

American Scandal: The Unabomber

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1. Atomic Pearl

Ted Kaczynski faces a painful rejection in high school. Then he endures an abusive psychology experiment at Harvard. Kaczynski may be an academic prodigy, but he feels lonely and out of place. His solution? He's going to get revenge on modern society.

It's the morning of July 2nd, 1982. Patrick Webb hurries through campus at the University of California, Berkeley. His eyes dart left and right, he spots police cars. A crowd of students. There's yellow crime scene tape stretched across the computer science building, and everywhere onlookers point and murmur. They all seemed to be saying the same thing, that there was an explosion, a big one might have been a bomb. That's why Patrick Webb is here. Webb is a bomb expert who works for the FBI. He's 37 years old, and normally he has an easy smile. But today his expression is grim because he knows the arm lookers are right. This could have been a deliberate act of violence, so he needs to move fast. Webb needs to figure out what exactly happened and if there's any evidence of foul play. He and the FBI need to start looking for suspects before it's too late. Web reaches the computer science building and flashes his ID. The officers move aside and web ducks beneath the yellow tape as he approaches the building, he's met by another FBI agent. The two enter together and walk up a stairwell. They exit on the 4th floor and head for the faculty break room. Their web pulses. And he stares in horror at the sight in front of him. Chairs lie, tipped over, scorched debris litters the floor. There's a faint smell of coffee in the air, but it's overpowered by the reek of gasoline. Web squats down and examines the floor. There are shards of glass and a metal pipe. He spots fragments of a battery and scraps of parcel paper. There's no question that this was a bomb. Looking at the scraps, this could have been a plastic can filled with gasoline. It would have been wrapped in parcel paper as a disguise. And for The detonator pipe bomb with batteries. When someone triggered it, the device would have exploded like one giant Molotov cocktail. Web rises and turns to the agent who led him in, so we had a victim. Yeah, the professor. He's got severe burns and might lose some fingers. God was there a a note anything. The agent hands web. A Ziploc bag inside is a burnt piece of paper. It's a. Type written note. This is it. No ransom, no demands, just. Woo, it works. I told you it would. No, nothing else. Red grits his teeth and gazes across the destruction he's never heard of a bombing case without demands. Most bombers ask for money. The return of a political prisoner, something, anything. This is bizarre and not nearly enough to give

him a read on the bombers. As Webb surveys the room, the other agent speaks up. You know, this could be UNABOM. I heard about him at a conference last year. Remember that United Airlines bomb back in 79 almost took down a plane in Chicago that was UNABOM. He also mailed a bomb to an executive at United Air. One of airlines have to do with a break room at UC Berkeley, where that's where UNABOM comes from. The name UNABOM. We believe the same guy is also hitting university. Investors has sent bombs to northwestern Utah, Vanderbilt, so Unabomber University and airline bomber went taps. His foot stares at the agent. That's a weird connection. You think he did? This I talked to some lab techs at the conference and this bomb here. Well, this looks exactly like what they described. Webex sales. If they're dealing with a serial bomber, then things just got a hell of a lot more complicated, but there's still something he can't wrap his head around. He turns back to the other agent. And tell me something. He sets the explosive in front of a coffee machine. Yeah, right. Had him playing you so anyone could have been the victim. He wasn't going after any single person, so no target, just a bomb in the break room. I don't. Know what the motive? Could be web, once again glances around the destroyed. Room. Then it hits. Terror he was going for terror. Web squats back down and gazes at the debris on the floor. Again, he'll probably be here all night, and these may be the only clues he has to work with. They'll be tedious work, but if this is the work of a serial bomber, then web knows one thing for sure. There will be more explosions and more victims. So now Webb has just a single goal. To track the bomber down before anyone else gets hurt.

So I'm wondering. I'm Lindsey Graham, and this is American scandal. Political violence is nothing new to America. These extreme measures have been the reaction to a wide variety of issues, from slavery to war to changes in their nation's economy. Those who commit political violence often believe that their actions are the only way to create change, but others only seek to create terror. Whatever the intent, political violence has caused countless lives and leaned as a spectre during troubled times from the late 1970s to the mid 1990s, America lived through one of these troubled episodes, a man named Theodore Kaczynski, mailed or planted 16 bombs around the country, these devices injured 23 people. And killed 3 and left a nation on Edge known to the FBI as the Unabomber. Kaczynski railed against technology. He believed that industrial life had harmful effects on the human spirit, and he believed that technology was hurt. On the planet, he sought to change the world with his bombs. The manhunt for the Unabomber began in 1979. Over the course of nearly two decades, it would grow into the longest and most expensive case in FBI history. But despite what he'd become, Ted Kaczynski wasn't born evil. Still, his experiences in childhood. And at college would leave him alienated and angry, and he grew determined to take revenge on everything he despised. This is episode one atomic Pearl. It's the spring of 1957 Ted Kaczynski stands in the hallway. Of his high. School watching students dream past one after the other. They walked by Kaczynski, gossiping, laughing. Kaczynski stares at them, and his arms trembled. It seems like all the other students at Evergreen Park High School.

And friends, they all seem like they fit into a group, but not Kaczynski. No one seems to notice him. Not today, not ever. Kaczynski runs a hand through his hair and looks around at least the day, though no one's picking on him. That's a small improvement. Kaczynski leans back against the locker and waits. He knows he has to be one of the most unpopular high schoolers in all of Illinois. Probably doesn't help that he's skipped 2 grades. He's already younger than everyone else. And on top of that, he's small for a 14 year old, and it also doesn't help that most people think he's weird and different. It's true. He likes to think logically, to argue, but every time he gets into these conversations, people seem to clam up and turn away altogether. High school has been a miserable experience. The only exceptions are science class. Band, but that's not enough, and Kaczynski has made a decision. He's going to change things. He's tired of being a loner and being ignored by everyone. He wants to somehow feel like he belongs and there's one person in particular he wants to get to know. Her name is Joanne. She's beautiful. Kaczynski is going. To make a. Move and he's going to impress her with his greatest strength, his mind. Kaczynski reaches into his pocket and grabs hold of what feels like a small tube of paper. It's a firecracker called an atomic Pearl, and he made it himself at home last night. He carefully twisted it a little piece of paper into the shape of a barbell. On one end he placed ammonium on the other end. When you untwist the paper. The crystals mix and then they explode. Anyone who sees the invention will be wildly impressed, and there's one person he wants to impress most. That's why he's going to give the firecracker to Joanne. Kaczynski sees Joanne approach her locker, her brown curls frame a heart-shaped face. Kaczynski walks up and she looks at him with a weak smile. Then he reaches into his pocket and hands her the firecracker. Joanne squinted. The gift asked why she should open it, but Kaczynski says she just needs to trust him. Joanne is reluctant, but finally she untwists the. Pepper, there's a sudden pop, and the firecracker explodes, sending a wisp of purple smoke into the air. Joanne shrieks and jumps back nearby. Students stop and stare. Joanna's eyes are wide open, in shock, and for a moment Kaczynski feels his knees go weak. Suddenly, this seems like it was a terrible idea. What was he thinking? Joanne is scared and now it feels like the whole school is. Watching him judging. But then Joanne starts laughing and Kaczynski feels the blood returned to his face. He grins back. Pretty neat, huh? Joanne nods, but then she warned him to be careful. This could get him in trouble. Ted smiles and shakes his head. He says there's no way that will happen. He's too smart to get caught. The two to stand in silence. And then Kaczynski begins to feel. Headed because he knows this is his moment to make a move. He's not scared anymore. He has to take action so Kaczynski blurts out an invitation. He asked Joanne if she wants to see a movie. This weekend. She stiffens and stammers that she's busy this weekend, but Kaczynski isn't ready to give up, so he asks about next weekend. Joanne inches away, clutching her binder. She apologizes and says she has tennis lessons next weekend and she should really get to class. Now Kaczynski is about to ask if she's actually taking tennis lessons all weekend. But before he can get the words out, Joanne is gone. Now alone in the hallway, Kaczynski slumps

against the locker. He thought the atomic Pearl was his best hope. He feels deflated, ready to give up. But he also knows he can't go on like this. He's a loner without any friends or prospects for a girlfriend. He has to do something. Something else. Soon after Joanne walks away, Kaczynski hears the bell and takes off for class. But then he gets the feeling. That he's not alone. Out of the corner of his eye, he spots a student from his chemistry class Boy, 6 feet tall, with facial hair. Already, he's beefy and wears A Letterman's jacket as the student approaches. Head cringes. Instinctively, he knows that something bad is about to happen. He hurries up trying to get away. But the student hurries after him and grabs Kaczynski by the shoulder. Kaczynski goes limp as the boy steps in. Front of him. But then something completely unexpected happens. The big student shoots Kaczynski, a big smile, and he says that Kaczynski is pretty smart. He saw that little bomb. He wants to know how to make something like that. Kaczynski looks at the ground and asks if the boy is serious. The boy says he is, and so with his eyes still on the floor, Kaczynski starts to explain that it's not a bomb, it's just a firecracker. And there's a difference between the two. Kaczynski begins to explain what the big student interrupts him. He says it doesn't matter. What does matter is that he's got a proposition. If Kaczynski can give him the recipe to make a. Bomb he'll put. In a good word with some girls. He looks Kaczynski in the eye and asks is it a deal? Kaczynski swallows. He wants a girlfriend more than anything in the world. So he looks up, nods and then explains the recipe for a bomb. The student punches him in the arm and runs off saying he's going to tell everyone that Kaczynski is cool. Kaczynski stands there suddenly feeling the glow like some religious Halo, because he knows that this. Is the start of a new day. A year later, the Pontiac pulls into the parking lot at Evergreen Park High. It sputters as it comes to. A stop. Turk Kaczynski steps out of the car and looks up at the school building. He shakes his head, feeling annoyed. This building looks fine. There's no sign of damage from the event last year. Some Jock blew out the windows during chemistry class. The boy blamed it all on Turk's son, Ted, remembering all those accusations and all of those school meetings. Turks still gets angry. But he's in a better mood today as he's back on campus for a different. Reason Ted's band teacher Mr. Roberto has invited him to a meeting. Turk is certain that the teacher wants to offer some well earned congratulations. Ted is only 15 years old, but he was just admitted to Harvard, the most prestigious College in the country. It's true that Ted has no real friends. Turkish tried to whip him into shape and called him sick and emotionally disturbed. He knew this hurt, Ted, but the boy needed to hear it in order to shape up still, despite his flaws, there's no question that Ted is a genius. As Turk steps into the band room, a few students are warming up, and then he notices Mr. Roberto, who approaches with a generous smile. Kaczynski, hello. Please grab a seat. The two pull up a pair of plastic chairs and turf gases across the. How's the band this year? Ted says you're his favorite teacher. Well, that's that's very flattering. He's a special kid. A special is an understatement. I'm guessing you. Heard he got into Harvard. Oberto pauses suddenly looking weary. Yes, that's actually why I asked you in today. I don't know exactly how to say this, but but have you

considered that maybe Harvard isn't right for Ted? Are you kidding me? The boys got an IQ of 167. Yeah. Ted is clearly brilliant, but but emotionally, well, he's just not as mature as other seniors. And I don't think it helped us skip him. Two grades. I mean, take the bomb. Last year, that wasn't Ted's fault. All he did was share some basic science. Regardless, it shows poor judgment. Plus, Harvard's, Harvard's a different social sphere. Students there come from a a certain class. Turk feels his face grow hot. Ah, just because I make a living making sausages, that means my son isn't good enough for Harvard. I see. I see. You know where Ted gets his IQ from? From me. Well, I don't doubt that, Mister Krasinski. But but there's no elitism at Harvard that has nothing to do with intelligence and and Harvard is just a pressure cooker for anyone, let alone someone. So you. Have you considered Oberlin commas? I suggest it because it's got an excellent music program. Turk stares at the music. He can't believe this man thinks he can just intrude on their lives. Kaczynski, I'm going to be blunt. I know you're proud of Tim. Damn right I am. But your pride will doom him, Harvard. Is not in his best interest. Turk bolts up. He can't take it anymore. You know what's not in his best interest. Having to listen to idiots like you. Before Alberto can protest, Turk throws open the door and stalks out. He took off work today and for. What to have his judgment questioned, Evergreen Park turned things a dead end school. He should have expected this. Turk gets into his car and slams him gear as he pulls out of the parking lot he makes a. Promise to himself. His boys going to Harvard and that's final. Later that year, in the summer of 1958, Ted Kaczynski stands on his front lawn, waiting impatiently. He desperately wants to get in the car, and finally. Head off to harbor. But first he has to deal with his parents. His mother is making a huge fuss. She's trying to get a photograph of what she keeps calling Teddy's big day Ted's gals as she and his father fidget with. Camera 10s is, of course, excited about Harvard. For the first time in his life, he'll be able to meet people just like him. Curious about the world. It'll be a different universe than Evergreen Park, IL. Maybe he'll even meet a girl. He also can't wait to get away from his parents. His mother, Wanda, is always telling him what to do. Join a club, try and make friends this way or that way, even today she's trying to control everyone. She made him dress up in a sports jacket just for the photo, and she did the same for Ted's little brother David. The boy is barely 9, and here on the front lawn he looks miserable in an oversized jacket. Ted watches his mother struggle to tame David's calic, but he can't stand it anymore. He barks at her to take the picture. Finally, the family lines up. There's a click in the photo's done tech sales. He's ready to leave. But first, Wanda pulls him aside and says she wants to talk for just a minute. Ted drones. You can hear it in her tone. He's about to get another pep talk. And sure enough, Juanna says she knows he had a rough time in high school, especially socially. But Harvard will be better, Ted Mutters to himself, and starts to walk away. But his mother grabs his sleeve surprisingly hard, and she looks right into his eyes says that she's proud of him, and she hugs him. Head hates this. He doesn't understand why people are always touching. So he just stands there stiffly. Finally, Wanda pulls away and says I love you. Teddy Tan rolls his eyes and

says he's in college. Now it's Theodore, not Teddy. His mother looks hurt, but she repeats the message. I love you, Theodore. And grudgingly, he says that he also loves her. The front door of the house swings open and Ted's father Turk comes bounding down the steps, he says they're going. To be late. Ted breaks free from his mom and tosses the suitcase in the back of the car before she can hug him again. He jumps in the passenger seat and locks the. More Ted sees his brother David standing in the doorway. Ted gives a quick wave and then turns away as his. Father starts the car. Soon their little brick house disappears into the distance. Ted feels himself relaxed for the first time in months, maybe years. Finally, he's leaving Evergreen Park town full of small headed. People, people who are never smart enough to understand him. That's why he never fit in, why he never made friends at Harvard. Harvard will be different. Ted's smiles. He knows the worst days are behind him and he can't wait for his next chapter to begin.

It's October 1958 in Cambridge, MA. Ted Kaczynski steps out of his dorm in a hurry and begins making his way across the quad. He looks down and notices the pants he's wearing are stained, his stomach crumbles and he realizes that all he's eaten today is half a sandwich and some milk that may have been. Foiled, still right now, Kaczynski has all he needs. His trombone and his sheet music. He's on his way to band practice, but he needs to hurry, otherwise he'll be late as he races through the quad. Kaczynski can't help but feel a dull frustration coursing through him, because even though it's hard to admit Harvard's been a tough adjustment back home. He never had to work for his straight A grades, but at Harvard he was barely pulling C's. The social scene is even worse. Everyone's dad is some rich banker or lawyer, or even a senator, and all his classmates want to do is sneak liquor and go to dances. He's not interested in either, but band is different. The kids there are quirky and creative. It's his only refuge, the one place where he feels he belongs. That's why Kaczynski has been looking forward to band practice all day. But now, as he turns a corner, he stops and surprised. Normally, the band practices inside, but today everyone's out on the lawn, and they're spread out in formation. Kaczynski finds the trombone section leader and asks what they're doing. The girl explains that now that it's cooled off, it's time to practice marching. Marching, Kaczynski grimaces and high school he hated marching, made him feel like they are all a bunch of army grunts, that they are following orders just because someone told them to, for no logical reason. Kaczynski tells the section leader that he doesn't like to March. She just snorts and says that if he wants to play in band, he has to March. Kaczynski protests and says his high school band teacher let him skip marching practice, but the section leader looks exasperated. She tells him that if that's what he wants, then he. Should go back. To high school. Then she adds that he's the right size for it. Kaczynski feels his stomach drop. He's always been sensitive about being small. But then a fury. Whole of him. And then he says he refuses to March. That's final. The girl shrugs. And says if that's the case, then he can't be in band. She then pushes past him. For a moment, he stunned, and then Kaczynski turns and storms off. He can't believe that

