

# "CHAOS"

(Pilot)

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TEASER

FROM BLACK

We're hit with a blinding SANDSTORM, hallowed by a fierce desert sun. A dragon's breath of sand and heat -- as a BLACKHAWK HELICOPTER touches down. We're...

EXT. DESERT AIRBASE (EGYPT) - DAY

...at a remote desert airbase. BOOTS hit the tarmac as SOLDIERS pile out of the copter, guiding dazed and emaciated CIVILIAN passengers to safety. Heavily armed MILITARY POLICE join the fray, their mood dispassionate as they scan the faces of the civilians, zeroing in on--

RICK MARTINEZ, mid 20s. Rick looks a wreck -- dehydrated, battered and bruised. Despite this fact, he still manages to radiate boyish good looks. His demeanor both serious-minded and disarmingly innocent.

MILITARY OFFICER

Martinez?!

RICK

Yes! That's me!

Rick extends his hand for a greeting. To his great surprise the military officer slaps cuffs on him.

INT. HELICOPTER HANGER - DESERT AIRBASE

The CIA's North African Chief of Station, LOWDEN, 50s, a sweat-stained, world-weary, career spook, sits alone at a table in an otherwise empty helicopter hanger. Rick is dragged in by the military police. He is directed to sit across from Lowden, where he's cuffed to the table.

LOWDEN

For the record please state your name and association with the Agency.

RICK

Am I under arrest?

LOWDEN

No. Putting you under arrest would afford you legal rights that I'm not prepared, or frankly in the mood to extend. You're being *detained* until it's determine if you need to be categorized as an enemy combatant.

RICK

Operative Martinez. Office Of Disruptive Services.

(MORE)

RICK (CONT'D)

You're telling me that I've got no lawyer. No rights. And no choice but to cooperate.

Lowden pulls a bottle of coke from a cooler by his feet. He pops the cap against the table edge.

LOWDEN

You have a choice. You could choose not to answer my questions. And I can choose to call it a day, and leave you cuffed to this table, inside this hanger, where temperatures routinely top 135 degrees. You know how we know that? We know that because our thermometers melt in here.

Lowden, a right prick, sips from his coke. Rick considers his plight. The full weight of his situation landing on him: the cuffs, the heat, the sadistic interrogator.

RICK

Okay... Let's talk. Let's talk about the truth...

Title card: *"Five Days Earlier"*

INT. CIA HEADQUARTERS - MAIN LOBBY - DAY

We're looking at a biblical verse etched in a wall.

*"And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."*

John VIII-XXXII

We FIND Rick standing in the main lobby of CIA Headquarters, taking in the etching. He tries to get his bearings. There is no directory. The lobby is empty of personnel, with the exception of...

...OPERATIVE BLANKE, 50s. Blanke sits on a bench, like a butler awaiting instructions. He notices Rick's lost expression, lights up, and hustles to his aid.

BLANKE

You look lost? Are you lost?

RICK

Could you tell me how to get to Central Administration? I have an appointment with the Director.

BLANKE

Which Director? Science and Technology? Intelligence? Support?

RICK  
Clandestine Service.

BLANKE  
Well... lucky you.

INT. CIA HEADQUARTERS - HALLWAY - DAY

Blanke leads Rick at a brisk pace.

BLANKE  
So, what was your golden ticket?

RICK  
Excuse me?

BLANKE  
Your golden ticket to Clandestine Service. What's your special skill?

RICK  
I speak fluent Arabic.

BLANKE  
Smart. I studied Spanish. Course that was back in the disco era when no one much spoke Spanish. Boy has the world changed. Now I'm no more qualified to be a spy than my mechanic.

RICK  
What department do you work for?

BLANKE  
I was formerly a military analyst.

RICK  
And now?

The question hangs in the air. They walk in awkward silence, finally arriving at a set of double doors: *Clandestine Administration and Oversight Services. (C.A.O.S.)*

Blanke nervously checks to see that no one is watching before pulling Rick close and urgently whispering...

BLANKE  
You're entering a house of mirrors!  
You won't survive without help! I can provide that help! All I ask is for a chance to prove my value!

Blanke slips Rick a business card and scurries off, disappearing around a corner. Rick's left wondering: What the hell was that all about?

INT. CIA HEADQUARTER - CLANDESTINE OPERATIONS - DAY

Sitting behind a spotless desk is DIRECTOR HIGGINS, 40s. Higgins approaches his job the same way a politician approaches a microphone -- calibrating his every word.

Higgins reviews Rick's application file when his AIDE enters.

AIDE

Mr. Martinez is here, sir.

DIRECTOR HIGGINS

Count to twenty then send him in.

Director Higgins slips Rick's file into a drawer, then dumps a box of file folders onto his desk, scattering them to achieve a "cluttered look." Rick enters moments later to find Higgins hunched over his desk "buried in paperwork."

DIRECTOR HIGGINS (CONT'D)

Have a seat. I apologize for the mess. We're under serious cost cutting pressures. Every program is up for funding review.

Director Higgins lifts his head, sizing up Rick.

DIRECTOR HIGGINS (CONT'D)

Tell me, how much money is too much to spend protecting this great country from a world increasingly filled with ignoble villainy bent on destroying our very way of life?

RICK

I wouldn't know, sir.

DIRECTOR HIGGINS

Well, I do. But I'm not at liberty to share budget numbers. Remind me, which program did you apply for?

RICK

The Core Collector Training Program.

DIRECTOR HIGGINS

Oh... that's unfortunate. Our CC program was red-tagged.

RICK

Red-tagged?

DIRECTOR HIGGINS

The program lost funding. Your job has been cut. I'm sorry.

Rick registers utter shock. Is this some cruel joke?

DIRECTOR HIGGINS (CONT'D)

Well, it was a pleasure meeting you  
Operative... 'er, Mr. Martinez.

Director Higgins returns to his work. Rick doesn't make a sound, or a move, his world silently imploding.

RICK

So... that's it? I'm out? But I've trained my whole life for a career with the CIA. My whole life! When my brothers went to soccer camp I stayed home and studied Arabic. When they were playing video games I was getting my pilots license! While everybody else was dating I was working at a firing range getting paid in bullets so I could train on semi-automatics! I will-- would-- could be a great spy. I'm dedicated, focused--

Rick reads Higgins' look as utterly uncaring.

RICK (CONT'D)

-- and embarrassing myself. I'm sorry. I... I suppose I should let you get back to slashing jobs.

Rick staggers to his feet and heads for the door. Unaware of Higgins delight over Rick's desperate outburst.

DIRECTOR HIGGINS

Hang on a minute.

Higgins gets out from behind his desk. He approaches Rick, drawing his attention to a large glass encasement. Inside the encasement hangs a U-2 Pilot flight suit and helmet.

DIRECTOR HIGGINS (CONT'D)

You're looking at one of my most prized treasures. That suit was worn by our U-2 pilots. At the altitudes they flew-- and without artificial air pressure-- human blood would boil. Paradoxically, were pilots forced to eject they would instantly freeze. Boiled or frozen alive without the protection of this amazing suit.

(then)

Our operatives have many amazing tools at their disposal.

(MORE)

DIRECTOR HIGGINS (CONT'D)  
 But do you know what the most  
 important item in an operative's  
 arsenal is?

RICK  
 No, sir

DIRECTOR HIGGINS  
 Trust.  
 (then)  
 There is a position available here,  
 at The Agency. A job-- an assignment--  
 that requires the savvy and skills of  
 a seasoned spy-- cloaked in the  
 veneer of youthful innocence.  
 Interested?

RICK  
 Yes.

DIRECTOR HIGGINS  
 Of course, due to the covert nature  
 of the position, I will need you to  
 accept the job sight unseen.

Rick's mind races, trying to reconcile the strange offer.

DIRECTOR HIGGINS (CONT'D)  
 Consider it our first test of trust.  
 Do you trust I have our country's  
 best interests in mind? Trust that I  
 have *your* best interests in mind?

RICK  
 I... I want to say yes...

DIRECTOR HIGGINS  
 (a mantra)  
 Trust. Trust.

RICK  
 Right, *trust*. Still...

DIRECTOR HIGGINS  
 My time, and patience is limited, Mr.  
 Martinez. As you so astutely noted--  
 I have many jobs left to slash.  
 (then)  
 So now I ask for the final time. Do  
 you accept the job?

Rick reels in the pressure of the offer. Feeling like he's  
 stepping into a trap... and we PRE-LAP...

LOWDEN (O.S.)  
 And you said *yes*.

INT. HELICOPTER HANGER - DESERT AIRBASE

We're back at the interrogation. CAMERA remains fixed on Rick -- he nods "yes." His expression pained, filled with remorse.

RICK

Director Higgins assigned me to the Office Of Disruptive Services. I was to monitor the activities of my fellow operatives and report back.

LOWDEN (O.S.)

Report what?

RICK

Proof of misconduct. Undocumented expenses, lack of receipts. No offense was considered too small. The Director was looking to red-tag the program. And to accomplish that he needed political ammo.

Lowden's voice drips with disgust.

LOWDEN (O.S.)

You're telling me you accepted the job of a mole? That you agreed to spy on your brothers-in-arms? That you entered the CIA spying on the CIA?

The condemnation is quite unnecessary. Clearly Rick regrets the decision. Off his discomfort we RETURN TO--

INT. CIA HEADQUARTERS - HALLWAY - OUTSIDE THE ODS - DAY

--Days earlier. Rick stands outside the door of *The Office Of Disruptive Services* -- filled with dread. He reaches for the door handle when a man hauling a desk chair approaches.

CASEY

Get the door, will ya?

Rick swings the door open and steps aside.

