

PERFECT CITIZEN

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Second Draft to Network
January 17, 2017

CBS Television Studios
Thinking Hat, Inc.

PERFECT CITIZEN

OVER BLACK: *"What kind of person does something like that?"*

INT. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE - LOBBY - DAY

We come up on DECK PARSONS. As Scotty Reston said about Dean Acheson: He's not the sort of man you hand your hat to by mistake.

Deck's mid-40s, fit, impeccably dressed. But it's his confidence that's defining: he moves purposefully, evidences no self-doubt.

As he waits for a GUARD to scan his ID, we hear a second voice:

FELIX REYES (V.O.)

Deck Parsons is a hero.

INT. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE - SECURITY CHECKPOINT - DAY

Deck stands, legs spread and arms out, in the full body scan.

MARTY ISSERLES (V.O.)

Millions of people believe that. But to millions of others...

CUT TO: the X-RAY IMAGE of Deck --

MARTY ISSERLES (V.O.) (CONT'D)

...He's a traitor.

INT. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE - ELEVATOR - DAY

Deck watches an ARMED ESCORT code into the secure elevator.

FELIX REYES (V.O.)

He was first in his class at West Point.

The button for floor 5 lights up.

FELIX REYES (V.O.) (CONT'D)

He earned two silver stars in Iraq.

The door slams shut.

FELIX REYES (V.O.) (CONT'D)

He was General Counsel of the NSA, the most trusted lawyer in the government...

INT. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE - 5TH FLOOR HALLWAY - DAY

Deck and the escort move briskly down a long corridor.

MARTY ISSERLES (V.O.)

But then he committed treason.

INT. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE - RECEIVING ROOM - DAY

Deck, alone now, waits in an elaborately decorated anteroom.

FELIX REYES (V.O.)

Was it treason -- or an act of patriotism?

The voiceover ends as...

INT. ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE - DAY

Deck hugs FRAN DAVIDS: a good friend, a great AG. Mid 40s, she has Hillary's brain, Bill's instincts. But as they pull apart --

DECK

(whispers)

Don't say anything, just follow me.

Deck leads her through a side door, into the AG's small private kitchen. He opens the microwave, puts his cellphone inside. Then, he holds out his hand for hers. The AG hesitates --

FRAN DAVIDS

Deck, this isn't necessary --

But he shakes his head. And seeing the urgency in his eyes, she hands him her phone. He puts it in the microwave, closes the door.

Then, Deck takes a deep breath -- and we see the slightest crack in that confident demeanor as he begins to unload:

DECK

The NSA is running a program targeting every single member of the U.S. Congress.

FRAN DAVIDS

When you say "targeting" --

DECK

Intercepting all of their phone calls, their emails, their texts. Storing them. Making them key-word searchable.

FRAN DAVIDS

Who the hell authorized that?

DECK

No one.

(off her)

I was doing a routine review of in-country targets and noticed our volume of intercepts had gone way up.

(MORE)

DECK (CONT'D)

I had to dig deep into the Tailored Access Operations, but I traced it to a program called Thinking Hat. It was set up off the books, runs unsupervised...

FRAN DAVIDS

And it's just piling up private information on the most powerful people in the country?

DECK

Who they're sleeping with, promising favors to, threatening... And I barely dipped into what's there.

The AG looks at Deck, stunned.

FRAN DAVIDS

You're sure this isn't some kind of counter-intelligence operation? Us trying to keep tabs on leaders who might be targets of the Russians or the Chinese?

DECK

If I didn't sign off on it and you didn't?

The AG's getting very nervous now.

FRAN DAVIDS

Have you looped anyone else in on this?

DECK

Not yet.

FRAN DAVIDS

Then don't. Because if this gets out, it will destroy the NSA.

DECK

If this goes on, it could destroy the entire government. We can't just bury it.

FRAN DAVIDS

Whistleblowers don't get medals these days, Deck. They get jail sentences.

DECK

I'm not looking to martyr myself. But I have a responsibility -- and so do you.

This is the conversation Edward Snowden never had.

DECK (CONT'D)

People are already spooked about hacked emails, stolen elections, cyber-terrorism... So if someone's looking for this much leverage over our *entire government* --

(off her)

We're shutting that down. Now.

Deck's determined. And ready.

FRAN DAVIDS

Alright...

(working it through)

Go back to the NSA. Pull all those files down, put them on a drive -- and get it out of the building.

DECK

That violates, what... half a dozen national security regulations?

FRAN DAVIDS

It'll give us leverage to confront whoever's behind this.

Deck looks dubious.

FRAN DAVIDS (CONT'D)

As soon as they realize their program was terminated and the files are gone -- they'll stick their head up.

DECK

First rule in intelligence: If the other guy's way out on a limb, don't crawl out and join him.

FRAN DAVIDS

First rule in politics: Screw everyone else's rules.

(off Deck's hesitation)

If we're going to control this situation, we need the files.

Deck eyes her, considering. Finally --

DECK

Okay.

Deck opens the microwave, takes his phone, and walks out. As soon as he's gone, the AG grabs her phone, dials. Then:

FRAN DAVIDS

Follow him back to his office. And as soon as he tries to leave with the hard drive -- arrest him.

EXT. ROUTE 295 SOUTH - DAY

Deck's on the road, and on his cell.

DECK

I'm coming back to clean some things up. Don't wait around.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. NSA - GENERAL COUNSEL'S OFFICE - SIMULTANEOUS

INGRID POE, Deck's unflappable deputy, on the other end.

INGRID

It's okay, I have to walk a couple staff lawyers through the new encryption laws...

She is, God bless her, everything millenials are not supposed to be: motivated, a deep thinker, unswervingly loyal.

DECK

Do it tomorrow.

And the tone of his voice makes clear: he wants her to go.

INGRID

Sure.

(then)

Anything I can do for you before I leave?

DECK

Take home the junk food that's lying around.

Ingrid's confused -- until she spots a cupcake on Deck's desk.

DECK (CONT'D)

I don't want it in the office.

As Deck comes up on NSA headquarters, their conversation takes on the slight echo of a tapped line:

INGRID

Copy that.

DECK

(calm but firm)

Go now, okay?

INGRID

Leaving now.

Deck hangs up, starts to exit -- then swerves hard at the last minute, back onto the highway...

...But the two FEDERAL AGENTS tailing him can't react fast enough. As they spin out, Deck floors it.

INT. NSA - DAY

Meanwhile, Ingrid walks out toward the security checkpoint. She plops her bag on the belt, but then --

GUARD

(off the cupcake)

Don't even think about putting that mess through my machine.

INGRID

Fine, but don't get your fingers in my frosting...

She hands him her messy treat, slides through the body scan, takes it back on the other side. She smiles; he doesn't.

EXT. TIPTON AIRFIELD - DAY

Deck flies off the highway, blows past a small terminal, and pulls right up to the gate leading onto the tarmac. He buzzes security to let him through. Deck waits, impatient -- but as the feds come screeching off the highway, he has no choice: he bails from his car, sprints toward the Bombardier waiting nose out on the runway.

EXT. NSA PARKING LOT - DAY

As she walks through rows of cars, Ingrid takes a bite -- and her teeth hit something. She stops, digs into the cupcake with her fingers, and pulls out: a small THUMB DRIVE.

EXT./INT. BOMBARDIER GLOBAL - DAY

Deck flies up the stairs of the plane as the agents ram through the gate, heading straight for him. But as they leap out of their car, Deck rushes past the FLIGHT ATTENDANT --

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

You're the friend of Mr. Perkins?

DECK

Thankfully.

And off Deck, realizing his entire life is about to change as the plane door comes down, we...

CUT TO:

A kaleidoscope of ANCHORS and SOUNDBITES move through the timeline of the scandal: "NSA General Counsel flees the country... / "...problematic Thinking Hat program comes to light" / "...Attorney General files charges against Parsons in absentia" / "...Federal judge finds no evidence top secret materials were stolen."

Then: "After a year of controversy, Deck Parsons is finally coming home."

INT. PERKINS ADANDE & ELLSBURY - RECEPTION - MORNING (DAY 1)

And now we see the two men we heard in voiceover -- MARTY ISSERLES: 40s, General Counsel for telecom giant TwoTwig. And FELIX REYES: late 20s, he's the self-proclaimed "Alpha Associate" at P&E -- and desperate for TwoTwig's business. They're huddled in the lobby.

FELIX

Look, I don't want to defend Deck Parsons.

MARTY ISSERLES

You just want me to hire your firm and have him be my lead counsel.

FELIX

If your company doesn't want to turn over the phone records of the girl who disappeared last night --

MARTY ISSERLES

It's not that we don't want to -- *we can't*. We have to protect her information.

FELIX

And there's only person who can make that argument with more authority than you.

Felix starts into the firm, nods for Marty to follow him.

FELIX (CONT'D)

Deck's *the* expert on this area of law, he'll take on anyone --

MARTY ISSERLES

What about the risk? He's only been back in this country for two weeks, the AG still wants to put him in a prison cell...

FELIX

Except she hasn't been able to prove he stole, leaked or did anything other than warn us our government was under siege.

MARTY ISSERLES

Snowden with a halo.

FELIX

I think "patron saint of privacy" is catchier. Either way -- Deck's your guy.

