

# Book of the Month

by

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Logline:

Unaware he has triggered a chain of events that will lead to a nuclear holocaust in the 1987 post-cold war era, an amateur novelist must transform himself and travel halfway around the world to prevent World War 3.

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EXT. MATAWAN NJ TRANSIT COMMUTER TRAIN STATION PLATFORM,  
SEPTEMBER 1987 - DAYBREAK

ROBERT CAIN (BOB), mid 30's, stands on the platform, looks at his leather Berluti shoes, noticing they are short of the high shine they should have, and that they have a noticeable scuff on one edge. He reaches down to give them a quick "hand shine" when he looks up to see the headlights of a car entering the near full parking lot. The new Jaguar drives to the front row and finds the single open parking spot very near the entrance.

MERRILL HALLSTROM, 60, hops out of the car and walks briskly up to the platform next to Bob. Merrill carries himself with grace and perfection, as if the whole world revolves around him, although his disposition is just the opposite, being caring and compassionate. Bob looks down at Merrill's identical shoes, which have a perfect shine, smiles to himself and gently shakes his head.

Train approaches the platform.

BOB

Good Morning Merrill. I figured you would have been at your place on the shore this weekend.

MERRILL

Wish I could have Bob, but I'm having some work done at my house in Holmdel, wanted to be sure it was done right. It's time to winterize the pool, so I thought I'd do a little remodeling of the poolhouse.

Bob smiles and shakes his head

BOB

I should have such problems to keep me away from the shore for the weekend.

The train slows to a stop, opens the door, and the two board a half full train, sitting across from each other.

INT. NJ TRANSIT TRAIN CAR - DAYBREAK

MERRILL

So how was your weekend?

BOB

Pretty quiet, most exciting thing I guess was watching President Reagan's speech about the pope coming to visit LA.

MERRILL

(Leans forward with a  
concerned look on his  
face)

Bob, Jen's been gone for over 2  
years now. You got a sizeable  
settlement from the insurance  
company, why don't you take some of  
that money and go out and enjoy  
yourself? Travel. Book a tour to an  
exotic destination and meet some  
people.

BOB

(sighs)

I've thought about it, but I keep  
thinking "Jen would really have  
loved this," and the desire just  
fades away.

(shakes his head)

Still too soon.

(Leaning forward, with a  
bit of confidence and  
bluster)

Besides, your company is going  
gangbusters, I don't see you  
sipping pina coladas on some  
caribbean island.

MERRILL

Touche, my friend. We've been  
incredibly busy. I can't believe so  
many people buy those trashy  
romance novels we publish. But then  
again, there are some 7 million  
people just in the city, figuring  
half of them are successful,  
leaving over a million lonely wives  
at home. Guess they need to fulfill  
their romantic desires from our  
books instead of experiencing it in  
their own lives.

Merrill sees the sadness in Bob's eyes as he is reminded of  
his own loneliness.

MERRILL

Bob, I'm sorry, I didn't mean...

BOB

That's OK. I should have gotten  
over this by now anyway.

MERRILL

Say Bob, we did have record sales a month back, and I'm having a little get together for my staff at the Holmdel house next week, why don't you come by. Get out of the house, have a few drinks, and get your mind off of things.

Bob takes a long look at Merrill

BOB

I just might take you up on that. As a matter of fact, it would probably do me some good to meet some book publishing folks. To be honest, one way I fill my time is writing. I'm taking an old thesis I wrote in college about Benedict Arnold, and have just about finished rewriting it as a novel.

MERRILL

Really? Benedict Arnold? Hate to say it, but from a publisher's perspective, doesn't sound too exciting.

BOB

Hold on, hold on. It's (air quotes) fact based fiction, that theorizes Benedict Arnold was a double agent for the colonies, not a traitor. He knew too much, so the founding fathers positioned him as a traitor, and had him executed so he'd never reveal their dirty little secrets.

Merrill stares at Bob analyzing his seriousness

MERRILL

You're serious, and I'm actually a bit intrigued. Tell you what. If you finish that novel, and if it's any good, I'll publish it for you.

BOB

(laughing)

You're a romance novel publicist, what interest would you have in a book about Benedict Arnold?

MERRILL

Bob, it's my company, and I'll do as I damn well please. My family founded Hallstrom Publishing over 50 years ago, and it's about time I enjoyed something other than the money it's provided me. You do need to come to my party and meet my folks. I may need this book published as much as you.

EXT. NJ TRANSIT RAILWAY AND TRAIN - DAYBREAK

OUTSIDE OF TRAIN HEADING AWAY.

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

INT. MERRILL'S HOUSE, COCKTAIL PARTY - NIGHT

People are conversing and milling about observing artwork, decorations, etc. Standing next to Bob, Merrill clinks his glass several times to draw the room's attention.

MERRILL

I'd like to thank you all for coming out tonight, I realize a trek way out here is probably not the way that most of you would choose to start off the weekend, but I hope you're all having a good time anyway (laughs from the guests). In all seriousness though, this is all for you, the dedicated folks of Hallstrom Publishing who crafted the book of the month "It won't be my Destiny" into the best selling book we've ever published. And to thank you all, I want you to take the rest of the week off with pay, as long as you are back in the office on time come Monday morning. (more laughs, clapping, and cheers from the crowd). One other thing, I'd like to introduce a good friend of mine, Robert Cain...

BOB

(interrupting Merrill)  
Bob, it's just Bob

MERRILL

Bob, who is an up and coming author who I hope will be our next best seller. He doesn't do romance novels (yet), but I think we may need to experiment a bit with a different genre. I won't steal his thunder, so I hope you'll take a few minutes to meet him, and find out what he, and his novel is all about.

Merrill guides Bob over to JOE ABBOUD, 40's, editor

MERRILL

Bob, this is Joe Abboud, my chief editor. I might own the company, but Joe here has forgotten more about publishing than I'll ever know.

Bob and Joe shake hands as Merrill walks away to socialize with other guests

JOE

Pleasure to meet you Bob. How do you know Merrill?

BOB

Oddly enough, we met on the train to the city. I remember the first time I saw him. He pulls into the lot 2 minutes before the train was due, finds a parking spot right in the front row, walks up to the platform just as the train arrives. I get to the station 15 minutes early, can never find a parking spot except in the back row, and this guy, looking like he's just walked out of the pages of GQ magazine, just glides in effortlessly. I sat across from him, and he reaches in his briefcase, and pulls out a book. I remember it to this day, it was "Summer's Hot Summer on the Shore." Now that is the last type of literature I thought this guy would be reading, so I said to him, "I gotta ask, my wife is reading that book, and you two look like you have nothing in common. Am I missing out on something?"

Joe laughs

BOB

So he chuckles and responds, "It's trash, but it pays the bills. Thank your wife for me for being a customer." He went on to introduce himself and tells me what he does. We just sort of struck up a train passenger comradery.

JOE

I've known Merrill for a long time, and still haven't figured him out. All that money, and he still rides the train in from Jersey. He should be living in the Hamptons, and riding into work on a private chopper. You mentioned your wife, is she here tonight?

BOB

No, she passed away a little over two years ago in a car accident. Merrill was really helpful back then, and is still helping me get back to a normal life. Hence, my invite here tonight to crash his company celebration.

Other guests approach to introduce themselves, Bob accidentally spills some garnish on his coat sleeve. Bob wipes it off with a napkin, but there is still some on his sleeve. Bob looks around, sees Merrill engaged in conversation, approaches him.

BOB

Merrill, I've made a bit of a mess on my sleeve, where can I clean this up?

MERRILL

Go up to my bedroom, upstairs to the left. Bathroom in there, also I have some fabric cleaning stuff in the clothes closet up there.

Bob ascends the stairs, heads up to Merrill's master suite. He looks around at how well appointed it is, enters the closet, looks at his neat row of fine clothes, finds something to treat the spot on his coat sleeve, leaves the closet for the master bathroom, again viewing its tasteful and unique decor. He cleans his sleeve, puts the cleaner back in the closet (again looking around), heads toward the bedroom door, stops to look around once more, then heads

back downstairs to rejoin the party.

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

INT. MERRILL'S OFFICE - DAY

Merrill, sitting behind his desk, is scanning through a heavily edited manuscript. Bob sits in one of the chairs across the desk from Merrill, watching. Merrill tosses the manuscript on his desk.

MERRILL

So how's it been working with Joe?  
Remember, he's the best I've got.

BOB

Since I've never done this before,  
I assuming it's going well. Only  
disagreement we've had so far is he  
wants me to add a section where  
Benjamin Franklin satisfies Martha  
Washington's lustful desires, said  
it would sell an extra 100,000  
copies.

(both laugh)

MERRILL

That would be just like Joe,  
keeping true romance in romance  
novels. I've got to tell you, I've  
skimmed through it, and I'm just  
not getting it. Tell me, in your  
opinion, what this book is about.

BOB

Well it's pretty simple, Benedict  
Arnold...

Merrill holds up a hand to cut Bob off

MERRILL

No, no, no, I get that. Tell me  
"what this is about." Why do I want  
to read a made up story about a  
historical figure everyone already  
knows about?

