

MANIFESTO

Episode 104

"Publish or Perish"

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ACT ONE

OVER BLACK

FITZ (V.O.)

This is a message from the terrorist group FC. To prove its authenticity we give our identifying number 553-25-4395.

Then we're in

INT. UTF - CONFERENCE ROOM

Where FITZ stands in front of the table covered in new letters from FC that we saw at the end of 103. Fitz reads a letter DIRECTLY TO CAMERA:

FITZ/FC

To the New York Times: Over the years we have given as much attention to the development of our ideas as to the development of bombs. Therefore, if our Manifesto is not published by the New York Times, or some other nationally distributed periodical, another bomb is ready to be delivered.

Then we CUT TO:

THE BOARDROOM AT THE NEW YORK TIMES

Where the exact same scene is playing out. ARTHUR SULZBERGER, JR., (identified by chyron as the Publisher of The New York Times) is reading his responses to FC's letters to his editors.

Sulzberger reads DIRECTLY TO CAMERA -- and we INTERCUT so we follow the men's exchange of letters as if it's a conversation.

SULZBERGER

To the man called "Unabomber" by the FBI: We received your letter. Newsrooms regularly get messages from people with threatening demands. Our traditional response will continue to serve us well -- notify the FBI and print nothing.

INTERCUT WITH UTF CONFERENCE ROOM

As Fitz continues reading FC's letters DIRECTLY TO CAMERA, picking each one off the table as we recreate the exchange:

FITZ/FC

The FBI is a joke. They have tried to portray these bombings as the work of an isolated nut. They must really be getting desperate if they resort to theories as ridiculous as this one about our supposed fascination with wood.

SULZBERGER

You seem like an intelligent individual. What makes you believe we would want to publish the work of an unrepentant killer?

FITZ/FC

"Unrepentant?" Perhaps. But -- we are not insensitive to the pain we have caused. We certainly regret injuring Patrick Fischer's secretary.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY OFFICE - DAY (MAY 5, 1982)

SECRETARY'S POV: She opens a package addressed to her boss, Professor Fischer. There's a flash of light and she's INSTANTANEOUSLY on the other side of the room -- we never saw how she got there, and neither did she. And after a moment, she realizes -- and SCREAMS --

FITZ/FC

And when we were young we were much more careless in selecting targets.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. AMERICAN AIRLINES FLIGHT 444 - DAY (NOVEMBER 15, 1979)

WE HEAR A MUTED, SUCKING EXPLOSION. The plane fills with smoke as everyone panics. Children are sobbing.

FITZ/FC

Some of the passengers were likely innocent. We're glad that attempt failed.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

FITZ/FC (CONT'D)

But our goal is less to punish the people pushing all this growth-and-progress garbage than it is to propagate ideas. We are tired of making bombs so we're offering a bargain:

Fitz sees the letter's next line. Double-takes. Then, with wide-eyed astonishment:

FITZ/FC

If you publish, we will permanently desist from 'terrorist activities.'

A moment of stunned silence in both the UTF and the NYT as they take this in. The world shifting on its axis.

FITZ looks around the UTF conference room -- HOLY SHIT --

SULZBERGER stammers. Shocked.

SULZBERGER

Well, how-- How do we know we can trust you to keep your word?

FITZ/FC

As I'm sure you know, bombs may attract attention, but IDEAS start revolutions. That is our sole aim. If we break our word, people will lose respect for us and be less likely to accept our ideas.

SULZBERGER sinks down in his chair. And the BOARDROOM ERUPTS IN DEBATE all around him:

FEATURES EDITOR

We can STOP him! How often do we, as journalists, actually have the chance to stop a killer?! We can SAVE LIVES here--

NEWS EDITOR

If we publish this, we're telling every psycho in America that they can murder their way into a New York Times column!

FEATURES EDITOR

We already do that when we publish the names of serial killers.

(CONTINUED)

NEWS EDITOR

So how many human lives do you want to sell a page for, Frank? He bombs 18 people, we give him five pages. The next guy blows up 36, will we give him ten? We might as well publish a rate chart!

Sulzberger doesn't know what to say. What to do. The weight of this decision settling on his shoulders.

Then suddenly we hear the mellifluous Jersey-tinted voice of:

BOB GUCCIONE (V.O.)

This is an open letter to the Unabomber from Bob Guccione, Editor-in-Chief of Penthouse Magazine.

BOB GUCCIONE is half-reclined on a satin divan in his tacky-swank, neoclassical mansion, surrounded by purebred Rhodesian Ridgebacks and Penthouse Pets.

BOB GUCCIONE

(pure swagger)

I've been following your correspondence with the New York Times. I believe your offer to desist from bombing to be genuine, and am willing to immediately publish your article, unedited and in full, in Penthouse Magazine. Our demographic is virtually the same as the New York Times, but our total readership is many millions more. I might add that we are the biggest selling magazine in the Pentagon.

CUT TO SULZBERGER, too surprised by Guccione to respond.

FITZ/FC

Mr. Guccione, we are very pleased and we thank you. While we don't have anything against sex magazines, it will obviously be to our advantage to be published in a, quote, respectable periodical. The New York Times is to have first claim on the right to publish, then The Washington Post, and after that Penthouse.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

FITZ/FC (CONT'D)

However, if only Penthouse publishes, we reserve the right to plant ONE MORE deadly bomb.

BOB GUCCIONE

I'm a little miffed and a whole lot disappointed by your recent communication. Penthouse isn't good enough? Screw you, dickhead.

The Pets COO agreement, trot after Guccione as he stalks off.

BACK IN THE NEW YORK TIMES BOARDROOM

FEATURES EDITOR

His publication deadline's only a week away.

SULZBERGER

We'll ask the Attorney General and the FBI to make a recommendation. Let them make the call.

INT. UTF - CONFERENCE ROOM

The camera tracks around Fitz, breaking the STRAIGHT TO CAMERA STYLE and taking us into the UTF's own RAGING DEBATE:

Fitz is standing at the conference table. ACKERMAN, GENELLI, COLE, and the rest of the top UTF agents look at him skeptically. Little love for Fitz, though there's a bit of grudging respect.

ACKERMAN

You're not actually suggesting that we advise them to PUBLISH, are you?

FITZ

One. We learned from the LAX incident that his reputation is extremely important to him. So if he says he'll stop bombing, he'll stop bombing.

COLE

The United States government does not negotiate with terrorists.

FITZ

And most importantly. If we get this published, SOMEONE will recognize his ideology, his idiolect, or both.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

FITZ (CONT'D)

I'm certain of it. We haven't found one single fingerprint in seventeen years. But he just gave us his LINGUISTIC fingerprint on a silver platter and he doesn't even realize it!

COLE

The United States government does not negotiate with terrorists.

GENELLI

They did publish the Zodiac Killer.

COLE

Yeah, and he kept killing and they never caught him. Which is why -- all together, class: The United States government... does not negotiate... with terrorists.

Fitz slides a MANILA FOLDER across the table to Ackerman.

FITZ

This outlines my case for publication. You can take that right to Reno and Director Freeh.

ACKERMAN

Linguistic fingerprints, idiolect, forensic linguistics... It's one thing messing around in the basement. But I'm supposed to walk into Janet Reno's office and ask her to violate a hundred years of government policy, to negotiate with a terrorist, because someone MIGHT recognize his spelling? And because he MIGHT stop? You might be right, Fitz. But no WAY am I pushing that boulder up the hill.