CASEY (CONT'D)

(calling inside)

Pants on, Billy! New guy's here!

Meet OPERATIVE CASEY MALICK, 30. A slight, ex-marine. On the whole, Casey expresses little interest in people. Content to spend his days inside a gym, or in his own head.



INT. CIA HEADQUARTERS - ODS - DAY

Rick follows Casey into the office. He takes in the bullpen. Over all the place has the feel of an accounting office than the expected CIA command center.

BILLY

Where are your manners? "New guy" has a name. Mick is it?

RICK

Rick. Rick Martinez.

BILLY

Martinez? You're a Mexicano! Bueno!!

Meet OPERATIVE BILLY COLLINS, 35. (Scottish) Billy is a gregarious, hard living, charmer. A man committed to nourishing his inner-devil over his inner-child. Billy admires the chair Casey has carried in.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Where'd you pinch that?

CASEY

From Plotkin's office.

Rick reacts involuntarily to the news.

RICK

The chair is stolen?

CASEY

If we made a formal request you'd be stuck on a milk crate for six months. Besides, Plotkin won't miss it.

RICK

Why not?

CASEY

Plotkin ate a bullet last week.

RICK

I'm sorry...

CASEY

No, literally. He ate a bullet. On a dare. It got lodged in his lower intestine. Septic shock set in. Now he's out on permanent disability and you're the proud new owner of his Herman Miller.

We realize the guys are setting up a desk for Rick. A third man enters the office lugging a desktop computer.

MICHAEL  
Is this the new guy?

BILLY  
His name's Rick. He's Mexican.

Meet OPERATIVE MICHAEL DORSET, 37. A trained psychologist turned Core Collector. Michael is a man that has little regard for fools in a world he perceives to be chock full of fools. Michael sets the computer on Rick's desk.

MICHAEL  
There you go. Your own desktop. It comes with Windows '97 installed.

RICK  
That's a joke right?

MICHAEL  
You're familiar with the IRS? Post Office? FEMA? What do they all have in common?

RICK  
They're government run agencies?

MICHAEL  
As is the CIA. Now, when was the last time you walked into the post office and shouted: "My God! I've stepped into the future!"

Casey begins unloading supplies from a cardboard box labeled: PLOTKIN. Billy snags a framed photo of a basset hound.

BILLY  
Look at the furry mug! Priceless!

He places the frame on Rick's desk.

RICK  
You're Scottish.

BILLY  
Indeed I am. Billy Collins. Born and bruised in South Edinburgh. I imagine you're wondering what I'm doing working for the CIA.

RICK  
A bit.

BILLY  
I was with the British Secret Service until I was *de-commissioned* for a bit of reckless, boyish mischief.

CASEY

They deported him.

BILLY

A mostly irrelevant detail. The point is, I landed here. Where I was welcomed into the CIA with open arms!

CASEY

In case you were unaware... The Agency has a rich history of wrapping their arms around sketchy characters.

BILLY

This proud fermenter of negativity is Casey Malick. I suspect you're wondering how such a boorish man with zero discernible charm has managed a twelve year career with the Agency.

(to Casey)

Tell him. Don't be shy.

CASEY

I'm a human weapon.

Rick looks to Michael for confirmation.

MICHAEL

I can never bring myself to say it. But it's true.

Billy motions to Michael.

BILLY

And this is our fearless leader, Michael Dorset. A tactical genius with a fevered brain. Which, sadly, has rendered him a devoutly paranoid bastard. Remember that the first time he asks to split a salad.

RICK

Why?

CASEY

He's looking to use you as a food tester.

MICHAEL

Spies get poisoned. It happens.

Michael plants himself on Rick's desk. His tone now pointed as he addresses his new office-mate.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Tell me, how did it come to pass that Director Higgins chose to bless us with additional staff when The Agency's cutting jobs right and left?

BILLY

Ah, the bastard emerges.

MICHAEL

I just think it's strange that Mr. Martinez is here. Strange, and requiring of an explanation.

(to Rick)

Well?

Michael fixes Rick with a challenging gaze. A beat.

RICK

I can only assume that the Directors' plan is for me to absorb your working knowledge of The Agency. Then replace you at half the pay.

Michael seems to take Rick's glib response as a direct challenge. Billy, on the other hand, loves it.

BILLY

I like this kid! He's muy caliente!

Michael's CELL RINGS. Almost simultaneously Billy and Casey's CELLS RING. All three men react to incoming text messages.

MICHAEL

You guys seeing this?

The men share a grave look and swing into action. Throwing on jackets, retrieving weapons. A mad scramble to get out the door. Rick sits at his desk-- utterly in the dark.

RICK

Is there something I need to know?

INT. CAR - D.C. STREETS - TRAVELING - DAY

Billy drives as the team speeds through traffic. Rick rides shotgun. In the back Michael and Casey are in contact with headquarters via cells and headsets--plugged into a laptop.

RICK

It may not be my place-- but what's happening?

BILLY

Plutonium residue was picked up at Reagan.

(MORE)

BILLY (CONT'D)

Passenger manifests ran against our suspected terrorist list produced a hit. A Yemenese land developer, Khalid Farooq, arrived from Dubai this morning. Michael's trying to get a lock on his cell.

(to Michael)

How about some coordinates?! I'm driving blind!

MICHAEL

I'm working on it...

As they speed on, Billy turns to Rick, and calmly inquires...

BILLY

Tell me, how much do you know about the ODS?

RICK

Uh... well... I know the program was created under President Carter, in response to the failure of Operation Eagle Claw--- our attempt to rescue Americans held in Tehran. That the ODS was meant as an experiment to try and ensure the success of future black-ops by combining three Directorates-- Operations, Intelligence Analyzes, and Tech Expertise--

Michael leans forward, interrupting.

MICHAEL

Got him! Four blocks South East!

BILLY

That's on the other side of the Park.

MICHAEL

Do what you've gotta do.

Billy veers hard. The car jumps the curb.

EXT/INT. CAR - GREAT LAWN - DAY

The sedan speeds across the Great Lawn. Billy grips the wheel tightly, expertly dodging pedestrians, cyclists, picnickers.

BILLY

(to Rick)

You were saying?

RICK

-- oh, uh, that the ODS was meant as a return to a time when ops were identified, planned, and implemented by a single team--

Billy muscled the wheel, while simultaneously slamming on the brakes -- sending the car into a fishtail slide. The car slots expertly into the flow of reverse traffic.

BILLY

That pretty much nails us, lad. The last of the old school spooks.

MICHAEL

Right ahead... ahead... stop!

Billy screeches to a stop at the curb. Michael points to a restaurant across the street. A lunch crowd has gathered at the Valet Service. Michael points to a businessman, FAROOQ.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

There. Farooq.

CASEY

We've got trouble. Clarkson.

Billy points to a MAN (CLARKSON) a few feet behind Farooq.

MICHAEL

Damn...

RICK

Who's that?

BILLY

Clarkson, Homeland Security. We're in potential hot water. Operating within U.S. Borders. Failing to share intelligence...

Farooq climbs into his Mercedes.

CASEY

Target's on the move.

Michael digs an envelop from his pocket, hands it to Rick.

MICHAEL

Make contact with Clarkson. Give him this copy of our coordination codes. And by all means treat him nicely-- he could have all our necks.

Billy swings Rick's door open. Rick jumps out. The others speed off in pursuit of the businessman. Rick spots Clarkson getting into his own car -- pulling into traffic.

Rick chases him on foot. Rick darts across four lanes of moving traffic-- dodging a UPS truck-- and in the process getting clipped by the truck mirror. Rick goes flying. He bounces off the sidewalk-- and right back onto his feet.

Rick finally catches Clarkson's car, pulling open the passenger door as it rolls to a stop at a light.

INT. CLARKSON'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Clarkson instinctively reaches for his shoulder weapon when Rick drops into the passenger seat. Rick waves his I.D..

RICK

No! No! It's cool! I'm CIA! We're tracking your man, Farooq. Here--

Rick hands the envelope out for Clarkson. Who doesn't seem to know what to make of the offer.

RICK (CONT'D)

--our coordination codes. We, I-- want you to have them. As a sign of mutual, respectful and cooperation between our two great agencies.

Clarkson smiles and plucks the envelope from Rick's hand before answering... in Russian.

CLARKSON

Spa-see-ba.

RICK

What?

CLARKSON

(Russian, subtitled)

I accept your offer of friendship.

RICK

You... you're Russian?

CLARKSON

(Russian, subtitled)

And you are CIA. We have much to discuss. Are you seeking asylum?

RICK

I... uh... wha?

Rick swings open the passenger door and dives out.

EXT. D.C. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Rick slams into the gutter. The Russian's car speeds off. Rick struggles to his feet-- his shoulder seriously out of whack. Billy's sedan pulls up. Billy leans out.

BILLY

Get in.

INT. BILLY'S SEDAN - CONTINUOUS

Rick slides inside. Dazed and confused. All three men smile, enjoying the sight of their disheveled friend.

MICHAEL

You're understandably confused. It's because you've been set up. Duped. We made up the mission. We made up the threat. We made up Farooq. We did all of that to trick you into climbing into a car and handing an envelope to a known Russian operative. Casey?

Casey displays a digital camera. He turns the viewer towards Rick and thumbs through photographs of him handing the envelope to the Russian.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

That there's some pretty damning stuff. Selling secrets to the Russians? You're looking at life without parole.

Rick's head is seriously spinning.

RICK

But... why?

CASEY

You think we don't have ways of knowing Higgins recruited you to spy on us?

BILLY

You placed your trust on the wrong horse, son.

MICHAEL

This is day one for you, right? Then consider this your first big lesson about life on the inside: *Trust within The Agency isn't earned, it's owned.* And now we own you.

