

"THE WHITE HOUSE PLUMBERS"

EPISODE 1: "THE BEVERLY HILLS BURGLARY"

Written by

Alex Gregory & Peter Huyck

Based on

"Integrity"

By Egil "Bud" Krogh

(Wiip Draft)

FADE IN:

WHITE TYPE/BLACK SCREEN:

"I want to track down every goddamn leak there is... let's have a little fun... I really need a son-of-a bitch... who will work his butt off and do it dishonorably."

-- President Richard Nixon

INT. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - DAY [1974] (ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE)

PRESIDENT RICHARD M. NIXON addresses Congress.

Supertitle: **State of the Union Address, January 30, 1974**

RICHARD NIXON

I would like to add a personal word with regard to an issue that has been of great concern to all Americans over the past year. I refer, of course, to the investigations of the so-called Watergate affair. As you know, I have provided to the Special Prosecutor voluntarily a great deal of material. I believe that I have provided all the material that he needs to conclude his investigations and to proceed to prosecute the guilty and to clear the innocent...

INT. WATERGATE OFFICE BUILDING HALLWAY - NIGHT [1972]

Through glass doors, we see a gaggle of diverse young DNC STAFFERS chatting animatedly as they head towards us, their conversation muted by the glass.

RICHARD NIXON (V.O.) (CONT'D)

...I believe the time has come to bring that investigation and the other investigations of this matter to an end. One year of Watergate is enough!

PULL BACK to reveal **DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE** on the doors, as suspenseful 70's heist-movie music builds...

SUPERTITLE: **19 months earlier. Watergate break-in attempt #2.**

INT. HOWARD JOHNSON'S HOTEL ROOM - AT THE SAME TIME [1972]

THROUGH BINOCULARS, from across the street, we see the DNC office emptying. The lights in the office go out...

SUPERTITLE: Listening Room, Howard Johnson's Hotel.

MAN'S VOICE (O.C.)
(on walkie-talkie)
Any movement? Over.

MAN'S VOICE IN ROOM (O.C.)
We are clear to proceed. Over.

INT. WATERGATE HOTEL ROOM - AT THE SAME TIME [1972]

SUPERTITLE: Command Post, Watergate Hotel.

The room appears empty. Then a man's head pops up behind the bed and goes back down. Then again. G. GORDON LIDDY (40's) is doing sit-ups -- he's a live-wire lawyer with a deep need to prove his manliness. From a walkie-talkie on the bed, we hear the hushed voice of his partner in crime, E. HOWARD HUNT.

HUNT (O.C.)
Status report.

Liddy jumps up and grabs the walkie-talkie.

LIDDY
You are clear. *Vorgehen.* Over.

SUPERTITLE: G. Gordon Liddy. Ex-FBI agent.

INT. WATERGATE HOTEL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS [1972]

A security guard, FRANK WILLS (20's), serious about his job, checks the door to the Continental Room. Locked. He shines a flashlight in the door's window and peers inside.

SUPERTITLE: Continental Room, Watergate Hotel.

HUNT (O.C.)
I'm not requesting a status report.
I'm giving a status report. Next
time, wait till I say 'over.' Over.

LIDDY (O.C.)
Roger that. Over.

INT. CONTINENTAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS [1972]

Wills sees half-empty drinks, food left on plates, and pamphlets scattered on tables -- the detritus of a fake corporate conference. He moves on down the hall. Our camera SCANS the room and PUSHES IN on a closet door.

HUNT (O.C.)

And what the hell does *vorgehen* mean? Over.

LIDDY (O.C.)

It means "proceed" in German. Over.

INT. CLOSET - CONTINUOUS [1972]

Inside the cramped space, E. HOWARD HUNT (50's) holds a walkie-talkie. He wears a crisp gray suit and surgical gloves. He's an Ivy League educated spy-slash-spy-novelist who fancies himself a real-life James Bond/Graham Greene.

HUNT

Much as I'd love to *vorgehen*, we are currently locked in the Continental Room--

SUPERTITLE: E. Howard Hunt. "Retired" CIA Agent.

LIDDY (O.C.)

Locked in?!

HUNT

Affirmative. Over.

LIDDY (O.C.)

Dammit, I interrupted again. Over.

HUNT

The security guard made an unexpected stop here and told us to leave, so we took position in a closet to avoid detection...

INT. WATERGATE HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS [1972]

Liddy kneel-stretches his quads.

HUNT (O.C.)

...but he locked the banquet room door from the outside, and now we are trapped. Over.

LIDDY

How is that possible? Isn't Villo a professional locksmith? Over.

INT. CLOSET - CONTINUOUS [1972]

Hunt glares at the man holding the flashlight, VIRGILIO "VILLO" GONZALES (46), a loyal second-string Cuban CIA asset who's seen better days. He holds up his lock-picking kit.

VILLO

The Continental Room doesn't have the same locks as the DNC! These are the wrong tools!

Supertitle: **Virgilio Gonzales, CIA infiltration expert.**

HUNT

Do you have the right tools?

VILLO

Of course I do!

HUNT

Where are they, *amigo*?

VILLO

Miami.

Off Hunt's exasperated look, we...

SMASH CUT TO:

EXTREME CLOSE UP: IBM Selectric typewriter. The following is typed on paper, echoing *All the President's Men*:

The following is the true story of the White House Plumbers, the Watergate burglars whose overzealous ineppitude...

Backspace, backspace. The misspelled word is x-ed out.

...ineptitude brought down the administration they had been hired to protect. No names have been changed to protect the innocent, because everyone was guilty.

TITLE CARD: WHITE HOUSE PLUMBERS

CREDIT SEQUENCE: Over The Jefferson Airplane's "Volunteers," archival footage of anti-war riots, hippies, Black Panthers, Vietnam combat, Women's Lib marches -- juxtaposed with a smiling Richard Nixon projecting order and prosperity, ending with him flashing the V sign as he leaves office in disgrace.

INT. MULLEN & CO. PUBLIC RELATIONS - DAY [1971]

Sitting at his desk, Howard Hunt reads the *New York Times* Pentagon Papers coverage, disgusted.

SUPERTITLE: Mullen & Co. Public Relations (and CIA front), June 1971. One year before the Watergate break-ins.

His new boss, SPENCER OLIVER, (60's) a genial WASPy Democrat, a life choice anathema to Hunt, sticks his head in the door.

SPENCER OLIVER

Howard, how's the copy for the handicapped kids coming?

HUNT

Fits and starts... like the kids.

SPENCER OLIVER

Bob needs it end of day.

HUNT

(not moving)
Roger that.

SPENCER OLIVER

Oh, and Bob told me to remind--

HUNT

No novel writing on company time.
Copy that.

SPENCER OLIVER

What's the difference between "Roger That" and "Copy That?"

HUNT

"Copy That" means "message received." "Roger That" implies action will be taken.

SPENCER OLIVER

Gotcha. Well, copy that.

Oliver moves on, oblivious to the slight. Hunt tosses the newspaper in the trash and leans over his typewriter. The top of the page reads "Bimini Run," by E. Howard Hunt (a novel). His fingers hover over the keys, but he's got nothing. He stares across the street at the Old Executive Office Building, which houses White House staff. If only...

EXT. RIVER ROAD, MD - LATER THAT DAY

Howard's wife, DOROTHY (50's) razor-sharp but warm, the glue that holds the Hunt family together, rides a horse along a wooded road. Dorothy's immaculate equestrian garb suggests she has her life under control, and that facade is a weight she bears gracefully. She looks up to see vultures circling portentously overhead. A green '69 Firebird rumbles by, and Howard toots the horn and waves. She smiles and waves back. Howard turns into the long driveway toward their secluded house, passing a sign which reads: "Witches Island." Dorothy dismounts at the end of the driveway and opens the mailbox.

INT. HUNT RESIDENCE - MOMENTS LATER

The living room displays Asian and Mexican art from a life of travel. A grand piano sits covered in family photos. Howard's daughter LISA, (23), sharp but fragile, lies on the floor in PJ's, reading *Rolling Stone*, while a MAID vacuums around her. Dorothy enters holding a letter.

DOROTHY

Lisa! You're still in pajamas? You asked me to take you shopping for work outfits. *Andale!*

LISA

I'm exhausted.

The maid and Dorothy exchange a sympathetic look.

DOROTHY

Where's Papa?

LISA

The king is in his chambers.

Dorothy walks toward the basement stairs.

DOROTHY

Get dressed, princess.

SUPERTITLE: Dorothy Hunt, CIA asset, mother of four.

INT. HUNT RESIDENCE/BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

Dorothy descends the stairs into the lair of her son, SAINT JOHN, (18), a handsome damaged hippie with a stutter who jams on a Les Paul via headphones, so we hear soft plunking.

DOROTHY

You know how Papa feels about
clothes on the floor.

He ignores her, so she picks up a pair of jeans, and a joint
falls out of the pocket. She sighs, crushes the joint into
the trash and crosses to an office door. She pounds on it.
Howard unlocks it and opens it a crack, smoking a pipe.

HUNT

I'm writing.

DOROTHY

You're in a basement in Potomac. Do
you really need to lock the door?
(re: letter)
We're late on Lakewood dues. Again.

Howard leans out and glares at Saint.

HUNT

Can you encourage Django to repair
to the shed? Despite my many
entreaties, he still tunes that
goddamn guitar to its goddamn self
instead of the goddamn piano, and
it's a half step flat and it's like
a hot nail stabbing my temple.

Saint stops jamming and takes his headphones off.

SAINT

What was that?

DOROTHY

Sweetie, if you jam in the shed,
you can turn your amp up nice and
loud. Maybe on the way out there,
you can even tune it to the piano.

SAINT

I'm quite c-c-comfortable here.

Saint glares at his father and puts his headphones back on.

DOROTHY

This is the fourth time this has
happened this year. I'd hate to
think that people at Lakewood think
we're, you know, in trouble.

