DON'T GET A MIME TALKING

by

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INT. WALK-IN CLOSET - MORNING

NICK REDMAN (35), nice looking in an unremarkable way, wearing a navy, silk robe enters and pulls the cord to the overhead fluorescent light. Everything is immaculately organized. Identical dark suits hang with white shirts and matching ties - all with tag labels, indicating the day of the week. Nick checks the time on his watch, selects the Monday clothing combo, and leaves.

INT. DINING ROOM - MORNING

Glass of orange juice, full coffee press, coffee cup, and vitamin bottle laid out in perfect symmetry on the dinning room table on a place mat of plastic wrap.

INT. PRIUS - MOVING - DAY

Nick is driving with both latex-gloved hands gripping the wheel. He's listening to NPR.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (O.S.) Good morning. It's Thursday May, 23, and the time is 9:00 a.m.

Nick checks his watch and the clock on the dash to make sure his time pieces are in sync.

INT. LITERARY AGENT'S OFFICE - DAY

ZACK (40), Nick's literary agent, is completely attired in black. He's leaning back in his chair with his legs crossed on top of the desk. Nick's sitting in a chair across from him, staring at the bottom of Zack's shoes. His arms are folded across his chest.

> ZACK You don't need the gloves in here, Nick. I had the office disinfected this morning before our meeting. I realize you have special needs. I feel you, bra.

NICK Why am I here, Zack?

ZACK I wanted to see you. How are you? How's Lilian?

NICK I'm peachy; Lilian's...gone.

ZACK

I know a hot Russian prostitute I can direct your way. Hot, Nick. Think Anna Kournikova!

NICK Can we get on with it, please?

ZACK

I've got the Bantam Dell people on my back. We have a contract with them for two more books, and we've accepted a healthy advance from them. They want to see something. What are you working on?

NICK

I'm trying to squeeze out a story about a talking mime that steals a rare bacteria from the Pasteur Institute.

ZACK

A talking mime. (beat) Quirky. I like it. I like it a lot. Send me the first two chapters when you get home.

NICK

There aren't any chapters. I can't get it going.

ZACK

Jesus, you're burned out! Three books in two years was too much for you. Okay, don't worry. Zack's got your back. We'll get you out of LA for a while. Too many distractions. I've got a place up in Big Sur. Quiet, quiet, quiet. Wait - even better. Paris! My wife's cousin has an apartment there you can use. NICK I'm not burned out, I'm just... blocked.

ZACK

You look pale. Do you ever go out of your apartment? Get some sun. Get some exercise. Drink some Red Bull.

NICK Sure, Zack. We about done?

ZACK

I don't like the looks of this, Nick. I don't like it. In this business, if you slow down, somebody steps on your back on the way past you. Produce and make money. That's the natural order of things. You with me? Paris, Nick! Hemingway, Fitzgerald, James, Redman.

INT. FOUR SEASONS HOTEL BAR - BEVERLY HILLS - AFTERNOON

Lunch is almost over. Only TWO CUSTOMERS remain in the lounge. Nick sits at the bar directly in front of an attractive FEMALE BARTENDER (35). He folds his gloved hands on the bar. She comes over to him, and gives the gloves a quick glance.

ISABELLE

Do you wear those so you can commit a crime and not leave any prints?

NICK

Funny.

ISABELLE

It's interesting how twins instinctively know things about each other. I thought I might be seeing you in the near future.

NICK

I'm sorry I was rude to her again. I'm sorry she called you to vent her frustration about me. Please grant me absolution one final time. ISABELLE Nicky, Nicky. Why can't you be nice to your mother?

NICK I think I resent her because I had to share the space in her womb with you.

ISABELLE I hope you're joking. Samuel Smith?

NICK

Sure. She turns to the reach-in refrigerator behind her, and

bends down for a beer bottle and chilled, Pilsner glass. She puts the glass down in front of her brother, and pours.

ISABELLE Both your recent, ex-girlfriends were in for lunch last week.

NICK Not interested.

ISABELLE Okay. How's Princess Lilian?

NICK

She just sent me an email from a lesbian commune in Oregon where she now resides. Does that give you a picture?

ISABELLE

Do you think your lack of success with women over the years has anything to do with you being a workaholic, germ-o-phobic, unable to commit to a relationship kind of guy?

He takes a long drink of beer, and dabs his mouth with the paper bev nap.

NICK It's possible that might have something to do with it.

They both chortle exactly the same way.

NICK How's your social life? Dating anyone?

ISABELLE No keepers. This town is mostly freaks and perverts.

NICK You look good.

ISABELLE Thanks. I just cracked the 35 minute mile in the pool yesterday. You getting any exercise?

NICK Nah. I just sit in front of my computer and pray that a story comes out before my publisher sues me for breach of contract.

He drains the rest of his beer, and checks his watch.

NICK I'm going to take off.

ISABELLE Short and sweet; like always.

NICK If it makes you feel any better, you're the only person I really like being with.

He reaches in his inside, jacket pocket, removes a filled out check, and slaps it on the bar.

NICK This is for you, because the service in this joint's so good.

She picks it up, and is struck with amazement. She takes his gloved hand.

ISABELLE You're incredibly generous with your money, Nicky.

NICK (shrugs) Get it while you can. I'm probably not going to have it much longer. He stands up, but she continues to hold onto his hand.

NICK

What?

ISABELLE I was just savoring the feeling of being touched by a man wearing latex.

NICK You're a naughty girl, Isabelle. Too bad you're my sister.

He smiles, and then turns to go. She calls after him.

ISABELLE Be nice to your mother.

DREAM - EXT. RESTAURANT - PARIS - DAY

A SCRATCHY SOUNDING version of "La vie en Rose" by Edith Piaf is playing. Nick and Isabelle are sitting at a bistro table on the Champs Elysees, holding hands. They're each wearing one latex glove. He's wearing a beret and red neckerchief around his neck, and she's got on a one-piece, Speedo, swimming cap, and a towel draped around her shoulders. JEAN SIMMONS is walking up and down the boulevard with a stack of newspapers under her arm, selling The Harold Tribune.

> ISABELLE "Oh, Jake, we could have had such a damned good time together."

NICK "Yes. Isn't it pretty to think so?"

MARCEL MARCEAU, dressed as "BIP" the clown, appears at the table, and pantomimes serving cocktails from a tray. Then he sits down at the table with them.

MARCEL MARCEAU You guys are straight out of a D.H. Lawrence story. You're a couple of pervs. And what's up with the one glove look? Some kind of Michael Jackson tribute?

Nick takes a filled out check from his sport jacket, and hands it to the mime.

Nick is bare chested with a towel around his waist, shaving cream on his face, and holding a razor. He rinses the razor, and looks up into the mirror. MARCEL MARCEAU, dressed as "BIP" the clown, is pantomiming the shaving process. Nick flinches, and drops the RAZOR into the SINK.

> MARCEL MARCEAU Careful with that axe, Eugene.

NICK (pointing) You're dead. I researched it.

MARCEL MARCEAU It's weird, huh?

NICK Yes it's weird! It couldn't be weirder! What's happening to me?!

MARCEL MARCEAU

Stress.

NICK Did you say <u>stress</u>?

MARCEL MARCEAU Yes I did. Is there an acoustics problem in here?

Nick tries to touch the mirror with a wet index finger, but the image retreats. He unstably turns toward the toilet, CRASHING DOWN on the seat. He's breathing irregularly.

> MARCEL MARCEAU (O.S.) You're hyperventilating.

Nick claps his hands over his ears, and rocks forward and back. A few moments later, he slowly rises to reexamine his reflection - same image.

NICK (depressed) Are you a ghost that's stuck between levels of the afterlife, until you finish something here?

MARCEL MARCEAU I'm sorry, that's incorrect. The answer our judges were looking for was, are you a figment of my (MORE)

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MARCEL MARCEAU (cont'd) imagination? So even though you didn't win the washer and dryer, we have a lovely consolation gift for you, compliments of "The Hallucination Game."

NICK

Oh, Jesus.

He sits back down on the toilet seat.

MARCEL MARCEAU Just think of me as a new friend. A new imaginary friend.

He springs back up.

NICK What does that mean?! Why is this happening?! Are you the mime from the story I can't write?!

MARCEL MARCEAU Slow down. You're about to blow your motherboard.

NICK Don't tell me to slow down! Where did my life go?! I <u>need my life</u> <u>back</u>!

MARCEL MARCEAU You are so funny. (mocking) Where did my life go? I need my life back.

He cups his hands around his mouth.

MARCEL MARCEAU Now hear this. You don't have a life!

Nick walks around the room, thoroughly searching above and behind everything. He comes back to the mirror.

NICK Am I on Candid Camera, or something?

MARCEL MARCEAU Negatory, dude.

8.

NICK I want you to leave right now. Go back to wherever you came from. And don't call me dude.

MARCEL MARCEAU No can do, my brother.

NICK

Why not?

MARCEL MARCEAU Because I'm not really here.

He makes an EERIE SOUND effect.

Nick is staring trance-like at the mirror. Then he has a lightbulb moment. He leaves the room, and returns with a folded, black bed sheet and roll of silver tape. He covers the mirror with it, and then steps back.

NICK

There.

Marcel is sitting on the edge of the tub in "The Thinker" position. He looks up.

MARCEL MARCEAU Is duct tape a great invention, or what?

NICK This is unbelievable.

MARCEL MARCEAU

I know. It's front page tabloid material. I can see your picture now, right next to the woman who claimed to be abducted by aliens.

NICK

(cranked up) Why is this happening?! Yesterday I was perfectly fine!

MARCEL MARCEAU You're over-amping again. You better sit down.

NICK I don't want to sit down!

He sits back down on the toilet seat, and his right eye starts to twitch. He slaps his left hand over it.

NICK Now I'm having a seizure.

MARCEL MARCEAU You know what would fix you right up? A lobotomy.

He stands, reaches his arms out palms down, and walks around the room, looking lost and confused.

NICK I refuse to accept this is happening!

MARCEL MARCEAU Okay, it's not happening. So who you talking to?

INT. FOUR SEASONS BAR - DAY

Nick walks to the bar, and collapses on a stool. He's disheveled.

NICK We have to talk.

ISABELLE What's wrong? You look awful.

There's a COCKTAIL WAITRESS at the end of the bar.

COCKTAIL WAITRESS #1 Ordering, please.

ISABELLE (to Nick) Be right back.

She steps quickly to the end of the bar, mixes a few drinks, and returns.

ISABELLE Sorry. To what do I owe the pleasure?

NICK I'm hallucinating!

ISABELLE Are you on drugs?! NICK Of course not.

ISABELLE What are you hallucinating?

NICK

The main character from the book I'm not writing has come to life. He was in my dream last night, and my bathroom this morning.

ISABELLE

What?!

NICK I can't think straight. I'm freaking!

ISABELLE Calm down. Take some deep breaths. Keep breathing.

His right eye starts to twitch. He slaps his left hand over it.

NICK That's the second time today.

ISABELLE Call your doctor immediately! Have him prescribe something that will

calm you down. You're a mess.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE WAITING ROOM - DAY

The small waiting room is full of SENIOR CITIZENS. Marcel is standing next to Nick at the frosted-glass, receptionist window. It slides open, revealing an OCTOGENARIAN WOMAN.

NICK Nick Redman to see Dr. Schlossman.

RECEPTIONIST Rick Bedman?

NICK No. Nick - Redman.

RECEPTIONIST Sorry, my hearing is going. If I wasn't so vain, I would wear a (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

RECEPTIONIST (cont'd) hearing aid. What are you here for, Mr. Bedman?

NICK Redman, R-e-d-m-a-n, and...it's personal.

RECEPTIONIST I understand (winking). Snake won't come out of the cage?

Marcel pantomimes hysterical laughter, and slaps his knee.

NICK (loudly) My snake is fine!

All of the old people in the waiting room look up from their magazines and MURMUR.

NICK (to everyone) That's not it.

RECEPTIONIST Denial is very common in the beginning. Please have a seat, Mr. Bedman. The doctor will be with you shortly.

Nick and Marcel sit in the only two available chairs. Nick picks up an AARP magazine from a table. Marcel pantomimes thumbing through a newspaper.

INT. EXAMINING ROOM - DAY

Nick is sitting in a chair by the window. Marcel is sitting on the examining table, dangling his legs over the edge. Then he crosses them, and pantomimes giving himself a reflex test by tapping one of his knees with an imaginary plexor. Enter DR. SCHLOSSMAN (75), silver hair, white lab coat with a stethoscope around his neck.

> DR. SCHLOSSMAN Hello, Nick. How are we today?

Marcel is turning his head and COUGHING.

NICK Not so good, Doc. I have a problem. DOCTOR SCHLOSSMAN Erectile dysfunction?

NICK

No! It's...a psychological issue. I was hoping you could prescribe something to make me normal.

MARCEL MARCEAU Cumulatively, there aren't enough drugs on the planet to be able to do that.

DR. SCHLOSSMAN What specifically is the problem, son?

NICK I'm hallucinating. I think I can see and talk to Marcel Marceau.

DR. SCHLOSSMAN The mime? I loved that guy. What a unique performer.

Marcel stands and bows deeply, sweeping his bedraggled hat almost to the floor.

NICK He's torturing me.

Marcel shakes his head, puts an arm around Nick's shoulder, and gives him an affectionate squeeze.

> DR. SCHLOSSMAN Nick, mimes don't talk.

NICK (agitated) What's the difference if he talks, or not?! Don't you think just seeing him suggests there's something seriously a miss?! I need some meds, Doc. I'm desperate! Give me a rhino tranq!

DR. SCHLOSSMAN Calm down, son.

MARCEL MARCEAU You better listen to him. You're going to give yourself a heart attack. He pantomimes having his heart beat rapidly against his hands. Then it stops, and he croaks.

NICK (to Marcel) Don't give me any advice!

DR. SCHLOSSMAN Who are you speaking to?

NICK

The mime.