END OF TEASER



ACT ONE

INT. BILLY'S CAR - IN FRONT OF RICK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Night has settled as Billy's sedan pulls to a stop in front of Rick's apartment. Billy and Rick the only passengers.

Rick makes no move to get out. Instead he silently sulks. Billy decides it's time to lighten the mood.

BILLY

I love winter in D.C. It always reminds me of summer in Scotland.

RICK

You've gotta believe-- I'm not a double-crossing kind of guy. I'm not. It wasn't my idea to be a mole. The Director manipulated me into saying yes before I even knew what I was saying yes to! If I'm guilty of anything it's that I'm easily duped by authority figures.

(then)

Which you obviously pegged.

BILLY

You traded your soul-- your honor-- for the promise of a job. Now, I can tell you've got the heart of a hero, but heart isn't enough to survive in the spy game. You need cunning. You need to be able to sniff out deception, manipulation. You need to think three steps ahead at all times.

RICK

I understand. And I'm not making excuses... but it was my first day.

Rick climbs out of the car. Billy feeling bad for the kid. The passenger window comes down. Billy leans out.

BILLY

Don't despair, lad. From where I sit you've still got a bright future with The Agency. Provided you play your cards right.

Billy slides back into the driver's seat. Starts the car.

RICK

Wait... what? What are you talking about?! What cards do I have?!

Billy drives off. Rick frantically calls after him.

RICK (CONT'D)  
I HAVE CARDS?!!

EXT. CIA HEADQUARTERS - QUAD - DAY

Rick hustles across the quad. A new day and a new shirt-- but the same suit-- looking a bit tattered from his roll in the gutter. As Rick enters the building he passes Blanke soaking up the sun. Blanke cheerfully salutes.

INT. CIA HEADQUARTERS - ODS - DAY

Rick enter the ODS. The guys are already there, feet up, thumbing through stacks of internal reports.

CASEY  
No coffee? You should have brought coffee. It would have gone a long way to winning us back.

Rick's not there to listen. He's been up most of the night thinking and he's got something to say.

RICK  
You guys don't own me! You think you own me-- but you don't! Sure you've got incriminating photos of me passing sensitive secrets to the Russians. But I have an eight hundred pound gorilla in my corner. I am sanctioned by the Director Of Clandestine Operations. A powerful, powerful man. And a man that is no fan of yours-- by the way. So I say show him the pictures! And I say he'll pick my word over yours!

Rick finally catches his breath. That felt good. The guys share a look: who wants to field this? It's silently decided that Michael will return the volley.

MICHAEL  
We wouldn't show the pictures to Higgins. We would leak the pictures to the press. And then you would become so toxic that Higgins would be left with no choice but to deny any connection. In fact, he would likely end up leading an investigation into your double-agent activities and no doubt recommend harsh punishment.

Rick realizes that Michael's right. He spins on Billy.

RICK  
You said I had cards!

BILLY  
I say a lot of things I don't mean.

Michael jumps to his feet. Snags the surveillance camera off of Casey's desk.

MICHAEL  
Relax. As Higgins' committed minion you still have double-agent value to us. With that in mind, we've come up with a way for you to earn your freedom.

Michael pops the photo-card from the camera. Waves it in front of Rick.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
We will destroy these photos-- freeing you from certain incarceration. If, in return, you agree to do a small job for us.

RICK  
Agreed.

Michael frowns: what a disappointment this kid.

MICHAEL  
You see? That there's your problem. You keep saying yes to jobs before you know what they are.

TIME CUT TO:

MOMENTS LATER. A FILE FOLDER lands on a desk. It opens to reveal a photo labeled "RICHARD ALDRIDGE"(40s). Trim, distinguished, perhaps a little bookish.

NEW ANGLE reveals Rick now at his desk, reviewing the file. Michael and Billy hovering over him. Pointing out details.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Richard Aldridge. AP print reporter. He's been held hostage by Sudanese rebels for coming on five months.

BILLY  
The AP has tried repeatedly to negotiate his release but every time they think they've reached an agreement the rebels simply up the ransom. It currently stands at eight million dollars.

Michael reaches past Rick, pulling a video up on his desktop. Michael hits PLAY.

MICHAEL

This video came to us yesterday.  
Courtesy of a French courier...

ON THE SCREEN

Richard Aldridge faces us. Seated on the ground. In a tent. Despite his emaciated appearance and filthy condition he still somehow manages to project a core sense of dignity.

RICHARD ALDRIDGE

...my *hosts* have become increasingly frustrated with your slow response to their latest demands. Beginning Monday I am to be denied food and water until the full ransom is delivered. I have been instructed to tell you that this is not a threat.  
(with difficulty)  
I suggest... no implore you to take them for their word...

Michael hits PAUSE. Rick is left staring at the troubling image of a man losing all hope. Casey leans in, showing his wristwatch to Michael.

CASEY

If this is going to happen then we'd better hustle.

INT. CIA HEADQUARTERS - HALLWAY - DAY

Casey and Michael flank Rick. The men move at a fast clip.

MICHAEL

We've tried repeatedly to get Higgins to authorize a rescue mission. But he's turned us down every time.

RICK

Why?

CASEY

Gutlessness. He's the kind of guy that thinks you can steal second -- while keeping one foot on first.

Rick looks to Michael for clarification.

MICHAEL

What Casey's trying to say is that Higgins defines success as the absence of failure.

(MORE)

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
 By not authorizing ops he doesn't  
 risk mission failure. "Inaction" has  
 become the battle cry of The Agency.

Blanke falls in step with the guys.

BLANKE  
 Morning! What are we up to?

Casey snarls at Blanke.

CASEY  
 Back off! Right now!

Blanke throws up his hands: no offense. As he recedes--

BLANKE  
 Weather report for tomorrow says  
 rain! Don't forget your umbrellas!

CASEY  
 Freakin' zombie.

RICK  
 Uh... what's the deal with that guy  
 anyway?

MICHAEL  
 His program was cut. He's got no  
 office. No place to report. So he's  
 stuck "walking the halls." Which is  
 tough because I think he's still  
 seven years from retirement.

They arrive at a set of double doors labeled: *Briefing Room*.  
 Michael thrusts the Aldridge file back into Rick's hands.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
 Here's your task: You're expected to  
 go into this Clandestine Briefing --  
 raise the Aldridge issue-- and  
 convince Higgins to authorize a  
 rescue mission. Which we-- the ODS--  
 will spearhead. In return, should  
 you prove successful, we'll give you  
 back your freedom.

Rick considers the challenge at hand.

RICK  
 How am I expected to succeed with the  
 Director where you've always failed?

MICHAEL

It's a long-shot, but something tells me he just might say yes to his trusted "man on the inside."

CASEY

Meaning you, *mole*.

Michael motions to the double-doors.

MICHAEL

Well, you'd better get in there. Meeting started forty minutes ago.

INT. CIA HEADQUARTERS - BRIEFING ROOM - DAY

A typical conference room. Twenty operatives in attendance. Higgins leading the meeting. Everyone's attention is directed to a video wall -- displaying *real time* satellite images.

Rick slips in, hoping not to be noticed. But in a room full of career spies that feat is simply impossible.

Rick takes the only free seat. Which happens to be next to FAY CARSON, 30s. Fay is a seasoned analyst, and a woman that exudes the rare combination of extreme confidence and great warmth -- rendering her infinitely crush-worthy.

DIRECTOR HIGGINS

...Ms. Carson. See what we can do about triangulating our concerns. The Georgian government-- as it were-- could prove helpful.

FAY

Yes, sir.

Higgins turns his attention to Rick.

DIRECTOR HIGGINS

I'd like everyone to welcome Mr. Martinez. A shiny new star in The Agency constellation.

Rick glances around the table. The collective "welcome" is unquestionably chilly. Higgins addresses Rick.

DIRECTOR HIGGINS (CONT'D)

We were just finishing up. Did you have business that needs addressing?

RICK

Um... actually, sir, I was hoping you might reconsider your position on the Aldridge hostage situation.

Higgins finds it impossible to hide his displeasure. He hadn't expected this subject to come up.

DIRECTOR HIGGINS

Read your case file. Mr. Aldridge is a French citizen. That, per national interests, makes him a French problem.

RICK

But he has dual citizenship. He's lived here most of his life. More importantly-- he's All American. Literally. He played cornerback for Florida State.

Higgins leans back in his chair, assuming a patronizing tone.

DIRECTOR HIGGINS

These briefings are about bringing new information. Do you have new information on Mr. Aldridge?

RICK

We know that the rebels have cut off food and water--

Higgins jumps on Rick's assertion.

DIRECTOR HIGGINS

The rebels have made a *threat*. A threat does not constitute actionable intelligence.

RICK

But isn't this one time when the threat is enough?

Higgins answers the question by changing subjects. He points Rick's attention to the live satellite feed.

DIRECTOR HIGGINS

These images are coming from the Chetznian-Azerbaidzhan border. A known haven for Al-Qaeda sympathizers. Give me your assessment. What are we looking at?

The satellite images show pixilated people passing in and out of some sort of underground facility.

RICK

It appears to be some sort of bunker.

DIRECTOR HIGGINS

The opening isn't large enough to suggest it's an operating nuclear facility. Which leads you to believe...

RICK

...it's an ammunition cache.

DIRECTOR HIGGINS

Making it a site possibly worthy of a pre-emptive strike.

RICK

Yes. I suppose so.

DIRECTOR HIGGINS

Ms. Carson, would you care to bring Mr. Martinez up to speed?

FAY

(a bit reluctantly)

It's not a bunker. It's a root cellar. Those are potato farmers storing potatoes for winter.

Rick feels sufficiently embarrassed.

