Like mice, fellow Republicans scurry out right behind him.

WENDY  
(to herself)  
Those chickenshits.

WOMAN #7  
WAIT--they can't just do that!  
(to WENDY)  
Can they?

The question is a gut punch. Wendy can only look at her.

WOMAN #7 (CONT'D)  
Can they?

EXT. RUNNING TRAIL, AUSTIN -- EARLY MORNING

Wendy is inside her head, and so are we: The SOUND of her pulse racing too fast, her lungs GASPING for air. For once, Wendy is not in control. She comes to a sudden, jarring stop.

INT. WENDY'S OFFICE, STAFF AREA -- EARLY MORNING

At her desk, a bedraggled Sonya--looking like she's pulled an all-nighter--desperately flips through pages of a printout.

INT. "BETTY KING" CONFERENCE ROOM -- MORNING

Wendy--this time with a rawness--stands before the Democrats.

WENDY  
They just shut them down, like they  
were nothing!

LETICIA  
To them, they are nothing.

INT. WENDY'S OFFICE, STAFF AREA -- MORNING

Sonya, still scouring through pages. Suddenly, she STOPS. Her eyes land on SOMETHING...and nearly pop out of her head.

INT. BETTY KING CONFERENCE ROOM -- MORNING

WENDY  
He called their stories  
"repetitive"! REPETITIVE!

INT. SENATE HALLWAY -- MORNING

Clutching a stack of pages, Sonya RACES down the hallway.



INT. BETTY KING CONFERENCE ROOM -- MORNING

WENDY

These women, who'd stood in line  
all night just for the chance to  
share their stories--their pain,  
for God's sake!--even for a minute.  
And he treats them like...they're  
reading the fucking phone book!

RODNEY

See, this is why I never go over to  
the House side. Kangaroo court.

WENDY

And did we do any better for them?

A hush falls over the room. It's broken--spectacularly--by a  
door BURSTING open: Sonya--breathless, wild-eyed. BEAMING.

KIRK

What the--

SONYA

THE HOUSE BILL!

WENDY

Jesus, Sonya--

SONYA

IT'S WORSE!

WENDY

(beat)  
What?

SONYA

They UPPED the crazy!

KIRK

Huh? They're voting on our bill--

SONYA

No! They AMENDED it!

WENDY

Sonya, are you SURE?

SONYA

(waves the pages; beaming)  
YES! NO procedures after 20 weeks!  
No exceptions--not for rape, not  
for life of the mother, nothing!  
Isn't that amazing!?

For the first time in days, Wendy smiles.

JOHN

Sorry--why are we happy about this?

WENDY

We can't pass two different bills--  
it's gotta come back to us!

JOHN

Right, but we'll just lose again--

WENDY

(to KIRK, with urgency)

The House votes Monday, right?

KIRK

Yeah.

WENDY

And the rules say we can't take up  
any bill till THREE DAYS after it's  
sent to us, which puts us--

LETICIA

(dawning on her)

On Thursday.

WENDY

The LAST day of session! And any  
bill that doesn't pass by midnight--

LETICIA

Dies.

WENDY

We FILIBUSTER! We run down the  
clock! We won't lose the vote--  
because we won't LET THEM vote!  
(beat; at their silence)  
What?

KIRK

Let's get real here. Dewhurst is  
not about to let us kill the one  
bill he needs most...and on  
procedure, for Chrissake.

WENDY

It's not about letting us, Kirk.  
We've got the right to filibuster.

KIRK

His members'll find a way, they  
won't stand for it--

WENDY

SO? They don't decide what WE stand  
for! They can outvote us, yes.

(MORE)

WENDY (CONT'D)

But they can't outsmart us, and  
they sure as hell can't outwork us!

Wendy's colleagues just look at each other.

RODNEY

How long are we talking about here?

JUDITH

Depends what time he calls it up.  
He's also got the highway bill--

SONYA

So it could be about 3 or 4 in the  
afternoon, if we're lucky.

JOHN

Leaves us...8 or 9 hours. Christ.

WENDY

It's doable.

LETICIA

That's a hell of a long time,  
Davis.

JOHN

Can't be done. Not under our rules.

KIRK

No stopping--

WENDY

I know that--

KIRK

No sitting, no eating--

WENDY

I know--

KIRK

No taking a piss--

WENDY

I KNOW THE DAMN RULES!

KIRK

THEN LOOK AROUND YOU! D'you see any  
TRIATHLETES here? Any god-damn  
OLYMPIANS?

Wendy looks at her colleagues, one by one. Kirk's right:  
They're not out of "Coccoon," but they're not far from it.

KIRK (CONT'D)  
 9 hours, Wendy! Who the hell here's  
 got even a CHANCE of pulling that  
 off?

Wendy locks eyes with Sonya. Instantly, we know: It is ON.

INT. WENDY'S OFFICE, RECEPTION AREA -- DAY

Wendy BARRELS into reception, nearly knocking over Javier.

WENDY  
 (to LUCY)  
 Get me the Lieutenant Governor!

JAVIER  
 I'm sorr--

SONYA  
 (on WENDY's heels)  
 WAIT--you're going to tell him?

WENDY  
NOW, Lucy.  
 (to SONYA)  
 It's how it's done.

LUCY  
 Right away.

SONYA  
 Forget protocol! Wendy--

INT. WENDY'S OFFICE, STAFF AREA -- DAY -- CONTINUOUS

At the commotion, AJ and Ben jump up from their seats.

AJ  
 What's going--

WENDY  
 Get me every word of testimony from  
every woman who stood in line for  
 that hearing, you understand me?  
 Every single one.

SONYA  
 (to AJ and BEN)  
 Filibuster.

AJ  
 Wha--WHO?

WENDY  
 Plus ANY woman who wants to speak  
 out on this--

SONYA  
Who do you think?

WENDY  
--whether or not they were there.

BEN  
No shit!

WENDY  
And all the letters from all the medical groups, along with all the legislative language, every page: The Senate bill, the House bill, committee amendments. I need to be able to cite them, from memory--

AJ  
That's...thousands of pages.

WENDY  
Just--

She freezes--suddenly hit with the enormity of what she's about to attempt--then forces herself to snap back.

WENDY (CONT'D)  
LUCY! WHERE'S DEWHURST?

SONYA  
(to AJ)  
She's giving him a heads-up.

AJ  
You're kidding.

WENDY  
We're sticking to the rules, you understand? 'Cuz when I get on that floor, the rules are all I've got.

SONYA  
He's not gonna like it.

WENDY  
I didn't come here to be liked.

BEN  
(cracking a smile)  
And it's working.

INT. DEWHURST'S PRIVATE OFFICE -- DAY

Dewhurst stands before his TV, tuned to the news.

LAURA (ON SCREEN)  
*In the session's closing days--*

We hear a knock on his door.

LAURA (ON SCREEN) (CONT'D)  
 --Republicans are poised to add far  
 reaching restrictions on abortion  
 rights to their list of victories.

Another knock.

DEWHURST  
 Yes?

RECEPTIONIST  
 (pops her head in)  
 A call for you. Senator Davis.

DEWHURST  
 (beat; surprised)  
 Davis? Did she say what she wants?

RECEPTIONIST  
 No, sir.

DEWHURST  
 Alright. Put her through.

LAURA (ON SCREEN)  
 --a potential firewall for  
 Lieutenant Governor Dewhurst,  
 facing what's expected to be a  
 tough primary challenge.

An annoyed Dewhurst hits speaker, puts on his happy face.

DEWHURST  
 Well, if it isn't the Yellow Rose  
 of Texas!

INT. WENDY'S OFFICE, PRIVATE OFFICE -- DAY

Wendy paces behind her desk. Sonya, AJ and Ben look on.

WENDY  
 You flatter me, Mr. President.

VOICE OF DEWHURST  
 Always. To what do I owe this  
 pleasure?

Wendy looks at Sonya, pauses. Taking a deep breath:

WENDY  
 Mr. President, I'm calling...as a  
 courtesy.

VOICE OF DEWHURST  
 (beat)  
 Oh?

WENDY

On the last day of session, when we take up the clinics bill, I intend to speak...

VOICE OF DEWHURST

*I'm sure you do.*

Wendy grips the desk, tight. She leans closer to the phone.

WENDY

No, I...intend to speak for an extended period of time.

Dead silence.

WENDY (CONT'D)

Mr. President?

Still nothing. Wendy looks at Sonya: What now?

SONYA

(whispers)

Do you think he heard--

VOICE OF DEWHURST

*I've been in this business a long time, Senator. And here's what I've learned. Number one: Fight for what you believe in.*

WENDY

That's what I'm--

VOICE OF DEWHURST

*Number TWO: Know when to call it a day.*

WENDY

(pause)

Well, I'm not there yet.

INT. DEWHURST'S PRIVATE OFFICE -- DAY

DEWHURST

(picks up phone)

Listen, we both know I've got the votes on this. Let's save each other a lot of frustration, call it a day, and go home to our families. I'm sure your daughters would be delighted to have you home.

VOICE OF WENDY

*Yes. But they'd understand why I can't be.*

DEWHURST  
Now that sounds like something  
you've told yourself many times.

INT. WENDY'S OFFICE, PRIVATE OFFICE -- DAY

For what feels like a long time, Wendy says nothing.

WENDY  
See you on the floor, Mr. President.

CUT TO:

INT. DEWHURST'S PRIVATE OFFICE -- DAY -- CONTINUOUS

Dewhurst slams down the phone, charges towards his office door, swings it open. At her seat, the Receptionist jumps.

DEWHURST  
GET TED IN HERE! NOW!

INT. WENDY'S OFFICE, PRIVATE OFFICE -- DAY -- CONTINUOUS

SONYA  
That was...a shitty thing to say.

WENDY  
You almost get used to it.

INT. DEWHURST'S PRIVATE OFFICE -- DAY

Dewhurst paces the length of his office as Ted looks on.

TED  
She's just showboating.

DEWHURST  
Well I don't need it! Especially on  
the last day!

TED  
Boss, look at her. She'll fold in a  
couple of hours.

DEWHURST  
What if she doesn't? What if she  
tries to hang on?

TED  
Till midnight? Come on. She's  
annoying, but she's not crazy.  
Plus, woman's gotta pee. Ever meet  
one who didn't?

DEWHURST  
(beat)  
That...goddamn House! Why couldn't  
they leave well enough alone?



TED

This is good for us. Press loves a filibuster, even a lame one. And when she buckles, you're the guy voters see banging down the gavel, bringing it home. Trust me: Wendy Davis is doing you a favor.

By Dewhurst's look, we can tell he's not so sure.

INT. WILL'S KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Wendy, in a ratty old Tarrant County Community College t-shirt, hovers over reams of highlighted papers, notes, legal pads, volumes of the U.S. Code. The clock reads 12:04 a.m.

SUPERIMPOSE: "Night before the filibuster"

Quietly, Will comes into the doorway, leans against it.

WILL

Coming to bed?

WENDY

(doesn't look up)

Not yet.

WILL

You need your rest, Wendy, especially tonight.

WENDY

I've got too much to read--

(flinches)

Damn it!

WILL

Your back?

Wendy stands, leans over at the waist, stretches.

WENDY

It's fine.

WILL

It's not fine, it hasn't been fine in years--

WENDY

I can't worry about that right now.

WILL

How does this end, huh? With you collapsing, lying there, martyred for the cause of abortion rights?

WENDY

So what if it does?

WILL  
You'll lose your seat, that's what!

WENDY  
(beat; unconvincing)  
You don't know that.

WILL  
We both know that! You're barely  
hangin' on, in a Republican  
district--

WENDY  
That's twice elected me--

WILL  
By a hair! Working your ass off for  
every damn vote!

WENDY  
No-one knows that better than me--

WILL  
Then why are you throwing it all  
away? You fall on this sword, you  
won't just bounce back--

WENDY  
They know where I stand--

WILL  
Not like this, they don't. It's  
going to get ugly, Wendy. It's  
going to get very--

WENDY  
YOU THINK I DON'T KNOW THAT?

She pauses. For a moment, she's somewhere else...

WENDY (CONT'D)  
My very first speech on the Senate  
floor, some good ole boy Senator  
calls out, "Speak up, I can't hear  
you!" So I do. "Louder!" he yells.  
I speak louder. "Still can't hear  
you!" he chuckles. "I have trouble  
with women's voices."

(beat)  
The men who run Texas aren't going  
to listen to me because I ask.  
They're going to listen to me  
because I make them.

And with that, Will gets it.

WILL  
Then say that.

He walks over to the island, picks up Wendy's phone, hands it to her. They lock eyes. Then, Wendy starts typing...

WENDY

"The leadership may not want to listen to TX women, but they will have to listen to me."

INT. WILL'S BEDROOM/BATHROOM -- NIGHT -- CONTINUOUS

Will's bedside clock reads 2:47 a.m. He's fast asleep. Quietly, Wendy enters, heads into the bathroom. She opens the shower door, turns on the shower--powerful, scalding, just like she likes it. As the steam consumes her, she gets in.

Wendy stands under the shower--she doesn't scrub, she doesn't wash her hair. She just lets the piping hot water roll over her. Against the glass door, the water's steady patter is a drumbeat: Percussive, rhythmic, musical. It transports her...

FLASHBACK SEQUENCE: INT. STAGE WEST DINNER THEATER -- NIGHT

From a shaky sound system, we HEAR the drumbeat of a marching band: Some kind of overture. We SEE a tiny, rag tag stage, its spotlights just hanging on. A hand-made sign proclaims Stage West Dinner Theater's production of "The Music Man."

In front of the stage: A series of rickety four-tops, where a few dozen CUSTOMERS munch on very average-looking sandwiches.

SUPERIMPOSE: 1983

Balancing two full plates on each arm, Wendy moves a mile a minute (yup, this is where she got it.) She drops them off--

WENDY

Ketchup comin' up--

--and heads towards her next table: A man, JEFF, late 30s. In an oxford and khakis, he's the best-dressed guy in the place.

WENDY (CONT'D)

Welcome to Stage West, may I take your order?

JEFF

What's good tonight?

WENDY

Harold Hill. Steals the show. But I'm biased; he's my dad.

JEFF

Ah. I meant the food.

WENDY

Oh, that. It's all terrible.

JEFF  
(laughs)  
Honesty. I like that.

WENDY  
The house special.

Jeff looks at her for a moment, then extends his hand.

JEFF  
I'm Jeff. Jeff Davis.

Wendy dries her hand on her apron, shakes his hand.

WENDY  
Wendy. Wendy Russell.

JEFF  
Strong handshake.

WENDY  
Sorry.

JEFF  
I'm paying you a compliment.

Wendy, flustered and trying to hide it, picks up her pad.

WENDY  
So. What would you like?

JEFF  
I'd like to buy you dinner,  
actually.

She puts down her pad and takes a good, long look at him.

WENDY  
Here? Definitely not.

INT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT -- NIGHT

We've traded up: A place with tablecloths and real napkins! Wendy, stiff in her one 'fancy' dress; Jeff, at ease in his smart blazer and crisp dress shirt. Wendy looks down at her place setting: Three forks?

JEFF  
(kindly)  
Just work your way in from the  
outside.

Embarrassed but trying not to show it, Wendy picks up a fork.

JEFF (CONT'D)  
How do you feel about Chianti?

A blank look from Wendy. She stuffs some salad in her mouth.

JEFF (CONT'D)  
(to a passing WAITER)  
Could we get a bottle of the  
Chianti?

WAITER  
Of course, Councilman.

WENDY  
(mouth half-full)  
Councilman?

JEFF  
Former, actually. The voters saw  
fit to retire me.

WENDY  
Oh. Sorry.

JEFF  
You don't follow politics, I take  
it.

WENDY  
Nope.

JEFF  
And you--working with your dad?  
Must be nice.

WENDY  
Yeah. Now it is.

JEFF  
Now?

WENDY  
He, umm...wasn't always in my life.  
Left when I was a baby.

JEFF  
I'm sorry.

WENDY  
Came back a few years later. Then  
he left again.

JEFF  
That must've been...very difficult  
for you.

WENDY  
(shrugs)  
Not once I stopped relying on him.  
You don't rely on people, they  
can't disappoint you.

JEFF  
Wow, that sounds...

WENDY  
What?

JEFF  
Lonely.

Wendy looks down, doesn't answer. She takes another forkful.

JEFF (CONT'D)  
So Wendy Russell relies on herself.  
For what, exactly?

WENDY  
For gettin' by. What else is there?

JEFF  
There's love, there's dreams--

WENDY  
(laughs, with an edge)  
"Dreams"?