this is what Harvard is like. Even the musicians are conformists. He can feel it in his bones. He's glad to quit. He heads back through the quad, but as he returns to his dorm, he realizes he now has nothing to do but study. And he realizes then that he needs to find something else to occupy him, something intellectual. He doesn't know what it is yet, but he'll start looking. A year later, Wanda Kaczynski is cleaning out Teddy's old bedroom in Evergreen Park. She finds a stack of old magazines and stops. She takes them and sits down on Teddy's twin bed. She begins flipping through issues of Scientific American. Bitter sweet memories come flooding back with every page. She remembers how when Teddy was a child, she told him on her lap and read these magazines to him. He always had the smartest questions. Pains her to remember how close they once were. Now, Teddy's a sophomore at Harvard. She hardly hears from him. To make matters worse, it sounds like he's lonelier than ever. She wishes she could do something to help him, but sitting here halfway across the country, she's not sure what she could do. One hears A thud from the front of the house. Sounds like the mail. She could use a break from her heavy heart and so she gets up and heads. Downstairs, she's flipping through a pile of coupons and catalogs. When she spots an envelope with a Crimson seal. It's something from Harvard. Wanda tears it open. It's a letter from a research psychologist there, someone named Doctor Henry Murray. He says he wants to enroll Teddy in a psychological study. It will be a friendly discussion about philosophy and life. The goal of the study, Murray says, is to contribute to the solution of certain psychological problems. But Murray says the issue is that Teddy is still only 17. He needs warrant his permission to enroll him in the. Wanda frowns. She's not sure what psychological problems Murray wants to study, but she reads the letter again and her concern for Teddy overtakes her. He was supposed to meet friends at Harvard and maybe even a nice girl. But he's spiraling more than ever. He even quit band. That was the one place he was happy. Warner looks again at the permission form. This doctor Murray is a psychologist, someone who helps people with their problems. Maybe he can help Teddy. She's not sure about the study, but she is sure that if Teddy doesn't get help soon, he'll be in big trouble. So she grabs her pen, signs the form and goes to find a stamp. She's going to mail this off today. A month later, Doctor Henry Murray takes a seat inside the Harvard psychology annex. Murray is a 66 year old psychologist, and right now he's inspecting the room where his next experiment will take place. It's covered in wallpaper with tiny yellow flowers. An entire wall is dominated by a one way mirror. Murray cracks his knuckles and turns to the young man. Sitting in. Front of. Him with his freckles and red hair, the man looks young enough to pass as a student. But Murray knows the truth. This man is actually a lawyer, and he's a key part of Murray's psychological study, which begins today when the studies participants arrive, they'll be told that they're debating A fellow student about their philosophy on life. In truth, they'll be debating one of the fiercest young litigators in Massachusetts, and Murray wants this lawyer. To break the students down, that's the point of the study. But right now, Murray is frustrated. The lawyer keeps asking whether he really should be so aggressive. Murray shakes his head and tells the lawyer he needs to attack the

students. He needs to make them squirm. What Murray doesn't say is that he has ties to the intelligence community in Washington, DC and throughout World War Two, he worked for the precursor to the CIA. Murray studied spy interrogations, harsh ones, and this study is the culmination of his work in the field. Now he wants to see what happens when a group of 22 students are verbally brutalized and received this treatment on an ongoing basis. But first, this lawyer needs to toughen up, Murray tells the man that he can't be soft. the US is still at war with Russia, and the country needs this research. With that, Murray asks who the first participant is. The lawyer consults a sheet in his lap and says the first up is code name lawful. Murray's eyes light up. He's been eager to test lawful his code name for a sophomore named Theodore Kaczynski. He's young, blue collar and appears to be the most alienated that should make for a highly combustible mix. Soon the interrogation will begin. Murray pulls up a chair behind the one way mirror and settles in to watch the Sparks fly. It's the fall of 1960 and a year later today, Ted Kaczynski is once again sitting under bright hot lights in the observation room of the Harvard psychology Annex. Two lights are aimed into his eyes. He squints at the bright light and dabs his forehead, wiping away beads. He feels like he's overheating, doesn't help that he's recently grown a beard. It's another hopeless attempt to look older than just 18. Across from Kaczynski sits an older student with bright red hair and freckles. The two sit facing each other. The chairs are the only furniture in the room. Sitting next to Kaczynski is a heart rate monitor with wires connected to his chest. Monitor beeps every now and then, and a movie camera wires in the corner, recording the psychological study. Right now, Kaczynski is trying to make a point about technology. It's something he has heard in one of his classes, and since then he hasn't been able to stop thinking about it. But he's been involved in these debate sessions for a year, and as always, the other student keeps interrupting and twisting his. Kaczynski's jaw clenches, and he decides he's going to try and make his point another way. What I'm trying to say is that technology limits humankind spiritually, I mean. The other student shoots Kaczynski a look of pure contempt. That's so cliché because it's true. A new technology may seem positive at first, but in the end it almost always has a cost. It takes away your independence. So technology is bad. How about cancer drugs, huh? Caring little kids with brain tumors that. Limit your freedom. No, that that's not. That that it's like I was saying about the Amish again with the Amish. Just listen. You're supposed to listen during a debate. Oh, so you get to make the rules. Of the debate that right. Kaczynski squeezes his eye shut and slaps his own leg. Just listen. The Amish do it right. They accept some technologies but reject others. They lead a simple life. Wait, you're an atheist, right? Right, But the Amish or Bible beaters? You're completely contradicting yourself. No, I'm not. You could still admire some aspects of their life. The other student leans back in his chair. Why are you smiling? I never saw it before. Now I know why you like the Amish so much. Ohh yeah, why is that stupid beard of yours? You even look Amish. The student then reaches forward and tugs Kaczynski's beard hard. Then he makes a Billy goat noise. Kaczynski recoils and rips the heart

rate patches off his chest. He jumps up glaring fiercely into the mirror. He knows that the psychologists are watching him from the other side, and for a moment he considers smashing his fist into the glass. He hovers there, his body shaking. He doesn't want to give up. He doesn't want to let them win, but he decides he's had enough. He turns and runs for the door as he does. The other student begins laughing and says he looks forward to their. Next meeting in a week. Kaczynski grabs the door knob and pauses. He feels small. Humiliated because the worst part is Kaczynski knows this guy is probably right. He's getting paid for each session, and he needs the money Kaczynski throws open the door and stalks down the hallway, and as he runs down the steps of the psychology annex, there's only one thought coursing through his mind. He wants to burn down the whole building. Every last person still inside.

It's six years later, 1967, in the middle of the night in Ann Arbor, MI, inside a small apartment, Ted Kaczynski is having a nightmare, the same one he's had over and over again. In the dream, he's sitting inside a small, dark room. A psychologist stands behind him. His breath is rancid and hot, and he whispers that Ted is sick, that he is worthless. Ted swivels in the chair and sees that the psychologist is holding some sort of device. He's using it to control Ted's mind, and he's also going to use it on Ted's younger brother, David. Like he does most nights, Kaczynski lashes out and attacks the psychologist in his dream. That's when he starts thrashing in his sleep and wakes up in a sweat. It takes him a full minute to realize where. He is. He's. Lying in his dingy apartment, surrounded by piles of clothes, books on math and plates of old food. He sits up and tries to slow his. It's been a terrible six years since he finished school at Harvard. He didn't know what to do with himself when he graduated. And so he decided to follow one of his only real interests to study math as a graduate student at the University of Michigan. He knows that people here consider him a rising star. He's published several impressive papers and even received the job offer at the University of California, Berkeley. It's one of the top math departments in the world. But inside Kaczynski boils with anger. He hates academia. His colleagues were supposed to be brilliant, but they mostly argue over titles and parking spots. Their petty conformists, not freethinkers and more and more, all Kaczynski dreams about his escaping, somewhere to just disappear. He goes for long walks in the woods. And sometimes he doesn't want to turn back, but he knows he has to because he can't figure out how to live without money. Kaczynski falls back onto the pillow right now, lying in bed, he has more immediate needs. He has to get back to sleep. It's only two AM he has classes to teach, but just as he's drifting off, something thuds against his wall. He jumps up, his adrenaline surging. And he hears another low thud, and then another in a slow building rhythm. Kaczynski groans and sinks back down into his sheets. It's the young couple next door. They're insatiable, never quiet. So Kaczynski pounds his fist against the wall. The only response is a muffled giggle. He lies back down in bed, listening in misery. He's been at Michigan for years and he hasn't gotten a single date. He's a full grown man now, 6 feet tall, but the insecurities of high school

still eat away at. Him Kaczynski buries his face in his pillow and screams. He's leaving for Berkeley in a few weeks. When he gets there, his life has got to change. It must. Two years later, Ted Kaczynski sits on a bench on the campus of UC Berkeley. It's an overcast day. Bells chime out from a nearby tower. Kaczynski turns the page in his book and takes a bite of an apple. He's trying to concentrate, but right now he can't. He looks up his impatience rising once again. With those damn protesters, their shouts and chants are never. Monday, it's 1969. The media has been calling the campus berserk Lily, and with good reason. Black Panthers are gathering for a March anti war. Protesters are waving signs and their black pea coats and brays nearby. Some long haired communists sell copies of Chairman Mao's Little Red Book. Kaczynski scowls at all the assembled. They're convinced that politics will change things, that they can reform society. Kaczynski snorts. He knows they're wrong, no matter what sort of government they set up, technology will always be there. That's the real danger. He has no doubt. Industrial society chokes off everything that's meaningful about human life. And it's not just human life. The planet is dying too Kaczynski. Seeing all this first hand, he's now a professor at UC Berkeley, and he's seen how the university and its professors are part of the problem. Physics, chemistry, psychology. They're all advancing the agenda of an industrial society and ruining the world. Kaczynski knows that somehow he has to. Stop this, but he won't be doing it by marching. Kaczynski can't help but smile at the irony. All those hippies think he's the square because he's the math professor in a tweed suit. But soon they'll never know that he's far more radical than they'll ever be. Kaczynski rises and tosses the half eaten apple in a trash can. He walks past a group of protesters and grins as they shout. Their anti war slogans. Right now, Kaczynski has to go teach a class, which is not going to do this forever. He has other plans, and soon his life and his work are going to look a lot different. Two months later, Ted Kaczynski strides down the hallway of the math building and UC Berkeley bulletin boards lined. The hallways are pinned with Flyers about poetry readings and upcoming protests. Kaczynski hardly notices them. He's heading to a meeting with the chair of the math department. He's feeling annoyed. They shouldn't have to have this meeting. Kaczynski already wrote a letter and made his intentions crystal clear, but he'll do them the courtesy of explaining himself again, so there's no ambiguity about his big decision. Kaczynski arrives at the office of John Addison. Addison is the department chair, and at the moment he's frowning over something, his desk is piled with books and stacks of papers, and in front of him is Kaczynski's letter.

Addison looks up. Ted, come in. Take a seat. Can I get you some coffee?

No, thank you.

Anything else?

I've stated my preference.

Alright, well let me turn this down. Anderson stepped over to her radio and shuts it off. Then he turns back to Kaczynski. It really is beautiful, isn't it? They're one and the same. I just love Beethoven.

That that wasn't Beethoven. There was Mozart.

All right, well, let's get down to it. I've read your letter and I have to say I'm stoned and I'm afraid I can't accept your resignation.

You don't. I don't need your acceptance, John. Come June, I'm leaving.

But why, Ted, you're a star. The youngest assistant professor in the history of the entire department. Be honest. Does Stanford poach at Harvard whatever salary they offered, we can try to match it.

No one offered me a job.

Well, Ted, I have to tell you I'm baffled. I just don't understand your resignation. So please...

Are we through?

Wait, just tell me why you're doing this. Why are you quitting? Kaczynski stared at him for a long moment. He was hoping to avoid this, but Addison might as well hear the truth. I'm leaving because I'm through with it. I can't support the technological industrial complex. Addison's quince, a look of confusion in size. I'm sorry, what I said I can no longer support the technological industrial complex I heard you. But Ted, you're a mathematician. Math feeds science, science feeds technology. But we do pure math, which gets twisted into terrible things. Math helps people. Drill for oil or make some new insecticide that kills birds and trees. Math is the gasoline on the fire. You're serious. You realize you're throwing away your career? That's exactly my intention. What are you? Gonna do,

Kaczynski smiles. Who knows? Professor, you are a fool. But you are always decent to me.

Kaczynski heads for the stairs, then walked outside. It's a glorious day. The first real day of spring. For the most part, Kaczynski believes every word he said about technology. But he did tell one lie. He knows exactly what he's going to do with himself. Now Kaczynski is going to save up his last few paychecks. Then he's going to buy a piece of land somewhere remote. Maybe in Canada. But he won't just escape. If technological society has been choking him to death. When Kaczynski knows he's fully justified in fighting. The thought makes him feel strong. He breathes deep and starts to whistle as he walks. He spent his whole life getting bullied and jerked around. And what has he ever done but take it, take it and then take it some more time for taking it is over. He's going to give, give himself time and space he needs. Give himself an escape from the technological world. And give everyone else help.

Next on American scandal, Ted Kaczynski falls in love, but when he has his heart broken, he retreats into the wilderness of Montana, pushes forward with a deadly bombing campaign from wondering.

This is episode one of the Unabomber for American scandal. And a quick note about our reenactments. In most cases, we can't know exactly what was said, but all our dramatizations are based on historical research.

If you'd like to learn more about the Unabomber case, we recommend the books Harvard and the Unabomber by Alston Chase Every Last Tie by David Kaczynski and Hunting the Unabomber by Lis Wiehl.

American Scandal has hosted, edited and executive produced by Me, Lindsey Graham for airship audio editing by Molly Bach. Sound design by Derek Barons. This episode is written by Sam Keene, edited by Christina Maltzberger. Our senior producer is Gabe Riven. Executive producers are Stephanie, Jens, Jenny, Lower Beckman, and Hernan Lopez for wondering.

2. In the Woods

Ted Kaczynski falls in love. But soon, he's shocked by some news—and retreats into the wilderness in Montana. It's there that he pushes forward with a deadly bombing campaign.

A listener note, this episode contains violent imagery and may not be suitable for younger audiences.

It's a late afternoon in the summer of 1969 in a forest in northern Canada. The shadows have grown long, and the evening animals have begun their. Muttering when everything goes quiet as a pair of boots crunched on the forest floor, David Kaczynski hikes forward along the path, then stops and gazes across the dense forest. It feels serene, perfectly still, David bends down and picks up a pine cone. Then there's a crunch of another pair of boots, and David looks over his shoulder. His brother Ted is approaching and as usual, he's got a scowl on. Face David doesn't understand it. For days now, the two brothers have been on a road trip. They've been hiking in forests, and David feels refreshed and full of life. But Ted's been full of nothing but complaints. They took this trip so Ted could find some land, which he planned to buy. He said he wanted something remote, but he keeps finding something wrong with every parcel. First, there were the power lines, which reminded him of technology. Then he heard the drone. Of an airplane and got angry again. It seems like he just can't be satisfied. David can tell that for Ted, this has become a larger problem. Increasingly, he's grown resentful toward any reminder of human society. That's why he quit his job at Berkeley, and that's why he keeps lecturing David, telling him how to live his life. But today David has made a decision. He knows that he's only a college student and far younger than Ted. But still, he's going to try and change Ted's mind. He's going to convince him somehow to give up his extreme views. As usual, though, David knows he'll have to wait until Ted is done lecturing him. You know mom and dad, they've been corrupted. They believe in all the usual trappings a family, a house, things, things, more things. They never have the courage. To do what I'm going to do and let's buy some land and live free. Maybe here, maybe Montana. But you should think about it. Don't be like them, Ted. The woods nature, it's all pretty. But seriously, how are you gonna make a living? You sound like mom. Always worrying about money. Yeah, but you have to eat. I'll find a way. You're just gonna be alone. I don't know if I could live without women. Ted stops and squints at David right away. David knows he has said something

he shouldn't have. Ted is 27, but he still has almost no experience with dating, and David knows it's a sore subject. Sorry, what I meant to say was. That are you. Dating someone? Well, there is someone. Names Linda, but I've never been able to tell her how I feel. And now she's dating someone else. Dave, you can feel Ted's eyes staring at him. David, are you a virgin? Yeah, I am. The brothers stared at the ground silently. When, a moment later, Ted starts laughing, and then David laughs too. You can feel the tension beginning to break. You know what, David? Forget women. They don't have our backs. We need to watch out for each other. Soon you're going to graduate college. You should join me. We can live off the land. I'll build 2 cabins. Yeah, Ted, we got to talk about this going on a road trip. That's fine and all, but you've got. To get serious. You can't just live out in the wilderness and just be all on your own. Well, that's what I'm saying. It would be the two of us. We wouldn't be alone now, you're not hearing. You don't have to be like mom and dad, but you can't live like an animal. Just get a job. You can put up with buy some land here Montana where ever and go there on vacation just like everyone else does. Look, I am not everyone else. I don't want to be like everyone else. I'm done with this conversation. Ted takes off. Down the wooded path. David watches him. He feels deflated because he knows Ted is. Right. Ted doesn't fit in and never has at that moment. David remembers something that happened when they were kids. Their dad caught a wild rabbit and the other kids from around the block gathered around to take a look. But when Ted saw it, he began to shriek. And demanded that his dad let the rabbit go. Ted was almost hyperventilating, and everyone stared at. Him like he was a freak. That day, David learned an important lesson. He would always. Be the younger brother, but he'd also have to take care of Ted no matter what happened. And now, as Ted rounds the corner, David hopes and prays that it's not too late, that he can still help Ted get his life on the right track.