They hit a corner, then spot the firm's three big guns -- PAUL PERKINS, TESS ADANDE, JESSICA ELLSBURY -- waiting in the hall.

Paul's the first to notice. Late 40s, a Boston Brahmin who knows all the strings to pull in his city, he carries his power lightly.

PAUL

(sticks out a hand)

Paul Perkins, managing partner.

MARTY ISSERLES

Marty Isserles --

PAUL

General Counsel of TwoTwig. Of course.

(nods)

This is Tess Adande...

TESS

If the name rings a bell, it's because I've been on your phone sheet for months.

She lights him up with a smile. Tess, 40s, lives decadently, works off her instincts -- and wants this business even more than Felix.

TESS (CONT'D)

So imagine my surprise when one of our associates finally got you in...

MARTY ISSERLES

Felix and I were both editors-in-chief of the Yale Law Journal. It's a tight network.

JESSICA

Which is probably why we haven't met. I'm Jessica Ellsbury. Suffolk Law School. Night division.

Jessica, late 30s, made her bones outworking, outthinking, the Ivy League fucks. Loving every minute of it.

MARTY ISSERLES

So you're the three who gave Deck Parsons
this soft landing.

PAUL

I've known Deck for 20 years. There's no
better man, no better lawyer. But judge
for yourself.

Paul opens the conference room door...

INT. PA&E - CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

...Where Deck waits inside.

He looks different now: his hair is longer, his wardrobe more
casual. And he feels... like a rockstar. He's not yet comfortable
with where he is, or the attention he draws. But this room -- any
room -- is very definitely *his*.

PAUL

Marty Isserles, Deck Parsons.

Isserles stares for a moment, star-struck despite himself.

DECK

I'd say welcome, but we've only been here
ten minutes longer than you have.

(nods)

This is my associate, Ingrid Poe...

Ingrid sits to one side, in her usual state of high alert.

DECK (CONT'D)

We hear you're in a tough spot.

MARTY ISSERLES

One of our customers, Ellie Benz, hasn't
been in touch with her parents since last
night. But she's 18, has her own account,
there's no evidence of foul play --

DECK

And even though the cops can't show
probable cause to justify a search, they're
still demanding you turn over her records.

Isserles nods: Deck nailed it. Felix grins.

DECK (CONT'D)

If they did have evidence, I assume TwoTwig
would share everything?

MARTY ISSERLES

Immediately.

FELIX

But if they give up private communications with no legal basis, they'll hemorrhage subscribers.

DECK

Don't make this about money. It has to be about privacy. About this girl's rights, and TwoTwig's obligation to protect them.

PAUL

Great. We all know people these days are less concerned with "Can you hear me now?" than "Who's listening in?"

MARTY ISSERLES

(dubious)

Everyone says they care about their privacy. But when they see what it costs to protect it, like here... Not many people want to stand up.

DECK

True. And if you do stand up, you can find yourself exiled in Montenegro for a year.

(off everyone's nervous laughter)

But I've learned a few lessons about how to handle these situations.

Isserles relaxes -- everyone does.

DECK (CONT'D)

Before we get started, one thing: TwoTwig doesn't use Supercookies, right?

JESSICA

Supercookies?

DECK

Files they hide on your phone to track the searches you do, the websites you visit...

INGRID

Then they sell all that info to advertisers.

TESS

Well, as long as they tell you --

INGRID

They don't. And you can't delete them.

Everyone turns to Isserles -- who hesitates.

DECK
(incredulous)
You want to play keep-away from law
enforcement while you're selling Ellie
Benz's info for a profit?

The partners frown; Felix looks sick.

DECK (CONT'D)
I can't make that argument for you.

Deck gets up, starts to leave -- but Tess grabs him, whispers:

TESS
You could make that argument. And you
should.

Jessica joins.

JESSICA
Because firms have clients, and attorneys
do their best to service them.

DECK
If this is what that looks like...
(to Paul, apologetic)
...A firm might not be the right place
for me after all.

INT. PA&E - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

As Ingrid follows Deck out --

INGRID
Maybe this was just a bad first case.

DECK
What makes you think we'll get better
ones?

INGRID
Paul's pitch. Wikileaks, fake news, the
surveillance state, cloud-based
everything...
(off Deck)
You've had a front-row seat. You know how
it's changing free speech, the press, our
privacy. If we get to take *those* cases --

DECK
They must've given you one hell of an
office here.

As Deck glances back into the conference room, where the Big Three and Felix are trying to do damage control with Isserles --

VIV (O.S.)

So how's the first day going?

Deck turns as VIVIAN PARSONS walks up, wheelie bag in tow. Her age (mid 20s) marks her as a young associate, but she reads differently than her peers: partially it's her boho sensibility, but more so... a sense that she's already lived a life, had real pain -- and is determined not to be afraid.

DECK

I think I made a bad first impression.

VIV

Everyone in the entire country already knows who you are.

DECK

Then I made a bad second impression.

Viv looks at Ingrid, who nods: he did -- then slips off.

DECK (CONT'D)

I refused to take the TwoTwig case.

VIV

Seriously, Dad?

And that's the life she's led -- as Deck's daughter.

VIV (CONT'D)

The firm's been hot after their business, Felix was counting on it to help him make partner...

DECK

Want to know why I had to say no?

VIV

Not really. Because I'm sure you have some principled reason that should make me proud but, instead, will make me mad because it creates a huge mess.

(off Deck)

I've seen this movie before.

They were clearly very close, but now... it's strained.

DECK

You wouldn't have taken this case.

VIV

I'm a junior associate who was hired as a favor -- I wouldn't have had a choice.

DECK

Paul hired you because you're a star.

VIV

Paul hired me because no one else would.

DECK

You would've hated being a public defender.

VIV

I'll never know.

(then, pointed)

When your father's a refugee from justice government jobs aren't really in the cards.

Viv feels bad saying it, but not as bad as Deck does hearing it.

DECK

I've replayed that day in my head a million times, I just -- I didn't have a chance to think through the consequences: for you, me, everything we were dealing with...

VIV

If you did -- what would you have done differently?

And from Deck's reaction, it's clear: that question has consumed him. But before he can respond --

VIV (CONT'D)

Actually, don't answer. We're both here now, and that's what matters, right?

She's trying to be positive, and it kills him.

DECK

(deflecting)

So where are you off to?

VIV

Court. I'm arguing a motion to dismiss for ZardeCo.

DECK

That's a big deal for a first-year. You are a star.

VIV

Tess gave it to me -- she thought she'd be busy working with you.

DECK

Oh. Then you better go before she grabs it back.

Deck gives Viv a quick kiss. She doesn't resist -- but she doesn't reciprocate, either.

VIV

What are you going to do now?

DECK

I'd like to help the missing girl's parents get the information they need from TwoTwig.

VIV

I should've guessed -- noble, and bound to create a huge mess around here.

DECK

I don't have to do it, Viv.

VIV

Yes you do.

And off the two of them, knowing this is going to be complicated...

INT. BENZ HOUSE - FOYER - MORNING

Deck and Ingrid are standing -- not sitting, they weren't invited -- in the entry. CARLA BENZ is compulsively checking her phone as her husband, JERRY, eyes Deck with suspicion.

JERRY BENZ

If the other side wanted to pay you, why would you help us for free?

DECK

Because the other side wants to profit off your daughter's information when no one's looking, then stand up for her privacy when the spotlight hits.

JERRY BENZ

And suddenly you grew a conscience, want to help the good guys again?

CARLA BENZ

Jerry!

DECK

No, it's fine.

Deck eyes a Mameluke sword on the wall.

DECK (CONT'D)

You're a former Marine?
(off Jerry's nod)
I won't hold that against you.

Jerry doesn't smile at the joke -- but Deck's not thrown.

DECK (CONT'D)

I was career Army. My first CO used to say: "Loyalty to country always -- loyalty to government when it deserves it."

JERRY BENZ

And who the hell are you to judge?

DECK

I was just in the right place at the right time -- even though it feels like the opposite. Because believe me, I paid a price.
(off Jerry)

But you understand duty, so you know why I didn't have a choice.

JERRY BENZ

You don't know me --

CARLA BENZ

Please, please... Can we just make this about Ellie?

DECK

She's right. You don't have to agree with what I did, but you should trust me. Because I know how it feels not being able to get to your daughter when she really needs you. So I'm offering to help.

Jerry hesitates. Then, he nods for Deck and Ingrid to follow him as he walks down the hall.

JERRY BENZ

We've had some issues. Ellie was dating an older guy --

CARLA BENZ

Greg Pool.

JERRY BENZ

He's trash. We fought about it.

INGRID

That's why Ellie got her own phone?

CARLA BENZ

And threatened to move out.

JERRY BENZ

Until Greg went to jail on a drug charge.
Ellie got scared, broke things off -- we
all got back to normal.

They enter...

INT. BENZ HOUSE - ELLIE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

...Which is reassuringly teenager-y: posters on the wall, clothes
on the floor, teddy on the bed.

CARLA BENZ

Last night, she went to pick up frozen
yogurt for us -- but never came back.

INGRID

Ellie's car is still in that parking lot.
Cops couldn't find any video, but there
are no signs of a struggle...

