

SHELL GAME

Written by

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Adapted from the novel SHELL GAME by Douglas Clark

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FADE IN

EXT. RURAL ROAD IN NIGERIA, AFRICA - DAY

Africa savannah captioned 'Near Kaduna, Nigeria'

American journalist MARK REYNOLDS is riding in the rear seat of an open-sided jeep on a dusty dirt road. In the front is a driver and Nigerian journalist ABEJIDE OJUKWU.

Close to 100 degrees, REYNOLDS is sweating while OJUKWU seems unaffected by the heat, his starched white shirt dry. The DRIVER is scruffy in a dirty shirt with a missing front tooth.

REYNOLDS
How much longer, ABEJIDE?

A road block becomes visible ahead manned by armed soldiers.

OJUKWU
(British accented English)
Looks like this might be it.

DRIVER stops the jeep. A soldier approaches.

SOLDIER
You cannot pass. Turn back.

DRIVER looks at OJUKWU in the passenger seat.

OJUKWU
We are journalists. We understand there has been some sort of industrial accident at the Agriproducts plant.

SOLDIER
I know of no such accident. This is a restricted military area. Now turn back.

The soldier steps back and levels his assault rifle.

DRIVER puts the jeep in reverse then makes a U turn. Drives back the way they came.

REYNOLDS
Think the road block has to do with this chemical leak?

OJUKWU

Of course. A reliable source spoke of casualties. A village by the name of Mobatu.

REYNOLDS

Casualties? From what?

OJUKWU

Ever heard of methyl isocyanate?

REYNOLDS

No.

OJUKWU

But of course you know of Bhopal, India? 1984?

REYNOLDS

Christ! You mean its the same stuff that killed those thousands?

OJUKWU

That has yet to be confirmed. But it is a strong possibility. I did some research on the Internet. Seems this methyl isocyanate is a by-product produced in the manufacture of a pesticide called Tricarb. That's what Agriproducts makes at this plant. Tricarb itself carries certain dangerous toxicological effects. Not even licensed for use in Europe or the United States. But Tricarb is cheap. So it has widespread use in Africa.

REYNOLDS

And it's this by-product methyl isocyanate stuff that's so dangerous? Right?

OJUKWU

That was the lethal agent in Bhopal. Highly toxic to the respiratory system. It's also heavier than air. That means it will not dissipate easily. Stays near the ground and pools in low areas.

Reynolds looks down at a map.

REYNOLDS

According to the map Mobatu is only a few kilometers east of here. What about we walk there? Off the road through the bush?

OJUKWU turns in his seat to look at REYNOLDS.

OJUKWU

If we get caught we'll be arrested. Maybe something far worse.

REYNOLDS

Willing to try?

OJUKWU stared at REYNOLDS for a moment considering the risk before turning to the DRIVER.

OJUKWU

Stop the vehicle, Joshua.

The jeep comes to a stop on the side of the road.

OJUKWU (CONT'D)

You are to return to this same spot in five hours. It'll be dark by then.

The DRIVER'S eyes widened in fear.

DRIVER

No, that is not possible. Much too dangerous.

REYNOLDS extracts a one hundred bill from his pocket and hands it to the DRIVER. The DRIVER hesitates for a moment then takes the money.

REYNOLDS

Another hundred when you return.

The DRIVER nods.

EXT. WALKING THROUGH SCRUB BUSH TERRAIN - AFTERNOON

REYNOLDS' and OJUKWU'S shirts are soaked with sweat after an hour, drinking the last of their water from plastic bottles.

They come over a slight hill looking down on a small river separating them from an impoverished village on the other side. Mud-brick houses. Rusted automobile carcasses.

Men clad in white contamination suits move about the village. Bodies are being carried and laid out in rows. Nigerian military vehicles and several eighteen-wheel tractor trailers with Agriproducts logos can be seen.

REYNOLDS takes digital close-up photographs with a large lens.

REYNOLDS

Let's get out of here.

EXT. BRUSH CONCEALMENT OFF SIDE OF DIRT ROAD - EVENING

REYNOLDS and OJUKWU have returned to the rendezvous spot. Hide in brush waiting for their DRIVER. Sun has just set.

REYNOLDS

What do ya think? Another Bhopal?

OJUKWU

Certainly looks like it. Now the question is what to do with the photos.

REYNOLDS

What do you mean? Publish of course. These pictures will be front page throughout the world.

OJUKWU

Not in Nigerian. The Government will never allow it. You see Agriproducts has a parent company, Pan Africa Holdings. Very big. Petroleum, minerals. Very connected. In Nigeria that means bribery of government officials.

REYNOLDS

You mean the government will try to cover this up?

OJUKWU

Most definitely. My guess is they'll claim it was the work of Islamic terrorists. Certainly not implausible in rural Nigeria.

REYNOLDS

Could it have been terrorists?

OJUKWU

Possible but unlikely. This region is firmly under government control. A fertilizer plant is not much of a terrorist target. So my friend, you will break this story from America. Best that I was never even here. You should hide the memory card with the photos. Just in case.

REYNOLDS nods then looks at his watch.

REYNOLDS

Do you trust our DRIVER to return? The guy looked pretty scared.

OJUKWU

He'll be along. Won't pass up the additional money you promised. Besides, Joshua is my wife's brother.
(smiles)

INT. NEW YORK DAILY PRESS NEWSPAPER OFFICES - DAY

Front page newspaper headline: 'Nigerian Disaster Another Bhopal - Hundreds Dead'

REYNOLDS is sitting in the office of the managing editor JOHN FREDERICKS along with researcher RACHEL STERN and financial editor BERNIE POOLE. FREDERICKS is mid-fifties, graying hair, in shirt sleeves with a tie. REYNOLDS is wearing a sport coat, no tie. STERN is wearing a white blouse, skirt, and low heels, hair up, wearing glasses. POOLE is in his sixties, thinning hair, glasses, tie and jacket, professorial appearance.

FREDERICKS

These photos are dynamite. Roll them out over the next several days with your follow up pieces.

Sequence of photographs shows bodies covered with sheets and Nigerian Army personnel in hazardous materials suits.

FREDERICKS (CONT'D)

Damn this is good material.

REYNOLDS

Thanks, John.

FREDERICKS

But I'm having trouble with your other stuff about Martinelli Global. I've read this whole thing. You're making a case that they're some kind of ...well you tell me. What do you think they are, MARK?

REYNOLDS

Try criminal enterprise for a start.

FREDERICKS

Wait, wait. I'm not reading criminality necessarily into this stuff. Am I wrong, BERNIE?

POOLE

Not sure, JOHN. Never seen such an elaborate and particularly secret array of corporate entities. Secret because down every chain of subsidiaries there is a tax-haven foreign corporation cut-out. Well beyond what other corporations typically do.

FREDERICKS

So? I understand that all multinational corporations use foreign subsidiaries. And those in places like the Bahamas and the Cayman Islands. All legal under U.S. Tax law. Am I right?

REYNOLDS

You're missing the point, JOHN. MGI is doing things that other corporations...

(FREDERICKS interrupts)

FREDERICKS

BERNIE, am I missing where the criminal activity is in all this?

POOLE

Well there's no proof or any smoking gun for that matter. But clearly MGI has a very suspicious business model.

FREDERICKS

(looking at REYNOLDS)
Business model?

(MORE)

FREDERICKS (CONT'D)

For Christsake you want to go on this witch hunt and make MGI your poster child for corporate global excesses? Another Enron perhaps? On what evidence?

REYNOLDS

Not an Enron, JOHN. Enron used creative accounting techniques to inflate profitability then hid their double-dealing through off-shore foreign subsidiaries. But MGI's different.

FREDERICKS

How? Summarize for me. I've read this master's thesis you guys have put together. Only someone like BERNIE can understand all this complex financial shit.

REYNOLDS

Here's the narrative, JOHN. MGI starts out as an immigrant success story at the turn of the last century. From Italian olive oil importer to one of the largest U.S. import-export companies after World War Two. Their own shipping and trucking fleets. But MGI is more than Walmart sourcing from sweat shops, or Microsoft sourcing programming in India.

FREDERICKS

How so?

REYNOLDS

First is where they invest, Some of the most corrupt countries in the world. Now they've gone into the big leagues, Russia. Secondly is their dominate control of a particular economic sector in those countries using local partners. Their success alone makes a compelling case that they must be partnering with corrupt government officials, and maybe even criminal enterprises to operate in these places.

FREDERICKS

Do they look fishy to you, BERNIE?

POOLE

Certainly unusual. If you dig back into their earlier history, they appear involved with illegal operations generations earlier when it was a family business. Liquor smuggling during Prohibition. Rumors of alliances with the Mafia. Even Lucky Luciano.

FREDERICKS

Can you prove any of that, MARK?

REYNOLDS

Unfortunately no. Too long ago. But that's not the story. The story is about sophisticated modern corporate buccaneering today.

FREDERICKS

(looks at POOLE)

So why doesn't Wall Street boycott them, BERNIE?

POOLE

Because they're consistently profitable over decades. A Wall Street darling. No one's ever put it all together before. RACHEL did impressive work here. She went down some arcane rabbit holes to produce a mountain of data. Data never collectively examined before. MARK is on to something here.

STERN

MGI flies under the radar, JOHN. Keeps a low profile. They've gone to elaborate lengths to obscure where their foreign investments profits come from.

FREDERICKS

(rolls his eyes)

Okay, here's the deal. Maybe you guys are on to something. Personally I don't see it as sinister like you do. My guess is lots of corporations have investments in bad places. Anything to make a profit. That's your focus on this series of articles, right, MARK?

REYNOLDS nods.

FREDERICKS (CONT'D)

I'm just saying don't put all your faith in MGI being the vehicle to carry the water for all the bad things corporations do.

REYNOLDS

Well this business in Nigeria is a good start. I'd like to play that up. Union Carbide took a real beating over Bhopal. It'll be interesting to see how MGI reacts.

FREDERICKS

I agree. Push the follow-up for all its worth. I'm just saying don't overreach. Keep the story to the Nigerian disaster.

REYNOLDS

But there's more, JOHN. You apparently didn't read everything in my report. What about Columbia?

FREDERICKS

What do you mean?

REYNOLDS

I mean Columbia is something more than an investment that hit a rough patch like this pesticide plant in Nigeria. A reliable source claims MGI is involved with the drug cartels. Laundering their money.

FREDERICKS

And this source?

REYNOLDS

The usual. A disgruntled ex-employee. A senior manager named Brown. Saw the headlines linking MGI to the Nigerian disaster. Gave me an extraordinarily detailed scenario of how MGI operates in Columbia.

FREDERICKS

Confirmed any of what he told you?

REYNOLDS

Some. Actually BERNIE and RACHEL did. Too complicated for this guy to be just making things up. The short version is MGI has a monopoly on the Columbia coffee industry. But nothing in their annual report leads to that conclusion. Control is exercised through a chain of foreign subsidiaries and banks. All off-book in their SEC filings. The coffee trade is the vehicle for laundering drug money. That's the real MGI story, JOHN.

FREDERICKS

So what are you suggesting?

REYNOLDS

I need to go to Columbia. Brown gave me the name of another insider that got canned along with him. A local. I also talked to a journalist in Bogota. He says he's willing to share information on the Columbian coffee trade.

REYNOLDS LOOKING OUT AIRCRAFT WINDOW OVER BOGOTA, COLUMBIA

CAPTAIN ANNOUCEMENT

Please fasten your seat belts. We will be landing in Bogota in fifteen minutes.

INT. OFFICE OF COLUMBIAN JOURNALIST JUAN CORTINA - DAY

REYNOLDS enters. CORTINA is seated at desk.

CORTINA

Welcome to Columbia, Señor REYNOLDS. Please sit down.
(to his secretary)
Maria, dos cafés por favor.
(back to REYNOLDS)

What you suggest about the collusion of these major coffee companies is interesting, Señor REYNOLDS. Your resources are much better than mine. But I am more than happy to contribute what I know.

(MORE)

CORTINA (CONT'D)

Two of these people you have named, Carlos Fuentes and Miguel Vargas, have family connections to the drug trade. Fuentes is from a wealthy banking family. The Vargas family has tentacles extending everywhere. Important government positions, senior army officers. Many different business enterprises.

CORTINA hands REYNOLDS a thick folder of type written pages.

CORTINA (CONT'D)

Here is all the information I have on those individuals you're interested in.

REYNOLDS does a cursory scan of the documents.

REYNOLDS

And why have you not published any of this? Especially this guy Manuel Ortega, boss of Cordillera Este Brokers. Sounds like a real monster.

CORTINA

He is. Impossible to corroborate. Even though I work in a corrupt Third World country, journalistic ethics still have a place. But the real reason is fear. It's public knowledge that he likes young girls. Seduces and rapes girls in their teens. Then he pays off or threatens the parents. The details of his alleged crimes are all there in the material I gave you. Ortega is believed responsible for at least six murders, two young girls and two sets of parents.

REYNOLDS

And the police won't do anything?

CORTINA

Enough evidence exists to arrest Ortega, but that will never happen. You see his uncle is the commanding general of internal security. All these people are protected. Too dangerous to publish in Columbia.

(MORE)

CORTINA (CONT'D)

So I will do the next best thing by helping you publish in the United States.

REYNOLDS

And this manager of República Agricola. What's his background?

CORTINA

We don't have a lot of information on Pablo Lopez other than what is public. His father is the dominate financial force within the ruling party. Moneyed, old family. Runs not only República Agricola but the family's vast land holdings. Perhaps the largest landholder family in Columbia. Lopez is educated in the U.S. Different background from the others that run these coffee companies.

REYNOLDS

This is a gold mine of information, Señor CORTINA. Perhaps this ex-manager of Cordillera Este Brokers can provide insider details. I got his name from another ex-employee. That's why I came to Columbia.

CORTINA

Señor Mendez apparently owns a restaurant in a working class neighborhood. I too am anxious to see if he will tell us anything. My driver is waiting.

REYNOLDS and CORTINA get into a SUV. The DRIVER standing alongside is a big man with dark glasses wearing a bullet-proof vest with a pistol evident in a shoulder holster.

INT. INSIDE SUV DRIVING THROUGH BOGOTA - DAY

REYNOLDS

Do you always travel about with this kind of protection?

CORTINA

Unfortunately, a necessary precaution. Now tell me about this Mendez we are going to see.

REYNOLDS

The source in the United States named Brown and Mendez were both fired over the same incident. Brown was an accountant at MGI. Dealt with their Columbian enterprises. He's the one that connected MGI to the coffee industry here through two foreign corporations, Americas Agrarian Holdings and South American Products. Together they own 95% of the Columbian coffee market.

CORTINA

And these corporations are not known to be actually owned by MGI?

REYNOLDS

That's right. MGI hides that through another foreign corporation which is listed in their SEC filings. But it's more than about trade monopoly. MGI also finances their coffee trade through another foreign corporation Latin Trust Group. Latin Trust I believe becomes the vehicle to launder drug money masked by the coffee business. So MGI controls the coffee profits, takes a percentage on the drug money, then avoids taxes through their tax havens shell companies.

CORTINA

What do we hope to get from Mendez?

REYNOLDS

More details than Brown could provide since Mendez was closer to the operation. Both lost their jobs over an error actually made by Ortega that cost a lot of money. Brown only talked because he has terminal cancer. Maybe Mendez wants revenge too.

CORTINA

Not likely that Mendez will tell a couple of newspaper reporters that sort of information. In Columbia that could easily lead to an ugly death.

INT. RESTAURANT IN WORKING CLASS BOGOTA NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

REYNOLDS and CORTINA enter and take seats at the bar. Only a couple of other patrons are present. A middle-aged woman comes over to them from behind the bar.

CORTINA

*Buenos tardes, Señora. Habla Usted
Ingles, Señora?*

MENDEZ WOMAN

Si.

CORTINA

Is Señor Mendez here?

Woman's expression registers fear.

MENDEZ WOMAN

No. Who are you?

CORTINA

My name is JUAN CORTINA, and this is MARK REYNOLDS. Señor REYNOLDS is from the United States. We are both journalists. Would you know how we might get in touch with Señor Mendez?

The woman's eyes dart around the restaurant nervously.

MENDEZ WOMAN

I am MARIA MENDEZ. My husband is dead. He died last year.

CORTINA

I am very sorry, Señora. How was it that he died?

MENDEZ WOMAN

A bullet to the head. He killed himself.

CORTINA looks at REYNOLDS with expression of disappointment.

REYNOLDS

That is most tragic, Señora MENDEZ. Do you know why your husband would take his own life?

MENDEZ WOMAN

What did you want to see my husband about?

REYNOLDS

A man by the name of Brown in the United States gave us his name. He worked with your husband. We wanted to ask your husband if he knew anything about Cordillera Este Brokers being financed by drug money.

MENDEZ's face stiffened almost imperceptibly but revealed no expression. Turning away she brought cups and poured three coffees.

CORTINA

We know there was some sort of mistake that lead to your husband's dismissal. Mr. REYNOLDS is researching a large international corporation that we believe controls the coffee market in Columbia. We're attempting to corroborate information that these companies also engage in other illegal enterprises.

MENDEZ took a sip of coffee before speaking.

MENDEZ WOMAN

My husband took his life not because he lost his job. What destroyed him was what happened to our daughter. You see she too took her own life two months earlier.

CORTINA was about to say something but MENDEZ held her hand up to stop him.

MENDEZ WOMAN (CONT'D)

Señor CORTINA, please allow me to finish. You must understand this is most difficult. This is about that pig Manuel Ortega the boss of Cordillera Este. You see our daughter also worked at Cordillera. She was just nineteen. With my husband no longer at the office, Ortega was free to pursue her. Gifts, high-living. It was not long before she moved in with Ortega. She refused to even see us.

Tears roll down MENDEZ face.