BOB

Got it. Here's the premise. You're  
right, everyone knows the story of  
Benedict Arnold. What this story  
does, is takes disparate factual

(MORE)



BOB (cont'd)  
 elements, and weaves them together,  
 to create a fictional story that  
 just might really be true.  
 Connecting the dots of historical  
 facts outside the story of Benedict  
 Arnold, to build just enough  
 credibility into the theory that he  
 was just a fall guy. Maybe make a  
 few people scratch their heads and  
 wonder if maybe it might be true.

MERRILL  
 That's what I thought. Get back  
 with Joe and his team, you've got  
 to put more of your thesis style of  
 writing into this, but keep it  
 colorful enough to make it  
 interesting.

Merrill stands, followed by Bob

MERRILL  
 I know that's a tough thing to do  
 with your first manuscript, but  
 Joe's the best. He'll walk you  
 through it.

Merrill and Bob shake hands, Bob exits Merrill's office.

INT. HALLSTROM PUBLISHING - DAY

Bob stands at DELORES WESSELL'S (DEE) 50's, very efficient  
 looking, desk as she finishes a phone call.

DELORES  
 (nodding as she speaks)...I really  
 appreciate that, and I'll see he  
 gets that to you as soon as  
 possible. Bye.

Delores looks up to acknowledge Bob

BOB  
 Miss Wessell, do you know if Joe is  
 available, we need to make some  
 changes in my manuscript.

DELORES  
 Bob? We met at Mr. Hallstrom's  
 home, and you've been in here a few  
 times since, so I think it's safe  
 for you to call me Delores.

BOB  
I'm sorry. Delores.

Delores calls Joe on the intercom

DELORES  
Mr. Abboud, are you available to  
see Mr. Cain?

JOE  
(over the intercom)  
Sure, send him in.

Bob walks over to Joe's office, knocks twice on the door, opens the door and enters. Joe is behind his desk, with STEPHANIE HOWARD, late 20's, late 80's attractive, on one of the chairs across from the desk. Both rise to greet Bob.

INT. JOE'S OFFICE - DAY

JOE  
Hey Bob, good to see you again.

Joe shakes Bob's hand, and leads him over toward Stephanie.

JOE  
Bob, this is Stephanie Howard.  
Steph, this is Bob Cain.

STEPHANIE  
Pleased to meet you Mr. Cain, we  
were just talking about your book.

Bob and Stephanie shake hands, a little longer than usual. Both smile with an evident mutual attraction.

BOB  
Pleased to meet you as well  
Stephanie, and please, call me Bob.

Stephanie, while still shaking Bob's hand, embarrassingly breaks her gaze at Bob and looks down for a moment. She looks back at Bob.

STEPHANIE  
Thanks, and you can call me Steph.

Joe is obvious to the mutual attraction

JOE  
Great, now that we've gotten that  
out of the way, take a seat.

All three sit. Stephanie and Bob trade glances and shy smiles

JOE

So Bob, what brings you here today?

BOB

Well, Merrill called me in to talk about the book. Wanted to give me some constructive criticism and work with you on the "tone."

Stephanie starts taking notes, while continuing on and off glances at Bob.

BOB

While he likes the general content, the way I've written it, it's just a story. Seems it needs a bit more of an emphasis on the reader feeling, "Hey, this might have really happened."

JOE

Glad you're open to that Bob, we'd talked about that earlier, and that's why I've engaged Steph here. She's a junior editor and transcriber, and has a real knack for giving good guidance on flow and tone.

STEPHANIE

There's something about the final keying of the manuscript into the computer system that helps me get a feel for those things, helps me understand the perception of the readers as I'm typing it, almost like I'm translating the story to them.

BOB

How long do you think the rewrite will take?

JOE

Hopefully we can knock it out in the next couple of weeks. Plans I hear are to release it as December's Book of the Month. It'll take a lot of dedicated time, you two will have to work closely together to meet the deadline. You OK with that?

Stephanie looks down at her notebook, shyly smiling and blushing.

Bob stands and begins to head for the door.

BOB

I'm willing to put in all the time  
it takes. I can't tell you how  
excited I am to get this finished  
and bring this story to life.

Bob opens the door, pauses, then turns back looking into  
Joe's office

BOB

And Joe, Merrill says we may need  
to add a scene where Benedict  
Arnold satisfies Martha  
Washington's lustful desires.

Stephanie turns away from looking at Bob in a full blush,  
Bob looks at Stephanie, slyly smiles, and exits the office.

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

INT. MERRILL'S OFFICE - DAY

Merrill presses the intercom

MERRILL

Dee, have Joe come in here.

Joe picks up the manuscript on his desk and looks at it

Double knock on the door, Joe enters

JOE

You wanted to see me boss?

MERRILL

I do, it's about the Benedict  
Arnold book.

Joe sits across from Merrill

MERRILL

What do you think about it?

JOE

Personally, ah, I actually like it.  
It's a big stretch from our usual  
stuff, but I thought it was pretty  
catchy. We didn't make a lot of  
changes, but the few things Steph  
worked into it really set the hook  
to the story.

MERRILL

So you'd be OK with this as  
December's book of the month?

Joe leans back and puts his hands behind his head

JOE

Like I said, it's a stretch from  
our norm, but yeah, I'd support it.

Joe leans toward Merrill

JOE

Going to leave a couple million  
lonely housewives unhappy though.

Merrill chuckles

MERRILL

Well, we've got a strong bottom  
line this year. Might get a few  
complaints from our loyal readers,  
but controversy gets press, and  
press sells books, so it may not be  
too bad in the long run.

Merrill picks up the manuscript, flips through it to nearly  
the end.

MERRILL

Now, I don't usually do this, but  
we need to change chapter 12. I  
want it rewritten to where Benedict  
Arnold isn't killed. He escapes,  
and a look-alike is killed in his  
place.

Joe leans back in his chair

JOE

Whew, that's a big change. Do you  
think Bob will go for it?

Merrill leans forward

MERRILL

Frankly, I don't care. I haven't  
been able to get hold of him for  
the past couple of days. Have Steph  
do the rewrite, and I'll make him  
appreciate the change.

Merrill slides the manuscript across his desk to Joe

MERRILL

Have Dee get hold of Bob, and get him in here Friday. We need to get this finalized and printed. Make sure Steph gets me the final manuscript by Wednesday, and make sure Dee gets a copy of the final to Bob as well.

Joe picks up the manuscript, stands, walks to the door, and opens it. He turns back to Merrill

JOE

Are you sure about this boss, I really did like it.

MERRILL

It's not up for debate. Make it happen.

Joe exits, closing the door behind him.

Merrill, swings his chair around, puts his feet up on the window sill, looks out the window, deep in thought.

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

INT. MERRILL'S OFFICE - DAY

Intercom buzzes

MERRILL

What is it?

DELORES

Joe asked me to have you join him in his office, he says there's a problem with the Benedict Arnold book.

Merrill exits his office, walks to Joe's office, entering without knocking

INT. JOE'S OFFICE - DAY

Joe views the people in the office, Joe is behind his desk, Steph is sitting across the desk from Joe, Bob is anxiously pacing.

MERRILL

What seems to be the problem?

Bob waves the manuscript in his hands at Merrill

BOB

What the hell is this???

MERRILL

It's the December book of the month. I ask again, what is the problem?

JOE

You know good and well what the problem is. You've changed the ending. The climax. The whole aspect that ties everything together and makes this a believable theory. What are you doing?

MERRILL

Sit down Bob.

Bob stares at Merrill

MERRILL

Bob, sit down so we can discuss this rationally.

Bob stares at Merrill, the relents and sits down hard in the other chair across from Joe.

MERRILL

Bob, in the scheme of things, this is a minor change.

BOB

Dammit! It changes the whole thing. It changes this from a plausible theory and turns it into a cheap movie of the week!

MERRILL

Bob, this is how things work. We needed the extra hook at the end, and now we have it.

BOB

It's not going to happen!

MERRILL

Bob, it is going to happen. This meeting is not professional, but as a personal courtesy to you. Hallstrom Publishing now owns this book, and it is going to be our December book of the month. With this ending.

Bob leaps from his chair and heads toward the door, as he forcefully pulls it open, Merrill stops him. Merrill then leads him into the reception area.

INT. HALLSTROM PUBLISHING - DAY

MERRILL

Bob, we've been friends a long time. Take a bit of time to think. Sit down for a few minutes and think this through. I'll be back in a few minutes.

Merrill returns to Joe's office and closes the door

INT. JOE'S OFFICE - DAY

MERRILL

Well, he took that better than I thought he would.

Merrill looks at Stephanie

MERRILL

Stephanie, we need to have this ready to go first thing Monday morning. You're going to have a long weekend getting this into the computer system.

Stephanie nods to Merrill, she is visibly upset

MERRILL

Look Stephanie, these things are tough. I'm older than this publishing house, seems I've worked here forever, and learned a lot along the way. If I know anything, I know that he will get over this long before he will get over you. Go out and talk with him. You'll both feel a lot better.

STEPHANIE

Yes sir

Stephanie exits Joe's office for the reception area.

INT. HALLSTROM PUBLISHING - DAY

Stephanie sits on the couch next to Bob and rubs his shoulder. Bob is tense, but begins to relax somewhat once Stephanie touches him.



STEPHANIE

I'm so sorry this happened Bob.  
Just so you know, it's not unusual.  
I've seen this happen many times  
before.

Bob looks at Stephanie

BOB

What do YOU think?

