

DRONES DON'T FLY WHEN THE SKY IS GREY

Written by

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SLOT 2

1 EXT. MIKE'S APARTMENT (PALO ALTO) [PRESENT DAY] - DAY 1
Helicopters fly over MIKE DONAHUE's (32) apartment.

MATCH CUT TO:

2 INT. MIKE'S APARTMENT (PALO ALTO) [PRESENT DAY] - DAY 2
An electric sander rotating.

Mike destroys hard discs with an electric drill. He encrypts a bunch of documents and uploads them. He takes meticulous care in laying every destroyed circuit board, hard drive, RAM module and cable in a neatly manner across the table. A showcase of electronic junk. He even writes explanatory labels for his art pieces saying "junk", "more junk" and "21b of ex-bytes".

MIKE (V.O.)
My name is Mike Donahue. Oh, don't worry. This won't be of any use were I'm going.

Insert: Picture of Mike and Sam on the wall.

He forgot about the coffee and is now vigorously boiling out of the Moka Pot in the kitchen. Mike whip turns to look but

The door is slammed open and 2 FBI AGENTS and SPECIAL AGENT DEMARCO, come rushing in.

SPECIAL AGENT DEMARCO
Put your fucking arms up.

Mike whip pans back to Sam's picture, takes a deep breath in, smiles and turns in his chair to offer his wrists, presumably to be handcuffed. He knew this would happen today.

3 INT. BAR (PALO ALTO) - NIGHT 3
SUPERIMPOSE: 2 months ago

OLIVER NELSON (54), CSO at Firefense, BRUCE STRAFFORD (39), technical analyst at Firefense, and Mike are having a drink after work. Oliver and Bruce go back a long time, but Mike feels weird in this mix. Also, he is the only one not wearing a suit.

Freeze Oliver Nelson offering a drink.

MIKE (V.O.)
This guy just hired me at firm
called Firefense.

Back to normal.

OLIVER NELSON
C'mon Mike. Grab it!

Music volume comes down. Heart beat. Mike hesitates, looks at the shots on the bar as if he had locked eyes with a woman. He closes his eyes, breathes in and finally grabs it.

Back to normal.

BRUCE STRAFFORD
What is the occasion, Oliver?

OLIVER NELSON
Clearly, a toast to Mike. Best
security analyst in the world. I'm
really looking forward to tomorrow.

They drink. Mike is not smiling. Oliver turns to order more.

Freeze Bruce Strafford.

MIKE (V.O.)
And this is some colleague from
work I still don't know much about.

Back to normal.

BRUCE STRAFFORD
So Mike, what is so special about
your preemptive rootkit?

MIKE
Well, administrators are usually
bound to monitoring adjacent
traffic. Event logging can then be
faked if the router is already
compromised. Like that attempt on
Syria.

BRUCE STRAFFORD
In a war zone is frequent to shut
down internet and mobile phone
access to opposition-held areas.

MIKE
BGP routes to Syrian IP space were
all *simultaneously* withdrawn from
all of Syria's upstream providers.

BRUCE STRAFFORD
Al-Assad blamed the outage on a
terrorist attack-

MIKE
Only it wasn't.
(beat)
That can only be done at a backbone
router level. And usually big
agencies like NSA or crazy lonewolf
hackers are the only ones that
would attempt so.

BRUCE STRAFFORD
And *you* can?

MIKE
I do. And I wouldn't have bricked
it.

Oliver Nelson turns around with new drinks.

OLIVER NELSON
Ok men, here's another round on me!
Well, not me he-he, Firefense.

4 EXT. THE BASEMENT (BERLIN) - DAY

4

MIA (27) is on the phone while walking towards The Basement
in Berlin, a hacker's retreat. It's a bright morning today.

MIA
Are you drunk??

EXT. BAR (PALO ALTO) - NIGHT

Mike is slightly drunk. He carries a beer bottle.

MIKE
Am I drunk? Am *I* drunk?

INTERCUT BETWEEN MIA AND MIKE

MIA
I haven't seen you drink since-

MIKE
Well lucky for you, you're not here
to see me anymore, right?