MENDEZ WOMAN (CONT'D)

A few weeks later the *policia* come to our door. They say our daughter is dead. A victim of a hit and run driver. That night we were shown her body. Her face was ... unrecognizable. All the bruises. We are not stupid. Anyone could tell her injuries were not from an automobile. She'd been beaten. We knew Ortega did this.

CORTINA

You have suffered terribly, Señora. You are probably correct that Ortega did this to your daughter. He has killed other young women but the police will do nothing. Unless you know something of your late husband's business dealings, we shall trouble you no longer.

MENDEZ looks at REYNOLDS.

MENDEZ WOMAN

You are Americano?

REYNOLDS

Yes. I work for a New York newspaper.

MENDEZ WOMAN

Un momento.

MENDEZ leaves the bar and goes into a back room. REYNOLDS looks at CORTINA with an inquisitive look. Moments later she returns holding a large manila envelope.

MENDEZ WOMAN (CONT'D)

This man named Brown worked with my husband. They both lost their jobs over a mistake Ortega made. Ortega of course blamed them. But this is for what he did our daughter.

MENDEZ hands REYNOLDS the envelope.

REYNOLDS

What is this, Señora?

MENDEZ WOMAN

About Ortega's business dealings. Perhaps you can make use of this. I do not know its importance.

(MORE)

MENDEZ WOMAN (CONT'D)

My husband meant to give this to someone who might avenge us. I have saved this for the right opportunity. I hope that I am not mistaken.

INT. REYNOLDS AND CORTINA BACK INSIDE SUV - DAY

REYNOLDS opens the package then hands the sheaf of papers to CORTINA. CORTINA leafs through some of the material.

CORTINA

Mierda! This I believe is what you came to Columbia for. Looks like accounting records.

CORTINA thumbs through several pages.

CORTINA (CONT'D)

(takes deep breath)

Financial transactions. Company names, individuals. Some I recognize. Government officials.

REYNOLDS

But how would Mendez get his hands on these records?

CORTINA

There's a cover letter. *'This is from my cousin, an accountant at Cordillera Este. A brave man who honors his family. Protect him.'* Includes the man's name.

REYNOLDS

Holy shit! Let's get back to your office. I'll need your help to translate this stuff.

INT. MARTINELLI GLOBAL HEADQUARTERS LOWER MANHATTAN - DAY

Office of CEO STEVEN MARTINELLI with view of East River and Brooklyn Bridge. MARTINELLI is with CFO CONRAD REDEK and corporate counsel PAUL BELDEN.

MARTINELLI

I read a page-three newspaper article about this accident in Nigeria two days ago. Now this front page headline story in the Daily Press.

(MORE)

MARTINELLI (CONT'D)

Martinelli Global is implicated. How is that, CONRAD? I thought we were insulated.

REDEK

Well, we are actually. Martinelli Global is sufficiently distanced. Nigerian Agriproducts is wholly owned by Pan Africa Holdings in the U.K. Pan Africa is traded on the London Stock Exchange. Around sixty percent of Pan Africa Holdings stock is owned by several of our Cayman Islands corporations. Another Martinelli Global owned Cayman corporation, New World Finance, is the principle secured creditor to not only Pan Africa, but the other offshore entities involved with Pan Africa.

MARTINELLI

So how did we then become connected in the press? Christ it's being portrayed as another Bhopal.

REDEK

One of the offshore entities, Southern Group Limited, is listed in our annual report. Some enterprising researcher dug into financial reports of Pan Africa Holdings, then dug a little deeper. Structurally, there is still substantial distance between Martinelli Global and Agriproducts.

BELDEN

Pan Africa Holdings is going to be dumped on with a load of international shit, STEVEN. They're in the same position as the Union Carbide partly-owned subsidiary was after the Bhopal accident in the 1980s.

MARTINELLI

So what is our public position?

BELDEN

Like I said, Pan Africa Holdings stock will take a big hit.

(MORE)

BELDEN (CONT'D)

Insofar as the disaster, liability insurance will pay for a good deal of whatever settlement is eventually negotiated. As for Martinelli Global, we stick to our legal position that this was only a remote investment. Martinelli Global had no involvement in the management of this pesticide plant. Plausible deniability.

REDEK

The Nigerian government is also sticking to the story that the event was a terrorist attack. I've talked personally with the Foreign Minister who is close to President Enzinwa. Journalists have been kept out of the area. Looks like only that Daily Press reporter got hold of anything. The Nigerian journalist that helped him has been silenced.

MARTINELLI

Are you saying the situation is therefore contained?

REDEK

The Nigerian incident is under control, Steven. Death toll is only in the hundreds, nothing like Bhopal. President Enzinwa has provided assurances. However, there still remains a problem with the Daily Press. Specifically this reporter MARK REYNOLDS.

MARTINELLI

How's that? You don't think this will just blow over?

REDEK

Problem is REYNOLDS is now in Columbia. Our associates down there say he seems armed with more than just public knowledge about our operations in the Columbian coffee trade. That's more a threat right now. Looks like he's again being assisted by a local journalist. A known troublemaker I understand.

MARTINELLI

And what course of action do you suggest?

REDEK

Play the terrorist angle as far as Nigeria is concerned. Stone-wall anything that comes up about Columbia. Get our Columbian partners to resolve the threat permanently. That's far more important right now.

MARTINELLI

Very well. I'd rather not know the details just put an end to this. Make sure no surprises come out of Columbia.

INT. UPSCALE BOGOTA RESTAURANT - NIGHT

REYNOLDS and CORTINA have just finished a late dinner and are drinking coffee and cognac.

REYNOLDS

Can't tell you how much I appreciate your help sifting through that material, JUAN. This is a hell of a story. Goes way beyond Third World corruption.

CORTINA

Hard to believe a large publicly traded America company is behind all this. What do you expect them to do when you publish this Columbian material?

REYNOLDS

Not sure. They're a secretive company. I suspect the blow-back will be a legal attack. No public comment to fuel the story. Stonewall everything.

CORTINA

Hope you're right. That's why this couldn't be published here. The blow-back here as you put it would be quick and violent.

REYNOLDS yawns.

REYNOLDS

Been a long day, JUAN. I've got a
nine o'clock flight in the morning.
Think I'll call it a night.

INT. REYNOLDS AND CORTINA IN BACK SEAT OF SUV - NIGHT

Leave restaurant with little traffic on Bogota streets this
late at night.

A delivery van pulls in front of the SUV from a side street.
A large truck pulls in behind the SUV maintaining a distance.

The van in front stops at a red signal light.

CORTINA's DRIVER looks in the rear mirror as the truck behind
approaches too fast, appearing not to be stopping.

DRIVER

Esto es una trampa!

CORTINA's DRIVER jams the accelerator to the floor and jerks
the SUV from out behind the stopped van in front to avoid the
approaching collision with the truck from behind.

EXTERNAL SHOT

Speeding truck slams into the stopped van.

INSIDE CORTINA'S SUV

At high speed, DRIVER looks in rear mirror and sees a large
SUV pursuing them.

DRIVER (CONT'D)

Señor CORTINA, detrás de nosotros!

Approaching another intersection, the signal turns red a
block ahead. The pursuing SUV comes up along side. Two
assault rifles point just before crossing intersection.

CORTINA's DRIVER yanks the steering wheel to the right to
avoid a small car coming across the intersection.

EXTERNAL VIEW

Pursuing SUV crashes into the small car at full speed then
deflected proceeds head-on into a utility pole.

CORTINA's SUV simultaneously goes into a skid, hits a curb
rolling over then skidding on its side before coming a stop.

EXT. OUTSIDE CORTINA'S OVERTURNED SUV - NIGHT

Dazed but uninjured, REYNOLDS, CORTINA, and DRIVER crawl out of the SUV.

They walk toward the other crashed SUV. CORTINA's DRIVER has gun drawn. Two bodies are visible outside the vehicle.

REYNOLDS

Look at that. Assault rifles.

Ejected from the SUV, two bodies are sprawled on the pavement with blood pooling. The SUV driver is slumped at the wheel.

REYNOLDS snaps pictures as sirens can be heard approaching. Removes memory card from the digital camera and replaces with a blank one then takes more shots. Slips the first memory card inside his sock.

Two police cars arrive. CORTINA approaches the police and explains the circumstances out of hearing range.

He returns to REYNOLDS accompanied by two police officers.

CORTINA

I explained that you were an American journalist. The officer wants your camera. Unfortunately we must go to the police station to answer questions.

All are handcuffed. CORTINA and his DRIVER are placed in the back seat of one police car, REYNOLDS into the other car.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM AT BOGOTA POLICE STATION - NIGHT

REYNOLDS is seated alone at a table. Peeling paint with rust stains tracing down the wall from the anchor bolts of the window bars, a single light hanging from the ceiling.

A SENIOR POLICE OFFICER enters.

COLUMBIAN POLICE OFFICER

Two men and a woman were killed tonight, another person may not live. Your vehicle was travelling at excessive speed. This is a serious matter, Señor REYNOLDS.

REYNOLDS

Christ, those guys tried to kill us! Didn't you see their guns.

(MORE)

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

I want to talk with someone at the American Embassy.

COLUMBIAN POLICE OFFICER

I suggest you calm down, Señor REYNOLDS.

Still standing, the officer lights a cigarette and offers one to REYNOLDS who shakes his head no.

COLUMBIAN POLICE OFFICER (CONT'D)

There is much to sort out. May take some time. I'm instructed to take you to police headquarters.

OFFICER opens door and another police officer enters.

INT. CONRAD REDEK'S OFFICE IN MANHATTAN - MORNING

REDEK is sitting at his desk.

SECRETARY (O.C.; intercom)

Mr. LOPEZ from Bogota is on line one, Mr. REDEK.

REDEK lifts receiver and punches line button.
(spilt screen)

REDEK

Hello, Pablo.

LOPEZ

The problem that originated in New York has not yet been resolved. Steps are however being taken to conclude the matter.

REDEK

That is unfortunate. It seemed an easy task. And what is being done?

LOPEZ

The situation is under control. Although not as planned, the solution will achieve the same result.

REDEK

I expect it to be taken care promptly, Pablo. Keep me informed.

REDEK hangs up.

I/E. COLUMBIAN POLICE SUV - NIGHT

REYNOLDS is sitting next to a POLICE OFFICER. In the front seat is a DRIVER and the SENIOR POLICE OFFICER.

COLUMBIAN POLICE OFFICER
(to officer sitting next
to REYNOLDS in back seat)
Remove his handcuffs.
(to REYNOLDS)
You see there is nothing to fear
Señor REYNOLDS. With fatalities
involved we must however
investigate in great detail.

SUV comes to an abrupt stop because of a stopped truck. On the SUV's right are cars parked against the curb.

The driver and senior officer in the front seat exit the SUV. The officer sitting to the left of REYNOLDS panics as he tries to open the left door to get out. The door will not open. He looks at REYNOLDS with terror in his eyes.

REYNOLDS looks about trying to understand what is happening.

Officer reaches over front seat to unlock the rear doors. REYNOLDS grabs the officer's .357 Magnum from his holster. Officer does not seem to notice in his haste to exit.

In the process of exiting the SUV, a burst of automatic rounds catches the officer tumbling him to the ground.

ASSAILANT comes into view of the open door. REYNOLDS shoots several rounds from the .357 catching the man in the chest.

REYNOLDS opens the right side door then jumps to the pavement leaving the door open and slipping behind the SUV. Tries to decide which way to run fearing more assailants.

Hears rear door slammed shut. Immediately thrusts his arm around the SUV pointing the revolver.

ANOTHER ARMED ASSAILANT near the front of the SUV with his backed turned is looking to the right in front of the SUV.

Assailant turns toward REYNOLDS who fires dropping the man.

REYNOLDS leaves the area at a run.

Blocks away, he wipes the revolver of fingerprints with his shirt tail then dumps it into a trash bin.

Walking further he sees a taxi outside a restaurant.

REYNOLDS
Habla Ingles?

TAXI DRIVER
Si, señor.

REYNOLDS
 The American Embassy, *por favor.*

EXT. REYNOLDS EXITING TAXI AT GATE TO U.S. EMBASSY - NIGHT

Pays taxi driver with money hidden in his sock then walks up to gate manned by a U.S. Marine.

REYNOLDS
 I'm an American citizen. Someone just tried to kidnap me.

MARINE
 Your passport.

REYNOLDS
 Stolen. My wallet too. I don't have any ID.

MARINE
 Can't let you in then. You need to come back in the morning to see a consular official.

REYNOLDS
 My fuckin' life's in danger! These assholes mean to kill me. I'm a journalist with the New York Daily Press. Now call your duty officer.

MARINE looks at REYNOLDS with a hard expression then turns toward another marine guard.

MARINE
 Call the Lieutenant.

INT. SMALL CONFERENCE ROOM U.S. EMBASSY, BOGOTA - MORNING

A YOUNG CONSULAR OFFICER sits opposite REYNOLDS in the small windowless room.

CONSULAR OFFICER BOGOTA
 We've verified your identity, Mr. REYNOLDS.

(MORE)

CONSULAR OFFICER BOGOTA (CONT'D)

Before we even inquired about this attempt on your life you described, we also received a notification from the Columbian authorities. Seems you're wanted for questioning in a murder investigation.

REYNOLDS

Shit. The bastards are trying to set me up. The police are in on it. Anything I did was in self-defense.

CONSULAR OFFICER BOGOTA

Did you kill someone, Mr. REYNOLDS?

Before REYNOLDS answered, the door opens. A distinguished looking MIDDLE-AGED MAN and a MARINE SERGEANT enter.

The young CONSULAR OFFICER got to his feet quickly.

CONSULAR OFFICER BOGOTA (CONT'D)

Ambassador.

AMBASSADOR

I'm Lorenzo Aznar, U.S. Ambassador to Columbia. Mr. Kramer, you and Mr. REYNOLDS will accompany me to my office.

INT. U.S. AMBASSADOR'S OFFICE, BOGOTA - MOMENTS LATER

AMBASSADOR is seated behind his desk with REYNOLDS seated opposite. CONSULAR OFFICER and MARINE stand in background.

AMBASSADOR

Ten minutes ago I received a call from a senior Columbian police official. He's aware you're here. Demands that you be turned over. A murder investigation. Now what's your story.

REYNOLDS

I was riding in a car with a Columbian journalist named JUAN CORTINA. A bullet proof SUV with an armed driver. Coming from a late dinner. We stopped at a traffic signal around midnight. Behind us comes a fast moving truck clearly not going to stop.

(MORE)

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

Our driver saw what was about to happen in his mirror so he pulled out of way. The truck then smashed into the stopped van. Fearing this was not an accident, our driver accelerated away from the scene. Sure enough we were soon being chased by a large SUV. As both vehicles approached another red signal, our driver swerved to avoid a car entering the intersection. But the pursuing SUV smashed into the car. Our vehicle lost control and overturned. We escaped injury but two of attackers lay in the street bleeding and the driver was slumped behind the wheel.

AMBASSADOR

How do you know this was an attack?

REYNOLDS

Before the collision the pursuing SUV came alongside. They pointed weapons at us. After the collision we saw assault rifles laying next to the ejected occupants.

AMBASSADOR

And CORTINA was uninjured?

REYNOLDS

He was standing next to me. Both of us were then taken into custody by the police and separated.

AMBASSADOR

I don't understand. The police released you now want you back in custody?

REYNOLDS

I wasn't exactly released. I was taken to a police station then told I was to be transported to police headquarters. Along the way the police vehicle stopped. All three police exited in a panic. The officer next to me had trouble opening the door. As he finally managed to get it open, he was shot as he stepped out. I think he was mistaken for me. Sensing something wasn't right, I grabbed his gun.

(MORE)

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

It saved my life. Ended up shooting two assailants. Obviously a setup assisted by the police.

AMBASSADOR

And Mr. CORTINA?

REYNOLDS

We were separated at the police station. He was not with me when the shooting attack occurred.

AMBASSADOR

The call I got was from General Ortega, head of the federal police. He mentioned none of what you just related. According to him you are wanted for questioning in the murder of this journalist, JUAN CORTINA.

REYNOLDS

Fuck! Not CORTINA. I thought this was about those assholes I shot. This is a setup, Mr. AMBASSADOR. CORTINA was alive when the police arrived after the traffic accident. Here, I can prove it.

REYNOLDS reaches inside his sock and extracts the memory card from his digital camera.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

I took pictures. Removed this memory card before they took my camera. Standard procedure if your camera might be confiscated. CORTINA's in a couple of these pictures.

AMBASSADOR

Get me something to view this on if you would, Mr. Kramer.

ACCIDENT PHOTOS DISPLAYED ON NOTEBOOK COMPUTER

REYNOLDS

You can see two guys laying beside their wrecked vehicle. Assault rifles clearly visible right there. That's CORTINA. This is just before the police arrived. If he's dead then the police are responsible. CORTINA had powerful enemies.

AMBASSADOR

Interesting. Ortega made no mention of any of this. I told him to make a formal request. We ...let's just say we exchanged words. Ortega is ... this is off the record, understood?

REYNOLDS

Of course.

AMBASSADOR

My guess is you're doing a story about drugs. After all, this is Columbia. What else? You found something incriminating. Correct?

REYNOLDS

Yes, Sir. Something big. Really big. More than just drugs. The Justice Department will be very interested. About a major U.S. corporation's foreign subsidiaries. Bribery, price fixing, most of all laundering drug money.

AMBASSADOR

And you have evidence to back this up?

REYNOLDS

Yes, sir. All sorts of incriminating material.

AMBASSADOR

And where is this documentation?

REYNOLDS

CORTINA scanned it. We sent it by email to my newspaper in New York. Unfortunately the Colombians now know what we have. I had a copy of everything on a USB drive when the police picked me up.

AMBASSADOR

So that's why Ortega called me personally. Well I'm inclined to believe you, Mr. REYNOLDS. Ortega is dirty. Won't go into the particulars but he's a real piece of work. I'm ex-FBI so I know more than my predecessor. I'm also second generation Columbian.