JEFF  
What's so funny about that?

Wendy puts down her fork. She is--suddenly--dead serious.

WENDY  
My mama had a 9th grade education.  
She watched me give birth when I was  
19 years old. My daughter and I live  
in a trailer. My phone's cut off,  
'cuz I can't pay the bill. I'm  
killing myself working two jobs, six  
days a week, plus paralegal classes.  
Oh, and I'm scrounging up quarters to  
pay a sitter so I can sit here with a  
stranger and pretend like I've got  
some kind of a life. So yeah, this  
may come as news to a politician like  
yourself, but people like me don't  
have time for "dreams." OUR dream is  
to just get by.

Jeff takes a good long look at her.

JEFF  
I don't believe you.

WENDY  
Well, I don't GIVE A SHIT if you  
believe me.

She pushes her chair back, stands, rummages inside her purse.

JEFF  
Wendy, sit down.

WENDY  
Don't tell me what to do.

JEFF  
All I'm saying is--

She tosses two dollar bills on the table.

WENDY  
That's all the cash I got--

JEFF  
--you're not killing yourself--

WENDY  
--I'll pay you back.

JEFF  
--so you can just "get by."

WENDY  
Then why am I killing myself, huh?!

JEFF  
So you'll never, ever have to just  
get by again.

She stands there, boring into him. How does he know?

JEFF (CONT'D)  
Stay. Please.

She stands there, and stands there. Finally, she sits down.

JEFF (CONT'D)  
So, Wendy Russell. What do you  
really want from your life?

INT. WILL'S BEDROOM -- DAY

A piercing alarm: Wendy startles awake. She looks exhausted.  
No matter. She takes a deep breath, hauls herself out of bed.

INT. WILL'S KITCHEN -- DAY

Will stands at the stove moving eggs. Wendy enters, much more subdued than usual. She's inside her head. By her outfit--fashionable sheath dress, chunky pearl necklace--it could be any workday. Except today, instead of Laboutins: Black flats.

WILL  
D'you sleep?

WENDY

A little.  
(beat)  
Not really.

WILL

How 'bout some coffee?

WENDY

Can't.

WILL

Right. Sorry. 2 eggs, comin' up.

WENDY

Just one.

WILL

You'll get hungry--

WENDY

The alternative's worse.

WILL

Oh.

(beat)

Wait, how are you going to--

The BUZZ of a doorbell interrupts him.

WENDY

That's how.

INT. WILL'S FOYER -- DAY

A door opens to reveal a woman wearing the light blue scrubs of a medical resident. She is DR. LISA CHANG, 28, and she hoists a medical bag that seems preposterously large for her.

DR. CHANG

Ready?

INT. WILL'S BEDROOM -- DAY

Wendy lies on the bed, ramrod straight. Dr. Chang rummages inside her medical bag. In the doorway, a wary Will looks on.

DR. CHANG

In an ideal world, we'd do this  
under sterile conditions.

WENDY

Trust me. This is not an ideal  
world.

Dr. Chang pulls out a surprisingly large, clear bag made of soft plastic. She attaches it to a thick rubber hose, which she starts pulling out of her bag. It seems to go on forever.



WILL  
Wait--how long is--?

DR. CHANG  
6 feet.

WILL  
FEET?

DR. CHANG  
It's hospital grade. It's the only  
one I could find on short notice.

Wendy doesn't even look. She just stares up at the ceiling.

DR. CHANG (CONT'D)  
Left or right leg?

WENDY  
Surprise me.

DR. CHANG  
Lift up your right knee for me.  
(once WENDY does)  
Now, please pull up your skirt.

Embarrassed, Will looks away. Her breathing quickening, Wendy hikes up her skirt. Dr. Chang wipes down her thigh, carefully tapes down the bag. She begins to loop the thick hose around Wendy's leg, towards her pelvis. It loops around and around.

WILL  
You don't seriously expect her to--

WENDY  
Will.

Dr. Chang unwraps a catheter tube--again, uncomfortably large. Wendy steals a look...and wishes she hadn't.

DR. CHANG  
Please pull down your undergarment.

Wendy's face hardens. We can almost SEE her thinking about the men of the Texas Senate who have put her in this position (literally). The indignity is not lost on her.

DR. CHANG (CONT'D)  
Senator Davis?

We stay on Wendy's face as she yanks down her underwear.

DR. CHANG (CONT'D)  
I'm going to insert the catheter  
tube into your urethra. It's...  
It's going to hurt.

Wendy takes a deep breath.

DR. CHANG (CONT'D)  
And Senator, no matter what happens  
today...thank you.

We lock in on Wendy's face: Preparing to nod, or maybe even smile. But instead, she lets out a piercing, all-out SCREAM.

WENDY  
OH, SHIT!

INT. WILL'S FOYER -- DAY

Before a full-length mirror, Wendy looks pretty much as you'd expect a woman wearing 6 feet of rubber hose to look: Bulky, awkward, uncomfortable. The rubber hose peeks below her dress. She puts on a suit jacket, but it's too short to help.

WENDY  
We're going to need a bigger coat.

She flips through the closet...too short, small, tight...till she spots it: An extra long, white/sky blue Escada day coat. Carefully, she puts it on, checks herself out in the mirror.

WILL  
You've never looked better.

WENDY  
God, I hope you're wrong.

WILL  
(beat)  
You sure you don't want me there?

WENDY  
It's ok...I don't need you there.

WILL  
I know you don't need me there--I  
just want to support you. Maybe  
you've heard of this concept,  
accepting support?

But Wendy doesn't take the bait. She gives him a quick peck--

WENDY  
Don't wait up. I plan to be VERY  
late.

--and turns to go. And though he shakes his head, Will can't help but smile as he watches her go.

INT. WILL'S APARTMENT BUILDING -- LOBBY -- DAY

The elevator opens to reveal Wendy. She steps out, but gingerly (wouldn't you?) She STOPS, looks down at her flats.

CUT TO:

The elevator opens--again. It's Wendy--again. But this time, BLAZING on her feet: Her running shoes, hot pink and green. Now, she strides purposefully across the lobby. She's READY.

DOORMAN  
(holding open the door)  
It's a hot one, Wen--

WENDY  
Senator. Today, it's Senator.

INT. DEWHURST'S PRIVATE OFFICE -- DAY

Ted and KATRINA DAVIS, the Parliamentarian, stand in front of Dewhurst, sitting at his desk. Katrina holds tight to her "Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedure"--all 677 pages of it. This is a woman who does things by the book. Literally.

SUPERIMPOSE: June 25, 2013  
SUPERIMPOSE: Last day of session

DEWHURST  
Brought your Bible, I see. You must feel like a kid at Christmas.

KATRINA  
No one relishes a filibuster, Mr. President.

SUPERIMPOSE: Katrina Davis, Senate Parliamentarian (no relation to Wendy)

DEWHURST  
Tell me about it.  
(beat)  
So, what are we looking at?

INT. WENDY'S PRIVATE OFFICE -- DAY

A parallel meeting: Wendy, Sonya and AJ. This time, it's Sonya who lugs "Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedure."

SONYA  
By law, the session must end at midnight. If the bill isn't passed by midnight, it's dead.

[With increasing speed, we INTERCUT between the briefings.]

KATRINA  
The rules of the Senate were written specifically to prevent any Member from tying up the chamber.

INTERCUT WITH:

SONYA  
You must stay standing at all times, no matter what.  
(MORE)

SONYA (CONT'D)

If you sit down even for a moment,  
you forfeit the floor.

INTERCUT WITH:

KATRINA

A Senator is not allowed any breaks  
of any kind, for any reason. He  
cannot lean on anything for  
support, not even his desk--

TED

Or her desk.

INTERCUT WITH:

SONYA

From the second you open your  
mouth, you're on your own.

AJ

No other Senator can "assist" you.

INTERCUT WITH:

KATRINA

The Chair determines what  
constitutes "assistance."

TED

That's you.

KATRINA

In consultation with the  
Parliamentarian, of course.

TED

(beat)

Sure. Point is, it's our call.

INTERCUT WITH:

SONYA

You can, however, take questions.

AJ

And you'll want to, to give your  
voice even a moment of rest.

INTERCUT WITH:

TED

I've told our guys: No questions.  
Nothing that gives her a breather.

INTERCUT WITH:

SONYA

You've got to stay on topic:  
"Germaneness." This isn't DC, so no  
reading the phone book.

AJ  
Or "Green Eggs and Ham," like Ted  
Cruz did.

INTERCUT WITH:

KATRINA  
Now, historically, the Senator who  
filibusters is given a fairly wide  
berth on what's considered germane--

TED  
Not this time.

INTERCUT WITH:

SONYA  
If the Chair believes you're  
breaking any rule, he'll issue you  
a warning. Basically, a strike.

INTERCUT WITH:

KATRINA  
A Senator is allowed--

INTERCUT WITH:

SONYA  
--only two strikes. Three--

INTERCUT WITH:

TED  
--strikes, and she's out.

INTERCUT WITH:

SONYA  
(beat; grimaces)  
Problem is--

INTERCUT WITH:

TED  
(beat; smiles)  
You're the umpire.

We lock in on Dewhurst, taking that in--

CUT TO:

INT. WENDY'S PRIVATE OFFICE -- DAY

--and then on Wendy, taking it all in.

WENDY  
Well, then...let's play ball.

INT. STATE CAPITOL HALLWAY -- DAY

Wendy walks unusually slowly. Sonya carries a thick binder.

SONYA  
The highway bill's first. That'll  
eat up a good hour or two. Then--

Wendy flinches.

SONYA (CONT'D)  
You ok?

WENDY  
(unconvincing)  
Yeah. Fine.

SONYA  
Then Dewhurst'll call up House Bill  
2. Republicans will speak first, so  
that'll eat up another hour, maybe  
two if we're lucky--

Wendy flinches again, grabs her abdomen.

SONYA (CONT'D)  
Wendy, what's going on?

WENDY  
The catheter, it's...pressing  
against something.

SONYA  
I'll call Doctor Chang.

WENDY  
No, just keep going.

SONYA  
(concerned)  
Ok, umm, with a little luck, you  
won't be called till...around 3.

WENDY  
So I'm looking at...9 hours.

SONYA  
(downcast)  
I know. But even if you last half  
that long, you're still sending a--

WENDY  
(buckles over)  
CHRIST!

SONYA  
WENDY! I'm calling her.

Sonya grabs Wendy's phone, dials.

VOICE OF DR. CHANG  
Hello--

SONYA  
Wendy's catheter--

WENDY  
It's too big.

SONYA  
She needs a smaller one--

Just then, a call comes in. The ID: "Lieutenant Governor."

SONYA (CONT'D)  
Hold on--  
(to WENDY)  
It's--

WENDY  
(grabs the phone)  
Lieutenant--

INT. DEWHURST'S PRIVATE OFFICE -- DAY

DEWHURST  
My turn for a courtesy call,  
Senator. There've  
been...adjustments to the schedule.

INT. STATE CAPITOL HALLWAY -- DAY

WENDY  
(beat)  
Adjustments.

INT. DEWHURST'S PRIVATE OFFICE -- DAY

DEWHURST  
The House filed its bill three days  
ago, at exactly 11:11 a.m. I've  
rearranged our schedule today, and  
you'll be recognized to speak at--

INT. STATE CAPITOL HALLWAY -- DAY

WENDY  
Let me guess: 11:11 a.m.

VOICE OF DEWHURST  
*Exactly.*

WENDY  
(pauses, looks to SONYA)  
Thirteen. 13 hours.

INT. DEWHURST'S PRIVATE OFFICE -- DAY

DEWHURST  
Not too late to change your mind.

INT. SENATE HALLWAY -- DAY

Wendy looks up at a clock.

SUPERIMPOSE: 10:45 a.m.

WENDY  
(to SONYA)  
She's not gonna make it.

VOICE OF DEWHURST  
Senator?

Wendy hands Sonya the phone, makes a beeline for the ladies' room across the hall. A frantic Sonya hits "swap calls."

SONYA  
DR. CHANG! THAT CATHETER--STAT!

INT. DEWHURST'S RECEPTION AREA -- DAY

Ted huddles with ROY CRANE, 40, the GOP Party Chair. Talking among themselves are Conservative Leaders HENRIETTA LUCE, 45; REV. "BUCK" MANNING, 55; and CLAY-LLOYD CAPERTON, 50.

TED  
Thanks for bringing them in, Roy. I owe you one.

ROY  
Trust me, if he wins these guys over, he's got their members, too.

Wearing his best politician smile, Dewhurst bounces in.

DEWHURST  
If it isn't our esteemed Party Chair! Great to see ya, Roy!

ROY  
Lieutenant Governor, meet Reverend Buck Manning, Thousand Lights Megachurch--

DEWHURST  
Well, I'll be damned! (That's a joke.)

ROY  
Henrietta Luce, from Concerned Women of Texas--

HENRIETTA  
The true voice of Texas women.

DEWHURST  
I'm sure!

ROY  
And have you met Clay-Lloyd Caperton, Texas Tea Patriots?



CLAY-LLOYD  
We've howdied but we ain't shook.

DEWHURST  
(tightly)  
Pleasure, Clay!

CLAY-LLOYD  
Clay-Lloyd; hyphenated.

DEWHURST  
Even better!  
(gesturing)  
Y'all'll watch from my own private  
office. I insist!

As the group files into his office, Rev. Buck hangs back.

REV. BUCK  
I'll be honest. A lot of us weren't  
sure you had it in you.

DEWHURST  
"I can do all this through Him that  
gives me strength."

REV. BUCK  
(impressed)  
Phillippians 4:13.

Rev. Buck joins the others. As soon as he's out of earshot:

TED  
"Phillippians"?

DEWHURST  
This day can't end soon enough.

EXT./INT. TAXI CAB, DOWNTOWN AUSTIN -- DAY

Total gridlock: Red lights, cars honking. In the back, Dr.  
Chang checks her watch. From the CAB DRIVER's radio, we hear:

VOICE OF NEWSCASTER  
*Get ready, folks, it'll be hot as a  
two-dollar pistol out there! We're  
lookin' at a high of 101 degrees--*

SUPERIMPOSE: 10:54 a.m.

INT. LADIES ROOM -- DAY

We see Wendy's sneakers under a stall; she's fumbling  
with...something. A nervous Sonya stands by the sink.

SONYA  
You're going to hurt yourself!

WENDY

I won't make it with this thing  
inside me.

INT. SENATE HALLWAY -- DAY

Nodding, smiling to passers-by, a confident-looking Dewhurst walks briskly towards the Senate chamber, Ted at his side.

INT./EXT. TAXI CAB, DOWNTOWN AUSTIN -- DAY

The taxi hasn't budged. DRIVERS yell out their windows.

VOICE OF NEWSCASTER

*The Texas Senate today is expected  
to pass the nation's most  
restrictive law on abortion--*

Dr. Chang tosses the Cab Driver a bill, jumps out. Lugging her oversized medical bag, she dodges around stopped cars.

INT. LADIES ROOM -- DAY

Sonya paces. Inside the stall, Wendy--now sweating, teeth gritted--steadies herself, takes a deep breath...and YANKS.

WENDY

AGHHH!!

SONYA

WENDY! STOP!

The stall door swings open. Wendy, hanging on to the door:

WENDY

Holy shit. I can't do it.

INT. SENATE HALLWAY -- DAY

Dewhurst and Ted reach the doors to the chamber. OFFICER #1 goes to open them, but Ted motions for him to wait. He takes a Texas flag pin off his lapel, pins it on Dewhurst's. Ready.

DEWHURST

Showtime.

EXT. DOWNTOWN AUSTIN -- DAY

Dr. Chang RACES. In the distance, we can see the Capitol.

INT. SENATE CHAMBER -- DAY

(Note: Here, we stay tight on our speakers. We do not yet see the chamber itself, or have perspective on the room.)

SUPERIMPOSE: 11 a.m.

DEWHURST  
 (bangs down gavel)  
 Members, the Senate will come to  
 order. Is there a Senator who would  
 like to lead us in the pledge of  
 allegiance?

On the floor, Dan Patrick stands (again, we stay tight).

DAN PATRICK  
 I will, Mr. President.

SUPERIMPOSE: Senator Dan Patrick (Republican)

DEWHURST  
 (coolly)  
 Senator Patrick is recognized.

EXT. LADIES ROOM -- DAY

SONYA  
 (into phone)  
 First floor ladies room! HURRY!

INT./EXT. STATE CAPITOL, FRONT ENTRANCE -- DAY

Dr. Chang, drenched in sweat, rushes in to find: A LONG-ASS  
 line at security. And we know: This is going to take a while.