6

INT. MIKE'S APARTMENT (PALO ALTO) - NIGHT

6

Mike is still on the phone, leaves the beer on the table.

MIA (V.O.)

Mike, pull yourself together.
You've got your pitch in just a few
hours.

MIKE

Geez, relax.

MIA

Don't fucking tell me to relax.
You've clearly broken your promise,
you're relapsing, and I can't be
there to help you out this time.

The doorbell rings and Mike comes to open.

MIKE

Hold on a sec.

It's MRS SIEVERS (74), a sweet and kind neighbor that has
been looking after Mike since he moved in 10 years ago.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Hi Mrs. Sievers. This is not a good
time.

(to Mia)

Mrs. Sievers is here.

MRS. SIEVERS

It's never a good time for you...

MIA

Put her on the phone.

MRS. SIEVERS

I heard you were working late, I
brought you something.

She grabs the bottle of beer from the table and goes into the
kitchen with a bag from *The Bake Shop*.

MIKE

I'm not hungry.

(to Mia)

No way. You'll talk about *me*.

MIA

Tell her I said 'hi', and good luck
tomorrow.

MIKE

Will do!

Mike hangs up the phone. Mrs. Sievers comes out with two big cupcakes on plates and sits on the couch.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Oooh, cupcakes! I'm hungry now.

MRS. SIEVERS

I couldn't sleep either. There is this mosquito in my room. Don't you hate it when you hear one but you don't know where it's coming from? And they go *wooosh* in your ear. Aw, they do keep me up all night.

Rack focus to a mosquito. We hear helicopters.

MATCH CUT TO:

7 EXT. FIREFENSE HEADQUARTERS (SAN FRANCISCO) - DAY 7

A helicopter in the sky and tilt down to reveal Mike, ready to go into his pitch at Firefense.

He breathes in and steps into the building.

8 INT. FIREFENSE CONFERENCE ROOM (SAN FRANCISCO) - DAY 8

MIKE

We open the door, close it behind us and wait for the prey.

Mike has just finished his presentation to the board. He gets a timid applause from the board.

OLIVER NELSON

Thank you Mike. Awesome job.

(visibly proud)

Basically, we're the only ones in the world to monitor from the *inside*.

MIKE

I don't think we're the only ones, though.

He has everyone's attention.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Intelligence agencies can use all sorts of backdoors and vulnerabilities to get access. They have a vast compilation and not just for routers, also for phones or TVs. Think about all the data that those devices collect.

OLIVER NELSON

(wrapping up)

Good. Any more questions?

BRUCE STRAFFORD

You're essentially saying that the government... therefore public resources, are hacking into American companies to spy on people.

MIKE

That's right.

OLIVER NELSON

(oblivious)

Well, I'd certainly *hope* they do. That's how you catch terrorists, isn't it?

Oliver gets a laugh from the board.

OLIVER NELSON (CONT'D)

We'll be debriefing after lunch. See you men, and lady, at 2pm.

The board leaves while Mike is still packing up his stuff. They wander outside the conference room and we can see through the glass wall how Bruce is still checking out Mike. RACHEL (24), Oliver's secretary, comes in to collect the binders for the debriefing session later.

RACHEL

Well, how did it go?

MIKE

Good.

The laptop starts beeping. Rachel notices first.

RACHEL

That's beeping.

Bruce, alone now, is seen on the phone through the glass.

MIKE

Beeping?

RACHEL

What's wrong?

MIKE

Someone is trying to hack into
Firefense.

RACHEL

Is that even possible?

MIKE

It looks like, somebody just tried
to patch the hypervisor from the
main network parser process.

9

EXT. FIREFENSE HEADQUARTERS (SAN FRANCISCO) - DAY

9

Mike is at the phone with Mia while coming out of the
building. He walks down the street visibly excited.

MIKE

Mia, listen, they were fucking
using the same vulnerability as the
attack in Syria.