STEPHANIE

I understand your points. From an  
accuracy perspective, I do like  
your version better. (pause) But  
Merrill has this unique knack. He  
seems to be able to turn anything  
into gold. He does have a great  
track record, just look at the  
success of the publishing house,  
compared to the crap we publish.

Pause

STEPHANIE

Think about it. What do you really  
want?

Pausing, Bob thinks about her question, slowly a sly smile  
comes to his face.

BOB

What do I want?

STEPHANIE

Yeah, it's really important for me  
to know.

BOB

What I want, what I REALLY want, is  
for you to walk out of here with  
me, right now. Forget about this  
nonsense for a while, have a few  
drinks with me, and join me for an  
extravagantly expensive dinner  
tonight. This is going to be a busy  
weekend for you if the final copy  
has to be ready on Monday to go to  
the printing house.

Bob stands, turns toward Stephanie who is still on the  
couch, and extends his hand. Stephanie takes his hand,  
stands, and begins to walk with him toward the door, not  
letting go of his hand.

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

INT. BAR '21' LOUNGE - NIGHT

Stephanie and Bob are seated in the corner booth. The waiter brings fresh drinks and removes the empty glasses from the table. They clink their fresh drink glasses, and smile at each other.

BOB

Getting back to earlier today in Joe's office, I'm sorry how I acted. I'm old enough to know better than to throw a temper tantrum.

STEPHANIE

No worries, it's a tough business, and I'm sure the guys have had to deal with much worse.

BOB

I don't care about the guys, and right now I really don't even care about the book. (pause) What I do care about, is making an ass out of myself in front of you.

Stephanie reaches over, pats Bob's hand, Bob smiles

STEPHANIE

You were a hero, not an ass. Nothing wrong with defending what is dear to you. Shows you have passion.

WAITER (45) approaches

WAITER

A table upstairs has just become open should you wish to dine there.

Stephanie and Bob look at each other. Stephanie smiles, and settles back.

STEPHANIE

I kind of like where I am. Right here. Right now.

Bob looks up at the waiter with a smile, shakes his head no, and the waiter departs. Stephanie and Bob smile at each other, mock toast with their drinks, and each takes a drink from their glass.

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

INT. BAR '21' LOUNGE - NIGHT

Several glasses litter the table, Stephanie and Bob pick at the remnants of several appetizers.

STEPHANIE

...and that's how Summer's Hot  
Summer has defined my career.

Bob picks up the waiter wallet, scribbles his signature on the check, grabs his credit card and slips it into his pocket. He stands and offers Stephanie his hand. Stephanie takes Bob's hand, and rises a bit clumsily due to the drinks and the late hour. Stephanie puts her arms around Bob.

STEPHANIE

And tonight has made it all  
worthwhile.

Stephanie takes Bob's arm and they head toward the door.

EXT. NYC STREET - NIGHT

Outside The 21, the DOORMAN (35) tries to hail them a cab

STEPHANIE

I'm sorry for having to head home  
so early, but it's going to take me  
all weekend to get your book loaded  
into the computer so we can start  
the printing next week.

Bob raises an eyebrow

BOB

And what would you think if I were  
to offer you an alternative?

STEPHANIE

You might be able to persuade me  
with the right offer. What do you  
have in mind?

A cab pulls up in the background and the doorman opens the  
back door for them

BOB

When I decided to write this book,  
I bought one of those new computers  
so I wouldn't have to mess with

(MORE)

BOB (cont'd)  
 retyping it over and over every  
 time I made a change. I have my  
 whole manuscript already entered,  
 and can give you a copy of it on  
 electronic disks. You just load the  
 disks into your system, push the  
 right buttons, and viola, you're  
 done.

Stephanie pantomimes a balance scale with her hands

STEPHANIE  
 Hmmmm, spend the weekend working,  
 or spend the weekend... Hmmmm.

Steph pauses, holding one hand higher than the other, looks  
 at Bob and smiles

STEPHANIE  
 Let's do it!

Bob whispers in the doorman's ear and slips him some cash.  
 Bob helps Stephanie into the backseat of the cab, then  
 slides in beside her. The doorman leans in the cab window.

DOORMAN  
 The Waldorf. And get them there  
 five minutes ago.

The cab pulls away from the curb and into the night traffic.

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

EXT. MATAWAN NJ TRANSIT RAILWAY AND TRAIN - MID MORNING

Bob and Stephanie are walking down the platform after  
 exiting from the train

BOB  
 You know, you really didn't need to  
 come all the way out here to get  
 the disks of the manuscript, I  
 would have been happy to bring them  
 into the city for you.

They continue walking, as Stephanie takes Bob's arm and  
 smiles at him

BOB  
 I grew up around here, and it's  
 always been home.

They walk for a few more steps as Bob looks around

BOB

I look around, and as much as it  
has changed, it's still the same.

Bob points at Merrill's Jaguar parked in the first row of  
the parking lot.

BOB

This is Merrill's car. He must have  
stayed in the city over the weekend  
or gone down to his place on the  
shore. I still don't know how he is  
always the last one to get here to  
the station, but still gets the  
best parking spot in the place.  
I've always envied people with that  
kind of luck.

Bob points to his car in the back row of the parking lot.

BOB

See where I have to park?

They continue walking, Stephanie's arm still in Bob's

BOB

Have you always been a city girl?

STEPHANIE

No, I grew up on Long Island and  
moved to the city after I  
graduated. Wanted to be a writer,  
and I thought I'd get my  
inspiration living in the city.

BOB

I thought Long Island girls only  
moved to the city to become  
actresses.

STEPHANIE

Not me. I wanted to tell the story  
through the poetic imagery of my  
words, not deliver lines someone  
else had written.

BOB

Hence the job at Hallstrom  
Publishing? Hoping to make contacts  
and get an insider's perspective?

STEPHANIE

You got it. Only after a while, I realized that while I could compose with just the right words, I had no creativity to create the stories to be told. So now I'm content to help others tell their stories with my words.

They arrive at Bob's car, and Bob opens the passenger door for Stephanie.

STEPHANIE

Can't say I'm sorry about the way things turned out the way they did, otherwise we might not be here like this now.

Stephanie gets in the car, Bob closes the door behind her, then gets into the car and they drive away.

EXT. BOB'S CONDO - DAY

Walking up to the door of the condo.

BOB

Here we are, my little slice of heaven on earth.

Bob opens the door and they enter the condo.

INT. BOB'S CONDO - DAY

Stephanie stops and looks around inside Bob's condo.

STEPHANIE

Wow, this place is huge. I wish I had this much space.

Stephanie walks over to the sofa table, picks up the wedding photo of Bob and his deceased wife. Stephanie looks at it for a moment, then turns to Bob with questioning eyes.

BOB

My wife and I on our wedding day. She passed away in a car accident a few years back. I probably should have told you, but it's not really much of a topic for a first date, and to be truthful, it's still tough for me to talk about it.

Stephanie sets the picture back down, and reverently straightens it.

BOB

I bought this place just after the accident, the old house had too many memories.

Stephanie walks over and hugs Bob.

STEPHANIE

I'm sorry, I didn't know...

BOB

It's OK. I get a little stronger every day. I'll never forget her, but I've come to grips that she is really gone, and I'm still here, so I need to keep moving forward in life.

Bob takes a deep breath.

BOB

OK, enough of that for now. Can I get you something to drink? Water? Juice?

STEPHANIE

No, I'm fine. Show me around if you don't mind.

BOB

Sorry, I guess I'm not much of a host. Actually, you're the first guest I've had here.

Bob takes Stephanie's hand and leads her through the condo, stepping into and pausing in the various rooms.

BOB

Kitchen. Dining room. Bedroom. Office.

They pause in the office

BOB

This is really a second bedroom, but I converted it into an office. This is where I have my computer, and where I did all my writing. Are you ready for me to make the disks for you?

STEPHANIE

Well that was a pretty quick tour, mind if we go over it again, a

(MORE)

STEPHANIE (cont'd)  
little more slowly this time? Maybe  
we can start in the last room you  
showed me, only this time, let's  
spend some "quality time" in there.

They lock eyes, smile, and walk back to the bedroom.

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

INT. BOB'S CONDO - NIGHT

Scene fades into the living room, where Bob and Stephanie  
are snuggled on the couch with coffee cups. A pile of  
computer diskettes sits on the coffee table.

STEPHANIE  
I really do need to be getting back  
to the city so I can spend the day  
tomorrow getting your manuscript  
loaded into the system and making  
Merrill's final edits.

BOB  
It should only take a half hour or  
so to load the disks. You can spend  
the rest of the day editing, or  
(pause) I can come into the city  
and we can spend the day together.  
The weather has been great for this  
time of year, don't you want to get  
out and enjoy it?

STEPHANIE  
I don't know...

BOB  
C'mon. You said you liked my  
version better, and it's more  
historically accurate. It'll give  
more credence to the book.

Stephanie is trying to decide

BOB  
Where's that girl that braved  
leaving Long Island for Manhattan  
and the telling of good stories?

Stephanie still tries to decide



BOB

I think we should leave the copy as is. Load the disks, then we'll catch a matinée of Les Miserables at the Broadway theater, and cap off the evening at the Rainbow Room.

STEPHANIE

You're right. What can it hurt?

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

INT. MERRILL'S OFFICE - DAY

Merrill, looking tired, sits behind his desk. His desk is empty, except for a book, a bank check, and a single piece of paper. There is a double knock on the door, and Bob enters.