DIRECTOR HIGGINS

*Actionable intelligence*, Mr. Martinez. I'd recommend you take the time to understand it's true meaning. Thank you, everyone. That's all for today.

(to Rick)

Stay put.

Rick braces. Shit. The room empties.

TIME CUT TO:

MOMENTS LATER. Director Higgins prepares himself a cup of coffee. He takes his time returning to the conference table-- where Rick awaits-- silently freaking out.

DIRECTOR HIGGINS (CONT'D)

It's clear to me that Michael has been whispering in your ear. Sounding the charge to battle. I feel compelled to remind you that he is a dangerous man. A man who's inflated ego habitually masquerades as uncompromising heroics.

Higgins sits next to Rick. His tone calming, even fatherly.



DIRECTOR HIGGINS (CONT'D)  
 But heroics must be balanced with risk. Physical *and* political. To you it must appear Mr. Aldridge is caught in a dangerous game of chicken between us and the French. I assure you nothing could be further from the truth.

RICK  
 So what is the truth?

Higgins sips coffee, confident he holds all the cards.

DIRECTOR HIGGINS  
 Unfortunately, the truth lives above your pay-grade. Give me your cell.

Rick hands over his cell phone. Higgins programs in a number.

DIRECTOR HIGGINS (CONT'D)  
 This is my personal cell. Call me anytime. I want you to succeed. More than everyone. In fact I may be the only true friend you have in The Agency.

Higgins hands the phone back to Rick.

DIRECTOR HIGGINS (CONT'D)  
 So, how is our little project going? Have you dug me up anything useful on the ODS?

Rick doesn't know how to answer this loaded question. The best he can come up with on short notice--

RICK  
 Still no... actionable intelligence.

INT. CIA HEADQUARTERS - ELEVATORS - DAY

Rick steps into an open elevator. He finds himself riding alongside Fay. They exchange a look of recognition before settling in for a silent ride. Finally--

FAY  
 You know, I wouldn't sweat your call back there. Half the room voted to bomb the potato people.

Before Rick's allowed any comfort by her words-- his cell BINGS. He's gotten a text message -- from Michael.

*"Heard you tanked with Higgins."* BING. *"Important you succeed."* BING. *"A gentle reminder..."* BING.

A PDF of Rick handing an envelope to the Russian operative appears. Rick lets out a tiny eek of discomfort.

FAY (CONT'D)  
You seem stressed.

RICK  
Do I?

FAY  
I bet I know what's wrong.

RICK  
I seriously doubt that.

Fay takes Rick's doubt as a professional challenge. She turns to face him head-on.

FAY  
You've been on the job less than a week and already you've managed to land yourself on the battle line of some twisted turf war between Director Higgins and the operatives of the ODS. You find yourself being squeezed, flattered, and threatened all at the same time. And every option presented to you feels like a career-ender. Your heart pounds every time you enter a room-- your head spins every time you leave. And at this very moment you're seriously considering listening to that little voice in your head saying *Run away. Run away. It's not too late to apply to grad school. I can still manage a fall-back career in teaching.*

Rick takes in Fay's spot on assessment.

FAY (CONT'D)  
Of course I'm guessing on the teaching part. I could just as easily picture you as a pharmacist.

RICK  
You're... good.

FAY  
Well, I'm a pro.

The elevator doors open. Fay steps out. She turns, holding the door open and smiles, inviting.

FAY (CONT'D)

I could really go for a steak. You like steak? I'm betting you do.

INT. D.C. STEAKHOUSE - NIGHT

Fay and Rick have been served dinner at the bar of a fancy D.C. Steakhouse. Fay sips from a frosty martini, savoring the flavor, while Rick unloads his stress.

RICK

I don't get it. Why does the Director need me? Why doesn't he just crush these guys with his awesome powers?

FAY

You've got to remember that Higgins is mid-management. The ODS has friends in high places. They are protected, and will remain so right up to the point where they screw up. At which time, Higgins will most certainly step in and crush them.

(then)

You're familiar with the concept of office politics? Ours come with poison pills and guns.

RICK

But I thought our job was to fight the enemy? That we're entrusted to protect our country, not our careers.

FAY

You are seriously adorable. I remember when I started working for the CIA. And I see it in your eyes-- the hope... The unvarnished dream of saving the world from evil deeds and evil people. Adorable.

RICK

I... I feel like I'm fighting for survival here.

FAY

That's because you've got to pick a side in this fight: Higgins, or the ODS. No one survives in the spy game unprotected.

RICK

But how do I know who to trust?

FAY

You can't turn to another spy for that answer. You can only trust yourself. Trust your ability to recognize the choices that are right and wrong-- for you. Then live with the consequences.

Fay polishes off her martini.

FAY (CONT'D)

But enough with the shop talk. Tell me something about you that I can't expertly deduce?

RICK

Like what?

FAY

Like... are you seeing anyone?

RICK

Not right this moment. No.

FAY

Any serious relationships behind you?

Rick laughs. This is a touchy subject with him.

RICK

Tons of them.

FAY

Tons?

RICK

Yeah, the thing is I tend to get *serious* with a woman way too soon. Which probably explains why I don't land many second dates.

FAY

You fall in love too fast. I think that's great. It means you're emotionally open. A quality seriously lacking in the men I usually date, who-- as you can imagine tend to be rather secretive creatures.

(then)

I have this crazy theory about dating in The Agency. Would you like to hear it?

RICK

Sure...

Fay turns to face Rick, excited for the opportunity to share.

FAY

Okay, here goes: Commit to being a couple on the first date. Then work out the relationship details later. You know, sexual compatibility, religious compatibility. The whole making babies issue... Marriage.

(then)

Look at us for example. If we wanted to couple up we'd have to commit tonight. Right this minute. Because within a week we'd be keeping so many secrets from one another that it would doom any hope of us surviving a normal courtship.

Rick becomes aware Fay's hands are now resting on his knees.

RICK

Are... you trying to seduce me?

FAY

No. I... is that where you're thinking this is headed? Or is it where you're hoping it's headed?

Rick gives this question serious thought.

RICK

Both? I'm sorry. My capacity to reason is a bit off these days.

Fay takes no offense. Instead she is utterly charmed.

FAY

You are seriously adorable. I'm having another martini. You in?

Rick notices Michael standing at the back of the restaurant. He motions for Rick to join him.

RICK

Sure. Excuse me. Potty break.

Rick slides off the bar stool. He heads for the back.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - BEHIND D.C. STEAKHOUSE - NIGHT

Michael drags Rick out of the rear entrance of the restaurant. He pulls him down the dark alleyway.

RICK

What are you doing?

MICHAEL

Saving your ass. You obviously don't know Fay works for Higgins.

RICK

She does?

MICHAEL

She's his Primary Analyst. His right hand gal. His functioning brain.

(then)

My guess is that Higgins knows that we know he sent you to spy on us.

RICK

You think Fay was working me?

MICHAEL

Have you stepped in front of a mirror lately? That woman is way out of your league. Why else would she be wining and dining a newby like you?

Billy's sedan screeches to a stop beside them.

INT. BILLY'S CAR - NIGHT

Michael and Rick pile into the back seat. Billy at the wheel. In the passenger seat a rather slight Frenchman, VIDOR.

VIDOR

(to Michael)

I do not bring good news. My government buckled to CIA pressures. We sent two agents in to negotiate the release of Aldridge. And we... well... we lost them.

MICHAEL

Killed?

VIDOR

Vanished. Poof. For my government, there is no appetite for further loss of life. We informed your director-- with hopes he would step in. But, sadly, he does not trust our account of the lost agents. He fears we play a game with him.

This news doesn't seem to bother Michael. In fact it appears to invigorate the man.

MICHAEL

Well, then. It falls to us to get it done. Billy?

BILLY

Agreed. We'll get it done.

RICK

What are you getting done?

MICHAEL

We're going to travel to Sudan  
without Agency authorization and  
rescue Aldridge.

VIDOR

They are doing what Americans do best-  
- they are going rogue.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. CIA HEADQUARTERS - ODS - DAY

Rick sits at this desk. The guys enter the office and crowd over him -- a trio of Cheshire Cats.

BILLY

This is your lucky day, lad. You are about to be granted a second shot at securing your freedom.

MICHAEL

Our mission requires a translator. An Arabic speaking translator. Interested in making a trade?

RICK

I'm pretty sure Central Sudanese tribes speak Juba. Which is a regional form of pigeon Arabic.

The guys stare -- that matters how?

RICK (CONT'D)

Which I am also versed in. Just saying...

MICHAEL

If you're on board, sign this.

A legal looking form is placed on the desk.

RICK

What is it? A nondisclosure form?

CASEY

It's a W-2. You'll need to become an employee of our corporation.

Rick's examining the documents. He reads:

RICK

Salvation America?

MICHAEL

It's our non-profit foundation. We maintain it as a cover for crossing international borders-- when Agency deniability is required.

BILLY

It also comes in handy in times like these-- when flying below Agency radar is required.



Rick draws a breath -- here we go again-- he signs the form.

INT. CIA HEADQUARTERS - HALLWAY - DAY

Michael leads our team down the hall.

MICHAEL

I've got us booked on a flight to Cairo. Leaves Reagan at six-forty. From Cairo we'll piggy-back a CTC hopper into Khartum.

BILLY

Logistical support?

MICHAEL

I'm calling in favors with some friends at SIS. We'll be covered.

(to Rick)

There's a travel warning for all of North Africa. Yellow Fever outbreak. I don't suppose you've been inoculated?

RICK

I'm pretty sure I had a tetanus shot in the third grade.

MICHAEL

We'll have to deal with that.

(then)

The plan is to contact the Rebels, present ourselves as representatives for the AP and pay the ransom.