I'm wondering. I'm Lindsey Graham, and this is American scam. In the late 1960s, the man named Ted Kaczynski set out to change America. Kaczynski had endured a lonely childhood, and as a student at Harvard, he suffered in an abusive psychological experiment. He was left with a hatred of technology and vowed to kill those responsible for it, as Kaczynski's resolve hardened. He began A bombing campaign that would grow deadly. The FBI found itself in a desperate race to locate the man. They called the Unabomber before he found his next victim. This is episode 2 in the woods. It's May 25th, 1978. Ted Kaczynski puts on a pair of sunglasses. He grabs the hood of his sweatshirt and pulls it over his head as he begins walking through campus at the University of Illinois at Chicago Circle. Kaczynski scans the campus looking for the science building, and every time he passes a student. He searches their faces, trying to see if they're watching him, or whether they've noticed the package that he's carrying so caught. Mostly, Kaczynski knows he's being paranoid. From the outside, it looks like just a harmless paper wrapped package. But inside is a carved wooden box packed with gunpowder and match heads. If anyone opens it, the device is rigged to explode. Kaczynski tries to fight down a rising sense. And panic, he never intended to be here

carrying a bomb in broad daylight. This wasn't the plan at all. His original plan was simple. First, he'd build a pipe bomb and he'd mail it anonymously to a prominent science professor, and then at the professor opened it. Kaczynski would have his first casualty in his war against modern. Society and everything seemed to be on track until he stepped up to her mailbox this morning. He tried to shovel the parcel into it, but he was too big. The package wouldn't fit. He began to sweat, and he realized that he had only one option. He'd have to plant the bomb himself. Now Kaczynski is walking through campus like a lost freshman. Looking for the science building? He shouldn't even be in Chicago. He should be back in Montana, where he recently finished building a cabin. But he needed some extra cash and so he returned to the city to work. Kaczynski feels himself sweating under the hot sun, but finally he locates the science building. His heart begins to beat faster, and his mouth goes dry, and then he realizes this is too big a risk. He's crazy. He can't bring a package inside the building, but nearby is a parking lot and all at once, Kaczynski comes. Up with a new. He begins walking toward the lot. Anyone parked here will be a professor or science student. If they find the package, they might mail it like a Good Samaritan, or they'll try and open it themselves. By the way, it's going to end up in the hands of a scientist and a scientist will get hurt, which is exactly the plan. Kaczynski is trying to change the world to stop the development of technology. Bombing may be violent, but he's certain it's the only way to create change. Kaczynski hurries over and squats between a hatchback and a rusted Chevy. He pretends to tie his shoes, and then he carefully sets the package. Down soon he pops up again and walks away empty handed. It isn't until he's left the campus far behind that Ted Kaczynski allows himself to break into a smile. After years of thinking. And planning and feeling very afraid. He's finally taking a stand. Two months later, Ted Kaczynski flipped through newspaper. He's growing more frantic and irritated because it looks like once again, there's no news of his bomb. Finally, he reaches the back page and crumbles up the paper and needs to go for a walk. And clear his head. Hazinski looks out at the street. He's in a suburb of Chicago where his parents now live. And right now he's living with them and he hates it. Nearby is an ice cream parlor filled with happy. A car full of teenagers drives past blaring music. Kaczynski clenches his teeth. This isn't how life was supposed to look, and this isn't how his plan was. Supposed to turn out. Kaczynski begins walking down the street. He passes a gas station, when suddenly he hears someone calling his name. Kaczynski looks back there at the gas station. He sees a short woman with WAVY brown hair and glasses. Her name is Allen and she's a manager at the Foam Rubber Factory where Kaczynski has been working. And saving up money. He barely knows her, and now she's waving him over. Kaczynski feels on guard. He approaches Ellen and greets her with a cold hello, but Ellen smiles at Kaczynski and though he can't explain it, he suddenly feels more at ease as he nears her car, he notices a bumper sticker in Spanish. He asks Helen if she can speak the language. She says. May we? Kaczynski frowns. He corrects her and says that's that's actually French, but Alan rolls her eyes and smiles. Now Kaczynski understands it was a joke. He can't help himself. He starts to

chuckle, too, and without realizing it, he begins to feel even more at ease. Soon the two began a real conversation. Ellen talks about her recent trip to Mexico and the fascinating architecture she saw there. Kaczynski is surprised. Ellen always seemed superficial and bubbly, but now she's talking about culture, history, ideas. Kaczynski looks at the ground and admits he's always wanted to learn Spanish. Ellen gives his shoulder a nudge and says she'd be happy to teach him as long as he doesn't mind. A little French now and then. Kaczynski is suddenly tongue tied. He stands completely frozen, and before he can stammer out another word, Helen invites him over to her sister's house. She says they're playing cards and could use 1/4. Kaczynski looks away for a moment. He remembers his bomb and his frustrations and all the work he still has ahead of him. He can't take time to play cards, so he shakes his head and tells Alan he's busy. But she's persistent and says it'll be boring at her sister's place without him, she gestures to her cars. Passenger seat, tells him to hop in. He hesitates. No one's ever treated him like this. Seems off and strange. But then something inside him shifts against his better judgment. Ted Kaczynski takes a deep breath. Gets into the car. A month later, Ted Kaczynski hovers over a fresh baked apple pie. He looks up and sees Ellen smiling. The smell of cinnamon and nutmeg fills the air, and the kitchen is warm. Ellen hands Kaczynski a fork and with a grin she says it's. Time to eat. Kaczynski sinks the fork into the pie, and as he looks up at Ellen. He can't help but beam. She's standing at the counter of his parents kitchen, her brown hair curling from the heat. Kaczynski wants to wrap her in a hug and never let go. He shakes his head. He can't believe how quickly his life has flipped upside down. They've only been dating for a month and he still doesn't know Ellen that well. But tonight he thinks he needs to tell her something important. He's in love with her. Kaczynski takes a warm bite of pie. He tells Ellen that he forgives her for using too much sugar. She frowns. Seems like another moment of their playful arguing. And so Kaczynski smiles again as he eats the pie. It's been a perfect day. Maybe the first perfect day of his. Life that afternoon, he and Ellen went apple picking in the local orchard. He gave her a lecture on the different varieties of apples, and at one point, while reaching for a bright green apple, their hands touched. It was electric, and that's when Ellen kissed him. Felt strange at first. Ellen stuck her tongue in his mouth when he asked what she was doing, she pulled away, but she kept saying it was OK, that she was fine. As he takes another bite of pie, Kaczynski can't stop thinking about the kiss or about Alan. She's so free and easy going, and this last month he hasn't thought about his bombs once. Soon they finished the pie, and Ellen says she better get going. Kaczynski walks her out to her car and decides that he's going to kiss her again and tell her that. He loves her. They reach Ellen's car and his breath quickens. He leans in, but then Alan puts a hand on his chest and steps back. She says they need to talk. She's been thinking about the two of them, and she's not sure they have much in common. Kaczynski blanks rapidly. He says he's confused, but Ellen responds by saying that's exactly her point. Kaczynski doesn't understand people, she says she's sorry, but she doesn't think they should go out anymore. Kaczynski watches, stunned as Alan gets in her car and drives

away. Suddenly, he feels like he's right back in high school with all the same pain and humiliation Kaczynski feels his chest swell with rage and a dark question forms in his mind. He wonders if Ellen has been plotting this from the start. Maybe she thought it would be funny. To get his hopes up and then get rid of him. That's the only possible explanation, Kaczynski snarls. He knows Ellen will be back at work on Monday, and he can make her suffer, too. A few days later, David Kaczynski stands at the bathroom sink, slowly washing his hands. He pauses and stares at himself in the mirror, and he listens to the hum of the machines and saws coming from. Outside the bathroom. Right now, David's in no hurry to return to the floor of this factory in Chicago, especially not with everything that's happened this. David reaches for a towel and that's when he spots it. A piece of note paper taped to the wall, David and muggers and leans in. Once he's close enough, he can see the handwriting and his stomach clenches. It's something from Ted again. For the past few days, Ted has been writing obscene poems about his ex-girlfriend, Ellen. He then posted the poems around the fact. These dirty poems could get him fired, but David is Ted's supervisor and he told Ted in no uncertain terms that he needed to stop posting. Inside the bathroom, David rips the latest poem off the wall. He reads it again and then stops. The imagery is nasty. Apparently this is Ted's answer to his order. It's direct defiance. David marches out of the bathroom holding a poem. It's time to confront his brother and put an end to this. David steps out into the gravel parking lot and finds Ted at the picnic table. David marches up and shoves the paper and Ted's face. Ted just smirks and takes a bite out of his apple. Ted, I told you, you need to stop. What do you think the latest one? I don't know if it's my best Ted. This is unacceptable. I know. I agree. My rhymes aren't precise. Ted, listen to me. This could get you fired. It could get me fired. But David, who's the one who's going to fire me? David clenches his John looks away. Come on, David. You're not going to do anything. You always protect. Me. You need to stop. Or what? What are you going to do? You know what I could do and what I should do. But you've never had the strength. Have you? I'll tell you what. I'm gonna go home and I'm gonna write another poem. Better one. All the idiots on the factory floor are gonna love it. I'm telling you, Ted, don't do this. I'll see you. Tomorrow, little brother. Ted rises from the table and starts walking away, and David shuts his eyes and says the words he's tried his best to avoid saying Ted, Ted going to recommend your termination immediately. For a moment, Ted Mugshot, then his eyes narrow and he flings aside his apple. Go ahead, you can always go back to Montana while you're stuck in this pathetic job. Then Ted pauses suddenly looking wounded. You know, we promise to stick together. You just broke that promise, and he turns and disappears down the block. David's sighs and kicks at the gravel. It's been a miserable day. He knows that as a supervisor, he's right to fire Ted. You can't act like that on the job and get away with it. David was left with no choice, but he also can't help feel that Ted is right too. He should have stood by his brother and suddenly David feels an urge to run as fast as he can. Stop, Ted. Tell him that he loves him and that everything's going to be OK because

David knows that even though he can't condone Ted's behavior, they do need to stick together. He has to find some way to repair this relationship.

It's the early fall of 1979 Ted Kaczynski lies awake in his cabin in Montana. It's 5:00 AM, but he can't sleep. The noise keeps waking him till he finally realizes what it is. Dripping water. He groans and fumbles with a flashlight in the dark. He hits the switch, and sure enough, there's water dripping steadily. From a growing crack in the ceiling Kaczynski points the beam around his small cabin. It's just 10 by 12 feet. Rows of books and packages of food lining the shelves, but all of it seems to be ruined from the rain dripping into the cabin. Kaczynski leaps out of bed and begins sifting through socky boxes of oatmeal and books with swollen pages. He's furious, slamming a heavy book down on the shelf, and he leans against the cold wall, trying to figure out what to do next. Two months ago, Ted Kaczynski saved up enough money and left Chicago. He promised himself he'd never go back there to work, no matter how badly he needed the money. He was done with people done with society, but looking around his cabin he can tell there's no way around it. Repairing these leaks is going to cost money and now he'll have to go back to the city. Once again. Suddenly Kaczynski remembers something else, and his heart starts racing. The rain could have damaged his bomb supplies, too. Kaczynski drops to his knees and begins tearing open cardboard boxes. He spent months stockpiling batteries and gunpowder ingredients. He's made all his purchases slowly to avoid suspicion. If his supplies are wet. He'll be set back months, he finishes checking the boxes and leans back in relief. All the supplies are still dry. And just then the rain finally stops. He rises and opens his front door, inhaling the smell of fresh pine trees. He knows that this is where he belongs. Far from cars and gas stations and malls. Far from conformists like Ellen who are destroying the world. Kaczynski takes a deep breath and feels a sense of purpose. He hasn't felt in years. That's when he makes up his mind. Somehow he'll fix up the cabin. It's time to restart his campaign against industrial society. He hasn't succeeded in hurting anyone yet, but he knows that if he just buckles down, he can make more lethal bombs and his enemies. I'll be so lucky next time. Three years later, it's a bright summer morning at the University of California, Berkeley. Diogenes Angelico's walks into his office in the Computer Science building. He sets down his heavy briefcase and grabs his mug. Angelitos is a professor of electrical engineering. He has a full day of research. Ahead of him and First things first, he needs to grab some coffee from the break room. As Angelico Sanders, he twists open the Venetian blinds, and then he turns toward the coffee. But there's something odd sitting in front of the coffee machine. The size of a typewriter case, and it's wrapped in tape gauges and wires stick out of the sides and on top it's a green wooden handle and Gelato scratches his chin. The building has been under construction, so he wonders if one of the construction workers left this device here. Then he sees a typewritten note attached to the top saying woo it works. I told you it would. Angelico's frowns. Here's no idea who this is addressed to. It's all very odd, but he has to get to work, and for that he needs his coffee. So he decides to

move the device aside. As soon as he lifts the handle as a loud burst, angelitos goes flying backward, he crashes into a table and lands in a heap on the floor. After that, everything sounds muffled and belicose lies on the ground, his vision going in and out, and the smell of ghastly burns, his eyes and nostrils, angelitos calls out for help. Or can barely hear his own voice. He tries to raise himself off the floor but collapses. And that's when he starts to feel the pain. He peers down and where his hands should be, and only sees as a mangled, bloody mess and Jellicoe looks up. And there's a student standing over him, and even through his damaged eardrums he can hear her scream in horror. It's may 1985, three years later, Ted Kaczynski walks through the bus station in Lincoln Mt. Today, he's wearing all black and has a laundry sack hanging over. He hears an engine coming, roaring to life, and then it begins to rumble. That must be his bus warming up because Ensky knows he doesn't have much time. And so with a quick glance around, he ducks into the men's bathroom. Kaczynski checks under the stalls. He's all alone, and then he steps into the far stall and reaches into the laundry bag. He tosses aside a pile of clothes and begins searching for the parts to his latest bomb. He has to check again. He's afraid that he's missing a critical piece, and he'll need it once he steps off this bus and begins making his way to Berkeley. Because he has another surprise in store for the Computer science department. Kaczynski's hand trembles, and he feels around for the bomb components. It's a Six Mile bike ride back to his cabin. If he has to go back, there's no question he'll miss the bus. When a moment later, his hand closes on the cold metal of a pipe, Kaczynski closes his eyes and breathes A sigh of relief. It's all there. Kaczynski starts shoving everything back into the laundry. Back as he does, he feels lightheaded. He hasn't been eating much lately. The cost of bomb supplies is cutting into his food budget, and so are all the disguises he had to buy jackets and shoes and hair dye. He even buys wads of bubble gum he stuffs into his cheeks to make his face look different. All of these expenses. Kaczynski hoist the bag and exits the stall. The sink is filthy, but he splashes water on his face, and that's when he notices someone's hair on the sink. Normally this would disgust him, but today he sees them differently. They're a reminder of physical evidence. Kaczynski has been very careful with all of his moms. He strips the cases off batteries to remove the serial numbers. He soaks every component in soybean oil and salt water to remove fingerprints, and yet he still has a nagging feeling that it's not enough, according to the newspapers, the FBI has now linked all his bombs together. He worries that the feds could be closing in. But maybe he can do something more. He could plant evidence, create a misdirect, and all it would take is a few stray hairs because Inski won't use these hairs. He can't risk drawing the FBI into Lincoln, Montana, but he'll be traveling across the country and there won't be any shortage of hairs and bus stops along the way. Kaczynski smiles life is about to get much harder for the FBI. It's May 15th, 1985. Patrick Webb hurries through the campus of UC Berkeley. The wind blows through a Grove of eucalyptus trees, and all at once we have experiences, an uncanny feeling of deja vu. He approaches the computer science building and here is the whale of sirens. Police tape flutters in the breeze, and although it's been three

years, the news is the same. There was another bombing inside this. Web works for the FBI and he's been called in once again to figure out who was responsible for this attack. Webb is one of the country's foremost experts on terrorist bombings. And yet, as he makes his way through this academic building, he can't help but feel like an outsider. Truth is, Web failed out of college on his first attempt, even 20 years later. He feels a nagging desire to prove that he's actually smart enough to be at the FBI. Being on the Unabomber case for three fruitless years hasn't helped, but he hopes that today he can begin to put an end to this losing streak. Webb enters the building and as he approaches the computer lab, he can smell burnt plastic and hair. He steps into the room and gets a full view of the destruction. The floor is littered with fragments. There are scraps of black plastic and what looks like part of a file box. From what web can tell, this is a completely different bomb than the last time. But there are also the familiar bits of rubber bands, melted batteries and pieces of pipe. Web runs a hand through his hair, which has started to turn grey. There's no doubt in his mind this is the Unabomber's work. Just then, another FBI agent appears in the doorway. Webb straightens up and shoots him a glance. So who's the victim? Graduate Student, Air Force captain. Actually, he lost several fingers. But he'll live, right? He got lucky, though. He was saved by some professor. A guy named Diogenes. Webb's eyes widen. Diogenes Angelico S yeah. You know him? Yeah. He almost got blown up by the last bomb here. So he saved this Air Force guy. How's that? Yeah, the old man snapped into it, pulled his tie off, wrapped it around the Air Force kids fingers and stopped. The bleeding. Well, any clues? The agent shakes his head and flipped through a notepad. Now, no fingerprints, no serial numbers. We got nothing. You all haven't tracked down a single shred of evidence. Nope, nothing. What have you been doing all this time? Apparently twiddling our thumbs waiting for you to come save the day. I don't know if I'm going to save the day. We've got 8. 8 bombs now, not a single fingerprint. Why would he risk coming back here? Oh, get it. Why Berkeley? The computer? Science Department web surveys the room, taking in the details. He knows the FBI behavioral team has pieced together a psychological profile of the Unabomber. It's supposed to be cutting edge, and the conclusion is that the Unabomber is a blue collar type, someone with little. But Webb doesn't buy it. Unabomber has mostly been targeting university campuses, and it seems awfully familiar with Berkeley's campus. Webb turns to the other agent. I think they want us to interview every single faculty member in this building. Ask about disgruntled professors and former students and come to think of it, we should also. Interview all the current students. That's got to be hundreds of them, and we'll do hundreds of interviews. We'll also need. To pull all the records for any parking tickets issued in the past week, do it for the previous bombing too. We're looking for any suspicious vehicles, anything suspicious at all. Well, Gee, is that all? Yeah, one more thing. Get rid of the sarcasm. Now go. The agent leaves and wed turns back to the bomb scene. He knows he'll take another all nighter to catalogue this evidence. Somewhere in this mess, there's got to be a clue.