BOB

Hey Merrill.

Bob pauses and looks at Merrill with concern

BOB

You OK? You're looking kind of worn out.

Bob steps over to the desk, picks up the book, sits across from Merrill's desk.

BOB

Trouble with the book? I thought it was selling pretty well?

Bob tosses the book back on Merrill's desk

MERRILL

Trouble with the book? That's a loaded question. Not with the sales, mind you, it's a winner. One of the best selling books of the month we've ever had.

BOB

So what's wrong. Are you getting heat about the genre? That it's not a romance novel?

MERRILL

No, no, no, that's not it at all. I wish it were that.

Merrill stands and sighs deeply.

MERRILL

Bob, I've got some bad news. Miss Howard, Stephanie, is dead. She's been murdered.

Bob leaps to his feet.

BOB

Oh my God, what happened?

Merrill approaches Bob, puts his hands on Bob's shoulders, and guides him back into the chair.

MERRILL

Bob, not unlike you, I have a story that I've carried around for many years, and never shared with anyone. And now, it's become tangled up with you, your book, and Miss Howard's death.

Merrill silently shakes his head, and returns to his seat behind the desk.

MERRILL

When I took over Hallstrom Publishing in the early '70's it was struggling. We were paying the bills, barely, and not going anywhere. It wasn't a great secret that if something didn't turn around in a couple of years, we'd have to close up shop.

BOB

I'm not following...

MERRILL

(Holding up his hand)

Hold on until you hear the rest of the story. Then you'll understand.

Merrill again stands, and slowly paces around the office

MERRILL

Around that time, I got a call from a fellow, said he had an idea how we could turn the business around. He sounded sincere, so I had him up here for a meeting.

BOB

Who was it?

Merrill motions downward with his hands for Bob to be patient.

MERRILL

Two well dressed men showed up for the meeting, they're names aren't important, as I now realize they were probably phoney names anyway. They presented me with a check for \$100,000, and asked that I establish a book of the month program. Their company would see to the promotion of the Hallstrom Publishing and the book of the month program. They would see to it that we got international distribution as well, guaranteeing a turnaround in our business.

BOB

Who were they with?

MERRILL

That's exactly what I asked them. They became a bit fidgety, and said they weren't at liberty to say, that it was a "very private" company. Since the check was a cashier's check, from the bank right here on the first floor of this building, there was no company name on it.

BOB

That's just too weird, what did you do?

MERRILL

I pressed them. They said that they would need one other thing from me, and I thought, here it comes. They said, One day, and that day may never come, we may need you to insert a line in one of your books of the month.

BOB

Sounds like that line from The Godfather. Were they with the mob?

MERRILL

That's what I thought. I gave them back the check, thanked them for the book of the month idea, and

(MORE)

MERRILL (cont'd)  
tried to show them the door, but they never left their seats. The older one looked up at me and said, Mr. Hallstrom, are you a patriot?

BOB  
Whew.

MERRILL  
I told him of course I was. That's when he said that they represent a small, covert organization in the US government, and were charged with keeping America safe from Russian intervention.

Bob's eyes widen

MERRILL  
They said even though Nixon had just returned from the Moscow Summit, and the Cuban Missile Crisis was ten years old, and fading away from peoples memories, we were still at war with Russia. To protect American interests, their organization had, over the past few years, smuggled a small nuclear bomb into Russia, and hidden it inside the Kremlin itself, to be discharged only if the fate of the US was in danger.

Bob stands, somewhat unbelieving

BOB  
Well that's all interesting cloak and dagger stuff, if it is actually true, but how does that affect my book and Steph's murder?

MERRILL  
You needed to know that background before you could understand how you are linked. You see, what they then told me, was that the sign for their operative in Russia to detonate the bomb would be a date, positioned in a certain place in our book of the month.

BOB  
What? I don't get it.

MERRILL

The triggering code was to be a date embedded in the in a certain line and chapter in the book of the month. For example, if the February book of the month had the date May 6 in the second line of the second chapter, the device was to be detonated on the following May 6.

Bob grabs the book on the desk and flips to the 12th chapter

MERRILL

That's right, the 12th line of chapter 12 in your book says, "...although he died in London on June 14..."

Bob moves his lips as he reads the line from the book, closes the book, sets it back on Merrill's desk, and sits back down

MERRILL

Now you understand my desire to change that chapter. I trusted Miss Howard to make the appropriate edits, which evidently were not done, as you can see.

Merrill returns to his chair behind the desk

MERRILL

She never failed me before. She was not involved in this, nor is anyone else in the company aware of this.

Bob lowers and shakes his head, near tears, knowing he has caused this event, and Stephanie's death

MERRILL

Bob, look at me.

Bob looks up at Merrill

MERRILL

Bob, Stephanie was tortured before she died. She had evidently been interrogated.

Bob bursts out in tears

BOB

No....

MERRILL

I had originally recruited the operative in Russia, but I don't know if it is still the same person, so the agency that engaged me does not know who he, or she is. I did it through an intermediary in West Berlin that had contacts in East Berlin. There would be no way for me to get him to stand down without creating an international incident. In other words, we are all dead. Sooner or later.

Merrill stands, picks up the check off his desk, folds it in half, walks around to Bob, and slides the check into Bob's jacket breast pocket.

MERRILL

This is a very generous check for your book, including future proceeds. I've given our bank downstairs instructions to cash this check for you immediately, no questions asked. I would advise you to take the cash and disappear, to enjoy what little of your life you have left.

BOB

Isn't there ANYTHING you can do?

MERRILL

Let's see. Get into Russia, then get inside the Kremlin. Identify an operative I don't even know, and try to persuade him to not do as he's been ordered. That same operative who is under orders to carry out the mission no matter what. It's more likely I would be killed than prevent the detonation, even IF I could figure out who the operative was.

Merrill walks over to his office door, and looks out.

MERRILL

Dee, grab Joe and come in here please.

Merrill walks back behind his desk and sits. Delores and Joe enter, Delores sits while Joe remains standing

MERRILL

Dee, Joe, I want you to witness my signing of this.

Merrill signs the paper on his desk. Puts down the pen and looks at them all.

MERRILL

I want you all to know, that what I'm doing, I'm doing of my own free will, and this paper will attest to that. No one is responsible for this but me. Please make certain this paper stays safe.

Merrill opens a desk drawer, pulls out a handgun, and shoots himself in the head. Joe rushes toward Merrill, Delores stands and screams, Bob stands, looks at Merrill in shock, then quickly walks out the office door.

INT. STAIRWELL - DAY

Bob runs through the door of the stairwell, and runs down several flights of stairs. He arrives on the ground floor sweating and disheveled. He stops, pulls the handkerchief from his breast pocket, and the check falls on the floor. He picks it up and looks at it, having previously forgotten about it due to Merrill's suicide. He folds it back up, slides it into his shirt breast pocket, wipes the sweat from his face, brushes his hair with his fingers, composes himself, and exits the stairway to the street.

EXT. NYC STREET - DAY

Bob steps out onto the sidewalk, stops, and carefully glances around for anyone on the street who may be watching him. He looks up to see the bank sign above him. He pats his breast where the check is in his pocket, and walks toward the bank, entering it.

INT. BANK - DAY

Bob steps into the bank, looks around, again composes himself and walks confidently up to the TELLER female (20).

TELLER

Hi, how can I help you today?

BOB

Hi, I need to cash a check.

Bob withdraws the check from his pocket, lays it on the counter, and endorses it. Bob then slides the endorsed check to the teller, who picks it up, turns it over, and looks at it with surprise.

TELLER

Wow, \$25,000? Are you sure you  
don't want to deposit some of it?

Bob is taken aback by the amount as he hadn't even looked at  
it before

BOB

(stammering)  
\$25...? Uh, yeah, I'm sure. Please  
just cash it.

TELLER

Are you sure you wouldn't prefer  
traveler's checks? They're a lot  
safer.

Sirens begin to be heard in the background

BOB

I'm sure. Just cash.

Sirens begin to get louder

TELLER

(in a questioning tone)

OK

TELLER

I'm going to need some  
identification Mr. Cain.

Bob fumbles for his wallet and shows the teller his driver's  
license. The teller makes some notations on the check.

TELLER

How would you like it?

BOB

(beginning to get nervous  
as the sirens get  
louder)

In cash I said!

TELLER

I know. I meant what denomination  
of bills do you want?

Bob looks a bit puzzled, as he hadn't thought of that  
before. Quickly regaining composure.

BOB

Hundreds.

(MORE)



BOB (cont'd)

(pauses)

Make that 23,000 in hundreds, and  
2,000 in twenty's.

The teller opens her cash drawer and looks in it for a moment, closes it, looks back at Bob

TELLER

That's more than I have in my  
drawer, I'll need to get this from  
the back.

The teller heads back out of sight, while sirens wail, and some stop, as the emergency vehicles have gotten to the building. Bob turns to look outside a couple of times, turning back to the teller station nervously. The teller returns with a large amount of cash, and the branch manager, a well dressed man. There is fear in Bob's eyes.

TELLER

Mr. Cain, this is our branch  
manager. He said he'd gotten a note  
from Mr. Hallstrom that you'd be  
coming in, and wants to talk with  
you about opening an account with  
us.

BOB

Look. All I want is to cash my  
check and head home. Is that too  
much to ask?

