

FLS

"THE INTERNATIONAL"

An Original Screenplay

By  
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Third Draft  
09/01/03

The following was inspired by the truth...

The muted PITTER-PATTER of rain falling on the roof of a car can be heard over the quiet squelch of RADIO TRAFFIC being churned out by a police radio. The VOICES ON THE POLICE RADIO ARE ALL SPEAKING FRENCH.

FADE IN:

CLOSE ON THE WINDSHIELD OF A CAR: a thick blanket of sleet and ice clings to the exterior of the glass, turning the outside world into a blur of fractured light and dark shadows.

We suddenly HEAR the sound of A MATCH BEING STRUCK to life --- its flame momentarily illuminates the reflection of two men seated next to each other in the front seat of the car. The Man on the left lights a cigarette before extinguishing the match and the reflection as we:

PULL BACK TO REVEAL:

INT. CITROEN SEDAN - NIGHT

We are now in the backseat of the sedan --- our attention centered in between the two men seated in the front. The rest of the cars windows are also covered by a veil of moisture which prevents us from seeing anything outside.

Behind the wheel of the car, we have AGENT ANDRE LAVON OF INTERPOL. Lavon is a brutishly handsome cop that exudes the uneasy edge and brooding intensity of a man with a battered soul.

Seated to the right of Lavon, we have FRANCOIS CLEMENT, a brawny, sixty-something Corsican with a face like a mud-slide. Clement appears mildly uncomfortable --- every minute or so he adjusts his seating position. He reads the newspaper "Le Monde" --- a large photograph of Presidents Jimmy Carter, Anwar Sadat and Menachem Begin graces the front page. The date on the paper, "Février 9 août 1978".

CLEMENT (IN FRENCH)  
(looks at his watch)  
What time is it?

LAVON (IN FRENCH)  
You mean now?

Clement flashes Lavon a little "very funny" smirk. Lavon takes a huge drag off his half-finished cigarette, stamps it out in the ashtray and then looks at his watch.

LAVON (IN FRENCH) (CONT'D)  
Twenty seven past the hour.

Taking off his watch, Clement sets the time, winds it up, puts it back on and adjusts his seating position. Lavon lights up a fresh butt.

CLEMENT (IN FRENCH)  
You're like a fucking chimney --- you know that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LAVON (IN FRENCH)  
What are you my mother?

CLEMENT (IN FRENCH)  
No ---  
(chuckles)  
But for all you know I might be your  
father...

Lavon ignores the comment --- takes another drag. We suddenly  
HEAR the muted DEEP-PITCHED THUNDER of some type of ENGINE  
ROARING TO LIFE in the distance.

CLEMENT (IN FRENCH) (CONT'D)  
I used to be even worse than you --- I'd  
burn through four, five packs a day.

LAVON (IN FRENCH)  
So what happened?

CLEMENT (IN FRENCH)  
You have any kids?

LAVON (IN FRENCH)  
No.

CLEMENT (IN FRENCH)  
A wife?

Lavon looks away and shakes his head. Clement, once again,  
adjusts his seating position.

LAVON (IN FRENCH)  
What's the matter with you?

CLEMENT (IN FRENCH)  
I'm racked ---

LAVON (IN FRENCH)  
Is it your nerves?

CLEMENT (IN FRENCH)  
No, it's my fucking hemorrhoids ----

Lavon can't help but crack a twisted little smile and Clement  
can't help but return it. We suddenly HEAR someone KNOCK TWICE  
on the car's window.

LAVON (IN FRENCH)  
All right --- its time.

EXT. KLEINE BROGEL NATO AIR BASE - NIGHT

Lavon and Clement exit the car, which is parked in front of a  
large military aircraft hangar. Stenciled upon the hangar  
doors is the NATO insignia : "Kleine Brogel NATO Air Base ---  
Belgium".

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

There is a Lear jet sitting on the tarmac about a hundred yards in front of the hanger --- its engines idling.

WE MOVE with Lavon and Clement as FOUR MILITARY POLICE OFFICERS escort them towards the jet.

LAVON (IN FRENCH)  
Gustav Stahlberg, our NCB chief in Finland, will meet you when you arrive in Helsinki.

CLEMENT (IN FRENCH)  
He'll take me to my family?

LAVON (IN FRENCH)  
He's arranged for everything...

Lavon and Clement stop at the flight of stairs positioned in front of the jet's open door.

CLEMENT (IN FRENCH)  
When will I be able to come home?

LAVON (IN FRENCH)  
I don't know. It's going to take time to build a case against Skouras and the bank.

Clement's face tightens with apprehension and uncertainty --- clearly does not want to get on the jet.

CLEMENT (IN FRENCH)  
This isn't easy for me --- you know?

LAVON (IN FRENCH)  
(nods sympathetically)  
The hardest thing in life is to know which bridge to cross and which to burn.

Clement plucks the cigarette from Lavon's mouth and takes a long drag.

CLEMENT (IN FRENCH)  
(fuck me cringe)  
I struggled against the Germans in the resistance from 40 to 45 --- battled the F.L.N. in Algeria from 55 to 61 (beat)  
I've fought all my life ---  
(takes another drag)  
And now I'm supposed to just let this pig-fucker Skouras run me out of my business, drive me out of my home ---

LAVON (IN FRENCH)  
You're making the right decision.

CLEMENT (IN FRENCH)  
I feel like a fucking coward...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LAVON (IN FRENCH)  
Let it go, Clement --- you're not doing  
this for yourself...

CLEMENT (IN FRENCH)  
Oh no? Then why am I doing it?

Lavon plucks the cigarette back from Clement.

LAVON (IN FRENCH)  
For the same reason you stopped smoking  
these.

Clement and Lavon exchange a little smile and shake hands.

LAVON (IN FRENCH) (CONT'D)  
I'll speak to you in a few days ---

CLEMENT (IN FRENCH)  
Take care, Lavon ---  
(grins and gestures)  
Oh, and by the way, your fly is unzipped.

Lavon looks down and is amused to discover that his fly is  
indeed unzipped.

He is in the midst of zipping it up when, without warning --  
Lavon's face and body are suddenly struck by a violent  
explosion of blood, cartilage and brain tissue. Lavon looks up  
and finds that portions of Clement's face and head have been  
completely blown away by an assassin's bullet.

Lavon is too shocked and horrified to react --- all he can do  
is stand there and watch as Clement's lifeless body teeters  
and then collapses at his feet, like a marionette whose  
strings have been cut.

ANGLE DIRECTLY OVERHEAD: Chaos erupting amongst the M.P.s ---  
Lavon remains frozen standing above Clement's lifeless body as  
we:

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MEDICAL EXAMINER'S OPERATING THEATER - DAY

THE CAMERA IS CENTERED HIGH ABOVE a metal autopsy table. Lying  
dormant on top of this table, the indistinct figure of a LARGE  
NAKED CORPSE.

OPENING CREDITS BEGIN TO ROLE as two men, POLICE SURGEON  
WELLES and his ASSISTANT, ENTER THE FRAME.

Welles attaches a microphone to his surgical gown, turns on a  
reel-to-reel tape recorder. The Assistant switches on the  
surgical lamp, igniting the corpse in a brilliant halo of  
white light. The body on the table is that of a fat, hairy,  
walrus of a man in his early fifties --- this man is clearly  
not Francois Clement.

Welles picks up the case file and references it as he speaks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WELLES

(thick English accent)

Fourteen hundred hours, Scotland Yard time. January 14, 1981. Police Surgeon Henry J. Welles, attending. Roderick P. Smith assisting. Case number 4-5-2-6-1. Decedent: SCHUMER, THOMAS M. Male, Caucasian. Stated to be fifty-two years in age. Nationality, American. Occupation, Assistant District Attorney, New York City.

THE CAMERA SLOWLY BEGINS TO DESCEND: inching its way down towards the body.

WELLES (CONT'D)

Yesterday at approximately one o'clock in the afternoon, Decedent Schumer exited the Durley House Hotel, entered a taxi and collapsed only a short time thereafter. According to the driver, decedent grasped his chest, passed out and never regained consciousness. Decedent Schumer was attended at the scene by medical personnel and was subsequently transported to a hospital. He was pronounced at thirteen-thirty hours by the attending physician. Apparent mechanism of death: myocardial infarction.

JUMP CUT TO:

A FEW MOMENTS LATER: The CAMERA CONTINUES TO INCH ITS WAY DOWN TOWARDS THE TABLE. CREDITS CONTINUING TO ROLL as Welles conducts an external examination of Schumer's corpse.

WELLES (CONT'D)

Vertical scar located down sternum would indicate that decedent underwent open-heart surgery for coronary artery repair.

(eyes scar on the inside of leg)

Bypass operation is from a triple saphenous vein coronary artery bypass graft.

(looks at head and face)

The head is normocephalic. The irides appear hazel with the pupils fixed and dilated. The sclerae and conjunctive are unremarkable, with no evidence of petechial hemorrhages ---

JUMP CUT TO:

A LITTLE LATER: The CAMERA AND CREDITS CONTINUE, we begin to detect a strange AUDITORY phenomenon: the closer we move towards Schumer's corpse the QUIETER things are becoming --- all sound slowly being overtaken by an unsettling HUSH.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Welles takes a scalpel, makes a very deep Y-shaped incision in Schumer's trunk and then peels the skin, muscle and soft tissues off the chest wall. Welles then pulls the chest flap upward over Schumer's face exposing the rib cage and the strap muscles of the front of the neck.

JUMP CUT TO:

A LITTLE LATER: CAMERA AND CREDITS CONTINUE, as does the growing silence. Schumer's chest plate has been removed, exposing the underlying organs. Welles cuts open the pericardial sac and the pulmonary artery. He then sticks his finger into the pulmonary artery and feels around.

WELLES (CONT'D)

Digital investigation of decedent's pulmonary artery reveals acute thromboembolus consistent with diagnosis of myocardial infarction. The severity of the stynosis could certainly have been the catalyst for sudden death ---

The CAMERA CENTERING ITS ATTENTION ON SCHUMER'S FACE.

JUMP CUT TO:

A LITTLE LATER: All sound has now been completely overwhelmed by the deafening silence.

The CAMERA concluding its descent into an extreme close-up of Schumer's eyes --- his swollen, lifeless pupils fill the screen.

ROLE TITLE CREDIT: **"THE INTERNATIONAL"**.

JUMP CUT TO:

NEXT DAY:

CAMERA PANS UP AND CENTERS ON THE DOOR JUST AS TWO MEN ENTER THE ROOM.

To our left, CHIEF INSPECTOR HAROLD KENT, head of Scotland Yard's Criminal Investigation Department. Kent's an old-school ball-buster in his mid-fifties with an unpolished, working-class demeanor.

Standing next to Kent, we have Agent Lavon. Lavon looks much older and more battle-worn than when we last saw him.

Police Surgeon Welles is busy cutting up another body.

KENT

(sloppy, East End, accent)  
Welles.

WELLES

Chief Inspector.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

KENT  
(gesturing to Lavon)  
This is Agent Lavon. He's with INTERPOL.

Lavon and Welles exchange salutary nods.

WELLES  
What brings you down to the butcher shop?

KENT  
Schumer, Thomas D.

WELLES  
Ah yes, the Yank.

Gesturing to the examination table, Welles directs their attention to Schumer's cadaver. Lavon does his best to conceal his grief, but it's obvious that this is a profoundly painful moment for him.

LAVON  
(speaks perfect English,  
continental accent)  
I understand it was a heart attack?

WELLES  
(nodding)  
Acute myocardial infarction.

Lavon anxiously runs his hands through his hair. Kent gestures Welles to give them a little space.

KENT  
You and Schumer, you were mates?

Eyes glued on Schumer's corpse, Lavon gives Kent a solemn nod. Kent reaches into his jacket, pulls out a silver flask of whiskey takes a swig, hands it over to Lavon.

KENT (CONT'D)  
They tell me that he was a savage fucking head-hunter. I heard last year alone he bagged, what, over forty million from Jose Gacha and the Medellin cartel!?

Lavon once again answers Kent with a simple nod.

KENT (CONT'D)  
Fuck me, what I wouldn't give to clear just one big game bust like that --- It'd be nice to leave the job with at least one fat trophy hanging on my wall.

LAVON  
(sharp glance)  
Schumer wasn't a trophy hunter.

Lavon takes a swig, hands the flask back to Kent.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KENT  
(toasting)  
Well, may the Lord grant him a generous  
share of eternity.

Lavon approaches and circles around the autopsy table, giving  
Schumer's corpse the once over.

LAVON  
(looks at Welles)  
What did you find when you cut him open?

As Welles reviews his notes, Lavon stops to take note of the  
cherry red color of the dried bloodstains and splotches  
scattered about Schumer's face and body.

WELLES  
The myocardium was significantly  
thickened; pallor was evident in the post-  
septal area and all of the major coronary  
arteries showed severe atherosclerosis  
with extensive calcification, especially  
in the left anterior descending branch ---

KENT  
(cuts him off, annoyed)  
Oye, Welles, just cut to the climax ---  
was there anything unnatural about  
Schumer's death?

WELLES  
No, sir. Nothing. Given his poor state of  
health and evident history of heart  
disease, it's amazing that Mister Schumer  
lived as long as he did.

LAVON  
May I see his dossier?

Kent gestures Welles to hand his file over. Lavon scans  
through the pages --- his consideration falling upon the post-  
mortem Polaroids photos taken prior to the autopsy. Lavon  
carefully scrutinizes an extreme close-up of Schumer's face  
and large nose.

P.O.V. LAVON: the camera-flash has illuminated the inside of  
Schumer's nostrils --- his nasal membranes are bright pink.

Lavon's pointed expression makes it clear that Schumer's pink  
nose means something. He flips to the toxicology report.

LAVON (CONT'D)  
This is only a rudimentary toxicological  
workup --- where's the rest of the data?

WELLES  
I saw no reason to order a comprehensive  
panel.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

LAVON  
Unnaturally red blood, lambent nasal  
membranes, these two indicators mean  
nothing to you?

Welles is clueless. Lavon's face tightens with restrained  
anger.

KENT  
What's the problem?

LAVON  
May I examine the body?

Kent considers for a moment, then nods.

LAVON (CONT'D)  
I'll need a flashlight and a loupe.

Welles is clearly affronted by this intrusion --- flashes Kent  
a look.

KENT  
Don't give me any aggro, Welles, just  
give him what he wants.

Lavon takes off his jacket --- as he rolls up his sleeves, we  
catch sight of a serial number branded into the inner portion  
of his left forearm. We can also see horrible scars of slash  
marks across both of Lavon's wrists as Lavon puts on a pair of  
latex gloves.

Lavon approaches the metal examination table, pulls the sheet  
off of Schumer and exposes his post-autopsy cadaver. He puts  
on the binocular magnifier and flashlight in hand, Lavon  
systematically begins to scan Schumer's corpse. Starting at  
his feet, he methodically works his way up the body.

Once he has finished examining the front-side of Schumer's  
corpse, Lavon gestures Welles to help him flip the body over.  
Starting now at the head and working his way down, Lavon  
doesn't have to go very far before he finds what he's been  
looking for. Focusing on the area just above the neck, Lavon  
can see a tiny, almost microscopic globule of a gelatin-like  
substance clinging to Schumer's hair.

P.O.V. LAVON: the magnified view reveals that the hair  
surrounding this tiny globule is slightly singed, as if it had  
been burned by a match.

Lavon looks up from the table. His face is flushed with anger.

KENT (CONT'D)  
What is it?

Handing him the head-loupe and flashlight, Lavon invites Kent  
to look for himself.

KENT (CONT'D)  
Where am I looking?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

LAVON

The nape of his neck, just above the hairline --- you'll see a tiny globule of a gelatin-like substance ---

(points to area with pen)

Look closely at the skin just below the substance --- you'll see that the surface tissue appears slightly singed and discolored, as though it was burned ---

KENT

Right, I see it ---  
(looking up at Lavon)  
What's it mean?

LAVON

It means that Thomas Schumer did not die of natural causes.

We HEAR RUMBLING THUNDER and RAIN as we:

CUT TO:

EXT. SCOTLAND YARD - SPECIAL BRANCH BUILDING - NIGHT

A light rain is falling over Scotland Yard's Special Branch Building. Clearly inspired by the designs of Le Corbusier, this glass and steel structure stands in stark contrast to the Victorian edifices surrounding it.

KENT (V.O.)

The toxin used was a hydrocyanic agent --- a formulated amalgamation of prussic acid, DMSO and Ancidine --- which was introduced into Schumer's bloodstream percutaneously via the entry lesion on the back of his neck.

ANGLE CLOSE on an illuminated conference room window in the middle of the building's third floor. We can see the distorted image of FIVE PEOPLE seated around a U-shaped conference table.

KENT (V.O.) (CONT'D)

The boys at lab believe that it was specifically designed to kill only Schumer.

INT. SPECIAL BRANCH - CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

A heavy pall of cigarette smoke fills the room. On one side of the table we have Lavon and Kent, both looking as though they've been working round the clock.

Sitting directly across the table, a tough but graceful looking woman in her forties --- eyes as sharp as cut throat razors. This woman is ELEANOR MORGANTHAW, the District Attorney for New York City. Morgenthaw is clearly strung out and on the edge.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Seated at the head of the table, two meticulously dressed gentlemen in their mid-sixties: ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER RICHARD DUNNE, head of Special Branch and SIR ARTHUR ELLISON, Great Britain's HOME SECRETARY. Spread out across the table are various reports, photos of Schumer, the crime scene, etc.

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER

But why go to such an extreme? Wouldn't a simple bullet have sufficed?

LAVON

The assassin wanted to make it appear that Schumer died of natural causes and was obviously aware of his long history of heart disease.

HOME SECRETARY

I don't understand?

LAVON

The prussic acid stimulated the heart attack --- and the Ancidine used Schumer's heart condition to mask the toxin's signature.

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER

If this is true, how did you spot it out?

LAVON

(to photos of Schumer on table)  
The subtle discoloration of his nasal membranes and blood were the initial indicators.

HOME SECRETARY

You've seen this sort of thing before?

Lavon nods, but says nothing.

HOME SECRETARY (CONT'D)

Where?

LAVON

(after a beat)  
Birkenbau.

An uncomfortable moment, Lavon keenly aware that everyone is looking at him.

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER

What about CSIU?

KENT

CSIU swept the entire scene, the taxi, Schumer's hotel room and effects. Came up with nothing. And MET canvassed not only the hotel, but the street as well. No one reported seeing anything unusual ---  
(clears his throat nervously)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KENT (CONT'D)

And I'm afraid that's all we have for the moment.

A few beats of heavy silence.

HOME SECRETARY

Miss Morganthaw, what do you make of all this? Do you have any idea who might be responsible for Schumer's death?

Morganthaw sits there for a moment, wrestling with herself --- desperately trying to conceal her grief as if it were a vice.

MORGANTHAW

(raspy NYC accent, stilted)  
Schumer worked for me, he was one of my boys --- I hold myself responsible for his death.

(pulls it together)  
But, as for his assassination --- both Lavon and I believe that it was Dormian Skouras that had Tommy killed.

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER

Dormian Skouras, Chairman of the International Bank of Credit and Commerce!?

MORGANTHAW

Yes.

The Home Secretary is clearly shocked and disturbed by this revelation.

HOME SECRETARY

(hard glare at Kent)  
Kent, did you know about this?

KENT

No, sir.

Home Secretary leans over and WHISPERS something to Assistant Commissioner who nods, packs up his files, and gets up from the table. He gestures for Kent to follow and they both exit the room.

The Home Secretary swivels his chair around to the cabinet behind him, opens the door to reveal an activated tape recorder. He switches it off and turns back to face Morganthaw and Lavon.

The atmosphere in the room is suddenly much more intense.

HOME SECRETARY

(angry glare at Morganthaw)  
Why weren't we informed of your suspicions prior to this briefing?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MORGANTHAW

I asked Agent Lavon not to say anything until I arrived in London and had an opportunity to review the facts at hand.

The Home Secretary is not satisfied with Morgenthaw's response. Obviously furious.

HOME SECRETARY

I want to know everything.

Morgenthaw gives Lavon a nod.

LAVON

My concern in all of this began a little more than three years ago at INTERPOL --- my department was busy investigating a wave of assassinations which had targeted nine of Europe's most prominent gray market arms dealers --- and we had reason to believe that the IBCC was involved.

HOME SECRETARY

What reason?

LAVON

I had a source close to the situation, a mid-level broker by the name of Francois Clement. Clement told us that Skouras was aggressively expanding the interests of his business from simply laundering the money made from the illicit arms dealing market, to consolidating and controlling it. Those dealers which joined Skouras' cartel were rewarded with rich contracts, those who did not were killed.

HOME SECRETARY

I don't remember hearing anything about this.

LAVON

Yes, well, when Clement was assassinated, our case died with him ---

(lights up a butt, takes a drag)

I was subsequently reassigned command of INTERPOL'S newly formed FOPAC group ---

HOME SECRETARY

FOPAC?

LAVON

Financial Operations Associated with Crime. We're a specialized unit that focuses primarily on money laundering ---

(takes a drag)

Shortly after becoming operational, I initiated a transnational investigation into the money-laundering activities of Skouras and his bank.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

LAVON (CONT'D)

Over the past twenty-six months FOPAC has uncovered what we believe to be the largest and most sophisticated money laundering operation in the world. We estimate that the IBCC recycles roughly thirty to forty percent of the world's black and grey market currency using systems that are so complex, my auditors still have not been able to ascertain how they work.

HOME SECRETARY

How is any of this related to Schumer and the Manhattan District Attorney's Office?

LAVON

Although the IBCC is based out of Luxembourg, we believe that the bank's New York City branch is the epicenter of its money laundering activity ---

MORGANTHAW

Commissioner Lavon's report to my office in the fall of last year was the catalyst for our own investigation into Skouras' bank. (beat) Thomas Schumer was my point man for this case.

HOME SECRETARY

And Schumer's trip to London?

MORGANTHAW

He was here for a blind date. Nine weeks ago our office was contacted by an individual who claimed to be a high ranking IBCC executive. This Insider was well aware of our investigation into Skouras and was willing to offer us his assistance in exchange for protection for himself and his family.

HOME SECRETARY

And did this meeting between Schumer and the Insider ever happen?

LAVON

There was nothing found among his effects to suggest that it did.

MORGANTHAW

But we don't really know for sure. Tommy was simply told that he would receive instructions for the rendezvous once he arrived in London.

HOME SECRETARY

What about this Insider's identity?

MORGANTHAW

As I said, it was a blind date. The Insider wanted to remain anonymous.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (5)

HOME SECRETARY

How then did you establish his credibility?

MORGANTHAW

He sent us a package which included twenty-two unrelated pages of classified IBCC internal audits --- the pages prove nothing on their own but some of the data contained within them indicates that in the past year, the IBCC has secretly moved at least seven hundred million of its laundered dollars into China...

LAVON

FOPAC has also seen evidence of this via telemetry we've picked up from the IBCC's offices in Hong Kong.

MORGANTHAW

Agent Lavon, Schumer and myself felt that this China development could be a significant clue in helping us jump-start an investigation, which until now has received little or no cooperation on the Federal or international level.

HOME SECRETARY

This scuttlebutt about Skouras and his bank has been circulating for years --- there has never been any credible evidence or testimony to support it. This is why your appeals have been ignored --- you have no case.

LAVON

We have no case because anyone that's ever been in a position to move against Skouras or the bank has been assassinated.