CARLA BENZ

Something happened, I know it. Ellie would
call me, even if she was with Greg...

Carla slumps on the bed, stares back at her phone, hoping.

DECK

Did the cops interview Greg Pool?

INGRID

(shakes her head)
He beat the drug charge, disappeared.

CARLA BENZ

That company can tell us if she's been
talking to him.

(struggling)

They can probably tell us where she is...

DECK

They can. And they will.

JERRY BENZ

Cops couldn't make them. Why're you so
sure?

DECK

Because when a secret doesn't deserve to
be kept -- there's always a way.

Deck pulls a PHOTO of ELLIE BENZ off her mirror. She's a young
18, smiley -- it hurts to look at it. But he forces himself. And
as Deck's game face returns...

END TEASER

ACT ONE

INT. PA&E - PAUL'S OFFICE - MORNING

TESS

Bringing Deck here was a mistake.

Tess is in high dudgeon, pacing in front of Paul.

PAUL

You voted for him.

TESS

After you opened a second bottle of Petrus and promised he'd be a huge new business magnet.

PAUL

Deck can be that and more. And even if he's doubting it after what just happened -- I'm not.

TESS

I love your optimism. I applaud your confidence. But Deck --

Paul holds up his hand, quiets her, as he walks over and closes his door... because Felix is right outside.

PAUL

Sorry, go on. You were just about to tear into the man who carried me on his back through our first year of law school, was the best man at two of my three weddings...

TESS

And has been in and out of my bed over the years. Every minute of which I've loved. But should we let our personal feelings drive a business decision?

PAUL

If you don't share my optimism and confidence yet, do it out of loyalty.

They're interrupted, again, by a KNOCK at Paul's door.

PAUL (CONT'D)

I know Felix came up hard, had to bang down lots of doors, but this is --

-- Not Felix. Jessica walks in.

JESSICA

You asked me why I voted against Deck coming here -- that was why. He doesn't care about this firm. He only cares about himself.

PAUL

That's not true. He just needs to get his bearings.

JESSICA

C'mon, Paul -- we brought in the most controversial man in America.

(to Tess)

You saw dollar signs...

(to Paul)

You saw a friend in need...

PAUL

But all you saw were the problems he might cause you in a confirmation hearing one day.

JESSICA

Absolutely. Because half the country thinks Deck's a hero who saved America, and that includes all of us. But the other half insists he revealed government secrets and should hang for it -- and those are people like the Attorney General.

PAUL

Fran Davids betrayed Deck. But she couldn't make a case against him, and she's embarrassed.

JESSICA

Which makes her dangerous.

(emphatic)

She stood at a podium the night Deck came back and called him "an active threat to our nation."

TESS

And she's been hammering him on the talk shows every day since.

PAUL

All I can say is, trust me.

JESSICA

If we let Deck stay, even if he tries to fit in, we're taking on a lot of risk.

(MORE)

JESSICA (CONT'D)

(off them)

Every time he goes in front of a client, a jury, a judge -- Deck's going to drag his reputation, his entire past in with him. How do you think that'll work out?

INT. COURT - DAY

JUDGE RUPERT COSTIN is an institution: imperious, opinionated, delights in tweaking lawyers who appear in front of him. But today:

JUDGE COSTIN

Can I just say how honored I am to have a true American hero in my court?

Ingrid nudges Deck, whispers:

INGRID

Bingo! Deck Parsons fan-boy.

MARTY ISSERLES

Your Honor... should I be concerned?

JUDGE COSTIN

Not unless you were on those Thinking Hat recordings.

(smiles)

That was a joke, Mr. Isserles. I assure you, you won't be disadvantaged by Mr. Parsons's record or by this expedited hearing.

As the Judge is talking, Viv slips into the room. Deck looks back at her: Well? She gives an excited thumbs up. Deck grins. In spite of everything, she wants him to be proud -- and he is.

MARTY ISSERLES

Your Honor, the standard for a police search is probable cause. And the moment that's met, we'll share Ellie Benz's information.

DECK

Except you shouldn't be looking at this as a Fourth Amendment issue.

JUDGE COSTIN

I know you to be an ardent defender of the Constitution, Mr. Parsons...

DECK

I am. But here, all we have to apply is basic contract law.

He nods at Ingrid, who hands him a document.

DECK (CONT'D)

TwoTwig's customer agreement includes an exception that allows information to be shared "if a customer's life is in jeopardy." Ellie Benz's parents believe that's the case here...

Deck points to the Benzes in the gallery.

DECK (CONT'D)

TwoTwig doesn't. And as you know, the court can resolve a private dispute like this by simply hearing the facts and making a judgment.

Deck looks at the Judge, confident.

JUDGE COSTIN

The articles always say you sacrificed a brilliant legal career to do what you did -- but maybe it's not quite over.

(off Deck)

Okay, Mr. Parsons: convince me Ellie Benz's life is in jeopardy.

INT. COURT - DAY

Deck's questioning DETECTIVE DIANA PARK. Knows what she knows, knows how to convey it; as good on the stand as in the street.

DECK

You don't believe Ellie Benz ran off on her own?

DETECTIVE PARK

Kids from broken homes. Kids with substance abuse problems. Kids who've been in and out of the system. They run.

She nods toward Jerry and Carla Benz.

DETECTIVE PARK (CONT'D)

But with a good family and a good scare from that dirtbag she was dating --

DECK

Greg Pool.

DETECTIVE PARK

Right. That kind of kid doesn't take off. They get taken.

As Ellie's parents wince, Isserles stands.

MARTY ISSERLES

I don't mean to sound insensitive, but...
Lack of foundation.

DECK

Detective Park has twenty years as a BPD
detective. We can stop and certify her as
an expert --

JUDGE COSTIN

I think the clock's ticking loudly enough
that both sides will stipulate?

Deck nods readily; Isserles, grudgingly.

DECK

So your professional judgment is, Ellie
Benz was kidnapped?

DETECTIVE PARK

I'll do you one better: by Greg Pool.

DECK

(counting on his fingers)
Jilted ex-boyfriend. Mixed up in drugs.
Just out of jail. Missing.

DETECTIVE PARK

(finger number five)
And there are no other suspects.

Deck, satisfied, looks back at Viv -- who's frowning at her phone.
As she gets up, hustles out...

...Isserles takes over.

MARTY ISSERLES

This guy we're worried about, Greg Pool --
he got caught with a duffel full of heroin?

DETECTIVE PARK

He did.

MARTY ISSERLES

And he was facing a big drug distro charge,
but got off because of a bad search.

DETECTIVE PARK

That was... unfortunate.

MARTY ISSERLES

Absolutely. So the cops would want to
nail Mr. Pool again if they could?

As Detective Park glances at Deck, sensing a trap --

DECK

This is beyond the scope -- we're not talking about a drug bust, we're talking about a missing girl.

MARTY ISSERLES

Are you sure about that? Because I bet there are some cops who would love a look at Ellie Benz's phone if they thought she'd been in touch with someone who just got over on them.

(off Det. Park)

Someone like Greg Pool.

DETECTIVE PARK

That's pretty cynical.

MARTY ISSERLES

My company receives 50,000 "emergency" demands every year. Sometimes because someone's in real jeopardy. But just as often -- they're fishing expeditions.

Ingrid nudges Deck:

INGRID

You could object again. He's testifying.

DECK

I don't want to waste time -- because we both know it's true.

MARTY ISSERLES

The FBI recently admitted to completely making up facts on thousands of occasions to justify collecting phone records.

JUDGE COSTIN

(to Deck)

Can I take judicial notice of that?

DECK

We've had instances of law enforcement overreaching -- but there's absolutely no evidence it happened in this case.

MARTY ISSERLES

No, but while Detective Park's experience leads her to believe Ellie Benz was kidnapped -- mine says this is a convenient backdoor for cops who got burned.

Judge Costin turns to Deck.

JUDGE COSTIN

You're the expert here, Mr. Parsons -- is our government really this out of control?

DECK

I don't think so. Unless I have reason to believe otherwise, I trust my government.

(off Judge Costin)

But I'm not here to comment on politics; I'm here to bring Ellie Benz home.

JUDGE COSTIN

Yet you are who you are -- so you're on the hook to do both. And while I'm heartened by your unshaken patriotism, there's not enough evidence here to prove either party's side.

Judge Costin gavels.

JUDGE COSTIN (CONT'D)

TwoTwig is not required to turn over Ellie Benz's records. If additional evidence becomes available, Mr. Parsons can refile.

Carla Benz gasps. Jerry wraps his arms around her. And off Deck, looking back at them...

INT. PA&E - VIV'S OFFICE - DAY

...A SHOT GLASS slams down on a desk. On one side is printed "Don't spy on me, bro." On the other, the seal of the NSA.

BUDDY PARSONS (O.S.)

Get it?

BUDDY PARSONS. Deck's younger brother. More than a little Billy Carter in him. He grins at Viv, waiting.

VIV

I get it, Uncle Buddy. But what happened to the Deck Parsons whistles?

BUDDY PARSONS

Those were clever: whistle... blower.

(off Viv)

They didn't sell.

VIV

And the shot glasses did?

BUDDY PARSONS

Ten thousand at ten bucks a pop.

