

Episode #92-019

FOREVER KNIGHT

"1966"

written by
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SHOOTING DRAFT
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09/09/92 PINK - PAGES ONLY
09/10/92 BLUE - PAGES ONLY

TEASE

FADE IN:

INTERCUT:

1 EXT. OUTSIDE PRECINCT - EARLY A.M. 1

CLOSE ON a DANGLING LOOP of clothesline. Swaying like a hangman's noose.

PAN UP to REVEAL: the noose is fastened to the muzzle of a SAWED-OFF 12-GAUGE.

The MAN holding the shotgun is standing in the shadows of an alley. In PRE-DAWN darkness. He wears a long black coat.

CLOSE ON the man: unshaven, chiseled features and dark, wild eyes. A hard look of crazed determination. He lifts a spool of ADHESIVE TAPE to his mouth and, holding the end with his teeth, he slowly UNZIPS a length of tape.

2 EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS 2

NATALIE DRIVING. YAWNING. Nodding to a tune on the radio as she steers her car to the curb OUTSIDE THE PRECINCT.

3 INT. PRECINCT LOBBY 3

COPS returning to headquarters. Coming off patrol. Passing a METAL DETECTOR that buzzes softly each time an armed cop steps through.

IN the B.G., a DESK SERGEANT shuffles paperwork and WATCHES a BANK OF SECURITY TV MONITORS. Each showing a different area of the precinct.

ON ONE MONITOR: SEE NICK ENTERING, passing through the metal detector.

PAN UP from the monitor to the actual entrance and NICK. He holds open his coat, flashing his shoulder-holster and pistol, smiles at the desk sergeant who waves him through and resumes his paperwork.

4 EXT. ALLEY 4

The GUNMAN TAPES the shotgun to his wrist and forearm. We SEE that the stock of the weapon has also been SAWED; altered to make the gun as concealable as possible. He works methodically. With a sense of urgency. Rolling the tape around his wrist until it almost looks like a cast.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

4

Finishing, he discards the tape and buries the shotgun in the folds of his coat. Reaches into his pocket and pulls out a HAND GRENADE. HEFTS IT then replaces it in his pocket and REMOVES a PISTOL. He clicks off the safety.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED: 2

4

HIS POV: MOVING SWIFTLY across the street. CLOSING IN ON NATALIE who's locking her car door. She drops the key, stoops down to pick it up and

THE GUNMAN IS THERE, looming over her. She is startled.

GUNMAN

Excuse me, ma'am. Are you going into the police station?

Natalie looks up at him.

NATALIE

(confused)

Uh, yes. I am...

GUNMAN

Good.

He WHIPS OUT THE SHOTGUN. Loops the noose around Natalie's neck.

GUNMAN (cont'd)

(hoarse whisper)

We'll go together.

5 INT. PRECINCT LOBBY

5

NICK moving through the LOBBY. He's savoring the end of another shift. Crossing to

SCHANKE who's "moderating" an argument between members of an ASIAN FAMILY: the LANS. Father, teenaged son who sports swollen lips, bruises and a black eye, mother and younger daughter. Skanky stands helplessly in between while they banter in their native tongue.

Skank's look to Nick says it all: "Help!!" Nick smiles patiently at his partner. Turns and speaks CHINESE to the father who nods as Nick talks. The father listens, then instructs his family to sit on the bench behind them. CLOSE to the door. NICK and SCHANKE cross to A DESK not far from the door.

SCHANKE

Three more. Three more shifts and I'm offa this night gig. I am never covering another night detective on vacation.

(beat)

Never. Everybody's weird around here after midnight.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

5

NICK

It's the witching hour, Skank. You
learn to love it.

(beat; sotto)

When you don't have a choice.

(beat)

What's with the family?

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: 2

5

SCHANKE

The old man there. Plugged a gangbanger who beat up his kid and tried to rob his store. All the homeboys in town are up in arms. We gotta protect the family.

NICK

The gang member he shot?

Skanky sits at the desk, starts looking for something in the drawers.

SCHANKE

Laid him out. D.O.A.

(beat)

I can't find anything in this guy's desk.

Skanky pulls out an overloaded desk drawer. Pulls it out of its track. The contents cascade onto the floor under the desk.

SCHANKE

(exasperated)

Would you look at that?

(to Nick; re the mess)

Should I leave it for him? He'll be back in three days... I should just leave it.

Nick's amused look says no. Grudgingly, Skank gets down on all fours and CRAWLS UNDER THE DESK.

6 INT. LOBBY

6

ON the desk sergeant immersed in his desktop paperwork. The metal detector buzzes and he looks up. REGISTERS SHOCK as he sees

NATALIE roped into the "hostage harness", being prodded forward at gunpoint by the GUNMAN.

The GUNMAN HOLDS UP HIS HAND, points his pistol at the desk sergeant.

ON Natalie. Terrified.

The desk sergeant draws his sidearm, trains it on the gunman and yells at the top of his lungs...

DESK SERGEANT

GUN! GUN! GUN!

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

6

His warning carries into the precinct proper. Heads snap in the direction of the lobby door. All cops draw their service revolvers. INCLUDING NICK. They turn to the FRONT DOOR. The Lan family is stranded on the bench behind the Gunman. A cop reaches to pull them away but the Gunman intervenes.

*

GUNMAN
(brandishing his pistol)
They stay!

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

6

The cop retreats.

ON NICK: the shock of seeing Natalie held hostage. His arms drop just a bit, his weapon sagging in his grip.

NICK
Natalie?

ON Natalie: holding her arms up in surrender. She can hardly speak.

NATALIE
(a hoarse whisper)
Nick...

FADE OUT.

END TEASE

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

7 INT. LOBBY - RESUME SCENE 7

ON the LAN FAMILY. Huddled on the bench behind the gunman and Natalie. Fear in their eyes.

The GUNMAN trains his pistol on the Father of the LAN family.

GUNMAN

All right. LISTEN UP!

8 IN STONETREE'S OFFICE: 8

The Captain rising from his desk. Pissed.

STONETREE

Who the hell---?

He heads for the door.

9 OUTSIDE IN THE PRECINCT: the Gunman's ultimatum. 9

GUNMAN

I want my brother outta here. I want Jimmy Lee.

10 ANGLE ON: 10

SKANKY: scrunched BENEATH the desk. LOOKING UP to Nick who stands over him with sidearm drawn. Nick speaks to his partner softly. From the corner of his mouth.

NICK

Who's he talking about?

SCHANKE

(sotto)

The bank job this afternoon. Killed a guard.

(beat)

He's downstairs in the lockup.

NICK

This guy's crazier than his brother.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

10

He whispers aside to Skanky.

NICK (cont'd)
Hang tight. He doesn't know you're
down there. Wait for your shot.
(beat)
You might have to take him out.

SCHANKE
(nervous)
Right...

-11 THE PRECINCT LOBBY

11

Nick MOVES IN CLOSER to the GUNMAN who reacts to his
presence. Turns toward him.

GUNMAN
(to Nick)
Are you in charge here?

STONETREE APPEARS in the doorway between the precinct
proper and the lobby.

STONETREE
(firm; patient)
I'm Captain Stonetree.
(beat)
You talk to me.

Nick ADVANCES on the Gunman. Shifts his position.

GUNMAN
(to Nick)
Don't move! Nobody move!
(beat)
I'll kill her, I swear.
(to Nick)
You. Drop it and get on your knees.

Nick hesitates.

GUNMAN (cont'd)
(hypertense)
Do it you son of a bitch or I'll
take her head off right here.

Nick complies. He kneels and slides his pistol across the
linoleum floor.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

GUNMAN (cont'd)

Hands behind your head.

(beat)

Do it.

Nick knots his hands behind his head.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED: 2

11

NICK

Let them go. Take me instead.

GUNMAN

Shut up.

Nick edges forward on his knees.

NICK

You don't have a chance in hell of getting out of here--

The GUNMAN LUNGES OUT. Holds his pistol in Nick's face.
CLICKS BACK the hammer...

GUNMAN

I said, shut up and stay where you are!

ON NICK. Hands behind his head. Looking up into Natalie's terrified eyes, then across to the LAN FAMILY frozen in fear behind the gunman... his words ECHO in Nick's mind as he stares at the gun inches from his face.

