

THE FIRST LADY

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FADE IN

INT. LOS ANGELES COFFEE SHOP - DAY

The PROFESSOR (78) steps up to the counter.

PROFESSOR

Hi, Tina. Large Cinnamon Roll Frappuccino.

While she works, the BARISTA (23) gestures to the children's book in the professor's hands.

BARISTA

Is that it?

PROFESSOR

Yes, I brought you a copy.

BARISTA

Wow. Thanks. I told my little boy about the baby Chupacabra that got lost at Christmas.

PROFESSOR

Well, now you can read it to him. And it's illustrated.

BARISTA

But why me?

PROFESSOR

Well, you're my friend. And let's be honest... who better? You have a bright inquisitive son and you are a barista in Los Angeles' most prestigious coffee shop. You probably have a better sense of a good story than anyone across the street.

The professor gestures to the enormous/ominous talent agency across the street.

BARISTA

The Death Star? Well. I don't know what the movie people will say, but I'll tell you what little Tony says when we read it. Here's your Cinnamon Roll Frappuccino.

PROFESSOR

I hope you enjoy the story as much as I
enjoy your coffee.

The professor steps away from the counter. He would exit the
shoppe but he's interrupted by the former FIRST LADY (58). She
is seated with her coffee, sunglasses on.

FIRST LADY

Excuse me. I heard you write books for
children.

A very long beat. She lowers her sunglasses so the professor can
have a glimpse. He freezes; this is Hollywood. He needs to test
the veracity of it all... with a trick question.

PROFESSOR

So... may I ask you a question. Why is the
hall in the residence so narrow? What is it
about this wide?

He gestures, a yard or two.

FIRST LADY

The Center Hall? It's not... the hall is more
like a living area. That's where the
television is.

PROFESSOR

My gosh, you are the real deal.

FIRST LADY

Did I pass the test?

PROFESSOR

I'm sorry. It's just that...

The professor surveys the room. No reporters. No security. Just
the normal Hollywood morning bustle.

FIRST LADY

Can I read your book?

PROFESSOR

That was my last copy... there are some more
in my truck. I'll get you a copy. It's just
a block or two down the way... I think...

FIRST LADY
No. No. Not right now.
(beat)
Sit down and tell me about it.

The professor will be a bit unnerved for the entire movie. Even though she invites him, he doesn't sit down.

PROFESSOR
I don't want to impose.

FIRST LADY
No, really. I'd like to hear about it.

PROFESSOR
Small Texas town...

FIRST LADY
Is that where you're from?

PROFESSOR
Yes, ma'am.

FIRST LADY
I guess you really ARE from Texas. Listen to that raw politeness. You sound like John Wayne.

PROFESSOR
Yes, ma'am.

FIRST LADY
Well, what happens? Something at Christmas I heard.

PROFESSOR
At Christmas... a nun finds a baby Chupacabra in a sandstorm. She cares for it over the holidays but the town... well they want to kill it.

FIRST LADY
It's a monster to them?

PROFESSOR
But it's not. It's just a baby.

FIRST LADY

And in the end?

PROFESSOR

Well, let's just say in the end, they're glad they didn't kill it. The story is for kids; of course, it has a happy ending. But there is a twist...

FIRST LADY

What's the twist???

PROFESSOR

Can I trust you with this? Chupacabras aren't goat killing vampires and they're not mangey coyotes...

(whispering)

... they're just harmless extremely shy nocturnal extra-terrestrials.

FIRST LADY

You mean from...

(she gestures up)

Good thing the town didn't kill it.

PROFESSOR

Her. It's a girl chupacabra.

FIRST LADY

Interesting. I'm looking forward to reading it.

Long beat. The professor contemplates things.

PROFESSOR

So, you're newly single...

FIRST LADY

The first First Lady to...

PROFESSOR

to divorce a sitting president.

FIRST LADY

The first sitting president to be divorced...

PROFESSOR

Proud of you. You certainly aren't any
Melania.

FIRST LADY

... with cause.

PROFESSOR

I'm sure there was plenty.

FIRST LADY

It hasn't affected his standing in the
polls; actually, he got a little boost.

PROFESSOR

Well, you're a woman and this is America.

FIRST LADY

What does that mean?

PROFESSOR

The boost, it's not legit. I doubt it was a
scientific poll. Looked doctored to me.

FIRST LADY

But the part about my being a woman.

PROFESSOR

Everyone has an ex-wife in this country. It
mean's you'll take the blame... if you let
them frame you that way.

FIRST LADY

I can be crafty if I have to be.

PROFESSOR

You'll need to be crafty and cagey.

(beat)

Your Ph.D. is the same as mine.

FIRST LADY

Oh, you're a political scientist? I thought...
you were the next Dr. Suess.

PROFESSOR

I think he's dead.

FIRST LADY

So help me out here. Who exactly are you?

PROFESSOR

I taught poli sci for 42 years, small college. You never heard of it.

FIRST LADY

I thought you wrote children's books.

PROFESSOR

It's something I'm toying with... here at the end.

FIRST LADY

The end?

PROFESSOR

I'm seventy-eight.

FIRST LADY

You don't look it.

PROFESSOR

(whispering)

Thanks. They say you want to be the next president.

FIRST LADY

Well, I'm not really interested.

PROFESSOR

Or you're not announcing it... yet.

FIRST LADY

But from one political scientist to another, what do you think of that idea?

PROFESSOR

I can't think of a better reason to run.

(beat)

Revenge politics. "Revenge sex" is so passe, don't you think? The future is "revenge elections."

FIRST LADY

(chuckling)

So cynical. That's the writer in you, not the professor.

PROFESSOR

I wasn't being cynical. I think you should poke him in the eye with a sharp stick.

FIRST LADY

Sharp stick?

PROFESSOR

Iowa? New Hampshire? South Carolina!

FIRST LADY

Really.

PROFESSOR

You're writing a tell-all book.

FIRST LADY

Oh, now that might be a sharp stick.

PROFESSOR

You will sell a lot of copies... but make sure it helps, not hurts things... in Iowa.

FIRST LADY

Iowa is a mystery to me.

PROFESSOR

It's a mystery for almost everyone. Because almost none of those morons were raised on a farm.

(beat)

It's all about farm policy... you'll have to study up... but for now... just use the book to expose not just the "broken vows" but also his "broken policies."

FIRST LADY

Nice. Thank you. I just might.

PROFESSOR

And until the book comes out, maybe some Op-Ed pieces... to support our frozen allies in Europe.

FIRST LADY

I was thinking of our non-Chinese speaking allies in Asia.

PROFESSOR

Why not both?

FIRST LADY

You're making me nervous standing there.. please sit down.

The professor nervously takes a seat at her table.

PROFESSOR

Where's the secret service?

FIRST LADY

It's a secret.

PROFESSOR

I probably won't buy that... Can I cut to the chase?

FIRST LADY

Sure. Why not?

PROFESSOR

What are you going to do? I mean you're no Tess Carlisle.

FIRST LADY

She was fictional and I'm well... real. She was widowed... and I'm definitely divorced.

PROFESSOR

You've seen that movie?

FIRST LADY

I've seen every movie with a president in it. I'm from here remember? Just down the street.

PROFESSOR

I knew you were from Hollywood.

FIRST LADY

My book was the *American President in Cinema*.

PROFESSOR

I didn't know that.

FIRST LADY

I'm remembering that Tess movie. There isn't any way in hell a woman like Tess Carlisle would remarry.

PROFESSOR

But if a President is widowed, he's remarried inside a year... and it's perfectly acceptable.

FIRST LADY

Even if he's divorced.

PROFESSOR

That was tasteless of him. He could have at least waited to remarry until after the midterms.

FIRST LADY

But your point was widowed First Ladies don't remarry.

PROFESSOR

Sad; I doubt they even fool around.

FIRST LADY

The First Lady, that's sacred territory?

PROFESSOR

Like, she's part of the fabric holding us together?

FIRST LADY

Not untrue. But all along... it's in the back of your head... the far back.

PROFESSOR

But it's there?

FIRST LADY

I'll admit it.

(beat)

Hey, that's Chapter One. Martha Washington and Abigail Adams. Any others I should mention?

PROFESSOR

Well, that's your department. But Jackie.

FIRST LADY

Thanks; any other ideas?

PROFESSOR

So, I was just thinking... like you loved them when you were at the alter, but it's like ten times Inauguration Day?

FIRST LADY

No. Only three times that day, and after that, it's back to acceptable levels.

PROFESSOR

Acceptable, hah. Well, congratulations; you're not a widow. AND the first person gets to establish the rules... George Washington, he set the rules... and the widows of all the Presidents, the same.

FIRST LADY

There aren't any rules for White House divorcees.

PROFESSOR

You get to write the rules. Every White House divorcee in the future will look to you for precedent.

FIRST LADY

You are serious? People will look at me, what I do?

PROFESSOR

Sure. And rather more than you think.

FIRST LADY

You think there will be a run on divorces?

PROFESSOR

Well, you broke the monkey's back. Sure there will be more White House divorces.

FIRST LADY

Think, I'll get the blame for those as well?

PROFESSOR

The gossip industry is divided on you, if you'll remarry?

FIRST LADY

That's what I'm doing here, writing the rules?

PROFESSOR

And, you know if you're photographed... er... uh...

FIRST LADY

The tabloids will say I'm looking for a man...

PROFESSOR

Film executives do come in here all the time.

FIRST LADY

And, I am looking to level up.

PROFESSOR

A level up from the current president? You're in the wrong neighbourhood. The wastewater treatment plant is out in Playa Del Rey. That's your one level up.

FIRST LADY

(chuckling)

You're a bit quick, aren't you?

PROFESSOR

You're tired of it all? Heard it all?

FIRST LADY

It's been two years; I think I've heard it all.

PROFESSOR

Maybe not all... I have a few ideas.

FIRST LADY

Can't a man and woman just be friends?

PROFESSOR

(chuckling)

Sure. Of course. It's the story of my life.
But, if we were photographed together...

FIRST LADY

It's a coffee shop. Who cares really?

PROFESSOR

You should care.

(beat)

I was a dog show judge... a dog breeder before
that.

FIRST LADY

That's no crime.

PROFESSOR

It is, in your political party.

FIRST LADY

Who said anything about that political
party?

A very long beat.

PROFESSOR

You ARE going to run, aren't you? You're
going to cross over to the other party and
run against the...

FIRST LADY

Bastard? Adulterer... PIC?

PROFESSOR

PIC?

FIRST LADY

Partner in crime... that's what he called
them.

PROFESSOR

He used that phrase with all twelve of them?

FIRST LADY

The twelve that we know about.

PROFESSOR

I spent a night in jail before.

(beat)

Well, just to be upfront. The Secret Service would NEVER let me sit here with you.

FIRST LADY

Honestly? Well, then I guess I can do the same. I told the Secret Service, AND their boss and their boss's boss to jump in the Pacific yesterday.

PROFESSOR

I missed that on the news. Evidently, they missed the note. They're all in Florida.

The professor gestured to the café's television. A smiling/waving prick walks down the stairs from *Air Force One*.

FIRST LADY

I don't want anything to do with them anymore. Nixon renounced his right to protection; did you know that?

PROFESSOR

And you feel like following Nixon's lead? You can call them tomorrow and get your protection back. Do it now, in fact.

FIRST LADY

I don't know if I wanna do that.

PROFESSOR

OK, I understand. I mean, I want to understand.

FIRST LADY

I found a crusty sock. In my clothes drawer.

PROFESSOR

That's a bit juvenile. His sock or yours?

FIRST LADY

A second guy was ranking up on *Call of Duty* when the drug addict stole my scooter.

PROFESSOR

Now, that I heard about on the news. You have a license for that thing?

FIRST LADY

Of course... and well... this last joker threw out \$300 worth of steaks. And fed my dog vegan dog food for almost a week.

They drink their coffee. The professor glances at her shapely leg. She catches him oogling at her.

FIRST LADY

Really?

PROFESSOR

I'm sorry, your leg; I'm not very sly am I?

FIRST LADY

I'll get over it.

PROFESSOR

That's good; I probably won't.

FIRST LADY

A minute ago, you sort of scoffed at the idea men and women could be just friends.

PROFESSOR

I always chuckle at the idea of just friendship theory. That's like *just war theory*, isn't it? But it hasn't gotten me into trouble, yet anyway. Has it?

FIRST LADY

No, but I did notice a little something you did with your voice.

PROFESSOR

Sorry; back at my college, a student said he wanted to find the answer...

FIRST LADY

One of your students?

PROFESSOR

I'd never allow any such foolishness. It was a sociology student. They'll allow any silly inquiry over there.

FIRST LADY

Hungry for students.

PROFESSOR

Intellectual freedom is what they call it.

FIRST LADY

Hah! Let's study everything in a haphazard way, throw it out there and see what sticks.

PROFESSOR

Life isn't a refrigerator. So anyway, this kid made a video. He walked around the library and asked everyone, "can men and women be just friends?"

FIRST LADY

So what did they say?

PROFESSOR

The women said "yes." And the men said, "uhh... no."

FIRST LADY

I can see that...

PROFESSOR

But one thing was very clear. The women spoke up immediately, "yes." And the men hesitated... like they wanted to be idealistic... but in the end, they felt like since it was on tape... they needed to be honest. They said, "no."

FIRST LADY

So what would you have said?

PROFESSOR

I mean, we're biologically men I know. So of course we're gonna have those caveman feelings but the modern man we can; we can just be friends. We can be content with just friendship.

FIRST LADY

But it's in your best interest sometimes say that?

PROFESSOR

Well with the modern media, some men have evolved you know.

FIRST LADY

So the guy went back to the women? And showed their hypocrisy?

PROFESSOR

You saw it on youtube?

FIRST LADY

I don't watch that sort of stuff, but it stands to reason.

PROFESSOR

The kid asked the women if they had any current male friends... of course, they all did. They named them and talked about them.

FIRST LADY

And then he made them admit that their friends would bone them if they wanted them to?

PROFESSOR

They all admitted, probably or gave a definite, yes, if they wanted to... er uh...

(beat)

And then the kid from sociology told them... "So what you're saying is men and women can't be friends?" They responded, "No, we can be friends. The women stressed the "can" in some normative political fantasy.

FIRST LADY

I think there are a lot of one-sided friendships. Repressed men.

PROFESSOR

I think women just want a reserve supply of...

FIRST LADY

Sperm?

PROFESSOR

I'm glad you said it and not me.

FIRST LADY

I just say what's on my mind.

PROFESSOR

Well, you're gonna have to stop doing that.

FIRST LADY

Iowa? They don't like sperm?

PROFESSOR

No, I think their problem would be more with the evolution.

FIRST LADY

I see what you're getting at.

PROFESSOR

Women keeping a stable of male friends... I'm sure that's something from evolution. Like what if her main contributor is gored by a wooly mammoth?

FIRST LADY

Is that actually scientific?

PROFESSOR

Next time I see David Buss in Austin, I'll ask him.

FIRST LADY

I read that book. He's in Austin now?

PROFESSOR

Second most important book ever written.

FIRST LADY

Okay, the Bible... But the second has to be *The Prince*.

PROFESSOR

Oh, screw Machiavelli. One, there is a rapper living off the name. Two, there is a new paradigm about to begin.

FIRST LADY

Really? Enlighten me.

PROFESSOR

The true conflict is no longer between the enlightend and the unenlightened.

FIRST LADY

Between the woke and the unwoke?

PROFESSOR

Not between the upper and lower classes. It's not the left vs. right. Law vs. Freedom. The new political cleavages will be between men and women.

FIRST LADY

That's been going on for a while.

PROFESSOR

Not like it's about to in this next election cycle...

FIRST LADY

You're writing a book, I hope?

PROFESSOR

They already did that; it's about this thick. It's called *Biology I*. Overpriced textbook for a subject that hasn't changed... ever.

PROFESSOR

No, I mean your spin on the election.

PROFESSOR

The Biological Civil War of 2036. A hologram book cover, so when you tilt the cover... there I am giving them this.

Tongue-in-cheek, he makes a gesture with his hands - finger in hole gesture.

FIRST LADY

Sex is a private thing, no?

PROFESSOR

Not for me. At my age? It's just public policy.

FIRST LADY

Hehe, you are so unorthodoxed...

PROFESSOR

Thank you.

FIRST LADY

And you may be right.

PROFESSOR

It has always been about power. Chapter One of every freshman textbook I ever taught out of. A struggle for who gets what and how - between systems, paradigms, economic classes. Whatever factions.

FIRST LADY

But all that is less obvious now?

PROFESSOR

Correct! It's becoming more and more a struggle between men vs. women.

FIRST LADY

Especially, right now, in this town.

PROFESSOR

Lenin was a sissy baby in history next to Harvey Weinstein. All that has really changed things... politically... you should ride that wave...

FIRST LADY

Nice surfing pun... but, that's been tried before. 2016 was supposed to be a shoo-in.

PROFESSOR

Yes, but you divorced the dirt clod. She didn't divorce him; what was she thinking?

FIRST LADY

Maybe she loved him?

PROFESSOR

From what I know about women; that's not likely after all that... behaviour.

FIRST LADY

Well, I can't argue with you there.

PROFESSOR

You need to ride all this female/male angst and reclaim what's yours.

FIRST LADY

I don't want him anymore.

PROFESSOR

You think I mean the president? No, I mean the White House. Let Girl Scout troops decorate the Christmas trees and you walk directly into the Oval Office.

FIRST LADY

Cute. Your student with the video camera...

PROFESSOR

Not my student. He belonged to the sociology department.

FIRST LADY

He should have asked the men if the only reason they were friends with these women was the slight chance they might put out.

PROFESSOR

He did and of course, they wanted to... er, uh, "do" their female friend.

FIRST LADY

The men didn't want to be friends, not even a little?

PROFESSOR

Well, a little.

(beat)

When I was in college I had a girl tell me that.

FIRST LADY

A woman?

PROFESSOR

No, I mean she was a girl. We were kids, late into our lives. She said, "I love you, but you're just my friend."

FIRST LADY

What?

PROFESSOR

That's what she said.

FIRST LADY

And that pretty much ended it?

PROFESSOR

No. I thought I just needed to go a little longer and wear her down.

FIRST LADY

And did it work?

PROFESSOR

No, as a matter of fact. It might have, but I moved on to graduate school.

FIRST LADY

There is always one party who hopes to bone.

PROFESSOR

Biology.

FIRST LADY

I think, yeah; ulterior motives are probably pretty common.

PROFESSOR

And it likely started that way.

FIRST LADY

Well, certainly when I think of my own experiences, through like high school into college. Yeah, that's how it started.

PROFESSOR

Well, I'm a bit far from your high school and college. I mean "we" are... how old?

They sit for a moment and look at the people; no one seems to care much. But more importantly, no one appears to be listening.

PROFESSOR

I've seen photos of you as a teen. From your ex's convention.

FIRST LADY

Please, that was so embarrassing.

PROFESSOR

I think you influenced Brian Wilson's *Surfer Girl*.

FIRST LADY

Never heard that one, before. I was eight months old in September of 1963.

PROFESSOR

You looked it up? That proves you've heard that before.

FIRST LADY

They did put that trash out there. You know my husband's communications staffers.

PROFESSOR

It's not trash. You were eight months old when it was released? What day did he write the song? Your birthday?

FIRST LADY

I don't know.