INT. SENATE CHAMBER -- DAY

DAN PATRICK  
 (with dramatic flair)  
 I pledge allegiance to the flag of  
 the United States of America--

[We INTERCUT, quickly, between inside the chamber and out...]

INT. VISITOR ENTRANCE, STATE CAPITOL -- DAY

DR. CHANG  
 I'm here for Senator Davis--

FEMALE OFFICER  
 You need to get in line.

INTERCUT WITH:

DAN PATRICK  
 And to the Republic, for which it  
 stands--

INTERCUT WITH:

DR. CHANG  
 It's an emergency--

FEMALE OFFICER  
 Ma'am, I told you--

DR. CHANG  
I'm delivering her--

FEMALE OFFICER  
(alarmed)  
Delivering?

DR. CHANG  
(beat; picking up on the  
misunderstanding)  
Yes! YES!

INTERCUT WITH:

DAN PATRICK  
--one nation, under God,  
indivisible--

INT. SENATE HALLWAY -- DAY

Dr. Chang, Female Officer and MALE OFFICER race down hall.

FEMALE OFFICER  
(into walkie talkie)  
I've got a 10-52. Repeat: 10-52.  
Senator Davis is giving BIRTH.

MALE OFFICER  
Did you even know she was pregnant?

INTERCUT WITH:

DAN PATRICK  
--with liberty and justice--

INT. LADIES ROOM -- DAY

FEMALE OFFICER  
(pushing open the door)  
Ladies room, here!

INTERCUT WITH:

DAN PATRICK  
--for all.

INTERCUT WITH:

Dr. Chang and the Officers burst in to find Wendy: Nearly  
buckled over, and Sonya, holding her up, white as a ghost.

WENDY  
GET THIS DAMN THING OUT OF ME!

FEMALE OFFICER  
(aside, to MALE OFFICER)  
I was the same way with mine.

INT. SENATE CHAMBER -- DAY

Again, we are tight on: Dewhurst, looking up at the clock.

SUPERIMPOSE: 11:10 a.m.

DEWHURST  
Where is she?

TED  
If she's not here, go right to the  
vote.

On the floor, Kirk and Rodney anxiously watch the clock.

KIRK  
What the hell?

The second hits 40, then 50...

RODNEY  
Stall.

Ted nods to Dewhurst: Go.

SUPERIMPOSE: 11:11 a.m.

DEWHURST  
The Senate recognizes--

KIRK  
(stands)  
Parliamentary inquiry, Mr.  
President.

DEWHURST  
(flatly)  
State your inquiry, Senator Watson.

KIRK  
Uh, before we get started today, I  
wanted to ask about, umm...

RODNEY  
(to KIRK)  
Decorum.

KIRK  
The rules of decorum, yes. Because  
this is one of those days that it  
could be a long day--

Rodney pulls out his phone, texts Wendy: "GET IN HERE!!"

KIRK (CONT'D)  
--and I wanted to make sure that it  
was communicated--  
(looking up at the clock)  
--that we ought to, umm, you know,  
maintain decorum.

DEWHURST

And I appreciate that, Senator  
Watson. I agree.

Ted gestures to Dewhurst: Move it along.

DEWHURST (CONT'D)

The Senate recognizes Senator Hegar  
for a motion to concur in the House  
amendments to Senate Bill 5, known  
as House Bill 2.

KIRK

(under his breath)

Shit.

SUPERIMPOSE: Senator Glenn Hegar (Republican)

SUPERIMPOSE: The Senate bill's sponsor

GLENN HEGAR

Thank you, Mr. President. House  
Bill 2 amends--

A sudden, powerful SLAM. All eyes turn to the chamber doors,  
SWUNG wide open. It's Wendy, thick, white binder in hand.

And that's when we finally see it, through Wendy's eyes: The  
grandeur, the enormity, the POWER of the Texas Senate.

She surveys the vast, two-story chamber, its 30-foot windows  
shining down a bright morning light. She sees 30 Senators--25  
men and 5 women, each at their desk. A wide aisle separates  
the 19 Republicans from 11 Democrats. (Wendy makes 12.)

She notices a smattering of STAFF and PRESS around the  
floor's periphery, then looks up at the mezzanine: The U-  
shaped Visitors Gallery, with seats for hundreds. It's empty.

Finally, she looks to the dais: The Secretary and two CLERKS  
sitting on the first level. A level above, Katrina Davis,  
shadowing the man who literally stands atop it all: Dewhurst.  
Wendy and Dewhurst lock eyes.

GLENN HEGAR (CONT'D)

As I was saying, House Bill 2--

Slowly, Wendy walks towards her desk (Hegar is just  
background noise). Dewhurst doesn't take his eyes off her.  
She reaches her desk, right between Rodney and Kirk's--

RODNEY

(smiles)

Nice sneakers.

--and puts down her binder.

KIRK

What in hell were you doing?

WENDY

Downsizing.

Kirk raises an eyebrow, but Wendy's look says, 'Don't ask.' She turns to Rodney, Judith and John, who try to offer smiles of support. Instead, their smiles come off like grimaces.

WENDY (CONT'D)

Where's Leticia?

RODNEY

She's...out.

WENDY

Very funny. Where is she?

(sees KIRK and RODNEY  
exchange a look)

Kirk, what's going on?

KIRK

Her father was killed last night. A car accident. She's...burying him.

Wendy can only stand there, in shock. Rodney looks at Kirk as if to say, 'Why on earth would you tell her that right now?'

GLENN HEGAR

The House amendments to the bill--

DEWHURST

(interrupting)

Senator Davis, you informed me that it is your intention to filibuster this bill.

Wendy just stands there...frozen...and we are again inside her head: We FEEL her pulse racing, HEAR her breathing quickening. Then, a distance voice, like an echo.

DEWHURST (CONT'D)

Is that still your intention?

(pause)

Senator Davis?

All eyes are on Wendy, still frozen.

KIRK

Wendy!

She snaps to, picks up her cordless microphone--from here on out, she is not allowed to put it down--and switches it on.

WENDY

Yes, Mr. President. I intend to speak for an extended period of time.

Dewhurst locks eyes with Ted, standing just off to the side. Ted nods, and Dewhurst turns to a Clerk.

DEWHURST

Please remove Senator Davis' chair.

The Clerk gets up from his seat and slowly walks towards Wendy. In the chamber, dead silence. As he reaches her--

CLERK

(under his breath)

I'm sorry.

WENDY

That's alright.

Wendy steps back from her desk, and the Clerk takes her chair. From this moment on, Wendy must stand on her own.

DEWHURST

You are recognized.

Wendy looks at Dewhurst, then above him: At the Senate clock.

SUPERIMPOSE: 11:18 a.m.

SUPERIMPOSE: 12 hours, 42 minutes to midnight

She takes a deep breath, opens her mouth to speak--

SMASH CUT:

FLASHBACK: INT. COURTROOM -- DAY

A very different type of chamber: The drab, fluorescent-lit Middlesex County Family Court. From a slightly-raised dais, a JUDGE, looks down on Wendy. (Again, literally).

JUDGE

Tick, tock, counselor.

SUPERIMPOSE: Cambridge, Massachusetts

SUPERIMPOSE: 1992

Wendy--her hair still unruly, her borrowed suit ill-fitting--stands up noisily from the lawyers' table. With her hands slightly shaking, she drops a stack of note cards.

WENDY

Shit.

Her client, ENRIQUE DIAZ, 35, looks up at her. He's worried.

JUDGE

Any day now, Miss...?

WENDY

Davis, your honor. Wendy Davis, Harvard Legal Aid Clinic--



JUDGE

Student lawyer. Let me guess: First time in a courtroom.

Wendy sees the plaintiffs' ATTORNEY, give his clients, MR. and MRS. MCGRATH, a knowing smile.

JUDGE (CONT'D)

Well?

WENDY

(clears throat; then,  
dramatically)

Your honor, and may it please the court--

JUDGE

(rolls eyes)

Take it down a notch, Counselor.

This isn't the Supreme Court.

Though I'm sure you'll get there.

He and the Plaintiffs' Attorney share a look and a chuckle.

WENDY

(beat; frazzled)

I'm sorry, your honor, umm, my client here, uh, Mr. Diaz, he--

JUDGE

I've read the file, Miss Davis. I fail to see how your client has any standing here. If Mr. and Mrs. McGrath want to give their late son a proper Catholic burial, I see no reason not to grant them possession of his remains.

WENDY

But...he'd left the church.

Renounced it.

Mrs. McGrath shifts in her seat.

WENDY (CONT'D)

He wanted to be cremated.

JUDGE

We don't always get what we want, counselor. Ask the Red Sox.

From the courtroom, more chuckles. But this time, instead of frazzling Wendy, the room's reaction focuses her.

WENDY

Before his death, Timothy McGrath instructed my client, his life partner of 14 years--

ATTORNEY

(stands)

Objection. The nature of Mr. Diaz's relationship to the deceased is speculation, your honor.

WENDY

(beat; to ATTORNEY)

Are you kidding me?

JUDGE

Address your comments to the bench, Counselor. Or haven't they taught you that yet?

And with that, something in Wendy snaps. She becomes...Wendy.

WENDY

They were LOVERS. Your honor.

Mrs. McGrath flinches, and Wendy immediately registers it. In fact, we can almost see the wheels of Wendy's mind turning.

ATTORNEY

It makes no difference what Mr. Diaz claims he--

WENDY

Homosexual lovers. You can say it.

Wendy looks at Mrs. McGrath, now shifting in her seat.

WENDY (CONT'D)

(to COURT STENOGRAPHER)

Write that down.

ATTORNEY

Your honor--

JUDGE

(to WENDY)

I give the orders in my courtroom.

ATTORNEY

--counsel is coloring the issue--

WENDY

Coloring it? It IS the issue! The plaintiffs hadn't spoken to their son in years! They'd rejected him--

ATTORNEY

Objection!

WENDY

--because he was in love with this man--

ATTORNEY

Your honor!

WENDY

Timothy McGrath was a man who had sex with men--

JUDGE

What are you doing?

WENDY

--who died of AIDS, a sexually transmitted--

MRS. MCGRATH

(jumps out of her seat)

Stop!

JUDGE

(banging down gavel)

What in HOLY HELL are you trying to do to these people?

WENDY

They can't have it both ways, your honor! Both erase who their son was AND take him from his partner! If they proceed, the court record WILL reflect--

MRS. MCGRATH

ENOUGH!

WENDY

--that their son was a HOMOSEXUAL--

ATTORNEY

For God's sake!

MRS. MCGRATH

NO MORE!

JUDGE

That's ENOUGH!

WENDY

And the WORLD will know--

JUDGE

I SAID, THAT'S ENOUGH!

ATTORNEY

We withdraw the petition, your honor! We withdraw.

SILENCE. The Judge, the McGraths, their Attorney, even Enrique--all in shock. Wendy is unbowed.

JUDGE

You've got a lot of nerve, you know that?

Wendy, breathless, just looks at him. She says nothing.

JUDGE (CONT'D)  
Don't you EVER step foot in my  
courtroom again.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE COURTROOM -- DAY

As Enrique thanks Wendy, she spots the McGraths exiting the courtroom. Too confidently, she walks right up to them.

WENDY  
I just wanted to say I'm sorry--

MR. MCGRATH  
"Sorry"?

WENDY  
(beat; surprised)  
For your son's passing.

MR. MCGRATH  
We don't want your pity--

MRS. MCGRATH  
Do you have children, Miss Davis?

WENDY  
(losing confidence)  
Umm, yes...two daughters. They're  
back in Texas...with my husband.

MRS. MCGRATH  
Lucky you. Well, I hope you never know  
what it's like to lose a child. And I  
hope no-one ever treats you the way  
you just treated me.

The McGraths walk away, and all Wendy can do is stand there.

INT. SENATE CHAMBER -- DAY

Wendy, on the Senate floor, right where we left her.

VOICE OF DEWHURST  
Senator Da--

WENDY  
(forcefully)  
I'm rising on the floor today to  
humbly give voice to thousands of  
Texans who have been ignored.

She pauses, looks right at Dewhurst.

WENDY (CONT'D)

These voices have been silenced by  
leaders who made personal political  
ambition the official business of  
this great state.

Dewhurst stiffens, locks eyes with Dan Patrick.

INT. PRESS ROOM -- DAY

Laura and colleagues watch Wendy on closed-circuit TV.

WENDY (ON SCREEN)

*You thought you could discount all  
the women who came here to speak  
for themselves. You were wrong.  
Today, you will hear their every  
word.*

CAMERA MAN

Man, I've got plans tonight.

REPORTER

No way she plans on standing up  
there all day. She's just making a  
point.

WENDY (ON SCREEN)

Every single word.

And though her colleagues are already discounting Wendy's  
resolve, Laura's expression tells us: She's not so sure.

LAURA

(almost to herself)  
I don't know about that.

INT. SENATE CHAMBER -- DAY

Wendy takes a step towards her desk, extends her hand--

RODNEY

(whispers)  
Watch the desk!

--and without touching her desk, she opens the binder.

WENDY

Starting with Elisa, in San  
Antonio:

(reading)

"When I was 17, I was raped on a  
date. I didn't know what had  
happened to me, much less what to  
do when I wound up pregnant."

INT. PRESS ROOM -- DAY

Her phone to her ear, Laura continues to watch Wendy on TV.

LAURA  
But what's her plan, Ben?

INT. WENDY'S OFFICE, STAFF AREA -- DAY

BEN  
(into phone)  
To keep talking. A long time.

VOICE OF LAURA  
13 hours?

BEN  
Actually--  
(looks at clock)  
Just 12 hours and 35 minutes to go!

INT. PRESS ROOM -- DAY

LAURA  
Fine. Off the record. This is a  
symbolic protest, right? She'll say  
her peace, then pack it in?

VOICE OF BEN  
*How long have you covered this  
place, Laura?*

LAURA  
Long enough to know this is crazy.

INT. WENDY'S OFFICE, STAFF AREA -- DAY

BEN  
And in all that time, have you ever  
known Wendy Davis to "pack it in"?

INT. PRESS ROOM -- DAY

Laura lets that sink in...then clicks on another line.

LAURA  
Phil, it's Laura. I'm gonna need  
more airtime tonight.

WENDY (ON SCREEN)  
(reading)  
*"You say that you have treated me  
with respect. Respect is not  
wandering in and out of the chamber  
when women tell the most intimate  
stories of their lives."*

LAURA  
Yeah. I'm sure.

INT. DEWHURST'S PRIVATE OFFICE -- DAY

WENDY (ON SCREEN)  
*"Respect is not shoving an  
ultrasound wand inside a woman's  
vagina for a painful, medically  
unnecessary, state-mandated rape."*

ROY  
Her district's gonna hate this.

TED  
I know. I called up some Fort Worth  
TV guys. Those nice suburban  
moms'll get a good look at their  
Senator tonight.

CLAY-LLOYD  
I know she's gotta starve, but do  
we?

TED  
Good point! Who wants some Chick-  
fil-A?

INT. WENDY'S OFFICE, STAFF AREA -- DAY

Sonya, AJ and Ben huddle around the closed-circuit TV.

BEN  
She's doing good, huh?

AJ  
She's doing well.

SONYA  
No. She's getting through the  
letters too quickly.

WENDY (ON SCREEN)  
*From Katherine Kennemer-Gennett...*

SONYA  
She's gonna run out.

SUPERIMPOSE: 1:49 p.m.  
SUPERIMPOSE: 2 hours, 31 minutes in  
SUPERIMPOSE: 11 hours, 11 minutes to midnight

INT. SENATE CHAMBER -- DAY

WENDY  
"I am a grown woman, a voter, a  
citizen and a U.S.  
(MORE)

WENDY (CONT'D)  
Constitutionally protected  
American. You are cordially not  
invited to treat me as though I am  
not."

RODNEY  
(to KIRK)  
Patrick looks like he just sat on a  
cactus.

At his seat, Dan Patrick adjusts himself.

INT. WENDY'S OFFICE, STAFF AREA -- DAY

SONYA  
What else can we get her? Studies?  
Case law? What?

AJ  
She's got all that. It's ok--she  
never planned to rely on the  
letters.

SONYA  
She also never planned on having to  
be up there 13 hours!

We can see on AJ's face: Sonya's right.

INT./EXT. DEWHURST'S PRIVATE OFFICE -- DAY

WENDY (ON SCREEN)  
*"We will not sit down while you  
attempt to strip us of our self-  
determination."*

Rev. Buck stands by the window, sees about two dozen women--  
all in orange t-shirts--climbing the steps to the Capitol.