VIV

Did the NSA have anything to say about it?

BUDDY PARSONS

I got a few letters along the way, cease and resist or whatever.

VIV

But you ignored them.

BUDDY PARSONS

I figured if they really cared, someone would call.

VIV

And you sent me those desperate texts today because they finally did?

BUDDY PARSONS

Worse.

He hands Viv a blueback, which she opens and scans.

VIV

This is a bench warrant for your arrest.

BUDDY PARSONS

Don't tell your dad, okay?

INT. PA&E - RECEPTION - CONTINUOUS

But Deck is oblivious as he walks back in and is met by Paul.

PAUL

I heard.

DECK

Already?

PAUL

You know the law; I know the people in the courthouse.

DECK

You should've seen Ellie Benz's parents.

PAUL

Do you have another card to play?

DECK

I'm already playing it.

As they walk together --

DECK (CONT'D)

You hear Viv won her motion to dismiss?

Paul smiles: he heard that, too.

PAUL

She's going to be a hell of a lawyer.

DECK

If I don't screw things up for her any more than I already have.

They reach Paul's office, and he gestures Deck in...

INT. PA&E - PAUL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

PAUL

Viv's always been strong. During the year you were gone, she got more so.

Paul grabs a putter and two balls, drops them on a turf strip.

PAUL (CONT'D)

When they froze your bank accounts, I offered her money. She didn't take it. When things got bad with her fiancé, I tried to get involved. She said no.

As Deck shakes his head, Paul lines up a putt, swings -- knocks it pretty close.

PAUL (CONT'D)

When I offered her a job, she insisted on interviewing first.

DECK

But if I had been here --

PAUL

You weren't. And she handled it. All of it. So instead of tearing yourself up playing "what if" -- start rebuilding.

Deck takes the putter, eyes his shot -- and knocks it closer.

DECK

Easier said than done.

Paul grabs back the putter.

PAUL

We'll figure out how you fit into this firm, get you and Viv back on track...

Paul pauses, then pops his ball over Deck's -- into the hole.

PAUL (CONT'D)

And then we'll focus on your golf game,
your love life, and how we'll use this
folk hero thing you've got going.

DECK

You know how much fall-out there'll be
with me around? For you, for everyone...

PAUL

Bring it.

DECK

Thank you -- but I'm not sure I can let
you take this on.

Before they can continue, MRS. LAWRENCE -- Paul's very devoted,
very discreet assistant -- pokes her head in.

MRS. LAWRENCE

Sorry, gents -- I have a message from
Ingrid Poe for Mr. Parsons.

She hands Deck a piece of paper.

PAUL

We also have to get you a cellphone.

DECK

Don't hurry.

PAUL

(off the message)
What is it?

DECK

My other card.

Deck walks out...

INT. PA&E - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

...But as he heads to the elevator, he glances toward Viv's office --
and sees a familiar figure through the crack in her door.

DECK

Bud?

Buddy spins, barely resisting his instinct to just shut the door.

BUDDY PARSONS

Decker, hello!

He hops up, hurries out, wraps Deck in a big hug.

DECK

What are you doing here?

BUDDY PARSONS

(without missing a beat)

Taking Vivvy to lunch. Dim sum. Want to join?

DECK

I can't, I'm jammed for time...

Deck pauses, eyeing his brother.

DECK (CONT'D)

Where's Viv?

BUDDY PARSONS

Checking on something for a client. Sounded important.

DECK

Just make sure you're not distracting her, okay?

BUDDY PARSONS

It's not her I'm worried about.

DECK

I keep telling you, Bud -- I'm fine.

BUDDY PARSONS

Okay, but if things start to get wiggy for you again --

DECK

You'll be my first call.

BUDDY PARSONS

First or second, depending on if it's a big legal thing or not...

Buddy winks; Deck can't help but smile. Then, he hurries out...

INT. PA&E - FELIX'S OFFICE - DAY

Viv walks in, starts talking.

VIV

If you had a client with a bench warrant out for his arrest, would you try to negotiate with the judge first -- or the prosecutor?

But Felix barely looks up from his VIOLENT PC GAME.

FELIX
Who's the judge?

VIV
(off the blueback)
Eloise Bell.

FELIX
The prosecutor.

As he incinerates demon after demon --

FELIX (CONT'D)
I thought you already used up all your
pro bono hours.

VIV
This is for a paying client. I hope.
(then, off him)
What are you doing?

FELIX
Working through my devastation.

VIV
Because you lost the TwoTwig business?

Felix finally looks up.

FELIX
I went to Harvard College, Yale Law School,
clerked on the Supreme Court --

VIV
Usually you say, "I grew up with nothing
and made it to..." before you do the whole
litany.

FELIX
C'mon, Viv. I'm up for partner in three
weeks. Bringing in a big client was all I
needed to seal the deal.

VIV
Everyone knows what you did.

FELIX
But how much is it going to matter? Your
dad has shifted the center of gravity
here. And if I'm not on his good side...

VIV
Yeah, you're right. You should probably
think about leaving.

Felix looks at her, stunned.

VIV (CONT'D)

Seriously. You have this gold-plated resume... If the world doesn't just roll over for you, quit.

Felix nods, point taken.

FELIX

Okay, fine -- but it's not like you're thrilled about your dad coming here.

VIV

Because I'm scared. When you go from talking to someone every day to just reading about them in the newspaper...
(emotional)

For my whole life, my father was there to protect me. Now, I feel like I have to protect him. But I don't know how. Or if things will ever be the same with us.

FELIX

Maybe you just have to keep trying.

VIV

Maybe we both do.

She smiles -- then leans in and kisses him. Felix is surprised.

FELIX

Oh, uh... Thank you.

VIV

Thank you?

FELIX

I just... I didn't know you were ready --
That we were --
(grinning)
Thank you.

He's jazzed. So's she.

VIV

So, my bench warrant. Who has the best in at the U.S. Attorney's office?

FELIX

Definitely Jessica. She's on the shortlist to take over there once the current USA goes on the bench.

VIV

She also has serious issues with my dad.

FELIX

But she loves you. You killed for her on the Valencia case, Rojo Motors... Rumor has it, she's fighting Tess for your time.

And off Viv, seeing an opportunity...

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Deck stands with Ingrid outside the yogurt store.

INGRID

This is the last place Ellie was seen. But the cameras outside are crap, don't cover much of the lot.

She points at the strip mall across the street.

INGRID (CONT'D)

I was hoping one of those fine establishments might have something that gives us a decent angle...

DECK

Medical marijuana dispensary, porn shop, coffee bar...

INGRID

One-stop shopping.

DECK

God bless America.

INGRID

I've been cracking into them one by one --

DECK

Kudos on keeping your skills sharp, but couldn't we just ask them for the video?

INGRID

Cops tried. Does it surprise you that none of them are eager to cooperate with law enforcement?

DECK

Even the coffee guy?

INGRID

Especially the coffee guy. Which is a shame, because it looks like he has a pretty sophisticated set-up.

(MORE)

INGRID (CONT'D)

(off Deck's concern)

We used to take down other countries'
nuclear programs, I'm not worried...

DECK

Even if you find something, I still have
to get it into court.

Ingrid lifts her laptop.

INGRID

So let me poke around, and maybe you can
reason with the Che-t-shirt-wearing, fair-
trade-coffee-peddling, cop-hating barista?

INT. COMRADE COFFEE - DAY

And then... FLASH. Deck's posing for a photo with a group of
SORORITY GIRLS from B.U. As they thank him, a WOULD-BE POET
sporting a man bun, clutching a leather journal, steps up.

MICK ARLES, the barista Ingrid described, beams at Deck.

MICK ARLES

Deck, man -- it is truly an honor. You
struck a blow for all of us.

DECK

I just did what I hope anyone in my
position would've.

Deck smiles for the selfie with the poet.

MICK ARLES

Taking on Big Brother, paying the price --
that's hero-ball.

(off Deck's nod)

Whatever you want, on the house.

DECK

How about a large cold brew -- and, a
look at your security tapes?

Mick's face falls.

MICK ARLES

Tell me they didn't get to you.

DECK

No one got to me.

MICK ARLES

'Cause the cops were in here, too...

DECK

Trust me -- I'm not asking you to help
the government.

INT. INGRID'S CAR - SIMULTANEOUS

Meanwhile, Ingrid's across the street, hacking into Mick's system.

INT. COMRADE COFFEE - DAY

DECK

I need you to help save a girl's life.

Mick, on the spot now, shifts uneasily. Deck pushes.

DECK (CONT'D)

Sometimes being a hero means taking a
risk. Doing something you never thought
you'd do. That you might not want to do.

MICK ARLES

I get that. I do. But you're talking about
the danger to this one girl, and I'm
thinking about the danger to us all...

DECK

Mick --

MICK ARLES

You took a stand against the man, even
when it got hard. That's what I'm doing:
I got my information locked down, and I
gotta keep it that way --

As he brags...

INT. INGRID'S CAR - SIMULTANEOUS

...Ingrid is finishing a bag of Whoppers and scanning the footage
from Mick's security cameras.

INT. COMRADE COFFEE - DAY

MICK ARLES

It's the principle, bro. I know you feel
that. Just like everyone should --

But as Mick makes a grand, sweeping gesture, Deck grabs his arm.