FITZ

This investigation's been taking the path of least resistance for seventeen years. And look where it's gotten us. I'm giving us a path forward. I know it's risky. But sending us his Manifesto was the first mistake the Unabomber's ever made. We have to exploit it for all it's worth!

(CONTINUED)

Ackerman watches Fitz, unsettled. Fitz's words have landed.

COLE

Actually, "Nathan R" was the Unabomber's first mistake. And, drumroll please, as of 7am this morning, we have Nathan R!

Everyone turns to Cole -- astonished --

Cole whips out a DARK GREEN FOLDER, plops it ON TOP OF FITZ'S MANILLA FOLDER. Cole pulls out the envelope addressed to the NY Times with the indented writing: *Call Nathan R, Wed. 7pm.*

COLE

Nathan R, AKA Nathan Robinson out of San Jose. He's an old acquaintance of, guess who? Leo Frederick Burt. My personal suspect number one. Robinson and Burt were both in SDS at University of Wisconsin. Since then, Nathan Robinson's gotten himself charged with Terroristic Threatening of a Peace Officer, Possession of Narcotics, Mail Fraud. We get a tail on him, there's a good chance he'll lead us to Leo Burt.

FITZ

Wait-- you KNOW the linguistic evidence eliminates Leo Burt as a suspect. So why--

ACKERMAN

You made your case, Fitz. But we don't negotiate with terrorists. Genelli, you get to New York, brief the Times. I'll meet with Reno. Thank you, everyone.

Meeting adjourned. Fitz stewes as he exits.

Ackerman picks up Cole's DARK GREEN FOLDER. Then, after a beat, picks up Fitz's MANILLA FOLDER too. Considers them. Two paths. Then stuffs BOTH into his briefcase.

INT. UTF - HALLWAY - DAY

NATALIE is waiting on a bench outside the room, a VISITOR BADGE around her neck.

Fitz gives her a look as he emerges: *No go.* Natalie shrugs.

(CONTINUED)

NATALIE

We fought the good fight.

FITZ

Thanks for your help. I'll walk you out.

(beat, as they walk:)

I keep thinking, am I just going nuts? NOBODY ELSE sees it.

NATALIE

Well I see it. So, it's them. Or, well, maybe you and I are both nuts. But at least you're in good company then.

Fitz smiles at her. She's adorable.

NATALIE

Hey, uh, you wanna go get lunch?

FITZ

I can't. My wife's coming into town today. But hey, maybe we can all get together while Ellie's here. That could be fun.

Natalie, to her credit, manages an extremely strained smile.

INT. FITZ'S EFFICIENCY APARTMENT - DAY

We hear keys jingle uncertainly. Then the door unlocks, swings open to reveal

ELLIE on the doorstep. Roller suitcase at her side. She finds the light switch. And stands there for a long moment, surveying the empty apartment.

The place is a WRECK. UNABOM documents cover the walls. Take-out containers, clothes, beer bottles strewn everywhere.

Ellie takes this in. And on her face, strangely -- a smile. She's oddly satisfied to find the apartment in such disarray.

Inside the fridge: ketchup packets, cream cheese, beer, and Jolt. She shakes her head. Hums the "Mighty Mouse" theme --

ELLIE

"Here she comes to save the day!"

And then gets to work. Cleaning everything. Replacing the UNABOM documents on the fridge with drawings from the kids.

INT. FITZ'S EFFICIENCY APARTMENT - NIGHT

Ellie lies on the couch. Watching the door as the keys jingle and then Fitz struggles through the door. He's carrying an unruly armload of papers and his Manifesto.

Fitz double-takes when he sees the apartment. Transformed.

FITZ

Wow.

(Then, noticing Ellie:)

WOW!

Fitz closes the door behind him, but then immediately launches in --

FITZ

Ugh, what a day. It's like, wake up, if you guys had all the answers you would've caught him by now! And here I am, giving them the path forward, and they don't even care.

He dumps his papers and Manifesto on the counter. Compulsively pages through them. Ellie approaches him from behind. Her hands on his shoulders.

ELLIE

Well... It's not all bad.

FITZ

Oh no? Because--

ELLIE

Nope. Because -- it's after 5. And I'm finally here. And there are NO. KIDS. ANYWHERE.

FITZ

Oh. OH.

He drops everything. Turns to Ellie. She grins at him.

And then he KISSES her. HARD. Then they tumble into the bedroom, and SLAM the door behind them.

The camera lingers on Fitz's Manifesto on the counter. Right next to the fridge, which is now covered with artwork by Fitz's kids. "MY DAD CATCHING BAD GUYS" among others. We hold on that image for just a moment, before we CUT TO BLACK.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO**INT. ACKERMAN'S HOUSE - MORNING**

Ackerman's wife BETH packs his suitcase, like she does for all his trips. Ackerman's pacing, frustrated. They've been talking about Fitz.

BETH

He's just a kid. It's easy to get passionate about something and not realize you're wrong.

ACKERMAN

He's not really a kid. And he isn't wrong, exactly. He's just got no practical experience for what this means. No big picture.

BETH

Okay so what do you think? Is it worth it?

A pause. Then -- this is hard for Ackerman to admit, but:

ACKERMAN

This is it for me. This case is The One. This is how they'll remember me. My legacy.

BETH

There's so much you'll be remembered for. Polly Klaas, Calvin Grigsby, the Chinese Mob, the kidnapping task force...

ACKERMAN

I can lock up a million serial killers and STILL I'll be The Guy Who Led Unabom. That's me, forever.

BETH

The Scarlet "U", huh? Ah, sweetie.

ACKERMAN

This is a buzzer shot. I only get one. But sometimes I just want to pass the damn ball to the next guy.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ACKERMAN (CONT'D)

No glory, no catastrophe, just --
"the path of least resistance."
It's terrible. Weak. But boy, I
think about it.

He looks down at the TWO FOLDERS: The manila one from Fitz;
and the green one from Cole. *The path of least resistance...*

OFF ACKERMAN struggling with the decision --

INT. UTF - DOCUMENT ANALYSIS ROOM - DAY

Fitz enters. Tabby sits there, headphones on, back turned.
Reading an airplane novel. She doesn't acknowledge Fitz.

Fitz, annoyed, plops down into his chair. Picks up his
Manifesto. Glowers at the whiteboards. At the back of
Tabby's head. *Why even bother?*

He tosses his work aside, reaches for the New York Times.
Opens to the crossword -- but he's already finished it.

He rummages, finds the Washington Post puzzle and starts
that. One across -- "Eddie Vedder, still." He stares at it.

Fitz taps Tabby on the shoulder.

FITZ

I need your expertise. A word
thing. Who's Eddie Vedder?

Tabby looks askance at him. She doesn't remove her
headphones. Fitz shows her the crossword. An olive branch.

Tabby, feigning annoyance, takes the crossword. Considers it
a moment. Then digs a CD wallet out of her bag, flips to a
Pearl Jam CD, slides it to Fitz. He scans track titles.

FITZ

"Alive." Nice. Thank you.

Fitz sits back down, working on the puzzle. Tabby considers
him. She can't stay mad. Takes her headphones off.

TABBY

You want a coffee? I'm going.

Fitz considers her. Her novel, his crossword.

Fitz drops the Post and grabs his jacket.

(CONTINUED)

FITZ

You know what? Take the day off.
I'm hitting the Tonga Room.