PROFESSOR

Well, it seems all a bit coincidental to me,
cosmic even. Do you believe in reincarnation?

FIRST LADY

Thank you, but I always thought of myself as
Sandy.

PROFESSOR

From *Grease*?

FIRST LADY

Where were you in 1978?

PROFESSOR

Reading for my doctorate in Ireland. I think
Danny was my roomie.

FIRST LADY

You're from Texas and you still say
"reading" for a degree.

PROFESSOR

(Irish accent)

Just to throw people off... haha and be a bit
mysterious. On Grammarly, when it asks you
what dialect of English you want GB or US.

FIRST LADY

Did you check GB?

PROFESSOR

C-O-L-O-U-R

FIRST LADY

Sometimes I put a U in humour.

PROFESSOR

(Irish accent)

And I have a killer Irish accent. When I get
bored or my feet get sore from walking
around making friends, I call these people's
secretaries and try to charm them.

FIRST LADY

It works?

PROFESSOR

No. Not yet. I'll never get an agent. But it's a very good accent.

FIRST LADY

Maybe they want genuine.

PROFESSOR

Hollywood? Where everyone has an act.

FIRST LADY

Well, as odd as it sounds. They are afraid of cheats and scammers. You should just be yourself.

PROFESSOR

As a writer, I've never actually considered being myself.

FIRST LADY

Maybe you should?

PROFESSOR

I was raised on a farm. I eat meat. I think capitalism (in general) makes the world a better place. And you want me to just announce that? In this town?

FIRST LADY

You have a point. I guess you have to do what you have to do.

They sit for a moment and survey the coffee shop.

PROFESSOR

Well, I've gotta go see a man about a dog.

(beat)

You gonna be here when I get back?

FIRST LADY

What does that even mean?

PROFESSOR

The only thing it would mean to me is I'm not dreaming.

(beat)

Oh, you mean about the dog?

(beat)
One second.

INT. MEN'S RESTROOM

The professor stands at the urinal, anxious to get back out to the table. Another PATRON enters and stands at the other urinal.

PROFESSOR
Damn slow urine stream...

The patron wouldn't normally be speaking while standing at the urinal but his curiosity gets the better of him.

PATRON
Hey, is that the First Lady you're with out there?

PROFESSOR
Oh, No. I wish. She's the body double.
Hollywood bullshit you know.

PATRON
Oh. I guess she's making a ton these days?

PROFESSOR
I guess. But there is this big fight over on the lot. This lady... she's really too tall, so they have to do all this fancy camera work to hide it.

PATRON
Oh, yea. Now that you mention it; she is kinda tall.

PROFESSOR
But they ARE similar.

PATRON
Okay, have a good day.

The Professor is still at the urinal, waiting. The other man exits.

INT. LOS ANGELES COFFEE SHOP - DAY

The professor exits the restroom, and the First Lady is gone. The professor is devastated. We expect him to shrug and get over it. There is a very long beat. He has a glimmer of hope. Her coffee cup is on the table.

PROFESSOR

She wouldn't leave a full cup. She'd take it with her.

He picks her cup up and shakes it...

PROFESSOR

Empty.

He glances at the trash by the doorway out. He slides back into depression. He's puzzled, hand on head. He's playing the entire conversation all over in his brain...

PROFESSOR

What'd I say to make her bolt?

He pulls his shirt up to his nose. It doesn't seem to smell.

Suddenly, things change. The First Lady emerges from the lady's restroom. For a fraction of a second she notices the disappointed look on his face. She smiles. She's back lit. Sexy walk back to the table.

He signals to the barista, two more.

PROFESSOR

I was just... let me get you another.

FIRST LADY

Thank you, professor.

He stops and whispers.

PROFESSOR

I'll be right back, Madame President.

He takes the two empties to the trash bin. The barista is quick.

The professor walks from the trash bin to the counter. The barista has two new coffee cups. The professor hands the barista some cash.

BARISTA

No, it's okay.
(whispering)
She's an icon!

PROFESSOR

She rather is; isn't she.

BARISTA

You keep chatting her up and I'll keep the coffee flowing.

He puts the twenty in the tip jar.

PROFESSOR

I appreciate that.

BARISTA

You don't really need any encouragement, do you?

PROFESSOR

Well... Rome wasn't built in a day.

BARISTA

I think you're making progress.

PROFESSOR

Ya think?

BARISTA

You go together nicely, I think. Otherwise, you'd have to leave.

PROFESSOR

Good, you protect her. You should be in the secret service.

BARISTA

This is her's and this is yours.

Her cup has "First Lady" written on it and his cup has, "Lucky Man" written on it.

The professor chuckles. The professor returns to the table with the two cups.

FIRST LADY

What was that about?

PROFESSOR

She's funny?

(beat)

She asked me if we wanted kids.

FIRST LADY

Hah, she IS funny.

PROFESSOR

So tell me about this agent who threw out your steaks?

FIRST LADY

Well, that won't happen again. I can promise you that.

PROFESSOR

Given the situation... maybe he... urh...

FIRST LADY

That occurred to me; it was done on orders.

PROFESSOR

Or maybe he was just looking for a promotion.

FIRST LADY

Men generally stick together, don't they?

PROFESSOR

True, and at that level... wow.

FIRST LADY

Relationships can get so nasty. I really hate that it's that way.

PROFESSOR

Well, if the president wants something done... in the Oval Office and he says something like 'I hope' or 'I suggest' or 'Would you be willing to?',

FIRST LADY

There are ten people around him that would take that sort of talk as a directive.

PROFESSOR

Won't someone rid me of this meddlesome priest?

FIRST LADY

He says something like that and the next day someone empties my freezer.

PROFESSOR

So, you called Home Land Security?

FIRST LADY

Oh, hell no.

PROFESSOR

So, how'd you get rid of him?

FIRST LADY

He wouldn't leave... I confronted him with the evidence.

PROFESSOR

The dog's diarrhea?

FIRST LADY

And told him to get the F out. I nearly had to call the LAPD.

PROFESSOR

So what happened?

FIRST LADY

I didn't call the LAPD until the next day, when he drove by. And they said to call the Secret Service. I called the Assistant Director, Office of Professional Responsibility. A woman.

PROFESSOR

You knew her?

FIRST LADY

No, but she's about 12 down on the organizational chart.

PROFESSOR

Make sure you put that in your book.

(beat)

The only person you could trust in the entire organization was a woman.

FIRST LADY

AND, halfway down the organizational chart.

PROFESSOR

How did it all start?

FIRST LADY

I went to see the grandkids a little over a week ago, I wasn't going to be able to bring my dog; he's huge. So Mr. New Age volunteered to take care of the dog. He had to be at the house anyway.

PROFESSOR

The five-year-old agent?

FIRST LADY

Yes. Regardless of the previous two losers, I trusted him. He's a vegan; I already told you that. But for Christ's sake, he was/is a Secret Service agent.

PROFESSOR

Maybe.

FIRST LADY

I had plenty of dog food, gave him very specific instructions. When I got back this joker was still in my house pouring vegan dog food into my dog's bowl.

(beat)

I noticed that the kind he was using was different from the kind I had left behind and used myself. I asked him if that kind had run out and he hadn't told me about it.

PROFESSOR

You're supposed to transition when you change dog foods.

FIRST LADY

Duh; I'd told him to call me if there were any complications.

(beat)

And then he told me he had thrown away the dog food that I had given him and instead used vegan dog food.

(beat)

I didn't know that they made vegan dog food. Well, I guess I'm not surprised.

PROFESSOR

I don't see the purpose; you can make it. It's probably just like carrots, potatoes, corn.

FIRST LADY

Well, if they get hungry enough dogs'll eat whatever. Maybe even tofu.

PROFESSOR

If I owned a vegan dog food company, every once in a while, I'd throw a pigeon, armadillo or a possum (some sort of road kill) in there just for spite.

FIRST LADY

That's like spitting on someone's burger.

PROFESSOR

(chuckling)

Yeah, it is.

FIRST LADY

It was mostly corn. I read the package.

PROFESSOR

When is the last time you turned on Animal Planet saw a wild dog attack and take down a corn plant?

FIRST LADY

Never.

PROFESSOR
Of course, it's not natural.

FIRST LADY
I never go against nature.

PROFESSOR
Mother nature.

FIRST LADY
I was angry with him about my dog having the runs... but that's not all he had also taken the opportunity to throw away all of the meat in my freezer including a tenderloin, I was saving for my birthday.

PROFESSOR
Happy birthday.

FIRST LADY
That's next week. Thanks. He pitched out the shrimp too.

PROFESSOR
Shrimp? That's not meat!

FIRST LADY
I saw a cat digging through my trash and went crazy and told him to get the bleep out of my house. That was the second time I told him to get out.

PROFESSOR
Were you compensated for what he threw out?

FIRST LADY
I'm right but my family and friends are blowing up my phone telling me I'm wrong.

PROFESSOR
For not wanting the protection?

FIRST LADY
No! For not feeding Rosco P. Coltrane vegan.

PROFESSOR

You named your dog after the sheriff of Hazzard County?

FIRST LADY

You can't tell anyone, but yes.

PROFESSOR

Your family and friends are vegans?

FIRST LADY

No, but they're from California. I can't believe I grew up here.

PROFESSOR

Good thing you did! Fifty-two electroal college votes.

FIRST LADY

We're not what we were, but I see what you mean. Who says no to 52 votes?

PROFESSOR

Listen, there is the distinct possibility you can win Texas. We love meat and the Dukes.

FIRST LADY

I liked *Gomer Pyle*. And I REALLY liked *Friday Night Lights*.

PROFESSOR

Texas is a lock, babe.

(long beat)

Did I just call you, babe?

FIRST LADY

You did.

PROFESSOR

I'm gonna stop doing that and comeback to that in a week or two if you don't mind.

FIRST LADY

I won't worry about it, for a week or two... and probably won't worry at all, unless I never hear it again.

PROFESSOR

Well, what I mean... This entire secret service story goes in the book. Right?

FIRST LADY

But the vegans. They vote.

PROFESSOR

This Secret Service thing, the divorce, it runs deeper than any food or lifestyle choice.

FIRST LADY

True.

PROFESSOR

No one ever said the key to a woman's heart is salad.

FIRST LADY

Relationships matter more.

PROFESSOR

And the dog this is HIGHLY symbolic. And ANY harassment is way out of bounds.

FIRST LADY

True.

PROFESSOR

Just the idea he would use the protection against you... 10 million votes right there.

FIRST LADY

There are 170 million women...

PROFESSOR

Females? Well, that means... what? Half were cheated on?

FIRST LADY

Or they cheated. Or they love my... the current dickhead's hair.

PROFESSOR

So, you can safely say... how many votes are we gonna lose with that?

FIRST LADY

I don't know. How many women have been shunned and then "ironically" stalked? Harassed by their ex?

PROFESSOR

I once signed my ex up for free bible literature.

FIRST LADY

I'm not sure that counts.

(beat)

Their ex doesn't want to have sex with them anymore but he still needs to influence events.

PROFESSOR

Control events.

FIRST LADY

Intimidate them.

PROFESSOR

And your family doesn't see the...

(beat)

You need to move to Texas. We have salads but without California's brain-eating microbes.

FIRST LADY

Are you inviting me to Texas?

PROFESSOR

Maybe a focus group could tell us something?

FIRST LADY

Listen, I have a fantasy...

She leans forward for extra privacy and whispers. The professor is nervous off the charts.

FIRST LADY

(sexily)

If I remain here... maybe I can win Texas AND California.

The professor whispers in return.

PROFESSOR

Is there enough sanity left in the electorate for you to win both?

FIRST LADY

I'm sorry... that was a bit over-sexualized. I just wanted to see your reaction.

PROFESSOR

Well, you already had my attention since that comment about political parties. But it's nice to know you haven't checked out.

FIRST LADY

Trust me, I'm not checked out.

PROFESSOR

Well, I'm not on the pill if that's what you're asking.

FIRST LADY

What?

(beat)

Right now... I just want someone to talk to...

PROFESSOR

I'm all ears. Speaking of ears... you need to have your house swept for bugs.

The professor quickly surveys the room; he checks the table for listening devices...

FIRST LADY

Did that, yesterday.

PROFESSOR

Who'd you use?

FIRST LADY

Someone my literary agent arranged.

PROFESSOR
They're in the phone book?

FIRST LADY
Don't know.

PROFESSOR
Find out. We can check them out.
(beat)
Sometimes the bad guys... use a debugging
operation to bug a place.
(beat)
What'd they find?

FIRST LADY
Just the locator on my car.

PROFESSOR
That goes in the book.

FIRST LADY
I think that's standard with protectees.

PROFESSOR
Yes, but most people don't realize that...
what? Half would blame the president's men.

FIRST LADY
All the President's Men?

PROFESSOR
I know every academic is taught the truth is
the most important value.

FIRST LADY
A lot of teachers value that. Sure.

PROFESSOR
But this is politics. You are about to be a
politician. Your interior decorating job is
over... this is hardball.

FIRST LADY
(a slight depression)
Please don't turn me into my husband.

PROFESSOR

I'm not going to make you do anything. I'm sorry. I'm just trying to fit in here. Play every card; that's my niche here.

FIRST LADY

I see, and you're right. Everybody needs a niche.

PROFESSOR

They need scratched.

FIRST LADY

Huh?

PROFESSOR

Niche, itch.

FIRST LADY

Oh, cute; I get it.

PROFESSOR

Your ex-husband is President of the United States.

FIRST LADY

He's also... a rat-fink liar and had a personality dis...

PROFESSOR

Wait, what?

FIRST LADY

No, no. I didn't mean that.

PROFESSOR

You know what the phrase "loose cannon" means?

FIRST LADY

Sure. I've seen a few editorial cartoons... something about a ship...

PROFESSOR

Someone who's words tend to backfire.

FIRST LADY

I meant I don't want to stand up anywhere
and lie.

PROFESSOR

About the tracking device?

FIRST LADY

Yes. Everyone knows it's always done.

PROFESSOR

Everyone doesn't know that.

FIRST LADY

Well, that's my point.

PROFESSOR

But it's not a lie... it's an omission.

FIRST LADY

This business...

PROFESSOR

This business is the only path to where you
want to go.

FIRST LADY

I know.

PROFESSOR

And this business is full of omissions. And
head-fakes and hidden agendas. You'll have
to play all these... uh... ugly games.

FIRST LADY

You're sitting here with me for romantic or
political reasons?

PROFESSOR

Romantic. I'm done with politics... remember I
write children's books now.

FIRST LADY

Maybe helping me, giving me advice, is
counterproductive.

PROFESSOR

Being your friend, and ally, might be ineffectual, or what in Texas we call "a water haul," but helping a lady is never counterproductive.

FIRST LADY

But did you ever think?

PROFESSOR

No, it never occurred to me. Until about ten minutes ago.

(long beat)

I celebrated New Year's Eve one year in New Orleans with Miss West Virginia. Brunette. Probably the most attractive woman in half the city that night, I'm guessing.

FIRST LADY

What happened?

PROFESSOR

She had a fiance at the Naval Academy.

FIRST LADY

And *Top Gun* had just come out?

PROFESSOR

No, I think this was about twenty years before that, well before that. But still... yes.

FIRST LADY

She wanted a naval aviator. *An Officer and a Gentleman*.

PROFESSOR

You really know your movies.

FIRST LADY

I do.

PROFESSOR

She told me nothing was going to happen. She made sure I understood that. And I'm not dumb. I heard her the first three times she said it.

(beat)

She kept reminding me, but she didn't need to, that I could leave her... that she'd be okay.

FIRST LADY

And you didn't leave her.

PROFESSOR

Of course not; it was a bar. And not just any bar; three-dollar hurricanes. How chicken shit would it be to walk away?

FIRST LADY

So you just made chit chat all night?

PROFESSOR

Pretty much.

FIRST LADY

Am I Miss West Virginia?

PROFESSOR

Same as with her; you can be whatever you wanna be.

(beat)

You toured Annapolis with the grim reaper? In the snow that day?

FIRST LADY

That's not really my style. The winter on the East coast really sucks.

PROFESSOR

What is your style?

FIRST LADY

California coffee houses.

PROFESSOR

You like coffee?

FIRST LADY

Not so much; mostly I like the conversation.

PROFESSOR

Yea, you meet the most unusual people.

FIRST LADY

Imagine that; me meeting you here?

PROFESSOR

Well, I like the way you phrased that. Words mean things, "meeting me," haha. I'm flattered.

FIRST LADY

I like the way you said, "unusual" too.

PROFESSOR

You are something, that's for sure.

FIRST LADY

I'm sorry. I just threw myself at you.

PROFESSOR

You didn't.

FIRST LADY

It's just I heard you talking about children's books... and...

PROFESSOR

Well... I'm glad you overheard.

FIRST LADY

I thought you were innocent enough.

PROFESSOR

Good thing for you I'm not.

FIRST LADY

Welcome to the team.

PROFESSOR

That is an honour. Nothing said between us will ever...

FIRST LADY

... be interesting enough to share.

PROFESSOR

Probably not. True.

FIRST LADY

Thank you. I trust you.

PROFESSOR

Mum is the word... for you but also for me.

FIRST LADY

You're running for president too?

PROFESSOR

No, but if people found out I sat at a table with Miss West Virginia the entire night at the drunkest, most hedonistic party, in all of French Quarter history. All my friends who I'm sure got laid... and nothing ever happened with me.

FIRST LADY

And now it's happened again.

PROFESSOR

Think of my reputation.

FIRST LADY

I didn't know you had a reputation.

PROFESSOR

I mean I would have a reputation if I could.

FIRST LADY

You didn't even try to kiss her?

PROFESSOR

No. She had a rock on about the size of Rhode Island. But I made her laugh... I made her laugh a lot. I think I hurt her stomach.

(beat)

You know when you laugh a lot and your stomach cramps up a bit, because she was holding it like this...

The professor gestures like he's split a gut.

PROFESSOR

Seventy-eight years and my biggest conquest was making a beauty queen laugh.

(beat)

Uncontrollably...

FIRST LADY

But still... that's something.

PROFESSOR

I hope she was standing at the alter... about to say "I do" but thinking... "damn that Texas guy was funny."

FIRST LADY

Maybe she did.

PROFESSOR

Maybe she was in front of the priest saying in her head, "I feel the need for speed."

FIRST LADY

Maybe you're her life's one regret.

PROFESSOR

I don't think women work that way... to me (the ones I want anyway) they're laser-focused. And besides, back then the military academy appointments went to well-connected the sons of aristocrats. I really had no chance at all.

FIRST LADY

I'm sorry. It seems like you've thought a lot about it.

PROFESSOR

No, but you just reminded me of it. I guess it's just funny.

FIRST LADY

Sounds like nostalgia.

PROFESSOR

I think I was just a time suck...

FIRST LADY

So she wouldn't be bored and have to reject the 50 guys that would have come at her (drunk) and not wanting to hear, "no."

PROFESSOR

Really? Ya think?

FIRST LADY

Come on professor, I mean that's a no brainer... a girl can reject 50 offers or she can make a friend. You're a tall man.

PROFESSOR

Big enough to frighten her tormenters?

FIRST LADY

Keep the wolves at bay.

PROFESSOR

I didn't think of that. I thought she wanted to laugh.

FIRST LADY

What was her name?