REV. BUCK  
Gettin' ourselves a little crowd.

The others join him by the window.

CLAY-LLOYD  
What's with the orange? Longhorns  
fans?

ROY  
(a hint of concern)  
No. Solidarity.

TED  
Nothing to worry about.

HENRIETTA  
Ted's right. Plus, it's a very  
unflattering color on most women.



INT. WENDY'S OFFICE, STAFF AREA -- DAY

WENDY (ON SCREEN)  
From Patsy: "Please be my voice."

SONYA  
How many more?

AJ  
Not many.

Sonya looks up at the clock--concerned.

SUPERIMPOSE: 2:48 p.m.  
SUPERIMPOSE: 2 hours, 30 minutes in

SONYA  
Shit.

SUPERIMPOSE: 9 hours, 12 minutes to midnight

SONYA (CONT'D)  
Get on Wendy's Twitter account--  
send out a call for more stories!

BEN  
On it.

WENDY  
"Thank you for speaking for me and  
millions of other Texas women--"

BEN  
Holy... Guys, look at this--

He turns his screen; we see Wendy's tweet from last night.

BEN (CONT'D)  
3,000 retweets! And growing! And  
look, 5,000 followers--no, wait--  
6,000--some, no, SEVEN--

SONYA  
(dawning on her)  
Pull up the live-stream.

Quickly, Ben switches screens, pulls up the live-stream of  
Wendy on the floor. He points to a number labeled "Views."  
It's like the National Debt Clock: Exploding.

AJ  
Jesus, Mary, and--

BEN  
Wendy.

SONYA  
It's happening.

And like clockwork, every phone in the office starts ringing.

EXT. STATE CAPITOL -- DAY

Two news vans pull up to the Capitol, unload equipment. A group of women in orange--some 60 or so--climb the steps.

INT. SENATE CHAMBER -- DAY

As she speaks, Wendy walks around her desk in circles, staying in motion. We see her elongate her spine, up and down, and begin to rotate her neck from side to side.

WENDY

From Joyce: "Would men want women to make the major choices about their lives, their bodies for them? I don't think so."

With her free hand, Wendy subtly rubs her lower back. She sees Donna Campbell and Dan Patrick notice, exchange a look. Wendy thinks for a moment, looks at GOP SENATOR BOB DUEULL, M.D. (identified by chyron). She closes the binder.

DAN PATRICK

What's she doing?

WENDY

I'd like to pause from these letters for a moment and talk about the unified opposition to this bill from the medical community.

Bob Deuell shifts in his seat. Donna Campbell stiffens.

DONNA CAMPBELL

Baiting us. She wants a break.

WENDY

Supporters of this bill think they know better than Texas women, but do they also know better than Texas doctors?

(turns to BOB DUEULL)

Ask any doctor, seriously. Any reputable medical doctor, the men--

(turns to CAMPBELL)

--and women who really understand this issue, they will TELL you--

BOB DEUELL

(gets up)

Alright, enough.

DONNA CAMPBELL

Bob, SIT DOWN--

BOB DEUELL  
Mr. President, would Senator Davis  
answer some questions?

Wendy steals this chance to bend down fully at the waist,  
stretching her back. We see the relief on her face.

DEWHURST  
(sternly)  
Senator Davis has the floor,  
Senator Deuell.

BOB DEUELL  
Obviously. But since she's trying  
to speak for physicians, as a  
physician, I'd like to ask her some  
questions.

Dewhurst watches as Wendy, a slight smile on her face, shifts  
up and down on the balls of her feet, stretching her calves.

DEWHURST  
(covers mic; to KATRINA)  
Do I have to allow it?

KATRINA  
It's her choice.

DEWHURST  
(beat; flatly)  
Senator Davis, will you yield to  
Senator Deuell?

WENDY  
(brightly)  
I'm happy to answer your question,  
Senator Deuell...but in doing so, I  
will not yield the floor.  
(to DEWHURST)  
I do not give up the floor.  
(to DEUELL)  
Take your time, doc. I got all day.

And with that, she bends down for a nice, long stretch. And  
as she does, she looks over at Kirk and gives him a wink.

SUPERIMPOSE: 3:28 p.m.  
SUPERIMPOSE: 4 hours, 10 minutes in  
SUPERIMPOSE: 8:32 minutes to midnight

BOB DEUELL  
Now, you say this bill would shut  
down all but five clinics  
performing abortions in Texas--

WENDY

It's not just me saying it. The Lieutenant Governor tweeted it, remember?

BOB DEUELL

Well, even if that were true--

WENDY

It is true.

(to DEWHURST)

Isn't that right, Mr. President?

Chuckles from the gallery. Dewhurst looks up and sees women in orange entering, sitting. He turns to a nearby staffer.

DEWHURST

Tell Ted to get in here.

EXT. STATE CAPITOL -- DAY

With the backdrop of more women arriving, Laura reports.

LAURA

(to camera)

We're live from the Texas Capitol, where an improbable, long-shot quest by Wendy Davis, a little-known State Senator from Fort Worth, is making waves online...and inside this chamber.

INT. WILL'S STUDY -- DAY

At his desk, Will, working with the TV in the background, is jarred to attention. He turns up the volume.

LAURA (ON SCREEN)

*Having just crossed the 5-hour mark, Davis has already filibustered longer than any woman in American history. But she's got a long way to go--more than seven hours, in fact--to reach the only goal that matters: Midnight.*

INT. SENATE HALLWAY -- DAY

Ted weaves in and out the orange-clad women beginning to line the hallway. We can see that he's surprised by their numbers.

TED

Excuse me!

INT. WENDY'S OFFICE, STAFF AREA -- DAY

Phones ring off the hook--it's ALL HANDS on deck.

LUCY  
(into phone)  
Senator Davis' office--

JAVIER  
(into phone)  
Thank you for calling--

AJ  
(into phone)  
I know she appreciates your  
support, ma'am.

SONYA  
(into phone)  
I'll tell her as soon as I see her.  
(beat)  
When? Not for a while, I hope.

BEN  
(into phone)  
The only end game is  
midnight. Quote me on that.

LUCY  
Ben, I've got *The Times*!

BEN  
Gotta go.  
(calling, to LUCY)  
El Paso or Corpus Christi?

LUCY  
New York.

A sudden SILENCE as the entire staff takes that in.

WENDY (ON SCREEN)  
*And this from Carol, in Austin.*

INT. SENATE CHAMBER -- DAY

Wendy continues to circle her desk as she speaks. But now, her efforts to fight the physical strain are more obvious: A bend here, a stretch there. We can see the toll it's taking on her. She again rubs her lower back--this time, harder.

WENDY  
Carol writes: "No-one ever thinks  
they're going to be faced with a  
decision of terminating a much-  
wanted pregnancy, or..."

She stops moving. She stops talking.

INT. WENDY'S OFFICE, STAFF AREA -- DAY

BEN  
(to SONYA)  
You want to take *The Times*, or  
should I--

But Sonya is locked on Wendy--

SONYA

Shh!

WENDY (ON SCREEN)

(long pause)

*...or having to decide when to shut off...*

SONYA

(gravely; to AJ)

What's in this letter?

AJ

Hold on, I'm on the--

SONYA

WHAT'S IN THE GOD-DAMNED LETTER!

AJ

Umm, I don't remember, I...

WENDY (ON SCREEN)

*...when to shut off the life support to their beloved child.*

On screen, Wendy goes dead quiet.

SONYA

Had she SEEN it?

AJ

I don't know if she read all--

SONYA

Jesus Christ, AJ!

INT. SENATE CHAMBER -- DAY

Inside Wendy's head: We FEEL her chest compress; the wind has been knocked out of her. She tries to form words, but nothing comes out. She looks down at Carol's letter: It's gone fuzzy.

She looks up and sees Dewhurst--watching her, ready to shut her down. It feels like slow motion as she sees him approach the mic, lean into it, opens his mouth to--and SHE PUSHES ON.

WENDY

(reading)

"My spouse and I were faced with exactly that decision."

FLASHBACK SEQUENCE: INT. OB-GYN OFFICE -- DAY

A small, cheerful OB-GYN practice: Happy baby photos and wellness posters abound. The whole family's here: Wendy, and nearly six months pregnant; Jeff; Amber, 14; and Drew, 8. DOCTOR DAN RAINIER enters.

DR. RAINIER  
Whoa, it's a party!

WENDY  
They insisted on meeting their baby  
sister.

DR. RAINIER  
Insisted, huh?

JEFF  
One guess where they get that from.

DRU  
The baby has a name now!

DR. RAINIER  
Oh yeah?

WENDY  
Tate Elise.

DR. RAINIER  
Beautiful.

DRU  
Except Tate sounds like a boy.

AMBER  
Well, Elise doesn't, stupid.

JEFF  
Hey, hey.

DR. RAINIER  
Well, why don't we take a look at  
who you'll soon be fighting with.

Wendy lies back on the exam table. Dr. Rainier squeezes jelly  
on her belly and begins to operate an ultrasound probe.

DR. RAINIER (CONT'D)  
So, how's fancy law firm life?

WENDY  
A little...corporate. A lot of  
paper pushing.

DR. RAINIER  
Trust me, you'll welcome that after  
the baby.

WENDY  
Not sure I'll go back, actually. I  
I'm thinking about...something more  
meaningful.

DR. RAINIER  
(distracted)  
Uh uh.

JEFF  
She's thinking about running for  
City Council! So she can boss  
around the whole city!

Dr. Rainier says nothing, focuses intently on the monitor.

WENDY  
Dan?

DR. RAINIER  
Give me a second, ok?

He exits the room, and Wendy locks eyes with Jeff.

JEFF  
It's fine, baby.

DRU  
What's fine, daddy?

JEFF  
Everything, sweetheart.

DRU  
Does he not like the name?

AMBER  
Would you stop with the name!

Doctor Rainier returns with NURSE EMILY.

NURSE EMILY  
(to AMBER and DRU)  
Would you girls like a brownie?  
Made them myself this morning!

AMBER  
Actually, I don't like-

WENDY  
(sternly)  
Go with the nurse.

The girls do as they're told. As soon as the door shuts  
behind them, Wendy grabs Dr. Rainier by the arm.

WENDY (CONT'D)  
Tell me what's happening.

DR. RAINIER  
Please stay calm, Wendy.



WENDY

Don't tell me what to do, tell me--

Jeff comes over to her--

JEFF

Come on, sweetheart.

WENDY

TELL ME WHAT'S HAPPENING!

DR. RAINIER

(beat)

There's something wrong. There's something quite wrong.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY -- DAY

The world's bleakest, longest, most depressingly fluorescent-lit hallway. Holding hands, Wendy and Jeff walk its endless stretch. Not a smile or a word passes between them.

INT. HOSPITAL, DR. ROSE'S OFFICE -- DAY

In this office: No baby photos, no wellness posters. DR. LYDIA ROSE, sits across a desk from Wendy and Jeff.

DR. ROSE

It's called Dandy-Walker Syndrome. A rare, congenital malformation of the cerebellum. Cases vary in severity, some are--

WENDY

What about Tate's case? MY baby?

DR. ROSE

Hers is...very significant. The left and right sides of her brain have essentially...separated.

Maybe for the first time, Wendy can't bring herself to speak.

DR. ROSE (CONT'D)

It's very unlikely that she'd survive delivery. And if she did--

Wendy fights back tears.

DR. ROSE (CONT'D)

Mrs. Davis, I believe your daughter is in a permanent vegetative state.

WENDY

No. No. I FEEL her. I feel her kicking.

DR. ROSE  
Unfortunately, that's reflexive.  
It's not something she controls.

WENDY  
I FEEL HER!

DR. ROSE  
I'm very sorry.

Wendy just shakes her head--no, no. Jeff tries to embrace her, but as if battling the news itself, she fights him off.

PRESENT DAY: INT. SENATE CHAMBER -- EVENING

Wendy's voice is softer than we've ever heard it. She's struggling to get through this. Tears have begun to roll.

WENDY  
"Every night, I would talk to my  
baby. I would tell her that I loved  
her and that I was sorry that she  
was sick. And then I would tell her  
that it was ok to leave me."

One by one, we see the faces of Wendy's colleagues--Republican and Democrat alike. In the chamber, you can hear a pin drop.

WENDY (CONT'D)  
(breaking)  
"My husband and I faced a nightmare  
beyond any parent's imagining. Our  
daughter was going to die. And the  
agonizing question of how she would  
die...we had to decide."

FLASHBACK SEQUENCE: INT. HOSPITAL, OPERATING ROOM -- DAY

Stark, BLINDING whiteness. Wendy, an IV in her arm, lies on an operating table. She stares up...at nothing and no-one.

DR. ROSE  
(from WENDY'S POV)  
Ready?

Slowly, Wendy opens her mouth, as if to speak, but she can't.

DR. ROSE (CONT'D)  
You're going to feel a slight prick  
in your arm, and then I want you to  
count backwards from 100--

Wendy shuts her eyes. Tears stream down her face.

PRESENT DAY: INT. SENATE CHAMBER -- EVENING

WENDY

"I held her, kissed her, told her  
that I loved her...

(pause)

...and then I said goodbye."

FLASHBACK SEQUENCE: INT. HOSPITAL, WENDY'S ROOM -- DAY

We see but do not hear: Wendy, devoid of color, in a hospital bed. She holds a tiny baby, TATE, who wears a pink baptism dress and a knit pink hat over her enlarged head. Jeff sits on the bed, his arm around Wendy. Tate does not move.

As a MINISTER performs a blessing, Wendy and Jeff cry.

INT. HOSPITAL, WENDY'S ROOM -- DAY -- LATER

The Minister is gone. Tate's body has been taken away. It's now just Jeff and Wendy...very much alone.

JEFF

It's going to be ok.

WENDY

(almost to herself)

It'll never be ok.

PRESENT DAY: INT. SENATE CHAMBER -- EVENING

Her hands now shaking, her tears uncontained: This is a Wendy her colleagues have never seen.

WENDY

"You can't know the pain of this  
decision. Why would you make it  
even harder?"

She closes the binder and falls silent.

INT. WILL'S KITCHEN -- DAY

A stunned Will just stares at Wendy on TV. It's clear by the look on his face: He's never seen her like this, either.

INT. WENDY'S OFFICE, STAFF AREA -- EVENING

The staff huddle around the TV, trying to hold it together.

LUCY

This...happened to her?

(at SONYA's silence)

But...why not tell them that?

SONYA

Because she shouldn't have to.

INT. SENATE CHAMBER -- EVENING

Her binder now closed, Wendy stands there, silent. She is not here; she's in a memory. Senators exchange looks: Is this it?

RODNEY  
(quietly)  
It's ok to stop, Wendy.

She looks at him, almost vacantly--

RODNEY (CONT'D)  
It's ok.

--and it seems like she will stop. But then, something compels her to look up. And that's when she sees the Gallery: A SEA OF ORANGE. Hundreds of women--all counting on HER. She looks at them, one by one, just as she did that first night.

WENDY  
It'll never be ok.

From somewhere deep inside, the energy ROARS back into her.

WENDY (CONT'D)  
I've got a lot more to say, Mr.  
President. A lot.

We see Dewhurst's face--and that of every Republican--drop.

WENDY (CONT'D)  
Starting with--

EXT. STATE CAPITOL -- EVENING

The scene outside the Capitol is now bedlam. A slew of REPORTERS, news vans, a seemingly endless line of women.

LAURA  
(to camera)  
Good evening, Tim. Well, as you can see behind me, women are now flocking to the Capitol to cheer on a woman they'd never even heard of just a few hours ago: Wendy Davis.  
(turns, to WOMAN #8)  
How long have you been waiting?

WOMAN #8  
Hours. Doesn't matter. I'll be here as long as Wendy is.

LAURA  
(to a visibly pregnant WOMAN #9)  
And this can't exactly be comfortable for you...

WOMAN #9

It's not about comfort. She's doing this for me. For my daughter. And if she can stand up to those men in there all day long, I can come down here and stand up for her.

WOMAN #10

Stand with Wendy!

INT. SENATE CHAMBER -- EVENING

WENDY

You can imagine how a woman feels to be told that she cannot exercise her constitutional rights.

As she speaks, Wendy watches Dan Patrick and Donna Campbell cross the Senate floor to Ted.

WENDY (CONT'D)

Actually, you can't, because so many of you have never, ever had to face those circumstances, and you never will, because you don't have the equipment!

DAN PATRICK

(to TED)

You need to get him to end this.

TED

Look, I know it's annoying, but she's bound to run out of steam.

DONNA CAMPBELL

She's got a catheter in!

