

LET HER SPEAK

Based on a True Story

Written by

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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) REPORTER
 --and dead armadillos. 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 chickensh**ts.

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 "Cocoon," 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)
Philippians 4:13.

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

TED
"Philippians"?

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--

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 DUEULL)
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!

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

(into phone)

Senator Davis' office, please hold--

LUCY

(into phone)

Hold please, I have four 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
Mr. President! KIRK
Are you out of your mind--

RODNEY
Mr. President, this is-- JOHN
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.

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

SONYA

OFFICER #2

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.

ROBERT DUNCAN
ME? What did I do?

TED

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

KIRK

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

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
 KEEP IT UP! LETICIA
 KEEP IT UP!

RODNEY
 KEEP IT UP! KIRK
 KEEP IT UP!

JUDITH
 KEEP IT UP! JOHN
 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 UPHELD 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.