PUSH IN ON NICK and FLASHBACK TO:

12 INT. LIBRARY - NIGHT (PAST)

12

In EAST GERMANY, circa 1966. Nick stands PINNED UP against a stack of books. His hands behind his head, the POINT of a broom handle poked into his back.

At the business end of the broom: a YOUNG MAN named BERNARD holds Nick at bay. Bernard is in his early twenties, intense-looking and emaciated. Very protective of something himself.

BERNARD

Stay where you are.

NICK

I'm just browsing.

BERNARD

(suspicious)

The library's been closed for hours.

*
*

NICK

(re: the broom in his back)

Is that thing loaded?

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

12

BERNARD

I could run you through with it.

NICK

That... could be a problem.

Nick tries to turn to confront Bernard but the young man THRUSTS the broom handle into Nick's shoulder blades.

LEANS ON IT HARD, pressing Nick flatter up against the book stacks.

With his free hand, Bernard reaches into Nick's coat pocket. FRISKS HIM. FINDS some piece of American I.D., a passport or licence. Studies it for a beat.

BERNARD

You're an American?

(beat; rude)

What are you? CIA? *

NICK

You'd better hope not.

BERNARD

What the hell are you doing in East Berlin?

NICK

I came for the scenery.

BERNARD

I'm sure the authorities would think that's very funny. *

(beat)

Especially if you don't have papers.

NICK

I brought my library card.

With that, NICK SPINS and SNAPS the broom out of Bernard's hands. Bernard steps in, TAKES AN ANGRY SWING AT NICK who neatly parries the blow. Nick crouches and STUNS Bernard with a quick uppercut to the gut. Knocks the wind out of him.

Then Nick FLIPS HIM OVER onto the floor. In a blur...

NICK HAS BERNARD PINNED to the floor. He's kneeling on Bernard's chest and hypno-gazing into Bernard's frightened eyes.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED: 2

12

NICK

Now. I'm here for a book. Who is here that can help me find it?

BERNARD

(stammering)

My... my father is the night custodian.

NICK

Take me to him.

-13 INT. LIBRARY BASEMENT

13

Dark and musty. Claustrophobic and cluttered with stacks of books, crates and boxes. At a desk, under a single bare light bulb swinging from a wire overhead, sits TOFFLER, a man of about sixty. Parchment scrolls and old maps are spread out before him on the desk. He looks up, STARTLED as Bernard and Nick ENTER.

ANGLE ON: TOFFLER'S HANDS under the desk. He reaches into a drawer and silently pulls out a large, gleaming black SWITCHBLADE STILETTO.

TOFFLER

(in German)

Bernard! Who the hell is this?

BERNARD

He was upstairs snooping around.

TOFFLER

And you brought him here?

Nick pushes Bernard forward. Illustrates who's in control.

NICK

I brought him.

Toffler COMES QUICKLY AROUND THE DESK. Produces his switchblade and SNAPS IT OPEN.

TOFFLER

You're American.

(beat)

You want to tell me why you're here? *

NICK

(reacting to the knife)

Your hospitality to strangers is heart-warming. *

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

13

In an eyeblink, Nick FLASHES OUT and PLUCKS the STILETTO from Toffler's hand. Toffler stares at his empty hand, stunned. Nick folds the knife closed.

NICK

I'm looking for a book. An ancient manuscript called the Abbarrat. Do you know it?

Toffler twigs a little to this but he covers.

TOFFLER

(sneering; uncooperative)
Never heard of it...

NICK

It's here somewhere. I've been tracking it for years. To this place.

(beat)

I want you to help me find it.

TOFFLER

Go back to the USA. You'll get no help from us.

NICK

(hard)

I might not give you a choice.

A WOMAN EMERGES from the shadows. Clutching books. She is LILY, Toffler's 25-year old daughter, very pretty in a professorial way.

LILY

(interrupting)

The book won't do you any good. *

(beat) *

Unless you read archaic Sanskrit, that is.

Nick turns to her. They stare at each other. *

NICK

I've got time to learn.

Lily moves into the circle of light. Stands next to her father and eyes Nick suspiciously.

LILY

Why are you so interested in the "Ancient Book of Miracles?" What's in it? *

*

*

*

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED: 2

13

NICK
 (matter-of-fact)
 A cure. According to legend, the
 Abbarrat contains cures.
 (beat)
 For curses.

Lily exchanges a wary look with her father. Then...

LILY
 (defiant; cynical)
 Maybe the Internal Security will
 be able to help you. They're very
 accommodating to American spies.

*
*

Nick gestures to the scrolls on Toffler's desks

NICK
 And enemies of the State.
 (beat; re: the scrolls)
 After-hours research?

Lily, Toffler and Bernard look worried.

LILY
 We're helping our father with his
 job.

*

NICK
 You're looking to get out.
 (beat)
 Looking for the old catacombs.

The three of them GLARE AT NICK. Nick points to the scrolls.

NICK (cont'd)
 You're looking in the wrong place.

OFF Toffler, Lily, and Bernard. Cold expressions tinged with disappointment. Staring at Nick...

TOFFLER
 Mind your own business.

LILY
 (gambling)
 What do you know about the
 catacombs?

NICK
 That the tunnels were constructed
 to accommodate the dead during the
 Plague.

*

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED: 3

13

TOFFLER
(dismissing him)
Everybody has heard the legend--

NICK
(cutting him off)
Under the old Burgen church. *

Lily looks at Toffler. Wary. Does this guy know what he's talking about?

NICK (cont'd)
They're closer to the Wall than
you think. *
(beat; gestures to the
parchment maps)
Nowhere near Deissenstrasse, where
you're looking.

ON Toffler: amazed.

TOFFLER
These maps are two hundred years
old.

NICK
(smiling)
I've done a lot of homework.

BERNARD
Is that how you got into East
Berlin? The tunnels? *

NICK
The tunnels have been sealed for
centuries.
(beat)
I found my own way across. I didn't
use the tunnels.

LILY
However it was you came - you're
going back. *

NICK
With the Abbarrat.

ON LILY: determined. Beat. *

LILY
With us.

Toffler and Bernard look at her. Surprised. She's taking a big chance.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED: 4

13

LILY (cont'd)
I'll help you find the book. I can
do the translation. And you'll
take us back, with you, to the
other side of the wall.

*
*
*

ON Nick. A beat. He ponders this uncertain alliance. Then...
He TOSSES the STILLETTO BACK to Toffler who catches it.

NICK
Deal.

CUT TO:

14 INT. SUB-BASEMENT STORAGE AREA

14

Light floods into the gloom as Lily opens the door.

LILY
(explaining)
The Abbarrat was supposed to have
been among the artifacts which
were recovered from an Afghanistan
dig in the early part of the
century--

*
*
*

She feels around for the light switch, flicks it. A few bare
bulbs glow, scarcely illuminating the large storage room.

LILY (cont'd)
All kept here in the uncatalogued
collection.

ON Nick: his eyes widen as he SEES

A ROOM filled to the rafters with crates of archaeological
artifacts.

NICK
We've got our work cut out for us.
(beat)
Would you know the book if you saw
it?

LILY
I think so. I can read the covers.
(beat)
Languages are my specialty.

Nick starts dusting off boxes, reading the labels. Lily
follows him.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

14

LILY (cont'd)
Towards the end of the war, the
Luftwaffe searched for the book.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED: 2

14

LILY (cont'd)

They thought it contained a magic formula that would allow them to...

(searches for a word)

Defy? Gravity.

NICK

To make men fly.

LILY

They were pretty desperate in the end.

(beat; looking at Nick)

You're desperate, too.

NICK

I have to find the book quickly.

LILY

(guessing)

Before someone else does?

NICK

There are others who want it as badly as I do.

LILY

To take the "cure?"

NICK

Or to prevent me from taking it.

LILY

Ah, then the book is very important to you.

ON Nick as he wrests the lid off a crate.

NICK

The book is my freedom.

LILY

Then I think you know what it's like. To be trapped in a life you don't want.

Nick smiles at her. Sympathetic.

NICK

I have an idea.

And she SMILES BACK at Nick. Her icy exterior thawing just a little. There's some chemistry here between them.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED: 3

14

A LONG BEAT where they study each other.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED: 4

14

LILY
 Yes. I believe you do.
 (beat)
 I don't remember what you said
 your name was. *

NICK
 Nick. Nick Thomas. *

LILY
 Uh-huh.
 (beat)
 Before we go any further here,
 shouldn't you take my father and
 Bernard to the catacombs?

