

Billions Episode 6.5 "Battleship Potemkin"

By

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EXT. SIDE WALK - BROOKLYN - DAY

Axe and Wags exit a restaurant, pace down the side walk.

WAGS
Where's the pick up?

AXE
I arranged for him to meet us at
the park.

WAGS
Why?

AXE
Thought a little fresh air might do
us good.

WAGS
Fresh air? Now?

EXT. PARK - BROOKLYN - DAY

Axe and Wags stroll through the park. JOGGERS run by, a KID
throws a frisbee for his DOG.

Wags swats at a gnat that's bugging him.

WAGS
I don't normally enjoy the
outdoors. There's too many bugs.

AXE
Wags, the deal, it rubbed me the
wrong way.

Wags swats the gnat.

WAGS
I was wondering when you were gonna
bring that up.

AXE
I want us to come back with
something big.

A MAN reads a newspaper on a wooden bench. Axe sees the
front page, it reads: Axe Capital's Big Cuts Have
Shareholders Concerned.

(CONTINUED)

Axe marches over to the Man, grabs the paper.

MAN

Hey!

Axe reads the front page.

AXE

(out loud)

The arrest of Bill Stern was a devastating blow for Axe Capital but now investors are wondering if their funds are being used for illegal trading.

Axe crumples the paper up. Wags steps in.

WAGS

What's got you all hot and bothered?

The Man taps Axe's shoulder.

MAN

Hey man you just ruined my paper.

Axe turns to the Man, a scowl on his face. The Man takes a closer look at Axe.

MAN(CONT'D)

Oh my God, you're Bobby Axelrod.

Wags glances down at the crumpled newspaper. He sees the headline, frowns.

INT. U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - DAY

Connerty, Kate and Terri sit in a conference room with the other investigators. They're going over the case thus far.

TERRI

That's it. That's all we've got so far.

CONNERTY

What about the field agents watching Axe's guys?

TERRI

Nothing's out of the ordinary. They wake up, go to work then turn in like good little soldiers.

(CONTINUED)

CONNERTY

It's too tidy to be a coincidence.

TERRI

You think they're up to something?

CONNERTY

No, Axelrod's stubborn but he's not a fool. They're waiting it out. You've seen the articles. The media's practically begging to bury Bobby Axelrod.

TERRI

(disappointed)

And all we have to do is hand them a shovel.

Connerty glances at Terri and the other investigators, then Kate.

CONNERTY

I'm calling it. That's all for today, everyone. We'll do a follow up tomorrow.

Connerty, Kate, Terri and the Investigators stand from their seats.

The Investigators leave the office in a line.

CONNERTY(CONT'D)

Terri.

Terri turns to Connerty.

CONNERTY(CONT'D)

Stay behind a minute.

Terri nods.

Kate lifts a file that she's holding.

KATE

I'll just put this in your office.

CONNERTY

(to Kate)

Thanks.

Kate closes the office door on her way out.

Terri eyes Connerty, they're alone now.

(CONTINUED)

TERRI
There something you wanna discuss?

CONNERTY
We need more eyes on Axelrod.

Terri's dreamy stare shatters.

TERRI
Well, you sure don't beat around
the bush.

CONNERTY
(oblivious)
Excuse me?

TERRI
Forget it. Listen, the problem here
isn't surveillance.

CONNERTY
What do you propose we do?

Terri shrugs.

TERRI
There isn't much we can do.

CONNERTY
So, you want us to stop pursuing
him.

TERRI
I didn't say that.

Connerty sighs.

TERRI (CONT'D)
Give it time. We all wanna see Axe
and his cronies go to trial but we
can't rush things.

It's a bitter pill for Connerty to swallow.

CONNERTY
Alright. For now, keep your ear to
the ground. If you find anything
out of the ordinary--

TERRI
(interrupting)
You'll be the first to know.

CONNERTY
(nods)
Thank you.

Terri turns, leaves the office. Connerty lingers for a moment.

INT. U.S. ATTORNEY CHUCK RHODES' OFFICE - DAY

Chuck leans against the front of his desk, glossing over a document.

There's a knock at the door.

Chuck looks up.

CHUCK
Come in.

Connerty enters the office, closes the door.

CONNERTY
Kate said you wanted to talk.

CHUCK
Have a seat.

Connerty strolls over, sits in a chair opposite Chuck.

CHUCK (CONT'D)
You alright? You're looking a little worn.

Connerty frowns, caught out.

BRYAN
Yeah, no, I'm fine. What's up?

CHUCK
Listen, I know what it's like being handed a big case and not knowing where to go, it's all part of the process.

CONNERTY
We can't be discussing this.

CHUCK
You're right, we can't but you know as well as I do that this is one case we can't afford to fold on.

Connerty, reluctant, concedes.

(CONTINUED)

CONNERTY

What do you want me to tell you?

CHUCK

Nothing that I don't already know.
I'm simply saying that it's okay to
ask for advice every once in a
while.

Connerty nods, taking it in, stands up.

CONNERTY

Well I appreciate that and I'll
keep it in mind going forward.

Chuck smiles. Connerty leaves the office, closes the door.

Chuck's smile turns to a look of concern.

INT. AXE'S OFFICE - AXE CAPITAL - DAY

Axe paces behind his desk. Wags sits, watches him.

AXE

You know, there used to be a time
where you were given a grace. Where
they didn't dog-pile you soon as
you hit a slump.

Wags nods in agreement.

WAGS

And that's all it is, a slump.

Axe looks away, sighs.

AXE

I should've seen it coming. You
can't get too chummy with them.
Before you know it, you've been
propped up so they can knock you
down when the tides turn.

WAGS

Sensationalism at its worst.

AXE

I wanna go in big. I want our next
move to say something about us as a
firm.