The teller and manager look at each other puzzled. The manager turns and walks away, shaking his head questioningly. The teller puts the cash on the counter and starts to count it out. Bob grabs the money and starts stuffing it in his pockets.

BOB

That's OK, I trust you.

TELLER

Slow down Mr. Cain. Acting like  
that, with all those police cars  
outside, people will think we're  
getting robbed. Let me get you a  
bag for that.

The teller reaches under the counter, produces a bag, and hands it to Bob. Bob scoops the remaining bills into the bag and turns to leave.

TELLER  
(Brightly)  
Thanks Mr. Cain, have a great day!

Bob hurriedly exits the bank.

EXT. NYC STREET - DAY

Bob steps onto the sidewalk outside the bank. There are several police cars with their lights on, and an ambulance parked in the street in front of the building. Bob again composes himself, glancing around for anyone who might be observing him, and starts walking to the corner. Several people have gathered on the sidewalk to see what all the emergency activity is about. Bob turns the corner and begins walking down the street, still glancing around for anyone watching or following him. When he feels confident he is secure, he steps to the curb and hails a cab. He pulls open the door, gets into the backseat.

INT. CAB - DAY

CABBIE  
Where to mister?

BOB  
Huh? What?

CABBIE  
Where to? C'mon, I ain't got all day here.

BOB  
Just drive. Head downtown.

Cabbie shakes his head and pulls into traffic

EXT. NYC TRAFFIC - DAY

Cab driving in NYC traffic.

INT. CAB - DAY

BOB  
The Bowery. 2nd and Houston.

CABBIE  
Waddya wanna go down there for mac?

BOB  
Just go. There's an extra 10 in it for you if you step on it.

Sound of the cab accelerating.

EXT. NYC TRAFFIC - DAY

Follow the cab as it migrates through the NYC traffic.

INT. CAB - DAY

BOB

Wait a minute, pull over here. Now.

EXT. NYC TRAFFIC - DAY

Cab pulls over to the curb

INT. CAB - DAY

BOB

Wait here, I'll be right back.

Bob starts to exit the cab, then gets back in leaving the door open.

BOB

Hey, do you smoke?

CABBIE

Yeah, what of it?

BOB

Let me borrow your lighter.

CABBIE

Why?

BOB

Just let me borrow your lighter for a minute. I'll give it right back.

CABBIE

What for?

BOB

Just give it to me!

CABBIE

10 bucks.

BOB

What?

CABBIE

10 bucks. You want to borrow my lighter, it'll cost you 10 bucks.

Bob reaches in his pocket, pulls out a \$100 bill and gives it to the cabbie.

BOB

Here. Turn the meter off, do as I say, and don't ask any more questions. There's another one of these for you when we get downtown.

The cabbie stuffs the bill in his pocket, turns off the meter, and hands Bob his lighter.

CABBIE

You're the boss.

Bob exits the cab

EXT. NYC STREET - DAY

Bob looks around, and no one is on the street. He walks to a storm drain and pulls out his wallet. He removes his credit cards and license, and melts them with the lighter. He tosses them down the sewer, then tosses his wallet down the sewer. He gets back into the cab.

INT. CAB - DAY

BOB

Let's go. And no more questions.

EXT. NYC STREET - DAY

Cab drives off

EXT. NYC STREET - DAY

Cab pulls to the curb in the Bowery.

INT. CAB - DAY

Bob hands the cabbie another \$100 bill, gets out of the cab, then leans back in.

BOB

Thanks man.

Bob closes the cab door and walks away.

EXT. NYC STREET - DAY

Bob looks around as he walks down the street. He sees several homeless men around. He keeps looking down alleys until he sees what he is looking for, a lone homeless man sleeping in an alley. Bob walks down the alley and shakes the homeless man on his shoulder to wake him.

BOB

Wake up man, wake up. C'mon, I've got a deal for you.

HOMELESS MAN

Huh? What? Who are you?

BOB

C'mon man, wake up. I've got a deal for you.

HOMELESS MAN

Got anything to drink?

BOB

No man, something better.

The homeless man rolls over to ignore Bob. Bob walks around him and says.

BOB

Look man, I'm an investigative reporter. I need to blend in around here, so I need to look like I belong around here. I'll give you a hundred bucks and my clothes for your clothes.

The homeless man suddenly looks interested.

HOMELESS MAN

Like those Woodstein and Bernwood guys who did Watergate?

BOB

Yeah, just like that, only this is going to be bigger.

HOMELESS MAN

Never seen a hundred bucks before. Never had a nice suit like that neither. That coat warm?

BOB

Warmer than yours, but you'll be able to get a hotel room with the money.

HOMELESS MAN

Bullshit, I don't need no hotel room.

(smiles)

But I'll be able to stay warm on the inside for a long time.

The homeless man starts to unbutton his coat. Fade out.

EXT. NYC STREET - DAY

Bob exits the alley wearing the homeless man's clothes. He stops to mess up his hair so he doesn't look as groomed. Bob walks down the street continuing to look around to see if he has been followed. He spots a liquor store and enters.

INT. LIQUOR STORE - DAY

Bob walks around the store to the wine section, looking at the best wines in the store, picks a bottle, then catches himself in the mirror. He puts the bottle back, and grabs 2 bottles of the cheap wine. He walks to the counter and sets the bottles down. The LIQUOR STORE CLERK (50's) rough, looks Bob over.

LIQUOR STORE CLERK  
Never seen you before, who are you?

BOB  
I'm thirsty.

Bob hands the clerk a crisp \$20 bill. The clerk studies the bill, then looks hard at Bob.

LIQUOR STORE CLERK  
Somethin' 'bout you ain't right.  
You smell like shit, but look like  
you just got outta the shower.

The clerk looks at the bill, then back at Bob. He holds up the bill.

LIQUOR STORE CLERK  
This thing real? Where'd you get a  
brand new 20 dollar bill?

Bob grabs the two bottles, and stuffs them in his coat pocket.

BOB  
Yeah, it's the real deal, and so am  
I. Keep the change.

Bob exits the liquor store.

EXT. NYC STREET - DAY

Bob walks down the street, still looking around to see if he is being observed. He sees an old hat with long earflaps lying on the sidewalk, picks it up and puts it on, then continues on his way. He walks past an alley, then backs up and enters the alley. He takes some \$20 bills from his

pocket, crumples them up in his hands, then drops them on the dirty pavement. He slides them around on the dirty pavement with his foot to make them look old and used. He picks them up and crumples them again, then sticks them in his coat pocket.

INT. PRINCE HOTEL - DAY

Bob enters the flophouse lobby, and walks up to the clerk. Several down-and-outers sit in the lobby in various states of consciousness. Bob slides a crumpled \$20 bill across the counter to the HOTEL CLERK (50's), male, disinterested in life.

BOB

I need a room. How long will this get me?

HOTEL CLERK

'Bout a week, maybe more, maybe less. Depends. Who the hell are you?

Bob stares at him blankly

HOTEL CLERK

You look like Snoopy in that stupid hat. Here, sign in.

Clerk slides a book in front of Bob. Bob hesitates, then signs in as "Snoop." Bob slides the register back to the clerk. The clerk looks at it, grabs a key and sets it on the counter in front of Bob.

HOTEL CLERK

Room 305, third floor. Stairs are over there. John and shower are at the end of the hall. There's a towel in the room for the shower. You're on your own for soap. Towels and sheets get changed Wednesdays or Thursdays. Depends.

BOB

Let me know when the money runs out. I'll go find more.

Bob takes the key off the counter and turns, heading toward the stairs.

HOTEL CLERK

(calling after Bob)  
And no trouble! (pause) Snoop!

FADE OUT

EXT. NYC STREET - DAY

Bob walks down the street, more confident, not looking over his shoulder anymore. He now has a scraggly beard, long hair, and still wears the homeless man clothes and hat. He turns and enters an electronics store.

INT. ELECTRONICS STORE - DAY

Bob walks up to the ELECTRONICS STORE CLERK (20's), male, behind the counter

ELECTRONICS STORE CLERK

Hey Snoop.

BOB

Hey Bill, did my order come in?

ELECTRONICS STORE CLERK

Yeah, hang on, let me get it.

The clerk goes to the back of the store while Bob looks around at some of the items on display. The clerk returns with a box containing some items. He sets the box on the counter, then starts to remove the items from the box one by one.

ELECTRONICS STORE CLERK

Micro camera, sound bugging kit, lock picking kit, wrist watch with a hidden garrote cord... Whatta going to do with all this stuff. Joining the CIA?

Bob laughs

BOB

Nah, just can't be too careful when you live where I do.

ELECTRONICS STORE CLERK

With all you spent on this, you should have just moved somewhere nicer.

Bob starts putting the items in his coat pockets

BOB

I'll think about that next time someone dies and leaves me some more money in their will. Thanks Bill.

ELECTRONICS STORE CLERK

You take care Snoop.



Bob exits the store

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

INT. PUBLIC LIBRARY - DAY

Bob sits at a table reading, several spy related books lay on the table by him. SISTER MARGARET (50's), Catholic nun approaches and sits across the table from Bob.

BOB

Hey sis.

SISTER MARGARET

Hello Snoop.

BOB

Still cruising the halls of literature trying to save us retched refuse I see.

SISTER MARGARET

I've only been hitting on you for about 2 months, but I've been doing this going on 30 years. Figure I've got another 20 left in me. You prepared for that?