DECK

Mick, listen to me: I fought a real war
with the Iraqis, a cyber war with the
North Koreans, then a legal war with my
own country. And I won them all.

Ingrid hurries in, nods: Mick has what they need. Deck pulls Mick close, gets in his face.

DECK (CONT'D)

But I don't have the time, and you don't have the stomach, for this to get any more unpleasant. So I'll ask you again for your store's video from last night, you'll say yes -- and you can go back to taking your stand tomorrow.

Deck lets him go.

DECK (CONT'D)

Do we have a deal, *bro*?

INT. PA&E - TESS'S OFFICE - DAY

Paul is standing in front of Tess.

PAUL

Isn't one of your old law school roommates tight with the Attorney General?

TESS

Yes...

(then, realizing)

You just saw that interview where she talked about the Espionage Act, and you're worried she's really coming after Deck.

PAUL

I'm worried a lot of people are coming after him.

Paul opens a desk drawer, pulls out... a .45 CALIBER BULLET with the word *TRAITOR* inked on it.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Just came by messenger.

Tess goes cold.

PAUL (CONT'D)

I knew people were spun up about what Deck did and him being back -- but it feels like it's getting worse, not better.

TESS

What's the AG going to do about it?

PAUL

Turn down the heat. Stop talking about Deck and Thinking Hat, let this fade away.

TESS

Why would she do that?

PAUL

Because she has a lot to lose, too, if this stays front and center. Deck pushed to make sure Thinking Hat got shut down -- but he didn't hang it on her.

TESS

Do you think he could?

PAUL

I don't know -- but neither does she.

Tess looks at Paul, worried.

TESS

I know how much you care about Deck. I care about him, too. But this is a very dangerous game you're playing --

PAUL

Jordy, right? Jordy Pembroke. She was an Assistant AG?

Paul doesn't want to discuss it any more -- he wants to fix it.

PAUL (CONT'D)

I need you to call her and get me five minutes with her boss.

And as Paul slips the bullet back into his desk...

INT. PA&E - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

We're close on a SCREEN --

CCTV footage shows Ellie walking to her car -- until she's stopped by a BALD, HEAVYSET MAN in his 50s. Ellie seems surprised, but the man gestures toward his car -- and Ellie gets in. The image freezes...

...And we PULL OUT, find Deck and Ingrid watching with the Benzes.

DECK

That's not Greg Pool.

JERRY BENZ

No.

DECK

Any idea who it is?

Carla shakes her head, horrified, and starts to cry. And off Deck, staring at the frozen image of Ellie Benz disappearing...

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. PA&E - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Deck, Ingrid, the Benzes. Still staring at that image of Ellie.

CARLA BENZ

You think this helps our case?

DECK

I don't like Ellie getting in a car with a guy like that, but...

JERRY BENZ

(upset)

She doesn't put up any fight.

CARLA BENZ

Something's still wrong. I can just -- she's my kid, and I know it.

DECK

I believe you.

He's a parent, and he gets it. He nods to Ingrid.

INGRID

Let's go back to your house, start running through everything: yearbooks, pictures, phone lists...

DECK

Detective Park knows this city, Ingrid knows everything else -- we'll figure out who that is and why Ellie went with him.

As they get up and start to walk out --

JERRY BENZ

Cops said they struck out on video -- where'd you guys get this?

DECK

We found a guy who wanted to help.

INT. PA&E - JESSICA'S OFFICE - DAY

The wall-to-wall law books are Jessica's overcompensation; the pictures of her wife, the toys for her kids, are where her heart is. (The standing desk is doctor's orders.) As Viv pulls Buddy in --

VIV

Jessica, this is my dad's brother, Buddy.

BUDDY PARSONS

Deck got the brains, I got the good looks.

He didn't get either.

VIV

Buddy's an entrepreneur, and he's been selling these...

Viv hands Jessica the shot glass.

JESSICA

Funny.

BUDDY PARSONS

Right?

VIV

Wrong. The NSA objected to its seal being used on commercial products.

BUDDY PARSONS

But I didn't take it very seriously --

VIV

Or show up to court.

JESSICA

So Deck avoids jail for potentially violating national security laws, but you may do time for... a joke. Seems fair.

VIV

But if we can talk to the U.S. Attorney before this becomes any more of a thing -- I think we can make a good argument that these are allowable as political satire.

JESSICA

(not missing a beat)

18 USC 506 was recently construed to permit the use of official government seals in cases of clear parody.

BUDDY PARSONS

How did she do that?

VIV

Big brain.

JESSICA

And an even bigger chip on my shoulder.

She nods toward her Suffolk Law diploma.

BUDDY PARSONS

That's nothing -- I got kicked out of
West Point.

He raises his hand: high five -- and Jessica gives him one.

VIV

I know you're slammed, but if you'll help
us out, I can pick up the slack on any of
your other matters.

JESSICA

(to Buddy)

I like your style...

(then, to Viv)

And I love your work.

Jessica pauses, considering. Then --

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Why don't I call the U.S. Attorney's
office, see if we can talk them down?

VIV

Thank you.

BUDDY PARSONS

And as an expression of my appreciation,
take one of these.

Buddy reaches into his pocket, pulls out something shiny, puts it
on her desk: it's an official-looking NSA BADGE.

JESSICA

Where'd you get that?

BUDDY PARSONS

I had 'em made. Bonus gift for people who
ordered more than one shot glass.

And as Jessica turns to Viv, you've gotta be kidding...

INT. PA&E - HALLWAY - DAY

Deck is walking toward Paul's office when Felix intercepts him.

FELIX

You have a minute?

DECK

Not really.

FELIX

Then give me thirty seconds.

As Deck continues down the hall, Felix hurries to keep up --

FELIX (CONT'D)

I want to help.

DECK

Because you're worried about Ellie Benz --
or about your relationship with me?

FELIX

Would you believe both?

DECK

Happily.

FELIX

TwoTwig just put out a press release.

Felix hands him a piece of paper.

FELIX (CONT'D)

Your first case, a missing girl... They
know there'll be a ton of media coverage
no matter how this plays out.

DECK

"TwoTwig complies with law enforcement
whenever there's a reasonable legal
basis..." -- they're covering their asses.

FELIX

But look at the part about how they're
trying to keep customers informed.

As Paul comes out, joins them --

DECK

(scanning the release)

TwoTwig publishes how many subpoenas they
get, and for what info?

FELIX

Apparently, they just started sending out
the reports this year.

DECK

Do we know if Ellie got one?

FELIX

They were included with last month's bill.
If Ingrid can dig that up --

But Deck's already there.

DECK

We can make a strong case that's
constructive notice.

Felix is thrilled. And Paul beams:

PAUL

That's *exactly* why I brought you here.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. COURT - DAY

DECK

Ellie Benz knew TwoTwig would share her
information in a situation just like this --
and she was fine with it.

Deck walks a copy of Ellie's phone bill up to the bench.

DECK (CONT'D)

She received a report detailing how TwoTwig
regularly provides both phone location
data and call logs to law enforcement --

JUDGE COSTIN

-- Which is exactly the information you're
asking TwoTwig to turn over.

As Judge Costin turns to Isserles, Deck whispers:

DECK

This is enough to give your company cover --
don't fight it.

Isserles hesitates. Then --

MARTY ISSERLES

While TwoTwig remains committed to
protecting the privacy of our customers...
I recognize the legal basis here.

JUDGE COSTIN

As do I.

(gavels)

TwoTwig will turn over all information
relating to Ellie Benz. *Immediately.*

EXT./INT. JAMAICA PLAIN TOWNHOUSE - DAY

BAM! The front door is smashed open. A SWAT team charges in, guns
drawn. Detective Park is right behind them, but Deck pushes past...

...Into an almost empty living room. As shouts of "CLEAR" echo
through the house, Deck looks around: there's a folding chair and
a heavy coffee table with a chain coming off one of the legs. On
the carpet around it, a blood stain. Deck stares at it...

...As the SWAT TEAM LEADER comes out of a back bedroom.

TEAM LEADER

Girl's not here. Just this is.

He holds up Ellie's phone. Just then, Ellie's parents fight their way inside. Deck turns to shield them from seeing anything, but they spot the SWAT leader holding the phone, and deflate.

DECK

It's okay, we're not stopping here --
we're speeding up now.

As a couple of UNIFORMS come over to take the Benzes out, Ingrid enters, joins Deck and Detective Park.

INGRID

(off her laptop)

This house is owned by a Solomon Noll...

DECK

Let me guess: The man in the video.

Ingrid spins the computer around: A PHOTO of a grim-looking SOLOMON NOLL next to a SCREENCAP of the man Ellie left with. Perfect match.

DETECTIVE PARK

He's a heroin trafficker. Controls the area around Egleston Square -- same place we arrested Greg Pool.

INGRID

So Pool gets busted, loses Noll's drugs, but then beats the charge and disappears.

DETECTIVE PARK

And I'm sure Mr. Noll's been looking everywhere for him since.

DECK

Which is why he picked up Ellie Benz. To help with the search.

It all clicks.

DECK (CONT'D)

Does BPD have a good line on Noll?