BILLY

And who exactly are you planning to hit up for eight million--?

Billy cuts off his own question-- when he sees that Michael has lead them to the COUNTERFEIT RECOVERY OFFICE.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Oh, I see where this is headed.

CASEY

Looks like you guys got this covered. I'm going to hit the gym. Maybe sneak in a massage. We're looking at one helluva long flight.

Casey peels off. Rick turns to Billy.

RICK

Is he always so helpful?

BILLY  
 Don't worry about Casey. At crunch  
 time he'll bring it.

INT. CIA HEADQUARTERS - COUNTERFEIT RECOVERY - DAY

The guys enter the Counterfeit Recovery Office. DORIS BALSHIK (40s), a sour-eyed woman that clearly favors her love of fried foods over her figure, types away at her desk.

Billy plants himself on her desk. He turns on the charm, unleashing his pitch perfect Sean Connery impersonation.

BILLY  
 (as Connery)  
 Hello, Ms. Money Penny. You look  
 ravishing today.

Balshik starts, unimpressed.

BILLY (CONT'D)  
 (as Connery)  
 This is the part where you pretend not  
 to be charmed. But flirt shamelessly  
 nonetheless -- before ultimately  
 granting me the favor I so desperately  
 need. And in return I agree to submit -  
 - at some distant time -- to your  
 deepest carnal desires.

BALSHIK  
 I'm not really a Connery fan.

BILLY  
 (as Connery)  
 How's that possible? This accent is a  
 siren's call to reckless fornication.

BALSHIK  
 Not for me. Maybe if you could manage  
 a Tobey Maguire accent.

BILLY  
 You're joking.

BALSHIK  
 What can I say. I like a lap-size man.

Balshik's gaze settles on Rick-- sizing him up. Rick makes a point of appearing as tall as possible.

Michael steps in to take his shot at Balshik.

MICHAEL

We really need your help, Balshik. And we're willing to make it worth your while. A trade perhaps...

BALSHIK

A trade? You mean a bribe. And that simply won't fly. What are you going to bribe me with, Dorset? Money? I work for the Counterfeit Office. I'm sitting on billions. Offer me a promotion? Forget it. I'm not the least bit interested in climbing the ladder around here. I like my little corner of the world.

Michael is nonplussed by the resistance. He already has this woman's number.

MICHAEL

What about Greece?

Michael motions to not one, but three desk calendars -- displaying the beaches and azure blue waters of Greece.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

What if I could get you stationed in Greece? Then would you be willing to make a trade?

BALSHIK

You can make that happen?

MICHAEL

I spent three weeks in a Serbian tool shed duct taped to the Mediterranean Field Director. In his darkest hours my co-captive confided in me a rather colorful array of personal failings and professional malfeasances.

(then)

Trust me, I can make it happen.

Balshik's interest is clearly peaked.

INT. CIA HEADQUARTERS - STORAGE ROOM - DAY

The lights POP ON in this tiny storage room. Balshik leads our guys inside. We discover bundles of cash, wrapped in cellophane stacked high on a folding table.

Balshik tears open one of the bundles of cash. Hands them each a one hundred dollar bill.

BALSHIK

We just picked these up in Hong Kong. It's top notch work. Bleached five dollar bills reprinted as one hundreds. Only they seriously screwed up. Can you spot it?

MICHAEL

Watermark is off.

BALSHIK

Most people won't notice that. I'm talking about the big mistake.

Michael flips the bill, recognizing the mistake.

MICHAEL

You've got to be kidding me...

Rick and Billy flip their bills -- unable to spot the flaw.

RICK

(to Billy)

What am I missing?

BILLY

Beats me. I'm still looking for a Prime Minister.

MICHAEL

The back is printed upside down. See? Flip the bill over and it's not noticeable. Flip it side to side-- impossible to miss.

BILLY

(to Balshik)

You've nothing laying around that might prove less fatal for us?

BALSHIK

You want to walk out of here with eight million dollars-- this is as good as it gets.

INT. CIA HEADQUARTERS - INFIRMARY - DAY

Rick sits on an examination table in the CIA Infirmary. His shirt off. A NURSE finishes administering a shot and exits. Rick rubs his shoulder, feeling some discomfort as--

Fay enters, her mood sour.

RICK

Oh. You... I mean... hello.

FAY  
Higgins is gunning for you.

RICK  
What?

FAY  
He's picked up chatter. He's convinced the ODS is inserting themselves in this Aldridge problem. Are they?

RICK  
I... am not at liberty to say.

FAY  
Look, I can only warn you. I can't protect you. Nor am I inclined to. By the way, you owe me fifty-four bucks for that steak dinner.

RICK  
I'm so sorry about that. I got pulled away.

FAY  
By Michael, no doubt.

RICK  
He was saving me... from whatever nefarious plan you were, you know, seducing me for.

FAY  
And you believed him?

RICK  
Well... yeah.

FAY  
Because I'm the evil ex.

RICK  
No... wait? Ex?

Fay realizes that Rick is in the dark.

FAY  
You don't know. Yes, ex. Michael and I used to be married. Until I divorced him for being too damn controlling. Which, apparently, was a message he failed to receive!

Rick once again finds himself behind the eight ball.

RICK  
So, you weren't spying for Higgins? I mean, you really did like me?

FAY  
Yes. I really did like you. Note the past tense phrasing.

Fay turns to go.

RICK  
How did you know? How did you know where to find me?

FAY  
Director Higgins programmed your phone with a tracking code. You're in the system. He knows where you are at all times.

Rick pulls out his cell. Holds it like a toxic hot-potato.

INT. CIA HEADQUARTERS - CLANDESTINE OPERATIONS - DAY

Higgins is at his desk. His Aide standing dutifully by his side. His desktop displays a GRID of CIA headquarters -- where an electronic PULSE indicated Rick's exact location. Higgins resigns himself to a tough decision.

DIRECTOR HIGGINS  
Bring him in.

AIDE  
(into earpiece)  
We're a GO.

INT. CIA HEADQUARTERS - VARIOUS/INTERCUT - DAY

A SECURITY DETAIL sweeps down the hall, directions buzzing in their earwigs. "Main Entrance... Central corridor..."

HIGGINS' OFFICE. The Director calmly wipes a smudge from the glass case housing his treasured U-2 flightsuit.

MAIN LOBBY. The Security Detail BLASTS through the front entrance, spilling into the main lobby, trampling over the CIA seal. The main lobby appears empty.

COMPUTER MONITOR. Rick's PULSE indicates he's there.

MAIN LOBBY. The Security Detail zig-zags through the lobby, checking behind every pillar. They complete their sweep-- nearly colliding with one another. No sign of Rick.

HIGGINS' OFFICE. The Aide, losing his cool, angrily barks--

AIDE

He's gotta be there! You should be looking right at him!

Higgins steps back to his desk, considering the puzzle: We see on the monitor that his security detail has surrounded a PULSE --but no Rick. And with almost zero effort deduces...

HIGGINS

He's on the roof.

MAIN LOBBY. The Security Detail looks straight up. Duh.

STAIRWELL. BAM! The door flies open. The Security Detail sprints up the stairs, taking them three at a time.

ROOFTOP. The Detail arrives, spotting a FIGURE in the distance step behind an elevator housing -- and out of view. The Detail splits into two groups, surrounding the housing.

BEHIND ELEVATOR HOUSING. The Security Detail rounds the corner, stopping short at the sight of--

Blanke -- tossing birdseed to ravenous pigeons. He grins at the Security Detail, unconcerned by his discovery.

BLANKE

What up, my bros?

INT. CIA HEADQUARTERS - CLANDESTINE OPERATIONS - DAY

A bag of birdseed is dropped onto Director Higgins' desk alongside Rick's cell phone.

AIDE

His phone was stuffed in the bag of birdseed.

HIGGINS

And just when I was beginning to think him an idiot.

Rick's cell phone RINGS. Higgins contemplates the meaning. Is this some sort of game? He lifts the phone to his ear.

DIRECTOR HIGGINS

Hello..? No, this is his boss. No, I don't know. Yes, I will relay the message. You have a great day too.

Higgins ends the call. His Aide stares. What happened?

DIRECTOR HIGGINS (CONT'D)

That was his mother. She's wondering where her son is.

Higgins flings the cell onto his desk.

DIRECTOR HIGGINS (CONT'D)  
That is the burning question...

EXT. SUDANESE DESERT - AID STATION - DAY

A C-130 Cargo Prop Plane touches down on a remote desert airstrip and taxis to a stop.

Michael is hit with a blast of desert heat as he cracks open the door. He spots a man waiting on the tarmac. This is...

VINCENT FURIO, 30s, their Italian contact. Vincent is decked out in a sport coat and long pants. Evidently fashion trumps comfort for this particular Italian. Standing alongside Vincent, holding a serving tray covered with bottled cokes, is his smallish Sudanese ASSISTANT.

Vincent greets Michael and the others with hearty hugs as they climb down the gangplank. Michael introduces Rick.

MICHAEL  
Vincent, this is Martinez. He's part of our team.

VINCENT  
A fourth Musketeer!? Fantastic!

Vincent embraces Rick. Then points to the cokes.

VINCENT (CONT'D)  
Welcome! Enjoy a frosty beverage!

Michael snags a couple of sodas, hands a bottle to Rick. The baked glass burns his hands.

RICK  
Ow! They're hot.

MICHAEL  
We're six hundred miles from a working refrigerator. You're expected to use your imagination.