HUNT

So, what's your point? I don't make
enough money?

DOROTHY

I am not saying that at all. You are a wonderful provider. My God, you work two jobs as it is. But with my embassy job and your two jobs and the fact that this keeps happening, well, I feel it's worth discussing. Howard?

Howard looks off into space, puffing his pipe.

HUNT

Mmm?

DOROTHY

What's going on. Are we okay?

HUNT

Yes, we're okay!

DOROTHY

Great. So, the Boothbys invited us to play tennis on Sunday at the club. We haven't gotten a chance to use our new racquets yet, and--

HUNT

I can't. I have to write.

DOROTHY

All day?

HUNT

Balzac wrote sixteen hours a day, every day.

DOROTHY

And he drank fifty cups of coffee a day, and dropped dead at age fifty one. Remember what your doctor said: exercise is good for ulcers.

HUNT

I prefer my ulcers to the Boothbys.

DOROTHY

Is this is because you found out Mary Ellen voted for Kennedy?

HUNT

My God, Dot, I'm not that petty.

Dorothy's not buying it for a second.

DOROTHY

First of all, that was eleven years ago. And she's not political -- she just admired Jackie's wardrobe.

HUNT

Odds of me throwing my new racquet at Mary Ellen: dangerously high.

Howard's office phone rings. He clocks it.

DOROTHY

What about bridge?

HUNT

I have to work. All day.

He shuts the door on Dorothy.

DOROTHY

Sunday is the Lord's day, God damnit!

(to Saint)

I like that new riff.

SAINT

Can't hear you. Too out of tune. The dissonance is d-d-deafening.

She walks up the stairs.

DOROTHY

I threw away your joint.

SAINT

You what??

SUPERTITLE: Saint John Hunt. Future meth dealer.

DOROTHY

Nothing, sweetie.

INT. HUNT'S HOME OFFICE - AT THE SAME TIME

The walls are lined with rifles, knives, and a Brown U pennant. Howard picks up the phone and plops in his chair.

HUNT

Howard Hunt.

WHITE HOUSE OPERATOR (O.C.)

This is the White House calling. Please hold for Charles Colson.

HUNT

Thanks. Thank you.

The White House! Hunt gets back up and paces, tangling his phone cord in the process. CHARLES COLSON picks up.

COLSON (O.C.)

Howard. Quick question: what's your take on Daniel Ellsberg?

HUNT

The pinko who leaked the Pentagon Papers? He should be hanged for treason.

COLSON (O.C.)

Exactly what I hoped you'd say. So. The White House is cooking up a project that I'd say is uniquely suited to your skill set.

HUNT

More "creative" memoranda? Sure, Chuck. Whatever you need.

COLSON (O.C.)

No, your old skill set. Like back in Guatemala, Mexico, Cuba. It's not an exaggeration to say that the fate of the free world may depend on this project. Interested?

Hunt takes in the weight of words -- deliverance!

HUNT

What does it pay?

EXT. PENNSYLVANIA AVE - THE NEXT DAY

Hunt walks past the White House, gazing longingly at the power that dwells within. He checks his watch and jogs toward the Old Executive Office Building across the street.

INT. OEOB HALLWAY - LATER

EGIL "BUD" KROGH, (31, tall, fit) an earnest young Nixon aide, walks Hunt toward his office as staffers hurry by.

KROGH

The President has tasked me with forming the Special Investigations Unit.

(MORE)

KROGH (CONT'D)

SIU's directive is to bring Daniel Ellsberg to justice and to put the fear of God into anyone else contemplating leaking secrets to the press. The gloves are off.

HUNT

And the rat-fucking begins.

KROGH

A little fact about me, Howard, I don't swear. Obviously in this White House, the language gets blue, so I certainly don't mind you using profanity, but you'll have to excuse me not joining in.

SUPERTITLE: Egil "Bud" Krogh. Aide to Chief Domestic Advisor John Ehrlichman.

As they pause at Krogh's office door, Hunt sizes up Krogh.

HUNT

Colson says you're a Navy man?

KROGH

Indeed.

HUNT

You see something new every day.

KROGH

Associate Director Felt will be joining us momentarily, but I wanted you to meet Gordon Liddy first. He's ex-FBI, then he was a prosecutor, ran for congress, then worked for Treasury, now he's doing in-house investigations for us.

HUNT

Sounds like he's bounced around a bit. He's reliable?

KROGH

Gordon has a thing he does to prove his commitment -- he holds his hand in the flame of a candle.

HUNT

And? What's the trick?

KROGH

There isn't one. He gets third degree burns every time, never flinches. Great guy. Family man.

HUNT

That must have been some marriage proposal.

INT. KROGH'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Hunt and Krogh enter the office of a workaholic, the desk and floor covered in papers, books, and stacks of binders. Multiple mugs of coffee line the desk. Krogh lives here.

KROGH

The White House is hoping your experience in the field can be--
(looks around)
He was here a minute ago.

We hear the sound of heavy breathing. They see Liddy on the floor beside Krogh's desk, doing push-ups.

KROGH (CONT'D)

Gordon. Howard Hunt is here.

LIDDY

Almost done. I believe every minute of a man's day should be geared toward physical preparedness.

HUNT

What happens when you're on the toilet, *amigo*? Bicep curls?

Liddy pops up, stretching.

LIDDY

Not a bad idea. G. Gordon Liddy.

They shake. A moment that will seal the fate of the nation.

KROGH

Gordon and I worked Narcotics together at Treasury. Fun fact: Gordon personally led the raid on Timothy Leary's compound.

LIDDY

And now Tim's a dear friend. He and I had dinner last month.

(MORE)

LIDDY (CONT'D)

(to Bud)

You got the memo on you-know-who?

KROGH

Sent it on up. It was outstanding.

Howard looks around Bud's office, feigning nonchalance.

HUNT

Well, as long as we're swapping Icons of the Counterculture trading cards, I may or may not have had a hand in the untimely passing of Che Guevara. I have not since dined with the late Mr. Guevara.

KROGH

Howard's a Company Man. He's helped overthrow governments south of the border, so hopefully he can help stop that from happening here.

HUNT

Having run the CIA's Mexico City office with a good deal of success, I believe it's a useful template for how I intend to run SIU.

LIDDY

Excuse me? SIU is my unit.

HUNT

Bud, Colson promised me full operational oversight--

LIDDY

Nope. No. Bud, you told me Ehrlichman empowered you to--

KROGH

Gentlemen. As per the President, I am heading up SIU. You both report to me. Understood?

The two alpha dogs look at each other. No choice.

HUNT

Copy that.

LIDDY

Copacetic.

INT. OEOB CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

ON A SCREEN: A picture of the Pentagon Papers headline. Krogh clicks the projector, and a picture of Daniel Ellsberg, the leaker, pops on screen. At the table: DAVID YOUNG (Henry Kissinger's aide), BOB MARDIAN (assistant attorney general, wearing tennis shoes), and the silver-haired MARK FELT (late 50's, #2 man at the FBI). Felt is capable, intelligent, the straightest of straight-shooters, sworn to enforce and uphold the law... so he's the antagonist in this story.

KROGH

We've been hammering the point to friendlies in the press that the Pentagon Papers are an indictment of the previous two Democratic administrations, that this is Kennedy and Johnson's dirty laundry, not Nixon's, that we're stuck cleaning up their mess... But the President is still livid.

Hunt, seething at Kennedy's mention, turns on the lights.

YOUNG

How are we supposed to negotiate our way out of Vietnam if the North Vietnamese know that the American people know that our government has always known that we can't win the war? You can't kick ass with your pants around your goddamn ankles.

KROGH

Without the perceived political will to continue the war, we have a leverage deficit. But even a perceived defeat is off the table. As a matter of policy, the United States does not lose wars. Ever.

YOUNG

Kissinger said Ellsberg's leak was a challenge to Nixon's manhood.

The room reacts. The gauntlet has been dropped.

HUNT

So we may prolong an unwinnable war, just to show the Communists we've still got rocks in our jocks?

Nixon's team stares at Hunt, uncomfortable with his accuracy.

MARDIAN

Well, now, hold on. No one's saying that. Exactly.

HUNT

(shrugs)

That's how I'd play it.

Felt slides a file across the table to Bud.

FELT

The Bureau has compiled a psychological profile of Daniel Ellsberg, to identify a leaker's motives, goals, and weaknesses.

SUPERTITLE: Mark Felt. Associate Director, FBI, later known as "Deep Throat," the most famous leaker of all time.

LIDDY

We should also get Ben Bradlee's scalp, if we could ever dislodge his fat head from Katie Graham's rectum. Joseph Goebbels called journalists *unverantwortliche daubers*, irresponsible daubers. Goebbels, he knew what was what.

FELT

Mr. Liddy. Director Hoover sincerely hopes you will eschew any action that could bring unfavorable attention to the Bureau.

LIDDY

Like what? Go on, Felt. Let's have it. Both barrels.

Hunt watches the interplay between Felt and Liddy closely.

FELT

Like devoting Bureau resources to running a background check on your own fiancé--

LIDDY

That should be standard O.P. for all agents. And my wife passed with flying colors, thank you very much.

FELT

The debacle in Kansas City that earned you the nickname Superklutz--

LIDDY

No one called me that to my face.

FELT

--in which you were arrested while
perpetrating an illegal break-in.

Hunt catches Krogh's eye, looking concerned.

LIDDY

Charges were dropped. What else?

FELT

The incident in Poughkeepsie?

Off Liddy's indignant look, we...

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. COURTROOM - DAY [1966]

A cocksure younger G. Gordon Liddy (30's, no mustache, more hair), gives closing arguments to a bored-looking jury.

SUPERTITLE: Poughkeepsie, NY 1966

Liddy holds up a .38 revolver.

LIDDY

In summation, the defense's entire argument hinges on the laughably false premise that it is impossible for this double-action .38 revolver to fire a bullet...

