

SAWGRASS WARS

"Board of Directors"

Episode 17 - Season One

Written by

Kurt Weichert

Based on the Sawgrass Wars novella series
by Kurt Weichert

Kurt Weichert
Website: weichertmedia.com
Email: kurtw423@gmail.com
Phone: (239) 810-9356

FADE IN:

EXT. MIAMI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

A chartered GULFSTREAM touches down beneath the Florida sun.

INT. GULFSTREAM - MOVING - DAY

Florida rises outside the window -- pale concrete, distant palms, a flat green horizon.

JOHNNY MALONE watches it return. A financial statement rests on his lap.

Across the aisle, TOMMY SCULLY stares at his hands: scarred knuckles, thick fingers, and a pale line across his left palm where a cable once tore through it.

Pilot's hands that have carried men, weapons, medicine, narcotics, and secrets across borders.

They tremble now.

Johnny closes the statement.

JOHNNY

You've flown into places where
people were shooting at you.

SCULLY

They usually missed.

JOHNNY

You landed a crippled C-123 on a
dirt road in Laos.

SCULLY

Had more road than I had airplane.

JOHNNY

You flew weapons into Nicaragua
while half the Soviet Union was
looking for you.

Scully looks at him.

SCULLY

Are you trying to help?

JOHNNY

No.

SCULLY

Good. Because you're doing a
terrible job.

Johnny slips the statement into a leather portfolio.

The plane taxis toward a private terminal.

SCULLY (CONT'D)

Does she know?

JOHNNY

No.

SCULLY

Bubs?

JOHNNY

No.

SCULLY

Millie?

JOHNNY

No one knows except Bones, Tiana,
and the people who helped keep you
hidden.

Scully nods slowly.

SCULLY

That's the part I keep coming back
to.

JOHNNY

What part?

SCULLY

I'm about to walk into that church
and tell my daughter half the
people she trusted lied to her.

JOHNNY

They didn't lie. Bubs and Millie
believed you were dead.

SCULLY

But you knew.

JOHNNY

Yes.

SCULLY
Sanchez knew.

JOHNNY
Yes.

SCULLY
And she spent twelve years
believing I'd been murdered.

Johnny holds his gaze.

JOHNNY
You were supposed to be murdered.
We changed the ending.

Scully turns back toward the window.

SCULLY
I should've come home.

JOHNNY
You would've gotten her killed.

SCULLY
That's what I told myself.

JOHNNY
That's what happened.

SCULLY
There's a difference.

Johnny has no answer.

EXT. PRIVATE AIR TERMINAL - DAY

The Gulfstream stops beside a black sedan.

TIANA ROSS waits at the bottom of the stairs, a telephone to one ear and a legal pad against her chest. Behind her, TWO ARMORED VEHICLES idle near the terminal.

Tiana ends her call as the cabin door opens.

Johnny descends first.

Tiana spots the portfolio beneath his arm.

TIANA
How bad is it?

Johnny stops on the final step.

JOHNNY

Bad?

TIANA

You've been gone almost a week, you refused to discuss numbers over the telephone, and three Swiss attorneys have contacted my firm demanding confidentiality agreements that make the nuclear launch codes look accessible.

JOHNNY

That sounds encouraging.

TIANA

How much did you bring back?

JOHNNY

Enough.

TIANA

Enough for what?

Johnny looks toward the armored vehicles.

JOHNNY

Whatever comes next.

Tiana follows his gaze.

TIANA

You hired armored trucks?

JOHNNY

The bank hired them.

TIANA

For documents?

Johnny smiles.

JOHNNY

Some of the documents are negotiable.

Tiana stares at him.

TIANA

How much, Johnny?

JOHNNY

You'll find out tomorrow night.

TIANA

That is not an answer.

JOHNNY

It is the only one you're getting
on an airport runway.

Scully descends from the aircraft.

Beneath the Florida sun, his resurrection seems impossible
even to Tiana.

TIANA

You still want to do this today?

SCULLY

If I wait another night, I may get
back on that airplane.

Johnny hands the portfolio to Tiana.

JOHNNY

Take this directly to the firm. Put
it in the main vault. Nobody opens
it without me present.

TIANA

Not even the senior partners?

JOHNNY

Especially not the senior partners.

TIANA

They have spent the last three days
preparing the conference room,
revising their partnership
structure, and pretending they
always respected my judgment.

JOHNNY

Money encourages personal growth.

Tiana looks at the armored vehicles again.

TIANA

I'm beginning to understand how
much personal growth we're
discussing.

Johnny opens the sedan's rear door for Scully.

JOHNNY

Tomorrow night.

Tiana holds up the portfolio.

TIANA

If this gets me killed, I'm billing
your estate.

JOHNNY

Get in line.

EXT. SOUTH FLORIDA HIGHWAY - DAY

The black sedan leaves Miami behind.

INT. BLACK SEDAN - MOVING - DAY

Scully watches condominiums become citrus stands, drainage
canals, and open sawgrass.

The closer they get to Dawber County, the quieter he becomes.

They pass the rusted sign of a gas station Scully remembers.
The building itself is gone.

The sedan crosses an old canal bridge.

EXT. CANAL - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

A pickup sinks into black water. A younger Johnny and Scully
drag TIMMY DAWBER through the passenger window.

Timmy laughs as they save his life.

BACK TO SCENE

Scully watches the bridge disappear behind them.

SCULLY

Does Billy know the truth about
Timmy?

JOHNNY

Not all of it.