It's early June 1985. The skies are. Bright blue and. The woods of northern Montana. But today Ted Kaczynski is crouched inside his cabin, sifting through a stack of newspapers. He's flipping through pages searching for news. Got his second bomb at Berkeley. Once again, he can't find a single article about it. He flips past ads for cosmetics and TV's, and many drones. Seems like he's not getting through to anyone. But finally he sees it. A short item buried inside the San Francisco Examiner. The piece says that a bomb exploded inside the UC Berkeley computer lab. There was one victim, an Air Force captain who aspired to be an astronaut. He lost several fingers, and now he'll never reach his dreams. Kaczynski sets the paper down. This is exactly the kind of person he wanted to hurt a military goon who's tied up with the whole technological system. He couldn't have asked for a better. But to his amazement, Kaczynski's chest tightens and all he feels is pity. He ruined this man's life. It's a stunning feeling, but soon it transforms into rage. Kaczynski doesn't know what's wrong with himself. He then grabs the newspaper and hurls it into the stove. Kaczynski takes a few. Then he grabs his journal off the shelf and searches for a pen that works. He started the journal to document his crusade against technology. He knows that if he's ever caught, people will consider him insane. He needs something to show the entire world that his actions were moral and rational. His journal is also a place he uses to work out his feelings. And so Kaczynski begins writing about his internal arguments, his thoughts about violence, and the need to change the world. He interrogates himself about the costs of his actions, the people he's hurting and the benefits of his bombing campaign. He leans back, his hand aching. From all the writing. And after he finishes this long entry, he closes the journal, feeling clear? Headed again. He knows now that there's absolutely nothing to feel guilty about. He's fighting for the future of humankind. Violence is wholly justified. Kaczynski sets aside the journal and steps out his front door. He gazes into the woods where birds are fluttering about. He knows that he doesn't just need to toughen up. Kaczynski needs to take his campaign further. Naming people won't change anything. It won't bring an end to the industrial world to finish the job he started. Kaczynski needs to kill. It's late December 1985, Ted Kaczynski walks into the town library in Lincoln, Mt. He shakes the snow off his jacket and warms his hands as he looks around the small building. The library looks like an old log cabin filled with thousands of books. It's one of the few things Kaczynski. Mikes about Lincoln, but today he isn't here to browse for books. He just returned from his latest mission in Sacramento, CA, and he needs to check the papers for news. Kaczynski spots the librarian sitting at the front desk. He'll admit that he actually enjoys talking with her, and now, as she notices Kaczynski, she looks up and smiles. Ted, it's been some time. It looks thin. But it's nice to. See you. You as well. You must be here for. These I've got all your newspapers right here. Remind me, Ted, you worked at Berkeley, right? That's why you didn't hear. Hear what? What's in the paper? It was another bombing. Kaczynski suddenly feels a surge of excitement that means his device worked anyway. They're saying this latest one is connected to the bombings at Berkeley, so I thought of you working there. Thank God you're not in California anymore. This last bomb. They

said it actually killed someone. Man who owned a computer store. Kaczynski feels his excitement grow even more. He wants to pump his fist to leap up laughing and he knows he has to contain himself. So he died. Yeah, so sad. Well, not really. It's not sad. Those people pushing computers on everyone. They're making everything worse for everyone else. They're better off without them. Librarians expression changes now. How can you say something like that? Because it's true. One day there won't even be books in libraries. Even if that's true, it doesn't mean that he deserved to die. Kaczynski wants to correct her, to remind her that objectively, the man was making the world a worse place when he knows he can't. Afford to sound suspicious? I suppose you're right. He is a poor guy. Well, I just hope they catch the guy who did it. That says the police are offering \$25,000 for his capture. Ted raises an eyebrow. 25,000 is pretty flattering, but someone would have to catch him first. And between his disguises and the false clues he's been planting, he knows there's just no way. Kaczynski grabs the newspapers and sticks them in his backpack. He then exits into the cold winter air. Kaczynski feels proud of himself killing the computer store owner was a good start, but he knows there's much more work to do. He wants to lead a revolution and bring down the whole technological system. But to do that he needs to do more than just terrorize people. Kaczynski gets on his bicycle and begins peddling toward home. He thinks about the journal he's been keeping. He knows that bombs are powerful, but so too, or words. And now, somehow he needs to get his words in front of as many people as possible. About a year later, Patrick Webb is at work in the FBI building in San Francisco. It's a bland government office full of metal file cabinets, buzzing fluorescent lights and bulky fax machines like the one web is ready to pound with his fist. Webb is staring at the beige machine and glaring at its blinking red light. He's pushed every button he tore off the front panel and checked for paper jams, but still all he's getting is this blinking red light. Web size. He's a bomb expert who works for the FBI, and right now he only needs one single fax, something that could help him track down the Unabomber before he kills again. Something that could? Put an end to the seemingly endless investigation. Webb has been on the case for five years now and has been full of nothing but frustration. The FBI still has zero good leads. They did manage to collect hair samples at one site. It was a rare mistake for the Unabomber. Still, it got them nowhere. But yesterday, finally they got a real lead. Another bomb went off in Salt Lake City, and this time someone saw the Unabomber, a woman working in a computer store known as someone creeping around the parking lot. She thought the guy was letting air out of people's tires, but then she saw him pull something out of a laundry bag. She asked her. Loss to check it out. And when he did, the object blew up in his face. The man survived, and once the woman pulled herself together, she gave a description to a sketch artist. The Utah FBI office said they'd faxed the sketch right over. Now Webb is standing by the fax machine, waiting for the sketch to. Print out. A minute later, a junior agent walks over. She squats down and takes a look at the machine and then she says she knows. What the problem is? Web rubs his eyes as the agent walks over to a cabinet and unwraps a fresh toner cartridge. Web watches

in disbelief. It can't be this simple. But then the agent snaps the toner into place and a second later the machine springs to life. Red massages his temples and can't help but laugh. A long queue of pages begin spitting out for the machine. Web tosses them aside searching for that one crucial page, and soon it comes through. Webb stares at the eyewitness sketch of the Unabomber, shows a man with a thin mustache and dark aviator sunglasses. He wears a hooded sweatshirt and his gaze is leveled right at the viewer. It's just a drawing. Web gets a chill looking at it. He then turns to the other agent and tells her to call up every magazine in the country, Time, Newsweek, Reader's Digest, Playboy, all of. Web tells the agent to make sure they have a copy of this sketch so they can run it. The agent is taken aback. She asked if we'd really wants this thing running in Playboy. The web nods and says they need every eyeball they can get on it. He tells the agent to get going and then watches her scurry off. Webb takes another look at this hand drawn sketch. He can feel it. They're getting closer. For years, he's been visiting crime scene after crime scene, he spent uncountable hours collecting evidence and reading reports about death and destruction. But finally he has a breakthrough. Webb knows he's going to catch the Unabomber, and when he does, this reign of terror will finally come to a close.

Next on American scandal, a fight erupts between Ted Kaczynski and his brother David. And when tragedy strikes, the Kaczynski family begins to break apart from wondering.

This is episode two of the Unabomber for American scandal.

A quick note about our reenactments. In most cases, we can't know exactly what was said, but all our dramatizations are based on historical research.

If you'd like to learn more about the Unabomber case, we recommend the books Harvard and the Unabomber by Alston Chase Every Last Tie by David Kaczynski and Hunting the Unabomber by Lis Wiehl.

American Scandal has hosted, edited and executive produced by Me, Lindsey Graham for airship audio editing by Molly Bach. Sound design by Derek Barons. This episode is written by Sam Keene, edited by Christina Maltsberger. Our senior producer is Gabe Riven. Executive producers are Stephanie, Jens, Jenny, Lower Beckman, and Hernan Lopez for wondering.

3. 35,000 Words

A fight erupts between Ted Kaczynski and his brother, David. And when tragedy strikes, the Kaczynski family begins to break apart.

It's evening, December 1992 in a steakhouse in San Francisco. The lights are low and the booths are crowded. Glasses clank and chatter and music fills the air. At a corner table, Patrick Webb slowly nurses a beer and waits patiently. He gazes across the table and sees a row of empty bottles. The other people sitting beside him seemed to be drunk. They're laughing and getting louder by the minute, but not Webb. He knows that tonight is not an occasion for heavy drinking. He needs to remain sober. And clear-headed because he's got an important task at hand and he's waiting for the right moment to strike. Webb is a bomb expert with the FBI, and right now he's sitting alongside three other FBI agents. They're in town for a conference, and while they seem to be having a good time, Webb is in a foul mood because he just learned that the FBI is planning to shut down the Unabomber case. Webb understands why the Bureau has gotten so impatient. It's been 5 long years since the FBI released a sketch of the Unabomber to media outlets across the country. Webb expected a breakthrough in a matter of weeks, but no credible leads ever emerged for Webb, who's given his life to this case. The sketch was just another frustrating dead end. And throughout this time, the Unabomber has gone quiet. So the FBI decided this investigation is a waste of time and money. But Webb isn't ready to give up because he knows the Unabomber could still very well be out there if they shut down the case, Americans could still be at risk, and the Bureau will have thrown away years of Webb's hard work. So now Webb knows it's his job to get just a little more time, enough to finish the case, and he knows just the person who can help. Even Webb glances to his right and a man with a square jaw and thin brown hair. His name is Chris Renee, and he's an FBI supervisor who has real power in Washington all night. Renee has been talking to another agent who's happy to see the case shut down. Webb has been waiting for the right opportunity so he can make his argument and ask Renee to save the case and now just as the other agent rises and says he needs to use the bathroom, Webb knows it's time to strike. Webb sits down his bottle and leans in to talk with Renee. Can you believe this I mean talk about short-sighted, Chris. I expected better decisions coming out of DC. The folks at headquarters are frustrated. Pat, you know that it's been years since there's been a single new development. Come on. Don't give me the party line.

Tell me, what do you think first? Renee takes a deep swig of beer as he considers his words. Look, it doesn't matter what I think. It's not my call. But that's the thing. You have power. You have influence. Come on. Put your thumb on the scale. But why? Let's be serious. The case is dead. Chris, you remember that guy who had a computer store born over in Sacramento? Remember the guy who was killed by UNABOM? I said, yeah, I remember him well. I get a call from his mother every month. When am I going to catch her son's killer? So, Chris. What am I supposed to tell her now? Ohh, come on. Don't get sentimental. You know you can't win them all. What if UNABOM strikes again? Any word leaks out that we've dropped the case? How would that look? Renee twirls his beer bottle and doesn't say anything, so Webb jumps in with his Trump card. You know you. Made this case, Chris, it's your baby. Web knows it's true. Renee was the first person to link all the early bombs. Without him, there might not be a Unabomber case, and so web shoots him a. Look of pity. You're telling me now you want to abandon it? Rooney shifts uncomfortably and shuts his eyes. Right then Webb knows he's won. OK, pat. OK, fine. I'll recommend an extension. But one year, one year, tops. And if there's no new leads, that's it. You won't regret it, Chris. Promise you that. Right then. Wet grits and announces that the next round is on him. Finally he feels like he can sit back and enjoy the night, but as he searches for the waitress and realizes that after tonight he can't waste any more time, he has only one year on the Unabomber case. The clock is already ticking.

From wondering, I'm Lindsey Graham and this is American scandal. By the mid 1980s, Ted Kaczynski's bombs left several people injured and one man dead. Yet the FBI found itself stymied as agents struggled to identify the Unabomber. Then, in 1987, the bombing ceased. The quiet period lasted five years. Many wondered if the Unabomber had died or had been arrested for another. Time, but Kaczynski was simply plotting the next phase in his campaign of terror. He also began to write a manifesto, something he hoped would drive a. Yet Kaczynski didn't realize that his manifesto would soon expose his identity. This is episode 335 thousand words. It's the fall of 1989 Ted Kaczynski stares at a piece of paper, his hand shaking. His fingers are cold and stiff, and his heart begins to race as he reads the letter he holds. Kaczynski just got back to his cabin after biking to the town of Lincoln, Montana. It was a Six Mile ride over hills and through a dense pine forest. Kaczynski felt alive and full of vigour, and when he stepped inside his cabin, he unzipped his backpack and took out the letter he picked up while in. It was from his younger brother David. When, as good as he felt before now as he finishes the letter, he feels himself go numb. He lets the paper fall onto the table. It lands next to a set of batteries, the necessary supplies for his latest bomb experiments. He gazes across his small cap. It's silent as always, and suddenly Ted Kaczynski feels totally alone and full of rage. He can't believe what David just wrote. It was another note about that woman, Linda. Ted first heard about Linda 2 decades ago, when he and David took a trip through Canada. For 20 years, she kept David on a string. It was embarrassing to see him that desperate, and Ted knew that his brother.

Had grown weak. But then it got worse. David briefly lived on a homestead in rural Texas, but gave up on that pure life. Instead, he got a home and a car, just like all normal people trying. Fit in. But then David announced that he and Linda are getting married. Ted rises and paces around his cabin. He races back to the letter to read it one more time. Maybe he misread it. Maybe he's losing his mind. But as he finishes rereading the letter, he feels himself once again aching in pain. Ted buries his face in his hands. He squats down to the ground and then he lets out a piercing scream until his throat cracks and burns. It's clear David has abandoned him. He's too blind to realize that this Linda is manipulating him and using sex to tear the brothers apart. David's stupidity and selfishness. It's like a knife and Ted's back. And now Ted can't help but wield a weapon himself. Ted sits down and grabs a pen and paper. He begins furiously writing a response. He says he's disgusted by David's weakness. He calls his brother a fool and he issues an ultimatum, breaks things off with Linda, or he will cease all communication. Ted finds an envelope and seals up the note. He hates going into town too often ever since the FBI began sending around that sketch of him, but tomorrow he'll make an exception. Because David needs to know that there are consequences for his actions. A year later, David Kaczynski exits to Chicago Freeway and heads toward the suburb of Lombard. He glances right and sees his father, Turk, sitting in the passenger seat. He looks exhausted and old. And as he stares out the window, Turk grabs a cigarette and wipes it. David's eyes go wide with shock. The two of them just left Turk's latest chemotherapy session. He was diagnosed with lung cancer and David came all the way from New York to take care of him. But here Turk is still smoking. David reaches out and tries to grab the cigarette, but Turk fends him off. David then pounds the steering wheel. And ask why they're even bothering with treatments. If Turk is just giving up on life. But Turk just shrugs and doesn't say a word. He keeps staring out the window, that coldness, he reminds David of Ted and any reminder of Ted makes David feel desperate with sadness. He hasn't heard from Ted in over a year. Not since Ted mailed an angry response after learning about David's engagement. And now with her father shutting down seems like the whole family is full. Part David knows he has to do something to change this, to fix his family and bring them back together. Soon, David pulls up to his parents house. He and Turk step inside and David grabs the mail. He sorts through some bills, a catalog, and then sees a letter, makes his heart skip a beat because he'd know that blocky handwriting anywhere. It's a letter from. And David tears it open with a surge of hope. He recently wrote to Ted and told him the horrible news that their father had terminal lung cancer. He had hoped that this family emergency would somehow Rouse Ted and convinced him to rejoin the family. But as he reads the letter, David's heart sinks and acknowledges that he received the news of his father's condition. But he offers no sympathy and he doesn't offer to return home to Sea Turk or to be with the family as their father. David sets down the letter and rests his head in his hands. He had hoped he could somehow save Ted, bring the family back together. But now, for the first time, he feels it might be too late. Ted may be too far gone. A month later, Wanda Kaczynski stares blankly across