(MORE)

AMBASSADOR (CONT'D)

A perfect choice for this posting. But I'm resigning in a couple of months. So if this goes sideways I'm not personally that affected. More importantly, I'd like to leave this office knowing I poked a sharp stick in Ortega's eye.

REYNOLDS

Then you can't turn me over to the Columbians. I'll end up like CORTINA.

AMBASSADOR

I'm aware of that. But that still makes you a real problem, Mr. REYNOLDS. I need to get rid of you before you become an even bigger diplomatic headache. So you'll leave shortly for the airport. I've convinced our FBI Special Agent In Charge that you're a material witness in U.S. Custody. Washington agreed. So an FBI agent will accompany you back to New York. I also expect what you have is worth all this trouble, Mr. REYNOLDS. Don't let me down.

REYNOLDS

Thank you, Mr. AMBASSADOR. I appreciate you sticking your neck out.

AMBASSADOR

It's not all altruistic on my part. It's now a Justice Department issue. By the time Ortega can muster higher powered support from the Columbian President's office, you will no longer be a diplomatic problem.

Two men entered the ambassador's office.

AMBASSADOR (CONT'D)

Apparently it is time for you to leave, Mr. REYNOLDS. These gentlemen are FBI agents.

REYNOLDS shakes hands with the AMBASSADOR.

AMBASSADOR (CONT'D)

I'm afraid there are a couple of details necessary to effect exit from Columbia. First is a passport in a false name. You are Mr. Jones. The second precaution is somewhat unpleasant. To avoid any dramatic attempt to prevent you from leaving you will be handcuffed to the agent accompanying you on the plane.

REYNOLDS

Handcuffed? Why?

AMBASSADOR

Because the agent carries a diplomatic passport. He cannot be detained. Handcuffed you cannot be separated. I'm betting that Ortega's security people won't be prepared this quickly. Don't worry. Once you're in the air the handcuffs will be removed. Good luck, Mr. REYNOLDS.

INT. OFFICE OF MGI CEO STEVEN MARTINELLI - NIGHT

STEVEN MARTINELLI, CONRAD REDEK, PAUL BELDEN seated.

MARTINELLI

Disappointing that LOPEZ couldn't contain this. Now this reporter knows he is onto something. Do we have a problem, CONRAD?

REDEK

Can't be entirely certain. Obviously REYNOLD's armed with some insider information. However, our fundamental subsidiary connections have bullet-proof cutouts. But absolute security is always an illusion, STEVEN.

MARTINELLI

For our situation, can you be more specific?

REDEK

The human component lies at the heart of all security breaches.

(MORE)

REDEK (CONT'D)

Any software security can be hacked but the even larger threat is by those with access. We have thousands of people engaged in transactions. Even though compartmentalized, some are privy to highly sensitive material.

MARTINELLI

Skip the bullshit lecture, CONRAD. This needs to be contained immediately. What's our next move?

REDEK

Go on the offensive. Stop this REYNOLDS cold.

MARTINELLI

And how do we do that? LOPEZ fucked up that option in Columbia. We sure as hell can't try that in New York.

REDEK

Nothing so crude, STEVEN. We simply kill the story. Durbin's people uncovered something that may do that.

REDEK retrieves copies of a bound report from his briefcase and hands one each to MARTINELLI and BELDEN.

REDEK (CONT'D)

Durbin prepared that report personally. Well documented. Irrefutable. If made public, the Daily Press would suffer a massive blow to their reputation. The short version is their well respected financial editor has been engaged in insider trading and a host of other illegal activities. Colluded with two partners at the investment banking firm of Feinberg-Tate. The three of them have been at it for years.

MARTINELLI looks down while turning pages of the report for a couple of moments before looking back at REDEK.

MARTINELLI

How did Durbin come by this information?

REDEK

He wouldn't say. Professional trade secret. I suspect computer hacking by his cyber moles. Impressive work though.

MARTINELLI

How do you propose we use it?

REDEK

Give it to Robert Tate. It's powerful enough to bring down his company. The price for burying it is for Tate to convince the Daily Press publisher to kill this crusade against MGI.

MARTINELLI

And what about REYNOLDS? I suspect he won't give up. Just goes to another newspaper. He'll continue his attacks.

REDEK looks over at Paul BELDEN.

REDEK

PAUL, I'll let you explain.

BELDEN

I've had a number of conversations with the Columbian Deputy Attorney General. Serious money changed hands. Linked him up with a U.S. law firm specializing in international criminal work. The Columbians will file for extradition of REYNOLDS on charges of murder.

MARTINELLI

Murder?

BELDEN

The local journalist that REYNOLDS was working with in Columbia. Arrested along with REYNOLDS. I suspect he actually died in police custody.

MARTINELLI

They'll need real evidence in U.S. Federal Court. Can't float that banana republic nonsense here.

REDEK

I agree, Steven. But it'll tie up REYNOLDS. Certainly complicates his crusade against us. Makes him a liability anywhere in the print media.

BELDEN

Parallel to that the Columbians will seek an Interpol arrest notice. It's called a Red Notice. Probably won't do much in the U.S. but it'll curtail REYNOLDS from venturing abroad.

MARTINELLI

And with regard to our legal exposure? Is the FBI or SEC likely to pursue anything exposed by REYNOLDS?

BELDEN

Too early to tell. We have inside sources at both so we'll have an early warning should anything arise.

MARTINELLI

Very well. Make sure the problem is contained, gentlemen.

INT. FEINBERG-TATE OFFICES MANHATTAN - DAY

EXTERNAL SHOT OF BUILDING WITH FEINBERG-TATE NAME

Distinguished middle-aged man sitting at a desk opening an envelop with a Manhattan skyline view through window.

Moments later his expression changes to pained shock.

SECRETARY (O.S.)

I have a Mr. REDEK of Martinelli Global holding for you, Mr. TATE.

INT. DAILY PRESS OFFICE OF MANAGING EDITOR - DAY

FREDERICKS is seated behind his desk with two men in suits seated in facing chairs as REYNOLDS enters.

FREDERICKS

MARK, damn glad you're back.

FREDERICK with broad smile rises and extends his hand to REYNOLDS. Two seated men also stand.

FREDERICKS (CONT'D)

Christ, your escape from Columbia will make a great story by itself. Oh, and these gentlemen are with the FBI. I've checked their IDs. I'm told you've promised them ... well whatever you promised.

AGENT WEATHERBY

I'm Agent WEATHERBY. This is Agent STONE.

REYNOLDS sets his briefcase on FREDERICKS desk and extracts an envelop which he hands to AGENT WEATHERBY.

REYNOLDS

Here you go. It's from an inside source in Columbia by the name of Mendez. He's dead now. Names, dates, numbers, a diary of corruption.

AGENT WEATHERBY

Care to tell us how you obtained this material?

REYNOLDS

No. I don't think so.

AGENT WEATHERBY turns toward FREDERICKS.

AGENT WEATHERBY

Will you be publishing whatever is in here Mr. FREDERICKS?

FREDERICKS

Maybe. Why?

AGENT WEATHERBY

From what Mr. REYNOLDS told our people in Bogota, the FBI will be opening an investigation. Be helpful if the bad guys didn't know what we had.

REYNOLDS

They likely already have copies of the same material. Columbian cops confiscated files on had with me.

FREDERICKS

No promises, but we'll let you know before we publish anything. Can we expect some reciprocity from the Bureau?

AGENT WEATHERBY

That's not up to me, Sir.
Gentlemen, have a good day.

The FBI agents leave the office.

FREDERICKS

What the fuck did you give them?

REYNOLDS extracted another copy of the Mendez file and hands it to FREDERICKS.

FREDERICKS leafs through several pages.

FREDERICKS (CONT'D)

Holy shit! You weren't kidding. Now tell me how you got out of Columbia. Your call last night when you got back sounded like a low budget action screenplay.

REYNOLDS

Close call, JOHN. Never been through anything like that. There's some real bad shit I didn't tell you. How about I give you the details over lunch? Right now I've got to say hi to RACHEL and BERNIE.

FREDERICKS

BERNIE's not in today. Emailed me.
Said he had the flu.

INT. RACHEL STERN'S OFFICE - DAY

STERN is seated in her small cluttered office with two notebook computers as REYNOLDS enters.

STERN

Oh my god! Mark! You're back!

STERN rushes to embraces him. Tears well in her eyes. She remains holding REYNOLDS arms for several moments.

STERN (CONT'D)

I've been sick with worry not being able to contact you. What happened to your cell phone?

REYNOLDS

Well that's part of a very long story. JOHN of course wants the details too. Told him I'd relate everything that happened over lunch. Join us?

STERN

Of course.

REYNOLDS

What's with BERNIE? JOHN said he has the flu?

STERN

Yeah. I got an email from him this morning. He left early yesterday. Said he wasn't feeling well then left in a hurry. Must be sick since JOHN told us this morning you were back and would be in the office today. BERNIE is just as invested in this MGI story as you and I.

INT. REYNOLDS OFFICE A WEEK LATER - DAY

FREDERICKS enters. REYNOLDS is on the telephone and cups the receiver upon seeing FREDERICKS.

FREDERICKS

MARK, got a minute? Need to see you in my office.

REYNOLDS nods.

FREDERICK'S OFFICE

REYNOLDS enters. FREDERICKS is seated behind his desk.

REYNOLDS

What's up?

FREDERICKS

Shut the door and take a seat, MARK.

REYNOLDS sits down.

FREDERICKS (CONT'D)

Some things have come up. Things that effect your MGI story.

REYNOLDS

What things?

FREDERICKS

First of all, BERNIE POOLE has resigned.

REYNOLDS

Resigned? That makes no sense. Why? What did he say?

FREDERICKS

He doesn't say. Just a terse email. Cites personal reasons. Won't answer my emails or phone calls. I even went to his apartment. His building concierge says he is out of town. Doesn't know where or for how long.

REYNOLDS

Not like BERNIE. Think it might serious?

FREDERICKS

No idea. Apart from BERNIE there's something else. It's this series of pieces on MGI. We need to proceed cautiously.

REYNOLDS

Cautiously? Christ almighty! You've seen the Columbian material, JOHN.

FREDERICKS

Tougher without BERNIE to decipher this complicated financial stuff. But it's maybe something else. Whatever it is prompted a rare call from our Publisher, Thurston Enders himself. This and another matter which I'll get to in a moment causes him to rethink this investigative series featuring MGI.

REYNOLDS

(sarcastically)

Rethink? What the hell did he tell you, JOHN?

FREDERICKS

Listen, MARK. I shouldn't even be telling you this but this is the first time I've ever been ordered to bury a story.

REYNOLDS

So what the fuck is this about?

FREDERICKS

Enders led me to believe that POOLE had committed some ethical breach. Something bad enough to damage the newspaper. Anyway, he said POOLE's actions might also impeach the MGI story.

REYNOLDS

That's bullshit, JOHN. BERNIE just put the complicated material RACHEL dug up into an understandable picture of how MGI operates.

FREDERICKS

There's more, MARK. Look at this. Came over the AP wire this morning. I had to tell Enders of course.

FREDERICKS hands REYNOLDS a piece of paper.

REYNOLDS

Fuck. These assholes are pursuing this just to pressure us, JOHN? We printed that a week ago along with the details of my escape from Columbia. Remember the photos of CORTINA before the police arrested us?

FREDERICKS

I agree it's nonsense but Enders says this complicates things even further. Feels you can't be objective. His words.

REYNOLDS

Objective? These assholes tried to kill me. MGI and their surrogates are behind this, JOHN.

FREDERICKS

You have no supporting evidence so we can't print that.

REYNOLDS

Not at the Daily Press I can't. Run by a weak willed senile old coward. What really hurts is you knuckling under, JOHN. But this is not the end of it. It's now very personal.

FREDERICKS

I can't let you pursue the story further, MARK.

REYNOLDS

Then fuck you, JOHN. I quit. Tell Enders to go fuck himself too.

FREDERICKS

Damnit, MARK, don't be stupid. We can work something out.

REYNOLDS leaves abruptly without a response.

INT. STERN'S OFFICE - DAY

REYNOLDS enters. STERN is seated working at her computer.

REYNOLDS

RACHEL, the shit just hit the fan. All sorts of shit. Enders killed the MGI story. Like a spineless subordinate, JOHN caved. Told him I quit.

STERN bolts out of her chair with a stricken expression.

STERN

No! You can't leave, MARK. Please don't. What happened?

REYNOLDS

Something to do with BERNIE apparently started this. According to JOHN, Enders wasn't specific but said BERNIE had committed some ethical breach. Had to be more than that. Doesn't connect how that affects the MGI story. But Enders was clear about that, the MGI story is terminated.

STERN

But you can't just leave. There must be a way forward without that.

Tears flow down STERN's cheeks. She embraces REYNOLDS and looks into pleadingly into his eyes.

STERN (CONT'D)

Please stay, MARK. I've grown very fond of you. We make a great team.

REYNOLDS is a little embarrassed with STERN's display of affection but gives her a chaste hug.

REYNOLDS

That we do. This whole story would never have unfolded without your brilliant research. I owe you, RACHEL.

STERN

Then stay. At least don't quit in a fit of anger.

REYNOLDS hands the AP report on his legal troubles with Columbia to STERN.

REYNOLDS

Things have become even more complicated. Read this just off the AP wire.

STERN reads the brief report.

STERN

Murder? Oh my god! Who?

REYNOLDS

JUAN CORTINA. My Columbian newspaper colleague. Police must have killed him. Probably what's happened to OJUKWU in Nigeria. MGI is ultimately behind this. That's why I can't leave this alone.

STERN

What are you going to do?

REYNOLDS

Get a good lawyer I should think.

STERN

No, I mean ... where will you go?

REYNOLDS

Go? Not sure. Right now I'll freelance. Got enough to still make things uncomfortable for MGI.

(MORE)

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

But I'll still need some help.
You're the best researcher I know,
RACHEL. Can you still moonlight for
me?

STERN

Of course, MARK. I'm invested in
this story too. I'm also invested
in you.

REYNOLDS

Not sure how I can thank you,
RACHEL.

STERN

How about for starters you take me
to dinner? Tonight? We need to
talk. Otherwise you'll go to your
apartment and get drunk. At least
you can get drunk with me.

REYNOLDS isn't sure this is wise but he needs her help.

REYNOLDS

Okay. Give me the address of your
apartment. I'll be there at seven.
You pick the restaurant.

INT. STERN'S APARTMENT BROOKLYN - NIGHT

REYNOLDS knocks. STERN opens door and unhooks security chain.
She is dressed provocatively in a black spaghetti-strap above
the knee-length dress with revealing cleavage and three-inch
heels. Her shoulder-length hair is down in contrast to her
office hairdo. No glasses.

REYNOLDS displays a sheepish grin.

REYNOLDS

My, this is a surprise.

STERN

Like this better than my office
attire?

STERN turns around revealing a plunging open back.

REYNOLDS

You look great, RACHEL. More than
great. Fantastic. Where we going?

STERN goes to kitchen returning with two glasses of red wine.

STERN

We're staying here. I decided to make us dinner. I'm a good cook. We're having Beef Bourguignon with a good Burgundy of course. Besides, you need to relax and we need to talk.

STERN hands REYNOLDS a glass and steps close to him.

STERN (CONT'D)

I'm more than fond of you, MARK. Ever since you broke up with Denise I've fantasized about being with you.

Setting her glass on an end table, she then hooks her thumbs into the straps of the dress letting it fall. She has nothing on underneath. A shapely body with good legs.

She takes his face in her hands, pressing close kissing him.

He responds by setting his wine glass down, enveloping her with his arms, and placing his hands on her butt.

INT. POSTCOITAL SCENE IN BED - NIGHT

Both are sipping wine.

STERN

Hungry?

REYNOLDS

Ravenous. Especially after that. You know, Rachel...

STERN touches a finger to his lips.

STERN

Don't say anything. It was my doing. I couldn't resist. I'm... Are you sorry I seduced you?

REYNOLDS

No, of course not. Surprised. Guess I never looked at you like that. You know someone...

STERN

(grinning)
Someone to have sex with?
(MORE)

STERN (CONT'D)

Guess I never did enough to entice you at the office. But the lovemaking was wonderful, MARK. Even better than my fantasies.

She drops the sheet to reveal her breasts and kisses him.

STERN (CONT'D)

Now dinner. I'm hungry too. By the way I sent BERNIE another email telling him you had a big blowup with FREDERICKS after he killed the MGI story. Surprisingly he sent back an email. Said to tell you he's sorry. He's sure it's because of him but can't explain.

REYNOLDS

That was it?

STERN

Yeah, but it got me doing some digging. Not sure it's connected but there's a terse press release from Feinberg-Tate announcing the resignation of two senior partners. No reason given.

REYNOLDS

Why you think it's connected with BERNIE?

STERN

A coincidence maybe. But both these guys show up frequently with quotes in Bernie's column.

REYNOLDS

Who knows? Must have been a bomb shell though for Enders to run scared on the MGI story. MGI's Columbian operations are clearly news. Big news. We can now connect them through their foreign subsidiaries. Prove they control 95% of the Columbian coffee trade. Producers, exports, even financing through their offshore banking. All well documented. Now this insider stuff from Mendez goes even further to probable criminal conduct. No publisher kills a story like that without a powerful reason.

STERN gets out of bed naked wanting him to appreciate her.

STERN

Now we can talk about what to do next. I could think of nothing else all day except getting you into bed. Lust can do that. How 'bout opening another bottle of wine while I reheat dinner?

INT. REYNOLDS APARTMENT DAYS LATER - DAY

REYNOLDS is alone working at his computer when he abruptly sets it down as something on the screen grabs his attention.