EXT. SUDANESE DESERT - AID CAMP - DAY

The camp is a staging area for distributing aid supplies. We see large crates of aid being loaded into U.N. supply trucks. In an open tent we find Vincent and Michael hunched over a folding table, reviewing a map, conversing in Italian. Billy and Casey check their GPS system-- comparing their position with their location on the map. Vincent indicates--



VINCENT

We are here-- approximately fourteen kilometers from the rebel encampment.

MICHAEL

What can you tell us about the big boss?

Michael lifts a photograph of a REBEL on horseback wearing fatigues and designer shades, posing with an AK-47 on his hip. A war criminal's equivalent of a publicity photo.

VINCENT

His name is Doji. Ask him and he'll say he's waging war against Southern Sudan succession. Ask me and I say he murders, rapes and terrorizes for money. That said, you'll find him a reasonable fellow.

MICHAEL

Reasonable?

VINCENT

This country has been locked in a civil war for fifty years. Savagery has become the national pastime. Doji is a brutal man, yes, but his judgement remains unclouded by intractable ideology. He is above all a profiteer. Much like every soul you will meet wandering in this desert.

MICHAEL

You have horses for us?

VINCENT

Yes, but I suggest you wait until sunset to begin your journey. It is suicide to travel in this heat.

MICHAEL

Our hostage is on his fourth day without food or water. We travel immediately.

Vincent shrugs: your funeral.

EXT. SUDANESE DESERT - DAY

Blinding sun. Scorched earth. Four riders crest the horizon. The horses limping along, smart enough to conserve energy in the crippling heat. Billy notices Casey coating his nose and cheeks with bright pink zinc sunscreen.

BILLY

That is a beautiful color on you. Not every man can pull off such a flamboyant under-shadow.

CASEY

They confiscated my good sunscreen at the airport! That's why I hate-- hate flying commercial!

They ride along for a beat. Billy reads Rick's somber mood.

BILLY

Why the sour puss, lad? We're on horseback, riding through the heart of hell to save a man from certain death! This is heroes work! Trust me, when you're old and feeble...

(indicating Casey)

... like Pink-Cheeks, you'll look back on these as happy days!

RICK

It's just... you're not worried about what Higgins will do to us when we get back to the Agency?

The question momentarily snuffs out the spark in Billy's eye. He flicks his reins, hurrying his steed.

BILLY

Only if we fail. Only if we fail...

EXT. DESERT - (LATER THAT) DAY

Michael has dismounted. He stands on a rise, holding a pair of binoculars, studying the rebel camp in the valley below. It looks like something out of a *Mad Max* movie. A patchwork of stolen Red Cross tents and metal huts linked together by rope and wire. Piles of rotting garbage ring the encampment.

A Land Cruiser outfitted with a Browning 50 caliber machine gun, and filled with Rebels, speeds out of the camp.

Michael lowers his binoculars. His mind racing, accessing his options as his partners catch up to him.

BILLY

They're sending out a greeting party.

The Land Cruiser stops a couple of hundred yards away. A silent standoff ensues. Michael makes a decision.

MICHAEL

Casey, I want you to ride down and make contact.

(MORE)

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Inform them we're representatives from the paper. That we've come to pay Aldridge's ransom.

CASEY

Me? What about the kid? He's the one that speaks Arabic.

MICHAEL

Which is why I can't risk having his head blown off before we settle into negotiations.

Michael hands Casey a note.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

This will explain everything.

Casey reluctantly takes the note. He gallops down the embankment, arriving alongside the Rebels moments later.

From their distant viewpoint, Michael, Billy, and Rick watch Casey hand the note to the Rebel Driver. The driver crumples the note, unread, and tosses it back into his face. The Rebels descend on Casey --pulling him from his horse. He's savagely punched and kicked.

Casey crawls on his belly -- channeling Don Knotts -- seeking refuge under the truck. Rick turns to the others, confused.

RICK

Human weapon?

MICHAEL

No doubt he's picking his moment.

Casey's dragged out by his feet-- kicking and squirming. A rifle held to his head. He's a hostage now. The Rebels calmly signal for the others to ride down.

BILLY

At the risk of sounding disparaging, I sense we are not dealing with gentlemen.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. REBEL CAMP - DAY

The guys are led by gunpoint into the camp. They are brought to a young rebel KAYA(16) -- seated in a makeshift throne -- which consists of a car seat bolted to wooden pallets. Kaya shouldered an AK-47. He fires-- strafing a burned-out U.N. truck. He lowers his rifle as they approach.

MICHAEL

(to Rick)

Tell him we've come to negotiate with Doji for the reporter's release.

Rick translates. Speaking in Arabic. Kaya responds in kind.

RICK

He says that we can't talk to Doji.

MICHAEL

Why not?

Rick asks the question. Kaya respond by aiming at a huge mound of garbage. He FIRES, causing the vultures to scatter. When they do we realize the birds were feasting on a human body -- presumably that of the dead rebel leader, Doji.

Kaya speaks to Rick. He again translates.

RICK

He says his name is Kaya. And that he is in charge now. And that we must negotiate with him.

INT. REBEL CAMP - LATER - DAY

A BLACK SCORPION tries to climb the walls of a shoebox. A second scorpion in dropped inside the box.

WIDER ANGLE: We see that the shoebox rests at Kaya's feet -- where he uses a stick to coax the scorpions to fight. Kaya delights in his tiny gladiator battle, remaining mostly oblivious to--

OUR GUYS: Seated together on the ground. Still held at gunpoint. Their supplies rifled through by the Rebels. A duffle bag of cash (in bundles) is dumped on the ground.

A bundle is broken open, and bills are distributed to Rebels. Our guys watch -- careful not to betray their worry as Rebel after Rebel examines the bills, each man FLIPPING them over. Finally, Kaya is assured the bills are good.

MICHAEL

Tell them that's two million. The remainder will be brought once we've confirmed that Aldridge is alive.

Rick speaks to Kaya in Arabic. Kaya respond.

RICK

He wants to know where you've hidden the rest of the money.

MICHAEL

That remains a secret until we have Aldridge safely in hand.

Rick translates. Kaya grins, responds.

RICK

He's asking why he doesn't start shooting us one by one until we've told him where the money is hidden?

This question momentarily stymies Michael.

BILLY

I'll field this one.

(to Rick)

Tell him that bloodshed is bad for business. That a true leader would understand that an open hand -- in negotiations like these -- achieves more than a closed fist.

Rick translates. Kaya responds. Rick hesitates...

MICHAEL

What did he say?

RICK

That he doesn't need to shed blood to find the money. That he can simply break a few fingers.

Our guys exchange concerned looks. Kaya grins, understanding his threat has registered.

BILLY

Well, he's clearly gained the upper hand in this negotiation.

Rick makes a decision. He jumps to his feet. All the rebel guns now trained on him. Rick speaks to Kaya -- quickly, forcefully. We don't know what's being said, but it's clearly gotten the young Rebels undivided attention.

MICHAEL  
What did you say?

RICK  
I blew my cover.

MICHAEL  
You what?

RICK  
I told him that I alone know where  
the money is hidden. I told him that  
I am an elite operative of the CIA.  
That breaking my fingers would  
accomplish nothing. That I was  
trained to endure intense torture.  
Trained to beat death itself.

Kaya stares, attempting to surmise Rick's wild claim.

BILLY  
I love the bold words, lad, but I  
fear he's about to ask for a  
demonstration.

RICK  
Yeah, I know...

Rick steps forward. He reaches into the shoebox, snagging one  
of the scorpions by the tail. He raises the squirming  
creature up and drops it into his mouth.

All watch, disgusted and horrified, as Rick devours the live  
scorpion. Once complete, Rick raises his arms, shrugs-- the  
scorpion having been eaten with no apparent ill affect.

A beat of stunned silence follows. Then--

BILLY  
(brightly)  
Highlight of the mission-- right  
there!

Kaya too is apparently impressed. He steps forward, slapping  
Rick on the back, addresses him in a friendly tone.

MICHAEL  
What did he say?

RICK  
He says that I am a fool. And he  
wants to know if I have a dying  
request.

MICHAEL  
Tell him you want to see Aldridge.

INT. REBEL CAMP - HOSTAGE TENT - DAY

RICHARD ALDRIDGE sits on the ground, his head resting on his knees -- his breathing labored in the stifling heat.

MICHAEL (O.S.)

Richard...

Aldridge raises his eyes, sees Michael standing over him.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

My name is Michael Dorset. I'm with the CIA. We've come to get you out.

Michael holds a canteen of water to Aldridge's lips. The reporter clutches the canteen, draining it's contents.

Michael takes in the tent -- it is home to a dozen or more civilian captives --mostly white and Asian. All of whom look to be fighting for their lives.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Jesus...

EXT. REBEL CAMP - HOSTAGE TENT - CONTINUOUS

Billy, Casey, and Rick await outside with the Rebels. They take a mental count of the full tent.

BILLY

(to Rick)

Ask who all these people are.

Rick questions Kaya. Kaya responds with a glimmer of pride.

RICK

Hostages.

Kaya continues to speak. Rick translates.

RICK (CONT'D)

He says that we are safe to take Aldridge tomorrow. Provided we bring the rest of the money. He says that he wants us to see that he is a reasonable man. That he can be trusted to keep the other hostages alive, presuming ransoms are forthcoming.

Kaya extends an open hand to Billy -- as if sealing the business deal. Billy smiles, shakes Kaya's hand and says--

BILLY

You, sir, are a royal cocksucker.

Kaya looks to Rick for a translation.

RICK  
I'm going to stick with a simple  
*thank you.*

EXT. DESERT - LATER - DAY

The men ride away from the rebel camp, the mood somber, the group clearly moved by their encounter with the hostages.

BILLY  
What was your head count back there?

MICHAEL  
Fourteen hostages. Chinese oil speculators. Dutch Aid workers. And our two missing French Agents.