The Home Secretary's disposition suddenly goes from intense to severe.

LAVON (CONT'D)

Over the past two years I have tracked eighteen assassinations; seven in Western Europe, three in the Middle East, five in the United States and three in the Far East. (beat) Eighteen homicides, all of which share two common threads ---

(gesturing)

First --- All of the victims had a definite connection to Dormian Skouras and the bank --- and although different methods were employed in each murder, all bear the same signature characteristics of a singular mind-set.

HOME SECRETARY

What do you mean by singular mind-set?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

LAVON

I believe that one assassin, working exclusively for Skouras, is responsible for all of these hits.

HOME SECRETARY

Including Thomas Schumer?

LAVON

(nods)

It fits the profile --- and if Scotland Yard would simply look at the Bank and its apparatus here in London ---

HOME SECRETARY

(interrupting)

I won't authorize any such action, until you provide me something more compelling than unsubstantiated theories.

LAVON

Schumer's corpse, this isn't compelling enough for you!?

HOME SECRETARY

Thomas Schumer was a ruthless law enforcer who made powerful enemies over the years, all of which had more tangible motives for killing him than Skouras.

Lavon stiffens and stares coldly at the Home Secretary.

LAVON

There is more than enough here to warrant an investigation.

HOME SECRETARY

(stone-cold)

Agent Lavon, need I remind you that INTERPOL has absolutely no authority in this matter --- so don't presume that you have anything to say about what does or doesn't warrant an investigation.

MORGANTHAW

(irate)

And may I remind you, Home Secretary, that had it not been for Lavon, none of you would have known that Thomas Schumer died of anything but a heart attack.

An unsettling, tension-filled silence overwhelms the room.

HOME SECRETARY

(after a pause)

I realize that this is a trying time for both of you.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

HOME SECRETARY (CONT'D)

But you need to understand, you're accusing the world's third largest private bank and one of the most respected businessmen in Europe of conspiracy, money laundering, arms trafficking, murder and god knows what else --- And what have you got!? Do either of you have any shred of hard evidence or corroborative testimony that can support these wild allegations?

LAVON

I've got the assassin.

HOME SECRETARY

The assassin --- do you have any proof that this assassin of yours even exists?

LAVON

Yes.

HOME SECRETARY

What?

LAVON

(after a beat)

A body count.

The pattering drone of the rain against the windows quickly begins to dissolve into the quiet, HISSING drone of what sounds like gas being forced through a tube as we:

CUT TO:

EXT. LEAR JET - DAY

HIGH ANGLE over a Lear jet making its final approach into Luxembourg's International Airport. The only sound heard is the HISSING DRONE of air being aspirated through a tube.

CUT TO:

EXT. LUXEMBOURG INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - TARMAC - DAY

The HISSING DRONE OF AIR CONTINUES as the Lear jet's door opens. TWO BODYGUARDS come out of the plane, unfold two large black umbrellas and then escort their PRINCIPAL into a waiting black Mercedes limo.

INT. MERCEDES LIMO - DAY

CLOSE ON WILHELM WEXLER: a frail looking German gentleman in his early seventies with a face like a requiem. Wexler placidly looks out the window as his limo makes its way through the streets of Luxembourg.

Wexler is being fed oxygen from a nasal cannula affixed just under his nostrils.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The cannula's plastic tubing is connected to a canister of oxygen. This is the source of the HISSING DRONE and its sound always accompanies Wexler.

CUT TO:

EXT. I.B.C.C. WORLD HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Centered in Luxembourg's financial district, the I.B.C.C.'s World Headquarters is a startling looking post-modern structure that towers over the surrounding city-scape.

Wexler's limo approaches the building and then disappears into the underground parking lot.

CUT TO:

INT. I.B.C.C. WORLD HEADQUARTERS - LOBBY - DAY

This building's lobby is unusually quiet for the headquarters of one of the world's largest banks. No customers, no businessmen, no secretaries, just security. Security is overwhelmingly visible: cameras everywhere, checkpoints at every entry and exit, SENTRIES armed with either sub-machine guns or German Shepherds on patrol.

Wexler and his cadre of Bodyguards emerge from one of the elevators. They are greeted by a YOUNG LADY clad in a dark blue suit. Gesturing his Bodyguards to stand down, Wexler follows the Young Lady down a long corridor.

CUT TO:

INT. I.B.C.C. WORLD HEADQUARTERS - EXAMINATION ROOM - DAY

The Young Lady ushers Wexler into a small white medical examination room and then leaves. There is a KNOCK at the door and MISTER AMAN, an attentive looking man clad in a white medical jacket enters. Aman has a file in hand and is accompanied by TWO FEMALE NURSES.

MISTER AMAN

(English accent)

Good afternoon Mister Wexler, so nice to see you again.

Wexler responds with a simple nod as the First Nurse begins to undress him. Every item is handed over to the Second Nurse who carefully searches each article of clothing before hanging it up. All of this feels routine.

Aman reviews Wexler's file. Looking up from the dossier, Aman sets his sights on Wexler's attache case.

MISTER AMAN (CONT'D)

Your attache case, is it new?

Wexler responds with a nod.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MISTER AMAN (CONT'D)  
I'm afraid I cannot allow it to clear  
until it has been screened. You will, of  
course, be provided with a surrogate.

Aman puts on a pair of surgical gloves, takes out a small  
flashlight and turns to face a now completely nude Wexler.

MISTER AMAN (CONT'D)  
Now, shall we begin the examination?

A look of dread washes over Wexler's face as he bends over to  
submit to full body cavity search.

CUT TO:

INT. I.B.C.C. WORLD HEADQUARTERS - CONFERENCE ROOM - DUSK

THREE MEN seated across from one another; each perched on a  
couch, a glass coffee table spaced between them. The couches  
and table sit in front of an enormous glass window, which  
affords a spectacular view of Luxembourg.

To our left is DORMIAN SKOURAS, a heavysset gentleman in his  
late fifties who looks exactly like Henry Kissinger. Wearing a  
pair of large, thick-rimmed Cazal eyeglasses and a stunning  
Savile Row suit, Skouras exudes the kind of raw, visceral,  
unapologetic power reserved exclusively for the gray eminence  
of gray eminences.

Silently taking notes next to Skouras is MISTER EHAMES,  
Skouras' right hand man --- ever-present, silent and ominous.

Seated across from Skouras and Ehames; a smarmy, slightly  
balding thirty-something Arab with a spatula face. This man is  
ABU NIDAL.

NIDAL  
(Arabic accent)  
Our relationship with the Swiss has  
become impossible since our last  
operation. They're discounting our dollar  
deposits by one hundred and sixty basis  
points below par, they've slapped us with  
all kinds of restrictive covenants,  
doubled the cost of moving our money,  
charged us outrageous administrative  
fees, and every time we stage another  
event, these bloodsuckers in Geneva  
parlay the liability of our heightened  
exposure into *their* justification for  
another across the board bump in  
premiums.

Skouras breaks out in LAUGHTER cruel as barbed wire.

SKOURAS  
(Greek accent)  
Well what do you expect?  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SKOURAS (CONT'D)

You've been living in the grey market jungle long enough to know, that when the lion kills, it's always the jackal that profits.

There's a large bowl of walnuts on the coffee table and next to the bowl a platinum nutcracker. Taking hold of the cracker, Skouras plucks one of the nuts from the bowl.

SKOURAS (CONT'D)

This predicament with the Swiss, it's merely a symptom of the malady that's ravaging you and your front.

(puts nut in cracker)

Your business isn't what it used to be. In today's world, the economics of international terrorism are just as critical a part of the endgame as terror itself. It's no longer as simple as "I bomb, therefore I am," yet you still act as if it was. You see, *this*, this is your problem.

Skouras maintains eye contact with Nidal, punctuating the moment by CRACKING the nut open and eating it.

NIDAL

And if I were to agree with your diagnosis, what would you prescribe as the remedy?

SKOURAS

We here at the International Bank of Credit and Commerce are prepared to provide your organization with everything it needs to rejuvenate itself --- financing, weapons, intelligence, counter-intelligence, strategic alliances, logistical support ---

NIDAL

In exchange for what? You must understand, my people have no money ---

SKOURAS

And you must understand that INFLUENCE, not money, is this institution's primary medium of exchange. Money, weapons, intelligence: all of these commodities are simply different forms of influence-  
(raised eyebrow)

As is your spectacular capacity for creating terror --- yes?

NIDAL

What exactly are you proposing?

Skouras plucks another nut and puts it into the cracker.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SKOURAS

I believe that with the right kind of direction and support you and your organization could become a very influential force in the Middle-East.

(leans forward, hard glare)

Perhaps even influential enough to expand the war in Lebanon.

Nidal sits back and looks at Skouras intently.

NIDAL

You realize, that to do this, many people would have to die.

SKOURAS

Yes, well, once you have committed yourself to an economic objective, why let a little bloodshed deter you from achieving it?

Skouras once again punctuates the moment by CRACKING the nut open and eating it. Nidal is visibly disturbed.

NIDAL

Such things should not be spoken of in terms of business ---

SKOURAS

War is a business. It has always been a business.

NIDAL

Perhaps it is to a man as corrupt as yourself ---

SKOURAS

Make no mistake Abu, absolute faith corrupts just as absolutely as absolute power. You and I, we are simply different sides of the same coin.

Nidal is not convinced --- he glares at Skouras, his eyes filled with suspicion and fear.

NIDAL

And this is why should I trust you?

SKOURAS

Trust? There is no such thing as trust on this earth, there is only opportunity; opportunity created by mutual interest.

(gives Ehames a little nod)

Our client list consists of everyone and anyone that has the need for invisibility, and it is mutual interest, not trust, that is the bond of all of these alliances.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Skouras smiles and then gets up. Mister Ehames and Nidal follow suit.

SKOURAS (CONT'D)  
This has been a stimulating exchange.  
(shakes hands with Nidal)  
I sincerely hope that you and I can find  
a way to do business together. (beat)  
I'll expect your answer in the morning.

As Skouras and Nidal shakes hands we suddenly HEAR the unmistakable HISS that accompanies Wexler.

WEXLER (O.S.)  
(thick German accent)  
Good evening, gentlemen both ---

Skouras turns and greets Wexler with a smile --- but Nidal tightens up with suspicion and anger, instinctively taking a step back into the shadows.

SKOURAS  
(gesturing)  
Abu, may I introduce you to my associate,  
Wilhelm Wexler. Herr Wexler is director  
of the bank's special operations group  
and my liaison to the intelligence  
community.

Wexler extends his hand to Nidal --- but his gesture is met with hostile silence. Nidal flashes Skouras an angry glare.

NIDAL  
(ice cold fury)  
What is the meaning of this intrusion? I  
was assured that only Ehames and yourself  
would be privy to our meeting.

SKOURAS  
Wexler is a man you should know. He is an  
integral part of my organization and  
could be a tremendous asset to you.

NIDAL  
(hissing)  
Fuck him --- and fuck you.

SKOURAS  
(bemused smile)  
Abu, if you're going to get anywhere in  
this world, you must learn how to use a  
little diplomacy.

NIDAL  
Diplomacy?  
(scoffs)  
I don't even know what that word means  
anymore.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (4)

SKOURAS

Ah, well then allow me to illustrate...

(turns to Wexler)

Wilhelm, my friend, I love and trust you  
as a son would a father.

Wexler flashes a razor thin grin, seems to know where Skouras  
is going with this.

WEXLER

And I you, Dormian, as a father would a  
son.

SKOURAS

(turns back to Nidal)

Now you see, he lied, I knew he lied and  
he knew I lied. THAT'S DIPLOMACY!

Skouras deals Nidal a savage grin and gestures one of the  
bodyguards to escort him out of the room.

WEXLER

Do you really think that madman can  
implement your program for Lebanon?

SKOURAS

Of course. Madmen like Nidal, they never  
do evil so completely and cheerfully as  
when they do it from ideological dogma.

CUT TO:

INT. I.B.C.C. WORLD HEADQUARTERS - SKOURAS' OFFICE

The sleekly designed office of an international power-broker.  
Skouras takes a seat behind his desk --- behind him, a massive  
glass window overlooking the bank's main trading floor.

Wexler carefully sits in the chair in front of the desk ---  
his breathing has become extremely labored. Skouras watches  
Wexler struggle to catch his breath.

SKOURAS

What are you doing to yourself, Wilhelm?  
Why do you continue to work like this?

WEXLER

The work keeps me preoccupied ---

SKOURAS

You're a sick man. You should just walk  
away.

WEXLER

Walk away and do what?

SKOURAS

Enjoy what precious time you have left ---  
reflect on the life that you've led.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WEXLER

I have no interest in reflection.

(wheezes)

My best memories are those that I have forgotten and that's how I want it to remain.

SKOURAS

So be it.

(leans back in his chair)

What did you find out in Milan? Why has Calvi pulled out of the deal?

WEXLER

Someone tipped him off to your arrangement with the P.R.C..

SKOURAS

Who?

WEXLER

I'm looking into it ---

SKOURAS

What does he know?

WEXLER

That you've secured a deal to broker the sale of their Silkworm Missile Systems to your clients in the Middle East and Africa.

Skouras' face tightens up, clearly not happy about this revelation.

WEXLER (CONT'D)

He is also aware that all of your purchase agreements are contingent upon the missiles being equipped with the guidance systems which his company produces ---

A look of dread comes across Skouras' face.

SKOURAS

How much is this all going to cost me?

WEXLER

There is no number --- he won't sell, not at any price.

SKOURAS

And why not!?

WEXLER

Roberto Calvi is a rabid anti-Communist, a fanatic. He simply won't be a part of an endeavor that would in any way benefit the Chinese.

(wheezes)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WEXLER (CONT'D)

He is also trying to position himself for next year's election --- hoping to get the nomination from Italy's Christian Democratic Party.

SKOURAS

That fascist stands to make at least three hundred million from this buyout --- and he'd rather stand on principle!?

An enraged Skouras swells to his feet and begins pacing.

SKOURAS (CONT'D)

What do you think?

WEXLER

You need to resuscitate negotiations with the Israeli, Shaoul Eisenberg.

(off Skouras' scowling refusal)  
He's the only other contractor able to produce this type of guidance system.

SKOURAS

Yes, but Eisenberg refuses to sell me his technology. He knows what I'm trying to do with China, and he wants participation, ten percent of the overall.

WEXLER

What other choice do you have?

Skouras turns around, gazes out at the trading floor and contemplates.

SKOURAS

Calvi's two sons? If the decision were theirs, would they move forward with the buyout?

WEXLER

Yes, but they were unable to sway their father.

SKOURAS

Of course they weren't ---  
(turns, gives Wexler a hard eye)  
An opinion can be argued with, but a conviction, a conviction is best shot.

WEXLER

I would strongly advise against taking such a risk.

SKOURAS

The risk is nothing compared to the reward ---

(sits back down)  
You of all people know what a partnership with the P.R.C. will mean for this bank, the extraordinary opportunity that it will create...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SKOURAS (CONT'D)

(takes out a cigar)

The only way the Chinese will move forward with this proposed partnership is if they have absolute confidence in this institutions ability to fulfill its commitments ---

(lights cigar)

Now it's already the seventeenth of January and I've guaranteed to deliver the silkworm sales by the first of March. The clock is ticking...

WEXLER

All the more reason to be prudent and secure your position with Eisenberg, now, while you're still in control.

SKOURAS

(shakes his head "no")

Eisenberg is a Trojan Horse --- I'd rather take out Calvi than deal with him.

WEXLER

Were anything to go wrong, you would be putting the fate of the People's Republic deal in Eisenberg's hands.

SKOURAS

Then I think we should bring in our Closer. Just to make sure nothing does go wrong.

WEXLER

There are no guarantees anymore, Dormian, not even with the Closer --- look at what happened in London with Schumer...

SKOURAS

The Schumer situation doesn't concern me. The Americans and British have too much at stake with this bank to ever allow anything to come of Lavon's revelation...

WEXLER

Be that as it may, Richard Amesely and the O.A.G. are extremely upset that you moved against one of their own without consulting them first.

SKOURAS

(angry, defensive)

Fuck Amesley --- I had to act or the opportunity would have been lost. Schumer was the only way for us to find and purge the Judas in this organization --- once he led us to him they both had to be eliminated.

(takes a puff from cigar)

The fact that this Lavon spoiled the illusion is nothing more than an unfortunate annoyance...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

WEXLER

And what if the same thing were to happen with Calvi? (beat) This man Lavon is exceedingly capable and very determined.

SKOURAS

Wilhelm, no man can make the truth prevail in a world that wants to be deceived.

(puff, puff)

This institution --- like Hollywood, like Christ --- exists and prospers because the world needs the good lie more than it does the bad truth.

(hard glare)

So you just deal with Calvi and let me worry about Lavon.

CUT TO:

EXT. GROSVENOR SQUARE - MORNING

A thick blanket of fog covers a small, meticulously manicured park situated directly across the street from the Eero Saarinen designed American Embassy in London.

Lavon sits alone on a bench that faces the Embassy --- smoking a cigarette, his eyes half-closed. As Lavon leans forward to stomp out his butt, he suddenly notices the ghostly specter of a MAN IN A TRENCH-COAT standing next to a tree located only a few yards away from the bench. The Man in the black trench remains eerily still, his features cloaked by the mist.

Lavon knows that he's being watched, but is too tired to do anything about it. Lighting up another cigarette --- he suddenly catches sight of Morgenthaw exiting the embassy. She crosses the street, moves into the park and passes the Man in the trench-coat as she approaches Lavon.

MORGANTHAW

(subtle gesture, low voice)

Who's the trenchcoat next to the tree?

LAVON

(shrugs)

Could be from the Firm, could be Special Branch...

(tiny smile)

Or, he could be just a man standing next to a tree ---

Morgenthaw remains standing --- obviously too upset to sit.

LAVON (CONT'D)

What did the ambassador have to say?

MORGANTHAW

He wouldn't meet with me. I ended up having to plead my case to the Deputy Chief of Mission and two mugwumps from the State Department.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LAVON

And?

MORGANTHAW

They're backing the Home Secretary's decision not to pursue Skouras or the IBCC as a possible suspect in Schumer's death.

LAVON

So where does this leave the investigation?

MORGANTHAW

I've been informed that Richard Amesley, the Deputy Under Secretary of State has personally arranged for Scotland Yard to turn everything over to Central Intelligence. Schumer's case files, blood and tissue samples --- it's all being sealed up and sent directly to Langley.

LAVON

WHAT!? Why?!

MORGANTHAW

Because once those files reach Langley, they automatically come under the protective shroud of the National Security Act.

(turns, locks eyes with Lavon)  
The Company is going to deep-six this whole fucking thing by invoking the Secrets of State privilege.

Lavon shuts his eyes in dreaded frustration and drops his head into his hands.

LAVON

We can't let them bury this, Eleanor ---

MORGANTHAW

(explodes angrily)

Don't you think I'd like to spit on my hands, hoist a black flag and begin slitting throats!?

Morganthaw slumps down onto the bench next to Lavon and deflates like a punctured balloon.

MORGANTHAW (CONT'D)

I don't know what to do anymore ---

LAVON

There must be someone you can appeal to?

MORGANTHAW

I don't know who to trust ---

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LAVON  
(after a beat)  
Perhaps we should go to the press?

MORGANTHAW  
And tell them what? We've got shit and you know it. We go public now, and it's over, they'll fucking crucify us.

LAVON  
How can you be so sure?

MORGANTHAW  
Do you really think the New York-fucking-Times is going to find anyone to line up behind us on this thing? (beat) We've been working the case against Skouras for over two years and in all this time not one person has ever agreed to come over to our side of the fence. Everyone we've ever approached during the course of our investigations, be they from the world of crime, law enforcement, finance, intelligence, government --- they all machinate to protect Skouras and his bank, no matter what the circumstance, no matter what the cost --- even at the expense of their own people.  
(after a long beat)

Why?  
(turns to face Lavon)  
What is it that allows this man to act with impunity? What could inspire such a sweeping conspiracy?

LAVON  
I wish I knew.

MORGANTHAW  
This whole thing is so overwhelming, so unbelievable --- its like some Kafkaesque nightmare --- and it just keeps getting worse...

Morganthaw fights to stave off an inevitable meltdown --- she succeeds in holding everything back but the tears. Lavon obviously wants to embrace her, but doesn't --- keenly aware that they are being watched.

MORGANTHAW (CONT'D)  
I'm scared, Andre. Scared that I'm losing faith; faith in the job, in myself --- in everything.

LAVON  
Believe me, Eleanor, I'm struggling just as you are ---- but its the struggle that defines us. Without it, we're lost.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MORGANTHAW

How do you cope? What do you do when you feel like your at the end of your rope?

LAVON

You tie a knot in it and hang on. You can't allow yourself to think about everything at once ---

Lavon gently takes hold of Morganthaw and forces her to look him in the eyes.

LAVON (CONT'D)

Clear your mind of everything that you don't know for the moment and focus on this one, simple truth: (beat) Thomas Schumer was our friend and colleague, our brother in arms --- and Skouras had him killed. Think about that. Then let go of the fear and take hold of the anger. Use it. Let the wrath in your own heart show you the way to Skouras'.

Lavon takes out his handkerchief and hands it to Morganthaw. She pulls herself together and gives Lavon a silent nod of understanding.

LAVON (CONT'D)

We must be close to something, Eleanor. Why else would Skouras risk having Thomas killed? Why else would the British and Americans be trying to bury it?

Lavon shakes out his last cigarette, lights up, takes a long, heavy hit.

LAVON (CONT'D)

Something is happening --- and Schumer and the rest were all murdered to either protect or facilitate whatever this something is.

MORGANTHAW

China. This is about whatever the IBCC is doing in China ---

Lavon nods in agreement and passes the butt to Morganthaw. She takes a long contemplative drag.

MORGANTHAW (CONT'D)

So what's the next move?

LAVON

You need to find this Insider that Thomas was supposed to meet with ---

MORGANTHAW

What's the point? You and I both know he's dead.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (4)

LAVON

Dead or alive --- knowing the man's identity and the circumstances of his fate might give us a few more pieces to the China puzzle --- and hopefully bring me one step closer to Skouras' assassin.

MORGANTHAW

You really think that this assassin is the silver bullet we've been looking for?

LAVON

I don't know, but right now he's the best shot we've got.

(looks at his watch, gets up from bench)

I've got to get to Heathrow...

MORGANTHAW

(grabbing Lavon's hand)

Andre ---

Morganthaw and Lavon exchange a look of beleaguered affection; the emotion in their eyes revealing an uneasy, unexpressed and delicate attraction.

MORGANTHAW (CONT'D)

If Skouras can take out Tommy and get away with it, what's to stop him from doing the same to us?

LAVON

Nothing.

Lavon gives her a gentle kiss on the forehead and leaves as we:

CUT TO:

EXT. POMPIDOU CENTER - PARIS - EARLY EVENING

The snow-covered Pompidou Center looks more like an oil refinery than a post-modern cultural center.

CUT TO:

INT. MUSEE D'ART MODERNE - MAIN CONCOURSE - EARLY EVENING

LONG SHOT OF MUSEUM'S MAIN CONCOURSE: a seemingly endless open-air hallway, which serves as the building's main artery. Looking down this long corridor, through a kaleidoscopic mass of PEOPLE as they move along the concourse. We suddenly see Wexler emerge from the crowd as he enters one of the galleries.