COMPUTER SCREEN

An email reads: *I have followed your stories about MGI with much attention. They are a cancer. Must be destroyed. Why have you stopped reporting on MGI? Rasputin.*

REYNOLDS sends back an email: *Who are you?*

Response: *Someone who wants to help. Have access to damaging confidential information. About MGI and their Russian partners. Russia is bigger story than Nigeria or Columbia.*

REYNOLDS texts STERN on his cell phone. *Can you come over tonight? Got something that requires your assistance.*

INT. REYNOLDS' APARTMENT - NIGHT

Opens door. STERN enters, embraces, and kisses him.

STERN

Where have you been the last couple of days? I've left messages.

She lightly touches his crotch.

REYNOLDS

Later, RACHEL. All sorts of things happening. Take a look at this.

REYNOLDS leads STERN over to the computer. Sits her down in the desk chair. Clicks on his email account.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

JOHN never cancelled my email account at the paper.
(MORE)

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

Maybe his way of rebelling against Enders directive. Certainly helpful. Look at this string of emails.

STERN looks at the computer screen for several moments.

STERN

What do ya think? Is this Rasputin legit?

REYNOLDS

At first I was wary. Too coincidental. Smelled like an MGI trap. No telling how desperate they might be to silence me.

STERN

To go after you here in New York? They're not exactly gangsters.

REYNOLDS

Not far from it. They outsource the violence. I still think they somehow found a way to pressure Enders to kill the story. They certainly know what I have from Columbia.

STERN

How?

REYNOLDS

Digital files I had on me. And of course JUAN CORTINA. No telling what he might have said while in police custody. They killed him.

STERN

Okay, then why don't you think this Rasputin isn't just an MGI trap?

REYNOLDS

He says this is personal revenge against people in Russia associated with MGI. Didn't say why. If we drive a stake in MGI's heart through the Russian connection it'll destroy those he's targeting. After back and forth emails he says he came by the information through hacking into computer systems.

STERN

What sort of information?

REYNOLDS

That's the grabber. Same sort of stuff as in Columbia but in from a bigger playground. Russia. Corruption, bribery, monopolies. Russian Mafia connections. Smuggling, money laundering. Instead of coffee and drugs, this is gas, oil, and best of all, nuclear materials.

STERN

Nuclear materials? You mean like nuclear power plants?

REYNOLDS

Not only repressing spent nuclear reactor fuels but involvement with weapons-grade nuclear material for the military. Rasputin wasn't more specific. I know something of nuclear technology from my book of a couple years ago, *Critical Mass*. And the Soviet era nuclear industry is a real snake pit.

STERN

Well MGI is certainly highly invested in Russia. Covered in their annual report. BERNIE even pointed that out. Do you think MGI is up to something illegal with nuclear stuff?

REYNOLDS

Don't know. But if they're working with the Russian military that would violate U.S. Law. If they are then of course they've buried it in elaborate subsidiary cutouts.

STERN

So that's what you want me to work on?

REYNOLDS

Yup. Not only MGI but everything you can dig up on Russian nuclear fuels reprocessing. That includes nuclear weapons.

(MORE)

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

All these old weapons, ours included, need to undergo upgrades. Triggering, targeting electronics, the conventional explosives components. Who does that in Russia?

STERN

Okay. I've got it. But couldn't this still just be an MGI trap, MARK? Why's this guy want to help you if you quit the Daily Press?

REYNOLDS

Told him I'm working on a book. What choice does he have?

STERN

Is that what you're going to do instead of going to another paper, or freelance?

REYNOLDS

Thinking about it. Talked with my literary agent a couple of days ago. She suggested I write a proposal she could float around. With two previously published books I've got a professional standing. Problem remains I need more on MGI to do the kind of book I want.

STERN

Makes sense I guess. But back to my question. Why do think this Rasputin is legitimate?

REYNOLDS

That's the interesting part. Look at this.

REYNOLDS moves mouse and clicks on an Internet link. Screen displays an attractive woman.

STERN

Who's this?

REYNOLDS

Name's KATERINA NIKOLAEVNA AVRAMENKO. Moscow News Journal reporter. Checked her out. You can see her articles on these various links. Obviously not a friend of the Putin regime.

STERN

So how's she fit in with Rasputin?

REYNOLDS

Seems Rasputin's been feeding her hacked documents from inside a Russian company called Moscow Capital Partners for some time. As you know, MGI owns 65% of Moscow Capital through their typical string of shell companies. She's been working the same story from a Russian perspective.

STERN

So why is she willing to collaborate?

REYNOLDS

Too dangerous to publish her stuff in Russia. Same problem as Columbia and Nigeria. No free press. Moscow Capital has ties both to the government and she believes organized crime. Russian journalists have disappeared for a lot less.

STERN

Pretty isn't she. Sounds too good to be true.

REYNOLDS

Don't think so. I actually talked to her this morning.

STERN

You what!

REYNOLDS

Surprised by my knowing her connection with this Rasputin. She sounded reluctant at first. What journalist wants to share a story. But she's a realist. This Russian angle is what I've looking for. I need to collaborate with her. Plus I'll need a translator for Rasputin's hacked materials. She knows the Russian landscape. Knows Moscow Capital Partners. Can't be done through emails. So I've agreed to meet her in Moscow.

STERN turns toward REYNOLDS with a look of disbelief.

STERN

MARK, you can't do that. If what this Rasputin says is true then MGI has some dangerous Russian connections. Just like Columbia.

REYNOLDS

Sure there's a risk. But that's what I do. How else can I pursue MGI? I can't let this opportunity pass. If it pans out then it makes my book a best seller. MGI becomes an even bigger story than Enron or Parmalat.

STERN shakes her head and grimaces.

STERN

I'm scared, MARK. Please reconsider.

REYNOLDS

Got to do this RACHEL. Need your help though. What do ya say?

STERN

Of course I'll help.
(sighs)
What do you need me to do?

REYNOLDS

As a precondition I pried some information out of Rasputin about Moscow Capital Partners. Like MGI, it's a web of subsidiaries connected through shell companies. Look at this list I made. Some directly link to MGI, others totally under the radar. Real ownership is obscured from both the U.S. and Russian governments through foreign shell corporations. Here's my starter list.

REYNOLDS hands STERN a piece of paper.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

I need you to expand on this. How are these legal entities connected? What do they do?

STERN

I'll get to work on it first thing.
Anything else?

REYNOLDS

Yeah. Can you get me a list of
criminal defense attorneys?

STERN

Oh shit. Sure. I forgot about that.

REYNOLDS

Had a conversation with a deputy
U.S. DA in the Southern Manhattan
office. Know the guy from an old
story. Gave him some good press. I
called him to see if he could tell
me if anything was happening over
the info I gave to the FBI.

STERN

What's that got to do with this
extradition nonsense?

REYNOLDS

Nothing except for a bad feeling.
The guy got back to me. Wouldn't
give me much but enough to make me
think. Tells me he called a
colleague. This colleague
acknowledged the FBI had informed
Justice about the information I
passed on looking to coordinate an
investigation. But according to my
guy, pressure from higher up has
suspended any investigation with
the Justice Department.

STERN

You're not suggesting that MGI has
that sort of political pull are
you?

REYNOLDS

Shit I hope not but I can see their
hand in this. Anyway it pissed off
this other DA. Certainly makes me
worry about the Columbian murder
charge having traction.

STERN

Then you can't go to Moscow. If MGI has pull there too then you could be arrested and extradited to Columbia.

REYNOLDS

Got to go, RACHEL. They've already killed two people helping me. Tried to kill me too. What do I do, sit on my ass and do nothing?

STERN

(resigned expression)
When do you leave?

REYNOLDS

In three days.

INT. CONRAD REDEK'S OFFICE IN NEW YORK - DAY

REDEK has a report just handed him by security consultant WILLIAM DURBIN.

REDEK

From REYNOLDS's emails? Who the fuck is this Rasputin?

DURBIN

A Russian hacker. Self-styled do-gooder. Environmental activist stuff, globalization, that sort of thing. Bit of a reputation in the hacking world.

REDEK

Good enough to have hacked our Associates in Russia?

DURBIN

Maybe. Don't know enough about their cyber security.

REDEK

Neither do I. So what do I tell NIKOLAI KRASIN he should do?

DURBIN

My people are the best. Hell they do the same thing as this Rasputin. That's how we got into REYNOLDS's emails. Hackers always leave fingerprints.

(MORE)

DURBIN (CONT'D)

I could send the same guys that hacked REYNOLDS to look into what happened in Moscow.

REDEK

(smiles at DURBIN)

As cozy as KRASIN is with Putin, I'm sure he can find experts at hacking in Moscow.

INT. MOSCOW'S SHEREMETYEVO AIRPORT - DAY

REYNOLDS cell phone rings as he exits baggage claim.

AVRAMENKO (O.C.)

It is me.

REYNOLDS

Okay. Well I'm here. Outside baggage claim. Where are you?

AVRAMENKO (O.C.)

Please take taxi. Go to Medea Hotel. Is good hotel. Pay only 750 rubles to taxi driver.

REYNOLDS

Okay. When do I meet you?

AVRAMENKO

At hotel. In few hours.

AVRAMENKO disconnects the call.

REYNOLDS

(under his breath)

Shit.

INT. MEDEA HOTEL, MOSCOW - EVENING

REYNOLDS is looking out his hotel room window at the Kremlin across the Moscow River when there is a knock at the door.

Opens door recognizing AVRAMENKO, tall, very attractive, stylishly dressed.

She brushes past him. He closes door.

AVRAMENKO

I apologize for not meeting you at airport.

REYNOLDS

No problem. Got here okay. Nice hotel.

AVRAMENKO

It was necessary. Wanted to see if you were being followed.

REYNOLDS

Followed?

(pause)

Was I?

AVRAMENKO

Yes. Look out the window. Across street. The white Lada.

STREET THREE FLOORS BELOW LIT BY STREET LIGHTS.

Two men are standing next to a car smoking.

AVRAMENKO (CONT'D)

We shall leave by rear of hotel. Delivery entrance. I will take you to different hotel.

REYNOLDS

Whatever you say. But we need to talk. How about getting something to eat? And I need a drink.

AVRAMENKO

Yes. I need drink also.

INT. INSIDE SMALL CHEAP CAR - NIGHT

AVRAMENKO in driver's seat. Manual transmission makes noise of gnashing gears as she puts it into gear.

AVRAMENKO

I will take us to small restaurant I know. Best Russian food.

INT. DIMLY LIT RESTAURANT - NIGHT

AVRAMENKO pours shots of vodka from a bottle in an ice bucket.

AVRAMENKO

(raises her shot glass)

To our successful collaboration.

REYNOLDS downs his vodka.

REYNOLDS

Anxious to get started. Seems we've been working the same story from different angles, Ms. AVRAMENKO. So who do think followed me?

AVRAMENKO

My friends call me NIKI, MARK. Probably someone from Moscow Capital Partners. But you must know they can be dangerous.

REYNOLDS

How's that? Things are that bad for journalists in Russia, NIKI?

AVRAMENKO

Yes. One of Moscow Capital's executives is man named Feliks GARNITSKY. Former KGB then became organized crime boss. Now businessman. There are rumors. Journalists go missing in Russia if certain people are threatened. Moscow Partners is known to be close to the Kremlin.

REYNOLDS

Did I make a mistake coming here? What do you suggest we do?

AVRAMENKO

We leave Moscow. Tomorrow.

REYNOLDS

Leave Moscow? What do ya mean? Why?

Interrupted by waiter setting plates of food on their table.

AVRAMENKO

This is *pochki v madere*. Kidneys cooked in wine and butter sauce. Bad for you but very good taste. Yes. We must leave Moscow. Is not safe. They know you are here.

REYNOLDS

And go where?

AVRAMENKO

Leave Russia. We go to Ukraine. To resort on Black Sea. By train.

REYNOLDS

Train? That's a long way.

AVRAMENKO

Overnight journey. Have reserved sleeper compartment. I have false passports so we shall not be followed.

REYNOLDS

False passports? Let me see.

AVRAMENKO retrieves a burgundy colored passport from her purse handing it to REYNOLDS.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

UK citizen? Peter Duncan? Shit, this doesn't look much like me.

AVRAMENKO

Good enough. You are now older than picture. Cut hair shorter. Passport photos are always bad.

REYNOLDS

The Russian Visa is still current. How'd you get this?

AVRAMENKO

Old boyfriend. Thought he'd lost it. But I found it in a jacket he left in my apartment. I will use passport of a friend.

REYNOLDS

Wonderful. Mine however is invalid. Your Mr. Duncan has undoubtedly replaced it by now.

AVRAMENKO

Not to worry. Train is not like airport. Border guards do not have computers to check such things.

EXT. OUTDOOR CAFE IN BAKU, AZERBAIJAN ON CASPIAN SEA - DAY

FELIKS GARNITSKY is sitting with a middle eastern man with trim beard named FARZARD SAVI drinking coffee.

GARNITSKY

Been a long time, FARZARD. So tell me why you followed me to Baku.

SAVI

A business proposition. You are now an important executive. This company of yours is involved in certain operations of interest to my government.

GARNITSKY

And therefore Tehran sends a colonel from the Iranian Intelligence Ministry to negotiate business?

SAVI

Well lets say certain individuals in Tehran have sent me. Instead of business let us say an opportunity.

GARNITSKY

Opportunity? For Moscow Capital Partners and who?

SAVI

Not your company, my good friend, you personally.

GARNITSKY

And who do you represent, FARZARD?

SAVI lights a cigarette.

SAVI

Several generals and certain influential people. You would call them hardliners. Let me be more specific. These individuals do not want detente with the West like when you were KGB, FELIKS. The United States and Israel will never allow an Iranian nuclear weapons program to advance. Those I represent want to circumvent that entire process.

GARNITSKY

The company I'm associated with does not deal in the technology of nuclear weapons. We only reprocess nuclear cores from the weapons.

SAVI

We're not looking for technology, my friend. We want to purchase fully operational nuclear warheads.

GARNITSKY registers surprise then lights a cigarette.

GARNITSKY

You can't be serious. This is Russia. Highest security. Not some Third World shithole.

SAVI

I am most serious. Your Rusatomic subsidiary disassembles and removes the cores from nuclear warheads for reprocessing of the fissile fuel.

GARNITSKY

And those operations are heavily secured by the Ministry of Defense.

SAVI

I am well aware of the security precautions. My people have worked on this for some time, FELIKS. There is a way. It requires your assistance. However, before I explain further I must know your interest.

GARNITSKY

Considerable risk on my part should anything lead back to me. How much are you offering?

SAVI

The plan calls for the theft of three fully operational warheads. For that we shall pay 1.5 billion Euros. 500 million each.

GARNITSKY pauses for a moment.

GARNITSKY

Consider that I'm interested. Now please explain the details of this plan so I can judge for myself.

I/E. MOSCOW KIEVSKY TRAIN STATION - AFTERNOON

REYNOLDS and AVRAMENKO board train.

COMPARTMENT WITH TWO SLEEPING BERTHS

REYNOLDS and AVRAMENKO sit down facing each other over a fold-down table and set up their individual notebook computers.

REYNOLDS

Okay. Here are the key connections from our friend Rasputin's trove of data. MGI links to Moscow Capital Partners through several offshore shell companies. MCP is itself a tangle of subsidiaries to confuse their dealings all over Eastern Europe. Wonder if the Russian government even understands the ownership affiliations? These two Cayman Islands MGI subsidiaries are particularly interesting. They're not acknowledged in MGI's SEC filings.

AVRAMENKO

What is this SEC?

REYNOLDS

A U.S. Government agency that regulates publicly traded corporations. From what you've translated, these are financially connected to this Rusatomic Industries. Not only reprocessing weapons grade nuclear fuels but actually refurbishing nuclear warheads. That must be illegal.

AVRAMENKO

And we have only begun. Much more material to examine. Black Sea will be good place to work. Now I am tired.

REYNOLDS

Me too. Need the toilet first.

REYNOLDS leaves compartment.

TRAIN CAR CORRIDOR AND TOILET

He enters toilet which is disgustingly filthy.

SLEEPING COMPARTMENT

REYNOLDS reenters.

REYNOLDS

Fuck! The goddamn toilet is a ...
Sorry. Should have knocked.

AVRAMENKO is dressed only in a bra and panties.

AVRAMENKO

It is fine. I am not shy.

(smiles coyly)

Usually I wear nothing to bed.

INT. MOSCOW CAPITAL PARTNER'S OFFICES, MOSCOW - NIGHT

NIKOLAI KRASIN and FELIKS GARNITSKY are sitting in KRASIN'S office. KRASIN is dressed in a Western suit, GARNITSKY in leather jacket with turtle neck.

(in Russian; subtitled)

GARNITSKY

Bad news, NIKOLAI. That American reporter may no longer be in Moscow.

KRASIN

I understood he was being watched?

GARNITSKY

Appears he evaded surveillance. Never stayed the night at the hotel he checked into. Obviously someone's helping him. My friends in the FSB issued an alert to all their agents. A state security matter.

KRASIN

Who's helping him?

GARNITSKY

Don't know that yet either. Got people working on possible journalists since the hacker mentioned a collaboration. May take some time.

KRASIN

That is most troubling, FELIKS. CONRAD REDEK will be here in Moscow tomorrow. Seems our American partners are not satisfied with our financial reporting. A country of bean-counters. Wants to better understand our involvement with nuclear materials. But I think he's more worried about this hacking breach into our databases. Losing REYNOLDS makes us look even worse.

INT. BLACK SEA RESORT IN ODESSA, UKRAINE - NIGHT

REYNOLDS and AVRAMENKO enter hotel room with view of the Black Sea through a large sliding door with a balcony.

AVRAMENKO stands close to REYNOLDS looking him in the eyes.

AVRAMENKO

I saw the way you looked at me on train. Do I arouse you?

REYNOLDS

Ah... of course. You're a very attractive woman, NIKI.

AVRAMENKO

I know I am most forward. That is how I am.