Wags looks worried.

(CONTINUED)

WAGS

(cautious)

I hear you but right now we need to be taking stock. Find our feet again.

AXE

So you want me to sit back and play small stacks till they forget about it.

WAGS

I'm just saying, it wouldn't be the worst thing that could happen.

AXE

I don't believe this.

WAGS

Nobody's saying stop what you're doing. I just think it would be in everyone's best interest if you slowed down for a couple days.

AXE

Slow down? Did you not see the article? We're headed for an ice-berg. And those shmucks at the attorney's office are chomping at the rudders.

WAGS

You've been through a lot. What they did at the plea deal, it wasn't okay.

AXE

You're damn right it wasn't. There's only so much a man can take before he gets insulted.

WAGS

You're wounded. Hell, at this moment, all of us are.

Wags alludes to the Staff outside Axe's office.

Axe glances at the Staff, they're hard at work.

Wags leans forward in his seat.

(CONTINUED)

WAGS(CONT'D)

But you've taken the brunt of it.

Axe considers this.

WAGS(CONT'D)

(serious)

We are here to make sure that this business stays afloat. I am here to make sure of that.

AXE

Why don't you just say what you're getting at here, Wags.

WAGS

Fine. I think you should take some time to be by yourself.

Axe stares at Wags, incredulous.

WAGS(CONT'D)

What?

Axe stands up, grabs his jacket and takes off out of his office.

INT. AXE CAPITAL - SAME

The Staff all stop what they're doing and watch Axe storm out of the building.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LAUREN'S HOUSE - DAY

Wendy and her friend, Lauren, laugh together on a couch. They're each holding a glass of wine.

WENDY

I cannot believe you said that.

LAUREN

(snickers)

Well he didn't give me much of a choice.

WENDY

You think he'll call you back?

LAUREN

Can't say, but if he does, he's in for a real surprise.

(CONTINUED)

Wendy and Lauren laugh.

WENDY
I missed this.

Wendy takes a sip of her wine.

LAUREN
Girl-talk?

WENDY
Yeah, just simple, unfiltered
communication.

LAUREN
So, how's Chuck doing?

WENDY
Good. He's been a little off since
the recusal but I guess it's to be
expected.

LAUREN
The case meant a lot to him.

WENDY
It meant a lot to his ego, we'll
put it that way.

LAUREN
And he doesn't mind you working for
Axe?

WENDY
He understands my reasons for
staying.

LAUREN
Must be some good reasons?

Wendy raises a brow.

LAUREN(CONT'D)
I'm just saying, Axe and his
company have been called into
question a few times.

WENDY
Do you believe it?

LAUREN
I don't know. Do you?

Lauren sips.

WENDY

I don't feel comfortable discussing this.

Lauren catches herself.

LAUREN

Sorry, I didn't mean to pry.

WENDY

No, it's okay. Honestly, I can't say I blame you. I mean the media hasn't exactly been discreet about it.

LAUREN

I'm sure they're just making it a bigger deal than it really is.

Wendy sips.

INT. U.S. ATTORNEY CHUCK RHODES' OFFICE - DAY

Chuck's in a meeting with ATTORNEYS working on a case.

His phone rings.

CHUCK

(to Lawyers)

Let's finish this at three.

The Attorneys nod and leave.

Chuck picks up the phone.

CHUCK

Adam.

ADAM(O.S.)

Hi, Chuck.

CHUCK

Not gonna lie, when I heard you wanted to talk I got a little nervous.

ADAM(O.S.)

Yeah well you're about to get a little more nervous.

(CONTINUED)

CHUCK

Cut straight to the chase, I like that.

ADAM(O.S.)

You recused yourself.

CHUCK

Yeah, things were getting tense at home. It's not good for the kids.

ADAM(O.S.)

You haven't gotten off yet. Washington isn't happy about Axe walking.

CHUCK

Well there's a real surprise.

ADAM(O.S.)

This is serious. They're talking about taking the case.

CHUCK

(surprised)

Well now they can't just do that.

ADAM(O.S.)

Yes, they can. And they will.

CHUCK

Listen, my best man is on the case and he's onto something--

ADAM(O.S.)

You're barking up the wrong tree, Chuck. I'm just the messenger.

Chuck sighs.

ADAM(CONT'D)(O.S.)

My advice, get a solid lead.

CHUCK

(irritated)

Thanks, Adam, for that little pearl wisdom.

ADAM(O.S.)

(sarcastic)

You're welcome.

Adam hangs up.

(CONTINUED)

Chuck puts the phone down.

CHUCK
Jack ass.

INT. LIVING ROOM - AXELROD HOUSE - DAY

Gordie and Dean play video games in the living room.

Lara strolls into the kitchen, sees the Boys playing in the living room.

LARA
Ten more minutes then both of you
get ready for the tutor.

The Boys don't respond, they seem off.

LARA
(stern)
Did you guys hear me?

GORDIE/DEAN
Yes mom.

Lara's cellphone rings. She checks the ID, answers.

LARA
Gretchen, hi.

Beat.

LARA(CONT'D)
The outing to the park?

The Boys share a look. Lara sees it.

LARA(CONT'D)
(lying)
Yes, I remember.

Beat.

LARA(CONT'D)
I'm sure the boys will be
thrilled.

Lara glances at the Boys.

LARA(CONT'D)
Great, take care, Gretchen.

Lara hangs up, marches into the living room.

(CONTINUED)

LARA(CONT'D)
Why didn't you guys tell me about
the outing to the park.

The Boys stare at the TV.

DEAN
We don't want to go.

LARA
Why not?

The Boys are engrossed in their videogame.

LARA(CONT'D)
Boys?

Lara grabs a remote and switches the TV off.