NICK
 My part of the bargain.

LILY
 (turning hard again)
 Under the assumption that you
 really do know how to find them. *

ON Nick, realizing there's very little trust here between
 them.

NICK
 And you'll keep looking for the
 book? *

LILY
 I'll stay for a few more hours. We
 cannot resume together until
 tomorrow night. We are only
 permitted access to these sensitive
 areas, thanks to my father.

NICK
 I only work at night anyway.

LILY
 (cold smile)
 Tomorrow night, then.

Lily looks at her watch.

LILY (cont'd)
 Bernard and Father. They're
 waiting for you. *

NICK
 (equally cold)
 So they are.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED: 5

14

OFF Nick

CUT TO:

15 EXT. STREET - NIGHT

15

Dark and deserted. In an old and desolate section of the city CLOSE TO THE WALL. Nick strides along purposefully. Toffler and Bernard follow a few steps behind. Bernard holds a duffel bag filled with tools. They look around warily as they walk.

Nick suddenly STOPS. Senses something. Bernard and Toffler catch up to him.

TOFFLER

What is it? Is this the place?

NICK

Shhh. Quiet.

And he LISTENS. Seems to scan for something, hearing something. A beat and he shakes it off.

NICK (cont'd)

(to Toffler)

Let me see the map again.

Toffler produces one of the parchment scrolls from the library.

TOFFLER

These are the oldest I could find.

Nick takes the map from Toffler and studies it.

NICK

The old Burgen Church had a subterranean mausoleum. We could access the catacombs from there.

BERNARD

The Burgen Church was destroyed in the war. The government wouldn't allow it to be rebuilt. I know where the ruins are. Come.

They continue on down the deserted street to

16 INT. CHURCH RUINS - NIGHT

16

The eerie interior of a church in skeletal ruins. Barely a shell of a building. The roof is open to the sky and moonlight floods in. Nick, Bernard and Toffler walk quietly through the ancient church.

Nick STOPS again. Listening. Something strange. Not quite right. He looks up at the sky through the roof. At the full moon overhead.

17 OMITTED

17

SCENE 16 CONTINUES:

Bernard creeping through the cobwebs. Holding a candle out before him. Reading the names inscribed on the ancient stone walls. He shivers.

18 INT. CHURCH RUINS - MAUSOLEUM ACCESS

18

ON Nick in the VAULT of the church. Nick is isolated. Standing before a large stone slab that covers one of the graves.

He bends down, places his ear on the stone and taps it with his knuckle. VAMP-LISTENING for the sonar-like echo. Then he looks around to make sure Bernard and Toffler don't see him and he LIFTS THE STONE SLAB. Slides it aside.

NICK

(calling)

Toffler. Bernard. Over here.

Toffler and Bernard ENTER the vault.

NICK (cont'd)

It's here. Let me see that light.

Toffler hands him his flashlight and Nick shines it down into the black hole to REVEAL A MAUSOLEUM disappearing into the earth.

18A INT. MAUSOLEUM VAULT

18A

Toffler and Bernard gape into the access. Then smile at each other.

TOFFLER

It really does exist.

(CONTINUED)

18A CONTINUED:

18A

BERNARD
(anxious)
Let's go, then.

NICK
Wait. Not yet.

(CONTINUED)

18A CONTINUED: 2

18A

BERNARD

You wait. I'm going on through.

He pushes Nick aside and starts down the mausoleum. Nick GRABS HIM back, pins him up against the wall. *

NICK

I said, wait.

(beat)

When I'm sure it's safe and when I have the Abbarrat, we'll all go together.

TOFFLER

Don't be foolish, Bernard. We're not leaving without Lily!

Bernard brushes Nick off. Glares at him.

BERNARD

Okay, we'll wait. But the longer we delay, the greater the chance we'll be caught. *

NICK

We'll return tomorrow night. Go home. Gather up the things you want to take. We'll meet tomorrow night at the library.

Nick heads out of the vault. Toffler follows, stops and calls to his son who's still standing at the hole.

TOFFLER

Bernard! Let's go.

(beat)

We have an agreement.

OFF Bernard, looking angry and frustrated.

19 EXT. CHURCH

19

Nick replaces the board that covered the entrance while Bernard and Toffler stand lookout. Nick finishes.

NICK

Tomorrow night, then. Midnight at the library.

TOFFLER

Midnight. Come on, Bernard.

Toffler and his son start down the dark street. Nick pauses for a beat, watches them disappear around a corner then HE FLIES OFF into the night.

20 AN OVERHEAD POV:

20

SEE Toffler and Bernard hurrying down the street, their footsteps fading.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL

a SINISTER SHADOWY FIGURE PERCHED ON A ROOFTOP is WATCHING THEM as they walk away. A MAN in a long, black coat that flows behind him in the night wind.

He turns: It is LACROIX.

Something diabolic in his eyes. A beat. And he silently FLIES OUT OF THE FRAME.

FADE OUT.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

21 INT. PRECINCT LOBBY - PRE-DAWN

21

ON Nick. Still kneeling. Hands folded behind his head. Still staring up at the muzzle of the GUNMAN'S PISTOL, inches from his face.

ONLY a MINUTE has passed in the unfolding hostage drama: the LAN family is still huddled on the bench behind the gunman. Natalie still in jeopardy.

STONETREE

(calm; to the gunman)

Your loyalty to your brother is admirable--

GUNMAN

He's done it for me.

STONETREE

It's not gonna get you anywhere.

(beat)

What do you think is happening outside this building right now?

The GUNMAN wavers, looks around nervously.

GUNMAN

(re: his hostages)

They'll get me outta here.

(crazed; almost to himself)

They'll get me out. They'll get me out...

STONETREE gestures to the TV MONITORS.

STONETREE

Take a look out there. See what you're up against.

The GUNMAN hesitates. Then he leans over and looks at the TV monitors.

STONETREE

There's probably a dozen heavily-armed officers out there right now. You and your brother step outta here... even with those people... they'll cut you down so fast, you won't know what hit you.

(beat)

Nice and clean. Like surgery.

22 ANGLE ON:

22

SCHANKE still crouched beneath the desk. He's drawn his
gun.

*
*

SCHANKE
One shot. Just give me one shot...

23 ON STONETREE

23

STONETREE

You're in the same position as the people you're holding. You're under the gun. You'll die here tonight.

(beat)

Are you ready for that?

(beat)

Are you ready to die?

ON NATALIE: wincing at Stonetree's gambit.

Nick speaks up, grabs the Gunman's attention, FOCUSES ON HIM. Hypnotizing...

NICK

He's right. You're a hostage, too.

Natalie glances back over her shoulder, turns ever so slightly: she knows what Nick is up to.

NICK (cont'd)

(hypnotically)

We're all in this together now.

The GUNMAN is looking at him, starting to become mesmerized.

GUNMAN

(repeating)

All... together.

NICK

(pouring it on)

We're all hostages here.

OFF NICK, his own words echoing, taking him back

DISSOLVE TO:

24 INT. LIBRARY SUB-BASEMENT - NIGHT (PAST)

24

Lily and Nick deep into their search for the Abbarrat among the uncataloged artifacts, talking as they work.

LILY

...we're all hostages here, Mr. Thomas. Hostages in our own country.

*

ON NICK as he pores through a crate.

NICK

(sotto)

All hostage to something...

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

24

LILY

This is a land of broken spirits.
Like living dead, some of us.

CLOSE ON NICK: reacting.

NICK

I can definitely identify with
that.

LILY

(smiling)

Except for the Party members, of
course. There's a lot of promise
for the people who sell their soul.

(sneering)

The good Socialists.

She finishes unpacking a crate.

LILY (cont'd)

There's no Abbarrat in this one.

(looking at her watch)

Father will be on his dinner break
now. We should go and join him.

NICK

(begging off)

If it's all the same to you, I'll
stay here and keep looking.

LILY

You don't know what you're looking
for.

(beat)

No, come on. We'll... how do you
say in America? "Take Five
Minutes."

ON Lily. Brushing back her hair. Very pretty.

LILY (cont'd)

Besides, we have to eat.

(beat)

Come on.