DETECTIVE PARK

We could never get close. The FBI came in, took over the case. I can see if they'll share what they've got --

DECK

Hold off on that. The FBI probably classified this as a national security investigation, and there'll be too much red tape.

DETECTIVE PARK

Noll's a bad man -- but a threat to national security?

INGRID

Drugs come in from another country; money goes out.

DECK

Then someone throws in the word "terrorism" -- voila: national security threat.

This is right in Deck's wheelhouse.

DECK (CONT'D)

That label gives the FBI leverage to demand information about Noll from anyone they want. But it also makes it harder to share -- so it'll be faster for us to go straight to the source.

DETECTIVE PARK

You're talking about TwoTwig again?

DECK

And every other telecom the FBI hit up.

DETECTIVE PARK

Can *they* share national security information?

DECK

Only if a court lets them.

(off Det. Park)

It was a hot issue when I was at the NSA -- and I think I know how to make it hotter.

And off Deck, determined...

INT. FEDERAL COURT - HALLWAY - DAY

Viv and Jessica walk with Buddy.

VIV

So this judge, Eloise Bell -- you can't fool around with her.

JESSICA

She's devoutly religious, very strict...
Runs her courtroom like Sunday school.

BUDDY PARSONS

(nervous, trying)
Does she wear a nun's habit instead of a
robe?

JESSICA

That's exactly what not to do. You didn't
show up for any of your hearings, she
issued this warrant --

VIV

Just get ready to swallow your pride and
take some abuse.

Buddy forces a smile.

BUDDY PARSONS

I've been compared to your dad my whole
life. I'm used to it.

That breaks Viv's heart a little. Jessica's, too. Buddy sees.

BUDDY PARSONS (CONT'D)

But I've had it easy compared to Deck.
He's suffered a ton for doing something a
heck of a lot nobler than this.

But just as they're about to push into the courtroom --

HAROLD DARMIAN (O.S.)

Jessica.

She turns, finds a smiling, gum-popping, only slightly blow-dried
lawyer-for-the-people: HAROLD DARMIAN.

HAROLD DARMIAN (CONT'D)

Can I get a word?

Jessica glances at Viv and Buddy --

HAROLD DARMIAN (CONT'D)

Alone.

INT. FEDERAL COURT - LAWYER WORKROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The door is closed; it's just Jessica and Darmian now.

JESSICA

Since when does the U.S. Attorney show up
to argue an enforcement action on a bench
warrant?

HAROLD DARMIAN

I didn't. I came to make a deal with you.

JESSICA

Buddy Parsons had no clue he was breaking any laws --

HAROLD DARMIAN

He'd do time for that NSA badge anyway. We both know that. But I couldn't care less about him.

(then)

I do care about his brother.

Darmian flashes that smile.

HAROLD DARMIAN (CONT'D)

I'm about to be nominated for a federal judgeship. So I need to know whether Deck Parsons kept those Thinking Hat recordings -- and whether I'm in any of them.

JESSICA

Why are you asking me?

HAROLD DARMIAN

Because we can help each other.

(off her)

You're a legal machine with today's version of a Norman Rockwell family: wife, two kids, three rescue dogs... You'd be a perfect pick to take over my job -- if someone got your name in the hopper.

Jessica's appalled by how bald it is.

JESSICA

You've completely misjudged me.

HAROLD DARMIAN

Your ambition -- or your intelligence?

He thinks he's hitting a nerve, but Jessica's not thrown.

JESSICA

You'd be making a mistake to doubt either. But if the price of this job is doing your dirty work -- no thanks.

HAROLD DARMIAN

It's not just this job that's on the line, Jessica. Taking Deck on as a partner will impact your career, your reputation, everything you've built -- shouldn't you know exactly what game he's playing?

But as Jessica shakes her head, starts to walk out --

HAROLD DARMIAN (CONT'D)

I asked Judge Bell to push the hearing on
Buddy's case to tomorrow.

(calling after her)

You have 24 hours -- to help me and
yourself.

INT. PA&E - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

DECK

This is impressive.

Deck's scanning a dozen POTENTIAL CLIENT FILES spread out on the
table. Tess, standing next to him, nods proudly.

TESS

I've gone after every big telecom company
in the country. And just like you, I prefer
to have good intel.

DECK

I want to sit down with all of them.

TESS

It could take a while to get the right
people together.

DECK

I don't have a while.

(then, suggestive)

And I know you can be very persuasive
when you want something.

TESS

I'm glad you remember.

DECK

One of the many things I've missed about
you...

And just as it's heating up --

JESSICA (O.S.)

I'm sorry, am I interrupting?

They both turn, find Jessica staring at them.

TESS

Not at all.

Tess smiles, scoops up her files, walks out.

JESSICA

So, we should clear the air.

DECK

I know you were worried about me coming here, and I understand that.

JESSICA

I have nothing against you, Deck. I respect what you did. And it's not that I don't want this to work out --

DECK

But...

JESSICA

I want to understand exactly what you're trying to do now.

DECK

First, find this girl. And then -- start over.

JESSICA

Is that realistic?

DECK

I have to believe it is.

(off Jessica)

But I realize, a lot of people can't get past what I did. And they worry about what I know, what I might do...

JESSICA

Should we be worried?

DECK

I don't think so.

Deck means it; Jessica wants to believe it.

DECK (CONT'D)

But as much as I love Paul and Tess, you're more objective. So if you think my past is going to compromise everyone else's future -- including my daughter's... We should deal with it now.

And off Deck, opening himself up -- again...

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. PA&E - CONFERENCE ROOM - EARLY EVENING

DECK

Some of your companies got requests from the FBI asking for information on a drug trafficker, Solomon Noll.

HONCHOS from the dozen telecom companies -- including Marty Isserles from TwoTwig -- are there. Everyone staring at Deck.

DECK (CONT'D)

But don't tell me if you have -- the request would've come in the form of a National Security Letter, which includes a gag order. So if you even acknowledge getting one -- to your customers, to your investors, to anyone -- you'll be sent to federal prison.

As the honchos glance at each other, nervous --

DECK (CONT'D)

I believe that's unconstitutional. And I'd like to file suit on behalf of any company that is tired of being put in this position. That wants to tell the government: we're willing to help you catch bad guys -- but we shouldn't have to give up our rights to do it.

Deck looks around the table.

DECK (CONT'D)

The only thing I ask is, if we win, you share the information you have on Solomon Noll. Because I need to find the girl he kidnapped.

Deck pulls out the PHOTO of Ellie Benz that he took from her mirror, puts it on the table.

DECK (CONT'D)

If you didn't get a letter -- or you're not interested in joining this fight -- I understand. And you're free to go.

Deck nods to Felix, who opens the door. A beat -- but no one moves. Every company got hit up. And they're all ready to fight.

DECK (CONT'D)

Okay.

INT. THE SOMERSET CLUB - NIGHT

Paul's at a table with a group of VERY WELL-HEELED MEN. Steaks and bourbon all around. But as they're talking...

...Tess walks in. Looking very glam. And very out of place. As the men stop, Paul's on his feet, over to her, immediately.

PAUL
(quietly)
Tess, this a members-only club -- how the hell did you get in?

TESS
I told the stiff at the front that I was your girlfriend, and if he didn't let me in, I'd make a scene.

PAUL
Nice.

TESS
You weren't answering your cell.

PAUL
No phones allowed here.

TESS
Seems like a fun place. Anyway, I have some good news.

PAUL
The AG?

TESS
She'll talk to you.

PAUL
Tell me where and when to call.

But Tess shakes her head.

TESS
She's not doing this over the phone. You're going to D.C.

EXT. FRANKLIN SQUARE - NIGHT

Deck's walking home, deep in thought, when he notices -- in the reflection off a ground-floor window -- a blacked-out TOWN CAR trailing him. Deck, though, doesn't get nervous; he doesn't even speed up. Instead, he continues on his way, hooks an easy right onto Shamut Avenue...

...And the car follows. Deck feels it, but keeps walking calmly. Then, the car speeds up, pulls even with him.

It rides along next to him for a few steps, and then the back window rolls down...

...And Tess stares out at him. Mad.

TESS
Why weren't you scared?

DECK
Because real bad guys don't drive around in cars like that. They don't follow so closely. They don't get you right in front of your house... Should I keep going?

TESS
Boo.

DECK
You look nice, though.

That makes her smile. Because this is why she got all glammed up.

TESS
Want to take a drive?

She holds up a bottle of wine.

DECK
I'd rather invite you upstairs -- but I can't tonight.

TESS
You're thinking about your case tomorrow.

Deck nods.

TESS (CONT'D)
You need the wine?

DECK
Let's save it for another time.

Tess winks, rolls up her window. Then Deck turns, heads into his building...

INT. DECK'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Deck walks in, flips on the light: the place is lightly furnished, still crammed with moving boxes. As if Deck hasn't fully committed to being there.

But there's beer in the fridge, and Deck grabs one as he strips off his jacket and tie, unbuttons his shirt... and reveals the BULLETPROOF VEST he wears.

Deck shrugs out of the vest, happy to get the thing off, and sits down at the kitchen table. Then -- for the first time all day -- Deck opens a computer.

He takes a blanket off the chair next to him, puts it over his head so it covers the keyboard and his hands, and he logs on. Once he does...