He fishes in his pocket.

CLOSE UP: As he removes his hand, we see he's palmed a shell.

LIDDY (CONT'D)

...with an empty casing in the chamber.

He picks up an empty casing from the exhibit table.

LIDDY (CONT'D)

Empty casing...

He loads the empty casing into the gun's cylinder next to the one lined up with the barrel. Turning away from the jury, he loads the shell from his pocket into the one lined up with the barrel and snaps the cylinder into place.

LIDDY (CONT'D)

But I will clearly show the ladies
and gentlemen of the jury that...

He points the gun up, and slowly and dramatically squeezes
the trigger. The gun cocks. The jury, still unimpressed.

LIDDY (CONT'D)

...in a double-action revolver, an
empty casing always remains in the
chamber after a bullet has been
fired. Watch carefully...

Liddy winks at the judge, and pulls the trigger. BLAM!

Screams, yells, the courtroom erupts in pandemonium, people
diving for safety and rushing out in a panic!

Liddy calmly pulls the empty casing out of the barrel and
places it on the jury box railing.

LIDDY (CONT'D)

The prosecution rests.

RETURN TO:

INT. OEOB CONFERENCE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER [1971]

Liddy looks proudly at Krogh and Hunt.

LIDDY

Nota bene: I won that case.

KROGH

Back to the issue at hand. The
President requests extensive
polygraph tests, administered by
the Bureau, and supervised by Mr.
Hunt and Mr. Liddy.

FELT

The FBI stopped administering
polygraphs seven years ago. Who did
the President want polygraphed?

KROGH

Everyone at DoD, CIA, FBI, State.
Anyone with high-level access to
confidential documents related to
Vietnam, who might have helped
Ellsberg and is still at large.
Anyone who might be even thinking
about leaking sensitive info.

Felt leans back in his chair and stares down Krogh.

FELT

Mr. Krogh. The FBI has every intention of bringing Daniel Ellsberg to justice by all legal means at our disposal. However, and let me be crystal clear on Director Hoover's position: the FBI are not the President's Gestapo.

LIDDY

(sotto to Hunt)

This why I left the Bureau.

INT. OEOB HALLWAY - LATER

Krogh leads them to a newly constructed office suite, ROOM 16, where PAINTERS clean up their tarps and rush out.

KROGH

You'll set up shop in here. In the meantime, what do I tell the President about the polygraphs?

LIDDY

Tell him our first order of business is muddying up Ellsberg.

KROGH

But he was emphatic about these polygraphs. He punched his hand.

HUNT

He punched his own hand?

KROGH

Like this.

(punches hand)

Wham! That shows you how strongly he feels. Let's not let him down.

Krogh walks off, as the two men enter the room.

LIDDY

Awkward motion. The man's obviously unskilled at hand-to-hand combat.

HUNT

He's a Quaker.

INT. HUNT RESIDENCE - THAT EVENING

Howard, Dorothy, Saint, Lisa, DAVID, 9, and their college-age daughter, KEVAN, Howard's favorite, are seated around the dinner table. Howard hurriedly wolfs his food.

SAINT

Good curry, Mama.

DOROTHY

I used golden raisins this time.

(silence)

How wonderful is it to have all of us Hunts under the same roof.

(more silence)

How are classes going, Kevan?

LISA

Let me guess. Four-oh.

KEVAN

No. More like a three-nine.

HUNT

(to Saint)

Hear that? A three-nine. At Smith.

You register to vote yet?

Saint looks to Dorothy.

DOROTHY

I mailed it in yesterday, dear.

SAINT

Yes, I'm registered. Happy?

HUNT

Voting is our most sacred right.

I'll be happy if you make the correct choice.

SAINT

You mean Nixon? Guy's such a lump.

KEVAN

Don't call the President a lump.

HUNT

No, I'm glad he said it. See, this is a free country. For now. But you know what would happen if you lived in, say, Cuba, and someone heard you call Fidel Castro a lump?

DOROTHY

Can we not do this at dinner?

HUNT

A Cuban poet by the name of Armando Valladares refused to put an "I'm with Fidel" sign on his desk. He was charged with terrorism, sentenced to thirty years hard labor and you know what he was forced to eat? Human excrement.

(everyone reacts)

Hey, I'm just reporting the facts. But this is where our nation is headed: a choice between Nixon and a steaming bowl of--

Lisa throws down her fork.

LISA

I cannot take this!

DOROTHY

Honey, remember what the doctors said: you need to eat.

Lisa walks out of the room.

DOROTHY (CONT'D)

And clear your plate!

KEVAN

Glad I came home for the weekend.

SAINT

Typical right-wing reductionism. It's not a b-binary choice between Nixon and eating p-p-poo.

HUNT

Clearly, you don't understand politics.

DAVID

Why did the man eat poo?

SUPERTITLE: David Hunt. Future drug dealer/Jacuzzi salesman.

DOROTHY

David, your father is talking.

HUNT

I made my point.

DOROTHY

Well, in that case, I was thinking, since you're so busy during the daytime, we might have some people over for a little dinner party, like we used to do back in Mexico. (for David's benefit)
We will not be serving poo.

Howard gets up, grabbing a naan for the road.

HUNT

I work nights now. Don't wait up for me.

DOROTHY

Since when? And where?

HUNT

The White House.
(to Kevan)
Keep it up. I'm sure you've got a four-oh in you, pumpkin.

Piqued, Dorothy gets up and follows him out.

DOROTHY

You work at the White House?

INT. LIDDY HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - AT THE SAME TIME

ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE of Pentagon Papers leaker DANIEL ELLSBERG plays on TV in the Liddy's modest living room. Reveal Liddy, his long-suffering but devoted wife, FRAN, and their kids ALEXANDRA, GRACE, TOM, JIM, and RAYMOND watching. The coffee table is covered with newspapers and disassembled handguns. Liddy cleans a Luger frame with a cloth.

REPORTER (ON TV)

Any regrets?

SUPERTITLE: Daniel Ellsberg. Leaker of the Pentagon Papers, and Harvard-educated former US Marine Corp company commander.

DANIEL ELLSBERG (ON TV)

Certainly not. I'm very pleased with the way the newspapers have acted to defend the First Amendment now. As a matter of fact, it's been a long time since I've had this much hope for the institutions of this country. Hope that we can free ourselves of this war.

GRACE

You're going to nail this jerk,
right, Dad?

LIDDY

You betcha, sweet pea.

Fran looks at Gordon with pride. She's drunk his Kool-Aid.

RAYMOND

I hope this creep rots in jail.

LIDDY

Don't worry, tough guy. He will!

Liddy grabs Raymond in a headlock.

**SUPERTITLE: Raymond Liddy, future Deputy Attorney General.
Arrested for possession of child pornography, 2017.**

Suddenly, a splat against the window! An egg drips down.

LIDDY (CONT'D)

Turn that off. *Schnell!*

Raymond scrambles to turn off the TV. The family hears the
sound of teenage laughter outside the house.

FRAN

Those awful teenagers are back. I
thought you talked to them.

Liddy hastily assembles the Luger.

LIDDY

I did. Apparently, the little snots
need a more thoughtful talking-to.

FRAN

Gordon. They're just boys.

LIDDY

It's unloaded.

He races upstairs.

ALEXANDRA

Why's he going upstairs?

FRAN

Your father knows what he's doing.

EXT. ALLEY - MOMENTS LATER

A trio of long-haired, unkempt BOYS stand in the alley behind the Liddy garage, peering around. One holds an egg carton.

BOY
He's probably looking out front.

BOY #2
Guy's such a turd.

As they continue talking, Gordon climbs out the bedroom window and quietly slips along the roof to the garage. He's now looming over them like Batman...

BOY
We should egg his Jeep next time.

Gordon leaps off the roof! He tries to stick the landing but rolls instead, and pops up like he meant to do it. The boys are startled but see that Gordon is shorter than they are.

LIDDY
Gentlemen, I politely asked you microcephalic pimple factories to eschew vandalism. This is your final warning. Cease and desist from frequenting this alley, or face stringent consequences.

They converge around him, menacingly.

BOY #3
It's a free country, asshole.

LIDDY
Indeed it is... And our greatest freedom is the right to bear arms.

Blindingly fast, Gordon draws the pistol from behind his back and points it at them. Their eyes widen. He cocks it.

LIDDY (CONT'D)
Three of you, one of me. As a prosecutor, I can tell you: juries love a self-defense shooting.

The boys turn and sprint off into the night. Liddy smiles.

EXT. HUNT RESIDENCE - AT THE SAME TIME

Dorothy follows Howard to his Firebird.

DOROTHY

I thought the point of retiring from the Company was to have more time at home with your family.

HUNT

Spending time at home doesn't pay the mortgage. As the Marquesas Dorothy de Goutiere of Chandernagore keeps reminding me, we need moolah.

He opens the car door, gets in, and rolls down the window.

DOROTHY

Okay, wow. You can leave my ex well out of this equation. And don't tell me money is the reason you're working two -- correction -- three jobs. And what is this new White House gig, anyway? More writing?

HUNT

It's more of a need-to-know gig, and the less you know, the better.

DOROTHY

You're not hearing me. I'm telling you I want to be with you, I want you emotionally present..

(he locks the door)

...and you're literally locking me out. Honestly, Howard, I think we need to see a marriage counselor.

HUNT

Tell my problems to a psychiatrist? Oh, sure. I can tell them all about Cuba, or what I did in Guatemala, or, even better, what really happened in Dallas! Maybe you need to see a psychiatrist, Dot, because you've flipped your goddamn lid.

He starts the car.

DOROTHY

Maybe I will! Someone needs to!

He drives off. Then stops. He leans out the window.

HUNT

Don't you dare see a psychiatrist.

DOROTHY

Or what, Howard? What'll you do?
Stage a coup? Have me overthrown?