PROFESSOR

I think we're in a relationship minefield here already. I think it can be just as dangerous... naming the women you didn't go to bed with, as it is naming women you did.

FIRST LADY

I don't think you even remember her name.

PROFESSOR

You're right. I don't remember. I do remember the state. Okay, you caught me; I have Alzheimer's.

FIRST LADY

Really?

PROFESSOR

No. I'm just kidding. There's more wrong with me than Alzheimer's, but I don't remember what it is.

FIRST LADY

Kidding, right?

PROFESSOR

Well, that's what I do? I observe phenomena and interpret it in a way that makes people say, "no way!"

FIRST LADY

You can't tell a woman on your first date that you have Alzheimer's.

PROFESSOR

Oh, you thought I was serious? I'm sorry. But don't men lie to women all the time.

FIRST LADY

Yes, pretty much.

PROFESSOR

Well, if a man did tell you he had Alzheimer's, why wouldn't you assume he's lying?

FIRST LADY

Because that's a big thing.

PROFESSOR

And men only tell little lies to women.

(long beat)

I don't know the girl's name.

FIRST LADY

When was this?

PROFESSOR

Well, at least fifty years ago. 1970s.

FIRST LADY

You know telling me about the West Virginia thing... it's opening a door I didn't even know we're standing at.

PROFESSOR

My greatest triumph, also, being my greatest screw-up?

FIRST LADY

You don't say the F-word do you?

PROFESSOR

If I thought any one of a dozen intelligence services weren't listening... I might.

FIRST LADY

I won't tell a sole about West Virginia.

PROFESSOR

Of course not, there isn't any market for foolish stories.

FIRST LADY

I thought it was quite touching.

PROFESSOR

I have no idea why I told you that. I think I have some sort of disability talking with women.

FIRST LADY

How long has this disability been going on?

PROFESSOR

Well, since I sat down here for sure.

FIRST LADY

What's your disability called?

PROFESSOR

Romance deficit disorder.

FIRST LADY

Don't you know how this works? We're bonding.

PROFESSOR

About how long will that take?

FIRST LADY

A new relationship is like a movie... you have to go through all this dialogue for whatever happens at the end to mean something.

FIRST LADY

Okay, so how long is the movie?

FIRST LADY

Is everything a joke with you?

PROFESSOR

You've grinned what, four times in forty minutes? That's not bad. And it seems to be about my only card, especially these days.

FIRST LADY

What about the election?

PROFESSOR

I think you have that under control, doctor.

FIRST LADY

I thought I was an interior decorator.

PROFESSOR

Don't listen to me. I'm old and I'm being eclectic/eccentric trying to fit in... here in California.

FIRST LADY

Well, you might have to listen to me, then.

PROFESSOR

More secret fantasies?

FIRST LADY

I blame six of my ex-husband's female relatives and friends led by my sister-in-law.

PROFESSOR

THAT does not go in the book.

(beat)

Well maybe, I wouldn't blame anyone specifically, but let's hear it.

FIRST LADY

From the very beginning, on AOL, they loved talking about how awful I was. Oh how super messed up I was. That I don't share any of my time with them. I didn't share any of their families hobbies, religion or physical characteristics.

PROFESSOR

That's way back there and maybe you were too pretty.

FIRST LADY

When we were still in grad school, they photoshopped my face onto a Grinch's body.

PROFESSOR

Well, let me tell you a story. I showed dogs... I had tickets to the local show... so I gave them to some students... the only students who could go were two athletes, black girls, volleyball players. Very nice kids.

(beat)

Well, they came back the next Monday and said, "Professor, that was interesting but your friends really have potty mouths." I had no idea what they meant because those things generally involve really well-to-do upper-crust people.

FIRST LADY

What happened?

PROFESSOR

One of them said it was the word, "bitch," that everyone one was calling each other a bitch.

(beat)

It got really silent in the classroom... and then about half the class laughed and then the other half asked their neighbour what was so funny.

FIRST LADY

What'd you do?

PROFESSOR

Well, I explained that "bitch" was what you properly call a female dog. And sure at a dog show, you hear that word all the time.

(beat)

So some basketball player about 6'8" raised his hand, "so why is it that black girls

back at my high school first thing they start calling each other are, "bitches."

FIRST LADY

You explained they're calling each other female dogs?

PROFESSOR

Of course. But the basketball player wanted to know why bitch means females. Why?

FIRST LADY

Good question.

PROFESSOR

Well, the only explanation I could think about was about how they fight. I told them when two male dogs fight it's face to face... and if you find a puncture wound it's on their neck, face, on their chest or on their front legs. They square up like boys fought in the hall at their old high schools.

(beat)

But, when female dogs fight, they will stalk one another from behind and if you find injuries, a lot of the time, the wounds will be on the rear legs or butt.

(beat)

You know, the basketball player he said, the black girls fought like that over at Roosevelt... they would wait until the other girl turned her back and out came the hair picks and other weapons.

(beat)

Well, with this the class roared with laughter, it was way too loud. The dean of students walked down to the classroom and opened the door. Looked in. They laughed at him, which was okay. He left.

FIRST LADY

Good thing he didn't ask what the laughter was about.

PROFESSOR

The Grinch. It's always about who is the biggest bitch.

FIRST LADY

And females don't fight by the rules.

PROFESSOR

So you were the Grinch. Badge of honour.
Look who's in the cat-bird seat now.

FIRST LADY

I was in the cat-bird seat wasn't I?

PROFESSOR

For a minute or two.

There is a long beat.

PROFESSOR

Wait a minute... why the Grinch? And why at
Christmas?

FIRST LADY

I guess because I didn't celebrate
Christmas.

PROFESSOR

You're Jewish?

FIRST LADY

Was.

PROFESSOR

Wow. What a communication team your ex had.
That was slick. I didn't know that.

FIRST LADY

Well, you don't get to the top unless you're
slick.

PROFESSOR

That's a pretty slick trick. THAT can go in
your book. He forced you to give up your
religion.

FIRST LADY

Well, I could have said, "no."

PROFESSOR

But he asked, didn't he? And if you hadn't agreed?

FIRST LADY

I don't know.

PROFESSOR

His sisters, cousins, they were older? Wealthy, already well educated. Married? Homeowners with children? Husbands?

FIRST LADY

Yes, but they planted that little seed of doubt in his mind... way early.

PROFESSOR

This is NOT healthy. If you blame them, it seems, you're bitter.

FIRST LADY

I'm not bitter.

PROFESSOR

Not even a little? Cause that's not going to work for the campaign. The only solution is for you to move on.

FIRST LADY

I thought I was being bullied, but back then there wasn't anything to say or do about it. And I was outnumbered.

(beat)

I mean HE wasn't going to correct anything.

PROFESSOR

Good, now that's better. This whole thing is on him. The only issue is how you put it out there. But...

(beat)

I think it's fairly simple; you married a louse.

FIRST LADY

Duh.

PROFESSOR

Bad girl. Don't do it again.

Long beat. Something is bothering the First Lady.

FIRST LADY

You have kids?

PROFESSOR

Daughter, 5th-grade math teacher. She's still single.

FIRST LADY

Are you married?

PROFESSOR

Widow.

(beat)

How is your son?

FIRST LADY

He's married? Poor girl.

PROFESSOR

Problems?

FIRST LADY

For nine years he's attended two colleges, full time. Two undergraduate degrees and a few certifications but nothing that might translate into real employment. Philosophy and Native American literature.

PROFESSOR

I'm so jealous of him. I *bloody* loved school.

FIRST LADY

Yes, but school is still school. There should be a beginning and an ending.

PROFESSOR

Well, I loved it. Sitting on my rear end, listening to anti-Soviet profs during the day and loud rebellious music at night.

FIRST LADY

It must have been confusing.

PROFESSOR

It was great. Those were the best years of my life.

FIRST LADY

Well, my son. He's not you.

PROFESSOR

Maybe he's happy? Listening to agitprop professors in the day and hip-hop at night?

FIRST LADY

Well, his mother is NOT pleased. The journalists call him a "professional student" and that's an appropriate description.

PROFESSOR

On the other hand, you can't put a price on knowledge.

FIRST LADY

Well apparently, there is a price on dumbass.

PROFESSOR

Hehe. Well, that clears things up. You're touchy about that.

FIRST LADY

Wouldn't you be?

PROFESSOR

I was educated in the Cold War, they needed me. The government I mean.

FIRST LADY

The only thing the government needs nowadays are lawyers.

PROFESSOR

Maybe he should be a lawyer?

FIRST LADY

I have asked him to get a master's degree and scale back on the undergraduate classes.

PROFESSOR

Maybe he could get a teaching job at a community college.

FIRST LADY

I tried; I demanded, but he never gets around to taking his GRE.

PROFESSOR

Maybe he did but didn't score so well. And he's ashamed?

FIRST LADY

I don't think so.

PROFESSOR

Well, the expectations are rather high. His dad is on him about it?

FIRST LADY

His father is the reason he is the way he is.

PROFESSOR

So, you talked to your son about it?

FIRST LADY

He says this would not be a fulfilling life and a life that's not fulfilling is a life not worth living.

PROFESSOR

Was that a veiled threat?

FIRST LADY

No, he's just repeating the propaganda.

PROFESSOR

There is a lot of that on a campus. It's good for business and you don't dare denounce it. It's money for the college.

FIRST LADY

He even told me that I am falling victim to toxic rhetoric that judges a man's worth based on his ability to provide financially.

(beat)

She would have divorced him years ago, but occasionally someone mentions in print that she's the daughter-in-law of the president.

PROFESSOR

That's not much.

FIRST LADY

But apparently its enough for her.

PROFESSOR

Oh, don't worry they'll be kissing and suddenly they'll need a baby carriage.

FIRST LADY

They have three kids already.

PROFESSOR

He has three kids and he's still in college? He's fallen in with the socialists.

FIRST LADY

Well, look at his father. We've always been on the left.

PROFESSOR

Poor kid; he probably had a bullseye painted on his back the entire time since he was in kindergarten.

FIRST LADY

Well, other than this little hiccup about school... we typically agree on most things and he's a loving son and father.

PROFESSOR

Maybe he should just teach... I mean; is he Ph.D. material?

FIRST LADY

He's too much like his father.

PROFESSOR

What's that mean?

FIRST LADY

He's a bullshit artist.

PROFESSOR

Oh, he's headed for politics then. That's easy.

FIRST LADY

No, he can't even do that... He is not going to ever do anything, or be somebody, who might adhere to "the man."

PROFESSOR

You want me to talk to him?

FIRST LADY

Why? You ARE "the man" to him.

PROFESSOR

It sounds bad.

FIRST LADY

It is.

PROFESSOR

Hang on here... I could pretend to be a Marxist and persuade him to help us change the system from the inside.

FIRST LADY

And a Marxist professor is better than a professional student?

PROFESSOR

Oh, good point. But it might land him a nice teaching job somewhere. A retirement and respectability.

FIRST LADY

I'm sorry. I don't wanna be too negative.

(beat)

The grandkids are great. Me and Sarah Jessica and Jason Statham and little baby

Hayden, we watched *Avatar* on Friday night and then again Saturday morning.

PROFESSOR

They name their kids after actors?

FIRST LADY

Yes. Sarah Jessica Parker and...

PROFESSOR

Jason Statham. Who's Hayden named after?

FIRST LADY

I don't know...

PROFESSOR

Hayden Panettiere? No...

FIRST LADY

Who's that?

PROFESSOR

Remember the Titans. I Love You, Beth Cooper.

FIRST LADY

I don't know. But I hadn't seen *Avatar* since it came out. I was surprised how much I enjoyed it and I wasn't surprised at how much the kids enjoyed it. They loved it, especially Jason Statham, he's gonna save all trees.

PROFESSOR

Well, that movie would be in the zeitgeist for him. What about the sex scene?

FIRST LADY

We call it the "marriage" scene. Quiet, they got real quiet. Jason Statham said, "Are they married? Now is that what marriage is?"

PROFESSOR

And in that movie technically, yes it is.

FIRST LADY

Supposedly.

(beat)

And he goes, "Man, I don't know about you guys, but I am so distracted by their private body parts."

(beat)

So I didn't know what to say so I went, "I'm more distracted by the fact that they're blue." And he adds, "and so small." His mom is nursing little Hayden sooo it's really like there's a lot of that, so he knows what's not there.

(beat)

So we talked about how they're not actual humans.

PROFESSOR

But near enough right?

FIRST LADY

But it was kind of like he was checking to see what I thought, so I say, "I can see why that's a pretty big distraction," and he goes, "Yeah, it is." And I say, "I said you should just know I have no problem with you being distracted by it and I actually appreciate your willingness to say it out loud."

(beat)

But most kids won't tell their parents or their grandparents what they think.

PROFESSOR

So you think he's getting interested in girls?

FIRST LADY

Jason Statham isn't like his dad was at that age... with his dad, his uncles would razz him like, "hey you got a girlfriend, no?" And his dad would say, "Yuck, I don't. Leave me alone."

(beat)

Jason Statham when you ask him if he has a girlfriend, he says, "Heck ya. And she's a keeper."

PROFESSOR

I wonder where he picked that up from?

FIRST LADY

Yeah, little Jason has never thought girls were yucky, that I know of.

PROFESSOR

He actually has a girlfriend?

FIRST LADY

They're just friends. They're really good friends it seems. She just happens to be a girl. They really like each other. He said to me, "Mom thinks we're too young to date, and I think that's probably true too."

PROFESSOR

How old is this kid?

FIRST LADY

Ten.

PROFESSOR

Can I ask you a personal question? How did you cope with all the stress?

FIRST LADY

In what? In Chicago last week? The White House.

PROFESSOR

You know the...

FIRST LADY

I lived in Blair House.

PROFESSOR

Well, I was thinking when you left and came back to California.

FIRST LADY

After the divorce? I believe I am developing a reputation of sorts.

PROFESSOR

I believe you are developing a lot of reputations.

FIRST LADY

My first day back in Los Angeles... after the DC fiasco? Well, this one is sort of...

PROFESSOR

What happened?

FIRST LADY

I washed my hair, three times.

PROFESSOR

Can't even imagine where that comes from...

FIRST LADY

I binge-watched *Veep*, and when that was done, it was still fairly early. So I could have had a fat free Fro Yo.

PROFESSOR

Fro Yo?

FIRST LADY

(she gestures across the street)
Right over there... Frozen Yogurt.

PROFESSOR

Oh, I see. Fro yo. That could be a nice sitcom.

FIRST LADY

But that would have been too easy... so I went to Trader Joe's...

PROFESSOR

... where they have an abundance of different treats, none of them healthy.

FIRST LADY

But all are SO very satisfying, and well I could just get what I wanted.

PROFESSOR

Trader Joe's is like 10 miles.

FIRST LADY

It sure is. So I didn't feel like going just down the street.

PROFESSOR

But you were willing to jump in the car and go on a half-hour trip?

FIRST LADY

Yeah, for fresh air and snacks? Absolutely!

PROFESSOR

Your protection?

FIRST LADY

I made him follow in a separate car. It annoys them to no end... my little road trips. I let him go but told him to keep his distance.

PROFESSOR

Which agent?

FIRST LADY

The crusty sock agent.

PROFESSOR

Okay... the thirteen-year-old. I see.

FIRST LADY

So I park and he follows me inside. I walked down an aisle and without saying a word, a very nice lady goes, "the soy ice cream sandwiches are one aisle over." And the sad thing is that was the aisle I was going for.

PROFESSOR

She was making a joke?

FIRST LADY

Yes, well. It's a stereotype, I guess. Recently divorced women... and ice cream.

PROFESSOR

Did you pick up some frozen carrots to pretend you were there for that?

FIRST LADY

Nope, I just went, "that's exactly what I'm looking for." And, "thank you."

(beat)

I ate all six of them on the way home... and it was on the cover of all six grocery store tabloids.

PROFESSOR

So, how'd that happen?

FIRST LADY

It's my fault. I've just got to be more careful.

PROFESSOR

You need to be more careful and you're sitting here with me? Now? Anyone could take our picture together. Seems a bit reckless to me.

FIRST LADY

Why, you're a children's book author.

PROFESSOR

And?

(beat)

I'm seventy-eight, a retired dog breeder.

FIRST LADY

So, I saw a list of the top ten human inventions. Domesticated dogs were right up there. Nice job by the way.

PROFESSOR

Well, dogs aren't computers or aeroplanes.

FIRST LADY

But you did take wolves and make Chihuahuas, collies and poodles. You MADE giant Mastiffs.

PROFESSOR

But you want to be the president and I was a dog show judge. An arrested dog show judge.

FIRST LADY

I doubt I care, but why were you arrested again?

PROFESSOR

For owning skinny dogs.

FIRST LADY

Skinny dogs?

PROFESSOR

Greyhounds.

FIRST LADY

Aren't they suppose to be skinny?

PROFESSOR

Sure, you can't make them fat. They have a skinny gene.

FIRST LADY

I wish I had that.

PROFESSOR

Most women will say you do. But just so you know... no actual photos of these abused dogs were given to the media.

FIRST LADY

Well, of course not, people would see that they're greyhounds.

PROFESSOR

Just the wild accusations. I'm surprized they were smart enough NOT to show the actual dogs. I thought they were dumb.

FIRST LADY

Oh, when it comes to legalized theft. It's a science.

PROFESSOR

Tell me about it. You think the mafia are organized? The government is that times eight!

FIRST LADY

How'd they know you even existed?

PROFESSOR

Big net. They went to a dog show... out in the parking lot... with tracking devices, same kind they use to track eighteen-wheelers. Up under the vehicles.

FIRST LADY

No warrant?

PROFESSOR

Well, they followed everyone to their house and THEN they got a warrant. I'm not sure they even wanted a conviction. Just the media coverage.

FIRST LADY

Right before an election?

PROFESSOR

Vote for me, I'm Sheriff Don Quixote.

FIRST LADY

Everybody has to be a hero, these days. It's an industry.

PROFESSOR

Protecting people from illegal puppies.

FIRST LADY

Illegal puppies?

PROFESSOR

The first deputy he didn't know what to charge me with, so he wrote down, "illegal puppies."

FIRST LADY

What?

PROFESSOR

My lawyer told me later they'd had a meeting and there was a handout but my deputy, he lost the paper and couldn't remember the correct charges.

FIRST LADY
That's sort of funny.

PROFESSOR
I guess.

FIRST LADY
How many breeders?

PROFESSOR
Twenty-seven.

FIRST LADY
What!

PROFESSOR
Decades ago, my mom bought me a little magnetic sign for my car door. It was cute... Texas Greyhounds. My address and phone number on it.

FIRST LADY
Yea?

PROFESSOR
I put it in a box in the garage. I didn't want those lunatics following me home. And thirty years later, they put an electronic tracker on my car.

FIRST LADY
But you don't have a conviction?

PROFESSOR
They just needed the dogs.

FIRST LADY
Charges dropped.

PROFESSOR
So the judge threw out the evidence.

FIRST LADY
What happened to the cops?

PROFESSOR

There isn't any penalty for violating the
Forth Amendment.

FIRST LADY

You should have sued them.

PROFESSOR

It was a waste of time and money.

FIRST LADY

Sovereign immunity?

PROFESSOR

I knew it would be dismissed. But I wanted
it in the newspaper.

FIRST LADY

And was it?

PROFESSOR

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FIRST LADY

One thing corrupt local pols do is stick
together.