EXT. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE BUILDING - DAY

Ackerman and FBI DIRECTOR LOUIS FREEH approach the huge DOJ building. The CAPITOL DOME towers over everything.

Ackerman, Freeh, and their security detail look like ants. Their own insignificance not lost on them.

INT. DOJ - JANET RENO'S WAITING ROOM - DAY

Reno's SECRETARY leads Freeh and Ackerman into the classic-American, well appointed waiting room. Ackerman takes it in. Feeling the weight of history in these rooms.

SECRETARY

Director Freeh. S.A.C. Ackerman.
Attorney General Reno will be with
you shortly.

FREEH

Thank you.

They sit. Ackerman's pale. Feeling his own inadequacy in these halls of power. Freeh can see it in his face.

FREEH

Don, listen. This is a cake walk.
You're telling her what she wants
to hear. "Don't publish a
terrorist."

Ackerman nods, reassuring himself.

ACKERMAN

And Leo Burt's a good lead.

FREEH

And you've got a ton more where
that came from. All the Tier One
guys are solid. Listen, you
inherited a garbage case. No one
expects a miracle. Reno just wants
to know we're doing our jobs, which
we are. And wants to see a nice,
thick folder, which you have.

Freeh's also reassuring himself -- he's got a lot riding on this too. Ackerman's beeper buzzes: Genelli. Ackerman looks to Freeh. Freeh nods -- go ahead.

(CONTINUED)

Ackerman walks to the guest phone on a side table, dials.

ACKERMAN
Genelli, it's Ackerman, what's up?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. THE NEW YORK TIMES - DAY

Genelli on the phone. The New York Times newsroom bustles along behind him.

GENELLI
I'm here at the New York Times,
and... I have some bad news.
We're going to be okay, we'll be
fine. But... I got here early for
my meeting with Sulzberger...

INT. THE NEW YORK TIMES - FLASHBACK

Genelli waits outside Sulzberger's office, watching the kinetic newsroom. He notices an INTERN distributing mail to cubicles, writing Post-It notes on mail bundles...

GENELLI (V.O., ON PHONE)
*There was this mailroom guy. I
followed him back to his desk...*

Genelli follows him to his cubicle and sees a Kanban board covered in Post-Its, organizing the Intern's tasks. Many of the notes are for phone calls: "Call Jeff S. re Wilder piece." "Call back Nick M. - Editor - Chicago." "Julian W. wants meet with Jason re 'Gallolay'?"

Genelli's stomach falls. He watches the Intern write a new Post-It RIGHT ON TOP of a stack of mail. Genelli grabs a "To The Editor" envelope, holds it up. He can see INDENTED WRITING ON IT from a Post-It. Just like the "Nathan R" note.

GENELLI
Do you happen to know someone named
Nathan, last name starts with an R?

CLOSE ON ACKERMAN

He stares down at the "Nathan R" note, there at the top of Cole's Green Folder. Ackerman closes his eyes at the horror of the stupidity of it.

(CONTINUED)

GENELLI (ON PHONE)

That Unabom letter came through the New York Times mailroom before it got to us. That indented writing? Was made by Reggie Berkenfeld, the Mail Intern here at the Times. Unabomber didn't write the Nathan R note. There is no Nathan R.

ACKERMAN

You're telling me we've been chasing a dead lead for the last 18 months?! How many Nathan R's have we-- Ah, *Christ!*

Ackerman hangs up. Sits down next to Freeh. Trying to hide the panic in his eyes. Freeh leans in, reassuring him:

FREEH

This doesn't change anything. She wants broad strokes. Just de-emphasize Nathan R and focus on Burt and the other Tier One leads.

The door OPENS. Ackerman startles -- but it's the Secretary.

SECRETARY

I'm so sorry gentlemen, but the Attorney General will be about a half hour more.

Ackerman nods, but his mind is elsewhere. His moral dilemma eating away at him. Cole's Green Folder in his lap...

INT. FAIRMONT HOTEL - TONGA ROOM TIKI BAR - DAY

The ultimate tiki bar. Grass huts, Pu Pu platters, ornate cocktails. A BOAT carrying a live CARIBBEAN BAND floats back and forth in an indoor pool. Fitz and Ellie are on their second round of Zombies.

ELLIE

This whole Warhammer thing has officially taken over the dining room table, and he's really territorial about it. I mean I can't even suggest he move it without him freaking out. So at night when he's asleep...
(wincing at her own confession)
...I'll just move one piece, just to see if he notices.

(CONTINUED)

Fitz can't help but laugh.

FITZ
That's terrible! The things we do
when we're alone...

ELLIE
I know! But I love seeing how
worked up he gets over it. He's so
funny. It's terrible. I had to
confess to *someone*!

She crosses herself sarcastically. We kind of love Ellie for sharing this weird, funny character flaw. Fitz loves it too.

FITZ
You think I should learn that game?
Maybe me and Davey could play
together.

ELLIE
I think you've got quite enough
games in your life already.

She realizes that sounded a lot like a dig. Fitz feels a little exposed. She tries to play it off, smiles.

ELLIE
(off her drink:)
Oof. These are strong.

Fitz is about to say something serious -- then his pager BUZZES. Ellie hides her annoyance. A forced smile:

ELLIE
It's okay. Go.

Fitz goes to the bar, dials on the phone.

FITZ
Sir. It's Fitz.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. DOJ - WAITING ROOM - DAY

Ackerman furtively eyes Freeh across the room. Talks low and fast. Keeping this secret from Freeh:

ACKERMAN
You have thirty minutes to come up
with something better than Forensic
Linguistics.

(CONTINUED)

Fitz tries to say something. Only manages a splutter.

ACKERMAN

Nathan R is a dead end. But language is not enough here. You bring me something concrete and operational I can give Reno to back up your case? I might be willing to float publication with the A.G. If I do--IF--both our asses are on the line, understand?

FITZ

Yes sir.

ACKERMAN

Cole's already on it. You two brainstorm. Be brilliant, quickly. You've got... 29 minutes. Go!

Ackerman hangs up. Fitz looks back to Ellie across the bar.

She clocks his look. Knows what it means. Raises her drink, waves for him to go.

He apologizes with a nod, then RUNS OUT. As soon as he exits, Ellie drops the smile, feeling very alone.

Then, BOOM! A simulated indoor THUNDERSTORM rolls over the tiki bar. Ellie sits in the facsimile of paradise -- alone.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE**INT. UTF - COLE'S OFFICE - DAY**

Cole SCREAMS into the phone:

COLE

We've filed twenty THOUSAND subpoenas for records on Nathan Rs. It was the goddamned MAIL BOY! Find the agent who missed that, and you bust him down to SOG! Or better yet, I'll fly out there and do it myself! And then I'll shit on your desk, dickwad!

Cole SLAMS the phone down. Hopping mad. He grabs a STRESS BALL from his desk and starts pumping it. Grabs a second one and pumps that one with the other hand. As he paces madly.

COLE

Get in here NOW! That phone rings in 15 minutes and Ackerman asks for what we got for Reno. Concrete and operational. Go!

FITZ

Okay, how about this. We know he likes codes. We embed a code into the printed article, lure him into a convers--

COLE

CONCRETE and OPERATIONAL! Not esoteric intellectual bullshit. You're thinking too high-level. He's a serial killer. Sure he has ten PhDs and a 500 IQ, fine. But he's a serial killer first. And what do serial killers want?

TABBY

Trophies! Serial rapists collect panties, serial killers collect ears or fingers or whatever.