TED

WHAT?

WENDY

And I've got the equipment, and my daughters have it--

TED

(gravely)

How can you tell?

DAN PATRICK

She's a doctor, she can--

DONNA CAMPBELL

Her coat! It's 100 degrees out!

Ted looks at Wendy, then locks eyes with Dewhurst. FUCK.

LATER...

WENDY

--as I stand here, watching you attempt to legislate motherhood upon others, I think about my own mother. About what it was like for her to raise four kids, on her own, working nights and days at a convenience store.

As she speaks, Wendy keeps a close eye on a huddle that's formed: Dan Patrick, Donna Campbell, Ted and Dewhurst--

WENDY (CONT'D)

I think about my daughters, Amber and Dru, the greatest blessings of my life.

--the Republicans' backs, stiffening; their faces, darkening.

WENDY (CONT'D)

About how, God willing, one day, they'll become mothers, too...when they're ready, when they're able...not when anyone else tells them to. Not their mother, not their grandmother, and sure as hell, not the men of the Texas Senate.

DAN PATRICK

You've let her have her fun, now get her outta here.

DEWHURST

I didn't "let" her do anything--

DAN PATRICK

You're the presiding officer, for Chrissake!

DEWHURST

I know you fancy yourself some...revolutionary, but we have rules around here.

DAN PATRICK

Then use them!

DONNA CAMPBELL

Dan's right. Enough's enough.

As she continues to speak, Wendy catches Rodney's eye and nods towards the Republican huddle.

RODNEY

(mouths, to WENDY)

We see it.

(to KIRK)

They're not just shooting the shit.

KIRK

But they're gonna shoot something,  
alright.

LATER...

The huddle's grown bigger: Now with Katrina, Bob Deuell,  
Glenn Hegar, ROBERT NICHOLS, 70 and TOMMY WILLIAMS, 57.

TED

We'll take turns: 30 minutes each.  
Whoever's on, your eyes never leave  
her, not for a second. Understand?

ROBERT NICHOLS

What the hell are we looking for?

SUPERIMPOSE: Senator Robert Nichols (Republican)

TED

Anything. A lean on the desk, the  
smallest digression from topic, any  
infraction of the rules.

DAN PATRICK

The rules as we see them. Got that?

Dewhurst, his body language stiff, says nothing.

LATER...

SUPERIMPOSE: 5:34 p.m.

SUPERIMPOSE: 6 hours, 16 minutes in

WENDY

--so I know what you're thinking:  
So what if we're left with just  
five clinics in all of Texas,  
right? So what if a woman has to  
drive a bit, or a lot. Big deal,  
right?

(beat)

Tell that to a scared teenage girl.  
Tell that to a woman in poverty. To  
a single mom, living paycheck to  
paycheck. It's so easy for us to  
say--as we stand here in our nice  
clothing, in our relatively  
comfortable lives--'Why is that a  
big deal?' Take it from me: It's a  
BIG DEAL. It is a big deal and I  
have been there. That has been my  
life.

INT. DEWHURST'S PRIVATE OFFICE -- DAY

WENDY (ON SCREEN)

*I have been to the point when I  
literally could not put gasoline in  
my car.*

CLAY-LLOYD  
Spare us your sob story.

WENDY (ON SCREEN)  
*I know what it's like to feel  
hopeless.*

REV. BUCK  
(to CLAY-LLOYD)  
Have a little respect.

CLAY-LLOYD  
What, she's getting to you, now?

REV. BUCK  
It's not me I'm worried about.

INT. SENATE CHAMBER -- EVENING

WENDY  
I'll share with you a personal  
experience that I had.

SUPERIMPOSE: 6 hours, 26 minutes to midnight

DAN PATRICK  
(to ROBERT NICHOLS)  
You're up.

WENDY  
Starting when I was in my late  
teens, Planned Parenthood became my  
medical home.

DAN PATRICK  
(under his breath)  
Shocker.

ROBERT NICHOLS  
(to DAN PATRICK)  
Quiet!

WENDY  
I was a poor, uninsured woman,  
whose only care was provided  
through that facility. And I can  
tell you, if we were to defund  
Planned--

ROBERT NICHOLS  
(jumps up)  
Mr. President, is the budget  
germane to this bill?

Wendy leans closer, as if unsure she's heard him correctly.

ROBERT NICHOLS (CONT'D)  
Or is Senator Davis off-topic?



But she has. And so has Dewhurst.

DEWHURST  
(under his breath)  
You're kidding me.

As Democrats begin to stir, Ted bounds up to the dais.

TED  
We've got to start putting these on  
the board--

DEWHURST  
You seriously think she went off  
topic?

TED  
Doesn't matter what I think; it's  
what you think.

DEWHURST  
What are we doing here, Ted?

TED  
What needs to be done.  
(beat)  
I underestimated her. We're going  
to have to do this the hard way.

INT. WENDY'S OFFICE, STAFF AREA -- DAY

AJ  
He's not looking at her.

DEWHURST (ON SCREEN)  
(averts WENDY's gaze)  
*Senator, umm, I don't think...*

SONYA  
No, no, no, no, no!

INT. SENATE CHAMBER -- EVENING

DEWHURST  
I don't think that the contents and  
subject matter of the funding of  
Planned Parenthood is...is germane  
to this debate.

SUPERIMPOSE: Strike 1

Wendy's eyes widen: She's as surprised as anyone.

INT. CAPITOL ROTUNDA -- EVENING

SEEN spectacularly from above, a massive, snail-like orange coil: The three winding balconies of the massive Capitol Rotunda, absolutely TEEMING with orange-clad women, with yet MORE women on the ground below. News crews everywhere.

LAURA

(to camera)

More than seven hours into her record-breaking filibuster: A procedural strike on Senator Wendy Davis. Her offense: Mentioning Planned Parenthood in this debate on reproductive rights. And yes, you heard that right.

INT. SENATE CHAMBER -- DAY

We can SEE Wendy working to keep her temper under wraps.

WENDY

(steely)

Thank you, Mr. President.

And Kirk--who knows that temper all too well--sees it, too.

KIRK

Shit just got real.

INT. SENATE HALLWAY -- EVENING

THRONGS of energized, orange-clad women make their way to the gallery. Many hold homemade signs: "#StandWithWendy."

ARCHIVAL NEWS FOOTAGE

Clips of familiar faces--Anderson Cooper, Rachel Maddow, the works--make clear: In real time, Wendy is huge NATIONAL news.

INT. WILL'S KITCHEN -- EVENING

WENDY (ON SCREEN)

*Mr. President, umm...*

SUPERIMPOSE: 6:28 p.m.

SUPERIMPOSE: 7 hours, 30 minutes in

SUPERIMPOSE: 5 hours, 22 minutes to midnight

Will leans in closer to the TV. Something is not right.

WENDY (ON SCREEN) (CONT'D)

*...the next issue I want to...*

(flinches)

*I want to address is, umm....*

WILL

Shit.

He picks up the phone, dials. Busy. Tries again. Still busy.

INT. WENDY'S OFFICE, STAFF AREA -- DAY

As phones ring off the hook, the staff dashes around, madly.

BEN  
She's trending! On Twitter!

JAVIER	LUCY
(into phone)	(into phone)
Senator Davis' office, please	Hold please, I have four
hold--	calls ahead of you--

SONYA  
Holy shit! Send out a blast--

JAVIER  
Senator Davis' office, please ho--

VOICE OF WILL  
*She needs a back brace!*

JAVIER  
Sir, I need you to hold--

INT. WILL'S STUDY -- EVENING

Will keeps an eye on Wendy on TV as he speaks into the phone.

WILL  
NO! Listen to me! This is Will Wynn.  
Tell Sonya Wendy's back is GIVING  
OUT. She needs a brace, RIGHT NOW!

INT. WENDY'S OFFICE, STAFF AREA -- DAY

BEN  
#StandWithWendy! It's everywhere--

AJ  
I've got FOX News, they want--

JAVIER  
(to SONYA, dashing by)  
There's a man who says--

SONYA  
(to BEN)  
Hold on, they want what?

AJ  
--to know if she's had an abortion.

VOICE OF WILL  
*This is CRITICAL--*

JAVIER  
Sonya, this seems important--

SONYA  
Tell 'em to go FUCK themselves!

JAVIER  
Sonya--

SONYA  
Who the FUCK do they think they--

JAVIER  
IT'S HER FUCKING BACK!

Everyone STOPS. Total silence. All eyes turn to Javier.

SMASH CUT:

The entire staff makes frantic phone calls.

LUCY  
(into phone)  
I'm looking for a back brace--

BEN  
(into phone)  
No, not braces, a brace!

SONYA  
(into phone)  
For your back--

AJ  
(into phone)  
Well, if you don't carry them, why  
are you asking me what size?

LUCY  
FOUND ONE! The CVS on Congress--

SONYA  
Have 'em hold it!  
(whips around, quickly  
sizes up each staffer; to  
JAVIER)  
YOU. You want a job when you  
graduate?

JAVIER  
Yes. Yes, of course!

SONYA  
Then RUN like a MOTHERFUCKER.

EXT. STATE CAPITOL -- EVENING

A MAD DASH out of the Capitol, and man, can Javier RUN! He dodges the women in orange, darts across traffic, sends cars swerving every which way. He's a human Frogger, on speed.

EXT. SENATE CHAMBER -- EVENING

Wendy twists at the waist, rubs her neck with her free hand.

WENDY  
Mr. President, I...  
(pause)  
I would like to turn to...

EXT./INT. CVS DRUGSTORE -- EVENING

DRIPPING in sweat, Javier rushes in, nearly knocking over CUSTOMERS. He rounds the corner to find: A LONG-ass line at pharmacy. A TV plays the news: Wendy on the Senate floor.

INT. SENATE CHAMBER -- EVENING

SUPERIMPOSE: 6:56 p.m.  
SUPERIMPOSE: 7 hours, 38 minutes in

WENDY  
And that's why it's--

A JOLT of pain runs up her back. She stifles a scream.

WENDY (CONT'D)  
SH!--surely...unfathomable that we--

It's very clear to Judith: Wendy is in pain.

JUDITH  
(to KIRK)  
We need a Plan B. And I'm not being  
funny.

SUPERIMPOSE: 5 hours, 4 minutes to midnight

INT. CVS DRUGSTORE -- EVENING

The line has barely budged. Javier, sweating, watches Wendy on TV, looking ever weaker. It's torture--for both of them.

CUSTOMER  
(to PHARMACIST)  
No, no, start over. First I take  
the...what?

PHARMACIST  
Levothyroxine.

CUSTOMER  
Hold on, spell that. L...

INT. WENDY'S OFFICE, PRIVATE OFFICE -- EVENING

SONYA  
(looks at watch)  
Where the hell is that kid?

INT. SENATE CHAMBER -- EVENING

Her throat dry as hell, Wendy's voice is clearly weakening.

WENDY  
The question before us--  
(clears her throat)  
Excuse me... The question before us--

Her voice catches; what comes out sounds more like a croak.

WENDY (CONT'D)  
(clears throat again)  
Sorry, one moment--

At his seat, Dan Patrick leans in towards Donna Campbell.

DAN PATRICK  
She's tired as a boomtown whore.  
(at DONNA CAMPBELL's look)  
What? It's a folksy expression.

Keeping a close watch on Wendy, concerned Democrats huddle.

JOHN  
She needs water.

RODNEY  
She needs rest. She needs food.

JUDITH  
She needs all those things! No way  
she can do another 5 hours of this.

RODNEY  
Well, anyone have any bright ideas?

KIRK  
(almost to himself)  
She's always gotta be the smartest  
student in the class.

JUDITH  
Not now, Kirk.

KIRK  
Actually, right now.

INT. CVS DRUGSTORE -- EVENING

Standstill. Javier can't take it anymore; he jumps the line.

CUSTOMER #2  
Hey, what do you think you're--!

PHARMACIST  
Sir, you have to get back in line--

JAVIER  
(pointing at the TV)  
It's for HER!

The Pharmacist and Customers all turn their heads to the TV.  
Then, the Pharmacist looks back at Javier, sweating bullets.

INT. SENATE CHAMBER -- EVENING

KIRK  
Mr. President, I think it's high  
time Senator Davis answered more  
questions, don't you?

INT. WENDY'S OFFICE, STAFF AREA -- EVENING

LUCY  
(dials)  
I'm trying his cell!

On a nearby desk, a cellphone rings. Lucy's face drops.

INT. SENATE CHAMBER -- EVENING

KIRK  
I'd like to ask you about the  
relevant case law.

We see on Wendy's face...concern. She hesitates, then...

WENDY  
Alright.

EXT. DOWNTOWN AUSTIN -- EVENING

Javier RACES through the streets, madly tearing open a  
package as he goes. Inside: A black, elastic back brace.

INT. WENDY'S OFFICE, STAFF AREA -- EVENING

KIRK (ON SCREEN)  
*There's a companion case to Roe v.  
Wade, is that correct?*

WENDY (ON SCREEN)  
*That's right.*

KIRK (ON SCREEN)  
*And that's a case that came out of  
Georgia, called Doe v. Bolton.*

BEN  
Wait...what's he doing?

[We INTERCUT between Wendy's office and Dewhurst's.]

INT. DEWHURST'S PRIVATE OFFICE -- EVENING

WENDY (ON SCREEN)  
*That's correct.*

ROY  
This is it, folks!

INTERCUT WITH:

AJ  
(downcast)  
Putting the case law into the  
debate record.

INTERCUT WITH:

HENRIETTA  
Why is this it?

INTERCUT WITH:

AJ  
For some...court challenge.

INTERCUT WITH:

ROY  
(brightly)  
This is what you do when--

INTERCUT WITH:

SONYA  
He thinks we've lost.

INT. SENATE HALLWAY -- EVENING

It's now a virtual MOSH PIT. Javier tries to squeeze through.

INT. WENDY'S OFFICE, STAFF AREA -- EVENING

SONYA  
(trying to hold it  
together)  
Ben...draft a statement. 'Senator  
Davis is proud of what she  
accomplished today, even if--'

INT. SENATE CHAMBER -- EVENING

KIRK  
And Senator Davis, tell me about  
that case, if you could.

TED  
(to DEWHURST, beaming)  
See! He's winding her down!



Dewhurst looks at Kirk, at Wendy, and back again.

DEWHURST

No. He's helping her stay alert.

KIRK

I mean, if that's a case with which you're at all familiar...and could speak to.

Kirk winks. And Wendy gets exactly what he's doing.

WENDY

I'm very familiar with it, Senator Watson, thank you for asking. And I'd be happy to discuss it with you. At length.

WENDY'S OFFICE, STAFF AREA -- EVENING

Sonya and AJ exchange a look...and break into a smile.

SONYA

Actually: Fuck that statement.

INT. SENATE HALLWAY, OUTSIDE CHAMBER DOOR -- EVENING

Javier finally reaches the doors, where he runs smack into a good-ole-boy-type OFFICER #2. Javier pulls out his Intern ID.

OFFICER #2

Senators and staff only.

JAVIER

I'm with Senator Davis--

OFFICER #2

Badge says intern.

JAVIER

Yes, but...she needs this!

OFFICER #2

Then she can come get it.

JAVIER

She's...a little busy right now!

OFFICER #2

Yeah?

(under his breath)

What she's doing is disgusting.

Stunned, Javier reaches for his phone. It's not there.

INT. CAPITOL ROTUNDA STAIRWAY -- EVENING

Javier, back in the thick of the mosh pit, tries to make his way up the rotunda stairway towards the gallery. It's JAMMED.

JAVIER  
Please! It's an emergency!

No-one moves. He takes the back brace, waves it in the air.

JAVIER (CONT'D)  
WENDY NEEDS THIS BACK BRACE!

Murmurs from the crowd. And suddenly, the Orange Sea parts.

INT. SENATE CHAMBER -- EVENING

KIRK  
Those cases established that the state can't unduly burden the exercise of a woman's fundamental right, correct?

WENDY  
Exactly right. And when the Supreme Court recognized that right--

JAVIER (O.S.)  
(loud whisper)  
Psst! Senator!

Rodney looks up and sees: A sweaty young man leaning over the gallery railing, frantically waving something in the air.

WENDY  
--they recognized that any intrusion on that right would be subject to strict scrutiny by the Court.

JAVIER  
(loud whisper)  
SENATOR!

Out of nowhere, OFFICER #2 grabs Javier.

INT. CAPITOL ROTUNDA STAIRWAY -- EVENING

Roughly, Officer #2 yanks Javier down the steps.