PROFESSOR

Yeah, hah. They go to the same church
together.

FIRST LADY

Hypocrites.

PROFESSOR

Cousins.

FIRST LADY

So, when things like this happen... you follow
the money.

PROFESSOR

Ben Bradly. Of course.

FIRST LADY

Mark Felt.

PROFESSOR

If you say so.

FIRST LADY

So who profited?

PROFESSOR

For decades, they'd been trying to build an animal shelter. The city council always rejected it. I mean, a very small town and just not that many stray dogs. They already had a shelter with three runs.

FIRST LADY

What happened?

PROFESSOR

Well, they won. The city council caved to all the media. They hired a different cousin or someone and built a fifty-thousand dollar building. Of course, it cost the taxpayers half a million. Sixteen runs for half a million. A student went out to check and he told me it was basically empty.

FIRST LADY

How small a town?

PROFESSOR

Five-thousand people, but they have a half million-dollar kennel. It's run by three or four families... mostly C students.

FIRST LADY

You looked up their grades?

PROFESSOR

I had retired and moved back home. Dumb move.

FIRST LADY

Should have listened to Bon Jovi.

PROFESSOR

Absolutely.

FIRST LADY

They did that to a seventy-year-old man?

PROFESSOR

Hey... age is just a number to them also.

FIRST LADY

You grew up there?

PROFESSOR

I knew them all from high school.

FIRST LADY

They got control of the government and I guess they're living pretty large now, huh?

PROFESSOR

I didn't say they were dumb. I said they were C students.

FIRST LADY

Simple graft.

PROFESSOR

I used to think (and teach) that the only problem was in Washington D.C. Until this happened.

FIRST LADY

Well, I'm sorry that happened to you.

(beat)

You know I had a swim coach who told us once that someday everything would be against the law. Some kid that smoke cigarettes... I forget his name... he argued with Coach that this was America and that would never happen here. We weren't NAZIs or Soviets.

PROFESSOR

I had a football coach who told us to be worried, that once the government knows your name, you're fucked.

FIRST LADY

Finally, you said it. Congratulations.

PROFESSOR

I feel really grown up now. Appreciate that.

FIRST LADY

So, you never got your dogs back?

PROFESSOR

No. You never get them back when there is the slightest possibility of a lawsuit. Before I could file the lawsuit, the city turned them over to private rescue and they, in turn, sold them across state lines. Oklahoma rescues send their "legally" stolen dogs to Texas and Texas rescues send their "legally" stolen dogs to Oklahoma. Seventy-seven dollars each.

FIRST LADY

Reciprocity. I see. And these were show dogs?

PROFESSOR

Yes, ma'am. Quiet a lot of money and time. Eighteen AKC champions. Thirty years of work. Two Best in Show winners.

FIRST LADY

Oh, I loved that movie.

PROFESSOR

Me too. I know those people.

FIRST LADY

That was a true story?

PROFESSOR

No, but they could have marketed it as a true story and no one would have said a thing.

(beat)

Don't you worry about sitting here with me?

FIRST LADY

I'm totally comfortable.

PROFESSOR

So we're sufficiently bonded?

FIRST LADY

I should have brought the Trader Joe's bag inside rather than pitching it in the trash.

PROFESSOR

It had the receipt in it? Maybe that's how they knew you ate them all in the car home. The receipt had the time on it.

FIRST LADY

You didn't see it on in the tabloids?

PROFESSOR

No.

FIRST LADY

And then it was in the proper newspapers. I thought you were a "newspaper" junkie?

PROFESSOR

Oh, I stopped with all that propoganda when I was transitioning.

FIRST LADY

Transitioning?

PROFESSOR

From professor to fiction writer.

FIRST LADY

You scared me for a minute. Frankly.

PROFESSOR

But you didn't share the ice cream with the agent.

FIRST LADY

Oh, hell no. He wasn't cheated on and thrown to the curb on national television. That was MY ice cream!

PROFESSOR

So who alerted the press? Mr. Crusty Sock?

FIRST LADY

Not necessarily. He told me he caught the neighbour going thru my trash.

PROFESSOR

He told you that? Hum.

FIRST LADY

I know.

PROFESSOR

Nothing ever happened to the neighbour?

FIRST LADY

Probably because nothing like that happened.

PROFESSOR

Your neighbour is innocent. Mr. Crusty Sock. That's your leak.

FIRST LADY

It's okay. He's back in D.C. now. Out of my dresser doors.

(beat)

I may not be decorating the Blue Room Christmas tree anymore...

PROFESSOR

... but that doesn't mean you're totally out of the game.

FIRST LADY

In two years, I'll have him fired for good.

PROFESSOR

If you win Texas. Maybe.

(beat)

So what attracts you to other people? Power?

FIRST LADY

I think I've tried that one...

PROFESSOR

Once burned twice shy?

FIRST LADY

Thanks um, I would say humour. Maybe politeness or kindness.

PROFESSOR

Like you... I mean I can tell right away if somebody is kind of a apple fritter or if they're not?

FIRST LADY

I mean some people are just kind of buttholes or whatever or they don't want to know about you.

PROFESSOR

So you're sort of a celebrity; everyone knows about you already... or they don't. Who do you like?

FIRST LADY

I was just thinking about that the other day. I like nurses.

PROFESSOR

Yes, but you only meet them in the hospital.

FIRST LADY

That's the downside. But I mean you know what nurses are like. And they have that rapport.

(beat)

What about you?

PROFESSOR

I'm a person who likes, I'm a person who's prone to fall in love with people I barely know. Yeah, terrible.

FIRST LADY

I meet waiters all the time sometimes I'm like, "yeah, that might work."

PROFESSOR

They can make you feel at ease and comfortable.

FIRST LADY

I like people that make you feel at ease as soon as you meet them like that's an awesome quality.

PROFESSOR

No one fell in love with more waitresses in Dublin between 1974 and 1978. I drank very little and oogled a lot ... now it's a definite no no. But back then...

FIRST LADY

Oogle?

PROFESSOR

You remember when you caught me looking at your legs... that's oogling. It's very bad. I'm sorry.

FIRST LADY

Nothing wrong with looking. So, you like waitresses?

PROFESSOR

Well, not only that but I fell in love with waitresses that never even waited on me. Oh, you work at *The Stag's Head*? Wanna come to America and meet my family?

FIRST LADY

They just wanted the tips, silly.

PROFESSOR

How was I supposed to know that?

FIRST LADY

How old were you?

PROFESSOR

Twenty-four or five.

FIRST LADY

And why were you there?

PROFESSOR

To eat and sometimes drink. You have to go to the pubs to fit in.

FIRST LADY

No, I mean why were you in Dublin.

PROFESSOR

To write a paper and get my doctorate.

FIRST LADY

Really? You don't seem the type not to realize what's behind a woman's smile.

PROFESSOR

So let me ask you a question. What if a waitress actually liked a fella? She would smile and wink at him? The fella will think she just wants the tip!

FIRST LADY

Good question, you'd have to ask a waitress.

The line at the counter has dissipated. The Barista is cleaning a table.

PROFESSOR

Tina? May I ask you a question? It might be difficult. I apologize.

(beat)

How do you communicate that you like a customer without him thinking you just want more of a tip?

BARISTA

Oh, that's easy. You just don't "like" customers.

(beat)

Hey, so I have a question for you too. I've been watching you. Are you two together?

The First Lady grins. The Professor grins back at her.

BARISTA

Okay. I see.

There is a pause while the barista leaves the table.

PROFESSOR

What are you doing later?

FIRST LADY

I have a birthday party to go to and I have to be at a school for a safety demonstration.

PROFESSOR

Oh.

FIRST LADY

I was just sitting here waiting.

PROFESSOR

Where is your car?

FIRST LADY

Down the street a bit, but it's all in walking distance.

PROFESSOR

Your protection?

FIRST LADY

I don't need protection. This is my neighbourhood.

PROFESSOR

I should walk with you anyway.

FIRST LADY

Maybe just today. Okay?

PROFESSOR

I'll do anything you say.

FIRST LADY

Nice line.

PROFESSOR

That's all I got for ya.

FIRST LADY

Fair enough, let's go.

They get up and move to the door. The professor puts a ten-dollar bill in the Barista's jar. The first lady grins.

PROFESSOR

You get out everyday? The girl, she seemed to...

FIRST LADY

Three events per day. There is a twenty square block area. So I can walk if I want.

PROFESSOR

You walk twenty blocks?

FIRST LADY

Well, I live in the center so its never twenty blocks... Not in one direction anyway.

She shows him a mapping app on her smartphone.

PROFESSOR

You have a secretary or someone who arranges things?

FIRST LADY

Not really. I do it but a lot of things just fall into my lap.

EXT. SIDEWALK - CENTURY PARK EAST - DAY

FIRST LADY

So, we were talking about what we're attracted to. You ever did the internet dating?

PROFESSOR

No. You did?

FIRST LADY

I have been.

PROFESSOR

You do... wow. And?

FIRST LADY

You're not jealous?

PROFESSOR

Look, you're the former First Lady. Oh, I didn't mean to say that.

(beat)

I mean you are MY First Lady... and I might be jealous... but only a moron would pitch a fit over something he has no control over.

FIRST LADY

I see.

PROFESSOR

I learned not to get too bent out of shape in about the fourth grade.

FIRST LADY

What happened?

PROFESSOR

I lost my fourth-grade girlfriend for beating up Bobby Britt.

(beat)

And... I'm in the 70th grade now.

(beat)

I'm gonna have to share you with the entire world anyway it goes; why do I care about a few over-weight, comb-over geeks living in their mother's basement.

FIRST LADY

Haha. You ARE jealous.

PROFESSOR

How does that go again? Deny. Deny. Deny.

FIRST LADY

That's sort of sweet. And rather clever too. Dating sites are nice for anonymous reasons.

PROFESSOR

I can see that...

FIRST LADY

But an abysmal failure for me. I really don't like a man that can't keep a conversation going. It's the number one turn off.

PROFESSOR

I'm listening to every word you say... twice.
I hear you and then I play it over in my
head again.

FIRST LADY

Why?

PROFESSOR

Well, to keep the conversation going, of
course.

FIRST LADY

Haha. I told you not to worry about that.

PROFESSOR

Well, I intend to be charismatic and not a
horse's ass... well not until the very end.

FIRST LADY

There is that "the end" stuff, again... you'll
live to be 100. Speaking of 100, we're going
to a centenarian's birthday party.

PROFESSOR

Mine, I hope?

(beat)

I mean GREAT!!!

FIRST LADY

I hate being the only person asking the
questions.

PROFESSOR

Online? Cause I've been all up in your
business.

FIRST LADY

Online. I get countless dick-pics. So, it's
sort of nice when a guy sends me photo of
his house plants. Gotten those before.

PROFESSOR

So, that's not what you're looking for?

FIRST LADY

No, silly! These dolts, I ask them what they like? What do they do? And then they just answer the question without really asking a question in return.

PROFESSOR

It's market forces? Too many single women, the men they're running around on the internet like a chicken with its head cut off.

FIRST LADY

Never saw that happen.

PROFESSOR

Never mind then.

FIRST LADY

I understand the market, but maybe they biologically just can't keep a conversation going.

PROFESSOR

I think we are actually agreeeing.

FIRST LADY

Yeah, maybe.

PROFESSOR

But how could you possibly answer, if they actually did ask an intelligent question?

FIRST LADY

I'd be vague. Women are allowed.

PROFESSOR

Like that's fair?

FIRST LADY

Did you ever have a conversation with someone who's not asking questions? They're just answering.

PROFESSOR

That's someone who is not really interested. But listen...

FIRST LADY

It burns me up! "Are you're at this site to meet people? Then contribute." Or they'll message you a couple days later and say, "So, how was your day?" And it's like, "Oh it was great; how was yours?" "It was good." And three days later it repeats itself.

PROFESSOR

They have a list of 100 other women they are talking to.

FIRST LADY

That's thirty-three and a third sexual convesations per day, then.

PROFESSOR

Mathmatically, that where the technology calls a halt to their biology, thirty-three point three. In another ten years, it will be up to fifty conversations per day.

FIRST LADY

Well, I just want to say, "obviously you're not really into this." Or "We've just met. Are you mad at me?" Like, "if I wanted to be ignored, I'd get married again!"

PROFESSOR

Yeah, it's just a simple response to a question, but they can't follow up with anything.

FIRST LADY

I might as well be talking to a robot.

PROFESSOR

Maybe it is a robot. I read an article how singles sites are using AI to sort of trick you with fake messages, and likes. They wanna keep people there on their site until a "real" person comes along.

FIRST LADY

The only problem is there aren't any "real" people?

(beat)
No! Oh, really? Now I'm REALLY pissed.

PROFESSOR
Why are you online anyway?

FIRST LADY
(sarcastic)
Because I don't want to hang out in coffee shops all day.

PROFESSOR
I don't know; you're doing okay with the coffee shop thing today, aren't you?

FIRST LADY
Yes, as a matter of fact. This is a nice conversation. I realized how important it is... comedy, yes, your humour is very fun for me. Sarcasm is very funny.

PROFESSOR
Are you sure you wouldn't rather talk about the Venezuela turn-around or dark-net crypto?

They encounter a cat on the sidewalk and pass without incident.

PROFESSOR
That's a mangey cat for this ritzy neighborhood.

FIRST LADY
Interloper, from a few blocks East of here probably.

FIRST LADY
So my son has a cat. This is suburban Chicago. So it's cold. The family cat's name is Engels.

PROFESSOR
That's not good.

FIRST LADY
Their old cat was Castro, but he got hit by a car.

PROFESSOR

Run over by history, no doubt.

FIRST LADY

So the day before I came back... we had a visitor and it was another cat, and he and Engels were having a conversation through the front door. For a long time. And this cat wanted so badly to get into Engels's space. Because this nasty cat was circling my son's house like a shark and I'm not kidding. This cat would not go away; I know this because their storm door is glass. So they could see one another and Engels he's inside looking out. That damn cat...

PROFESSOR

Great movie...

FIRST LADY

Not *That Damn Cat*. It was an entirely different cat, this cat was like a Chicago gangland cat. Black and brown.

PROFESSOR

Brindle... that's the worst kind. They don't even lick their paws or keep themselves clean.

FIRST LADY

I know, right? He's walking along the windowsill and I see him looking in the kid's bedroom. And Engels would like go in there and look out at the intruder. Al Capone's great-great-grand-kitty, right?

(beat)

I got tired of it all. I knew where the bad kitty was because the flood lights kept going on and off. And then they're eyeballing each other. They're at the sliding glass door, staring each other down.

PROFESSOR

Engels ready to fight?

FIRST LADY

No. Like he wasn't growling or moaning like cats sort of like to do.

PROFESSOR

I would have opened the door and let him and Engels decide whose house it was.

FIRST LADY

Some grandfather you'd be?

PROFESSOR

I don't know; my grandfather would have turned Eisenhower out on any stray.

FIRST LADY

Your grandfather had a cat named Eisenhower?

PROFESSOR

Is this some sort of a test?

FIRST LADY

No, silly.

PROFESSOR

Ask the grandkids if they want to see Engels and the bad kitty fight or do they want a ride on Marine One? The cat fight'll win.

FIRST LADY

I want to tell you the story about the cat.

PROFESSOR

Why don't they just have two cats? Bring the proletarian cat into the house?

FIRST LADY

Well, maybe in theory but this outlaw cat is working too quickly. He hung around for like another hour just like hating Engels.

PROFESSOR

Maybe he was like mocking Engels, "like look at you in there a slave to *the man*."

FIRST LADY

Maybe. But I think Engels was mocking him back. Like, "yeah, I'm warm in here and I got kids to entertain me, and they feed me, so suck it. You can have your rats, I'm eating tuna."

PROFESSOR

Plant based fish-free tuna?

FIRST LADY

Maybe. Who knows.

PROFESSOR

You okay with all this walking?

FIRST LADY

I'm in great condition; there are three kids in the house. I can't ever just rest when I go there.

PROFESSOR

You're a hero.

FIRST LADY

I walk probably three miles a day here in LA but when I come home from Chicago I'm sore.

PROFESSOR

That's what grandkids are for. To help you get nice and tone... I mean sore.

FIRST LADY

Yep, because once you watch one kid's trick, you gotta watch both of them.

PROFESSOR

I think it's pretty much expected. And pretty soon the baby will start doing tricks.

FIRST LADY

I do it... I'll go upstairs when the boy want to show me a, you know, a speedboat. He has a remote control speedboat in the bathtub and then because I can't say no, I might

have to go downstairs to see a cartwheel and then back upstairs for something else.

PROFESSOR

They have a hot tub?

FIRST LADY

No. Why?

PROFESSOR

Cause that's what you need. Here's what you do next time you're there. Take Jason Statham with his boat to the nearest hot tub store. Tell them you wanna have a test drive.

FIRST LADY

They won't.

PROFESSOR

They will if they think it might be a sale.

FIRST LADY

Oh, you're tricky...

PROFESSOR

Then the most important part... take the time to tell little Jason, you know, like, "if you just asked your dad for a hot tub look how much more room you have for your boat."

FIRST LADY

Oh, that's a bad move. I'll get all the blame for sure.

PROFESSOR

Plausible deniability. How old is Jason Stamos again?

FIRST LADY

Ten.

PROFESSOR

And then when little Jason asks him enough, hopefully three or four times a day, next time you're up there you'll have a nice hot tub to relax in.

FIRST LADY

Yeah?

PROFESSOR

Absolutely.

Long beat.

FIRST LADY

No more games. You wanna come to the beach tomorrow?

PROFESSOR

Games? Me? Sure.

FIRST LADY

Give me your cell phone.

She takes his phone and types in an address.

FIRST LADY

This is where I live.

PROFESSOR

I thought you lived..

FIRST LADY

I just tell strange people that.

PROFESSOR

I know where you live... that makes me feel a little strange.

FIRST LADY

This is my faux neighbourhood. The seat of Hollywood power.

PROFESSOR

Yes, the Death Star. I didn't know they called the talent agency that until..

FIRST LADY

Some people. There's Rodeo Drive but we can walk ten blocks or so and..

PROFESSOR

I see. You can drive into town, park just down there, drink coffee and walk up here for the real LA. Good mix of geography and politics. And you are up here every day?

FIRST LADY

Nearly every day.

PROFESSOR

Smart lady.

FIRST LADY

If it gets out where I live, you'll be shot.

PROFESSOR

I don't know how; you fired your protection.

FIRST LADY

I didn't fire Rosco and he weighs in at about 270. And unlike the Secret Service, he does what I tell him to do.

PROFESSOR

I'll do what you tell me to do.

FIRST LADY

But you weigh more like 170 and I doubt you'd bite a man's dick off and leave it on the porch.

PROFESSOR

Your dog did that?

FIRST LADY

No, it's cats that do that. But you're scared aren't you?

PROFESSOR

Wow. The beach. This is ON the beach?

FIRST LADY

Well, we call it the strand.

PROFESSOR

I'm guessing this is a hot tub?

FIRST LADY

How did you do that?

PROFESSOR

Google. Satellite. I guess you have one hell of a vacuum cleaner?

FIRST LADY

With the sand? Let's just say I buy the extended warranty.

PROFESSOR

You know what was really wrong?

FIRST LADY

The division of the property?

PROFESSOR

I didn't even follow that.

FIRST LADY

Neither did I.

