

SMALL DARK LOOK

Written by

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SHOEBOX FILMS
FOR
FOCUS FEATURES

Open on black.

Caption: 'The best way to stop a prisoner escaping is to make sure he never knows he is in prison'.

Fyodor Dostoevsky

Over black we hear a hoarse voice whisper in Russian and see a subtitle.

VOICE (OOV)
(Dear God. Before you take my soul.
Give me the strength to do this).

1

INT. SECURE WARD, PRISON HOSPITAL - DAWN

1

A plastic cigarette lighter is lit.

Into the flame light comes the heel of a shoe held by the shaking hand of an old man. The hands and wrists have bracelet tattoos.

A face leans into the light to see the black smoke begin to curl up from the heel of the shoe. Then drops of black melted rubber begin to drip from the shoe into a ceramic cup. The cup, the face and the hands are striped by orange light coming from a light gantry outside. Rain dribbles on a barred window.

We study the face in the light of the lighter. Wizedened, in great pain but determined, with straggly grey hair. This man is GORNI ZYKOV. The lighter could be a candle in an Old Masters painting, the face looks like a face from Rembrandt.

As the rubber drips Zykov reaches into the half light and gropes to find the tube of a CATHETER, which enters his penis (out of shot) under his white robe (his crumpled robes look like a shroud in the half light). We now see that Zykov is lying in a hospital bed...

He extracts the end of the catheter from a plastic flask attached to a drip scaffold and puts it into the cup. He grunts a little to release some urine. Urine flows through the catheter tube into the cup and mixes with the black melted rubber.

Zykov gasps in pain and swirls the mixture.

The lighter and a hand find a needle from a syringe hidden under a pillow. Zykov's shaking hand grabs it and he lies back on the bed, striped by bars from above. He takes a deep breath and then pulls away the bed sheet.

We see that his body has many tattoos, swirls and crosses and stars, but they flash in and out of the light.

He begins to dig the tip of the needle into his own flesh. Once, twice, three times, as if injecting compulsively but never piercing the skin all the way. He curls to survey his work as blood pimples appear and he wipes the blood away on the sheet.

We will learn he is working on a home made tattoo.

He continues to prick and wipe his skin in a pattern which for now only he understands - dipping cotton wool into the jet black sludge of rubber and urine and applying the sludge to the pin pricks, to dye the subcutaneous layer.

He grunts in pain as the urine and rubber sting.

Daylight begins to appear at the barred window as he works, and we begin to see Cyrillic letters emerging in black on his skin - 'C A W...'

Birds begin to sing the dawn chorus. Daylight illuminates the scene and we read the Russian name 'C A W A' (SACHA) tattooed on Zykov's thigh. He uses the white sheet to wipe the excess of the mixture away.

Zykov uses a polished metal needle tray as a mirror to check his work. When he is satisfied he lies back on the pillow and sighs. All his strength has gone and his life is dribbling away.

The freed catheter begins to dribble urine onto the floor.

Zykov looks to the barred window one last time and hears birds singing. He takes a breath then reaches for the emergency cord, which he pulls. Then his eyes close and the catheter flow reduces to a drip, drip, drip.

2

EXT. FOGGY RAIN-COVERED RUSSIAN GRAVEYARD - DAY

2

*

Deafening noise. A ROAD DRILL begins to dig up the frozen earth as if it were concrete. Grey daylight.

A traditional, onion-domed Russian orthodox church sits in a snow covered graveyard on the outskirts of Moscow. In the distance high-rise tower blocks are shrouded in frozen fog.

Gravestones protrude from a thick quilt of fog as the GRAVE DIGGERS drill in the shadow of the church. Iron and steel ring out in the bitter cold.

*

3

INT. SMALL HOME NEAR RUSSIAN GRAVEYARD, KITCHEN - DAY

3

We hear the road drill digging in the distance. Gorni Zykov, the old man we saw in jail, is lying dead and naked on a table.

We study his lifeless body for a moment, lit by the grey light. We revisit the tattoos and glimpse the name 'SACHA'. Other tattoos tell the story of his life, in the style of the Vory v Zakone. He has a faded star above his heart. A crucifix is tied to his right wrist and rests in his frozen grip.

*

Then a door opens and three priests carrying incense enter. The road drill wheezes, stops and starts outside. The priests stand around the body and then there is a knock at the door. The OLDEST PRIEST gestures toward the door.

PRIEST

(His sons. Beware the older one. He is Brotherhood. He is a killer. And he is not afraid of crucifixes.)

Louder...

PRIEST (CONT'D)

(Come in.)

GREGORY enters first, dressed in a sharp dark suit. Right behind him his younger brother enters and we should see the truth in his eyes. This is Vladimir. Their entrance swirls the incense smoke. Gregory is carrying a brand new black suitcase, which he places on the floor beside the body.

*

*

*

The oldest of the priests is running hot water from a tap at the sink into a plastic bowl a little way behind the body. Steam clouds. He hands the bowl of hot water to Gregory then begins to fill a second bowl.

*

A second priest hands Gregory a white cloth. Gregory waits for the second bowl of hot water to be handed to Vladimir. A priest gestures for them to begin.

*

*

Gregory soaks his cloth in the hot water and looks at his brother. They begin to wash their father's body.

*

*

The priests glance at each other. Vladimir looks down at the body, unsure. Quietly to Gregory,

VLADIMIR

Do they expect us to wash his dick?
Because I'm not fucking touching my
dad's dick.

The short priest reacts a little. Gregory speaks evenly to his brother without averting his eyes from the body.

GREGORY

Vova, the short one speaks English.

The short priest reacts a little. Vladimir shrugs. He begins to giggle - a bit freaked out. Gregory splashes his cloth on Zykov's chest and steam rises.

The Priests leave. Gregory continues to clean the body and Vladimir watches them exit.

Gregory picks up the brand new black suitcase. He flicks it open. The open suitcase contains a brand new expensive suit of clothes with a pair of shiny shoes on the top.

Vladimir takes a breath and now the priests are gone his emotion wells up. He stands motionless with his head down. Steam rises from the hot water in the bowls and on the body.

Gregory looks up and sees the tears on Vladimir's face. He pulls up a chair and offers for Vladimir to sit.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

It's ok, Vova.

*

Vladimir sits and puts his face in his hands. As he sobs silently, Gregory takes out the shoes then pulls out a crisp white shirt and lets it unfold. He takes a pin from the collar of the new shirt and puts it between his lips and interrupts...

GREGORY (CONT'D)

Look at the body.

Vladimir can't.

*

GREGORY (CONT'D)

Vova! Please do as I say. Look at him. It's the last time you will see him.

*

*

*

*

Vladimir takes a huge breath and lowers his hands and drags tears away. Then takes a last look.

*

VLADIMIR

I looked, I'm OK.

GREGORY

I said look. Look closely.

Vladimir looks away.

VLADIMIR

I don't want to look. He looks weak.

Gregory is calmly unbuttoning the shirt.... He spots a fresh tattoo high up on his fathers hip bone.

*
*

The name 'C A W A' (SASHA) is written with a shaken handwriting.

*
*

Gregory's face expression immediately changes. The name Sasha means something to him.

*
*

Vladimir's tears are now drying and he blinks quickly as he peers at his dead father's hip bone.

Vladmimir now sees the new Tattoo as well.

*

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)

Sacha. Who the fuck is Sacha?

4

INT. RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH - DAY

4

We see three lines of bells in the pink and white belfry. There are four bells in each line and they grow in size from left to right. The first bell is as small as a hand, the last bell is huge and decorated with iconic images.

Between and through the open belfry we see the Russian skyline of endless snow huddled under a cloud of smoke.

The bells are attached to ropes and we follow them down into the darkness below. There is a chamber where a Priest stands. He holds all twelve ropes, some in his hand and some are attached to his feet and legs. He looks like a puppet (this is how the *Perebus* funeral bells are rung).

He rings the first bell by tugging a rope with two fingers in a sharp jerk. As the first bell rings we see...

5

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

5

A funeral procession consisting of three priests, two grave diggers, Gregory, Vladimir, and a stray dog which is yapping.

The road drill is steaming in the snow. Zykov's coffin is carried through the graveyard on the shoulders of the mourners. His sons are at the front, followed by the two junior priests and finally the grave diggers at the back. The senior priest leads the way.

*

Vladimir turns to Gregory and asks quietly,

VLADIMIR

If he was born here, why has no one
from the village come?

Gregory shrugs.

GREGORY

Stop talking.

VLADIMIR

I'm just saying. Why would he
choose to be buried in a place
where no one gives a shit about
him?

GREGORY

His father is here somewhere. He
was a war hero.

VLADIMIR

Still. I would have preferred he
was **buried** in London.

Vladimir looks around the graveyard. The priest overhears
Gregory. He thinks for a moment then glances at a huge tomb
and mausoleum half hidden by fog and a huge Russian pine
tree. It is the only big tomb in the graveyard.

PRIEST

He was the son of General Nevsky
Lavra?

Gregory shrugs in response.

They arrive at the grave side. The awkward business of
lowering the coffin begins, with the grave diggers using
straps. The puppeteer priest is ringing the bells one-by-one
and the tone gets deeper each time.

Vladimir is freezing and Gregory is impassive, he lights a
cigarette. The priest hurries to the other priests and
whispers to them. The coffin is lowered and reaches its
resting place. The oldest priest comes to the brothers and
bows a little.

SENIOR PRIEST

(On behalf of the people of
Savyalovsky, I would like to thank
your grandfather for saving this
entire region from the Nazis. He
was a great hero).

The priest kisses Gregory's hand and then Vladimir's. He
straightens before saying,

VLADIMIR
(It's in our blood.)

We stay on the brothers' grieving faces for a moment as the priest throws frozen soil onto the coffin. In the background beside the grave of the war hero, the grave digger spits into the ground.

*

6 INT. CAR, ROAD NEAR TRAIN STATION - DAY

6

*

Gregory drives and Vladimir sits in the passenger seat.

They drive in silence.

*

Vladimir looks at his brother. Takes his hand.

*

VLADIMIR
You ok?

*

*

GREGORY
I'm fine.

*

*

Vladimir except Gregory's answer. Let's go of Gregory's hand. He then stares out of the window at the wet foggy poverty of the town. An old man wheels fire wood in a hand cart...

*

*

VLADIMIR
It would have been better if the
Nazis had taken this place and
burnt it.

*

*

*

*

They are heading for a small train station and bump across the tracks.

7 INT. CAR / EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

7

Gregory pulls up outside the station and pulls on the handbrake.

VLADIMIR
Why are we stopping?

*

*

Gregory takes out the car keys and hands them to Vladimir. He then looks at Vladimir for the first time since they left the graveyard.

*

*

*

GREGORY
I'm taking the train. You drive on
to the airport.

*

*

*

VLADIMIR
The train? What train?

*

*

GREGORY

There is someone very important I
have to go and see. I will meet you
back in London.

*
*

VLADIMIR

What about the wake and the
panikhidas? Everybody's coming to
the party tomorrow.

Gregory is impassive.

GREGORY

I know. And I need you to take care
of it. Hold the speech. Make it
short. And don't let your sister
say anything.

*
*
*
*

VLADIMIR

You still think she'll come? She
shouldn't come.

*
*
*

GREGORY

She'll come..
Will you do this for me?

*
*
*

Vladimir doesn't know how to respond.

*

GREGORY (CONT'D)

Vova? You'll take care of it?

*
*

VLADIMIR

Yes.. Yes.. I'll take care of it..

*
*

GREGORY

Thank you..

*
*

Gregory smiles at his brother.

*

VLADIMIR

Who are you meeting?

*
*

GREGORY

I can't tell you. But this is
something I need to do. Do you
trust me? Vova?

*
*
*
*

VLADIMIR

I trust you.

*
*

GREGORY

Tell them I had business to do.

*
*

Gregory turns and goes to get out of the car. It becomes clear now that Vladimir feels vulnerable without the protection and counsel of his older brother.

VLADIMIR

Can't I come with you? We'll just
do the wake when we both come back.
Fuck'em.

Gregory has always run the family business and so far only delegated minor, non criminal, responsibilities to Vladimir. Returning to London alone makes Vladimir nervous...

GREGORY

Time for you to grow up Vova. Tell
them nothing has changed, nothing
is for sale. Now Papa's gone
they'll all come looking for things
to take.

Gregory announces in deliberately clear Russian.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

(Nothing is for sale).

He gets out of the car and leaves.

He walks in the rain toward the train station, he is now no more than a black shape cut out under an umbrella. Vladimir watches him go with a look of trepidation. He lowers the window and yells...

VLADIMIR

Hey, I don't even know the way to
the airport!

Gregory doesn't hear, doesn't turn... perhaps the rain is too loud. Perhaps he just doesn't want to.

8

INT. RUSSIAN RESTAURANT - DAY

8

Forty people are gathered for the wake, families with children or men alone. A table has been set up for canapés and waiters in starched uniforms serve the guests.

The men wear black ties and the women wear sable. At first they look like members of the British establishment, but look closer and it should become apparent that the men in here are gangsters, Turkish, Russian and Serbian.

9

INT. RUSSIAN RESTAURANT, SIDE ROOM - DAY

9

Vladimir is smartly dressed. Sober. He peers through a crack in the door from a private side room.

He spots a huddle of Russian men sitting in a corner, deep in conversation, then sees three Turkish men in conversation at another table. One of the Russians breaks off and heads for the Turkish group with a piece of paper folded in his hands. He gives the piece of paper to the Turks and a discussion begins.

Vladimir doesn't like these machinations going on all around him and without Gregory.

VLADIMIR

Look at them.

We now see he's not alone. He speaks to his sister LUDA, Russian, almost the same age, expensively and smartly dressed. She doesn't look happy to be there.

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)

They are already making deals without me.

He continues to spy.

LUDA

Well hiding in here doesn't stop them.. Dear brother..

Vladimir shrugs.

VLADIMIR

I'm not hiding. And what are you doing here anyway Dear sister, think you can just waltz back in like nothing happened, pick right up where you left off eh??

Luda ignores Vladimir's outburst

LUDA

It would have been better if Gregory had come back with you...

VLADIMIR

He had business. I told you.

An older Russian man (LEON) enters the rooms. He nods and smiles to Luda. Then looks at Vladimir still spying out of the crack.

LEON

I can tell the cousins Gregory is
coming back tomorrow, right?
People want to know for sure...

Vladimir speaks to Leon without turning.

VLADIMIR

What 'people' Leon?

Leon hesitates. He's never really liked being alone with
Vladimir.

LEON

Cousins. The Turks, the Serbs.
There are wolves out there. They
all want to know for a fact.

VLADIMIR

Fuck fact. Besides they are not my
cousins. Not yours either.

Vladimir peers through the crack once more. Leon looks back
at Luda.

10

INT. RUSSIAN RESTAURANT - DAY

10

Vladimir emerges from the side room and sees a little girl
(VALERIE). He picks her up, swings her around in his arms
before depositing her on a table with a grin.

VLADIMIR

My most beautiful cousin. How are
you? You brought your violin?

VALERIE

No. They told me not to.

VLADIMIR

Well cousin.. They were wrong. (He
whispers in her ear) They always
are.

Vladimir smiles.

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)

Today is a day to celebrate his
life. Papa always said,

Switches to Russian.

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)
 ('People should be like the sun.
 Always shining above the clouds')

He twirls her around again. One of the heavy looking men, NIKOLAI, is suddenly in front of Vladimir, eating a pastry and dusting the crumbs from his jacket...

NIKOLAI
 So, your brother chose to stay in
 Moscow. How come?

*

Vladimir's face hardens in an instant and he gently puts the girl down. He glares at Nikolai.

VLADIMIR
 Who's asking?

*

*

Nikolai who isn't the sharpest knife don't know how to respond.

*

*

*

11 INT. RUSSIAN RESTAURANT, SIDE ROOM - DAY

11

*

All the heads of the families and their captains have gathered in the private side room. Turkish, Serbian, Russian men sitting down around a large wooden table. Vladimir stands...

(This scene we also see in a different room. With Vladimir on his own. Rehearsing the speech. Luda will be watching both scenes with a certain concern.)

*

*

*

VLADIMIR
 I want to raise a toast.

They all pour and raise their glasses.

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)
 To my father and to celebrate the
 fact that he had a good life. An
 honorable life.

We will learn that Vladmimir now begins to paraphrase a code...

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)
 He was honest and helpful and
 always told the truth to other
 members. Can anybody say otherwise?

...the code of the Vory V Zakone. No one contradicts him.

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)
He raised sources of income to
support the *Obshchak*. That's all of
you...

He looks down the table.

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)
Families as well. All of you
benefitting. Anybody here can say
any different? *

A pause.

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)
And in his whole life he had no
connection with law enforcement
agencies. Anybody say any
different?

The silence around this point has a razor sharp edge. Some
look to each other, a Turkish man half smiles and looks down.
Vladimir takes a moment then hardens...

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)
And while everyone is here, while
all of London is here, while all of
Europe is here to pay respects,
please respect this.

A pause.

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)
Nothing is for sale.

He repeats in Russian...Fixing Luda with a stare. *

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)
(Nothing is for sale).

Pause. They understand. Luda is stone-faced. *

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)
Somebody here at my Dad's funeral,
says 'So your brother stayed in
Moscow'. In that way, you know?
Like there is an opportunity....

Vladimir looks at them all directly...

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)
...Well talking like that means you
don't get touched.

They wonder what he's referring to.

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)

My brother and I are having a party
at my father's house. I'm going to
walk around outside. Whoever I
touch is invited. Whoever I don't
touch is not invited.

There is silence.

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)

(To your health).

He drinks. They all drink. Some more nervously than others.