10

INT/EXT. THE BASEMENT (BERLIN) - NIGHT

10

In The Basement, a spaceship looking fluor colored basement
with neon lights, cables all over, eighties memorabilia and
other weird stuff hanging from places.

MIA

But what for?

INTERCUT BETWEEN MIKE AND MIA

MIKE

Data. Firefense is used on most of
the biggest Internet sites. When
they receive more traffic that they
can handle they will turn it on so
we manage the high traffic volume
for them.

Mia sits up.

MIA
 So by hacking into Firefense you
 can perform straightforward traffic
 interception.

Mia speaks softer and walks off to find privacy outside.

MIKE
 Including HTTPS connections.

MIA
 You think the NSA is trying to get
 into Firefense?

MIKE
 It could be them, or it could be
 some other skilled group.

11 INT. NSA HEADQUARTERS (FORT MEADE, MARYLAND) - DAY 11

Director of the NSA, KEITH B. ALEXANDER, and Deputy Director
 of the NSA, JOHN C. INGLIS, enter a room where the Chief of
 the Office of Tailored Access Operations, ROB JOYCE, awaits.
 Bruce Strafford, revealed now as an asset to the NSA, is
 connected via video conference.

ROB JOYCE
 Good night General Alexander.
 'Night John.

KEITH B. ALEXANDER
 How serious is this?

ROB JOYCE
 We don't know that yet, general.

BRUCE STRAFFORD
 Not pretty.

Keith B. Alexander lands eyes on the Bruce.

BRUCE STRAFFORD (CONT'D)
 Mike Donahue is onto us, sir.

KEITH B. ALEXANDER
 Who's that?
 (looks at Rob)
 I was guaranteed stealthiness for
 this operation.

ROB JOYCE
Well, Mr Donahue is an analyst at
Firefense and he may be close to
subvert our operation.

INT. ALVA'S HACKING LOCATION - NIGHT

Members of the ALVA Hacking Group are chilling out. NICO (37)
is one of them.

ROB JOYCE (V.O.)
We acquired access to the ALVA
Hacking Group, with presence in
various countries, and we've been
using them as a cover.

NICO
Yo, how stupid people are, this
random thing made me over 80k last
month.

INTERCUT BETWEEN NSA HEADQUARTERS AND ALVA'S LOC.

ROB JOYCE
This group is totally oblivious.

JOHN C. INGLIS
So what is our exposure at this
time?

ROB JOYCE
We are re-evaluating our OPSEC in
the operation right now. We don't
know yet.

12 INT. MIKE'S APARTMENT (PALO ALTO) - DAY 12

Mike hurries into his apartment. He is still on the phone.

MIKE
I'll trace the packets back.

13 EXT/INT. THE BASEMENT (BERLIN) - NIGHT 13

Mia lights up a cigarette.

MIA
Mike, I don't think you should.

MIKE
Why shouldn't I?

MIA

Well, this is not something that anyone can do. If Firefense is under this attack, I'm pretty sure so are Google, Yahoo, Facebook... this is not some kid's playground.

MIKE

More of a reason to expose it. People deserve to know, don't you understand?

MIA

I do, but if the NSA is behind all that, you're gonna have the FBI taking you down in no time. Why do you wanna take on that risk?

MIKE

Samuel didn't serve for a country of leechers.

MIA

Oh-ok, I get it. It's your own personal ghosts again.

MIKE

Fuck you. Stop saying that.

Mike hangs up.

MIA

It's been two years, for fuck's sake!

Silence on the line.

MIA (CONT'D)

Mike, don't do anything stupid.

But Mike has already hung up. Mia comes back inside.

JÖRG

Hey, hey, hey, what was that about? Is he still hanging his shit on you?

MIA

It turns out that George Orwell was an optimist.

JÖRG

Don't let him drag you down, Mia.

MIA
He is onto something this time.

JÖRG
Ok, fill me in!

14 INT. F-SECURE HEADQUARTERS (HELSINKI) - DAY 14

We hear helicopters in the background. We walk into the lobby following MIKKO HYPPONEN, a respected Finnish hacker.