Flustered, he can't think of a realistic threat.

HUNT

I mean it!

He peels out.

INT. LIDDY HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

The family hears the front door open. To their surprise, Gordon enters, limping.

FRAN

Where were you? What happened?

GORDON

I explained the law to them, and they agreed to take their carousing elsewhere. Problem solved. Could one of you get Daddy some ice?

EXT. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE BUILDING - MORNING

SUPERTITLE: Department of Justice

HOOVER (O.S.)

Mmmmmmmuuuuuuuh. Nnnnnnnuuuuuhhh.

INT. J. EDGAR HOOVER'S OFFICE - MORNING

CLOSE ON: A hypodermic needle being flicked. A spurt of liquid into the air.

HOOVER (O.S.)

Mmmmmmmmmnnnn. Hnnnnnnnh.

A NURSE injects liquid into the vein on an old man's foot. REVEAL J. EDGAR HOOVER, the source of the moans, slouched in a chair, barely conscious, his sock off, foot up on his desk.

SUPERTITLE: J. Edgar Hoover, FBI Director for Life.

As the nurse swabs the injection and puts his sock back on, Hoover snaps into focus. He sits bolt upright at his desk.

HOOVER (CONT'D)

Thank you, my dear. I'd be a
shambles without those vitamins.

She puts away her needle and medicine in her leather bag.

SUPERTITLE: Amphetamines.

As she walks out, Felt enters, and hands Hoover a folder.
Now, Hoover is jacked on speed, hands in constant motion.

FELT

Highlights of the latest Ellsberg
wiretaps. He talks to his shrink a
fair amount. He's still upset his
mother forced him to play piano.

Hoover impatiently flips through it. We see a CLOSE-UP of a
transcript: FIELDING: How are you feeling? ELLSBERG: Well,
you know, relieved to have finally done it.

HOOVER

Who's seen these?

FELT

You, me, Associate Director
Sullivan and the transcriber.

HOOVER

Keep it that way. I don't trust
anyone at the White House.

He slides a folder across the desk to Felt, who reads it,
aghast. Inside is a memo: G. Gordon Liddy to President Nixon.

FELT

Subject: Directorship of the FBI...
What?! Replace you? Nixon wouldn't
dare. Ignore it. That Liddy is a
wet paper bag full of crazy.

HOOVER

(hacking cough)
Nixon gave it an A+. Stay on this.

Felt heads to the door.

FELT

I hope you feel better soon.

HOOVER

(suppressing cough)
I don't know what you're talking
about. I'm in fine fettle.

INT. OEOB HALLWAY - A LITTLE LATER

The Plumbers' new secretary, KATHLEEN CHENOW (30's attractive, a D.C. lifer) hangs a sign that reads "The Plumbers" outside Room 16, as Liddy looks on.

LIDDY

Tilt it right.

KATHLEEN

I certainly wouldn't expect you to want anything to tilt left.

Liddy smiles as Hunt enters, carrying a briefcase.

HUNT

Plumbers? What in the Federal Bureau of Insanity is this?

LIDDY

Our job is to stop leaks, so we're like plumbers. Get it?

Hunt pulls Liddy into the suite of offices.

INT. ROOM 16 - CONTINUOUS

Hunt gets in Liddy's face.

HUNT

You're putting a sign on the door to announce covert operations?

LIDDY

Don't wet your panties, Mata Hari. Everyone knows what we're doing. By the way, I hear we're getting confirmation that Ellsberg belongs to a secret LA sex club called "Sandstone." That'll take him down a peg or two.

HUNT

Or build him up even bigger. Pervert's probably nuts deep in unwashed hippie poontang every night. God, they worship him.

Hunt hears Krogh clear his throat. He turns to see Bud with Chenow, holding a Top Secret/Confidential manila folder.

KROGH

Howard Hunt, this is SIU's new secretary, Kathleen Chenow.

KATHLEEN

This came from Mr. Colson's office.

She hands Hunt the folder, and he pulls out a dossier.

HUNT

Muchas gracias. Apologies for the colorful language.

KROGH

See, I never have this problem.

KATHLEEN

It's not a problem.

LIDDY

We stole her away from a Senator.

KATHLEEN

Rescued, more like. Happy to be on the team. Mr. Liddy just showed me how to kill a man with a pencil.

HUNT

Did he, now. This I have to see.

Hunt hands her a pencil off of a nearby desk.

KATHLEEN

Plant the eraser in the palm. Am I doing this right?

LIDDY

Keep the shaft collinear to the radius bone--

KATHLEEN

--through the middle two fingers...
(she jabs upward)
...right above the Adam's apple.

LIDDY

Helps if it's sharp.

HUNT

Gordon, if a woman's walking down a dark street, when's she going to have a sharp pencil handy? Or did you develop this technique exclusively for killing co-workers?

LIDDY

If you think you don't face the possibility of a violent death at every moment of every day, you're living in a fantasy world, pal.

HUNT

(re: dossier)

Ah, hell. Sandstone's a clinic for sexual dysfunction. That's some secret club. Skull and No Boners. That info's as useless as their peckers.

(to Chenow)

Sincere apologies.

Hunt hands Liddy the dossier.

KATHLEEN

Please. I've been here three hours and no one's pinched my ass or told me to wear a smaller sweater, and I learned how to be an assassin with office supplies. It's paradise.

Smiling, she sticks the pencil in her updo and exits.

LIDDY

We need more wiretaps, Bud. Tap his wife, friends, family! Air their secrets! Make him fear for their safety, their sanity! *Nacht und nebel!* Heinrich Himmler 101!

KROGH

(uncomfortable)

Yeah, um, we've tapped all of them. There's nothing usable. See for yourself.

Krogh flips to a different section.

HUNT

I thought the FBI was stonewalling us with the Ellsberg wiretaps.

KROGH

We have a friend at the Bureau.

LIDDY

Christ almighty. Hoover's gonna shit his perfumed silk panties when he finds out he has a mole. And he will find out.

Liddy reacts to the dossier. We see the transcript. It's a photocopy of the same one Hoover saw. He shows it to Hunt.

LIDDY (CONT'D)

Get this: Ellsberg talking to his psychiatrist, Dr. Lewis Fielding of Beverly Hills, saying, quote, "I'm relieved to have finally done it."

KROGH

Too bad we couldn't get that psychiatrist's file. Fielding wouldn't hand it over to the FBI. What do you suppose it means, "relieved to have finally done it"?

HUNT

Completed his mission, clearly. I've believed from the get-go that Ellsberg's a Soviet asset. Come on, who else benefits from our weakened position in Southeast Asia?

KROGH

China, obviously. Everyone, really.

HUNT

China likes to play in the shadows. This front-page bullshit reeks of borscht. God damn, I'll bet there's some hot stuff in that file.

LIDDY

What kind of idiot spy talks to a shrink?

KROGH

Maybe we can make hay of Ellsberg being impotent. In a tasteful way that doesn't make us look crass.

Connecting the dots, Hunt has a brainstorm.

HUNT

No. I've got it. I know what to do.
(looks around at staff)
Not here.

EXT. D.C. STREET - LATER

An antiwar protest floods into the street, young people chanting anti-Nixon slogans, waving posters of Daniel Ellsberg, smoking weed, etc.

Cops in riot gear sprint past as a car bursts into flames!
Bricks shatter storefront windows! In a row of cars trapped
by the melee, we find Liddy's Jeep CJ-7, with Hunt in the
passenger seat and Krogh in back.

INT/EXT. HUNT'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Liddy exhales, annoyed.

LIDDY

Bunch of spoiled brats. You know
why working class Joes don't riot?
Because they know they're the poor
bastards who are going to have to
clean it all up the next day.

HUNT

Bud, go out there and tell the Age
of Aquarius that Ellsberg just made
Dick Nixon have to keep the war
going a couple more years.

Krogh gathers his thoughts.

KROGH

After Kent State, we heard there
was going to be a mass protest at
the Capitol. I get woken up by a
call around 4:30 AM: the President
is in the car, heading to the
protest alone, no staff, just a
couple of Secret Service guys. We
all scramble there. It's still
dark, bunch of kids sitting on the
steps with their angry signs, and
up walks Richard Nixon, the evil
warmonger himself, and sits down on
the steps with those kids and just
talks and listens... No cameras, no
press. He never spoke a word about
it since. I've been to Vietnam.
I've met the farmers, decent, kind
people whose homes have been
burned, kids have been killed. I
made every one of them a promise
that America is doing everything we
can to bring peace to their
country, but we can only do it from
a position of strength. All these
leaks make it that much harder.

(re: protestors)

Why can't these kids see we're on
the same side? That we're all part--

Liddy turns up the radio - loud. Krogh shuts up.

EXT. COSMOS CLUB - EARLY EVENING

Liddy pulls up to the posh, literary-themed private club. The three men all get out. The valet looks askance at the Jeep.

LIDDY

Fancy digs.

HUNT

If you have money, you join the Metropolitan; if you have brains, you join Cosmos; if you have neither, you join the University Club. I'm a member at all three.

INT. COSMOS CLUB LIBRARY - A LITTLE LATER

An elderly WAITER carries a glass of milk, a Scotch, and two sparkling waters. They sit in a secluded nook.

WAITER

Here you are, Mr. Hunt, whole milk and a Chivas Regal 18. And Perriers for the gentlemen.

HUNT

Thanks, Bill.

Hunt chugs the milk, as Liddy and Krogh stare. Then Hunt takes a big sip of Scotch and waits for the waiter to walk away. Krogh and Liddy listen expectantly.

HUNT (CONT'D)

That psychiatrist is Ellsberg's Achilles' heel. If we got hold of that file, I bet we find a full confession about his Russian ties. Then we could show the world his true red colors, send him to jail, or better yet, the gallows. The problem with wiretaps is Ellsberg's expecting them. Ergo, unlikely he'd incriminate himself on the phone. But inside the safe confines of his shrink's office... Loose lips sink shits...