12 INT. RUSSIAN RESTAURANT - DAY

12

The music resumes. We are back with the families now.
Children running around. The men we saw before have returned.

Vladimir moves through the room. He goes to one, then two
then three men and touches them on the shoulder. The guests
chat amongst themselves but are now still as statues,
enduring this odd turn of events. *

The music makes it more surreal. Vladimir move back in to the *
room, touches another shoulder then another and walks by *
another and another, taking his time - enjoying it. We notice *
he is only touching the shoulders of older men., but then he *
detours and touches a Turkish woman (who we will learn is *
ILKAY) on the shoulder... *

ILKAY

I'm busy. *

VLADIMIR

Someone will explain why you're not *
busy. *

He moves on. We might sense that Vladimir hasn't yet earned *
this display, he's running on the fumes of his dead father *
and his absent brother. He touches twenty shoulders in *
succession on his way to reaching the door. *

Then he turns to Leon, and says privately... *

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)

Tell those I touched to come to my *
father's house. Now my house. *

He looks over Leon's shoulder and around the room. The room *
is watching him. *

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)

This is the future. To those not
touched, my father says farewell.

As he leaves the room he sees Ilkay through the crowd, who is
sipping champagne and smiling at a story being told by a
heavy looking Russian man.

She sees Vladimir staring at her. Their eyes lock through the
crowd and music.

LATER

Luda is getting ready to leave. Vladimir comes over.

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)

You're not coming back to the
house?

Luda shakes her head.

LUDA

No. This is enough for now. I've
done my duty.

Luda puts on her mink coat. Vladimir helps her, he knows how
she despises these people. He tries to make nice.

VLADIMIR

Come to the party sis. You know you
want to...

Vladimir pats Luda's ass. She smacks his hand away.

LUDA

Stop it!

Vladimir laughs.

VLADIMIR

Give me a kiss.

LUDA

No.

VLADIMIR

Just a goodbye kiss

Luda kisses him. He turns his head so their lips brush.

LUDA

Fuck you!! Stop it VOVA!

VLADIMIR

Just joking ok. Relax sis. It's
just fun..

Pause..

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)

We talk more next time okay?

Luda shakes her head and turns to leave.

VLADIMIR (TO HIMSELF) (CONT'D)

Sure, anytime Brother.

Luda is now on the sidewalk. She looks closely at her brother
and says with unexpected tenderness...

LUDA

You did good, you did good.

Vladimir blinks at her in surprise.

She leaves.

13 EXT. NOTTING HILL HOME - 2AM

13

Rain pouring down. An expensive five storey Notting Hill
home. Large cars with suited drivers are parked outside. The
drivers stand and smoke and accept parking tickets with a
smile and a bow. There is loud music coming from within. The
curtains are drawn.

14 INT. NOTTING HILL HOME, KITCHEN - 2AM

14

Vladimir enters the kitchen. He's finally on his own.

He lights a cigarette from the burner on the stove. In the
flame we see his hand shaking.

In the background we suddenly see a figure standing up
against the wall. It's the beautiful young Turkish woman from
the gallery (Ilkay) wearing a sable coat.

She begins walking towards Vladimir.

She looks at Vladimir as she passes him.

VLADIMIR

Someone explained who I am huh?

She puts her purse on the counter and opens it.

ILKAY

They said you are the little
brother of a man I should respect.

*
*
*

Vladmimir smiles and shrugs.

Ilkay takes something out of her purse and lays it on a
kitchen surface. She starts chopping a line of cocaine and is
preparing to snort it.

VLADIMIR

Not in here...

Ilkay continues, bending down into her line as if she didn't
hear.

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)

Are you deaf?

She sniffs, raises her head and straightens. She has cocaine
dusted on her sable collar. She looks placid and amused,

ILKAY

Did you say something?

VLADIMIR

You know, I remember when you were
a sweet little refugee with a
plastic rose in your hair...

Ilkay takes a cigarette out of her bag. Lights it on the
burner.

ILKAY

Funny I don't remember you.

*
*

Vladimir grabs a damp cloth and begins to wipe away the
dusting of cocaine that Ilkay left on the steel surface.

ILKAY (CONT'D)

What?

He wipes some more, digging the cloth into the steel...

VLADIMIR

Tashkar knows my Dad don't allow
this shit in his house so he sends
his kid into my Dad's kitchen...

She exhales.

ILKAY

No one sent me. Besides your dad's
dead. Didn't you know?

*
*

VLADIMIR

He's testing me for sure...

*

Continues to smoke.

ILKAY

My dad's in Istanbul. Fucking relax
ok?.

*

*

Vladimir stares at her. Her confidence causes Vladimir to
hesitate.

ILKAY (CONT'D)

Paranoid.

She stares back. Tension between them. She breaks it.

ILKAY (CONT'D)

You going to show me around the
house or what?

*

*

15 INT. NOTTING HILL HOME, ATTIC ROOM - NIGHT

15

Vladimir and Ilkay stand looking at a painting. The music
from the party from downstairs is muffled.

VLADIMIR

Sad bitch really. Wonder how long
she had to sit there.. Anyways my
brother likes it. Said he doesn't
want to sell it.

*

*

The room is a store room and an office. It is dominated by an
original Renoir painting. '*In Summer*', a painting of a sad
and perplexed woman staring out of a beautiful summer scene.
Ilkay comes closer and gazes up at the painting...

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)

He said it reminds him of someone.

Ilkay stares at the painting...

ILKAY

It reminds me of someone too. Me.

Vladimir laughs.

VLADIMIR

Nah. That woman is ugly. You're OK.

Vladimir puts his arm around her waist...

16 INT./EXT. MOSCOW, LENINGRADSKY TRAIN STATION - 6AM 16

The hub of the Moscow rail network is busy but we locate Gregory. He is exiting the station, carrying his small black suitcase through crowds of commuters who are wrapped up against the cold. He gets outside into the morning fog and hails a taxi. *

17 EXT. MYTISCHI DISTRICT, LOMONOSOV SCHOOL - 7AM 17

Children are playing in a playground, making mountains in the snow. We see them through the railings. The children all wear identical uniforms. Gregory walks between them.

18 INT. LOMONOSOV SCHOOL, RECEPTION - 7AM 18

The reception is a converted vestry with a vaulted ceiling and a stone floor. Iconic images hang all around and Gregory's footsteps echo as he walks.

A FEMALE RECEPTIONIST responds to the echoing footsteps and emerges from a recess. Gregory lays his gloved hands on the stone desk. They speak in Russian,

RECEPTIONIST
(Can I help you?)

GREGORY
(There is a boy here. Sacha. Sacha Zykov).

RECEPTIONIST
(We have a boy of that name on our register. What about him?)

GREGORY
(I received a message that there is a problem).

RECEPTIONIST
(A message from who?)

GREGORY
(Is there a problem?)

RECEPTIONIST
(What is Sacha to you?)

GREGORY
(Sacha Zykov is my son).

As we take this on board the teacher is alarmed.

RECEPTIONIST
(Sacha's father is dead.)

Gregory is expressionless.

GREGORY
(Yes. I am dead. Where is Sacha. I
want to see him).

The teacher is deeply intimidated but brave.

RECEPTIONIST
(I'm afraid that will not be
possible. Sacha Zykov's father and
mother died in a car accident
together with his mother).

*
*
*

Gregory nods.

GREGORY
(There is truth and then there is
the truth. I want to know if he is
here.)

*
*

The teacher presses a buzzer on the desk and there is a buzz
from a back room. Gregory understands that she has called for
assistance. The teacher speaks with formality...

RECEPTIONIST
(Sacha Zykov was removed from this
establishment one week ago.)

Gregory reacts with a wave of fury and anxiety which he
controls. His father's message explained.

GREGORY
(Removed by who?)

The teacher glances back, as if waiting for assistance...

RECEPTIONIST
(To a State institution).

GREGORY
(For what reason?)

A middle aged man in a sleeveless jumper and round spectacles
emerges (ADMINISTRATOR). He is an academic accustomed to
power.

ADMINISTRATOR
(Is there a problem?)

The receptionist speaks softly, with trepidation.

RECEPTIONIST
(He is asking about Sacha Z).

The administrator puffs up...

ADMINISTRATOR
(What about him?)

Gregory stares at the administrator who wilts quickly.

GREGORY
(Where did they take him?)

Silence.

GREGORY (CONT'D)
(Quickly. I am two people. The other is close. Where?)

The administrator sees the cold intent in Gregory's eyes and speaks quickly and honestly.

ADMINISTRATOR
(We don't know. We weren't told. Please).

Gregory shifts his focus to the teacher.

RECEPTIONIST
(They just said 'Government'. A car came and took him.)

A pause. He looks back to the administrator who swallows hard. The administrator has genuine feelings. Gregory turns and walks away.

19

EXT. SIDE STREET, NEAR TO LOMONOSOV SCHOOL - 7AM

19

Gregory walks out through slush with his tumult contained inside his iron face.

A black car is now parked out side the school. Gregory lights a cigarette as he watches the black car. A middle-aged MINISTRY OFFICIAL gets out of the black car and leaves the passenger door open as he watches Gregory.

*
*

We can still hear the children's voices echoing.

The Ministry official calls out...

*

OFFICIAL
(Gregory Zikov).

20 INT. GOVERNMENT STAFF CAR - 7.30AM 20

The car drives fast. Gregory looks out the window at the foggy almost colourless landscape. *

The ministry official looks at Gregory in the rear mirror. *

21 INT. INTERIOR MINISTRY, CORRIDOR - 8AM 21

Gregory's heels click on the tiled floor as he and the official make their way down a high vaulted corridor. As they walk, we glimpse large portraits of Putin along with hanging Russian flags.

22 INT. INTERIOR MINISTRY, INTERIOR MINISTER'S OFFICE - 8AM 22

Gregory is shown into a large office, built and decorated in ornate Tsarist style. More flags hang and there is a stove to augment the central heating.

On the wall there is the famous photo of President Putin, bare chested, holding up a trout he's just caught.

A man in his sixties (the INTERIOR MINISTER) is working on papers by the light of a table lamp and looks up briefly as Gregory is shown in. He greets him in Russian. *

INTERIOR MINISTER *

(I am told to offer you
congratulations. Your father is
dead.)

The ministers condolences are ignored by Gregory. *

GREGORY *

(Where is my son?) *

The minister ignores the question from Gregory. *

INTERIOR MINISTER *

(please do sit) *

Gregory stares at the minister. *

INTERIOR MINISTER (CONT'D) *

(I insist) *

Gregory finally sits. *

INTERIOR MINISTER (CONT'D)

(So I assume now it is you who
controls London.) *

GREGORY
(Where is my son?)

*
*

The Minister leans back in his chair and it creaks.

INTERIOR MINISTER
(There is something we want you to
do for us.)

*
*
*

He reaches back to a shelf and pulls out a file. From it he
takes a portrait photograph. It is a photo of a Russian woman
who we will learn is NATASHA DUBINSKY. She is in her early
fifties, unsmiling. Gregory glances briefly at the photo.

*
*
*
*

INTERIOR MINISTER (CONT'D)
(You know her yes?)

*

Gregory still says nothing.

*

INTERIOR MINISTER (CONT'D)
(Her name is Natasha Dubinsky. She
invented something you and I would
not understand. Then she sold it
for several billion dollars and
caught a plane to London.)

*
*
*
*

The Minister stares at Gregory.

INTERIOR MINISTER (CONT'D)
(We know you know her. We also know
she has bought paintings from your
gallery in London not too long
ago.)

*
*
*

GREGORY
(It is not my gallery).

INTERIOR MINISTER
(Because you are dead?).

*

GREGORY
(The gallery is in my brother's
name.)

A pause.

INTERIOR MINISTER
(Yes. It keeps him out of trouble I
hear. And allows you to deal stolen
art works to unscrupulous buyers
from the Russian community
including Ms Dubinsky).

*
*
*
*

He gestures at the photo. Gregory relents.

GREGORY

(People make their bids
anonymously. He has no idea who
buys..)

*
*

INTERIOR MINISTER

(Well.. Lucky for him.. Because we
want him to be no part of this and
we want you to tell none of your
associates either. We only trust
you).

*
*
*
*
*
*

The Minister scans another typed sheet from his file.

Gregory appears to understand the agenda immediately and the
Minister explains....

INTERIOR MINISTER (CONT'D)

Normally we wouldn't care but this
woman, this genius Natasha
Dubinsky. Insists on making
broadcasts on the BBC World
Service. Rambles about winds of
change. About the Motherland. The
Fisherman thinks these dreams are
infectious.
(And that...)

*
*
*
*
*
*
*

He waves his hand...

*

INTERIOR MINISTER (CONT'D)

(...Is troubling to us.)

*
*

The Minister glances at the portrait of Putin grinning,
holding up his trout..

INTERIOR MINISTER (CONT'D)

(So the Fisherman wants to make an
example).

Gregory doesn't look up at the photo...

INTERIOR MINISTER (CONT'D)

(There are people on an airplane
getting tired of waiting so I will
be quick. We want you to kill her.)

*
*
*

Gregory's face hardens.

*

A pause. Gregory responds in English.

GREGORY

Natasha Dubinsky is impossible to
reach.

*

INTERIOR MINISTER
So you do know her.

*

GREGORY
(I know of her, I hear stories. No
one ever meets her or sees her.)

*

*

The interior Minister takes another sheet from the file and places it on the desk. We see an address and a brief description and a poorly photocopied image of an icon.

INTERIOR MINISTER
Natasha Dubinsky has a particular
interest in iconography.
Especially the icons of the
fourteenth century. And when it
comes to one certain item.. It has
become.. Well an obsession.

*

*

*

*

He taps the image with a stubby finger.

INTERIOR MINISTER (CONT'D)
(The Russian Mother of God. Also
known as the Black Madonna.)

*

*

The Minister smiles...

INTERIOR MINISTER (CONT'D)
(Painted when people still believed
these things were painted by
angels.)

*

*

Gregory glances at the photocopy with its smudged colors.
Only the eyes of the icon survive and stare out.

INTERIOR MINISTER (CONT'D)
(Natasha Dubinsky will risk
everything for this.)

*

*

The Minister picks up the sheet and holds it out for Gregory
to take.

INTERIOR MINISTER (CONT'D)
(It will be in your luggage on
arrival in London.)

*

*

Gregory hesitates. Silence. They stare at each other.

GREGORY
And if I say it can't be done?

*

*

The Minister decides to put an end to all doubt.

INTERIOR MINISTER

(Then I say..In that place where
they took your son there is a
Priest they call 'the Bull'. Your
son hasn't met him yet. He can be
very devoted and loving.)

*

*

A pause.

We stay with Gregory. Contemplating.

*

27 EXT. MOSCOW AIRPORT, SECURITY CHECK POINT - 9.30AM 27

*

Thick rain falls at Moscow Airport. We see a black car pull
up at a security check point leading to the baggage area. The
driver shows ID and is allowed through.

*
*
*

28 EXT. MOSCOW AIRPORT, LOADING AREA - DAY 28

*

The driver arrives at a floodlit loading area and gets out.
From the trunk he takes out an Aeroflot bag.

*
*

Suitcases chug through a rubber curtain, ready to be loaded.
We find Gregory's black suitcase and see it has a blue ribbon
tied to it. Gloved hands pluck it from the conveyor and put
the Aeroflot bag inside. The suitcase is then returned to the
conveyor belt.

*
*
*
*
*

24 INT. NOTTING HILL HOME, ATTIC ROOM - 5.30AM 24

Coke is snorted off a glass table. Ilkay and Vladimir are
both in their underwear dancing. High. Very loud music makes
it impossible to hear anything.

Ilkay dances, poses next to the painting. Laughing, playful.
Striking poses that match the figure in the portrait. Pulling
sad faces. Vladimir starts laughing, gets up and joins her.
They dance. They kiss - hands all over each other. Vladimir
breaks away to line up more coke.

Ilkay looks round the room, dancing, curious. Looks in a
drawer, doesn't see anything, then another - nothing, one
more and suddenly, what has she found? Very slowly she pulls
out a gun. Gregory's gun.

She weighs it in her hand, admires it, tries it out. She
turns points it at Vladimir. He looks up, freaks out. She
laughs, cowers. Now he laughs, gets up and goes to take the
gun off her. She dances with it teasing him, they play fight,
wrestle, he tries to grab her. She runs, jumps on the sofa,
he chases. It's getting faster, she jumps, he tackles her -

BANG!

- the gun fires. A heart beat or two. The music skips. Both bodies lie dead still. Slowly, Vladimir starts to get up, breathing hard. He struggles to climb from under Ilkay's lifeless body. Blood begins to pool fast from under her chest and toward Vladimir's feet. He steps back....and back...to avoid the flood. He drops the gun. He stares at the body.

29

INT. NOTTING HILL HOME, DRAWING ROOM - DAY

29

The debris of the funeral party is still strewn all around. Dishes and broken glass and half eaten food.

The front door opens. Gregory enters carrying the blue Aeroflot bag. He looks all around and reacts to the state of the place.

Leon walks towards him.

LEON

Boss we..

GREGORY

Where is he?

LEON

..in the kitchen..

Gregory looks towards the close Kitchen door.

Then he hears a clatter from the kitchen. He enters the Kitchen. Vladimir is sitting, slumped over the table. He's wrecked, drunk, hung-over, smears of dried blood on his body... but his face implodes with relief when he sees Gregory.

VLADIMIR

Gricha!

Vladimir stands and stumbles over to Gregory and gives him a huge hug. Gregory reacts to the blood.

GREGORY

What happened?

Vladimir remembers the night before like biting on a rotten tooth. He rubs the back of his neck.

VLADIMIR

You should've been here.