She begins unbuttoning her blouse.

AVRAMENKO (CONT'D)

You are handsome man. We must work together for many days. There is much sexual tension to distract us. Only one bed. Therefore we should make love to relieve that tension.

AVRAMENKO puts her arms around his neck and kisses him while she unbuckles his belt.

EXT. BALCONY OVERLOOKING BLACK SEA - DAY

Both are working at computers on a table outside.

REYNOLDS

I think I have a pretty good picture of what's going on with Moscow Capital in Russia. They're into some real deep shit. This material shows how MGI is secretly invested in these Russian operations.

AVRAMENKO

Enough to publish in America?

REYNOLDS

Almost. We've been at this two days and still have a mountain of material to sift through.

(MORE)

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

Plus it'll take some work to boil all this down into something readers can understand. Unbelievably complex. Not only shell companies but a shell game of moving money around. Concealing profits and masking the illegal activity. They even launder the money through their own banks. This Rasputin knows a lot about Moscow Capital. Enough to pick out the important stuff from their databases. Lot of work ahead still.

AVRAMENKO lays her hand on REYNOLDS arm.

AVRAMENKO

I can help. You need collaborator. Also someone to translate. Someone who knows how things work in Russia.

REYNOLDS

You've been invaluable, NIKI. Look what we've put together already.

AVRAMENKO

Then let me come to America to help you. This is my story too. I can never publish this in Russia.

REYNOLDS

Yes I know.
(pause)
You know you'd never be able to return to Russia. This implicates a lot of influential people.

AVRAMENKO

Eventually they'll discover I helped you. It's already dangerous for me in Russia. I like being with you, MARK. You are talented journalist. Very good lover too. Is it possible you take me to America?

INT. MOSCOW CAPITAL PARTNER'S OFFICE, MOSCOW - DAY

KRASIN and REDEK are sitting at a conference table.

REDEK

About these operations involving nuclear materials.

(MORE)

REDEK (CONT'D)

On the surface they generate low profits. But you say the money is made indirectly through offsets the government awards other MCP owned enterprises?

KRASIN

That is correct, CONRAD. But those profits are considerable.

REDEK

But these... what do I call them, nuclear enterprises? According to my information, nuclear waste management is a disaster waiting to happen. Is it worth it?

KRASIN

Putin insures it to be profitable. Lucrative offsets, no-bid contracts, and a host of other preferences. Besides, we had no choice. Russian reprocessing of foreign nuclear reactor spent fuels is important to Russian government nuclear program. And Russian prestige. Putin needs to hide the costs. Massive investment disguised as private funding to manage the waste is necessary to maintain international stature for Russia. That is the way things are done in Russia, CONRAD.

REDEK

Listen, NIKOLAI, all I'm asking is give us more detail. It's the numbers we're after. Obscure everything to make it appear legitimate business. Christ, you'll not be audited here but in the U.S. things are different.

KRASIN

Very well. I have very creative people. They shall prepare a plausible fiction for next quarter's financial reporting.

REDEK

Excellent. Now to this other matter. Any progress on the security breach into your system?

KRASIN

(sighs)

Yes. Both good and bad news. GARNITSKY brought in some FSB computer experts. They did find evidence of unauthorized breaches.

REDEK

Shit. How bad?

KRASIN

Bad enough. Multiple entries over several months. Into the most sensitive areas. Areas *off the books* as you would say.

REDEK

So what the hell is the good news?

KRASIN

The FSB computer experts say it doesn't look like real hacking?

REDEK

What the hell does that mean?

KRASIN

They believe the evidence of unauthorized access was planted as false tracks.

REDEK

How would they know that?

KRASIN

They say it was not sophisticated enough. The tracks were left to appear the databases were hacked. Technical reasons I don't pretend to understand. If they are correct, then it means it was someone inside.

REDEK

And that's your good news, NIKOLAI?

KRASIN

(smiles)

By inside I mean within the IT department here at headquarters. Better yet, these experts feel it could only have been one of two individuals. Something about administration rights.

REDEK

And?

KRASIN

We've eliminated one. The head of the department. The other, the senior database administrator has gone missing. Cyber security people have computers found at his apartment. They're working to crack his encrypted access. He is the likely source. He'll be found soon.

REDEK

But regardless the source we must assume REYNOLDS has highly damaging materials. Damaging to both MGI and MCP. Now REYNOLDS and this computer nerd of yours are both on the loose.

KRASIN

GARNITSKY is still well connected with his former colleagues in intelligence. Russian State Security is treating this as a matter of national security. It should not be long. Once Reynolds is located what would you like done, CONRAD?

REDEK

We need to know what he has. Where copies of the information exist. MARTINELLI would like to see REYNOLDS extradited to Columbia. I think he should just disappear. But you need to find him quickly. I'll assume you'll permanently fix the source of the leak, NIKOLAI?

EXT. CAFE IN BAKU, AZERBAIJAN OVERLOOKING CASPIAN SEA - DAY

FELIKS GARNITSKY is seated with another man with a close-trimmed beard named FARZARD SAVI at an outside table on a sunny day, sharing a bottle of wine and smoking.

SAVI

And what brings my old friend to a backwater like Baku?

GARNITSKY

Business of course. My company has many interests involving oil. And what brings a colonel in the Iranian Ministry of Internal Security to Baku?

SAVI

Obviously to see my old friend FELIKS.

GARNITSKY

And you knew I'd be here? Impressive work. Do you have a dossier on me, FARZARD?

SAVI

But of course. Ex-KGB, now a powerful businessman. You are a person of great interest.

GARNITSKY

As much as I enjoy your company, old friend, what are you after?

SAVI

Your talents. Your organization. Your connections to the Russian military. Access to certain places of interest.

GARNITSKY

Sounds like you want to steal something. I'm no longer in the intelligence business, FARZARD.

SAVI

Yes, we want to steal something. Something so valuable we're prepared to pay an enormous sum to get it. A sum even someone of your means might consider.

GARNITSKY

And how much is that?

SAVI pauses to light another cigarette.

SAVI

1.5 billion Euros.

GARNITSKY

(registers surprise)

Yebat. That's impressive. To steal what?

SAVI

Nuclear weapons. Three fully functional warheads to be precise. 500M each.

GARNITSKY

You're fucking mad. Can't be done. You might work for religious lunatics but I thought you were smarter, FARZARD.

SAVI

It can be done, my friend. It is my idea, my plan. The key is this company you are involved with, Rusatomic. Do they not dismantle nuclear warheads and reprocess the fissile cores?

GARNITSKY

Yes. Rusatomic is a contractor to the Russian military. But the military controls all security.

SAVI

I am well aware of the security measures. Certain Russian officers will be well paid to manipulate paperwork. A bloodless coup you might call it.

GARNITSKY

Then why do you need my services?

SAVI

The plan is far more elegant than mere theft. That requires cooperation at a very high level. People only you have access to, FELIKS.

GARNITSKY

Even if you're successful, everything falls apart when the theft is discovered. The whole fucking world will come down on Iran.

SAVI

Of course. But the plan is for it to remain undetected. Never acknowledged publicly. It's value is covert diplomatic leverage.

INT. MOSCOW RESTAURANT - NIGHT

FELIX GARNITSKY briefing his subordinate YURI DRATSHEV.

DRATSHEV

And you think General TATARINOV will cooperate?

GARNITSKY

He has no choice. TATARINOV works for the Minister of Defense who is close to KRASIN. Likes the money we pay him. I can easily destroy him. You remember that incident with Leysa Varvarinski. Video of TATARINOV drunk beating her to death. I could send him to prison. Besides he's a greedy bastard. He'll be paid too well to refuse.

DRATSHEV

But he still might balk at this.

GARNITSKY

Like I said, he has no choice. If he refuses then you will see he has a fatal accident. But let's assume that won't be necessary, at least until he's done his part. Now I need you to go to the Urals. Become familiar with the warhead disassembly at Trekhgornyy and the reprocessing operation at Ozersk. Need you to understand the shipping and receiving procedures.

DRATSHEV

I'll need a higher level security clearance.

GARNITSKY

That is not a problem. One final thing, YURI. Commit nothing to paper. No emails. Risky as it is, use cell phones. Use different phones.

(MORE)

GARNITSKY (CONT'D)

Say nothing that directly connects to the operation. Never use the word *nuclear*.

INT. GRILLAGE RESTAURANT NEAR RED SQUARE, MOSCOW - NIGHT

FELIKS GARNITSKY and Major General OLEG TATARINOV are seated at a table in the elegant restaurant. TATARINOV gulps down a large measure of Scotch.

TATARINOV

And for this I shall receive ten million Euros?

GARNITSKY

And a job with Rusatomic. Three times your general's salary. Working with your replacement at the 12th Directorate on behalf of Rusatomic.

TATARINOV

Is this for a terrorist group?

GARNITSKY

No.

TATARINOV

Then it must be North Korea or Iran.

GARNITSKY

Does it matter?

TATARINOV

How many people will know of my involvement?

GARNITSKY

Besides me, only my subordinate YURI DRATSHEV. Other army officers involved will not know of your participation. They believe they are working on secret orders from President Putin to conceal decommissioned warheads from the Americans.

TATARINOV

I assume these officers will disappear after the theft? How do I know that will not also be my fate?

GARNITSKY

No need, General. You have no reason to ever tell anyone. And your death would raise suspicions. Besides we also have future needs of your experience.

TATARINOV

And what is it I'm to do?

GARNITSKY

Issue orders to relocate three designated warheads from the disassembly plant in Trekhgornyy to the fuel reprocessing plant in Ozersk. Just a normal order from your office I understand. But these warheads will not have undergone disassembly.

TATARINOV shakes his head

TATARINOV

That is not possible. The transfer of complete warheads will violate procedure. Others will know.

GARNITSKY

No, it is possible. Only one officer at Trekhgornyy will be involved in executing your order. He will later destroy your order and record only the appropriate amount of fissionable material transferred for reprocessing.

TATARINOV

I do not understand. What happens to the warhead assemblies?

GARNITSKY

A shell game is played. Again on your orders, the operational warheads are to be transferred to a highly secret military installation.

TATARINOV

What secret installation?

GARNITSKY

(smiling)
A fictitious installation.
(MORE)

GARNITSKY (CONT'D)

A location abandoned by Rusatomic's failed predecessor. Manned by our people in army uniforms. A second officer under our control destroys your transfer order and any record of the shipment.

TATARINOV

There remains the problem of unaccounted weapons grade fissionable material.

GARNITSKY

A third asset, a colonel in charge of auditing inventories at the reprocessing plant substitutes an earlier receiving record with one showing a lesser quantity. When the next physical inventory comes up short, the audit will identify the discrepancy as a prior transactional error.

EXT. HOTEL ROOM BALCONY OF BLACK SEA RESORT - DAY

Both are dressed casually on a warm sunny day each hunched over their computers on the outside table.

AVRAMENKO

MARK, I just received an email from Rasputin. I don't understand. This makes no sense.

REYNOLDS

What's he say?

AVRAMENKO

He says he's discovered something new. Extremely serious. Too sensitive to send by email. Wants to meet us.

REYNOLDS

Shit. I don't believe this. He goes to great lengths to disguise himself now he wants to meet? Sounds like a trap. Maybe this isn't even from him.

AVRAMENKO

Do I answer?

REYNOLDS hesitates in thought.

REYNOLDS

You've seen a lot of his emails.
Does it sound like him?

She shrugs with an expression of uncertainty.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

Tell him okay. But not in Moscow.

AVRAMENKO types email.

AVRAMENKO leans forward to read an immediate reply.

AVRAMENKO

He suggests we meet in Kiev. Say's
he's from Kiev. Agrees that will be
safer than Moscow. In two days.
He'll meet us at the train station.
He will recognize us.

INT. KRASIN AND GARNITSKY IN KRASIN'S OFFICE IN MOSCOW - DAY
(in Russian; subtitled)

KRASIN

Any progress on locating this
reporter?

GARNITSKY

Not yet. If he's still in Moscow
somebody is hiding him.

KRASIN

Has Interpol issued a Red Notice so
he can be extradited to Columbia if
he is arrested?

GARNITSKY

No. My FSB source claims Interpol
has raised questions about the
evidence. But isn't it better to
simply make him disappear like
REDEK suggested? Why take the risk?

KRASIN

I agree but MARTINELLI is concerned
about repercussions in the U.S.
He'd preferred that REYNOLDS
disappear in Columbia. But just as
important is knowing what this
VARVARINSKI stole.

GARNITSKY

He's definitely gone to ground. His only family, his father lives in Kiev. I have people maintaining surveillance there.

KRASIN

REYNOLDS and VARVARINSKI must be found quickly.

GARNITSKY

Some progress there. We think REYNOLDS is probably being helped by a reporter for the Moscow News Journal. A woman named KATERINA AVRAMENKO. A crusading troublemaker. She's gone missing too. The FSB is pushing hard with this new lead.

INT. KIEV TRAIN STATION - DAY

REYNOLDS is seated alone at a coffee kiosk.

A TALL SKINNY YOUNG MAN with long unkept hair approaches and sits down at REYNOLD's table.

SKINNY YOUNG MAN

MARK REYNOLDS? I am ILYA VARVARINSKI. You know me as Rasputin.

REYNOLDS

Can you prove you're Rasputin?

SKINNY YOUNG MAN

Let's see. I sent you email from NIKOLAI KRASIN to STEVEN MARTINELLI confirming arrangements with Rusatomic and the government. An invoice from Smolensk Logistics to known big Russian Mafia boss for consulting fees. An email to FELIKS GARNITSKY from YURI DRATSHEV confirming death of managing director of Transneft would be ruled a suicide.

REYNOLDS

Okay, that's good enough. Glad to meet you Mr. VARVARINSKI.

REYNOLDS extends his hand.

INT. VARVARINSKI'S FATHER'S APARTMENT IN KIEV, UKRAINE - DAY
REYNOLDS, AVRAMENKO, AND VARVARINSKI (Rasputin) sitting at a kitchen table in a distressed Kiev housing project apartment.

VARVARINSKI

Let me explain how I accessed the confidential information I sent to you. I run computer systems at Moscow Partners. Made it look like hackers broke into our databases.

REYNOLDS

And why are you doing this?

VARVARINSKI

Because someone at Moscow Capital caused the death of my sister.

REYNOLDS

Aren't you then at risk of being discovered?

VARVARINSKI

But I am also very good hacker. If they discover tampering, I have left signs that our databases were accessed by outside hackers. They shall probably suspect American intelligence.

AVRAMENKO

But why did you have to risk this meeting? I didn't even know your identify until now. What's this about?

VARVARINSKI

I discovered something that scared me. Something must be done to stop them. It's about nuclear weapons.

REYNOLDS

But you've already provided us information about Moscow Capital's involvement with weapons grade nuclear materials reprocessing for the government. What's so troubling now?

VARVARINSKI

I believe someone has stolen Russian nuclear warheads.

REYNOLDS

Jesus Christ!

VARVARINSKI

One of the bigshots at Moscow Partners is man by name of Felix GARNITSKY. Very bad person. He is responsible for my sister's murder. I hacked into his cell phone.

REYNOLDS

That can't be possible. What the hell did you hear?

VARVARINSKI

I shall let you judge. Not sure I understand everything. These are conversations between GARNITSKY and someone named DRATSHEV that works for him. DRATSHEV is calling from the Urals. Ms. AVRAMENKO can translate for you.

VARVARINSKI turns laptop computer to allow AVRAMENKO to operate keyboard by playing recordings of conversations in Russian, periodically stopping to translate for REYNOLDS.

(translating following
playing audio recording)

AVRAMENKO

From August 5th - DRATSHEV: I was introduced to Colonel B. He believes I am army officer working with a rogue faction of the Russian military.

From August 29th - DRATSHEV: Everything is set. Items are scheduled to move from Trekhgornyy on September 5th. Removal from Ozersk Plant No. 2 will take place on the 9th... GARNITSKY: And the facility on Zukov Road? Dratshev: All set. I shall text photos.

GARNITSKY: And arrangements for shipment in Astrakhan? DRATSHEV: Ship sails on the 14th.

From September 9th - Dratshev: All three packages have arrived at Zukov Road. Sending photos.

REYNOLDS

Do you have the photos?

VARVARINSKI punches notebook keyboard. Screen fills with an image of a building with Russian military markings.

VARVARINSKI

Those are Russian Army unit identifications. But there is no such army unit. I checked. The building is also fake according to Google Earth.

VARVARINSKI brings up another photo. Screen fills with an image of a wooden crate with identification markings and the danger symbol for radiation.

Another image shows one side of the crate removed revealing a cylindrical object 24 inches in diameter with a mass of protruding electrical wiring.

VARVARINSKI (CONT'D)

I cannot be sure but I believe this might be a nuclear bomb.

REYNOLDS

Holy shit. It's definitely a nuclear warhead. Not just the fissionable core but the entire assembly. God help us.

AVRAMENKO

What's that mean, MARK?

REYNOLDS

It means it's a fully operational bomb. A high-yield state of the art bomb. Probably thermonuclear. All it needs is a triggering circuit.

VARVARINSKI

You know about this technology?

REYNOLDS

Enough. Did research for a story about lax Russian nuclear weapons security. Wrote a book about it. Ironic to be looking at the unthinkable becoming reality.

VARVARINSKI brings up another photo. Screen fills with an image of a piece of equipment appearing to be a diesel engine and large tank with Russian markings.

AVRAMENKO

Zoom in on the markings.
(pauses to view image)
It's labelled as a compressor.

VARVARINSKI

The last message is from the 14th.
DRATSHEV says the ship has sailed.
Astrakhan is a Russian port on the
northern coast of the Caspian Sea.

REYNOLDS

And that's how they disguised the
warheads. Sealed inside that tank.

AVRAMENKO

Oh my god. Terrorists or Iran?