PROFESSOR

Well, how did you...

FIRST LADY

I told my lawyer to fuck him over, and she did!

PROFESSOR

Literally?

FIRST LADY

No, not that I'm aware of.

(beat)

Oh, enough with the jokes... bring your own suntan lotion.

PROFESSOR

I was just gonna say I hated the way they treated you with the snow shaming.

FIRST LADY

Yeah, I forgot about that.

PROFESSOR
Journalists really suck.

FIRST LADY
Especially when they're sucking your... nope,
I'm not going to say it.

PROFESSOR
The butch blonde from Minnesota?

FIRST LADY
The Viking? She's on my list.

PROFESSOR
You don't really have a list, do you? Cause,
that might look really... well, they'll call
you Nixon.

FIRST LADY
Fine, so long as they spell the name right.

PROFESSOR
Nixon never influenced Brian Wilson, did he?
Or wear a yellow bikini.

FIRST LADY
Oh, you've seen that photo? I was entirely
hot that summer. Smoking hot.

PROFESSOR
Still are... in a, fully clothed, coffee shop
knees down way.

FIRST LADY
Thank you. Don't worry. The list is in my
head and I'm not likely to forget... not my
friends (that's you, if you wanna) or my
enemies (that's them).

PROFESSOR
It was literally the first time you'd been
in the Oval office.

FIRST LADY
I think so. Yes. The very first day, just
after the parade.

PROFESSOR

They are supposed to give you a holiday.

FIRST LADY

You mean a honeymoon? Well, they didn't.

PROFESSOR

That's right, honeymoon. They should take that out of the textbooks.

FIRST LADY

There is a lot they need to take out.

PROFESSOR

What exactly did you say?

FIRST LADY

All I did was look out and I went, "Man, it's snowing pretty hard; it's really coming down."

(beat)

And that pompous ass was sitting there at his new desk. With reporters and photographers not ten-feet away, "It's like when you saw that shooting star. It was you made a wish and life was a Disney movie."

PROFESSOR

What a jerk!

FIRST LADY

And then to make matters worse, he got up and looked out into the Rose Garden and he said it was just a "flurry." It was terrible. It was just terrible.

PROFESSOR

You can't snow shame someone. Not a So-Cal girl on her first day in the White House.

FIRST LADY

You know if he hadn't ridiculed me that day... in front of the Viking... I might have never come home...

They give each other a nervous hug.

PROFESSOR

What does it matter if they're a better judge of snow than another person? What is the First Lady now in charge of DC school closures?

FIRST LADY

(chuckles)

I think if you'd been there...

PROFESSOR

You would've weathered the storm? Me against the entire White House press corps? Please.

FIRST LADY

It would have been you against only half the press corps?

PROFESSOR

The female half. No thanks!

FIRST LADY

I like you.

PROFESSOR

I like you too, but...

FIRST LADY

I'd seen snow before. Call me sheltered but I really didn't expect them to lash into me like that.

PROFESSOR

Well, they're a bunch of damn yankee bitches. They were just jealous of all the waves you ripped when they were balls deep in snow.

FIRST LADY

And it was perpeccuated by women, in my own office...

PROFESSOR

Okay, vagina's deep in snow.

FIRST LADY

They put a relatively expensive store-bought sign on my office door... DC Avalanche Control Center.

(beat)

Which is fine; I can take a joke, but the media...

PROFESSOR

They smelled blood...

FIRST LADY

They smelled their own coitus.

PROFESSOR

Well, it was all downhill after that.

FIRST LADY

Oh, hah... your' kidding. Snow. Nice pun.

PROFESSOR

You're not really broken up about it. You look like you're doing alright? House on the beach and just the rumour of you getting out there has them running scared.

FIRST LADY

Can you be honest with me? Do you remember that day?

PROFESSOR

The snow? On TV?

FIRST LADY

Vaguely?

PROFESSOR

Sure.

FIRST LADY

You saw the snow?

PROFESSOR

I'm biased. It snows in West Texas. Not always but sometimes a lot.

FIRST LADY

You're snow shaming me now.

PROFESSOR

I'm not.

FIRST LADY

So what do you say? Was it really coming down?

PROFESSOR

I didn't think it was the hardest snow I've ever seen. I also thought it was really unnecessary for your husband to shame you over your opinion.

FIRST LADY

Thank you.

PROFESSOR

He never really had your back, did he?

FIRST LADY

Not since day one.

PROFESSOR

You gonna put the snow debacle in your book?

FIRST LADY

Chapter Two!

EXT. FRONT OF THE ONLY RUN DOWN HOUSE IN THE AREA - DAY

There is a tattooed JUVENILE standing on the sidewalk. He's about to be interviewed by a JOURNALIST. The COPS arrive and take note of the TV truck and so they comb out and begin looking through the hedges.

PROFESSOR

What happened?

JUVENILE

News Channel 2 LA is about to put me out there for losing my lizard. Now the cops are here to help.

PROFESSOR

Don't be too sure. Don't give them your real name. Just my friendly advice.

FIRST LADY

What happened?

JUVENILE

Well, I was looking for my lizard. I needed some help finding my pet.

TV JOURNO

We're looking for Marley, which happens to be a 3-foot lizard. The resident, Juan Christabal...

The professor grimaces.

TV JOURNO (con't)

... says he bought the tegu at the National Exotic Pet show over the weekend. He let the lizard out in his front yard to bask in the sun because, as he told us, "they like just to do that" and he gets on his phone for a second and when he looked up, the lizard was gone, Juan is offering a reward for information; he even called the police department's non-emergency line for help.

(beat)

Juan, what's Marley look like?

JUVENILE

Gonna be about 3-feet long. I had him for a whole three days or so. He was running around terrorizing the cat. But he just eats eggs and bugs. I had a guy with a fake leg trying to help me catch him. Well, I mean that was about 11:00 o'clock. I guess he got tired.

TV JOURNO

Thank you, Juan.

The cops have found a ladder and use it to look on the roof of the neighbouring businesses. One cop finds it on the awning of the flower shop. Hamming it up for the news camera, he brings the lizard down for the kid.

They continue along the sidewalk.

FIRST LADY

Thank you, officer.

The professor gives the police a clearly fake smile.

FIRST LADY

That ended pretty well. God, I love America!

PROFESSOR

God, I love America? Where'd that come from?

FIRST LADY

Yeah, that kid was nice. Everyone was nice.

PROFESSOR

Are you running for President?

FIRST LADY

Not yet.

PROFESSOR

Or, are you just friendly this way all the time.

FIRST LADY

Tomorrow. I'm not talking about moving in or anyone changing anyone's life.

PROFESSOR

I like the beach.

FIRST LADY

I bet you do!

PROFESSOR

You'll see, tomorrow. I have a white F-150. When I pull in the drive don't be frightened.

FIRST LADY

Do you think I'm a jellyfish?

PROFESSOR

A what?

FIRST LADY

Soft and too optimistic.

PROFESSOR

Look, I'm sort of a hired gun. Like your mastiff, Rosco, only feed me tacos. Or I'll get the runs.

(beat)

You can afford to be soft. Just tell me who you want me to beat up.

FIRST LADY

I'm not sure that's what I need.

PROFESSOR

You already have a "yes" man? I was sort of hoping to be your "yes" man.

FIRST LADY

That's cute and the way you said it... it was borderline sexy. But that sort are a dime a dozen where I'm going. So just tell me what you think.

PROFESSOR

About the electoral college or about that back there? The lizard.

FIRST LADY

Either.

PROFESSOR

Okay, everyone back there was pretty benign.

FIRST LADY

The guy just likes weird pets.

PROFESSOR

Yeah, but who loses a lizard?

FIRST LADY

Well, he wasn't looking for "lizard people."

PROFESSOR

Yeah or a black Mamba. Or a cobra.

FIRST LADY

No super illegal snakes. That's good.

(beat)

That lizard...

PROFESSOR

Well, first you should assume everything is against the law.

FIRST LADY

Why? Because everything is?

PROFESSOR

No. Because the cops assume everything is. I think those lizards come from Florida. They're harmless.

FIRST LADY

He didn't call 911.

PROFESSOR

He didn't say my lizard stole my meth or my triple C or whatever.

FIRST LADY

Triple C?

PROFESSOR

Some over-the-counter drug that these kids take.

FIRST LADY

Oh, this could have been way worse.

PROFESSOR

Actually, that kid was lucky.

FIRST LADY

Yea, the news camera might not have arrived first.

PROFESSOR

In Texas, that kid would get four years.

FIRST LADY

For what? Being on the news?

PROFESSOR

If they know who you are...

FIRST LADY

You're kidding about that...

PROFESSOR

Only a little.

EXT. SIDEWALK - LADIES HAIR SALON - DAY

Two STYLISTS are standing out in front of the establishment. One is looking up at the sun and the OTHER STYLIST down at the sidewalk. The First Lady and the professor are approaching.

PROFESSOR

How long should I let my hair get and should I cut it?

FIRST LADY

You should keep it as long as I say.
California, Oregon and Washington.

PROFESSOR

With all due respect. I'm gonna look more for a less political answer.

They arrive and speak with the stylists.

STYLIST #1

It does have a bit of a wall, you got a little superscript going, like a wave, that's better, yeah. Well not really.

STYLIST #2

I like it. It's a little big here. Yeah, I think I like it shorter but I like it. If you're gonna wear it longer just wear it like how you normally sleep in it.

STYLIST #1

What does your lady think?

PROFESSOR

She likes it longer.

STYLIST #1

Oh yeah, keep the length. You should grow a ponytail.

PROFESSOR

She likes long hair.

STYLIST #2

Cut your hair, man. You got a real Steve Buscemi / Kristen Stewart look going on.

FIRST LADY

You've got doppelganger hair.

PROFESSOR

I like that.

STYLIST #1

OK, we'll take him; come on in.

STYLIST #2

Oh, that's good.

PROFESSOR

I knew that was best. What time is the party?

FIRST LADY

We'll be back.

(to the professor)

Can you come with me?

PROFESSOR

(to the stylists)

We have a birthday party to go to now. Thank you.

FIRST LADY

Was that a test?

PROFESSOR

You don't think you passed a long long time ago? Block and blocks ago. Literally.

FIRST LADY

Really?

PROFESSOR

I guess I have a thing for women who had all the power in the world and gave it away for their dignity.

FIRST LADY

You're weird.

PROFESSOR

Obviously, I'm walking here with you.

They walk a bit.

EXT. SIDEWALK - AVENUE OF THE STARS - DAY

PROFESSOR

I wanna write a script. But I think my typing hand is going out on me.

FIRST LADY

Your typing hand?

PROFESSOR

Yes, this one... it's feeling a little funny.

FIRST LADY

You should get it checked out.

PROFESSOR

Maybe. But I wanna write a script.

FIRST LADY

Oh, good. Let's hear it.

PROFESSOR

It's about a guy... a kid... like that one back there. But someone dumps on him every day; one way or another. At school, in the neighbourhood, he gets a job and he's treated badly every day, all day.

FIRST LADY

I'm not so sure I'm gonna...

PROFESSOR

No, but he's making a list... and everyone assumes it's a list of people to kill. But

in the end, it's like a Christmas card list or something like that.

FIRST LADY

That's not bad. You want me to mention it to my literary agent? He's in New York, but...

PROFESSOR

What? No.

FIRST LADY

Why?

PROFESSOR

I have... this is going to sound really weird to you...

FIRST LADY

Why?

PROFESSOR

You've been involved in friendocracy.

FIRST LADY

What's that?

PROFESSOR

It's the opposite of meritocracy. I forgot the real word... cocktail parties, politics, networking and nepotism. All that B.S. in a blender.

FIRST LADY

Cronyism?

PROFESSOR

That's the word!

FIRST LADY

And you think that's weird? That's my ex, I promise you. Nothing to do with me.

PROFESSOR

No, but you might think I'm weird.

FIRST LADY

Well, try me.

PROFESSOR

I sort of need to get this done myself.

FIRST LADY

You're really seventy-eight?

PROFESSOR

Well, yea.

FIRST LADY

Well, let's get it done. Don't you think it's about time?

PROFESSOR

Listen, if I don't have an agent by our 10th anniversary.

FIRST LADY

(chuckles)

Marriage?

PROFESSOR

You don't have to get married to have an anniversary? I thought this was California!

FIRST LADY

(nervous laugh but she's not offended)

Haha.

PROFESSOR

Well, I kid a lot. I'm sorry.

FIRST LADY

You do like to joke; that's for certain.

PROFESSOR

And besides, I have better ideas... finished scripts.

FIRST LADY

Ready to shoot? Good?

PROFESSOR

I like 'em.

FIRST LADY

How many scripts do you have?

PROFESSOR

Sixty-three.

FIRST LADY

You have sixty-three movie scripts?
(incredulous)

Why?

PROFESSOR

Because they occurred to me.

FIRST LADY

I mean most people... How?

PROFESSOR

Well, I write and when I'm done, I write ten query letters... and when I hear nothing back... well screw them. I write another script.

FIRST LADY

I sort of like that. I think most people in this town write one script, and they call it a lifetime achievement.

PROFESSOR

Or they call it a waste of time.

FIRST LADY

Well, there's that too.

PROFESSOR

You see that building back there?

(beat)

I want inside.

(beat)

I wanna look those...

FIRST LADY

Dickheads?

PROFESSOR

I wanna look them in the eye and have them tell me I'm an idiot.

FIRST LADY

Well, I could probably get them to do that.

PROFESSOR

No.

FIRST LADY

Why?

PROFESSOR

(dementia hiccup)

Why did you divorce...

FIRST LADY

The dickhead-in-chief?

PROFESSOR

So you could walk around with some dignity?
So, let me do this...

FIRST LADY

Right, of course.

EXT. SIDEWALK - IN FRONT OF PET SUPPLY STORE - DAY

PROFESSOR

What are you thinking about?

FIRST LADY

You and my Mastiff.

PROFESSOR

That agent gave your 300-pound dog the runs?

FIRST LADY

Pretty much.

PROFESSOR

What kind of car does he drive?

FIRST LADY

I don't know. Government-issued.

PROFESSOR

I'd take a bat and break every window.

FIRST LADY

Hehe. For that we'd need to find his personal car. Some foreign job probably. I hate that guy.

PROFESSOR

Other than the vegan food... he treated the dog well?

FIRST LADY

I love that dog because he fits me. I want a dog that will be a guard dog, intimidating, to protect me against intruders.

PROFESSOR

Now that you let your protection go...

FIRST LADY

He is not a puppy and he is not a lapdog.

PROFESSOR

You sure? I mean 300 pounds...

FIRST LADY

He's 270 and I don't baby talk him or treat him like anything but what he is. I feed him real dog food, I take him on walks and we run sometimes.

PROFESSOR

He's a practical weapon, not a teddy bear.

FIRST LADY

That fucking agent treated him like a big teddy bear. He was always petting him and giving him kisses, baby-talking him and giving him stuffed animals. Like the kind you give children!

PROFESSOR

Not dog toys?

(beat)

We still on for tomorrow?

FIRST LADY

Sure.

PROFESSOR

I'll bring him a nice bone. Not one of those
cured, dried, and dyed.

He gestures to the bones in a rack outside the pet store.

PROFESSOR

I'll go to a butcher and get him one of
those giant thigh bones. Cattle have these
giant thigh bones!

FIRST LADY

Still bloody?

PROFESSOR

Of course!

FIRST LADY

You know I might marry you, after all.

(beat)

Or not.

EXT. LOS ANGELES SIDEWALK - DAY

There is a street hustler with a table and some cards on the
table. The professor smiles.

PROFESSOR

It's a grifter.

(beat)

What's going on here?

HUSTLER

Trivial pursuit. Five in a row gets you
\$100, but it costs twenty to play. For \$100
you can take this nice lady to eat up at
Craft.

PROFESSOR

You wouldn't trick us would you?

HUSTLER

No. Man this is legit. People, they just
don't know the answers.

PROFESSOR

You don't have people that memorized them when they were kids?

HUSTLER

No man. Nobody memorized all this.

PROFESSOR

Let's see your money.

The hustler puts a \$100 bill on the table. The professor puts a \$20 bill out.

PROFESSOR

And you make a living here.

HUSTLER

Here and down by the theatre.

PROFESSOR

No tricks? These cards authentic? Let me see one... one off the bottom. No, count down to the fifth.

He does and hands it to the professor.

PROFESSOR

It looks good.

HUSTLER

You ready? Silent films are usually long love stories that ended with a chase scene. What phrase...

PROFESSOR

Cut to the chase.

HUSTLER

You didn't let me finish but that's one.

FIRST LADY

Oh, I thought it was pedal-to-the-metal.

PROFESSOR

I think that was *Smokey and the Bandit*, dear.

FIRST LADY

This is kinda fun.

HUSTLER

Florida, the Sunshine State, for some reason has more of these than McDonald's locations.

PROFESSOR

The Sunshine State? Tanning salons.

HUSTLER

That's two. Number three. What popular form of gambling is illegal in Nevada?

FIRST LADY

Oh, I know that one.

HUSTLER

You can't play, lady.

PROFESSOR

Come on. Give the lady a break. It's always something, with you guys.

HUSTLER

You guys? You mean cause I'm black?

PROFESSOR

No it's not that.

HUSTLER

Bullshit, man.

PROFESSOR

It has nothing to do with that. I told her you were a grifter.

HUSTLER

You did what?

PROFESSOR

Well, from way back there, you looked like a grifter. The cards... The table. The track shoes.

HUSTLER

Man, I'm an honest businessman.

PROFESSOR
So, give the lady a chance.

HUSTLER
You grow up in Las Vegas or something?

FIRST LADY
Hermosa Beach.

HUSTLER
That here?
(to the professor)
No, if she gets it wrong, ya'll be fighting,
calling 9-1-1 and I'll have to leave and
move up the street. I can't be responsible
for any ugly divorce.

FIRST LADY
We're not married.

HUSTLER
Really? You look married. You a lawyer?

FIRST LADY
I hate lawyers.

HUSTLER
What about you?

PROFESSOR
Nope.

HUSTLER
Okay. You think you know the answer? What is
it?

FIRST LADY
The lottery.

HUSTLER
I'm so stupid. I knew you knew. That's
three. Number four. Who invented the word
"vomit"?

PROFESSOR
William Shakespeare.

HUSTLER

Oh, he's Mr. Hollywood and all... You a movie maker big man? Let's give you a science question.

(beat)

Number five. Apollo astronauts left 96 bags of faeces, urine and what other item on the moon?

FIRST LADY

Oh, I knew it. That's not a real question.

HUSTLER

It ain't, lady. Your man just don't know it.

The hustler moves to take the money.

PROFESSOR

Blood.

HUSTLER

Oh, man!

The hustler grabs the cards, money and the table and runs off. He drops the twenty relatively near them, but returns to pick it up. At first the hustler eyes the money. But he's forced to look up.

PROFESSOR

Son, never take your eyes off your opponent, even when you bow. Bruce Lee. *Enter the Dragon.*

The professor is still grinning. And the hustler wants the twenty but as he bends he doesn't take his eyes off the professor.

FIRST LADY

How did you know that? Don't tell me you memorized the entire game.

PROFESSOR

No. But you tell me how you knew about the lottery question and I'll tell you about the blood.

FIRST LADY

Okay, Nevada Primary 2032.