Vladimir grunts at the enormity of what happened and repeats softly...

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)
You really should've fucking *been*
here.

A pause. Gregory studies Vladimir and senses trouble.

GREGORY
Vova..? What did you do?

*

Vladimir begins to laugh softly to himself. Finally... he looks up with tears in his eyes.

VLADIMIR
Last night something happened....

A pause.

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)
...and I can't breathe.

*

A pause.

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)
I have to remember to breathe.

*

30 INT. NOTTING HILL HOME, UPSTAIRS ATTIC ROOM - DAY 30

The room is just as we left it.

We find Ilkay dead. The blood has caked dry around her. The door opens and Gregory and Vladimir enter. Gregory goes to the body, takes a deep breath and turns her over. It is evident he recognises her. Vladimir can't look.

*

Gregory walks past him and out of the room.

31 INT. NOTTING HILL HOME - STAIRS - DAY 31

Vladimir calls after him,

VLADIMIR
Gricha?

Gregory doesn't stop walking.

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)
Gricha?

*

*

Gregory continues down to Leon who's waiting at the bottom of the staircase.

GREGORY
You know who that is up there?

Leon nods.

LEON
I wish I could have.. I mean I
would have stayed if I had known..

Gregory looks dead serious. Then snaps out of it.

GREGORY
Clean the blood. Use fertiliser.
There are sacks in the basement.
Then clean this place up. The
entire house. Properly. Understood?

Leon nods.

Gregory turns and looks up towards his brother.

GREGORY (to Leon) (CONT'D)
Someone will come for the body.
Just open the door. Sober him up.

LEON
Of course.

32 EXT. GREEN LANES BUTCHER SHOP - DAY 32

A small North London Turkish butcher shop has meat hanging.
A fat Turkish guy is hanging a lamb carcass on a meat hook.
Gregory approaches in the rain.

33 INT. GREEN LANES BUTCHER SHOP - DAY 33

The fat Turkish guy turns around as Gregory enters. He
squeezes himself behind the counter, wiping blood on a cloth.

SHOPKEEPER
Can I help you?

Gregory doesn't speak.

GREGORY
I want to know where she is.

SHOPKEEPER
Where *who* is?

A regular customer enters and the shopkeeper nods a nervous greeting.

GREGORY
She stole something from me.

*

SHOPKEEPER
Who stole what from you? What are
you talking about?

The regular customer calls over in Turkish...

CUSTOMER
(Do you have my bones?)

Gregory smiles at the customer.

*

GREGORY (in turkish)
(Piss off!)

*

*

The regular customer glances at Gregory and leaves.

GREGORY (CONT'D)
Tell Tashkar that last night his
daughter stole money from us. We
want to know where she is.

*

SHOPKEEPER
I told you, my brother...

Gregory suddenly twists the shop keepers arm around, making
his body spin. The shopkeeper yells in pain.

GREGORY
Tell Tashkar I was here.
Understand?

*

*

The shopkeeper nods.

*

Gregory turns and walks out into the rain.

*

34

INT. NOTTING HILL HOME, DRAWING ROOM - EVENING

34

Vladimir and an army of cleaners are cleaning and
straightening up the house. Leon is sweeping up broken glass
and the place is a hive of activity. Vladimir sees a car pull
up outside and hurries to the door.

He unlocks the door and lets Gregory in. Vladimir puts his
arm around Gregory and speaks softly as they walk through the
frantic clean up....

Gregory walks with purpose and doesn't reply. Vladimir is filled with intrigue and whispers...

VLADIMIR

So?

Gregory pushes open the door to the kitchen.

35

INT. NOTTING HILL HOME, KITCHEN - DAY

35

As soon as they are in the kitchen Gregory spins Vladimir around and gets down to business.

GREGORY

Let me see you then. You ok?
Feeling alright?

Vladimir nods. Not sure what to say or what to expect.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

This is what happened here last night.

Vladimir looks down.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

Fucking look at me when I'm talking to you!

VLADIMIR

Yes I'm sorry I..

Gregory slaps Vladimir in the face.

GREGORY

Hey! I need you to listen ok?!

Gregory grabs Vladimir's ears and tugs them away from his head, a physical instruction for him to listen. It looks painful, almost comical.

GREGOR

You took Tashkar's daughter upstairs. You thought you were going to fuck her...

VLADIMIR

Ow! You're hurting me..

GREGORY

Listen! She stole a suitcase. It was full of cash. Our father always kept the cash in the upstairs room.

(MORE)

GREGORY (CONT'D)

People know that. She stole it and now she has disappeared. You think she said she was going to New York.

Vladimir is trying to keep up. Gregory pulls his ears even harder and shakes Vladimir's head to make him concentrate...

GREGORY(CONT'D) (CONT'D)

We are angry with Tashkar. We want to know where the fuck she is with our money...

Vladimir begins to smile to show he understands but Gregory yanks his ears so that they hurt...

GREGORY(CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Tashkar's daughter always was in trouble. Always shaming him. Now this. Stealing...at the funeral of a respected man...

Gregory stares into Vladimir's eyes. Vladimir nods quickly.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

Tell me you understand.

VLADIMIR

I understand. I understand.

Gregory hugs him then lets him go. Vladimir heaves a sigh of relief. He can find no words of gratitude.

GREGORY

I am keeping you alive because I promised our father I would. But keep your chaos away from me. I have things to do.

Gregory lets Vladimir go and walks toward the back door. Vladimir takes a breath and calls out to his departing brother...

VLADIMIR

I'm sorry Gricha!

INT. NOTTING HILL HOME, HALLWAY - EVENING

Gregory goes upstairs.

36 INT. NOTTING HILL HOME, UPSTAIRS ATTIC ROOM - EVENING 36

Gregory enters with his black suitcase. The Renoir still hangs and there is a bullet hole in the wall beside it. The blood has all been cleaned up.

He goes to a small safe and dials a code to open it. *

He then opens up his small black suitcase. The icon is inside and it glows in the flickering light. Gregory stares at it and we might sense he feels a connection with its weary sadness.

He glances at the Renoir and sees a reflection in the expression. The same look of disappointment and accusation.

He grabs an ancient 1950's suitcase from a corner (the one his father brought with him from Russia) and lays it down and opens it. It is filled with cash (his father's stash). Gregory places the icon on top of the cash and nestles it into a safe place. He covers it over with bank notes. *

He runs his hand through his hair. Sits down at his desk. *

Gregory opens a drawer and takes out a photo. He's looks at it. It's a picture of him together with a woman and their newborn baby. *

We stay with Gregory. *

5 **EXT. PICCADILLY, ST. JAMES'S - THE RITZ - MORNING** 5 *

Rain is pouring down. Gregory drives his car up in front of the Ritz. He steps out and hands the key to the doorman. *

GREGORY
Morning Michael. *

Michael the doorman smiles at him. *

DOORMAN
Morning Sir. *

GREGORY
My sister in? *

DOORMAN
Just got back from her morning run
sir. Should I announce your
arrival? *

GREGORY
No I'm alright thanks. *

Gregory enters the Ritz.

INT. THE ROYAL SUITE - THE RITZ - MORNING

Gregory stands looking out the window. The best view of Hyde park. Luda comes out of the bathroom.

LUDA
So how was Russia? Sorry I couldn't
come.. Did you take any pictures?

Gregory turns.

GREGORY
Funny.

Luda smiles. She sits. Pours coffee

LUDA
Well now it's over and he's gone.

GREGORY
He was a great man.

Luda just stares at Gregory. Her anger is apparent

LUDA
For you men, maybe, for me, maybe
not. I came to the wake, I did my
duty. Why are you here?

GREGORY
I came to see if you are OK sister.
What's done is done. It's time to
move on, embrace the future.

LUDA
(Angrily)
What do you want? Don't waste my
time.

Gregory spits it out.

GREGORY
Time is all you have Luda...

Then..
They've taken Sasha...

Luda reacts. Silence, no response.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

I know you still call the school to
speak to him each week. When you
call next time, they will tell you
he has been taken away by the
Government.

He ploughs on through her reaction...

She looks up at Gregory.

LUDA

I told you keeping him there was a
big mistake.

GREGORY

I did it to protect him..

Luda switches to Russian.

LUDA

(Russia eats it's young.)

Gregory nods, then speaks evenly and clearly.

GREGORY

(I know and sometimes the dead come
back to life) I've come here
because I need your help to get him
back..

*Its clear that once upon a time the two of them were close,
but it was a long time ago.*

Luda shakes her head and looks at Gregory.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

There is something they need me to
do and I am going to do it. But I
need your help.

Luda just stares at him.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

It is part of the deal that our
brother is not involved and there
is no one in my organisation I
trust.

LUDA

But you trust me? That would be the
first time anyone ever trusted me
with anything in this family.

(MORE)

LUDA (CONT'D)

(I'm not sure that's your smartest
move brother)

GREGORY

Will you help me?

LUDA

No.

Luda stares cold at Gregory. He stares back.

GREGORY

You know staying here isn't free
right?

LUDA

You wouldn't..

GREGORY

Not if you help me..

LUDA

It's the family's fund. Not yours.

GREGORY

Well, which is it to be?

She nods her assent, ever so slightly.

A pause.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

Thank you.

Gregory stands.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

This will be a good thing. Good for
our family.

LUDA

(No good can come of this family
Grisha).

GREGORY

(Things can change, they will
change, I promise).

Luda stares hard at Gregory. She doesn't believe him. He
leaves.

42 INT. NOTTING HILL HOME, ATTIC ROOM - DAY 42 *

A space has been cleared in the room and the Renoir peers down. Gregory has an old fashioned Polaroid camera in his hand (cell phones are not secure) and has draped a white sheet against the wall. *

Propped up against the white sheet, for the first time we see the stolen icon. It is very beautiful. The Madonna's eyes follow us around the room. *

Beside it is the front page of that day's newspaper. *

Gregory kneels close and takes a shot of the icon beside the newspaper. He stares at the icon and we might sense that he has some kind of emotional connection with it. There is a knock at the door and we hear Vladimir from outside. He tries to open the door but it's locked. *

VLADIMIR (OOV) *

Hey Gricha, you in there? *

Gregory ignores him. *

VLADIMIR (CONT'D) *

I know you think of me just being a fuckup ok? And you're right I am.. *

I'm sorry ok? I'll be better from now on.. I promise. *

Gregory still doesn't answer. *

VLADIMIR (CONT'D) *

Gricha? open the door.. Can we please talk? *

Gregory hardly pauses before taking aim and firing off another shot... *

Vladimir tries to be funny. *

VLADIMIR (CONT'D) *

You shooting porn up here or what? *

43 INT. NOTTING HILL HOME, OUTSIDE THE ATTIC ROOM - 43 *

Vladimir knocks on the door a little harder, still half laughing. He whispers. *

VLADIMIR *

Hey, I know it's the picture you stole from the museum. *

(MORE) *

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)

I've been reading about it in the
paper. At least let me see it.

The camera light flashes under the door once more. Vladimir
gets mad but speaks softly with a laugh in his voice...

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)

People are saying '*that's* why
Gregory didn't come to the party'.
'He was stealing a fucking virgin
worth a hundred million dollars.'
They're saying, 'shit, these
brothers are good'.

Silence. The camera flashes again. Vladimir is about to
hammer on the door but holds himself in check.

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)

Gricha?

Silence.

He gently touches the closed door. Still no response from
Gregory. The camera flashes again. Vladimir takes a breath,
turns and walks.

44 INT. NOTTING HILL HOME, ATTIC ROOM - DAY

44

Gregory hears Vladimir leave and reacts. He stares at the
image of the Virgin and she appears to stare back at him.
He looks back to the door (Vladimir).

51 EXT. HOLYWELL CEMETRY, OXFORD - EARLY MORNING

51

The beautiful over grown Oxford cemetery is filled with and
shadows on a sunny and foggy morning. The tombs sit at angles
or are half sunk into the ground. The yearly lushness makes
it the total opposite to the graveyard in Russia.

Then we see a shadow and then see Luda walking between the
graves, glancing at a map of famous grave stones. She checks
the inscriptions and finally finds the tomb of someone called
Theophilus Carter, who died in 1904.

There is a tea pot on the grave. Luda looks around once and
then takes a small envelope from under her coat. She places
it in the teapot.

52 EXT. OXFORD UNIVERSITY, WADHAM COLLEGE - DAY

52

A perfectly English scene as students about to sit exams walk around the manicured quadrant in flowing black robes. Through the crowd a tall, gaunt man with wild grey hair walks quickly and carelessly. We follow him...

53 INT. WADHAM COLLEGE, MONTY'S OFFICE - DAY

53

....in shafts of light we absorb the dry, sun bleached interior of books and leather and upright chairs. Books of art history are strewn on a circular coffee table. The door to the office opens and the gaunt man with grey hair enters.

He sits instantly down at his desk and turns on his computer. He checks his incoming mails. *

We will learn that this is PROFESSOR MONTY DARK, a Serbian born Professor of art history. A large original lithograph of the Mad Hatter hangs in a frame above his head.

He curses at his screen. *

MONTY

Fuck. Block me. It's OK. So what?
Who cares? Clara! *

He rolls his wheeled chair back from the screen and calls out again.

MONTY (CONT'D)

Clara! I need you to print
something for me! Clara! *

There is silence in response.

Suddenly a new mail and an image pops up on his screen - it's a picture of The Matter Hatter. The Professor reacts with unease before... *

Clara Monty assistant comes in. The Office is already empty. *

CLARA

Yes sorry I was just.. *

54 EXT. OXFORD STREETS - DAY

54

....he is already running, his shirt untucked, his grey hair wild, racing between and around people...

55 INT. LUDA'S CAR / EXT. OXFORD STREETS - DAY 55

...in the rearview mirror we see Monty running through the Oxford streets.

She takes a deep breath. Picks up her cell and sends a text. *

Text: **He's on his way..** *

56 EXT. HOLYWELL CEMETERY - DAY 56 *

Monty runs through the graveyard, following a path he knows well. He arrives at the tomb of Theophilus Carter. He falls to his knees opens the teapot and finds the envelope. *

He tears it open and reads frantically. We see three photographs of the icon, taken by Gregory. Monty stares at them and then clutches them to his chest. He gets to his feet and looks all around.

MONTY

Thank you. Thank you. God is not dead. *

57 EXT. REMOTE SURREY CROSSROADS/INT. MINI - DAY 57

A deserted country lane in the middle of the Surrey countryside. A black Mini is driving fast down the lane with Monty at the wheel. Monty drives the way he runs. We hear Serbian pop music. *

He is smoking. He seems to be nervous. He drives fast across a windswept crossroads but suddenly his Sat Nav speaks...

SAT NAV

You have reached your destination...

Monty hits the brakes hard and skids to a halt. He turns off the music and the wind moans. He looks all around at the empty desolation. Not even a barn to mark the spot.

Monty checks a scrap of paper on which he has written some GPS coordinates. From the glove compartment of his car, Monty takes out a house brick.

We see Monty getting out of the car with the envelope in one hand and the brick in the other.

He walks forward a few paces then carefully places the envelope down under the brick on the white line in the middle of the road (we infer he is following an instruction). He glances around for someone or something, but the hedges and fields seem empty. *

He walks back to his car and gets inside. He fires his engine and slowly reverses away from where the envelope has been left.

Monty drives away.

The envelope is under the brick and the wind tugs at it. After only a moment a battered Land Rover appears from a dirt track in the nearby field. It parks directly over the envelope, with a front wheel either side.

We hear a rhythmic clicking coming from inside the Land Rover. Then the passenger door opens and a red setter dog is shoed out of the vehicle. The dog comes around to the envelope and begins to sniff it. Satisfied, the dog sits.

Then, a Mongolian Russian gets out of the car. This is HUNAN. The rhythmic clicking sound gets louder and we see that Hunan has a *Geiger counter* in his hand. He comes to the front of the Land Rover and squats down.

He runs the Geiger counter over the envelope and it stays even. Satisfied that it is ok, Hunan pulls on a surgical glove then picks up the envelope and straightens. He carries the envelope to the car and then drives away fast. *

58 EXT. HUGE GEORGIAN COUNTRY HOUSE, SURREY - DAY

58

We take in the majesty of the house for a moment then see Hunan's Land Rover approaching the front gate. The property is surrounded by a high wall topped with razor wire. There is an Iris recognition security monitor at the gate which Hunan pulls towards with his window open. He peers into the purple light for a moment and the security gate begins to open.

59 EXT. HUGE GEORGIAN COUNTRY HOUSE, FRONT ENTRANCE - DAY

59

As Hunan drives up the long drive, we see security cameras following his progress.

Two heavy looking ex-FSB security men guard the door with guns hidden. Hunan pulls up in front of the door and gets out of the Land Rover with the envelope. We might notice a sentry on guard on the roof of the nearby building.

Hunan trots past the security guards who evidently know him well and defer to him. He punches a security code into a keypad beside the front door.

60 INT. HUGE GEORGIAN COUNTRY HOUSE, CORRIDOR - DAY 60

Hunan walks smartly down a long corridor with doorways opening out either side onto drawing rooms and dining rooms. Oil paintings decorate the walls along with tapestries. As we follow Hunan and the envelope, we see secretaries at work in some of the rooms, large log fires burning, video screens flickering.

Several staff members walk in the opposite direction and greet Hunan silently. He reaches a door marked 'Observatory'. There is another keypad beside this door and Hunan punches in a coded number.

61 INT. HUGE GEORGIAN COUNTRY HOUSE, CORRIDOR/SPIRAL STAIRCASE - DAY 61

Hunan enters this most secure area. All around the walls we see works of art, some old masters and some Impressionists. We will learn that some of them are stolen. There are also pieces of text in Cyrillic, framed and protected by glass.