SCULLY

Does he know Bo killed him?

JOHNNY

We don't know that.

SCULLY

You believe it.

JOHNNY

I believe Bo was capable of it.

SCULLY

So did Sanchez.

JOHNNY

We never proved it.

Scully's jaw tightens.

SCULLY

Rose always blamed me.

JOHNNY

You did talk Timmy into joining the Army.

SCULLY

I didn't talk him into anything.
Timmy saw me in uniform and decided
the war couldn't happen without
him.

JOHNNY

You could've stopped him.

SCULLY

Nobody could stop Timmy before
Vietnam.

JOHNNY

And after?

Scully looks out the window.

SCULLY

After Vietnam, nobody knew how.

EXT. GETHSEMANE BAPTIST CHURCH - LATE AFTERNOON

A white church stands beyond cypress trees. New lumber is stacked near one wall. A ladder leans against the roof. Several shattered windows have been replaced.

BILLY DAWBER stands on the ladder, driving a nail into flashing.

PASTOR BUBS sorts shingles below him. MILLIE and EILEEN SCULLY carry folding chairs from the fellowship hall.

The black sedan pulls onto the dirt shoulder beneath the trees.

INT. BLACK SEDAN - CONTINUOUS

Scully remains in the passenger seat.

Outside, Billy looks toward the car.

Then Eileen does.

She shields her eyes. She can see Johnny behind the wheel, but not the man beside him.

Scully's breathing changes.

Johnny waits.

SCULLY
You coming?

JOHNNY
This part belongs to you.

Scully reaches for the door handle. Stops. Puts his hand back in his lap.

SCULLY
What if she hates me?

JOHNNY
She probably will.

Scully stares at him.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)
For a little while.

SCULLY
That's your encouragement?

JOHNNY
It's the best I have.

Scully opens the door.

EXT. GETHSEMANE BAPTIST CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Scully steps into the road and stands beside the sedan.

Eileen stops.

One of the folding chairs slips from her hands and strikes the ground.

Millie turns.

MILLIE

Honey?

Eileen does not answer.

Scully crosses the road slowly.

Eileen simply stands there.

Bubs follows her gaze. The shingles fall from his hands.

BUBS

Dear God.

Billy climbs down from the ladder.

Scully stops at the edge of the churchyard.

Eileen studies the silver in his hair, the scar along his jaw, the slight favoring of his right leg.

Beneath the years, she finds the face from the only photograph she owns.

EILEEN

Daddy?

Scully's eyes fill.

SCULLY

I'm sorry.

Eileen crosses the yard.

For one instant, Scully braces as though she might strike him.

She crashes into him instead.

He wraps both arms around her and staggers beneath the force. Eileen buries her face against his chest, holding him with the desperate strength of a child who waited too long.

Scully closes his eyes.

SCULLY (CONT'D)

My baby.

Eileen sobs. Scully presses his face into her hair.

SCULLY (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. I'm so sorry.

Bubs removes his glasses and wipes his eyes. Millie covers her mouth. Billy stands beside the ladder, unable to look away.

Eileen finally pulls back. She touches Scully's face, testing whether he is real.

EILEEN
We buried you.

SCULLY
I know.

EILEEN
There wasn't a body.

SCULLY
No.

EILEEN
They said there was nothing left to bring home.

SCULLY
That was the idea.

Confusion replaces wonder.

EILEEN
The idea?

Scully looks toward the road.

Johnny remains behind the wheel.

Eileen follows his gaze. Her expression hardens.

EILEEN (CONT'D)
He knew.

SCULLY
Yes.

EILEEN
All these years?

SCULLY
Yes.

She steps away from her father.

EILEEN
Pastor Bubs?

Bubs shakes his head.

BUBS

I swear before God, child, I
believed your father was dead.

EILEEN

Millie?

MILLIE

We both did. We would never have
kept this from you.

Eileen looks back at Scully.

EILEEN

Then tell me.

Scully glances at Billy. He sees Timmy in the boy's posture,
the shape of his face, the quiet way he absorbs pain.

SCULLY

Some Del Vecchio men came to Dawber
County in 1991. There was a card
game. I lost money I didn't have.

Billy steps closer.

BILLY

My father was there.

SCULLY

Yes.

BILLY

What happened?

SCULLY

The men wanted payment. I kept
talking when I should've stopped.
One of them hit me.

BILLY

And my father killed them.

Scully does not soften it.

SCULLY

Your father saved my life. Then the
killing took hold of him, and I
couldn't pull him back.

Billy lowers his eyes.

SCULLY (CONT'D)

Afterward, the Del Vecchios sent men to Widow's Walk. Sanchez and I fought them. One tried to take Eileen.

Eileen stares at him.

EILEEN

I remember Alex.

SCULLY

He saved you.

EILEEN

He shot someone.

SCULLY

Yes.

INT. WIDOW'S WALK MARINA - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

A bloody hand reaches for a terrified CHILD EILEEN.

Gasoline spreads across the floor.

CHILD ALEX cries as he grips a pistol too large for him.

BACK TO SCENE

SCULLY

Johnny and Sanchez knew the Del Vecchios would keep coming. They made it look as if I had been killed. They got me out of the country.

EILEEN

And you never came back.

SCULLY

If they learned I was alive, they would've used you to reach me.

EILEEN

I was a child.

SCULLY

That's why I stayed away.

EILEEN

I grew up.

SCULLY

I know.

EILEEN

How?

Scully cannot answer.

Eileen understands.

EILEEN (CONT'D)

You watched me.