PROFESSOR

You were there, naturally. I was there too in 1969.

FIRST LADY

You worked for NASA?

PROFESSOR

No, but I watched it on TV. ABC television I think. We lived in an area where ABC came in perfectly but NBC and CBS were a bit fuzzy. But I remember the story, of course. It was a big deal.

FIRST LADY

But why blood?

PROFESSOR

You ever seen a plane crash? What about a car crash? They thought they might crash, cut themselves... you know need blood. So they took some with them.

FIRST LADY

Oh, that was smart.

PROFESSOR

You're right.

FIRST LADY

I watched it on TV too.

PROFESSOR

You were three.

FIRST LADY

My mother said I watched and was fascinated.

(beat)

You're smiling.

PROFESSOR

Sure. Why not.

FIRST LADY

He took your money.

PROFESSOR

Yea, but did you see the look on his face. He dropped the money and was debating with himself to come back and get it. I'm an old man, and you weigh what, a hundred?

FIRST LADY

He thought you were gonna kick him in the face when you threw the Bruce Lee quote out there.

PROFESSOR

I'm sorry. I find a lot of stuff in movies funny.

FIRST LADY

That was funny.

PROFESSOR

Worth a hundred-and-twenty bucks?

FIRST LADY

Well, I don't know what we'll eat the next week.

PROFESSOR

Beans and rice, baby.

FIRST LADY

Not without Tabasco.

They walk a bit.

FIRST LADY

I can't believe that happened. Our kids would have been...

PROFESSOR

Round little Tabasco lovers?

FIRST LADY

Probably very bright.

PROFESSOR

The President he's pretty bright... other than the cheating part? Get it... the cheating part.

FIRST LADY

Again. But, I am smarter than my husband.

PROFESSOR

And, you're guessing because of the... moronic behaviour?

FIRST LADY

Because he insisted that we both get IQ tests.

PROFESSOR

Well, that sounds like a marriage ending strategy on his part.

FIRST LADY

Right.

PROFESSOR

This country is in more trouble than I thought.

FIRST LADY

Right!

PROFESSOR

What a dumbass! Here's something no good can come from.

FIRST LADY

Either way, he's screwed.

PROFESSOR

You said, what's important is how you use what God gave you.

FIRST LADY

I just said, it doesn't matter.

PROFESSOR

But it DOES matter.

FIRST LADY

Sure, now that we're divorced it matters.

PROFESSOR

You should have gotten a Mensa pin. I would get all of it. I'd get the mug, the backpack and the hat.

FIRST LADY

I wouldn't wear it anywhere... except up in the residence...

PROFESSOR

Does Mensa sell underwear? I'd make him take them off for an entire month...

FIRST LADY

It would take a month for him to get the point.

PROFESSOR

Is he really that slow?

FIRST LADY

What do you think? But can I steal that about the underwear for my book?

PROFESSOR

Of course. What's a few phrases here or there? You stole my heart already.

FIRST LADY

You're funny.

PROFESSOR

Funniest man you ever slept with?

FIRST LADY

We didn't...

(beat)

Oh, I see. That's a trick question.

PROFESSOR

Just playing the hand I'm dealt.

FIRST LADY

This is how you seduce all your women. Do they fall so easily?

PROFESSOR

Not for me, they haven't. Not yet.

EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - DAY

PROFESSOR

Is this the school?

FIRST LADY

Looks like it.

The PRINCIPAL and about six OFF-DUTY TEACHERS (all with cell phones) meet them on the steps.

PRINCIPAL

Welcome. Welcome.

FIRST LADY

This is my friend.

PROFESSOR

Nice to meet you.

They walk toward a classroom.

PRINCIPAL

I hope you don't mind we're trying to publicize something new and innovative.

FIRST LADY

I understand it involves classroom safety.

PRINCIPAL

Yes.

FIRST LADY

Well, I'm here to help.

The group arrive at a classroom and the teacher comes to the door.

PRINCIPAL

(to the teacher)

Here she is.

FIRST LADY

Nice to meet you. So, I hear you have a nice idea to make your classroom safer?

TEACHER

Sure come in and I'll show you.

The off-duty teachers fan out like a film crew. Their phones up and taping it all from every "appealing" angle. The kids were told not to wave at the cameras but some forgot.

The principal and the professor remain in the hall but look in the open classroom door.

FIRST LADY

Oh, my! What a handsome group of young people.

TEACHER

What do you say, class?

STUDENTS

Thank you. Madame, First Lady.

PROFESSOR

(to the principal)

That's' going to burn him up.

PRINCIPAL

She'll always be the Frist Lady to most of us.

The professor nods.

PROFESSOR

(whispering to the principal)

I appreciate you letting her do this.

PRINCIPAL

Our pleasure. Thanks for the help. And the fortitude.

TEACHER

So yeah. Since the shootings started, and I'm sure teachers everywhere have been

probably been doing a lot of thinking recently about your school safety. I just had an idea and I wanna share it, so if you are a teacher feel free to steal this idea.

FIRST LADY

I like it that we're sharing information. That's important.

TEACHER

Like here's my classroom, I have these big windows along the back wall. My students know that plan A is always just to get out of that middle window and run across the street.

(beat)

But of course, Plan B is to barricade the door and fight. They all know this. The issue here is my door is wood and until they replace it with metal...

PRINCIPAL

(whispering to the professor)

That's going to take a few years in this school district.

PROFESSOR

That's unfortunate.

The professor takes out his phone and punches in a short email or a note-to-self.

TEACHER

I can still lock it but I have this giant window here so I thought. How can I get every single student to prepare themselves?

(beat)

I thought a hockey puck; it can really distract you. Right? Especially you can keep in mind the desks are like this. So my kids just lift the top and they have their supplies under here. So then I got smart. I got some double-sided tape. There were some issues with the cheaper brands so we decided to go with the super-strong Gorilla brand. Some scissors and I just cut a strip of tape for every puck under every desk.

(beat)

Easy to reach and that way kids can use them if they need them.

FIRST LADY

How did you think of such a thing?

TEACHER

Well, I'm not really from here. I'm from Canada. I teach during the day and I go to acting class at night. Have you touched a hockey puck before?

FIRST LADY

Why no.

The teacher takes the demonstration puck from under the desktop; there is a bit of difficulty with the tape. But she hands the puck to the First Lady.

TEACHER

See? They're light. Just right for this age group.

Every Californian (and Texan) gets a thrill the first time they touch a puck; it's like an exotic bird feather or a moon rock.

PRINCIPAL

You ever held a puck?

PROFESSOR

Years ago. To me they're buffalo chips dropped from UFOs.

PRINCIPAL

To me too. But these Canadians... what are ya gonna do?

FIRST LADY

Oh, I see. How interesting.

PROFESSOR

Where did she get thirty hockey pucks in Los Angeles?

PRINCIPAL

Apparently, they are a dollar each in Canada?

PROFESSOR

Canadian dollars or US dollars?

TEACHER

Obviously, it's just a distraction..

FIRST LADY

Well, it might give you a bit of extra time to escape.

TEACHER

Certainly, yes.

FIRST LADY

I know that's one of the things they teach you now. You should run, or you have to hide and if you can't do either then fight back.

TEACHER

And it definitely makes us feel a little bit better.

FIRST LADY

I hope it never happens, but you seem ready.

TEACHER

We're ready to fight if we have to.

FIRST LADY

Yeah and just throw whatever you can.

TEACHER

Want to help us practice?

FIRST LADY

Sure.

TEACHER

Well, just step out into the hall and we'll practice. Don't worry we do this once a week and it doesn't hurt at all.

Out in the hall.

PROFESSOR

Don't worry? You're going to let them pelt you with hockey pucks?

FIRST LADY

Sure. Why not?

PROFESSOR

Don't do it.

FIRST LADY

Why?

PROFESSOR

(whispering)

There are six cellphone cameras in there and your outfit; your hair alone is reason enough. You have jewellery on; it will be strewn about on the floor. But most importantly you still have your dignity.

The First Lady ponders the potential problems.

PROFESSOR

(quietly to the principal)

I can get you steel doors here in the next week, if you'll help me here.

PRINCIPAL

He's right; maybe put the First Lady inside the classroom. Let her throw a puck or two. I was pelted yesterday, sort of a text run.

PROFESSOR

I'll play the heavy. I have no dignity to protect.

PRINCIPAL

Then we're all agreed?

The principal, First Lady and the teacher enter the classroom and shut the door.

The professor enters the classroom, maybe a bit too early.

PROFESSOR

I'm a Chupacabra and I'm here to eat your pencils?

Nothing happens. The students aren't ready... but they open their desks and they also struggle with the super Gorilla tape.

PROFESSOR

(faux growling & finger nails ready to rip)
I'm an old Chupacabra.

(beat)

But I'm still hungry for pencils.

(beat)

I'm here to eat your pencils, erasers and drink all your glue.

(beat)

You should be afraid because I also eat goldfish.

Still no hockey pucks flying.

PROFESSOR

I do this for a living you know.

(beat)

Goldfish, glue and pencils that's my thing..

Twenty-five of the thirty hockey pucks come flying. The professor is an excellent actor and falls to the floor holding his heart. He's leaning against the door cross-eyed with his hair a mess. It's such an act the children all laugh.

TEACHER

Thank you so much for coming.

FIRST LADY

You're welcome.

TEACHER

Can I ask you for another favour?

(beat)

On Friday, we're having a training that involves off duty police officers walking through the building, firing guns with blanks so we know what it sounds like if it ever happens.

FIRST LADY

Oh. I didn't know we were doing that. Won't they be frightened?

The First Lady looks at the professor for help.

PROFESSOR

Friday? That thing in Sacramento?

FIRST LADY

Oh, I'm sorry. Friday? I won't be able to come. I'm so sorry...

PROFESSOR

But, we're going to subscribe to your channel and we'll be sure to share it.

The professor pulls out his phone again and sends himself a note/reminder.

TEACHER

Oh my! That would be terrific.

FIRST LADY

Thank you for inviting me. Good luck, children. And don't let the chupacabras frighten you. My friend is such a clown.

(beat)

Chupacabras, they're not real.

(beat)

They are actually just extremely shy extra-terrestrials. And they're actually frightened of goldfish.

Half of the children's jaws drop.

FIRST LADY

Has everyone seen the movie *E.T.*?

All the children's hands go up.

FIRST LADY

Chupacabras.

The first lady points up to the sky. She winks at the professor.

FIRST LADY

Bye.

She's blown the kids minds and they chatter like their parents have played a mean trick on them by telling them about chupacabras being monsters.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

The First Lady and the professor exit the school and walk.

FIRST LADY

Thank you for that...

PROFESSOR

About Friday? I thought from your expression. Did I intrude?

FIRST LADY

No. Friday I have a date with a surfboard.

PROFESSOR

You surf?

FIRST LADY

Don't worry you'll learn.

PROFESSOR

Hahaha. You're funnier than I am.

FIRST LADY

Well, save me any embarrassment you can. Please!

PROFESSOR

The hockey pucks are one thing but... live fire training?

FIRST LADY

That is a bit much.

PROFESSOR

Frankly, it really wrong.

FIRST LADY

I like that you are willing to draw a line for me.

PROFESSOR

I'm happy. I mean I'll be happy to.

FIRST LADY

I hate those politicians that will run over an old lady just to get in front of a camera.

PROFESSOR

Let's not do that.

FIRST LADY

Yes, I've been the old lady run over before.

PROFESSOR

It's crazy that in her brain hockey puck drills are normal.

FIRST LADY

But live-fire training?

PROFESSOR

It must be a teacher thing.

FIRST LADY

It is absolutely yeah and also a bummer that it's just another thing a teacher has to deal with.

PROFESSOR

Bad parenting, drugs, crime...

FIRST LADY

Kids, runny-nosed kids and kids running everywhere. No one walking, ever!

PROFESSOR

The school board mandating things that probably aren't wise.

FIRST LADY

What a difficult job to be a teacher?

PROFESSOR

Yeah, protect the kids. But then also protect yourself.

FIRST LADY

Must be... just like numbing; it must be so overwhelming every time she hears a noise that's a little out of the ordinary.

PROFESSOR

Even if she isn't the nervous type.

FIRST LADY

Yeah, I'm guessing a few are, but in the back of her brain they must all be going, "what was that noise?"

PROFESSOR

"Johnny, that's nothing. Come back inside and close the window."

FIRST LADY

No wonder they're throwing hockey pucks.

PROFESSOR

Thirty hockey pucks; it'll be on the class list at the beginning of the year: three boxes of Kleenex and markers, glue and folders.

EXT. SENIOR CITIZENS HOME - DAY

PROFESSOR

Oh, were' here. They put up a yard sign?

FIRST LADY

100 years, that's a big deal.

(beat)

I hate it when they ask them like they inevitably always do... What's the secret to longevity.

PROFESSOR

And the answer is always, "fast food."

FIRST LADY

Or, "Every day I drink one shot of coconut vodka."

PROFESSOR

"I smoked two packs of Camels and drink a six-pack of Lone Star every day."

FIRST LADY

Like, uh, it's always not anything healthy and it's never good beer or liquor or fish.

PROFESSOR

You know the answer is that you're lucky.

FIRST LADY

That's not wrong.

PROFESSOR

Alright, let's go see this lucky gramma.

INT. BINGO ROOM - SENIOR CITIZENS HOME

They step in but aren't noticed at the back of the room. The BIRTHDAY GIRL is at the front of the room gathering congratulations. There is a \$100 cake and \$20 worth of decorations.

FIRST LADY

She's 100 years old.

PROFESSOR

This lady is 100 years old? She looks maybe 90.

FIRST LADY

I guess that's good.

PROFESSOR

It's better than being 90 and looking 100.

FIRST LADY

I guess this is her granddaughter talking to her? I guess this is good. Here it is.

GRANDDAUGHTER

How old are you?

BIRTHDAY GIRL

No idea.

GRANDDAUGHTER

You're 100!

BIRTHDAY GIRL

What?

GRANDDAUGHTER

100 years old.

BIRTHDAY GIRL

100? No, I don't believe it.

GRANDDAUGHTER

You look like you're 21 and look like an angel. And just as beautiful as ever.

BIRTHDAY GIRL

Yes. I heard that.

PROFESSOR

Go say "Happy Birthday" and then let's go find my truck.

He pulls out his phone and looks on the map.

PROFESSOR

It's only four blocks... that way.

FIRST LADY

You sound happy.

PROFESSOR

Well, I wasn't entirely sure.

FIRST LADY

You have a waypoint on where you parked?

PROFESSOR

You just call the Secret Service if you forget where you parked?

FIRST LADY

What happens if you lose your phone?

PROFESSOR

Then I'd be screwed. And you'd be walking back to your car.

FIRST LADY

I know exactly where it is.

PROFESSOR

I hope.

The First Lady approaches the Birthday Girl and shakes hands with her and all the family and friends, the entire room.

EXT. SIDEWALK - - DAY

They walk toward the professor's truck.

PROFESSOR

She's only like 91 and clearly a little senile.

FIRST LADY

They're saying she's 100.

PROFESSOR

I guarantee that is one BORING place. I think they just find someone lonely and say it's their birthday so they can have a party. The employees were all into that cake.

FIRST LADY

I saw that. And you think those are all just blatant lies?

PROFESSOR

We wanna get on the *Today Show*. Yeah we're gonna get you on a jar of Smuckers, too.

FIRST LADY

That granddaughter... wow.

PROFESSOR

Why not lie about her age? She lied about everything else.

FIRST LADY

The Today Show justifies the means.

PROFESSOR

She said her grandmother looked 21.

(beat)

You're more beautiful than ever. Yeah, we just found your first boyfriend, Noah from the Ark. He died.

(beat)

"You sound like an Angel." Where did that come from?

FIRST LADY

This is Hollywood remember.

PROFESSOR

Are you saying she works in film?

FIRST LADY

Apparently.

This only confirms what the professor already believes.

PROFESSOR

I already like you...plenty. No need to blow smoke up my you know what.

EXT. AUTO-REPAIR SHOP - DAY

There is a YOUNG MAN (20) working on a race car out in the drive just off the sidewalk.

FIRST LADY

This is your race car?

YOUNG MAN

Yep.

FIRST LADY

Where do you race?

YOUNG MAN

Locally.

FIRST LADY

How are things going?

YOUNG MAN

Well, not good. My girlfriend is in Washington at college...

FIRST LADY

That's too bad.

YOUNG MAN

She wants me to fly up there once a month.

FIRST LADY

How long have you been dating?

YOUNG MAN

Two years and she's very smart and got a scholarship and well... I love her very much. She says she loves me too.

FIRST LADY

Well, that's almost the entire battle.

PROFESSOR

Sounds like you're the big winner!

YOUNG MAN

I recently started my racing career at the local short track.

FIRST LADY

And she's upset that you're blowing a lot of money and time doing that?

YOUNG MAN

She always supported my dreams.

PROFESSOR

When she was here; she supported your dream.

YOUNG MAN

My dad paid for her to get in, but she was there at every race. But she knows racing is an expensive profession.

PROFESSOR

The quicker you can turn your profession into cash-money she can spend the better.

YOUNG MAN

Speed costs money. How fast did you say you want to go?

PROFESSOR

That's what they say, right?.

YOUNG MAN

Yep, well I can't afford Washington and all that.

FIRST LADY

Well, no, book a few months in advance. Then a flight might only cost you what, \$400? I mean ya gotta get online and find a good deal.

YOUNG MAN

The problem is I'm up against the sons of rich men. Son's of millionaires. One guy's grandfather is a billionaire.

PROFESSOR

But you all have the same engine? The same basic car, right?

YOUNG MAN

I'm racing as hard as I can.

FIRST LADY

And she could also come back on some of the weekends.

YOUNG MAN

I should probably try to go.

FIRST LADY

That's nice but she needs to understand you're still gonna race.

The professor looks at the first lady and disagrees.

PROFESSOR

What's it cost to race one of these things?

YOUNG MAN

Too much.

PROFESSOR
You ain't a kidding there, buddy.

FIRST LADY
Well, good luck.

They turn and walk down the sidewalk.

FIRST LADY
Poor kid.

PROFESSOR
He's got money. I mean he's raking in millions. You saw that car, the sponsorships. He's backed by black paint with a touch of blue primer?

FIRST LADY
That's very unfair.

PROFESSOR
Just kidding. It may be sexist but I blame the girl.

FIRST LADY
Really?

PROFESSOR
She wants him to visit her once a month?

FIRST LADY
That's not too much to ask for.

PROFESSOR
She's gonna make that guy wreck.

FIRST LADY
You!

EXT. PLASTIC SURGERY CENTER - DAY

They stop. The professor pulls out his phone camera. A luxury car with a woman in sunglasses and her hair concealed under a scarf drives into the parking garage.

FIRST LADY
You're not recording...

PROFESSOR
No, but it looked like I was, huh?

FIRST LADY
Silly. You ever thought about that?

PROFESSOR
What? Plastic surgery?
(beat)
Just my scrotum.

FIRST LADY
Your what?

PROFESSOR
You know where they hang down.

FIRST LADY
You know, like that's weird?

PROFESSOR
Why? It's just skin. George Clooney said he had that procedure done.

FIRST LADY
And I was like... but later I heard he was joking.

PROFESSOR
Was he? Maybe he SAID he was joking.

FIRST LADY
I don't know. But thanks for sharing that.