KROGH

So we bug Fielding's office?

HUNT

We could, but I suspect the most damning conversations have already happened, but we could...

LIDDY

Infiltrate the office. And steal--

HUNT

--access Fielding's notes on Ellsberg. Photograph them. Don't even need to take them. We just need to know what's in them.

KROGH

Wow. That's... burglary.

LIDDY

We could put the word out that Fielding gave us the file, turn those two rats against each other. Classic black bag job, as we call them at the Bureau.

HUNT

We call them black ops. I think it's a better name. Less corny.

LIDDY

The proverbial black bag refers to the satchel in which one carries one's tools, say picks, jimmies--

HUNT

I get it. I prefer the subtlety of 'black ops.' But that's what we do at the Company. Unlike the Bureau, it's our bread and butter, so...

LIDDY

'Black Ops' could mean anything. You could be targeting negroes or chthonic deities.

KROGH

Whatever you call it, it sounds illegal. Guys, I don't know...

HUNT

There's a fine line between illegal and clandestine. And if the President authorizes it, doesn't that by definition make it legal? Gordon? You're the legal eagle.

LIDDY

Gray area. But I have read the Ellsberg indictment, a first year law student could do better. If we don't build a case, he could get off scot free for the biggest intel leak in American history!

HUNT

Bud, you said the President wants to take the gloves off. If you want, I can run it by Colson, but the last thing I'd want to do is subvert your authority.

At the mention of the fanatical Colson, Krogh blanches.

KROGH

Okay. I'll run the Fielding idea up the flagpole, and nothing further. Say nothing. To anyone. Understood?

EXT. WHITE HOUSE - NIGHT

From outside, we are looking in. We see Nixon's back, and he's talking to John Mitchell. The actors are extras, but the voices we hear are of the real Richard Nixon and real John Mitchell from the White House tapes.

PRESIDENT NIXON (ON TAPE)

We've got to keep our eye on the ball, and the main ball is Ellsberg, and we've got to get this son of a bitch... we can't be in a position of ever allowing -- just because some guy's going to be a martyr -- of allowing the fella to get away with this kind of wholesale thievery. Otherwise, it's going to happen all over the government, don't you agree?

JOHN MITCHELL (ON TAPE)

Quite.

INT. ROOM 16 - THE NEXT DAY

Krogh enters, holding an envelope, to find Liddy doing tricep dips on a desk, and Hunt reading the *Washington Post*.

KROGH

Okay. It's a go. But. You two cannot make the entry yourselves. You have to hire outside help.

HUNT

Jesus, Krogh, you're giving me a world-class case of blueballs.

Krogh hands the envelope to Liddy. Inside, cash.

LIDDY

Bud, there isn't enough in here to buy donuts, let alone spy gear.

KROGH

It's what they gave me. You'll have to make do with what you've got.

HUNT

I can scramble an ace infil team on forty eight hours notice who will do it for free. Get Ehrlichman to lean on Helms at CIA to lend us equipment. And so we're all clear, this means I'm running the op.

KROGH

First of all, as I've said before, I'm in charge. But, that said, Gordon, are you okay with Howard taking point on this one?

Liddy looks at Hunt -- dammit, outmaneuvered.

LIDDY

He's the dirty tricks expert.

Hunt smiles. He's warming to Liddy.

HUNT

Excellent. Bud, I'll call you when it's done, using the name "Edward J. Hamilton." That's my moniker from Elder Days. Gordon's "George F. Leonard." What'll we call you?

KROGH

Why do I need a code name?

HUNT

Can't be too careful.

KROGH
Okay. Call me... Wally.

HUNT
Wally...?

KROGH
Fear. Wally Fear....

INT. CIA SAFEHOUSE - A FEW DAYS LATER

CLOSE ON: Hunt's mouth. A plastic handle sticks out, his pursed lips covered with foam.

A CIA disguise master, code-named STEVE, checks his watch. Steve wears latex gloves, a cigarette dangles from his lips.

STEVE
Open.

Hunt opens his mouth. Steve gently takes out a mold. Throughout the scene, he shapes the mold with a knife.

HUNT
And we'll have drivers licenses--

STEVE
--pocket litter, the whole kit and kaboodle. Standard issue camera, as well as a low-light miniature spy cam. Wigs for how many?

SUPERTITLE: CIA Disguise Master. Code name: "Steve"

HUNT
Five. Make 'em bold.

Liddy handles the cameras, as Steve pulls wigs out of a box.

LIDDY
What about walkie-talkies?

STEVE
You'll have to supply your own.
Spies "R" Us, this ain't.
(to Liddy)
How's the gait-alterer?

Behind Steve, Liddy wears coke-bottle glasses and hobbles awkwardly around the room.

LIDDY

Feels like a pebble in my shoe.
Won't this draw attention?

STEVE

Exactly. And all people will
remember about you is the gimmick.
How tall was he? "Not sure. He
walked with a limp."

Hunt puts on an ill-fitting red wig.

HUNT

What color were his eyes? "I can't
remember. But his hair was this
crazy red color. I couldn't tell if
it was a wig or not."

LIDDY

Clever.

HUNT

Trust me, *amigo*. This ain't my
first rodeo.

INT. HUNT RESIDENCE/BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dorothy tosses and turns in bed. She hears drawers opening
and shutting in the bedroom. She lifts her head to see Howard
pop a pill and return to packing, humming happily.

DOROTHY

Where are you going?

HUNT

West Coast. White House stuff.

He tosses the red wig into his suitcase.

DOROTHY

I thought this was a writing gig.

HUNT

With a soupçon of field work.

DOROTHY

Howard. Listen to me, I get it.
Hell, I miss it too sometimes. I'm
pretty sure I was the only gal from
Bowling Green who carried a gun to
work. But I thought we both agreed
we were leaving that world behind.

HUNT

So you still get your kicks at the Embassy, and I get put out to stud?

DOROTHY

I'm a translator. Every once in a blue moon, I report some drivel about nobodies making meaningless decisions in Spain back to low-level drones at the Company. It's hardly cloak-and-dagger.

HUNT

I'm turning to stone inside, Dot. I need action to keep my juices flowing. And my country needs me.
(thinks)
I should take the brown Ferragamos.

As he crosses to the closet, she gets out of bed.

DOROTHY

I need you! And so do the kids! You have a daughter fresh out of the insane asylum, a son who--

HUNT

Hey. I took care of that pervert teacher of his! That sicko is long gone. Problem solved.

DOROTHY

You think vengeance is going to fix everything?! Jesus, Howard! After Cuba, it took me ten years to piece you back together like some CIA Humpty-Dumpty, and now you're back in the shit?! I know you blame yourself for what happened, but there is no amount of payback that is going to heal your wounds. There is only one thing that will let you move on with your life: you have to find some way to forgive yourself.

Her words land. Howard has a flicker of self-awareness, of uncomfortable vulnerability... then his guard goes back up.

HUNT

I'm not mad at myself. I'm mad at the fucking Democrats.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. BAY OF PIGS, CUBA - DAY [1961]

A terrified US-backed *BRIGADISTA* staggers into frame, bloodied and dirty, pieces of his torn uniform wrapped around wounds. Bullets whiz by as he bursts through a clearing onto a mangrove beach. Shot in the leg, he falls to his knees, turns around, and raises his carbine. Click. Empty! He's cut to ribbons by machine-gun fire.

SUPERTITLE: Bay of Pigs, Cuba, 1961

Watching him fall, another *BRIGADISTA* crouched behind a rock screams into his radio. Next to him lies a wounded comrade.

BRIGADISTA	SUBTITLE
<i>¿Dónde están los aviones?</i>	Where are the airplanes?
<i>¿Dónde están los putos aviones?!</i>	Where are the fucking airplanes?!

INT. CIA BASE - AT THE SAME TIME [1961]

In a third-world concrete room, a group of sweaty CIA agents listen to the *Brigadista* on a radio's scratchy speaker.

SUPERTITLE: CIA Base Code Name JMTrax, Guatemala

BRIGADISTA (O.C.)
¿Dónde están los putos aviones?!
¡Vienen! ¡Vienen!

Then, gunfire followed by screams. The RADIO OPERATOR turns to a younger Howard Hunt puffing a pipe. Hunt looks ruefully across the room at his Cuban counterpart, BERNARD "MACHO" BARKER, (40's) the former Cuban secret policeman turned FBI mole turned CIA spy, who stares back at Hunt, shell-shocked.

RADIO OPERATOR
What do I tell him?

HUNT
Tell him the United States does not abandon our brothers in arms. Tell him air support is on the way.

RADIO OPERATOR
(into the mic)
Señor, Los Estados--

Hunt smacks the young Radio Op on the head.

HUNT

Dummy! That bastard just ate a hot lead sandwich and the planes are grounded. HOW did this happen?!

Another AGENT languidly smokes a cigar.

CIA AGENT

No air support. Not enough troops. The *Houston* sank, so no medical supplies or ammo. And the Russians knew about the invasion last week. Goddamn leaks are killing us.

HUNT

That's a bullshit rumor. Kennedy wouldn't have had the *cojones* to send us in if they knew. That pill-popping mick is all cock, no balls.

RADIO OPERATOR

Probably just another rumor... but I heard Radio Moscow broadcast about the invasion five days ago.

The men stare at Hunt. He didn't know. Hunt looks at Barker, their whole world crashing down around them. Seething, Hunt tries to pull the radio off the table, but it's not coming.

BARKER

Amigo. The cord's wrapped around the table leg. Hold on, I can--

Hunt hurls his pipe against the wall and storms out.

RETURN TO:

INT. AIRPLANE - THE NEXT DAY

Hunt inscribes a book, Diabolus. "To Shannon, surrender to adventure. -- David St. John." He hands it to a STEWARDESS.