SCULLY

When I could.

EILEEN

You knew where I was?

SCULLY

I knew Bubs and Millie had taken
you in. Johnny made sure I received
news.

EILEEN

Photographs?

SCULLY

A few.

EILEEN

Birthdays?

SCULLY

All of them.

EILEEN

But you never called.

SCULLY

No.

EILEEN

Never wrote.

SCULLY

No.

Eileen SLAPS him.

The sound carries across the churchyard.

Billy steps forward. Bubs stops him with one hand.

Scully does not move. Eileen's hand trembles.

EILEEN

You let me believe you were dead.

SCULLY

I did.

EILEEN

I used to pray for one memory of
you that belonged to me. Not
something Bubs told me. Not an old
photograph. Something I could
remember for myself.

Scully's cheek reddens.

SCULLY

I don't deserve your forgiveness.

EILEEN

No, you don't.

SCULLY

But I came home to ask for it.

Her anger breaks beneath another wave of grief.

Eileen grabs him again. Scully holds her.

This time, neither speaks.

Billy looks across the road toward Johnny.

Johnny meets his eyes through the windshield.

INT. MACK DONNELLY'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

MACK DONNELLY awakens to the silhouette of a man sitting in
his bedroom.

Mack reaches beneath his pillow.

The man raises Mack's own pistol.

ANTON BELOV, charcoal suit and no tie, sits calmly in the
chair.

ANTON

You should choose a less
predictable hiding place.

Mack freezes.

Only the bathroom light is on. It casts a narrow yellow line across the floor.

An empty Jack Daniel's bottle sits on the nightstand beside a half-filled glass.

MACK
How did you get in?

ANTON
You gave us a key.

MACK
I changed the locks.

Anton smiles.

ANTON
You changed the lock.

Mack sits up carefully.

MACK
What do you want?

Anton places three photographs on the bed: Mack's DAUGHTER walking toward a parked car, seated near a restaurant window, then embracing BARBARA outside a townhouse.

Mack stares at them.

MACK (CONT'D)
If you touch either one of them --

ANTON
We have touched no one.

MACK
You followed my daughter.

ANTON
We verified that she remains healthy.

Mack lunges from the bed.

Anton pulls back the pistol's hammer.

Mack stops.

ANTON (CONT'D)
Sit.

Mack remains standing.

Anton points toward a chair near the window. Mack sits.

ANTON (CONT'D)
You told my associates Johnny
Malone possesses money in
Switzerland.

MACK
He does.

ANTON
You told them he could provide
access.

MACK
He can.

ANTON
You told them you could deliver
him.

MACK
I'm working on it.

Anton surveys the apartment: dirty clothes, open case files,
newspaper clippings about Johnny Malone taped beside maps of
South Florida.

ANTON
You have been working on Johnny
Malone for twelve years.

MACK
I found him.

ANTON
You found the ruins of his house.

MACK
He survived.

ANTON
Then where is he?

MACK
Dawber County.

ANTON
You are certain?

MACK
Yes.

ANTON

And the money?

Mack glances at the photographs.

Anton notices.

ANTON (CONT'D)

You made promises in Reno, Agent Donnelly. You borrowed money from men who do not accept disappointment. Then you borrowed more to repay the first debt. This was unwise.

MACK

I know how debt works.

ANTON

Do you?

Anton places Mack's pistol on the bed and stands.

ANTON (CONT'D)

We do not want your salary. We do not want your pension. We want Malone and the account information.

MACK

I'll get both.

ANTON

When?

MACK

Soon.

Anton picks up the photograph of Mack's daughter.

ANTON

Soon is not a date.

Mack watches the photograph.

MACK

Give me one week.

ANTON

You have three days.

MACK

I can't move that fast.

ANTON

Then your daughter may need to.

Mack rises.

Anton draws a second pistol and presses it against Mack's chest.

MACK

You kill a federal agent in Miami,
every agency in the country comes
after you.

ANTON

We are not threatening a federal
agent.

Anton withdraws the gun and slides it beneath his jacket.

ANTON (CONT'D)

We are reminding a father of his
responsibilities.

He heads toward the bedroom door.

ANTON (CONT'D)

Three days, Mr. Donnelly. Johnny
Malone alive. The Swiss access
information verified.

MACK

And if he won't give it to me?

Anton opens the door.

ANTON

You once killed Atticus Shelton.

Mack says nothing.

ANTON (CONT'D)

I am confident you will think of
something.

The apartment door closes.

Mack picks up the photograph of his daughter. His fingers
shake until the paper rattles.

Across the room, Johnny Malone smiles from a twelve-year-old
surveillance photograph.

Mack pours the last of the whiskey into his glass and drinks
without sitting down.

INT. GETHSEMANE BAPTIST CHURCH - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Fried chicken, collard greens, cornbread, and sweet tea cover the table.

Scully finishes a third plate while Eileen sits across from him, firing questions faster than he can answer.

Bubs watches with cautious gratitude. Millie refills Scully's glass.

Billy sits at the end of the table.

BILLY

Did my father ever talk about coming home?

Scully sets down his fork.

SCULLY

Every day.

BILLY

Then why did he come back the way he did?

SCULLY

Because some wars follow you.

BILLY

Is that what happened to him?

SCULLY

That's part of it.

BILLY

Did Uncle Bo try to help him?

Scully looks toward Bubs.

The pastor does not rescue him.

SCULLY

Bo tried to control him. That wasn't the same as helping.

Billy's face tightens.