FITZ

But a serial bomber...? It's different, it's at a distance.

(CONTINUED)

COLE

He'll want a copy of the paper.
Right? His Manifesto gets
published, damned if he isn't
buying that newspaper.

Fitz sits up. Cole's right.

FITZ

And he'll want to see other people
buying it, reading it. He'll want
to see his ideas getting out there.

TABBY

But what does that get us? He can
buy the New York Times at any
newsstand in the country, any time
he wants. It's not actionable.

Everyone's quiet. Thinking. Fitz looks at Cole's NY Times
sitting on his desk. Something occurs to him.

FITZ

The Post.

COLE

What?

FITZ

The Washington Post. Whenever I
finish the Times crossword I go get
the Post, but it's a pain in the
ass because they only sell it at
one newsstand in the city.

TABBY

So if we publish in The Post...

FITZ

...and we know he's in the Bay
Area...

They all look at each other. Figuring something out.
They're ahead of us for the moment, but that's okay -- we can
tell they're all thinking something exciting. And HUGE.

TABBY

(disbelief)

Dude, that's like a hundred and
fifty SOG, minimum.

Cole grabs the phone. Dials. With a grin:

(CONTINUED)

COLE

Not my problem. Fitz has to sell
it.

(into the phone)

It's Cole.

INTERCUT WITH

INT. DOJ - SECRETARY'S OFFICE

ACKERMAN

What do you got?

COLE

I've got Fitz and Tabby in the
room. Fitz, go ahead.

FITZ

(hurried)

We know he's Bay Area. And we
think that if we publish, he will
buy the paper as a trophy. The
Washington Post is sold at only one
newsstand in the Bay Area. So if
we publish exclusively in the Post,
he'll have to come there and buy
it. So on publication day, I'm
proposing...

Fitz looks at Cole and Tabby. They indicate "go ahead." But
they're both glad it's him pitching this, not them. Fitz
takes a deep breath...

FITZ

...we follow and identify every
single person who buys a Washington
Post in San Francisco.

There's silence on the other end of the line. Fitz looks at
Cole who's almost amused by the tension.

ACKERMAN

Is this a joke? You realize the
scale-- We'd have to drain the
entire COUNTRY of surveillance
teams.

FITZ

(shaken)

Yes sir.

Ackerman sees JANET RENO head for the conference room.

(CONTINUED)

ACKERMAN

That's insane. Jesus H.--

CLICK! Fitz, Cole, and Tabby look at each other.

FITZ

I guess that's a no?

Cole grins, puts his feet on the desk. High on the gamble.

COLE

That was fun. See, brass tacks.
Grab that door, will you?

He starts bouncing a tennis ball off his office wall. Fitz and Tabby stagger out of the office, close the door after them. They don't know if they've failed, or hit a home run.

INT. DOJ - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Handshakes and hellos as Ackerman and Freeh greet Reno and her two STAFF MEMBERS. Ackerman's mind is reeling, but outwardly he's holding it together.

RENO

Director Freeh. S.A.C. Ackerman.
Hello. Thank you both for waiting.

FREEH

Madam Attorney General, thank you
for having us.

Everyone sits at the end of the conference table. The Secretary is offering coffee and water.

Ackerman takes out Cole's dark green folder, opens it. The Secretary approaches him.

SECRETARY

Can I get you a coffee? Or some
wudder?

Ackerman catches the dialect. Double-takes.

ACKERMAN

"Wudder." You from Philly?

SECRETARY

(embarrassed)
Originally, yeah.

(CONTINUED)

Ackerman stares at her. Thrown. Suddenly re-thinking the value of Fitz's points. He politely indicates he'd like water. She pours, leaves.

RENO

So the Unabomber's publishing deadline is approaching. The Times and the Post are on my call sheet. What am I going to tell them?

FREEH

Ackerman?

Ackerman opens Cole's Green Folder. The first thing he sees is the NATHAN R LETTER in its bag. He feels a visceral wave of disgust at its utter offensive *wrongness*. To his own surprise, he takes out Fitz's Manila Folder. Opens it. He can't believe he's saying this, but:

ACKERMAN

The FBI's recommendation... is... that we publish the Manifesto. In full.

Freeh's eyes practically pop out of his head. Reno's staffers don't hide their surprise. Reno takes this in. Not what she was expecting. But Ackerman builds his confidence, selling it like a pro.

ACKERMAN

We publish exclusively in the Washington Post as part of a two-pronged approach. First prong, "forensic linguistics." If we make the Manifesto widely accessible, I believe there is an excellent chance that a friend or colleague of the Unabomber will recognize his unique language and ideology, and will turn him in.

(beat)

Second, there is a high likelihood that the Unabomber lives in the Bay Area. The Washington Post is sold at only one location in San Francisco. This unique advantage will allow us to stage a large surveillance operation to follow, question, and identify every individual who buys a copy of The Post on the day of publication. While an operation of this size and scale is...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ACKERMAN (CONT'D)

unprecedented, we believe it to be
a singular opportunity to lure the
Unabomber into the light.

Ackerman sits back. Takes a sip of water. He's SWEATING now
and waiting for a sign. The silence is deafening.

Finally Reno clears her throat. All eyes are on her.

RENO

That's an unusual strategy. What
about precedent? Where do we stand
once all this is done?

ACKERMAN

There's no easy answer to that. I
do believe we can say with
conviction that publication is less
to assuage the demands of the
attacker than to use his plan
against him. So it establishes a
precedent of vigilance more than
weakness on the part of law
enforcement.

RENO

If you catch him.

ACKERMAN

(gulp)

Yes, ma'am. If we catch him.

RENO

Big "if." Director Freeh, is FBI
HQ on board with this?

FREEH

("Fuck you, Ackerman")

Don's taken it upon himself to
propose launching one of the
largest surveillance operations in
FBI history. We're happy to let
Don take the lead and be the face
of this operation.

Reno clocks his meaning. The velvet switchblade. Turns to
Ackerman.

RENO

Don, you're nearing retirement,
aren't you? You're aware of the
implications of this coming undone.
You sure you want to do this?

(CONTINUED)

She's speaking to him person-to-person. Truly concerned. Ackerman appreciates this. But sticks to his guns:

ACKERMAN

What I don't want is to look at any more pictures of ripped up bodies. And I don't want to pawn this case off on the guy coming up behind me. This is our best move. It's risky, and we've got others, but this one's the best. And I'd rather respect the man I see in the mirror than the man I see on TV.

This lands on both Freeh and Reno. They're affected by his honesty and poise. This is what heroism looks like.

Reno considers this for a long moment. Clenches her jaw. Doing the math for herself. Decision time. Then:

RENO

Okay. Let's do it. You'll have the full support of DOJ.

Everyone stands and shakes hands. Reno pulls Ackerman aside for a private word as everyone files out.

RENO

I admire your moral courage on this Don. It's not always rewarded. In your case, I certainly hope it is.

INT. DOJ - ELEVATOR - DAY

An uncomfortable wait for the elevator doors to close.

FREEH

If you'd pulled that at any other point in your career, I'd have fired you in this elevator.

ACKERMAN

Yes, Sir. I know.

FREEH

You feel that up there? Sword of Damocles. Right over you now.

Ackerman can't help but look up. At the blade of responsibility dangling over him -- as the doors DING closed.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR**INT. UTF - SECURITY ENTRANCE - DAY**

CLOSE ON ELLIE, wide eyed, as she takes in her environment --

HUNDREDS OF AGENTS are flooding past her, streaming into the UTF. Passing through the metal detectors, wands, and X-Rays, ID checks. The SURVEILLANCE ("SOG") TEAMS being brought in for Fitz's big sting operation.