INT. POMPIDOU/MUSEE D'ART MODERNE - GALLERY -

A large and desolate open air gallery devoted exclusively to the works of Otto Dix.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE CAMERA IS POSITIONED BEHIND A VIEWING BENCH which is situated in front of a large Otto Dix painting, entitled "Job". The grotesque and distorted image that it depicts is that of Job looking up at the heavens in utter horror and agony. There is a MAN seated on this bench. A YOUNG COUPLE, stands next to the bench, looking at the painting.

WEXLER ENTERS FRAME and takes a seat next to the Man on the bench. WHEEZING heavily, Wexler struggles for a moment to catch his breath. After a beat, Wexler turns to the Man sitting next to him with an idle smile and gestures to the painting.

WEXLER

This canvass appeals to you?

YOUNG MAN'S VOICE

(nods, American accent)  
I like the look of agony.

WEXLER

Why?

YOUNG MAN'S VOICE

Because I know it's true.

WEXLER

Yes. I've often thought if God were suddenly condemned to live the life which he has inflicted on men, He would kill Himself.

YOUNG MAN'S VOICE

He did.

The Young Couple exits the gallery --- a few beats of silence.

YOUNG MAN'S VOICE (CONT'D)

Every time we meet, you look a little closer, but not close enough. (beat) It must be horrible to die a slow death.

WEXLER

Yes, but that's life on this bitch of an earth --- times change, men deteriorate and life always comes to a bad end.

REVERSE ANGLE --- FACING WEXLER AND MAN: seated next to Wexler is an inconsequential looking soul in his mid to late thirties whose most distinguishing attribute seems to be that there is absolutely nothing distinguishing about him. Having carefully excised himself of any external peculiarities that would mark him as an individual, THE CLOSER is a man that always seems to blend into the immense design of things.

CLOSER

What would you have preferred your ending been like?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WEXLER  
(after a pensive beat)  
More purposeful --- and certainly more climactic.

CLOSER  
A finale?

WEXLER  
Yes, a finale.

CLOSER  
Things can always be arranged ---

WEXLER  
(chuckles)  
As much as the thought appeals to me, I'm afraid that your consideration is needed elsewhere for the moment.  
(catches his breath)  
Your Principle would like you to finalize the Calvi contract.

CLOSER  
Why?

WEXLER  
He won't agree to the buyout, but his sons will.  
(wheezes)  
You'll find all of our situational details included in your dossier...

THE CLOSER  
Is this an access or technical contract?

WEXLER  
Technical.

THE CLOSER  
Orientation, manual or automatic?

WEXLER  
Manual.

CLOSER  
Disposition?

WEXLER  
Exigent.

CLOSER  
How exigent?

WEXLER  
The contract must be finalized by the twenty-eighth of this month.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CLOSER

Eight days from now?

(Wexler nods yes)

That's a totally unrealistic delivery date. To close out a deal of this size and complexity requires at least a month of due diligence ---

WEXLER

Almost all due diligence has already been completed --- all of it bona-fide --- and you will, of course, have all of our Italian assets at your disposal.

CLOSER

What assets? If you had any real coverage in that corner, you wouldn't need me to come in for the close.

WEXLER

Resources can always be reallocated --- just tell me what you need.

CLOSER

It's not a question of resources, it's a question of operating exposure. The odds are like poison on an eight day turnaround.

WEXLER

I don't care. You are going to do this.

The Closer deals Wexler a severe glance --- his eyes, cold and dark, like water under ice.

CLOSER

You know better than to give me marching orders.

WEXLER

Yes, better than most.

CLOSER

So why are you pushing me?

WEXLER

Because you need to make amends. (beat)  
The illusion you sought to create in London, it didn't hold.

CLOSER

What happened?

Wexler reaches into his jacket pocket, pulls out a photograph of Andre Lavon and shows it to the Closer.

WEXLER

The toxin you used left a minute lesion on the nape of his neck. Scotland Yard missed it, Lavon didn't.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

The Closer flinches slightly, trying to hide his astonishment. He takes the photo from Wexler and studies it carefully.

WEXLER (CONT'D)

Lavon's got the scent --- any more mistakes and its only a matter of time before he picks up a trail.

The Closer smiles inwardly and nods more to himself than Wexler.

WEXLER (CONT'D)

Why should this please you?

CLOSER

It's better to be wanted for murder, than not to be wanted at all.

(grins inwardly)

Death is a lonely business.

WEXLER

I understand the fascination, when you play the game for the game's own sake, a cunning opponent makes the match --- but Lavon, he is different than the rest...

CLOSER

Different how?

WEXLER

He's oblivious to the game --- his only concern is the truth.

CLOSER

Only a fool would be committed to something he will never know.

WEXLER

Perhaps.

Wexler leaves a Locker ID ticket on the bench to the Closer --- and then gets up -- the two men lock eyes.

WEXLER (CONT'D)

(scathing little grin)

Or perhaps, in the end, the most foolish commitment of all is to be committed only to one's self.

Wexler exits. The Closer picks up the locker ID and turns his attention back to the Dix canvass.

CAMERA MOVING CLOSE ON PAINTING: tight on the twisted and tortured face of Job.

MATCH CUT TO:

## CLOSE-UP OF BLACK AND WHITE CRIME SCENE PHOTOGRAPH:

The photo is an extreme close-up of the face of a murder victim. The murder victim's contorted facial expression of utter agony is exactly the same as the subject of the Dix painting.

CAMERA PULLS BACK TO REVEAL:

INT. LAVON'S OFFICE - INTERPOL HQ - PARIS - NIGHT

A large, functional looking office cluttered with piles of paperwork and files.

The CRIME SCENE PHOTO is tacked up to a huge wall covered with the INTERPOL case files of eighteen assassinations. The contents of each case file have been sorted out in long columns which run chronologically across the wall.

Outstretched across the other two walls of the office, the anatomy of INTERPOL's official FOPAC investigation into Skouras and the IBCC.

Lavon sits with his feet kicked up on his desk --- lit cigarette in hand --- contemplating the wall of case files with the intensity of a seer. He takes one last drag off his butt before tapping it out in the ashtray on his desk. Shaking out a fresh butt, Lavon reaches for the lighter --- his attention drifting to the silver picture frame situated next to the lighter.

THE SILVER-FRAMED PHOTOGRAPH: a black and white snapshot of Lavon at age twelve --- he stands with his two older sisters and parents, everyone smiling --- a happy family.

MOVING CLOSE ON LAVON: held spellbound by the image of these ghosts --- we can see old emotions, like old scars, begin to savage his face.

VOICE OF A MAN (O.S.)

(husky Swedish accent)

When did you get back?

Lavon snaps out of his trance, looks up from the photos and sees VIKTOR HAAS, GROUP II DIRECTOR OF INTERPOL, standing in the doorway. Haas, a bearded, rough and tumble Swede in his sixties.

LAVON

This afternoon.

HAAS

You should've checked in with me.

Lavon doesn't respond, just lights up another cigarette, glaring at Haas with a definite venom --- a palpable tension between these two old friends.

Haas can't take the glare, drops his briefcase by the door and walks over to the window, slides it open, takes a deep breath.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HAAS (CONT'D)

I spoke with Eleanor not long ago --- she told me everything.

(after a beat, turns to Lavon)

How are you holding up?

LAVON

I feel like a blind man in a dark room looking for black hat that isn't there.

Haas strokes his beard, clearly distressed. After a beat, he opens the top drawer of the filing cabinet situated next to the window, retrieves a bottle of whiskey and two glasses. Haas then takes a seat in front of the desk, pours, hands Lavon a glass. The two men guzzle down the booze. Haas pours another round but Lavon doesn't want it.

HAAS

Have another with me --- it will help to ease the pain.

LAVON

(slides the drink away)

After a time, the grief becomes it's own anesthetic.

Lavon stares Haas down, a glare pregnant with condemnation.

HAAS

Please, Andre. What happened to Schumer is tragic, but there was nothing I could have done ---

LAVON

I've been warning you about these assassinations for over a year --- submitted eight budget-for-inquiry requests, all of which you rejected...

HAAS

How could I justify endorsing an inquiry of this size based solely on a hunch?

LAVON

There was a day when that would have been enough. It's not as if you and I haven't worked under the rose before.

HAAS

That was another lifetime ago, when I could still afford to take a chance. Things are different now.

LAVON

No they're not. You're different. You used to be a sledgehammer, now you're a bureaucrat.

The sting of this last comment is evident in Haas' eyes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HAAS

I admit, my priorities have changed ---  
and perhaps if you ever had the guts to  
make a life for yourself beyond this  
office, you'd understand why.

(hard glare)

But don't think for a moment that you're  
a better man than me. We've both used the  
job --- I used it to build a solid future  
for myself and my family --- you used it  
as a means to avoid having to deal with  
yourself and the past ---

LAVON

(cuts him off)

I don't want to hear it, Viktor. Not now,  
not from you ---

HAAS

You only have, at the most, four more  
years left before they retire you ---  
What are you going to do when the job  
isn't there?

LAVON

I don't know and I don't really care.  
Right now my only concern is bringing  
down Skouras and his bank ---

HAAS

(explodes, angrily)

Would you just listen to yourself!?  
You're an analyst, Andre, not a law  
enforcer. INTERPOL isn't in the law  
enforcement business --- we deal strictly  
in intelligence and facilitation, that's  
it.

LAVON

(hard, incredulous glare)

How can you sit there and lecture me on  
protocol and procedure? You spoke to  
Eleanor --- you know what's happening.

(leans forward)

Look me in the eye and tell me that I'm  
not more right than I am wrong about all  
of this.

(nods to the murder board)

Look me in the eye and tell me that  
there's nothing here.

HAAS

(looking away)

You're missing my point. Your  
investigation into Skouras is strictly  
limited to the economic aspects of his  
bank's activities. You have to focus on  
that, work that --- and pass your take on  
to the appropriate authorities.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (3)

LAVON

We've been circulating our take since the very beginning. No one ever does anything with it --- no one can. Financial crimes are almost impossible to prosecute on a global scale. Whatever case we have against Skouras gets lost in the subtleties and complexities of international law ---

(points at photo on murder board)  
But there's nothing subtle about a bullet in the head --- nothing complex about a cold blooded murder.

Lavon lights up a butt.

HAAS

What makes you so sure that only one man is responsible for all of this? It doesn't make sense that Skouras would use the same assassin over and over.

LAVON

This assassin isn't just an assassin, he's a polymath --- a problem solver of the first order. He isn't simply killing people, he's providing Skouras with perfect solutions to complex problems --- and he never misses his mark.

HAAS

And if he does exist, if you could find him --- do you really think you'll ever be able to connect him to Skouras? The essence of the relationship between an assassin and his employer is deniability.

LAVON

Yes --- but I believe that this relationship is different.

(gesturing)

Take a hard look at all of these hits and you'll see ---

Lavon gets up. He walks over to the murder wall.

LAVON ( (CONT'D)

(gesturing to file)

The arms dealer, Clement --- look at the staging and orchestration --- the methodology, choice of location --- even the medium with which this man was killed. Sheer theatrics. An assassination that was specifically engineered to unfold with all the high drama of some tragic opera.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

LAVON ( (CONT'D)

This assassin could have just as easily eliminated Clement while he was exiting his flat but instead, at great risk to himself, he chose to turn his death into living theater --- because he knew --- simply killing Clement wasn't the solution to the problem. The solution was in the message that Clement's death sent.

(takes a drag from butt)

It's the same thing across the board --- even with Schumer. The design and execution of these hits all point to something unique in our experience with this type of crime.

HAAS

What are you suggesting?

LAVON

I'm suggesting that whereas most assassins are only given the who, when, where, sometimes even the how --- THIS ONE IS BEING TOLD WHY.

(locks eyes with Haas)

In order to create the perfect solution, he must first know what the problem is.

HAAS

This man of yours could simply be Skouras' soldier, a hired gun that carries out the orders he's been given.

LAVON

There's no way Dormian Skouras is designing these hits. Skouras is a businessman, this assassin is an artist. And I'm convinced ---

(points to murder wall)

that what he's doing over here is covering up ---

(points to the financial wall)

what Skouras is doing over here.

Lavon returns to his seat at his desk, lights up another butt.

LAVON (CONT'D)

Everything in my gut's telling me that this killer knows why he's killing. If we get him, we get motive, and if we get motive, we get Skouras.

Haas sits there for a few pensive beats but is clearly not convinced.

HAAS

What is it you expect me to do, Andre?

LAVON

I expect you to trust my instincts and back me up --- give me the resources I need to make this case.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

HAAS  
I can't do it --- not without something more than supposition. I have people to answer to, Andre --- surely you can understand ---

LAVON  
Yes, I understand --- I understand that the only thing necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing.

HAAS  
(iced fury)  
I didn't deserve that --- Skouras is not Hitler.

LAVON  
No --- Skouras is smarter.

Haas swells to his feet --- crimson with restrained rage and indignation.

HAAS  
I'm sorry about Schumer, I truly am --- and I can understand how frustrated and upset you must be --- but that doesn't give you right to shit on an old friend or your C.O. ---  
(locks eyes with Lavon)  
Like it or not, you work for me. And I'm telling you right now --- your job isn't to run down some notional assassin, it's to run this office.

Begins to leave the room, not looking back.

HAAS (CONT'D)  
Now go home and get some sleep.  
(gestures to murder wall)  
I want that shit off the wall by the end of the week.

Lavon sits there for a few moments with this hangdog look on his face. Frustrated and fatigued, he anxiously runs his hands through his hair and then lights up another cigarette.

PANNING with Lavon as he turns his attention back to the wall of case files.

As THE CAMERA SLOWLY TRACKS PAST LAVON towards the wall, we suddenly become aware of the strange VISUAL METAMORPHOSIS beginning to develop --- as we draw closer to the tapestry of case files, the content and information contained within the various photos, diagrams, reports --- it's all changing.

The PHOTOGRAPHS of the eighteen different murder victims are individually DISSOLVING into various photographs of only one man: ROBERTO CALVI. The PHOTOGRAPHS of the different crime scenes are individually dissolving into various photos of only one location: THE PIRELLI BUILDING IN MILAN.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

The CRIME SCENE DIAGRAMS are individually dissolving into maps and diagrams of only one area: NORTHEAST MILAN, etc...

As this visual metamorphosis continues, it soon becomes very apparent that we are no longer looking at Lavon's assemblage of information about the CLOSER'S PAST VICTIMS, we are looking at the Closer's assemblage of information about his NEXT TARGET.

The CAMERA SLOWLY PANNING UP TO REVEAL:

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

The massive assemblage of information has been laid out on the second floor of a huge empty warehouse --- everything lit-up by a few jury-rigged floodlights.

The information outstretched on the floor have been sorted into specific sections. The Closer stands at the foot of this mosaic of data and is studying it intently. He is wearing a pair of cut-off army fatigues and sweatshirt.

We can see a custom-made brace affixed to his right leg and the special boot that it attaches to. The atlas of scars covering the Closer's legs make it very clear that this condition is NOT a result of a congenital defect.

The Closer looks up from the floor, cracks his neck, and stretches his back. We FOLLOW him over to one of the worktables. Spread out on top of the table: a large black tactical duffle bag and two disassembled Sauer 200 take-down sniper rifles.

The Closer reaches into the black duffle, pulls out an unmarked medicine bottle, pops open the cap and shakes out two glass capsules of amyl nitrate into his left hand.

Hitting the PLAY BUTTON on the cassette deck, the Closer takes a few steps back and puts the capsules under his nose. We HEAR the glass POP as he SNAPS the capsules open and BREATHES in the vapors just as the first few power chords of Pink Floyd's "INTERSTELLAR OVERDRIVE" blares out of the boombox --- The Closer shuts his eyes as the cataclysmic rush of the drug and music takes hold.

MOVING CLOSE ON THE CLOSER: born again hard, as he opens his eyes. The MUSIC taking over and catapulting us into:

#### PLOTTING ASSASSINATION MONTAGE:

EXT. PIRELLI TOWER - DAY

It's a bitter, freezing cold day in Milan --- the whole city glazed over in a hard blanket of ice.

Rising above North-East Milan, the Pirelli Tower is a glass and concrete skyscraper whose startlingly sleek Gio Ponti design dominates the city-scape. The building sits facing THE PIAZZA DUCA D'AOSTA, a large park-like square surrounded by buildings. Located just across the piazza is Milan's STAZIONE CENTRALE, the largest railway station in Europe.

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CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON PIRELLI TOWER'S PLAZA STEPS: a GROUP OF WORKMEN are busy constructing a large stage at the base of the steps.

ANGLE ON THE CLOSER: quietly sitting on a bench situated in the Pirelli Tower's entrance plaza, just to the right of the steps where the stage is being erected. He's got a notebook in his lap, a pen in hand. A rangefinder, hangs from his neck.

VARIOUS ANGLES: The Closer is meticulously scrutinizing every environmental element of this sector --- elevations, foliage, traffic patterns, intersections, landmarks, buildings, etc. He checks the time on his watch: 12:45 P.M. --- notes the location of the sun and the shadow-play its position creates on his surroundings. He pays scrupulous attention to the wind.

The Closer scans this entire area, until his sights finally lock onto the GALLIA EXCELSIOR HOTEL: a twelve story luxury hotel situated across the piazza, just to the right of the railway station.

We see the Closer follow a line of sight from the stage to the hotel. He then raises the rangefinder to his eyes --- setting its sights on the eleventh floor of the hotel. The Closer looks up --- a resolute expression on his face.

The Closer gets up and walks down the plaza steps when a tremendous BACKFIRE explodes from the tailpipe of a passing truck. We can HEAR the GUNSHOT-LIKE ECHO of this sudden BANG reverberating several times over the din of the streets --- **the acoustics of the piazza and surrounding buildings making it sound like two or three backfires right on top of each other.** The Closer smiles inwardly like a man bitten by some inspired idea.

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

The Closer stands in front of the blackboard which is now covered with an unbelievably complex geometric equation comprised of a schematic-like illustration of the area surrounding the Pirelli Tower. Plotted within the schematic are ranges, temperature, elevations, trajectory tables, etc.

ANGLE ON WORKTABLE: both Sauer 200 takedown sniper rifles have been totally assembled, primed and mounted in their own vice. The rifles are pointed at corresponding targets located at the far end of the warehouse.

Wearing surgical gloves, The Closer cracks open a box of Federal .308 match grade ammo, shakes out a handful of bullets. Loading the Sniper Rifle on the right, he then takes hold of the gun...

POV CLOSER: zeroing the scope's cross-hairs in on the target's bull's-eye and BANG! The bullet hits target, dead center.

The Closer pulls back the rifle's bolt, ejects the spent cartridge and lets it drop to the ground.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLOSE ON SPENT CARTRIDGE LYING ON THE FLOOR: the Closer carefully uses tweezers to pick up the casing and put it into the glass medicine bottle.

EXT. MILAN POST OFFICE - MORNING

A large municipal post office. We see a MAN clad in a overcoat and a dark green fedora enter the post office.

INT. MILAN POST OFFICE

THE MAN IN THE GREEN HAT opens a mailbox, pulls out a small package --- walks over to a bench, sits and uses a key to open this package. Inside is a small box. He removes the box's lid and looks inside.

ANGLE ON BOX: a small piece of paper with some information typed on it, two envelopes filled with cash and the small glass medicine bottle with the spent rifle casing inside it.

The Man In The Green Hat closes box and exits building.

EXT. PIAZZA DUCA D'AOSTA - DAY

The stage in front of the Pirelli Building has been completed. An ARMY OF VOLUNTEERS are now decorating the stage with all kinds of political banners and billboards with ROBERTO CALVI'S name printed all over them.

ANGLE ON THE MAN IN THE GREEN HAT: he is casually strolling through the Piazza with his back to us. Walking along side him is a UNIFORMED POLICE CAPTAIN with a black eye-patch over his left eye. The two men are heading towards the GALLIA EXCELSIOR HOTEL, engaged in conversation. They suddenly stop walking. The Man In The Green Hat hands a manila envelope to the Police Captain and the two men part ways.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

The warehouse is completely empty. No sign that the Closer was ever there --- nothing.

**MUSIC AND MONTAGE END:**

We HEAR the RING OF A TELEPHONE as we:

CUT TO:

INT. EXCELSIOR HOTEL GALLIA - SUITE #1122 - NIGHT

CLOSE ON RINGING TELEPHONE situated on night-table next to the bed. THE CUT OUT, a handsome young Italian Gentleman wearing a brown leather coat, picks up the phone.

CUT OUT

Pronto.

CLOSER

Designator?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CUT OUT

Naphtali.

CLOSER (V.O. PHONE)

Did you retrieve the packages?

CUT OUT

(thick Italian accent)

Yes.

CLOSER (V.O. PHONE)

Open them, using the combination: 3241.

The Cut Out retrieves an attache case and a metal, mil-spec case from the closet and puts them on the bed. He then dials in the combination to both cases and opens them. Inside the attache he finds the manila envelope, wad of cash and stopwatch. The mil-spec case, neatly houses the disassembled Sauer 200 take-down sniper rifle, scope and ammunition.

CUT OUT

They're open.

CLOSER (V.O. PHONE)

Open the envelope.

The Cut Out grabs the envelope, tears it open and dumps its contents out onto the bed --- there are the photos of Roberto Calvi, the Pirelli Tower, etc.

CLOSER (CONT'D)

You're familiar with the element in the photograph?

CUT OUT

Yes.

CLOSER (V.O. PHONE)

Go to the window.

The Cut Out, taking the phone and photo with him, walks over to the window.

CLOSER (V.O. PHONE) (CONT'D)

Across the piazza --- there's a stage in front of the Pirelli Tower --- and a podium on the stage ---

The Cut-out looks across the piazza and locks onto the stage.

CLOSER (V.O. PHONE) (CONT'D)

At approximately twelve o'clock noon, tomorrow, the element in the photograph will stand behind that podium and give a speech ---

(speaks slowly, purposefully)

Start the watch the very moment the he begins speaking and precisely four minutes into his speech, complete the action.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CLOSER (V.O. PHONE) (CONT'D)  
(beat) The precise timing of this event  
is essential to its success. It is  
everything. (beat) Do you understand?

CUT OUT  
Yes, I understand.

We HEAR the phone CLICK dead. Hanging up the phone, the Cut  
Out stands at the window, staring pensively across the park at  
the deserted podium situated in the middle of empty stage.

We suddenly HEAR SKOURAS' VOICE over the darkness...

SKOURAS V.O.  
A new wave is coming ---

CUT TO:

INT. I.B.C.C. WORLD HEADQUARTERS - CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

A dimly lit conference room. Mister Ehames, along with the  
IBCC's THREE HIGHEST RANKING EXECUTIVES are seated at a  
conference room table. All eyes are locked on Skouras who  
stands at the head of this table --- gazing out a massive  
window which overlooks the bank's main trading floor.

SKOURAS  
(turns to face table)  
And this new wave is going to change  
everything --- the way we make money, the  
way we make war, everything.

Skouras lights up a cigar, takes a few puffs and slowly begins  
to make his way around the table.

SKOURAS (CONT'D)  
A new wave economy, driven by  
information, is going to overtake this  
industrial system by breaking markets  
into smaller, more differentiated pieces.  
Mass-markets are going to be replaced by  
niche markets --- and this economic de-  
massification will be paralleled by a de-  
massification of conflict.

(Skouras stops)  
Though it may be difficult for some of  
you to fathom, this single giant threat  
of war between the superpowers is going  
to be replaced by a multitude of complex  
niche conflicts.