BILLY

What happened the night my father died?

EILEEN

Billy --

BILLY
I want to know.

Scully holds the boy's gaze.

SCULLY
I wasn't there. Johnny and Sanchez
had already sent me south. By the
time I heard Timmy was dead,
everyone had accepted that he
killed himself.

BILLY
Everyone except you.

SCULLY
Except me. Johnny. Sanchez.

BILLY
Why?

SCULLY
Because Timmy survived Vietnam when
a lot of better men didn't. He
survived the Del Vecchios. He
survived himself for a long time.

BILLY
That doesn't mean he couldn't have
done it.

SCULLY
No.

BILLY
But you don't believe he did.

Scully chooses his words carefully.

SCULLY
I believe your father had become
dangerous to people who needed
obedience.

Billy looks down.

Beneath his shirt, the key to Bo's private ledger hangs from
a cord around his neck.

Scully notices. Says nothing.

A car horn sounds outside.

Scully wipes his mouth and stands.

Eileen stands with him.

EILEEN
You're leaving.

SCULLY
For a meeting.

EILEEN
What meeting?

SCULLY
Something Johnny is arranging for
tomorrow night. He wants to know
who still believes in him.

Eileen's eyes change.

EILEEN
Are you leaving again?

Scully hears everything beneath the question.

He places a brass key on the table.

EILEEN (CONT'D)
What is that?

SCULLY
The key to the room Johnny rented
for me in town.

EILEEN
You're staying in Dawber County?

SCULLY
I'll be back tonight.

Eileen closes her hand around the key.

EILEEN
You'd better be.

Scully kisses her forehead. He shakes Bubs's hand, then
embraces Millie.

SCULLY
You raised her better than I ever
could have.

Millie holds him tightly.

MILLIE

We raised her because you couldn't.
Don't confuse that with not needing
you.

SCULLY

I won't.

Scully stops beside Billy.

SCULLY (CONT'D)

You look like him.

BILLY

Everybody says that.

SCULLY

I mean before the war.

Billy swallows.

BILLY

No one remembers him that way
anymore.

SCULLY

I do.

EXT. GETHSEMANE BAPTIST CHURCH - NIGHT

Scully enters Johnny's waiting sedan.

INT. GETHSEMANE BAPTIST CHURCH - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Billy watches from the table until the sedan disappears down
the road.

INT. ROSE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

SUPER: 9:07 P.M.

Rose sits in her rocking chair with one swollen foot in
Rufus's lap.

Rufus rubs it while watching a baseball game with the volume
low.

The telephone rings in the kitchen.

INT. ROSE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Billy answers.

BILLY

Hello?

TIANA (PHONE)

Billy, it's Tiana Ross.

Billy lowers his voice.

BILLY

How did you get this number?

TIANA (PHONE)

I'm an attorney. Obtaining telephone numbers is among my less impressive talents.

BILLY

What do you want?

TIANA (PHONE)

Johnny is holding a meeting tomorrow night at my firm.

Billy looks toward the living room.

BILLY

About what?

TIANA (PHONE)

The future.

BILLY

Whose future?

TIANA (PHONE)

Apparently everyone's.

BILLY

I don't work for Johnny.

TIANA (PHONE)

He knows.

BILLY

Then why invite me?

TIANA (PHONE)

Because Alex and Bones asked for you. Johnny agreed.

Billy leans against the wall.

BILLY
Who else is coming?

TIANA (PHONE)
You'll see when you arrive.

BILLY
That sounds like something people
say before an ambush.

TIANA (PHONE)
Eight o'clock. I'll leave your name
with security.

BILLY
I didn't say I was coming.

TIANA (PHONE)
Are you?

Billy thinks of Alex, Bones, his father -- and the ledger
hidden beneath a loose floorboard in his bedroom.

BILLY
Yes.

TIANA (PHONE)
Then I'll see you tomorrow.

The line goes dead. Billy returns the receiver to its cradle.

INT. ROSE'S HOUSE - BO'S STUDY - SAME TIME

An extension telephone lowers silently onto its base.

Bo sits behind his father's old desk in the dark.

Rose appears in the doorway with an empty glass.

ROSE
You listening to that boy's
telephone calls now?

Bo looks up.

BO
I heard the phone.

ROSE
You lifted the extension.

BO
He's keeping things from me.

ROSE
So are you.

Bo leans back.

BO
Johnny Malone is holding a meeting
tomorrow night.

Rose's expression sours at the name.

ROSE
Billy going?

BO
Yes.

ROSE
You gonna stop him?

BO
No.

ROSE
Why not?

BO
Because I want to know who attends.

Rose studies her husband.

ROSE
You weren't invited.

Bo reaches for his hat.

BO
Neither was Johnny when he came
back to Dawber County.

Rose smiles despite herself.

ROSE
Since when has that stopped either
one of you?

Bo switches off the desk lamp.

BO
It never has.

INT. CHILDRESS LEGAL GROUP - CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

A polished mahogany table stretches beneath floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking Biscayne Bay.

Oil portraits of the firm's dead founders watch from one wall, their solemn faces already disapproving.

TIANA ROSS stands near the windows, reading the same financial statement for the third time.

JOHNNY MALONE sits at the head of the table, smoking beneath a NO SMOKING sign.

TOMMY SCULLY occupies the chair to his right. His dark suit fits perfectly. He still looks more comfortable in a cockpit.

Three SENIOR PARTNERS whisper at the far end of the room.

Tiana lowers the statement.