a Funeral Home in the Chicago suburbs. She feels dizzy and slow, and even though she hears the soft music coming from an organ, and even though she sees a table lined with flowers, somehow none of this makes any sense. Doesn't make any. Sense at all. Wanda's son David suddenly appears and hands are up. The food he tells her she has to eat so she takes the plate, but then her hands start shaking, and before she can help it, Wanda drops her fork. She feels like something has broken inside her and she begins. To ***. Once again, she replays the scene in her. Mind the same one. She can't let go of. Can't stop remembering. It was just last week. And she was in the living room at home. Wanda heard a loud pop from upstairs. She stood up worrying that her husband, Turk, had fallen. David was at home too, and he went upstairs to check. But a moment later, he came back downstairs. His eyes were wide and his mouth hanging open. He told Juana that Turk had shot himself with a rifle. Now, remembering that moment, Wanda's grief begins to overtake her again as she stands trembling in the middle of the Funeral Home, an old friend approaches and gives her. A hug, but she's weeping hopelessly and searching for an explanation for everything that's happened. But that's something she knows she'll never get. Want to spend days looking for a suicide note? She searched the house top to bottom, looking for a simple last message from church. Something saying I love you. But there was nothing Turk could be cold like that. Just like Ted and Wanda knows. That's one of the worst parts of. All of this. Turk and Ted never reconciled, but Wanda knows it's not too late for her to reconnect with Ted. David invited him to the funeral, and so far he hasn't shown up. But maybe he will. Maybe she'll see her son the person. She wants here more than. Any friend or relative? A few minutes later, the funeral director appears at Wendy's Elbow. He says he has a long distance phone call. Wanda sighs and nods. She is exhausted, but she should at least thank whoever's calling. Warren steps into another room and picks up the phone. It's me. Want his heart suddenly soars? It's Ted. The first time he's called in years. Teddy, are you in town? Are you here? I'll come get you. No, no, I'm not. Mom. I'm in Montana. This is costing me \$3 a minute. Oh, OK. Well, don't worry. I'll pay you back. I'm just so glad you. David sent an emergency letter about Dad. So you heard. It's awful. Just terrible. Terrible for all of us. No, it wasn't terrible. It was brave. He died on his own terms like a man. I I admire him. Bites her lip and pinches back a tear. She doesn't know what to say. Mom, what is it? I. I do feel sorry for you. I know you loved him. Listen, teddy. No matter what happened in the past, it is not too late. We want you in our lives. I love you. I miss you. Stop it. Teddy, I said I love you. Come back and be with us. Wanda holds her breath and waits for him to say something and all she hears is silence. And then. A click Danny. Hello, teddy. Wanna sits down the phone and wipes her nose. Her heart is still aching, but she feels something else. A small trickle of hope. Teddy did call. He wouldn't have called if he didn't care. As Wanda rejoins the funeral, she catches David's eye across the room and she feels her strength coming back. She has two good kids, and even if the family is trained right now, someday, hopefully she can bring them back together once again. It's two years later, the summer of 1992, Ted Kaczynski Shields his eyes and looks over

an endless forest of pine trees. He takes a deep breath and wipes the sweat from his forehead, and then he continues hiking up the slope in northern Montana. Kaczynski loves to hike, gives him a chance to clear his head and commune with nature. But today isn't just about trees and mountains. Today, Kaczynski is experimenting with a new type of bomb. It's been over five years since his last bombing in Salt Lake City. Since then, he's been lying low and rethinking his strategy, planting bombs in person is out of the question. He can't risk being spotted again now that the whole country has seen that famous sketch of him. At the same time, large packages are expensive to mail and they arouse. Kaczynski needs something smaller, something stealthier. And that's why he's begun experimenting with aluminum powder mixed with ammonium nitrate and extremely powerful explosive, and he's built a bomb that could be a work of genius. It looks like a hot dog inside a bun. First, The detonator inside goes off and then that ignites the surrounding ammonium nitrate. But Kaczynski has faced setbacks, with a number of duds. Still, he knows that if this new detonator works, he'll be that much closer to building the perfect. Bomb first, though, he needs to test it. Out on the hillside, Kaczynski scans the forest. Finally, he spots a large dead tree with a hollow in his trunk. Kaczynski walks toward it and wedges the bomb inside the hole. He then lights a long fuse. Turning off, Kaczynski finds a space between 2 boulders. He settles in and waits, feeling the stab of anxiety because he can't afford any more duds. After hundreds of experiments, he's almost out of money and the last thing he wants is to have to ask David or his mother. For anything else. Several minutes pass and Kaczynski grows nervous. He rocks back and forth waiting, and then he grows certain it's another failure. Maybe it's time to give up. Maybe he's not the genius he thought he was causing ski stands and starts walking. Back but when he's 100 feet from the tree, there's a thunderous explosion. Kaczynski falls to his knees and listens as the boom echoes through the mountains. Kaczynski's mouth hangs open and he jumps up and runs back to the tree. He smells burnt wood and sees plumes of smoke and a smile lights up his bearded face. The tree trunk. Is a smoking black crater. Kaczynski examines the side rolling charred to breathe beneath his foot. If his bomb tore apart solid wood, he can only imagine what he would do to an unsuspecting scientist, izinski grins again. He may have been quiet the last few years, but he is. Far from done.

It's June 22nd, 1993 in a bright, cloudless day in Tiburon, CA, Charles Epstein pulls into the driveway of a big White House and steps out of his car. He pauses for a moment and looks out at the San. Francisco Bay. Epstein would love to lie out in the sun and relax, but today he came home early because he has an important task. Ahead of him, he needs to finish writing a grant application or that will let him keep pushing ahead with his important work as a geneticist at UC San Francisco. Recently, he's been getting a lot of attention and was even featured in the New York Times. In his research, he splices genes into mice to give them the equivalent of Down syndrome and Alzheimer's disease. The public response to his genetic engineering has been overwhelming, but it hasn't all been positive. Even if Epstein believes his work will save people's lives,

Epstein unlocks the front door and quickly glances at the mail on the kitchen table. The stack includes a small package from the chemistry department at Cal State Sacramento. It's about the size of a VHS cassette, but heavier. Epstein is curious, so he sits down at the table and begins to open it. It all happens very fast. There's a huge bang and a bright white force blows him backward. Suddenly, he sprawled on the kitchen floor. The table has been blown off its legs, the windows shattered. Epstein feels a terrible throbbing, and then a searing pain coming from his right hand. He's dazed, but he knows he needs medical help and quickly he drags himself across the floor and manages to reach the phone. But he can't dial 911 because several of his fingers are missing. Using all his strength, he gets to his feet and nudges the door open. Then he steps outside. He noticed his gardener is working in his neighbor's yard. He starts toward them, limping in incredible pain and hoping he can stay conscious long enough to reach them. An hour later, Patrick Webb turns the steering wheel of his Toyota sedan and heads toward the Golden Gate Bridge.

The car approaches the tall red beams and looks out across the Bay. The sun is starting to set and the water on the Bay is calm. Web glances. Right quickly locks eyes with his wife, Florence. She shoots him a mischievous grin. He then grabs her hand and gives it. A kiss. Tonight's going to be a perfect night. Web and his wife are going out for a romantic dinner, one that's long overdue. Webb has been working tirelessly and he knows that his pursuit of the Unabomber has started to take a toll on his marriage. That's no surprise to Webb. It's been six months since he got his extension on the case, but his team hasn't found a single new lead and morale in. The unit has grown. The stress is steadily turning webs, hair Gray and affecting his relationship with Florence. But tonight is finally his chance to reverse course and fix things with his wife. Ran this halfway across the bridge when his cellular phone rings, Florence shoots A withering look. Don't do it. I shouldn't let it go. Look, it'll it'll be two seconds. Don't pick it. Up. This is our night. Web grips the steering wheel tight, he feels torn, but he knows what he has to do. So Webb lets go of Florence's hand and picks up the heavy phone. He quickly glances at Florence, but she's already turned away with a look of resigned anger. Web knows he'll just have to patch this up later. He'll be fine. This is agent web. It's Dennis. I'm at the office. Can you talk? I'm just getting off the bridge. Hold on. Web finds a spot to pull over.

Before Florence can say anything, he hops out of the car and pulls out the phones antenna for better reception. There's been a bombing in Marin County. At a house. You think it's UNABOM? Pat has got all the hallmarks. He's the victim. Some scientist. He'll live. But he's in bad shape. Look, we need you to head over and lock down the crime scene, right? Webb's heart starts racing. He looks at Florence trying to meet her eyes, but she turns her head and again looks away. Webb knows he's got a terrible choice in front of him. He can't stand to hurt his wife. She's put up with night after night of late hours and this case has taken over his life. But he also knows he can't say no, not now, not when they finally have a development. All right, Dennis. Be there soon. Webb gets the address and hangs up. Then he walks back to his car and takes

the seat. Behind the wheel. For a moment, he and floor and sit in silence. Web can feel a heavy weight between the two of. Then the web knows he has to break the news. They have to reschedule dinner. This is too important. Florence sits quietly, her expression blank. And then Webb tells her the next piece of news. He doesn't have time to drive her home. He'll have to drop her off in a parking lot and have their daughter come pick. Drop Florence turns and shoots Web. A look of crushing disappointment, and she tells him that they can't go on like this. Something has to change, Web nods tells Florence that he loves her. He says he can't imagine what she must be feeling, but whatever anger she has, whatever resentment she's right to feel it. This job has taken over his life. And it's not OK. Florence nods and thanks him for saying that. But Webb reminds Florence that after all these years, finally the case has got some life again. And then he makes a promise. They may have to cancel yet another dinner, but this time is different. This time he's going. To get the Unabomber. Almost two years later, Ted Kaczynski is in his cabin in Montana and owner rampage. He turns over food boxes, digs through his bedding and piles of worn clothes. But he still can't find his missing notebook. For 16 years, Kaczynski has been the mastermind behind a deadly bombing campaign. He's injured and killed people and now he's finally ready to tell the world why he launched the campaign, how technology has corrosive effects on the human spirit, and how Kaczynski has an idea to change the world. He's been jotting down his ideas in the notebook, but now he can't find. It Kaczynski grunts and kicks over an apple. Crate there underneath it is the missing notebook. Kaczynski nearly collapses in happy relief, he stalks over and picks it up, and then he heads over to his typewriter. Kaczynski knows he's become a celebrity criminal with \$1,000,000 reward for his capture, and so now he plans to take advantage of this celebrity status. He's going to type up a manifesto and submit it for publication. He knows he can aim big. Maybe the Washington Post or New York Times. Maybe even Scientific American. He always liked. Wherever it's published, it's critical that millions of people read it. That will give his manifesto power because once people digest its message, they'll rise up in revolution. Humankind will finally throw off the chains of technology. Kaczynski licks his lips and bangs out the first line, the Industrial Revolution and its consequences have been a disaster for the human race. Suddenly, though, his arms feel weak. It's one thing to fantasize about publishing his manifesto, but it's another to stare at actual words on a page all at once. Kaczynski realizes what a huge risk this is. He's essentially mailing evidence straight to the FBI. But Kaczynski chuckles. The FBI has been chasing him for years, and so far they've been clueless. He could probably drop off his manifesto at FBI headquarters in person and still get away with everything. Somehow, they'd still screw it up. But Kaczynski knows there's no need to tempt fate. So he tosses this first sheet of paper into the fire, and he puts on a pair of gloves, picks up another sheet, and begins typing again. It's October 1995. David Kaczynski is searching through the newspaper collection at Union College in Schenectady, NY. His wife Linda stands beside him as the two search through the papers. They're looking for a special pull out section from a specific edition of 1 paper, a 35,000. Word manifesto, which the

Washington Post printed last month. The author of. The article is the terrorist known as the Unabomber. David frowns as he searches the papers. He resents being here. He heard about the manifesto when it was first printed, but didn't give it much thought. It sounded like the words of a psychopathic murderer, but one who apparently agreed to stop killing people if the newspaper published his ideas for David. This sort of blackmail was just another despicable. Act in a world that was growing more violent by the day. But David hadn't thought again about the manifesto until Linda brought it up. She mentioned that the manifesto was anti technology and it reminded her of how David described his brother Ted. She said she wondered if there was a connection. David was floored by this suggestion. Linda has never even met Ted, and now she was implying that he could be the Unabomber. Ted couldn't even stand to see a Bunny in a cage. How could he be a violent killer? Still, Linda insisted that David at least read the manifesto. He agreed just to keep the peace, which is why he's here today, searching through a collection of recent newspapers. Finally, Linda spots the issue of the post. They flip through it, but there's another hiccup, the supplement with the manifesto is missing. David exhales, feeling secretly relieved. He suggests that they call it a. Day. But then Linda's face lights up. She has an idea. The Internet. She grabs David's hand and drags him to a computer terminal. David and Linda have never been online before. And wait as the machine pings and hisses. But finally the 1st 6 pages of the manifesto load, David Settles in to read certain this is a waste of time. But when he finishes those 6 pages, he pushes his chair back and hurries out into the hallway. His face feels flushed, and he tells Linda he needs some room to breathe. For a minute or so, the two stand in the hallway client and then Linda asked David what he thought David looks down at the floor, feeling shaken. Then he looks back at Linda and says he's been waiting all day to shoot down her idea. But if he's being honest, something about the manifesto does sound like. There's a chance it's him. Maybe one in 1000. Linda takes his hand and says that even if it's only one in a million, they should still do. David size in his job, he works with troubled children and he always tells them to do the right thing and follow their conscience. But now he has his own dilemma and his own torn conscience, and he has no idea what to do. But David gets an idea. He was an English major in college and very good at analyzing texts. He tells Linda that he'll find a full copy of the manifesto and then dig up some of Ted's old letters. He'll compare the two line by line. David realizes it's going to be painful going over Ted's old letters. That pain won't be nearly as great as imagining. His brother as the new bomber, and so as quickly as he can, David is going to become an expert in the Unabomber's manifesto and hopefully proves that his brother is not a killer.

It's November 1995 and the month after David Kaczynski first read the Unabomber's Manifesto tonight, David sits on his living room couch with his wife, Linda. He grabs another yellow piece of paper from the pile on the coffee table and begins to read it. It's another old letter from Ted, and David winces as he revisits. All of Ted's rage and hatred. David is tired when he knows he has to keep reading. Every night

has been like this for the past few weeks. Instead of cooking or watching TV, he and Linda have ordered Takeout, settled down on the couch, and spent hours comparing tense old letters to the Unabomber's manifesto. It's the only way David can know with any certainty whether Ted's just a troubled man. Or murderer? David takes a deep breath and then continues reading the old letters. Halfway through reading, one, David lets out a groan, and he tells Linda that he's got something. It's yet another word with British spelling. David never understood why Ted spelled certain words the British way. He right analyze with an S instead of AZ. David always saw this as a harmless. Birth, but it doesn't seem harmless now. While reading the manifesto, David kept seeing those same British spellings, and each time he saw one, he couldn't help but get chills. Linda Jones down something in a notebook. She then looks up and says this is another point against Ted. David's eyes wander as he considers the horrifying implications. These past weeks he's gone back and forth like a pendulum, trying to figure out whether Ted is guilty or innocent. Part of him still can't imagine Ted as the human bomber. His brother may be mentally ill, but he's never been violent. But the evidence keeps stacking up. And what they found is uncanny. And has lived in Chicago, Michigan and the Bay Area. Those are all areas that were hit by bombs. Even worse, there seems to be a pattern in the timing of these attacks. Several bombs exploded soon after David and his parents sent money to Ted. David feels sick by the thought that he funded terrorism and murder, as he and Linda have continued this exercise, he's felt his own mental health teetering. He wishes this could all. Just go away. David sets aside the letter and stands up. He shakes his head, says this isn't working. This exercise isn't getting them anywhere. Linda watches David as he paces the room. He can tell she's exasperated. She wanted them to hand over the letters to the authorities, but David refused. Now, though, they're out of options. But then David stops pacing. He feels an electric charge of an idea as it begins to take shape. Then he sits back down on the couch and tells Linda he. Has a plan. He'll write Ted a letter and propose a visit. He'll say it's a chance for the brothers to catch up. He can even offer to pick up winter supplies for Ted as an incentive, and while he's up there, he can poke around for signs of bombs. If there's no evidence, we'll know for sure that Ted is innocent, then they can stop obsessing and get their. Life back. David smiles and waits for Linda to agree with the plan, but she doesn't. Instead, she tells him it's a terrible idea. It's dangerous. She's afraid Ted might hurt him. At that, David feels something inside him, snap and he yells at Linda that Ted is not violent. How many times does he have to say? That for her to. Believe it, Linda backs away and gives him a cold stare. She says that's. Fine, if he's so certain, then there's no point in reading all these letters. She then grabs her box of takeout and disappears into the bedroom. David rubs his hand through his hair and curses. He hates this and he hates all the ways he feels like he's failed. Ted, like he's led his brother down, but then he looks back and forth between Ted's letters and the Unabomber's manifesto, which are all spread out on the coffee. Deep down, he isn't sure that Ted is innocent, but he also can't go on with this uncertainty. So David sits down again, grabs a piece

of paper, he decides he will write Ted. He will pay him a visit and he will prove to Linda and himself that his brother is innocent. A month later, David Kaczynski walks up to his house and grabs the mail, but as he shuffles through it, he stops in his tracks to a letter addressed in blocky handwriting from Ted. David's hands tremble as he unlocks the front door. He steps inside and lets himself drop onto the couch. He stares at the letter, a heavy feeling of dread watching over him. He can't bring himself to read it. Not yet. Because he's still not sure what he'll actually do if Ted invites him to Montana, Ted could be a killer. He could be mad. David can't risk his life for such a foolish plan. And if he somehow raised Ted's suspicions, something even worse could happen. David can't live with that kind of guy. But David decides he can't hold out any longer. He tears open the envelope and pulls out the letter. It's short by Ted Standards, just two pages, and as soon as David scans the first line, his heart sinks. Ted is furious with David for writing. He says that he's choked with frustration. All he wants is to get his family off his back forever. And he lets David know that this includes him. The rest is a wandering, hateful rant. David thought that. After all these years, he could withstand this venom a little better. But he was wrong. Ted has come completely unhinged and it hurts more deeply than David ever thought possible. David's father is already dead now. It seems his brother is gone as well. But the worst part is he knows that this is tense intention. Ted wants to hurt him, pains David to admit this. But if Ted is willing to hurt his own family, he's probably willing to hurt strangers as well. David tries to read the letter again, but can't. His eyes are full of burning tears, and he realizes that he doesn't need to reread the letter. He already knows what he has to do. It's time to talk to the FBI. Three months later, David Kaczynski steps into a suite at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Washington, DC there's a woman waiting for him and sitting at a glass table. Her name is Kathy Puckett, and she's an FBI agent. David collapses into a chair and rubs his eyes. He's exhausted. Last night, he and his wife. Kinda flew to DC so he could meet with the FBI, but a Blizzard knocked out power everywhere in the city. He spent the night freezing cold in his hotel after that long, shivering night, he spent this morning being grilled by one of the agents. Colleagues, the conversation went on and on as the agent questioned David about Ted's history and why David thought he might be the Unabomber. It was excruciating. David realized then that there was no turning back. He had now betrayed his own brother. David looks up at Puckett, and he doubts this next interview will be any better. But he knows that he has to keep going. Even if he is tired, even if he is heartbroken from his own decision, because Ted appears to be unhinged and deadly. But if David cooperates, he could somehow still protect head. Agent Puckett sets down a mug and leans forward. So how are you doing, David? I hope my colleague wasn't too eager this morning. That's one way to put it, guys, a bully. He pushed and pushed. All he wanted was for me to hand over Ted's letters. I'm sorry. I don't think you should have been treated that way. When you understand. That's why I was afraid to talk to you people. I mean my brother. He's mentally ill. I can't just give you some evidence and then have a bunch of FBI agents

go charging into his cabin. David, that's not exactly how it would happen. We're just collecting information. Listen to me. He could be in. Yes, you understand that right. Of course. Of course. Well, if you go storm his cabin, he might lash out and he might hurt himself. David, if Ted's innocent, he can go right back to his normal life. But if he's behind these bombs, then we have to stop the killing. Either way, we need his letters that will help us identify whether he's the Unabomber. Now I'm. I'm sorry my colleague was pushy, but we do need those letters and you know that it's the right. Thing to do. David stands his legs shaky. He walks to. The window and stares out at the falling. Snow. He knows that if. Ted is convicted he could face the death penalty. His blood would be on David's hands at the same time. Three people have already died from the Unabomber's attacks. Even more have been injured. And so as hard as it is, David's decision seems clear. Yeah, you. You'll get the letters, but you need to promise me something in. Return Ted can never know. I talked to. You never. Never. You would be devastated. We can do that. We can keep your identity a secret. Don't worry about that. David looks directly into her eyes. I mean it, my role can never be made public, I promise. On behalf of the FBI, I promise. And with that, David makes a promise of his own. He agrees to turn over Ted's letters and to cooperate in the case against. Brother, he just hopes it all ends soon and that the man being LED away in handcuffs is someone, anyone other than 10.