CASEY  
So, what are you thinking? We planning an extraction?

MICHAEL  
The three of us against a hundred-plus heavily armed rebels? Not a chance.

RICK  
Four.

MICHAEL  
What?

RICK  
There are four of us. You didn't count me. I'm prepared to do whatever's required.

MICHAEL  
As comforting as it is to know we might have the pleasure of dying in each other's arms... I still say no.

BILLY  
You are aware that half of those poor souls will starve before their releases are negotiated.

MICHAEL  
I'm not blind to that fact. But the *four* of us mounting a suicide mission won't solve that problem.



RICK

Then I say we contact The Agency --  
share our Intel. There are multiple  
lives at stake now--

MICHAEL

--which is exactly why they won't  
take action. The CIA's not in the  
business of rescuing foreigners,  
remember?!

Rick's sense of outrage getting the best of him, snaps--

RICK

So your recommendation is "inaction."

Michael spins on Rick, all semblance of charm and wit  
dropping away. His eyes flare from a rarely tapped rage.

MICHAEL

Never, ever challenge my courage! I  
have not given up on those hostages!  
To even suggest otherwise--!

Michael chokes off his outburst. Which nevertheless places  
Rick back in his saddle.

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

Our guys sit around a campfire, contemplating the day.  
Michael has a stack of files in his lap-- which he scans.  
Rick finally musters the courage to address Michael.

RICK

I'm sorry about, you know, what I  
said back there.

MICHAEL

Don't sweat it. I recognize you were  
born stupid. But I also recognize  
that you are capable of learning.

RICK

I'd like to believe I am.  
(off reports)  
What's that?

MICHAEL

My weekend reading. Internal reports.

RICK

You dragged those this whole way?

MICHAEL

I pride myself on keeping up. In case you didn't know, there are over seventeen thousand employees at the CIA. Less than a thousand are core operatives, like us. Gathering vital human intel. The rest of them sit back home generating threat reports.

(off reports)

Somewhere in all this clutter-- rests the oil that will light our lamp.

RICK

Lamp?

MICHAEL

The lamp we -- the operatives of the ODS hold high-- as a beacon -- guiding our once proud agency on its return to greatness.

Billy and Casey share a look: clearly no fans of Michael's sermonizing.

BILLY

You know, you're not scoring many sanity points with the kid by rambling on like a Knight of the Round Table.

MICHAEL

I think he gets my meaning.

RICK

You chose to prioritize results over risks. I imagine there was a time in The Agency when they called that leadership.

Michael nods, satisfied with the response.

BILLY

Well, since we're all in love again, I think it's high time we gave Mr. Martinez his present.

Billy pulls a flash-card from his pocket, tosses it to Rick.

RICK

What's this?

BILLY

The pictures of your Russian tryst. We relinquish ownership.

(MORE)

BILLY (CONT'D)

You proved yourself to be a man of action back in that camp. You have proved yourself worthy of our respect. You, sir, have earned your freedom.

This unexpected gift catches Rick off guard. It means more to him than he ever expected.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Today I witnessed the bravest thing I've ever seen in my life. I watched a man eat a deadly scorpion. A *live* poisonous scorpion.

RICK

Thanks, but it was an Emperor Scorpion. And they're not lethal. I know, I had one as a pet. Point of fact-- they're considered a great delicacy in parts of central Asia.

(then)

Although I found the experience... unpleasant.

MICHAEL

I suggest you destroy that flash-card at the first possible opportunity.

Rick thinks, then tosses the flash-card into the fire. Billy pulls a flask from his backpack..

BILLY

I propose a toast. To *Senor* Rick -- mission MVP!

(to Rick)

First honors.

Rick accepts the flask, feeling compelled to say something. Filled with emotion, flush with a feeling of camaraderie.

RICK

Your respect... it means a lot. More than you can know. The thing is, I didn't join the CIA to write reports or earn a pension. I joined to help make the world safer.

(looking to Billy)

I joined to do "heroes work." When we get back to The Agency-- and I have to report to Director Higgins-- I will tell him that I was proud to have served with the ODS. If only even for a week...

Rick takes a swig from the flask. He enjoys the burn.

RICK (CONT'D)

That... is... good... stuff.

Rick turns to hand the flask to Michael. Then, recoils, as if he'd just received an invisible punch.

Rick's eyes roll back in his head and he drops to the ground -  
- knocked out cold. Drugged by his fellow operatives. Michael and Casey share a look: the plan worked. Billy leans over to check Rick's pulse and confirm he's okay.

BILLY

(to no one in particular)

Sometimes we can be right bastards.

EXT. REBEL CAMP - MORNING

Morning light is just breaking over the rebel camp. A Rebel Sentry spots a horse approaching the camp -- and Rick, unconscious, strapped to its back.

MOMENTS LATER. Rick is cut loose. He falls to the ground. Landing with a thud-- which jars him awake. Rick struggles to make sense of where he is-- finally piecing together that he's back in the grasp of the Rebels. Shit.

Kaya leans over Rick. He asks--

KAYA

(subtitled)

Where are your friends?

RICK

(subtitled)

Damn good question.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

EXT. REBEL CAMP - NIGHT

The hour is late. A few open fires provide what little light there is in the rebel camp. With the exception of a wandering sentry or two, there is no other sign of movement.

INT. REBEL CAMP - HOSTAGE TENT - SAME

The Hostages are spread out on the ground, asleep. Among the hostages we find Aldridge, and laying beside him...

Rick-- wide awake. His sour expression makes it clear he's not counting sheep, but more likely imagining ways to murder his betraying partners.

A BAGPIPE melody begins to BLARE through the camp. Rick sits up on his elbows. None of the Hostages stir. He looks out of the tent (the walls of which are mesh) and spots some Rebels chatting by a fire-- oblivious to the blaring bagpipes.

Rick hops to his feet, his eyes searching for the source of the music when it suddenly cuts out, replaced by--

BILLY (O.S.)

You've been listening to the dulcet pipes and stirring drums of the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards, playing *O'er The Blows of Ballindalloch*.

By this point Rick understands Billy is in his ear. He digs his finger in his ear, unable to locate an earwig.

BILLY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Don't bother trying to dig out the receiver, lad. It's glued to your inner eardrum.

RICK

Can you hear me?

BILLY (O.S.)

Indeed we can.

RICK

What the hell happened to you guys?

BILLY (O.S.)

First, our sincerest apologies for drugging and ditching you like we did. You see, it was the only way we could see fit to motivate Director Higgins to mount a rescue operation.

RICK  
By getting me taken hostage?

BILLY (O.S.)  
We needed to put pressure on him. We needed an operative in impending danger. Meaning, you.

RICK  
And you couldn't tell me that in advance? You couldn't be bothered to loop me into the plan?

BILLY (O.S.)  
There was some concern you might chicken out. Not from me, mind you.

RICK  
Who? Who thought I would chicken out?

BILLY (O.S.)  
I'm not naming names. Just know that I was out-voted two to one.

The dull ENGINE ROAR of low flying drones begins to be heard over the camp. This is heard by the Hostages, who stir. It's also heard by the Rebels-- who scramble-- guns ready.

RICK  
What's happening?

Michael now cuts into the conversation.

MICHAEL(O.S.)  
The mission is underway. Keep the hostages on the ground. Get them covered best you can-- with coats, sheets, rugs, whatever you've got.

By this point the Hostages have all awakened -- aware of the aerial assault-- and an OILY MIST, falling over the camp.

Sporadic GUNFIRE begins breaking out around the camp-- as the Rebels shoot into the night sky at an unseen adversary.

Rick addresses the Hostages. Assuming command.

RICK  
A CIA rescue operation is underway! I need everyone to lay flat! And cover yourselves!

The Hostages begin to scramble under rugs and sheets.

MICHAEL (O.S.)

Rick, it's important you try and not get wet.

Rick realizes that he's already soaked, his face and arms coated by the oily mist.

RICK

Too late for me. Why?

(no response)

Guys? What happens if you get wet?

BILLY (O.S.)

(gently)

Sorry, buddy. This may hurt a bit.

Just then-- A TREMENDOUS FLASH rips through the camp. The mist becoming ELECTRIFIED. Rick is charged with electricity-- as if hit by a taser. He drops to the ground convulsing.

EXT. REBEL CAMP - CONTINUOUS

The Rebels are tasered by the mist. Some writhe in pain-- others knocked unconscious. All drop like flies.

In the next instant, Soldiers begin to sweep through the camp, engaging in hand-to-hand combat, securing incapacitated Rebels. Gunfire rings out.

INT. REBEL CAMP - HOSTAGE TENT - SAME

The remaining Hostages begin to crawl out from under their sheets and rugs. They all appear okay. And are thrilled when--

Michael, Casey, and Billy slip into the tent -- wearing full paramilitary garb, and armed with handguns.

The guys find Rick on the ground-- conscious, and apparently having lost feeling in his tongue. Which he stabs into the air-- in an effort to regain speech. Michael and Billy pull Rick to his feet. Explaining--

MICHAEL

(to Rick)

We have to split the hostages into two groups. We can't fit them all in one helicopter. Billy and I will take the more injured. You and Casey will lead the others to the second drop point. Got it?

Rick can't quite form words, so he simply nods.

EXT. REBEL CAMP - NIGHT

Casey leads Rick and the Hostages past the outskirts of camp, and into dessert night. They begin to draw GUNFIRE from within the camp.

CASEY  
Down! Down!

Casey hurries the Hostages into a slight ravine. He and Rick piling in after them, as--

The Land Cruiser blasts out of the darkness, zeroing in on the group, the 50 millimeter peppering the night with MUZZLE FLASHES. Casey considers his puny handgun. He turns to Rick.