GORDIE
Mom!

DEAN
What are you doing?

LARA
(strict)
I want some straight answers from
the two of you without a screen
getting in the way.

The Boys soften.

LARA(CONT'D)
What's going on with you guys? You
used to beg me to send you on
school outings.

GORDIE
We just don't feel like going,
okay.

LARA
No, that's not good enough.

Lara gets eye level with the boys.

LARA(CONT'D)
In this family we talk about things
that are bothering us.

The Boys take this to heart.

GORDIE

There's a girl who's been talking
about Dad.

LARA

Which girl.

DEAN

Carey.

LARA

Baker?

The Boys nod.

Lara takes it in, hurt.

LARA

Well regardless of what she says,
you two are going.

The Boys groan.

DEAN

But why do we have to?

LARA

Because we don't hide when people
say bad things about us.

INT. AXELROD HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Bobby, Lara and the Boys eat dinner in the kitchen. Chef
Ryan isn't there tonight.

Axe looks at Lara then the Boys. Cutlery scrapes plates.

AXE

(to Gordie)

How's about that Yankees game the
other night. What a joke huh?

Gordie plays with his food.

GORDIE

Yeah, I guess.

Axe realises something's up. He looks at Lara and Dean,
neither of them are looking up at him.

(CONTINUED)

AXE

So what is this, the new mood for
the family? Anti-social and
indifferent?

LARA

Bobby.

Axe reigns himself in.

LARA(CONT'D)

Gordie, look at your father when
he's talking to you.

GORDIE

Yes mom.

INT. U.S. ATTORNEY CHUCK RHODES' OFFICE - DAY

Chuck looks out the window, phone pressed to his ear.

ASSISTANT(O.S.)

Washington, hello?

CHUCK

Hi, I'd like to arrange a meeting,
it's Chuck Rhodes.

Connerty enters the office.

Chuck waves him over.

ASSISTANT(O.S.)

I'm sorry, Mr Rhodes, madam
Secretary isn't taking any
appointments right now. You'll have
to wait.

CHUCK

Isn't there some way we could talk
over the phone? It's about a high
profile case that my office is
handling.

ASSISTANT(O.S.)

Unfortunately, there will be no
appointments for the time being. Is
there anything else I can do for
you?

(CONTINUED)

CHUCK
(over it)
No, thank you.

Chuck hangs up.

CONNERTY
Something wrong?

Chuck sighs.

CHUCK
Adam called me yesterday.

CONNERTY
Oh boy.

CHUCK
(solemn)
Yeah.

CONNERTY
I take it he didn't have good news.

CHUCK
No, no he didn't. Said the
Secretary General wasn't too
pleased about the plea deal blowing
up. She's thinking of taking it.

CONNERTY
What?

CHUCK
Yeah.

CONNERTY
But we've covered so much ground
already.

CHUCK
I tried getting a hold of her but
even if I did I'd have nothing
concrete to show her.

CONNERTY
We need time. We can't attack
without a good enough reason.

CHUCK
Time is a luxury we don't have at
the moment.

(CONTINUED)

CONNERTY

So we'll end up forfeiting the case then?

CHUCK

Not yet. There's still a way to hold onto it, even if it's only for a little longer.

CONNERTY

How? Axe hasn't made any moves since the deal.

CHUCK

You're gonna need to be a little more proactive on this one.

CONNERTY

What are you talking about?

CHUCK

I'm saying if you can't find a reason then make one.

Connerty considers Chuck's advice with a grain of salt.

CONNERTY

You know, we've already put this case in jeopardy just by talking about it here.

Chuck raises his hands, not guilty.

CHUCK

Alright. As you were.

CONNERTY

We're keeping a close eye on trades. If they do make a mistake it'll most likely be there.

Chuck nods, pats Connerty on the back.

CONNERTY(CONT'D)

How's it going with the other cases? You doing alright?

CHUCK

What are you kidding? Nothing I haven't done a dozen times before.

INT. AXELROD HOUSE - BILLIARDS ROOM - DAY

Axe paces back and forth, pensive.

The door opens, Wendy enters.

AXE

You're late.

Wendy strolls in, puts her handbag down.

WENDY

You weren't at the office today.

AXE

Wags sat in on a meeting for me.

Axe plops down onto a leather sofa.

Wendy takes a seat opposite him.

WENDY

How are you feeling?

AXE

You kidding me?

Wendy gives him a stern look, answer the question.

AXE (CONT'D)

Alright, a few days ago, I felt invincible. Like I'd taken the first step out of this tar trap we've been caught in.

WENDY

You've been following the news.

AXE

Course I have.

WENDY

A little too closely?

Axe considers the question, sighs.

AXE

It's like a fog-horn blaring for all the world to hear.

WENDY

And no one hears it louder than you.

(CONTINUED)

AXE

Wags told me to slow down. You believe that? And now Lara's mad, the boys aren't talking. I can feel the reigns slipping through my fingers.

WENDY

Last time we spoke, you said you were angry because Boyd ditched you at the ballgame.

AXE

So?

Wendy sits forward.

WENDY

So I think that right now you're channeling a lot of negative energy.

AXE

Channeling? Where?

WENDY

That's just it. You're feeling trapped because you haven't taken any action.

AXE

Did you not hear a word I just said?

WENDY

Not that kind of action. You're feeling aggravated because you're letting them get to you. Boyd, the media, you're buying into it and it's making you want to fight back. You have to ground yourself. Reflect then make your move.

AXE

Reflect on the plea deal?

WENDY

That, and more importantly, what you can do for this firm without drawing attention to yourself.

Axe considers Wendy's words.

EXT. FROYO SHOP - BROOKLYN - DAY

The shop is funky. menu-boards in vibrant colors line the walls.