DR. SCHLOSSMAN This isn't really my field of expertise. I'll give you something to calm you down, but I think you should see a psychiatrist.

INT. PSYCHIATRIST OFFICE - DAY

Nick is lying on the couch. The DOCTOR is sitting behind his desk, and Marcel is pantomiming that he's sitting next to the couch taking notes.

PSYCHIATRIST Comfortable?

NICK

I guess.

PSYCHIATRIST Why don't you tell me exactly what's troubling you?

MARCEL MARCEAU Is your erectile problem, making you feel inadequate, Mr. Bedman?

He holds his index finger straight up, and then let's it curl down into a question mark.

NICK I see and talk with Marcel Marceau.

PSYCHIATRIST He was a very unique performer.

Marcel turns toward the doctor and salutes.

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NICK He speaks abusively to me.

MARCEL MARCEAU There's a difference between abusive and sarcastic. I'm sarcastic, and possibly a little sardonic at times.

PSYCHIATRIST He speaks to you?

Marcel sticks out his tongue, wobbles his head, and encircles his ear with an index finger, signifying Nick's cuckoo.

> PSYCHIATRIST This is very unusual.

NICK I know it's unusual! Why do you think I'm here?!

MARCEL MARCEAU (Austrian accent) So, Herr Bedman. It appears to me that you wish to marry your twin sister? Personally, I think you would be much better off with a nice shiksa from Beverly Hills, with plastic breasts, but of course these things are quite subjective.

PSYCHIATRIST Mr. Redman, this is an extremely interesting case. I think we should meet at least three times a week. We could end up on Oprah.

INT./EXT. BATHROOM - NEXT MORNING

Nick is at the doorway, craning his neck to see if Marcel is in there. Everything looks okay. He enters cautiously, and looks around. He takes the sheet down from the mirror.

> NICK (jubilant) I'm cured! It was like a 24 hour flu. The brain is a very mysterious organ.

He opens the wrapper of a new toothbrush, brushes

methodically, and then throws it away. He leans forward toward the mirror and points.

NICK Here's looking at you, kid.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Nick bounces into the room, HUMMING. He stops dead in his tracks when he sees Marcel sitting at the table, pantomiming that he's drinking coffee with his pinky finger extended.

MARCEL MARCEAU

Morning.

NICK You're supposed to be gone! Why aren't you gone?!

MARCEL MARCEAU I thought we were pals. Didn't we have fun together yesterday?

NICK No! We did not! I'm raving! I've turned into a raving lunatic!

MARCEL MARCEAU I think you're a raving, drama queen. Make some coffee and have some juice. Chill out.

Nick makes coffee and juice, and arranges the place setting perfectly on a fresh plastic liner. Marcel points across the table.

MARCEL MARCEAU The spoon is just a hair off.

Nick gets out of his seat, and kneels down at the side of the table. He looks down the fork, plate, knife, and spoon line like a carpenter sights an edge. Marcel is enjoying himself.

> NICK It's perfect. Oh, I get it. You're poking fun at my attention to detail. All right, I admit it. It's possible I may have some psych issues.

MARCEL MARCEAU <u>Some</u>! That would be like saying there is <u>some</u> sand in the Sahara, or the Pope has <u>some</u> interest in Catholicism!

Nick shoots out of his chair.

NICK You want to play, "White Face!" Okay, let's play! I'm getting rid of you! Today!

INT. BRAIN SCAN LAB - UCLA CAMPUS - DAY

Heavy Metal music is playing in the background. TWO SURFER types with Albert Einstein hairdos are putting a helmet with electrodes on Nick's head. There are wires that run from the helmet to a brain scanning machine.

> NICK You guys have done this plenty of times, right? I don't want to get fried.

Marcel mimes being electrocuted. Then he looks out of it.

TECHNICIAN #1 No worries, mon. We could like do this in our sleep.

Marcel looks sad. He holds up, and unravels a rolled up document entitled, "Nick's Last Will And Testament."

TECHNICIAN #2 Okay, everybody ready? It's showtime!

The two techs hug, and kiss each other on both cheeks. Then they step back, and put on Groucho glasses and mustaches with slinky eyeballs. Marcel wipes an imaginary tear from his eye, and sadly waves goodbye to Nick. Technician #2 throws a switch on the machine. SPARKS FLY, and the room goes dark.

INT. PRIUS - MOVING - DAY

Nick's clothes are tattered, his eyebrows are gone, and he's covered with singe marks.

MARCEL MARCEAU Those eyebrows are going to grow back thicker than ever. You'll see.

NICK Don't think I'm giving up. This was a minor setback. I'm going to do whatever it takes to get rid of you!

MARCEL MARCEAU That's a bold statement.

NICK Watch me. Tomorrow I'm going to an acupuncturist who guaranteed he could cure me.

INT. WAITING ROOM - DR. FUNG'S - DAY

Nick whips out his handkerchief and spreads it on a chair before he sits down. Marcel pantomimes sticking needles all over his body. His face is twisted in pain.

> NICK I'll bet you were the class clown in school.

Marcel puts his index finger under his chin, and looks up pensively.

FLASHBACK: INT. GRADE SCHOOL - FRANCE - DAY

A YOUNG "BIP" the clown is entertaining his CLASSMATES and TEACHER. There is LAUGHTER, and APPLAUSE from everyone.

End flashback.

He nods affirmatively to Nick.

NICK Let's enjoy our last few moments together. I'll miss you in a strange kind of way.

Marcel puts a hand on Nick's shoulder.

MARCEL MARCEAU "Jake, you're very disturbed. You're crazy. Forget it, Jake. It's Chinatown." He cracks up.

INT. EXAMINING ROOM - DAY

Tight quarters. Two chairs, massage table, print on the wall of the human body with pressure points. DR. FUNG (80's), enters, carrying a soft, folded case. He looks, and is dressed exactly like Mao Tse Tung. He circles around Nick and Marcel with the fluid movement of a Tai Chi master.

> MARCEL MARCEAU Am I high, or are you about to get kabobbed by "The Chairman?"

> > NICK

Quiet!

MARCEL MARCEAU

"Quickly as you can, Grasshopper, snatch the pebble from my hand. When you can take the pebble from my hand, it will be time for you to leave."

DR. FUNG Take off clothes. Keep underwear on. Lay down on table.

MARCEL MARCEAU

What, no foreplay? Hey, ixnay about the erectile problem. It's not good first date material.

NICK

Uh, Dr. Fung, sir. I have an ever so slight issue with germs. Would it be possible to keep my clothes and gloves on during the procedure?

DR. FUNG Take off clothes! Lay down!

MARCEL MARCEAU

I don't know about you, but I'm turned on by a man who knows how to take charge.

Nick's face is tormented as he slowly removes his clothes, and lies down face first on the table.

MARCEL MARCEAU When's he going to break out the opium pipe?

Dr. Fung agilely loads up Nick's dorsal side with small needles. Then he drapes a sheet over him.

NICK

(panicky) Don't touch me with that sheet.

DR FUNG Quiet! Cure working.

He leaves the room.

NICK

(to Marcel) Did you hear that? The cure is working. Don't say hi; say bye.

Nick is off the table, kneeling down on one knee, tying his shoe. He looks around the room. No one's there. He pumps his fist.

NICK

Yes!

Dr. Fung returns. Three hundred dollar. No plastic; no check!

NICK (all smiles) And worth every penny.

DR FUNG You like to buy some Chinese herbs?

NICK No thanks; I'm good.

He peels off three "Benjamins" and lays them across the palm of the doctor's outstretched hand.

DR FUNG You come back. I cure anything. Nick's smile disappears when he looks inside the car and sees Marcel in the passenger seat, pantomiming that he's rocking out with headphones on his ears. Nick's radiating anger when he throws open the door.

MARCEL MARCEAU

Hey, "porcupine boy." How was the skewer session? You look relaxed. He was an abrupt little guy, wasn't he? "Quiet! Cure working!"

NICK We're not nearly through!

MARCEL MARCEAU Confucius say, man who get taken to cleaners by Chinese acupuncturist, end up with too much starch in shorts.

INT. FOUR SEASONS BAR -EARLY EVENING

The bar and lounge are HALF-FULL. Isabelle is serving a WOMAN at the bar when Nick and Marcel walk in, and sit down at the end of the bar. She finishes with her customer, and walks over to them.

ISABELLE How you feeling? What happened to your eyebrows?!

NICK It's a long story.

ISABELLE Are you still seeing the mime?

NICK He's with me right now.

ISABELLE

Where?

He turns his head to the right.

NICK

There.

ISABELLE Where-there? He points to the empty stool next to him. NICK There-there. MARCEL MARCEAU I can tell you guys are related by the way you talk. ISABELLE Nicky, this is way beyond latex gloves in public. You need help. NICK I've been getting help. But the help, doesn't help. ISABELLE What's he look like? NICK Like a mime. They all look alike. Marcel is offended. MARCEL MARCEAU What if I said all crazy people look alike. Wouldn't be very PC, would it? A COCKTAIL WAITRESS is waiting at the end of the bar. COCKTAIL WAITRESS #2 Ordering, please. ISABELLE Be right back. Should I get you quys a couple of beers? NICK Oh you're a riot, Alice! She takes care of the waitress, and returns with a beer bottle and chilled glass. She pours it. ISABELLE Can I talk to him?

(CONTINUED)

NICK <u>No</u>, you can't talk to him! This isn't a seance!

ISABELLE Shhh. Keep it down. People are going to think you're crazy.

MARCEL MARCEAU He is crazy.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Nick is sitting at the computer with Marcel at his side.

NICK

I think I've figured out how I can improve the situation. I'm going to change the main character in the story from a talking mime, to...

MARCEL MARCEAU A nymphomaniac, dressed in a parochial, high school uniform.

NICK That wasn't what I was going to say. I was thinking, maybe a French chef.

MARCEL MARCEAU Why would a French chef steal bacteria from the Pasteur Institute?

NICK He could steel something else. Maybe a rare mushroom.

MARCEL MARCEAU Riveting. Wait! He could steal enriched uranium that was a disguised to look like a pate! Then he sells it to a group of Russian mobsters that blackmail the French government into buying their bootleg, caviar-flavored vodka. But hold on: It's all a very clever deception. While Interpol scours Europe for the stolen pate, a sous chef, who is really a gay, Russian spy from West Hollywood, breaks

(MORE)

MARCEL MARCEAU (cont'd) into Hotel de Ville and plays Judy Garland records with the Mayor all night.

NICK I'm not even going to dignify that with a response.

INT. DINNING ROOM TABLE - MORNING

Nick and Marcel are having coffee.

MARCEL MARCEAU So, what's on the agenda for today? We going to see a witchdoctor? Maybe you should have a priest come over and perform an exorcism. "Your mother sucks cocks in Hell, Karas, you faithless slime."

NICK You're quite the movie buff.

MARCEL MARCEAU I used to be an actor.

NICK

Yeah, I saw that on a DVD I rented about your life. I feel like I know a lot of things about you.

MARCEL MARCEAU Except how to get rid of me.

NICK

Right.

Nick checks his watch.

NICK I have to get moving. I have an appointment to talk with a Buddhist Lama.

MARCEL MARCEAU Flying to Tibet?

NICK Driving to North Hollywood. Nick and Marcel enter the temple, and see A FEW smiling DISCIPLES in the lobby.

MARCEL MARCEAU Maybe we could stop by the gift shop on our way out, and buy the CD of one hand clapping.

NICK

I like it here. I feel less bound by the physical laws of the universe.

MARCEL MARCEAU That's good, Nick. You'll be the most evolved patient in the asylum.

NICK Maybe you should wait in the car.

MARCEL MARCEAU No way, Siddhartha.

Nick asks one of the DISCIPLES in the lobby if he can direct him to the Lama.

DISCIPLE (blissed out/pointing) That's the Lama's office is over there.

MARCEL MARCEAU Did that smiler just say there was a llama in that room? You have to have a special license for those kind of animals, don't you?

NICK

Hilarious.

They walk to the office, and stand in front of the door.

MARCEL MARCEAU Did you know that spitting is a llama's way of saying "Bugger Off?"

NICK Will you stop? MARCEL MARCEAU It's true. Saw it on the Discovery Chanel.

EXT./INT. LAMA'S OFFICE - DAY

Nick KNOCKS LIGHTLY on the DOOR.

LAMA (O.S.)

Come in.

They enter. A bald MAN (65), wearing a saffron robe with one bare shoulder exposed is sitting behind a desk. He's wearing small, rimless spectacles down toward the end of his nose.

> NICK Hi. I'm Nick Redman.

The Lama stands, and extends his hand for shaking. Nick reluctantly, short arms his gloved hand in that direction. The Lama withdraws his hand defensively.

> LAMA (thick Indian accent) Do you have a skin condition, Mr. Redman?

MARCEL MARCEAU Oh no your Lamaship. He's a few fries short of a happy meal.

NICK No, sir. I have a slight issue with germs.

LAMA I see. Please sit down.

The Lama sits down and steeples his fingers together.

MARCEL MARCEAU Something about this guy's voice is familiar. I think I talked with him once when I needed tech-support for my fax machine.

NICK As I mentioned on the phone, I'm dealing with an unusual problem. LAMA Yes. The French mime hallucination. He was very talented.

MARCEL MARCEAU What can I say? It's great being me.

LAMA Mr. Redman, besides the concern about germs and the hallucination you are experiencing, are there other abnormalities in your life?

NICK Yes, sir. Several.

LAMA Are you under the care of a psychiatrist, or doctor?

NICK

No, sir, although I have recently seen my doctor and a psychiatrist about my present problem.

LAMA And were they able to help you with your situation?

MARCEL MARCEAU Your saffronness, if I may. My boy is full-on Mad Cow.

Nick launches out of his seat, glaring at Marcel. He spooks the Lama, who doesn't know what's happening.

NICK (agitated) You're freaking me out! I can't take it! I'm on the verge of...

MARCEL MARCEAU What? What?

NICK

I don't know!

MARCEL MARCEAU Better settle down, Skippy. You're eyes are like pinwheels.