Sister Margaret looks at the books on the table, picks one up to look at, then sets it back on the table without opening it.

SISTER MARGARET

More spy books? I see why they call you Snoop.

Bob chuckles

BOB

It's pure escapism sister. The world's going to hell in a handbasket, and this helps me to step away from the realism of that.

Sister Margaret gives Bob a disapproving look

BOB

Oh, sorry Sister.

SISTER MARGARET

Snoop, I can tell your a well educated man. I know you won't tell  
(MORE)

SISTER MARGARET (cont'd)  
me what led you to this station in  
your life, but I wish you'd let me  
help.

BOB  
What if this is my life's choice?  
What if the proletariat has become  
the new bourgeoisie, and by turning  
my back on that life, I truly shed  
those chains of tyranny?

SISTER MARGARET  
I work for God, would you classify  
me as a part of that tyranny?

BOB  
Well played Sister Margaret.

SISTER MARGARET  
I knew you could state the case,  
but couldn't make the case. No one  
can. And yes, I'm here with a  
message from my boss, and he wants  
to talk to you.

BOB  
How do you know we aren't already  
talking?

SISTER MARGARET  
If you were, we wouldn't be having  
this conversation right now.

Bob puts down his book.

BOB  
You're never going to give up, are  
you?

SISTER MARGARET  
As many times as we've had this  
conversation before, I think you  
know the answer to that.

BOB  
So what's in it for me?

SISTER MARGARET  
Only eternal life with the glory of  
God.

Sister Margaret stands up

SISTER MARGARET

St. George's Ukrainian Church. Just of 7th Street and Bowery. Mass is at 6 in the morning, or at 7:30 if you want to sleep in.

BOB

Ukrainian Church? Isn't the Ukraine in Russia?

SISTER MARGARET

Not really, but close. Both Russia and the Ukraine are republics located in the Soviet Union.

BOB

You seem to know a lot about the area. Tell me more about it. How does a Catholic Church exist in a communist country?

Sister Margaret sits back down across from Bob

SISTER MARGARET

The roots of Christianity in that area date back to the apostle St. Andrew. With nearly 2,000 years of acceptance and growth, it's much more established than the political base of the Soviet Union. People will tolerate political and border wars, but will draw the line at religious genocide. Hitler couldn't do it with the Jews, there's no way the Soviets can do it with the Catholics.

BOB

So how is it that there is a Ukrainian Catholic church in lower Manhattan?

SISTER MARGARET

Lower Manhattan was a prime destination for Ukrainian immigrants in the 18th & 19th centuries. As so many immigrants have, they brought their religious beliefs here to America, built up the church, and it's following. In most cases, their religion was the only thing they had to bring with them.

BOB

You don't sound much like an immigrant, so how did you get involved?

SISTER MARGARET

My grandparents emigrated from the Ukraine and settled in lower Manhattan. Our family has lived in this area since. I was raised in St. George's, and it always felt like home, so when I was called, it was a calling for me to serve here.

BOB

Do you still have family back in the Ukraine?

SISTER MARGARET

I do. And St. George's has a partnership with St. Nicholas church in Kiev. I've always dreamed of visiting, my ancestral home, and the home of my church.

BOB

Ahh, the dream of going home. Even an old stew bum like me can understand how that works, on many levels. I too wish to go home one day.

SISTER MARGARET

So where is home?

Bob taps his heart and points at his head saying

BOB

Here and here for now.

SISTER MARGARET

Snoop, I've just laid out my family history for you. Can't you give me just one nugget of information about you?

BOB

(smiling)

Just one, right?

SISTER MARGARET

Yes, just one. For now.

BOB  
(pulls out his hat and  
puts it on)  
This is why they call me Snoop.  
Used to be Snoopy, but I shortened  
it. Made me feel more mysterious.

SISTER MARGARET  
(stands)  
Until tomorrow morning then?

BOB  
Tell you what Sister, let me check  
my calendar for any conflicts, but  
I'll try to make it happen.

SISTER MARGARET  
Thanks Snoopy, that's all I ask.

Bob watches as Sister Margaret walks away, he is deep in  
thought.

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

INT. PRINCE HOTEL - DAY

Bob walks down the hotel staircase and approaches the desk  
clerk.

BOB  
Hey Jim.

HOTEL CLERK  
Hey Snoop, how are things?

BOB  
Well, I've got a bit of a problem I  
hope you can help me with.

HOTEL CLERK  
Sorry Snoop, you've been a good guy  
here, but I never get involved with  
the residents here.

BOB  
I'm just looking for a bit of  
guidance, advise really. I seem to  
have lost my ID card, and need some  
help in getting a new one.

HOTEL CLERK  
So go to the courthouse.

BOB

Well, there's a problem with that. If I can't prove who I am, how can I get proof of who I am? I was hoping you may know someone local around here I could get a bit of (coughs) help from.

The Hotel Clerk looks at Bob suspiciously, eying him up and down

HOTEL CLERK

You serious? Not going to come back to bite me?

BOB

One hundred percent serious. Trust me, I've never given you reason not to. If it works out, I'll make it worth your while.

The Hotel Clerk again looks at Bob, trying to decide what to do.

HOTEL CLERK

Eddie at the social club over on Spring Street might be able to help.

BOB

But that's a private club.

HOTEL CLERK

Go to the liquor store around the corner on Prince. Ask for a bottle of Taylor Port, 20 year old. Say it's for Eddie, and that I sent you. It ain't cheap.

BOB

Not a problem.

HOTEL CLERK

Next Tuesday, take the port to the social club. There will be two guys standing outside. Show the bottle to the shorter one, and tell him you have a gift for Eddie.

BOB

That's it?

HOTEL CLERK

That's all I can help you with,  
you're on your own from there.  
Don't make me regret this, or  
you'll regret it more than me.

BOB

Understood. Thanks Jim.

Bob begins to walk toward the exit door, stops, then turns  
back to the Hotel Clerk.

BOB

And you won't regret it.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

EXT. SPRING STREET - DAY

Bob walks down the street holding the bottle of port,  
approaches a door that has two men standing next to the  
door, one on each side of the door. The door is marked with  
the word "PRIVATE CLUB." Bob approaches the shorter man.

BOB

Good afternoon, I have a gift for  
Eddie.

Bob shows the man the bottle of port. The man looks at the  
bottle, looks over Bob, and enters the door without saying  
anything. Bob begins to follow, but the other man outside  
the door blocks his path. Eddie waits for the first man to  
come back out.

After a pause, the first man opens the door, then gestures  
with his thumb for Bob to enter the social club.

INT. PRIVATE SOCIAL CLUB - DAY

Bob enters the club. The inside is dimly lit, with a thick  
haze of cigarette smoke hanging in the air. Several tables  
are occupied. Bob spots a table with one man sitting at it,  
with two men standing next to the table. The man sitting at  
the table gestures for Bob to join him. Bob approaches the  
table, and still standing, offers the bottle of port.

BOB

A gift for you sir.

The man seated at the table takes the bottle from Bob, looks  
at it, then hands it to one of the men standing beside him.  
He returns his look to Bob, and gestures for Bob to sit  
beside him.

EDDIE

Thank you for the kind gift, to  
what do I owe this gesture?

BOB

Thank you for taking time from you  
day to see me. I am a bit ashamed  
to ask, having just met you, but I  
am a man in need of something.

Eddie leans back and stares at Bob for him to continue.

BOB

I need a couple of passports.

EDDIE

So go to the post office. Why do  
you come to me for such advice?

BOB

Let's just say I currently have no  
proof of identity. Actually, I have  
no identity now.

EDDIE

No identity?

BOB

No, none.

EDDIE

So no one would know if, poof, you  
just disappeared?

Eddie looks at his companions and laughs, they laugh along  
with him.

BOB

That's right, poof, and I'm gone.  
But I'd prefer it be on my terms.

Eddie leans forward in his chair and stares at Bob.

EDDIE

I still don't know why you come to  
me.

Eddie leans back in his chair, and folds his hands over his  
stomach.

EDDIE

I do, however, know of a friend who  
may be able to help you.  
Unfortunately, he too has a

(MORE)



EDDIE (cont'd)  
problem, that perhaps you may be  
able to help him with.

Bob leans forward in his chair.

BOB  
How can I help?

EDDIE  
This friend of mine has a customer  
who claims he can't pay my friend a  
large sum of money that is past  
due. In addition, he keeps  
frequenting my friend's place of  
business. This is quite  
embarrassing to my friend, and I  
don't like my friends to be  
embarrassed. It would be a personal  
favor to my friend and me if you  
were to collect this debt for my  
friend, and persuade this customer  
of his to, let's say, never visit  
my friend's business again, so as  
to not cause any future  
embarrassment.

BOB  
It would be my pleasure to do this  
favor for you. Where can I find  
these people?

Eddie reaches up and takes the bottle of port from his  
bodyguard and looks at it.

EDDIE  
I have many friends. Tomorrow, go  
see the man who sold you this  
bottle, and tell him how  
appreciative I am to have received  
it. He will have instructions for  
you.

Eddie looks at one of his bodyguards and nods to him. The  
bodyguard reaches under Bob's arm prompting him to stand.

EDDIE  
And one more thing. As you will be  
a representative of mine, please  
dress more properly.

BOB  
Thank you sir, I will.

