

Angie exits, dreading her role as the messenger.

INT. LAND OF OZ, WICK'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Not nearly as colorful or hip as Oz's office, Wick's office has a Southern hospitality to it. But no eyeline is unobstructed by an award or a trophy engraved with his name. Grip-and-grins with President Nixon and other dignitaries are framed behind him.

Sam sits on the arm of the couch. Jane and Patti sit close together in the middle of the couch. Wick sits behind his desk, eyes closed, rubbing the bridge of his nose where his reading glasses sit.

Wick opens his eyes, puts his glasses back on. When you're Deputy M.E. of "Newsweek," you can make people wait for you to do that sort of thing.

START

WICK

These allegedly 'culturally significant stories' -- as Oz likes to call them -- are not permission to get lax about journalistic standards. We need full names.

SAM

I'm not surprised at your decision. Bummed out. But not surprised.

PATTI

(furious)

Being flexible isn't the same as lowering our standards.

Sam shoots Patti a homicidal glare. Patti retreats.

Wick refocuses on Sam.

WICK

Mr. Rosenberg, I hope you're not too 'bummed out' to write an airtight story with real sources, authorities or elected officials. And then we'll see if it merits the cover of *Newsweek* magazine.

SAM

(detached)

You got it, Wick.

END

Sam opens the door for the women, looks at his watch, immediately re-focused on getting Wick what he wants.

~~Off Patti, moved.~~

START

INT. OZ'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Wick enters, shuts the door behind him. Oz goes around his desk, reestablishes his turf.

OZ

Sorry about your cover, Wick.

WICK

I'm not sore because I don't have another tear sheet for my scrapbook. I'm baffled, Oz. In terms of sheer body count, we lost more young men on Saturday in the jungles of Vietnam than we did at a fairgrounds outside of Berkeley.

OZ

Altamont is a different kind of story than troop withdrawal, but no less important.

WICK

I read your editorial. The loss --

OZ

"A Generation's Loss of Innocence."

Wick nods. Waits.

WICK

It's a story for the Culture section. *The back of the book.*

OZ

No, it's not. Because if I'm going to insure our relevance, we have to cover the story of the counter-culture. My Lai three weeks ago and last week's anti-war march both warranted covers.

WICK

Anti-war covers.

OZ

Yes, because the people are shouting it from the rooftops.

They have turned against this war,
so your Pentagon source concerned
that troop withdrawal will only
deepen the quagmire feels, today, a
little dated.

WICK

It wasn't dated three days ago when
it went to typeset.

OZ

You're right. And then a free love
festival exploded, because the
counter-culture itself is starting
a new chapter. A revolution, for
God's sake. And Altamont, in my
opinion, is a perfect aperture to
show that.

WICK

The day a story about a music
festival trumps a story about a war
we're fighting, is the day I don't
know my ass from my elbow.

OZ

Wick, we've had fourteen covers on
Vietnam in the past year. We done?

Wick retreats, knows he's lost this round. Oz nods, looks
down at work on his desk.

PRE-LAP The Band, "I Shall Be Released."

END

Wick exits.

~~INT. NEWSWEEK, PHOTO DEPARTMENT -- DAY
ECU on a phonograph spinning, "I Shall Be Released." Nora
happily looks at Ned's final picks for the cover. They both
have eye loops on. Cute. But Cindy's distracted.~~

~~NORA~~

~~Ooh, I like the one with the
trampled flower.~~

~~CINDY~~

~~But if it's a cover, I always like
human eyes. I vote for the close up
of the broken-hearted hippie.~~