25 INT. LIBRARY BASEMENT

25

ON Toffler's desk as he unloads a LARGE BOTTLE of VODKA, a
few tins of meat and fish, some bread. Meager fare.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED:

25

Nick and Lily are standing by the desk, watching him.

TOFFLER

...decent meat, you can't get. But Russian Vodka, we have a surplus.

(beat)

My daughter here, she's very intelligent. Years of conscientious study--

LILY

(like she's heard this before)

Oh, Poppa.

TOFFLER

And she cannot have a job worthy of her intelligence. She swings a mop at the University building. A custodian like me. Why?

(beat)

Not in the Party.

(beat)

They keep a lid on us here.

He uncorks the vodka bottle and fills three empty jam jars set out in front of him. Fills them almost to the brim: mealtime in Eastern Europe.

TOFFLER (cont'd)

(as he pours)

No jobs. But plenty of vodka. That's how to keep the population happy, hey, Mr. Thomas?

Toffler hands a drink to Lily. They clink jars.

TOFFLER

(in German)

Salute!

LILY

(joking; in Russian)

Nostrovial!

They drink. Toffler looks at Nick, tips his glass as if to say, "Come on, drink up!"

A beat. Nick eyes the glass of vodka in his hand. What the hell... he knocks it back like bad medicine.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: 2

25

LILY
(re: the food)
What did you manage tonight,
Father?

Toffler is opening one of the tins of meat. He splats it on a plate. FLICKS OPEN a SWITCHBLADE and stabs it into the meat.

TOFFLER
I don't know what it is but it's
not rancid.

He tastes some of the canned food.

TOFFLER (cont'd)
Definitely some kind of meat.

He breaks off a chunk of bread, offers it to Nick.

TOFFLER (cont'd)
You are welcome to share.

NICK
No thanks. Please, go ahead.

Toffler offers some to Lily. She smiles, takes the bread from her father.

TOFFLER
I insist. We'll eat to "celebrate"
our agreement, huh?

Toffler slices off a thick slab of the canned meat, stuffs it into a hunk of bread. A crude sandwich. Hands it Nick.

An uncomfortable beat. All eyes on Nick. Toffler and Lily chomp into their food with gusto. Stare at Nick. Waiting.

Nick sighs. Looks at his dinner. Chokes back his nausea and BITES into the bread.

NICK
(almost gagging)
Delicious.

Nick coughs. Pounds his chest and swills some more vodka to kill the unpleasant taste.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: 3

25

TOFFLER

(enjoying Nick's
discomfort)

Rich American food has spoiled your
palate. Here, we take what we can
get. And we get very little.

Toffler washes down his food with a hearty swig of vodka.

TOFFLER (cont'd)

So, have you found the book?

NICK

(swallowing with great
effort)

No luck yet.

LILY

But I think we're close. If it's
there, it's in one of the few
remaining crates.

TOFFLER

(to Nick)

Is there a chance that we might go
tonight? After Bernard arrives. I
sent him home to pack some things.

(beat)

He'll pack like for a vacation.

LILY

(laughing)

He'll want to bring his tools.

(to Nick)

Bernard is a mechanic. A very good
one.

(beat)

His daydreams are all about
American muscle cars. *

NICK

All I need is the book. I'll go
through the tunnels first to ensure
that they are passable.

Lily and her father exchange a wary look. They don't trust
Nick.

LILY

You'll go through the tunnels. *

(beat)

And we'll wait behind? *

(pointedly)

For the police, maybe.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: 4

25

She and Toffler glare at Nick.

TOFFLER

You're not setting us up are you,
Mr. Thomas? The police, they're
known to do such things.

*

(beat)
Routinely.

NICK

You'll have to trust me. Just as I
have to trust you to deliver the
book.

*

*

LILY

(beat)
Are you to be trusted, Mr. Thomas?

ON Nick. Just as suspicious as them.

NICK

Yes.

(beat)
Are you?

CUT TO:

26 INT. EAST BERLIN STREET - NIGHT

26

ON THE WALL: a concrete facade looming over the dark street.
Spotlights fan down from watchtowers. Sweeping the streets,
piercing into shadows.

A MAN, an AGENT of the INTERNAL SECURITY / SECRET POLICE
comes up the street. Walking briskly into the frame.

HE stops. Hikes up the sleeve of his coat. Checks his watch.
Takes a final drag from his cigarette and tosses it aside.

The SECRET POLICEMAN scans ahead into the street, squinting
into the gloom and night mist. Looking for someone.

A beat. BEHIND HIM, a SHADOWY FIGURE ALIGHTS SILENTLY in the
street.... LACROIX keeping their pre-arranged rendezvous.

LACROIX

Are you from the Ministry?

*

The MAN turns. Startled by Lacroix's sudden appearance.

SECRET POLICEMAN

You're the one who called?

*

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

26

Lacroix walks slowly toward him.

LACROIX
About a matter of great importance
to your agency.

SECRET POLICEMAN
(suspicious)
Who are you?

Lacroix is close to the policeman now. He fixes him with a steely, evil gaze.

LACROIX
Let's just say...
(beat)
I'm a friend of the State and I'd
like to register... a complaint.

OFF Lacroix's evil grin

DISSOLVE TO:

27 INT. TOFFLER HOME - NIGHT

27

BERNARD packing some things. Angrily stuffing them into a satchel. Muttering to himself in German.

BERNARD
(sotto)
He's shown us the way. We should
just go. What the hell are we
waiting for?

He zips the bag closed.

BERNARD (cont'd)
I don't trust this American. I'm
not going to wait. I'll find my
own way.

CLOSE ON BERNARD: determination and impatience. He DONS HIS CAP and shuts off the light.

CUT TO:

28 EXT. STREET - NIGHT

28

Bernard hurrying along as inconspicuously as possible. Down a murky back-street through the night fog. As he rounds a corner

TWO MEN get out of a black car parked across the street and FOLLOW HIM.

29 EXT. ALLEY

29

Bernard. Checks both ways, then carefully proceeds down the alley in the direction of the Burgen church. Suddenly, he HEARS O.S., someone calling his name.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Bernard Toffler!

CLOSE ON Bernard: a sudden pained expression. Closing his eyes. He's nailed..

ON the TWO MEN who were tailing him. They step out of the shadows, revealing themselves. They are the POLICE with guns drawn.

POLICEMAN

Bernard Toffler, stay where you are.

Bernard CUTS and RUNS. Bolts up the street. The police give chase.

Bernard turns a corner and the HEADLIGHTS of a PARKED POLICE CAR come on, FLOODING HIM with light. Bernard looks around, then cuts up an alley.

RUNS to the end of an alley. To a HIGH CHAIN-LINK FENCE topped with RAZOR WIRE. He tosses aside his bag and CLIMBS desperately.

The POLICE CLOSE IN behind. Calling for him to halt. Bernard makes it to the top of the fence. Loses his footing and becomes ensnared in the wire. He frantically tries to free himself but he's caught.

The POLICE ARRIVE at the bottom of the fence. They thrust their guns up at him.

POLICEMAN

Don't move!

ON Bernard: frustrated, almost crying. Blood streaming now from his hands and legs. A beat and he SAGS into the wire.

DEFEATED. Hopelessly entangled.

CUT TO:

30 INT. LIBRARY SUB-BASEMENT - NIGHT

30

Nick and Lily working close together in the storage room. Sorting through stacks of ancient manuscripts.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

30

LILY

(reading)

Look here. We must be close. Here is a document that actually makes reference to the Abbarrat.

Nick takes it from her, runs his hands over the Sanskrit writing.

NICK

So we know it really exists.

LILY

At least I think it's a reference. But then perhaps it's part of the same set that contains the Abbarrat.

(beat)

See here. This is a formula for medicine.

She leans in closer to Nick. Almost touching him. Her closeness affects him. Unnerves him. He feels an attraction and she obviously does, too. Under different circumstances, in another world, maybe this magnetism would come to love.

NICK

(looking at Lily)

A prescription.

Lily looks up at him. Gazes at him. A beat here while some definite electricity flows between them.

Lily composes herself. Returns her attention to the pages in front of her.

LILY

Yes. There are many of them.

(beat)

But this is not the Abbarrat. This is more like a cookbook or something. There's nothing in here about magic or curses.

She puts the book down. Right now, she's more curious about Nick.

LILY (cont'd)

What is it like where you come from?

Nick pause in his search, dusts off his hands.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED: 2

30

NICK

America?