The bodyguard escorts Bob out the door.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Bob sits at the bar sipping his drink, watching a patron. He removes a photo of the man from his pocket and looks at it to confirm he is watching the right man. He returns the photo to his pocket. His hair is trimmed and combed, as is his beard. He wears a sportcoat and slacks, with an open collared shirt.

The man stands up and walks to the restroom. After the restroom door closes, Bob walks to where the man had been seated, puts a \$20 bill next to the half empty glass of beer, and walks to the restroom. He pulls on the door, and realizes it is locked. As Bob stands by the door, another patron approaches.

BOB

It's going to be a while, my friend  
isn't feeling very well right now,  
if you know what I mean.

The patron walks away.

Sound of the door being unlocked, and as the door starts to open, Bob pushes his way in.

DEADBEAT

What's going on, who are you?

Bob locks the door and looks at the deadbeat.

BOB

Who is not important, and you know  
why I am here.

In a swift motion, Bob spins the man around so his back is to Bob, and Bob pulls the crown from his watch and wraps the garrote wire around the man's neck.

BOB

But since you asked, I am an angel,  
here to right a wrong you have  
committed. Now there are two kinds  
of angels, angels of mercy, and  
angels of death. Blink twice if  
you'd prefer I was an angel of  
mercy.

The man blinks his eyes twice. Bob releases the garrote wire and shoves the man down onto the toilet.

DEADBEAT

I swear I don't have the money now, but I can have the thousand I owe you next week.

BOB

Now that's a problem. I don't have until next week, and you certainly don't. In addition, you've been an embarrassment to have around.

DEADBEAT

What are you going to do?

BOB

How much money do you have on you?

The man pulls some bills out of his pocket and counts it quickly.

DEADBEAT

Thirty-two dollars. I have thirty-two dollars. Here. Take it.

The man holds the money out to Bob.

BOB

Well that's just not enough to make the problem go away, and right now, you're nothing more than the problem. And I need this problem gone tonight, and gone forever.

The deadbeat slinks back away from Bob.

Bob reaches in his pocket and pulls out some bills.

BOB

Here is what's going to happen. We are going to walk out of this bar together and get into a cab. I'm going to take you to Penn Station, where you're going to get on a train to, , , New Orleans, where you will stay for at least a year. I have \$500 seed money for you to get started down there. I have people there who will be watching you. You are not to leave the city. Period. I have people here who will be listening for you. You will not contact anyone outside of New Orleans. Period. I have bought your debt, and now own you. One

(MORE)

BOB (cont'd)  
year from today, should you not  
break these rules, this debt will  
be erased. Do you understand?

The deadbeat nods his head

BOB  
Let's go.

Deadbeat stands up and straightens his clothing, then looks  
at Bob.

DEADBEAT  
How do I know I can trust you?

BOB  
You don't.

Bob pushes the \$500 into the deadbeat's breast pocket.

BOB  
But what alternative do you have?

Bob unlocks and opens the bathroom door, and leads the  
deadbeat out of the bar.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. BARREN ROOM - DAY

A man (Michael) sits at a table in a barren room. There are  
only two chairs at the table.

Bob approaches the table, and Michael gestures for him to  
sit. Bob sits in the open chair.

MICHAEL  
How did it go with him?

Bob removes an envelope from his pocket, and slides it  
across the table to Michael.

BOB  
This was delivered to me by  
accident, I believe it belongs to  
you.

Michael picks up the envelope and slides it into his jacket  
pocket.

MICHAEL

Thank you, that was most kind. And what of the poor, misguided sole who delivered this to you?

BOB

With all due apologies sir, it seems he will be unable to ever be a customer of yours again.

Michael smiles.

MICHAEL

Seems a shame, but it's probably for the best. Do you have the names?

Bob removes a paper from his pocket, and slides it to Michael.

BOB

This provides all the details I believe you will need.

Michael picks up the paper, scans it, and nods his head.

MICHAEL

Very well, meet me back here in a week with the photos, and we'll be able to complete the documents.

Bob exits.

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

INT. ST. GEORGE'S CATHOLIC CHURCH - DAY

Bob sits in the rear pew as parishioners are leaving mass. Sister Margaret approaches and sits next to him.

BOB

Beautiful service this morning. Quite inspirational. More so than usual.

SISTER MARGARET

Now aren't you glad you listened to me? And to God?

BOB

More than you will ever know. Sister Margaret, something has  
(MORE)

BOB (cont'd)  
happened, and I need to talk about  
it. Privately. Is Father Paul  
hearing confession this morning?

Sister Margaret looks concerned.

SISTER MARGARET  
What is it, can I help?

BOB  
No, no, this is something I need to  
speak with Father Paul about.

SISTER MARGARET  
He will be hearing confession this  
morning, but not until nine.

Bob takes Sister Margaret's hand.

BOB  
Sister, I can't thank you enough  
for setting me on this path. I  
can't imagine all the people you  
have led to being saved, including  
me.

Bob lets go of her hand.

BOB  
If you don't mind, I'd kind of like  
to just sit here for a while and  
pray for guidance as I wait for  
Father Paul.

Sister Margaret stands to leave.

SISTER MARGARET  
Of course, of course. Peace be with  
you.

BOB  
And also with you sister.

Sister Mary walks away, fade out.

INT. CONFSSIONAL - DAY

Bob enters the confessional and kneels. FATHER PAUL (60),  
Catholic priest, is in the confessional.

BOB  
Father Paul?

FATHER PAUL

Yes my son.

BOB

Father Paul, this is Snoop.

FATHER PAUL

Yes, I know.

BOB

Father, I need to talk to you about Sister Margaret.

FATHER PAUL

Snoop, have you ever been to confession before? This is not how it's done.

BOB

I know Father, but I do need to talk to you privately, and this was the best way I could think of.

FATHER PAUL

I do have an office, and office hours posted.

BOB

But were here now, and it's private. Can't we just talk now?

Father Paul sighs.

FATHER PAUL

Go on, my son.

BOB

Father, I can't tell you all the great things Sister Margaret has done for me in changing my life. These past couple of months have been miraculous for me.

FATHER PAUL

Yes, she is one of our finest and most devoted. So what is the problem with her?

BOB

Father, it's not a problem, it's an opportunity. I want to thank her in a special way, for all that she has done for me.

FATHER PAUL

There is no need for that my son,  
her reward lies in the kingdom of  
heaven.

BOB

Father, please hear me out. A few  
weeks ago, I overheard her talking  
about the worldwide catholic  
conference being held at St.  
Nicholas Church in Ukraine this  
year. It runs from Easter to the  
Ascension, and there will be  
representation from churches all  
around the world. Sister Margaret  
said since her ancestors hailed  
from the Ukraine, and she has  
always wanted to visit. I thought  
it would be special for her to be  
able to attend the conference this  
year, as no one knows if it will  
ever be held in the Ukraine again.

FATHER PAUL

Yes, yes, the conference is one of  
the church's biggest events every  
year. But we are a poor parish with  
very limited funds. We just can't  
afford to send anyone on such a  
venture.

BOB

That's where I can help father. You  
see, I too have heritage from the  
area. Russia, not the Ukraine. I  
still have family living there. I  
believe I can now turn my life  
around there, living in a new  
place, with family and God beside  
me.

FATHER PAUL

I'm sorry but...

BOB

Wait father. I just inherited a  
small amount of money from my last  
living relative here in the states.  
With your permission, I'd like to  
provide the means for Sister  
Margaret to go to the conference. I  
would travel with her so she could  
give me the strength I need to  
embark on my own new life.

(MORE)



BOB (cont'd)

Otherwise I'm afraid I'll just spend it on booze, and who knows what else. It's becoming a terrible temptation.

FATHER PAUL

Are you sure about this? Have you discussed this with Sister Margaret?

BOB

No father, I wanted to seek your permission and blessing first.

FATHER PAUL

I know little of your past life my son, but I do feel there are to be great things in your future. You have my approval to discuss this with Sister Margaret, and carry on, provided she consents.

BOB

Thank you father.

Bob exits the confessional, and sees Sister Mary sitting alone in a pew. Bob sits down beside her.

BOB

Sister Margaret, you have been so good to me, I want to thank you.

SISTER MARGARET

Oh there is no need for that, this is what my life has been dedicated to.

BOB

You don't understand, I need to tell you what I just discussed with Father Paul.

SISTER MARGARET

Snoop, the confessional is a sacred place, what's disclosed in there is between you and God.

BOB

I did get Father Paul's blessing to talk to you about this, and I'm certain God wouldn't mind either. You see, I recently received a small inheritance, and wanted to

(MORE)

BOB (cont'd)  
use it to take you to the  
conference in the Ukraine I heard  
you talk about a couple of weeks  
ago.

SISTER MARGARET  
Oh no, that's simply out of the  
question.

BOB  
Why?

SISTER MARGARET  
It's so far away, and I have so  
much to do here.

BOB  
Sister, I heard you say this is the  
most important conference for the  
church every year, and there's no  
doubt that you have devoted your  
life to the church, which means  
this is the most important event  
this year for what you have devoted  
your life to. In addition, I've  
often heard you say you would like  
to visit the Ukraine sometime  
before you die. Now this year the  
conference is in the Ukraine, and I  
have been given the means to take  
you there, almost sounds to me like  
there has been a heavenly  
intervention.

Sister Margaret slowly smiles

SISTER MARGARET  
And Father Paul gave his approval  
for this?