PROFESSOR
Too much information?

FIRST LADY
Yes, information sometimes sucks.

PROFESSOR
Well, what about you? You ever thought about it?

FIRST LADY

On my face? No way. My ex-husband did it.

PROFESSOR

I thought that was a rumour.

FIRST LADY

Nope. He's so vain he'll think "you and I" are about revenge.

PROFESSOR

We're not? You and I? President of the United States. The commander in chief. Boss of the FBI, CIA, NSA and Secret Service.

FIRST LADY

And the IRS.

PROFESSOR

All those guys have guns, they put people in prison like you and I drink coffee... and you wanna provoke the man?

FIRST LADY

Why not, you've been provoking me since about ten.

PROFESSOR

Really? The most powerful man in the world?

(beat)

Wait, you just said that I've been provoking you. No. You've been provoking me.

FIRST LADY

You think that's going to be a problem?

PROFESSOR

The president? No, but I'm a little worried about the surfing.

FIRST LADY

Don't worry.

PROFESSOR

Trained in mouth-to-mouth?

FIRST LADY
I'll take care of you.

PROFESSOR
How did he pull it off? Cosmetic surgery.
While in office, I mean?

FIRST LADY
Apparently, the surgeon knew what he was
doing.

PROFESSOR
Why risk everyone finding out?

FIRST LADY
You just admitted you needed surgery on your
balls.

PROFESSOR
I'm not the president though.

FIRST LADY
Well, there was a backup plan.

PROFESSOR
What was that?

FIRST LADY
That he fell in the shower.
(beat)
Well, it's the only place the president is
alone.

PROFESSOR
That's not what I heard.

FIRST LADY
Oh, that's terrible...

PROFESSOR
A stupid bimbo joke. I'm sorry. You might be
very important to me and...

FIRST LADY
(chuckling)
No, I don't care. I've heard them all.

PROFESSOR

You heard that one about the shower before?

FIRST LADY

Well, no... but, you know what I mean. He's so vain he has to have a wife half his age jokes. Heard all those.

PROFESSOR

But plastic surgery? He clearly thinks the presidency has something to do with television.

FIRST LADY

It does.

PROFESSOR

You know after the Kennedy-Nixon debate, the people that watched on TV thought Kennedy won.

FIRST LADY

I heard that. Not since school but... that sounds about right. Kennedy was handsome.

PROFESSOR

And the people that listened on the radio thought Nixon won.

FIRST LADY

Yep. I thought Nixon ripped him a new one.

PROFESSOR

Let's not repeat that in public too much.

EXT. PAWN SHOP - DAY

The professor stops and he's looking into a pawnshop window.

PROFESSOR

Did you ever think politics is a lot like football?

FIRST LADY

The crowds, the scoreboard, it's a rough sport.

PROFESSOR

Trophies... uh, I mean trophy wives.

The first lady chuckles. The professor enters the pawnshop and returns with a helmet, with the number 36 on the side. Next election 2036.

PROFESSOR

Here this is for you. Your gonna need a helmet.

(beat)

You ready for this?

She smiles...

FIRST LADY

I suppose.

PROFESSOR

No. I'm not kidding. It will be very nasty.

FIRST LADY

They used to tease Gerald Ford that he played too many games without a helmet.

PROFESSOR

They didn't even have helmets back then.

FIRST LADY

No?

PROFESSOR

They had something like a baseball glove.

FIRST LADY

How do you...

PROFESSOR

I have my dad's leather helmet still.

FIRST LADY

Thank you. I'll take it.

PROFESSOR

And remember it's from me?

FIRST LADY
I've been warned.

EXT. DISPENSARY - DAY

PROFESSOR
You partake?

FIRST LADY
I like to get high sometimes.

PROFESSOR
And...

FIRST LADY
Apparently, it's a big deal that I do.

PROFESSOR
People never suspected that you do that.

FIRST LADY
Because I'm an old woman who used to be the
First Lady.

PROFESSOR
Ever been a problem?

FIRST LADY
I don't know; it's all supposed to be sealed
but his lawyers tried to blame me for
getting him high in the Oval Office.

PROFESSOR
Jack asses.
(beat)
But you didn't?

FIRST LADY
No, we got high LONG before he was even a
lawyer. In my college dorm room at first.

PROFESSOR
So they tried making you into a drugie.

FIRST LADY
Well, I've totally taken on the personality
of a stoner.

PROFESSOR
Haha. But it's legal now.

FIRST LADY
I quit smoking when it became legal. Now I
only do the edibles.

PROFESSOR
I still haven't smoked it.

FIRST LADY
How do you like it?

PROFESSOR
Kind of fun. Tastes good to me. I didn't
think it would be.

FIRST LADY
Right, why would anyone smoke something that
smells gross and makes you cough, when they
can eat a cookie?

PROFESSOR
Or two cookies.

EXT. SIDEWALK - TCL CHINESE THEATRE - DAY

They stand in front of the theatre. There is a line for the
film.

PROFESSOR
Snow White #57.

THEATRE EMPLOYEE
Sir, are you in line?

FIRST LADY
No. We're not. Please go ahead.

PROFESSOR
You work for Disney?

THEATRE EMPLOYEE
No.

PROFESSOR

I pitched them ten ideas in the last two years and they made this? It's not even controversial.

THEATRE EMPLOYEE

Sir?

PROFESSOR

Where are the protesters? We came down to see the protesters. How do I get my money back?

(beat)

I saw a small man on TV... an angry man. He said other woke people don't make movies with little people in them. Who would that be? Where is he? I know he was rich he had a few hundred sticking out right here...

The professor gestures to his shirt pocket.

PROFESSOR (con't)

... and he had this grin on his face, like he has money in the bank, so screw all the other little people.

THEATRE EMPLOYEE

Did you buy a ticket online?

PROFESSOR

No, I just wanna see some protests.

THEATRE EMPLOYEE

Well, if you didn't buy a ticket...

PROFESSOR

Where's the little guy who invited me down here to protest?

(to the First Lady)

Quick pretend we're not together.

He walks... along the rope line and the professor speaks to the moviegoers. He stops occasionally and looks up and down the sidewalk.

PROFESSOR

Hi, are you here to protest? No?

(beat)
Hi, are you here to protest? No?
(beat)
Hi, did you see them protesting earlier? No?
(beat)
You protesting? They were gonna make a movie
about an old lady and her Chupacabra, but
they made this same movie... again.

The First Lady is chuckling but rejoins him and pulls him away,
down the sidewalk.

FIRST LADY
You must really dislike Disney.

PROFESSOR
I hate Disney.

FIRST LADY
What? You weren't a child?

PROFESSOR
Sure.

FIRST LADY
Sunday night? *The Magical World of Disney*,
right after *Wild Kingdom*?

PROFESSOR
Sunday nights in the 60s for me were mixers
with the sororities... that's the only wild
kingdom I was interested in.

FIRST LADY
But seriously, they won't listen to you now?

PROFESSOR
So I'm not gonna watch their show back then.

FIRST LADY
You are the only Disney hater/protester I've
ever seen.

PROFESSOR
Cause if you protest against them, you will
NEVER work anywhere.

FIRST LADY

Free speech only protectes you against the government, not the conglomerate.

PROFESSOR

Did I embarrass you back there?

FIRST LADY

No. I understand. If I can be bitter about one thing, then you can be bitter about one thing.

PROFESSOR

You're bitter about something?

FIRST LADY

Thanks for not noticing.

PROFESSOR

I don't know what's bothing you, but if you ever wanna talk about it... just let me know.

She looks something up on her smartphone as they walk.

FIRST LADY

The Magical World of Disney first aired in 1954. You would have been two.

PROFESSOR

Uhm, we didn't get ABC?

FIRST LADY

You said it was the only network that came in clear.

PROFESSOR

You know, when Disney reads a script, I'll admit it then that I watched as a kid. Until then I liked *Red Skelton*, *Rin Tin Tin* and *Lucy*. Screw *Mickey Mouse*! Never heard of him.

FIRST LADY

I liked Disney but if you don't want me to I won't.

PROFESSOR

Hey, you're mocking the sorority girls? Man they were my bread and butter.

FIRST LADY

I just wanted to see your reaction.

PROFESSOR

Well, officially you better like Disney. Florida will be in play. Orange County is a big county. That's about 1 and a half million. 500,000 votes maybe. Half women.

FIRST LADY

Naturally.

PROFESSOR

So you watched a lot of television?

FIRST LADY

Hogan's Heroes and *Bonanza* did it for me.

PROFESSOR

Hoss or Little Joe.

FIRST LADY

Little Joe, of course.

Still walking and bitter, the professor turns around to look at the theater.

PROFESSOR

Snow White.

FIRST LADY

How many remakes is that?

PROFESSOR

Since 1937, I'm counting... 147 remakes.

FIRST LADY

That's two per year.

PROFESSOR

I'm kidding. But instead of buying a new story, they go back to the same well.

FIRST LADY

Safer that way.

PROFESSOR

This is art, there's no safe in art making.

FIRST LADY

Making art...

PROFESSOR

That's like, "there's no crying in baseball."

(beat)

Are you willing to denounce it just because it's been done 147 times before?

FIRST LADY

No.

PROFESSOR

Well, there goes the screenwriter's vote. How will you ever win Los Angeles County? You know everyone out here has a script. What's your position on *Snow White* and dwarfism?

FIRST LADY

Well, I don't know.

PROFESSOR

Well, the original was in the 1930s and there was the animation... jobs for one white voice actress and seven dwarf voice actors. And now 80 years later, there are jobs for one Hispanic actress and seven dwarves.

(beat)

There's an angry little person on the news raising hell about it... but, of course, he's made 28 movies and has money in the bank.

FIRST LADY

The angry little person...

PROFESSOR

Unnamed. He's a small person. Not little! You know he's 4'5". That's not a little

person. He doesn't even qualify. I don't know how he got those parts.

FIRST LADY
He rejected your script?

PROFESSOR
Hung up the phone on me.

FIRST LADY
Well, no one said he was smart.

PROFESSOR
Exactly. We only have established that he's small and not little.

FIRST LADY
Maybe he's just saying to Disney you're not as woke as you think. Maybe Disney rejected HIS script too?

PROFESSOR
But what about the seven actors?

FIRST LADY
I don't even know. Yeah, if that is their way of...

PROFESSOR
... feeding their family?

FIRST LADY
... I'm sure they are saying to your small friend...

PROFESSOR
... with the heavy phone...

FIRST LADY
... "you made your money, now it's our turn."
But at the same time, I'm like, "I don't know; is this humiliating?"

PROFESSOR
Is he sympathetic to the plight of little people?

FIRST LADY

I don't know if he's said anything.

PROFESSOR

Will he watch *Snow White*?

FIRST LADY

Of course not.

PROFESSOR

That's good. Not even with his grandkids. He won't watch because he supports the little angry fella.

FIRST LADY

Who's already made his money.

PROFESSOR

You think we can get him to actually say that? Like give him some figures on how many dwarfs vote.

FIRST LADY

You wanna put him in a box with the angry little guy?

PROFESSOR

Did you see those people's faces back there in front of the theatre? They thought I was mental for wanting to protest.

FIRST LADY

I see what you are saying.

PROFESSOR

You might have to goat him into denouncing the movie. Don't you have any friends in the press corps?

FIRST LADY

I might... but why? I don't understand why it matters...

PROFESSOR

You need separation. Whatever the White House says looney then you say the opposite. What side has he taken... What does your

husband watch movies with little people in them?

FIRST LADY

Ex-Husband.

PROFESSOR

Right. I'm sorry. That's obvious.

He takes her hand.

PROFESSOR

Look, I'm holding your hand, in public. Making it impossible for you to still be married.

FIRST LADY

Slick.

PROFESSOR

Of course. You left him. And he's not your man anymore.

(mocking the media)

He belongs to America...

FIRST LADY

...and that skanky blonde gold digger.

PROFESSOR

The key I think is making him recognizable as the dickhead he is.

FIRST LADY

I'm not sure that will be too difficult.

PROFESSOR

Good. Every scorned woman in this country is a huge electoral demographic.

FIRST LADY

And the prick vote is diluted if you ask me.

PROFESSOR

You'd think the pricks'll all vote for your ex. But they won't. Put those yellow bikini photos from the 1980s out there and the dickheads'll be entirely split.

FIRST LADY

They're already confused.

PROFESSOR

We triangulate them. A good but scorned woman (that's you), dickhead candidate number one and dickhead candidate number two. We win. I mean you win.

(beat)

You'll have a huge gender gap and I believe high-intensity numbers. Gender loyalty... while I believe...

FIRST LADY

And, not all men will vote for my husband... just because they cheated on their wives too... or just because he's a dick, like they are.

PROFESSOR

AND okay, the bikini loyalty. But mostly the female vote. Affinity!

FIRST LADY

Affinity?

PROFESSOR

Voting for someone because they are like you are. Cowboys vote for cowboys.

FIRST LADY

Dicks vote for other dicks.

(beat)

It's called identity politics, nowadays?

PROFESSOR

Funny, when I went to school the political science profs didn't have that term.

FIRST LADY

No, of course not. It was my generation that invented it.

PROFESSOR

Then you know what to do, right?

FIRST LADY

We just need to find another dickhead adulterer that wants to be president. The women vote for me and two dickheads spilt the cheater vote.

PROFESSOR

Then you agree, women who've been cheated on are the next big identity voters.

FIRST LADY

Is this scientific in any way?

PROFESSOR

We can do the math later... right now you need separation.

FIRST LADY

Not only are we separated, we're divorced and he's remarried.

PROFESSOR

No, that's not what I mean. But, you know she's the best optics you have. You remember when Dukakis wore a tank hat and rode around in a tank?

FIRST LADY

I was a kid... yeh. People laughed.

PROFESSOR

That 28-year-old... half his age...

FIRST LADY

You have to admit she looks good.

PROFESSOR

She looks too good. And that's good for you. She's your Dukakis in a tank.

FIRST LADY

I don't...

PROFESSOR

It's sort of a long con. You know what I mean? Let him have the Gucci and Dior vote.

FIRST LADY

And we'll take the crying your eyes out and eating tubs of ice-cream vote? And then explaining to your kids that daddy still loves them he just can't stand the sight of mommy anymore?

PROFESSOR

I'm sorry but we need to put her (THEM) in our paid advertising. You remember the first time they held hands in public?

FIRST LADY

We use that footage? It was perfectly staged. It's so pretty.

PROFESSOR

Pretty damning if you ask me.

FIRST LADY

We need some focus groups and polling to support that... but it might work.

PROFESSOR

Not everyone is beautiful and not everyone has THAT MANY mistresses in the media. I mean don't they talk to each other in the media?

FIRST LADY

If you want people to like you in spite of your pretty privilege, maybe don't go on television and talk about how hot you are.

PROFESSOR

Or what a burden it is to be pretty.

FIRST LADY

She eats like a bird and she'll outlive him by 50 years.

PROFESSOR

And she's just the type of First Lady to break the rules and remarry.

FIRST LADY

That's no skin off my back.

PROFESSOR

Aren't you glad that happened; she'll be the widow and not you?

FIRST LADY

Never thought of it that way. As a widow she's a train wreck waiting to happen.

PROFESSOR

She's going to be a very exciting person for at least seven of her eight husbands.

FIRST LADY

I'm not sure I...

PROFESSOR

Aristotle Onassis Syndrome?

FIRST LADY

What's that.

PROFESSOR

Jackie. The thrill of being on top of a woman that was... well... how to say it... orgasmed in the residence.

FIRST LADY

Don't count on it with this president.

PROFESSOR

Well, in theory anyway.

(beat)

The Viking reporter, she'll experience her own brand of gold-digging. When he's gone, she'll have nothing but POTUS parts suitors.

FIRST LADY

(chuckles)

You are terrible.

PROFESSOR

They won't love her... when she's older. Husbands will only be able to get off thinking about the stature of... well... you probably get the picture.

FIRST LADY

Haha. "I shared a woman with the president."

PROFESSOR

But actually, it'll be "I shared a woman with a dead president."

FIRST LADY

Which clearly isn't the same.

PROFESSOR

Well, that's out there in her future.

(beat)

Right now, she's helping you.

FIRST LADY

She dated the NFL commissioner before my husband, you know.

PROFESSOR

I wasn't aware...

FIRST LADY

When she was a Flight Crew cheerleader.

PROFESSOR

United, Delta, American? I thought she was a reporter.

FIRST LADY

A New York Jets cheerleader.

PROFESSOR

She dated her boss.

FIRST LADY

Some would say, that makes two bosses.

PROFESSOR

Make sure you use that in your book. People should see that patten, from the NFL to the White House.

(beat)

And carrying the water for him as a reporter; that's low.

FIRST LADY
They were ALL reporters!

PROFESSOR
Name, names.

FIRST LADY
I will!

PROFESSOR
Never ever screw with the government
professor.

FIRST LADY
We're smarter than the average wave.

PROFESSOR
That what you say out here... We say, "smarter
than your average steer."

FIRST LADY
But I'm supposed to disagree with
everything?

PROFESSOR
When possible, for now... Your biography... well
it needs to be about how different you two
are, politically.

FIRST LADY
That's easy to do lately.

PROFESSOR
I'm sure it is. He does what's he thinks is
popular and you do what's right.

FIRST LADY
We ARE different.

PROFESSOR
Good; put it out there; within reason.

FIRST LADY
And?

PROFESSOR

Let the people decide who they like the best. You're in the middle and by definition that means you haven't lost your mind. And it's all about sanity, these days.

FIRST LADY

Disagreeing with him... that sounds a bit risky. I mean he knows people.

PROFESSOR

He only thinks he's in touch with people. He's buffaloed everyone, including himself.

FIRST LADY

And he has an army.

PROFESSOR

HAD an army. You have an entire gender!

FIRST LADY

I don't know.

PROFESSOR

You don't still have feelings for him, do you?

FIRST LADY

Absolutely not.

PROFESSOR

If you run for President. Your responsibility has to be to yourself. To win. If you don't win, there isn't much you can do to help anyone. If you win, you can do whatever you think is right.

FIRST LADY

But for now I just have to getting him to denounce *Snow White*? That might backfire.

PROFESSOR

If you're wondering if I'm going to drop your hand as we walk, the answer is no.

FIRST LADY

Okay.

EXT. A BIT DOWN FROM A SIDEWALK CAFÉ - RODEO DRIVE - DAY

PROFESSOR

This is my truck.

They get in the cab. There is a sunscreen on the dash. Windows have dark tenting. She looks in the back seat.

FIRST LADY

Are you living in this truck?

Very long beat... It might be a deal-breaker. The First Lady's brain is racing. She's been so happy all day... and now reality hits her hard.

PROFESSOR

Pretty much...

(beat)

Well just until they drag me back to my prison in Texas...

FIRST LADY

Prison?

PROFESSOR

Well, most people call it senior living. My daughter paid for a year, well it's my money.

FIRST LADY

But you came here?

PROFESSOR

Yep. I-10 all the way. Until...

FIRST LADY

Is there something wrong with you?

PROFESSOR

I don't think so, but I'm really not in your league. For me, it's here in this truck, in this town or senior living in baking hot Texas.

Very long beat...

FIRST LADY

(sarcastic)

And you're seventy-eight. Why not... age is just a number.

PROFESSOR

Well with average life expectancy: I should live until tomorrow...