TIANA

One hundred twelve million, four
hundred seventeen thousand, eight
hundred six dollars.

Johnny exhales toward the ceiling.

JOHNNY

That was the balance this morning.

TIANA

This morning?

JOHNNY

The markets opened.

TIANA

You disappeared from Florida with
what everyone believed was five
million dollars.

JOHNNY

Everyone was wrong.

TIANA

How wrong?

Johnny smiles.

JOHNNY

The five million in the swamp
belonged to Dawber County. This
belonged to me and Sanchez.

Scully leans back.

SCULLY
Mostly Sanchez.

JOHNNY
I did the accounting.

SCULLY
And Sanchez did the surviving.

JOHNNY
He was good at it until he wasn't.

The humor leaves Johnny's voice.

Tiana puts the statement down.

TIANA
How much of this is clean?

JOHNNY
All of it.

TIANA
Johnny.

JOHNNY
It has been sitting in private
banks, trusts, holding companies,
and investment accounts for twelve
years. Taxes were paid wherever
taxes were required. The money has
been reviewed by attorneys who
charge more per hour than this
entire firm.

CHARLES PIERCE clears his throat.

PIERCE
Mr. Malone, that does not
necessarily answer Ms. Ross's
question.

Johnny looks down the table.

JOHNNY
And you are?

PIERCE
Charles Pierce.

JOHNNY
Your name is on the building?

PIERCE

Yes.

JOHNNY

Congratulations.

Pierce adjusts his tie.

PIERCE

Our firm is prepared to represent you in all legitimate financial, corporate, and estate matters. We cannot knowingly participate in laundering criminal proceeds or financing illegal ventures.

JOHNNY

Did you read the opinion letters attached to the back?

PIERCE

Yes.

JOHNNY

Did the Swiss government release the funds?

PIERCE

Yes.

JOHNNY

Did the Internal Revenue Service freeze them?

PIERCE

No.

JOHNNY

Did any court place a lien against them?

PIERCE

No.

JOHNNY

Then until someone with a badge tells us differently, the money is legitimate.

Pierce looks to Tiana. She offers no help.

Johnny crushes his cigarette into a water glass.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

I'm not asking this firm to commit crimes. I'm asking it to protect my investments, establish corporations, purchase property, negotiate contracts, and make certain nobody steals from me.

SCULLY

That last part may keep you people busy.

One partner forces a laugh. Pierce does not.

TIANA

Charles, we'll take it from here.

PIERCE

This is still my firm.

TIANA

Then you should be pleased that I brought it the largest private client in its history.

Pierce eyes Johnny's portfolio and its impossible financial statement.

PIERCE

Of course.

He gathers the other partners and heads for the door.

JOHNNY

Mr. Pierce?

Pierce stops.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

I'll need the room through midnight.

PIERCE

The building closes at ten.

JOHNNY

Not tonight.

PIERCE

I'll inform security.

The doors close.

TIANA

You have been back in my life for less than two weeks, and I am already giving orders to the man whose name is on my paycheck.

JOHNNY

Your name is on the building too.

TIANA

Not first.

JOHNNY

It will be.

Scully smiles.

SCULLY

I see why you hired her.

JOHNNY

She hired herself.

Tiana sits to Johnny's left.

TIANA

Before anyone arrives, we need rules.

Johnny looks over the empty chairs.

JOHNNY

That is why we're here.

TIANA

I mean rules for you. No threats. No bribing my partners. No ordering anyone killed. Nobody discusses murders, narcotics shipments, hidden bodies, or federal agents inside this office.

JOHNNY

What can we discuss?

TIANA

Lawful business.

JOHNNY

That should shorten the meeting.

The doors open.

ALEX GREGORY enters in the inexpensive suit he wore to Deon's funeral. Grief remains in his eyes, sharpened now by purpose. A leather folder is tucked beneath his arm.

VINNIE DEL VECCHIO follows in a tailored charcoal suit and open-collared silk shirt.

Scully shoots to his feet. His chair rolls backward.

Vinnie stops.

VINNIE

You're supposed to be dead.

SCULLY

So were some of your father's friends.

The room goes silent.

JOHNNY

Tommy.

SCULLY

I know whose boy he is.

VINNIE

I didn't kill anybody.

JOHNNY

Neither did your cousin Alex. That is the generation we are discussing tonight.

SCULLY

His father sent men after my daughter.

VINNIE

My father sent men after you. One of them panicked and grabbed the girl.

SCULLY

He put a gun against her head.

VINNIE

I was eight years old. I didn't approve the operation.

Scully comes around the table.

Alex steps between them.

ALEX

Vinnie helped me when Grandfather
tried to use Dad's false death
certificate against me.

SCULLY

That makes you even?

ALEX

No. It makes him my cousin.

Scully studies Alex -- and sees the terrified six-year-old
gripping a pistol after saving Eileen.

He returns to his chair.

SCULLY

The boy didn't choose his father.

JOHNNY

No. None of them did.

Vinnie sits but keeps watching Scully.

Alex places the folder on the table.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

What have you got?

ALEX

Sunstate Pain and Rehabilitation.

Tiana closes her eyes.

TIANA

Of course you do.

Alex distributes the proposal.

ALEX

We have a location, a physician,
and a management company. Florida
doctors can prescribe and dispense
medication directly from their
offices. The patient pays for the
appointment, the examination, and
the medication before leaving.

Johnny studies the pages.

JOHNNY

You're opening a medical clinic?

ALEX

A pain-management clinic.

JOHNNY

Are you in pain?