(beat)

Well, the streets are not lined
with gold if that's what you think.

LILY

At least they aren't lined with
Russian tanks.

(beat)

I don't want to go to America. I'd
be happy to live in West Germany.
This is my country. We all only
want to live free.

NICK

Then you will.

LILY

That's good.

(beat)

I hope you're not trying to
deceive us, Mr. Thomas. *

NICK

And I hope you're not leading me on
either.

(beat)

You'll just have to trust me.

LILY

I hope that you're being truthful,
Mr. Thomas. Because if you are an
agent of the secret police, if you
do betray our trust... *

(beat)

I'll kill you myself. *

OFF Nick's reaction

CUT TO:

31 INT. PRECINCT LOBBY - PRE-DAWN (PRESENT)

31

CLOSE ON NICK: facing down the barrel of the gun still.
Fixing the gunman with his hypnotic stare.

NICK

Trust me. You'll never get out of
here alive.

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED:

31

GUNMAN
(dazed)
Never... get...

CLOSE ON the LAN SON: the teenage boy's ill-considered moment of decision. In a futile attempt at heroism, HE LUNGES for the GUNMAN. SNAPPING HIM AWAY from Nick's thrall. Undoing the trance. The Gunman turns and points his pistol at the Lan son.

*
*

GUNMAN
Freeze, you stupid little punk!!

*

A COP SEES that the GUNMAN is distracted. The COP makes his move. He STANDS to fire but he's a beat too slow.

The GUNMAN CATCHES HIM from the corner of his eye. The GUNMAN WHIPS around and POPS the cop with a shot to the chest. Then he reels and FIRES RANDOMLY, scattering cops for cover. One shot takes out the LAMP on the desk where Skanky is concealed.

Another shot clips Stonetree. He falls, clutching his shoulder. Nick crawls to him.

32 ON SKANKY: COVERING AS GLASS SHARDS SHOWER DOWN ON HIM.

32

33 ON the GUNMAN:

33

TICKED OFF and hyper-hyper tense. The LAN FAMILY is terrified behind him. Natalie's got her eyes closed, looks like she's praying.

GUNMAN
Okay, we're all hostages here, huh?
(babbling to himself)
Hostages, huh? Okay, I'm a hostage
too, am I? I'll show you hostage.
Hostage. I'll show you what.

He slips the pistol quickly into his pocket and FUMBLES FOR the HAND GRENADE.

Then he holds the grenade aloft for all to see.

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED:

33

GUNMAN (cont'd)

You like that? You see that?
(to Nick)

SEE IT? You give me my brother or
we all go to hell together.

(babbling)

All of us. Together. One big,
happy, DEAD family.

OFF Nick, kneeling next to his fallen Captain. Holding a
handkerchief to Stonetree's wound.

FADE OUT.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

34 INT. LOBBY - RESUME SCENE

34

SKANKY COWERING UNDER THE DESK. Frustrated. Wanting to act but knowing he's only valuable as long as he maintains his cover.

SCHANKE
Wait for it, Skanky.
(beat)
Wait for it.

35 ANGLE ON THE GUNMAN - CONTINUOUS

35

The crazed GUNMAN is ranting now.

GUNMAN
Get 'em out. Get 'em out. I want
all these cops outta here. NOW!
(beat)
All of 'em. All of 'em.

The COPS tense. Each one of them has a bead on the GUNMAN'S heart. Each wants to shoot.

ON Nick and Stonetree. Nick compressing the Captain's shoulder wound. Another COP kneeling alongside, assisting.

STONETREE
(through his pain)
You gotta get those people out of
here--

NICK
Gotta get you to a hospital.

STONETREE brushes him aside. Winces as the attending cop peels off the Captain's shirt and examines his wound.

STONETREE
Nick?
(beat)
Remember what's important here. The
family. You gotta get that family
out.

Nick looks across the room. To Natalie and the Lan family; mother and daughter weeping, terror-stricken.

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED:

35

CLOSE ON Nick. Remembering...

DISSOLVE TO:

36 INT. LIBRARY BASEMENT - NIGHT (PAST)

36

RESUME SCENE with Lily and Nick. Lily has fixed Nick with a hard look. She means what she says.

NICK

I will get you and your family out.

(beat)

And I'm depending on you to hold
to our agreement and help me with
the translation. *

LILY

We'll take the Abbarrat with us. To
the West. It may take time to
decipher. Weeks, perhaps.

NICK

I've been through hell trying to
find this book. Years and years of
fruitless searching. Following
leads all around the world. Once
it's in my hands, we can take all
the time we need.

(beat)

After we cross, where will you go?

Lily pries the lid from a crate. Peers in. Starts pulling
out packing material, more manuscripts. She holds one book
up to the light, studies the cover.

LILY

We have family there. Distant
relatives. Hopefully, they will
take us in until we can get
established.

NICK

A new life for all of us.

TOFFLER ENTERS. He's pulling on his coat.

TOFFLER

I'm leaving to collect Bernard. He
should have come back by now.

(beat)

He gets distracted sometimes.
Probably laid down for a nap. *

LILY

(to her father)

I think we're almost through here.
Only a few more crates to search. *

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED:

36

TOFFLER

(to Nick)

Good luck. I hope you find the book
so we can leave tonight.

He turns to leave.

TOFFLER (cont'd)

Mr. Thomas, if the book isn't
among this collection--

NICK

If it's not here, I'll continue to
look elsewhere. But I still have to
go home.

(beat; smiling)

And you'll just have to come with
me, won't you?

Toffler SMILES. He wraps an arm around his daughter's
shoulder, pecks her goodbye.

TOFFLER

Good. Good. I'll tell Bernard the
good news.

He EXITS. Lily turns and SMILES at Nick. Warming a bit to
him now.

LILY

You've made him very happy.

NICK

(smiling)

And you?

LILY

Well, yes. I'll be very glad to
leave this awful place, once and
for all.

*
*

NICK

Now if we can only get Bernard to
cheer up.

37 INT. TOFFLER HOME

37

IN THE LIVING ROOM, swarming with police. Cruelly ransacking
the home.

BERNARD SITS in a chair. Handcuffed. Bruised but defiant.
The SECRET POLICEMAN who struck a deal with Lacroix STANDS
OVER HIM. A BRUTE of a COP stands by.

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED:

37

SECRET POLICEMAN
One more time, please.
(beat)
Where is the American agent?

BERNARD smiles weakly.

BERNARD
What American?

SECRET POLICEMAN
(to the Brute)
Gerhardt. Jog his memory, please.

The BRUTE COP STRADDLES Bernard in the chair. PUNCHES HIM hard across the face.

SECRET POLICEMAN
The American who is helping you to plan your escape.
(beat)
What is his name?

BERNARD
(dazed)
I don't know any Americans.

The policeman PULLS OUT a revolver. COCKS BACK the hammer and presses the gun to Bernard's temple.

SECRET POLICEMAN
Maybe I'll let some air into your thick skull, huh? Clear your head.

ON Bernard. Under the gun. He TURNS HIS HEAD away and spits a stream of blood defiantly.

BERNARD
(beat)
Go to hell.

38 EXT. TOFFLER HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

38

Police cars everywhere. The house is lit up. Cops are ferrying the Toffler's belongings in and out. A household "strip-search."

39 UP THE STREET: TOFFLER comes around a corner and

39

FREEZES IN HIS TRACKS. SEES the commotion in front of his house.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED:

39

He DUCKS QUICKLY BACK into the shadows. Leans back against a brick wall.

CLOSE ON Toffler: anger and despair.

He turns and hurries back to the library.

40 INT. TOFFLER HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

40

The SECRET POLICEMAN still holding his gun on Bernard.

Another cop steps up and hands him a sheet of paper. He studies it for a minute.

SECRET POLICEMAN

(to Bernard)

Your father works at the central Library. Is he there now? With your sister?

Bernard doesn't answer. The SECRET POLICEMAN gestures to the BRUTE COP who WHACKS BERNARD AGAIN. Into unconsciousness this time. Bernard's head falls forward and he slumps in the chair. The secret policeman folds the paper and slips it into his pocket. Clicks the hammer of his gun back in place and holsters it.

SECRET POLICEMAN

(to the other cops)

Finish up here. Put him in my car. We'll go to the library and gather up the others. If the American is there, I want him alive.