Ellie is pushed to the wall by the stampede of agents. Waiting there for someone to come get her. A GUARD gives her a sympathetic look. Holds up a finger -- "one more minute."

Then Ellie sees Fitz coming up to the security desk. She waves to him, tries to get through the crush of people.

But Fitz doesn't see her. Instead, Fitz signs the logbook, hands a visitor lanyard to NATALIE -- who, we now see, was waiting just past the metal detectors.

Fitz and Natalie disappear into the UTF. Ellie watches them go, confused and annoyed. Pushed back against the wall by the crowd. A moment later, Tabby taps her shoulder.

TABBY

Mrs. Fitzgerald? Great to finally meet you! Welcome to the Greatest Shitshow on Earth, pardon my French.

INT. UTF - CAFETERIA

Ellie and Tabby enter the big cafeteria and find Fitz and Natalie hunched over Fitz's Manifesto, debating some point.

Fitz looks up. Meets Ellie's eyes. For a moment he looks like he's been caught doing something wrong, but he recovers.

FITZ

El!

He runs over and kisses her on the cheek.

FITZ

Did Tabby find you okay? Insane here today. This is Natalie Schilling, she's been helping with the linguistics.

Ellie and Natalie shake each other's hands.

(CONTINUED)

NATALIE

Great to meet you. I've been hearing about you.

ELLIE

Have you. Hm.

The deep unspoken subtext goes right over Fitz's head.

FITZ

Well. Let's eat!

INT. HOOVER BUILDING - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Ackerman watches as the conference room is transformed into a PRESS BRIEFING ROOM. Aides set up a podium, microphones, and FBI seal. Members of the PRESS hover, steno pads ready.

Director Freeh sits in the back, holding court. Surrounded by a group of top law-enforcement officials.

Freeh meets Ackerman's gaze across the room. Holds it.

Ackerman turns away.

INT. UTF - CAFETERIA

Ellie, Fitz, Natalie and Tabby eat lunch. Like everyone else in the cafeteria, they're eyeing the TVs, waiting for the press conference to air. The room is PACKED.

ELLIE

Is it always this crowded in here?

Fitz is glued to the TV. He doesn't respond.

Natalie, trying to be polite, indicates her visitor badge.

NATALIE

I've never been here during the day, really.

She doesn't realize how that sounds until Ellie cocks her head. A moment of silence, then:

ELLIE

What do you do here, exactly?

NATALIE

Oh, I just, uh, consulted once or twice on the linguistic side. I'm a Grad Student in Linguistics at Stanford. And, uh, what do you do?

(CONTINUED)

ELLIE

I'm a school nurse. Slash
administrator. And we have two
boys.

NATALIE

That's wonderful.

Strained smiles both ways. Fitz is still laser-focused on
the TV. Tabby cuts in and answers the original question:

TABBY

We're at double capacity today. We
got two hundred extra agents here
to be deputized for tomorrow's op.

FITZ

He's on!

ON THE TV, Ackerman steps to the podium flanked by Genelli,
some other agents, and a Media Coordinator. The whole cafe
REACTS. Fitz goes and turns up the volume.

ACKERMAN (ON THE T.V.)

*Good afternoon. My name's Don
Ackerman, Special Agent in Charge
of the FBI San Francisco and I'm
here with leaders of the Unabom
Task Force. The Attorney General
Janet Reno and FBI director Louis
J. Freeh today said that they
recommend the publication of the
Unabomber Manifesto.*

Fitz and Natalie smile at each other, proud. Ellie clocks
it.

ACKERMAN (ON THE T.V.)

*Concern for public safety
ultimately led to this decision.*

Fitz takes Ellie's hand -- even Ellie's getting swept up in
the excitement. All eyes are glued to the TV.

ACKERMAN (ON THE T.V.)

*The Unabom Task Force continues to
encourage the cooperation of the
American public by calling our
hotline. The FBI can now be found
on the World Wide Web at our brand
new website, FBI.gov. We will
upload the manuscript there for
anyone to access.*

(CONTINUED)

TABBY

(to Fitz)

Phones are gonna be slammed.

ACKERMAN (ON THE T.V.)

We ask that the public pay particular attention to the philosophies in the Manifesto, and to try to recall if they know...

Fitz and Natalie realize something -- then both start saying exactly what Ackerman is saying, word for word.

ACKERMAN/FITZ/NATALIE

(All at the same time:)

"...any individuals who have held similar philosophies, or who have written in a similar linguistic style, whether in college or even high school."

FITZ & NATALIE

(at the same time:)

We told him to say that!

Fitz lets go of Ellie's hand and high-fives Natalie. They're both bubbling over with excitement.

ACKERMAN (ON THE T.V.)

...With the help of the American public, we believe the Unabomber will have nowhere to hide. Now I'll take your questions.

Everyone's congratulating each other, back-slapping, energized -- but in the center of it all is Ellie. Still stung that Fitz let go of her hand.

INT. UTF - BULLPEN - LATER

Cole takes position at the head of the room as hundreds of agents assemble to be deputized en masse.

Fitz has walked Ellie to the door to say goodbye. Agents bump them as they stream past. The energy of the room and the operation is mounting around them. Pulling them apart.

FITZ

I'll call later, okay? You should try to get down to Fisherman's Wharf. You'd enjoy it.

(CONTINUED)

ELLIE

Hey, I meant to tell you, I got a call from school this morning. They've got head lice going around like crazy. They were asking if I could come in. Begging, actually. I told them no. Because I kind of feel like you need me here, right?

The gravitational pull of the room is tugging on Fitz. He's eager to get rid of Ellie but is trying hard not to show it.

FITZ

I'll be fine if you need to go. Don't worry about me. If you want to go back, I mean, that's okay.

ELLIE

Okay. But... I don't want to go.

Another wave of people bumps past them. Fitz doesn't know the right answer here.

FITZ

Great. Then don't. You're gonna have lots of fun here. Listen El, I gotta run.

ELLIE

I'm gonna stay.

FITZ

Sure okay, but just, I'm not gonna be around...

ELLIE

No I know.

FITZ

Okay. I'll see you.

She nods. He starts to walk away, sucked into the maelstrom-- but glances back, and sees her starting to well up.

FITZ

What's wrong?

ELLIE

(dissembling)

I'm fine. Go go go.

Fitz knows he shouldn't go. He turns away anyway, disappears into the sea of agents.

(CONTINUED)

Ellie watches from the doorway as the County Sheriff takes the podium. The entire UTF turns its back on Ellie as they raise their right hands to be deputized. A glimpse of Fitz, and then he's out of sight.

Ellie turns and walks out. And it feels like the end.

INT./EXT. MULTIPLE LOCATIONS - NIGHT/DAWN

MONTAGE -- PRINTING AND DISTRIBUTING THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON POST DISCLAIMER (V.O.)
We, the editors of The Washington Post, have faced the demand of a person known as the Unabomber that we publish a manuscript of about 35,000 words.

-- THE PRESSES run - the Manifesto is printed over and over with all the automated mechanization it opposes. It's TIED, STACKED and LOADED onto DISTRIBUTION TRUCKS.

WASHINGTON POST DISCLAIMER (V.O.)
If we failed to do so, the author threatened to send a bomb to an unspecified destination "with intent to kill."