STEWARDESS

I've never met a novelist before. What brings you to Los Angeles?

HUNT

My colleague and I are doing top-secret intelligence work for the White House. Shhh! And I'm going to give you a secret mission: two more fingers of scotch, *por favor*.

She walks off. Liddy, sitting next to Hunt, glares at him.

LIDDY

For a guy who busts a fella's balls
for putting up a sign inside the
OEOB, you play pretty goddamn fast
and loose in the field.

HUNT

Whoa, whoa, whoa, *amigo*. What are
you so bent out of shape about?

LIDDY

I need you to take this mission
seriously. Maybe this is all wigs
and spy games for you. And that's
fine, you're out of the game. But
I'm still gunning for the top.

HUNT

Hey. You need to loosen up or
you're going to blow a vein. No one
needs this gig more than me. No
one. *Comprende?*

They realize the waitress is standing there with a glass of
scotch, and they both force nonchalant smiles.

EXT. BEVERLY HILLS STREET - A LITTLE LATER

CLOSE ON: a sign over a parking spot. "Dr. Fielding."

Hunt and Liddy case a tree-lined Beverly Hills side street.
Hunt wears his bizarre red wig. Liddy, wearing his pageboy
wig and coke-bottle glasses, sneers at Fielding's car.

LIDDY

Volvo. Of course.

Hunt uncaps his CIA camera, looks cagily at PASSERS-BY, and
quickly snaps pictures of the building, the car, and Liddy.

HUNT

Let's get the front entrance.

Liddy limps toward the building's entrance. Hunt, barely
suppressing laughter, keeps snapping pictures of Liddy.

HUNT

Wish we had a movie camera to
capture that sexy sashay.

Liddy flips Hunt off as he hobbles away.

EXT. STREET - THAT EVENING

They're in a rental car, Liddy watching Fielding's car in its parking spot through a sniper scope. Hunt sips coffee, happily tapping his hand to the jazz playing low on the radio. They're both still wearing their wigs.

HUNT

You can see the car with your naked eye. It's fifty yards away.

LIDDY

I know. This is a ZF-41 sniper scope. WWII vintage.

HUNT

I'm not even going to ask what country they're from.

LIDDY

The Germans grind superior optics.

HUNT

What's with the Hitler hard-on? I've got to tell you, *amigo*, people at the White House are not digging that riff. Read the room. I fought in the war, you know.

LIDDY

Lucky bastard. I did everything I could to see combat but... It was not to be. And just so we're clear, I'm no Nazi. I think the Holocaust was a horrible, tragic mistake.

HUNT

Uh huh. I'm seeing a 'but' thundering toward me across the prairie, kicking up dust.

LIDDY

But I was raised by a German nanny.

Fielding approaches and enters his car. Hunt starts the car, and hands his coffee to Liddy.

HUNT

Here we go.

LIDDY

Hoboken was a rough town, full of Germans who loved Hitler.

(MORE)

LIDDY (CONT'D)

The nuns in my church made us do
the pledge of allegiance with a
Nazi salute.

HUNT

New Jersey: come for the smell,
stay for the fascism.

LIDDY

I was a scrawny little mick, got
beaten up daily. My nanny used to
play Hitler's speeches on the
radio. And something about that
voice gave me strength, the will to
triumph over all obstacles. Made me
feel like a Nietzschean *Übermensch*.

Fielding pulls out, and Hunt follows.

HUNT

That voice gave the entire German
population the same delusion.

LIDDY

And *Der Hindenburg*. She used to fly
right over my house. Most
incredible sight I've ever seen in
my life. Bigger than a battleship!

Fielding turns, Hunt follows.

HUNT

Have you considered that Adolf
Hitler and the Hindenburg may not
be ideal templates for success?

LIDDY

That's a fair point.

Fielding drives through a yellow light.

LIDDY (CONT'D)

Speed up!

Hunt blows through a red, swerving around an oncoming car
which blasts its horn! Coffee spills all over Liddy!

HUNT

Shit! You okay?

LIDDY

(gritted teeth)
I can tolerate any amount of pain.

HUNT

Where is he, where is he?

LIDDY

There! Turning right.

As Hunt speeds up, Liddy tosses the coffee out the window.

HUNT

As a kid, I used to get beat up a lot too. My father worked half the year in Florida, and those sunburned inbreds loved picking on the pale little New Yorker.

LIDDY

What did you do?

HUNT

Papa found a Golden-Gloves winner to train me. Couple of jabs to the jaw later, they retreated to the swamp whence they shambled.

LIDDY

What I did was take strips of packing tape, poked a few dozen thumbtacks through, and wrapped them around my forearms. Then I put on a fuzzy sweater, so you couldn't see the tacks. When the kids grabbed me, I thrashed around, tore their flesh to ribbons.

HUNT

You realize that's fucking nuts, right?

LIDDY

Extremis malis extrema remedia.
Extreme remedies for extreme ill.

HUNT

Aegrescit medendo. The remedy is often worse than the disease.

(off Liddy's look)

I'm an Ivy Leaguer, *amigo*. Your fancy Latin don't scare me none.

Liddy smiles, impressed.

EXT. DR. FIELDING'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Fielding pulls into his driveway, turns off his car and heads into his house. Behind him, Hunt and Liddy drive off into the night.

INT. FIELDING'S OFFICE/HALLWAY - LATER THAT NIGHT

Hunt and Liddy walk down the hall, in their disguises. As a CLEANING WOMAN comes out of a door, towing a vacuum and a bag of garbage, they do a 180, and hide behind a corner.

LIDDY

She could be a problem.

HUNT

Or our way in. Follow my lead.

Hunt's palate mold makes him sound slightly off. He starts walking toward the cleaning woman.

LIDDY

Wait! I don't know the plan!

Liddy chases after Hunt, who approaches the woman.

HUNT

Hola, señora.

She turns to see the spectacle of the two men, one in a red wig, the other in a pageboy wig with coke-bottle glasses.

CLEANING WOMAN

Hello? Who are you?

HUNT

Señora, somos doctores y amigos de Dr. Fielding. Con su permiso, nos gustaría ir a su oficina por un momento y dejarle algo que ha estado esperando.

TRANSLATION

Madam, we are doctors and friends of Dr. Fielding. With your permission, we would like to go into his office for a moment and leave for him something he has been expecting.

Liddy, unable to speak Spanish, nods sagely.

CLEANING WOMAN

Ah, bueno.

HUNT

Por favor, prometemos no tomar nada.

TRANSLATION

Please, we promise not to take anything.

CLEANING WOMAN

Very well, *caballeros*.

She takes out her key ring and opens Fielding's office. Hunt triumphantly gestures to Liddy to enter the office.

LIDDY

(sotto)

Whatarewedoing?

HUNT

You are leaving the important thing for our good friend Doctor Fielding. I will wait out here.

LIDDY

Roger that. *Señor*.

Liddy enters the office.

INT. DR. FIELDING'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

With a look back, Liddy hurriedly takes his mini camera out of the tobacco pouch and fumbles with it. He drops it, picks it up and starts taking pictures of everything.

INT. ANTEROOM - AT THE SAME TIME

Hunt smiles at the cleaning women.

HUNT

Escribiendo un mensaje al doctor.

TRANSLATION

Writing a message to the doctor.

HUNT (CONT'D)

(calling out)

How are you doing, my trusted colleague? Almost done writing the note?

As the cleaning lady starts to enter the office, Liddy appears in the doorway.

LIDDY

All done. With the note.

As they exit, Hunt slips the woman a ten-spot.

HUNT

Muchas gracias, señora.

EXT. STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Liddy and Hunt walk to their car, Liddy hobbling and exasperated, Hunt stifling an excited chuckle.

LIDDY

It's pretty hard to follow your goddamned lead when I don't speak a goddamned word of Spanish!

HUNT

I told her we were doctors, so calm down and act medical.

LIDDY

Doctors?! We look like Howdy Doody and Price Valiant's gimp cousin! The plan was for us to photograph the outside of the building, the halls. Bud specifically told us not to make an entry ourselves!

Annoyed, Hunt spits out his voice-altering mold into his hands and flings it into the bushes.

HUNT

Hey, you wanted to see action in a war, *muchacho*? Guess what: you're in one now, on your own goddamn soil. Remember that riot? If we don't stop the Ellsbergs of the world, our children's future is in flames! Democracy as we know it is over! You and I may be all that stands between civilization and savage, bloody chaos! So regardless of what Egil "Bud" Krogh says we may or may not do, I will fuck these rats by any means necessary!

LIDDY

Sure, sure, I get it. But you do realize we can't get those photos developed here. And we sure as hell don't have time to send film back to the White House.

HUNT

But now we know what the inside of the office looks like, Gordon, so we can save our team valuable time. Did you see it?

LIDDY

Four-drawer steel file cabinet in the southwest corner of the room, with lock. So, what now?

HUNT

Now? Now you go buy us some walkie-talkies, and I call in the team.

EXT. HOTEL ENTRANCE - THE NEXT DAY

Music: "Thousand Finger Man" by Candido Camero. Percussion and horns, Cuban style. A taxi pulls up.

SLOW-MOTION: Three men wearing sharp suits and sunglasses get out of the back seat. They are all 50-something Cubans. They look like they mean business, and they do. Bernard Barker, from Hunt's Cuba days, now 50's, is the aging, world-weary alpha dog. EUGENIO MARTINEZ, and FELIPE DeDIEGO, are his loyal henchmen. They all carry oddly small suitcases.

SUPERTITLE, "The Cubans": Bernard "Macho" Barker, CIA. Eugenio Martinez, CIA. Felipe DeDiego, CIA.

A porter tries to take their luggage, but they blow past him.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

The music follows the men as they stride through the lobby. They reach the elevator, press the button and the music stops. They wait. Nothing. They look around. Still nothing.

A MAINTENANCE MAN approaches.

MAINTENANCE MAN

It's out of order. Stairs are that way, around the corner.