The brute cop hauls Bernard roughly to his feet and drags him out.

The secret policeman watches them go, then turns to

LACROIX. Entering from another room.

LACROIX

The American is mine.

SECRET POLICEMAN

After we interrogate him, you can do what you please with him.

LACROIX

You won't be able to arrest him.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED:

40

SECRET POLICEMAN

You know him?

(beat)

Perhaps we should interrogate
you?

LACROIX

(a beat; a smug smile)

Try.

CUT TO:

41 INT. PRECINCT LOBBY - PRE-DAWN (PRESENT)

41

ON Nick kneeling beside Stonetree who's supine on the floor, clutching his wounded shoulder. Again, only a minute has passed.

STONETREE

(to Nick)

Gotta get them out, Nick.

The other cop who's attending to the Captain helps him to sit up.

Nick stands and confronts the gunman who's holding the grenade up.

NICK

Let them take the Captain out of here.

GUNMAN

I'm in charge here. I call the shots. You'll do what I say. I wanna see my brother. Get him up here!

NICK

NO! You don't get something for nothing.

GUNMAN

(rambling)

I'm not negotiating. No negotiation. Nothing. NO deals. Nothing...

NICK

You don't give me anything. You don't get anything. Let them go and I'll tell the officers here to stand down.

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED:

41

GUNMAN
(a beat; looking around)
I let 'em go and you bring my
brother.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED:

41

GUNMAN (cont'd)

(beat)

All except the old man. He stays
until you deliver my brother.

NICK

Deal.

GUNMAN

And then we'll talk about gettin'
us outta here.

CLOSE ON Nick: an ice-cold stare that tells us, it's never
gonna happen that way...

NICK

You got it.

The gunman nods. A policewoman rushes in and escorts the
family away.

A couple of cops hustle their injured Captain out.

Nick nods to the remaining cops. Some of them hesitate, then
all holster their weapons and retreat until only Nick,
Natalie, Mr. Lan, and Skanky remain.

42 ANGLE ON SKANKY: sensing a resolution is near. He carefully
clicks off his safety and DRAWS BACK THE HAMMER... 42

Nick turns back to the gunman.

NICK

Now the woman. Cut her free.

GUNMAN

No way. You bring my brother.

NICK

(cold determination)

No.

GUNMAN

What?

ON Natalie: she closes her eyes and lowers her head. Getting
ready for what's coming.

NICK

It's over. There's only one more
deal. You cut her free and
surrender...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED:

42

NICK (cont'd)

(beat)

And you won't die.

Cards on the table time. The Gunman studies Nick for a beat then...

HE LIFTS THE GRENADE to his mouth, BITES OUT THE PIN. CLOSE ON the Gunman: he grits the pin in his teeth for a beat then SPITS IT OUT at Nick.

GUNMAN

Big mistake, cop.

(beat)

Big mistake.

43 INT. LIBRARY BASEMENT - NIGHT (PAST)

43

Lily and Nick. Still digging. Lily straightens up. Wipes her brow.

LILY

This is the last of them. If your book is here, it's got to be in this one.

NICK

We'll know soon enough.

Nick lifts the crate up to a table top. Starts to peel off the top as

TOFFLER ENTERS. Breathless and angry. He calls to his daughter in German.

TOFFLER

Lily! Come away from him. Now!

Lily looks confused.

TOFFLER (cont'd)

The police are at the house.

(to Nick)

You told them.

LILY

(shocked)

An agent of the police.

She crosses to her father's side. TOFFLER WHIPS OUT his switchblade, flicks it open and advances on Nick.

(CONTINUED)

43 CONTINUED:

43

TOFFLER
You set him up. You set up my son.
(beat)
I'll cut your heart out, you
bastard.

*

LILY
(disbelief)
We trusted you.

*

*

44 EXT. OUTSIDE THE LIBRARY

44

Police cars screech to halt in the street. Police jump out
and race up the steps to the front door of the library.
Heave against the door, breaking it in.

45 INT. LIBRARY BASEMENT

45

Toffler holding the knife out in front of him. Moving on
Nick.

TOFFLER
You'll pay for this betrayal with
your life.

*

NICK
I had nothing to do with Bernard's
arrest.

TOFFLER
Liar!

NICK
I'll prove it to you. Let me prove
it to you. We don't have much
time.

*

*

SUDDENLY, we HEAR O.S.: POLICE POUNDING on the basement
door.

POLICEMAN
Police! Open up in there.

Toffler grabs Lily. They huddle back against the wall and
look at Nick.

NICK
(whispering)
You have no choice but to trust me.

AGAIN, the policeman POUNDS ON the door.

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED:

45

POLICEMAN

Open the door or I'll shoot it
open.

NICK

(sotto)

I'm your only way out of here now. *

A beat. Toffler looks at his frightened daughter.

She nods. Toffler FOLDS HIS KNIFE CLOSED.

OFF Toffler and Lily

FADE OUT.

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

46 INT. PRECINCT LOBBY - RESUME SCENE

46

CLOSE ON the armed GRENADE in the Gunman's hand. He's clamping the trigger closed with his fingers.

He RELAXES his grip ever so slightly. We SEE the trigger open just a hair. He moves carefully to a WINDOW.

CLOSE ON NICK: suddenly very worried. If the gunman should open the window and the MORNING SUN STREAM IN....

- The GUNMAN has his hand on the CORD that opens the blinds. Nervously fingers it.

GUNMAN

You're not givin' me anything to live for, cop. I don't mind dyin' especially with such pretty company.

He YANKS ON the shotgun, pulling Natalie back a step. STARTLING HER.

ON Natalie: she rocks back on her heels and GASPS. Her eyes wide with terror.

NICK

Natalie, listen to me. Nothing's going to happen to you.

GUNMAN

(snide)
So it's Natalie, is it?
(beat; to Nick)
Your girlfriend, officer?

NICK

(to the gunman)
One last chance. Give it up.

The Gunman laughs nervously at Nick's bravado.

GUNMAN

Forget it, cop. We're all walkin' outta here together. All of us. We're all goin' to take a nice, little stroll in the sunshine together.

ON NATALIE: she shoots a look of dread at Nick. If the Gunman forces his hand...

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED:

46

If he forces Nick to walk out of the precinct as a
hostage, into the morning sun...

GUNMAN (cont'd)

We either walk outta here together
or they'll take us out in parts.
In little plastic bags.

(beat)

Got it?

(beat; pissed)

Is that what you want? Is it?

CLOSE ON Nick: tense but unyielding. Hold on him for a beat
then

CUT TO:

47 INT. LIBRARY BASEMENT - NIGHT (PAST) 47

RESUME SCENE with Nick, Lily and Toffler. The policeman still pounding on the door outside.

NICK

(sotto)

Is there a back way out?

TOFFLER

(clutching Lily)

Down the corridor. An exit to the alley. But the door is bolted and the key isn't with me. *

NICK

I'll take care of that. When we get to the alley, go straight to the Burgen church. I'll get Bernard. I'll lead the police away then double back and meet you there. *

(beat)

Are you ready?

They nod. Nick steps to the door. PULLS IT OPEN and GRABS the policeman.

Lily and Toffler watch in awe as Nick FLINGS HIM ACROSS the room. The cop SLAMS into a wall and crumbles to the floor.

They EXIT to the corridor.

48 INT. BASEMENT CORRIDOR 48

They race to the bolted back door. O.S. we HEAR the sound of police yelling. Approaching.

Toffler and Lily look on, aghast, as NICK BENDS the doorbolt away from the door. Snaps it cleanly off.

LILY

How... how did you---?

NICK

Never mind. Come on.

They dash through the door.

49 EXT. BACK ALLEY (E. BERLIN) 49

Toffler, Nick and Lily emerge.

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED:

49

NICK
Go on. Quickly. I'll catch up with
you. *

Toffler and Lily hustle off. Nick watches them disappear into the shadows then he LIFTS OFF. FLYING out of the frame.

50 INT. POLICE CAR (E. BERLIN)

50

ON Bernard. Slumped in the back seat. Handcuffed, dazed and bloodied.

OUTSIDE the car, a LONE POLICEMAN stands watch over him, holding a sub-machine gun.

A THUD on the ROOF of the POLICE CAR STARTLES him upright. He looks around, frightened. Curious.

