

ACT ONE

B

FADE IN:

INT. NEWSROOM - LATER THAT DAY - DAY/1  
(Chuck, Marsh)

CHUCK ENTERS TO FIND AN EMPTY NEWSROOM. HE CHECKS HIS WATCH.

CHUCK

Two hours early. I should be trying  
to find the Monkey House right now...

MARSH ENTERS FROM HIS OFFICE, WEARING BLACK AND YELLOW FACE  
PAINT, A "STEELERS" JERSEY AND YELLOW KNEE SOCKS.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

"Oh look, the Monkey House."

MARSH

Oh, hey, Chuck. Didn't hear you come  
in, I was sanding my athletic cup.

(MORE)

BACK TO YOU - "CHUCK THE PATRIOT" - by C. E. Downes 6.

MARSH (CONT'D)

Thing doesn't pop into place like it used to. Good thing you're here, though, you can help me hang up this "Go Steelers" banner.

HE PICKS UP THE BANNER FROM A NEARBY DESK AND UNFURLS IT.

CHUCK

Oh, that's right, they're in the A.F.C. Championship this Sunday. I guess a few years in L.A. is enough to make you forget all things football.

MARSH

That's very true. My cousin Philip moved to L.A. Used to do play-by-play for Steelers Radio; now he's in a cult that worships bicycle wheels. Anyway, can you help me hang this banner?

CHUCK

Sorry. Wait for an intern to show up and help you. Or better yet, wait for two interns, then get yourself a beer.

CHUCK EXITS TO HIS OFFICE.

RESET TO:

INT. CHUCK AND KELLY'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

CHUCK SITS AT HIS DESK.

CHUCK

Damn. It's so early no news has even happened yet.

AFTER A BEAT, HE TAKES OUT HIS CELL PHONE AND DIALS.

KELLY (V.O.)

(ON PHONE) What is it, Chuck?

CHUCK

Sorry, Kelly, I just wanted to apologize for letting myself in and scaring you this morning.

KELLY (V.O.)

Oh, that's fine. I should've called you as soon as I got sick.

CHUCK

(CONFUSED) You mean when Gracie got sick...

KELLY (V.O.)

That's right. When Gracie got sick.

GRACIE (V.O.)

(SARCASTIC) Nice save, Mom.

CHUCK

Oh, is that Gracie? Put her on.

TRIPP (V.O.)

Who are you talking to, Kel?

CHUCK

Who the hell was that?!

AN ELEPHANT TRUMPETS IN THE BACKGROUND. CHUCK QUICKLY HANGS UP AND TOSSES HIS CELL ACROSS THE DESK. HE'S IN SHOCK AS WE:

FADE OUT.

C

FADE IN:

INT. TELEVISION STUDIO - ANCHOR DESK - DAY - DAY/1  
(Chuck, Kelly, Montana, Ryan, Marsh)

CHUCK AND KELLY DELIVER THE NEWS.

CHUCK

(TO CAMERA) ...which will be only the  
latest in a series of bus fare hikes.  
We break now to check the weather with  
Montana Diaz Herrera. Montana.

RESET TO:

INT. TELEVISION STUDIO - WEATHER MAP - CONTINUOUS

MONTANA DELIVERS THE WEATHER.

MONTANA

Well, I hope you can afford the new  
bus fare, Chuck, because we're looking  
at some major snow for this weekend  
when our Steelers host the Patriots  
for the A.F.C. CHAMPIONSHIP! Wooooo!

BACK TO YOU - "CHUCK THE PATRIOT" - by C. E. Downes 9.

SHE DOES AN ALMOST-TOO-PROFESSIONAL CHEERLEADING ROUTINE.

RESET TO:

INT. ANCHOR DESK - CONTINUOUS

KELLY WATCHES WITH CONTEMPT, AS CHUCK TURNS TO HER.

CHUCK

All right, Kelly. Who was that, this afternoon? Did someone else take you to the zoo? I have a right to know!

KELLY

(WATCHING MONTANA) Damn. I couldn't even do that when I was sixteen.

CHUCK

Kelly! Who is he?!

KELLY

He's no one. He's a friend.

CHUCK

A... "friend?"

KELLY

So? So what? I'm allowed to have "friends!" I should've cancelled the zoo trip when we...you know...

CHUCK

Got "friendly?"

KELLY

(SIGHS) Gracie still wanted to go, so Tripp took us. Happy?

BACK TO YOU - "CHUCK THE PATRIOT" - by C. E. Downes 10.

CHUCK

"Tripp?" Really? The man literally has "mistake" written all over him.

KELLY

He's a nice, successful, funny, smart man. He's a psychiatrist.

RYAN (O.S.)

Seven...Six...

CHUCK

So? I'm on TV. When was the last time you saw a psychiatrist on TV?

RYAN (O.S.)

Three...Two...

KELLY

(TO CAMERA) Welcome back, Pittsburgh. We turn now to Marsh McGinley with the latest in sports.

RESET TO:

INT. TELEVISION STUDIO - SPORTS DESK - CONTINUOUS

MARSH DELIVERS THE SPORTS, STILL IN HIS STEELERS COSTUME.

MARSH

Thanks, Kelly. Although I'd happily give up my segment to see a little more of Montana's cheerleading. Takes me back to my cheer-- my football days. But the big news: This weekend's A.F.C. Championship Game.

(MORE)

BACK TO YOU - "CHUCK THE PATRIOT" - by C. E. Downes 11.

MARSH (CONT'D)

Patriots at Steelers. Steelers!  
Steelers! Rah, rah! Rah, rah, etc.  
Come on, Montana! No? I tried. Of  
course by now this weekend's game is  
news to no one, as every red-blooded  
Pittsburghian already has a front row  
couch reserved to watch our Steelers  
kick some Patriot ass! Kelly.

RESET TO:

INT. ANCHOR DESK - CONTINUOUS

KELLY AND CHUCK FACE THE CAMERA.

KELLY

Thanks, Marsh. That's it for tonight,  
but join us tomorrow, when I interview  
Dr. Tripp White about his best-selling  
self-help book.

CHUCK REACTS, AS KELLY GRINS SMUGLY.

CHUCK

(FLUSTERED) Uh...yes. Goodnight,  
Pittsburgh. Be sure to turn to WURG  
this weekend to watch our Patriots  
kick some Steeler ass. Goodnight.

ANGLE ON: RYAN

RYAN'S JAW DROPS FOR A MOMENT, BEFORE HE COMPOSES HIMSELF.

RYAN

Uh...oh, uh...and we're out!

ANGLE ON: CHUCK, KELLY AND MARSH

MARSH SITS MOTIONLESS. KELLY'S JAW IS AGAPE. CHUCK TURNS TO HER, PREOCCUPIED.

CHUCK

I guess I'm supposed to feel jealous  
that he's a best-selling author?

KELLY

(IN SHOCK) Chuck, do you realize what  
you just said?

CHUCK

What? "Best-selling author?"

RYAN RUSHES IN.

RYAN

(PANICKED) Chuck, do you realize what  
you just said?!

CHUCK

How did you even hear that?

RYAN

All of Pittsburgh heard it! Oh, I  
knew it! I'm gonna be the youngest  
news director ever to get lynched!

CHUCK

For what! What did I say that's so  
friggin' terrible?

MARSH QUICKLY TURNS HIS CHAIR.

MARSH

Nobody repeat it! We're all screwed!

BACK TO YOU - "CHUCK THE PATRIOT" - by C. E. Downes 13.

CHUCK

Oh, come on! Is this a practical joke  
or something? What did I say?!

CHUCK STEWS IN CONFUSION AS WE:

FADE OUT.