Lara and the Boys sit at plastic table by a wall.

Gordie and Dean dig into their colorful frozen yogurts.

LARA

You guys learn anything at school today?

DEAN

We learned in world history that Cesar was murdered by his own senators.

LARA

(alluding to Gordie)

Dean.

DEAN

What? You asked?

Lara brushes it off.

LARA

Well it's nice that you learned something new. What about you, Gordie?

Gordie looks down at his cup.

A doorbell jingles.

Lara turns, sees CAREY and her mother, MELINDA BAKER at the till.

GORDIE

Mom?

Lara turns to the Boys. They look very uncomfortable.

GORDIE

Can we go?

Lara wants to leave but puts on a brave face.

LARA

No, I don't think we will.

Gordie averts his gaze. Lara turns again.

(CONTINUED)

Melinda and Carey see her, pretend they didn't.

LARA(CONT'D)
(to the Boys)
I'll be right back.

GORDIE/DEAN
No, mom, don't.

Lara strolls over to Melinda by the till.

Melinda braces herself, pretends she didn't notice Lara.

MELINDA
Lara? What a surprise. I didn't
know you come here.

LARA
Melinda. Good to see you again.

Carey averts her eyes when Lara looks at her.

MELINDA
How've you been?

LARA
Good, good. Listen, I heard that
some things were said about Bobby
and the Boys are quite upset about
it.

MELINDA
(sympathetic)
Oh no.

LARA
They say Carey said some of it and
I just want to make sure things are
okay between the kids.

MELINDA
(to Carey)
Is this true?

CAREY
Yes.

MELINDA
Why?

CAREY
I hear you and dad talk about it
all the time.

(CONTINUED)

Melinda goes beat-red.

MELINDA
Go to the car.

Carey scurries off.

A CASHIER, teenager, glasses, chimes in.

CASHIER
That's three dollars, fifty cents,
mam.

Melinda, caught off guard, opens her wallet, hands the cashier a fiver.

MELINDA
(to Lara)
I am so sorry. I don't know where
she got that from.

Lara's not buying it.

LARA
I think it's pretty clear where she
got it from.

Lara turns to the Boys.

LARA
Come on, boys.

Gordie and Dean get out of their chairs, mortified.

The Boys stand beside Lara.

LARA
(to Dean)
Take your brother to the car.

Dean takes the keys. The Boys leave.

MELINDA
Lara, I'm sorry. It's just that
everyone's been talking about it
and I didn't mean to upset you or
the boys.

LARA
(hurt)
It's okay, Melinda. It's not like
everyone else isn't doing it.
(serious)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LARA (cont'd)

You understand that talking about someone's family is a very serious thing.

MELINDA

I do.

LARA

Then I'm sure you won't do it again.

MELINDA

No, not at all.

Lara smiles at a meek Melinda, walks off.

Melinda's stands idly by.

The cashier closes the till.

CASHIER

(to Melinda)

Your change, mam.

INT. U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - HALLWAY - DAY

Terri paces down the hallway. She stops when she sees Connerty in his office. He's sitting opposite Kate.

INT. U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - CONNERTY'S OFFICE - DAY

Connerty stares at Kate from behind his desk. Kate has some documents on her lap.

CONNERTY

Was I dreaming or do you speak Japanese?

Kate blushes.

KATE

I don't.

CONNERTY

So that little, tickle in my belly, the other day was just a fluke?

There's a knock at the door.

Kate and Connerty glance at it.

(CONTINUED)

CONNERTY

Come in.

Terri enters.

TERRI

We got something.

Connerty's ears prick up.

Terri closes the door.

TERRI (CONT'D)

One of the brokers averaged down
and bought up a whole lot of stocks
in EuroDime.

CONNERTY

But they've been on a decline for
months now.

TERRI

Not anymore.

Terri places her phone down on Connerty's desk.

Connerty and Kate check the stats for EuroDime.

TERRI (CONT'D)

An unlikely turn of events.

KATE

A little too unlikely.

TERRI

(to Connerty)

You want me to go ahead?

CONNERTY

No. Keep tailing him.

TERRI

But it's a sure thing.

CONNERTY

That's exactly why I want you to
stay on it. Whatever happens, we've
already got him.

Terri nods, put down, glances at Kate.

Kate stands.

(CONTINUED)

KATE

I have to go now. I'll keep you posted on the reports.

CONNERTY

You don't need any help?

KATE

No, thank you, I'll manage.

CONNERTY

Okay.

Kate smiles at Terri, leaves.

INT. UPMARKET RESTAURANT - STATEN ISLAND - DAY

Bobby and Wags sit in the corner of the exclusive section of the restaurant.

AXE

Give me the run.

WAGS

The investors are pulling back. They're waiting to see what we do next.

AXE

We lose any big ones?

Wags grimaces.

AXE (CONT'D)

Goldstein?

WAGS

Wayne and Marsha.

AXE

The Lebreayas? God, they've been with us for six years. Who'd they go with?

WAGS

I don't know and at this point I don't have the time to care. We need to stabilize.

AXE

(pensive)

I've got something.

(CONTINUED)

WAGS

I'll take anything.

AXE

I set up a meeting with Boyd. Those pricks at the papers want me to play bad man and I'm not gonna give it to them.

WAGS

After he stood you up?

AXE

I can't be too picky right now.

WAGS

You still want the endorsement?

AXE

I just want his ear. Two big fish like us? We know the code. And baiting me out to the ball game the other night wasn't part of that code.

Wags sits back, smirks.

WAGS

So a little time off did you good after all.

AXE

It did. Helped me think this whole mess through.

WAGS

Where are you meeting Boyd?

AXE

Leagues at one.

WAGS

Why not Daniels?