REYNOLDS

I'd guess Iran. Ship can dock at an
Iranian port on the Caspian. Too
sophisticated and too costly an
operation for terrorists. And even
GARTNITSKY wouldn't be stupid
enough to arm ISIS or Al-Qaeda with
nuclear weapons.

AVRAMENKO

Now what do we do?

REYNOLDS

Ilya's right. We must get this
information to the United States.
We'll catch the first available
plane.

AVRAMENKO

(she shakes her head
negatively)

Might be a problem, MARK. Your real
passport shows no entry stamp into
Ukraine. You can't risk using the
fake passport and being detained by
Ukrainian security.

REYNOLDS

Shit. What do you suggest?

AVRAMENKO

Getting a flight from Kiev is still
safer than risking discovery in
Moscow. We'll take a train north
getting off at a station just over
the Russian border.

(MORE)

AVRAMENKO (CONT'D)

Then we'll board a return train to Kiev using our real passports getting a Ukraine entry stamp.

EXT. KIEV TRAIN STATION PLATFORM - NIGHT

GARNITSKY subordinate named STANISLAV is talking to GARNITSKY via cell phone.

(in Russian: subtitled)

STANISLAV

(excitedly)

Mister GARNITSKY, we've found him!

GARNITSKY (O.C.)

VARVARINSKI?

STANISLAV

Yes, but he was also with a man and woman. The surveillance team in Kiev say they're sure the man is the American reporter REYNOLDS and the Russian woman AVRAMENKO.

GARNITSKY (O.C.)

Excellent. Get down there with a strike team immediately, STANISLAV. Charter a plane. I want you to seize all of them. Take them to a secure location and wait for instructions from DRATSHEV.

STANISLAV

Yes, Sir. But I'm afraid the American and the woman have already boarded a train back to Moscow. One of my men boarded the train to watch them. Two men are still watching VARVARINSKI.

GARNITSKY (O.C.)

Very well. We'll take care of REYNOLDS. You get VARVARINSKI. Report back when you have him.

EXT. PRIVATE JET ON TARMAC AT KIEV'S BORISPIL AIRPORT - NIGHT

STANISLAV and three men disembark aircraft and drive off in waiting SUV.

OUTSIDE KIEV APARTMENT BUILDING - EARLY NEXT MORNING

STANISLAV and his men abduct VARVARINSKI as he leaves apartment building bundling him into a SUV.

All disembark SUV then enter a warehouse.

INT. KIEV WAREHOUSE - DAY

VARVARINSKI has been tied by his wrists with duct tape to a chain link internal fence and stripped bare to his waist.

STANISLAV nods to one of his men holding a length of electrical cable who then whips the cable across VARVARINSKI's back.

VARVARINSKI screams.

(in Russian; subtitled)

STANISLAV

That is only a sample of the pain you will suffer. It will go on as long as necessary. You cannot endure. Tell me what you stole. Who has the information?

VARVARINSKI remains silent.

STANISLAV nods and man with cable whip resumes torture.

VARVARINSKI screams with each blow. His back becomes torn and bleeding after sustained beating.

STANISLAV (CONT'D)

(close to VARVARINSKI)

This will not end until you tell me what you did with the information.

VARVARINSKI

(labored breathing)

Gave files to American reporter named REYNOLDS and Russian reporter named AVRAMENKO.

STANISLAV

Where else have you made copies?

VARVARINSKI

On my computers.

STANISLAV

Where else?

VARVARINSKI

Nowhere else.

STANISLAV
I don't believe you.

STANISLAV nods to his man and the torture resumes.

VARVARINSKI
(screaming)
Stop! Stop! I will tell you. Two
people in New York. One to New York
Daily News, Rachel Stern. The other
to a lawyer named Michael Solomon.

STANISLAV
How did you send the information?

VARVARINSKI
On memory drives. By FedEx.

STANISLAV
When?

VARVARINSKI
Yesterday.

STANISLAV moves away from VARVARINSKI and places a call on
his cell phone out of audio range.

Concludes call, returns to VARVARINSKI, pulls a pistol from
his shoulder holster, and shoots VARVARINSKI in the head.

EXT. TRAIN STATION BRYANSK, RUSSIA JUST OVER BORDER - MORNING

REYNOLDS sits at cafe table in station when AVRAMENKO returns
and joins him.

AVRAMENKO
I have tickets for return to Kiev.
One hour.

REYNOLDS
Good. I'll feel better using my
real passport. We'll go right to
the airport. Get tickets for the
first available flight anywhere in
Europe. Spend the night then get
you a visa at a U.S. Consulate.

AVRAMENKO
There is problem. I checked
Internet. Russians need visa for
all European countries. Only Turkey
does not require visa.

REYNOLDS

Then we'll go to the U.S.
Consulate in Kiev. That way we just
pass through the transit area
wherever we stop over in Europe.

AVRAMENKO

(shakes her head
negatively)

Kiev is not safe. They are looking
for us. GARNITSKY may have people
in Kiev. He is major criminal and
ex-KGB.

REYNOLDS

Okay. Then Istanbul it is. Should
be flights there from Kiev.

AVRAMENKO lays her hand on REYNOLDS' hand.

AVRAMENKO

You should go on ahead to New York.
It is necessary to get this
information to United States, MARK.

REYNOLDS

I'm not leaving you behind, NIKI.
Too dangerous here. This is also
your story. Besides, I need you to
translate and help put all this
together.

AVRAMENKO

Why would major international
corporation steal nuclear bombs?
That makes no sense.

REYNOLDS

Been thinking the same thing. Maybe
they didn't. Maybe this is
GARNITSKY doing his own rogue
operation. How much are three
nuclear bombs worth? But it still
comes back to Moscow Capital's
involvement with the Russian
nuclear industry. That's where I
need your help to put it all
together, NIKI.

INT. LAW OFFICES OF COHEN, MILLER & SOLOMON, MANHATTAN - DAY

FedEx driver enters building lobby and is approached by a
woman in business attire.

NEW YORK WOMAN

Do you have an overseas package for
Matthew Solomon? I'm his secretary.

The driver hands woman an envelope. Woman signs for receipt
then leaves the building after FedEx driver.

EXT. NEW YORK DAILY PRESS BUILDING, MANHATTAN - DAY

FedEx driver exits truck and is immediately approached on the
sidewalk by a man in a business suit.

NEW YORK MAN

Do you have an overseas package for
Rachel Stern?

The driver hands man an envelope. Man signs for receipt then
walks away without entering the building.

EXT. KIEV TRAIN STATION - DAY

Cold rainy day as REYNOLDS and AVRAMENKO disembark train and
walk to taxi queue with their luggage.

AVRAMENKO

(to taxi driver in
Russian)

Airport.

(to REYNOLDS)

There is a flight to Istanbul at
one o'clock.

INSIDE TAXI

AVRAMENKO leans over and kisses REYNOLDS on the cheek.

AVRAMENKO (CONT'D)

Will I like New York, MARK?

REYNOLDS

Compared to dreary Moscow I should
think you'll love it.

AVRAMENKO

Do you have girlfriend, MARK?

REYNOLDS

Ah... no. Not really. Nothing
serious.

From the taxi rearview mirror a large Mercedes comes up
quickly behind flashing its headlights.

Mercedes pulls along side taxi with man waving identification out window while gesturing for the taxi to pull over.

Taxi pulls over with Mercedes pulling behind.

REYNOLDS and AVRAMENKO turn to see three men approaching the taxi. No uniforms. All are wearing leather jackets.

Two of the men open both rear doors and point pistols at REYNOLDS and AVRAMENKO ordering them out. Third man yells threateningly at the frightened taxi driver.

REYNOLDS and AVRAMENKO are shoved into back seat of Mercedes, squeezed between two gunman.

The third gunman retrieves the luggage and notebook computers from the taxi then gets into the passenger seat of the Mercedes. Mercedes accelerates rapidly with spinning tires.

A second Mercedes falls in behind and the two cars speed rapidly through a Kiev industrial district near the river.

Both cars stop at roll-up door entrance to same location where VARVARINSKI was taken. Both cars enter warehouse.

Stacks of boxes occupy most of the warehouse storage space in long isles. Inside the warehouse is an internal office area.

Roll-up door is closed and all the assailants got out of the vehicles leaving REYNOLDS and AVRAMENKO in the back seat.

INT. REYNOLDS AND AVRAMENKO IN BACK SEAT OF MERCEDES - DAY

REYNOLDS

What did these guys say to the driver?

AVRAMENKO

Said they were Ukrainian Security Service. But I don't think so.

REYNOLDS

Why?

AVRAMENKO

Except when they spoke to the driver they spoke to each other in Russian.

REYNOLDS

Then these guys are GARNITSKY's thugs. Or maybe Russian FSB. Probably makes no difference.

(MORE)

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

Listen, NIKI. Whatever they want to know about our investigation of Moscow Capital or MGI, tell them. It's not worth being hurt. Copies of the files are on the way to the United States. But for god sakes don't say anything about the nuclear weapons theft.

AVRAMENKO

Doesn't matter. With what we know it's better for them we disappear.

REYNOLDS

Maybe, but they'll at least want to find out what we know and where the files are. Just keep our heads and see what they're planning. Shit! Where are the USB drives with GARNITSKY's conversation about the bombs?

AVRAMENKO

In my purse.

REYNOLDS grabs her purse and reaches inside pulling out the USBs along with a small caliber pistol.

REYNOLDS

Sonofabitch. Didn't know you carried a gun.

AVRAMENKO

Russian journalism is dangerous.

REYNOLDS pushes the USBs through the gap behind the car seat.

REYNOLDS

Damn good thing we didn't copy those files onto our computers. Before long they'll search us. Can you hide the gun on your body where they might not find it?

AVRAMENKO thinks for a moment then pulls up her skirt tucking the gun in her panty hose on the inside of her thigh.

Car door opens motioning them out at the point of a gun.

INT. EMPLOYEE LUNCH AREA WITHIN WAREHOUSE OFFICE - DAY

Scarred walls with florescent light fixture over eight-foot cafeteria table with stained plastic chairs, litter on floor.

Man in charge puts gun to AVRAMENKO'S head while another pushes REYNOLDS into a chair binding his wrists with duct tape then doing the same to AVRAMENKO.

Contents of their luggage and computer cases are dumped on the table. Everything is meticulously searched.

Man in charge takes notebook computers into adjoining office.

INT. WAREHOUSE LUNCHROOM HOURS LATER - NIGHT

One man stands guard sitting in a chair.

REYNOLDS

Do you think this miserable piece
of shit whore's son understands
English, NIKI?

The guard registers no particular expression.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

Doesn't look like it. They must be
waiting for someone. We've got to
try to escape before that happens.

AVRAMENKO

How?

REYNOLDS

Your gun of course. This guy is
tired. Look at him yawn. You'll ask
to go to the toilet. When you come
out, stick the gun in his face. I
mean right in his face with the
muzzle touching his head. You've
got to scare the shit out of him,
NIKI. March him back here.

AVRAMENKO

Then what do we do? We don't know
how many others are still here.

REYNOLDS

We'll have to play it by ear. Now
listen to me. You must be prepared
to shoot him if it goes wrong. If
that happens pick up his gun and
make a run for it. Can you do that?

AVRAMENKO nods.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

One more thing. One of the other guys will take this guy's place to guard me when this guy escorts you to the toilet. When you come back I'm not sure what will happen. The only thing we have going is your gun until we can disarm them. You've got to shoot them if it goes wrong, NIKI.

INT. WAREHOUSE LUNCHROOM SHORT TIME LATER - NIGHT

REYNOLDS nods to AVRAMENKO.

AVRAMENKO

(to the guard in Russian)
I must go to the toilet.

Guard stands up and opens door into adjoining office and says something in Russian to a confederate.

Second guard enters the lunch room and first guard grabs AVRAMENKO by the arm exiting the lunch room with her.

INT. WAREHOUSE TOILET - NIGHT

Guard opens door to toilet.

AVRAMENKO enters then turns to face the guard until he closes the door.

After lapse of couple of minutes, AVRAMENKO opens the toilet door. With hands still bound at wrists she points pistol at guard smoking a cigarette his pistol stuck into his waist.

AVRAMENKO takes two steps sticking gun close to his forehead.

AVRAMENKO

(in Russian; subtitled)
Put your hands behind your head.
Walk in front. Try anything and
I'll put a bullet in your head.

INT. WAREHOUSE LUNCHROOM - NIGHT

Door opens. Guard enters ahead of AVRAMENKO.

RUSSIAN GUARD

(in Russian; subtitled)
Where is the woman?

AVRAMENKO steps to the side and points her gun at the seated guard.

Holding his gun in his lap he reacts by raising his gun.

AVRAMENKO fires twice hitting the man in the chest.

Other guard standing pulls gun from his waist.

REYNOLDS pushes the cafeteria table violently catching the man hard at the hip.

AVRAMENKO fires repeatedly dropping the man to the floor.

REYNOLDS retrieves the two weapons dropped by the guards. One appears dead, the other is gasping for air.

Shouts in Russian come from outside the lunchroom. Wounded man tries to reply but REYNOLDS smashes his head with a gun.

REYNOLDS

Get the other gun, NIKI! We're
going into the warehouse and find
another way out.

INT. ISLES OF STACKED BOXES ON PALLETS - NIGHT

REYNOLDS and AVRAMENKO sprint down an aisle. Each has a gun from their guards but their wrists remained bound with tape.

Shots miss fired at them miss as they weave their way changing aisles until coming to the rear of the warehouse.

REYNOLDS

Should be a door somewhere back
here.

He finds a personnel door but it is secured with a padlock.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

Get out of the way! Keep watch.
Shoot at anyone you see.

REYNOLDS puts the barrel of his gun against the hasp securing the padlock. Fires two shots freeing the door to open.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

Run outside and find some cover to
hide behind.

AVRAMENKO

What are you going to do?

REYNOLDS

Ambush these bastards. We can't get far without warm clothing. We've no car, no passports, no money.

AVRAMENKO

Ambush?

REYNOLDS

Surprise them. Shoot them. Then we'll take the car and make a run for it. Now go!

As AVRAMENKO leaves through the door, REYNOLDS conceals himself behind a forklift a short distance from the door. Finding a metal edge he removes the tape binding his wrists.

Two armed men run to the door. One opens it cautiously. A shot ring out punching a hole through the sheet metal warehouse wall but does not hit either man.

Kneeling, REYNOLDS steadies his pistol and fires twice. One man falls. The other man turns and fires off wild shots. REYNOLDS fires repeatedly bringing the second man down.

REYNOLDS approaches the first man he shot who is conscious and still holding his gun. REYNOLDS comes up behind him and places the barrel of his gun against the man's head. Man drops his gun. REYNOLDS moves in front of him. The man is holding his abdomen with blood seeping out between his fingers and looks up in disbelief at REYNOLDS.

REYNOLDS picks up the man's gun and goes to the door opening it only a crack to avoid AVRAMENKO shooting him by mistake.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

NIKI. It's me. Don't shoot. Come back in here quickly.

REYNOLDS opens door to show himself.

AVRAMENKO enters warehouse and he frees her wrists.

AVRAMENKO

(looking at the two men)
What happened? Are you all right?

REYNOLDS

Yes.

REYNOLDS searches the pockets of both guards.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

No car keys. Back to the office.

Both move quickly back toward the warehouse office area.

INT. WAREHOUSE LUNCHROOM - NIGHT

REYNOLDS enters lunchroom with caution.

One man remains barely alive with ashen face, labored breathing, and his entire front soaked in blood.

REYNOLDS searches the man's pocket for the car keys. His hand is covered in blood as he extracts keys.

REYNOLDS

Yes! Get our coats, NIKI. Leave everything else.

AVRAMENKO grabs their overcoats from the pile on the table.

REYNOLDS puts his ear to the internal door leading to the adjacent office listening for any sign of others.

INT. WAREHOUSE OFFICE - NIGHT

They enter office littered with take-out food containers and empty beer bottles.

REYNOLDS

Shit. No passports, no computers.

REYNOLDS tosses the car keys to AVRAMENKO.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

You drive. I'll open the roll-up door... Wait, I'll be right back.

REYNOLDS ducks back into the lunchroom area bending over the dying man to again search his pockets.

Retrieves the man's wallet and wipes away blood. Opens the wallet finding some cash and a credit card.

Rushes back into the office grabbing AVRAMENKO's arm exiting into the warehouse area where the one Mercedes sits.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

Start the car, NIKI.

She gets behind the wheel as he opens the roll-up door.

He climbs into passenger seat and AVRAMENKO accelerates out of the warehouse.

INT. MERCEDES DRIVING THROUGH KIEV - NIGHT

AVRAMENKO

Where am I to go?

REYNOLDS

Do you know anyone in Kiev?

AVRAMENKO

No. I don't even know where we are.

REYNOLDS

Take it easy, NIKI. Drive us out of this industrial area. Go to the left. More lights in that direction.

AVRAMENKO

What are we to do?

REYNOLDS

We must get to the American Embassy.

AVRAMENKO

But how do we find it?

REYNOLDS

Easier in the morning. We'll find someplace to stay and get some rest. And get rid of this car.

AVRAMENKO

We've no money. No passports.

REYNOLDS shows her the wallet from the dying man.

REYNOLDS

A credit card and a little cash. Just need to find a hotel. Someplace small and out of way.

AVRAMENKO drives through a commercial area mostly darkened this late at night.

AVRAMENKO

There is hotel.

REYNOLDS

Yes. Pull over.

AVRAMENKO parks in front of hotel.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

Go in and see if they have a room.
Use this credit card. Say your
husband is parking the car. If they
have a room, wave to me. I'll dump
the car blocks away and walk back.

She gets out of the car and he slides behind the wheel. She
kisses him through the open window.

INT. REYNOLDS DRIVING MERCEDES - NIGHT

Drives down darkened streets eventually parking in front of
an apartment building.