ALEX

Not personally.

JOHNNY

Then why do I have the feeling I'm about to be?

VINNIE

The business is legal.

JOHNNY

So are casinos. They still destroy people.

Alex points to the projections.

ALEX

The first location could produce three million dollars during its first year. After we prove the model, we expand to Miami, Fort Lauderdale, Tampa, and Orlando.

JOHNNY

Where did a seventeen-year-old get these projections?

ALEX

From pharmaceutical distribution reports, public medical-board records, prescription data, and the clinic owner we met in Broward.

JOHNNY

You met another clinic owner?

ALEX

I studied the competition.

SCULLY

He does sound like you.

Johnny ignores him.

JOHNNY

What happens when the state changes the law?

ALEX

We expand before it does.

JOHNNY

What happens when the federal government notices?

ALEX

We maintain patient records, diagnostic requirements, physician oversight, and separate corporate entities. The doctors make all medical decisions.

JOHNNY

And who makes all the money?

ALEX

We do.

Johnny leans back. Tiana studies Alex with growing concern.

TIANA

How many pills are you planning to dispense?

ALEX

As many as the doctors lawfully prescribe.

TIANA

That answer came too easily.

ALEX

My mother died because she could not afford the treatment she needed. My father died in prison two weeks before he was supposed to come home. I am finished waiting for good things to happen because I followed somebody else's rules.

Johnny studies him.

JOHNNY

Money doesn't fix either one of those things.

ALEX

No. But not having it made both worse.

Silence.

Johnny closes the folder.

JOHNNY
I'm not approving this tonight.

ALEX
I didn't ask your permission.

JOHNNY
You asked for my money.

ALEX
I asked for an investment.

JOHNNY
They are the same thing until you
earn enough to disagree with me.

Vinnie smiles. Alex does not.

Johnny pushes the folder toward Tiana.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)
She reviews the structure. Every
corporation. Every contract. Every
doctor.

TIANA
You cannot be serious.

JOHNNY
I am not investing until you tell
me what can be done legally.

TIANA
And if I tell you the entire
enterprise is designed to exploit a
dangerous gap in Florida law?

JOHNNY
Then Alex will have to improve his
proposal.

Alex sits back, dissatisfied but undefeated.

The doors swing open without a knock.

WILLIS CHILDRESS enters in a black suit over a burgundy
shirt. His right hand is bandaged. TWO MAROONS wait behind
him.

Tiana points toward the lobby.

TIANA
No armed escorts.

WILLIS
They ain't escorts. They're
associates.

TIANA
They can associate downstairs.

Willis dismisses them with a nod and enters alone.

He spots Scully.

WILLIS
Damn.

SCULLY
You must be Willis.

WILLIS
You must be the dead man.

SCULLY
I've been called worse.

They shake hands.

WILLIS
My brother talked about you.

SCULLY
Deon was a good man.

WILLIS
He was the best of us.

Willis takes a chair near the middle.

JOHNNY
Where is my son?

WILLIS
He's coming.

JOHNNY
With whom?

Willis smiles.

WILLIS
That's harder to answer.

JOHNNY
I gave Bones one instruction.

WILLIS
Yeah. He told me.

JOHNNY
And?

WILLIS
He didn't follow it.

Johnny looks to Scully.

SCULLY
He gets that from you.

The doors open again.

BONES MALONE enters laughing with SUDS. Both look badly out of place.

Bones wears a sports jacket over a black T-shirt. Suds wears a pale blue suit with sleeves above his wrists and a jacket straining across his shoulders.

TEDDY HENDERSON follows in expensive linen and dark glasses.

PHIL HENDERSON enters last.

Every conversation stops.

Phil wears a cream suit, black shirt, and a blood-red silk pocket square. He surveys the room like a monarch inspecting a provincial courthouse.

PHIL
This is the room?

Tiana rises.

TIANA
It is our largest conference room.

PHIL
I've seen vocal booths with more imagination.

TIANA
It's a law firm.

PHIL
That explains the absence of taste.

TEDDY

Dad.

PHIL

Don't "Dad" me. You said Johnny Malone was assembling the most important business meeting in Florida.

Johnny rises.

JOHNNY

You're Phil Henderson.

PHIL

And you're the accountant who destroyed an entire county.

JOHNNY

That description leaves out some details.

PHIL

The details are why I came.

They shake hands. Phil notices Scully.

PHIL (CONT'D)

You fly?

SCULLY

Anything with wings.

PHIL

I have a Gulfstream that keeps developing electrical problems.

SCULLY

Then you have a mechanic developing financial opportunities.

Phil stares at him. Scully stares back.

Phil smiles.

PHIL

I like him.

Bones spots Alex.

BONES

There he is.

Alex stands. The friends clasp hands and pull each other into a brief embrace.

Bones looks toward Vinnie.

BONES (CONT'D)
This the cousin?

ALEX
Yes.

BONES
The gangster?

VINNIE
You're Johnny Malone's son?

BONES
That wasn't an answer.

Teddy steps between them.

TEDDY
Can everyone try not to start a family war before we sit down?

WILLIS
That is the smartest thing he said all week.

Phil looks at his son.

PHIL
You've spent a week with these people?

TEDDY
Working.

PHIL
You don't know the meaning of the word.

TEDDY
I brought you the meeting.

PHIL
You brought me two men dressed like nightclub bouncers and a teenager who looks prepared to overturn the table.

Bones looks toward Johnny.

BONES

Who's he talking about?

JOHNNY

You.