MIKKO HYPPONEN (V.O.)
PRISM is a code name for a data-
collection effort born in 2007.

Mikko takes the elevator, looks directly into the camera.

MIKKO HYPPONEN
Here is something you have to know.

15 INT. F-SECURE SAUNA (HELSINKI) - DAY 15

Mikko relaxes in a sauna as he explains to camera.

MIKKO HYPPONEN
Government programs like Prism are
not about doing surveillance on
people that they have reasons to
suspect of some wrong doings. They
are about doing surveillance on
people they *know* are innocent.

16 INT. F-SECURE HEADQUARTERS (HELSINKI) - DAY 16

Mikko walks down the Hallway, surrounded by offices.

SUPERIMPOSE: White-line logos of Google, Yahoo!, Facebook,
Skype, YouTube, Microsoft, AOLmail, Apple and PalTalk.

MIKKO HYPPONEN
The government deputizes all of the
Prism partners to be their little
surveillance sheriffs. And every
single one of these companies
denies it.

17 INT. MIKE'S APARTMENT (PALO ALTO) - DAY

17

Mike dumps the the information from the communication he intercepted. We see the Wireshark interface with IPs were the traffic is jumping to. They belong to a server in China.

SUPERIMPOSE: Graphics including a world map and a traveling line representing the flow of data from Palo Alto to China.

MIKKO (V.O.)

Because the Internet is massively complex and so much of it is invisible, your whole domestic communication between you and your wife can go from New York to London and back and get caught up in the meantime.

Mike stares at the encrypted payload. He obtains a shell.

SUPERIMPOSE: The data now flows from China to the UK.

Mike opens a new shell window to nmap the host in the UK.

MIKE

Classy! A printer.

Mike resorts to his colleagues on IRC.

18 INT. AN APARTMENT (VALENCIA) - NIGHT

18

KATYPERSKY is in the IRC Channel when Mike comes online.

SUPERIMPOSE:

wazowski joined the channel

katypersky: and that is what wazowski learnt in jail, I swear...

KATYPERSKY

Oh, hello there!

INTERCUT BETWEEN MIKE AND KATYPERSKY

SUPERIMPOSE:

* wazowski adjusts his tie

wazowski: looking for you

wazowski: you had that remote preauth RCE for HP printers, does it work against the big office jets? I'll buy you a thousand beers

MIKE

Please, please, please.

SUPERIMPOSE: katypersky: who do you think I am? check your mail :*

KATYPERSKY
(fake offended)
Who do you think I am?

MIKE
Ha ha, Yes!

SUPERIMPOSE: katypersky: better not be american beer

Mike gains access to the printer with Katypersky's exploit.

SUPERIMPOSE: The data now flows from the UK to Russia.

19

INT. THE BASEMENT (BERLIN) - NIGHT

19

Jörg is helping out Mike in the IRC channel. Mia is doing something else, reluctant to participate.

JÖRG
Have you already tried the typical
quick'n'easy? PHP-CGI? this
shellshock thing??

Mia hesitates for a moment and finally

MIA
I'm on it.

She comes to her laptop and puts on her headset. She types away a script. Jörg looks up and smiles at her. She smiles back.

MIA (CONT'D)
Got it! Shellshock on the header
values o port 8080.

SUPERIMPOSE: The data now flows from Russia to Palo Alto.

MIKE
Thank you! Love to have you back.

MIA
You know you'll never have me back,
right?

MIKE
(teasing)
We'll see!

BACK IN PALO ALTO

Mike runs a reverse DNS resolution, visiting the website he realizes it is *The Bake Shop* round the corner.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Time to go physical.

20 INT. F-SECURE HEADQUARTERS (HELSINKI) - DAY

20

MIKKO HYPPONEN
I know you don't give a shit about
foreign surveillance, but how would
you like your dick picks be seen by
someone other than the poor girl
they were intended to?

BACK TO PALO ALTO

Mike grabs his bicycle and is off to *The Bake Shop*.

22 INT. THE BAKE SHOP - DAY

22

Mike enters rushing in. His verbiage is too technical for the audience in the shop. Mrs. Sievers is also there.