Gets out and opens back door. Sticks his hand down behind the
rear seat attempting to retrieve the discarded USBs but is
unsuccessful. Closes car door quietly and walks away.

INT. GARNITSKY TALKING TO DRATSHEV ON CELL PHONE - DAY
(split screen in Russian;
subtitled)

GARNITSKY

Have you dealt with the individuals
we discussed?

DRATSHEV O.S.

Only one remains. The others no
longer represent a problem. I am
having dinner with the remaining
individual to resolve the matter.

GARNITSKY

Very good. Need you to take care of
that other lingering problem.
STANISLAV has contained the
situation in Kiev. Need you to get
down there and take charge.

I/E. GEN. TATARINOV IN RESTAURANT IN OZERSK, RUSSIA - NIGHT

Car in front of restaurant is visible through large window.

OUTSIDE

Driver of car walks away. Car explodes moments later.

EXT. IRANIAN CASPIAN PORT OF NOWSHAHR - DAY

Sitting dock side with freighter in background is a flatbed trailer loaded with a large open wooden crate revealing the equipment concealing the nuclear warheads.

FARZARD SAVI is instructing the truck driver.

EXT. KIEV AIRPORT EXECUTIVE JET TERMINAL - NIGHT

STANISLAV is waiting on the tarmac beside a Mercedes close to an executive jet. YURI DRATSHEV steps down, speaks briefly to STANISLAV then both get into a Mercedes which drives off.

I/E. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

STANISLAV and DRATSHEV exit Mercedes. STANISLAV finds the personnel door unlocked. Sensing something is wrong, he draws his pistol and enters cautiously.

INSIDE

Lights are on but no one is visible. DRATSHEV is standing next to him also with a drawn weapon.

(in Russian; subtitled)

STANISLAV

Vadim? Sacha?

STANISLAV and DRATSHEV enter office then lunchroom.

One man lies prone on the floor, the other is propped against the wall. Blood has pooled around both.

DRATSHEV

How many of your men were here?

STANISLAV

Four.

STANISLAV crouches next to the propped up man and shakes his shoulder. Close to death, the man's eyelids barely flutter.

STANISLAV opens door into warehouse and glances about.

DRATSHEV

What has happened here, STANISLAV?

STANISLAV

I don't know, YURI. REYNOLDS and the woman were unarmed.

(MORE)

STANISLAV (CONT'D)

Tied securely when I left. Someone must have helped them.

DRATSHEV

Search the building immediately.

STANISLAV comes upon his other two men. One is dead, the other wounded and still conscious.

WOUNDED MAN

REYNOLDS... had a gun... somehow hidden... got away with the woman.

STANISLAV

There was no one else?

WOUNDED MAN

No. Just them. Don't understand how it happened.

STANISLAV looked around then smashed the wounded man repeatedly in the head with the butt of his gun.

INT. WAREHOUSE OFFICE - NIGHT

STANISLAV reenters lunchroom. DRATSHEV is standing alongside their driver.

STANISLAV

The other two are in the back. Both shot dead. Looks like whoever did this entered by a back door.

DRATSHEV

How long were you gone from here?

STANISLAV

Two hours. Just to pick you up.

DRATSHEV

And how would anyone know you brought them here?

STANISLAV

(nervous)

I don't know, YURI. But I've still got their passports and computers.

DRATSHEV

I'm going to assume your people just fucked up. Probably something to do with the woman.

(MORE)

DRATSHEV (CONT'D)

That means REYNOLDS only option is the United States Embassy. You fucked up, STANISLAV. Let's hope you can redeem yourself.

INT. KRASIN'S OFFICE MOSCOW - DAY

GARNITSKY enters and closes door. KRASIN stands looking out the window behind his desk.

(in Russian; subtitled)

GARNITSKY

Bad news, NIKOLAI. REYNOLDS and AVRAMENKO have escaped. Somehow they managed to kill the four guys holding them.

KRASIN

Sonofabitch! How did such a thing happen? Who's responsible?

GARNITSKY

Guy named STANISLAV was in charge. Had to use him since he was there to deal with VARVARINSKI and stumbled on REYNOLDS. DRATSHEV's in Kiev right now to sort things out.

KRASIN

Damn good thing I didn't tell our American associates we captured REYNOLDS. At least I can report we discovered the source of the data leaks. That matter has been taken care of I trust?

GARNITSKY

Yes. Also got cyber people working on tightening security protocols.

KRASIN

And what is being done to locate REYNOLDS and AVRAMENKO?

GARNITSKY

DRATSHEV has more people in route. As far fetched as it sounds, he doesn't think anyone is helping REYNOLDS. Thinks some fluke allowed him to get hold of a gun. We have their passports, credit cards, computers. If he's right then their only chance is the U.S. Embassy.

KRASIN

Which means we have lost them.

GARNITSKY

But they have no evidence. They have nothing on them. VARVARINSKI's taken care of. Storage devices with the stolen data were sent to REYNOLDS associates in New York. Those have been intercepted. The leak has been plugged.

KRASIN

REYNOLDS still represents a liability back in America. Assuming he's reached the U.S. Embassy do we have any leverage with the Ukrainian police? Questions about these homicides perhaps? Can the American's ignore that?

GARNITSKY

I have indirect contacts into Ukrainian state security. Since this is a police matter maybe we can make it into something more. I'll get working on it. If we can get him outside the embassy then there are ways to eliminate him. But I thought MARTINELLI was concerned about publicity if an American reporter is killed?

KRASIN

Better now this ends in Kiev if possible. I'll smooth it over with MARTINELLI. Blame overzealous Ukrainian subcontracted security perhaps if it comes to that.

INT. UNITED STATES EMBASSY KIEV, UKRAINE - EARLY MORNING

Interview room with REYNOLDS and AVRAMENKO seated across table from junior consular office.

CONSULAR OFFICER KIEV

I can't pass you to someone higher up unless you tell me what this is about. Until we check you out we can't be certain you are who claim to be without passports.

REYNOLDS

Listen. This is a national security matter. It involves terrorism and nuclear bombs.

The consular office arches his eyebrow making no reply then leaves the room.

Minutes later an older man enters and extends his hand.

JOHNSON

My name is RALPH JOHNSON.
Commercial Attache.

REYNOLDS

Considering that my information concerns nuclear terrorism, am I to assume you are actually the CIA Head of Station?

JOHNSON

Oh my no. Just a career foreign service employee. Not connected with intelligence. Right now I'm just the most senior consular official on duty this early in the morning.

REYNOLDS

Well, Mr. JOHNSON, humor me. I still assume you're CIA but whoever you work for you've got to pass on some vital and urgent information to Washington.

JOHNSON

Very well. Let's hear your story.

REYNOLDS

Both Ms. AVRAMENKO and I have been working on a story about multi-national corporate corruption. It involves MGI in the United States and an affiliate, Moscow Capital, in Russia. They've tried to kill me more than once to silence me.

JOHNSON

Here in Kiev?

REYNOLDS

Yes. We escaped after being abducted. That's why we have no passports or belongings.

JOHNSON

And how did you manage to escape?

REYNOLDS

I'd rather not get into those details right now. Here's what this is about. We have an insider source at Moscow Capital. We've enough incriminating evidence to topple MGI, maybe even Moscow Capital in Russia. Problem there is they're well connected with Putin.

JOHNSON

How's that connected with nuclear terrorism?

REYNOLDS

Because in the process of leaking information, our insider source, also an accomplished hacker, uncovered something truly frightening. We must get this to the White House.

JOHNSON

The White House? Listen, Mr. REYNOLDS. Before I came in here we were able to verify your identity. If it wasn't for your reputation I'd throw you out of here as a crackpot. But you've got to give me more than just some wild conspiracy theory.

REYNOLDS

If you know my background than you also know I have some knowledge of nuclear weapons through my past research for a book I wrote. Tell your superiors I have strong evidence that Iran has obtained several operational nuclear warheads. Russian warheads.

JOHNSON

Jesus! You're serious aren't you? What kind of evidence?

REYNOLDS

Audio and photographic digital files. Hacked from cell phone conversations.

JOHNSON

And where is this evidence?

REYNOLDS

In New York by now.

INT. U.S. EMBASSY, KIEV, UKRAINE - AFTERNOON

REYNOLDS and AVRAMENKO are sitting in a large conference room with windows. Coffee cups and water bottles litter the table. Both are slightly disheveled. JOHNSON and another man enter.

JOHNSON

This is our FBI liaison officer
Special Agent FRANKS.

JOHNSON and FRANKS take seats at the table.

FRANKS

Quite a story, Mr. REYNOLDS. You do seem to get around. Interpol has issued a arrest notice filed by Columbia. For murder no less.

REYNOLDS

A ridiculous charge that I can refute with photographic evidence. Evidence the FBI has in New York.

FRANKS

We've also been contacted by the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry. Something regarding several homicides here in Kiev. Know anything about that?

REYNOLDS

We were abducted and escaped. Had to defend ourselves. I'll discuss the details once we're safely back in the United States.

FRANKS

You've put us in a difficult diplomatic position. But right now let's hear the details about these Russian nuclear warheads.

LATER SAME AFTERNOON

Agent FRANKS sets down his legal pad.

FRANKS (CONT'D)

Okay. If all this is true then it's easy enough to check if the files are in New York as you say.

REYNOLDS

You calling me a liar?

FRANKS

I'm saying we need some tangible evidence. Maybe a way to get out of Kiev. Frankly this sounds like some sort of obsessive witch hunt against MGI. My superiors would have my head if I gave it credibility without some sort of corroborating proof. According to Washington, the supposed evidence you brought us earlier from Columbia proved inconclusive. There was even speculation some of the material might have been fabricated to facilitate your getting out of Columbia. Is this a repeat?

REYNOLDS

We don't seem to be getting anywhere. The digital files are in New York. Besides this nuclear theft stuff there is enough other material to convict MGI executives on all sorts of criminal charges. For that you'll need our help, that includes Ms. AVRAMENKO's. I don't trust being left to dangle in the wind here in Kiev while the FBI investigates or maybe buries the whole thing.

FRANKS

You're hardly in a position to negotiate Mr. REYNOLDS.

REYNOLDS

Really? Considering the gravity of even the remote possibility of Iran now possessing state-of-the-art operational nuclear warheads, I'd suggest you have no choice but to get me and Ms. AVRAMENKO to the United States. Even this administration isn't that stupid.

FRANKS

You're right, we're not getting any where. I need to consult with Washington and Mr. JOHNSON with his superiors.

REYNOLDS

You do that. While you're at it contact a Deputy U.S. District Attorney by the name of Albert Thorne. He'll vouch for my credibility.

JOHNSON

This may take some time to work through. Probably all night. Arrangements will be made for you to spend the night here at the Embassy.

INT. ROOM IN BASEMENT OF EMBASSY - NIGHT

REYNOLDS and AVRAMENKO are escorted by two Marines.

Two cots are piled with sheets, blankets, and pillows with a door leading to a small toilet with a shower.

Marine closes door. No doorknob on inside. A holding cell.

INT. ROOM IN BASEMENT FOLLOWING MORNING - MORNING

Knock on door which is then opened. Woman is holding a stack of folded clothing. A Marine stands behind her.

WOMAN AT EMBASSY

These are clean clothes. When ready, notify the Marine and he will escort you to breakfast. You are expected in the conference room at 8:30.

INT. U.S. EMBASSY KIEV CONFERENCE ROOM - MORNING

REYNOLDS and AVRAMENKO enter conference room. JOHNSON and FRANKS are already seated. A speaker phone sits in the middle of the table. A large television screen hangs on the wall.

FRANKS

Please be seated. Hope you both got some rest. In a moment we're going to have U.S. DA THORNE on video.

(MORE)

FRANKS (CONT'D)

Seems you've struck a nerve in Washington, Mr. REYNOLDS. It's almost two in the morning there.

Television screen comes on displaying two men.

THORNE

I am ALBERT THORNE. With me is PHILLIP ELLSBERG also a Deputy U.S. District Attorney. Mr. ELLSBERG specializes in financial crimes. We're speaking from the Pentagon. I'm advised this is a secured transmission so we can speak freely. Mr. REYNOLDS, I must say you have a propensity for getting into international difficulties.

REYNOLDS

Goes with the job.

THORNE

We've been briefed by Mr. JOHNSON and Mr. FRANKS. A remarkable story. So much easier to proceed if you would simply let our experts review the evidence you say you have in New York.

REYNOLDS

I will as soon as I'm back in the United States. You must understand my position. I'm stuck out here in Eastern Europe in real danger. You guys already ignored my prior information on MGI. It's a matter of trust. Get me and Ms. AVRAMENKO out of Kiev.

ELLSBERG

I looked at the information you brought out of Columbia. Not sure why the investigation was dropped but that was a mistake. Clearly the evidence was sufficient to warrant an investigation. This Columbian charge of murder of your journalist colleague is not only bullshit but suggests Columbian government collusion with a criminal enterprise. Frankly I'm mad as hell and intend to make a stink. If nothing else, MGI has highly questionable associations.

REYNOLDS

Then you'll appreciate what I now have to offer, Mr. ELLSBERG. MGI's hidden connections through offshore shell companies. Documented evidence of corporate bribery, money laundering, smuggling, SEC violations, falsifying taxes, wire fraud, and probably a host of other criminal charges.

THORNE

But the urgency here concerns your suspicions of the theft of Russian nuclear weapons. Are you suggesting that too was MGI's doing?

REYNOLDS

That I can't say. We only know it was engineered by FELIKS GARNITSKY who's a senior executive of Moscow Capital of which MGI has a majority ownership stake. All obscured of course through foreign subsidiaries.

THORNE

This FELIKS GARNITSKY is known to U.S. Intelligence. Extensive criminal background. You say this source calling himself Rasputin hacked GARNITSKY's cell phone conversations?

REYNOLDS

That's right. The source is an insider at Moscow Capital. An IT specialist. He's also the source for all the incriminating information extracted from Moscow Capital databases. That material of course heavily implicates MGI. But the source is also a hacker. He had a personal animosity against GARNITSKY. Once he hacked GARNITSKY's conversations he realized this went beyond corporate criminality. He came out of hiding to turn over the information in person to us here in Kiev since Moscow had become too dangerous.

THORNE

Very well. I think we have enough to take upstairs. Hope to get back to you in the next 24 hours. Do we need to coordinate with anyone at State?

JOHNSON

No, I'll take care of things from here. I'm advised by the Ambassador that we will facilitate the return of both Mr. REYNOLDS and Ms. AVRAMENKO to the U.S. if directed by the Justice Department.

INT. COMPUTER ROOM AT MOSCOW CAPITAL - DAY

IT director, a mousy woman named Raisa, is looking at a notebook computer in a small office. FELIKS GARNITSKY enters.
(in Russian; subtitled)

GARNITSKY

What have you found, RAISA?

RAISA

(nervous)

This is one of VARVARINSKI's computers, Sir. Just started to search for confidential files he stole since the specialists you brought in broke through his encryption. There's a lot of files directly copied from our database. But I found something else.

GARNITSKY

What?

RAISA

There is a folder in VARVARINSKI's documents labelled with your name, Sir. Audio files and photos.

GARNITSKY

Audio files? What do you mean?

RAISA

Recordings, Sir. I didn't listen to any of them. Thought it best if I left that to you.

GARNITSKY

Yes. I appreciate that.

RAISA stood up and allows GARNITSKY to sit in front of the computer. She directs the cursor on the computer screen.

RAISA
Just click each file. You can
navigate forward and backward right
here. I'll leave you alone, Sir.

She leaves and closes the door.

Intermittent visual images show the nuclear warheads.

EXT. MOSCOW STREET - DAY

GARNITSKY calls DRATSHEV in Kiev.
(split screen, in Russian;
subtitled)

GARNITSKY
Listen carefully, YURI. I want you
to destroy REYNOLDS and AVRAMENKO's
computers immediately. Those are
the only remaining copies of the
material VARVARINSKI stole. Remove
the hard drives. Do you understand?

DRATSHEV
Yes, Sir.

GARNITSKY
REYNOLDS has become a serious
liability. My FSB sources say they
are at the U.S. Embassy there in
Kiev. Fortunately they have a
source inside the embassy. But we
have to assume they will soon
leave. Probably under escort, maybe
even by the Ukrainian police. He
and AVRAMENKO must both be killed
before they can get to the airport.
Can that be done?

DRATSHEV
That will be ... yes it can be
done. I'll need manpower and
weapons support though.

GARNITSKY
How many people do you have in
Kiev?

DRATSHEV
Just STANISLAV and two of his men.

GARNITSKY

I'll text you a number to call.
Name is LEBEDYENKO. An arms
smuggler in Odessa. I'll call him
and explain the situation. He'll be
able to supply what you need.

DRATSHEV

It most likely will require high-
grade explosives, Sir. No time to
plan anything more subtle. It'll be
messy.

GARNITSKY

I understand. Just get it done.
We'll float the rumor it was pro-
Russian Ukrainian separatists. And
one more thing. STANISLAV should
not survive. He's a fucking
liability, YURI.

GARNITSKY removes the SIM card from the cell phone then
throws the phone into a trash receptacle.

EXT. PARKING STRUCTURE AT DRATSHEV'S HOTEL, KIEV - DAY

DRATSHEV is standing with men from Odessa looking into the
open cargo bed of a large Chevrolet Suburban SUV.

The space is occupied with a bed of bricks of plastique
explosives with attached wires leading to a receiver.

One man hands DRATSHEV a remote control.
(in Russian; subtitled)

ODESSA MAN

First extend the antenna. Move this
switch to arm the explosives. The
light turns from red to green.
Press this button to detonate.

INT. PARKED OUTSIDE U.S. EMBASSY GATE, KIEV - DAY

STANISLAV is behind the wheel alone in a Mercedes.

Viewed from the rear mirror, a large SUV pulls up behind.