-- A NEWS TRUCK drives through the pre-dawn streets of San Francisco, past early joggers and late drunks. It's that brief window of tranquility before the city awakens.

WASHINGTON POST DISCLAIMER (V.O.)
The newspaper has consulted closely with law enforcement on the issue of whether to publish under the threat of violence.

-- The bundles are tossed in front of HAROLD'S NEWSSTAND. The CLERK cuts the plastic tie, allowing the constricted bundle to exhale before it's displayed on shelves.

WASHINGTON POST DISCLAIMER (V.O.)
Both the Attorney General and the director of the FBI have now recommended that we print this document for public safety reasons, and we have agreed to do so.

-- The CAMERA RISES and down below we see HAROLD'S NEWSSTAND on the edge of the CITY SQUARE PROMENADE. One by one, UNMARKED VEHICLES pull into position around the square...

(CONTINUED)

We rise higher, and see, atop the buildings surrounding the square, ROOFTOP SURVEILLANCE TEAMS move into position... The gears of this huge FBI operation already turning...

And now, we see the whole city spread out below as the sun rises and San Francisco starts to come awake.

A very long day has officially begun.

END OF ACT FOUR

James Fitzgerald

ACT FIVE**EXT. DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO - CITY SQUARE PROMENADE - DAWN**

7 AM. Sunrise. ISOLATED SHOTS progressively reveal a full picture of the SURVEILLANCE OPERATION as this sequence unfolds in the partially-enclosed city square.

-- CLOSE ON A FOLDED WASHINGTON POST rhythmically bobbing to the tempo of the SOUNDTRACK as it's carried down the street.

WIDEN TO THE BANK CLERK carrying it, on his way to work.

RACK FOCUS TO REVEAL a disguised T-REX BENSON (his call sign will be FRISCO 1) at the other end of the square, tailing the Bank Clerk.

-- ANOTHER PAPER, carried by a BUSINESSMAN.

-- BINOCULARS adjust to follow him. WE CUT TO THEIR POV, looking down from above.

BINOCULARS 1

Go Frisco 4. UNSUB 4 heading North. Hispanic, blue dress shirt, red tie, glasses, black briefcase.

FRISCO 4 exits a nondescript OFFICE BUILDING at the edge of the square and parallels the Businessman, following him out onto the street...

FRISCO 4

(into his sleeve)

This is Frisco 4, I have the eye on UNSUB 4.

...and out of our field of view.

BINOCULARS 1

Copy that Frisco 4.

-- WE HEAR A CAMERA CLICK and a photo of a female YOGA INSTRUCTOR buying the Washington Post at HAROLD'S NEWSSTAND fills frame.

A DIFFERENT PAIR OF BINOCULARS picks her up.

BINOCULARS 2

Go L.A. 1. UNSUB 5 moving west. Female, caucasian, brown hair, purple tights, carrying a... rolled up rug.

(CONTINUED)

WIDEN OUT to reveal a rooftop surveillance position where two agents have a bird's eye view of the whole square.

-- L.A. 1 exits the same nondescript office building, turns a corner and spots the Yoga Instructor.

L.A. 1
(into his sleeve)
This is L.A. 1. I have the eye on
UNSUB 5.

-- A DIFFERENT CAMERA CLICKS and we see a photo of the LONG LINE OF PEOPLE waiting to buy the paper at Harold's Newsstand. This is a big event. The camera ZOOMS IN and grabs individual pictures of everyone in line.

WIDEN to reveal another surveillance team watching from a different rooftop.

WE PAN ACROSS ROOFTOPS to reveal A THIRD ROOFTOP SURVEILLANCE TEAM focused on Harold's.

ROOFTOP TEAM MEMBER
Go Frisco 5. UNSUB 14 moving
North. Male, Caucasian...

-- A HAND writes the description down on a notepad -- "male, Caucasian..." **Where is this?**

ROOFTOP TEAM MEMBER
...50s, brown leather jacket, salt
and pepper.

WIDEN TO REVEAL IT'S FITZ'S HAND AND WE ARE --

INT. THE STAGING AREA

It's a WHOLE FLOOR of an office building. ROWS OF DESKS WITH RADIOS and AGENTS writing down the entire operation on notepads.

Fitz and Cole are at the COMMAND CENTER, listening to the radio, writing notes and tracking Unsubs on a CORKBOARD.

A LINE OF 80 UNDERCOVER SURVEILLANCE AGENTS (junkies, everyday stiffs, joggers, business women) waits at the door where a HANDLER is deploying them one by one.

This operation is HUGE. The whole room works with military coordination to track and record every phase as it unfolds.

Fitz and Cole are at the eye of the storm. The nerve center. Orchestrating everything.

(CONTINUED)

INTERCUT WITH OTHER SURVEILLANCE SEQUENCE LOCATIONS

-- FRISCO 6 snaps a photo of a LICENSE PLATE as the BUSINESS MAN gets in his car.

FRISCO 6

This is Frisco 6, UNSUB 2 is getting into a Silver Lexus ES, License plate 3, Mike, Foxtrot, Delta, 639. I am breaking off surveillance.

-- Fitz writes down the LICENSE NUMBER on a CARD.

-- A MOBILE SURVEILLANCE AGENT in a Honda Civic responds:

SACRAMENTO 3

This is Sacramento 3, I have the eye on UNSUB 2.

She drives off.

-- Fitz hands the LICENSE NUMBER to a RESEARCHER, who punches it into the DMV database. The driver's license photo of the BUSINESS MAN slowly loads, along with all his info.

The Researcher gives Fitz a thumbs up. Fitz looks at the computer.

FITZ

Sacramento 3, Unsub 2 is Joel Fetters of Pacific Heights, should be all clear. Follow him to his destination and proceed with interview.

SACRAMENTO 3

Copy.

-- A SERIES OF SHOTS of the various agents following their Unidentified Subjects...

-- WE BRIEFLY NOTICE A STREET PUNK GIRL SMOKING A CIGARETTE.

BINOCULARS 1

Unsub 81 50-55 year old Male Caucasian, beard, corduroy jacket, aviator sunglasses, headed North through the square.

Fitz ZEROS IN on this description -- looks back out the window and spots the SUSPICIOUS UNSUB.

(CONTINUED)

An older man, unkempt hair, beard, hat, grungy corduroy blazer and aviator sunglasses. We can't see his face fully -- but we see enough to think, Could this be Ted Kaczynski?

FITZ
(into the radio)
Frisco 67 I want you on Unsub 81.

-- We see that STREET PUNK GIRL -- and only now do we realize: it's TABBY. Smoking a cigarette, looking like a different person. She's awesome at this.

TABBY
Copy that. I have the eye on Unsub 81.

Tabby tails him to the BART at the far corner of the square.

TABBY
(into her sleeve)
Getting onto the BART.

FITZ
Copy Frisco 67.

She descends the stairs.

-- Fitz is making DESCRIPTION CARDS for all the Unsubs he likes for the profile. He puts them ON THE BOARD. We can see that a couple of them have been labeled "CLEARED."

INT. THE BART

-- Tabby's on the subway, watching the Suspicious Unsub from one train car over. He's deeply focused on the Manifesto. She's bobbing to her Walkman, searching for characteristics that may fit the profile. She still can't see his face.

INT. BANK

-- T-Rex tails the Bank Clerk into a large bank downtown.