(gesturing)  
Just look at the map and you'll see ---

Skouras walks over to a huge, eerily lit conflict map of the  
world. Small magnetic markers are positioned about this  
display. They are being used to identify the areas of the  
world where there is armed conflict or the potential for  
conflict.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

SKOURAS (CONT'D)

Insurgencies in Burma, religious violence in Ireland, ethnic strife in Guyana, rebel uprisings in Iraq, border disputes in Peru, civil upheaval in Uganda, El Salvador, Yemen --- everywhere tribal warfare, separatist clashes, coups, terrorism, warlordism, revolution ---  
(looking at map intently)

The disenfranchised of today are the franchises of tomorrow.

(turns to executives)

In ten years this planet will be teeming with niche conflicts organized and waged from the bottom up by men like our new client, Mister Nidal ---

(forcefully)

Third and fourth world conflict, THIS IS THE FUTURE, gentlemen.

(puffs on cigar)

And we must be prepared to capitalize on it.

The sound of someone BREATHING can suddenly be HEARD as we:

CUT TO:

EXT. PIRELLI TOWER PLAZA/PIAZZA DUCA D'AOSTA - DAY

The BREATHING CONTINUES --- controlled and rhythmical, like a man meditating. It is the only the sound that can be HEARD.

The political rally in front of the Pirelli Tower is in full swing. The stage is cluttered with a mixture of LOCAL POWERBROKERS and PARTY LOYALISTS --- the street in front of the stage, which has been blocked off to traffic, is crowded with a few THOUSAND high-spirited SUPPORTERS and the ever-present legion of PAPARAZZI --- everyone listening and responding to the man speaking at the podium: ALBERTO SOSSI, leader of Italy's Christian Democratic Party.

An ARMY of eagle-eyed POLICE OFFICERS positioned at strategic locations throughout the plaza, street and piazza --- keeping a close watch over everyone and everything.

Standing at the edge of the piazza we can see the UNIFORMED POLICE CAPTAIN with the black eye-patch --- he's got a pair of binoculars in his hand --- EYE-PATCH POLICE CAPTAIN begins walking towards the middle of the square.

ANGLE CLOSE ON STAGE PODIUM: Sossi wraps up his speech and introduces the keynote speaker, ROBERTO CALVI. Calvi steps into frame, shakes hands with Sossi and moves behind the podium.

We suddenly HEAR the CLICK OF A STOPWATCH being started at the exact moment Calvi begins his speech --- the syncopated TICKING of the timepiece can be HEARD over the BREATHING.

THE CAMERA PULLING BACK OVER THE CROWD, across the piazza, through a window and into:

INT. EXCELSIOR HOTEL GALLIA - SUITE #1122 - DAY

The Cut-Out is lying in a prone position on top of the desk, which has been moved a few feet back from the window and angled to align perfectly with the stage in front of the Pirelli Building. He's cradling the sniper rifle --- stopwatch is situated right next him on the desk. The Cut-Out shifts his attention between the sniper scope and the watch.

CLOSE ON STOPWATCH: two minutes and tens seconds have elapsed.

CUT TO:

EXT. PIAZZA DUCA D'AOSTA - DAY

BREATHING and TICKING CONTINUING --- Eye-patch Police Captain stands in the center of the piazza. He glances at his watch, and then looks through his binoculars --- his sights locking onto the window in the middle of the Excelsior Hotel's eleventh floor.

We see Eye-Patch Police Captain move towards the Hotel's entrance.

CUT TO:

INT. EXCELSIOR HOTEL GALLIA - SUITE #1122 - DAY

BREATHING and TICKING CONTINUING... CLOSE ON CUT-OUT --- he waits until there is only twenty seconds left on stopwatch before looking through the sniper scope and beginning his target engagement sequence. The Cut-Out adjusts his position, turns the safety off and fingers the trigger...

POV CUT-OUT: looking through the sniper scope, the Cut-Out carefully lines up Roberto Calvi's head in the cross-hairs. We HEAR the pace of the BREATHING suddenly change --- as TWO extremely DEEP BREATHS are taken --- a third deep breath is taken but after the exhale --- the BREATHING and TICKING suddenly stop --- giving way to an unsettling silence --- and then BOOOOM!

CUT TO:

EXT. PIRELLI TOWER PLAZA - DAY

The Cut-Out's shot misses Roberto Calvi and hits Sossi, who is standing just to his right. The bullet rips through Sossi's arm and into one of the plaza steps as we:

CUT BACK TO:

INT. EXCELSIOR HOTEL GALLIA - SUITE #1122 - DAY

SOUND RETURNING TO NORMAL. The Cut-Out, realizing that he missed his target, instinctively pulls back from the gun to reload. We can HEAR the ECHO of the GUNSHOT reverberating over the distant SCREAMS and COMMOTION coming from the Plaza --- but strength of this ECHO does not diminish as it should and maintains its intensity for an unnaturally long time.

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Within a matter of seconds the Cut-Out has ejected the spent cartridge and chambered a new round. Peering back through the sniper scope, he attempts to re-engage his target.

POV CUT-OUT: the scope's cross-hairs PAN up from the crowd to the podium --- Calvi is still standing there but most of his face and skull has just been blown away by a bullet that clearly DID NOT come from the Cut-Out's rifle. Calvi's headless corpse drops to the stage in a bloody flux.

REVERSE ANGLE ON CUT OUT: the Cut-Out looks up from the scope - the expression on his face quickly changing from shock to panic with the dreaded realization of what's happening.

CAMERA QUICKLY CRANES UP THREE FLOORS TO THE HOTEL'S ROOF.

THE CLOSER is lying in a prone position on the Hotel's roof, flawlessly concealed behind the gigantic letter "G" in the hotel's sign. He is wearing a gray mesh camouflage pullover suit, blending in perfectly with the shadows. There is a black suitcase just behind him.

The Closer calmly breaks down the sniper rifle and puts it into a suitcase along with the stopwatch --- when suddenly he HEARS the CLATTERING OF A DOOR OPENING ON A NEARBY ROOFTOP AND THE VOICES OF MEN. The Closer panics only slightly --- he quickly slithers backwards along the icy roof, towards the access door, which he has secured with a chain lock.

The Closer, making sure that he is obscured by the shadows, gets up. He quickly undoes the lock and opens the door. He tears off his mesh pullover, under which he wears a drab looking suit --- shoves the pullover into the suitcase and disappears into the building.

CUT TO:

INT. EXCELSIOR HOTEL GALLIA - SUITE #1122 - DAY

The Cut-Out is in a mad panic to flee the scene of the crime. He primes his pistol and turns to the door, which suddenly EXPLODES open. The Eye-patch Police Captain erupts into the room and shoots the Cut-out down in a blaze of gunfire.

The Eye-Patch Captain cautiously moves towards Cut-Out, who is now lying face down on the floor and presumably dead. He kicks the gun away from his hand. The Eye-Patch Captain then crouches down, turns the Cut-Out over only to discover that he is still alive, barely. The Eye-Patch Captain promptly FIRES a bullet into the Cut-Out's skull, killing him.

He then quickly scans room, finds the desk where the Cut-Out fired the rifle from --- Moving over to the right of the desk, the Eye-Patch Police Captain, reaches into his pocket, takes out the glass medicine bottle with the spent cartridge, unscrews the bottle's cap and drops it on the floor, next to the Cut-Out's spent casing --- thus completing the illusion.

CUT TO:

EXT. EXCELSIOR HOTEL GALLIA - ENTRANCE - DAY

The Closer, suitcase in hand, composedly exits the Excelsior, gets into a taxi and drives away just as an ARMY OF LAW ENFORCEMENT descends upon the hotel.

CUT TO:

EXT. PIRELLI TOWER PLAZA - DAY

HIGH ANGLE over the stage and steps --- a chaotic scene --- looking down at Roberto Calvi's corpse crumpled-up on the stage in a pool of blood.

FADE TO BLACK:

FADE IN:

EXT. HAAS'S HOUSE - EARLY MORNING

Lavon stands knocking on the front door of Haas's house. The door swings open --- TITI, a small terrier, charges out and BARKS at Lavon --- behind the dog, a groggy and annoyed Haas clad in his p.j.'s, bathrobe, slippers.

HAAS (IN SWEDISH)  
(screaming whisper at the dog)  
Titi --- will you shut up?!

Lavon picks up the dog and pets him --- Titi shuts right up.

WOMAN'S VOICE O.S. (IN SWEDISH)  
Who is it, Viktor?

HAAS (IN SWEDISH)  
(turns to voice)  
Everything's fine, go back to bed.  
(to Lavon)  
What is it? What are you doing here?

LAVON  
We need to talk.

HAAS  
What do you need to talk about that can't wait until I get to work?

LAVON  
The Calvi hit in Milan.

HAAS  
What!?

LAVON  
The shooter used a Sauer 200 take-down sniper rifle --- the same weapon used by my assassin on three separate occasions.

Haas's face puffs up with rage like an angry squid.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HAAS  
You're insane!

LAVON  
Viktor ---

HAAS  
(explodes, enraged)  
No. I've had it. I tried to talk to you  
about this and now it's over. This  
obsession of yours has gone too far...

Haas grabs the dog and begins to slam the door when Lavon  
suddenly stops him.

LAVON  
(hard glare)  
I wouldn't be here if I didn't think I  
had something significant.

HAAS  
Significant!? Calvi's shooter is dead and  
the fact that he used a Sauer is nothing  
more than a coincidence.

LAVON  
And I suppose it's also just a  
coincidence that in the wake of Roberto  
Calvi's death, Calvi Defense Systems has  
agreed to be bought out by a subsidiary  
of the IBCC.

HAAS  
(after a beat)  
Who's your source?

Lavon pulls a newspaper out of his briefcase, hands it to Haas

LAVON  
Yesterday's London Financial Times.

Haas scans the article, looks up at Lavon.

LAVON (CONT'D)  
Please, Viktor, just hear me out.

A disinclined and annoyed Haas grabs his winter coat from the  
rack next to the door, puts it on and hands the dog leash to  
Lavon.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

MOVING with Lavon and Haas as they walk the dog down this  
track house street of a working-class Paris suburb. Lavon  
takes a dossier out of his briefcase, pulls out a photo of the  
CUT-OUT, hands it to Haas.

LAVON  
Calvi's shooter, Renato Romero, a top  
Lieutenant in the Red Brigade.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LAVON (CONT'D)

Romero was responsible for planning and executing almost all of the Brigade's major assassinations ---

HAAS

I'm familiar with his take, we've been after him for years.

(hands photo back)

Make your point.

LAVON

None of Romero's hits display the high degree of technical proficiency and skill required for something like the Calvi assassination. This was, in fact, the first time Romero had ever used a sniper rifle to kill.

HAAS

So?

LAVON

So where did Romero pick up the skills?

HAAS

Romero was found at the scene with the murder weapon, witnesses saw him firing from the window, ballistics confirms the bullets came from this type of rifle ---

LAVON

(cuts him off)

Viktor, how did a man with no formal military or para-military training, a man that has never used a sniper rifle in any of his previous operations, suddenly become proficient enough to get two shots off a bolt action weapon inside a period of ten seconds and take out his target with a head-shot at a range of over seven hundred meters?

HAAS

Who knows --- maybe it was a matter of sheer luck.

LAVON

Luck? (beat) Luck is the residue of design.

(puts file back in case)

There are only a handful of men in the world that could have made that shot and Renato Romero was not one of them.

HAAS

What happened to Calvi fits the Brigade's M.O. --- they're Italy's most savage Marxist-Leninist terrorist organization -- all of the their attacks target symbols of the establishment.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HAAS (CONT'D)

This was a politically motivated assassination whose sole objective was to yield the Brigade maximum exposure.

LAVON

If maximum exposure was the objective, why didn't the Brigade claim responsibility for it? (beat) Why did they instead, release a statement denying any involvement in Calvi's assassination?

Haas, clearly caught off guard by this development.

LAVON (CONT'D)

I've been working this with Alberto Cerutti, our NCB Chief in Milan --- Cerutti has a source close to the Brigade who confirmed the denial and said that Romero was expelled from their organization months ago.

Haas stops walking and throws Lavon a wary look.

LAVON (CONT'D)

The Brigade wasn't behind this, Viktor. Someone simply made it appear as though they were.

Haas anxiously begins stroking his beard.

HAAS

Unless you can establish Skouras' motive, you've got nothing.

LAVON

Robert Calvi was vehemently opposed to the IBCC buyout.

HAAS

How do you know?

LAVON

Cerutti's had conversations with three high-ranking executives inside the company.

Haas stands silent for a moment --- his wheels turning --- wants to blow a hole in Lavon's case, but the worried look on his face makes it clear that he can't.

HAAS

(groans)

Fuck me, Andre, why can't you just get along like everyone else? Why isn't it ever easy with you?

LAVON

Lines of least resistance make crooked rivers and crooked men.

Haas can't help but grin at Lavon.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

HAAS

Alright --- have a report to me by Monday and I'll pass it on to the Secretary General with my recommendation for an inquiry. If Munoz agrees with your take, you'll be able to move on this by the end of the week.

LAVON

There's no time for Munoz to review this. I need to get to Milan before the trail goes cold.

HAAS

Milan?! Milan is out of the question.

LAVON

Viktor ---

HAAS

(cuts him off)

You've already got me out on the edge with this, Andre --- so don't push me. If you want to work the case, work it through Cerutti --- anything else has to be approved by Munoz. Is that clear?

Lavon acknowledges Haas with a nod of understanding as we:

CUT TO:

EXT. NORTHEAST MILAN - STREET - NIGHT

It's a bitterly cold night in Milan --- the whole city still iced over in a deep freeze. A quiet downtown corner.

Gazing across the street, we can see Lavon standing in the shadows of a doorway --- he's smoking a butt and occasionally stomps his feet --- trying not to freeze his balls off.

A black Fiat suddenly pulls up to the curb and Lavon gets in.

INT. BLACK FIAT - NIGHT

CAPTAIN ALBERTO CERUTTI, a handsome and hungry looking cop in his late thirties, is behind the wheel.

CERUTTI

(thick Italian accent)

Why didn't you let me know you were coming to the city? I would've been happy to pick you up at the airport.

Lavon is too cold to speak. He flips the car heater on high and cups his hands around the vent, frantically tries to warm himself up.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

LAVON  
(shivering)  
I had no idea it could get so cold in Milan.

CERUTTI  
Coldest front to move through the city in twenty years. We've been in a deep freeze for the past two weeks.

Lavon tries to light a cigarette with a match, but his hands are still shaking too much to connect. Cerutti helps him.

CERUTTI (CONT'D)  
What's with all the subterfuge? Why didn't the office call about your arrival?

LAVON  
The office doesn't know I'm here.

CERUTTI  
You didn't tell them?

LAVON  
(shakes his head no)  
I'm here on my own.

Cerutti not happy about this revelation or the predicament it puts him in.

LAVON (CONT'D)  
Come now, Alberto --- you're just as hungry for this as I am. You know there's something wrong with the Calvi hit.

CERUTTI  
Just because I know something doesn't make me responsible for it.

A heavy silence.

LAVON  
Look, you do what you want. If you want to help, help. If you want to call Haas, call him.

CERUTTI  
Do you really think I would betray you?

LAVON  
No.

Lavon opens the door and gets out of the car.

LAVON (CONT'D)  
All a man can really betray is his conscience.  
(nods)  
Ciao, Alberto.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Lavon slams the door shut. Cerutti watches him --- the guilty expression on his face melting away into one of "fuck me" submission as we:

CUT TO:

EXT. PIRELLI TOWER PLAZA/PIAZZA DUCA D'AOSTA - NIGHT

The Plaza is eerily lit by giant floodlights. Police barricades and crime-scene tape surround the perimeter of the stage and steps. A CREW OF WORKMEN are just beginning to disassemble the bleachers situated next to the stage.

Lavon steps into frame, flashlight in hand, and approaches the scene of the crime. Carefully surveying the area.

The WORK-CREW'S FOREMAN sees Lavon poking around and starts YELLING AT HIM IN ITALIAN --- Cerutti suddenly appears, flashes his badge, the Foreman backs off.

Cerutti watches intently as Lavon makes his way to the podium where Calvi was shot. He looks down and sees a massive bloodstain, covered in the ice and frost and surrounded by the taped outline of Calvi's body.

LAVON

Where is the hotel?

Cerutti points across the Piazza, Lavon locks his sights on the window located in the middle of the Excelsior Hotel's eleventh floor. He then turns back to the stage and finds the two bullet holes in the stone steps behind the podium --- both have been marked and numbered.

CLOSE ON LAVON: he gets on his knees and moves close to bullet hole number one, the Cut-out's bullet --- meticulously examining it. The shape and shadow falling upon the hole clearly highlight the angle at which the projectile entered the stone.

MOVING with Lavon as he crawls a few feet to his right, to bullet hole number two, the Closer's bullet and repeats his examination. The shape and shadow of this second hole is markedly different than the first. Lavon is puzzled. He begins scanning the stage, looking for something --- his sights quickly locking onto two little desk flags situated on either side of the podium's desktop. Taking both desk ornaments, Lavon strips the sticks clean of both the metal base at one end and the flag at the other.

Cerutti watching curiously as Lavon moves back to bullet hole number one.

LAVON (CONT'D)

(off of Cerutti's look)

It's a technique used by snipers in the field to determine enemy positions --- You insert a rod or dowel into a bullet hole and note its angle of trajectory ---

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Lavon inserts one of the sticks into the bullet hole --- so that the stick protrudes from the point of entry. Lavon then inserts the second stick into bullet hole number two.

LAVON (CONT'D)

You then follow its reverse azimuth --- which will allow you to pin-point the location from which the bullet was fired.

Lavon crouches next to the first stick, staring down its length. Lavon slides over to the second stick and repeats the process --- but as he looks up from the stick, you can see that his eyes are wide with intrigue.

LAVON (CONT'D)

(gesturing)

Have a look at this ---

Cerutti lies down in a prone position behind the stick protruding from bullet hole number one. He then follows the stick's direction and trajectory angle --- and can see that it is clearly pointing to the window located in the middle of the Excelsior Hotel's eleventh floor.

CERUTTI

This bullet was fired from Romero's room.

LAVON

Yes, now follow the trajectory of second bullet, the shot that killed Calvi.

Cerutti moves to a prone position behind the dowel extending from the second bullet hole.

POV CERUTTI: following the sticks direction and angle of trajectory, he can see that it is pointing three floors above the hotel's eleventh floor, to the middle of the hotel's roof.

Cerutti looks up from the stick, unable to conceal his profound shock. Lavon flashes him a wicked little grin:

CUT TO:

EXT. EXCELSIOR HOTEL GALLIA - ROOF - NIGHT

A thick layer of frost and ice cover the tar-papered rooftop. Lavon forces open the frozen door --- the beam from Lavon's flashlight cuts across the darkness as he carefully scans the area. Cerutti right behind Lavon.

Lavon's every move is slow, cautious and premeditated --- both men being mindful not disturb a potential crime scene.

Lavon's attention is first drawn to the slither path made by the Closer as he snaked his way back from the gigantic metal "G" in the hotel's sign. Lavon uses the beam of light to point the trail out to Cerutti.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Carefully making their way around the perimeter of the roof, the two men approach the gigantic letter "G" in the hotel's sign. Lavon sees the silhouetted impression of the Closer's body lying in a prone position in front of the letter "G". He then kneels down and identifies the two small parallel prints in the ice --- situated just in front of the metal "G".

LAVON

(pointing to prints with a pen)  
These were left by a rifle bi-pod ---  
which puts the muzzle roughly ---  
(points to right above the lower  
part of big metal "G")  
here.

Crouching down, he examines the icy metal surface of which has been burned and scarred by acid.

LAVON (CONT'D)

He used acid to burn away the striation marks and residue from a muzzle burst.

CERUTTI

Why would a man that was so cautious not to leave his mark one place, be so careless as to leave it in another?

LAVON

Maybe he panicked or maybe he didn't anticipate that this weather would last as long as it has...

(stands up)

Either way, it's lucky for us; this deep freeze has preserved everything.

Lavon carefully follows the slither path back to the roof access door --- Cerutti trailing behind. Lavon discovers the deep-cut impressions of two footprints etched into the ice located just to the left of the door. Although the prints came from the same person, the impression of the right shoe is distinctly different than left.

Lavon moves around the prints and then kneels down to get a closer look with the flashlight. The detailed impressions left by the shoes have been perfectly preserved by the sub-zero weather. Lavon can see that the right shoe is at least two sizes larger than the left shoe --- the right shoe also has a very strange tread pattern as compared to the left.

LAVON (CONT'D)

When was the last time anyone was on this roof?

CERUTTI

The hotel manager claims that no one has been up here in weeks.

Lavon stares long and hard at the prints, a gleam of excitement in his eyes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LAVON

The man I'm looking for, I think he was here.

CERUTTI

How do you know?

LAVON

This print, I think it matches a partial print lifted from the scene of another assassination in Hamburg this last year.

Lavon takes out a pen, places it next to the right footprint and then takes several photos of the impression. He does the same with the left footprint.

CERUTTI

Shall I call the lab?

LAVON

No. Don't call anyone.

(after a pensive beat)

Go talk to the hotel manager. I'm going to need a hot plate, a saucepan, some talcum powder and a two dozen candles. I'll cast these prints myself.

CUT TO:

INT. - POLIZIA DI STATO - CERUTTI'S OFFICE - MORNING

Lavon and Cerutti talking as a LAB TECHNICIAN as carefully examines Lavon's wax casts of the footprints.

CERUTTI

It still doesn't work for me ---

LAVON

What doesn't work?

CERUTTI

The math. Two slugs were recovered from the scene and two casings were found next to Romero's rifle. If the kill-shot came from another shooter, there would have been a total of three bullets fired, yes?

LAVON

I'm sure there's an explanation, we just need time to figure it out.

The Technician looks up from the casts and has a lengthy exchange with Cerutti in Italian. The Technician pointing out certain features of the right cast to Cerutti as he talks.

CERUTTI

(turns to Lavon)

He says that the right footprint was not made by a normal shoe.

(pointing out features to Lavon)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CERUTTI (CONT'D)

There is no specific brand marking but it's definitely American sizing --- and given the sole's broad base and these parallel slots along the outer-sole --- he thinks its a custom shoe made for a leg brace or prosthetic device.

LAVON

What does the prosthetic device used with this shoe look like? Would be visible or would it be hidden under clothing?

Cerutti asks the Tech and gets his answer.

CERUTTI

He says that these devices are usually made out of steel or alloy --- but the condition of the leg would determine the specific type of prosthesis used.

LAVON

Would the person wearing this kind of brace have a discernible limp or distinctive gait?

Cerutti asks the Tech who answers.

CERUTTI

Yes --- it's more than likely.

Lavon takes out a little black address book, finds a name and number --- writes the name number down on a piece of paper and hands it to Cerutti.

LAVON

I'm going to need him to lift the print off of this cast and have it tele-faxed to Alan Kovacs at the FBI's impressions lab. Right away.

Cerutti translates, gives the Tech the number. The Tech takes the wax casts and leaves.

The Phone RINGS. Annoyed, Cerutti grabs it.

CERUTTI

Cerutti.

As he listens, Cerutti's attitude instantly down-shifts from annoyance to panic. He hands the phone to Lavon.

CERUTTI (CONT'D)

It's for you.