AXE

Too fancy.

Wags gestures in agreement.

Axe looks at two SOUTH HAMPTON WIVES glancing at him and Wags, whispering.

(CONTINUED)

AXE (CONT'D)

Too many prying eyes might scare him off.

WAGS

And we certainly don't want that to happen. You don't think he might stand you up again?

AXE

No. He accepted the invite. He knows that's not how we play.

WAGS

It is a cutthroat game.

AXE

Agreed. But even in this game, there are lines that can't be crossed.

WAGS

Try telling that to Rhodes and his troop of monkey-cops in the district.

AXE

I can't expect them to understand. It was foolish to think that we could break bread. They're not like us.

WAGS

They're pious.

AXE

Even worse. They're bigots. You don't get a record of eighty-one and o, without cutting a few corners.

WAGS

Nobody suspects him.

AXE

Exactly and you know why?

WAGS

Because the narrative is skewed.

AXE

Precisely. Nobody wants to believe different because it'd be too much work to explain why.

(CONTINUED)

Axe glances at the two South Hampton Wives. It's obvious they're talking about him.

WAGS

What are you saying here?

Axe leans in.

AXE

To hell with Rhodes and the press.
They wanna air our dirty laundry
for those pricks in their
high-castles to see, let em' do it.
We decide who we are and the
actions we take to preserve Axe
Capital.

INT. AXE CAPITAL - DAY

Wags, pensive, paces into the main office area. He sees some of the Staff are chatting away, drinking coffee.

Wags marches over to the group of EMPLOYEES taking it easy. The Employees see him and stop talking.

Wags stands near their circle. He addresses Chris.

WAGS

Well don't let me stop you. It
must've been very important for you
to be missing work.

Silence sweeps the office.

CHRIS

No, it, uhm, it wasn't. We're gonna
work now.

WAGS

(chuckles)

No, please, carry on. Can I have
some cigars brought to you?

(irritated)

Maybe you'd all like a little
champagne to celebrate your
spectacular track records as of
late.

Chris and the other Employees are scared.

Wags looks at Axe's empty office.

(CONTINUED)

WAGS(CONT'D)

(to entire office)

Axe isn't here because he's too busy taking the heat for all of your fuck ups. We're in the red here, people. Anyone who's not ready to earn can pack their shit and leave. Same as always.

The Staff get back to work on the double.

Wags watches all of the little worker bees toiling away in fear. He grins to himself.

Wags glances at Axe's empty office.

INT. AXE AND LARA'S BEDROOM - AXELROD HOUSE - NIGHT

Axe sits on the bed, undoes his shoelaces.

Lara undoes her necklace by a mirror.

AXE

I know you and the boys haven't had it easy lately.

Lara glances back at Axe in the mirror.

LARA

They're withdrawing from me. They don't tell me things anymore.

AXE

They're kids. It's natural for them to keep secrets from us.

LARA

Not like this.

AXE

I don't see a problem here.

LARA

Melinda Baker's daughter said things about you in front of them.

AXE

Is that what this is all about?

LARA

It's not just Carey Baker. The whole neighborhood's been whispering about you and the firm.

(CONTINUED)

AXE

You think I don't know what they're saying about my company?

LARA

It's not about that.

Lara climbs into bed, faces away from Axe.

AXE

Is this about me not signing the plea deal? I thought we talked about that.

Lara turns over, confronts Axe.

LARA

We never resolved it.

AXE

What's there to resolve. I made a mistake, it's over.

LARA

Your sons are being picked on because you couldn't swallow your pride.

AXE

I'm not gonna have this fight again.

Lara lays down, turns away from Axe.

INT. RHODES HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Chuck is shirtless, tied to the headboard of the bed. He's got a big, red gag in his mouth.

WENDY(O.S.)

I see you're in need of some discipline.

Chuck groans.

WENDY(CONT'D)

You've stepped out of line one too many times. I'm resorting to drastic measures.

Wendy, dominatrix lingerie, clutches a horse-whip.

Wendy runs the tip of the whip along Chuck's bare leg.

(CONTINUED)

Chuck's not into it. Wendy notices.

WENDY
(breaks character)
Everything okay?

Chuck nods.

Wendy doesn't buy it.

WENDY(CONT'D)
You're miles away.

Wendy undoes the gag, sits beside Chuck.

CHUCK
Sorry, hun.

WENDY
You haven't been yourself lately.
What's bothering you?

CHUCK
It's nothing, a little drama at
work.

Wendy looks Chuck in the eye.

CHUCK(CONT'D)
I got a call the other day, from
Adam in Washington.

WENDY
What did he say?

CHUCK
They're thinking of taking the case
from us.

WENDY
What for?

CHUCK
Secretary General didn't like how
we handled the plea-deal.

WENDY
But you recused yourself.

CHUCK
It doesn't matter. They're tired of
the flack they're getting because
we're going after Bobby Axelrod.

WENDY

It might be a good thing?

CHUCK

How could this possibly be a good thing?

WENDY

I meant for us.

Chucks glances at Wendy.

WENDY (CONT'D)

It's an opportunity to move past everything that's happened.

CHUCK

Oh I'm sure you'd like that.

WENDY

I am on your side here.

CHUCK

I know. It's just frustrating.

INT. RHODES HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Wendy sits alone in the dark. She's scrolling through headhunting agencies on her laptop.

Wendy sees a notification pop up. It's an email. It was sent earlier that afternoon.

Wendy opens the email, it reads: Hi Wendy. Stop by tomorrow. I'll show you around our offices.

INT. U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - COFFEE CORNER - DAY

Connerty fills a cup with filtered coffee, adds sugar.

Chuck swoops in from down the hall.

Connerty sips.

CHUCK

Bryan, good to see you.