INT. YOGA STUDIO

-- L.A. 1 tails the Yoga Instructor into a Yoga Studio where students are gathering.

INTERCUT WITH OTHER SURVEILLANCE SEQUENCE LOCATIONS

-- More and more people buy the paper and agents follow them all.

-- Fitz and Cole track everything from the nerve center.

(CONTINUED)

COLE

Rotate back ASAP once you clear
your Unsubs people, we're moving,
we're moving. T-Rex what's your
status?

T-REX BENSON (V.O.)

Unsub 4 has entered First National
Bank. Proceeding with interview.

EXT. BUS STATION

Tabby watches the Suspicious Unsub board a bus.

TABBY

Following Unsub 81 onto the Route
30 bus. Gonna lose radio contact.

Fitz adds "Route 30 Bus" to the description on the card for
the Suspicious Unsub.

FITZ

Copy that, watch your six.

-- T-Rex greets the Bank Clerk.

T-REX BENSON

Hello Sir. I'm Special Agent
Benson with the FBI, mind if I ask
you a few questions?

BANK CLERK

(shifting nervously)
Sure. Go ahead.

T-REX BENSON

The FBI thinks you may have some
information for us. Is there
anything you can think of...

INTERCUT WITH ANOTHER AGENT FINISHING THE SAME QUESTION:

L.A. 1

(to the Yoga Instructor)
...Is there anything you can think
of that we might like to know?

This is the standard FBI approach -- leave the question
vague, let the subject fill in the blanks. And, as we'll
see, it's surprisingly effective.

(CONTINUED)

BANK CLERK
(scared, guilty)
Is this about my offshore account?

YOGA INSTRUCTOR
Is this about Jury Duty?
(totally lying)
Cuz I never got the summons.

-- WE SEE A SERIES OF ANSWERS from multiple Unsubs:

UNSUB 1
(looking guilty as hell)
Is this about Stephanie...

UNSUB 2
He had like ten pounds of ecstasy.

UNSUB 1
...because I've never cheated
before.

UNSUB 3
My accountant said that I could
write off dog food...

BANK CLERK
Everything's on the books -- it's
all above board.

T-REX BENSON
Okay, is there anything else that
might be of interest to us? Like,
why'd you buy the Post today?

YOGA INSTRUCTOR
I buy it every day.

BANK CLERK
For the Unabomber thing.

UNSUB 1
For the Michael Dirda book reviews.

UNSUB 2
For the Unabom Manifesto, duh.

-- In the staging area WE HEAR AGENTS CLEAR THEIR UNSUBS on
the radio. Fitz is worried and Cole is growing frustrated.
As CLEARANCES roll in...

(CONTINUED)

MULTIPLE AGENTS

(on the radio)

"Subject doesn't fit the profile."

"Subject appears to have unrelated
mental health issues." "Subject was
cooperative and checked out."

"Subject checked out."

-- Almost all of the DESCRIPTION CARDS on Fitz's board have
been cleared, but Tabby's Suspicious Unsub 81 is still open.
Fitz zeroes in on that card, his hope pinned to it.

FITZ

Check in, Frisco 67.

Only STATIC in response. Out of range.

EXT. SAN RAFAEL - DAY

The Suspicious Unsub gets off the bus. Tabby follows.

He takes off his corduroy jacket and Tabby sees he's wearing
a faded Chicago Cubs tee. CHICAGO -- that fits the profile!

He heads up a wooded road. Tabby follows a few beats later.

EXT. SUSPICIOUS UNSUB'S HOUSE - DAY

Tabby approaches on foot.

TABBY

(into her radio)

This is Frisco 67 do you copy?

Static.

She can make out a HOUSE in the trees. She notices a SMALL
CABIN a hundred yards away that's part of the property. Some
of our audience may be wondering... is that THE cabin???

She knocks on the door of the house. No answer. She peeks
in through the window.

TABBY

Hello?!

Nothing suspicious. She goes to a SIDE DOOR. It's open...

INT. SUSPICIOUS UNSUB'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

A TRIGGER WIRE has been tied to the inside doorknob.

EXT. SUSPICIOUS UNSUB'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Tabby reaches out and pushes the door open -- we're certain there's going to be an explosion...

But -- NOTHING HAPPENS. Except:

INT. UNKNOWN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A LIGHTBULB FLASHES in response to the trigger wire.

INT. SUSPICIOUS UNSUB'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Tabby enters, looks around -- TEST TUBES, WIRES, BATTERIES, FERTILIZER. Her eyes widen -- she could be in trouble. She spots an OLD SMITH CORONA TYPEWRITER on a table -- *OH, FUCK.*

SUSPICIOUS UNSUB (O.S.)
(voice coming from outside)
Hey!!

Tabby whips around, frantically searching for the voice. She spots him PEERING THROUGH THE LIVING ROOM WINDOW, partially obscured through foliage.

He's just looking at her. We can't make out his face. It's creepy as hell. For a moment they stare at each other, size each other up. He starts to back away. Tabby PULLS HER GUN.

TABBY
Don't move!

Then -- HE RUNS! She BOLTS out the side door --

EXT. SUSPICIOUS UNSUB'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Tabby TEARS around the corner of the house -- SPRINTS AFTER HIM --

She chases him INTO THE WOODS. He's running for the CABIN!

AS FAST AS HE CAN the Suspicious Unsub DOUSES THE CABIN WITH GASOLINE, tosses the gas can inside. Tabby RUNS toward him--

TABBY
FBI! Freeze! Down on the ground!
Do it now!

The Unsub STRIKES A MATCH -- TOSSES IT -- and the Cabin BURSTS INTO FLAMES.

He drops to his knees with his hands in the air and for the first time we can see -- IT'S NOT TED.

(CONTINUED)

TABBY

Keep your hands up and move away
from the fire, you idiot!

The Unsub crawls away, smacking out flames on his shoes.

Tabby smells something. She moves to look through the cabin door -- FIFTY MARIJUANA PLANTS are engulfed in flames!

TABBY

(reacting to the weed)
Jesus Christ! Are you frigging
KIDDING ME?!?

She's freaked, pissed, relieved, all at once. The Unsub just looks at her dumbly.

INT. THE STAGING AREA

The operation is wrapping up. None of the leads are panning out. All of Fitz's DESCRIPTION CARDS have been cleared except for Tabby's Unsub. Fitz waits by the phone, biting his nails. Cole looks at him like, "this isn't good."

The phone rings, Fitz grabs it.

FITZ

Yeah?

INTERCUT WITH TABBY IN THE SUSPICIOUS UNSUB'S HOUSE

The Suspicious Unsub is handcuffed on the couch.

TABBY

It's not him. It's just a guy
growing weed. I'm gonna need
backup. And the Fire Department.

Fitz deflates, looks at Cole and shakes his head. SHIT. FAILURE. Cole, grim, picks up the phone and calls Ackerman.

INT. HOOVER BUILDING - RADIO COMMUNICATIONS ROOM

Ackerman gets the news. His heart sinks. He can feel the judging eyes of Freeh and his Colleagues. His worst-case scenario just came true. It's over.

INT. THE STAGING AREA - LATER

Everyone has gone home. It's just Fitz. Alone amid the wreckage.

END ACT FIVE

ACT SIX**INT. UTF - DOCUMENT ANALYSIS ROOM**

Fitz stares at the phone. A feeling of deep DREAD hangs heavy over the room.

Tabby gives him a sympathetic look. But can't think of anything reassuring to say.