MIKE
Hi Madam! I'm Mike Donahue, live
down the street.
(to Mrs. Sievers)
Oh, hi Mrs. Sievers!
(back to the owner)
I work for Firefense, a
cybersecurity company.

He awkwardly hands out business cards.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Our firm has been compromised by a
rootkit on our routers and we need
your help.

The owner is perplexed.

BAKE SHOP OWNER
My help?

His explanation steers away of being efficient.

MIKE

We've tracked down the traffic of the C&C and it jumped to a VPS in China and then the UK, and Russia and finally back here.

BAKE SHOP OWNER

Here?

MIKE

Yes. You're a proxy! Probably that one!

Mike points at the computer by the counter aside.

BAKE SHOP OWNER

I don't understand, son.

MIKE

I just need a few minutes.

BAKE SHOP OWNER

A few minutes?

MIKE

To set up the tools and track back the proxy traffic.

BAKE SHOP OWNER

Scoot! No way you are touching that! It cost me 500 dollars to get it fixed! You're not going anywhere near it.

MIKE

But madam, you don't understand. You are being hacked.

BAKE SHOP OWNER

Oh no! I won't bite! I know what this is. I've read those chain emails. You are the hacker and you want to get my Facebook pictures and hand them in to Obama. You have no right to expose me, son!

Mike manages to sweep a dongle into the computer in the shop while pretending to listen to the owner's rant about data from a totally uninformed and mistaken point of view.

MRS. SIEVERS

Mike? Don't expose the woman.

BAKE SHOP OWNER
I know what they do. Them Hackers.
They spy on our pictures and then
they read our texts.

MRS. SIEVERS
(alarmed)
Well, that's awful.

BAKE SHOP OWNER
They can even steal money from your
account and then have it sent to
Switzerland or something.

MRS. SIEVERS
That's why I don't trust banks. All
my money I keep it under the
mattress. That's what mamaw told me
to do-

Mike is done, pulls out the dongle and rushes out.

MIKE
Thank you! Bye!

23 INT. FBI DEPENDENCIES (SAN FRANCISCO) [PRESENT DAY] - DAY 23
Mike is handcuffed in a room at some undisclosed location.

MIKE (V.O.)
They are deciding my future.

We see Special Agent DeMarco and John C. Inglis talk.

MIKE (V.O.)
Precisely those who want my head,
who want my knowledge. They want me
to stay quiet, because I know now
what they have always tried to
hide.

They shake hands and John C. Inglis comes into the room.

INTERCUT WITH

Images of people doing the actions described.

MIKE (V.O.)
I know about your trip to Bermudas,
about your fling with your cousin.
I know what you think about your
boss and I've seen your dick pic
too.

(MORE)

MIKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 You were speeding during your DUI.
 You googled for chihuahua puppies
 and how to poison your mother in
 law. Your phone was listening in
 your pocket when you met Lucy for
 the first time, when you made love
 to her too.

24 INT. THE BASEMENT (BERLIN) - DAY

24

Mia hesitates. She looks at her screen and understands she now has the power to either publish and finish Mike's work or stand by her own advice and don't mess with the governments.

MIKE (V.O.)
 But I didn't steal it. It has
 travelled miles around the world
 and is let back into the country.

Mia breathes in, opens an e-mail and types. It is addressed at "The Guardian".

MIKE (V.O.)
 Homeland security? Domestic?

INTERCUT BETWEEN THE BASEMENT AND THE FBI DEPENDENCIES

JOHN C. INGLIS
 We need to know who else is working
 with you. You are putting American
 citizens in serious danger with
 your actions.

MIKE (V.O.)
 Bullshit. That's just a lie. There
 are no frontiers to data and the
 law or the PATRIOT Act were never
 designed to protect you.

Mia hits send.

MIKE (V.O.)
 We have this information now, and
 we no longer get the luxury of
 pleading ignorance.

Mike looks at John C. Inglis.

MIKE
 Guilty.

Black. We hear a helicopter. Its sound is deafening.