Next on American scandal after a 17 year manhunt, the FBI closes in on a remote cabin in Montana. But will they find enough evidence to lock up the Unabomber? From wondering.

This is episode three of the Unabomber for American scandal.

A quick note about our reenactments. In most cases, we can't know exactly what was said, but all our dramatizations are based on historical research.

If you'd like to learn more about the Unabomber case, we recommend the books Harvard and the Unabomber by Alston Chase Every Last Tie by David Kaczynski and Hunting the Unabomber by Lis Wiehl.

American Scandal has hosted, edited and executive produced by Me, Lindsey Graham for airship audio editing by Molly Bach. Sound design by Derek Barons. This episode is written by Sam Keene, edited by Christina Maltsberger. Our senior producer is Gabe Riven. Executive producers are Stephanie, Jens, Jenny, Lower Beckman, and Hernan Lopez for wondering.

4. Hard Evidence

The FBI gets closer to the Unabomber. But a leak to the media threatens the case. And soon, agents are forced to take action.

A listener note this episode contains references to suicide and may not be suitable for younger audiences.

It's late at night in mid March 1996, several miles outside Lincoln, Montana, two men crept through a forest, their boots crunch on the snow and leaves, and their breath rises and clouds. One of the men stops and squints at the trees ahead. The man's name is Max Noel, and even though he's dressed in camouflage, he's not looking for deer. He and the other man are FBI agents, and right now they're searching for something else. Tripwires, booby traps, anything that could lead to an explosion. Noel scans the forest. It's nearly pitch black. Their only help is the pale moonlight that breaks through the trees. Still, from what he can see, nothing stands out. So Noel turns to the other agent and the two exchange knots. They continue creeping through the snow. Soon they stop next to a tall pine tree. From here, Noel can see a small wooden structure about 100 yards away. He exhales deeply. The cabin belongs to Ted Kaczynski, the man they suspect to be the Unabomber. No quickly scans the tall tree. Then he turns to his partner and gives. Thumbs up. This is where they'll set up the microphone and motion sensor. These tools will give them unparalleled access to Kaczynski, and that's something they need right now because for the past week, the FBI hasn't made enough progress. They've been spying on Kaczynski, but they've been staying far away and the trees of the forest have interfered with their sight. Now they need to get closer and they need to gather more hard evidence. After 17 long years of hunting the Unabomber, and not about to let him get away. Now this equipment could be their best option to gather proof that Kaczynski is a mass murderer. Noel looks up at the swing tree and swallows hard before setting out. He and his partner played rock, paper, Scissors. Noel lost. And so now he grabs the lowest branches and starts to climb. He then reaches out and his partner tries to hand him the. High-powered microphone. Noel stretches as far as he can, but his fingertips can't quite grasp it. Noel shoots the agenda. Look away. Toss it up. Come on, he'll be fine. I'm not going to toss the mic. It's too delicate. Let me climb down. A bit. When, as Noel descends, his foot lands on a wet branch. He slips and comes crashing down. With a loud thud. Several animals scurry through the brush as the noise echoes through the hills. Noel

stares at his partner. Any movement? No, I haven't seen any. Are we good? I think so. Just keep going. Watch out for that First Branch though. But the agent stops at the sound of a metal Cliff. It's a lock being undone, and then a second later, the door of the cabin rattles open. Noel doesn't hesitate. He grabs the agent by the arm and pulls him behind the tree trunk. The two agents stand completely still, but Noel knows he needs to act fast, so he slowly takes out his night vision binoculars. He holds them up to his eyes and peers around the edge of the tree trunk. The world is now shaded to bright green, just as he feared. There's a man right in his field of vision. It's Kaczynski, and he's walking toward their hiding spot. Noah's chest tightens. And his hand instinctively reaches for his pistol. He hopes to God he won't have to use it. And now all he can do is wait and react as necessary. But then Kaczynski stops. He bends down and picks something up, and he grabs something else. And all at once. Noel realizes what Kaczynski is doing. He's gathering. Kaczynski grabs another law and finally returns to his cabin and locks up. Noel turns to his partner and breathes a huge sigh of relief. Oh, God. All right, let's do this. Let's get out of here. And this time you're climbing that tree. The agent smiles and nods, and then he grabbed a limb. But as the agent climbed up the trunk, Noel suddenly feels himself shivering. The night has gotten cold and late, they need to finish this job and get out of the woods as fast as possible, because while they were safe this time, Noel knows it was.

In a matter of luck, Ted Kaczynski could be armed and very deadly if he is the unimodular should have this entire force rigged with explosives, nor knows they have to figure out the truth one way or the other. Because if Noel has to lead another midnight mission, he might not be so lucky next time. From wondering, I'm Lindsey Graham and this is an American scandal. In September of 1995, the Washington Post published a 35,000 word manifesto, which railed against developments in science and technology and was written by the Unabomber, a criminal who led a bombing campaign across the country. A month after its publication. David Kaczynski read the manifesto. He found undeniable similarities to the writings of his estranged brother Ted, and when David alerted the FBI, the agency believed they'd finally found the man. But to make an arrest, the FBI needed proof that Ted Kaczynski was indeed the man behind the attacks. And on top of that challenge, information leaks would soon force the government to act before it was ready. This is episode 4 hard evidence. It's late March 1996. Max Noel sits in a bar in Lincoln, Mt Neon Light from a beer sign illuminates Noah's jowly face as he watches a group of locals run. One by one, they hand over their guns to the bartender. In exchange, he gives them bottles of Bud light and then then head to a booth and the bartender winks at. No, no. Old chuckles and the bartender asks if he wants another whiskey. No nods, because the truth is he needs the drink. He'd assumed the FBI would quickly nail Ted Kaczynski. Now that they had the microphones outside his cab. One maybe he'd test an explosive and provide the evidence that Bureau needed, but instead, Kaczynski has barely left his shack. Meanwhile, Noel has spent a dozen freezing nights in an unheated cabin nearby.

He's been watching and waiting, and it's been miserable. Noel can only hope this case will soon come to a close. And he can return to balmy San Francisco. Noel's thoughts were interrupted when he hears a car door slam in the parking lot. He glances through a dirty window and spots a white Ford Bronco walking away from it. Is the one person he doesn't want to see right now, his boss Terry Turchi churchy is a good man and he has a passion for the case. But Noel knows the second churches. Please him. The two will get. Into yet another argument. Church enters the bar and takes off his puffy tan jacket. It's an outfit that marks him as an outsider in rural Montana church. He then spots Noel and grabs a seat next to him. He points to Noah's glass and tells the bartender he'll have the same. Then he smiles and asks Noel how he's doing. Noel isn't in the mood for small talk. He's lost his patience and wants to wrap up this case. So in a gruff voice, he asks churchy whether he's finally overruled Cathy. Chuck it churchy takes a sip of whiskey and stares into the distance. This has been an ongoing fight. Pocket is an agent who's in contact with David Kaczynski, the bombers brother for Noel. It's simple. They should use David and bring him to Montana. He could get in contact with Ted and through David the FBI could get the hard evidence they need. But pocket refuses. She says they have to protect David's anonymity. And Turkey, Noah's boss, keeps back her up and makes Noel furious. They have the Unabomber in their sights. They should be using every asset possible. But Turkey shakes his head and says he's not here to discuss Puckett or the brother David. They've got bigger concerns. Someone at headquarters has talked to CBS. It was a leak and a bad one, someone told a reporter that the FBI was just about to make an arrest, and now CBS wants to run with the story. Mole pounds the table and the bartender shoots him a look. He can't believe it, as CBS exposes their operation, Kaczynski will destroy every bit of evidence inside his cabin. The FBI has put 17 years into this case. He can't believe it could all fall apart just because someone in DC wanted to feel like they were at the center. Of the action. But Turtle lays a hand on his shoulder and tells him to relax. The FBI director himself has chatted with Dan rather. CBS has agreed to stay quiet. Noel takes a sip of whiskey and, with his teeth clenched, he asks, what for now means. Turkey pauses. He says he doesn't know how long CBS will hold off. It might not be long. Either way, they can't afford to wait on the raid. They need to gather a team in Montana right away. No knots. He knows church is right. They need to act. Past this might be their only chance to catch the Unabomber, so Noel rises and pushes his glass forward. He tells Starchy the next few days are going to be interesting, but when the dust settles. They're going to have their man. Later that evening, Ted Kaczynski leans over a wooden table inside his cabin. He grabs a solid block of aluminum, and, using a metal file, he begins turning the aluminum into powder. Before long, Kaczynski's arms ache, and he starts feeling dizzy. He can't remember the last time he ate a meal, but he has to keep working. Because this powder will allow him to make his deadliest bomb yet, he snorts as he remembers the deal he cut with the Washington Post. He promised to stop making bombs as long as they published his manifesto, and they agreed, and he can't believe they fell for it. He's not going to stop his bombing now, not when the

whole country is talking about his cause. Finally, people are waking up to the evils of technology. Kaczynski knows he's become a guru, a prophet, someone who will lead the masses to a revolution. But Kaczynski feels himself growing more wobbly. He sets down the file and wipes his forehead. It's time to take a break. So he washes his hands in a basin of coal dirty water. Then he dries them on his black pants. He notices them that his pants are drooping from his emaciated frame. They look like loose, filthy rags with huge holes in them. Kinski crunch. He knows he has to eat or else he's going to starve. But as he rummages through his shelves, he sees there's almost nothing left. Just a few. Powdered goods and some oatmeal and a saving that oatmeal for tomorrow. Kaczynski doesn't know what to do. The materials for this bomb cost more than he expected, and once again he ended up using his food money. His head begins to spin, but then Kaczynski realizes he has only one option. He has to keep building this bomb. He'll deal with food later. What he's doing now is too important. You can't get distracted by something like hunger. So Kaczynski grabs the aluminum block and begins filing it again. Pile of silvery powder grows, and so does his smile. Because he already has his next target planned. There's an aerospace company in Dallas. When they get this package, they'll be hit with a major surprise. A week later, Terry Churchy stands in a hotel room in Helena, Mt. He looks down at the twin beds, which are piled high with papers. These are documents related to the Unabomber case, and they're the key to constructing an airtight warrant for Ted Kaczynski's arrest. Churchy has been pouring over these papers all night and refuses to take a rest. Because he knows he needs to move fast, he needs to convince a federal judge to issue a warrant for Kaczynski's arrest. And he needs it now. CCBS is growing impatient and reporters from ABC and CNN are on to the story. Two, the FBI pleaded with reporters and managed to buy itself just another 24 hours. But by tomorrow night, they're all going to run their story telling the whole world that an arrest could be imminent. And if they do, the case will fall apart. The door of turkeys hotel room opens, and a man with Gray hair and a cup. Of coffee enters, he's. A US attorney and all night. He and Turkey have been arguing over these papers. It's clear they have almost zero physical evidence linking Kaczynski to the Unabomber. So they're developing a new strategy. They're basing everything on language and showing similarities between Kaczynski's letters and the manifesto. Churchy grabs report and tells the US attorney it's time to take action. The evidence is solid. The FBI even has its top linguists working on this, but the attorney says he isn't convinced. He worries the judge won't buy it and need to keep working. Turkey collapses into a chair, exhausted and exasperated. He tells the attorney that this is the best they have. There's no time for new angles. Dozens of FBI agents have already streamed into Montana. They've rented every SUV within 200 miles, and they're all waiting on Turkey to secure a war. US Attorney hesitates tapping his thumb against his chest church. He knows the attorney's fears aren't without cause. This is far from ironclad evidence, but finally the US attorney agrees it's time to move forward. Churching nods and races over to a fax machine. He loads in the affidavit and dials the FBI number in DC. Then he hit send. As the papers pass through the machine

with a mechanical whir, churchy exhales in relief. He hopes that soon the FBI gives a green light to move forward, and after that church, you will only have to make his case to one more person. It's just past dawn on April 3rd, 1996, Terry Churchy paces back and forth inside a hallway in a federal courthouse in Helena, Mt. Pale light streams into the courthouse, and Turkey stops to rub his eyes. He's exhausted, but he can't lose focus any minute. Judge Charles Lovell will emerge and inform Turkey whether he's approved a warrant for Ted Kaczynski's arrest. The weight has been agonizing because every minute this drags out, the media is getting closer to Kaczynski, and if they blow the FBI's cover churchy's career will be. Or church, he sits down and closes his eyes. He's not going to sleep. He can't. He just wants to rest and think a moment. A minute later, a door opens. Churchy startles and finds Judge Lovell standing in the doorway. Ohh, your honor. I'm sorry. Promise I wasn't sleeping. The federal courthouse. It's got a real cozy feeling, doesn't it? Even if it's not exactly a Marriott Hotel, Your honor. When you've been up all night, even a wooden bench feels like a feather top mattress, I bet. I'm sure you've had a rough night. Why don't? You come on in. Turkey rises and address the judges chambers. The two take a seat. I'd like to go over this line by line, of course. Although time is of the essence, I'm well aware, but that doesn't change anything about our obligation to be fair and thorough. Of course, your honor. Now to be clear. You have no physical evidence linking Theodore Kaczynski to the crimes of the. Turkey grimaces and shifts uncomfortably in his seat. No, Sir, no. But the language in his letters is very similar to the manifesto. We find it persuasive. Then explain this one here about consistent. Well, most people say consisted of, as in this breakfast consisted of ham and eggs, but Kaczynski always writes. Insisted in and so does the Unabomber. Well, I sometimes say, consisted in. Does that make me the Unabomber? Well, your Honor, obviously no, but. Point here. The Unabomber uses the term chicks, right? Yeah, only men of a certain age call women, chicks, men who are Kaczynski's age, which is also my age. Churchy, these are awfully shaky arguments for invading a man's home and potentially ruining his life. Well, your honor. Look at these British spellings analyze with an S or license. 2C's. That's very unusual for an American, and they appear in both Kaczynski's letters and the manifest. Level pauses and taps his finger against the desk. That's true for the phrase about cake. Almost every normal person says you can't have your cake and eat it too, but if you actually think about. It that's backwards. What you can't do is eat your. Cake and then have it. I'm not sure I'm. Following what what? What what phrase does Kaczynski use the second one? A logical one like a mathematician would. And so does the. Bummer, bubbles. Eyes narrow as he reads the warrant. And he picks up the copies of Kaczynski's letters and. Minute passes for churchy. The weight is excruciating. The whole case hinges on this single decision. If the judge doesn't buy his argument, Kaczynski could walk away and continue his campaign of murder. Finally, level looks up. I think there's probable cause here. You do. I do. However, I'm only granting a search warrant on the cabin, not an arrest warrant. But Sir, if we. Look through the cabin and don't find anything. Then you'll have to let him go. I'm sorry, but civil liberties still means something around

here. Turkey knows he has no choice but to accept the judge's decision. It's better than nothing, though, so he thanks Judge level and rises to leave, but as he approaches the door, the judge speaks up again. You really think this is the Unabomber? Your Honor, I do. And go get him. Yes, Sir. Turkey steps outside the chambers in the hallway. He looked out of courthouse window. The sun has risen and the sky is now blue. The morning is quickly growing late church. He knows he can't waste another minute, so he grabs his walkie-talkie and radios Max Noel and Lincoln. Turkey tells him that the judge made a decision. Have a warrant. It's time to move.