...Deck tosses the blanket aside. He settles in, opens his email: 14,967 UNREAD. Deck pauses, then just closes out. Instead...

...He opens Wickr, the secure private messaging app. He types a note to Viv --

DECK: Hi.

He waits. Then...

VIV: Hi.

DECK: What are you doing?

VIV: Working.

DECK: On what?

INT. PA&E - VIV'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Viv, still buried in research, glances at Buddy's shot glass.

VIV: You don't want to know.

DECK: When people say that now, I'm going to listen.

INT. DECK'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Deck smiles, likes his own joke. But there's no response...

INT. PA&E - VIV'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

...Because Viv, who's alone in a mostly darkened firm, sees a LIGHT go on. She stands up, walks to her door, looks out -- and realizes: someone is in her father's office. She freezes.

INT. DECK'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

At home, Deck tries again:

DECK: That was kind of funny, right?

INT. PA&E - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Viv is moving down the hall now. Quietly. Nervous. She pauses just out of sight of Deck's office.

INT. DECK'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

DECK: Anyway... I was excited about us working together.

He pauses.

DECK: But is it too much, too soon?

INT. PA&E - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Viv takes a breath -- then peers into her father's office...

...To find a CLEANER about to start vacuuming. The cleaner waves.

INT. DECK'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Meanwhile, Deck's gotten self-conscious:

DECK: Sorry, this isn't your problem. You've dealt with enough.

INT. PA&E - HALLWAY / VIV'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Viv -- spooked, realizing how on-edge she is -- hurries back to her office. She sits down, settles herself. Then, she looks back at their thread...

...But Deck's already logged off.

INT. FEDERAL COURT - HALLWAY - MORNING (DAY 2)

As Viv and Jessica walk in with Buddy, U.S. Attorney Darmian approaches. He leans in to Jessica, whispers:

HAROLD DARMIAN
Did you talk to Deck?

JESSICA
As a matter of fact, I did.

HAROLD DARMIAN
(anxious)
Does he have the files?

Jessica smiles.

HAROLD DARMIAN (CONT'D)
What?

JESSICA
I'm just imagining what you must be hiding.

Darmian glances at Viv, who's standing with Buddy -- and looks like she may have overheard.

HAROLD DARMIAN
This isn't a game, Jessica.

JESSICA

Yes, it is. And you started it. But I'm ending it.

(off him)

So either do the right thing and drop this case -- or let's go get into it.

INT. FEDERAL COURT - MORNING

Jessica is addressing JUDGE ELOISE BELL. Too young to be this rigid. Buddy's joke about a nun's habit wasn't far off.

JESSICA

The NSA has a specific regulation governing the use of its seal --

JUDGE BELL

Citation, please, Ms. Ellsbury.

JESSICA

50 USC 3613.

Jessica winks at Buddy: he likes it when she does that.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

But it expressly says its goal is "to prevent injury to the United States."

Jessica holds up a shot glass.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

What's the worst thing someone could do with this?

HAROLD DARMIAN

Probably not much -- compared to what they could do with this.

Darmian holds up one of Buddy's fake badges.

HAROLD DARMIAN (CONT'D)

Size, shape, and weight are identical to a real NSA badge.

BUDDY PARSONS

(whispers)

That's why you make things in America.

Jessica elbows him.

HAROLD DARMIAN

If someone were to use this fraudulently --

VIV

Did they?

(MORE)

VIV (CONT'D)
(off Darmian)
Did someone use this fraudulently?

Viv glances at Jessica, who nods: go for it. But before she can get rolling --

JUDGE BELL
Ms. Parsons, you're fresh out of law school, so you should remember: statutory violations only require that the defendant know he was doing wrong -- they don't require actual harm.

VIV
Except Buddy Parsons didn't know.

HAROLD DARMIAN
The NSA sent him letters. When he didn't respond, my office filed charges.

JUDGE BELL
And when he didn't show up, I issued a bench warrant.
(off Viv)
His disregard was willful.

VIV
It wasn't disregard -- it was disbelief.

Viv stands her ground.

VIV (CONT'D)
The NSA collects over 7 billion telephone and internet records every day. They infiltrate foreign governments to destroy their military capabilities. Protect our own infrastructure from malicious hackers.

Jessica leans over to Buddy:

JESSICA
I want to be at your family dinners.

VIV
I don't think Buddy Parsons ever imagined they'd worry about someone flashing one of his badges around.
(then, passionate)
No one's scared of the agent who comes to their door with a badge any more -- they're scared of the agents they can't see, who are listening to their calls, watching them surf online... That's the real threat.

Viv looks at Darmian --

VIV (CONT'D)

But if you want to put my client on the stand and let the judge decide...

Darmian glances at Buddy, who's nodding effusively.

JUDGE BELL

Care to wade into this political quicksand, Mr. Darmian?

Darmian hesitates, weighing the risk --

JUDGE BELL (CONT'D)

Or would it make more sense for you -- particularly right now -- to just let me give Mr. Parsons a suspended sentence on the warrant and call it a day?

Darmian nods, Judge Bell gavels, Buddy wraps Viv in a hug.

BUDDY PARSONS

So technically, I can keep selling stuff -- right?

INT. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE - LOBBY - MORNING

We're back where we first met Deck. But now, the man offering his ID to the guard is Paul Perkins.

INT. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE - SECURITY CHECKPOINT - MORNING

Paul stands, legs spread and arms out, in the full body scan.

INT. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE - ELEVATOR - MORNING

Paul watches an ARMED ESCORT code into the secure elevator. The button for floor 5 lights up. The door slams shut.

INT. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE - 5TH FLOOR HALLWAY - MORNING

And then it's Paul and the escort moving down the hall.

INT. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE - RECEIVING ROOM - MORNING

But as Paul waits in the elaborately decorated anteroom -- an ASSISTANT comes in.

ASSISTANT

Mr. Perkins, I'm so sorry. The Attorney General won't be able to see you. She was called away.

INT. COURTHOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

Deck has a protective arm around the Benzes as they run a gauntlet of REPORTERS and CAMERAS. Ingrid and the telecom honchos are right behind them. But as they reach the courtroom doors...

...A SCRAPPY SOUTHIE GUY lunges out of the crowd, cold-cocks Deck.

SOUTHIE GUY

If you hate this country, leave!

The punch staggers Deck, but he doesn't go down. He looks... relieved. As if the punch, and the pain, are an easier kind of penance to deal with.

But as BAILIFFS rush toward the attacker, Deck waves them off --

DECK

No, no... let him go.

Deck wipes the blood from his mouth. Then, squares up to the guy.

DECK (CONT'D)

If I hated this country, I promise you, I wouldn't have sacrificed so much to protect it.

And instead of destroying him -- which Deck could, which everyone there wants him to -- Deck opens the door to the courtroom...

INT. COURT - DAY

Deck and Felix are settled at plaintiff's table. The first row is filled with our telecom honchos; Ingrid and the Benzes behind them. The GALLERY is packed. But as Judge Costin enters --

JUDGE COSTIN

Mr. Parsons, do we know who from Justice is arguing this case?

The defense table is empty. Deck gets to his feet.

DECK

We're running pretty fast here, so maybe --

But Deck's interrupted as a small ENTOURAGE enters from the back -- led by the Attorney General, Fran Davids.

It's the first time these former friends have been in the same room since they became bitter enemies. And as their eyes meet...

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. COURT - DAY

Deck's staring at Fran Davids. Everyone is.

JUDGE COSTIN

To what do we owe the honor, Ma'am?

FRAN DAVIDS

Ellie Benz.

As she walks toward the bench --

FRAN DAVIDS (CONT'D)

The real interest here isn't National Security Letters: it's the government's investigation into the drug dealer who may've taken this girl.

The AG comes up, stands right next to Deck.

FRAN DAVIDS (CONT'D)

So instead of wasting any more time with unnecessary legal challenges, we're willing to share everything we have on Solomon Noll.

She holds up a FILE. In the gallery, the Benzes get to their feet.

FRAN DAVIDS (CONT'D)

These are all the relevant intercepts -- including tracking from the last thirty minutes that puts Solomon Noll in a warehouse in Charlestown.

As the AG hands up the file, Deck moves toward the bench --

DECK

Can we see that, Your Honor?

FRAN DAVIDS

A team of FBI agents is ready to storm the warehouse on my go-ahead.

The AG nods at her DEPUTY, who hands her a LAPTOP. She opens it...

...And a REAL-TIME IMAGE of the warehouse, surrounded by AGENTS, comes up. As everyone in the courtroom stands, trying to see...

...Deck picks up the file, scans it as fast as he can.

The AG looks around the courtroom theatrically. Then --

FRAN DAVIDS (CONT'D)

Now.

The deputy repeats the order into his cellphone: "We are a go."

ON SCREEN -- the FBI AGENTS react immediately, converging on the warehouse.

But Deck's not watching, he's focused on the file -- on one phone number in particular, that appears a few times.

ON SCREEN -- there's a loud BANG, the windows of the warehouse LIGHT UP from a flash grenade, and then... silence. Everyone in the courtroom, watching, waiting... Except Deck.

The tension peaks as the comm from the scene crackles to life. And then: "Negative on the girl, this place is empty..."