51 EXT. STREET OUTSIDE LIBRARY

51

Nick ALIGHTS on the roof of the police car. The COP who was guarding Bernard TURNS and REACTS to a FULLY VAMPED NICK SWOOPING DOWN on him like a black shadow.

NICK DISARMS the guard, PUNCHES HIM UNCONSCIOUS and TOSSES him aside. HOPS INTO the police car.

NICK
Hang on, Bernard.

Bernard gapes at him from the back seat. Nick starts the little car and GRINDS IT into gear. ACCELERATES AWAY as a knot of policeman clustered at the top of the LIBRARY STEPS REACT, drawing guns and giving chase, yelling after Nick to "Halt!"

They jump into cars and PEEL OUT after Nick.

52 INSIDE THE POLICE CAR:

52

Bernard tumbles back in the seat as the car accelerates.

ON NICK: checking in the rear-view as he SPEEDS AWAY. Swerving around corners. Dodging through what little traffic there is on the street.

Nick fishtails the police car around an especially tight corner and Bernard bounces roughly back and forth.

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED:

52

NICK
(to Bernard in the
rear-view)
You'll have to excuse my driving.
(beat)
I'm really not used to travelling
like this.

ON Bernard: he recovers his balance just as Nick

SLAMS on the BRAKES and SKIDS to a stop. Jumps out. Goes to pull Bernard from the back seat and SEES that he's handcuffed to a pillar. To Bernard's utter amazement, Nick reaches in and SNAPS the metal cuffs off. Pulls Bernard out of the car.

BERNARD
(stunned)
I thought you were--

NICK
(finishing)
You thought I was with the police.
(beat)
I think we've dispelled that idea.

53 EXT. STREET OUTSIDE POLICE CAR - EAST BERLIN

53

Nick drags Bernard along. HEAR SIRENS O.S., the cops catching up. Nick STOPS. Spins Bernard around and GLARES into his eyes.

NICK (cont'd)
Bernard, listen to me. I want you
to sleep now--

BERNARD
What--?

And CLICK! He's out like a light. He slumps into Nick's arms. Nick hefts him over his shoulder, looks behind and LIFTS OFF...

54 AERIAL POV:

54

Flying over the city and DESCENDING to land in front of the BURGEN CHURCH.

55 EXT. OUTSIDE BURGEN CHURCH 55

Nick lets Bernard down and ZAPS HIM awake.

BERNARD
(shaking it off)
I--I must have blacked out. *

NICK
Come on. We haven't got much time. *

Bernard looks up, realizes they are at the Church.

BERNARD
We're going?
(beat)
My sister. My father?

NICK
They're waiting for us. *

56 INT. BURGEN CHURCH BASEMENT / MAUSOLEUM 56

Nick and Bernard catch up to Lily and her father. Toffler shines a flashlight on the pair as they enter the basement vault.

TOFFLER
Bernard! Thank god, you made it.

Lily and Toffler embrace Bernard as Nick jumps down into the black tunnel entrance. Nick reaches up for Lily. Helps her down. Then Toffler and finally Bernard as the distant sirens approach.

57 INT. TUNNEL 57

The pale beam of the flashlight illuminates a cramped, crypt-like area, littered with skeletons. Rats scuttle away from the light as the entourage heads into the tunnel. Nick PAUSES for a beat. VAMP SCANS ahead and behind. HEARS the commotion of a small army of police closing in on the Church above them.

NICK
The police?
(beat)
How the hell--?
(then realizing)
Lacroix.
(to the Tofflers)
Go on ahead. Don't stop. Don't look back. I'll deal with the police. *

(CONTINUED)

57 CONTINUED: 57

The Tofflers continue on ahead into the gloom. Nick turns back and as he does, we SEE his vampire, yellow eyes glowing in the murky darkness. The Tofflers footsteps fade and echo against the stone tunnel walls.

58 INT. BASEMENT MAUSOLEUM 58

The cops converge at the catacombs entrance. A few cops toting machine guns and lamps enter the tunnel.

59 DOWN IN THE TUNNEL: 59

A cop leading the way pauses and peers into the darkness ahead. Fans back and forth with his light. A beat and

NICK LOOMS OUT of the blackness, FLASHING FANGS and GROWLING like a beast from your worst, subterranean nightmare.

ON the cops: rearing back, taken by surprise.

60 UP AHEAD 60

Some distance with the Tofflers as they race to freedom. Lily stops short as she HEARS the CHATTER of MACHINE-GUN FIRE BEHIND her, reverberating against the stone walls.

She turns back, frightened. Toffler takes her by the elbow but she wrenches free as starts back for Nick.

61 WITH NICK and the COPS: 61

The two cops are heaped unconscious on the floor of the tunnel. Nick stands and tosses a machine-gun aside. He turns and confronts

LILY who emerges from the darkness. She SHRIEKS and COWERS BACK as she SEES the VAMPIRE in her flashlight's beam. An awful beat. Nick is caught. Lily composes herself, looks at Nick curiously.

LILY

This is what you are? This is why you want the cure in the Abbarrat?

NICK

(looking hard at her)

My... curse.

*

HEAR more cops approaching. Nick reaches out for Lily's hand.

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED:

61

She hesitates then takes it and they flee into the darkness ahead.

Nick stops after a few yards. Where an upright BEAM reinforces an intersection of the tunnel. Nick HEAVES against it with all his vampire strength until it yields and the tunnel roof COLLAPSES, blocking the passage.

62 WITH Bernard and his father:

62

They've reached a seeming dead-end. They huddle against it as they HEAR FOOTSTEPS APPROACHING.

A tense beat. Then NICK and Lily EMERGE from the inky blackness into the pool of light.

TOFFLER
It's a dead end.

NICK
No. Wait.

He PRESSES his ear to the stone wall in front of them. LISTENS. Then he shines the flashlight up and around the edges of the stone wall to REVEAL SEAMS.

NICK
(to Bernard)
Hold this.

Hands him the flashlight. Nick LEANS INTO the stone wall with every ounce of his vampire might. Slowly, it gives and COLLAPSES in to

63 ANOTHER MAUSOLEUM VAULT.

63

In the sub-basement of another ancient cathedral.

The Tofflers and Nick step out of the tunnel, shine flashlights around the eerie vault. Ahead of them, a barred gate. Nick KICKS it open and they EXIT.

64 EXT. CATHEDRAL - WEST BERLIN

64

A West Berlin street. Bernard looks around, BREATHES freedom, then turns and SMILES at his father.

ON Lily and Nick: an awkward moment.

(CONTINUED)

64 CONTINUED:

64

NICK

Now you know why I have to go back
for the book. It's my only hope.

*

LILY

If it contains a cure, I'll help
you find it.

*

(beat)

And if not... the secret of what
you are will always be safe with
us.

Without warning, she stretches up and PLANTS a KISS on Nick.
Takes him by surprise.

LILY (cont'd)

(whispering in his ear)

You have given us new life.

(beat)

We will repay you in kind.

Nick embraces her. CLOSE ON Nick as he hugs Lily tight. He
closes his eyes and we

CUT TO:

65 INT. PRECINCT LOBBY - PRESENT

65

ON NICK: Nick facing down the Gunman.

NICK

It's over. Give it up.

CLOSE ON the Gunman's hand. His finger on the trigger of the
shotgun. His hand is sweating and cramped.

GUNMAN

(really rambling now)

You give it up. I'm gonna do this.

I'm gonna pull this off.

(to himself; insane)

I'll do it. I'll do it. I'll do it.

I'll kill everybody here.

Everybody. I don't care. I'm goin'

out. I'm goin' out. Blaze of glory.

I don't care anymore. I'll go out.

The GUNMAN is CLOSE TO FLIPPING OUT now. Sweating. SPOOKED.
He wipes his brow with the back of his fist. See the grenade
in his hand.

CLOSE ON THE GUNMAN: Strung-out to the breaking point.

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED:

65

GUNMAN

You're right. It's over. No more talking. Time to go. Time to go.

(beat)

I'm gonna do this. I'm gonna do this.

65A WITH SKANKY: SLOWLY EDGING HIS WAY OUT FROM COVER. Creeping from beneath the desk. His gun held high...

65A

65B ON NICK: GLANCING OVER the Gunman's shoulder to SEE

65B

ON A MONITOR: Skanky has crawled from cover INTO THE FIELD OF VIEW OF ONE OF THE SECURITY CAMERAS. If the Gunman should turn and look at the TV, he'll surely see Skanky.