It's late morning on April 3rd, 1996. Max Knoll creeps again through the woods near Ted Kaczynski's cabin. The wind shakes the pine trees and sleet has slicked the forest floor, but Noel hardly notices the weather. Because he and the other FBI agents are laser focused looking for booby traps, Noel scans the trees. He knows dozens of SWAT team agents are moving through the forest on all sides. He hopes these agents won't be necessary. He desperately wants to avoid a shootout, but it's reassuring to know he has the back. At last known and his team are within 50 yards of the cabin. Noel stops and glances left. Then he locks eyes with the local forest Ranger who's joined the team and was crucial for the raid. The Ranger knows Kaczynski and the two have spent time talking. The Ranger believes that Kaczynski trusts him, so he agreed to work with the FBI to exploit that. Together, Noel and the Ranger are going to put on a little performance. The goal is to trick Ted Kaczynski and then neutralize him. Noel knows this could be a disaster. He could also be a stroke of genius. Either way, they're now about to see if this ruse will actually work. The Ranger gives a quick nod. He and Noel are both ready. The Ranger then takes on an angry tone, just as they practiced right here. This, Sir, this is the property line, not over there. Noel raises his voice. That's not what they said at the surveyors office. Well, the surveyors don't know what they're talking about. The surveyors don't know what? They're talking. Son, have you lost your mind? Look at this map. Look at the property line. You don't believe me? Well, I can ask the guy who lives here. Can show us. That's fine by me. Noel and the Rangers start walking toward the cabin. They pass what looks like a garden plot and then stone fire pit. Noah's heart starts to pound. This all looks innocent, but he knows he can't be sure. One false step could cause a massive explosion. Finally, they reached the cabin door, the Ranger. Is it a hard knock, Ted. Ted, are you in there? Can you come out here and show this gentleman where the property line is. There's the sound of movement inside. And then a voice. Calls out from behind the door. I'm busy. It's all clearly Mark. Ted, we're having an issue. It'll only take. In it. There's a pause and then Noel hears A deadbolt being turned. The door opens a crack. Ted Kaczynski emerges in the doorway with a messy pile of brown hair and a salt and pepper beard, his cheeks are gone. Adrenaline starts coursing through his body. After all this time, he's finally face to face with the Unabomber. Kaczynski's eyes dart left and right, but then he seems to calm down as he looks at the Ranger. Alright, let me grab my coat. Kaczynski withdraws back into the cabin, and then what comes next happens very fast.

The Ranger grabs Kaczynski by the arm. Noel panicks. Kaczynski is paranoid. That was a bad move. This could quickly escalate, and Noel is certain it's now or never. So he whips out a pistol and shoves it in Kaczynski's face. Ted, we need to talk. Before he can fight back, Noel Yanks him out of the doorway. Kaczynski cries out, but he's weak and frail, and Noel has no trouble marching him away through the woods. There's another cabin not far off. He'll bring Kaczynski. There and see if he can get him talking. In the meantime, Patrick Webb and the FBI will swoop in and search Kaczynski's cabin. As they walked through the woods, Noel glances at the wooden shack. It's imperative the web finds something in that cabin, some real evidence showing Kaczynski as the Unabomber. Otherwise, this case will fall apart. 20 minutes later, Patrick Webb stands in the doorway of Ted Kaczynski. Cabin Webb is a bomb expert and an FBI agent, and he's been working this case since 1982. It's been 14 long years now as he breathes in the musty air. He can't believe they could finally close the case. Webb steps inside the cabin, his eyes adjusted, the dim light filtering through the small windows. As he scans the room, his fingers twitch. Somewhere in this space is evidence that will put away the Unabomber. But wed moves slowly and forces himself not to touch anything. Any item could be wired to explode, so instead he simply walks around the cabin, taking note of Kaczynski's belongings. He starts with a tour of the bookshelf. It's an impressive collection and includes books by Orwell Twain, Dickens. There are books on nuclear energy and birds. Web can tell that the Unabomber has a wide variety of interests. Webb moves on and as he breathes in, he notices that the cabin has the sour smell of an unwashed body. Still, the space has been kept tidy. The snowshoes mittens, a frying pan they're all neatly arranged. So is a bottle of antidepressants that surprises web. And his manifesto of the Unabomber. He railed against psychologists and for a moment, Webb wonders whether they've got the wrong guy. Maybe this is just another dead end. Everything seems innocent until Webb reaches the last few shelves. There he finds batteries, copper tubing, and blocks of aluminum. These are all materials used to make bombs. Web frowns. He knows you can't convict somebody just for owning batteries and copper tubes. So Webb decides to kneel down and look under the bed. It's dark, but he can see a small package. It's neatly wrapped in brown parcel paper like so many of the Unabomber's weapons, webs, breath. Catches and slowly, carefully, he rises to his feet. He knows he can't risk moving that package. It's too dangerous, but he has to do something. They can't hold Kaczynski forever, so Webb rises and continues searching through the cabin. He prays he can find something definitive before it's too late. At the same time that Webb is searching the cabin, Max Noel stands across from Kaczynski in a nearby cabin. His hand rests on his pistol, but he doubts he'll have to use it. Kaczynski looks frail and malnourished. He has the energy of a wild animal that's been left to starve in the wilderness. Noel hopes that somehow he can get through to this strange man, and he hopes that Kaczynski will just admit his crimes. Noel starts in by asking Kaczynski about bomb making and the manifesto he mentions the people who've died in the bombing attacks. But Kaczynski doesn't take the. Instead, he asks to see a warrant. Knoll sighs and hands him the document. But as Kaczynski

reads it, he starts picking it apart. He points out that, according to this warrant. His cabin windows face east, but they face West. He says it's. A faulty document looks up shaking his head in disbelief. As he's talking, Noel studies Kaczynski, the man smells unwashed and his clothes are disintegrating on his body. He's missing a tooth, and he even has chunks of dirt in his eyelashes. How in the world does someone get dirt in their eyelashes? The man Noel is looking at bears almost no resemblance to the man who taught at UC Berkeley so long ago. Noel recently looked at those old pictures and he was reminded that Kaczynski was handsome back then, sharp in suits and ties. Now the only similarities he can spot are those piercing eyes. Thinking about Berkeley gives Noel an idea, though. He asks Kaczynski about math and says he wants to know more about his PhD dissertation, but Kaczynski shoots him a look of pure contempt. He asked no how much math he studied, Noel says. He's no idiot. He got up to calculus. Kaczynski rolls his eyes and says, no, couldn't possibly. Understand what he studied. It's not even worth. Explaining, Noel realizes they're not getting anywhere, at least not yet. So it's time for a break. He pulls out a Snickers bar from his jacket he's about to unwrap it when he sees Kaczynski, eyeing it hungrily. No pauses. Maybe food will get him talking, so he tosses the Snickers bar to Kaczynski. Kaczynski is a bit stunned. Staring at the Snickers in his lap, he picks it up and bites into it right through the wrapper. He chews loudly and then pulls the slimy wrapper out of his mouth and sets it on the. At that moment, Noel realizes that despite Kaczynski's calm demeanour, this man is completely insane. He's not going to say anything useful, so Noel glances out the window and looks for any sign of progress at Kaczynski's cabin. He's hoping it doesn't take Patrick Webb long and running out of time, and they need to lock up this case right now. Otherwise they'll have to release this madman and potential killer back out into the world. An hour later, Patrick Webb steps out of Ted Kaczynski's cabin in one hand, he's holding a box of oatmeal and the other A2 way radio. We have lifts up the radio and calls Terry Churchy. He's waiting in his Ford Bronco just half a mile away. Churches voice crackles over the radio and he demands to know if Webb has any. News web, grins. He's decided he's not going to spoil the surprise, so he just tells Churchy that he better come down to the cabin. Churchy barks back into the radio and demands to know what's going on. Did Web find evidence? But Web just tells him to hurry. You'll understand when he gets here, Turkey gruffly says. Fine, and then the signal. Webb stands in the wooded front yard waiting. He runs a hand through his white hair and closes his eyes for more than a decade. He's given his whole life to this case. He's given up nights and weekends and outings with friends. He sacrificed sleep in time with his wife, all to reach this moment. A few minutes later, there's a rustling in the bushes and Terry churchy emerges from the woods. His eyes are puffy and red, and he approaches Webb with a scowl. He says he's tired and he doesn't have time for games church. He demands to know what did Webb find? Webb then reaches out his hand and offers churchie the box of oatmeal. Churchie stares at it, and then he looks up and asks what the hell this is. Web reaches over and cracks open the lid. Her she peers inside Web explains that inside this box of oatmeal or homemade detonators for

bombs, they're exactly like the ones the Unabomber. Just by the time churchy glances up again, Webb can feel tears filling his eyes. He says that this is the guy. This is the guy. After 17 years, they've found him. Now it's time to arrest the Unabomber. Bring him to justice.

It's early evening on April 3rd, 1996, David Kaczynski sits in his apartment, staring at a TV. His eyes are burning and his jaw hangs open. Right now, everything feels twisted and confused. He turns and looks at his wife, Linda, and his mother, Wanda. Normally, they're a source of comfort when he feels troubled like this. But at the moment they too look shell shocked because on TV is an image of Ted. It's grainy footage, but it shows him being marched away by FBI agents. He looks filthy and emaciated. Like a feral dog. Picture zooms in on Ted's face and suddenly Wanda begins to weep. David doesn't know what to do. He wishes he could comfort her and somehow fix this situation, but he knows he can't, and even worse, he knows he was responsible for this. He himself went to the FBI. He turned in his own brother. All the while he was living in a. State of denial. He thought it couldn't be true and couldn't be the Unabomber. But now, here's Ted on national TV. The news anchors keep calling Ted a terrorist. They keep repeating the. Family name Kaczynski.

The doorbell rings. Juan looks at David. Should we? Answer it. No, mom, it's probably some nosy neighbor who saw the news. When it rings again and again, Ronda rises and moves toward the front door. Mom, please, just ignore it. David, what if someone has some news? No one has any news. I promise. We all just need to try and get our heads clear. Come back, come back. I'll deal with whoever it is, OK? Wanda returns to the couch and David walks over. To the window. He peels back the curtain and looks out when he sees leaves him startled. What is it? It's nothing, mom. It's fine. But David knows it's not fine. There are at least 20 reporters outside standing in front of big satellite trucks. David hears the Creek of the couch and turns to see Wanda and Linda approaching. He knows he can't stop them, so he steps aside. Wanda presses her face against the window. Why are they all here? I don't know. We should all just sit back down. David knew the media would track him down eventually, but he has no idea how they got here so quickly. Why there are so many of them, but a moment later he gets an answer. Dan Rather comes on CBS News and announces the Unabomber has been turned in by his own brother. David suddenly feels himself collapsing inward. The FB I promise to keep his role secret. They promised. How could they betray him like this? Soon Ted will find out. The truth will kill him. A moment later, the phone rings. David Starks over in a rage and picks it up. Who is it? It's Kathy Pocket from the FBI. What the hell do you want? I want to apologize. I'm so, so sorry. I cannot explain how the truth got out. Damn it. Only asked for one thing. One thing. You couldn't do it. Done with you. David slams down the phone and falls back against the wall. He shuts his eyes and tries to steady his breath, but then he hears a tapping on the window. He opens his eyes and sees a camera lens staring right at him. The cameraman is tapping to get his attention. David runs over and closes the drapes. He

then turns to his mom and Linda. He knows they need to get away. They need to get far from this circus of reporters and cameras. But David isn't sure where they can. Go the. Whole world now knows the name Kaczynski, and even though Ted's the one heading to jail, David isn't sure he or his wife or his mother will ever be free again. It's January 8th, 1998, and nearly two years later Ted Kaczynski wipes his nose and crouches into a dark corner of a concrete cell. He's in a federal jail in Sacramento, CA. It's nothing more than a small box with a cot in the toilet, Kaczynski snuffles and feels a tear dripping from his eye. He mutters to himself, and then in a rage, he pounds his fist. Against the wall. He knows he failed. He failed again. It's around 2:00 AM, and Kaczynski's trial would begin later this morning, but a couple of hours ago, he made-up his mind. He wasn't going to see the inside of a courthouse ever again. He decided to be brave, take matters into his own hands, just like his father Turk. He waited for the guards to pass by and he pulled off his underwear and he looped it around a pipe, arranging it like a noose. Finally, this nightmare would end. His pain would be gone. It's a pain that he'd. Felt for weeks. And it all began when his lawyer told him something. They were preparing for a pretrial hearing, and the lawyer explained that it was Ted's own brother, David, who turned him into the FBI at first had refused to believe it. He knew that David loved him. He couldn't imagine such an unthinkable betrayal, but Ted later confirmed it. His own brother had ratted him out. Ted tried to pretend that it didn't hurt, but then he spotted David at the pretrial hearings, sitting alongside their mother. That's when the pain truly set in, because it wasn't just David who betrayed him and Mother Wanda has been trying for years to hurt Ted. She's mocked him, mocked him for not having friends, mocked him by sending him to Harvard. Just so she could feel important, Ted thought he had already learned this lesson, but it was another reminder. Trust, nobody. That's one reason why he wanted to end his life. The other reason is that his lawyers wanted him to plead not guilty by reason of insanity. But he's not insane. It's the rest of the world that's crazy. So Kaczynski decided there was only one way out of this nightmare. Only one way to make himself a martyr and memorialize himself in history. He's going to hang himself. But when he tried the elastic on the underwear broke and he came crashing to the ground. Now, as he crouches in the dark corner, Kaczynski can't help but weep with the most crushing feeling of grief and failure. He sobs his head banging against the concrete wall. He was betrayed by everyone he's ever known. His mother, his brother, the whole world. Kaczynski wipes his eyes with his palm and sits back as his breath steadies slowly, he feels himself calming down. His nose has stopped running and in his sudden bursts of clarity he realizes he can't let them win. Not after all they've done to him. He has to keep fighting. He must prove that he's sane, that his ideas are true. He has to stay alive, even if it means spending the rest of his life in this concrete box. Kaczynski looks around his small, dark jail cell. It's maybe 10 feet by 12, the same size as his cabin, because as he wipes his nose on his shirt and then rises off. He makes a decision. That's final. He will not plead insanity. It's better to be a caged felon than someone who the world dismisses as insane. The felon who can still lead a

revolution. In January of 1998, Ted Kaczynski was declared competent to stand trial, facing the death penalty, he accepted a plea bargain and pleaded guilty to three counts of murder. He also pleaded to 10 federal counts related to his bombing campaign using US mail. He's currently in a supermax prison in Colorado, serving 8 consecutive life sentences without the possibility of parole. To this day, he remains unrepentant and convinced that his philosophy is correct. David Kaczynski. He still lives with his wife, Linda in New York after his brother's trial, David became a vocal critic of the death penalty. He's given hundreds of talks on capital punishment, especially as it relates to those suffering from mental illness. Ted Kaczynski called for a revolution, one that would fundamentally change the modern world. He believed that science and technology were corrosive forces and tried to halt their progress. Yet that revolution never came. Instead, with the rise of the Internet, the modern world has become even more dependent on technology. But that doesn't mean Kaczynski's arguments have been forgotten. Years after its publishing, his manifesto has attracted a broad new following. His ideas have received praise from a diverse coalition, including mainstream political commentators, journalists and environmentalists. They echo Kaczynski's arguments about the costs of technological development and the negative side effects that technology has on modern life and outside the mainstream. The manifesto has also found support among radical political groups, including those who reject society entirely. But while many writers and thinkers see Kaczynski's fears as prophetic. They're careful to separate his quest for social change from his use of violence as the victims of the Unabomber know all too well, political violence comes with a terrible price.

Next on American Scandal, we speak with John H Richardson, a journalist and author. We'll talk about how Ted Kaczynski has gained a new following, decades after his capture, and Richardson will discuss his own correspondences with Kaczynski from wondering.

This is episode four of the Unabomber for American skin.

A quick note about our reenactments. In most cases, we can't know exactly what we said, but all our dramatizations are based on historical research.

If you'd like to learn more about the Unabomber case, we recommend the books *Harvard and the Unabomber* by Alston Chase, *Every Last Tie* by David Kaczynski and *Hunting the Unabomber* by Lis Wiehl.

American Scandal has hosted, edited and executive produced by Me, Lindsey Graham for airship audio. Editing by Molly Bach. Sound design by Derek Barons. This episode is written by Sam Keene, edited by Christina Maltsberger. Our senior producer is Gabe Riven. Executive producers are Stephanie, Jens, Jenny, Lower Beckman, and Hernan Lopez for wonder.

5. The Followers

Ted Kaczynski warned that technology was crushing the human spirit—and harming the planet. Since 1995, when his manifesto was published, Kaczynski has gained a large number of followers. John H. Richardson, a journalist and author, corresponded with Kaczynski, and joins Lindsay to discuss the wide-reaching influence of Kaczynski's ideas.