CONNERTY

Hey boss.

(CONTINUED)

CHUCK
Mind if we take a walk?

Chuck walks to his office.

CONNERTY
(unsure)
Alright.

Connerty follows Chuck.

INT. U.S. ATTORNEY CHUCK RHODES' OFFICE - DAY

Connerty enters the office. Chuck closes the door behind him.

Chuck rushes Connerty.

CHUCK
I need you to tell me right now, if you have anything.

Connerty looks down.

CONNERTY
We caught a low-level broker using inside info on a recent trade.

CHUCK
And?

CONNERTY
It wasn't anything we could tie to Bobby.

CHUCK
I thought you said you could handle the case.

CONNERTY
Whoa, now hang on. You think this is my fault?

CHUCK
No I don't think that.

CONNERTY
Then why question me when you know I'm working on it?

(CONTINUED)

CHUCK

Because I don't think you understand the gravity of the situation at hand. This is bigger than Enron and we're hanging onto it by a thread.

CONNERTY

We shouldn't even be talking about this.

Connerty turns to leave.

CHUCK

(furious)

Sit down.

Connerty stops, walks up to Chuck.

CONNERTY

You've let this get out of control.

CHUCK

Maybe I have. Maybe I'm just tired of waiting for you to finally connect the dots.

CONNERTY

You're out of line.

Chuck gets in close.

CHUCK

I don't see you kicking and clawing to hang onto this case and I'm worried. Washington's gonna call any day now to relieve us.

CONNERTY

They're not gonna take the case.

CHUCK

Oh yes they will. And when they do it'll be on you.

CONNERTY

You're gonna regret saying that.

CHUCK

I hope to God I do.

Connerty, eyes Chuck, leaves.

Chuck watches him go, arms crossed, dismay.

INT. LEAGUES RESTAURANT - DAY

The restaurant is relatively empty. Axe sits by himself at a table on the second floor.

Axe looks around, annoyed, checks his phone.

The DINERS below are served by WAITERS in formal attire.

Axe swipes his phone, presses it to his ear.

WAGS(O.S.)

Hello?

Axe sees LAWRENCE BOYD, fifties, gray hair, suit, round a corner and head for Axe's table.

Axe hangs up, stands, big smile.

Boyd waddles up to Axe, shakes his hand firmly.

BOYD

The man himself, Mr Bobby Axelrod.

AXE

Lawrence Boyd. How long has it been since the two of us were in a room together?

BOYD

My best guess? Probably not since the gala in o' eight.

AXE

(gestures to chairs)
Shall we?

BOYD

Yes.

The two men take a seat.

AXE

I'll be honest, I was a little worried that you weren't gonna show.

BOYD

I wouldn't blame you for thinking that after....

(CONTINUED)

AXE
Don't mention it.

BOYD
I hope you understand that it
wasn't personal.

AXE
I didn't at first but I don't dwell
on it.

Boyd sits back, analysing Axe.

BOYD
I take it you're not gonna tell me
off then?

AXE
You know I'm not.

Boyd grins.

A Waiter offers a bottle of wine to Boyd.

BOYD
Richebourg? How on earth did you
get this?

AXE
Bribed a buddy of mine who works
for the embassy.

The Waiter pours a glass for Boyd then Axe.

Axe raises his glass.

Boyd, smitten, raises his.

BOYD
You must have one hell of a favor
to ask of me.

AXE
As a matter of fact I do. And to
tell you the truth, I think you owe
me one.

BOYD
I thought you weren't sore about
the ballgame?

AXE

I'm not. Not anymore.

Boyd sits back, cautious.

BOYD

I don't have time for a square dance.

AXE

Relax, have some more wine.

Boyd loosens up.

AXE (CONT'D)

I'm asking for a show of support.

BOYD

That's what this is about? Well I'm sorry but unfortunately you and your company have a certain stink that I don't want to attract.

AXE

Then why'd you come?

BOYD

Honestly? I felt a little bad. Not saying I owe you one or anything but I understand it isn't easy when it all caves in.

AXE

Not even a pat on the back?

Boyd stares at Axe.

BOYD

We're headed for a bedrock pretty soon.

Axe pays careful attention.

BOYD

We're doing a block on ExTel. They don't realize they've got a gold mine under their noses.

AXE

Rubinex.

BOYD

There's your show of support.

Axe grins.

AXE

What makes you think they're gonna take off?

BOYD

Been watching them for months. Market capitalization's bound to go through the roof after they pull the trigger on J&J.

AXE

You're certain it's gonna happen that way.

BOYD

There's no such thing as certain in our line of work.

Axe chews on Boyd's words.

AXE

I'll take it.

BOYD

I've got one more word to the wise for you.

Boyd leans in close.

BOYD(CONT'D)

That stink I was talking about earlier, it's blood in the water. Soon as those judicial pricks get a whiff of it they'll swim for miles to tear a piece for themselves.

AXE

This, I am aware of.

BOYD

Oh it gets worse than what you're dealing with now.

Axe holds his pose.

BOYD(CONT'D)

Much worse.

INT. LAW FIRM - OFFICE - DAY

Wendy and a COMPANY REP, square jaw, suit, enter the office.

REP
Right this way.

They take a seat on either side of the Rep's desk.

Wendy's eyes roam the beige, suede office.

REP(CONT'D)
So, what do you think?

WENDY
It's good.

REP
The dental plan we offer here is to die for.

Wendy raises a brow.

REP(CONT'D)
You know, spending time with you today, I'm certain that you'd be a welcome addition to the team here.

WENDY
What makes you say that?

REP
Everyone's so manic here. Constrained by digits and decimal points. It would help to have a more stoic presence in the building.

WENDY
Stoic?