In a shaded wall we see a collection of six original Russian icons from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Hunan walks past them and trots up the staircase.

62 INT. HUGE GEORGIAN COUNTRY HOUSE, OBSERVATORY - DAY 62

At the top of the spiral stairs he finds a closed door which he opens. Inside we are surprised to find a fabulously expensive and technically advanced TELESCOPE.

The upper room has been turned into an observatory with a glass domed roof. The telescope is pointed at the sky. The room is empty though a cigarette still burns in an ashtray.

He looks at another closed door with a sign which reads 'Library'. Hunan glances at the smouldering cigarette and guesses.

Hunan turns and places the envelope beneath the telescope. He walks.

Once again we stay with the envelope for a moment. We hear Hunan's footsteps as he descends and hear a door close. Only then does Natasha Dubinsky emerge.

She is a little older than the woman in the photo Gregory saw, and thinner. She may not have slept and we might imagine she spent the night gazing at the stars. We sense someone alive furiously inside her own head.

She opens a drawer and takes out some white gloves, of the kind used for handling very old manuscripts. She then opens up the envelope and stares at the photograph of the icon. The sight of it seems to put a new light into her eyes and bring her life to the surface. She places the photo down on the desk and smooths it, speaks in Russian,

DUBINSKY

(There. The ancient magic. I am not looking at you, you are looking at me.)

A pause.

DUBINSKY (CONT'D)

(What do you see?)

A half smile.

DUBINSKY (CONT'D)

(When we meet you will tell me who I am).

INT. NOTTING HILL HOME, DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

Gregory sits at his desk. He's looking at a book of beautiful Russian icons as if searching for an answer. Leon comes in.

GREGORY

Yes?

LEON

We have a problem sir.

EXT. NOTTING HILL HOME, DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

We see their conversation through the window. Gregory listens. He does not look happy.

63

EXT. CHINATOWN, LONDON - NIGHT

63

Rain. Roars of laughter, drunken screams, a night in Soho. Through the drunks and tourists Gregory and Vladimir walk past the window of a garishly lit Chinese slot machine arcade.

Gregory stops. Looks straight at his brother. Vladimir isn't sure of what's going on.

VLADIMIR

What?

GREGORY

Because of what you did. We now have a problem. We're now gonna try to fix that problem. Ok?

VLADIMIR

Ok.

Gregory walks out of the rain and into the slots place and Vladimir follows.

64 INT. SLOT MACHINE ARCADE, CHINATOWN - NIGHT 64

It's quiet inside. Only a few haunted figures play the slots. Gregory and Vladimir enter the place and walk toward a door marked '*staff only*'. Gregory walks on and Vladimir follows.

65 INT. SMALL OFFICE BEHIND THE SLOT ARCADE - NIGHT 65

A young Chinese guy with dyed blond hair (TONY) stands at the door of the small office. His Mother (MADAM LAU) is pouring tea for three. Madam Lau is in her sixties and is wearing a gold and blue silk tunic. She has deep, hard eyes.

Gregory and Vladimir are seated at a round table as their tea cups are poured. A *living waterfall* picture glows in the half darkness. Once Madam Lau has poured her tea she takes a seat and begins to speak in *Hak Ga* dialect.

After she has spoken, Tony translates in a bored monotone.

TONY (TRANSLATING)

She says six days ago her sons buried a woman in a wolf coat.

A pause. Gregory glances at Madam Lau's hand.

GREGORY

I see you are wearing her rings.

Tony translates and Madam Lau shrugs.

TONY

She says what use are diamonds in heaven?

She continues and Tony translates.

TONY (CONT'D)

We thought we were just burying a body for you. We didn't realize we were also burying a secret. For that the cost should have been higher.

Gregory stares at Madam Lau...

TONY (CONT'D)

She says you have to pay rent on secrets.

A pause.

GREGORY

How much rent do you pay on a secret?

Madam Lau pushes a scrap of paper across the table. Gregory reads it and reacts.

66

E/I. SLOT MACHINE ARCADE, CHINATOWN - LATE NIGHT

66

*

Gregory and Vladimir emerge from the slot machine arcade and Gregory stops to lean against a wall to light a cigarette. He looks deeply pissed off and Vladimir sees it. Vladimir tries to bounce the mood away...

VLADIMIR

Why are we agreeing to this 'rent' shit? Since when are we scared of an old lady?

*

Gregory looks at Vladimir with more contempt and speaks evenly.

GREGORY

First of all. That Lady in there isn't just any old lady. And to answer your question, yes we are scared. I come back to London and you've shot a fucking princess. I am paying the price.

*

*

*

*

*

*

VLADIMIR

It was an accident.

*

*

Gregory gestures inside.

GREGORY

I don't care what it was Vova!

*

Gregory draws on his cigarette. Vladimir looks down at his shoes. Inside, a machine pays out a jackpot.

VLADIMIR

I just bring you trouble, don't I
Gricha?

Gregory doesn't answer.

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)

You think you'd be better if I was
gone.

Gregory blows smoke into the neon.

GREGORY

Yes.. Sometimes I do.

*

Vladimir laughs, pretending the answer is a joke...

VLADIMIR

(Well fuck you brother).

Gregory stubs out his cigarette, takes Vladimir in his arms.

GREGORY

Soon I will have a job for you. The
real thing. Improve your Russian.
Drink less.

He kisses his brother on the top of the head and disappears
round the corner. At first Vladimir doesn't follow - he then
turns up his collar and follows out in the rain.

*

*

INT. NOTTING HILL HOUSE/LUDA'S HOTEL SUITE INTERCUT

*

The next day. Gregory and Luda speak on the phone. Luda
laughs bitterly.

*

*

LUDA

Big brother trusting little sister
to do this all on her own.

*

*

*

GREGORY

It's not funny Luda.

*

*

LUDA

I know its not funny. I am not
laughing. I am deadly serious.

*

*

*

Gregory is coaching Luda.

GREGORY
Lets try again.

LUDA
I came to talk about money.

GREGORY
Good. Now he will try to ask you
all kinds of things.. What do..

LUDA
I came to talk about money.

She is exasperated..

This is stupid. I hate this..

GREGORY
I know it's stupid.

Luda stares ahead.

LUDA
I am not doing this for you.

GREGORY
I know that too. And yet here you
are. Let's do it again.

LUDA
I came to talk about money.

68 INT. ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM, OXFORD - DAY

68

In a sunlit gallery we find Professor Monty Dark sitting on a bench, staring at Manet's *'Portrait of Mademoiselle Claus'*.

After a moment Luda enters and walks to the painting. The painting is a rendezvous and Luda quickly identifies Monty Dark and sits down on the bench.

MONTY
You are the one.

LUDA
Yes.

MONTY

I chose this spot because of her.

He gestures at the sad and lonely expression on the face of the portrait.

MONTY (CONT'D)

She reminds me of my client. I was in her presence only once. She was on the balcony of her house. She has a telescope and she stares at the stars all night long. When she looks at you it's as if you are as far away from her as a star.

Luda is unimpressed.

LUDA

I came to talk about money.

Monty Dark smiles.

MONTY

In all transactions of this kind I use the name 'Mad Hatter'. That grave I use for drops is the grave of the man who inspired Lewis Carroll to create the character....

LUDA (repeats dryly)

I came to talk about money.

MONTY

When we talk about the item for sale we talk about your friend's 'dark mother'.

Luda looks around the gallery and sighs and repeats again.

LUDA

I came to talk about money.

Monty turns to study her.

MONTY

What? You think code names are silly. Who are you?

LUDA (DEAD PAN)

I am the one they sent to talk about money.

What did he expect?

MONTY

From now on I will refer to my client as Madam Claus. The woman in the painting.

He stares again at the Manet...

MONTY (CONT'D)

She is very particular. If you enter her consciousness she trains her telescope onto you. She wants to know everything.

Luda sighs and checks her watch.

LUDA

There are two potential buyers.

MONTY

Unlikely but I understand your strategy.

LUDA

If you don't want to do business we will go to the other buyer.

Monty shrugs.

MONTY

She is most afraid of Plutonium. Isn't that fantastic? To feel worthy of a nuclear assassination.

LUDA

My friend wants ninety million dollars, transferred to the Marshall Capital bank.

MONTY

A transaction of that size would be traced.

LUDA

In all official accounts the transaction will be for a Renoir painting currently in my friend's possession. A legally owned painting called 'In Summer'...

MONTY

Goodness I hate Renoir and so does she...

Luda continues....

LUDA

Nevertheless the Renoir will be seen to be sold to your client for ninety million dollars. The dark mother will be hidden inside the frame. The Renoir will then be returned to my friend in good faith.

A pause. Monty studies her.

MONTY

I am in love with you. Simple as that. Let's go for a drink.

LUDA

No. Is the client interested or not?

*

A pause.

MONTY

The Madam is interested.

He smiles.

MONTY (CONT'D)

But she tells me she wants to see the bones.

LUDA

I'll pass it on.

*

*

Luda leaves.

*

EXT. ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM, OXFORD - DAY

*

Luda comes out from the Museum. Turns left. Starts walking fast. Heavy breathing. The rain is pouring down.

*

*

69

INT. HUGE GEORGIAN COUNTRY HOUSE, OBSERVATORY - NIGHT

69

*

At night the observatory is a wondrous place. An image of the night sky is projected on a plain wall and small blue lights glow. The telescope itself gleams in moonlight from the glass dome.

We see the red end of a cigarette glow as Madam Dubinsky looks at the stars. After a moment there is a knock and Hunan enters. The moment the door is closed...

HUNAN

Ninety million. Dollars.

Natasha draws on her cigarette.

DUBINSKY

The madonna he stole is a symbol.
Of hope...

Hunan is cautious...

HUNAN

First we need the proof it is
genuine.

Dubinsky hardly hears...

DUBINSKY

...of birth. Re-birth. She is the
mother of Russia.

A pause.

DUBINSKY (CONT'D)

I wonder if our thief knows that
the theft of this most important
piece could be an omen of change
for our country.

Hunan flickers just a little and we should imagine he is used
to Dubinsky's odd flights of fancy.

HUNAN

Madam Dubinsky, for ninety million
dollars you could buy a revolution.

Dubinsky turns to him with a look of utter contempt.

DUBINSKY

If the results of the tests are
positive, offer eighty. Good night.

Hunan smothers his feelings and walks.

INT. NOTTING HILL HOME KITCHEN - NIGHT

Gregory enters the Kitchen. Vladimir sits there. He looks up
at Gregory.

VLADIMIR

Where have you been? I tried to
call you all day.

*
*
*
*
*

Gregory ignores Vladimir. He goes to the fridge and takes out some food. He starts making himself a plate.

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)
Did you know the silent treatment
is the most common pattern of
conflict in a marriage.

GREGORY
Good thing we're not married then.

He softens slightly

GREGORY (CONT'D)
Do you want me to cancel the
birthday party Saturday? I
understand if you don't feel like
doing it..

A pause.

VLADIMIR
No.. Well I just thought.. Well to
be honest I didn't think you wanted
me do it.. after..

GREGORY
It's your thing Vova. You arranged
it. So if you still want to do it,
its fine by me.. Just don't over do
it. Up to you.

Vladimir is all changed. It's like he suddenly lit up.

VLADIMIR
Ok.. Thank you Grisha. Then yes.. I
still want to do it.

Gregory forces out a smile. Looks out the window, sees Luda
pull up. Vladimir sees too, his smile fades.

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)
What is she doing here?

GREGORY
I need to talk to Luda alone.

VLADIMIR
What about?

Gregory reaches over the table and takes his brother's hand
and leans in close.

GREGORY
Family stuff..

Gregory exits the kitchen, leaving Vladimir alone and
forlorn.

INT NOTTING HILL HOME DRAWING ROOM - DAY

Luda and Gregory talk

GREGORY
So?

LUDA
He loves me and wants to get
married.

GREGORY
Sounds like him.

LUDA
He's a nutcase Grisha..

GREGORY
I know..

LUDA
He is unreliable, a fantasist...

GREGORY
I didn't choose him Luda. They did.
Just tell me what he said?

LUDA
He said his client was interested
but that she needs to see the
bones..

Gregory nods, showing he understands...

Luda sips her coffee, then looks directly at Gregory.

LUDA (CONT'D)
He also said that the buyer is
depressed, in big pain all the time
you know, the Russian sickness when
you live away from home too long.

Gregory looks straight ahead.

LUDA (CONT'D)
It's Natasha Dubinsky isn't it?

Gregory doesn't reply.

GREGORY

The less you know the better.

LUDA

I knew it was her. A woman, who has
an observatory and an interest in
icons. It can only be Natasha
Dubinsky.

Gregory doesn't reply.

LUDA (CONT'D)

If Sasha's life is dependent on you
killing Natasha Dubinsky then I
have the right to know Grisha.
It would be easier to reach the
Queen for God's sake.

Gregory looks at her.

GREGORY

And yet I have to.

LUDA

So it is her?

Gregory's silence signals his assent

LUDA (CONT'D)

Jesus! If there was ever a woman
I'd like to meet. Talk to even just
look at. It's her.

GREGORY

You will never meet her Luda.
Understand?

LUDA

Yes yes. Understood.

EXT. HARLEY STREET - EARLY EVENING

Gregory is walking down Harley Street with his briefcase. He
walks through a small iron gate and we see the plaque of a
clinic belonging to a Doctor Sherenovsky.

It's out of hours. Gregory presses the buzzer on the door,
waits and is finally let through.

INT. DOCTOR SHERENOVSKY'S CLINIC, RECEPTION - EARLY EVENING *

A young Russian receptionist greets him with a smile as he enters. She picks up the phone and in Russian....

RECEPTIONIST (INTO PHONE)
(Doctor Sherenovsky... it is one of
your friends from the old City.)

INT. DOCTOR SHERENOVSKY'S CLINIC, OFFICE - EARLY EVENING *

The consulting room is plush and exudes expense. DOCTOR SHERENOVSKY is mid sixties, worldly, amused by life and death. He opens the door to let Gregory in and they kiss each other on both cheeks. He speaks in Russian.

DOCTOR
(Grisha. My condolences) *

GREGORY
(Thank you.) *

The doctor closes the door then locks it. Gregory puts his briefcase on the doctor's desk. Inside the briefcase there is another case made from metal. It has a complex code key and Gregory begins to feed in the combination. The doctor studies Gregory and, for the first time, we sense his nervousness. *

Gregory doesn't flicker as he opens the metal case. Inside we see the icon. Sherenovsky reacts with shock and trepidation.

DOCTOR
(No, no, no... Please..) *

Gregory takes an envelope of cash out of the briefcase and lays it on the desk.

GREGORY
(I need to use your X-ray machine).

INT. DR. SHERENOVSKY'S CLINIC, X-RAY ROOM - EARLY EVENING *

Gregory is wearing a lead vest. The doctor slides the tray into the X-ray machine. He picks up a control button on a wire and fires the X-ray machine.... *

76 INT. ART GALLERY - NIGHT

76 *

Only a few table lamps burn inside the gallery and the art works are cloaked in darkness. The door to the back office is ajar and we see Vladimir speaking with Leon.

A door buzzer buzzes and Hunan enters the gallery. He walks past Vladimir's office and through the gallery. Vladimir spies him, and hurries to the door and watches him go up the stairs.

77 INT. ART GALLERY, UPSTAIRS OFFICE - NIGHT

77 *

No paintings are stored here but there are stacks of empty frames. Gregory sits at a leather-topped desk staring out of the window. Hunan walks in through an open door and Gregory turns and sits.

GREGORY

Close the door.

Hunan closes the door and stand in front of the desk.

*

The secure window is barred and they sit into barred light. Gregory puts an envelope onto the desk.

HUNAN

You insisted on me. What is wrong with the Mad Hatter?

GREGORY

You are Lewis Carroll. His creator. I wanted the creator.

*

Hunan hardly takes his eyes off Gregory as he produces a small Geiger Counter from his own briefcase and runs it over the envelope.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

They are X-rays.

*

Hunan has a weary expression, suggesting he knows that already. The Geiger Counter flutters only a little. Hunan is satisfied and takes the envelope.

HUNAN

You know already that Mrs Dubinsky has a passion for this kind of art work. She says eighty million... Goodnight..

*

*

Hunan is about to leave.

*

GREGORY

I want to make you an offer...

Hunan stops.

*

GREGORY (CONT'D)

...a financial offer, regarding
your employer...

He continues evenly.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

...a sum of twenty million dollars
transferred to a personal account
in your name if you agree to co-
operate with me in the next five
days.

Hunan stares.

HUNAN

Twenty million dollars? To do what?

GREGORY

To help me get into a room with
her.

Gregory stares and Hunan begins to understand. Hunan's face
changes to a half smile. Then he laughs briefly and looks
away but then looks back.

HUNAN

You know what?

Gregory stares.

HUNAN (CONT'D)

Fuck you.

Hunan is about to leave but Gregory grabs his arm and speaks
evenly.

*

GREGORY

Let me describe the part of your
life that you like to keep hidden..

*

*

*

A pause.

*

GREGORY (CONT'D)

You walk up a little path.
Somebody's built a ramp for
skateboards next to it....

*

As Gregory continues, Hunan begins to react with horror (we will learn why) and sits down slowly....

GREGORY (CONT'D)
The apartments are called 'The
Grove', your mistress and your son
live in a little cottage at the
back...

*

Gregory reaches into his pocket.

GREGORY (CONT'D)
There is only one lock on the
garden door. A simple metal key.

Gregory pulls out a metal key, which he drops on the table.
Hunan stares at it with horror.

GREGORY (CONT'D)
You should understand I never
begin a business meeting unless I
already know the outcome.