The music restarts and the Cubans head to the stairs.

INT. HUNT'S HOTEL ROOM - A LITTLE LATER

As Liddy loads batteries into three walkie-talkies, there's a patterned knock at the door.

HUNT

It's the boys.

Hunt opens it. The Cubans file in.

HUNT (CONT'D)

Amigos!! Macho!

They're huffing and puffing from the stairs. Barker seems like he's about to have a heart attack.

BARKER

Hola... Eduardo...

HUNT

¿Que pasó?

MARTINEZ

Elevator's out. Had to take stairs.

BARKER

Heart feels... like it's going to fall out of my chest.

Liddy's appalled. These geezers are Hunt's "ace crew?"

LIDDY

We're on the second floor.

DEDIEGO

He has angina.
(to Barker)
Take your nitro, Macho.

Barker takes out a pill container and pops one.

BARKER

Hold on. I need a second.
(beat)
Okay. Okay. I'm good.

He opens his arms and gives a manly hug to Hunt, an *abrazo*.

BARKER (CONT'D)

¡Acere, qué bolá!

HUNT

Good to see you, my dear old friend. A thousand thanks.

BARKER

Anything for you, *jefe*.

Hunt hugs Martinez and DeDiego.

HUNT

Gordon, this is Felipe DeDiego, Eugenio Martinez, and Bernard Barker. We call him Macho.

(MORE)

HUNT (CONT'D)

Fellas, this is Gordon Liddy. He's ex-FBI. From here on out, we're calling him "George F. Leonard."

LIDDY

Gentlemen.

Barker goes to hug Liddy.

LIDDY (CONT'D)

Whoa. Easy there, Macho. I'm not big on hugging men. No offense.

HUNT

Hugging is for wives and children. This is an *abrazo*.

MARTINEZ

This is how men greet each other in Cuba. It's very masculine, not homosexual.

LIDDY

Looks a lot like a hug. I'm a handshake kind of fella.

MARTINEZ

You know the expression, "when in Rome?"

LIDDY

We're in Beverly Hills.

The Cubans all look Liddy over.

DEDIEGO

Fuckin' Feds, man.

HUNT

Que verdad.

All the Cubans laugh and light up cigars.

LIDDY

How do you gents know each other?

Hunt jauntily drapes his arms around the Cubans.

HUNT

We're all Company Men, *amigo*.

MARTINEZ

Veterans of *Bahía de Cochinos*, the Bay of Pigs.

LIDDY

You guys were involved in the Bay
of Pigs?

The Cubans chuckle. Barker gestures proudly to Hunt.

BARKER

That was "Eduardo's" operation.

It dawns on Liddy how big a fuckup Howard Hunt is.

LIDDY

Good God. That was the mother of
all clusterfucks.

BARKER

It's not his fault! Kennedy shafted
us. And Cuba. *Y todo el mundo.*

DEDIEGO

Our friends were shot down like
dogs on the beach because of that
comemierda, JFK.

MARTINEZ

Like pigs! Pigs and dogs! Bleeding
in the sand! Like rats!

BARKER

So when Eduardo wants help fucking
the Democrats, we say when, where
and in what hole, boss.

HUNT

Aceres, again we stand at a
crossroads in history. Again, the
free world is counting on us to
stop the insidious spread of the
global plague that is Communism.
But this time we have a new *jefe*,
the man who stood up to Kruschev in
the kitchen. And this time, we're
going to do it right. Viva *El*
Presidente Nixon!

ALL

Viva *El Presidente* Nixon!

INT. HUNT RESIDENCE/BEDROOM - AT THE SAME TIME

Dorothy, wearing a nightgown, pulls a hatbox down from a
closet shelf. She carries it over to her vanity. She opens
the box and pulls out a 1960's-era hat.

Under it is her old pearl-handled .25 caliber automatic. She ejects the clip. Empty. She rams the clip back in, racks the gun, and points it at her reflection in the mirror, James Bond style. Then she sees a framed picture of herself and Howard from their Mexico days. She points the pistol at Howard, and starts to squeeze the trigger...

DAVID (O.S.)

May I have a glass of water?

Dorothy quickly tosses the gun in a drawer and turns around to see her nine-year old son rubbing his eyes.

DOROTHY

Yes, yes, sweetie! Of course you can have some water. You bet.

DAVID

What were you doing with the gun?

DOROTHY

Oh, Mama was just playing a little make-believe game, where I was pretending to be a spy, you know, like in Daddy's books. Silly stuff.

She ushers David out of the room, hugging him tightly.

EXT. FIELDING'S HOUSE - LATER

Fielding's Volvo pulls into his driveway. Down the street, we see a car's lights turn off.

INSIDE THE CAR.

Hunt puts out his cigar and cracks the window. He pulls out a walkie-talkie.

HUNT

(into walk-in-talkie)
Eagle is in the nest.

LIDDY (V.O.)

(crackly)
What was that?

HUNT

I said, "eagle is in the nest."

EXT. FIELDING'S OFFICE BUILDING - AT THE SAME TIME

Liddy sits in his own rental car listening to Hunt's unintelligible voice on his walkie-talkie. He eats an apple.

LIDDY
Do not copy. Please repeat.

HUNT (V.O.)
[crackle]gle [crackle]st!

LIDDY
Is the antenna up?

HUNT (V.O.)
What?!

LIDDY
I say--

EXT. FIELDING'S STREET - AT THE SAME TIME

Hunt tries to decipher Liddy's voice.

LIDDY (V.O.)
[crackle]nna [crackle]up!

HUNT
THE EAGLE IS IN THE NEST! THE NEST!
THE EAGLE IS IN THE NEST!

A couple walking by Hunt's car stare disapprovingly at him screaming, and he politely touches the brim of his hat.

INT. FIELDING'S OFFICE/HALLWAY - AT THE SAME TIME

Barker, DeDiego and Martinez case the hallway, wearing oddly colored, ill-fitting wigs and dark shades. With a furtive look, Martinez tries the door to Fielding's anteroom. Locked.

BARKER	TRANSLATION
<i>No se suponía que estuviera cerrado.</i>	It wasn't supposed to be locked.

DeDiego tries the radio.

DEDIEGO
George? Come in, George?

From the walkie talkie, they hear static.

EXT. FIELDING'S STREET - A LITTLE LATER

Hunt happily savors a danish. He opens a take-out coffee, blows on it, sips and does a spit take, choking.

WHIP ZOOM/HIS POV: Fielding's car is gone!

HUNT

Oh, no no no no no no.

Hunt grabs the walkie-talkie.

HUNT (CONT'D)

Gordon? Shit. George?

EXT. FIELDING'S OFFICE - AT THE SAME TIME

Liddy's walkie-talkie sits on the seat next to him, silent.

INT. FIELDING'S ANTEROOM - AT THE SAME TIME

DeDiego tries to jimmy the lock to Fielding's office with a letter opener. No dice.

BARKER

¿Qué hacemos?

TRANSLATION

What do we do?

DEDIEGO

¿Qué es más importante, obtener los documentos o no dejar un rastro?

TRANSLATION (CONT'D)

What's more important, getting the documents or not leaving a trace?

Barker ponders this.

INT. FIELDING'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Smash! The window shatters! Barker reaches in and opens the window latch.

INT. FIELDING'S ANTEROOM - CONTINUOUS

Barker recoils, grabbing his wrist.

BARKER

Me corto la muñeca!

TRANSLATION

I slashed my wrist!

Barker grips his wrist.

MARTINEZ
Déjame verlo.
(looks)
Es un rasguño.

TRANSLATION (CONT'D)
Let me see it. It's a
scratch.

BARKER
Se sentía como un corte.

TRANSLATION (CONT'D)
It felt like a slash.

EXT. FIELDING'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Hunt pulls up to Fielding's house. The lights are out. Hunt slumps down in his seat and rolls down his window. He telescopes the antenna and sticks it out the window.

HUNT
George. Come in, George.
(beat)
Anyone?!
(then)
Sonofabitch.

He starts the car, slams it in gear and peels out, wheels billowing smoke.

INT. FIELDING'S OFFICE - AT THE SAME TIME

DeDiego keeps watch at the door, while Martinez takes out a camera and Barker tries the file cabinet. Locked. He sighs.

BARKER
Yumas y sus cerraduras.

TRANSLATION
Americans and their locks.

He pulls a short pry-bar from his pocket and starts to bend the drawer open.

EXT. FIELDING'S OFFICE - LATER

Hunt runs up to Liddy's car, panting, and gets in.

HUNT
Fielding's on the move.

LIDDY
Shit. Is he headed this way?

HUNT
I don't know. One minute he was there, the next he wasn't. I thought he was in for the night.
Hijo de puta!

LIDDY
Why didn't you radio?

HUNT
I tried!

Liddy picks up his walkie-talkie.

LIDDY
Fellas?
(static)
Hello?

HUNT
Where did you buy these pieces of
shit?! Were they out of soup cans
and twine?

LIDDY
I spent every dime they gave us!

Barker and the guys hurry out of the building, huffing and puffing. Liddy starts the car, as Hunt gets out.

HUNT
Rendezvous point, *muchachos, vamos!*

EXT. BEVERLY HILTON HOTEL - MINUTES LATER

Three cars pull up to the front, and Hunt, Liddy, and the Cubans all get out of their respective cars, hand the keys to the valets and walk wordlessly inside.

INT. ELEVATOR - MOMENTS LATER

They ride with some random people, who eye the silent, sweaty guys in wigs crowded up against them. They all squeeze out.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - LATER

The team enters, and the Cubans pull off their wigs.

LIDDY
Okay, full debriefing.

BARKER
Eduardo, there was nothing there.

HUNT
Nothing?

DEDIEGO

We went through every file in that office, Eduardo.

MARTINEZ

Nothing with the name Ellsberg on it. Here's pictures of the room.