REP
Reserved, someone who tells them to think before they act.

WENDY
Let's say I started working here, hypothetically.

REP
Of course.

(CONTINUED)

WENDY

What would my first year be like?

REP

We're prepared to start you off with three hundred thousand annually and who knows, it may go up.

WENDY

That's a lot less than I make at the moment.

REP

I understand that but Axelrod's firm isn't the big kid on the block anymore.

WENDY

You're lowballing me.

REP

(play it off)
No, God, no.

WENDY

Yeah, I believe that.

REP

I'm simply saying that coming from a company like Axe Capital, you shouldn't expect too much in the beginning.

WENDY

(insulted)
Well, thank you for your honesty.

Wendy stands.

REP

Now wait.

Wendy stops.

REP (CONT'D)

I don't mean to cause any offense. I'm just telling you what all the other firms'll be telling you too. But believe me, it gets better from there.

Wendy considers it.

(CONTINUED)

REP(CONT'D)

You've got my details. Give me a ring once you've thought it over.

INT. U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - DAY

Chuck delegates to a gaggle of attorneys. He breaks away from the group, heads to his office.

Allison, Chuck's secretary, motions to him.

ALLISON

Got a Mr DeGiulio on the line.

CHUCK

Put him on.

Chuck opens his office door.

INT. U.S. ATTORNEY CHUCK RHODES' OFFICE - DAY

Chuck marches to his desk, picks up the phone.

CHUCK

Adam, to what do I owe the pleasure?

ADAM(O.S.)

Spyros told her.

CHUCK

I'm sorry, what?

ADAM(O.S.)

Ari Spyros told the SG that you and Connerty poked and prodded Axelrod in the plea deal. Is it true?

CHUCK

No, of course it isn't.

Chuck paces.

ADAM(O.S.)

They're gonna send Spyros over to your firm.

CHUCK

Now why would they do that?

(CONTINUED)

ADAM(O.S.)

Madam wants a run down on the state of things before she makes the final call.

CHUCK

(to himself)

The rat-bastard.

ADAM(O.S.)

You there?

CHUCK

Yeah, I am.

ADAM(O.S.)

You make any progress before the final decision tell me.

CHUCK

You can get it out there?

ADAM(O.S.)

I can bend her ear, but only if it's big enough.

Chuck sighs.

INT. AXE'S OFFICE - AXE CAPITAL - DAY

Axe sits with Wags in the office.

WAGS

I don't trust him. He stiffed you once before. Did you do the homework on it?

AXE

I did and it looks clean.

Axe chucks a document onto his desk.

WAGS

I don't know, it feels like he gave it up a little too easy. How did he say it?

AXE

Read the stats.

Wags opens the document.

Beat.

(CONTINUED)

WAGS
Looks promising.

AXE
Better than what we've seen all
week.

WAGS
Who're you gonna give it to?

Axe sits back, looks at the staff working outside the
office.

AXE
Jay, De Souza and Donnie.

WAGS
Donnie? He's bloody from being
mauled all season.

AXE
The pieces are set up. I just need
someone to push them in place.

WAGS
You don't think it'd be a little
suspicious?

AXE
We'll disperse the purchase times.
Fortunes change every day.

Wags nods.

INT. AXE CAPITAL - CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

Axe and Wags stand at the head of the room.

Jay, De Souza and Donnie sit at a table.

AXE
You've all been briefed. Sink your
teeth into the bedrock and make
sure you watch those times.

WAGS
Pin those shorts and pin them hard
when we tell you to.

Jay, De Souza and Donnie nod, stand and leave.

(CONTINUED)

WAGS (CONT'D)

(to Axe)

By this time next week the press'll
be calling us visionaries again.

Axe stifles a laugh.

AXE

Hold your horses, Tonto.

Wags gives Axe a sly grin.

INT. U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - CONNERTY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Connerty and Kate sit in the office, pouring over notes.

Connerty tosses a file onto his desk.

CONNERTY

That's it. I don't think I can read
another word.

KATE

Me neither. The lines are beginning
to blur.

CONNERTY

What do you say we go grab some
sushi?

KATE

Now there's an idea I can get
behind.

INT. SUSHI RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Connerty and Kate sit at a counter top with a conveyor belt.
Sushi dishes float by.

KATE

You doing alright? I know things
aren't exactly easy right now.

CONNERTY

(deadpan)

Honestly, no.

Connerty and Kate chuckle.

(CONTINUED)

KATE

I'm glad you at least have a sense of humor about it.

CONNERTY

Somebody has to. Chuck certainly doesn't see anything funny in it.

KATE

He's just really invested in the case.

CONNERTY

That's the problem. He recused himself. Letting go shouldn't be an issue for him at this point.

KATE

You wouldn't be sad to see Washington take it?

CONNERTY

Sad? God, I'd be gutted but if that's what it takes to prosecute Axelrod then I can't hold a grudge.

Kate and Connerty share an intense stare.

Connerty's cell vibrates.

CONNERTY

I gotta take this.

Connerty answers.

CONNERTY(CONT'D)

Bryan speaking.

TERRI(O.S.)

We got one.

Connerty's eyes widen.

CONNERTY

Who is it?

INT. U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - CONNERTY'S OFFICE - DAY

Bryan, Kate and the Investigators sit around a the whiteboard. Terri holds up a picture.

(CONTINUED)

TERRI

Donnie Caan. Been working at Axe Capital since the early days.

CONNERTY

Had a string of bad trades, couldn't get back on the horse.

TERRI

Then last night we picked him up for a short on Rubinex.

INVESTIGATOR

What's so special about this one?

CONNERTY

He did a total one-eighty on his patterns.

TERRI

It was last minute, desperate.

KATE

And he would've only changed course if he was certain it'd pay off.