Hunan's face is now tight with fear and anger as he looks
from the key to Gregory.

GREGORY (CONT'D)
In truth you are tired of Mrs
Dubinsky. We would back and forth,
twenty million, twenty two, twenty
five and in the end you would
accept twenty three. I am
dignifying your greed with an
implied threat to those you love.

A pause. He pushes the key across the table.

GREGORY (CONT'D)
Twenty three million. And no
stranger will walk the path to the
cottage where you hide your
mistakes. Plus you would be a free
man.

*

*

Hunan looks back to the key. Gregory waits. After a moment
Hunan takes the key and puts it into his pocket.

HUNAN
Dubinsky is not an easy woman to
reach.

A pause.

GREGORY

And yet together we will reach her.

INT. NOTTING HILL HOME, DRAWING ROOM - DAY

Vladimir is blowing up balloons. He's decorating for the birthday party. Some of the staff members are helping him. He's enjoying himself.

78 EXT. FANCY DRESS/PARTY SHOP - DAY

78

Gregory's car pulls up outside. Gregory gets out and (surprisingly) enters the party shop.

79 INT. FANCY DRESS/PARTY SHOP - DAY

79

Gregory's sharp black suit is incongruous to the wild colours and scary outlines of the fancy dress shop. After a moment an ASSISTANT emerges from behind a witch's cloak. He is late fifties, a sixties veteran.

GREGORY

I want to buy a clown outfit.

ASSISTANT

Clown. Wow. We have all sorts. Clowning is very complex. We have the real thing. Do you know the history?

Gregory has placed the case and opens it. He turns and faces the assistant with a face of stone.

GREGORY

No.

A pause.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

I don't need to know anything. I only need a clown outfit...

He pulls a picture of a clown outfit from his case and holds it up.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

Exactly like this one.

80 INT. NOTTING HILL HOME, BACK BEDROOM - DAY 80

A shock. In a back bedroom we find Vladimir half dressed as a clown. He is applying the nose and the wig in the mirror. He giggles as he looks at himself.

VLADMIMIR

What the fuck, what the fuck. Scary
as fuck. Funny as fuck!

*

He laughs and yells...

VLADIMIR

Scary as fuck! Hahahaha.

*

He leaves...

81 INT. NOTTING HILL HOME, DRAWING ROOM - DAY 81

The same large room that hosted the wake has now been transformed for a children's birthday party. There are balloons and goody bags and chairs arranged for musical chairs.

Through an open door into the kitchen we can just glimpse the back of another clown, who is smoking. Gregory arrives from upstairs and calls out....

VLADIMIR

Hey Gricha, look. Fucking look at
me. Scary as fuck. Gricha...

82 INT. NOTTING HILL HOME, KITCHEN - DAY 82 *

He bursts into the kitchen and stops dead when he sees the other clown. The guy is roughly the same height and build as Vladimir. His face clouds. The Clown turns. *

VLADIMIR *

Hey. Hey, hey, what the fuck are
you doing? *

The clown has no idea who he has been hired by and is
instantly dead pan. *

CLOWN *

The clue's in the clothes mate. I'm
a clown. For the kid's party. *

Vladimir moves closer and gets louder and louder.... *

VLADIMIR

I am arranging this party. The kid is my niece. And I am the fucking clown for this party. I am always the clown for this party. Every fucking year I am the clown for this party.

The clown scares quickly and speaks fast...

CLOWN

Maybe this year there's two.

VLADIMIR

Fuck two.

CLOWN

I was hired. Three till five.

VLADIMIR

Hired by who?

CLOWN

Some English guy.

83

INT. NOTTING HILL HOME, UPSTAIRS ROOM - DAY

83

Gregory is sitting near to the window, peering out of the window down at the street. The first of the party guests are beginning to arrive. Most are respectable parents of school friends of Zykov's niece, Valerie. We see Gregory has a revolver on the table beside him.

Vladimir bursts in, his wig and red nose in his hand.

VLADIMIR

Hey, what the fuck. There's a clown in the Kitchen that says you hired him for the party.

Gregory continues to stare out of the window.

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)

I am the clown. Every fucking year. I arranged this party. Then he says maybe this year it's two -

Gregory looks out of the window at the arriving guests.

GREGORY

I hired him in case you got drunk.

Gregory turns and peers at his brother in clown clothes.

VLADIMIR

She's my favourite fucking niece.
Like my own kid. Why would I get
drunk?

Gregory turns back to the window.

GREGORY

Why does *anyone* get drunk?

He looks to Vladimir as if it's a real question.

VLADIMIR

Not everyone is made out of stone
like you.

GREGORY

I told the guy to wait in the
kitchen. Go down and tell him to
keep the clothes on but stay out of
the way.

Vladimir takes a moment.

VLADIMIR

Just fucking trust me for once, OK?

Gregory looks at his brother. Then smiles.

A pause.

GREGORY

The conditions necessary for trust
simply do not exist.

Vladimir has no clue WTF Gregory is talking about.

He half laughs...

VLADIMIR

Meaning?

GREGORY

Just go and make the kids laugh.

Vladimir hesitates. Then leaves. After he has gone, Gregory
begins to load bullets into his revolver.

Vladimir in full swing as the clown. Children laughing and
music being played. The kids are loving it and so is
Vladimir. This feels like his true element. He's good.

85 INT. NOTTING HILL HOME, KITCHEN - DAY

85

We join the reserve clown as he smokes a cigarette and sips vodka that he has been given in the empty kitchen. Beyond the kitchen we can hear children laughing and music being played for musical chairs. The clown is on his cell phone....

CLOWN (INTO PHONE)
I've been told to just sit and
wait. Fucking weird gig man...

Then Vladimir enters, and grabs a cake with unlit candles.

VLADIMIR
Party's almost over mate. You can
go.

*

CLOWN
Your brother told me to wait. He
paid me double to wait until he
tells me to go.

The clown gestures at the vodka.

CLOWN (CONT'D)
Told me to help myself.

Vladimir takes a moment, now becoming uneasy. Then he leaves with the cake.

86 INT. NOTTING HILL HOME, DRAWING ROOM - DAY

86

The entertainment's over. The kids all begin to head for a table where lots of plastic party bags are waiting, filled with trinkets and slices of cake.

87 INT. NOTTING HILL HOME, UPSTAIRS ROOM - DAY

87

We join Gregory as he peers down at the parents departing with goody bags. Cars pull away. Then, over their heads, he sees a long black Bentley pulling up.

The driver of the Bentley gets out and opens the rear door. A wiry Turkish man with a thick moustache gets out and buttons his camel hair coat. A few moments later an empty hearse pulls up.

Gregory reaches for his revolver and slips it into his jacket. He gets to his feet. At that moment Vladimir bursts in, his wig in his hand.

VLADIMIR

Fucking Turks outside, right now,
serious as hell. No fucking joke.
Fucking Turks in a fucking hearse
and kids everywhere.

Gregory takes Vladimir gently by the shoulders. He comes
close and speaks softly.

GREGORY

It's not just any Turks Vova. It's
Tashkar who is outside. The father
of the girl you killed. He said he
wanted to meet so I invited him
here...

*

VLADIMIR

You fucking what?

GREGORY

It is possible that he knows. Vova,
it is possible he knows you killed
his daughter. It is best to find
out what he knows and the best
place to meet is here..

Vladimir looks terrified. He looks out of the window and
sees four Turkish men now waiting for the last car to depart.

VLADIMIR

I'm going to run.

Gregory holds him tight.

GREGORY

No. No. That would be an admission.

Gregory takes him and gives him a huge hug (which for the
first time we see is filled with sincere feeling). He pulls
back. There is a heavy knock on the door downstairs and the
bell rings three times.

VLADIMIR

Fuck!!!! I'm sure he knows. Why
would they be her if he didn't?

*

*

*

Vladimir suddenly have trouble breathing.

*

GREGORY

That's right Vova remember to
breathe... In and out.. Slowly..

*

*

*

Gregory lets go of his brother.

*

GREGORY (CONT'D)
No matter what happens, you do
exactly what I tell you to do.

Vladimir is almost weeping, still breathing hard...

*

VLADIMIR
OK, give me a fucking gun...

GREGORY
No, no, just do what I tell you to
do. If I say the words ('goodbye
my brother') you run into the
kitchen and go down to the cellar.

He touches Vladimir's face...

GREGORY (CONT'D)
I'm trusting you on this one.
Remember trust?

*

*

Vladimir nods.

*

GREGORY (CONT'D)
If I say 'goodbye brother' you run.

*

Vladimir blinks away tears. At that moment they hear the door
being kicked open downstairs.

VLADIMIR
Shhhhit.

GREGORY
It's OK. It's OK. They mean
business, come on....

VLADIMIR
I got to change these fucking
clothes....

A Turkish voice...

VOICE (OOV)
Hey! Someone here or we wreck!

VLADIMIR
Let's go.

Gregory ushers Vladimir to the door.

VLADIMIR (SOFTLY) (CONT'D)
I have to fucking change.

GREGORY

No.

Vladimir hesitates.

88 INT. NOTTING HILL HOME, DRAWING ROOM - DAY

88

We see the shapes of four men with backs turned among the debris of the children's party. Gregory, then Vladimir enter. Vladimir is holding his wig and red nose.

TASHKAR, the wiry leader of the men is first to turn and sees Vladimir as they enter the room.

GREGORY

I will forgive the broken door
because I know you are grieving.

He gestures around at the room trashed by the children's party.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

I arranged our meeting for this
time so we would be reminded that
we all love our children. And
sometimes our children create
chaos.

All four men are staring murder at Vladimir, in his clown costume. His appearance freezes the air.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

My brother was the clown. He can be
a funny guy. Kids like him. Take a
seat.

The Turkish men glare at Vladimir as they grab chairs still in line for musical chairs. As they take their seats, one of the Turkish men accidentally bursts a balloon by stepping on it. Everyone reacts to the bang.

They sit down in a circle. Gregory ushers Vladimir to a seat nearest the kitchen door.

TASHKAR

This is the last place my daughter
was seen alive.

Gregory nods.

GREGORY

You have our deep sympathy.

A pause.

GREGORY (CONT'D)
Because your daughter shamed you.

Tashkar stares at Gregory and Gregory meets his stare.

TASHKAR
No one in New York has seen her.

Vladimir is pouring himself a glass of wine and babbles nervously...

VLADIMIR
Yeah, well, New York... it's a big
fucking City. I went there once.
No one scared me except the cops on
horses. I'm scared of horses.

*

Tashkar's murderous look is almost uncontainable as he glares Vladimir into silence. Gregory studies the look and begins to sense the news is bad. Tashkar turns back to Gregory.

TASHKAR
So I came back to London and had
meetings.

A pause.

TASHKAR (CONT'D)
In Chinatown.

Vladimir swallows down his wine like it is a lump of granite, looking at Gregory over his glass. Then Tashkar reaches into his pocket...

He pulls out three severed fingers, all wearing ornate rings. They are the rings Madam Lau was wearing, the rings that once belonged to Ilkay. The fingers belonged to Madam Lau.

Tashkar stares only at Gregory as he drops Madam Lau's severed fingers onto the tablecloth. Gregory takes a breath. Vladimir waits for Gregory to speak but there is silence.

Vladimir decides to try to bluff it out.

VLADIMIR
Hey, what the fuck. You gone into
the jewelry business? You selling
us some fucking fake rings?

Gregory and Tashkar are staring only at each other, communicating silently.

Tashkar's eyes burn as he finally turns to Vladimir. Vladimir sees the murder in his eyes and looks to Gregory imploringly...

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)

Gricha?

Tashkar looks back to Gregory and speaks softly.

TASHKAR

We both know what happened. We know
your brother killed my daughter.
There is only one road to peace.

*

A long silence. Suddenly two of the Turks pull guns. One points at Vladimir, the other at Gregory. Vladimir almost falls backwards off his chair. Gregory nods once. Vladimir stares in horror.

VLADIMIR

(Gricha, fucking do something).

Gregory's face contorts in grief for just half a second.

TASHKAR

You have no choice. We are going to
take your brother away with us so
that he can face justice.

The revolvers are cocked.

TASHKAR (CONT'D)

Or you both die right now, right
here.

VLADIMIR

Gricha? How the fuck did you let
this happen? You let this happen.
Gricha...

GREGORY

Shut up.

A pause. Gregory looks at the severed fingers on the table.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

I will not let you take my brother
to be tortured and butchered.

TASHKAR

You have only one choice Gregory.
One brother or both.

Gregory looks to be deeply distressed. He looks away. The guns are pointed.

TASHKAR (CONT'D)
Ten seconds. Nine..

GREGORY
Ok. OK. But I will do it. To spare him pain.

Vladimir rises slowly to his feet his mouth gaping...

GREGORY (CONT'D)
I will do it cleanly. Allow me that. He is my brother.

A pause. Tashkar stares at Gregory.

GREGORY (CONT'D)
I have a gun. Allow me to pull it.

Vladimir's legs almost give way.

VLADIMIR
Gricha? (Holy mother of God).....

Gregory pulls his revolver and cocks it. He gets to his feet. He stares at Vladimir.

GREGORY
(Goodbye brother).

Vladimir hesitates. Gregory's eyes flicker for just a moment. At last Vladimir remembers and makes a break for the kitchen, chairs flying. Gregory fires and misses. So do the Turks. The Turks leap to their feet but Gregory is ahead of them and bursts into the kitchen. *

89 INT. NOTTING HILL HOME, KITCHEN - DAY

89

In the kitchen it all happens fast.

The substitute clown is drunk with his head on the table. But the gun shot brings him to his feet. The moment he enters Gregory shoots the clown twice in the face.

Vladimir is close and Gregory pushes him down the cellar steps. Vladimir falls hard down the stone steps into darkness.

When Tashkar enters he sees the substitute clown lying dead, his face blown apart by the two bullets. Gregory has his arm over his face in grief.

Tashkar growls and points the gun again at the dead clown's face and pumps more bullets into his head (making him more unrecognisable).

*

After a moment the smoke clears. Tashkar stares at the body then looks to Gregory, who removes his arm and takes a breath to hold back tears.

GREGORY

It is done. Leave me the fuck alone.

Gregory falls to his knees and hugs the bloody body, blood pooling all around the clown. Gregory pulls back, covered in blood...

GREGORY (CONT'D)

It is done! Go!

Blood is reaching the boots of the four Turks. Tashkar looks down and speaks in Turkish.

TASHKAR

(Justice done. Peace).

The four men leave. As they go Gregory sits back, blood soaked, and he breaths again.

90 EXT. RUSSIAN EMBASSY COMPOUND - DAY

90

A guy in his thirties (MIKHAIL) leaves the building and steps into an unmarked black embassy staff car. He is driven away at speed.

*

91 INT. JAPANESE RESTAURANT, MAYFAIR - DAY

91

It is a busy lunch time and the chefs are working through smoke and flames. Knives and skewers clatter. Through the smoke we see Luda entering in her long mink. She walks by the reception...

*

Luda

It's OK, I'm meeting someone.

*

She scans the room and sees Mikhail from the embassy sitting at a corner table for two. He is with a young man and the two are drinking Saki and laughing. Mikhail stops laughing when he sees Luda approaching.

*

*

*

*

He double takes as if he has seen a ghost.

LUDA (CONT'D) *
Hello Mikhail? Can I just have a *
moment?

MIKHAIL *
I'm busy.

LUDA (brightly) *
Oh. OK. *

Luda turns and walks. *

Mikhail reacts with horror and speaks softly to his date. *

MIKHAIL *
Will you excuse me? *

He dabs his mouth with his napkin and follows fast. *

We see that Luda apparently represents something awful for *
Mikhail. *

92 EXT. JAPANESE RESTAURANT, MAYFAIR - DAY

92

Luda lights a cigarette as she waits in the doorway where a *
uniformed doorman opens the door for guests. Chauffeur driven *
cars are parked. Mikhail emerges. *

MIKHAIL *
My condolences. *

LUDA *
I need you to find someone for me. *

MIKHAIL *
We had a deal. I don't do that *
anymore. Also your father has *
passed. I'm free. *

Luda blows out her smoke, turns and looks at Mikhail. *

LUDA *
Your freedom is cancelled. *

MIKHAIL *
You really have my deepest *
condolences. *

LUDA *
Thank you. You already said that *
Mikhail. *

(MORE)

LUDA (CONT'D)

Did you by chance ever hear about
an investigation on a Government
embassy official in Istanbul?
Apparently this individual was
giving information to the
Americans.

Mikhail reacts with deep, deep foreboding.

MIKHAIL

No..

LUDA

Well..

Luda stares into his eyes. Looks towards the restaurant.

LUDA (CONT'D)

Your boyfriend in there has been
promoted to London since then, so
the fall will be even harder. It
will be the Gulag for him,
Mikhail....

Luda looks at him.

LUDA (CONT'D)

Oh you did know...

Michal

Wait, wait, wait, stop who the fuck
are you to come here and make
threats? Your father is dead. The
Turks will take over soon. You can
tell your brother, Vladimir that
fool of a son, that he can go fuck
himself. And if I were you I would
stay low too.. Very low..

Luda smiles.

LUDA

I'm not here on behalf of Vladimir.
Gregory sends his regards.

MIKHAIL

Gregory is dead.

Luda smiles.

LUDA

You should know better. There is
dead and then there is dead...

Michal fumbles for a cigarette. He lights it and blows smoke away.

MIKHAIL
What do you want?

LUDA
A young boy was taken from
Lomonosov last week. I need to know
where he is.

Luda drops her cigarette.

LUDA (CONT'D)
After this you're free.

SWITCHING TO RUSSIAN

(Small price for a life.. Isn't
it?)

Luda walks out.

93 SCENE DELETED. 93 *

94 INT. HUGE GEORGIAN COUNTRY HOUSE, UPSTAIRS STUDY - DAY 94 *

A Regency chair is smashed against a wall. *

The study is elegantly furnished and decorated but right now
the room is being smashed to pieces by a furious Natasha
Dubinsky. *

She sweeps cups and saucers from a table and hurls books from
a small shelf above her desk. She grabs an angle-poise lamp
and bends it back on itself until it snaps. Her hair is
tangled around her face as she kicks at the debris around her
feet. *

Finally, she stops to take a breath. Behind her through the
window we see the misty fields of her estate. We also notice
that amongst the debris are the torn pages of a newspaper. *

Dubinsky slumps into the chair at the desk. There is a
computer and a keyboard which is dangling on its wire. A
cigarette burns in an ashtray. A wood fire burns in the grate
and wind moans down the chimney. *

There is a knock at the door. The door opens and Hunan
enters, carrying the envelope of X-rays that Gregory gave to
him. *

Hunan hardly reacts when he sees the mess in the room. He takes a breath but from his reaction we infer that this rage may be a relatively regular occurrence.

Dubinsky looks a little contrite. To explain the mess, she gestures at the newspaper and speaks gently...

DUBINSKY
(A good friend of mine. A fearless journalist.)

Hunan glances at the shreds of the newspaper. Dubinsky speaks softly...bitterly.

DUBINSKY (CONT'D)
(They say she 'fell' from a balcony.)

Hunan is efficient and unemotional.

HUNAN
(I know.)

Hunan sits down near to Dubinsky with the envelope in his lap.

HUNAN (CONT'D)
(The BBC called and asked if you might agree to an interview for the World Service.)

Dubinsky sweeps her hair from her face. She stares at the envelope and then begins to tear it open.

HUNAN (CONT'D)
(It would mean a journalist coming here like before.)

She pulls the X-Rays from the envelope. She stares at them. She breaths the air around it.

DUBINSKY
The black Madonna says you can not trust anyone.

Hunan reacts wearily. Dubinsky glances up at Hunan as if she senses something. She repeats...

DUBINSKY (CONT'D)
She says do not trust anyone.

She goes back to studying the X-Rays.

HUNAN

Madame Dubinsky, if you want to
make a statement about Tatiana's
death that is more significant than
a broken chair, then allow the BBC
to send a journalist.

Madame Dubinsky continues to study the X-Ray.

DUBINSKY

She says no.

Hunan reacts. Dubinsky holds the X-Rays up to the light. We
guess from her reaction that she can see straight away the
icon is authentic.

DUBINSKY (CONT'D)

(Offer eighty five.)

She shoves the X-Rays back into the envelope.

DUBINSKY (CONT'D)

(This lady is coming to me for a
reason. She is giving me courage.
Tatiana's death is a phone call to
me from the fourteenth century...)

She offers the X-Ray to Hunan.

DUBINSKY (CONT'D)

(Destroy these and get the car
ready.)

Hunan takes the envelope. Dubinsky walks out the door.

DUBINSKY (CONT'D)

(Now Hunan!)

114 EXT. ART GALLERY - NIGHT

114

Luda comes walking down the street. She's walking fast.

114 INT. ART GALLERY, UPSTAIRS OFFICE - NIGHT

114

Luda enters the office. The room is silent. Gregory sits at
his desk. Luda looks directly at Gregory.

LUDA

Is it true?

GREGORY

Is what true?

LUDA

Did you kill our brother at a
birthday party? While he was a
clown, entertaining kids?

GREGORY

It's a little bit more complicated
than that. But yes.. And no..

LUDA

Well explain..

GREGORY

Tashkar would have taken him with
them and tortured him... I didn't
want that. He did something stupid
that couldn't be undone. It was the
only way.. He is.. dead. Dead. At
least for now.

Luda shakes her head. She understands. Vladimir is alive.

LUDA

Jesus.. This family..

Luda sits in exasperation.

LUDA (CONT'D)

Anyway, it doesn't matter..I don't
need to know. He's alive.

She stands getting ready to leave. And almost as an
afterthought she adds

LUDA (CONT'D)

Remember Mikhail from the embassy?

GREGORY

Yes?

LUDA

I met with him earlier. He's
scared.. He will help find Sasha
for us..

GREGORY

You don't have to get this involved
Luda.

LUDA

You're very welcome Grisha.

Gregory looks after Luda as she leaves. He almost smiles.

96 INT. NOTTING HILL HOME, UPSTAIRS STORE ROOM - EVENING 96 *

Gregory sits at a desk, staring out of the window. He has a digital radio beside the briefcase and it is playing the BBC World service. We hear Dubinsky being interviewed. *

INTERVIEWER (FROM RADIO)
Mrs Dubinsky, you have already gone on record saying that the death of Tatiana Petrova was state sponsored murder. What evidence do you have?

Gregory sits in half darkness, staring out at the street below.

97 INT. BBC WORLD SERVICE STUDIO - EVENING 97 *

The studio is cramped and functional. Natasha is being interviewed by a woman in her thirties (INTERVIEWER). Hunan and a body guard are at the air lock door. Hunan leaves the room. Dubinsky notices. *

INT. BBC WORLD SERVICE STUDIO, HALLWAY - EVENING *

Hunan walks down the hallway, picks up his phone. Makes a call. *

INT. GREGORY'S OFFICE - MEANWHILE *

(During this we hear Dubinsky's interview). *

Gregory's phone rings. He picks it up. *

GREGORY *

We had a deal. You broke it. *

(On the radio) *

DUBINSKY (FROM RADIO) *

In Russia there is never any evidence. *

HUNAN *

I didn't know. I promise. I tried to call as soon as I found out. She just decided to leave out of nowhere. I can still make it happen. *

GREGORY
Are you alone now?

HUNAN
Yes.

(On the radio)

DUBINSKY
*And if there were, who would use
it? There is only circumstance.*

GREGORY
Where?

HUNAN
At the BBC. In the fucking hallway.

GREGORY
Did she see you leave the studio?

HUNAN
What? No. Maybe. Why?

GREGORY
Because she's not dumb Hunan. Go
back in.

INT. BBC WORLD SERVICE STUDIO - EVENING

Hunan returns to the studio. Dubinsky is still being
interviewed.

Dubinsky's voice breaks and her feelings break through...

Dubinsky (CONT'D FROM RADIO)
There is only the hand in the
shadow. Or just the shadow.

A pause. The interviewer steps in...

Interviewer
You made your own fortune during
the break up of the Soviet Union.
Some would say you made it by
betraying your country.

Dubinsky sparks...

DUBINSKY
My country? Who knows my country?
Those now in charge have savaged
it. Have fu...

She stops herself and sweeps back her hair. She returns to the question...

DUBINSKY (CONT'D)

I was a research scientist. I developed a piece of technology and chose to sell it to the highest bidder. At the time the word all around was capitalism. The state sold off core industries at knock down prices to a favoured few... and those few have robbed my country.

INTERVIEWER

You have arrived here with a great deal of security. You obviously believe that you yourself are a target?

Dubinsky says nothing. The silence throbs on the air waves. Hunan checks his watch.

98

INT. NOTTING HILL, ATTIC ROOM - EVENING

98

Gregory has take the icon from the case and peers at it as Dubinsky answers and Gregory listens...

DUBINSKY (CONT'D FROM RADIO)

...Yes. I believe I am a a target.
Because I speak out for justice.
For democracy. For change.

As Gregory stares at the icon his reaction is puzzling. The words appear to have resonance for him.

INTERVIEWER

Mrs Dubinsky thank you very much
for taking the time to...

She interrupts...

DUBINSKY

And may I also say.

She switches to Russian,

DUBINSKY (CONT'D)

(Things will only change when the dark Mother of Russia is liberated and placed in the hands of the liberators. I hope those liberators are listening.)

Gregory reacts. On air there is puzzled silence. The dark mother icon is in his hand.

INTERVIEWER

Thank you. Natasha Dubinsky who....

Gregory turns off the radio.

99 EXT. BBC BROADCASTING HOUSE - EVENING 99

The curved 1920's facade has lights burning, though it is late. Outside, near to the main entrance, three black Mercedes cars are parked. Around them stand six bodyguards in dark suits.

The bodyguards scan the empty streets until a radio crackles and they stiffen in readiness. The double doors of Broadcasting House open and Hunan emerges, looking left and right. Then Dubinsky appears, flanked by two more bodyguards, as she is hurried across the pavement into one of the waiting Mercedes.

Dubinsky ducks into the car and the other bodyguards jump into the vehicles in front and behind. Hunan follows Dubinsky into the middle car and the cavalcade pulls away into the night.

100 SCENE DELETED 100 *

101 EXT. DOCTOR SHERENOVSKY'S HARLEY STREET CLINIC - NIGHT 101

Gregory walks down the street with his briefcase in his hand. He approaches the railings outside the clinic then trots down the steps to the front door. At the front door he presses the buzzer. After a moment, Doctor Sherenovsky himself opens the door. He looks deeply anxious and ushers Gregory inside quickly.

102 INT. DOCTOR SHERENOVSKY'S CLINIC, CORRIDOR - NIGHT 102

The doctor hurries down a half-lit corridor with Gregory behind him. Sherenovsky has reached a locked door. He takes out two keys and unlocks the door. He pushes it open onto a half-lit room.

103 INT. DOCTOR SHERNOVSKY'S CLINIC, PRIVATE ROOM - NIGHT 103

Gregory enters the room which is lit only by street lights from the gloom outside.

We now see Vladimir sitting on the bed. *

He looks a little thinner and is unshaven, wearing a neck brace.

VLADIMIR

You nearly broke my fucking neck. *

Gregory pulls a quarter bottle of vodka from his pocket.

GREGORY

Let's drink to resurrection. *

Gregory unscrews the top on the bottle.

VLADIMIR

I thought you were going to do it.
I heard your voice in my head
saying you'd be better off without
me.

GREGORY

I never said that. You said that.

VLADIMIR

I said it and you said 'yes'. In
that fucking voice. Like God.

Gregory puts the vodka bottle gently to Vladimir's lips.

GREGORY

Just drink Vova. You need to
remember less. *

Vladimir takes a sip. The burn makes him cough.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

Now you are dead like I was. *

Gregory puts the bottle to Vladimir's lips again. It is a tender gesture, like a nurse offering water, even though the liquid is vodka.

At last Vladimir reaches out to touch Gregory's hand they hold hands for a moment, reassuring, then Gregory reaches into his pocket. He produces an envelope which he drops onto Vladimir's lap. Vladimir tears the envelope open. Inside he finds a Russian passport. As Vladimir opens it...

VLADIMIR

Dimitri..? *

GREGORY (CONT'D SOFTLY)
You will have to move away from
London for a while.

*

Vladimir is overwhelmed as Gregory continues...

Gregory (CONT'D)
There are people I trust in New
York. Perhaps Dimitri Kalkovich can
start again.

Vladimir hides his emotion by studying the passport. Finally
he looks up.

VLADIMIR
New York is a long way.

GREGORY
Not so far.

VLADIMIR
It's cold.

GREGORY
Not so cold when your brother comes
to visit you.

*

Gregory holds his hand, tenderly. Vladimir winces.

VLADIMIR
When do I get out of here?

Gregory pulls on his coat.

GREGORY
Soon. No one knows you're alive.
Not even family.

*

He buttons his coat.

GREGORY (CONT'D)
You stay here until after your
funeral.

Vladimir sits up and grins...

VLADIMIR
When is my funeral?

*

GREGORY
Tomorrow.

VLADIMIR

So you're going to burn that poor
fucking clown.

GREGORY

I am.

Gregory walks to the door...

VLADIMIR

Grisha. Can I please come? I would
like to see who my real friends
are.

Gregory looks stonily at Vladimir.

GREGORY

(No matter what. You stay here ok?)

VLADIMIR

Ok. ok. I got it.

Gregory leaves.

104 EXT. DORMITION CATHEDRAL (RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH) - DAY 104

A black carriage pulled by a black horse with black plumes
trots up to the side entrance of the church. Guests dressed
in black are waiting outside.

There are two Russian Orthodox Priests also standing in the
doorway, with orbs of burning incense that blows fast in the
crisp wind that also blows veils from faces.

Among the mourners we see many of the people who attended the
wake at the art gallery. Luda moves in closer to Gregory.
She can't stop herself from smiling.

GREGORY

What's so funny.

LUDA

Nothing. My condolences.

GREGORY

Likewise..

Luda hands Gregory a small envelope.

LUDA (WHISPERS)

They are keeping Sasha here.

As the carriage approaches a black limousine also approaches from the other direction. It pulls up and a driver gets out and opens the rear door.

GREGORY

Look sad.

*
*

Tashkar gets out.

Tashkar glances across the street at Gregory. Gregory nods. Leon is quietly astonished.

*

LUDA

Fake or not. Inviting our brother's killer to his funeral might look like weakness. Might even look like surrender.

*
*
*
*
*

Luda looks at the shocked reactions of the other mourners as Tashkar crosses the street. The horse drawn carriage is close.

*

GREGORY

I want everyone to witness Tashkar is here and that London is now at peace...

*
*

The carriage arrives and the black horse halts in the church doorway. It blows steam into the air. We see Tashkar approaching through the refracted glass panels of the horse drawn hearse.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

....And I want everyone to understand that vengeance is the business only of the Lord God Almighty.

Luda hears something in Gregory's voice and reacts. Tashkar appears around the black horse and approaches, flanked by two men. Luda still has time to say softly....

*
*

LUDA

Gregory? You don't believe in the Lord God Almighty.

*

Gregory's face is made of stone as Tashkar arrives and holds out a gloved hand. As the other mourners look on, Gregory takes his hand and they shake. People react with some astonishment.

TASHKAR

For reasons of faith I will not come into your place of worship.

GREGORY

I have prepared a room for you to wait.

TASHKAR

And afterwards we will divide the city.

Gregory gestures to the Priests. One of them comes to escort Tashkar toward a side door into the crypt. Tashkar and his two bodyguards disappear into darkness.

Luda stares at Gregory and reads something in his face.... *

Gregory nods to the Funeral director, who unlocks the carriage and swings open the double glass doors.

105

INT. DORMITION CATHEDRAL, CRYPT - DAY

105

Candles burn and effigies flicker in the light. A single icon stares down from the walls and we study it as a door opens, shedding daylight.

The Priest enters and turns and beckons Tashkar inside.

PRIEST

He has prepared bread and salt and cocaine for our Muslim brothers.

A guard enters first, followed by Tashkar, followed by the second guard. The Church bells begin to ring, just as they did in Russia. As the second guard enters, the priest slams the door. *

Tashkar spins round... Two heavy looking ASSASSINS appear from the shadows. One of the assassins begins to pull out a length of strong silver masking tape... *

The Priest falls to his knees and prays before the icon, mumbling a prayer, keeping his back turned (knowing what was afoot). Inside the church the congregation are singing a Russian dirge. *

106

INT. DORMITION CATHEDRAL (RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH) - DAY 106

We come close to Gregory as the hymn ends. The Priests complete their final prayers and swing their smoking orbs of incense. Then silence as the coffin begins to roll toward the furnace through black velvet curtains...

107 INT. DORMITION CATHEDRAL, CREMATION OVEN - DAY 107

At first we are unsure where we are. We see the walls of a steel box with gas pipe nozzles and jets, lit by the light caused by the approaching coffin.

Then we see the coffin come to rest. Outside the congregation begin to chant as the Priests pray. After a moment a pilot light ignites and a blue/yellow flame burns.

In the pilot light we see Tashkar's face and his body wrapped in silver tape. A second then a third pilot light ignites and we can see clearly the gas jets pointing in to the oven and see that Tashkar has been bound and pushed into the oven and now lies beside the coffin.

Then the hiss of gas. Tashkar regains consciousness and opens his eyes. He sees the coffin beside him and realizes. He lets out a hoarse, splintered yell.

Then the gas jets ignite all at once and the oven becomes an inferno.....

108 INT. RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH - DAY 108

As the prayers continue, the congregation wonders whether they can hear a blood curdling scream coming from beyond the black curtains. Some look at each other, one or two cross themselves in fear. Gregory stares ahead. Luda whispers... *

LUDA *

So, the City will not be divided
after all.. *

I/E. CAR - CHINATOWN, LONDON - NIGHT *

Leon and Gregory parks the car in Chinatown. They get out of the car and walk toward the Arcade. *

INT. SLOT MACHINE ARCADE, CHINATOWN - NIGHT *

It's a busy night. Gregory and Leon enter the place and walk toward the door marked 'staff only'. Gregory walks on and Leon follows. *

65 INT. SMALL OFFICE BEHIND THE SLOT ARCADE - NIGHT 65 *

Tony the young Chinese guy with dyed blond hair is pouring tea for Madam Lau. Her hand is in bandage. She looks up at Gregory as he enters. Tony looks scared. *

GREGORY

We had an agreement. You didn't
keep it.

Leon takes out a gun with silencer and shoots Madam Lau in
the chest.

Leon looks at Tony. Then looks at Gregory. Gregory nods and
leaves. Two seconds after Leon follows. As he exits the door
we see Tony lying on the floor. Dead.

INT. SLOT MACHINE ARCADE, CHINATOWN - NIGHT

Leon stops in the middle of the arcade. He slowly removes the
silencer from his gun. As soon as he's 100% sure that Gregory
is all the way out of the arcade, Leon raises his arm and
shoots up in the ceiling 3 times.

The before calm, but busy place suddenly changes into a place
of fear and chaos. Everyone wants out! Panic occurs. People
jumps for the street. Slowly Leon walks towards the exit.
From his inside pocket Leon takes out a Molotov cocktail.
Lights it and throws it into the arcade. In a matter of
seconds the place is in flames.

