

TERMS

Season One Episode 2

11/20/2016

created by

Lindsay Graham

written by

Michael Federico and Robert McCollum

TERMS SEASON 1 EPISODE 2 - 11/20/2016

1.2.1 COLD OPEN - INT. TV STUDIO

1.2.1

DAVIS FRYE

Tonight on Mandatory Measures with Davis Frye, President-Elect Charles Dunwalke sits down for his first interview since election night. I'm Davis Frye, and you're watching 'Mandatory Measures.'

MUSIC: "Mandatory Measures" THEME

DAVIS FRYE (CONT'D)

President Elect Dunwalke, thank you for joining us tonight.

CHARLES DUNWALKE

Hey, ity's my pleasure.

DAVIS FRYE

First, you were the surprise candidate. Then, you were the surprise nominee for the Republican Party. Now, for a large portion of Americans, you are the surprise President-Elect. So, I guess my first question is, are YOU surprised you're here?

CHARLES DUNWALKE

Oh, not at all. We knew we'd win from Day One.

DAVIS FRYE

Let's talk about your "win." Obviously, the electoral math broke your way, but the popular vote went to your democratic opponent Senator Cameron Carlisle. Nearly one million more Americans voted for the Senator than for you. What concerns might you have taking office without a mandate from the American people?

CHARLES DUNWALKE

Oh, look. The President of the United States, simply by virtue of being the President of the United States, has a mandate.

DAVIS FRYE

It doesn't concern you that--

CHARLES DUNWALKE

You want a mandate, Davis? Look at the down-ballot elections. Look at the number of men and women sweeping into Congress who support me. There's your mandate. The American people not only want me in office, they want me to do what I promised I would do without obstruction.

DAVIS FRYE

Mr. Dunwalke, a number of those promises remain incredibly controversial. There are--

CHARLES DUNWALKE

Look, I'm gonna stop you right there. Every promise I made, every policy I laid out, every platform I campaigned on, comes back to one thing: America First. America First. That's it. The fact we've reached a point in this nation where the idea of putting America first is controversial, is ludicrous to me. Absolutely ludicrous.

1.2.2 INT. WHITE HOUSE BASEMENT

1.2.2

SOUND: Feet echoing down a concrete hallway

RON CLARKSON

Where the hell are you taking me, Zach?

ZACH

I don't understand the question, Mr. Clarkson.

RON CLARKSON

Where are we?

ZACH

You're at lunch, sir. You never left the restaurant. We never talked. You never came here. The President is waiting inside. Enjoy your day.

MUSIC: Intro

1.2.3 INT. THE CAGE

1.2.3

SOUND: Door to the CAGE opening/closing.

RON CLARKSON

I thought I had been in every room in this building. Where the hell are we? This place is creepy.

PIERCE

The few Secret Service agents that know about it call it "The Cage." Which it is. A Faraday cage, and EMP generator. You left your phone at home, right? The sparks and smoke can be rather spectacular.

RON CLARKSON

I think Zach just threatened me.

PIERCE

Aw, don't be silly. Zach likes you.

RON CLARKSON

What is going on, Oliver?

SOUND: The sound of the Cage kicks on.

PIERCE

So long as that machine is going no one can record anything that is said in this room.

RON CLARKSON

Not the machine - why am I here?

PIERCE

Charles Dunwalke cannot be the next President. And you and I are going to make sure of that.

1.2.4 INT. TV STUDIO

1.2.4

CHARLES DUNWALKE

Alright, you're wrong. 'America First' doesn't mean turning friends into enemies. 'America First' just means demanding the respect that we deserve. That's it.

(MORE)

CHARLES DUNWALKE (CONT'D)
And we've lost that respect
because of the policies and actions
of the current Republican
administration and the Democratic
administration that came before.

DAVIS FRYE
You think other nations,
including our allies, have lost
respect for America because of
the Pierce administration?

CHARLES DUNWALKE
Look, I believe Oliver Pierce is a
good man. I believe he's a smart
man. What do they say about
him? "He's playing chess when
everybody else is playing
checkers." Davis, do you know what
it takes to be great at chess?
(beat)
I'm asking, do you know?

DAVIS FRYE
Uh--

CHARLES DUNWALKE
It takes a willingness to
sacrifice your own pieces in order
to eventually - eventually - win
the game.
I'm not willing to sacrifice my
own. I'm not willing to sacrifice
American lives, or American jobs,
or our American future. Yeah,
Oliver Pierce is a good, smart
man. Like all the other good, smart
men who appeased their enemies and
let them take their pawns. Who
allowed terrorists and the
countries that support them to
take thousands of American lives,
because the 'long-term strategy'
allowed for it.
Now that's not me. Not a game I
have any interest in playing.

DAVIS FRYE
Then, how do you approach--

CHARLES DUNWALKE
You ever study Syria? Huh? Probably
not, right? Maybe you can locate it
on a map, maybe you can't.
(MORE)

CHARLES DUNWALKE (CONT'D)

Doesn't matter. I have studied Syria and the Syrian people, and the people of countries just like it. So has President Pierce and Congress and Homeland Security. We know what countries the threats will come from before they even know it themselves. If we know this - if we know where the threat will be - it's our duty to eliminate that threat before it ever has the chance to arise. It's our duty to wipe it out. Am I wrong?