FIRST LADY

Statistically, you should have died last year.

PROFESSOR

There's nothing I can say? What can I do?

(beat)

I have a twelve-foot yacht. The trailer has a flat tire. It's parked in the back of senior hell, but still... it's fixable. And there's a lake an hour's drive away.

FIRST LADY

Anything else?

PROFESSOR

Well, in the interest of full disclosure... I technically still have cancer...

FIRST LADY

Haha, earlier it was Alzheimer's.

PROFESSOR

I'm not kidding. It's all up and down my spine. And it's gonna go everywhere else.

(beat)

I guess, I wish I was a jellyfish.

FIRST LADY

Well, how long do you have?

PROFESSOR

It's not fair to you, you know. This has all been just one fun adventure... haha. My date with the first lady. Let's just go find your car and call it a day, decade, century, whatever.

FIRST LADY

Nobody gets hurt?

PROFESSOR

That's the general idea. You go and be president and I'll just go find an agent.

FIRST LADY

Ships that pass...

PROFESSOR

... on Rodeo, in the middle of the day.

FIRST LADY

Why didn't you say something before now?

PROFESSOR

Well, you know in Chapter One... and it's on every test, at least my tests, self-interest.

FIRST LADY

My tests too. Question number two.

PROFESSOR

It was selfish, self-interest, not telling you in the coffee shop... but I wanted to spend this time, doing this, walking around looking important. And frankly, men are like that.

FIRST LADY

We take every opportunity.

PROFESSOR

It's in all those textbooks because if you wanna be president you'll need to take every opportunity.

ALT PROFESSOR

I didn't wanna lose you, but I didn't wanna use you just have somebody around. Come on I'll take you to your car.

She leans over and kisses him. Then straddles him.

FIRST LADY

Is that your cell phone?

He holds up his cell phone and smiles.

PROFESSOR

Here. Let's get in the back.

FIRST LADY

You have protection?

PROFESSOR

Is that a Secret Service joke?

She chuckles and he looks in the center console until he smiles. He turns on the radio. He puts up some sunshades; the side windows are covered. Remember he's been sleeping in the back seat. He's prepared and covers the windows.

They are about to get in the back when a full-blown TERRORIST opens her door and drags her out by the hair. The terrorist pistol whips the professor and he's unconscious. The terrorist zip ties the First Lady's hands in front of her; big mistake.

The terrorist is making his way down the sidewalk to a van. A DIFFERENT TERRORIST is waiting in the driver's seat.

The terrorist is about to put her in the back of the van. No cops or anyone ready to help.

Professor has blood running down his face. He opens his glove box. Beach Boys *Surfer Girl* comes on the radio.

Out on the sidewalk, he has her football helmet in his hand (concealed in the helmet is a short barrel .45) and he's walking down the sidewalk. He's closing the distance.

The First Lady is struggling. There might not be time for him to reach them and he's out of range. He needs to get closer for a good shot. The professor begins singing... It's not entirely odd with the homeless in Los Angeles. The song on the radio helps.

PROFESSOR

*We could ride the surf together
While our love would grow
In my woody, I would take you
Everywhere I go*

*So I say from me to you
I will make your dreams come true
Do you love me, do you, surfer girl?
Surfer girl, my little surfer girl*

It's just strange enough to distract the terrorist. The First Lady swings and pokes the terrorist in the eye with her thumb. Professor closes the gap and shoots the driver first. The terrorist is about to shoot the First Lady. But the professor shoots the terrorist.

The professor scans the street (pointing the pistol) looking for other terrorists. The threat seems over. Seeing none he runs to her, dropping the pistol into the helmet.

PROFESSOR

You okay?

Long beat.

The professor takes a long military-grade knife out of his boot and cuts her zip tie. She's recovering from the shock. But suddenly she smiles. Of course, we've always speculated she has a lot of character; now it's 100% clear.

FIRST LADY

Well, by god. They'll read your scripts now.

She hugs him tightly, but he's frail.

PROFESSOR

Still, I'd rather this not... listen... I'm not feeling so well.

The First Lady takes charge... and he's gonna colaps but the eases him down... He's able to lean against the railing that is around a café with sidewalk seating.

The Professor looks a bit lost... pale and he's shocky.

PROFESSOR

Pills. My pills. There's a bag behind the seat. Get the Tikosyn, please.

She goes to the truck and pulls up the bag and puts it on the seat. She unzips it and inside there are 30 prescription pill bottles.

In tears, she reads them, and if they aren't Tikosyn, she throws them into the passenger's seat.

The FIRST COP arrives. Today, he's the only innocent cop in LA County. The professor looks relieved.

PROFESSOR

Sergeant Al Powell? I thought you'd never get here.

COP #1

It's Jackson. So you wanna tell me what happened?

PROFESSOR

Well, when you're in love with a beautiful woman, you go it alone. I guess.

The First Lady returns with the correct pill bottle and she grabs some water off another table.

FIRST LADY

How many?

PROFESSOR

I only have one heart... unless you wanna give me yours. One.

She gives him a pill and grabs a glass of water.

FIRST LADY

Is that a valentine's joke or a transplant joke?

PROFESSOR

Hey, you have a sense of humour.

FIRST LADY

What's this for exactly.

PROFESSOR

Heart rhythm. I think. I'll let you know in a minute. If I start running around the block, this is the right one.

FIRST LADY

And the other meds?

PROFESSOR

Oh, you name it.

FIRST LADY

No, YOU name it.

PROFESSOR

There is the cancer, diabetes, Alzheimer's. Back pain, skin rash, a stomach ulcer, high blood pressure, low blood pressure. Sleeping. Not sleeping. Seems like six statin drugs. I tried to tell you.

FIRST LADY

I know you did.

PROFESSOR

(to the cop)

I tried to tell her I'll not the right guy. Look at me.

FIRST LADY

But I insisted.

PROFESSOR

How can I back out now?

FIRST LADY

Hahah. Very funny.

A suspicious-looking SECOND COP arrives. Very few have known who she was all day, but he knows immediately who she is. He's whispering something into his radio, that is apparently on a different band than the first cop. He reaches for the First Lady's arm.

COP #2

Ma'am, we need to get you off the street.

FIRST LADY

Don't touch me. There were two of them; my friend shot both of them. The weapon is in that helmet.

PROFESSOR

You know I asked a guy once, what's it take for someone to read your script in this town?

(beat)

And... he said, "Ya gotta kill someone."

FIRST LADY

He's kidding.

COP #2

So, you shot these two to draw attention to yourself? Your script?

PROFESSOR

Scripts.

FIRST LADY

No, hang on that's not what happened. There are more security cameras on this street than at the White House. Now go look.

PROFESSOR

I thought you were. Just the other day, I heard your PSA on reading...

FIRST LADY

My roommate at Berkley, she runs the Ad Council.

PROFESSOR

And two years after the coup and the ads are still running?

FIRST LADY

It wasn't a coup; it was a divorce.

PROFESSOR

Pardon me; I'm a bit biased. In my mind he is the coup plotter... if anyone asks me...

FIRST LADY

All this and you're still funny.

PROFESSOR

I'm not dying you know.

FIRST LADY

No, I know. You'll be fine. You're just a bit dehydrated and need a rest.

PROFESSOR

With that radio spot, I thought you could help me, but you meant kid should read, not agents.

FIRST LADY

Wait, so you want my help?
(to the cops)
He's a just little shaken.

PROFESSOR

Don't let them tow my truck. I'm living in my truck.
(to cop #1)
It's there or assisted living in Texas.

FIRST LADY

(to the cops)
I can drive his truck to my house?

PROFESSOR

I don't know... what's going on with me and I realize I'm not making sense. I never shot anyone before. Not outside of Texas anyway. It's legal there you know.

FIRST LADY

Hehe, he's joking.

PROFESSOR

Meatloaf died.

FIRST LADY

Yeah, he did.
(to the cops)
We've been listening to the radio.

COP #2

Fella, you seeing a doctor? On any medications.

PROFESSOR

Plenty.

COP #2

Plenty of... which.

PROFESSOR

Both.

FIRST LADY

Please don't make like he's crazy. I know this man. He's okay. I mean he writes books for children. Just give him a minute.

COP #2

We're just trying to get to the bottom of this.

FIRST LADY

We're not giving you a statement.

(to the professor)

Tell them honey... you want to end the questioning.

PROFESSOR

She wants her Secret Service protection back. And all the interest groups can jump in the electric chair.

(beat)

I'm sweating like a damn cut pig.

FIRST LADY

(to the cops)

No questions.

COP #2

I've seen this plenty... They come here looking to sell a movie script.

FIRST LADY

Really?

COP #2

This happens all the time. I mean they all have mental and physical issues.

FIRST LADY

Issues? Well, you can say that about nearly everyone.

PROFESSOR

Will you get me off this god forsaken street? I hate these fucking Jaguars. They're everywhere.

The First Lady can't help but chuckle.

COP #1

Hang on buddy there is an ambulance on it's way.

COP #3

He looks malnourished if you ask me.

FIRST LADY

Maybe we should get him up and inside?

COP #1

No, the ambulance is maybe ten blocks away.

COP #2

But you don't need; you don't need to. This isn't your problem ma'am, not your problem.

COP #3

His chance of getting help is way better back where he came from. Sending him home. That's the best thing that we can do for him, for them.

COP #2

Now as for yourself; you really need your protection back. Look around you. This might have all been avoided.

A light bulb goes off in the professor's head.

PROFESSOR

(to cop #2)

Oh, no! I wanna know who those fellows are..

COP #1

Sir, just relax.

PROFESSOR

(to cop #2)

Hey, I killed them, now you go over there and get in their wallets and you tell me who they are. What nationality? Who they work for.

COP #1
Sir, just relax.

The First Lady's phone rings. She ignores it.

FIRST LADY
Guess who?

PROFESSOR
Your son?

The First Lady turns fearful; she shakes her head. She shows the professor her phone. The caller ID says, POTUS. The professor looks at his wristwatch.

FIRST LADY
Less than five minutes?

PROFESSOR
Something in Denmark...

FIRST LADY
(to cop #2)
Hey, I want to know who they are and who they talked to... six months back...

The professor holds up two fingers.

FIRST LADY
Two years back.

COP #2
There will be a detective here any minute.

FIRST LADY
Tell him I'll be at the hospital.

The ambulance arrives. The EMTs want to treat the First Lady but she must redirect them to help the professor.

PROFESSOR
The keys are in the truck.

Cop #2 whispers to cop #3. They put cop #3 in the back of the ambulance with the professor. Smiling far too much, cop #3 immediately starts whispering in the professor's ear, trying to gain his confidence.

FIRST LADY
(to cop #3)
No, sir. Get out.

COP #2
It's for his own protection.

FIRST LADY
Absolutely not!

There is a standoff...

FIRST LADY
I'm not moving. I'll put him in that truck and take him there myself. Now get out. You're not talking to him.

COP #2
We're just doing our job?

FIRST LADY
This is NOT your job.

The DETECTIVE has been standing there a while... and he nods to cop #3 and he shame walks out of the ambulance. The First Lady gives the detective a questioning/concerned look.

The First Lady notices a YOUNG GUY with a GoPro camera; he's been filming it all or most of it.

FIRST LADY
Are you a reporter?

INTERNET BLOGGER
Sort of.

FIRST LADY
Get in there. If you want to talk to me later... then no one talks to him now. Understand?

The guy with the camera gets in the back of the ambulance with the EMT. The First Lady gets in the professor's truck and she will follow the ambulance. Several police cars follow the truck.

FADE OUT

THE CREDITS BEGIN BUT ARE QUICKLY INTERRUPTED

INT. CAPITOL BUILDING ROTUNDA - JANUARY 20th - NOON

SUPER: TWO YEARS LATER - WASHINGTON DC

The procession escorting the First Lady to be sworn in has stopped. There are nine JUSTICES, four CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS and the SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE. The First Lady and the professor (in a fancy wheelchair) are there, waiting.

NEWS ANCHOR

There seems to be some discussion. The former First Lady, now the President-Elect, and the first woman expected to serve as president, she and her staff and family and friends and she's joined by her husband... they're all waiting.

COMMENTATOR

I hope she's not going to make a mockery of this?

NEWS ANCHOR

That's an open mic.

COMMENTATOR

I'm aware.

NEWS ANCHOR

Can you tell me where the current President is?

COMMENTATOR

I assume he's already out on the platform.

The television director cuts to the miserable and shivering President.

NEWS ANCHOR

There he is, calmly dutifully waiting to make a peaceful transfer of power.

COMMENTATOR

As the entire nation is aware, the outgoing president, lost the so called "election" to the woman he earlier had divorced. Not only will the next president be the first female to hold the office; she'll also be the only former spouse to succeed her husband in office.

NEWS ANCHOR

Ex-husband.

COMMENTATOR

(sarcastically)

Thanks for straightening me out on things.

The television camera pans over to the 28-year-old trophy wife and outgoing First Lady. She is in furs but she looks equally miserable.

NEWS ANCHOR

Boy, she looks cold.

COMMENTATOR

You wanna know why she looks cold?

(beat)

Because it IS cold.

NEWS ANCHOR

Hey, nothing personal.

COMMENTATOR

Well, this country is really messed up right now. Let's just hope this works out and things can return to normal.

The outgoing president and wife are red-cheeked and shivering and they appear to be unaware of the delay inside the capital.

Inside, the professor looks incredibly frail, 140 lbs. and ten years older. He's in a thick coat and under two wool blankets. He has a nice winter hat on his head.

FIRST LADY

(to powerless people)

No, I'm not taking him out there. There are health considerations. We'll be sworn in here. Bring them in here and where's the Bible?

NEWS ANCHOR

Well, now the Speaker of the House is going over to discuss the situation.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

Ma'am, Madame President-Elect, the television cameras? The television audience. Everyone is waiting.

FIRST LADY

No.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

Maybe the First Gentleman could watch from my office and you could continue?

FIRST LADY

We'll NOT be separated. Especially not today!

NEBULOUS CONGRESSMAN

(under his breath to opposition leader)

Bitch.

The Speaker of the House spins and points his finger at the Congressional leaders. The Speaker doesn't know which one said it, so he points to each one of them with narrowed eyes.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

Hey, there'll be none of that.

The First Lady points to three (or more) different cameras that are set up in the Capitol Rotunda.

COMMUNICATIONS AIDE

These cameras were supposed to only catch you briefly as you walk through on your way to the stage.

FIRST LADY

Well, today they're gonna capture it all.

COMMUNICATIONS AIDE

Ma'am?

FIRST LADY

I require it.

THE CHIEF JUSTICE in a robe stands around idly, holding a Bible, but checks the time intermittently.

FIRST LADY

The cameras outside? Well, bring them in. I'm not taking my husband out into that mess. He's ill. Everyone knows he's ill.

NEWS ANCHOR

There seems to be a controversy. They want her to step out on the platform and take the oath of office, but...

(finger on his earpiece)

Oh, I'm being told she's concerned about the health of her husband, about to become this nation's first First Gentleman.

FIRST LADY

I need some medical and military authorities, here now! Please.

Her political aides scramble, looking for allies.

COMMENTATOR

She has to take the oath first, before anyone is anything.

NEWS ANCHOR

Well, I'm being whispered to in my ear... the discussion you are watching has more to do with where the oath will be administered.

COMMENTATOR

Can we proceed?

NEWS ANCHOR

She might have a point. At least three feet of snow has fallen instead of one; it's a

bitter wind and cold temperatures than expected.

COMMENTATOR

But not as bad as in 1985, Reagan's second inauguration.

NEWS ANCHOR

For everyone at home. On this day in 1985 there were similar but not so harsh weather conditions and the ceremony was moved indoors.

Back to the First Lady who will not budge.

COMMENTATOR

Still, she's adamant.

The professor nods to her that everything will be okay. They look into each others eyes. It's a private conversation. She listens to him.

PROFESSOR

What are you doing here with a clown like me?

FIRST LADY

I have no idea.

PROFESSOR

It was the bloody thigh bone I brought your dog?

FIRST LADY

No. My first idea about you? You'll laugh.

(beat)

You've had me since all that about the Chupacabras are from outer space.

PROFESSOR

That caused a few heads to turn.

FIRST LADY

Mine for sure.

PROFESSOR

"Who is Disney, trying to ruin a centuries-old Hispanic myth?"

FIRST LADY

You think you'll be okay?

PROFESSOR

Sure, let's go freeze.

She kisses him and runs her fingers through his chemotherapy hair. He smiles confidently, she looks worried but her confidence grows. Finally, she smiles. They continue outside.

COMMENTATOR

Oh, he's taken the initiative and he's moving his wheelchair.

NEWS ANCHOR

She's been arguing with Inauguration officials to bring the ceremony inside but he has the wheelchair's controller in hand; he's leading the group out into the cold.

COMMENTATOR

So, things might run a bit behind schedule?

NEWS ANCHOR

No, I think we're right on time.

COMMENTATOR

I don't think I've ever seen such a drama only minutes before an Inauguration.

NEWS ANCHOR

Generally, everything is scripted entirely.

COMMENTATOR

One has to wonder if this is any indication of how the new president will work.

CREDITS CONCLUDE

FADE OUT

THE FIRST LADY - CHARACTERS

First Lady (58): The first First Lady to divorce a sitting US President. She has escaped to her hometown of Los Angeles to plot a return to political life. I would like to say, "Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned," but I can't she's gentile and ladylike, as the political tradition calls for. However, she can be a bit rough, and the audience might suspect she's out for revenge, but she plays it very cool. Maybe she's looking for love. Perhaps political revenge. Perhaps BOTH. In the end, she could play the victim, but instead chooses to be the hero. Might be an actress similar to Laura Dern, 50 something and alive!

Professor (78): Retired professor of political science with a shady past. Wise and witty, but he's dying of almost every disease. He may simply be trying to seduce the former First Lady. Or he may be looking to gather up some political power with his final months/years. He has some interesting political theories but at the same time he may be just flatering the First Lady. Spent a night in jail for raising greyhounds. He has a right-wing or libertarian ideology, but chiefly he sees his job as winning political revenge for the First Lady. Might be an actor similar to Bruce Dern, seventy-eighty something, nearly a cowboy and certainly wily.

Barista: Alfred coffee shop employee and cheerleader for love.

Principal: Elementary school principal. PR savvy.

Teacher: Has an idea about school safety.

Birthday Girl: Celebrating her 100th birthday.

Daughter: Possible trickster.

Juvenile: He's lost his lizard.

TV Journalist: She's just reporting the facts.

Racer: He wants to race AND have a girlfriend.

Street Hustler: Grifter with a trivia game hustle.

Two Hair Stylists: One long and one short.

Four Cops: Three are involved in a conspiracy.

President: Apparently had affairs with a dozen reporters.

New First Lady: Former White House reporter. Too pretty for the job... she leveled up by marrying the newly divorced president.

Speaker of the House: Politician who only wants to move things along smoothly.

Chief Justice: Patiently waits for noon.

Congressional Leaders: Typical morons.

Communications Aide: Lost kid.

News Anchor: Mild mannered.

Commentator: Sexist ass.

Premise: The first First Lady to divorce a sitting US President flees to her native Los Angeles to plot a return to political life. However, she meets an ageing professor and a problematic political romance develops.

Setting: Los Angeles coffee shop and sidewalks. Then the Capitol Rotunda in Washington DC.

Time: Early 2035.