Everyone in court turns to Fran Davids. She pauses, unsure. Until --

DECK

If you're done with your show, Fran -- I know where Ellie Benz is.

And off Deck, in too much of a hurry to fully enjoy his vindication...

EXT. JAMAICA PLAIN TOWNHOUSE - DAY

A car screeches up, Deck flies out. Ingrid's behind him.

Coming out the front door of the house, held up by Detective Park, is a worse-for-the-wear -- but very much alive -- ELLIE BENZ.

Ellie sees her parents hurrying out of the car, and rushes toward them. Thrilled. Relieved. As the family is reunited...

...Detective Park, working her way through all of the BPD UNIFORMS and FBI AGENTS descending on the scene, grabs Deck.

DETECTIVE PARK

How'd you know?

DECK

Solomon Noll called the townhouse three times this morning. So someone was here. And it was the safest place in town after the raid...

INGRID

So when we hit it yesterday --

DETECTIVE PARK

-- Noll's guys had Ellie out looking for Greg Pool.

Detective Parks nods toward two rough-looking ACCOMPLICES being dragged out of the house.

DECK

It's all about right place, right time.

As Ingrid smiles, Deck turns to watch the Benz family: Both parents are holding their daughter close.

Jerry looks up, sees Deck. With all his doubts and personal misgivings put to rest -- he nods his thanks.

And off Deck, nodding back...

INT. PA&E - TESS'S OFFICE - NIGHT

PHWEEEEEP! A whistle blows...

...And it stops Tess and Felix, mid-toast. (Red wine for her, orange soda for him.) They both turn --

TESS

(off the whistle)

What the hell is that?

And Jessica shows her: Deck's face on one side, the word *HERO* on the other.

JESSICA

Deck's brother made them.

(reaches into her bag)

I took a few for the kids, he's got a ton of extras...

She offers a couple up -- Tess and Felix take them.

FELIX

I heard you and the U.S. Attorney got into it over Buddy Parsons.

JESSICA

I started; Viv finished.

FELIX

Viv's good.

JESSICA

She's great.

TESS

But what about you? This going to hurt your chances of getting that job?

JESSICA

It was either very bad, or very good --
can't tell yet.

TESS

Well, let's drink to very good. What can
I pour you: 1990 Pichon Lalande...
(off Felix's soda)
...Or that?

JESSICA

I should get home to the kids...
(looks at the whistles)
But I might need to fortify myself first.

She nods at Tess's wine, sits.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Are we celebrating or medicating?

TESS

Celebrating.

FELIX

Guess who finally landed TwoTwig as a
client?

JESSICA

Deck?

FELIX

Very funny.
(then, nervous)
Don't make that joke during the partnership
meeting, okay?

TESS

Meanwhile, I've been getting calls from a
dozen other telecoms interested in "cutting
edge" representation...

Jessica takes her wine, lifts her glass --

JESSICA

Congratulations to both of you.

They all toast.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

(then, to Tess)
We should find Paul, figure out how we
can convince Deck to stay.

TESS

I think Deck knows how all of us feel now. But he needs someone else to be good with it.

FELIX

Viv.

INT. PA&E - DECK'S OFFICE - DAY

Meanwhile, Deck's down the hall, sitting in his office for the first time. There's a great view of the city out the window, but inside -- it's completely undecorated.

He looks down at his desk: Perkins Adande & Ellsbury Employee Handbook. Roster of clients. Conflict list. Billing sheets... Nothing like what he's used to. And then -- there's a CELLPHONE. Company issue, charged and ready for him. He stares at it.

VIV (O.S.)

It won't bite.

Deck looks up, smiles.

DECK

That's the least of what it can do.

He tears off a piece of tape, sticks it on the phone camera.

VIV

That really necessary?

DECK

I promise you, it is. You want to sit?

But Viv shakes her head.

DECK (CONT'D)

If you came to say you don't want me here...

(off the paperwork)

...Do it before I deal with all this.

VIV

Where would you go?

DECK

Into business with Buddy.

She smiles, guilty.

VIV

He asked me not to say anything.

DECK

I'm glad I didn't know. But seriously --

VIV

(interrupting)

I missed you while you were gone.

DECK

I missed you.

VIV

I'm worried about you.

DECK

That's not how it works.

VIV

I'm fine.

DECK

Are you? Because dealing with money and jobs and the controversy I caused... I knew that couldn't have been easy, but I knew you could handle it.

(off Viv)

When I left, though -- you were in a relationship that I know was a lot worse than you admitted.

It clearly pains Deck. Viv, though, doesn't want to go back.

VIV

I ended it.

DECK

Where is he now?

VIV

Out of my life.

Deck looks at her, worried.

DECK

There was something off about him, Viv. I always told you that.

VIV

And I told you, it's done.

Deck realizes he has to leave it there. For now. But it's hard to get past.

DECK

Honestly, if I had to do it over again --

VIV

Don't. Don't second-guess it. You were protecting millions of people.

DECK

But you're my child.

Deck's wanted to say that -- and Viv hear it -- for a long time.

VIV

I want you to stay here.

DECK

Even if it gets messy?

VIV

It *will* get messy. Because you'll change this firm as much as it changes you.

(then)

I think I'll like being a part of that.

It's starting to feel like it used to; both of them realize it.

VIV (CONT'D)

But Dad -- can I ask you something?

DECK

You're the one person who can ask me anything.

VIV

Did you take those Thinking Hat files when you left the country?

Deck looks her in the eye.

DECK

No.

Viv nods, taking that in. Then --

VIV

Do you have them now?

DECK

If I did, it would make starting over impossible.

Viv hesitates.

VIV

I think that's right.

She goes to her father, and this time she gives him the kiss. Then, Deck watches as she walks out into the hall, joins a waiting Felix. As the two of them head off, they cross with...

...Ingrid, who's headed into Deck's office, holding a box of Milk Duds and an iPad. She puts the iPad in front of him --

INGRID

Did you see this?

ON SCREEN --

News footage of Fran Davids, standing on the courthouse steps. Surrounded by CAMERAS and REPORTERS.

FRAN DAVIDS

...And one of my priorities has been balancing the government's need for secrecy with the public's desire for transparency. The Ellie Benz case is a perfect example.

Ingrid's disgusted.

INGRID

You just gonna let her take credit for this?

DECK

I didn't do this for the credit.

INGRID

No, but she did.

ON SCREEN --

FRAN DAVIDS

...I was forced to intervene here because, instead of focusing on the life of a young girl, Mr. Parsons was consumed -- again -- trying to make a political point.

Ingrid flicks the screen, muting the AG's spin.

INGRID

You know how many reporters have called, wanting to talk to you about this case? And everything else?

DECK

I don't care.

INGRID

Only one of you is going to be the hero. And if you don't start fighting --

DECK

The win was shutting down Thinking Hat.
(MORE)

DECK (CONT'D)

Getting to come back -- that was a bonus.
Now...

(off Ingrid)

I don't want to fight this battle anymore.
We'll have others.

INGRID

Does that mean we're staying?

DECK

I think so.

INGRID

Good.

But as she picks up her iPad --

INGRID (CONT'D)

You know I'm in, right? For whatever has
to be done.

DECK

I know.

Ingrid walks out...

INT. PA&E - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

...And we follow her as she walks down the hall, finishing her
Milk Duds, and heads into...

INT. PA&E - WOMEN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ingrid tosses the candy box in the trash, goes to wash her hands.
She turns on the water. Then, she takes off what until now has
always appeared to be a Fitbit-type bracelet...

...But, as she unhooks it, is clearly a USB DRIVE.

Ingrid sets it away from the water. She washes the chocolate off
her fingers... then quickly puts the bracelet back on.

INT. PLOUGH & STARS - NIGHT

Deck's sitting alone at a table in the back -- but still getting
stares. He ignores them, though, sipping at a beer, typing on his
new cellphone...

...Where he sends a text to Tess: *Hello*. Tess texts back: *What
are you doing online?* Deck: *Living dangerously*. He pauses, then
adds: *My house, one hour?* Tess: *I'll bring the wine*. Deck smiles.
But as he's turning off his phone --

PAUL (O.S.)

I see you started without me...

Deck looks up, as Paul eyes the three extra beers on the table.

DECK

People keep sending over rounds.

But as Paul reaches for one, Deck shakes his head.

DECK (CONT'D)

When I got up to pee, that guy in the boots may've spit in those.

(off Paul)

So where've you been?

PAUL

Tracking down the Attorney General.

DECK

Why?

PAUL

Because I was worried.

DECK

Look, even if Fran Davids wants to keep this fight alive -- I don't. And I won't. I'm ready for the rebuild we were talking about: being at this firm, with you, with Viv. Doing work that matters.

(off Paul)

Which is not to say I won't be a pain in your ass from time to time, but I promise you, I'll make it worthwhile. And --

PAUL

Deck. She gave me this.

Paul pulls out a piece of paper, hands it to Deck. Deck scans it --

DECK

This is a subpoena.

PAUL

Jessica's getting one, too. And Tess.

(then)

And Viv.

Deck looks at Paul, stunned.

PAUL (CONT'D)

She's coming after all of us now.

And off Deck, knowing it's time to take off the gloves...

END PILOT