DRATSHEV exits SUV and enters Mercedes on passenger side.
(in Russian; subtitled)

DRATSHEV

Where are your two men?

STANISLAV

In another car watching from the other direction.

DRATSHEV

Extra manpower just arrived. Muscle from Odessa. Well armed. Here's the plan. You'll drive the big SUV they brought. This is your show, STANISLAV. Chance to redeem yourself. Don't fuck it up.

STANISLAV nods.

DRATSHEV (CONT'D)

Now when REYNOLDS leaves the embassy we'll have at least a little notice. A source inside. If it's headed to the airport they should go in that direction.

DRATSHEV points ahead.

DRATSHEV (CONT'D)

It's your job to ram whatever vehicle REYNOLDS is in with the SUV. Bring it to a stop. Do it immediately as they exit the gate. The Odessa crew will then pull up. They'll unload with assault rifles and grenades killing everyone in the vehicle. Any questions?

STANISLAV

What if REYNOLDS doesn't leave for days?

DRATSHEV

I'll see that everyone has water and food. If you need to piss or shit, figure it out. Now let's change vehicles.

OUTSIDE

DRATSHEV and STANISLAV exit the Mercedes.

Four Odessa men exit the SUV. One man tosses SUV keys to STANISLAV.

INT. DRATSHEV AND ODESSA MEN HOURS LATER IN MERCEDES - DAY

DRATSHEV's cell phone rings. Answers then disconnects after listening for a few seconds.

DRATSHEV dials STANISLAV in the parked SUV a block ahead.
(in Russian; subtitled)

DRATSHEV
REYNOLDS will be in a black
limousine with tinted windows
leaving soon. Get ready.

DRATSHEV disconnects the call.

ODESSA MAN
Your man doesn't know about the
explosives?

DRATSHEV
No. A necessary sacrifice.

INT. MERCEDES WITH DRATSHEV AND GUNMEN - DAY

Limousine exits gate and turn onto street.

SUV pulls out immediately accelerating toward limousine heading in same direction.

Mercedes follows a hundred yards behind the SUV.

DRATSHEV in front passenger seat extends remote's antenna and moves switch turning indicator light from red to green.

EXT. SUV OVERTAKES LIMOUSINE - DAY

Closing on the limousine STANISLAV jerks the SUV abruptly into the left rear quarter panel of the limousine spinning it 180 degrees out of control.

As the SUV moves parallel to the limousine, DRATSHEV in the following Mercedes detonates the explosives in the SUV.

Explosion blows away the entire rear half of the SUV with the front half burning as it rolls to a stop

Mercedes slows, stopping near the disabled limousine.

Front of the limousine is badly damaged with hood missing, front wheel collapsed, windshield and windows blown out.

DRATSHEV and three men armed with assault rifles exit the car and approach the limousine.

Behind them tires screech and armed Marines jump from a jeep.

One gunman fires at Marines who take cover behind jeep.

Other two gunmen fire bursts into limousine passenger area.

Sirens in the distance.

DRATSHEV motions for gunmen to return. Mercedes accelerates away from the scene under fire from Marines.

EXT. IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH OF BOMBING - DAY

Additional Marines, State Department security, and CIA operative JOHNSON and FBI Agent FRANKS arrive at the scene.

JOHNSON opens rear passenger door. AVRAMENKO is slumped over held by her seat belt and covered in blood.

Behind JOHNSON the embassy doctor pushes him out of the way.

DOCTOR
Move out of the way.

DOCTOR checks AVRAMENKO's neck for a pulse.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
She's dead.

DOCTOR and JOHNSON open the opposite rear door.

REYNOLDS is unconscious. DOCTOR checks his neck.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
He's alive. Pulse seems fairly strong.

Ukrainian police and medical personnel add to chaotic scene.

REYNOLDS is removed from the limousine still unconscious, placed on a gurney then loaded into an ambulance.

JOHNSON
Will he make it, Doctor?

DOCTOR
Can't say. Looks like severe head trauma. But all the blood is mostly superficial lacerations. I'm going to the hospital.
(MORE)

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Get me someone that speaks
Ukrainian so I know what the hell
is going on medically with the
patient.

INT. KIEV HOSPITAL NEXT DAY - NIGHT

FBI Agent FRANKS, JOHNSON, and the embassy DOCTOR stand next
to REYNOLDS bed as he comes out of sedation.

DOCTOR

Mr. REYNOLDS, can you hear me?

REYNOLDS makes no reply but his eyes are open.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Your injuries are serious but no
longer life threatening. A
concussion, broken ribs, a
punctured lung, and a dislocated
shoulder. Lots of bruising. You've
just come out of surgery to repair
your ribs and lung. All went well.

REYNOLDS

(difficulty speaking)
NIKI?

DOCTOR

I'm sorry. Ms. AVRAMENKO did not
survive. In addition to the blast
effects she was also struck by two
bullets. She died at the scene.

FRANKS

Arrangements have been made to get
you to the United States. In a few
hours you'll be flown to Germany on
a U.S. military transport for
further medical evaluation. Once
you are well enough you'll be flown
to the United States. Considering
what has happened we need to see
this incriminating evidence
immediately. Will you tell us how
we can get our hands on it?

REYNOLDS

When I'm back in New York.

INT. LIVING ROOM OF REYNOLDS APARTMENT IN MANHATTAN - DAY

REYNOLDS is seated along with U.S. District Attorneys THORNE and ELLSBERG. REYNOLDS arm is in a sling and his face still reveals lacerations and bruising.

THORNE

We've listened to your recorded interview in Germany about this possible nuclear weapons theft. Pretty thin without hearing the recordings and especially examining those photos you saw. Just your third hand account. After all GARNITSKY did work for Moscow Capital of which Rusatomic is a subsidiary, involved with reprocessing weapons-grade fissionable materials. Couldn't this be just normal practice, or even a Russian subterfuge?

REYNOLDS

I don't think so. Hearing the conversation and seeing the photos paints a different scenario.

THORNE

For what it's worth, the FBI has traced FedEx packages sent from Ukraine addressed to your attorney and Ms. Stern. Since they didn't sign for the packages it tends to support your allegations of a criminal conspiracy. But the material is still gone.

REYNOLDS

It also confirms that ILYA VARVARINSKI, aka Rasputin my inside Russian source, is by now dead.

ELLSBERG

We've got two different investigations going on. This nuclear bomb stuff is mostly in the hands of U.S. Intelligence. Justice is involved only because of the possible connection to MGI. But on that subject, we're actively pursuing MGI's practices largely based upon your earlier information from Columbia.

REYNOLDS

Why now? What changed?

ELLSBERG

I have a new boss and she has a new boss, the new Attorney General. Beyond that I'd rather not comment. But unlike this limited evidence about these nuclear bombs, you must be able to recall a lot of new material you discovered about MGI's investments in Russia.

REYNOLDS shakes his head.

REYNOLDS

I'll do my best to offer what I can recall. Difficult though without the documentation. Or NIKI AVRAMENKO to help. And without the incriminating evidence even I know it'll be difficult to prosecute. At least for real criminal stuff not just SEC violations or tax violations. And speaking of MGI, where do I stand legally with those assholes in Columbia?

THORNE

We couldn't stop the Interpol arrest notice but we're fighting Columbia's extradition application. Frankly I think it's just a tactical smoke screen.

INT. CONRAD REDEK'S MGI OFFICE, MANHATTAN - DAY

STEVEN MARTINELLI walks into office. REDEK is seated behind desk. Throws newspaper on REDEK's desk and sits down.

MARTINELLI

Seen that?

REDEK picks up the newspaper.

MARTINELLI (CONT'D)

I just got off the phone with KRASIN. They located REYNOLDS then that idiot GARNITSKY tried to kill him. A car bomb no less. Didn't get REYNOLDS. Killed that Russian reporter helping him but also killed an FBI agent.

(MORE)

MARTINELLI (CONT'D)

KRASIN says he's removed any connections related to the bombing leading back to Moscow Capital.

REDEK

Does that mean GARNITSKY?

MARTINELLI

No. I think KRASIN's afraid of GARNITSKY.

REDEK

It'll eventually die down. Blamed on the Russian-Ukraine conflict.

MARTINELLI

KRASIN assures me they've found the source of the leaks. He says there are no copies of the stolen material in existence. But I doubt there's any way to be sure. And REYNOLDS is now out of reach, sure to be talking to the FBI. Time we did painful damage control.

REDEK

What do you have in mind, STEVEN?

MARTINELLI

What you suggested when this whole thing started. Create a bogus cyber attack using a self-inflicted computer virus. Destroy our entire email archive.

REDEK

Certainly painful. Might also now be construed as too coincidental.

MARTINELLI

Can't be helped. How assured are you that we've constructed the necessary subsidiary cutouts to protect us from incrimination for things happening overseas?

REDEK

We've been years architecting the structure using the best legal people. But for the same reason it's complex it may hide vulnerabilities.

MARTINELLI

(sarcastically)

That's comforting. We may have blocked REYNOLDS in Russia but we still have to deal with the damaging material he brought out of Columbia.

REDEK

I agree that will be a problem. But there are no witnesses and we have the best lawyers. This is still about stuff happening in a Third World country. Americans don't give a shit. And REYNOLDS is out in the cold. No newspaper will hire him. Allegation of murder hanging over him. I've seen to it that no one will publish a book proposal he's floated around for fear of legal repercussions.

MARTINELLI

Hope you're right, CONRAD.

INT. REYNOLDS APARTMENT IN MANHATTAN - NIGHT

RACHEL STERN is sitting close to REYNOLDS on the sofa holding a glass of wine. REYNOLDS is hunched forward.

REYNOLDS

The sons of bitches are just too powerful. A shadow government with unlimited resources. Maybe even engineered changing the political dynamic in the Middle East. I've little to show for the deaths of four people helping me.

STERN touches his shoulder but he makes no response.

STERN

That's not true. You said yourself that the Justice Department is investigating MGI.

REYNOLDS

That may never amount to much. MGI could drag this out for years.

STERN

I think JOHN will take you back on the paper.

REYNOLDS

Sure. Under the condition I drop
investigating MGI. No fucking way.

REYNOLDS computer on his desk across the room pings a tone
signifying a new email.

He rises and sits at the desk looking at the computer screen.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

Jesus Christ! Come over here and
look at this!

STERN stands behind him looking at the computer.

STERN

(reading email aloud)

*Mark Reynolds: If you are reading
this email I am probably dead. How
is that you say? Because it would
not be sent if I was alive and able
to control my automatic program. I
must brag and tell you how this was
done. I created program and hid
files on internet service
provider's servers. Elegant work to
get around their firewalls and
remain undetected. I am not modest.
Nowhere in cyberspace is safe! Ha,
ha, ha! Must be sure you have
evidence to destroy these monsters.
You will receive many emails with
attachments because files are
large. This is my life insurance.
You are my beneficiary. Goodbye
Mark Reynolds. We fucked the bad
guys very good! Rasputin*

REYNOLDS

Holy shit. The missing files. My
god, this first attached folder is
the GARNITSKY stuff and the photos.
Sonofabitch.

STERN

You mean the stuff about the
Russian bombs?

REYNOLDS

That's right. Once the intelligence
experts get a look at these they'll
have a different opinion.

STERN

Then we must get this material to those guys at the Justice Department right away.

REYNOLDS

Not until I've made digital copies. I'll have to think about where to stash them. Not going to lose these again. As for the Russian nukes... well I'm not about to trust the U.S. Government either. They'll want to keep it secret. Use it for some sort of geopolitical leverage. Or to justify some knee jerk military response. The world needs to know. Not only about Iran but the fucking Russians. Will you help me, Rachel?

STERN

Of course.

REYNOLDS

Help me organize everything. The whole story on MGI. Maybe I can get BERNIE to help. I'm going to do that book and bring down MGI.

EXT. MOSCOW STREET - DAY

YURI DRATSHEV is abducted at gunpoint and forced into an SUV as he leaves a Moscow restaurant.

At a scrap yard, DRATSHEV is shot in the back of the head. His body is then fed into a large compactor used for compressing scrapped automobiles.

INT. JUSTICE DEPARTMENT FEDERAL BUILDING MANHATTAN - DAY

REYNOLDS, STERN, DAS THORNE and ELLSBERG along with several other staffers are working at a conference table each with a notebook computer in front of them.

EXT. OUTSIDE MARINELLI GLOBAL HEADQUARTERS MANHATTAN - DAY

Large contingent of FBI enter the building.

HEADLINE

New York Daily Press: *MGI UNDER FBI INVESTIGATION.*

INT. JUSTICE DEPARTMENT PRESS ROOM, WASHINGTON - DAY

Attorney General at podium addressing reporters.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Following a major investigation, a federal grand jury yesterday handed down a list of indictments against Marinelli Global, Incorporated. Those indictments go well beyond what may be typified as financial crimes. They encompass a broad array of criminal enterprises involving such activities as drug smuggling, money laundering, and bribery to name just a few. It appears MGI's business model is built upon a criminal foundation never before experienced in corporate America... Corporations do not commit crimes, people do. In this case personal indictments have also been handed down for several MGI senior executives and two partners of the auditing firm Kellogg-Tyler... Accordingly, arrest warrants have been issued. Those include Steven Marinelli, CEO, Conrad Redek, CFO, and Paul Belden, Corporate Counsel. Mr. Redek and Mr. Belden surrendered to Federal Marshals this morning. Steven Martinelli has been residing in Italy since news of the investigation became public. An extradition request has been conveyed to the Italian government.

INT. CNN NEWSCAST DISPLAY - DAY

NEWS ANCHOR

On news of federal criminal indictments against senior management, trading was suspended on Martinelli Global stock at the New York Stock Exchange today after falling 40% within an hour after the opening of trading. A spokesperson for the Exchange indicated it was unlikely trading would resume for some indefinite time...

(MORE)

NEWS ANCHOR (CONT'D)

Another related casualty appears to be the investment banking firm of Manhattan Commercial. The Bank today announced a write-down of seven billion dollars of MGI loans. However financial experts cite the Bank's substantially greater exposure. If MGI goes into liquidation as many see to be certain, Manhattan Commercial may be also become a fatality.

I/E. ITALIAN VILLA NEAR UMBRIAN CITY OF SPELLO - NIGHT

The night was devoid of any moonlight with a heavy fog as three men dressed in black approach the hilltop villa.

A man sleeps in bedroom as the three entered noiselessly.

Two men grab each arm of the sleeping man. The third shines a flashlight to confirm it is STEVEN MARTINELLI.

As MARTINELLI is held down a plastic bag is pulled over his head and held tightly around his neck.

INT. HOLDING CELL LUBYANKA PRISON, MOSCOW - NIGHT

The notorious Stalin era terror prison remains a cold, bleak place of concrete walls and exposed piping overhead.

Two burly guards lift NIKOLAI KRASIN from his cot forcing him face down onto the floor then placing a knee in his back.

Other guard takes a syringe from his pocket, removes cap over the needle then violently plunges it into KRASIN's buttocks.

KRASIN thrashes about for a few seconds then goes slack.

One guard pulls off the bedding sheet ripping it in half then rolling it into a crude rope making a loop at one end.

Climbing onto the cot, the guard fastens the makeshift rope around an overhead pipe.

Both guards manhandle the unconscious KRASIN to place the loop around his neck. KRASIN is suspended with his feet inches above the floor.

EXT. YACHT IN BLACK SEA ANCHORED OUTSIDE OF ODESSA - DAY

FELIKS GARNITSKY is seated at a table on the stern of gangster BORIS LEBEDYENKO's yacht on a beautiful day.

LEBEDYENKO

And what brings you to the sunny south, FELIKS ALEKSEEV?

GARNITSKY

Some difficulties in Moscow. Decided I needed a vacation. Perhaps somewhere on the Mediterranean.

LEBEDYENKO

Then why come to Odessa?

GARNITSKY

Let's just say I needed to take a circuitous route, incognito.

LEBEDYENKO

Does this have something to do with that work we did for you in Kiev?

GARNITSKY

Unfortunately, yes. And for your help, I'm prepared to pay you a great deal of money, BORIS.

LEBEDYENKO

And who is it you have offended? I don't wish to inherit your enemies.

GARNITSKY

The Government. My former boss NIKOLAI KRASIN was arrested. I do not intend to share the same fate.

LEBEDYENKO

I appreciate how you must feel since I too have a similar problem.

LEBEDYENKO turns motioning to two of his men standing nearby.

Men approach and point silenced pistols at GARNITSKY.

GARNITSKY

What the fuck is this, BORIS?

LEBEDYENKO

Self preservation, my friend. I hate to give up your generous fee but your enemies offer something much more. I'll be allowed to live provided you don't. Sorry. This is just business FELIKS ALEKSEEV.

Gunmen shoot GARNITSKY repeatedly.

An anchor is tied around his ankles with a length of chain.

Yacht heads away from shore at high speed.

GARNITSKY's body is dumped overboard.

INT. CNN NIGHTLY NEWS - NIGHT

NEWS ANCHOR

The much anticipated new book titled *SHELL GAME* hit bookstores and on-line outlets today. The author, former investigative reporter Mark Reynolds of the New York Daily News, gives a detailed account of the investigation that led to the collapse of Martinelli Global, the international corporation alleged to be a sophisticated global criminal enterprise. Critics say the spectacular and sometimes violent investigation that claimed the lives of several of Reynolds associates, reads like a thriller... While the facts are well documented as to MGI's alleged criminal activities, Reynolds also makes a sensational claim that a principle at MGI's Russian affiliate engineered the theft of Russian nuclear warheads. Reynolds further suggests the warheads are now most probably in Iran... The White House and the State Department have issued statements saying there is no evidence at this time to believe such an event took place... The Kremlin categorically denies the loss of any nuclear weapons.

(MORE)

NEWS ANCHOR (CONT'D)

President Putin himself has charged this as yet another unsubstantiated U.S. threat directed toward Russia.

FADE TO BLACK