JAVIER  
I'm TELLING you, it's for--

OFFICER #2  
Not one more word outta you--

INT. SENATE CHAMBER -- EVENING

KIRK  
Now, I'd like to ask you about what  
proponents say is their rationale  
for this bill.

WENDY  
Ask away, Senator.

INT. SENATE HALLWAY, OUTSIDE CHAMBER DOOR -- EVENING

Just as Officer #2 drags Javier by the chamber doors--

JAVIER  
I have RIGHTS!

The doors open--

RODNEY  
What's going on here?

INT. DEWHURST'S PRIVATE OFFICE -- EVENING

HENRIETTA  
What's going on, Roy? You said it  
was over.

INT. SENATE CHAMBER -- EVENING

KIRK  
Frankly, we would all like to  
reduce the number of abortions.

WENDY  
Yes, we would.

Rodney walks over to Wendy, holds out the back brace.

RODNEY  
Merry Xmas.

INT. WENDY'S OFFICE, STAFF AREA -- EVENING

SONYA  
(seeing the handoff)  
He did it! The kid DID IT!  
(beat)  
Anybody know his name?

INT. SENATE CHAMBER -- EVENING

With her mic in one hand, Wendy attempts the Houdini-esque  
task of using her one free hand to slip the brace under her  
coat, pull it tight around her lower back, and fasten it.

KIRK  
Is there anything in House Bill 2--

Wendy fumbles with the brace; she can't seem to--

WENDY  
(under her breath)  
Come on--

KIRK  
--that will help us reduce--

Wendy nearly drops the brace.

KIRK (CONT'D)  
--unwanted pregnancies?

WENDY  
In fact--

She tries again--almost got it! Rodney--for mere seconds--  
places one finger against the brace just as Wendy fastens it.

DAVIS  
--I do not believe there is.

Like a rocket, Senator Tommy Williams jumps out of his seat.

TOMMY WILLIAMS  
Point of order, Mr. President!  
Senator Davis has just received  
assistance in putting on her back  
brace. She has violated our rules.

Wendy whips around towards him in utter disbelief: 'WTF?'  
And all at once, EVERY Democrat jumps out of his/her seat.

JUDITH	KIRK
Mr. President!	Are you out of your mind--

RODNEY	JOHN
Mr. President, this is--	Like hell she did!

EXT. CAPITOL ROTUNDA -- NIGHT

LAURA  
(to camera)  
Dewhurst must now decide whether to  
penalize Davis with a second  
strike. And Senate Democrats are  
voicing their objections.

INT. SENATE CHAMBER -- NIGHT

JUDITH  
(to REPUBLICANS; incensed)  
Everything Senator Davis has done  
is consistent with the rules of  
this Senate. And you know it,  
because many of you are watching  
her every move--her every move!  
(MORE)

JUDITH (CONT'D)

Senator Davis has not leaned on her desk. She has not sat on her chair. For more than eight hours, she has not once rested, not once taken even a sip of water. Who among you could do what she has done?

INT. DEWHURST'S PRIVATE OFFICE -- NIGHT

JUDITH (ON SCREEN)

What man among you could do what she has done?

We hear applause from the gallery, see Dewhurst looking visibly uncomfortable. Wanly, he gavels down the applause.

DEWHURST

Order.

HENRIETTA

Look at him--weak as water. One thing I'll give Abortion Barbie: She's got twice the backbone.

She grabs her purse, heads towards the door.

ROY

Where you going?

HENRIETTA

To make sure he gets one.

She's out the door. Rev. Buck, Clay-Loyd and Roy follow her.

INT. SENATE CHAMBER -- NIGHT

JUDITH

Open your book. Look at your rules. Read it!

RODNEY

(aside, to WENDY)

The President just tweeted about you!

WENDY

Dewhurst?

RODNEY

(hands WENDY his phone)

Barack Obama!

INSERT: Barack Obama's actual tweet from that night.

WENDY

"Something special is happening in Austin tonight. #StandWithWendy"

(MORE)

WENDY (CONT'D)  
 (stunned)  
 He's watching?

RODNEY  
 Wendy, the whole country's  
 watching!

On the dais, Dewhurst huddles with Ted and Katrina.

DEWHURST  
 So I rule against a woman whose  
 back is literally giving out.  
 (nods to GALLERY)  
 How's that going to look, huh?

TED  
 That's not your audience.

Henrietta, Rev. Buck, Clay-Lloyd and Roy enter, take seats on  
 the floor's periphery. Dan Patrick greets them effusively.

TED (CONT'D)  
That's your audience.

RODNEY  
 (addressing SENATORS)  
 We seem to have two standards: One  
 for men who've filibustered; the  
 other, for Senator Davis, a woman.  
 One time, Senators formed a circle  
 around a male colleague  
 filibustering so he could take care  
 of business in a trash can. That  
 wasn't "assistance." But this is?

DEWHURST  
 (to TED)  
 Are you hearing this?

TED  
 That was a long time--

DEWHURST  
 We let a guy take a shit in a trash  
 can!

TED  
 No, he was just pissing--

DEWHURST  
 Pissing, shit, I don't GIVE A SHIT!

Silence. Ted looks at Katrina as if to say: Help me out.

KATRINA  
 Actually, you don't have to rule.

DEWHURST

What? Why?

KATRINA

It's your prerogative to throw the question to the members. They vote.

TED

(dawning on him)

And we've got the numbers.

INT. WENDY'S OFFICE, STAFF AREA -- NIGHT

SECRETARY (ON SCREEN)

Senator Ellis.

RODNEY

NO!

SECRETARY

Senator Ellis, no. Senator Estes.

SONYA

She said the rules were all she'd have. She doesn't even have that.

INT. SENATE CHAMBER -- NIGHT

DEWHURST

There being 17 ayes and 11 nays,  
the point of order is sustained.

He bangs down the gavel.

SUPERIMPOSE: Strike 2

SUPERIMPOSE: 7:21 p.m.

From a number of women in the gallery: BOOS. Wendy swings around, throws her finger over her lips and orders:

WENDY

SHHHH!

It's the first time she's addressed them directly. A HUSH.

RODNEY

(to WENDY)

They're frustrated.

WENDY

Trust me, I know how they feel. But he'll hold me responsible, and I can't get that third strike.

SUPERIMPOSE: 4 hours, 39 minutes to midnight

RODNEY

I'm sorry, Wendy. I was an idiot.

WENDY

You were a gentleman. Don't let it happen again.

LATER...

As Wendy, her voice now hoarse, continues to push out words--

WENDY (CONT'D)

Now, the section by section analysis of the bill. Section 1A provides that--

--she doesn't take her eyes off another Republican huddle.

DAN PATRICK

We're national news--even God damned Obama's tweeting about her! She's cleaning our plow and we look like damn fools!

DEWHURST

And what do you propose I do?

ROBERT NICHOLS

Give her the final strike!

TED

We need grounds, Bob.

DAN PATRICK

WE'RE the majority, she's ONE person! There's your grounds!

DONNA CAMPBELL

Rule that she's gone off topic.

WENDY

Under section 4 of subsection A--

DEWHURST

Except she's precisely on topic.

WENDY

Let me quote you that section...

DONNA CAMPBELL

Then let's LEAD her off.

LATER...

SUPERIMPOSE: 9:00 p.m.

SUPERIMPOSE: 9 hours, 42 minutes in

SUPERIMPOSE: 3 hours to midnight

WENDY

Now let's go back to what you say is the intent of this bill--



DONNA CAMPBELL  
 (stands; friendly)  
 Will the gentlewoman yield for  
 questions?

Wendy eyes her. We can see the wheels of her mind turning.

WENDY  
 I will not yield.

DONNA CAMPBELL  
 (surprised; with an edge)  
 Even to a female and a physician?

WENDY  
 No, thanks.

DONNA CAMPBELL  
 Mr. President, I have questions for  
 Senator Davis--

DEWHURST  
 And she has declined to yield,  
 Senator Campbell.

Donna Campbell shoots Dewhurst a look: Whose side are you on?

WENDY  
 Thank you, Mr. President. Now, as I  
 was saying--

LATER...

A restlessness: Republicans fidget, look up at the clock.

SUPERIMPOSE: 9:36 p.m.  
 SUPERIMPOSE: 10 hours, 18 minutes in  
 SUPERIMPOSE: 2 hours 24 minutes to midnight

WENDY (CONT'D)  
 Now, let's talk about--

Wendy lifts up one leg, then another, rotating each calf in a circle. By the look on her face, we can tell: They're tight, painful. She sees that one of her shoes has come untied.

WENDY (CONT'D)  
 --why we're really here today.

She bends down at the waist to tie it, and as she does, she lets her microphone momentarily drift away from her mouth.

WENDY (CONT'D)  
 The reason we're actually here--

DEWHURST  
 Senator Davis--

WENDY  
--is that the majority is intent--

DEWHURST  
(annoyed)  
No-one can hear you.

Wendy bolts upright, swings around to look right at Dewhurst.

WENDY  
Is that right?

She brings the mic right up to her mouth, so that it BOOMS--

WENDY (CONT'D)  
THEN LET ME SPEAK VERY CLEARLY: You have a strategy. You and every Republican in this chamber. You cannot legally take away a woman's right to choose, so you instead try to make it impossible for her to actually exercise that right. And that's exactly what you've been doing for years.

DAN PATRICK  
(to DONNA CAMPBELL)  
He's just going to let her say this crap--

DONNA CAMPBELL  
Shh, hold on.

WENDY  
Just last year, remember, you enacted a bill FORCING women to undergo an invasive, vaginal probe sonogram, and then return to that same doctor--

DONNA CAMPBELL  
(stands)  
Mr President.

WENDY  
--no sooner than--

DONNA CAMPBELL  
Mr. President!

WENDY  
--24 hours later--

DEWHURST  
Senator Campbell, for what purpose do you rise?

DONNA CAMPBELL  
 A point of order: Is the sonogram  
 bill germane to this bill?  
 (looks right at WENDY)  
 Or has Senator Davis once again  
 gone off-topic?

A stir from the women in the Gallery.

WENDY  
 (to DONNA CAMPBELL)  
 You're not serious.

DONNA CAMPBELL  
 Mr. President?

WENDY  
 Do you need me to explain to you  
 what a sonogram is, Doctor  
 Campbell?

DONNA CAMPBELL  
 Mr. President, what is your ruling?

WENDY  
 Mr. President, I demand to be heard  
 on this ludicrous objection--

DONNA CAMPBELL  
 And I demand a ruling--

Dewhurst whips around to Katrina.

DEWHURST  
 This is her strategy? THIS?!

INT. WENDY'S OFFICE, STAFF AREA -- NIGHT

The entire staff watch the back and forth on TV.

A.J.  
 He can't be considering--

SONYA  
 Of course he can. Look at the time.

They look up at the clock: 9:40 p.m.

DEWHURST  
*Senator Campbell, would you please  
 come to the platform and we will  
 discuss this with the  
 Parliamentarian?*

SONYA  
 (gravely)  
 This is it. Let's go.

Sonya is out the door, and the entire staff follows.

INT. SENATE CHAMBER -- DAY

As Donna Campbell heads towards the dais to confer--

KIRK  
Enough of this shit.

--Kirk gets up and follows. Rodney gets up, as well--

RODNEY  
Don't leave your spot.

WENDY  
I'm not going anywhere.

--and one by one, ALL other Senators march up. They encircle the dais--GOP on one side, Dems on the other. It's a rumble.

DEWHURST  
God damn it.

TED  
Stay calm.

DONNA CAMPBELL	KIRK
The sonogram bill was last	Let me explain to you how
year, and this is THIS year--	time works. It's a continuum--

INT. SENATE HALLWAY, OUTSIDE THE CHAMBER DOOR -- NIGHT

Wading through the crowd of women and news crews--including Laura's--Sonya and staff reach the door. She flashes her ID to Officer #2. Right away, Javier recognizes this man.

SONYA  
Senator Davis' staff.

OFFICER #2  
We're full.

SONYA  
I know, we'll stand.

OFFICER #2  
Nope.

SONYA  
(beat; surprised)  
What? The Senator who has the floor  
is permitted to have staff present.  
Senate rules.

OFFICER #2  
(leans in)  
File a complaint with Dewhurst. See  
how that goes.

Sonya freezes. But then, we see the anger rising in her, the frustrations of this unbelievable day finally boiling over.

SONYA  
What--you think you're some kind of  
tough-guy?

BEN  
Sonya!

SONYA  
Some kind of hero?

BEN  
Sonya, let's go--

Spotting the commotion, Laura and her Camera Man approach.

SONYA  
Let me tell you: That woman in  
there, she's the hero.

The Camera Man turns on a blinding light, starts rolling.  
Sonya takes a step closer to Officer #2.

SONYA (CONT'D)  
You're just the guy who got the  
fuck out of the way.

Officer #2 steps towards Sonya, menacingly, then looks at the  
camera. All eyes on him...as he gets the fuck out of the way.

INT. SENATE CHAMBER -- NIGHT

As the other Senators continue encircling Dewhurst, trying to  
get his attention, Wendy stands on tiptoes, calls out:

WENDY  
I know I can't leave my place here,  
but I have a right to respond! Mr.  
President! I have a right to  
respond!

A flustered Dewhurst looks to Katrina--

KATRINA  
She's right.

DEWHURST  
Senator Davis, you are recognized.

WENDY  
You bet I am.

Sonya, AJ, Ben, Javier and Lucy enter and stand against the  
wall. Senators turn to Wendy; they all know this is very  
likely her last hurrah. She looks at them...long and hard.

WENDY (CONT'D)

Members, I'm tired. I'm so tired...of y'all pretending that you know better. Not just better than me-- better than any woman. That's what exhausts me. Infuriates me. Hell, you know what? It PISSES ME OFF.

DONNA CAMPBELL

Mr. President--

WENDY

It's my time, Campbell--MINE. So yeah, forget the niceties! And while we're at it, forget the case law, the medical evidence, forget logic, reason, all of it! Forget everything...but one thing. ONE very simple thing: It's not up to you. Simple as that. Not you, not me, not any one of us here gets to tell any woman up there--or anywhere--what she gets to do with her life. With her body. And you know why? Because it's hers. IT'S HERS. And no matter what BS bill you pass here tonight...no matter what procedural tricks you use to shut me up...you can't alter that one simple TRUTH: It's her life. Hers. Now get the hell out of it.

Women in the Gallery EXPLODE in cheers.

WENDY (CONT'D)

And that, Senator Campbell, isn't just ON topic, it's the ONLY topic.

EXT. DOWNTOWN AUSTIN -- NIGHT

THOUSANDS of orange-clad women, girls and even men make their way to the Capitol. Texas has never seen anything like this.

INT. SENATE CHAMBER -- NIGHT

SUPERIMPOSE: 30 minutes later

All the other Senators continue to encircle the dais, boring into Katrina as she madly flips through Mason's Manual.

DEWHURST

(under his breath)

How much longer?

KATRINA

I'm looking for precedent.

KIRK

Look under T--for travesty!

DEWHURST  
Everyone, step back!

Wendy eyes the Senate clock, every second ticking so slowly.  
Each time the second hand moves, it sounds like a cannon.

WENDY  
Keep searching, Katrina.

She turns and spots her staff on the sidelines, silently  
cheering her on. The sight of them fills her with  
emotion...emotion she fights back.

SONYA  
(mouths)  
Hang in there.

Across the chamber, the Conservative Leaders hover over Ted.

HENRIETTA  
Why doesn't he just call it?

TED  
He will, but he needs some basis--

CLAY-LLOYD  
The Texas Tea Patriots! How's that  
for "basis"?

TED  
I just need you to be patient--

REV. BUCK  
We've listened to her for 11 hours.  
Time to put the chairs in the wagon.

TED  
Roy, you know how this works--

ROY  
No, Ted. They're right. Time's up.

Ted looks at him for a moment, then nods. He understands.

LATER...

SUPERIMPOSE: 10:08 p.m.  
SUPERIMPOSE: 10 hours, 50 minutes in

With Dewhurst and Ted hovering, Katrina points to her Manual.

KATRINA  
It's open to interpretation, but--

TED  
It's fine.

Wendy paces around her desk, obsessively checking the clock--

DEWHURST

Members...

--and stops. She looks right at Dewhurst; he won't look back.

DEWHURST (CONT'D)

After consultation with the  
Parliamentarian, and after  
reviewing Senator Davis' comments--

Dewhurst surveys the Republicans, not exactly happy with him--

DEWHURST (CONT'D)

Senator Campbell, your point of  
order--

--and at the Conservative Leaders, who look even less so.

DEWHURST (CONT'D)

--is well-taken and is sustained.