I'm wondering. I'm Lindsey Graham, and this is American scandal. Today we wrap up our series on the Unabomber. Between 1978 and 1995, Ted Kaczynski LED a campaign to stop the advance of modern technology. Kaczynski was a former math professor and as an undergrad at Harvard, his life was profoundly changed after he took part in a brutal psychological. Experiment Kaczynski was left bitter and bent on getting revenge at scientists and those he believed were advancing technology. So he began mailing and planting bombs across the country. This campaign would kill 3 people and injure many more. He was known by the FBI as the Unabomber, and the manhunt to find him lasted nearly two decades. It would become the longest and most expensive case in FBI history. The publication of Kaczynski's Manifesto in 1995 led to a break in the case when Kaczynski's brother, David, noticed similarities between the manifesto and his brother's letters. Soon, agents arrested Kaczynski in his cabin in rural Montana. The Unabomber case was a milestone for the FBI, but Kaczynski also had a large influence across American culture. His manifesto, titled Industrial Society and its Future, featured A scathing critique of science and technology. Kaczynski argued that industrial life was destroying the human spirit and the planet. It was an argument that gained traction with a variety of movements, including radical environmentalists and those who reject civilization. Today I'm speaking with John H Richardson, a journalist and author who's written about those movements while working on a story about environmental activists. He also began exchanging letters with Ted Kaczynski himself. We'll talk about Kaczynski, his vision of a perfect world, and how his message might still resonate today. That's next.

Lindsey: Richardson, welcome to American scandal. Let's start with Kaczynski's manifesto. It's 35,000 words long, and in it Kaczynski focuses on 2 main ideas. I was wondering if you can.

John: Good to be here.

Lindsey: Tell us what they are.

John: Well, basically that technology is uncontrollable because it's too large a system to be controlled by any entity or governing body or anything like that. And it's really in control of the world rather than us making the decisions driving things forward, whether we want it to or not. And that it's going to be a disaster for humanity and that it should be stopped.

Lindsey: 35,000 words is a long time to spend on just those two or three points. How far into detail did he get?

John: Well, yeah, I mean he he talks about organizing and ideas of primitive life and. And a lot of different aspects of the critique he talks about how technology and civilization, in his opinion, causes psychological illnesses and makes people, as he calls it, feral. He talks about the difference between left and right and how they fall into the. Spectrum of his analysis. I mean, he goes into a lot of subjects. The history of anti technology glosses into a little bit. He's certainly not the first person who's had these ideas. But basically the thing that distinguishes his book is that it's it calls for revolution and something to actually be done about it, rather than just being a social analysis as other scholars and thinkers have done over the last couple of centuries.

Lindsey: Well, if we presume that revolution does come, did Kaczynski have any cohesive vision of of his utopia? What would it look like to live in the world? He wanted to see?

John: He talks about primitive life as a sort of hunter gatherer kind of ideal, but I'm not sure that that's something that he particularly posits as something that would be pleasant. And he doesn't seem all that interested in exactly how an anti civilization would be constructed after some kind of collapse. He's really more interested, I think, in the critique of how technology, in his opinion, both makes us helpless, robs us of agency. And is getting larger and larger and more and more destructive. That's the critique he's more interested in, I think, than what life should look like.

Lindsey: I find that surprising, given that we all know Ted Kaczynski, because of his his acts of violence in order to enact a revolution.

John: Well, I mean. This is just my opinion, but I think that he reacted to the incursion of roads and housing and cabins and stuff like that. To his wilderness. In a very emotional. Once angry way it was, he says himself. His reaction was wanting revenge. Some people say that he came up with the philosophy later to justify his killings. In my opinion, I mean he. He obviously had those kinds of anti civilization ideas because he went to live in the woods in the first place. And I think it was a combination of emotional and reaction mixed with with a growing political conviction that civilization was the enemy. Now if you look at his thoughts about revolution that he's. And this is not consistent with killing people randomly. That's not a tactically effective thing to do. It never has been particularly, unless you just want to cause. So his acts are not consistent with that. You know what you might call if you wanted to mature philosophy where he. Does the whole social critique that sort of puts his acts in context, I guess.

Lindsey: Well, let's stick with the manifesto. In 1995, it was published in the Washington Post and reached an international audience. Do you have an idea of what the public reaction was to his ideas?

John: Well, at the time, I mean there was the popular reaction, which was weird hermit killer, and there was a a more sort of a counterculture head for President campaign. Then there was a sort of a some serious academic critiques looking at it by people in. Places like the New York Times by. Important physicists and technologists and have been all ever since, so I think all of those are sort of completely different. Ted Kaczynski's.

Lindsey: Could we characterize those that took the manifesto seriously as a sort of following well?

John: Well, I I think there's definitely been people who have been seeing him as a inspiring figure or or or sympathetic or of the similar mind. So definitely, I mean, in foreign policy magazine a couple of years ago, it's they argued that there were a couple thousand committed ready for revolution, anti serve people in the US I have no idea whether that's right and there you know there have been consistently groups. And overseas making the same claims, some who explicitly are Kaczynski inspired. But I wouldn't overstate it. I don't think there's any kind of revolutionary army out there waiting to make an attack. And most people who are anti SIV these days are aware of Kaczynski but are not necessarily directly, you know, acolytes of him. Few people would admit to that.

Lindsey: Well, you have an interesting relationship with Kaczynski, yourself, and in 2016 you wrote to him. He was still in a supermax prison in Colorado, serving concurrent life sentences.

John: Where he remains.

Lindsey: Yes, where he remains. Why did you reach out to him?

John: I've been covering climate change stories for Esquire magazine for a few years, and during the course of that I became aware of people who had sort of given up hope that there would ever be any effective global. Action against. And when you start to look at those people, you end up stumbling across the Kaczynski it's because it's sort of like we told you so. So I became. I started looking at that and it reminded me of somebody I had met a decade before who had exposed those ideas and. And so that intrigued me. Just the connection with the actual person I knew and liked, so I just started interviewing people. As a reporter, I was thinking maybe there was a story there and eventually I ended up writing to him.

Lindsey: For most people who perhaps are not reporters, it's not a natural course of things to reach out to a mass murderer. How did that feel?

John: Well, I've done. You know, I've done killers and gang stories before. I was a crime reporter for a while. It's not that far out of. What I I would normally do, I did a story where I spent a week with a hit man from the Sinaloa Cartel. I mean, that's what you do.

Lindsey: Well, in this instance, what did you talk about? Where, where did the conversation go?

John: Gee, it's been a long time since the beginning. I mean, first I was just saying I was interested in doing a story about him and his followers and his ideas and all that, and he was dismissive and and a bit contemptuous of my magazine. But he was pretty funny about it, he quoted Paul Goodman. He said, as I understand, that score was a magazine that goes around and around and ends up coming up with no real point in its articles. So we batted that one around for a couple letters and and basically tried to. I tried to get him to. Continue writing and respond and play it out. And he's like I said, dismissive. He's very sort of aloof in a lot of ways, certainly at 1st and then. And I just kept trying.

Lindsey: You can imagine anyone in Kaczynski's. Base and certainly of of his temperament, being aloof and dismissive of of the press. But but like you said, you. Kept at it. Did you gain? Any notion of Kaczynski as as a person as the as perhaps the the relationship warmed.

John: Well, I mean, he definitely has a sense of humor. He's funny and in a Subic kind of English prep school way, he's very scholarly. I mean, his letters have footnotes and citations and page references to my letters or to whoever he's writing. He is. He tends to be. The cool, cool temperament, if you've read his book, you know he is a mathematician. He tends to be sort of hyper rational. It's kind of like being with a guy in college who's really smart and you're batting things around and he's he's sort of snotty. Superior and makes you work for your end of the conversation.

Lindsey: Did you get the any feeling that he? Enjoyed writing you?

John: There were times when he said things that were not just in the course of response or all of that. I mean we we talked about music and boats, things that were off topic sort of about revolution. And technology, although it always sort of crept in there. And when when sometimes you could get quite antic and sort of like boyishly wanting to. Have fun with. Like language like, you know playing with language. Playing with fanciful concepts about adventure, I mean, I don't know. It was just it was kind of unexpected. You never know what a person is really like. And people can create personas and letters, but he he seemed to me, you know, not really much different than anyone else that you would be corresponding with. Except for of the notoriety of his case and the peculiarity of his intellect.

Lindsey: I suppose it was inevitable that the two of you spent some time discussing politics and the idea of political revolution. Certainly 2020 has been a year fraught with charged politics. Did Kaczynski have anything to say about the current moment?

John: Well, he's not a big admirer of Trump, and I've sort of spoke of his administration as grifters, thieves. Those are not his exact words. He he once said that if he had been able to vote in 2016, he would have voted for Hillary, which I thought was kind of funny. I think that although he devotes a lot of time to hating liberals or leftists, rather in his his manifesto. But his sympathies are probably more in that direction than done it with conservatives. At least today's version. He's very interested

in developments in technology and stuff like that. He that's one of the ways that I got his interest, I guess is I would write to him about developments and data mining and surveillance technology and things like that.

Lindsey: Yeah, certainly. Since he was arrested quite a few things on the technological horizon have changed. Social media appeared and advanced artificial. Did this just confirm his suspicions?

John: Ohh no yeah, no. And actually if you look at the manifesto again, there's a surprising amount of stuff that is really does seem prophetic. He he talks about those kinds of technological surveillance, military robot type developments. Of genetic engineering, it was a big concern for him. The idea of designer babies and just a general, you know, more and more departure from the natural world. I had done some. And pieces on on computer algorithms and robots and. And so I think that he's interested in that stuff. And that was we were able to talk.

Lindsey: About it, one thing that's probably not changed much in his time in prison is his actual accommodations. Uh, he's used to small, cramped quarters, but but how is he found? Prison. You know he's not.

John: The kind of person who complains about physical discomforts or anything like that. He actually I I tried to sympathize with him once because I had read an article about conditions there and it said there was terribly cruel because the IT was designed so that prisoners could never see the sun. And maximum security. And so I said that I read that that's terrible. And what a horrible situation, especially for you. And he wrote back and he said. You're a journalist and you believe everything you read. What an idiot. I can see the sky. And then he talked. Gave me a little lecture on the different cellblocks and and and what the rules were. All of that. So he's not looking for sympathy. He's sort of an honest broker in that regard, I he mostly seems very frustrated about time, research, materials, ability to correspond as much as he would like, and stuff like that. Often when I write to him and he says he has very little time to respond or he's working hard to get something done. He's writing another book or something like that.

Lindsey: In all these years, did you get any feeling that his time in incarceration has changed his views; about his manifesto, his mission or his crimes?

John: I mean, he's not the kind of person who would reveal that necessarily, if he has any remorse about his killings, I don't think he would say so because it would be like an unseemly reach or sympathy or something like that. I don't think he would want to play that card.

Lindsey: In your writing, you pointed out that Kaczynski's papers are a popular attraction at a University of Michigan archive. Who is still interested in Kaczynski's ideas there?

John: Well, you know, there's a lot of people on Facebook, lots of weird groups that reference Kaczynski, and it's hard to say how many people are involved, although some of them get. I saw one with 100. And it's again, as I said, there's a lot of people

who are very Kaczynski-ish who deny or disavow or just won't talk about Kaczynski in the sense that there's that sort of potent violence around him that suggests to me that he's on people's minds if they keep saying he's not. In their minds. But there's also, like explicitly there's, you know, terrorist groups in Latin America and there's groups who are more active in the US who aren't committing violence, who might be in favor of it, who are. Or, you know, not using his name or referencing him because it's so explosive, you know, practically quote him in their own works. I think there are people who are trying to live off grid, which is sort of an overlap with preppers. There's people who are sort of. Doing legal thinking, there's people who are fighting pipelines and sympathetic but have more immediate environmental concerns. It's, you know, it's a big spectrum, but it's irrelevant in a way to say are they consti inspired because in a way, that's just saying, are these people associated with this person with this? Troublesome reputation, but the overlap of ideas. The critique of technology, the desire for revolution, things that he put together in one explicit, very forceful package for the first time, I think have been being mirrored by contemporary thinkers.

Lindsey: I think that's a fair point that that a confluence of ideas, a similarity of ideas, does not indicate an endorsement of Kaczynski. But you know, in 2018 you wrote an article in New York magazine about a generation of people who have been influenced by Kaczynski. And you coined a term Kaczynski moments. What did you mean by that?

John: Well, I was. I was thinking of a couple of things. One was a young man I'd met who told me about reading the manifesto for the first time, and it was the cover had been torn off. He didn't know what it was. He just started reading it as an innocent person who was interested in anarchist ideas and all that. Sympathetic to the general concept and he got a little. While ways in and he thought this is like brilliant, it's genius. And he got a little farther in, and he figured out, oh God, this must be Ted Kaczynski. And it was a shock. And I think that that's really why I wrote the story, because I saw that shock replicated on other people. There's a famous essay by Bill Joy, the founder of Sun Microsystems, I think, and he knew a person who had been wounded by one of Kaczynski's bombs and but ended up somehow having that same experience where somebody handed him some Kaczynski writings from the manifesto and. He said, wow, this is completely right and then turned the page and saw Kaczynski's name and I felt this shock like how could I agree with this killer? And that's sort of just really caught my imagination and I think it's I guess because it stands for this sort of shock that comes when you realize how climate change seems uncontrollable by the systems designed by man.

Lindsey: I think I'd be captivated too, in these Kaczynski. These these times in which people find themselves horrified to agree with the thoughts of a murderer. So there is this difference. This divide between Kaczynski, the murdering hermit, and Kaczynski, the thinker, but Kaczynski wanted a revolution, and still revolutions are pretty rare things, even though radical thought. You know, has brought them about

in the US and France, Russia. China Kaczynski is not a Jefferson or or Robespierre a Lenin. Or a Mao. So how influential in his thinking was Kaczynski, really?

John: Well, I mean, I'm not he. It's clearly, you know, the overwhelming majority of humanity has zero interest in his thoughts. I mean my sense. Has always been that when there are subterranean things happening in the culture that haven't really been out in the clear yet, there it it's sort of stewing away in in peoples minds, in in corporate and not very well. Worked out ways and I think it tends to be people who aren't like super well attached to normal life. Conventional life who tend to serve, receive. What is happening in the culture? These unsaid things I I think that it goes throughout history. People who are sort of prophets and visionaries are not necessarily the normal guy who shows up to the office at 8:00 AM, you know. Uh, so I'm interested in phenomenons of. Different thinking you know, Canaries in the coal mine kind of thing. And so looking at what is undeniably a huge growth and and sort of all sorts of varieties of not anti but a civilizational things like the these primitive life gatherings that have really gone. From a few in the 80s to hundreds now. The whole prepper movement, all the various forms of simplicity and Wellness and back to the land and and living light on the earth and all of that, there's there's a lot of that kind of thinking growing and some of it is more radical than others in in other countries where they have more radical. More live radical tradition. There is violence and bombings and and and murders with a strong anti sieve message, and sometimes they explicitly Kaczynski ish message also. I mean, the idea that there's a couple thousand of them in the states, you know, as a point, Dr. Kaczynski makes often is that. The Russian Revolution was accomplished by 6000 Bolsheviks. What Kaczynski's practical advice has come down to is. Wait for the right moment and hit a critical point in the infrastructure or the system, and you might be able to create a chain effect that brings down the system.

Lindsey: So we return I guess to this tension that Ted Kaczynski, the Thinker, might have had something that we should pay attention to. But Ted Kaczynski, the activist the revolutionary, is someone we should rightfully revile.

John: No, I wouldn't go that far. I think the feelings you may have about the judgments we may have and I may have about his behavior are kind of irrelevant to what? The the disturbance that he felt, which is being felt, I think by many more people as climate change and ocean acidification and species extinctions accelerate. So he was an extraordinarily rational man who was like, so rational that he went. Over the edge and said he looked at what was happening in the history of technology and how it had grown and efforts to control it. And scientific ethics and what they've done over the years. And he said this is a this is just going to get worse until it all falls apart. And he wrote that in the 90s, as people, other people were warning as far back as the century. But but. But when you see that he was so disturbed at that time and you see that a lot of the things that he's predicted are coming true and that other people are being disturbed. The question isn't whether how we feel about Ted Kaczynski. The question is, what are we going to do about the Ted Kaczynski's that are gonna come because his reaction is not like one-of-a-kind people. I've, I've always felt that

when things start getting bad. And people connect it. Wildfires and the flooding and everything else. There's going to be a lot. Of people who. Become unhinged and a lot of them are going to become unhinged in that way because that model exists. Even whether whether it has his name attached to it or not, he's more like a a case study in a way than to talk about right and wrong or anything else.

Lindsey: John Richardson, thank you for speaking with me today.

John: But thanks for having me.

Lindsey: Now was my conversation with John H Richardson, a journalist and author of the book *My Father, The Spy*.

Next on American scandal, we bring you an encore presentation of our series on the Iran Contra affair in the 1980s, Washington, DC, was hit with the sensational scandal. Stories began to emerge about illegal weapons sales abroad and an attempted international coup, and as the scandal unfolded, it would threaten the presidency of Ronald Reagan. Will lead to a high stakes showdown with a special prosecutor. From laundry, this is episode five of five of the Unabomber from American scandal. In our next series, in the 1980s, Washington, DC, was hit with a sensational scandal. Stories emerged about illegal weapons sales abroad and an attempted international coup. It would come to be known as the Iran Contra affair, but as the scandal unfolded. Fingers pointed to the very top reaching into the Oval Office of the White House.

This episode contains reenactments and traumatized details, and while in most cases we can't know exactly what was said, all our traumatization is are based on historical research.

American scandal was hosted, edited and executive produced by Me, Lindsey Graham for airship audio. Editing by Molly Bach. This episode was produced by Susan Ballot. Our senior producer is Gabe Ribbon. Executive producers are Stephanie, Jens, Jennie, Laura Beckman, and Hernan Lopez for wondering.

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