BONES

Oh.

Suds lowers himself into a chair. The wood CREAKS.

Phil sits opposite Willis. Teddy takes the chair beside his father.

Bones remains standing. Johnny notices the bruises above his collar.

JOHNNY

What happened in Miami?

BONES

Nothing.

Willis laughs.

WILLIS

Your boy walked into a Haitian ambush with two guns and a bad attitude.

JOHNNY

You did what?

BONES

They were hurting Suds.

Suds smiles.

SUDS

He saved us.

JOHNNY

I told you to deliver a message and come back.

BONES

I delivered it.

JOHNNY

That was the entire assignment.

BONES

I had time left over.

Johnny plants both hands on the table.

JOHNNY

You could have been killed.

Bones's expression changes.

BONES

I've spent my whole life dealing
with what you could've done,
should've done, and didn't do. You
don't get to come back after twelve
years and tell me who I can save.

The room falls silent.

Johnny and Bones stare at each other.

Finally, Johnny nods toward the chair beside him.

JOHNNY

Sit down.

Bones drags the chair closer to Suds before sitting.

Johnny notices.

LATER

The doors open. BILLY DAWBER slips
inside ten minutes late, wearing a
white shirt, dark trousers, and his
father's watch.

He stops at the sight of the impossible gathering.

Bones sees him first.

BONES

Billy!

Alex stands.

Billy crosses the room. Bones pulls him into a rough embrace.
Alex clasps his hand.

For one moment, they are three boys again.

Then Billy sees the documents covering the table.

BILLY

What is this?

ALEX

Our future.

Billy looks at Johnny.

BILLY
Whose version?

JOHNNY
That is what we're here to
determine.

Billy sits between Alex and Bones.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)
Your uncle treating you well?

BILLY
He's given me work.

JOHNNY
What kind?

BILLY
Legitimate work.

Bones laughs.

BILLY (CONT'D)
What?

BONES
You said it like you don't believe
it.

BILLY
I said what it is.

JOHNNY
Bo is reopening the Battenberg
packing house.

Billy's eyes shift to Alex.

BILLY
You already knew.

ALEX
Forbee told me Bo came to see him.

JOHNNY
He put the Sheltons and Brodys back
together. Merle controls the Neck.
Dale controls the groves and river
access. The packing house connects
both properties to Battenberg
transportation.

Billy says nothing.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)
What is Bo moving?

BILLY
Produce.

Willis laughs.

Phil leans toward Teddy.

PHIL
Is everyone in this county a
terrible liar?

TEDDY
Pretty much.

Johnny watches Billy.

JOHNNY
Marijuana?

Billy's jaw tightens.

BILLY
I'm not here to inform on my
family.

JOHNNY
No one asked you to.

BILLY
You just did.

JOHNNY
I asked whether Bo is preparing to
compete with us.

BILLY
Compete with what? Nobody's told me
what this is.

TIANA
That's a fair question.

Tiana stands at the front of the room.

TIANA (CONT'D)
There are no formal partnerships
tonight. No investments are being
authorized, and this firm is not
approving criminal activity.
(MORE)

TIANA (CONT'D)

We are here because Mr. Malone requested an opportunity to hear what each of you is building.

PHIL

Then why is the door closed?

TIANA

Confidentiality.

PHIL

No. It's because everyone here knows the difference between what is legal and what is profitable.

Tiana meets his eyes.

TIANA

Mr. Henderson, I know your recording company has survived three federal investigations, two congressional inquiries, and an artist who accused you of dangling him from a hotel balcony.

PHIL

He was not an artist.

TIANA

He was under contract.

PHIL

That was his first mistake.

Johnny stands. The side conversations end.

JOHNNY

Twelve years ago, Dawber County made more money than most small countries. We had fishing boats, trucks, airstrips, warehouses, pilots, politicians, law enforcement, and routes stretching from Colombia to New Jersey.

Scully watches every face.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

The operation collapsed because Bo demanded control, the families turned against one another, and too many people started believing they were untouchable.

(MORE)

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

Sanchez and I skimmed from Bo because we believed he was taking more than he deserved. Mack Donnelly discovered it. Bo discovered it. Sanchez died, and I burned everything down.

BILLY

Along with everyone who trusted you.

JOHNNY

Yes.

Johnny does not defend himself.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

Kenny went to prison. Bo went to prison. Your parents lost their homes. Businesses closed. Dawber County paid for what I did long after I disappeared.

WILLIS

My brother paid for it.

JOHNNY

Yes.

WILLIS

And now you want to start again?

JOHNNY

No. I want to build something that does not depend on one route, one product, one family, or one man.

ALEX

What does that mean?

JOHNNY

It means property. Shipping. Entertainment. Agriculture. Private security. Medical investments. Construction. Legal services. Businesses that reinforce one another.

WILLIS

And marijuana?

JOHNNY

I don't care what you grow as long
as you don't bring federal
attention to my door.

TIANA

It's already at your door.

JOHNNY

That is why I hired you.

TIANA

You did not hire me to make the DEA
disappear.

JOHNNY

No. I hired you to make sure they
knock before entering.

Phil smiles.

PHIL

Now he sounds like an accountant.

Johnny opens his leather portfolio and passes copies of the
financial statement down the table.

Alex sees the final number. His eyes widen.

Vinnie takes the page from him.

VINNIE

Holy shit.

WILLIS

Is this real?

TIANA

I have verified it with three
institutions, two Swiss firms, and
an American forensic accountant.

Teddy counts the digits twice.