CONNERTY

Precisely. It's a text book inside trade.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Connerty and Terri sit at a table in the middle of the room. Donnie sits opposite them, handcuffed.

CONNERTY

How are you feeling Mr Caan?

DONNIE

How do you think I feel?

TERRI

You've been at Axe Capital for what now, five years?

DONNIE

Six.

TERRI

That's a long time.

(CONTINUED)

CONNERTY
(to Donnie)
Know what'll be even longer?

DONNIE
What?

CONNERTY
The sentence we're gonna drop on
you if you don't cooperate.

TERRI
We know your short on Rubinex
yesterday wasn't a lucky strike.

CONNERTY
And we've got all we need to prove
it. This is your one and only
chance.

Connerty and Terri stare Donnie down.

DONNIE
What's gonna happen to me?

CONNERTY
If you do as we say, follow our
orders to the letter, you're
looking at two years.

Donnie shudders.

DONNIE
Oh God.

TERRI
You'll be out in eight months with
good behavior.

DONNIE
What about my partner, my kids?

TERRI
They'll be able to visit you.

Donnie looks up at the ceiling, back down at Connerty and
Terri.

DONNIE
(defeated)
What do I have to do?

Connerty grins.

CONNERTY
You're going to be our inside man.

DONNIE
A rat?

TERRI
No, an informant.

CONNERTY
You'll bring us closer to Axelrod
and in return you'll receive a
reduced sentence.

Donnie stares at Connerty and Terri, his back's against the wall.

INT. U.S. ATTORNEY CHUCK RHODES' OFFICE - DAY

Chuck's sitting in his office.

There's a knock at the door.

CHUCK
Come in.

Connerty slowly enters.

Chuck watches him stroll to the center of the room.

CONNERTY
We've got something.

There's a twinkle in Chuck's eye.

CHUCK
Tell me it's something big.

CONNERTY
Oh it's big.

Chucks stands, walks round his desk to Connerty.

CHUCK
(admiring)
Well now, would you look at that?

CONNERTY
I can't say anything further. Not
until it's had a some time to
settle.

(CONTINUED)

CHUCK

Of course. Get a report done and
send it to Washington immediately.

Chuck grins at Connerty.

CHUCK(CONT'D)

Consider me thoroughly impressed,
Mr Connerty.

Connerty, bashful, smiles.

CHUCK(CONT'D)

Now go, quick, before those yuppies
in Washington try to hustle the
case from us.

CONNERTY

Right away.

INT. AXELROD HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The Boys are playing video games in the living room.

INT. AXELROD HOUSE - KITCHEN - SAME

Axe enters from another room, stops. He sees the Boys in the
living room.

He also sees Lara outside in the garden.

INT. AXELROD HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - SAME

Axe steps in from the kitchen, claps.

AXE

Come on you two. Get your skivvies
on. We're going out on the boat.

The Boys look back at Axe.

DEAN

Why?

Axe walks out to the garden.

AXE

Because I said so.

EXT. AXELROD HOUSE - GARDEN - SAME

Axe exits the house, sees Lara tending to some plants.

AXE

I'm taking you and the boys out on
the water.

Lara turns, raises a brow.

AXE(CONT'D)

It's been a while since we did
anything as a family. Let's escape
the noise for a while.

Lara smiles.

LARA

When are we leaving?

AXE

Right now.

EXT. YACHT - OPEN OCEAN - DAY

A luxury yacht cuts through the ocean like a sword.

EXT. YACHT - OPEN OCEAN - EVENING

The yacht is stationery. The sun begins to set.

Axe sits in fishing chairs with Gordie and Dean.

Each of them has a rod but none of them have a shirt on.

AXE

Listen, boys.

Gordie and Dean turn to Axe.

AXE(CONT'D)

There are gonna be things you hear
about me that might upset you. It
comes with being in the public eye.
You understand?

The Boys nod.

AXE(CONT'D)

This boat, our house, your
schooling, it all comes with a
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

AXE(CONT'D) (cont'd)
price to pay. And I'm not talking
about money.

Beat.

AXE(CONT'D)
What I'm trying to say is that even
though there are people saying bad
things about me. I want you guys to
know that none of it's true.

Axe and the Boys stare out at the ocean.

GORDIE(O.S.)
Thanks, dad.

Axe, staring out at the ocean, can't help but smile.

INT. RHODES HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Chuck's grilling burgers on a stove plate.

The Kids sit at the kitchen counter, plates at the ready.

Wendy enters, work clothes on.

KIDS
Hi mom.

Wendy sees Chuck grilling.

CHUCK
Hi hun.

WENDY
Hi guys.

Wendy hugs the Kids.

WENDY(CONT'D)
What's going on?

KIDS
Dad's making burgers.

CHUCK
Coming in hot.

Chuck dishes a patty out to both of the Kids.

Wendy smiles at him.

INT. RHODES HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATER

Wendy soaks the dinner plates in the sink.

Chuck steps out of a hallway.

Wendy glances at him, grins.

The lights are dim. The house is quiet.

Wendy dries her hands, turns to Chuck.

WENDY

You were awfully perky tonight.

CHUCK

(silly)

What can I say? It's Friday and I see a pretty lady I wanna dance with.

Chuck shakes his junk like a gigolo.

WENDY

(giggles)

Chuck, quit fooling around.

Chuck comes in close to Wendy, embraces her. Wendy melts.

Chuck pulls back, looks Wendy dead in the eye.

CHUCK

Awkward groin movements aside, I'm in serious need of some discipline.

Chuck goes in to kiss Wendy's neck.

Wendy slaps him.

Chuck touches his cheek looks at Wendy.

She smiles an evil smile.

Chuck's raw and digging where this is going.