Nick distracts the GUNMAN'S attention away from the monitor. He slowly APPROACHES. Circling around so that the Gunman must turn to follow him... turn AWAY from the monitors.

ON NATALIE: looking apprehensive. Ready. Knowing that Nick's about to make the grandstand play.

NICK SLOWLY APPROACHES THE GUNMAN.

The GUNMAN LOOKS AT HIM. Does a confused double-take.

GUNMAN

Get back!

(glancing around nervously)

I'll do it. Don't screw around with me. I'll do it, I swear.

NICK

Give it up. It's over.

65C SKANKY still creeping along. Getting into position.

65C

CLOSE ON HIS HAND holding the shotgun:

He TAKES his FINGER OUT OF THE TRIGGER GUARD.

CLOSE ON Nick: he SEES that the gunman has taken his finger from the trigger....

66 EXT. EAST BERLIN LIBRARY - NIGHT (PAST)

66

AERIAL POV: BANKING AND SWOOPING DOWN to the street. Nick touches down.

67 EXT. STREET OUTSIDE LIBRARY

67

CLOSE ON NICK'S FACE: SHOCK as he SEES THE LIBRARY is in FLAMES! Nick races up the steps. Tries the door but he's beaten back by the fire and smoke. He steps back.

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED:

67

A look of frustration and hopelessness on his face. To have come so far, to have been so close...

LACROIX CALLS to him from O.S.

LACROIX

Is this what you want, Nicholas?

Nick WHIRLS and faces his old nemesis.

LACROIX is holding up THE ABBARRAT. The Ancient Book of Miracles clutched in his hand. The gilt lettering catching the firelight. Glinting.

LACROIX (cont'd)

I must say, it's quite an interesting read.

NICK

Give me the book, Lacroix.

LACROIX

(beat; then evil)

No.

Nick moves toward him and Lacroix circles away. Goading him.

LACROIX (cont'd)

Did you really think that I would let you get a hold of this?

NICK

I'm taking that book with me, Lacroix.

(beat)

I'll kill you if I have to.

LACROIX

(smiling)

I'm afraid not, Nicholas.

And LACROIX TURNS and CASTS THE BOOK into the BURNING LIBRARY. AND WHOOSHES OFF INTO THE NIGHT.

CUT TO:

68 INT. PRECINCT LOBBY - PRESENT

68*

The Gunman fingering the hand grenade in his standoff with Nick. LOOKING AT NICK. Time frozen, standing still for a seemingly eternal beat.

*

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED:

68

BEHIND HIM: Skanky crawling into position on the TV
SECURITY MONITOR.

*
*

IN A SLOW-MOTION BLUR:

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED: 2

68

Nick LEAPS ASIDE and yells

NICK
Now, Skanky! Now.

Skanky STANDS UP FROM BEHIND HIS COVER and fires TWICE. Two quick shots to the Gunman's chest... *

CLOSE ON HIS HAND. Still holding the grenade. His grip LOOSENING...

CLOSE ON SKANKY: the horrible instant. SEEING the grenade and realizing that the GUNMAN HAS PULLED THE PIN and ARMED IT. *

The GRENADE TUMBLING OUT

Nick DIVES FOR IT.

INTERCUT WITH:

69 NICK IN THE PAST: A DESPERATE, SLOW-MOTION LUNGE FOR THE BOOK. 69

ON the BOOK: TUMBLING END OVER END into the fire.

70 IN THE PRECINCT: 70

Nick CATCHING THE GRENADE in his hand. Closing his fists around it.

71 NICK IN THE PAST: 71

THE BOOK SAILS PAST NICK'S OUTSTRETCHED HANDS. Into the FIRE.

72 PRECINCT: NICK stands, clutching the grenade. 72

A beat. He FALLS to the floor, closing his body around the grenade to absorb the impending blast. *

SKANKY CUTS NATALIE away from the shotgun. PULLS HER AND MR. LAN AWAY to safety. Natalie resists. *

NATALIE
(crying to Nick)
Nick! NO!

Skanky pushes her down behind a desk. Rudely. Does the same with Mr. Lan.

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED:

72

SCHANKE
Get down, damn it.

ON Nick: CURLED ON THE FLOOR, fetal-position. He SLOWLY
opens his palms to REVEAL

*
*

the HAND GRENADE CRUSHED in his grip. Impotent pieces of
shrapnel and plastic explosive now.

73 PAST: Nick sprawled on the ground. Empty hands
outstretched.

73

CLOSE ON Nick: a look of heartbreak as he watches the book
as it's CONSUMED IN FLAME.

Watches his dream of freedom CURL and BURN in the fire.

OFF NICK

8FADE OUT.

END ACT FOUR

(CONTINUED)

73 CONTINUED:

73

TAG

FADE IN:

74 INT. STONETREE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

74

Days later. Everyone assembled to welcome the Captain back from his brief hospital stay.

STONETREE sits behind his desk. His arm is in a sling and he's gingerly flexing his fingertips.

STONETREE

Doctor says I'll never even remember it. Lucky for me, he got me in the meat.

SCHANKE

Lucky guy. I guess there's times when being overweight can be a lifesaver.

STONETREE GLARES at Skank. A laser-beam look that could cut through a concrete wall.

SCHANKE (cont'd)

(embarrassed)

Oh! I mean, well, you know. Stocky. Built--

STONETREE'S still staring. Nick and Natalie are choking back the urge to laugh.

SCHANKE (cont'd)

I mean, muscular. Large and well-constructed.

STONETREE

Detective, how long has it been since you had to bring in a daily quota of parking tickets?

SCHANKE

I think I hear my phone.

And he's out of there.

STONETREE tosses a file folder across the desk to Nick.

STONETREE

Just in case you're interested. Lab report on that hand grenade.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

74 CONTINUED:

74

STONETREE (cont'd)
Boys downstairs said the thing was probably a dud all along.

NICK
(smiling at Nat)
So we were all very lucky.

NATALIE
Right. Uh, Nick? The next time you wanna pull a John Wayne?
(beat)
Please don't invite me.
(beat)
But I owe you one anyway.

She pecks him on the cheek and EXITS. Leaving Nick and the Captain.

STONETREE
You did good, Knight. You didn't bend. You can't ever give in to these crazies. I'm sure the Lan family is very grateful. You got 'em out and no one got hurt.
(beat)
Nick? Hello? Earth to Nick?

Nick's spacing out, remembering the other family he helped to safety.

NICK
Sorry, Captain. I was thinking about something.

STONETREE
Uh-huh.

NICK
Another family I know.

OFF Nick

DISSOLVE TO:

75 INT. NICK'S LOFT - DAWN

75

Nick coming home after a long day. He stares for a beat out the window. Then shuts the blinds. He stretches and unbuckles his shoulder-holster. Crosses to the refrigerator. Helps himself to some sustenance from his private stock.

(CONTINUED)

75 CONTINUED:

75

Then he crosses to his answering machine. Rewinds and listens. Smiles as he hears...

LILY (V.O.)

Nicholas! It's Lily Toffler. I was so happy to get your letter today, I had to call.

(beat)

We are all well. After so many years. Father is still with us thankfully. And Bernard's an engineer now with BMW.

(beat)

You'll be happy to hear that I've been awarded tenure... finally... at the University. My oldest boy, named Nicholas, of course, is almost sixteen. I'm sorry we've lost touch for so many years. Time just goes by so quickly--

ON Nick: reacting with a shrug.

LILY (V.O.)

Nick, I haven't given up. And I know you never will. I think that other copies of the Abbarat or at least the information contained in the book, still exist and I continue to track them down.

(laughing)

You might say that it's an obsession of mine. Father says to tell you that we think of you often. And very fondly. Especially as we watched that dreadful Wall come down two years ago.

Nick smiles. Offers up a silent toast and drinks.

LILY (V.O.)

I saved a piece of it for you. I'll send it now that I know where to reach you.

(beat)

Nick? I know it's never enough to repay you for what you did for us. But thank you. From all of us. Forever...

ON Nick: splayed in his chair. Listening to Lily's voice.

(CONTINUED)

75 CONTINUED: 2

75

NICK
(sotto)
It's enough.

He closes his eyes.

FADE OUT

THE END