Suds leans closer.

SUDS

How much is that?

Bones looks over his shoulder.

BONES

One hundred twelve million dollars.

Suds whistles.

BILLY

You had this the whole time?

JOHNNY

I had access to part of it. The rest required Scully, Sanchez's records, and several conversations with bankers who believed I was dead.

Willis puts down the statement.

WILLIS

And everybody's been killing each other over five million dollars in a swamp.

Johnny nods.

JOHNNY

That is the lesson.

WILLIS

What lesson?

JOHNNY

Never tell desperate men the true size of the prize.

Phil laughs -- genuinely this time.

ALEX

What are you going to do with it?

JOHNNY

I'm going to invest a portion in ventures that can survive scrutiny. The rest remains protected.

ALEX

How large a portion?

JOHNNY

That depends on what each of you brings to the table.

WILLIS

We bring Miami distribution and people who ain't afraid to defend it.

Phil rests a hand on the statement.

PHIL

I bring clubs, promoters, athletes, musicians, hotel owners, and people wealthy enough to buy whatever makes them forget who they are.

TEDDY

And I understand the customers.

PHIL

You understand nightclubs. Do not oversell yourself.

Vinnie taps the clinic proposal.

VINNIE

We bring a legal product with extraordinary demand.

TIANA

The phrase "legal product" is doing heroic work in that sentence.

ALEX

I bring the plan.

Johnny studies him.

JOHNNY

Yes, you do.

BILLY

And what am I supposed to bring?

JOHNNY

Yourself.

BILLY

My name, you mean.

JOHNNY

No. I already have enough family names in this room.

BILLY

Then why did you ask me here?

JOHNNY

Because Alex trusts you. Bones trusts you. And whether Bo admits it or not, he trusts you enough to place you beside him.

Billy's hand moves toward the ledger key beneath his shirt.

Johnny notices.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)
What did he give you?

BILLY
Work.

JOHNNY
What kind of work?

Billy hesitates.

BILLY
A ledger.

Johnny's expression changes. Scully sees it.

JOHNNY
His private ledger?

Billy says nothing.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)
That used to be my job.

BILLY
I'm not you.

JOHNNY
I know.

BILLY
Uncle Bo says you never understood
loyalty.

Johnny walks slowly down the table.

JOHNNY
Your uncle believes loyalty means
accepting whatever he decides to
take from you.

BILLY
He's trying to rebuild the county.

JOHNNY
So am I.

BILLY
Maybe Dawber County doesn't need
either one of you.

Johnny stops behind Billy's chair.

JOHNNY

That may be the smartest thing
anyone has said tonight.

BILLY

Then why are you both doing it?

JOHNNY

Because men like Bo and me rarely
recognize when we are no longer
needed.

Billy considers him.

ALEX

If this works, we won't need either
of you forever.

Johnny smiles.

JOHNNY

That is exactly what I expect you
to believe at seventeen.

BONES

I've got a question.

JOHNNY

Of course you do.

BONES

Who's in charge?

The answers come at once.

SCULLY

Johnny.

SUDS

Willis.

TEDDY

My father.

ALEX

Me.

VINNIE

Me.

Phil looks around with disgust.

PHIL

This organization is doomed.

Tiana raises her voice over them.

TIANA

No one is in charge because no organization exists yet.

Johnny returns to the head of the table.

JOHNNY

She is in charge of telling us why everything we want to do is illegal.

TIANA

And I expect that to become a full-time position.

JOHNNY

Tonight, we decide whether we have enough common interests to continue speaking. Tomorrow, Tiana begins constructing the lawful framework. After that, we discuss capital.

WILLIS

That's it? We came all the way here to find out if we can have another meeting?

JOHNNY

You came because you thought I might distribute one hundred twelve million dollars before dessert.

WILLIS

Had crossed my mind.

Phil studies the founder portraits.

PHIL

Do you have dessert?

Tiana ignores him.

Johnny looks to Billy.

JOHNNY

One last question. Does Bo know you're here?

BILLY

No.

JOHNNY
Would he approve?

BILLY
No.

JOHNNY
Then we have at least one thing in
common.

The conference-room doors open.

Charles Pierce stands in the hallway, pale and visibly
uncomfortable.

TIANA
We're still meeting.

PIERCE
I understand. There is a gentleman
here who insists upon seeing Mr.
Malone.

TIANA
Tell him to make an appointment.

PIERCE
He said he has been waiting twelve
years.

Nobody moves.

A familiar figure steps past Pierce.

BOCEPHUS DAWBER enters alone.

Dark suit. Polished boots. White shirt buttoned at the
throat. Prison has grayed his hair and deepened the lines in
his face, but it has not diminished him.

He fills the doorway with the authority of a man accustomed
to entering rooms that belong to someone else.

Billy stands.

BILLY
Uncle Bo?

Bo looks at him but says nothing.

His gaze moves around the table: Willis Childress. Phil
Henderson and his son. Vinnie Del Vecchio holding Johnny's
financial statement. Alex, Bones, and Billy together. Tiana
at Johnny's left.

Then Bo sees the man at Johnny's right.

Scully rises.

For one instant, Bo's composure fractures.

His eyes narrow. His left hand closes into a fist.

Billy sees it.

So does Johnny.

Bo recovers and turns toward the head of the table.

Johnny slowly rises.

The two men face each other for the first time since Dawber County fell.

JOHNNY
What's he doing here?

Bo smiles.

BO
Hello, Johnny.

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF SEASON ONE.