A woman in the Gallery jumps out of her seat--

WOMAN #4

BULLSHIT!

--and the entire Gallery erupts in JEERS.

DEWHURST

(bangs gavel)

I will not have an unruly mob!

But the jeers only get LOUDER. Ted bounds up to the dais--

TED

Hegar to close it out!

--as Wendy just stands there, frozen. She's in SHOCK.  
Suddenly, the world around her is fuzzy...it's white noise.

DEWHURST

The Chair recognizes Senator Hegar  
for a motion.

For a moment, no-one moves. They all seem caught off guard.

DEWHURST (CONT'D)

Hegar, get on with it!

GLENN HEGAR

(stumbling from his seat)

I move to concur--

But he's drowned out by the women, now BOOING.

GLENN HEGAR (CONT'D)

--with the House--



Wendy looks around for something, anything, any way forward--

GLENN HEGAR (CONT'D)  
--AMENDMENTS TO--

WENDY  
No, no, no, no, no--

GLENN HEGAR  
--SENATE BILL FIVE!

WENDY  
NO!

The JEERING from the Gallery grows louder, and suddenly, we're back inside Wendy's head. All she hears is an echo: An echo of herself, uttering 'no, no, no, no NO!' We see Kirk say something to her--inaudible--and she snaps to. She grabs him by the arm--

WENDY (CONT'D)  
I'm NOT giving up, understand me?

KIRK  
Wendy--

WENDY  
I AM NOT GIVING UP.

KIRK  
We're not giving up. WE!  
Look around you.

We are inside Wendy's head as she turns and SEES around her-- REALLY sees around her--as if for the very first time...

...At the face of every Democrat, encircling her like a human shield. At the SEA of angry, defiant women in the Gallery. At her own running shoes, literally reverberating: A vibration, and we FEEL it, rumbling like an approaching earthquake.

It's a CHANT, soft at first, then louder, and LOUDER, coming from the THOUSANDS of women outside the chamber, hearing the news that Wendy has been silenced. The women in the Gallery hear it, too. And one by one, they stand. Stand with Wendy.

WOMAN #11  
Let her speak!

WOMAN #12  
Let her speak!

...until the entire Gallery is standing, chanting, SCREAMING:

WOMEN  
LET HER SPEAK! LET HER SPEAK!

[We INTERCUT with the following scenes around the Capitol...]

INT. CAPITOL ROTUNDA -- NIGHT

Countless women packing the Rotunda: "LET HER SPEAK!"

INT. SENATE HALLWAY -- NIGHT

Throngs of women jamming the hallways: "LET HER SPEAK!"

EXT. STATE CAPITOL -- NIGHT

Thousands of women demonstrating outside: "LET HER SPEAK!"

INT. SENATE CHAMBER -- NIGHT

Wendy looks up at the women CHANTING...the sight, the sound of them is overwhelming. She knows: She is not alone.

WOMEN

LET HER SPEAK! LET HER SPEAK!

DEWHURST

(bangs down gavel)

Senator He--

WOMEN

LET HER SPEAK! LET HER SPEAK!

DEWHURST

(struggling to be heard)

SENATOR HEGAR!

Hegar tries to speak, but he's drowned out. And that's when Kirk pulls out a weapon: His booming MEGAPHONE of a voice.

KIRK

MR. PRESIDENT!

WOMEN

LET HER SPEAK! LET HER SPEAK!

KIRK

POINT OF ORDER, MR. PRESIDENT!

For Dewhurst, there's no pretending he hasn't heard Kirk.

DEWHURST

State your--YOUR POINT OF ORDER.

The women quiet.

KIRK

You've made your rulings on the three strikes. But under our rules, the entire Senate must vote to end a filibuster.

For a moment, no-one says a word.

KATRINA  
 (whispers, to DEWHURST)  
 He's allowed to ask for a vote. But  
 you're allowed to turn him down.

DEWHURST  
 On what basis--

TED  
 Just do it!

DEWHURST  
 Senator Watson, your motion is  
 denied.

The Gallery erupts in BOOS.

TED  
 CLOSE IT OUT! HURRY!

DEWHURST  
 Senator He--

KIRK  
 I MOVE TO OVERRULE THE DECISION OF  
 THE CHAIR.

The Gallery erupts in CHEERS (yes, it's a roller coaster!)

TED  
 FUCK!

DEWHURST  
 What--?

KATRINA  
 He's challenged your ruling. You  
 need to step down.

DEWHURST  
 Excuse me?

KATRINA  
 You can't preside over a challenge  
 to your own ruling. It's the rule.

Dewhurst looks over to Kirk...who smiles. He sees Dan  
 Patrick, Donna Campbell and Glenn Hegar racing to the dais.

DEWHURST  
 For fuck's sake, they're gaming us!

DAN PATRICK  
 I'll preside!

DONNA CAMPBELL  
 No, I'll do it, the optics--

GLENN HEGAR  
I'm the bill sponsor--

TED  
 (to DEWHURST)  
 Not the show horses, you've got to  
 stay in charge of this--

Dewhurst looks around frantically and spots, all the way in  
 the back: The down-home Robert Duncan.

DEWHURST  
 Senator Duncan!

ROBERT DUNCAN  
 Wha--?

Ted bounds off the dais, races towards Duncan.

DEWHURST  
 Assume the position.

DAN PATRICK                      DONNA CAMPBELL  
 What?!                              Him?!

ROBERT DUNCAN  
 ME? What did I do?

TED  
 You're...a lawyer.

ROBERT DUNCAN  
 In Lubbock!

Wendy keeps her eye on the chaos; Kirk keeps an eye on Wendy.

KIRK  
 You ok to keep standing? I can only  
 challenge while you're standing.

WENDY  
 I'll stand here all damned night.

KIRK  
 Two hours'll do. I've got an idea.

SUPERIMPOSE: 10:04 p.m.  
 SUPERIMPOSE: 1 hour, 56 minutes to midnight.

TED  
 (yanking DUNCAN up)  
 Katrina'll find you basis to rule  
 against Watson. Deliver the ruling,  
 close the debate, hand the gavel  
 back for final passage. Got it?

ROBERT DUNCAN  
 I...I think so.

Slowly, dead-man-walking-style, Duncan climbs up to the dais.

DEWHURST  
(handing the gavel)  
You can do this.

Warily, Duncan looks up...and as if on cue, the women chant.

WOMEN  
LET HER SPEAK! LET HER SPEAK!

Down below, Democrats tightly encircle Wendy and Kirk.

KIRK  
Any motion you can think of, draw  
it out. The more obscure the  
better. Got it?  
(at the DEMOCRATS' nod)  
On my signal.  
(looks up at DUNCAN)  
Now.

Every Democrat swings around towards Duncan, hand in the air.

KIRK (CONT'D)  
Mr. President!

RODNEY  
Parliamentary inquiry!

JOHN  
Mr. President!

JUDITH  
I move to table the motion!

DEMOCRATIC SENATOR #1  
Parliamentary inquiry, Mr.  
President!

DEMOCRATIC SENATOR #2  
Mr. President, I have a  
privileged motion!

Duncan FREEZES. Dewhurst sees it, goes to climb the dais...

DEWHURST  
They're just trying to confuse you--

KIRK  
Point of order! The President  
cannot approach the chair!

KATRINA  
(to DEWHURST)  
Step off the dais--

DEWHURST  
What? Jesus Christ!

WENDY  
(wry smile)  
There's room by me, Mr. President.

DAN PATRICK  
I move to TABLE Senator Watson's  
motion!

ROBERT DUNCAN  
What the FUCK is happening?

INT. SENATE HALLWAY -- DAY

Amid a crowd of onlookers, Laura interviews Sonya.

LAURA  
But the Lieutenant Governor already  
declared the filibuster over--

SONYA  
Right, but Kirk Watson challenged  
that ruling, arguing that--  
(to WOMEN's cheers)  
--only the full Senate can end a  
filibuster, through a vote. So now  
Republicans are trying to dismiss  
Kirk's objection, but it's not  
clear they can, procedurally.

LAURA  
That's...a lot to unwind.

SONYA  
(smiles)  
It is, isn't it?

INT. SENATE CHAMBER -- NIGHT

Wendy and Kirk keep a close eye on Katrina, who flips between  
two, equally mammoth manuals of parliamentary procedure. In  
the Gallery, the women keep up their chant: "Let her speak!"

SUPERIMPOSE: 10:20 p.m.

WENDY  
How much time can we burn here?

KIRK  
She's a stickler. Know the type?

LATER...

SUPERIMPOSE: 10:58 p.m.

KATRINA  
On the other hand, this sub-note to  
rule 4.01 says that the underlying  
motion to table takes precedent...

ROBERT DUNCAN  
(to himself)  
I'm in hell.

The Conservatives encircle Dewhurst and Ted like a noose.

HENRIETTA  
What in the hell's she looking for?

DEWHURST

(tense)

Precedent. It's... complicated.

CLAY-LLOYD

Yeah? Well, I'm up to here with complicated! We all are!

DEWHURST

(beat)

You think this is easy for me?

TED

Boss--

DEWHURST

You think I like being sidelined?  
Removed from my own chair?

CLAY-LLOYD

Your chair? Now you listen to me:  
Get this done, or we'll make sure  
you never sit in OUR chair again.

Dewhurst, fuming, starts to speak, but Ted stops him.

TED

We got it.

With Wendy and Kirk at center, the Democrats again huddle.

KIRK

She'll find some way for Duncan to  
rule against me.

WENDY

Count on it.

KIRK

So let's game this out. Judith?

JUDITH

Alright: Once they rule against  
you, they've still got to get  
through three votes. First, to  
table your motion--

RODNEY

That'll take five minutes.

JUDITH

Then, a vote to close debate.

RODNEY

Another five minutes.

JUDITH

And then, final passage.

RODNEY

Five more minutes. Fifteen total.

They all look up at the clock.

SUPERIMPOSE: 11:10 p.m.

WENDY

It's not enough.

On the dais, Katrina hands Duncan a piece of paper.

ROBERT DUNCAN

All this?

She nods. Wanly, Duncan bangs the gavel. He approaches the mic. The Gallery quiets down. Every eye in the chamber is on him.

ROBERT DUNCAN (CONT'D)

(clears throat; reads)

Members, we have carefully looked at the rules of the Texas Senate, as well as other secondary authority on which our rules are primarily based, in particular--

INT. CAPITOL ROTUNDA -- NIGHT

Amid the throngs, dozens of REPORTERS prepare for live shots. And suddenly, every reporter's cell phone is buzzing.

LAURA

We need to break in!

CAMERA MAN

Live?

LAURA

Do it!

The Camera Man signals 1-2-3, 'Go.'

LAURA (CONT'D)

Breaking news from the Texas Senate--

INT. WILL'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Will leans right up against his TV.

LAURA (ON SCREEN)

Wendy Davis' filibuster is over. The interim Senate President, Robert Duncan, has ruled that Republicans CAN vote to table a motion by the Democratic leader, Kirk Watson, that could have kept the filibuster alive--



Will turns off the TV. He just sits there, unable to move.

INT. SENATE CHAMBER -- NIGHT

SUPERIMPOSE: 11:22 p.m.

SUPERIMPOSE: 38 minutes to midnight

Wendy looks over at Kirk, but he's unable to face her.

ROBERT DUNCAN

Senator Watson, you're recognized  
for closing arguments.

Silence. Kirk stares long and hard at Wendy. He grabs his mic.

KIRK

(pointing at WENDY)

Look at her. Take a good, hard look.  
That woman right there had the guts  
to stand on this floor--and take  
every indignity you threw at her--for  
more than 12 hours. 12 hours! You  
didn't think she could do it. And you  
know what? Neither did I. Well...we  
were both wrong. Would Wendy Davis  
have made it to midnight--a mere 38  
minutes from now--if you hadn't  
cheated her? Twisted the rules  
against her? You KNOW she would have.  
And it kills you! So, disagree with  
her if you want; that's your right.  
But how dare you silence her! How  
dare you claim "victory" when you  
know, I know, the whole world knows:  
Tonight, in the heart of Texas, the  
best man--the best WOMAN--won.

Kirk literally drops the mic, slumps down into his chair. In  
the Gallery, women LEAP to their feet, CHEER wildly.

DUNCAN

Order! ORDER!

Wendy's eyes meet Kirk's. She mouths: 'Thank you.' Stifling back  
tears, all Kirk can do is nod. The Gallery grows MORE raucous--

TED

(to DUNCAN)

Clear the gallery! NOW!

ROBERT DUNCAN

Security will clear the gallery!

Officers wade into the Gallery and grab a number of women,  
roughly, yanking them out of the chamber. They fight back as  
the rest of the women scream at the guards. It's shockingly  
physical, it's ugly (and yes, it actually happened).

From a side door, Laura and her Camera Man enter the Gallery.

LAURA  
Are you getting this?!

CAMERA MAN  
We're not allowed to film in here--

LAURA  
TURN ON THE FUCKING CAMERA!

On the floor, Dewhurst just stares up in disbelief.

DEWHURST  
This is madness.

TED  
(to DUNCAN)  
Call the roll!

DUNCAN  
(struggling to be heard)  
The clerk will--WILL CALL THE ROLL.

SECRETARY  
(almost inaudible)  
Senator Birdwell, Senator Campbell--

SUPERIMPOSE: Vote #1 (of 3)  
SUPERIMPOSE: To put aside Watson's challenge

The doors to the chamber burst open: Leticia. She takes in the utter chaos on the floor, the screaming women in the Gallery. Then, she strides right up to Wendy.

LETICIA  
Well, Davis, as usual, you've made  
a real mess of things.

WENDY  
(stunned)  
But...your father, your family--

LETICIA  
We're family, Davis. And you need  
help.

WENDY  
(emotionally)  
There's too much time.

SUPERIMPOSE: 11:29 p.m.

LETICIA  
Huh. Whattaya say we just go home?  
(turns to DUNCAN)  
Mr. President, I move to adjourn!

ROBERT DUNCAN

Wha--?

TED

No, no, no, NO!

LETICIA

I move to ADJOURN!

On Wendy's face: A realization. A ray of hope. Leticia waves her arms at Duncan, trying to get his attention.

JAVIER

I don't get it--

SONYA

It's a privileged motion--it has to be voted on. She's eating up time.

LUCY

Maybe saving the day...  
(smiles, touches his hand)  
Like someone I know.

Leticia zeroes in on Ted as he grabs a CLERK on the dais.

TED

Turn off their mics!  
(at CLERK's blank look)  
TURN OFF THE DEMOCRATS' MICS!

The Clerk fumbles under a panel, and we see--one by one--the red light on the microphone of every Democrat turn off.

LETICIA

Mr. President, I said--  
(taps her dead mic)  
Son of a BITCH!

WENDY

They've turned off the mics!

LETICIA

I MOVE TO ADJOURN!

SECRETARY

--Senator Carona, Senator Davis--

WENDY

(pointing to LETICIA)  
Mr. President!

ROBERT DUNCAN

(to TED)  
I heard Van DePutte motion--

TED

You heard NOTHING.

SECRETARY  
--Senator Deuell, Senator Ellis--

Wendy and Leticia lock eyes. Leticia heads towards Duncan.

LETICIA  
Did you not hear me or did you  
REFUSE TO RECOGNIZE ME, MR.  
PRESIDENT?

TED  
(to SECRETARY)  
Hurry up!

In the Gallery, Laura turns to her Camera Man in disbelief.

CAMERA MAN  
He's ignoring a fellow Senator!

LAURA  
No. He's ignoring a woman.

The Secretary tallies up the vote, hands it to Duncan.

ROBERT DUNCAN  
The ayes are 17, the nays are 12,  
the motion is approved.

SUPERIMPOSE: 11:45 p.m.

From the women in the Gallery, more BOOS.

DAN PATRICK  
One down, two to go.

TED  
Somebody motion to close debate!

DAN PATRICK  
I move the previous question!

WENDY  
Senator Van de Putte made a motion!

TED  
(to DUNCAN)  
No--call the roll!

ROBERT DUNCAN  
The clerk will--

WENDY  
MR. PRESIDENT!

TED  
Keep going--

WENDY  
 (top of her lungs)  
 GOD DAMN IT, I'M TALKING TO YOU!

And that, everyone hears. Suddenly, TOTAL SILENCE.

ROBERT DUNCAN  
 Senator Davis, I have made clear--  
 you are no longer recognized.