Lavon locks eyes with Cerutti, hesitating before taking the phone. This can't be good.

LAVON

Lavon. Yes.

(his face tightens with anger)

Yes. Yes. I understand.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Lavon hands the phone to Cerutti and gestures him to talk.

CERUTTI

Cerutti. Yes. Yes, of course. Ciao.

(hangs up)

I'm to escort you to the airport and see that you're on the next plane to Paris.

Lavon is visibly pissed and frustrated with himself.

CERUTTI (CONT'D)

What happened?

LAVON

Haas suspended me. I have to go back and face disciplinary action.

CERUTTI

How did he know that you were here?

LAVON

Because I wasn't there.

CUT TO:

EXT. LINATE AIRPORT - MILAN - NIGHT

We see Cerutti escort Lavon into the airport.

INT. LINATE AIRPORT - MILAN - NIGHT

Lavon is seated on a bench, looking defeated and miserable. Cerutti approaches, hands Lavon a plane ticket.

LIEUTENANT CERUTTI

Your flight leaves in one hour.

LAVON

Thank you.

CERUTTI

What are you going to do now?

LAVON

I don't know.

(locks eyes with Cerutti)

I'm sorry, Alberto. I shouldn't have involved you in this.

CERUTTI

No. You were right.

(sad smile)

A detective that minds his own business is a contradiction in terms.

Lavon smiles despite himself and the two men shake hands. Cerutti turns and leaves. He stops after a few steps and turns back to Lavon.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CERUTTI (CONT'D)

You know, Enzo Escada, our bureau chief in Rome warned me that you were a brilliant man --- but that your genius for detective work is eclipsed only by your genius for getting into hot water.

LAVON

Yes, well --- getting into hot water does have its benefits.

CERUTTI

Such as?

LAVON

It keeps you clean.

The two men give each other knowing smiles and part ways.

We MOVE with Lavon as he approaches the security checkpoint.

ANGLE ON SECURITY CHECKPOINT: Lavon joins a long line of people wait to place their bags on the x-ray machine and move through the metal detector.

The HIGH PITCHED SCREECH of the metal detector alarm jolts Lavon out of his daze. His gaze falls on an elderly gentleman with a metal-handled cane who has set off the alarm. His protests are ignored as the security guards pull him aside and wave a detector wand over him.

The line continues to move, but Lavon is frozen in place, staring after the old man intently, as if trying to recall something. An inspired idea suddenly grips him like a seizure. He spins around and bolts towards the airport exit after Cerutti as we:

CUT TO:

EXT. LINATE AIRPORT - MILAN - CONTINUOUS

Lavon rushes out of the airport --- Cerutti is already half way down the street. Lavon chases Cerutti's car down --- screaming and waving until he pulls over to the curb. Cerutti gets out and gives Lavon an incredulous glare.

LAVON

(panting, screams)

His prosthetic leg brace was made of metal.

CERUTTI

So what?

LAVON

So if he moved through this airport he would have set off the metal detection alarm ---

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

Cerutti gives Lavon an excited little smile and snaps into action --- MOVING with Lavon and Cerutti as they jog back towards the terminal.

LAVON (CONT'D)

We need to question airport security --- and starting with the day of the assassination, we need to look at anyone that set off any alarms ---

CERUTTI

What if he didn't leave through this airport?

LAVON

Then we'll have to expand our search to every major airport in Italy.

CERUTTI

And if he didn't leave Italy on a plane?

LAVON

Let's just pray that he did.

Cerutti suddenly stops jogging and squares off with Lavon.

CERUTTI

What's going to happen if you don't return to Paris?

LAVON

It doesn't matter anymore.

CUT TO:

EXT. I.B.C.C. WORLD HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

We are slowly MOVING towards the top three floors of the I.B.C.C. HQ building, which serve as the personal residence for Dormian Skouras. Our attention centers on the corner window of the twentieth floor.

Gazing through the glass, into a sleekly designed den whose walls are covered in a dazzling array of German expressionist paintings.

INT. I.B.C.C. WORLD HEADQUARTERS - SKOURAS' DEN

Skouras is seated on a couch, clad in a white silk robe and pajamas. He smokes a cigar and reviews a large stack of financial papers.

Three TV monitors are built into the adjacent wall. They display activity from financial markets around the world.

Skouras picks up a sealed communique marked with the U.S. SEAL in his pile. He picks up a SHARP LETTER OPENER from the coffee table next to him. He uses it to open the envelope, inadvertently slicing his palm. Skouras, though aware of the fact he's just cut himself, does not react.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He just sits there, motionless --- staring at the cut in anticipation of the first sign of blood. He watches as the blood slowly begins to flow from the cut --- dripping onto his papers and robes.

Skouras' macabre fascination soon gives way to fear and vulnerability as the blood continues to flow.

MISTER EHAMES O.S.

Sir, Wexler has called in on the wire,  
the call should be coming through any  
moment now...

Skouras spins around to face Mister Ehames --- Ehames sees the blood, a concerned look on his face.

MISTER EHAMES

You're bleeding ---

SKOURAS

I accidentally slashed my hand with the  
blade ---

MISTER EHAMES

Shall I ring for the doctor?

SKOURAS

No, it's only a small cut...

MISTER EHAMES

But sir, you're covered in blood.

SKOURAS

Yes, I know.

Ehames fetches the first aid kit from under the bar sink and brings it over to Skouras. He cracks open the kit takes out some alcohol swabs, bandages.

SKOURAS (CONT'D)

I don't expect you to understand, but  
power breeds a strange sort of isolation.

Skouras holds out his wounded hand --- Ehames begins to clean the cut.

SKOURAS (CONT'D)

It isolates you from yourself as much as  
it does the outside world --- makes it  
easy to lose sight of the fact that you  
still can bleed --- (beat) and there's  
the irony of it all ---

(chuckles pensively to himself)

Men like myself can only live, by  
completely forgetting that we are human.

The PHONE on the side-table starts to RING. Ehames finishes cleaning the wound, gives Skouras a piece of gauze to hold on it and then answers the phone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MISTER EHAMES

Yes --- yes, please hold for Mister Skouras.

Ehames transfers the call to the speakerphone and then returns to fashioning a bandage for Skouras' cut. We can hear the inimitable WHEEZE and HISS of Wexler on the speaker.

SKOURAS

Wilhelm?

WEXLER (OVER PHONE)

Yes, Dormian.

SKOURAS

What is it?

WEXLER (OVER PHONE)

Lavon was in Milan ---

Skouras just stands there for a beat --- profoundly disturbed.

SKOURAS

What was he doing there?

WEXLER (OVER PHONE)

I was simply told that he was there --- I have as yet to learn why --- but I suspect he knows something.

Ehames finishes putting on the bandage and then sits in the chair across from Skouras.

SKOURAS

What would you advise I do about this?

WEXLER (OVER PHONE)

Why do anything until we know that it's a problem?

SKOURAS

Because in putting off what must eventually be done, we run the risk of never being able to do it.

WEXLER (OVER PHONE)

Dormian, why do you pay me to advise you on these matters? It's clear that you don't want my counsel, only my corroboration...

SKOURAS

(snaps back)

Wilhelm, what I want is for you to do what I think needs to be done.

WEXLER (OVER PHONE)

And what exactly is that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SKOURAS

We're in the midst of finalizing the Calvi deal --- we simply can't afford to leave anything to chance.

(after a beat)

I think it's time to send Him to a better world.

WEXLER (OVER PHONE)

(caustic)

Of course. Death, the ultimate simplification of life.

This last comment really pisses off Skouras --- he gives Ehames an incredulous glare.

SKOURAS

Careful, Wilhelm. I've had just about all I can take from you.

WEXLER (OVER PHONE)

Yes. I've had just about all I can take from myself ---

SKOURAS

(angry)

Are you going to take care of this or do I need to make other plans?

WEXLER (OVER PHONE)

No. (beat) I will see to it myself.

Skouras hangs up the phone and turns to Ehames, perturbed.

SKOURAS

Wexler is beginning to worry me.

MISTER EHAMES

Shall I make arrangements?

SKOURAS

I don't want anything to happen until after he's completed this last task for the bank. Understood?

Mister Ehames nods.

SKOURAS (CONT'D)

Good.

(exhausted breath)

So ends the bloody business of the day.

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON A VIDEO MONITOR. Footage of airport security scrolls by in fast-forward. The timecode on the tape reads: "01/31/81" --- a low resolution, black and white, angle over the Security Checkpoint --- the image frozen on screen is of the Closer being checked by Security after setting off the alarm.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

CERUTTI V.O.

He's traveling under the name Sherwood, Timothy M. He boarded TWA flight number four-twenty-two, departing Rome at five p.m. on the thirty-first and arriving in New York at J.F.K. at eight-thirty p.m.

CAMERA PULLING BACK TO REVEAL:

INT. LEONARDO DA VINCI AIRPORT - ROME - SECURITY ROOM - NIGHT

A dimly lit room whose far wall is covered by an elaborate video surveillance system.

Lavon, Cerutti, THE AIRPORT SECURITY CHIEF and a VIDEO OPERATOR are all crowded around the control console for the system --- their eyes glued to the monitor.

LAVON

(gesturing operator)

Let me see it again.

The Operator rewinds the clip and plays it again. Lavon watches the Closer move to the line with a slight limp. He sets off the alarm while moving through the metal detector. Cerutti leans in and looks closely at the Closer.

CERUTTI

He doesn't look like much.

LAVON

I think that's the idea.

CERUTTI

Even if you find him, I won't be able to arrange extradition until I get the case reopened --- and this is going to be impossible unless we can answer for the third bullet.

LAVON

I have no interest in prosecuting him --- remember --- it's Skouras I'm after.

CERUTTI

What other leverage could you have to compel him to turn against Skouras apart from the threat of prosecution for the Calvi hit?

LAVON

What do you think's going to happen when I find this man? When I crack open his life to scrutiny? Prosecution will be irrelevant. He's marked man on the street and he knows it. (beat) So he can either die for Skouras or turn on him.

CUT TO:

EXT. TWELFTH STREET BATH HOUSE - DAY

Looking through the front window of the Twelfth Street Bathhouse, an old school Russian steam-bath.

INT. TWELFTH STREET BATH HOUSE - RUSSIAN BANYA - DAY

The Closer sits in a large Russian-banya-type steamroom --- quietly sweating it out amongst a GROUP OF BURLY RUSSIANS --- everyone, including the closer, watches the TWO BIGGEST RUSSIANS play a game of chess.

INT. TWELFTH STREET BATH HOUSE - LOCKER ROOM -

The Closer puts his leg brace and boot on --- once he is finished getting dressed, the Closer moves to a phonebooth situated in the back, gets in and closes the door.

ANGLE CLOSE ON CLOSER: he pulls out a stack of quarters and a stopwatch from his jacket. He puts the quarters in and dials. A FEMALE VOICE answers and we hear the CLICK as he starts the stopwatch and it's faint TICKING beat.

VOICE ON PHONE  
Five-o-two-six. (beat) Designator?

CLOSER  
Copernicus. (beat) Messages?

VOICE ON PHONE  
Your uncle wishes to see you immediately.

CLOSER  
(eyes widen in surprise)  
Repeat.

VOICE ON PHONE  
Your uncle wishes to see you immediately.

CLOSER  
(after a turgid beat)  
Mister Samuel Koppler. Carlyle Hotel, New York. Four-thirty p.m. --- the day after tomorrow.

The Closer hangs up the phone. He stops the watch. It reads twenty-five seconds.

CUT TO:

EXT. TWA TERMINAL - JFK - MORNING

Looking down on the Erro Saaranien designed TWA terminal at New York's JFK airport. It's a cold, overcast evening.

Lavon walks out of the terminal, gets into a cab as we:

CUT TO:

RLS

EXT. CORNER OF EAST 117TH STREET AND 2ND AVENUE - NYC - NIGHT

The cab pulls to the corner, Lavon gets out --- the cab peels off into the night --- leaving Lavon standing alone on the worst street in one of the city's worst neighborhoods.

Lavon crosses the street and approaches the front door of an abandoned industrial building situated on the corner. The sign above the building reads: ALLIED LINEN AND UNIFORM SERVICE.

ANGLE CLOSE ON LAVON: he KNOCKS on the front door but no one answers. Lavon tries to open the locked door, when he suddenly HEARS someone step up behind him.

MAN'S VOICE O.S.  
(heavy Puerto Rican/NYC accent)  
Hey, Chico ---

Lavon spins around and sees DETECTIVE IGNACIO "IGGY" SALAZAR, a taut little wrecking ball of a cop, that's dressed for the street, Serpico-style. Lavon can see that Salazar's packing.

SALAZAR  
Don't say or do anything --- just move.

Making sure that they are not seen, Salazar directs Lavon into the alley. Lavon does not seem concerned in the least. He reaches into his pocket, pulls out a pack of butts --- shakes one out.

Salazar stops, takes out a zippo --- lights the butt. Lavon thanks him with a nod takes a drag.

LAVON  
(extends his hand to Salazar)  
I'm Lavon ---

SALAZAR  
Yeah, I know.  
(shakes with Lavon)  
Detective Ignacio Salazar ---  
(gestures)  
Come on. We gotta get outta sight.

The men continue walking.

LAVON  
What is this place?

SALAZAR  
It used to be a structuring pad --- now it's our home away from home. We confiscated it in the Jose Gacha bust last year.

INT. ALLIED LINEN AND UNIFORM - NIGHT

Lavon follows Salazar up a flight of steps until they arrive at a large, reinforced steel door with a security camera positioned above it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Salazar KNOCKS on door and gives a special signal to the camera. POLICE OFFICER MCMANUS slides open the door and ushers the men into:

INT. ALLIED LINEN AND UNIFORM - TASK FORCE COMMAND - NIGHT

The office area has been converted into the off-site headquarters for the Manhattan D.A.'s IBCC investigation. It's sparsely furnished with only the essentials --- there are no windows, only skylights.

McManus closes the door behind them and locks it.

As Salazar takes off his overcoat --- Lavon looks around the make-shift office. He can see the shadowy figures of TWO PEOPLE sitting at their desks --- we can HEAR them working the phones. Situated in the center of the room, a large conference room table surrounded by four gigantic bulletin boards. An assemblage of information outstretched across the massive boards that encircle the table. This is the anatomy of Morgenthaw's entire investigation.

Salazar takes a big WHIFF of air and throws a glance towards the kitchenette where we see a MAN, busying himself at the stove.

SALAZAR  
What's Bernie makin' for dinner tonight?

MCMANUS  
Goulash.

SALAZAR  
(groans)  
Wacala! Last time he fed us that crap I was peeing out of my ass for a week.

MAN IN KITCHEN  
I heard that Iggy --- just for that, you get to set the table.

Morgenthaw comes over to the men. She gestures Iggy to give them some space and greets Lavon with a concerned smile.

LAVON  
(gesturing to surroundings)  
What is all this?

MORGANTHAW  
When I came back from London, I had my offices swept for bugs --- the whole place was infested --- everything from the phones to the bathrooms were hard-wired to the hilt.

LAVON  
This is how the bank knew about Schumer and the Insider?

MORGANTHAW  
I certainly hope so.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

Lavon nods --- an awkward moment of silence and inaction between them. Morganthaw gives Lavon a hug that is pregnant with affection.

MORGANTHAW (CONT'D)  
(whispers in his ear)  
Are you okay?

LAVON  
Yes, I'm fine.

Morganthaw pulls away, self-conscious. There is an uneasy tension between these two unrequited lovers --- insecure, delicate and doomed.

MORGANTHAW  
I spoke to Haas a few hours ago ---

LAVON  
What did you tell him?

MORGANTHAW  
I told him not to ask me any questions that I couldn't answer.

LAVON  
He thinks I've gone rogue?

MORGANTHAW  
He doesn't know what to think --- he's pissed, he's worried --- but most of all he's hurt --- he feels that you've betrayed him.

LAVON  
I had no other choice.

MORGANTHAW  
The moves you've been making have put us all in a compromising position ---

LAVON  
I realize this --- but I'm not about to back off --- not now.

MORGANTHAW  
This is serious, Andre. If you don't go back to Paris and deal with your problems --- if you continue down this path --- whatever chance you may still have to save your career will be lost --- your life in law enforcement will be over.

LAVON  
And what does this life really matter if an arch criminal like Skouras can't be brought to justice?  
(hard glare)  
I have to do this, Eleanor ---

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MORGANTHAW  
(after a long beat)  
You look awful --- when was the last you  
had a decent meal?

LAVON  
I don't remember.

MORGANTHAW  
Why don't you wash up ---  
(gesturing)  
The bathroom is right over there.

CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Lavon enters the bathroom, moves to the sink and turns on the water. He takes off his jacket and tie, rolls up his sleeves, stares at himself in the mirror for a few moments, clearly not happy with what he sees.

Lavon moves over to the urinal on the wall, unzips his fly and is about to relieve himself when he notices something strange about this particular urinal.

POV LAVON: looking down into the urinal, we see a laminated 8x10 head-shot of Dormian Skouras super-glued to the face of the porcelain basin.

Lavon can't help but crack a wry little grin as he pisses on Skouras' face.

INT. ALLIED LINEN AND UNIFORM - TASK FORCE COMMAND

Lavon emerges from the bathroom and walks over to Morganthaw who is in kitchen conferring with SOLOMON HELLER, the task forces forensic accountant. Next to them at the stove is DETECTIVE BERNARD "BERNIE" WATTS. Watts is a forty-something humper with the anesthetized frown of a battered old bison who's spent too many years in the zoo.

LAVON  
That's an inspiring toilet you have  
there, Eleanor...

WATTS  
(Brooklyn accent)  
That was all Schumer --- he had a gift  
for shit like that.

MORGANTHAW  
Andre Lavon ---  
(gesturing to Watts)  
Detective Bernie Watts ---

Watts gives Lavon a nod of acknowledgement.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WATTS

Andre. That's a good name. I gotta cousin from Cleveland named Andre, he's gotta a clubbed foot and speaks five languages.

Watts lifts the oversized stockpot from the stove, grins, and heads for the table, where the rest of the men are seated.

HELLER

(off Lavon's dumbfounded look)  
Don't worry --- Bernie's a little screwy but he's as solid as they come ---  
(extends hand to Lavon)  
I'm Solomon Heller, the task force's forensic accountant ---

MORGANTHAW

Solly, tell him about the new developments you're tracking ---

HELLER

Four days ago, the day after the Calvi assassination, the IBCC announced that it will be opening fifty nine new offices in the Middle East and Africa, making it the largest bank in third world. And yesterday, Skouras made disclosures to the IMF indicating that over the next four years the bank will be picking up three to four billion in low interest paper for the People's Republic of China.

LAVON

What does all this mean?

MORGANTHAW

Skouras is positioning the bank for some major move --- and whatever it is, it's going down soon.

LAVON

Any idea on what it might be?

MORGANTHAW

We're working on it ---

WATTS O.S.

(yelling)  
Alright fellas --- dinner is served.

LAVON

And my assassin?

MORGANTHAW (CONT'D)

Come on --- we'll go over everything while we eat.

ANGLE ON CONFERENCE TABLE - MINUTES LATER

Lavon, Morgenthaw and the rest of the men are seated around the conference table, eating goulash, drinking beer and discussing the case.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SALAZAR

We got lucky and caught two stewardesses that were working the flight he came in on from Rome --- had them sit down with an artist.

Salazar passes a composite photo to Lavon. Lavon puts on his glasses and examines it.

SALAZAR (CONT'D)

This is the composite we came up with.

CLOSE ON A POORLY RENDERED COMPOSITE PHOTO OF THE CLOSER:

WATTS

You're sure that this is the guy that whacked Tommy?

Lavon nods.

SALAZAR

How long have you've been studying this guy's handwriting?

LAVON

Long enough to know his signature.  
(hands back composite)  
Did the flight attendants give you anything else?

Salazar looks at his notes.

SALAZAR

Male, Caucasian. Thirty to forty years old. Average build. Average height. Fair complexion. Short, dirty blond hair. No visible scars or marks. No distinctive accent. Nothing distinctive about his clothing or his demeanor. No distinctive habits or peculiarities, other than the gimp leg. They said he slept the entire flight.

LAVON

Where did he go after he cleared customs?

SALAZAR

Don't know --- the CCTV lost him at the curb.

WATTS

We canvassed every fuggin cab and limo company in the city --- roused airport parking, car rental agencies...came up with shit.

LAVON

Could he have transferred to another flight?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SALAZAR

No --- we covered that.

LAVON

What about the identity he was using?

MORGANTHAW

It all tracks; his name, date of birth --- he's even got an unrecycled social security number.

LAVON

Was the ID stolen?

HELLER

No, backstopped --- everything about his front checks out in the system, but none of it leads anywhere. We ran the alias through NLETS, AIDS, NCIC ---

SALAZAR

This guy's a fuckin' ghost in the machine.

MORGANTHAW

No he isn't, Iggy.

(holds up clip shots)

This fucker leaves tracks --- our job is to find them.

WATTS

We have the composite, some established identifiers with his gimp leg --- we could put out an APB?

SALAZAR

A citywide!? Come on Bernie, why don't you just light a fuckin' match and send up a burning red flag?

HELLER

He's right, we know the bank's got hooks in the force.

SALAZAR

The bank's got hooks in everything, Solly.

MORGANTHAW

Why are we assuming that he's here in Manhattan? He could be anywhere ---

HELLER

Yeah, Chief --- but we can't ignore the possibility that he could be here for you.

MAN'S VOICE O.S.

I don't think so ---

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

FRANK NEGURSKI, the youngest member of the task force; steps up to the table, excitement like a scar disfiguring his face.

NEGURSKI  
I think he lives here.

Everyone stops eating and looks at Negurski.

NEGURSKI (CONT'D)  
I just got off the phone with Kovacs at FBI Impressions --- the footprint was left by a shoe used for a "knee ankle foot orthosis" --- it's manufactured by AGM Biomechanics, based out of Boston. AGM says the tread pattern is exclusive to shoes produced at the Issacson Orthopedic Institute, here in the city --- the shoe could only have come from there.

MORGANTHAW  
You're sure?

NEGURSKI  
(nods)  
Issacson carries the patent on its design.

SALAZAR  
Do we have a home address on the Doctor?

NEGURSKI  
Issacson's out of town, but I got a beat on the guy who's running the show while he's gone.

Negurski hands his notes over to Salazar, who is about to get up and go --- when Heller suddenly stops him.

HELLER  
Let's say somehow, we catch a break and spot him --- what are we gonna collar him for?

Everyone thinking for a few beats.

LAVON  
He came into the United States using a false name and identification --- arrest him on that. It gives you probable cause to open up his life --- and if he can't prove that he's an American citizen you could detain him for as long as you want.

Everyone at the table takes a moment to eat and consider Lavon's suggestion.

SALAZAR  
We'll call you from the doctors ---

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Salazar and Watts get up from the table --- Lavon following suit.

MORGANTHAW  
(to Lavon)  
You're going with them?

LAVON  
Of course. Unless you object.

MORGANTHAW  
No, just make sure you stay in line ---  
(pointing threateningly)  
The same goes for you two --- this guy  
isn't some shit-birding punk from the  
Bronx, he's a doctor and you're knocking  
on his door without any paper after-hours  
on a Friday night. So be nice.