TWO burly, robed-clad MONKS enter quickly. Each one grabs

Nick by an arm, lifting him off the ground. He's getting the "bum's rush."

MARCEL MARCEAU Now you've done it. You're the only person in history to be 86ed from a Buddhist temple.

Marcel gets up, walks to the door, and then quickly turns toward the Lama. He gives him a "thumbs up."

MARCEL MARCEAU Fax machine works great.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Nick is at the computer. Marcel is looking over his shoulder.

MARCEL MARCEAU Still mad about yesterday?

Nick spins around in his chair.

NICK What do you think?

MARCEL MARCEAU

Who knew those Buddhist dudes were going to overreact like that? I think they have a lot of suppressed sexual tension.

NICK We're cranking this program up a notch! We're going to you're burial site.

MARCEL MARCEAU But, Nick. That's in Paris, and you've never been on an airplane.

NICK I've got it worked out.

INT. AIR FRANCE PLANE - NIGHT

Nick and Marcel are sitting in first class. Nick cinches his seat belt extra tight.

MARCEL MARCEAU

Nervous?

He takes a bottle of pills out of his jacket pocket, and SHAKES it.

NICK I plan on being comatose for the entire flight. I'll go to sleep when it's dark, and wake up when it's light. Just like normal.

MARCEL MARCEAU Did you know that seat belt isn't going to help if we crash?

NICK Why did you have to say that?

Marcel smiles, and adjusts his seat so that he's completely reclined.

MARCEL MARCEAU I'm sorry. It was an insensitive remark.

INT. ROISSY - CHARLES DE GAULLE AIRPORT - DAY

An anxious Gallic MOB surrounds a baggage carousel in anticipation of the luggage. Nick is swaying from side to side from the residual effect of the meds, plus the pushing and shoving he's absorbing from the crowd. He's the last person to retrieve his suitcase.

EXT. FRENCH APARTMENT BUILDING - AFTERNOON

A taxi pulls away after dropping Nick and Marcel on the sidewalk in front of their destination.

MARCEL MARCEAU What a charming neighborhood. Slightly bourgeois, but charming.

NICK I'm thrilled you approve.

Nick looks up the security code on his Blackberry, and punches it in on the keypad next to the door.

They step into a cobblestone courtyard and walk until they see two doors opposite each other, leading into separate buildings.

NICK The door on the right is us.

INT. THIRD FLOOR LANDING - DAY

There are only two apartments on the floor.

MARCEL MARCEAU Take off your gloves.

NICK

No.

MARCEL MARCEAU This guy's going to think you're wack-job.

Nick looks at him.

NICK I am a wack-job.

MARCEL MARCEAU You're embarrassing me.

NICK There's a simple remedy for that.

MARCEL MARCEAU Ring the doorbell, doofus.

He RINGS the BELL.

NICK I hope this guy speaks English.

MARCEL MARCEAU (whispering) Zip it! I hear him coming.

The door is opened by BERNIE SMYTHE (35), $6^{\prime}9"$ and 250 pounds.

NICK

Bernie?

BERNIE

Yes.

NICK I'm, Nick Redman. Zack's friend from The States.

Bernie smiles, and extends a bear claw size-hand into the hallway for shaking. Nick shows him his gloved hands. Bernie's smile changes to alarm as he jerks his arm back inside.

> MARCEL MARCEAU Nothing to worry about, bro. Just a touch of leprosy.

BERNIE Do you have a skin problem?

NICK

No.

Bernie looks quizzical.

BERNIE

Come in.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Nick and Marcel walk inside the main room of the studio. There's a large potted palm tree in front of one window, a desk and chair in front of another, and a loveseat.

> NICK Where's the bed?

Bernie walks across the room toward two French doors, opens them, and pulls the Murphy bed down from the wall.

MARCEL MARCEAU Cool, man.

BERNIE You want some coffee?

NICK You're a God.

BERNIE

Have a seat. I'll make some.

He goes into the kitchen, and Nick and Marcel sit down at

the breakfast counter that divides the main room from the kitchen.

NICK Your English is pretty good.

BERNIE Thanks. I'm from Toronto.

He pours coffee from a French press into two demitasse cups, and hands one to Nick.

BERNIE What are you doing in Paris?

MARCEL MARCEAU This should be interesting.

NICK

I'm a crime novelist. I'm trying to write a story that takes place here.

BERNIE Two American artists on the same floor. There's a painter that lives across the hall.

NICK

Really?

BERNIE (nodding) Let's see if she's home. I'll introduce you.

Nick rolls his eyes.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Bernie RINGS the DOORBELL across the hall. No one answers.

BERNIE

I guess she's out. Introduce yourself to her sometime. She could be someone to have dinner with. Nick's exhausted. He goes to the linen closet in the hall and takes out a set of sheets and pillowcases. They don't match. He loads his arms with all the linen in the closet, carries it to the bed, and dumps it. He sorts it all by color in little piles. No matches for a complete set.

NICK

How is this possible?

He makes the bed with military precision, and then sets his wristwatch alarm for 6:00 am. He goes into the bathroom to brush his teeth.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

NICK (to mirror above sink) I'm as tired as I ever remember being.

MARCEL MARCEAU Long day, plus you lost nine hours.

NICK

I hope coming here was a good idea.

Nick tosses the toothbrush into the wastebasket, turns off the light, and goes into the main room to lie down on the bed. He's out before his head hits the pillow. A few hours later, he's awakened by a PULSING POLICE EURO-SIREN, passing by the building. He rolls over and looks at the green phosphorescent numbers on his watch: 12:30 a.m. He flips over on each side a few times trying to get back to sleep, but he can't. He defaults to a position flat on his back with his hands clasped behind his head. He hears his neighbor come home. Her DOOR SQUEAKS open, and then SLAMS shut. A minute later, a WAGNER OPERA wafts across the hall. Nick gets up and staggers serpentine toward the bathroom, glancing a shoulder off the door frame.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

He turns on the light, and stands akimbo in front of the mirror. Another SIREN goes by. Nick sticks his arm up in the general direction of the music and siren.

Marcel pantomimes yawning and rubbing his eyes.

MARCEL MARCEAU Is it morning already?

NICK

(agitated) No it is not! Can you believe this noise?! It's like waking up in the middle of a war zone!

MARCEL MARCEAU

"Saigon...shit. I'm only in Saigon. Every time, I think I'm going to wake up back in the jungle." "I'm here a week now. Waiting for a mission. Getting softer. Every minute I stay in this room, I get weaker. And every minute Charlie squats in the bush...he gets stronger."

NICK Yuk it up. Tomorrow we're going to the cemetery.

EXT. INSIDE PERE LACHAISE CEMETERY - DAY

Nick opens a folding map of the burial locations for the cemetery, and scans the list of internments as they walk.

NICK

There you are. Section 21. I'd like to check out Jim Morrison and Oscar Wilde as long as we're here. They're right on our way.

EXT. JIM MORRISON GRAVESITE - CONTINUOUS - DAY

THREE GIRLS are swooning at the spot. Nick and Marcel hang back and observe.

GIRL #1 You still light my fire, Jim.

GIRL #2 Ring my bell at the dead rock star hotel.

GIRL #3 You fooled everyone, Mr. Mojo Risin. We know you faked your death. MARCEL MARCEAU (to Nick) Talking to dead guys must be trendy this season.

He walks away.

NICK

Wait up.

EXT. OSCAR WILDE GRAVESITE - CONTINUOUS - DAY

A TOUR GROUP of gay men surround the huge monument. They're putting on thick, red lipstick, and taking turns kissing the tomb all over, so it leaves prints of their lips.

> MARCEL MARCEAU This is always where the action is.

NICK Imagine the germs on that tomb from everybody kissing it.

MARCEL MARCEAU Come on. I'm right over there.

They walk a short distance to a large plot of flowers.

MARCEL MARCEAU Home sweet home.

NICK Where's your tomb?

MARCEL MARCEAU I don't have one.

Nick takes off his backpack, and empties the contents onto the ground: Small CD player and disk, booklet, white-face mask, mime doll, small bag of pins, small bag of bones, and a rubber chicken. He opens the book.

> MARCEL MARCEAU What's all that?

NICK A voodoo kit. It comes from New Orleans, or maybe Haiti. It's supposed to have powerful magic, or your money back. MARCEL MARCEAU What are you going to do with it?

NICK Perform a pagan ceremony at your grave site. That's why we're here.

MARCEL MARCEAU I can't wait to see this.

Nick pops the CD into the player, and leafs through the manual until he finds what he's looking for. He shows Marcel the page.

NICK Step by step. Before we start, I want to tell you that all of our time together hasn't been negative. You're actually good company. It's just I need my life back.

MARCEL MARCEAU Do what you have to do.

Nick turns on the MUSIC, (a compilation of Dr. John The Night Tripper and Professor Longhair songs), slips on the mask, and starts gyrating around the grave-site, chanting UNINTELLIGIBLE SOUNDS that he reads from the manual. The music attracts the gay tour group and the girls from the Morrison burial site. Everyone is following Nick around the grave, imitating the sounds he's making, and holding onto each other's waists like a conga line. Nick breaks out of formation, collects the mime doll, and jabs all the pins into it. Then he drops down on his knees, and torches it with a lighter. While it burns, he tosses the bones into the fire, and fans it with the manual. Finally, he takes the chicken, swings it over his head, and then collapses on the ground, twitching. The CD finishes playing.

> GIRL #3 (to Nick on the ground) That was fucking awesome, dude!

INT. CAFE DE FLORE - AFTERNOON

Nick and Marcel are sitting next to the front window that looks onto Blvd. Saint-Germain, drinking small coffees. A SAX PLAYER is playing for donations on the sidewalk.

> NICK I really thought the graveyard ceremony was going to work.

MARCEL MARCEAU It was by far your most ambitious effort. There was some serious mojo going on back there.

NICK But I didn't cast you out.

MARCEL MARCEAU You're not going about it right. I'm not a spirit. You invented me.

NICK Why would I do that?

MARCEL MARCEAU Because the stories of your life are not your own.

NICK What? I think I missed that.

MARCEL MARCEAU

You've been living vicariously through the characters in your stories. It's nice and clean that way. You don't have to take chances when they have an adventure, and you don't have to risk being hurt when they fall in love. But you're scared that you might be running out of stories to tell. Then there would be no fictional life, and no real life.

NICK

Let's say you're right, even though I don't think you are. What happens now?

MARCEL MARCEAU

Take a break from the writing for a while. You've been putting too much pressure on yourself. Go to some museums, go to the markets and parks, and hangout in cafes. Be open to whatever comes. Also, lose the gloves.

NICK

I need them.

MARCEL MARCEAU No you don't. You see anybody else wearing latex gloves? Teach yourself to be less eccentric! That's one of the reasons girls keeping dumping you. Take them off right now.

NICK Do you know how many...

MARCEL MARCEAU Please don't whine. Give me your hands! It's for your own good.

Nick reluctantly reaches his hands across the table, and Marcel SNAPS the gloves off his hands.

MARCEL MARCEAU Isn't that better?

MONTAGE: travels around Paris, seeing the sights. He continuously looks at his hands.

1.) On a nice Spring day, he is gathering provisions for the apartment at an outdoor market.

2.) He's having lunch at a bistro table in front of a CROWDED cafe in Bastille.

3.) He's walking into the mansion at Musee Rodin, out of Musee d'Orsay, and into the I.M. Pei entrance to the Grand Louvre.

4.) He's sitting on a green metal chair in the Jardin du Luxembourg, watching some children sail colorful toy boats in the cement pond.

5.) He's is visiting Notre Dame, La Chappelle, and Sacre Coeur.

6.) Finally, he's at the top of The Eiffel Tower, looking at the PANORAMIC VIEW of Paris.

INT. BREAKFAST COUNTER - MORNING

NICK I have to admit, Paris is beautiful. Nick

MARCEL MARCEAU You need to meet someone.

NTCK I don't speak French.

MARCEL MARCEAU Let's go next door and meet the American painter.

NICK That's a good idea.

MARCEL MARCEAU Thanks. That's why I make the big money.

INT. HALLWAY - SAME DAY

They go next door. Nick RINGS the neighbor's BELL. The door is opened by a petite WOMAN (40), who has flaxen dreadlocks sprouting out of her head like a fern plant. She's wearing navy blue, mechanic's coveralls splotched with white paint and red, high-top Converse gym shoes.

LUCY

Oui.

NICK I'm Nick, your new neighbor. Bernie told me to introduce myself.

LUCY

American?

NICK (nodding)

LA.

LUCY (caffeine frenzy) I'm from Seattle. Well, I was born in Annapolis, then we moved to Newport News, and I graduated from high school in San Diego. My adoptive dad was in the Navy, so we moved around a lot. He lives in Seattle now with his shrew wife who I hate. After high school I said adios, and went to art school in Switzerland, and moved to Paris after I graduated. I mean where (MORE)

LUCY (cont'd) else would you want to live if you're a painter? Well, Italy maybe. Coffee?

Nick looks like he's been shot with a stun gun. He can barely nod.

LUCY (CONT'D) Well come inside. I'm not bringing it out there.

She turns, and limps toward the kitchen. The guys follow her inside.

INT. LUCY'S STUDIO - DAY

Small galley kitchen, with pots and pans and dirty dishes littered in the sink and on the counter. There are art supplies strewn on top of the dining room table and all over the floor in the main room, except for a single square meter oasis of cleanliness, surrounding a hydraulic chair and easel supporting a canvas. There is also a loft-style bed about six feet off the ground. Her place is twice the size of Nick's.

> NICK How can you live like this?

MARCEL MARCEAU Maybe she has a grant from the Pasteur Institute to cultivate bacteria in here?

LUCY I'm a slob. What's your deal? On vacation, having a pre-midlife crisis, doing the expat-thing? Got a job, retired, looking for a rich old lady to sponge off? Here's your coffee. Did I say I was a painter? I have a show day after tomorrow. I get kind of wired before a show.