CASEY (CONT'D)  
What's the Arabic word for surrender?

RICK  
Islam.

CASEY  
Islam?

RICK  
It means surrender-- as in surrender to God.

CASEY  
Well, I recommend you start shouting it.

And with that Casey sprints off into the darkness. It takes Rick a moment to realize that he's just been abandoned.

RICK  
Really?! You're running away?! What happened to the human weapon?! Huh?! You know, I knew you would suck!! This comes as no surprise!!

Rick thrusts his arms high as the Land Cruiser, filled with Rebels rolls up. Rick shouts:

RICK (CONT'D)  
Ehna Islam!!! Ehna Islam!!!

The Rebels command the Hostages to join Rick. One by one they pull themselves off the ground. Their capture secured, when--

A BLUR catches Rick's eye a split second before-- Casey leaps out of the darkness --and onto the truck -- fists and feet moving in concert, taking out the Rebels in an explosive, deadly display of hand-to-hand combat.



Rebel bodies topple from their perch on the truck. And within seconds Casey had dispatched the lot and taken control of the Land Cruiser. At long last Rick has seen the "human weapon" in action. He is dutifully impressed.

Michael and Billy arrive on foot.

MICHAEL  
(re hostages)  
Any injuries?

RICK  
No, we're good.

The sand beneath their feet begins to STIR -- the rescue copter drawing near. Michael and Billy climb into the Land Cruiser-- with Billy manning the 50 millimeter. Michael shouts to be heard over the copter roar.

MICHAEL  
Keep them safe! We'll provide all the cover we can!

Casey turns the Land Cruiser and steers back toward the rebel camp. The sound of a fierce FIREFIGHT echoing in the darkness as our fearless trio disappears -- back into the breach.

Rick shields his eyes, buffeted by sand, looking up as the Blackhawk's blinding SPOTLIGHT shines down on him, and we--

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. HELICOPTER HANGER - DESERT AIRBASE

We're back in the helicopter hanger --where our tale began. Rick has just finished reporting to Lowden. The Chief of Station's opinion of his detainee has shifted-- now begrudgingly impressed. Lowden pulls a coke from his cooler, pops the cap, and sets the drink in front of Rick.

LOWDEN  
I suppose I owe you a belated congratulations. The mission was a complete success. All the civilians are safe.

RICK  
And my partners? Any word on my partners?

LOWDEN  
Unharmed.

Rick is visibly relieved to hear the news. Lowden gets a phone call. He answers his cell.

LOWDEN (CONT'D)

Lowden.

Lowden listens, snaps to attention.

LOWDEN (CONT'D)

(into phone)

Yes, sir. I'm looking right at him.

Rick knows who's on the other end of the line. Knows that it was only a matter of time before he'd have to face--

INT. CIA HEADQUARTERS - CLANDESTINE OPERATIONS - DAY

-- Director Higgins. Seated behind his spotless desk. The picture of contained fury. Rick is shown in by Higgins' Aide. Rick takes a seat across from the director.

Higgins silently considers his wayward protege. Rick holds Higgins' gaze, defiant, refusing to submit to shame.

DIRECTOR HIGGINS

Less than a week ago you sat in this very office. At that time I provided you with a job. And in return all I asked for was your trust. You betrayed that trust. You chose, instead, to place it in the hands of reprobates. Three men that define everything that is currently wrong with the Agency.

Director Higgins straightens his desk blotter. Making sure it aligns perfectly with the edge of his desk.

DIRECTOR HIGGINS (CONT'D)

It's been said that the two greatest dangers facing the world are these: order and disorder. I happen to accept half of this statement as true. You clearly accept the other. I am confident time will prove me right. And when that day comes-- rest assured I will show no mercy.

(then)

That will be all.

Rick struggles to make sense of Higgins' cryptic declaration.

RICK

I'm not fired?

DIRECTOR HIGGINS

No. You are now permanently assigned to the ODS.

INT. CIA HEADQUARTERS - ODS - DAY

Casey, and Billy are at their desks, relaxing. Michael plows through a stack of Internal Reports. Rick stands before them.

RICK

I don't understand? Why am I still here?

BILLY

Our mission report was leaked to the White House -- detailing your participation and personal heroics.

MICHAEL

This was a big win for the Agency. And the White House. Which is why your job is safe. For now.

RICK

That's... wow... thank you.

CASEY

Don't thank us. We didn't leak the report. Personally, I'm still tee-d off. I heard your desert insults. Your words stung. They stung hard.

Rick looks to Michael and Billy for clarification.

RICK

If not you guys, then... who?

Billy and Casey turn to Michael. He'll have to field this one. Michael hesitates, reluctant to answer, and we--

INT. D.C. STEAKHOUSE - NIGHT

Fay eats dinner at the bar. Rick approaches, he takes the bar stool beside her. She looks over, annoyed.

FAY

That stool's occupied.

RICK

It is?

FAY

Yes, by a jerk-ass.

Rick quickly realizes she means him.

RICK

I deserve that. Look, Fay, I came here for two reasons.

(MORE)

RICK (CONT'D)

First, to thank you for leaking the report. And secondly, and more importantly, to ask you to come home with me.

Fay nearly chokes on her salad.

FAY

What?!

RICK

I think we should couple up. Tonight. Right away. We should walk out of this bar and into a committed relationship -- before the next mission risks ending the possibility of us forever.

Fay turns to face Rick, giving him her full attention.

FAY

You obviously haven't noticed, but I'm stone sober. Which means, if your goal is to take me home, you'll have to do a lot better than throwing my own words back in my face.

RICK

Okay... okay... let me try my words.

(then)

From day one at The Agency, everyone I've met, everyone I've trusted, has played me. My boss, my partners... everyone but you. And in spite of the crazy week I've just had-- I still want a career in The Agency. It's clear to me now that I'm not going to accomplish that without help.

Rick slides closer to Fay. Focused, filled with urgency.

RICK (CONT'D)

I need a touchstone. A tether to reality. Someone I know that I can trust completely. I want-- I hope that someone can be you.

(remembering)

Plus-- I think you are the most amazing woman I've ever met. Seriously. I just spent two days in the Sudan dodging bullets, eating bugs, and getting roofied. And not once-- at any point in all that craziness-- were you out of my thoughts.

Fay softens, clearly charmed by Rick's efforts.

FAY  
Remind me, how old are you?

RICK  
Twenty-six.

FAY  
I suppose that's old enough to fully appreciate "amazing" when you see it.

INT. RICK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The apartment is dark. Silent. Suddenly the front door bursts open. Rick and Fay tumble in, hot and heavy, kissing, fumbling to rip off each other's heavy coats.

Rick kicks the door shut and the two fall, in a heated embrace, onto the couch, landing in the lap of--

Billy, seated in the dark. The couple stares up at the grinning Scotsman.

BILLY  
Evening, Boyo. Fay...  
(to Fay)  
Might I say you look quite ravishing  
this evening.

The lights POP ON. We find Michael and Casey seated at the kitchen table.

MICHAEL  
I think the more appropriate  
description would be *ravished*.

Fay sits up, brushing her hair back, not altogether surprised to see the guys.

FAY  
Billy. Casey.  
(to Michael)  
Miserable Bastard.

Rick hops to his feet, greatly annoyed.

RICK  
What are you guys doing here?!

CASEY  
We've been activated. I-MINT shows a handful of "organic tea farms" in central Cambodia may actually be fronts for heroin refinement.

BILLY

Heroin that funds the terrorist activities of the Jemaah Islamiyah. Otherwise known as al-Qaeda's ugly cousin.

MICHAEL

We're expected to infiltrate and confirm with human intel. My guess is the Director is throwing us back in the field as punishment for the Aldridge affair.

(to Fay)

Am I right?

FAY

(admonishing)

You have to expect bite-back when you poke the bear.

Rick turns to Fay, feeling betrayed.

RICK

You... you knew about this?

FAY

My hope was that this could wait 'till morning. Sorry.

Michael hops to his feet. Pleased with himself. He claps an arm around Rick.

MICHAEL

I don't want to see any tears about this, Martinez. Remember, you're the one that wanted to do "heroes work."

The fact is, there are no tears. Instead, Rick looks quite energized. Ready for action. This is what he wanted.

RICK

What's our cover?

MICHAEL

We go in as buyers for a Portland based organic grocer.

CASEY

I packed for you.

Casey grabs a duffle off of the table, tosses it to Rick. The bag STRIKES him in the chest. And we MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. CAMBODIAN JUNGLES - DAY

Where Rick is STRUCK in the chest with the very same bag.

WIDER: Our guys are now deep in the Cambodian jungles. The air thick with moisture and bugs. We discover they are in the process of unloading supplies from their SUV -- which is stuck in a deep muddy rut, on a narrow dirt road.

Billy notices Casey has tucked his pants inside of his knee-high gym socks. He looks suitable ridiculous.

BILLY

Jungle fever already set in?

CASEY

You won't be laughing when we encounter leeches. And we will encounter leeches.

The team gathers in front of the SUV. They take in the road ahead, which disappears into dark, dense jungle overgrowth.

MICHAEL

My guess is we have about a two mile hump.

Before they can take a step-- a CRASHING NOISE booms from the jungle. Something HUGE is coming at our guys, snapping bamboo trees like blades of grass. They brace for an attack, armed only with luggage as--

-- an elephant steps out onto the narrow road. On top of the elephant sits a CAMBODIAN MAN, armed with a semi-automatic. A dozen more ARMED MEN step out of the brush, guns trained on our team. A tense beat. Billy turns to Rick.

BILLY

You've got hostage experience.  
What's our move?

Off of Rick, poised for battle, mind racing, loving it--

END OF PILOT