He shows Liddy some polaroids.

LIDDY

The cabinets have been pried open! There's files all over the floor! We said leave no traces! These are a goddamn shitload of traces!

HUNT

Macho...

BARKER

You wanted us to photograph the files! Don't worry. Eugenio threw some drugs around to make it look like junkies robbed the place.

LIDDY

But if junkies had drugs, why would they break in?

The Cubans exchange a look. They hadn't considered that.

BARKER

I found documents that looked like old tax returns. Maybe the doctor is not paying his taxes?

DEDIEGO

Macho, tax returns means he's paying taxes.

BARKER

Ahhhh. True.

LIDDY

We have to cover our tracks. I'll find some mope with outstanding charges to cop to the break-in, get the local authorities to cut a deal. And we should call Wally Fear, tell him it was a wash.

Liddy grabs the phone, then POP! Liddy reacts, braced for combat. Hunt holds a foaming champagne bottle and wears a brave face for his men. He presses the hang-up button.

HUNT

Let the jumpy bastard sweat it another hour. *Caballeros*, I toast you and your hard work, your creativity, and your patriotic sacrifice for our democracy.

LIDDY

What exactly are we celebrating?

BARKER

We live to fight another day. Viva President Nixon!

The Cubans toast while Liddy exits the room. We follow him.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Liddy walks calmly down the hallway, smiling at a COUPLE passing by. He reaches the ice machine room and enters, closing the door. Through the window in the door, we see him lose his shit, kicking and punching the ice machine.

INT. AIRPLANE - THE NEXT MORNING

Hunt, hung over and wearing shades, sips a Bloody Mary. Next to him, Liddy does tricep lifts in his seat.

HUNT

If you don't cut that out, I will ask the stewardess for a freshly sharpened pencil, and I will stab you in the throat.

LIDDY

Take your best shot.

Liddy continues his exercises. Hunt sips his drink.

EXT. LIDDY HOUSE - THAT NIGHT

Liddy puts his key in the door and pauses. He takes a deep breath and wills himself to enter.

INT. LIDDY HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Liddy enters, and the whole family gets up from the dinner table excited and greets him.

LIDDY

Hey, gang! Missed you all! Hope you saved me some dinner.

Fran looks at Gordon. He forces a winning smile.

FRAN

So? A productive trip?

LIDDY

A triumph, *mein Liebchen*.

(to Raymond)

How'd the ballgame go, champ?

RAYMOND

I went oh-for-three. I stunk.

LIDDY

Hey. No sad faces in this house.

You'll get 'em next time, right?

Liddys never quit, right?

RAYMOND

Right. Thanks, Dad.

INT. HUNT RESIDENCE/BEDROOM - NIGHT

Howard enters the bedroom, spent. Dorothy continues reading a book as Howard undresses and climbs into bed.

HUNT

You'll be glad to know I spent some time in a psychiatrist's office, as per your suggestion.

Dorothy puts her book down. This is big.

DOROTHY

Really. What did the doctor say?

HUNT

Nothing. He wasn't there.

Dorothy puts together the pieces. She exhales, exasperated.

DOROTHY

So we're talking burglary, not therapy.

HUNT

I just did recon. Macho and the boys did the work. And not well.

Dorothy has finally reached her breaking point.

DOROTHY

Howard... I want a divorce.

Howard sits up. He was not expecting this.

HUNT

Whoa. Dot. Hold your fire. The mission was a flaming train wreck, the White House is going to axe us first thing *mañana*. That chapter of my life is closed, and the book has been tossed in the remainder pile, as agreed. Truce?

DOROTHY

I'm sorry. But there are bigger issues that aren't going away.

HUNT

I know. I promise, I'll do better. Look, this whole thing has been a real wake-up call. It's high time I took stock of what I have, not what I've lost. You're the best thing in my life, Dot. From here on out, you are my priority *numero--*

Then, downstairs, his office phone rings. She looks at him. Every cell in his body wants to race down and answer it...

INT. ROOM 16 - THE NEXT DAY

Liddy works a wrist exerciser. Hunt puffs his pipe. The mood is tense. Krogh appears in the doorway.

KROGH

Knock, knock.

LIDDY

Bud. What's the word?

KROGH

Well. I guess the word is goodbye.

Hunt and Liddy look at each other. Shit. It's over.

LIDDY

Well... thanks for the opportunity. Can't say we're surprised.

HUNT

What kind of severance do we get?

KROGH

What? No, guys, everyone's happy with your work. I'm out.

HUNT

What?

LIDDY

You?

KROGH

Oh, I still have my job at the White House. I'm just out of SIU. And I'm not going to lie, it's a bit of a relief. Well, anyway, Dean wants to see you fellas.

INT. JOHN DEAN'S OFFICE - LATER

Brilliant, arrogant JOHN DEAN, (30's), sits with his feet up on his desk. Hunt and Liddy stand, facing him. They are his elders, but he is very much their superior, and he owns it.

DEAN

Long before Ellsberg became a pain in our asses, the President was obsessed with documents housed at the Brookings Institute that were, let's just say, unflattering. Mr. Colson came up with a plan to start a fire at the Brookings Institute and have our operatives, posing as firemen, remove the safe in the confusion. We were looking into renting a fire truck, uniforms -- but there was just one hitch: no operatives. No one with the stones or the stomach to do what needed to be done. Eventually, Mr. Mitchell and I talked the President out of it, because it was, well, batshit crazy, but... he never forgot it. And that's why we hired you two.

SUPERTITLE: John Dean III, White House Counsel.

Hunt muses for a moment.

HUNT

The key is to cut the phone lines, so that the distress call never goes out to the real firemen.

LIDDY

I always wanted to drive a fire truck.

HUNT

I've got a great incendiary guy.

Dean chuckles, pleased.

DEAN

See, this is what the President expects: total commitment. But he also expects results, and by results, I mean resounding success. Bud fell on his sword for the Fielding mess, so send him a bottle of, I don't know what the hell he drinks, Communion wine? But now it's on you two. No more fuck-ups. This job is your first, last, and only priority. Understood?

LIDDY

Jawohl. Understood.

Howard has a pang of trepidation: Dorothy...

HUNT

I need to think about it.

Liddy and Dean stare at Howard in disbelief as he broods.

DEAN

If you have a problem with any of this, we can find someone else.

Howard steels himself.

HUNT

No. I'm in. All in.

LIDDY

Damn right you are.

DEAN

Excellent. So. SIU is no longer a White House operation. Congratulations, you now work for the Committee to Re-Elect. You'll report to Jeb Magruder, deputy head of the Committee. We're shifting your mission from leaks to political intelligence. Priority One is winning the election.

HUNT

'Intelligence,' as in espionage?

DEAN

Espionage, sabotage, infiltration, disinformation, planting moles in the DNC at the Watergate, bugging. But we're open to fresh ideas. Work up a proposal and budget. Get creative. Dazzle us. But whatever you propose, it had better work.

LIDDY

Speaking of budget, in what size ballpark are we playing?

DEAN

What do you think you'll need?

Hunt looks at Liddy, then turns back to Dean.

HUNT

For the scope of what you're envisioning... a million dollars.

DEAN

Sure.

Liddy and Hunt exchange a look: holy shit.

INT. HOOVER'S OFFICE - AT THE SAME TIME

Felt stands before a fidgety Hoover.

FELT

There was a break-in at Ellsberg's psychiatrist's office. A perp already came forward to confess to the break-in, some junkie.

HOOVER

Anything stolen?

FELT

Nothing, apparently. There were pills scattered on the floor, but none of them belonged to Fielding.

HOOVER

A junkie copped to a misdemeanor B & E? And he didn't steal anything?

FELT

A junkie with a crisis of
conscience. Unusual. As is a drug
addict leaving pills behind.

Hoover looks at Felt, processing. Felt suspects something.

HOOVER

Who else knew about Fielding?

FELT

You, me, the transcriber and
Associate Director Sullivan. I
trust the transcriber.

HOOVER

Put a man on Sullivan. He sees
nothing pertaining to the White
House from here on out. Get me on
the phone with Helms at CIA. We
need to discuss Howard Hunt.

FELT

Do you think Nixon was behind this?

HOOVER

Of course he was! If that greasy
little Quaker wants a war with
Justice...

(long hacking cough)

...by God, he's got one.

EXT. PENNSYLVANIA AVE - LATER

A group of ragged PROTESTORS wield profane signs, and the
LEADER shouts into a megaphone.

PROTEST LEADER/PROTESTORS

Fuck you, Dick, and your war! Fuck
you, Dick, and your war!

Liddy and Hunt stroll past with coffees and sandwich bags.

HUNT

If the White House is concerned
about protests at our convention,
we could have some of the leading
agitators, your Abbie Hoffmans,
drugged and taken to safe houses in
Mexico and returned after the
convention. Or not. A million bucks
buys a pretty nice shovel.

LIDDY

I've been kicking around a variation on the classic honey-pot trap for DNC brass. A houseboat. Hidden cameras. High-class hookers.

HUNT

We should be writing this down.

LIDDY

Or not.

Hunt and Liddy land at the White House fence. Behind them, the protest rages. Unperturbed, they sip coffee.

LIDDY (CONT'D)

When I told my wife about the new gig, she nearly cried she was so proud of me. Yours?

Liddy's flicker of vulnerability surprises Hunt and himself.

HUNT

I haven't told Dorothy yet.

LIDDY

Oh, she's going to flip. We should get the gals together and bust out the bubbly, now that we actually have something to celebrate!

Liddy laughs and pats Hunt on the back. Hunt forces a smile.

HUNT

Roger that.

(then)

About that sex boat idea. What about a Japanese motif, like a floating geisha house?

LIDDY

Brilliant. Fuck it, I'm writing this down.

As Liddy pulls out a note pad, Hunt gazes pensively through the White House fence. The thick black bars make it look like they're in jail....

FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW.