

"THE HIT LIST"

by

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FADE IN:

INT - SWANK BAR - DAY

MAXWELL JONES, a political analyst sits in a bar with his friend, LINTON HAYWOODE, watching his televised interview on Channel 4.

The two men drink and laugh as they watch the interview. Linton, a former Naval Officer, watches the interview and casually watches the critical reaction of some of the people in the bar.

A FEMALE BARTENDER crosses to refill Max's and Linton's cocktail glasses. She turns to look up at the television then turns to refill Max's glass. As she fills his glass she glances up at Max and recognizes him from the TV.

Female Bartender reaches to fill Linton's glass. She glances up at Linton.

Linton smiles at the Bartender. Waitress returns smile and crosses to the edge of the bar on her right. Linton's eyes follow the Bartender as she crosses to the edge of bar.

Max sits looking up at the TV, while Linton eye flirts with the Female Bartender

MAX

So what do you think?

LINTON

Oh...nice man, real nice.

Max turns to Linton and follows Linton's P.O.V to the Female Bartender at the edge of the bar chewing on a drink stir. The Female Bartender smiles at them.

Max pokes Linton. Linton jumps.

LINTON

Huh?

MAX

The interview?

Linton looks up at the TV.

LINTON

Oh yeah.

MAX

So what do you think?

LINTON

What do I think?

Linton reaches for his cocktail.

LINTON

I think you need a haircut.

Linton drinks from his glass. Max laughs.

MAX

No, man, seriously. What do you think?

LINTON

Max, you want my honest opinion?

Linton puts down his glass.

MAX

Yes, I want your honest opinion.

Linton looks around the bar at the critical expressions of some of the people. People mutter comments as they stare at Max seated at the bar.

LINTON

Ok. I think you need to tone it down a little.

MAX

Tone it down? Why?

LINTON

Because, Max, it sounds like you're soap boxing.

MAX

Soap boxing? Linton-

Linton leans closer to Max.

LINTON

And you know you're pissing a lot of people off with these interviews.

Critical bar goers mutter incoherent criticisms. Max goes into character.

MAX

But that's the point, my brother!

Max and Linton share a laugh. Max reaches for his glass and holds it casually triumphant.

LINTON

Alright, jerk, shuck it up!

Linton looks around behind them. He takes a drink and slowly savors it.

LINTON

Speaking of pissed off people, when was the last time you spoke to Julie?

Max slowly returns his glass to the bar next to his mobile device. He contemplates before reaching for his mobile device. On the wallpaper/desktop of the mobile device is the picture of JULIE VASQUEZ.

Max taps the mobile screen and a pictures folder springs open on the mobile desktop. Max taps another folder and several pics of Julie open on the mobile desktop.

The first picture is of Max and Julie snuggling lovingly in a park.

The second photo is of Julie dressed in her karate uniform holding her trophy.

MAX (VO/OS)

It's been months.

The third photo is of Julie dressed in an elegant black dress playfully strangling Max, while Max comically pokes out his tongue and crosses his eyes.

Max looks down at the mobile device. He stares at the picture of Julie in the elegant black dress.

Linton sips his cocktail and Max continues to stare at the picture on the mobile device.

LINTON

Have you tried calling her for a change?

MAX

Of course I've tried. (beat) My calls go straight into her voice mail.

LINTON

You think she's seeing someone?

MAX

I don't know...

Max continues to stare at the mobile device. He then carefully places it on the bar counter.

MAX

I try not to think about it.

Linton looks down at his watch then finishes his cocktail. Linton rises from his bar stool.

LINTON

Well, bro, I gotta go.

MAX

Go? Dude, you just got here.

Linton beckons the Female Bartender. Linton reaches into the breast pocket of his suit jacket and pulls out a \$100.00 bill. He places it on the bar next to Max.

LINTON

I know. But I have to meet an old military buddy of mine.

MAX

Oh yeah? About what?

LINTON

Max, you know how this works. If I told you, then I'd have to kill you.

Linton looks around the bar. He looks towards the exit.

MAX (VO/OS)

Alright. Never mind.

A MAN in a suit wearing sunglasses, and carrying a briefcase slowly walks past the exit. The man reaches for a pack of cigarettes in an interior jacket. A holstered pistol rests inside his jacket.

The Man looks at Linton and slowly nods twice.

Linton nods back at the Man. Linton pats Max on the shoulder and crosses behind Max toward the exit.

MAX

Call me later.

LINTON

I will, bro.

Linton heads towards exit where Man is standing outside.

LINTON (VO/OS)
What are you up to this week?

MAX
Promoting the new book.

Linton turns at the exit.

LINTON
If I'm free, I'll swing by your place.

MAX
Ok. Sounds cool. Just call.

LINTON
I will.

Linton turns to exit, then suddenly turns to speak to Max.

LINTON
(smiling)
And Max? Stay out of trouble.

Max raises his cocktail glass and smiles.

MAX
Yes, sir!

Linton exits the bar. The Man walks away, Linton scans the area then follows the Man.

Max returns to watching the TV. Max's mobile phone suddenly rings. Max looks down at the phone and the number registers as "unavailable." Max picks up the phone and answers the call.

MAX
Hello?

A fast busy signal rings loudly through the mobile device receiver.

MAX
Hello?!

Max shakes his head, places the cellphone on the bar, and returns his attention to the interview.

INT - BOSS'S OFFICE - DAY

BOSS, a Government Secret Agency operative sits in his darkened office smoking a cigarette and watching the interview on channel 4.

Boss extinguishes his cigarette in an ashtray on his desk, and presses a 'fast dial' button and the speaker phone button on his land line desk phone.

MERCENARY, a black ops mercenary, answers the call.

MERCENARY (VO)

Yes.

BOSS

Did I catch you at a bad time?

MERCENARY (VO)

Not at all.

INT - MERCENARY'S ROOM - DAY

MERCENARY sits in another room drinking a cocktail and watching the Channel 4 interview.

MERCENARY

I was just watching tv. There's an interview on channel 4 that I think you'd just love.

MERCENARY takes a gulp from his cocktail.

BOSS (VO)

What do you think about this interview?

MERCENARY

What do I think? I think our friend needs a haircut.

MERCENARY swirls his drink with his right hand.

INT - BOSS'S OFFICE - DAY

BOSS

So we're clear on the matter?

MERCENARY (VO)

Crystal.

Boss reaches for another cigarette, lights it, and takes a drag.

BOSS

Same terms as usual- half now and the rest when I read about our friend in the obituaries.

Boss reaches for the deskphone and disconnects the call. He rears back in his chair and exhales a plume of smoke.

INT - MERCENARY'S ROOM - DAY

Mercenary looks at his cellphone and speed dials one of his Field Operatives. The call connects and Mercenary speaks into his cellphone.

MERCENARY

We just got the green light.

Mercenary reaches for a bottle of scotch and uncorks it.

MERCENARY

Do you know if he'll be alone?

Mercenary pours scotch into his glass.

MERCENARY

And there's no girlfriend to worry about?

Mercenary swirls the glass.

MERCENARY

Well, if he has company, just handle it. Make it look like a lovers quarrel homicide-suicide.

Mercenary disconnects the call and sips his cocktail.

EXT - KITCHEN WINDOW - DAY

Max stands at the kitchen sink rinsing dishes. He occasionally looks out the window to the sound of birds.

INT - KITCHEN - DAY

Max looks out the window while rinsing a dish. The kitchen phone rings on the wall behind Max. Max dries his hands and crosses to the phone.

MAX

Hello?

The sound of silence prompts Max to speak again.

MAX

Hello?

JULIE (VO)

Max?

MAX

Julie?! Oh my God. I'm glad you called.
Do you have any idea how worried I've
been about you? Where've you been?

JULIE (VO)

Trying desperately to forget about
you...and about us.

MAX

I see.

JULIE (VO)

And then I get this call from a friend
who tells me you're on TV, and then all
of these emotions start rushing through
me-

MAX

Julie, I don't know what happened to
us. Please believe me. I never meant to
hurt you.

JULIE (VO)

I know Max...but you did.

Max exhales defeatedly.

JULIE (VO)

Listen...I'm in the neighborhood. Do
you mind If I come over so we can talk?

MAX

I would love to see you. Come over so
we can fix this. Please.

JULIE (VO)

Ok...I'll see you soon.

MAX

Ok. Julie, I-

Julie disconnects call before Max can finish his sentence.
Max stands at the wall with the phone in his hand before he
returns the phone to its cradle.

EXT - CAR - DAY

A car pulls up and stops outside of Max's house. The
diegetic sound of the car turning off is audible. The non-
diegetic sound of tense, ominous music is audible.

THE ASSASSIN dressed in black fatigues, black military boots, and a black long sleeve shirt steps out of a car from the driver's side, and carefully closes the door.

The diegetic sound of the car door being quietly shut is audible. The non-diegetic sound of tense, ominous music is still audible.

Assassin walks towards Max's house. The figure suddenly lowers a 'door unlocking gun' to their side, and rests the weapon against their right leg.

The non-diegetic sound of tense, ominous music builds as the figure gets closer to the house.

INT - KITCHEN - DAY

Max drains the sink, dries his hands, and crosses to the trash can. He pulls the loaded trash bag out, and ties it closed.

The knob on the back door leading to the kitchen turns.

Non-diegetic sound of tense, ominous music is audible.

Max crosses to the back door leading to the kitchen. Max jerks the door and surprises the ski-masked Assassin as the Assassin attempts to pick the lock.

The startled Assassin looks up at Max.

MAX

What the fu-

The Assassin drops the lock-picker and whips out a pistol with a silencer attached to the barrel.

Max hurls the bag of trash out the door at the Assassin.

The trash crashes into the Assassin and knocks the Assassin backwards.

Max slams the back door shut, crouches down, and locks the door.

Splinters of wood eject from the door as the Assassin fires muffled shots into the wooden back door.

The diegetic sound of muffled gunfire, followed by the sound of bullets splintering wood is audible.

Max scurries away from the door to the sink area, and looks up at the phone on the kitchen wall.

The knob on the kitchen door turns. The diegetic sound of creaking metal is audible.

Max turns to the sound of the knob turning.

MAX

Shit!

Max suddenly scurries to the phone on the wall.

The Assassin suddenly stands outside the window and shatters the window with bullets.

The sound of glass shattering is audible.

Bullets shatter the phone on the wall as Max reaches up to the phone. The sound of bullets shattering the phone is audible.

Shards of metal and plastic shower down on Max.

MAX

Fuck!

Max scurries out of the kitchen.

INT — ROOM — DAY

Max scurries into his room and shuts the door with his foot. He reaches for his mobile phone on his desk and taps 9-1-1.

The sound of a fast busy signal rings loudly from the phone.

MAX

Hello?! Hello?! Damn!

Max throws the phone down and reaches for the landline phone. He picks up the phone and presses 9-1-1 on the phone pad. He listens for the dial tone and hears none. Max throws the phone down and turns toward his room door.

INT — KITCHEN — DAY

The back door creaks open and the Assassin creeps into the house with pistol resting lowered. Assassin surveys the kitchen and crosses to the bullet-riddled wall phone.

Assassin kneels to the floor and examines the drop of Max's blood.

INT — OUTSIDE ROOM — DAY

Assassin crosses to the door outside of Max's room and slowly turns the knob. Assassin raises the pistol, kicks the door open, and fires blindly into the room.

The sound of muffled gunfire is audible.

INT — ROOM — DAY

Assassin enters the room and scans the room looking for Max. Assassin turns toward an open window in the corner of the room.

Assassin crosses to Max's desk, picks up a trifold frame, and methodically taps on a picture of Julie.

Max slowly rises from a darkened corner of the room with an axe handle, and brings it down on Assassin's right hand. The wrist breaks from the blow, and Assassin drops the pistol.

Assassin stifles a excruciating grunt as the wrist bone breaks.

The sound of bone breaking is audible, followed by the sound of the pistol falling to the floor.

Assassin pivots quickly and strikes Max in the abdomen with a back kick.

Max flies backward and falls to the floor.

Assassin turns and charges Max.

Max whacks Assassin across the knee with the axe handle. Assassin falls to a kneeling position inches away from Max, suddenly pulls a knife from a hidden sheath, and lunges toward Max.

Max swings the axe handle and knocks the knife upward. The knife plunges into Assassin's neck. Blood spews from Assassin's mouth and splatters Max's cheek.

Assassin falls face down to the floor, gurgles incoherently, and rolls over to face Max. Assassin removes the blood-stained blade and drops it on the floor.

The sound of a heavy metal blade falling to the floor is audible.

Max uses the axe handle to pull the blade closer to him and away from the Assassin.

As Assassin attempts to speak, blood spews and spatters.

ASSASSIN
(gurgling)

Max...

Max leans cautiously closer and listens to Assassin.

ASSASSIN
(gurgling)

help me...

Max crosses to the fallen intruder and pokes Assassin in the neck with the axe handle.

MAX
How do you know my name? Who the fuck
are you?

Assassin gasps for air and spews blood.

ASSASSIN
(gurgling)

Please...help...

Max kneels near Assassin and removes the bloody ski mask. As Max removes the mask he stares down, incomprehensibly, at Julie's blood-stained face.

MAX
What?! Oh no...

Max leans closer to Julie.

MAX
Julie?!

Max places his hand under Julie's head.

MAX
We need to get you to a hospital.
You're loosing a lot of blood, baby!

Max tries to lift Julie to a sitting position.

JULIE
Don't...don't. It's too late.

MAX
Julie, stay with me, ok?

Julie spews more blood from her mouth.

MAX

You're going to be fine as soon as we
get you to a hospital. It's not too
late.

Julie's eyelids close slowly, then re-open as she tries to
maintain consciousness.

MAX

Julies, stay with me. Stay with me.

Max places Julie's head in his lap. Julie smiles.

MAX

Why?

JULIE

I was doing my job.

MAX

Your job? What-

Julie places a blood-stained finger on Max's face.

JULIE

I was hired to keep tabs on you.
Initially, it was only intel...but then...

Julie gasps for air. Tears stream down her bloodied face.

JULIE

You became a target.

MAX

Julie, you're in shock-

JULIE

I left because you were scheduled to
vanish 12 months ago, but...but I
couldn't do it...and then I found this.

Julie hands Max a little black book. Max winces.

JULIE

More than half of the women in your
book, your little black book, are
active field operatives.

Max stares.

MAX

Julie...what are you saying? That I've
been sleeping with fucking agents?

Julie nods and coughs blood.

JULIE

Yes...the agent that you slept with...while we were together filed a detailed report...and I found it.

MAX

Julie, I was hurting. I was hurting and feeling reckless. I always loved you-

Julie gasps for air increases.

JULIE

You betrayed me...I betrayed you.

Julie gasps for air.

JULIE

The circle is closed...

Julie stops breathing and dies in Max's lap.

MAX

Julie? Julie?!

Max places his fingers on Julie's blood-soaked neck and checks for a pulse.

MAX

Julie...oh no...

Max embraces Julie's dead body, rocks back and forth, and cries aloud.

MAX

Julie...

FADE OUT

FADE IN

Mercenary sits on the patio at a café eating and reading a newspaper. A WAITRESS walks past the table and places the bill on the table. Mercenary nods at the Waitress and watches her as she walks away.

The Waitress walks near a large screen TV which catches Mercenary's attention.

Max appears on the TV screen surrounded by reporters. Next to the live caption of Max and the reporters is a still photo of Covert Operative, Julie Vasquez.

The non-diegetic sound of a muffled, thunderous explosive echo is audible.

Mercenary drops his eating utensils.

The sound of metal falling to the table is audible, coupled with the ominous, non-diegetic sound of foreboding tension.

Mercenary stares at the TV screen.

The non-diegetic sound of a muffled, thunderous explosive echo is audible.

Mercenary's mobile device rings on the café table. He reaches for it and answers the call.

MERCENARY

Yes?

BOSS (VO/OS)

My friend, we have a serious problem!

Boss disconnects call. Mercenary stares at his cellphone as it rings fast busy, then suddenly turns to look up at the roof tops. Mercenary stands and scans the surrounding buildings.

The diegetic sound of a fast busy remains audible.

EXT — ROOF — DAY

A group of pigeons rest on the façade of a building.

The non-diegetic sound of a muffled, thunderous explosive echo becomes audible.

The group of pigeons suddenly fly from the façade and scatter into the sky. The sound of the wings beating in the air is audible.

The non-diegetic sound of a muffled, thunderous explosive echo becomes audible, loops for 5 seconds, then fades.

THE END