

BRAINDEAD

GARETH

(SIDE 1)

21.

LAUREL (CONT'D)
Nothing. I'll handle it.

INT. MEETING ROOM - FIVE MINUTES LATER - DAY

Gareth sits across from Laurel now. She reads the clipboard:

LAUREL
So you're having problems with your
Viagra prescription, sir--?

GARETH
Uh... no.

LAUREL
You wrote "Viagra not considered
Medicaid," Mr. Finnerman?

GARETH
I'm not Mr. Finnerman. I'm Gareth
Ritter, Chief of Staff to Senator
Wheatus.

(off Laurel's confusion)
Red Wheatus. Republican from
Delaware--

LAUREL
Yes, I know. I mean, I don't know,
but... Do you want me to get a more
senior staff person?

GARETH
No. I don't need senior; I need the
sister. I'm here to offer a deal on
behalf of Senator Wheatus. Actually,
I'm not here at all.

LAUREL
You're-- not?

GARETH
No. If your brother tries to get
mileage out of this by embarrassing
the Republicans, we'll deny this
meeting ever happened--

LAUREL
I really think I should get some--

GARETH
Ms. Healy, there are now 90 minutes
until the government shuts down and
100,000 employees are thrown out of
work.

(MORE)

↑
START

GARETH (CONT'D)

My boss is ready to cross the aisle
and vote with the Democrats in order
to keep the government working.

Laurel's eyes widen at this.

GARETH (CONT'D)

But he needs the Democrats to set
aside a 48 million dollar earmark for
autism studies. It's a pet cause of
his. I think you'll agree, 48
million is a drop in the bucket--

LAUREL

Seriously, this is my first day.
Let me just get--

GARETH

No, I'm out the door. This is my
cell number. Get your brother's
agreement in 90 minutes and call me
or my boss will have to stand with
his Republican colleagues. And
don't tell anyone or this deal goes
away. Do you understand?

LAUREL

I-- No.

GARETH

Ms. Healy. 100,000 jobs depend on
you getting to your brother in 90
minutes and convincing him to take
this deal. You're the go-between.
So if I were you, I'd run.

And Gareth goes. Laurel sits there for a second. Another
second, staring straight ahead. Then-- bang-- she's up from
her chair, running, and...

END OF TEASER

↑
FINISH

BRAINDEAD

GARETH

(SIDE 2)

ACT TWO

EXT. MARTIN LUTHER KING MEMORIAL - DAY

"The Third Day"

The Martin Luther King Memorial. Not one of the better known D.C. monuments. A massive stone canyon, Laurel and Gareth dwarfed by it...

GARETH

Are you asking me if I'm freelancing?

LAUREL

Yes.

GARETH

We're in the middle of the biggest budget crisis in four years, and you think I would make up this budget offer from my boss?

LAUREL

Yes. Senator Wheatus doesn't give a damn about autistic kids. You do. You have an autistic sister.

Gareth stares at her.

GARETH

You've been investigating me?

LAUREL

I always find that best when you don't trust someone.

Gareth smiles, eyes her, considers it...

GARETH

Okay, I'll be completely honest--

LAUREL

How refreshing.

GARETH

I told my boss the Democrats wanted a deal and they were offering 48 million for autism to close it. And he said "yes," because I know he wanted a deal. He just didn't want to make the first offer--

LAUREL

So you're lying?

↑
START

GARETH

I am creatively structuring a deal.

Laurel laughs, shakes her head, gets up to go.

GARETH (CONT'D)

Come on, are you seriously walking away from this? People are going hungry over this. People can't pay their rent. They're dipping into their savings, and all you have to do is convince your brother to meet. That's all.

Laurel stops, considers it. Then continues off.

~~INT. RUSSELL BUILDING - DAY~~
~~Laurel enters Russell, sees a SUPERVISOR at the metal detectors sending one of his downcast GUARDS home. Frowning, Laurel sees another tear-stained AIDE passing. She considers it, and...~~
~~INT. HEALY SENATE OFFICE - WAITING ROOM - DAY~~
~~...enters the senatorial office surprised to find Luke there, waiting for her:~~
~~LAUREL~~
~~What's wrong?~~
~~LUKE HEALY~~
~~Are you still looking into this Smithsonian shipment?~~
~~LAUREL~~
~~Yeah, why?~~
~~LUKE HEALY~~
~~I think you can stop~~
~~INT. HEALY SENATE OFFICE - LUKE'S OFFICE - DAY~~
~~Randall and Breanna Burke jump up, arm-in-arm, smiling, as Luke leads Laurel into see them:~~
~~RANDALL BURKE~~
~~This must be her. Laurel, thank you so much for helping Breanna. We're happy you did, but we don't need your help anymore.~~

Laurel frowns, eyeing Breanna.