Leon and Gregory walk away from there.

109 EXT. HOLYWELL CEMETERY - NIGHT

109

We find Monty walking quickly between graves, mopping his
brow. We come close to the grave of Theophilus Carter, lit
by moonlight. The teapot is waiting. Monty opens it, picks
out an envelope and hurries away.

110 INT. WADHAM COLLEGE, MONTY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

110

Monty Dark returns to his office with the envelope. He tears
it open and he reads. We see from his face that he is shocked
and puzzled by what he reads.

Suddenly a door to a back office is opened. Luda appears in
the doorway.

MONTY

Holy fuck.

She comes to sit down opposite Monty in the stripes from the
leaded window. She glances at the open envelope, snatches the
message from the envelope and reads it. It is evidently what
she expected. She puts it back on the desk.

LUDA

I have a friend at the Russian
embassy. He gave me an extra piece
of information we weren't
expecting.

Monty glances at the sheet of paper.

LUDA (CONT'D)

He claims you contacted the Russian
Ambassador and told him you knew
who it was who had the icon.

Monty begins to tremble and wipes his brow.

LUDA (CONT'D)

You asked for fifty million dollars
for the name.

Luda glances at the sheet of paper on the desk.

LUDA (CONT'D)

And now you are shocked to read
they have no interest in that name.
Am I wrong?

Monty grabs the note, screws it up and drops it in the bin.

MONTY

Yes. Yes. I am a fool. I am the
hatter after all. So the business
is done. It is nothing. I made a
mistake...

LUDA

You are an intelligent man. You
will draw conclusions from their
reply.

Luda stands and peers at the Mad Hatter lithograph on the
wall.

LUDA (CONT'D)

If they don't want the name of the
man who has the icon it is because
they already know who he is.

Monty suddenly doesn't like Luda.

LUDA (CONT'D)

And if they already know who he is,
then it can only be that he is
working for them.

MONTY

No. No, no. I would never draw that conclusion. I am not given to conclusions. I go on endless speculations. I study art. Please...

LUDA

So now you know. You know the secret. Unfortunately no one alive must know it. Family rule.

Monty shakes and then looks down to Luda who now just like her brother suddenly has the dead pan look of a killer.

MONTY

I am a civilian. Please, just let me...

Luda smiles.

Monty stops talking. As if he notices something in Luda's personality he hasn't seen before. Could it be that this woman is even meaner and tougher than her brother?

Suddenly he jumps up grabs a letter opener from the desk and tries to stab Luda. She ducks out the way and disarms him. The weapon is dropped and kicked out of the way. Now Monty tries to run out of his office, down the hall.

111 INT. WADHAM COLLEGE, HALLWAY - NIGHT

111

Luda immediately jumps over, chases him down the hall and grabs him. They wrestle. Neither of them make a sound. Monty kicks and bites as Luda holds his legs. He kicks her off him and makes it to the bathroom.

112 INT. WADHAM COLLEGE, BATHROOM - NIGHT

112

Monty starts throwing anything he can find at her, she fights him off, he grabs her and starts to throttle her. In his desperate frenzy he is too strong for her. She is starting to pass out. She clammers and reaches for something to stop him. It's getting worse, she's losing her strength. She reaches up, grasping for anything.

From the sink she grabs a hair dryer. They struggle, bottles smash. Monty tightens his grip around her neck, choking her. Luda pulls the hair dryer to the floor and smacks him over the head a couple of times - he starts to loosen his grip. Luda takes advantage, manages to flip him and get her knee on his chest as he yells and grunts and struggles.

With one hand she grabs Monty's balls and squeezes. He yells, open mouthed. Luda pushes the hair dryer into his mouth, switches it on, blasting hot air at full speed.

Monty gulps in agony as the scalding air fills his lungs. His chest expands and his eyes almost burst from his head. Luda turns up the dial, blasting more hot air. Monty is now almost unconscious, desperately trying to take oxygen into his burnt lungs. He tries to make a noise but can't. He stops moving, his eyes stare. Blood trickles from his mouth. Luda stands and leaves the bathroom leaving the dead Mad Hatter on the white marble floor.

I/E. CAR - THE RITZ, LONDON - NIGHT

Leon and Gregory parks the car in front of the Ritz. They get out of the car and walks fast inside.

114 INT. HALLWAY, UPSTAIRS THE RITZ - NIGHT

114

Gregory and Leon comes out of the elevator.

GREGORY
You wait here.

Leon nods.

Gregory continues down the hallway towards the royal suite.

INT. THE ROYAL SUITE - THE RITZ - CONTINUOUS

Gregory enters the suite. The Suite is silent. Gregory walks into the master bedroom finding Luda sitting on the bed. Close on Luda's hands. They are shaking. She is in shock and stammering.

Gregory looks at her. Walks to the bed and kneels down in front of her. He takes her hands.

LUDA
I...something went wrong. He was
trying to double-cross us. He
attacked me and I...

She buries her face in her hands. Gregory holds her.

GREGORY
Hey it's okay.. breathe... remember
to breathe Luda..

They sit there for a while. Finally a gesture of family love and support. She sobs. He calms her.

GREGORY (CONT'D)
You were strong. That's all that matters. You did well.

Gregory picks up his phone. Calls a number.

GREGORY (CONT'D)
Come in here.

Leon enters the bedroom. Gregory lets go of Luda. Gregory looks at Leon.

GREGORY (CONT'D)
You stay here okay. No matter what don't let anyone in.

Luda looks at Gregory. Wipes her tears away.

LUDA
What's going on?

Gregory looks at Luda.

GREGORY
The auction starts in two hours. I have to be there... Leon will look after you..

Luda nods.

LUDA
I'm fine..

Gregory smiles. Looks around the Suite.

GREGORY
You deserve every penny Luda..

Luda smiles.

LUDA
What about Sasha? Was he there?

GREGORY
He was there.. I'm sending Vova to pick him up. They'll travel home through Finland.

LUDA
Is someone meeting them there?

GREGORY

Leon will meet them at the
platform.

Gregory turns and walks out the bedroom.

Suddenly Luda stands and follows.

LUDA

Grisha.

Gregory turns. Luda looks at him. Something about her has
changed.

LUDA (CONT'D)

Send me instead. Sasha knows me. He
knows who I am. He's never met Vova
or Leon..

GREGORY

You've done enough Luda.

LUDA

Please.. I insist.

Pause.

GREGORY

Only if you really want to Luda..
But I'm not the one sending you..
understand? It might be dangerous..

LUDA

I want to. I really want to.

Pause.

Then Gregory nods, speaks without hesitation.

Gregory

You will wait at the platform. Leon
will fill you in on the details.

Luda smiles.

Gregory (CONT'D)

Call me when you get there. Your
flight leaves in two hours. Good
luck Luda.

A pause.

LUDA

Thank you..

Gregory leaves.

*

115 INT. DOCTOR SHERNOVSKY'S CLINIC, PRIVATE ROOM - NIGHT 115 *

Vladimir is asleep. By the bed his clock tells us that it is 4.58 AM. We hear a buzzer being rung and the front door opened down the hall. Vladimir wakes slowly and reacts to a sharp pain in his neck.

Gregory knocks and enters.

GREGORY

You leave in one hour.

Gregory reaches into his pocket for an envelope...

...he hands it to him. Vladimir looks deeply uncertain.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

It's all in there.

Vladimir looks inside.

VLADIMIR

You already gave me a passport.

*

GREGORY

That isn't for you.

Vladimir takes the passport and turns to the identity page. He reacts with puzzlement and looks to Gregory.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

In Russia I had a son. He is in danger. You are going to rescue him.

Vladimir looks back sharply to the photo and stares at it...

VLADIMIR

A son?

GREGORY

Yes. A son. His name is Sasha.

*

*

He looks up to Gregory who checks his watch.

Vladimir looks away and we see he is fighting emotion.

VLADIMIR

You might have told me.

*

*

GREGORY

No one knew.

*
*

VLADMIMIR

And now you need me to save him?

*

GREGORY

Yes Vova. I need you.

*

Vladimir looks back. This would be a joyous moment for Vladimir if it weren't for the suspicion that he is being used. Gregory sees it. He takes the passport and puts it in the envelope then puts it in Vladimir's pocket. Then, (remarkably), he hugs his brother.

Gregory (CONT'D)

You are going to be a hero. Like your grandfather. (Things survive in the blood. Me and you the same.)

He lets Vladimir go....

GREGORY (CONT'D)

That's why I trust you. Only you Vova.

*
*

A pause.

*

GREGORY (CONT'D)

Will you help me?

*
*

Vladimir takes a moment then chooses to believe that Gregory is sincere.

116

INT. SOTHEBY'S AUCTIONEER'S, AUCTION ROOM - DAY

116

The painting 'In Summer' is displayed on the auction gallery easel and a room half filled with the proxies of wealthy bidders are gathered, glued to their cell phones.

Standing near to the door we see Hunan. Across the room from him we find Gregory. The female AUCTIONEER settles for what will be an enormous sale.

AUCTIONEER

Ladies and gentlemen we have the honour of offering this 1874 Renoir painting in oil on canvas called 'In Summer'. Provenance via Bonham and the Renoir family estate.

The sad and perplexed lady stares out at the excited room.

AUCTIONEER (CONT'D)
We have a reserve of fifty million,
so can I begin with fifty million
and one pound. There. And fifty
one...

The bidding is brisk. Hunan participates in the escalation
and Gregory checks his watch.

117 EXT. MOSCOW AIRPORT - DAY 117

We see a blizzard blowing as a jet lands on the snowy tarmac.
Through snow we see the frontage of Moscow airport. Over this
we hear the auctioneer...

AUCTIONEER (OOV)
Fifty five million. Do I hear fifty
six, Fifty six...

118 INT. MOSCOW AIRPORT, PASSPORT CONTROL - DAY 118

An overnight flight from London has just landed and the
passengers are approaching Border Control. In the weary queue
we find Vladimir.

AUCTIONEER (OOV)
...fifty seven, fifty eight, fifty
nine million....

Vladimir arrives at the control desk and hands over his fake
passport. He grins. The Russian Border Patrol officer runs
the passport through his scanning machine. He then gestures
for Vladimir to place his fingers on the finger print
machine, which he does. There is a moment of tension. Then
the Border Officer hands Vladimir his passport back.

AUCTIONEER (OOV) (CONT'D)
Sixty five million. Sixty five,
seventy. Any advance on seventy
million pounds....

Vladimir takes it and walks...

119 INT. SOTHEBY'S AUCTIONEER'S, AUCTION ROOM - DAY 119

Hunan flicks his program gently.

AUCTIONEER

Eighty million pounds. Eighty million pounds I am offered for this Renoir depiction of isolation and sadness on a summer afternoon. Do I hear any advance on eighty million pounds.

There is a gasp in the crowd. The figure is way above expectation. Hunan is impassive.

AUCTIONEER (CONT'D)

Eighty million pounds to bidder twenty four. Thank you.

There is spontaneous applause. Hunan and Gregory both slip away through their respective oak panelled doors.

120

INT. SOTHEBY'S AUCTIONER'S, BACK STAGE - DAY

120

We see the excruciating care with which the painting is taken and covered and sealed, the face of the lady being smothered by tenderness. Gregory and Hunan meet in the shadows at the back of the gallery. They speak softly as the painting is wrapped and boxed.

HUNAN

She confirmed this morning. She wants you there in person when she sets eyes on the icon for the first time.

Gregory nods gently.

HUNAN (CONT'D)

She thinks your meeting is part of a new Russia. She spends too long among the stars.

A pause.

HUNAN (CONT'D)

When you enter the house you will be body searched and blindfolded. The gun will be in the place we agreed.

*
*

Gregory lights a cigarette.

GREGORY

The cigarette case on the table.

*

Gregory blows smoke. Hunan studies him.

HUNAN

You are a very smart man. What
makes you do this?

Gregory answers immediately.

GREGORY

I am a patriot.

*

Hunan nods. The painting is delicately slipped into a crate.

121 EXT. REMOTE SURREY CROSSROADS - DAY 121

A black SUV drives forward into shot.

We are at the same desolate, rural crossroads where Monty
left the envelope of photographs a few days ago. The SUV
pulls up abruptly. The door opens and Gregory gets out.

*

He stands beside his car for a moment and then the red light
of a rifle sight plays on his face and across his dark
glasses.

122 INT. HUGE GEORGIAN COUNTRY HOUSE, CORRIDOR - DAY 122

Gregory is blindfolded, walking quickly down the corridor,
flanked by two bodyguards. The corridor is decorated with oil
paintings.

123 Int. HUGE GEORGIAN COUNTRY HOUSE, BARE ROOM - DAY 123

Gregory is led, still blindfolded, into a large bare room
with no furniture. The heavy drape curtains are drawn but
light filters in through gaps.

*

*

*

Hunan is waiting by a window. He turns as Gregory enters.

*

HUNAN

Let's go.

*

*

124 INT. MOSCOW AIRPORT. ARRIVALS - DAY 124

Vladimir emerges into the arrivals lounge where drivers wait
with cards bearing the names of arriving passengers. We see a
driver in a dark suit holding a card with the name 'DIMITRI
KALKOVICH'.

*

*

*

*

Vladimir walks toward the guy with the card... but walks
straight past him (he has forgotten for a moment that he has
a new name). Vladimir disappears into the crowds...

*

*

*

then he re-appears and greets the guy with the card with a bashful smile (he has remembered).

The guy with the card hands Vladimir a set of car keys and whispers in his ear. Vladimir takes the keys and walks on.

125 INT. MOSCOW AIRPORT. CAR PARK. BLACK MERCEDES - DAY 125

We study the inside of the car for a moment and sees a shoebox on the passenger seat. Then the locks all unlock at once.

A few seconds later Vladimir gets into the car. He opens the shoebox and finds a pistol which he puts into his inside pocket. There is also an envelope which he half opens to reveal two train tickets.

Vladimir puts the tickets and the envelope into his other pocket and fires the engine. He checks his look in the rear-view mirror then reverses away.

126 INT. HUGE GEORGIAN COUNTRY HOUSE, CORRIDOR - DAY 126

Gregory, Hunan and the two bodyguards pass through a set of double doors after Hunan has punched in a key code. They all march through.

They walk down the long corridor through shafts of light from high windows then reach a second double door. Hunan punches in the code and lets a bodyguard open the door.

127 EXT. NOVOSPASSKY MONASTERY, OUTSKIRTS OF MOSCOW - DAY 127

Vladimir pulls up outside the forbidding exterior of the Monastery, which also serves as a religious school. He checks an address on a scrap of paper then lets the address blow away.

He walks up the blank wooden doors and pulls a chain that rings a bell. The Monastery is ancient but the modern city has crept up on it all around. Trucks rumble past.

The wooden doors are pulled open and a Priest puts his head into the gap. Vladimir pulls out a piece of ID.

128 INT. NOVOSPASSKY MONASTERY, CLOISTER - DAY 128

The priest lets him in and Vladimir bows with exaggerated reverence. The Priest departs. Vladimir walks alone down the corridor. He checks a door and ducks down a dark corridor.

129 INT. HUGE GEORGIAN COUNTRY HOUSE, DRAWING ROOM - DAY 129 *

Gregory is ushered into the drawing room. A big fire burns. *

Dubinsky is at the fireplace and turns. Hunan and the *

bodyguards stand close by. Hunan removes Gregory's blindfold. *

Gregory and Dubinsky stare at each other. Their eyes meet in *

what appears to be genuine sympathy. Hunan turns to the other *

bodyguards and orders them in Russian... *

HUNAN *

(Leave us.) *

The other body guards depart and Hunan locks the door. *

Dubinsky approaches Gregory. *

DUBINSKY *

(So this is the thief with honor.) *

Dubinsky stands a few feet away from Gregory. There is a *

battered red trunk by the fire and a cigarette case near to *

the table. Dubinsky nods a gentle greeting. *

DUBINSKY (CONT'D) *

(Open up the human painting and let *

me see the image created by *

angels.) *

Gregory half smiles. Hunan reaches into a cabinet and brings *

out the Renoir which has just been purchased, already *

unpacked. Hunan tenses. Gregory very gently turns the *

painting over and picks apart some woven cloth at the back of *

the painting frame. *

He tears a small hole in the hessian and then removes the *

sacred icon. He handles it with reverence. *

A pause. Dubinsky dares to take the icon and stare at it. *

Hunan waits. He glances at a cigarette box beside the fire. *

Hunan is getting deeply nervous. He gestures at Gregory to *

do the work. Gregory is still staring at Dubinsky. *

GREGORY *

(Madam Dubinsky. I came here to end *

it.) *

Dubinsky turns sharply to him. In one move Gregory grabs the *

cigarette box and takes out a Glock pistol. Dubinsky reacts *

and turns sharply to Hunan. Gregory already has the pistol *

pointed at her head. *

Dubinsky lays the icon down and stares down on it. She *

breaths back tears. *

DUBINSKY

(So she betrayed me too.)

A pause. Gregory cocks the trigger. Hunan hisses...

HUNAN

(Just do it.)

Dubinsky turns and stares into Hunan's eyes with burning fury.

HUNAN (CONT'D)

(Do it.)

Then Gregory lowers the pistol.

GREGORY

(But I find I can't.)

A pause. He glances at the icon.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

(My father died asking that we find a better way.)

HUNAN

(Are you fucking crazy? Shoot....)

GREGORY

(And so it shall be. Your enemy is my enemy....)

(HERE WE SHOULD HAVE A FIGHT SCENE BETWEEN HUNAN AND GREGORY. TO BE WRITTEN)

Hunan can stand it no longer. He pulls a gun and goes to shoot Dubinsky. Gregory takes aim and shoots him dead. There is a pulse of shock in the room. The icon is unblinking. Dubinsky has closed her eyes but opens them.

DUBINSKY

(I appear to be still alive.)

Gregory puts his gun away. The locked door is now being hammered at and the guards are yelling.

DUBINSKY (CONT'D)

(Should I dare to hope that a man like you did this because you believe in what I am doing?)

The door is being kicked hard.

DUBINSKY (CONT'D)
(Will you work with me?)

*
*

A gun is fired to break the lock.

*

DUBINSKY (CONT'D)
(Will you work with me?)

*
*

Finally the secure door flies open. Three body guards burst inside with guns raised. They see that Madam Dubinsky is alive and Hunan is dead. Gregory speaks evenly.

*
*
*

GREGORY
(I will be in touch Madam
Dubinsky.)

*
*
*

130 INT. MOSCOW. INTERIOR MINISTRY - DAY

130

The Interior Minister is on the telephone, being kept on hold, in the same room that he used to brief Gregory. We might afford ourselves one more glimpse of the portrait of Putin above his head. The Minister is put through. He sits up straight and speaks with deep nervousness.

MINISTER
(I'm afraid he betrayed us).

He listens to the response with a dark look before the call is cut. He then quickly picks up the phone again and begins to dial.

131 INT. NOVOSPASSKY MONASTERY SCHOOL, RECEPTION - DAY

131

The RECEPTIONIST is at her station as she hears footsteps coming up stone steps. She prepares. Vladimir is almost out of breath. He heads towards the reception desk.

VLADIMIR
(This place is like a maze).

RECEPTIONIST
(Hello? Are you a parent?)

VLADIMIR
(No).

Vladimir grins. He approaches the desk and reaches into his pocket.

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)
(I'm in a hurry).

He pulls out his pistol and points it. He then produces a small photograph of Sacha.

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)
(Show me where he is.)

132 INT. NOVOSPASSKY MONASTERY SCHOOL. CLASSROOM - DAY 132

In class a girl is reading English from a text book, mangling the words...

RUSSIAN GIRL
'The tall man was wearing a long coat. It was black. 'Good morning' he said...'

Then the door flies open and the terrified receptionist enters, followed by Vladimir, who has a gun drawn. He fires a shot into a far wall.

Vladimir scans the class. From among the ducked heads, Vladimir recognizes Sacha. Vladimir grins.

VLADIMIR
(You and me. We've got to go).

Sacha looks astonished. Vladimir knows there isn't time so strides up to Sacha and grabs his arm.

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)
(I am uncle Vladimir. I will explain).

Sacha looks bewildered but Vladimir has no time to waste.

Vladimir (CONT'D)
(Let's go).

133 INT. NOVOSPASSKY MONASTERY SCHOOL, CORRIDOR - DAY 133

Vladimir is hurrying Sacha down the cloistered corridor.

SACHA
(My dad told me his little brother was always making jokes.)

VLADIMIR
(Yeah, that's me. One big joke.)

SACHA
(Where are we going?)

VLADIMIR
(Finland).

Sacha reacts with astonishment.

SACHA
(Is that a joke?)

VLADIMIR
(No, it's not a joke. Finland is not funny).

SACHA
(I don't have my passport).

Vladimir yanks open the door to the outside world...

VLADIMIR
(No, I have your passport. And forget what I said about being your uncle. You're my little brother. OK? Remember that...)

He steps out into the yard and Sacha hesitates...

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)
(Come on brother).

They both begin to run.

134 EXT. NOVOSPASSKY MONASTERY - OUTSKIRTS OF MOSCOW - DAY 134

Vladimir and Sacha leap the fence and jump into Vladimir's car. He drives away fast. A few moments later three Priests emerge from the school, two of them dialling on cellphones. A few seconds later a black car pulls up at the school gates. Two heavy looking men emerge and we guess they have come for Sacha. They see the Priests outside and react.

135 INT. LENINGRADSKY TRAIN STATION, MOSCOW - DAY 135

The place is busy with travelers, just as it was when Gregory passed through. Vladimir hurries Sacha toward a particular platform. Vladimir is walking fast and Sacha is trotting beside him.

VLADIMIR
(They will send your photo to all the ports and border crossings. We have to be fast.)

SACHA
(Why? What have I done?)

VLADIMIR
(I will explain on the train.)

Vladimir looks up at the departure board.

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)
(We're looking for a train called
the 'Tolstoi'.)

Sacha is still slightly dazed.

SACHA
(What will we do in Helsinki?)

Vladimir keeps walking but turns to Sacha and grins...

VLADIMIR
(Me? Get laid. You? You're going to
meet your aunt. Its a family
reunion)

*
*

136 EXT. REMOTE SURREY CROSSROADS/INT. SUV - DAY

136

Gregory is arriving at his SUV, still parked in the country lane. He has the Renoir, which he places in the back. He gets in, reverses and drives quickly away. As he drives, his cellphone rings. He takes the call as he shifts into 'drive'.

GREGORY
Do what I tell you to do.

He drives away.

137 INT. LENINGRADSKY TRAIN STATION. TICKET BARRIER - DAY

137

A large and plush sleeper train called the 'Tolstoi' is at the buffers and passengers are hauling their luggage aboard. Vladimir and Sacha arrive at the barrier where a uniformed ticket inspector is checking tickets.

Vladimir hands him two tickets and the inspector studies them. He asks in Russian,

INSPECTOR
(You have passports?)

Vladimir hands the inspector his passport. He then hands the inspector Sacha's passport. We glimpse a recent photograph of Sacha.

The inspector looks up at Sacha to check his likeness. Sacha shrinks a little. The inspector hands the passports back. The ticket inspector watches them go with a little curiosity. In the bright light of the platform, we see Vladimir and Sacha boarding the train.

138 INT. NOTTING HILL HOME, DRAWING ROOM - EVENING 138

The house is in half light. Car headlights sweep the scene and we hear a car door being closed. After a moment Gregory enters. He doesn't turn on the lights but pours himself a vodka. Gregory sits down at a table and places his cellphone on the table. We hear a train platform whistle blow.

139 INT. 'TOLSTOI' TRAIN, DINING CAR - NIGHT 139

The interior is smart and elegant and Vladimir and Sacha have first class tickets. They sit at a dining table in silence as a uniformed waiter pours Vladimir some wine. The lights of the suburbs of Moscow glide by.

The waiter turns to Sacha.

WAITER
(Some wine?)

SACHA
(I don't.)

VLADIMIR
(He does.)

The waiter pours Sacha some wine and Vladimir grins at him. After the waiter has gone Vladimir raises his glass and Sacha anxiously raises his glass too.

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)
(To freedom.)

Vladimir swigs the wine. Sacha takes only a small sip of wine. He peers at Vladimir.

140 INT. NOTTING HILL HOME. DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT 140

Gregory is still sitting at the table, alone in his vigil. He is smoking a cigarette. Time has passed. There are many more butts in the ashtray. The bottle of vodka less full.

141 INT. 'TOLSTOI' TRAIN, COMPARTMENT / EXT. TRAIN STATION - 141
NIGHT

In shadows and the flash of passing lights we can just make out Vladimir's sleeping face on the top bunk inside the small sleeper compartment. Sacha beneath him on the bottom bunk. The train begins to brake sharply and the grind of the wheels makes Vladimir's eyes flicker open.

He sits up as the train begins to slow to a halt. He looks a little dishevelled but he wipes his face with his hand and gets off the bed. The space is cramped.

He reaches into his jacket and slips his pistol under the thin mattress.

Outside the window we see the train platform as the train slows down. We glimpse the border crossing between Russia and Finland illuminated in bright white lights in the near distance. Garish advertisements for cheap drinks and tobacco slip by slowly. Train guards, police and Border Patrol stroll around the platform. Vladimir gently wakes Sasha who rouses, bleary eyed.

The train finally stops with a jerk and we hear whistles and voices from the platform. Vladimir takes an envelope in his hand and sits on Sasha's bed. Sasha slowly sits up. Vladimir whispers and begins to empty the envelope into his hand.

VLADIMIR

(It's going to be OK. Remember, you
and me are brothers.)

Vladimir hands Sacha the fake passport.

VLADIMIR (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

(I never had a younger brother
before. I was always the kid. All
the time. It's no fun, you know?)

Sacha glances at his own photo beside a false name and reacts. From the envelope Vladimir pulls out a leaflet advertizing a circus in Helsinki. We glimpse pictures of clowns and elephants...

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)

(I was a clown once. Yeah. Nearly
broke my fucking neck. If they ask
why we're going to Helsinki we say
we're going to see the circus. It's
your Dad's idea so it'll work.
Always say something they don't
expect to distract them.)

We can hear Border Patrol officers boarding the train and knocking doors further down the corridor. Sacha looks scared and whispers. Vladimir hushes him (we are finding that Vladimir is good when he is in charge).

*

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)
(You're going to stay in Finland a while. All the explanations are in the envelope. Your Dad fixed everything. Now, what's your name?)

*

*

Sacha can hardly speak he is so afraid.

SACHA
(Mikhail Kalkovich.)

Vladimir nods and gives him an encouraging smile. There is a knock at the door. Two Russian Border police are in the corridor.

POLICE 1
(Could you step outside?)

Vladimir smiles and urges Sacha outside into the corridor. The police take their passports and begin to examine them. There is a long silence. The officer with Sacha's passport looks up at him and Sacha almost withers.

POLICE 1 (CONT'D)
(You are Mikhail?)

Sacha freezes and looks to Vladimir.

SACHA
(Yes.)

Vladimir reaches into his pocket and produces the leaflet for the Helsinki circus.

VLADIMIR
(Some day he will be a trapeze artist. Look, we're going to Helsinki to see this. He's going to be a circus guy.)

The Border Patrol officers glance at each other.

The second one takes Sacha's passport again and rubs his thumb over the picture.

POLICE 2
(What accent is that? You speak Russian a funny way.)

A heartbeat.

VLADIMIR

(My dad was Greek. I loved my dad.
He raised me).

Then the guard hands the passport back. It seems they are convinced. Vladimir nods firmly, keeping his composure. Sacha is still frozen in terror.

POLICE 1

(Enjoy the circus.)

The police officers turn and step off the train. Sacha is still frozen. Vladimir busies himself putting the passports away. Then he speaks softly...

VLADIMIR

(You did OK. Like your Dad.)

Sacha is still staring out at the platform. He watches as the two police officers stop on the platform and begin to speak to a guy in a brown raincoat who glances up in the direction of the train.

The guy in the brown raincoat boards the train.

142 INT. 'TOLSTOI' TRAIN, COMPARTMENT - DAWN

142

The train is beginning to slowly move on toward a short tunnel which marks the Russian/Finnish border. Vladimir is filled with delight and has his cellphone to his ear. Sacha is still scared. Vladimir gets a reply on his phone and hisses into it...

VLADIMIR

We fucking did it, Gricha, we did it...

*

143 INT. NOTTING HILL HOME, DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

143

Gregory is at the table and has just picked up his phone.

GREGORY

Are you across the border?

He listens to Vladimir's babbling voice for a few moments then interrupts...

GREGORY (CONT'D)

Are you across the border?

144 INT. 'TOLSTOI' TRAIN, COMPARTMENT - DAWN

144

Vladimir is fizzing as he kneels up on the cramped seat and peers out of the window...

VLADIMIR

We're twenty metres from the tunnel...

The train is moving slowly...

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)

Gricha, we fucking did it!
I'm a fucking hero, right?

145 INT. NOTTING HILL HOME, DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

145

Gregory speaks in a hoarse voice.

GREGORY

No Vova, the danger is now. This is where they will do it. Stay close to him.

146 INT. 'TOLSTOI' TRAIN, COMPARTMENT - DAWN

146

The train is just beginning to gather momentum and the tunnel that marks the border is looming. Vladimir has the phone in his hand and Sacha is staring at the door to the compartment. Vladimir looks out of the window and speaks into the phone...

VLADIMIR

Ok the tunnel's here, hold the line...

The train enters the short tunnel and the compartment is in uncertain light. Suddenly there is a gunshot and the lock on the compartment door flies off in splinters. The door is then pulled open. The guy in the brown raincoat is in the corridor with his gun raised. He aims directly at Sacha...

Vladimir drops the phone and flies forwards. He takes the bullet meant for Sacha in his chest but his momentum knocks the assassin off his feet.

Vladimir lands on top of the assassin and using his brutal, animal strength he begins to choke the life out of the him. The assassin fires another bullet into Vladimir and he growls like a bear. He pulls the gun away from the assassin and shoots him once in the head. Blood splatters up the window of the train.

The train emerges into bright daylight on the other side of the tunnel in Finland. Vladimir takes a huge breath and rolls off the body of the assassin. He has two huge bullet wounds in his chest and his life is draining away fast.

He tries to speak but air escapes his lungs through his bullet wounds. He stares up at Sacha for a long time and finally manages to whisper...

VLADIMIR (CONT'D)

Gricha...

The train is gathering speed. It is a bright and beautiful day.

Vladimir dies a hero.

Sacha is staring with horror at the two bodies. He steps back and the door to the compartment slides closed. Sacha almost steps on the cellphone which Vladimir dropped when he leapt to save Sacha's life.

In horror Sacha bends down and picks up the phone. After a long moment...he speaks into it...

SACHA

(Papa? He's dead...)

147 INT. NOTTING HILL HOME, DRAWING ROOM - DAWN

147

Gregory is holding the phone to his ear tightly. He listens to his son's voice for a while. Finally...he speaks calmly...

GREGORY

(When the train stops, get off and walk. Your aunty Luda will be waiting on the platform. Walk fast before they find the bodies. Stay on the phone.)

*
*

Morning light is just beginning to light the room. We stay with Gregory's face for a moment. He struggles to come to terms with the loss of his brother. He fights the emotion until he knows his son is safe.

148 INT. HELSINKI TRAIN STATION - MORNING

148

Luda is waiting on the platform. The train is just pulling into the station.

She waits and the doors begin to open. Sacha stumbles out of a carriage with the phone in his hand.

He begins to walk quickly away from the train. He walks through porters and passengers. Behind him a porter leaps from the train and yells...

PORTER
(There are bodies here! Two bodies!!)

Sacha half turns then is suddenly grabbed...

LUDA
(Sacha...)

149 INT. NOTTING HILL HOME, DRAWING ROOM - DAWN 149

Gregory has the phone to his ear and hears Luda saying the name. He pushes the phone hard and deep to his ear as he listens. We see tears being fought as he hears Luda and Sacha collide.

LUDA (FROM PHONE)
(Sacha, Sacha, Sacha...)

*

Gregory strains to hear.

LUDA (OOV) (CONT'D)
(Where is Vladimir?)

150 EXT./INT. TRAIN STATION PLATFORM - MORNING 150

SACHA
(He is dead.)

Luda reacts as a guard and a policeman board the train fast. Sacha still has the phone. Luda realises quickly that the station will be locked down soon. She grabs the phone from Sacha and speaks fast...

*

LUDA
I have him. We are running.

GREGORY
Don't run. Walk normally Luda.

*

*

Luda slows down, with Sacha holding her arm. The platform seems endless.

*

*

LUDA
Grisha.. Vova didn't make it...

*

*

GREGORY (O.S.)
I know..

*

*

*

As they approach the exit a uniformed cop steps in their way... They look at them. Luda smiles.

*

They let them pass.

*

151 INT. NOTTING HILL HOME, DRAWING ROOM - MORNING 151

Gregory sits in his chair. Listening to his phone.

*

The silence is almost unbearable.

*

152 INT. PARKED CAR / EXT. HELSINKI STATION - MORNING 152

Luda and Sacha jump into a hired car that Luda left waiting. She is still on her cell. She fights tears. She starts the car and drives off.

*

*

*

LUDA

I have him. We made it. We made it
Gregory.

*

*

A pause as they share the silence. Luda looks at Sasha and begins to laugh and cry. She speaks into the phone.

*

*

153 INT. NOTTING HILL HOME, DRAWING ROOM - MORNING 153

Gregory hears and we see he has swallowed all emotion. He speaks softly.

GREGORY

Thank you Luda.

*

A pause. He cuts the call. As the birds sing we are left with Gregory sitting alone, staring ahead. Then he picks up the phone and begins to dial.

154 INT. MOSCOW. GOVERNMENT STAFF CAR - MORNING 154

The Interior Minister is being driven through the streets of Moscow in a Government car. His cellphone rings. He checks the number and looks puzzled. He takes the call...

155 INT. NOTTING HILL HOME, KITCHEN - MORNING 155

Gregory is on his cellphone, staring ahead.

GREGORY

I didn't kill Dubinsky because it
would have been a mistake.

Gregory peeks between net curtains at the grey London day...

GREGORY (CONT'D)

She is no threat to you. She is
more use to you alive than dead.

He goes to the coffee machine and pours himself a cup...

GREGORY (CONT'D)

She has contacts with every
dissident in the world. Numbers,
names and addresses. She has asked
me to work with her. She trusts me.
I will say yes.

Gregory talks on as if over-riding interruption.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

The Turks and the Chinese have been
dealt with, so the Serbs will fall
in behind. I am in control of this
city. Just like my father was.

*
*
*
*

Gregory drops sugar lumps into his coffee with a steady hand.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

I want to offer you a deal,
Minister.

Gregory sips his coffee.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

Tell the Fisherman I will report on
Dubinsky and your other enemies. I
will make London safe for our
friends.

A pause.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

But I must be allowed to stay here.
I must remain here as King.

We may believe Gregory's desire for power has consumed him.
His empire will grow. We study his soldier face. He cuts the
call.

THE END