The vigorous KNOCKING of a door can be HEARD as we:

CUT TO:

INT. MAJESTIC APARTMENT BUILDING - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Lavon, Watts and Salazar are standing outside the door of an apartment. The MUFFLED SOUND of a blasting stereo can be heard. Watts KNOCKING, but no answer. Salazar knocks louder, the door suddenly swings open --- DOCTOR BARRY WEISSMAN, a pudgy, man in his early forties, stands there in his bathrobe. Paranoia evident in his eyes, Weissman has all the tell-tale signs of an asshole who's been doing blow all night.

SALAZAR  
Doctor Weissman?  
(flashes his shield)  
I'm Detective Salazar NYPD, this is my  
partner, Detective Watts.

Weissman's paranoia suddenly shifts into high gear.

DOCTOR WEISSMAN  
What? What do you want? Why are you here?

WATTS  
Calm down Doctor, we just want to ask you  
a few questions about a patient.

DOCTOR WEISSMAN  
A patient? What patient? Do you know what  
time it is? No. No. I really must go. I'm  
sorry, I've done nothing --- goodnight.

Before anyone can respond, Weissman slams the door.

WATTS  
This douchebag's pinned out of his  
fucking mind.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SALAZAR

Paranoid fuck thinks we're here to bust him.

LAVON

(after a beat)

Tell him we're here because his life may be in danger. Grave danger.

Watts and Salazar both break out with big shit-eating grins.

SALAZAR

(yells)

Doctor Weissman, please! We have reason to believe your life is in grave danger.

WATTS

We think one of your patients might be trying to kill you.

Weissman cracks the door open and peers out fearfully.

DOCTOR WEISSMAN

Kill me?!

LAVON

Doctor Weissman, I am Agent Lavon --- I work for INTERPOL, we're assisting in the manhunt.

DOCTOR WEISSMAN

Why would one of my patients want to kill me?

LAVON

This man is a psychotic. He's already butchered seven doctors in Europe --- we have reason to believe that you may be next.

Weissman on the brink of an anxiety attack. Lavon shows the composite to Weissman.

LAVON (CONT'D)

Doctor, have you ever seen this man?

DOCTOR WEISSMAN

No --- I've never seen him before.

WATTS

Does the name Timothy Sherwood mean anything to you?

DOCTOR WEISSMAN

No. How do you know he's a patient of mine?

LAVON

We have his footprint. The shoe was manufactured by ---

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (2)

LAVON (CONT'D)  
(looks at notes)  
AGM Biomechanics, exclusively for the  
Issacson Institute --- model: KAFO-121.

DOCTOR WEISSMAN  
KAFO-121? We started using that design  
about three years ago.

LAVON  
But you have no recollection of ever  
prescribing a device to this man.

DOCTOR WEISSMAN  
No, we've used that type of orthosis on  
hundreds of patients.

WATTS  
Well then, we'll need to review all of  
your patient files ---

DOCTOR WEISSMAN  
Right now?

LAVON  
Doctor, we need to find this man before  
he finds you.

CUT TO:

INT. ISSACSON INSTITUTE - WAITING ROOM - A LITTLE LATER

A large open-air waiting room tastefully appointed with all  
the appropriate modernist furnishings.

Lavon, Watts, Salazar --- stand as Weissman rolls a small cart  
stacked with files into the waiting room.

DOCTOR WEISSMAN  
I narrowed it down to three hundred and  
seventy-six possible matches. These are  
all of the Institute's male patients with  
a KAFO-121 orthosis on their right leg ---

Lavon grabs one of the files and flips through it.

LAVON  
All of the files have a set of diagnostic  
photographs of the patient and their  
impairment. Pull anyone even remotely  
resembling the profile or composite.

The men all grab a stack of files and begin their hunt.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. WAITING ROOM - MORNING

It's snowing heavily in Manhattan. Lavon stands in front of a  
huge glass window, stretches and lights up a cigarette.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Lavon turns to face Salazar and Watts, both men camped out on the floor, also smoking, open files spread out in front of them, arranged in sections. Doctor Weissman is laying back on the couch, drinking some coffee.

Lavon turns his attention to the remaining eight files.

LAVON  
(looks up at Watts and Salazar)  
Gabriel Ward?

SALAZAR  
What about him?

LAVON  
Three hundred and seventy-six dossiers,  
and this is the only one without any  
photographs?  
(looks to Weissman)  
Why?

DOCTOR WEISSMAN  
How should I know?

LAVON  
Ward's address is listed as a P.O. box,  
all of his bills were paid with cashiers  
checks ---

SALAZAR  
Is there a contact number?

LAVON  
Manhattan --- 757-6241 ---

Salazar gets up, moves to the reception desk, picks up the phone and dials the number.

SALAZAR  
Dead line.

Watts, Lavon and Salazar exchange a pointed look.

LAVON  
It's him.

SALAZAR  
I'll call the name into Negurski --- have  
him run it down --- see if we can get a  
crack warrant for the P.O. Box in Jersey.

As Salazar begins to dial into the office, Lavon scours through Ward's file.

LAVON  
Doctor, where are all your old  
appointment books?

DOCTOR WEISSMAN  
On a shelf behind the counter.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Lavon moves into the receptionist's area and pulls out two of the binders, and starts flipping through them. Lavon scans through the pages of the appointment book --- until he finds his name.

LAVON

(to Weissman)

What are these check marks next to his name?

DOCTOR WEISSMAN

Oh, those are for our records. Since most of our patients have ambulatory problems, we have a kickback account with United Taxi; the checks indicate when we used their service for a patient.

Watts comes over to take a look --- Lavon directing his attention to the middle of the page.

LAVON

April third, two-thirty --- secretary called a cab for him.

Watts and Lavon exchange a razor sharp glance as we:

CUT TO:

EXT. WEST 12TH STREET - GREENWICH VILLAGE - DAY

West 12th Street. A heavy snow is falling --- obscuring everything. Lavon and Watts are standing in front of the bold, pin-stripped facade of the New School for Social Research Building.

Watts is using a pay-phone on the sidewalk just south of the New School building. Salazar and Lavon are scanning the street and area --- looking for anything of significance.

SALAZAR

I checked the dispatchers log myself: this is where he was dropped off each time.

LAVON

What do you think he was doing here?

SALAZAR

Beats the shit outta me --- I'm gonna go grab a cup --- you want anything?

LAVON

Pack of Reds and a coffee, medium sweet.

Lavon watches Salazar walk across the street and disappear into a Mom and Pop market. The market is situated directly next to a familiar location --- THE 12th STREET BATH HOUSE.

Watts hangs up the phone and stomps on over to Lavon.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WATTS

The Chief just got off the phone with  
your pal Haas a little while ago ---  
(puts his arm around Lavon)  
You've just been officially shit-canned.  
(gives him a kiss)  
Congratulations.

THE CLOSER emerges from the bath house across the street. He stands under the awning, buttons up his overcoat and puts on his gloves. Both Lavon and Watts are totally oblivious to his presence.

LAVON

Did anything come back on the name?

WATTS

No, not yet --- what about you?

LAVON

Nothing --- we're going to have to  
canvass the entire neighborhood.

WATTS

(cringes with dread)  
Great. That's just fuggin' great.

INT. MOM AND POP MARKET - DAY

Salazar is at the counter. He hands the CASHIER a hundred dollar bill. The cashier scowls at him.

Salazar casually glances out the window, towards Lavon and Watts --- suddenly he sees the CLOSER strolling past the store. Salazar gets a good look at him and yet can't believe his eyes --- totally thunderstruck.

Salazar grabs the cigarettes and explodes out of the store, leaving the cashier holding his change, mystified.

EXT. WEST 12TH STREET - GREENWICH VILLAGE - DAY

Watts and Lavon watch confusedly as Salazar hurries over to them.

WATTS

What's up with you?

SALAZAR

(panting excitedly)  
I just made our perp ---

Salazar doesn't point, but gestures across the street towards the Closer as he walks down the sidewalk.

SALAZAR (CONT'D)

Eleven o'clock --- in the black overcoat.

LAVON

You're sure it's him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SALAZAR  
Hundred percent.

MOVING with all three men as they cross the street and begin tailing the Closer. Lavon's eyes are locked on his target, trying to get a grip and think clearly.

WATTS  
Where did he come from?

SALAZAR  
I don't know --- I'm in the store gettin' coffee and butts when I see him rolling past the window.

WATTS  
Whaddya think? Should we go for the collar?

LAVON  
If we try to hit this mark and miss, its over, we'll never see him again.

SALAZAR  
So?

LAVON  
We'll tail him, find out where he sleeps, coordinate and then take him down.

The three men following the Closer across Fifth Avenue --- and continue along East 12th Street.

LAVON (CONT'D)  
I'll take the A, Salazar, you're the B-MAN and Watts is C. Keep the box tight. Anyone gets blown, signal by putting both your hands in your pockets and then drop out. Anyone thinks that he's about to cut and run, put your collar up. Whoever's in the B-position leads the charge --- anything else, just use your best judgment.

Salazar, gives Lavon a nod and then crosses the street, moving into position. Watts, is about to drop back when Lavon suddenly stops him.

LAVON (CONT'D)  
(gesturing to give him)  
I need money --- cash and coins.

Watts gives Lavon cash and coins before dropping back.

VARIOUS ANGLES - STREETS

HIGH ANGLE OVER EAST 12th STREET: watching as Lavon, Salazar and Watt's move into position, tracking the Closer as he casually plods down the sidewalk, heading East towards Broadway, totally unaware that he is being watched.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ANGLE ON LAVON: he follows the Closer at a steady pace, keeping a ten yard distance from his target.

ANGLE ON SALAZAR: he follows about five yards behind Lavon. Salazar's eyes shift from the Closer to Lavon and then across the street to WATTS.

ANGLE ON WATTS: he is on the North side of the street --- walking parallel to Lavon and Salazar. Watts is perfectly in step with the other two members of his team, his attention alternating between the Closer and Lavon. Watts sees the approaching intersection of University Place and 12th. He suddenly picks up his pace ---

ANGLE ON LAVON: he sees Watts moving ahead of the Closer, cutting across the intersection diagonally to the East-side of University Place. Lavon suddenly stops to tie his shoe and allows Salazar to move into the A-POSITION behind the Closer as he turns right at the corner and heads South on University place.

ANGLE ON BROADWAY AND EAST 9TH STREET: the Closer veers around the corner and heads South up Broadway. Watts appears, but instead of continuing to follow, stops at the light. Lavon moves past Watts into the A-POSITION.

MOVING WITH SALAZAR: trailing behind Lavon and Closer, Salazar sees both men descend into the SUBWAY ENTRANCE near the corner of Broadway and Washington Place. Salazar stops, looks across the street to Watts and gestures his partner to move in behind Lavon with a simple nod.

INT. WASHINGTON SQUARE SUBWAY STATION - DAY

The station is bustling with PEDESTRIANS looking to get out of the snow. The Closer drops his token into the turnstile slot and moves through. Lagging a few beats behind him, we see Lavon --- he moves up to the turnstile and, unaware that the tollgate only accepts tokens, drops a quarter into the slot. Lavon is confused when it doesn't allow him to pass. This confusion swells into alarm when he loses sight of the Closer. Lavon puts another quarter into the slot, which yields the same result. Just as he is about to panic, Salazar comes up behind him and with deft slight of hand, slips a subway token into Lavon's hand as he passes. Lavon drops the token into the slot and moves along.

INT. SUBWAY STATION - UPTOWN PLATFORM

The platform is packed. Lavon enters frame looking around, and spots the Closer putting some money into a pay-phone.

ANGLE ON CLOSER: dials a number ---

CLOSER

Yes, the room for Mister Samuel Koeppler.  
(beat as call rings through) Guggenheim,  
top of the rotunda. Thirty minutes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Closer hangs up phone as we :

CUT TO:

EXT. SOLOMON R. GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM - DAY

HIGH ANGLE looking down at Frank Wright's masterwork. We can see the Closer round the corner of 87th and enter the museum.

INT. SOLOMON R. GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM - LOBBY - DAY

The Closer makes his way through the late afternoon CROWD. He buys a ticket at the counter, then approaches the Museum's security check. The Closer moves through the metal detector, sets off the HIGH PITCHED ALARM and is stopped by A SECURITY GUARD. He opens his overcoat, lifts his right pant-leg and shows the Guard his metal brace. The Guard waves him through.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE - DAY

Lavon, Watts and Salazar stand huddled together just up the street from the Guggenheim. They all glare at the museum and are clearly concerned.

SALAZAR  
You think he made us?

LAVON  
I don't know ---

SALAZAR  
What the fuck is he doing in there?

WATTS  
Five will get you ten that he ain't in there for the fuggin' culture.

RLS

INT. SOLOMON R. GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM - LOBBY - DAY

Salazar enters the museum's lobby --- stops for a moment to take in the stunning space.

POV SALAZAR: looking up into the soaring, spiral shaped atrium, the great rotunda that encircles and defines it, the massive and magnificent skylight that covers it. The skylight is densely packed under a heavy blanket of snow.

As Salazar moves towards the ticket-counter, he catches sight of the museum's security check and metal detector.

ANGLE ON TICKET-COUNTER: Salazar approaches the CASHIER, gives her a smile and discreetly flashes his badge.

JUMP CUT TO:

ANGLE ON SECURITY CHECK: people in line, waiting to move through the metal detector and bag check. Salazar approaches, gets in this line.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The SECURITY CHIEF comes over and relieves the GUARD on duty. We see the Chief turn off the metal detector just before Salazar and Watts move through it.

Lavon is bringing up the rear --- standing in line behind a GROUP OF THREE MEN IN WHEELCHAIRS AND THE THREE MEN PUSHING THE CHAIRS.

MOVING with Lavon as passes through security and begins to ascend the main rotunda ramp. Lavon looks to his left, across the atrium, and sees Watts slowly moving up to the second level gallery. He looks to his right and sees Salazar in the first level gallery, standing in front of a canvas.

Lavon casually strides up next to Salazar, pretending to study the painting ---

SALAZAR

(whispers)

I talked to Security, they're locking down all of the alternate exits. Only one way out now.

ANGLE ON WATTS: he is standing along the third level rotunda, hanging out in front of a painting. Lavon comes rolling up the rotunda ramp and moves to the painting next to Watts.

LAVON

(whispers)

Where is he?

WATTS

(muttering)

Directly behind me, up one level.

As Watts walks away and continues up the rotunda, Lavon carefully peaks across the atrium --- looking up one level, he locks sights on his mark. The Closer stands at the rotunda parapet looking down into the lobby.

ANGLE ON THE CLOSER: he checks his watch and then gazes down into the lobby just as WEXLER enters and moves to the ticket-counter. Wexler is alone --- he is using a cane to walk, his gate is slow and unstable.

ANGLE ON WATTS AND SALAZAR: shielded behind a large sculpture. They watch the Closer's fractured image through the sculpture's broken blocks of glass.

MOVING WITH LAVON: as he continues up the rotunda's spiral --- carefully keeping his sights on the Closer as he strides past two of the Men in the Wheelchairs.

HIGH ANGLE OVER ROTUNDA ATRIUM: we can see the Closer coming around the bend of the sixth level, converging on the main rotunda's top level gallery. Lavon, one level bellow, slowly following.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (2)

ANGLE ON SUMMIT GALLERY: the Closer enters the gallery located at the top of the rotunda --- takes a seat on a bench facing a large Francis Bacon painting, entitled "Study for the head of a Screaming Pope".

Wexler enters the gallery, makes his way over to the Closer. Wexler looks much worse since the last time we saw him --- he has the pale, lackluster appeal of a man close to death and his breathing has grown much more afflicted.

Wexler takes a seat next to the Closer. He is so out of breath he can't even speak --- just sits there struggling to regain his composure. Easy to see that Wexler's days are numbered.

CLOSER  
(whispers)  
You're close now ---

WEXLER  
Yes, close enough to taste it.

CLOSER  
And what does the end taste like?

WEXLER  
A rusty knife.

The Closer lets out a quiet little CHUCKLE.

CLOSER  
So?

Wexler slides a baggage claim ticket to the Closer.

CLOSER (CONT'D)  
What is it?

WEXLER  
(after a beat of silence)  
It's a gift --- the contract for Lavon.

The Closer cannot mask his pleasure and excitement.

CLOSER  
Why?

WEXLER  
He was in Milan.

The Closer's pleasure quickly turns to vexation.

CLOSER  
Has anything been compromised?

WEXLER  
No. Not yet --- but the fact that he was  
there at all --- it's a problem ---  
(catches his breath)  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

WEXLER (CONT'D)  
A problem that your Principle would like  
resolved, immediately.

ANGLE ON LAVON AND SALAZAR: they are standing in the shadows  
of an alcove, next to a water fountain --- acting like they're  
waiting for the bathroom as they watch the Closer and Wexler  
on the bench. Talking in WHISPERS.

SALAZAR  
Who's the old scag sittin' next to him?

LAVON  
I don't know ---

SALAZAR  
You think he means something?

LAVON  
Pick him up when he leaves and let's find  
out.

ANGLE BACK ON WEXLER AND THE CLOSER:

WEXLER  
The method and manner is entirely up to  
you. Your Principle would simply like him  
to vanish without a trace ---

CLOSER  
Any other provisions?

WEXLER  
Yes --- no mistakes.

CLOSER  
This won't be a problem.

WEXLER  
We shall see.  
(catching his breath)  
I have known killers of every sort in my  
lifetime. None ever measured up to their  
fate.

Mustering up all of his energy, Wexler attempts to get up from  
the bench --- but quickly loses his balance. The Closer  
catches him before he falls and steadies Wexler on his feet.

CLOSER  
I won't see you again, will I?

WEXLER  
No, at least not in this world.

CLOSER  
So you believe in a life to come?

WEXLER  
A life to come?  
(scathing little grin)  
Mine was always that.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Wexler gives the Closer a farewell tip of the head and then makes his exit --- heading for the elevator.

MOVING WITH WATTS: as he makes his way up the rotunda ramp, Salazar rushes past him on his way down --- doesn't have time to explain.

ANGLE ON LAVON: Watts hooks up with Lavon in the back corner of the sixth level gallery.

WATTS  
Where's Iggy going?

Lavon nods to Wexler who is now entering the elevator.

LAVON  
I'm having him follow a new lead.

WATTS  
Who is he?

LAVON  
Don't know, but he met with our man.

Once the elevator doors close, Lavon steps out from the shadows and carefully begins to inch his way up the rotunda.

ANGLE ON CLOSER: seated on the bench, contemplating the baggage claim ticket.

MOVING WITH LAVON: he reaches the top of the rotunda, just as the Closer picks up the claim ticket, rises to his feet and turns around to exit the gallery.

The Closer's eyes fall on Lavon --- an unsettling beat of silence and inaction; the Closer is too stunned by the sight of Lavon to do anything but stand and stare. Lavon is equally jolted by the fact that the Closer clearly recognizes him.

CLOSER  
(after a long beat)  
How did you find me?

LAVON  
You left a footprint on the roof in Milan.

The Closer cracks a thin grin and nods --- he moves slightly and Lavon reacts.

LAVON (CONT'D)  
Don't move --- and keep your hands where I can see them ---

CLOSER  
They'll never let you bring me in from the cold.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

LAVON

You can either die for Skouras or talk to me.

We see the Closer considering this. A tense beat as he and Lavon size each other up.

The spell is broken when Watts comes up behind Lavon, holding up his badge with his left hand, his gun in his right --- pointed at the Closer.

WATTS

(yelling)

NYPD, douchebag ---

(gesturing)

Now get your hands on your head ---

All the BYSTANDERS within the proximity of this action immediately flee at the sight of Watts' drawn gun.

Watts locks back the revolver's hammer and takes a menacing step forward.

WATTS (CONT'D)

(forceful)

I said get 'em up jag-off --- now!

The Closer complies with Watts, puts his hands on his head --- but does not take his eyes off of Lavon.

LAVON

(to Watts)

Where are your cuffs?

WATTS

Back of my belt ---

Un-clipping the handcuffs from Watt's belt, Lavon is just about to step towards the Closer, when we suddenly HEAR a quick succession of FOUR MUFFLED THUMPS --- before Watts or Lavon know what's happening the Closer has taken four bullets to the chest. The blunt force of the impacts drives the Closer into the wall before dropping him to the ground.

Another THUMP is HEARD --- and Watts' neck is suddenly blown open by another bullet --- blood and tissue exploding all over Lavon as Watts' lifeless body falls to the ground.

PANNING WITH LAVON: he spins in the direction the bullets came from and is confronted with WHEELCHAIR MAN#1, only a few yards away, he is now walking up the rotunda towards the summit --- a 9mm Ruger P85 with a suppressor in his hand --- its sights trained on Lavon. PUSHER#1 is right behind his partner, pistol drawn. Lavon too stunned to react.

Wheelchair Man#1 is just about to pull the trigger and drop Lavon when we suddenly HEAR the deep-pitched burst of an UNSUPPRESSED GUNSHOT being fired --- BOOOOOM! Wheelchair Man#1 takes a shot to the chest and goes down.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

CAMERA WHIP PANS WITH LAVON: he spins back to the right and sees the Closer, just barely up on his knees --- a WALTHER P.5 in his hand ---

Pusher#1 returns fire and pumps another two bullets into the Closer's chest. As the Closer pitches over to the ground, Pusher#1 begins to swing his attention towards Lavon.

Lavon finally reacts --- he scrambles for the snub-nosed .357 in Watts' hand, squeezes off two shots and forces Pusher#1 to take cover. Lavon then dives behind a large Constantin Brancusi glass sculpture --- he crouches there for a few beats, trying to get his shit together, but he can't --- he's reeling with shock, confusion and horror. Lavon's moment of reprieve is quickly annihilated by another SAVAGE BURST OF GUNFIRE. Lavon leaps for cover behind the wall just as the giant sculpture EXPLODES sending thousands of deadly shards of glass flying like shrapnel.

VARIOUS ANGLES: A GENERAL PANIC has erupted in the Guggenheim; the BLARING of museum alarms, everyone SCREAMING and stampeding down the rotunda ramp towards the exit. Everyone except the WHEELCHAIR TEAMS #2 and #3 --- a TOTAL OF FOUR MORE ASSASSINS --- all of whom are now swiftly moving into action--- all armed with 9mm Machine-pistols.

ANGLE ON LAVON: Peeking out from behind the wall, Lavon looks down the rotunda ramp and sees Pusher#1 coming out from behind a corner and charging towards the summit gallery.

MOVING with Lavon as he pops out and lets loose three shots, all of which miss --- Pusher#1 returns fire and forces Lavon to retreat.

CLOSE ON LAVON: hunkered down behind the wall, pinned by a horrendous barrage of lead --- it is very clear that Lavon is not mentally or physically cut out for this kind of action. Lavon is totally out of his element, he knows it and he's scared.

Lavon looks at his gun, only one bullet left. He looks over at the Closer: although he's still lying on the ground, the Closer is not dead. Lavon can see him struggling to move. He can also see that the Closer is wearing body armor under his shirt and overcoat.

POV LAVON: ZOOMING on the Closer's Walther lying beside him. It's the closest gun to Lavon.

Lavon knows he has to go for it. Taking a deep breath, Lavon bursts out from behind the wall, fires his last bullet at the converging attacker and misses. As Lavon shifts his weight over to lunge for the gun, he loses his footing on the glass and wipes out.

Pusher#1 storms into the gallery, Lavon closes his eyes and prepares to die just as the Closer grabs his gun, flips over and takes out the assailant with a surgically placed shot. Pusher#1's body lands in front of Lavon with a THUD. Lavon grabs the Pusher's gun and gets the drop on the Closer.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

LAVON  
Drop it ---

CLOSER  
(wheezing)  
If I drop the gun --- we both die.