WENDY  
 ME! But what about HER!? Huh? That  
 woman, our grieving colleague, who's  
 made the most extraordinary  
 sacrifice to be here! You've stood  
 there--you and all these men  
 directing you--and ignored her.  
 IGNORED her! This woman whose voice  
 you clearly heard, whose hand you  
 clearly saw, was not WORTHY of your  
 attention. So I ask you, MR.  
 PRESIDENT: At what point must a  
 female SENATOR raise HER hand, raise  
 HER voice to be recognized over the  
 men in this room?

And nearly 13 hours later, the dam finally BURSTS.

The army in the Gallery ROARS. From every woman in that room:  
 The frustrations of a lifetime of being ignored, of being  
 passed over, of being silenced...finally BOIL OVER. A  
 collective CATHARSIS like nothing we've ever seen.

In the chamber below, Republican Senators stare in awe--  
 dumbstruck. They know: Whatever this is, it's UNSTOPPABLE.

DUNCAN  
 (frantic)  
 THE CLERK WILL CALL THE ROLL!

SECRETARY  
 (drowned out)  
 Senator Birdwell, Senator Campbell--

SUPERIMPOSE: Vote #2 (of 3)  
 SUPERIMPOSE: To close debate

SECRETARY (CONT'D)  
 They can't hear me--

TED  
 KEEP GOING!

SECRETARY  
 Senator Carona--I can't hear them--

SEN. DUNCAN  
 (bangs down gavel)  
 Order in the chamber! WE WILL  
 SUSPEND THE ROLL CALL UNTIL WE GET  
 ORDER IN THE CHAMBER!

WOMEN  
 LET HER SPEAK! LET HER SPEAK!

Wendy looks up at the clock...

SUPERIMPOSE: 11:52 p.m.

...and up at the Gallery. Earlier, she'd quieted them; now, she needs them. This isn't her battle to win. It's THEIRS. She faces the women, gestures with both her hands: LOUDER.

WENDY  
 Keep it up! KEEP IT UP!

Seeing her signal, the crowd raucously TURNS IT UP.

WOMEN  
 LET HER SPEAK! LET HER SPEAK!

One by one, Democrats follow Wendy's lead, amping the crowd.

WENDY	LETICIA
KEEP IT UP!	KEEP IT UP!
RODNEY	KIRK
KEEP IT UP!	KEEP IT UP!
JUDITH	JOHN
KEEP IT UP!	KEEP IT UP!

WOMEN (CONT'D)  
 LET HER SPEAK! LET HER SPEAK!

Stunned Republicans can do little more than watch...

SEN. DUNCAN  
 If I can have some order--

WENDY  
 KEEP IT UP!

The CHANTS are now EAR-SPLITTING: "LET HER SPEAK!"

SEN. DUNCAN  
 If I can have your ATTENTION!

TED  
 Fuck it, call the damn thing!

SEN. DUNCAN  
 THERE BEING 19 AYES AND 10 NAYS,  
 THE PREVIOUS QUESTION IS ADOPTED.

SUPERIMPOSE: 11:56 p.m.

The women's chants turn into JEERS, BOOS, even tears. But Wendy knows: She cannot have them lose hope. Hope is all they've got left. She faces the women and raises two fingers on her right hand: V for Victory. And the Gallery ROARS.

WOMEN

WENDY! WENDY! WENDY! WENDY! WENDY!

Each woman stands up, faces Wendy and returns the sign for victory. One by one, Wendy's Democratic colleagues follow suit. Solidarity. VICTORY.

In the history of the Senate, there's never been a moment like this. Dewhurst and Republicans stand there, stunned.

DEWHURST

(almost to himself)

What have we done?

TED

Nothing--yet. Final passage, get up there!

But Dewhurst just stands there, gives Ted a long, hard look.

DEWHURST

Don't you get it? We lost. We lost the moment she stepped on that floor.

And with that, Dewhurst slowly ascends the dais. Duncan tosses the gavel at him, gets the hell out of there.

WOMEN

WENDY! WENDY! WENDY!

Dewhurst holds up the gavel, as if uncertain what to do with it. He looks at Dan Patrick; he looks at the Conservative Leaders; he looks at Ted. And finally, he looks at Wendy. She locks eyes with him, as if willing him to do the right thing.

DEWHURST

On final passage. The Clerk will call the roll.

SUPERIMPOSE: Final passage

SECRETARY

Senator Birdwell, Senator Campbell--

Democrats howl, the Gallery boos. But Wendy stays laser-focused. We see it on her face: She's seen something.

For the first time today, she abandons her perch and strides right up to the dais. Every eye in that chamber follows her.

Wendy looks Dewhurst in the eye...and points. Emphatically.

WENDY  
It's midnight!

And that's when we see it: Right above Dewhurst's head, right in front of Wendy's eyes. The Senate clock.

SUPERIMPOSE: Midnight

The Gallery EXPLODES, the Democrats jump up and CHEER. All except Wendy, who's still watching Dewhurst. He says nothing.

DEWHURST  
Call the roll.

SECRETARY  
Wha--?

DEWHURST  
CALL IT!

SECRETARY  
Senator Birdwell, Senator Carona--

Instantly, the cheers transform into JEERS, BOOS, HISSES--

SECRETARY (CONT'D)  
Mr. President, I can't hear--

WENDY  
It's MIDNIGHT!

TED  
(to REPUBLICAN SENATORS)  
EVERYBODY UP HERE!

Republicans rush towards the Secretary, yelling out: "Aye!"

SECRETARY  
Wait, hold on--

WENDY  
IT'S TOO LATE.

SECRETARY  
Senator Deuell, Senator Ellis--

RODNEY  
Look at the clock!

LETICIA  
Mr. President! What time is it?

SUPERIMPOSE: "12:02 a.m."

TED  
Keep going!



SECRETARY  
 Senator Eltife, Senator Estes--

WOMAN #13  
 Shame! Shame!

Instantly, EVERY woman in the Gallery is screaming:

WOMEN  
 SHAME! SHAME! SHAME!

TED  
 Nineteen, that's it--  
 (to CLERK)  
 THE PRINTOUT!

Ted hovers over the Clerk, and the world's slowest printer.

WOMEN  
 SHAME! SHAME! SHAME!

TED  
 Hurry up!

As the Clerk pulls out the printout, Ted yanks it away--

CLERK  
 Wait--  
 (points to the bottom)  
 Look.

INSERT: Printout with "Time of vote: 12:02 a.m."

SUPERIMPOSE: Official time stamp: 12:02 a.m.

TED  
 (beat)  
 Change it.  
 (at the CLERK's look)  
 DO IT.

On his computer, we see the Clerk delete "12:02 a.m.," type in "11:59 p.m.," and hit print. It slowly prints out--

TED (CONT'D)  
 Come on, come on!

The Clerk hands the new printout to Ted, and just as Ted turns to hand it to Dewhurst, he looks up and sees: EVERY SENATOR encircling the dais; EVERY EYE in the room on him.

As if on cue, the Gallery stops chanting. A DEATHLY QUIET. Wendy steps forward, holds out her hand for the printout. Ted looks at her, as if considering it...then turns and hands it to Dewhurst. The Gallery hisses, but Wendy motions for calm.

Again, she steps forward, till she's as close to Dewhurst as she can get without climbing the dais. She looks right at him. In that instant, they are the only people in the room.

WENDY

Rule number one: Fight for what you believe in. Rule number two: Know when to call it a day.

For what feels like a long time, Dewhurst stands just there, as if surveying the wreckage. Then, almost to himself, he shakes his head. Finally, he clears his throat and speaks.

DEWHURST

The Constitutional time for the first-called session of the 83rd legislature--  
(long pause)  
--has expired.

Murmurs in the Gallery as--

DEWHURST (CONT'D)

House Bill 2...cannot be signed.

He bangs down the gavel--and the Gallery EXPLODES. From the women, the Democrats, Sonya and the staff: ABSOLUTE EUPHORIA. And from the stunned Republicans, just standing there: Shock.

We're back inside Wendy's head: SEEING the jubilation, HEARING the roar of the crowd, all of it like an out-of-body experience. Slowly, we FEEL Wendy's body relax, the weight of this struggle finally lifted off her shoulders.

Wendy stands there, not even smiling, as if even she can't believe what she's accomplished. Democrats rush to embrace their winning quarterback. All except Kirk, who stands to the side. Wendy's eyes lock on his. He walks up to her, no smile.

KIRK

You got a lot of nerve, you know that?

For what feels like a long time, Wendy considers him.

WENDY

I do know that.

And finally, she smiles. A big, glorious, shit-eating grin, which Kirk matches in kind. He takes her hand in his and throws it high in the air: VICTORY.

INT. CAPITOL ROTUNDA -- NIGHT

Like rolling thunder, word of Wendy's victory spreads through the Capitol...and the crowds go absolutely NUTS. They cheer, cry, embrace. Then, one woman's voice rises above the fray...

WOMAN #13

(sings)

*The Eyes of Texas are upon you--*

...and the crowd breaks into the beloved Texas fight song.

WOMEN

*--all the livelong day.*

INT. SENATE HALLWAY, OUTSIDE CHAMBER DOOR -- NIGHT

The chamber doors open...and Wendy, flanked by her fellow Democrats, emerges. The crowd EXPLODES--it's like the Beatles arriving in America. As she makes her way, they loudly sing...

WOMEN

*The Eyes of Texas are upon you,  
You cannot get away.  
Do not think you can escape them  
At night or early in the morn--*

EXT. CAPITOL BUILDING -- NIGHT

The singing has spread to THOUSANDS of women lining the Capitol steps, the grounds, even the streets...far as the eye can see.

WOMEN

*The Eyes of Texas are upon you  
Til Gabriel blows the horn!*

News crews race to capture the scene. Then, a ROAR from the crowd as Wendy--arm in arm with her colleagues--emerges.

WOMEN (CONT'D)

WENDY! WENDY! WENDY!

The camera lights turn on: BLINDING. Wendy tries to see where the crowd ends, but she can't--it seems to go on and on. She pauses to take in this moment: The culmination of everything she's worked for not just today, but her entire life.

A bullhorn passes among the Democrats, from one to another, until it reaches Wendy. She lifts it, takes a deep breath--

INT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION -- LIBRARY -- NIGHT

We see the same scene, but on TV--MUTED. We pull back and see the back of a man in a silk bathrobe, watching it all unfold.

SUPERIMPOSE: Governor Rick Perry (Republican)

He clicks off the TV, picks up the phone. Right away:

VOICE OF PERRY AIDE

*You saw?*

PERRY

I'm calling another session. 30 days. She talked for a day. Let her try and talk for a month.

INT. WILL'S FOYER -- EARLY MORNING

Wendy, bent down and lacing up her now-famous running shoes.

INTERCUT WITH:

ARCHIVAL NEWS REPORT

We SEE a series of rapid-fire TV news reports that inform us:

JUST HOURS AFTER WENDY DAVIS' STUNNING FILIBUSTER VICTORY, GOVERNOR PERRY HAS SHOCKED THE POLITICAL ESTABLISHMENT AND CALLED THE LEGISLATURE BACK INTO YET ANOTHER SPECIAL SESSION. AND THIS TIME, THE ONLY ITEM ON THE AGENDA...IS HOUSE BILL 2.

EXT. RUNNING TRAIL, AUSTIN -- EARLY MORNING

Wendy, now running, picking up speed...

[Note: We INTERCUT--increasingly quickly--between the fast-coming TV news reports and Wendy, running feverishly, each time in different running gear. Time is passing.]

NEWS REPORT: BY PUTTING 30 MORE DAYS ON THE CLOCK, REPUBLICANS TODAY FINALLY GOT WHAT THEY WANTED: THEY PASSED HOUSE BILL 2.

Wendy, sweating, looking as intense as we've ever seen her. She looks angry--no, she's PISSED. Tears begin to well, roll down her cheeks. She BATS them away--she will not stop.

NEWS REPORT: HALF OF TEXAS CLINICS HAVE SHUT THEIR DOORS.

She runs even FASTER, her breathing louder, and LOUDER...

NEWS REPORT: OPPONENTS ARE GOING TO COURT TO TRY AND BLOCK THE NEW LAW.

Wendy is literally RACING, as if her life depends on it...

NEWS REPORT: IN A SWEEPING DECISION, A THREE-JUDGE FEDERAL PANEL HAS UPHOLD TEXAS' CONTROVERSIAL ABORTION LAW.

...a MAD DASH...Wendy's breathing so labored, it's PANTING...

NEWS REPORT: THE U.S. SUPREME COURT HAS ANNOUNCED IT WILL TAKE UP AN APPEAL TO THE CONSTITUTIONALITY OF TEXAS' ABORTION LAW...SETTING UP WHAT BOTH SIDES SAY IS THE MOST IMPORTANT REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS CASE IN A GENERATION.

...KICKING UP so much dust, we can see almost nothing else...

NEWS REPORT: 3 YEARS AND 1 DAY AFTER WENDY DAVIS' HISTORIC FILIBUSTER, THE SUPREME COURT TODAY WILL DECIDE: CAN A STATE UNDERMINE A WOMAN'S RIGHT TO CHOOSE? WE'RE ABOUT TO FIND OUT.

Instantly, Wendy comes to a sudden, JARRING STOP. We see that her hair is longer...she's got a few wrinkles under her eyes.

SUPERIMPOSE: 3 years later

She is DRENCHED, BREATHLESS, SPENT. We SEE on her face: The weight of the world--THIS MOMENT--on her shoulders. She looks out in the distance and sees, looming: The Texas State Capitol.

INT. "JAVA JOINT" COFFEE SHOP -- MORNING

Baristas and customers crowd around a TV. We see: A live CNN report showing frenzied crowds outside the Supreme Court. The chyron reads: "BREAKING NEWS: SUPREME COURT DECISION IMMINENT."

EXT. "JAVA JOINT" COFFEE SHOP -- MORNING -- CONTINUOUS

Wendy approaches the door and sees--through the glass--the crowd gathered around the TV. She goes to open the door, but stops. Instead, she stands there...and takes this moment in.

INT. "JAVA JOINT" COFFEE SHOP -- MORNING -- CONTINUOUS

Anxious chatter from the crowd suddenly SHUSHES--

*CNN REPORTER (ON SCREEN)*

The decision is in! I repeat--the decision is IN. By a vote of 5 to 3, the United States Supreme Court--

EXT. "JAVA JOINT" COFFEE SHOP -- MORNING -- CONTINUOUS

A beat. Then, through the glass, we hear a THUNDEROUS CHEER...and see the crowd embracing, high-fiving, even crying.

From Wendy's POV: The once-Pregnant Barista spots her, waves enthusiastically for Wendy to come inside. But Wendy just stands there...and ever-so-slightly smiles. She turns around, starts walking away...walking faster...until she's running...

...and as she runs, further and further away, we HEAR, through broadcasters, what the whole world is hearing..."HISTORIC DECISION"... "RESOUNDING VICTORY"...and see, streaming down Wendy's face: Tears of unadulterated JOY.

EXT. RUNNING TRAIL, AUSTIN -- MORNING -- CONTINUOUS

...Wendy, still running..."MOMENTOUS"... "TURNING POINT"...and when she's finally alone, she stops. She looks up at the Texas sun, so bright upon her face, and lets out what we clearly SEE, but do not hear: The ROAR OF A LIFETIME.

*VOICE OF NEWS REPORTER*

3 years ago last night, she made the world listen. Today, Wendy Davis was heard.

CUT TO BLACK:

## TITLE CARDS:

"The Supreme Court's decision struck down any law that places an 'undue burden' on a woman's Constitutional right to choose."

"But the fight isn't over. Last year alone, 26 states enacted laws restricting anti-choice laws."

"In one state, survivors of rape must now notify their attackers of their intention to end a pregnancy."

"On the Supreme Court, just ONE vote separates supporters of reproductive rights from opponents."

"At least one of those supporters is weighing retirement."

"Donald Trump would appoint his successor."

[The screen goes dark, and then...]

"Take a stand."

## ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE:

The real-life Wendy Davis turns to the hundreds of cheering women in the Senate Gallery and signals: V for Victory.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END.

## READERS' NOTE:

David Dewhurst was unseated by Dan Patrick in the Republican primary for Lieutenant Governor. Patrick went on to defeat the Democratic nominee, Leticia Van De Putte.

Robert Duncan became Chancellor of the Texas Tech University System.

Rick Perry became Donald Trump's Secretary of Energy.

Kirk Watson and Judith Zaffirini continue to serve in the Texas Senate. Rodney Ellis retired from public service.

Wendy Davis became the Democratic nominee for Governor of Texas. She didn't win the general election...this time.

Today, Wendy leads an organization she founded to empower young women to take action. It's called "Deeds, Not Words."

She has vowed to run again for office.