MARCEL MARCEAU

Ya think?!

Nick takes the cup from her as she flits around the room.

LUCY So are you the strong-silent type? Don't talk much, don't need much (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LUCY (cont'd) from anyone. Quietly secure in the knowledge of who you are.

NICK

No.

LUCY Which question were you answering?

NICK I'm not especially secure.

LUCY Me either. Do you like women? I think all men are pigs! That's ironic because I'm not a lesbian, and I haven't had sex in a long time.

She looks at her watch.

LUCY (CONT'D) Wow! Gotta get back to work. Take the cup with you. Keep it as a house warming gift. We should get together some time. You know talk.

INT. NICK'S STUDIO - TWO DAYS LATER - 4:00 A.M.

There is a POUNDING on his DOOR.

LUCY (O.S.) Help me! Please help me!

Nick shuffles to the door in boxer shorts and a t-shirt. He was sound asleep. He fumbles with the coordination of turning the door knob.

NICK What...what is it?

LUCY (heavily agitated) I don't have enough paintings!

NICK

What?

LUCY Paintings! Paintings! I need more paintings!

NICK Take it easy. Do you want to come in, or something?

LUCY (weaker) I need paintings.

NICK (sniffing the air) What's burning!

LUCY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

He tracks the stench to the coffeemaker and unplugs it. The empty glass pot is scorched black. Lucy limps in.

LUCY Is something bad happening?

NICK Your coffee pot's totaled.

LUCY I need more paintings!

NICK

Please don't start that again. Listen, would you mind if I cleaned your apartment as long as I'm here? I can't live next door, knowing this place is such a mess.

He puts on an oven mitt, and starts organizing the dishes from the kitchen into a concentrated area as they talk.

NICK How can you live like this?

LUCY Come with me tonight! Please! I'm begging you! I can't go alone! I'll die if I have to go alone!

NICK All right, I'll go. Try and calm yourself. LUCY Do you have a suit? A dark one preferably. I can buy you one if you don't have one.

NICK I have one. What time should I be ready?

LUCY The gallery will send a car at seven. It starts at eight.

NICK Maybe you should take something.

LUCY I need to lie down for a while. Thank you. Thank you so much for helping me.

INT. LEFT BANK ART GALLERY - NIGHT

Lucy and Nick are greeted at the door by the South African owners, FELIX and DEBORA (60's). They're dressed formally, and look quite elegant.

FELIX Let's have a glass of Champagne before things become too hectic.

DEBORA

Splendid idea, dear.

They have a quick drink together, then Felix and Lucy disappear to check everything out.

DEBORA Nick, how do you and Lucy know one another?

NICK We're neighbors.

DEBORA Do you like her paintings?

NICK Actually, I'll be seeing them for the first time tonight. DEBORA We adore her work. This is the third time she has shown with us.

NICK Does she have enough paintings to show?

DEBORA

(smiling) She always worries about that. Her work is so divine, she could show with two paintings. Let's locate the others, and take our places at the front door.

A wonderful exhibition, and a GOOD CROWD. Nick is fixating on one of the more abstract paintings, with his hands stuffed in his pants pockets. Marcel is beside him, and Lucy is behind them.

> MARCEL MARCEAU This thing makes "Starry Starry Night" seem laid back.

LUCY That's my "crazy" one.

She makes air quotation marks when she says CRAZY.

NICK You're so intense. I wish I had a little of that.

LUCY It usually drives people away.

MARCEL MARCEAU Maybe you drive everyone away because you're, "Caffeine Girl!"

She slips an arm through one of Nick's.

LUCY Join us for dinner after we close.

MARCEL MARCEAU We'd love to. Are we going some place expensive?

NICK My pleasure. It's after midnight, and the dining room is FULL. The MAITRE D' adroitly escorts the foursome to a table that OVERLOOKS THE SEINE and NOTRE DAME. The WINE STEWARD arrives promptly and pours Champagne. Felix raises his glass for a toast.

FELIX

Here's to you, Lucy. Your work is resplendent.

Everyone CLINKS their GLASSES together. Lucy and Nick lock eyes on each other.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT 2:30 A.M.

They're in front of their respective apartment doors. The vibe they had working at dinner is gone. They're avoiding direct eye contact with each other.

MARCEL MARCEAU I don't think it's happening tonight, Slim. I'm going inside.

NICK I had a good time tonight, and thanks for dinner. It was great.

LUCY Thanks for coming. I owe you one.

Nick follows Marcel inside.

INT. NICK'S STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

A minute later, there's a SOFT KNOCK on his DOOR.

LUCY (O.S.) Nick, I'm locked out.

MARCEL MARCEAU The fun never stops here at Chateau Relaxo. I'll be in the bathroom if you need me.

Nick opens the door and lets her in.

NICK Dump everything out of your purse. LUCY I just went through it. My keys aren't in there.

NICK

Dump.

She empties her purse onto the breakfast counter - no keys.

LUCY Can I spend the night? I'll call Bernie in the morning for a key.

NICK

Sure.

He goes to the closet and gets her a hanger for her dress, a T-shirt for her to sleep in, and a toothbrush still hermetically sealed in plastic from his stash.

NICK You can use the bathroom first. Please don't touch anything.

LUCY I'll be careful.

He hangs up his suit, and pulls the bed down from the wall. Lucy comes out of the bathroom and stares at the bed.

> LUCY Should I get in?

NICK Unless you want to give the loveseat a shot.

She looks over at the small loveseat, and then gets in bed. Nick takes his turn in the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

MARCEL MARCEAU For a loser, you do pretty well with women. At least for a while.

NICK Nothing's going to happen. She's locked out. MARCEL MARCEAU What would Freud say about the keys?

NICK Why don't you ask, if you bump into him?

Nick comes out of the bathroom.

LUCY Could you turn off the light? I'm feeling a little self-conscious.

He flicks off the light on his way to bed, gets in, and flips over on his side looking at the palm tree. Then he turns over on his other side and stares at her back. She turns over, and they're eyeball to eyeball.

> LUCY Am I on your side of the bed?

NICK Yeah, I sleep left handed.

LUCY Let's change sides then.

NICK That's okay. I can go without sleep for one night.

LUCY It doesn't matter to me which side I sleep on.

She arches-up like a quilt-covered praying mantis and attempts to pass over him. He scrunches down into the bed and slides under her moving in the opposite direction. The quilt tangles around their legs and torsos in the process and knots them together in the missionary position.

> LUCY I'm stuck.

NICK

Hold on.

He wriggles his arms free, puts them around her body, and rolls them back the other way. Now he's on top.

LUCY Now what? NICK I don't know. LUCY Are we going to do it? I haven't done it in a really long time. NICK Do you think this might be the right time for you? LUCY Is it the right time for you? NICK Lucy, I'm a man. It's the right time for me unless I'm unconscious. LUCY I didn't realize that.

A classically awkward situation.

LUCY Could you rub my back for a while? I'm tense.

NICK We don't have to anything.

LUCY Could you rub my back anyhow?

He gets off of her.

NICK

Flip over.

She rolls over onto her stomach and hikes her shirt up from a prone position. He begins to massage her back.

LUCY Your hands are like sandpaper.

NICK I'll see if I have any hand cream.

He gets out of bed and turns his ankle on one of her shoes. He hobbles into the bathroom, switches on the light, and closes the door. MARCEL MARCEAU Sure sounds like a good time out there.

NICK

I'm ready to get a hotel room! She wouldn't stay on her side of the bed, she booby-trapped the floor, I've probably sprained my ankle, and now I have to give her a massage while she contemplates whether or not we're going to have sex. Is there any hand cream in here?

MARCEL MARCEAU) Look under the sink behind the cleansers.

Nick finds a small pump-bottle of German hand cream. He takes it with him.

MARCEL MARCEAU Now you kids enjoy yourselves, but be careful. You know what can happen when hormones are raging.

INT. BED - CONTINUOUS

He pumps some cream into his hands and rubs them together. It makes a SLURPING NOISE.

LUCY Did I hear you talking in there?

NICK

No! Turn over.

He goes to work on her back, and she is sound asleep a minute later. He admires his hands as if he's performed a miracle with them. He pulls the covers up to her neck and rolls over onto his left side.

INT. APARTMENT MAIN ROOM - DAY

Nick is typing on his laptop, still trying to write his book. Marcel is looking over his shoulder. They both look out the window and see a MAN in a dark suit across the courtyard walk out the back door of an apartment, carrying a

(CONTINUED)

black briefcase and a shovel. They both look at each other, and then stretch their necks closer to the window. The neighbor disappears from view for a minute, and then reappears with only the shovel.

> NICK Did that guy bury a briefcase in his garden?

MARCEL MARCEAU

I think so.

NICK If you were going to bury something outside, why wouldn't you wait until it got dark?

MARCEL MARCEAU Maybe he couldn't wait. What do you think's in the briefcase?

NICK Could be anything. Important papers, a secret formula, money...

MARCEL MARCEAU Chopped up body parts.

They look at each other and then back out the window.

MARCEL MARCEAU Forget the story about the mime stealing bacteria! This is the story you were meant to write. It's destiny!

NICK Slow down. We didn't actually see him bury anything, and if he did, this could be dangerous.

MARCEL MARCEAU Where I come from, shovel + briefcase = buried briefcase. And you're right; you will have to be careful. Maybe we should recruit Lucy to help with the surveillance.

Nick goes next door. They're leaving their doors ajar for each other unless they don't want to be disturbed.

INT. LUCY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS - DAY

NICK You're not going to believe what I just saw.

She spins her painting chair around toward the sound of his voice.

LUCY What'd you see?

NICK

Some guy across the courtyard walked out the back door of an apartment onto a patio carrying a briefcase and shovel. When he went back inside the apartment a minute later, he only had the shovel.

LUCY You're making this up?

He holds up three fingers together.

NICK Scout's honor.

LUCY You saw someone bury a briefcase?

NICK Well, I didn't exactly see him bury it. I lost sight of him for a minute.

LUCY

Show me.

INT. NICK'S P.O.V. - AT WINDOW - CONTINUOUS

NICK See the patio surrounded by the wall, with all the flowers and bushes?

LUCY (O.S.) Yeah. What'd he look like?

MARCEL MARCEAU (O.S.) He was a bald midget with a peg leg, scar on his left cheek, and he (MORE) 51.

(CONTINUED)

MARCEL MARCEAU (O.S.) (cont'd) wore a black eye patch like the Hathaway Man...

NICK (shrugs) I don't know. Average height and weight.

LUCY This has got to be nothing. You can't tell what other people are doing by partially observing one incident from your window.

NICK That's why I want to follow him.

LUCY That's an invasion of privacy.

NICK It's harmless. Help me follow him for a while, and we'll see if he's up to something. You owe me.

LUCY I want to go on record as saying I don't approve of this.

NICK Noted. It's going to be great.

MONTAGE:

1.) Nick and Marcel go into a store.

2.) They come out, carrying handfuls of bags.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Nick is dressed completely in camouflage. He's standing in the big palm tree pot behind the tree, looking through binoculars. Marcel is behind him, wearing a skintight, gold lamae, King Tut body suit.

> MARCEL MARCEAU Anything going on?

NICK A woman is hanging up sheets. MARCEL MARCEAU She's covering up the crime scene. You're going to win a Pulitzer for this story.

INT. LUCY'S APARTMENT - DINNING ROOM - THAT EVENING

Lucy and Nick are eating dinner. Nick is miming gestures of using a camera and binoculars and acting very animated as they eat.

> NICK I'll get up early tomorrow morning and wait for "Briefcase Boy." Then I'll follow him to work. That might reveal something about what's going on. At least we can begin to establish his routine.

> > LUCY

What do you want me to do?

NICK

Help me follow him. We'll establish two vantage points. Maybe one of us will spot something the other one missed.

LUCY You make it sound so exciting. I think I'm getting into it.

They get a decent buzz on during dinner, and one thing leads to another.

LUCY (impetuously) Sleep here tonight!

NICK Uh...okay. I'll just go brush my teeth.

LUCY I'm going to take a quick shower. INT. NICK'S BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Nick's strutting around the room like a rooster. He's got his thumbs under his armpits with his fingers pointing upward, and is flapping his arms like they were wings.

> MARCEL MARCEAU This is embarrassing to watch.

NICK I'm excited. I'm going to have sex in a foreign country.

MARCEL MARCEAU You realize of course, this puts her in position to be the next woman to dump you.

NICK Do you have to break my balls before I have sex with someone?

MARCEL MARCEAU (smiling) Try not to hurt yourself.

INT. LUCY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

She is nervously pacing back-and-forth and biting her nails when Nick returns. She has an orange towel wrapped around her torso and a purple one around her head.

> LUCY My mop takes a long time to dry.

NICK My engine's revving.

LUCY I'll get the hairdryer. Contraception?

NICK

Fertility.

LUCY I didn't mean it as a word association exercise. Did you bring some contraception?

Nick nods, holding up what looks like a single, thick condom pack. He lets it unravel like an ammo belt, revealing about a dozen packs.

LUCY Think that'll be enough?

INT. LUCY'S BED - NIGHT

The relationship is consummated. They are sitting up next to each other with their backs against the pillows. She has the "Wow Look" on her face.

> LUCY I must have been doing it wrong. That was unbelievable! Was it unbelievable for you?

> > NICK

Yes.

LUCY Just yes?! Only yes?!

NICK Yes, it was unbelievable for me, too.

LUCY Let's talk! Tell me something personal that you've never told anyone before.

NICK I don't think this is a good idea.

LUCY Come on, I'll go first. My adoptive mother broke my leg with a baseball bat when I was ten. That's why I walk like a gimp.

NICK

Jesus!

LUCY She broke it in four places. I missed so much school that year they made me repeat the fifth grade.

NICK Why did she hit you?

LUCY She was an abusive drunk. Your turn. NICK I can't do it. LUCY Don't think about it. Just let it rip. Momentary silence, then he blurts out something. NICK I'm incredibly boring, and I have a problem with intimacy. I've come to Paris to have an adventure, and fall in love. LUCY How did that feel? NTCK I don't know I'm still processing it. LUCY You think too much. INT. NICK'S BATHROOM - EARLY NEXT MORNING MARCEL MARCEAU I suppose you're going to regale me with exaggerations of your sexual prowess? NICK Something unexpected happened last night. MARCEL MARCEAU You became a cross-dresser. NICK I lowered my defenses.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING LOBBY - MORNING - 7:15 AM

Nick has on a shoulder length, salt and pepper wig with lamb chop sideburns, and sunglasses. Marcel is dressed as a French sailor. They're sitting in chairs, holding newspapers in front of their faces for cover. The neighbor comes into view at 8:30, carrying a black briefcase. The guys give him some distance, and then follow him to a metro station, down the stairs to the platform, and into a CROWDED TRAIN CAR. They exit the metro a few stations later, and walk a short distance on the Champs-Elysees. The neighbor stops and opens the door to a *bureau de change*.

EXT. CHAMPS-ELYSEES - DAY

MARCEL MARCEAU The plot thickens. Take a picture of his place of business with the address. You need to document everything we see.

Nick takes a camera out of his backpack and photographs the building, and then backs away.

NICK This is so cloak and dagger.

MARCEL MARCEAU It's the real deal, buddy.

NICK (on cell phone) He's is in the currency business.

LUCY This is exciting!

NICK I know. I'll call you if anything happens.

The rate of the euro against all major world currencies, lights up on an electronic tote board, displayed in the front window at 9:30. There is already a SHORT LINE of PEOPLE waiting to get in when he unlocks the door. An hour passes.

> NICK (on cell phone) It's me again.

LUCY What's up?

NICK This is unbelievably tedious.

LUCY Anything I can do?

NICK

In my hall closet is a box of disguises. Put something together for yourself. Then go into my top dresser drawer, and in one of my socks is some U.S. currency. Get twenty bucks and bring it over here.

LUCY Where am I going?

NICK Georges le V. I'll meet you in front of the station.

EXT. GEORGES V METRO STATION - DAY

Lucy walks up to Nick wearing a short denim skirt with a white peasant blouse, and a dark short wig.

LUCY What's the plan, Stan?

MARCEL MARCEAU I like her with short hair. You should ask her to wear that in bed.

NICK Did you bring the money?

She pats the front pocket of her jeans a few times.

NICK (pointing) His shop is right there. Exchange the dollars for euros, and ask what his hours of operation are.

LUCY

Got it.

She's back in a few minutes, and hands him some paper money and change.

LUCY Here. 9:30 to 5:30, and he closes between noon and 1:30 for lunch.

NICK Okay. Let's get some coffee. We'll pick him up before he leaves for lunch.

EXT. CHAMPS-ELYSEES - CAFE PATIO

It's a sunny morning. They're holding hands and sipping small coffees. The Arc de Triomphe is behind them. Everything is everything.

> LUCY What are you thinking about?

He squeezes her hand.

NICK Last night.

EXT. CHAMPS-ELYSEES - NEAR BUREAU DE CHANGE - NOON

The subject hangs a cardboard clock set at 1:30 on the inside of the door. He locks up and walks down the street, away from where Nick and Lucy are standing.

NICK You follow him. I'm going to take some pictures through his windows.

Nick is randomly clicking pictures of the shop though the front window. Marcel is behind him.

MARCEL MARCEAU What are you looking for?

NICK I don't know. Maybe we'll see something interesting after we develop the pictures.

MARCEL MARCEAU Like in "Blowup."

A few minutes later his PHONE RINGS.

LUCY He bought a sandwich, and now it looks like he's heading into Parc Monceau. It's the rue Rembrandt entrance.

NICK On my way. Should I pick up some sandwiches?

LUCY Yes! I'm starving.

Nick buys a couple sandwiches, two small bottles of water, and a micro bag of chips. Then he speed dials his partner.

> NICK Yankee two, this is Yankee one.

MARCEL MARCEAU Give me a break.

LUCY

Take the entrance I said, and follow the footpath to the fountain. There's a bronze statue of a soldier on a horse, surrounded by benches. That's our location.

EXT. PARC MONCEAU - DAY

She's sitting on a bench on the opposite side of the statue from her subject, surveying the grounds through the binoculars. Nick and Marcel sit down next to her.

> NICK Chicken, or ham?

She puts the glasses down.

LUCY

Chicken.

NICK Let me see the glasses.

He checks out the subject, munches on his sandwich, and listens to Lucy describe how beautiful the park is.

Nick's P.O.V.

Someone comes into his focus and sits down on the bench directly behind the subject.

60.

LUCY (with her mouth full) Any napkins?

NICK

In the bag.

He puts the glasses down and looks at her.

NICK Someone just sat down directly behind him.

He takes the napkin off her lap and wipes something off the corner of her mouth, and then puts the napkin back on her lap.

LUCY There's an empty bench right next to his.

NICK Why would you sit directly behind someone, instead of off to the side of them? I'm going to walk past them to try and hear if they're talking to each other.

He strolls nonchalantly around the statue and circles back to their bench.

LUCY

Anything?

NICK No, but they have identical briefcases.

MARCEL MARCEAU It's a switch!

NICK It might be prudent of us to get out of here.

LUCY Remember why you came here.

NICK I can't believe I told you that. MARCEL MARCEAU We need a plan.

NICK (to Lucy) Pose for some pictures by the

statue. I'll focus the camera on you and the briefcase. If anything happens behind you, we'll have pictures of it.

She moves into position and poses provocatively. He removes a telephoto lens from his pack and attaches it to the camera. Then slowly raises it to his eye, focusing on Lucy and the briefcase to the left of the neighbor. The neighbor drops part of his newspaper, and as he bends down to retrieve it, he surreptitiously sets his briefcase on the ground next to the end of the bench, and pushes it behind him. Nick CLICKS the CAMERA several times and begins to SWEAT PROFUSELY. He motions Lucy back and reaches out for her hands, pulling her down onto his lap so they're face-to-face.

> LUCY Why are you so sweaty?

NICK I think I'm having a stroke.

She dabs the perspiration from his forehead with one of the thin paper napkins.

LUCY Did you see anything?

NICK He set his briefcase on the ground next to the bench, and then pushed it behind him.

LUCY What are these guys up to?

NICK

I don't know, but at the risk of sounding cowardly again, we should consider the consequences if they catch us spying on them.

His right eye starts to twitch.

LUCY What's wrong with your eye?

He quickly slaps his left hand over it.

NICK

I have a seizure whenever I'm worried about being killed in a foreign country.

LUCY Do you have any other tics?

NICK None that I'm aware of.

LUCY How long have you had this?

NICK

Lucy, could we please schedule the neurological interview for another time?! These characters might be passing plutonium back and forth!

LUCY Relax. We're just a couple of tourists, eating lunch and admiring the scenery.

NICK (whispers) They switched them.

She spins off his lap to see both men walking away.

LUCY (whispering breathlessly) Quick! Let's follow them! I'll take the new guy!

NICK Wait a second.

LUCY But they're getting away!

NICK Look, I've just experienced a lifetime of exhilaration. Feel free to do whatever you want. MARCEL MARCEAU You're acting like the old, boring Nick. Where's the new, exciting Nick? Go after them!

NICK

(to Marcel)
We don't know who these people are.
They might be killers. I don't want
to get shipped home in a box,
wearing a toe tag.

MARCEL MARCEAU Feels more like white-collar crime to me. I don't think they're killers.

NICK

You don't think, is not an especially reassuring phrase! Just because you don't have anything to loose.

LUCY Are you talking to me?

Marcel leaps up from the bench and breaks into the famous Travis Bickel mirror scene from "Taxi Driver."

MARCEL MARCEAU

"You talkin' to me? You talkin' to me? You talkin' to me? Then who the hell else are you talkin' to. You talkin' to me? Well I'm the only one here. Who the fuck do you think you're talking to. Oh yeah. Ok." I waited my whole life to say that.

NICK

I don't know who I'm talking to, or what I'm talking about, for that matter. I'd like to go home and lie down for a while.

She grabs him by the shoulders and shakes him back and forth.

LUCY I'm on fire! Let's do it right here on the bench!

He removes her hands.

NICK I am not having sex in broad daylight.

MARCEL MARCEAU Might be good for you. You could get a little vitamin D.

Lucy stands up, takes Nick's hands, and pulls him to his feet.

LUCY Then let's go spend some money! I need everything!

INT. EXCLUSIVE BOUTIQUE - AVE. MONTAINGE - DAY

A snobby, smartly dressed SALESWOMAN sneers at Lucy with disdain when she enters, but when she flashes her platinum credit card, there's an instant attitude adjustment.

LUCY (in French) Show me everything you have in my size.

SALESWOMAN

Oui, madame.

Nick sits down in an armchair, and Marcel sits on one of the arms. The saleswoman leads Lucy around to different racks of clothing where they scoop up as many garments as they can carry.

MONTAGE:

1.) She models short skirts, tight dresses, designer jeans and tailored slacks.

INT. CHANGING ROOM IN BACK - DAY

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LUCY
(projecting)
Nick.
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INTERCUT:

NICK (O.S.)

Yes.

LUCY Come_back here.

He's just outside the changing room.

NICK What can I do for you?

LUCY (whispers) Come inside and close the door.

NICK Please don't start this again. Just get dressed, and let's get out of here.

He kisses her patronizingly on the forehead and nervously strides outside to wait.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS - DAY

MARCEL MARCEAU This woman has very active hormones.

NICK Tell me about it. This could be a very strenuous couple of weeks.

Lucy comes out with her arms loaded with bags.

LUCY I can't stop thinking about sex. You've turned me into a nympho.

NICK After one night?

LUCY Something happened to me last night. I don't feel the same.

MARCEL MARCEAU Could be something she ate.

LUCY I'm going to get my hair cut.

NICK I'm going home to write. Let's meet near the *bureau* at 5:15. LUCY Can you take these with you?

She hands him all her bags, and then cradles his face with both hands and kisses him on the lips.

LUCY I'm very glad you moved in next door.

EXT. NEAR THE BUREAU DE CHANGE - 5:15 P.M.

Lucy has acquired a lot more bags. Her hands and arms are full again. She holds her arms out to Nick.

LUCY Take some of these; my arms are breaking.

He takes half the bags.

MARCEL MARCEAU She's not in condition for all this shopping. Maybe she should join a gym.

At 5:30 the neighbor turns off the lights and locks up. They follow him across the street to a bank, and then into the metro for the ride home.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Nick, Lucy, and Marcel are sitting in a small booth eating. Lucy is now sporting a jet black, Cleopatra hair style.

> NICK I've thought of a plan to meet Briefcase Boy.

LUCY Let's hear it.

NICK Okay. We know he gets home between 6:15 and 6:30. What if we were to plant you in front of the lobby door at 6:10 with too many art supplies for you to carry? LUCY You want me to meet him?

NICK Yeah. You're going to seduce him.

LUCY You're joking.

NICK Nope. Wear that new black spandex dress with some pumps, and put on some warpaint.

An older, heavyset WAITER with curly gray hair and a handlebar mustache brings their next course. Lucy leans across the table after the waiter leaves.

LUCY

(sotto) I've never seduced anyone.

NICK

You won't have to do much. Your porno star body stuffed inside that little black dress will do most of the work.

LUCY I don't think this plan is going to work.

NICK

Oh, it'll work. I'm going to let you in on a secret that men are never supposed to reveal to women.

Lucy looks intently at Nick. She puts her elbows on the table and rests her chin on her fists.

NICK

When we see women with bodies like yours, wearing clothing that looks like it's been spray-painted on, we instantly lose fifty IQ points.

LUCY

What do I say to him?

NICK

Innocently ask if he could help you get your stuff inside. I guarantee he will carry everything up to your (MORE) NICK (cont'd) apartment for you. Then make some small talk, like you're meeting someone for the first time. Introduce yourself, ask him what apartment he lives in...

LUCY What was in the briefcase you buried in your backyard?

NICK I don't think that should be one of the questions.

LUCY All right; we've met. Now what?

NICK

Best case scenario; he invites you over for a drink sometime. If he doesn't, we'll think of a contingency plan.

LUCY

It won't work. He won't carry my stuff upstairs. He lives on the ground floor.

NICK Trust me. He'll carry your stuff to Brussels if you want him to. You're going to be on a first name basis with him by 6:30 p.m. on Monday.

INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY - NIGHT

They're returning home after dinner. Nick hears his ANSWERING MACHINE BEEPING.

NICK I'll be over in a minute.

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

ZACK (on machine) Nick, it's Zack. Are you relaxing? How are things in the City of Light? You better be getting out of the apartment once and a while. Did (MORE) ZACK (cont'd) I tell you it's the most beautiful city in the world! And how 'bout those French women? Listen bro, I need you to send me something from the mime story pretty pronto. I can't hold these guys off much longer. But hey, no pressure. Just relax, have a good time, and write. Text me, or something when you can.

NICK Slight change of plans, Zack. There's a better story brewing.

INT. COURTYARD - IN FRONT OF LOBBY - EVENING

Love ya, babe. Ciao.

Lucy and the art supplies are in place. The neighbor comes into the lobby, and sees a damsel in distress in a little black dress. He offers to help her with her things.

INTERCUT:

Nick and Marcel are upstairs in the studio pacing the floor. At 6:25 they hear Lucy TALKING to someone as she SQUEAKS opens the DOOR to her apartment. The guys listen through the wall with a drinking glass next to their ears. After the neighbor helps her take everything inside, she walks him to the door and thanks him. She closes the door and waits for a minute before going next door.

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - EVENING

NICK Translate every syllable!

LUCY It went exactly like you said it would!

NICK What's his name?

She hands him a business card.

LUCY Robert Bley. NICK I told you, you could do it.

MARCEL MARCEAU This is like the "The Sting." We're playing the big con.

She's beaming from the accomplishment. Nick pulls her down onto the loveseat.

NICK (CONTD) Where'd you leave it with him?

LUCY I'm having cocktails on the patio tomorrow night.

NICK/MARCEL TOMORROW FUCKING-NIGHT?!

NICK This is incredible! I should be in espionage.

LUCY By the way, he couldn't take his eyes off my dress.

NICK It's what's stuffed inside the dress that hooked him. I want to tear it off of you!

MARCEL MARCEAU I can practically smell the testosterone in here.

MONTAGE: Next Day

1.) Nick and Marcel tail Robert Bley to work.

2.) They tail him to the park for lunch.

3.) They tail him to the bank after he closes.

4.) They tail him back home.

INT. LUCY'S APARTMNT - EARLY EVENING

NICK What time do you go over for cocktails tonight?

LUCY

7:30.

NICK I got you something for the occasion.

LUCY

What?

He hands her a brown, Louis Vuitton-style purse.

LUCY Thanks, but I don't carry a purse.

NICK There's a digital, spy camera built into this purse.

MARCEL MARCEAU Bond. Jane Bond.

He opens it to show her the camera inside, slips his shoulder through the straps, and tucks it under his arm for a demonstration. He moves it around.

> NICK Point the edge of the bag at your subject, and squeeze it with your arm.

LUCY Let me try it.

He hands her the purse.

NICK This significantly increases things in the danger department. Are you sure you're up for it?

LUCY

Absolutely!

Lucy subtly squeezes the purse with her arm.

NICK

Looks good. Here's the strategy: Try to be as observant as possible, but keep it natural looking. Compliment them on the flowers, and ask for a tour of the garden. Only take pictures of something that looks suspicious. The less arm movement, the better. If you have any doubts about using the camera; don't!

LUCY

Check.

NICK It might also be smart to check for a security camera while you're there.

LUCY

Why?

NICK In case we take the next step in this caper. Let's also make this a short visit. Check it out, and then get out of there.

LUCY

Okay.

NICK

I'll be watching you through the binoculars, and I'll call if something doesn't look right to me.

MARCEL MARCEAU One very important, last thing: Never wear black shoes with that bag.

Nick and Lucy kiss good-bye more times than normal.

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Nick's wearing his camouflage outfit with dark face paint, standing in the palm tree pot. He's looking through the binoculars. Marcel is behind him. They both take DEEP BREATHS and let them out simultaneously.

NICK'S P.O.V.

73.

(CONTINUED)

Robert and MARIE, his wife, are sitting opposite Lucy who's facing Nick's apartment. The purse is on the ground next to her. They're all holding glasses of white wine and chatting.

MARCEL MARCEAU What's going on? This is nerve-racking.

NICK Nothing. They're just sipping wine and talking.

Robert's CELL PHONE RINGS. He stands, and goes inside the apartment with it pressed to his ear. Marie and Lucy get up, and begin a touching and smelling botanical tour around the patio.

> NICK Here we go. The woman is showing Lucy around the garden.

MARCEL MARCEAU Where's Robert?

NICK

Inside.

MARCEL MARCEAU How's she doing?

NICK I can't see her arm moving at all.

Robert comes back outside with a bottle of wine, and joins the women. He refills everyone's glasses.

MARCEL MARCEAU Should we reel her back in?

NICK Not yet. I want her to look for a camera.

MARCEL MARCEAU What about a dog?

NICK We would have probably seen it.

The tour finishes, and they sit back down. Lucy tilts her head and holds up her pinky finger near her lips and her thumb to her ear. NICK She just gave me a signal to call her.

He speed dials her and talks, while continuing to focus through the binoculars.

LUCY

Allo.

NICK You we're born to be a spy.

LUCY

Thanks.

NICK Were you taking pictures of the yard?

LUCY

Yes.

NICK See anything suspicious?

LUCY

Yes.

NICK When you look for a security camera, check the roof, too. Oh, and look for any sign of a dog.

LUCY

Okay.

NICK Come home soon. I miss you.

LUCY I will. Gotta go.

MARCEL MARCEAU Have you ever told a woman you missed her?

NICK I don't think so. INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Nick and Lucy are standing behind the palm tree. Nick's got the binoculars, and Lucy's pointing. Marcel is slouching on the loveseat.

LUCY There's a decent size patch of dirt half-way down the fence that faces your apartment, that definitely looked different from the rest of the garden. Let's dig it up!

Marcel sits up straight.

MARCEL MARCEAU "Danger, Will Robinson! Danger!

NICK

Slow down.

LUCY

We're never going to know what's really going on unless we get our hands on one of these briefcases.

MARCEL MARCEAU She's right, but don't be impulsive.

NICK Did you see anything resembling a camera?

LUCY

No.

NICK Okay, we'll dig it up.

LUCY

When?

NICK As soon as we have a foolproof plan.

LUCY Shake on it!

She spits on her hand, and extends it. Nick looks at Marcel.

MARCEL MARCEAU What's the worst that could happen? A little hoof and mouth, maybe. Do you go to a dentist, or a podiatrist for that?

LUCY Put it there, partner.

NICK How 'bout if I give you my word.

LUCY Spit on your hand, and shake.

He reluctantly does it.

MARCEL MARCEAU If I didn't see it with my own eyes, I wouldn't believe it.

INT. LUCY'S APARTMENT - MORNING

She's painting in her chair. Nick leans over the side of the bed looking down at her.

NICK (groggy) Morning.

LUCY No sex last night.

NICK (yawning) You were asleep when I finished writing.

LUCY Why didn't you wake me?

He lays back down, clenches his eyes shut, and presses both palms against his forehead.

LUCY Has the novelty of doing it with a crippled girl worn off?

NICK That does it!

He chucks off the comforter, climbs down the ladder, and stands with his hands on his hips to the side of the easel.

NICK

You better prepare yourself for the reality that people don't have sex every time they sleep together. Additionally, the idea of waking you at 1:30 in the morning to have sex is <u>ludicrous</u>! And one final thing: <u>Never</u> torture me about anything, first thing in the morning!

She's smiling. He follows her sight line and sees that his boxer shorts are displaying some morning virility.

LUCY Can I ask you something?

NICK (huffy) What?

LUCY How can you walk like that.

EXT. PARC MONCEAU - NEXT DAY - NOON

Nick is disguised as a mail carrier and Marcel as a park ranger. They re waiting on their usual bench for Robert to arrive, which he does a few minutes later. Shortly after, he's joined by an attractive REDHEAD (30), who sits on his lap sidesaddle. They peck at each other's lips, and progress to a full-scale make out and grope-fest. Then the woman stands, smooths her clothes, and leaves. Robert goes back to reading his paper like she was never there. Nick and Marcel look at each other.

> NICK What'd we miss?

MARCEL MARCEAU I don't know. Let's follow her.

INT. RITZ HOTEL - DAY

She goes inside the hotel, and enters a room marked "Employees." The guys sit down on a sofa in the luxurious lobby and share a Herald Tribune from the coffee table for cover. GUESTS are coming and going. MARCEL MARCEAU We're not dressed right for this place.

NICK Let's wait for Red to surface.

The woman reappears a few minutes later as a brunette, wearing a navy dress with red piping and a little scripted red "R" on the collar. She takes her place at the concierge station.

NICK (CONT'D) So now we've seen three players. One buried a briefcase, two switched briefcases with each other, and the third did something so smoothly that we missed it.

MARCEL MARCEAU Would you like to try and solve the puzzle, or do you want to spin the wheel?

INT. JEWELRY STORE - SAINT-GERMAIN-DES PRES - DAY

Nick is browsing the cases for a gift. A sophisticated looking SALESWOMAN approaches him.

SALESWOMAN Bonjour, monsieur.

NICK (in French) Is there anyone here that speaks English?

SALESWOMAN I speak English, sir.

NICK Good. I'm looking for a gift for a woman. I want it to be a token of my affection, but not of my commitment.

This is the first time she has ever heard those words in any language, but she is unflappable.

SALESWOMAN Perhaps an ankle bracelet. This way. She leads him to a glass case, slides open the back panel, and reaches inside for a black velvet display tray. She puts it on top of the case.

> NICK I think these say what I'm trying to communicate.

The woman nods.

NICK (pointing) That one please.

SALESWOMAN Shall I gift-wrap it for you?

NICK It won't be necessary.

EXT. RUE DE RENNES - DAY

Nick is staring in a lingerie shop window at an anatomically correct female mannequin. She is modeling leopard spotted underwear. He takes the little jewelery box out of his sport coat pocket, looks at it, and turns it over in his hand.

> NICK Underwear is perfect. It's intimate, yet noncommittal.

INT. LUCY'S APARTMENT - DAY

She's painting in front of the easel. Nick holds a bag from the lingerie shop behind his back, and leans over her shoulder to kiss her on the cheek.

> LUCY What was Robert up to today?

NICK He was putting the moves on a redhead in the park.

She spins around on her chair.

LUCY You're <u>kidding</u>?! NICK Nope. She's a concierge at the Ritz, where she's a brunette.

LUCY Did he come back home after work?

NICK I didn't follow him.

LUCY What'd you do?

NICK I went shopping. Here.

He holds out the bag. She stands up and hugs him carefully so as to not get paint on his sport jacket.

> LUCY I wonder what could be inside a bag with an underwear logo?

NICK Might be patio furniture.

She removes two sets of demi-bras and thongs. One has leopard spots, the other has tiger stripes.

LUCY Why, it's underwear!

She checks the tags.

LUCY And the right size.

MARCEL MARCEAU They're from the Seigfried and Roy collection.

She gives him a peck on the lips, and then tosses the bag of lingerie onto the dining room table.

LUCY What's the occasion?

NICK You seemed a little concerned about my interest level this morning, so I bought you a sexy gift. INT. LUCY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

NICK I'm going to write next door for a while. Should I wake you when I'm finished?

LUCY That's okay. I know you love me.

INT. NICK'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

NICK We're at the "L" word already.

MARCEL MARCEAU

Attention! Attention! Is there a doctor in the house?! Please report to the psychiatric ward with a 1000 cc's of Thorazine.

NICK

Very amusing.

MARCEL MARCEAU

Maybe you should take a long nap to escape? That's what you usually do when you're having intimacy issues.

NICK I care for her. I don't why, but I do.

MARCEL MARCEAU You guys have made a connection. Leaving is going to be complicated.

NICK

Yeah.

Nick opens the medicine cabinet and removes the ankle bracelet hidden there. His face is scrunched up.

> MARCEL MARCEAU Well, either give it to her, or take it back.

> > NICK

Yeah.

MARCEL MARCEAU It's not an engagement ring.

NICK

I know.

He obtains a flashlight from the other room, and creeps next door like a thief in the night.

INT. LUCY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

He stealthily scales the ladder up to Lucy's bed and pulls back the comforter up to the shin of her right leg. Then he directs the light at the jewelery box and removes the bracelet. She feels around with her leg for the missing cover. He struggles a little getting the bracelet latched around her ankle, but manages it without waking her. Then he covers up her exposed leg, slides up to the pillows, and kisses her lightly on the cheek.

> NICK (sotto) It's just a gift; no big deal.

EXT. STREET - MORNING

Nick is disguised as an Bavarian mountain climber, wearing lederhosen, etc. Marcel is dressed as a French sailor. They follow Robert to the bank he normally stops at after work. When he revolves through the front door back onto the street, he has a brown leather satchel slung over one of his shoulders in addition to his usual black briefcase.

> NICK This can only mean one thing.

MARCEL MARCEAU He's going to give one to somebody.

Nick speed dials Lucy.

NICK Good morning.

LUCY Nick, I love it! You were so clever to put it on me while I was asleep.

NICK I'm anxious to see it on you. Listen, put on a disguise and meet me in the park by the statue before noon. LUCY What's up? NICK Robert stopped at the bank this morning before opening the shop, and came out with a brown leather satchel. I think he might pass it to somebody. LUCY Are you going to comeback here before lunch? NICK No, I'm going to stay on him in case he hands it off to someone over here. LUCY I'll see you in the park. Nick and Marcel hang closer than normal to the bureau de change, so they don't miss a hand off. They focus attentively on the door, but nothing unusual happens. Robert hangs the clock on the door at noon, and carries his briefcase and new satchel to his regular sandwich shop.

> NICK (on phone) We're on our way. Keep your eyes open.

LUCY I'm ready.

EXT. PARC MONCEAU - DAY

Nick and Marcel join Lucy on their observation bench. She snaps the straps holding up his shorts.

LUCY You look so cute in that little outfit. MARCEL MARCEAU Why don't you yodel for her?

NICK Make fun if you want, but no one is ever going to recognize me.

MARCEL MARCEAU No one knew who you were to begin with.

Robert comes into view, and takes his usual bench. Nick gets the binoculars from his pack.

NICK'S P.O.V.

The concierge comes into view, and sits down on Robert's lap.

LUCY What a pig! Why do you guys get married, if you want to screw around?!

She shoves Nick with both hands, knocking the binoculars away from his face.

NICK What is wrong with you?! You could have put my eyes out!

LUCY Why are all men pigs?!

He resumes the surveillance.

MARCEL MARCEAU I blame the orgasm. It puts so much pressure on everyone.

NICK Something seems different about this today. It's stiff. Wait, she's worked the strap of the satchel onto her shoulder.

The concierge gets up and leaves with the satchel.

NICK Stay with him. I'll follow her.

He gives her a head start, follows her for a short distance, and then returns.

LUCY

What?

NICK Show me the bracelet.

She pulls her pant leg up and turns her hip inward flexing the calf muscle. Nick gets down on his knees in front of her and kisses her ankle just below the chain.

> LUCY You're such a stud.

He and Marcel close the gap on the concierge and shadow her to a metro station. They slip into the train car with her. A few stations later they exit the metro, and she walks briskly with the satchel swinging on her shoulder. Finally she goes into the Bulgarian Consulate. Nick and Marcel cross to the other side of the street, and wait on the sidewalk by the curb.

MARCEL MARCEAU

Take out your map, and turn it upside down like a lost tourist. Someone might be watching.

NICK

Good idea.

A minute later a TAXI SCREECHES to a halt in front of the consulate. Red streaks out of the building without the satchel, jumps in the taxi, and they ZOOM off.

NICK

What are they up to?

MARCEL MARCEAU Money laundering maybe. Robert's got a cash business.

NICK How does Bulgaria figure into this equation?

MARCEL MARCEAU Got me. I say we just focus on Robert. He's the linchpin. We need to see what's inside the briefcase he buried. INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - DAY

Nick's sprawled out on the loveseat, Marcel's sitting at the counter. Lucy enters, and sits down next to Nick. She pushes some hair out of his eyes.

NICK It's time to dig up the briefcase.

LUCY

Great!

NICK Can you invite them to be your guests at the gallery for a private showing?

LUCY

Sure.

MARCEL MARCEAU Good plan, Brainiac.

NICK

I'll download the pictures you took of the patio to my laptop, so I know exactly where to dig. The whole thing should only take a few minutes. How high's the fence?

LUCY About five feet. I could see over the top of it.

Marcel stands up, and mimes climbing over a wall and digging in the ground until he finds something with a handle.

> NICK Why am I doing this again?

LUCY Because it will assure your book of becoming a bestseller.

NICK Hope I don't get the award posthumously.

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - DAY

Nick is downloading the shots Lucy took to his laptop. She's looking over his shoulder.

LUCY There! See how that patch of dirt looks different?

NICK Yeah. That's got to be where it is. Okay. Give 'em a call, and find out what night they're free.

INT. LOBBY RITZ HOTEL - DAY

Nick and Marcel are sitting on a sofa reading a newspaper. Nick is wearing a beret, rubber nose, black horn-rim glasses, and a fake mustache. Marcel is dressed in an airplane pilot uniform. GUESTS are coming and going.

> MARCEL MARCEAU We're wasting our time here.

NICK Humor me, will you? She's going to be one of the characters in my book. I'm researching her.

At 9:00 a.m. their subject takes her position behind the desk. At 11:59 a.m. she goes to the employee room to change her uniform and hair color. She walks out the side door of the hotel with a folded newspaper under her arm onto Place Vendome, and then walks a few blocks to a CROWDED rue de Rivoli. The guys are right behind her. A MAN in a suit passes her going the opposite direction, and they exchange folded newspapers.

NICK Did you see that?! These guys are all James Bond. You know what's going to happen, if they catch me digging in Robert's yard?

MARCEL MARCEAU Torture's the first answer that pops into my mind.

NICK That's right. They'll torture me to find out what I know. I have an extremely low pain threshold! I'll sing like a canary.

MARCEL MARCEAU

"Is it safe?" "I don't know what you mean. I can't tell you if something's safe or not, unless I know specifically what you're talking about." "Is it safe?"

NICK

That could be me, for real! I need to go back to the apartment, and think about all of this. I don't want to die over here.

MARCEL MARCEAU What's the difference where you die?

NICK I didn't mean it in the existentialist sense; I don't want to die <u>anywhere</u> yet!

MARCEL MARCEAU

Don't worry. You have cunning, cleverness, and guile on your side. (beat) Of course, they're seasoned professionals, possibly killers, and might be protected by diplomatic immunity.

NICK

Why don't I feel encouraged by that?

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

After showering, Nick wraps himself in a bath sheet and leans forward toward the mirror, resting his palms backwards on the sink.

MARCEL MARCEAU Feeling better?

NICK

I'm scared.

MARCEL MARCEAU

That's normal. It's a momentous night, an uber night, a preternatural...

NICK Okay, I get it. It's a big night.

MARCEL MARCEAU Stay loose. Maybe try some laughing exercises. Try this with your head back: Ha, ha, ha...

Lucy busts through the door, SCREAMING.

LUCY Caught you, you pig! Where is she?!

Nick jumps back out of fright. She SNAPS open the SHOWER CURTAIN and looks in the tub.

NICK What is your major malfunction?

LUCY I distinctly heard you talking and laughing with someone in here! Don't try and deny it!

MARCEL MARCEAU It's the moment of truth. This is when the matador draws his sword on the bull. The tension is palpable here tonight, sports fans. But, will he tell her? Can he tell her? The crowd chants, "The truth will set you free!"

NICK (to Marcel) Will you stop it, please?

LUCY Who'd you say that to?

NICK (pause) Marcel Marceau.

LUCY You may have noticed, I'm not laughing.

MARCEL MARCEAU Have you heard the one about the Pope and the Dali Lama that go into a Jewish delicatessen for lunch... NICK I see and talk to Marcel Marceau.

LUCY The mime? (beat) The dead mime? I'm sleeping with someone that talks to dead people?

MARCEL MARCEAU How do you think it's going so far?

NICK He isn't a dead person in this situation. I invented him.

She sits on the ledge of the tub.

LUCY Thanks for clarifying. For a second there, I thought it was something abnormal.

MARCEL MARCEAU She's giving you "the tone." Did you hear it? Very bad sign.

LUCY When we're you planning on telling me about this?

NICK I guess, I wasn't.

LUCY You weren't going to tell me?!

MARCEL MARCEAU That was a trick question. You were going to miss that one no matter how you answered it.

NICK I didn't think you would understand. I don't even understand it.

LUCY How frequently do you talk to him?

NICK/MARCEL (over one another) Hardly ever./Everyday. LUCY Where is he?

NICK In the mirror.

She stands up and looks in the mirror.

LUCY

Hi.

MARCEL MARCEAU (Brooklyn accent) How ya doin'?

She turns to Nick.

LUCY I always thought he was incredibly talented.

NICK Everyone says that.

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Nick and Marcel are dressed in black shoes, black jeans, and black turtlenecks. Nick looks out the window toward the sky. It's an overcast night. Lucy enters the apartment, wearing her little black dress. She walks up to Nick and spins around.

> LUCY Can you zip me?

NICK What time are they meeting you at the gallery?

LUCY Nine o'clock. I've got a waiter to pour champagne and pass hors d' oeuvres first.

NICK Perfect. It'll be pitch-black out by then.

LUCY How are you? NICK I'm nervous. Call me when they arrive, and don't let either one of them out of your sight for a second.

LUCY Okay. Good luck.

They embrace, and then she exits. Nick CLUNKS a duffel bag of supplies onto the counter.

NICK Let's double check our equipment.

He removes the contents of the bag, one item at a time.

NICK (CONT'D)

Mountain climbing pick, collapsible military shovel, wire cutter, rope, lock-picking set, miner's helmet with light, gloves, ninja mask, flashlight, jar of Tang and water bottle.

MARCEL MARCEAU Want to check the location one more time?

NICK I could find it with my eyes closed.

MARCEL MARCEAU Let's try and relax until she calls.

They both sit ramrod erect on the loveseat. Nick has his hands intertwined behind his neck, and Marcel's arms are folded across his chest. Nick's CELL PHONE RINGS, launching them to their feet.

> LUCY (on phone) They just walked in. Call me when it's done. I love you, Nick.

> > NICK

Ditto.

MARCEL MARCEAU Did you just cryptically say you loved her also in a way that guys (MORE) MARCEL MARCEAU (cont'd) do when someone's listening to their conversation?

NICK I just said ditto; that's all.

MARCEL MARCEAU You did tell her you loved her.

NICK Did you hear me say it.

MARCEL MARCEAU You implied it.

NICK Do we have to discuss it right now? Let's get this thing done and get back, before I have a heart attack.

Marcel pumps both fists.

MARCEL MARCEAU

Hoorah!

EXT. OUTSIDE THE NEIGHBOR'S FENCE - NIGHT

Nick and Marcel are crouched next to the wall. Nick removes the gloves and mask from his pack, and puts them on. Then he springs on top of the wall into a frog crouch. He glances around.

NICK

Hand me the bag.

He rifles through it, and extracts the flashlight. He aims it below him, turns it on, and then off immediately.

MARCEL MARCEAU

Ready?

NICK

I guess.

Nick drops his bag over the garden onto the patio. It THUDS when it hits the bricks. He jumps down next to the bag like a cat burglar, and rolls one time when he hits. He's back in the same crouch with both palms on the ground in front of him. Marcel is standing behind him. Nick opens the bag, and lays out the contents silently onto the patio. He puts on the helmet, and turns on the light. He starts with the pick. NICK The ground's soft. Give me the shovel.

He starts digging.

MARCEL MARCEAU I just can't get over that ditto thing. Have you ever told anyone you loved them.

NICK No, and I didn't tell it to Lucy either.

MARCEL MARCEAU How much do you want to bet she thinks that's what you meant?

NICK Look, it just came out in response to her saying it to me. It would have been rude to not say something.

MARCEL MARCEAU Admit it. You're in love with her.

Nick stops digging, and turns to Marcel.

NICK Could we please try and keep our eye on the ball? If I get caught back here, I'm going to get a manicure with a pair of pliers. How far down can this thing be?

MARCEL MARCEAU Maybe it's the wrong spot.

NICK It's the right spot!

MARCEL MARCEAU Maybe he dug it up.

Nick stops digging for a moment.

NICK I feel something.

He squirms into the hole headfirst up to his waist. He digs his toes into the patio brick, and shimmies his body out of the hole backwards, holding the briefcase by the handle with both hands. He turns around and PLOPS it on the ground.

MARCEL MARCEAU

You got it!

Nick takes off his helmet and kills the light. They're staring at it in the dark.

MARCEL MARCEAU I guess we should open it.

Nick tries to unhinge the clasp.

NICK It's locked.

Nick reaches for the lock-picking set of tools next to the bag. He jiggles it and pops the lock. Then he opens the briefcase, reaches inside with a gloved hand, and pulls out a small, but heavy, rectangular, metal plate. He sets it on the ground.

NICK Shine the light on it.

Marcel scans it from one end to the other, and then back again. He turns off the light.

MARCEL MARCEAU It's a twenty euro-note plate.

Nick reaches in the bag, pulls out five more plates, and sets them next to the first one.

MARCEL MARCEAU (CONTD) He's a counterfeiter. He's passing phony money through his currency business.

NICK

Why did he bury these things? Why not keep them in a safety deposit box?

MARCEL MARCEAU You can get a safety deposit box opened with a court order. But if the authorities search your apartment, they might not dig up your garden. NICK What do we do now?

MARCEL MARCEAU Either take the plates to the authorities, in which case, we'll have to explain how we got them, or put them back into the briefcase and rebury it.

NICK I'm putting them back. This is too dangerous.

He repacks and locks the briefcase, turns, and lowers it back into the hole. Then he scoops all the dug up earth back on top, and TAMPS it down with the back of the SHOVEL.

> NICK Give me the flashlight.

He shines it where he was working.

NICK How's it look?

MARCEL MARCEAU Stomp around on it.

Nick marches around on the spot, and then shines the light on it again.

NICK

Let's go.

MARCEL MARCEAU Let's tunnel out, like in "The Great Escape."

NICK

I'm leaving.

He gently drops the case and bag of tools over the fence, and then bar vaults onto the other side from a crouching position.

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Lucy charges into the apartment. She's amped-up. Nick and Marcel are subdued.

LUCY Did you get it?! Was it exciting?! MARCEL MARCEAU No, and yes. NICK I dug it up, looked inside, and put it back? LUCY What was in it?! NICK Counterfeit euro-note plates. LUCY Let's call the cops! He'll get twenty years. MARCEL MARCEAU More like a fine and three to five, max. NICK We can't. I got the information illegally. LUCY We could call in an anonymous tip from a pay phone. NICK They're not going to dig up his yard without evidence of a crime. There's SILENCE while they mull over the dilemma. LUCY (excited) I know. We could buy some phony money from him... MARCEL MARCEAU Turn it over to the cops as evidence... NICK And then call in an anonymous tip from a pay phone.

99.

INT. BUREAU DE CHANGE - DAY

Robert is behind the cashiers glass window. Nick shuffles in slowly, disguised as an old Hassidic Jew. He shambles up to the window and talks through the little baffled opening in the glass.

NICK

(thick Jewish accent)
I vould like to buy a hundred
dollars of euros, sonny boy. One
fifty, two tventys, and two fives,
if it vouldn't be too much trouble.

ROBERT

\$147.12, monsieur.

Nick slips \$150.00 through the slot under the window. Robert counts off the euros from separate denomination packs of bills, and slips them through the window slot. Nick slowly counts the money, and then puts it in his wallet.

NICK

Thank you, boychick. Can you tell me vere I can find a kosher restaurant in this treyfedicka town?

ROBERT

Perhaps in le Marais, monsieur.

NICK

Thank you.

He waves feebly, turns, and slowly makes his way out the door.

EXT. BUREAU DE CHANGE - CONTINUOUS

When he turns past the window out of sight, he resumes his usual gait. Lucy and Marcel are waiting at the metro station entrance of Georges V.

NICK

Got 'em!

LUCY Let's take the bills to Banc de France to be examined. MARCEL MARCEAU It's a good idea, Rabbi. If they ain't bogus, we're back to square one.

INT. BANC DE FRANCE - DAY

They walk into the bank, and approach a WOMAN, wearing a smart three-piece, pinstripe suit. Lucy has the money acquired from Robert.

LUCY (in French) Good afternoon. Is there a way we can check the authenticity of these notes.

WOMAN (in French) Yes, of course.

She goes inside an office, and returns with a document-size manila envelope and form.

WOMAN (CONT') Fill out the form, and put it in this envelope with the money. We will contact you within forty-eight hours.

LUCY (to Nick) Takes two days.

NICK For six bills? Don't they have a machine that can scan them?

Lucy inquires.

LUCY (to Nick)

No.

NICK Okay. Let's leave 'em.

Lucy fills out the form, puts it in the envelope with the money, and gives it to the woman.

SUPERIMPOSE ON SCREEN: TWO DAYS LATER

INT. BANC DE FRANCE - OFFICE - DAY

Lucy, Nick, and Marcel, have an audience with a serious looking MAN in a dark suit. He hands Nick some notes.

CURRENCY OFFICER The tens and twenty are counterfeit, *monsieur*. Where did you get them?

MARCEL MARCEAU Tell him you don't remember!

LUCY

We...

Nick cuts her off, and takes her hand.

NICK

I don't remember. We've been doing so much shopping and money exchanging since we got here.

CURRENCY OFFICER (suspicious) Of course. So many places. May I inquire as to why you thought this money might be counterfeit. Did anyone question the notes?

MARCEL MARCEAU Careful. He's trying to trip you up.

NICK No. I was reading an article on the internet about the counterfeit euro problem that has developed in the last few years, and out of curiosity, I thought we would check these notes.

CURRENCY OFFICER Curiosity.

NICK

Ye, yes.

The man folds his hands together, and rests his elbows on the desk.

CURRENCY OFFICER Monsieur, perhaps you are not aware that not coming forth with information about a crime in France, is itself a crime.

MARCEL MARCEAU

"Welcome to the Penal Colony...of French Guiana...whose prisoners you are...and from which there is no escape. First attempt at escapes...add two years of solitary to existing sentences. Second attempts, add five more."

Nick's right eye starts to twitch. He closes it in an attempt to look less affected.

CURRENCY OFFICER Your eye, *monsieur*?

LUCY

He's fine. We better get you back to the hotel, dear, so you can take your medication. He has a slight neurological disorder. Nothing serious.

CURRENCY OFFICER Where are you staying?

LUCY

The Ritz.

CURRENCY OFFICER

Very nice.

He takes a card from a holder on the desk, and gives it to Nick.

CURRENCY OFFICER (CONT'D) If you can remember where you may have acquired the money, *monsieur*, my number is on that card. Enjoy your stay in Paris.

NICK Thank you. I...we will.

They practically sprint out of the bank.

INT. LUCY'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Nick and Lucy are eating dinner at the dining room table.

LUCY That guy didn't believe anything we said.

NICK

If we phone in an anonymous tip to him, he's going to know it's us, and then it's going to be bamboo shoots under the fingernails until I admit to digging up the plates. Then I'll be off to a penal colony somewhere.

LUCY A penile colony? Can I come with you?

NICK How droll.

LUCY

Maybe you should just tell him the truth. He'll probably thank you for helping him bust Robert and his gang. You might even receive a commendation from the EU.

MARCEL MARCEAU

Or maybe life's a crazy, mixed up journey that started with writer's block, and finishes by uniting you with your true soul mate in a French prison.

NICK

I'm surrounded by comedians.

They hear POLICE SIRENS, getting closer and closer. Then they stop. REFLECTIONS OF RED WHIRLING LIGHTS are ricocheting off the inside of the apartment. Nick and Marcel walk to the window. COPS have set up a perimeter in front of the building, and are pouring into the courtyard like ants.

> NICK There's enough cops out here to take a small country into custody.

Lucy joins him at the window.

LUCY Maybe they're capturing a terrorist.

MARCEL MARCEAU Let's go down there!

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

They're just outside the door. TWO SWAT TEAM COPS dressed in full-combat gear gesture them back inside with a wave of their rifles.

INT. APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

They return to the window.

NICK The whole building's under siege.

Marcel WHISTLES "La Marseillaise," while SIX SWAT TEAM members escort TWO handcuffed PERPS out of the apartment building onto the street.

LUCY It's Robert and Marie!

The cops load them into a paddy wagon, and TEAR OFF.

INT. LUCY'S BATHROOM - AFTERNOON

Nick's sitting on the toilet seat in the "Thinker Position." Lucy is taking a shower and doesn't realize he's there. He looks up at the schools of multi-colored fish on the shower curtain that she's elbowing in an effort to wash the more difficult to reach places. He stands up and turns toward the mirror.

> NICK (sotto) What should we do about the plates?

> MARCEL MARCEAU Forget about 'em. They arrested the counterfeiters. That must mean they have enough evidence to prosecute.

NICK What about society? They're going to get out of jail in a few years (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

NICK (cont'd) probably. They could go right back into business, diluting France's money supply, pushing them ever closer toward inflation. We could dig up the plates again, and destroy them.

MARCEL MARCEAU

Destroying possible evidence in a case is a bad idea. Forgetting about the plates is a good idea. Finish your book. The swat team ending is dynamite. Zack's going to sell the movie rights to this story.

NICK

Yeah.

MARCEL MARCEAU What's wrong?

He turns, faces the shower, and taps Lucy on the shoulder through the curtain.

LUCY I'll be out in a minute.

He grips the curtain, and jerks it open behind her. Then he steps over the ledge and SNAPS the curtain back into place. She scans him from eye level down to his shoes, and back up.

> LUCY (CONT'D) What's going on?

NICK I'm acting spontaneously. I never could have done this before I met you.

LUCY So, I helped you in some way to be able to shower with your clothes on?

NICK You know that's not what I meant.

She taps a wet finger against his sternum.

LUCY You're acting like you've been drinking hair tonic.

He smiles, and then takes her finger and kisses it.

NICK

Ditto.

LUCY

Ditto?

MARCEL MARCEAU

I knew it! Didn't I tell you?! Do not tell me you're going to...Are you going to propose to her in the shower?! At least have the decency to dry off first! I have to sit down, I'm a wreck. Can you imagine how quirky you're kids are going to be?

He stands back up.

MARCEL MARCEAU (CONTD) Okay, let's do this!

NICK Turn off the shower, please? There's something I want to ask you.

She turns the water off, reaches for a towel, and wraps it around her torso.

LUCY Okay, what?

MARCEL MARCEAU You don't have a ring! You can't do this without a ring! Unhook one of the shower curtain rings. It's only a symbol anyway.

Nick undoes one of the shower curtain rings from the rod, takes her hand, and kneels down on one knee.

NICK I know we've only known each other for three weeks, but... MARCEL MARCEAU Hold it! Time out! I have confession to make before you start.

Nick looks over toward the toilet.

NICK

Not now.

MARCEL MARCEAU It's important.

LUCY Were you going to propose to me, but now you're talking to Marcel?

NICK (to Lucy) I'm sorry. Just give me a moment to collect my thoughts.

NICK (CONT'D) (to Marcel) This better be unbelievable, and make it fast!

MARCEL MARCEAU You know when I told you I was a figment of your imagination, and I wasn't a ghost? Well, I lied. I'm a ghost, and I did have some unfinished business in this life to take care of.

NICK Forget it. It doesn't change anything. That it?

Lucy climbs out of the tub.

LUCY

I think the moment's past.

She leaves the room.

NICK Great. Did you hear the tone again? This is not going to be an easy fix. Why did you have to tell me this right now? MARCEL MARCEAU There's one more little thing.

NICK

Well, by all means, let's hear it. I wouldn't want you floating around the afterlife with anything less than a clear conscience.

MARCEL MARCEAU Lucy's my daughter from an affair I had when I was touring the States.

NICK

What?!

MARCEL MARCEAU And I sort of arranged Zack's wife's, cousin's apartment to be across from Lucy's. I thought you two socially troubled kids would hit it off together.

Nick is starring at Marcel like a zombie.

MARCEL MARCEAU (CONTD) You all right?

NICK

No.

MARCEL MARCEAU

Everything besides that, happened on it's own. So, how you going to tell her?

NICK Me?! Why do I have to tell her?

MARCEL MARCEAU I can only reveal myself to one person.

NICK

Well, why did you choose me, instead of her to begin with? She should be hearing this from you! If I tell her the mime I speak to on a regular basis is her father, she's going to have me committed. She already thinks my cheese has slipped off the cracker. MARCEL MARCEAU We could try a seance. You might be strong enough now to raise my apparition, so she could see me.

NICK You're not serious.

MARCEL MARCEAU

It's either that, or you have to tell her about me and her mother. Come on, the seance will be fun. You can wear the turban from the disguise box. This will bond you guys together for ever. Just march in there, ask her to marry you, and tell her there's someone you want her to meet. Let me hear what you're going to say. Go ahead.

NICK

(clears throat) Okay. Luce, you know I speak to Marcel Marceau on a regular basis, right? Well, you are not going to believe what he just told me. (claps hands together) He's your dad. Small world, isn't it?

MARCEL MARCEAU It needs some work.

INT. APARTMENT MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS - DAY

Lucy is reading at her desk. Nick spins her chair around, and squats in front of her.

NICK

I'm sorry I did such a lousy job in there. I want to recapture the moment. Do you have the shower curtain ring?

LUCY

It's on the dinning room table.

He gets up and retrieves it, and then kneels down on one knee.

NICK Will you marry me? I'll move to Paris if you want.

LUCY Are you going to continue talking to the mime?

NICK Hey. Turns out he's a ghost; not an imaginary friend. Boy, did I feel silly when...

LUCY A ghost?! Nick, I love you, but I don't know if I can deal with this.

NICK He's leaving. Everything's going to be absolutely conventional from now on. Here.

He pulls the shower curtain ring apart, and fastens it around her wrist.

NICK (CONT'D) Looks nice. Think of it as an engagement bracelet. So what do you say?

LUCY I guess so, although I'm sure it's going to be weird.

MARCEL MARCEAU (O.S.) It's a magical moment. Tell her already.

Nick cringes when he hears the voice. He stands.

NICK How would you like to meet, Marcel?

LUCY Can I do that?

NICK We'll hold a seance. Light some candles, put on some music, and clear everything off the dinning room table.

He gets up and heads toward the door.

NICK

To change.

Lucy prepares the room. Dim lighting, candles, and SOFT MEDITATIVE MUSIC. Nick returns, wearing Ali Babba and the Forty Thieves pajama pants, a rhinestone-encrusted vest with no shirt, curved slippers, and a turban with a blue, plastic amulet on front. She breaks into a paroxysm of hysterics when she sees him. Tears are streaming down her cheeks.

> LUCY Conventional (choke). Absolutely conventional.

NICK Try to be serious. It's not going to work otherwise. I'll go get the guest of honor.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS - EVENING

Marcel is dressed in a suit, and is without the white face.

NICK There's a strong family resemblance. Ready?

MARCEL MARCEAU

Yeah.

They go back into the other room.

INT. DINNING ROOM - CONTINUOUS - EVENING

The three of them are standing by the table.

LUCY Are we all here?

NICK

(to Lucy) Yeah. Let's sit down. I'll sit at the head of the table. You sit to my right, and Marcel, to my left please. LUCY Do you know what you're doing?

NICK No, but I know what I want to happen. Take my hands.

MARCEL MARCEAU You're trying to channel an energy. Close your eyes, relax. Do you feel your breath becoming more shallow?

NICK Yes. Close your eyes, Luce.

MARCEL MARCEAU Visualize my face.

NICK Which one? This one, or Bip The Clown?

LUCY What's happening? Should I be doing something?

NICK No. Just keep your eyes closed and relax. Try and think back to your birth.

LUCY My birth?! Who can remember their birth?!

She throws Nick's hands down, stands, and walks to the window. She spins around toward him.

LUCY (CONT'D) This is stupid!

MARCEL MARCEAU You struck a nerve with the birth thing.

NICK Come back to the table, Luce.

LUCY Nick, you have some serious issues. I think we should postpone our engagement until... NICK (to Marcel) I could use a little help here. This wasn't my idea.

Marcel get's up and goes to the door.

MARCEL MARCEAU This is in all the ghost movies.

He slowly opens the SQUEAKY DOOR, and then slams it shut. Lucy almost jumps out of her skin.

> LUCY What was that?!

MARCEL MARCEAU That's what they always say. Should I make one more impression?

NICK

Sure.

He goes into the kitchen, opens a drawer, pulls out a handful of silverware, and drops it on the floor. She scurries back to the table and reaches out for Nick's hands.

MARCEL MARCEAU Want me to do the wind flapping the curtains routine?

NICK I think she's had enough.

LUCY Sorry I doubted you.

NICK Took me a while to be convinced in the beginning, too. Okay, where were we?

LUCY You wanted me to try and remember my birth. How can I do that?

NICK Go back to your earliest memories, and try to rewind from there.

LUCY What does my birth have to do with anything?

NICK It's connected. Now let's concentrate. The candles flicker, and Marcel floats above the table. NICK (CONT'D) Jesus, I did it! Open your eyes, Luce. LUCY Oh-my-God. MARCEL MARCEAU Bonsoir, ma puce. LUCY (to Marcel) Bonsoir. LUCY (CONT'D) (to Nick) Why did he call me that? That's how French people affectionately refer to children. Does he call you that? NICK Uh, no. You know how sometimes you can overreact to things? LUCY What things? NICK Well, for instance when you busted into the bathroom because you heard me laughing, and assumed I had some babe stashed in there. LUCY That was one overreaction. NICK What about the morning you tortured me because we didn't have sex the night before. LUCY What's your point? NICK

In the event things should get a little strange or emotional, keep holding onto my hands.

114.

LUCY

Okay.

NICK Marcel, why don't you take over from here?

The screen goes black. Lucy SCREAMS in the background.

LUCY (O.S.)

<u>What</u>?!!!

White screen with superimposed words: ONE YEAR LATER

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

MARSELINE, a COOING BABY GIRL, is crawling around the floor. Lucy's in her chair painting, and Nick is typing on his laptop at the desk.

> LUCY (CONT'D) Dad, can you get a bottle of juice out of the frig for the baby?

Bip The Clown enters the main room, holding a red, plastic clown bottle with a nipple. He holds it up.

MARCEL MARCEAU

This one?

LUCY Yeah. See if she'll drink some?

MARCEL MARCEAU

Okay.

He bends down to scoop the baby up into his arms, and gives her the bottle. They look at each other with mutual adoration. He sits down at the dinning room table while she drinks and stares up at him.

> MARCEL MARCEAU (CONTD) C'est bon, ma pouce? Did I ever tell you the story about the night daddy conducted a seance, so mommy could meet grandpa? It was a ghostly night. The candles flickered, the door squeaked, silverware fell on the floor. Your mommy screamed...

Lucy and Nick are smiling.

Fade to Black