LAVON  
I said drop the gun!

CLOSER  
Do you really think that you can deal  
with this alone?

The Closer is having a hard time breathing --- although the armor absorbed all the lead, the Closer's chest absorbed all the blunt force trauma and shock.

CLOSER (CONT'D)  
(gesturing to body armor)  
Help me gets this off ---

Lavon hesitantly helps the Closer tear off his obliterated body armor --- the Closer's entire chest and stomach are literally black and blue --- he's sustained some major damage -- broken ribs and possible internal injuries.

We suddenly HEAR the supersonic STREAKS of bullets as they whiz past Lavon's face and tear into the Bacon canvas. Lavon and the Closer simultaneously return fire, forcing WHEELCHAIR MAN#2 and PUSHER#2 to take cover.

LAVON  
(freaking)  
Who are they?

CLOSER  
(grumbling to himself)  
Wexler, that slippery little fuck --- he brought them.  
(locks eyes with Lavon)  
They're here for me.

LAVON  
Why?

CLOSER  
Because of you.

The Closer looks across the gallery to the elevator and stairwell.

CLOSER (CONT'D)  
We need to get out of here ---

Lavon's eyes darting around, looking for an escape route --- Wheelchair Team#2 open up on them with another attack --- The Closer grabs Pusher#1 body and uses it as a shield.

POV LAVON: ZOOMING on sign above stairway access.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (8)

LAVON

The stairs ---

Lavon helps the Closer to his feet and the two men cut across the gallery towards the stair access, laying down short bursts of suppressive fire.

ANGLE ON STAIRWAY: Lavon and Closer ram through the access door and into the triangular stairwell. They peer down the center of the stairs and are immediately greeted by a shit-storm of GUNFIRE coming from WHEELCHAIR TEAM#3 on the fourth level of the stairway.

Lavon and Closer are forced back out to the gallery. Lavon desperately slaps the elevator call button, to no effect, the floor indicator lights are dark: the museum alarm has stopped the elevators.

CLOSER

Forget it, the alarm shut them down.

Lavon nods grimly and hurries to the opposite end of the elevator alcove, just as Wheelchair Man#2 bum rushes the summit --- Lavon fires catching him in the arm. Wheelchair Man#2 falls, down but is not out. He returns fire. A bullet grazes Lavon across his right cheek --- blood spatters across his face and eyes, temporarily blinding Lavon. Lavon blindly fires his gun at Wheelchair Man #2 --- forcing him to take cover.

The Closer grabs Lavon and pulls him behind a wall.

CLOSER (CONT'D)

Are you okay?

Lavon can't talk, just nods --- as he wipes the blood from his eyes.

CLOSER (CONT'D)

The ramp is the only way out ---

Lavon nods in agreement.

MOVING WITH CLOSER AND LAVON: as they explode down the rotunda, simultaneously opening fire on Pusher#2 and Wheelchair Man#2 --- a fucking brain-curdling exchange of bullets.

Lavon is having trouble shooting and running. He stumbles and falls, hurtling forward into Pusher#2. Lavon loses his gun as they slam into ground. Lavon and Pusher#2 begin to wrestle --- Pusher#2 pistol-whips Lavon with a savage blow to the skull and breaks his nose with another vicious blow --- blood spurts from Lavon's nostrils. Lavon's totally out of it.

The Closer can't help Lavon, he's too busy dealing with Wheelchair Man#2.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (9)

As Pusher#2 is about to fire his gun into Lavon's face, the Closer feeds Wheelchair Man#2 two bullets in the mouth, then spins and fires at Pusher#2, catching him in the back --- Pusher#2 SCREAMS in utter agony, Lavon uses the opportunity to shove the gun out of his face just as Pusher#2 reflexively squeezes the trigger --- and empties his entire clip into the giant rotunda skylight.

The bullets rip through the skylight's window-panes. We can HEAR the CRACKLING sound of the thick glass panes beginning to spider-web under the tremendous weight of the snow --- tiny streams of snow begin to flow through the holes.

The Closer quickly moves to scavenge the two downed assassins for weapons and ammo as Lavon tosses Pusher#2's body aside and scrambles over to his gun.

Suddenly they're taking fire from above as WHEELCHAIR TEAM#3 emerges from the Summit stairwell. Lavon and the Closer hustle to their feet and stampede down the rotunda path, laying down a horrendous field of fire with their machine pistols.

VARIOUS ANGLES: a full-tilt boogie-war gun-fight has broken out in the Guggenheim. Everyone swirling around the great rotunda --- the strobes from their muzzle-bursts lighting up the atrium like welder's arcs.

EXTREME HIGH ANGLE: watching the action from directly overhead --- looking down into the museum's great rotunda --- everyone battling it out as they make their spiraling descent down the ramp --- a strobing vortex of bullets and debris.

FOLLOWING LAVON AND CLOSER: steam-rolling their way around the rotunda's third level, spasmodically firing their machine pistols at the converging Assassins --- The Closer doing his best not to let his gimp leg slow him down.

Lavon and Closer suddenly find themselves taking fire from below as well as above. Both men are forced to take cover ---

THE CLOSER CATCHES A BULLET IN THE BELLY AS HE DUCKS BEHIND THE PARAPET WITH LAVON. He SCREAMS in fury, frustration and pain as the blood begins to gush from his gut.

LAVON  
How bad is it?

CLOSER  
(in agony)  
Bad.

The GUNFIRE suddenly stops and an eerie silence suddenly overtakes the atrium --- everyone taking a moment to re-group and reload.

Lavon peeks down into the center of the museum's lobby and sees TWO MORE ASSASSINS. Checks his clip, it's almost spent. Grabs the Closer's gun. Desperately trying to figure out his next move.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (10)

VOICE FROM ABOVE O.S.  
(screaming down to lobby)  
Where are they?

VOICE FROM BELOW O.S.  
(screaming up)  
Nine o'clock --- behind the parapet.

The Closer is trying to fight off from going into shock. Lavon savagely smacks the Closer across the face --- and gives him a hard glare.

LAVON  
(screaming whisper)  
Don't you fucking do it --- just hold on.

ANGLE ON LOBBY: We suddenly HEAR the SHATTERING POP of one of the skylight's window-panes as it finally gives way under the weight of the snow --- a small shower of glass falls into the lobby followed by a small cascading stream of snow through the empty window-frame.

The Lobby Assassins are all distracted by this...

ANGLE BACK ON CLOSER AND LAVON: Lavon is also looking up at the skylight --- watching the snow flow into the museum.

POV LAVON: ZOOMING on all the tiny, almost undetectable streams of snow flowing through the various bullet holes.

Lavon is pricked by a sudden inspiration --- he leans back, and empties the rest of his clip into the gigantic rotunda skylight. The cathedral-like dome of glass suddenly EXPLODES open.

LOW ANGLE LOBBY: the two Assassins in the lobby look up in utter horror as a cataclysmic avalanche of snow, ice, glass and debris comes crashing down on them.

VARIOUS ANGLES: the great rotunda and atrium now fully exposed to the elements. It is snowing in the Guggenheim.

Under the cover of the falling snow, Lavon puts the Closer's arm around him, gets him to his feet --- and helps the Closer walk as they make a break for it.

Lavon and the Closer wind their way down one more level of the rotunda --- the Assassins above them resume their attack and give chase.

CUT TO:

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE - FRONT OF GUGGENHEIM - CONTINUOUS

Flashing lights and SIRENS converging from every direction as Lavon and the Closer erupt out the Guggenheim. Lavon can see an army of POLICE and EMERGENCY VEHICLES approaching from both directions on Fifth --- but they are still too far away to save them from the Assassins right on their heels.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - ACROSS FROM GUGGENHEIM - CONTINUOUS

Lavon dragging the Closer across Fifth and into Central Park. Looking for someplace to hide, they duck for cover behind a large cluster of snow-covered hedges. The Closer finally collapses --- Both men PANTING and COUGHING like they just finished running a marathon.

Lavon carefully peers over the bush and looks towards the museum. The Assassins burst out of the museum's entrance --- seeing the approaching police cars --- they all dive into a waiting GETAWAY VAN and peel away into the night just as the POLICE CARS ARRIVE.

Lavon looks down, sees the Closer sprawled out in the snow --- the snow surrounding him quickly turning red.

Lavon kneels down --- this is clearly the end for the Closer. Lavon violently grabs him by the shirt. The Closer, moving into terminal shock --- Lavon smacks him across the face.

LAVON

Don't do this --- not now.

CLOSER

(inward smile, cackles)

I told you ---

LAVON

Told me what?

CLOSER

(gasps for air)

That you'd never bring me in from the cold.

The Closer lets loose a short burst of HYSTERICAL LAUGHTER --- and then seizes up as though death were squeezing the life from him --- the Closer's face delicate with fear, his eyes roll back, his body goes limp and he dies.

LAVON

Don't do this to me ---

(almost inaudible whisper)

I didn't come all this way just to have you die.

Lavon doesn't move --- frozen in a state of disbelief and dread. He is still holding the Closer by the shirt --- starts to shake the Closer violently --- but nothing happens. Lavon finally lets go of the Closer's shirt --- and his body drops, sinking into the red snow. The flashing lights of the arriving POLICE CARS illuminating the scene in an eerie strobe of red and blue light.

Lavon just sits there motionless for a few moments, staring at the Closer's lifeless body --- his eyes a prelude to a scream.

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CONTINUED:

Forty four years worth of suppressed emotion welling up inside Lavon like lava --- he tries to fight it off but is quickly overwhelmed --- Lavon's senses capsize and he snaps --- in a terrifying eruption of anger, frustration, dread and despair Lavon begins beating on the Closer's corpse --- he savagely punches, hammers, slams, pounds on this dead body until he finally succumbs to the exhaustion.

With a mixture of tears and blood flowing down his face --- Lavon finally sits back --- Looking up at the heavens with all the pain and abandon of the forsaken Job.

The BEAM OF A FLASHLIGHT suddenly falls on Lavon --- he turns and sees the shadow-cast figure of the POLICE OFFICER holding the light as we:

FLASH CUT TO:

INT. NYC POLICE STATION - UPPER EAST SIDE - SQUAD ROOM - LATER

A POLICE OFFICER is seated next to the door of a grungy squad room, keeping a careful eye on Lavon.

Lavon sits at a small desk looking helpless and miserable, like a man lashed by some elemental force of nature. Although he is still covered in dried blood and battle soot, both his broken nose and graze wound have been treated and bandaged.

He stares out the window and smokes a cigarette, his hands still slightly shaking.

There is a KNOCK at the door and Morganthaw enters the room.

MORGANTHAW  
(to Police Officer)  
Can I have a few minutes.

Police Officer gets up and exits, closing the door behind him.

Morganthaw throws Lavon an anguished look of concern, relief and affection. She pulls up a chair next to Lavon and gently takes his hand into hers. Lavon can't bear to look at her in the eyes, instead throwing his glance to the ground in shame.

LAVON  
(broken up with emotion)  
I'm sorry Eleanor --- I ---

MORGANTHAW  
(interrupting)  
Andre ---

Morganthaw gently uses her hand to get Lavon to look at her in the eyes.

MORGANTHAW (CONT'D)  
Do you remember what you once told me  
when I was at the end of my rope? (beat)  
Well, now I need you to tie a fucking a  
knot in yours and hang on --- because  
it's not over.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAPTAIN MANNY KOLSWALSKI, a fifty-something badge heavy cop suddenly enters the squad room.

Morganthaw gets up and squares off with Kolswalski.

CAPTAIN KOLSWALSKI  
What's up Ella? What are you doing here?

MORGANTHAW  
I need to get him out, Manny and I need to get him out right now.

CAPTAIN KOLSWALSKI  
Are you out of your fucking mind!? I got seven dead Jon Does, a dead cop, it's snowing in the fucking Guggenheim.  
(gesturing to Lavon)  
And this humper is the only one that knows what happened.

MORGANTHAW  
I know Manny --- but I still need you to give him up to me. Just let me take Lavon for the night and I'll have him back to you by dawn.

CAPTAIN KOLSWALSKI  
Why? What the fuck is going on?

MORGANTHAW  
I can't get into it ---

CAPTAIN KOLSWALSKI  
Look, Ella, I wish I could help but this guy's been black-flagged by the FEDS. I've got heavies from the Bureau, Justice and INTERPOL coming in to roust him ---

MORGANTHAW  
I'll take full responsibility ---

Kolswalski gives Morganthaw a concerned glare.

CAPTAIN KOLSWALSKI  
I let you do this and we're all gonna be up for the shit sandwich review.

MORGANTHAW  
Yeah, but you have my word, Manny, I'll be the only one that takes the bite for this.

CAPTAIN KOLSWALSKI  
There's just no way ---

Morganthaw gets into Kolswalski's face, real hardcore like...

MORGANTHAW  
I don't wanna hear it, Kolswalski --- you're gonna do this thing for me...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

RLS

CONTINUED: (2)

MORGANTHAW (CONT'D)  
(severe glare, icy)  
And you know why.

Kolswalski stands there for a moment, totally shocked --- his initial astonishment quickly turning into stone cold rage.

CAPTAIN KOLSWALSKI  
(hissing)  
You fucking miserable little cunt ---  
you're really gonna play that card on me?

MORGANTHAW  
Old sins cast long shadows, Manny.  
(turns to Lavon, gestures)  
Come on, let's go.

Morganthaw and Lavon begin to exit the squad room ---  
Kolswalski grabs her hard by the arm.

CAPTAIN KOLSWALSKI  
You do this, Ella --- you walk out that  
door --- and you just better hope to God  
you never need a cop in this city.

Morganthaw jerks her arm away and exits the room with Lavon as  
we:

CUT TO:

EXT.. NYC POLICE STATION - UPPER EAST SIDE - CONTINUOUS

Morganthaw and Lavon emerge from the police station. They  
begin to descend the steps when Lavon suddenly stops.

LAVON  
Eleanor, I can't let you do this ---  
(spins her around to face him)  
I won't let you slit your own throat to  
save mine.

Morganthaw's face suddenly goes delicate with a vulnerable  
lovesick smile.

MORGANTHAW  
This has nothing to do with that. This is  
business.

LAVON  
What do you mean?

MORGANTHAW  
I think we might have cracked the China  
puzzle ---

LAVON  
What ---!?

MORGANTHAW  
We can't talk here ---  
(pulls Lavon by the hand)  
Now come on ---

EXT./INT. VOLVO WAGON - MINUTES LATER

Morganthaw driving away from the Police Station, Lavon riding shotgun. Morganthaw is reeling with paranoia and anxiety --- scanning the mirrors to make sure they aren't being followed.

MORGANTHAW

The IBCC's expansion into Africa and the Middle East --- taking control of the illicit arms dealing market in Europe --- the billions Skouras is pouring into China --- it's all connected ---

LAVON

(interrupting)

Yes, but what's behind these connections? What is it all about?

MORGANTHAW

Small arms --- cheap, mobile, handheld weapons. That's what this is about.

(off of Lavon's confused look)

By 1990 small arms will be the only weapons used in 96% of the world's conflicts --- and no one has the capacity to manufacture these small arms cheaper, faster or in greater quantity than the People's Republic of China.

LAVON

I still don't understand ----

MORGANTHAW

Skouras is loaning China the billions they need to build a military industrial complex capable of mass-producing a wide variety of small arms and munitions --- and in return the Central Commission has agreed to make the IBCC it's exclusive broker for these weapons.

LAVON

Skouras has the ability to get these weapons from any number of sources. What does he gain from exclusivity with the Chinese?

MORGANTHAW

Once the P.R.C. infrastructure is in place, the overall costs in production will be reduced by more than 43% --- a discount which Skouras intends to pass on to his buyers.

LAVON

But why would he want to reduce his profit margin by giving his buyers this discount?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MORGANTHAW

Because his goal is to make war affordable to anyone with the will to wage it.

LAVON

Where's the money in that equation?

MORGANTHAW

Skouras' interest is probably in the commissions generated by sale of the weapons.

Lavon lights up a butt and takes a long pensive drag.

LAVON

(shakes his head)

Even if Skouras were taking back fifty cents on every dollar, those commissions will just barely cover the costs of servicing the P.R.C. loan package.

MORGANTHAW

This deal is going to make China the dominant supplier of small arms to the third and fourth world --- and it's the IBCC which will govern the flow of these weapons ---

LAVON

(interrupting)

But how exactly does the bank profit from this?

MORGANTHAW

Control. If the IBCC controls the flow of weapons, they control the conflict ---

LAVON

There's no such thing as conflict control, not to the degree that it assures the bank a return on it's investment --- Skouras know this...

Lavon turns everything over and over in his head --- when it suddenly hits him. Lavon seizes up and goes pale with the dreaded realization of what this is all about.

LAVON (CONT'D)

There is, however, one result that conflict does produce which would virtually guarantee Skouras an ever-increasing return on his money.

(after a long drag)

Debt.

Morganthaw stops the car at a red light, turns and gives Lavon a puzzled look.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LAVON (CONT'D)

The objective isn't to control the conflict, the objective is to control the debt that the conflict produces. (beat) You see, the true value of conflict, the real value, is in the debt that it creates --- control the debt and you control everything.

It takes a few moments for Morganthaw to absorb the concept but when it finally sinks in a look of utter horror comes across her face.

MORGANTHAW

Jesus Andre --- the man is so fucking brilliant, it's truly terrifying ---

The light turns green, but Morganthaw is too freaked out to react to it.

LAVON

How did you find out about all of this?  
Who told you about the China deal?

Cars behind them begin HONKING. Morganthaw doesn't say anything, just hits the gas --- clearly on total overload.

LAVON (CONT'D)

(after a beat)

Eleanor, where are we going?

MORGANTHAW

The Bronx.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE BRONX - MOODY'S BAIL BONDS - LATE NIGHT

The Volvo pulls up to a dreggy old building whose street level tenant is a fucked up old store front Bail Bondsman Office. Morganthaw and Lavon cautiously exit the car and enter.

INT. MOODY'S BAIL BONDS - CONTINUOUS

AL MOODY, a sixty-something x-cop that looks like Quasimodo on a bad day BUZZES Morganthaw and Lavon through the security door and ushers them into the office.

MOVING with Morganthaw and Lavon as they make their way into the BACK OFFICE. Negurski is working the phones --- using the back of Moody's place as a makeshift office.

Negurski hangs up the phone and approaches Morganthaw. He looks worried.

NEGURSKI

I just got off with Heller ---

LAVON

How bad is it?

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

NEGURSKI

FBI and Justice have shut down the entire show --- raided task command --- seized all of our files...

MORGANTHAW

Cheer up --- things are going to get a lot worse before they get worse.

(gestures to basement door)

Is your wife here?

NEGURSKI

Yeah, Rita got here a little while ago. She's checking him out right now.

ANGLE ON SALAZAR ON THE COUCH: looking grief-stricken and unsteady. All of Wexler's belongings laid out beside him. Lavon approaches, takes a seat next to him.

LAVON

Ignacio ---

SALAZAR

You don't need to say anything.

(long beat, hard glare)

Just make sure my partner didn't die in vain.

Lavon gives him a solemn nod. Morganthaw gestures Lavon to come with her as she heads for the basement door.

INT. MOODY'S BAIL BONDS - BASEMENT - LATE NIGHT

Lavon, Morganthaw descend the steps into a murky basement decked out with a poker table some chairs and a musty old couch.

Wexler's seated at a poker table --- he's wearing no shirt, just an undershirt --- he looks and sounds even sicker than the last time we saw him. RITA NEGURSKI, a young woman in a nurses outfit, has just finished giving Wexler a check-up and is packing up her gear.

Wexler twinges at the sight of Lavon as if he were just stung by some invisible insect. Lavon picks up on his uneasiness.

MORGANTHAW

(to Rita)

How's he doing?

RITA

His vitals are steady but he's weak. So just try not to get him too excited.

MORGANTHAW

Thanks Rita.

Rita exits the basement. Morganthaw turns her attention back to the table.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MORGANTHAW (CONT'D)  
Are you feeling better, Mister Wexler?

WEXLER  
(doesn't take his eyes off Lavon)  
Yes, Miss Morganthaw. Thank you.

Morganthaw can see Lavon and Wexler digging their eyes into each other like nails.

MORGANTHAW  
(gesturing to Lavon)  
This is an associate of mine ---

LAVON  
(cuts her off)  
He knows who I am.

Lavon picks up Wexler's shirt and jacket off the chair situated next to him and takes a seat, continues to eyefuck him.

LAVON (CONT'D)  
(hands Wexler his shirt)  
Don't you?

WEXLER  
(taking the shirt)  
Yes.

Wexler begins to put his shirt back on but Lavon suddenly stops him when he notices the military-type tattoo situated on Wexler's upper-arm. Lavon pulls the shirt away, leans in to get a closer look --- flinching slightly when he does.

The vibe in the basement suddenly going from tense to hostile. Lavon's disagreeable reaction makes it very clear to Wexler that he knows what his tatoo signifies.

WEXLER (IN FRENCH) (CONT'D)  
The mark of Cain leaves a deep, unsightly scar.

Lavon's face goes rigid, like a man in the grips of a barely controlled rage --- he rolls up his shirt sleeve and reveals to Wexler the numbers branded on his inner arm.

LAVON (IN GERMAN)  
(slow and icy)  
So does the mark of Abel.

While glancing at Lavon's camp numbers, Wexler also notices the scars across his wrist.

WEXLER  
(eyeing the scars)  
Yes, I can see that.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Lavon suddenly becomes self-conscious when he realizes that Morganthaw is also looking at the scars and rolls down his sleeve.

WEXLER (CONT'D)

You should not be ashamed. The thought of suicide has been a great source of comfort to me through many a bad night.

LAVON

It's too bad that you lack the resolve of your Fuhrer. I would have hoped that a man like you would at least have the courage of his sins.

WEXLER

Yes, I would have hoped so, as well.

Morganthaw gives Lavon a pointed "what the fuck is up?" look.

LAVON

(gesturing)

His tattoo --- it's the insignia of the Brandenburg commandos, the special forces unit of the Abwehr.

MORGANTHAW

The what?

LAVON

The Abwehr --- the intelligence branch of the Third Reich. (beat) He's a Nazi.

WEXLER

(dead serious, emphatic)

I was never a Nazi --- my allegiance was to my country, never to that fool.

The overwhelming force and sincerity of Wexler's conviction catches Lavon off guard. He stares curiously at the old man for a beat --- and then it suddenly dawns on Lavon who and what Wexler was.

LAVON

You were under the command of Admiral Canaris.

Wexler nods.

LAVON (CONT'D)

I thought after the attempt on Hitler's life, everyone in Canaris' Black Orchestra was executed.

WEXLER

Most were. I managed to escape.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

LAVON

You were given a second chance and you chose to waste it on becoming a fucking janitor for Skouras?

WEXLER

You know nothing about me ---

LAVON

I know enough --- I was at the museum --- I know you were His handler --- and that you arranged for Him to be killed at the behest of Skouras, like you have for so many others.

WEXLER

What happened at the Guggenheim was most unfortunate --- and I can assure you that our mutual friend would have been quietly disposed of had your presence not forced the issue...

In a cataclysm of rage, Lavon savagely smacks Wexler across the mouth with enough force to draw blood. Shocking both Wexler and Morgenthaw.

LAVON

The blood's on your hands, not mine...