Then -- THE PHONE RINGS. Fitz stares at it for a few rings. Then answers.

FITZ
Document analysis.

INT. UTF - BULLPEN

Fitz walks past his coworkers. Everyone avoids eye contact. Dead man walking.

INT. UTF - ACKERMAN'S OFFICE

Fitz knocks on the open door. Inside, Ackerman and Cole sit behind the desk. Grim-faced. They stare at him for a moment. Then Ackerman nods to the empty chair.

Fitz enters. Sits.

Ackerman and Cole both stare at Fitz in unmasked contempt. Something they scraped off their shoe. A long silence. Then Fitz jumps in to defuse it:

FITZ
Sir, I know this seems like a setback. But this is actually a huge win. The Manifesto is out there, people are reading it. There's an excellent chance someone will recognize ideas, idiolect--

Cold silence. Ackerman just stares at him. Expressionless.

COLE
Don't bullshit the Chief. You've taken this investigation BACKWARDS. We now have a tipline getting POUNDED by every ex-wife, every pissed-off sister-in-law, every brother with a grudge, in the whole COUNTRY. All garbage.

(CONTINUED)

Cole starts pulling documents out of the box. Throwing them into Fitz's lap.

COLE

We got birthday cards. Grocery lists. A book report on "My Side of the Mountain." Ah, here's a great one. Recognize the spelling?

He tosses Fitz a drawing of a penis ejaculating swastikas.

COLE

The fax is spitting this stuff out as fast as we can reload the paper. Let alone the MAIL. The nation's trashcan is getting dumped on our laps. And it's all worthless.

Fitz looks up at Ackerman. Ackerman's still staring at him in grave silence. Then, completely cold and official:

ACKERMAN

Your TDY with UNABOM Task Force is terminated. You can turn in your clearance on your way out. If we need your expertise again, we'll be sure to contact you.

FITZ

Sir-- There's still so much work to be done with document analysis--

Ackerman turns back to Fitz.

ACKERMAN

You want the truth, Fitz? I feel like I can tell you this frankly. You're going to have a long career in the FBI. But it's not because you're talented, or special. You've been telling yourself your whole life that your problems are because you're an artist, because you're a special snowflake. But you're not. You're just another asshole. And you're going home now, so we can bring in some other asshole to replace you. And nobody will even know the difference. Goodbye.

And Ackerman turns away. Fitz stands there like an asshole.

INT. FITZ'S EFFICIENCY APARTMENT - NIGHT

Fitz comes home to an empty apartment. He looks for Ellie. She isn't there. He sees a note on the coffee table: "Heading home. Call me when you can. Love, El."

Fitz, irate, picks up the phone, dials. His home answering machine picks up. He grinds his teeth. Seething.

FITZ

Hey. I guess you left, which is, I mean, great. Just friggin great. Thanks for the support. You're getting your wish. I'm fired. So I'll be home just like you wanted. Don't worry, I'll get a cab.

He slams the phone, opens the fridge to grab a beer. Double-takes.

Ellie has completely STOCKED THE FRIDGE with snacks, fruit, cheese, sandwiches, milk. Fitz stares at it for a moment. Then SLAMS it shut. Overwhelmed by guilt and shame.

INT. ACKERMAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ackerman looks at the infamous copy of the Post. Stewing. Beth's not having it, points to the date on the paper.

BETH

This is one day. One. You've got thousands of days under your belt and each one of them did something good for somebody. And everybody knows it. The only person that cares about this day, is you.

Ackerman nods, ashamed to speak, but he knows she's right. He processes her words, then changes his demeanor.

ACKERMAN

What are we doing for dinner?

BETH

I made a beef stew.

Ackerman takes one last look at the Post, then tosses it in the trash.

ACKERMAN

Freeze it. Let's go out.

She smiles. Goes to get ready. Life goes on.

INT. FITZGERALD HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Ellie watches out the window as Fitz pulls up in a cab. She doesn't look pleased to see him. Just -- worried.

INT. FITZGERALD HOME - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

With intense focus, Fitz and Davey move the Warhammer board from the dining room table to the floor in Davey's room.

TIME CUT:

Everyone's eating dinner. Fitz is miming interest as the family talks -- he's got a thousand-yard stare.

INT. FITZGERALD HOUSE - FITZ'S BEDROOM - LATER

Fitz lays in bed next to Ellie, who's sleeping. He stares at the ceiling. A strange BUZZING sound keeping him awake.

He follows the sound to the window. Looks out. It's a STREETLAMP. He squints at it. The electric BUZZ, the fake bright orange light.

Fitz stares at it a long moment. Then TAKES SOMETHING OUT OF A DRAWER -- we don't see what it is. He puts it in his robe pocket.

EXT. FITZGERALD HOME - NIGHT

He crosses the porch, the lawn, and stands underneath the STREET LAMP, staring up at it angrily. He pulls HIS GUN from his robe pocket, aims it at the buzzing, flickering lamp.

He holds his aim, angry, his finger tightening on the trigger. But then he catches himself. Sense kicking back in. He lowers the weapon. Surprised at himself.

CUT WIDE to Fitz, utterly alone on this dark suburban street.

He looks at his darkened house. Overwhelmed by a sense of disassociation, displacement. Like he's looking at the house of a stranger.

Fighting his anger, his alienation.

And for a long, long moment, he just stands there. Gun in hand. Under the flickering light.

BLACK.

EXT. PARIS - THE LATIN QUARTER - DAY

A WOMAN IN YELLOW sits at a Hotel Cafe with a Pernod on ice, a raspberry tart, and the Herald Tribune.

She watches people walk past. Gazes at the Eiffel Tower in the distance. Pretending she's in a movie.

She turns a page of the Tribune -- something catches her eye.

INT. FRENCH HOTEL LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

The Woman walks up to the CONCIERGE. Mimes TYPING.

WOMAN IN YELLOW
(heavy American accent)
Excuse-moi Monsieur, est-ce qu'il-y-
a un ordinateur ici dans l'hotel?

INT. FRENCH HOTEL - BUSINESS CENTER - MOMENTS LATER

The Woman sits down at a computer. She waits for the dial-up to log on. Modem SCREEECH. It takes forever. Then she opens Netscape and types in the long web address from the newspaper. It ends in "FBI.gov."

She clicks on the Manifesto and starts reading, a look of concern growing as she skips through the paragraphs.

INT. FRENCH HOTEL - GUEST ROOM - LATER

The Woman is on the phone. A MAN is on the other end.

WOMAN IN YELLOW
Hey it's me.

MAN (V.O.)
Hey sweetheart, how's it going?

The Woman adjusts nervously.

WOMAN IN YELLOW
Good. It's going good. I don't
want to upset you I just... have
you looked at the Unabomber
Manifesto yet?

EXT. THE MAN'S HOUSE - SIMULTANEOUS - MORNING

WE SEE THE MAN THROUGH HIS FRONT WINDOW, standing in his kitchen drinking coffee. There's a tense pause.

(CONTINUED)

MAN

No.

The Woman seems to know she's asking a lot...

WOMAN IN YELLOW

I think you should. I think you
should go get the Washington Post
and read it.

The man shifts at this unwelcome suggestion. He knows where
this is going and doesn't like it. Their conversation
continues, but we don't hear the rest because we:

CUT WIDE to reveal the exterior of the Man's House.

A MAILBOX in the corner of our frame.

The name on the mailbox reads:

"KACZYNSKI"

END EPISODE

James Fitzgerald