1.2.5 INT. THE CAGE

1.2.5

RON CLARKSON

What are you talking about?! Where would you even start?!

PIERCE

'There's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip.'

RON CLARKSON

Wonderful, Oliver. Now is the perfect time for your folksy bullshit.

PIERCE

The Founders thought of this. They put things in place to stop men like Dunwalke from taking power. Ben Franklin talked about--

RON CLARKSON

They meant outside threats, Oliver! What you're talking about is treason!

PIERCE

No. I'm talking about exploiting certain procedures that have been laid out in--

RON CLARKSON

We don't all have your gift for semantics. The American people will see it as treason. World leaders will see it as treason. You know why? Because it's fucking treason!

PIERCE
Are you finished?

RON CLARKSON
Why would you do this? You're the man who finally brought compromise back to the federal government. You're the man who worked tirelessly--

PIERCE
And I cannot allow Charles Dunwalke to destroy all of that. I can't hand the government over to a man who's only goal is to dismantle that government.

RON CLARKSON
Jesus Christ what am I doing here?!

PIERCE
Everyone always said you were the cool one, Ron. "Clarkson never breaks under pressure. That's why Pierce needs him. He'll keep you calm in crisis."

RON CLARKSON
Yeah, you and I know that's not true.

PIERCE
Yes, we do. So, I need you to follow my lead on this, stay calm, and give me a chance to talk.

1.2.6 INT. TV STUDIO

1.2.6

DAVIS FRYE
Mr. Dunwalke, I'm going to read a statement you made, and if you would, I'd like you to clarify it for me and our viewers at home.

CHARLES DUNWALKE
Sure.

DAVIS FRYE

At a campaign stop in Ohio, you said, "The American Judiciary is like the guy who points a gun at you and tells you to give him all your money. Then, after he takes your money, he shoots you anyway."

CHARLES DUNWALKE

(Laughs.)

I actually forgot about that one. That's pretty good.

DAVIS FRYE

What did you mean by it?

CHARLES DUNWALKE

Look, I grew up outside of Chicago. Chicago is an incredible city. Best sports town you'll ever see. Best food. Jazz. Art. All of it. Unfortunately, on the flip side, Chicago and corruption go hand-in-hand. Capone, Dillinger, all the old organized crime, sure, but then you have the Daley family that decided Democrats should get to rule like kings. The list goes on and on. Point is, I know what corruption looks like. Seen it my whole life. But nothing I've seen compares to the corruption of the American court system. There are judges pretending - and not well mind you - pretending to be objective. Judges who have taken it upon themselves to dictate social policy, to determine how we should raise our children, who have decided that their will - not the will of the American people - is all that matters.

DAVIS FRYE

I bring up the Judiciary, because you'll be responsible for filling at least two vacancies on the United States Supreme Court. Some think it could even be three seats, if you were to win re-election. Tell me, what does a Dunwalke Supreme Court look like?

CHARLES DUNWALKE

A person who looks at states like Kansas, who hold their judges accountable for their rulings, who say that their state legislature has the right to remove judges who go too far afield.

A person who looks at that and says, "They got it right," that person is a Dunwalke Supreme Court Justice.

The only person worthy to sit on the highest court in the land, is a person who understands that the court itself represents the greatest abuse of power in our government.

1.2.7 INT. THE CAGE

1.2.7

RON CLARKSON

If you were this committed, why didn't you just campaign against him? Endorse the Democrat?

PIERCE

Because by the time it was clear what had to happen, it was too late. It would have solidified his "outsider" status and helped him win. And it would have made it difficult for me to do what I need to do now.

RON CLARKSON

Let it go, just help get him out in four years.

PIERCE

Four years? That man will destroy the country on Day One. He believes compromise is weakness and winning is more important than doing what's right. Millions of lives mean nothing to him. You've been around long enough to know what this man is, Ron. What he really is. I'm not paranoid. I'm not crazy. I am trying to save the country.

(BEAT)

RON CLARKSON
So why not just kill him?

PIERCE
This isn't a vendetta. We're not
the mob.

RON CLARKSON
I know.
(Beat)
So, where do you start? Try to find
something to get him impeached?

PIERCE
That still puts him in office, and
it could take years. We have to
stop him before he's ever sworn in.

RON CLARKSON
Sorry, Oliver, but that happens in
72 days.

PIERCE
We go after the Electoral College.

RON CLARKSON
Schiller's old bill? Even if he
resurrected it, it'd never get
through in time.

PIERCE
We just need it out there. It
starts the conversation and gets
people questioning the College's
legitimacy.

RON CLARKSON
People have been bitching about the
Electoral College for 200 years;
it's done nothing. Why would now be
any different?

PIERCE
Because we're going to add fuel to
the fire.

DAVIS FRYE

That may be the case for you, but when many people - politicians and the public - hear some of your ideas on foreign policy, ideas that essentially cast long-time allies in adversarial roles, they--

CHARLES DUNWALKE

That's not the case, not the case at all. Places like Germany. Japan. They're not adversaries to me, they're allies. In the way that my son is an ally. At the same time, when my son graduated from college, I made it clear he was on his own. It was time for him to be a man. Germany. Japan. They're the kids who turn 27 and are still living in the apartment above Mommy and Daddy's garage. It's time for them to stand on their own two feet. It's time for them to help defend themselves.

DAVIS FRYE

Let me play you a clip from a joint statement made by 6 members of the German Bundestag. This speech was delivered in Berlin, today. This happened just today.

'...his proposals are dangerous to Germany. Dangerous to the European Union. Dangerous to his own people. And, dangerous to the world. If Mr. Dunwalke were to take action on any of these policies in regard to Germany or the EU, it is our belief that the entire Union must strongly consider sanctions against the United States of America.'

Today, sir. You have European allies making unprecedented statements. Suggesting sanctions against the United States based on your proposals and your rhetoric.

CHARLES DUNWALKE

Ok. Look. Let me tell you about Germany. We know everything that they're doing.

(MORE)

CHARLES DUNWALKE (CONT'D)

We always know everything that they're doing, which is good, because we all know what happens when Germany is left to its own devices. This bravado - let's see how brave they are when they no longer have the United States military to back them up. Let's hear the tough-talk when they're no longer free to trade with the United States, or when we decide to reclaim the digital frontier as our own. Let's see how hard-nosed Germany is - or France or England, for that matter - when we shut down their access to the Internet.

DAVIS FRYE

That's not even.. I'm sorry, Sir, but this all sounds incredibly adversarial.

1.2.9 INT. THE CAGE

1.2.9

RON CLARKSON

Norvad? Oliver, Norvad would destroy Victor. You're willing to sacrifice your own Vice President?

PIERCE

I am.

RON CLARKSON

Well what if he finds out? How can-

PIERCE

Victor knows everything, and he knows what needs to be done. He is, above all things, a patriot.

RON CLARKSON

I'm sure that will be a great comfort to him when he's in prison.

PIERCE

Let me worry about Victor.

RON CLARKSON

Who else knows?

PIERCE

No one.

RON CLARKSON

Gwen?

PIERCE

No. She can't know. Ever. I believe everything I intend to do is right. As you said, others may see it differently. There could be a noose at the end of this path, and I have to keep Gwen safe.

RON CLARKSON

She'll find out. She's smarter than both of us.

PIERCE

My wife isn't the issue right now. There's no turning back once this starts, and I need to know if you're in.

RON CLARKSON

Honest and unwavering. The first city council campaign I ran for you. "Honest and unwavering. That's Oliver Pierce." I could have gone with arrogant and bullheaded, but honest and unwavering played better.

PIERCE

I need an answer, Ron.

RON CLARKSON

Honest, unwavering, and a man I trust completely.

What do you want me to do first, Mr. President?

1.2.10 INT. TV STUDIO

1.2.10

[Conclusion of Dunwalke interview]

DAVIS FRYE

We are just about out of time. I want to thank President-elect Charles Dunwalke again for sitting down and talking with us, and now as is always the case on Mandatory Measures, we give our guest the last word. Mr. Dunwalke, the floor is yours.

CHARLES DUNWALKE

Thanks for having me, Davis.

Elections last a long time. Honestly, I feel like I campaigned for three years, and I bet it felt like a decade for you all. Brutal. What the American people are subjected to over the course of an election. Just brutal. It gets hard to know what's true and what's just another talking point.

My opponent Senator Carlisle, you might remember, was real fond of saying, "the enemy is at the gate." "The enemy is at the gate! The enemy is at the gate!" People love that stuff. It's got urgency. The ring of truth. "The enemy is at the gate!" Nonsense. The enemy is not at the gate, my friends.

The enemy lives within the walls of this city. Look, the enemy might be your co-worker. Your neighbor. Your child's teacher. The enemy might pray five times a day so you don't notice him funneling money to terrorists. The enemy might look like a beggar, so you feel sorry for him, all the while he's collecting welfare for a disability he doesn't really have.

The enemy might be the family that says they want nothing more than to live the American Dream when in fact, they got no right to be here.

(MORE)

CHARLES DUNWALKE (CONT'D)

The enemy is the person you see at a party or maybe she's someone you knew in high school and just keep up with on Facebook - she's the one telling you to shut up and just let everyone do what they want.

"Marriage is for everybody!

Abortion is a right! Marijuana cures cancer! Let people do what they want!" But this is the same woman who would scratch your eyes out for merely suggesting that you have the right to own a gun. The enemy is the couple next door who look down on you for loving your country too much. Who mock you for going to church. Who shout at you because you dare to raise your child in the way you see fit.

The enemy is not at the gates. The enemy is all around you. It's hard to hear, I know. And it's hard to make the right decisions when facing all of this chaos. But it's okay. It's going to be okay. Because, I'm willing to make those hard decisions.