Wexler doesn't respond immediately. All you can HEAR is the HISS of his oxygen. Finally wiping the blood from his face with his hand, Wexler looks at it and then smirks inwardly.

WEXLER

I was once destined to become a man much like yourself --- true-hearted, determined, full of purpose --- but character is much easier kept than recovered.

(wheezes)

Each of us suffers his own fate. None of us can control the things life does to us. They're done before you realize it, and once they're done they make you do other things --- until at last everything comes between you and the man you wanted to be --- and you have lost your true self forever.

MORGANTHAW

Bullshit. We all have choices in life, you made yours.

LAVON

(after a long, thoughtful beat)

But, sometimes a man can meet his destiny on the road he took to avoid it.

Wexler considers what Lavon has just said and gives him a curious glare.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

LAVON (CONT'D)

Skouras must be stopped --- you can give him to us.

WEXLER

What makes you think I would?

MORGANTHAW

Why else would you have told me what did about China?

Wexler doesn't answer.

LAVON

Perhaps it's because you haven't lost everything yet.

WEXLER

A good death doesn't outweigh a bad life.

LAVON

No --- but there's a victory in dying well.

WEXLER

There's no redemption in me telling you what I know about Skouras because it won't yield you the result that you desire. It won't allow you to bring Skouras to justice.

(wheezes)

Don't you understand --- the very system, the very power structure, that you both serve and protect will never allow anything to happen to Skouras or the bank. They cannot afford to. The IBCC is an indispensable part of the Establishment --- We, are not.

MORGANTHAW

What is it that makes the bank so indispensable?

Wexler wrestling with himself --- looking as pensive as a monk in a spiritual crisis.

WEXLER

The IBCC is not only the chosen bank for the world's major terrorist and criminal organizations, it's the chosen bank for the world's major intelligence organizations as well: the Russians, the Americans, the French, the Chinese, the Saudis, the Israelis --- the list is endless.

MORGANTHAW

But there are any number of banks that have the capacity to wash and move money...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

WEXLER

You don't understand, the IBCC is not a bank in any conventional sense --- it's a global organism --- a platform from which all of Skouras' other enterprises are launched and managed. The money laundering is simply the engine that drives everything else.

LAVON

What are you talking about?

WEXLER

The IBCC deals in everything: intelligence, counter-intelligence, conflict management, drug trafficking, arms dealing --- It's the only full service financial institution for those who operate within the black and gray latitudes of this world.

(catches his breath)

This is why they all come to Skouras. This is why they all protect him --- why nothing will ever be done about the untimely death of your colleague, Thomas Schumer. And this is why we will all be quietly disposed of before any action can be taken against him.

(solemn glare)

The system guarantees the bank's prosperity because everyone needs it --- and the truth guarantees the bank's obscurity because everyone is involved.

LAVON

They're afraid of him because he knows where all the bodies are buried.

WEXLER

Yes.

MORGANTHAW

How could a man knowing so much about so many have survived this long?

WEXLER

Universally assured destruction. (beat) If anything disagreeable ever happens to Skouras, if he succumbs to anything but a natural death; everything that Skouras knows about everyone he deals with will be made public.

(wheezes)

Kill Skouras and what he knows, the world will know.

Silence heavy in the air like a threat. Morgenthaw and Lavon are both shell-shocked --- there is about them an air of desperation, as though all the rules they learned in life are suddenly being reversed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

MORGANTHAW

So where does that leave us? What are we supposed to do? Am I supposed to just forget about everything that gives my life meaning?

Wexler doesn't respond.

MORGANTHAW (CONT'D)

I won't do it. I can't. If the system is so corrupted to the core, so broken --- I would rather take my chances trying to fix it, than live the lie.

CAMERA MOVING CLOSE ON LAVON: his face clenching up with a terrible realization and grim resolve.

LAVON

There's only one thing that can fix this  
(beat) a bullet.

Although Morgenthaw is shocked by Lavon's comment --- Wexler sees the truth in it.

WEXLER

Indeed. One well placed bullet could change everything.

LAVON

Can it even be done? Skouras is one of the most well protected men in the world. And he never leaves his keep in Luxembourg ---

WEXLER

There is a way (beat) and a will.

LAVON

(eyeing Wexler suspiciously)  
Why would you help me do this?

WEXLER

Because ---- it is easier to die for one's principles than to live up to them.

MORGANTHAW

(to Lavon)

How can you even consider this!? It goes against everything that you believe in and the only thing you'll achieve is chaos.

LAVON

Once the truth about everyone is revealed, the system will be forced to cleanse itself and rebuild ---

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

MORGANTHAW

(screaming)

Andre ---- Justice isn't about picking up a gun...

LAVON

(after a beat)

The end move in justice has always been about picking up a gun.

CUT TO:

INT. I.B.C.C. HEADQUARTERS - EXECUTIVE DINING ROOM - MORNING

An enormous executive dining room gilded with post modern opulence. Seated on one side of the dining table are Skouras and THREE OF HIS TOP EXECUTIVES. Seated across the table from them are THREE serious looking CHINESE CENTRAL COMMISSION OFFICIALS. All clad in plain gray suits, the Chinese Officials are clearly uncomfortable in these ornate, Western surroundings.

A very formal STAFF OF WAITERS tends to the group's every need.

SKOURAS (IN CHINESE)

Gentlemen, the IBCC is an institution that leaves nothing to tomorrow. The future is purchased by what we do in the present ---

CHINESE OFFICIAL#1 (IN CHINESE)

It is a great deed to leave nothing for tomorrow but your strong-arm tactics have made some members of the Commission uncomfortable.

Mister Ehames enters the dining hall --- a worried and intent look on his face --- he stands in the corner and waits for the right moment to interrupt.

SKOURAS (IN CHINESE)

In this world a man must either be the anvil or the hammer. I do what's necessary to get things done.

CHINESE OFFICIAL#3

(cuts in, in broken English)

We are not here to question your methods, we are here to evaluate the results.

CHINESE OFFICIAL#2 (IN CHINESE)

The deadline for the silkworms is rapidly approaching and the next phase our relationship will only begin if you meet this milestone.

SKOURAS

It's already done. We've closed ---

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

MISTER EHAMES

Excuse me , sir.

Mister Ehames approaches Skouras and then WHISPERS something into his ear. Skouras glances nervously over at the Chinese and is met by their intimidating, stone-faced stares. Skouras clears his throat and puts on a big smile.

SKOURAS (IN CHINESE)

Gentleman, you must forgive me.

(gets up from table)

I will rejoin you momentarily.

JUMP CUT TO:

DOWN HALL FROM THE EXECUTIVE DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

SKOURAS

(freaking)

What do you mean they pulled out!? The signing ceremony was today. They can't pull out. It's too late.

MISTER EHAMES

The Calvi's never showed up to the signing ceremony. We're not exactly sure what happened, but one thing is clear --- they know. They know everything ---

Skouras looks as if he's about to explode. He teeters on the brink of a psychotic breakdown --- unholy rage and violence. We watch as Skouras, by force of sheer will, slowly brings himself back from the brink of a meltdown.

SKOURAS

(dismayed)

I want you to find out what happened ---

MISTER EHAMES

Yes, of course. (beat) And how would you like to handle the delegates from China?

SKOURAS

I'll take care of them --- you just get in touch with Eisenberg --- tell him we're ready to make a deal --- and have him here first thing in the morning.

EHAMES

I'm afraid that won't be possible. I've already spoken to Eisenberg's office --- it's his grandson's Bar Mitzvah this weekend and he is totally unavailable until Monday. (beat) Unless, of course, you'd be willing to attend.

Skouras stands there for a few strained beats and lets out a deep breath with the dreaded realization of what he must do. The artery in his head bulging like a snake.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SKOURAS

Make the call --- tell him I'd be honored to attend.

CUT TO:

EXT. JERUSALEM - MORNING

HIGH ANGLE: looking down at the holy city of Jerusalem in the early morning light. The entire city dusted with a light blanket of snow.

CUT TO:

EXT. KING DAVID HOTEL - MORNING

The usual early morning activity. GUESTS getting in and out of cabs and limos --- entering and exiting the hotel's main entrance.

A CONVOY OF THREE BLACK MERCEDES suddenly pulls around the King David's carport --- all three cars stop in front of the hotel's entrance. The convoy consists of a black limo spaced in between two black four doors.

SIX BODYGUARDS exit the black cars --- all dressed in black overcoats, wired with walkie-talkies and carrying submachine guns. The Five Bodyguards set up a perimeter in front of the hotel's entrance, scan the area and suddenly we see SKOURAS emerge --- buffered in between two more bodyguards who quickly usher him into the limo. Trailing behind Skouras is Mister Ehames, his executive assistant. Ehames gets into the limo as we:

CUT TO:

EXT. JERUSALEM - STREETS - MORNING

VARIOUS ANGLES of Skouras' convoy of black Mercedes making their way through the streets of Jerusalem. The traffic is light on this Saturday morning.

INT. SKOURAS' LIMO - MORNING

Skouras sits across from Ehames in the back. His eyes constantly darting about, scanning the surrounding traffic and landscape --- he's clearly uncomfortable and on edge.

Ehames has just finished a phone call on the PRC-101, a portable satellite communications terminal, which is a phone that fits in a briefcase. He hangs up the handset.

SKOURAS

Any word on Wexler?

EHAMES

No. Nothing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SKOURAS  
(winces)  
I don't like this.

EHAMES  
Do you think Wexler might have played a  
role in exposing you to the Calvi's?

SKOURAS  
I don't know. But it's unlikely this  
Lavon could have figured it out on his  
own.

EHAMES  
Wexler did seem fairly determined to have  
you make the deal with Eisenberg from the  
beginning.

SKOURAS  
While I'm at the Bar Mitzvah, I want you  
to call Langerman in Switzerland and see  
if there's been any activity on Wexler's  
accounts.

Skouras is clearly uneasy --- takes out a silver pill box,  
pops a valium to settle his nerves.

SKOURAS (CONT'D)  
(lights up a cigarette)  
Eisenberg (scoffs) It's not enough that I  
came to him to make the deal or that I  
gave him the terms he wanted ---

Skouras looks out the window at the passing city-scape.

SKOURAS (CONT'D)  
He makes me spend three days in this God-  
forsaken place.

CUT TO:

EXT. JERUSALEM - ZION GATE - OLD CITY - MORNING

We see Skouras' motorcade approach the ancient ramparts of the  
old city. The cars enter the old city through the heavy stone  
arch of the Zion Gate.

CUT TO:

EXT. JERUSALEM - OLD CITY - JEWISH QUARTER - MORNING

Skouras' motorcade is directed by an IDF SOLDIER into a  
guarded parking lot located at the edge of the Jewish Quarter.  
The Parking has been reserved exclusively for guests of the  
Eisenberg Bar Mitzvah.

Skouras, Ehames and the Bodyguards exit the vehicles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SKOURAS  
(looking around nervously)  
How far is the Synagogue from here?

HEAD BODYGUARD  
It's in Hurva Square --- a five minute walk through the quarter.

SKOURAS  
You know exactly where you're going?

HEAD BODYGUARD  
Yes sir, we've all walked the route.

CUT TO:

EXT. JERUSALEM - OLD CITY - JEWISH QUARTER - MORNING

VARIOUS ANGLES: Skouras, surrounded by a shield of five Bodyguards, cautiously walks through the ancient, labyrinthine passageways of the Jewish Quarter. The asymmetrical stone buildings and narrow, shadow-cast streets add to Skouras' uneasiness.

The Quarter is crowded with HUBBUB of heavy Shabbat traffic--- JEWS of every sect, making their way to either a Synagogue or the Western Wall to pray.

EXT. JERUSALEM - JEWISH QUARTER - HURVA SQUARE - MORNING

Situated in the heart of the Jewish Quarter, Hurva Square is one of the few open spaces in the old city. We can see that the area located in front of the Ramban Synagogue has been cordoned off by barricades and is surrounded by IDF SOLDIERS. Congregated within the barrier is the EISENBERG BAR MIZTVAH PARTY --- about one hundred of the most powerful people in Israel.

Skouras and his Bodyguards approach --- an IDF SOLDIER stops them from proceeding.

IDF SOLDIER  
Name please?

HEAD BODYGUARD  
Skouras.

The IDF Soldier checks his list and then allows Skouras to pass. As Skouras and his men move into the party, SHAOUL EISENBERG, a tough sixty-something Israeli, is there to greet them. Everything about Eisenberg suggests a man that is best left unfucked with.

Skouras and a smiling Eisenberg shake hands.

EISENBERG  
(thick accent)  
Dormian, good of you to come. You're just in time --- the procession was just about to leave without you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SKOURAS

Leave?

EISENBERG

(gesturing)

My grandson, Eli, he's being Bar Mitzvahed at the Wall.

(ushering)

Come --- you'll walk with me.

EXT. JERUSALEM - OLD CITY - JEWISH QUARTER - MORNING

VARIOUS ANGLES: The Eisenberg Bar Mitzvah Party making there way through the Quarter towards the Western Wall in a great procession --- a small army of IDF soldiers surrounds the group. Leading the procession is Eisenberg's GRANDSON and the FAMILY RABBI --- everyone else trailing behind them.

MOVING with Skouras and Eisenberg --- as they walk and talk. Skouras' ever-present Bodyguards positioned around them. Skouras trying to put on a happy face, but he's clearly having trouble with being so publicly exposed --- he is sweating like a pig, his eyes constantly darting about --- every sudden SOUND or movement amplifying his level of anxiety.

EXT. JERUSALEM - OLD CITY - THE WESTERN WALL - MORNING

The Eisenberg Bar Mitzvah Procession finally reaches the Western Wall and is confronted with a spectacular sight --- the Wall on a cold and crisp Saturday morning. We can see the gleaming Dome of the Rock on the Temple Mount above the Wall. The plaza in front of the Wall is dense with a great ocean of THOUSANDS of WORSHIPERS. They are all clustered near the old temple stones --- MUMBLING PRAYERS and DAVENING.

The Bar Mitzvah party descends the steps to the plaza, they move through the SECURITY CHECK --- the Men and Women separate --- Eli Eisenberg and the Rabbi then lead the men to the men's prayer section of the wall.

VARIOUS CLOSE ON SKOURAS AND CEREMONY: watching as the Bar Mitzvah ceremony begins --- there are about twelve other ceremonies taking place at the same time --- the CACOPHONOUS DIN is loud and jarring. Although the Bodyguards surround Skouras, they cannot prevent people from bumping and knocking into him as they make their way to and from the Wall. All of the people and activity only heightens Skouras' sense of isolation and unrest.

Skouras indicates to his Head Bodyguard that he's had enough. Skouras then moves through the crowd to Shaoul Eisenberg --- we see the men lock eyes. Skouras gives Eisenberg a silent, solemn "do we have a deal?" nod --- Eisenberg hesitates for a moment --- gives Skouras a solemn "yes" .

HIGH ANGLE OVER WESTERN WALL PLAZA: we see Skouras and his cadre of bodyguards emerge out the mass of people and make their exit up the main plaza steps.

EXT. JERUSALEM - OLD CITY - TIFERET YISRAEL STREET - MORNING

VARIOUS SEVERE ANGLES: Skouras and the Bodyguards carefully navigating their way along the busiest street in the Jewish Quarter. The hustle and bustle of the street seems to be growing more and more intense ---

Skouras and his B.G.'s turn left onto Jewish Quarter Road, and the hubbub suddenly subsides --- barely any foot-traffic on the road at all. Everything gets real quiet.

FOLLOWING CLOSELY WITH SKOURAS: as Skouras and his Bodyguards head South down the DESERTED Road, back towards the Zion Gate. They are approaching the Cardom up on the right ---- when the grim solitary figure of WEXLER suddenly appears fifty yards up ahead. He totes his oxygen caddy --- his breathing is severely afflicted --- broken, wheezing, like a dying organ. His walk is stilted, like a mechanical toy. Wexler has completely shaved his head bald --- and his skin has the ghastly, pale gleam of a dead man in a dream.

Skouras freezes in his tracks --- bewildered, on edge.

SKOURAS  
(disturbed)  
Wilhelm?

Wexler doesn't respond, just continues his slow advance towards Skouras. Skouras tenses up and takes a step back, his men tense up and take a step forward.

SKOURAS (CONT'D)  
Wilhelm --- what are you doing here?

Once again Wexler doesn't respond --- keeps staggering forward, his breathing become increasingly labored. Wexler's lack of response creating a bad vacuum.

SKOURAS (CONT'D)  
Why won't you answer me? Wilhelm! What's wrong with you?!

Wexler suddenly stops walking --- despite all his efforts to keep moving forward --- his breathing has become so arrested, it suddenly becomes clear that Wexler is having some sort of attack --- he reaches out to Skouras and then collapses forward to the ground. Skouras takes a few concerned steps towards Wexler, who is lying face down about fifteen yards ahead.

SKOURAS (CONT'D)  
(alarmed)  
Wilhelm, are you all right? Wilhelm?!

There is no response from Wexler, who appears to be going into cardiac arrest. Skouras signals his three lead bodyguards to check Wexler out. They head over to Wexler as Skouras and the remaining two bodyguards move to within eight yards of Wexler to get a better look.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE CLOSE ON WEXLER: seized up in extraordinary pain, laying face down on the ground. The three bodyguards come up close to him and hear a STRANGE, VIOLENT STACCATO HISSING --- LIKE A MAN DESPERATE TO CATCH HIS FEW REMAINING BREATHS.

One guard gently turns Wexler over to reveal Wexler laughing indulgently, holding in check a deeper, more explosive delight.

WIDE SHOT FROM THE POV OF A SMALL ALLEY: the alley is situated between two buildings, about thirty yards away from the action. We see the bodyguard who turned Wexler over start to SCREAM SOMETHING --- the two bodyguards next to Skouras begin to leap towards him just as THEY ARE SUDDENLY HIT WITH THE DEAFENING, CONCUSSIVE BLAST AND EXPLOSION OF SIX GRENADES WEXLER HAS SET OFF SIMULTANEOUSLY. The first blast is followed closely by a SECOND BLAST as WEXLER'S OXYGEN TANK ERUPTS IN A VIOLENT EXPLOSION.

As the smoke and debris dissipates, we can see Wexler and all the bodyguards are scattered about the ground -- body parts blood --- Skouras is still alive, having been shielded from the force of the blast and shrapnel by his two bodyguards. Skouras extricates himself from under the bodies of his men and stands in a daze, staggering around --- fucked up and shell shocked. Trying to shake off the concussion of the blast and regain control of his senses

LAVON (O.S.)

Skouras!!

We suddenly see Lavon step in to frame from behind with a gun in his hand held down at his side. He begins to walk towards Skouras.

EXTREME CLOSE UP ON SKOURAS: totally out of it, his back is to the approaching Lavon. We see blood trickling from his ears --- still a little hard of hearing.

LAVON (CONT'D)

(slowly raising his gun)

Skouras!!

Skouras turns and sees Lavon coming towards him with a raised gun. He stands there for a moment and regards Lavon with a faint recognition --- but it quickly becomes clear to Skouras who Lavon is as he raises his gun and points at him.

SKOURAS

Lavon --- ?

We SUDDENLY HEAR A GUNSHOT RING OUT! Skouras recoils as if he'd been shot --- but it is Lavon who has been taken a bullet in his left arm. Lavon drops to his knees in pain and scrambles for cover.

Skouras spins and sees that the bullet came from one of his mangled bodyguards --- just barely alive. Skouras grabs the gun from the dying bodyguard and makes a break for it --- Lavon struggles to his feet and gives chase --- both men heading North, towards the Muslim Quarter.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MOVING WITH LAVON as he heads North down Jewish Quarter Road --  
- trying to keep visual contact on Skouras who is about a  
sixty yards ahead of him.

FOLLOWING CLOSE ON SKOURAS as he turns onto David Street and  
heads towards the SOUK.

EXT. JERUSALEM - OLD CITY - MUSLIM QUARTER - SOUK

VARIOUS ANGLES: as Lavon pursues Skouras into the Muslim  
Quarter --- and suddenly we are swallowed up into the exotic  
haze and hurdy-gurdy clamor of the Souk or Arab Market.

The market is teeming with activity --- NATIVES and TOURISTS  
whirling about the stone-laid arteries of this ancient bazaar.

CLOSE ON LAVON: scanning in all directions --- desperately  
trying to get a fix on his target --- but Skouras has  
momentarily disappeared into the immense design of things.  
Skouras suddenly appears from behind a pillar.

MOVING WITH SKOURAS: running through the market place ---  
crashing into everyone and everything. He can see that Lavon  
is on his tail. Desperately trying to escape, he cuts across  
the bazaar and down a side-street. Lavon tears after him.

EXT. JERUSALEM - OLD CITY - MUSLIM QUARTER - SIDESTREET

Lavon explodes on to the side-street and is met by a hail of  
GUNFIRE from Skouras. Lavon dives for cover in a small alcove.  
He pops up and returns fire with two quick shots.

EXTREME CLOSE ON SKOURAS: hunkered down behind a cluster of  
trash-cans, in a mad panic --- totally out of his fucking  
element and shaking with terror.

SKOURAS

(yells to Lavon)

Lavon, what are you doing? What kind of  
deal did you make with Wexler?

Lavon doesn't respond.

SKOURAS (CONT'D)

Answer me!

Skouras shuts his eyes in dread, takes a deep breath --- he  
then pops out fires two bullets --- cuts and runs. Lavon  
following.

EXT. JERUSALEM - OLD CITY - MUSLIM QUARTER -

VARIOUS ANGLES: Lavon pursuing Skouras through the desolate  
back streets of the Muslim Quarter --- an unrelenting foot  
chase through a maze of back-streets, corridors, alleys,  
passageways. All that can be heard are the FOOTSTEPS, the  
HEAVY BREATHING, and the eerie fragmentary wails echoing from  
the Mosques.



EXT. JERUSALEM - MUSLIM QUARTER - AQABAT SQUARE

HIGH ANGLE: a small desolate little square at the head of which sits The Church of the Redeemer. We see Skouras emerge from a back-street --- he runs across the square to the Church. Skouras reaches the Church's door only to find that it is closed for renovations --- no redemption. Skouras spins and sees Lavon entering the square --- he panics, fires a few rounds at him and then sprints towards the shadow-cast alley off to the side of the church. Lavon following.

ANGLE CLOSE ON SKOURAS: the alley he's just run into is a dead end. No way out. Skouras freaks --- knows he's boxed himself in. All he can do is point his gun and wait --- he sees Lavon's figure move across the alley entrance and fires.

SKOURAS

We can work this out. Just tell me what you want...

LAVON O.S.

(screaming back)

You are all I want, Skouras.

SKOURAS

Killing me isn't the answer...

ANGLE CLOSE ON LAVON: his back pressed up against the edge of the wall just outside the blind alley --- preparing to make his move.

SKOURAS (O.S.) (CONT'D)

(yells)

Don't you know who I am?!! Don't you know what will happen if you kill me?!!

LAVON (O.S.)

Yes --- I know. I know everything.

SKOURAS

So why are you doing this?!!

LONG SHOT FROM THE FAR EDGE OF THE SQUARE --- we see Lavon still pressed up against the edge of the church wall, on the edge of the blackness of the blind alley.

LAVON

(yells back into the darkness)

Because ---- no one else will!

And with that Lavon busts his move and storms into the darkness.

CUT TO BLACK:

As we HEAR the sound of a SINGLE GUNSHOT being fired REVERBERATE over the blackness.

THE END.