BOB  
He did.

SISTER MARGARET  
So I suppose it's decided then. I  
don't even know where to begin to  
prepare.

BOB  
I'll help you with that, and we  
have plenty of time.

Bob reaches in his pocket and removes his spy camera.

BOB

Show me that smile again, I want to capture this moment.

Sister Margaret smiles at Bob, and Bob takes a couple of pictures of her.

BOB

Thank you Sister, I'm sure this trip will be meaningful for both of us.

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

INT. BARREN ROOM - DAY

Bob and Michael sit at the table. Michael removes an envelope and slides it across the table to Bob.

MICHAEL

The photos worked very well. These documents are perfect, you will have no trouble passing through any borders.

Bob withdraws an envelope from his pocket and slides it across the table to Michael. Michael stops it halfway across, and slides it back toward Bob.

MICHAEL

This is not necessary my friend. You did me a service in collecting my debt, but then you did me a favor by permanently solving my problem. I just wish you would be staying to work with me in the future.

BOB

A kind offer, and this was my pleasure. Should things not work out for me, I may take you up on that.

MICHAEL

I'm always here to help should things not work out for you.

Michael puts the envelope back into his pocket, stands, and walks away.

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

INT. JFK AIRPORT - DAY

Bob is sitting at the airport gate, and Sister Margaret walks up to him and sits down next to him. Sister Margaret looks shocked when she sees that Bob is now dressed as a Catholic priest. He is now well groomed, his hair and beard have been trimmed, and there are tinges of gray in his hair and beard.

BOB

You look surprised, don't you like my new look?

SISTER MARGARET

Why in the world are you dressed like that.

BOB

It's still a delicate world we live in, and relations between the USSR and US are strained. The only way I was able to get a visa for the travel was as a priest attending the conference.

Sister Margaret holds up her passport to Bob.

SISTER MARGARET

And I still don't understand how you were able to get me a passport in such a short amount of time.

BOB

From the moment you agreed to go, my only job has been to get things prepared for our trip, and I had plenty of free time to dedicate to it. That's when I found out about the travel restrictions. Speaking of preparing for the trip, have you been studying your conversational Russian like I have? It'll be good for you to know a few key phrases, to help you get around.

SISTER MARGARET

I have. I can ask for directions to a church, a restaurant, and a bathroom, although I'm not sure I can understand the responses.

(MORE)

SISTER MARGARET (cont'd)

(pauses)

I still can't believe this. I've never been in an airport before, much less ridden on an airplane, and here we are talking about speaking a foreign language.

Bob is deep in thought, as Sister Margaret begins looking through a travel brochure.

SISTER MARGARET

Did you know that this plane holds over 400 people? And that we will be flying in the air for over 8 hours without stopping?

BOB

So you've never flown before?

SISTER MARGARET

No, the furthest away from home I have ever been was a trip to Washington D.C. We took the train, and that was a frightening experience. I'm not sure I can do this.

BOB

Sister Margaret, I've flown many times before. Once you are in the air, you'll relax, and realize it is the only way to travel.

SISTER MARGARET

You have flown before?

BOB

I haven't always been homeless.

SISTER MARGARET

Where have you flown to?

BOB

Ahhh, that's a topic for a different time. (stands) If you'll excuse me, I need to pop into that bookstore over there and get something to read on the plane. Can I get you anything?

SISTER MARGARET

No thank you, I brought along my favorite book. But please hurry

(MORE)

SISTER MARGARET (cont'd)  
back, I'm still nervous, and it's  
comforting to have someone here  
with me.

INT. AIRPORT BOOKSTORE - DAY

Bob looks around a bit, then selects the book "Zodiac" by Robert Graysmith from the shelves. He then picks up a small notebook and approaches the BOOK STORE CASHIER, (40), female.

BOOK STORE CASHIER  
Will that be all?

BOB  
Yes please. Thank you.

Cashier looks at the book then back at Bob

BOOK STORE CASHIER  
Do you know what this book is  
about?

BOB  
Yes ma'am.

BOOK STORE CASHIER  
I wouldn't think this would be  
suitable reading material for a man  
of the cloth. This guy is as  
despicable as they come.

BOB  
Yes, but we are all God's children,  
and he loves us all.

Cashier rings up the sale.

BOOK STORE CASHIER  
That'll be 8.87. I love my children  
too, but that doesn't make them any  
good.

Bob hands the cashier a ten dollar bill, she hands him back the change.

BOOK STORE CASHIER  
8.87, 88, 89, 90, 9 and 10.

Bob takes the book and looks up at the cashier.

BOB  
Well, if everyone were good, I  
guess I'd be out of a job.

Bob turns and walks out of the store. He walks a way down the terminal to a currency exchange and stops. The CURRENCY EXCHANGE CASHIER (25), female, greets him.

CURRENCY EXCHANGE CASHIER  
Hi, how can I help you?

BOB  
I'd like to exchange some US dollars for Soviet rubles please.

CURRENCY EXCHANGE CASHIER  
Certainly sir.

The cashier reviews a listing of the current exchange rates.

CURRENCY EXCHANGE CASHIER  
the exchange rate is .58, that's \$1.73 per ruble, and we take a 4% charge for the exchange. How much would you like to convert?

Bob looks around to be certain no one is looking. He pulls a stack of \$100 bills from his pocket, and hands it to the cashier.

BOB  
This please.

The cashier looks shocked.

BOB  
Please. And thank you.

CURRENCY EXCHANGE CASHIER  
(using her calculator)  
Let's see, that's \$10,000, less 4% fee for \$9,600, converted to rubles, that's 5,568 rubles. I'll need to get that from the back.

The cashier walks away from her window, as Bob casually looks around. The cashier returns with the currency.

BOB  
Could you put that in two equal stacks for me please?

CURRENCY EXCHANGE CASHIER  
(does a quick calculation)  
That would be 2,784 rubles each. Let me go back and get the proper denominations.

The cashier again walks away for a few moments, then returns, counting out the currency on the counter.

CURRENCY EXCHANGE CASHIER

(counting out the  
currency)

1,000, 2,000, 500, 600, 700, 50,  
60, 70, 80, and 1, 2, 3, 4.

(counts out second stack  
of currency)

1,000, 2,000, 500, 600, 700, 50,  
60, 70, 80, and 1, 2, 3, 4.

Bob takes the currency and puts one stack in his right pocket, and one stack in his left pocket. He then removes a \$100 bill from his pocket, puts it on the counter.

BOB

Thank you, keep this in case your  
drawer should ever run short some  
day.

Cashier holds up the bill, looks at it briefly, then slides it in her pocket.

Bob walks back to Sister Margaret, sits down beside her. He reaches in his pocket and removes the wad of rubles.

BOB

I took it upon myself to get you  
some local currency should you want  
to buy some souvenirs when you get  
to the Ukraine.

SISTER MARGARET

Oh, I can't take that.

BOB

Please sister, this is the least I  
can do. It means a lot to me.

SISTER MARGARET

Oh it's too much.

BOB

Oh sister, don't worry. It's not  
that much, what with the exchange  
rates and all.

Sister Margaret hesitantly takes the money

SISTER MARGARET

I don't know how to thank you for  
all this.



BOB

Please, all this is thanks enough.  
You have no idea.

Bob picks up his Zodiac book to look at it.

SISTER MARGARET

How can you read that, such an evil  
person.

BOB

I've always been intrigued by the  
codes. I was hoping to see if I  
could make any sense of them. Some  
say there are even codes in the  
Bible.

SISTER MARGARET

And there are some that say there  
is no thing as God. I think the  
world would be a much better place  
if we just took things at face  
value and didn't try to hide things  
in secret codes.

BOB

Amen to that sister.

Boarding call for Pan American flight 74 from New York to  
Frankfurt, with continuing service to Moscow.

BOB

That's us. (stands) Are you ready?

Offers Sister Margaret his hand to help her up. Sister  
Margaret takes his hand and stands.

SISTER MARGARET

I don't believe I have ever been  
more excited and afraid at the same  
time.

BOB

Me too sister, me too.

Bob and Sister Margaret walk toward the line at the gate.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. AIRPLANE - NIGHT

Sister Margaret is in the seat next to Bob and is asleep.  
Bob has his tray table down, and opens his Zodiac book to a

page showing the symbols of the Zodiac's coded messages. He has his notebook open, and is randomly copying symbols from the book to his notebook.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

EXT. TRAIN STATION PLATFORM IN MOSCOW - DAY

Sister Margaret and Bob stand on the platform by a waiting train, their baggage is on the ground surrounding them.

BOB

I've gotten you round trip tickets from Moscow to Kiev, so when you are ready to come home, just get back on this train and take a cab back to the airport. I know you'll do fine.

SISTER MARGARET

I do wish you'd reconsider and come to Kiev with me. It's a long ride, and I don't know what to do once I get there.

BOB

Don't worry, I've gotten you a sleeper, and if you sleep half as well on the train as you did on the flight over, you won't even know I'm not there. You have plenty of money to get yourself a cab to the cathedral, and I'm sure they are prepared to receive visitors for their upcoming event.

(pausing, deep in thought)

Besides, I have a ways to travel myself, and people to find. I don't know how long that will take me, or how they will react to me once I find them. I need some time to myself to prepare. Remember, we have adjoining seats for the flight back home. If we meet back up then, I will have been unsuccessful, and will tell you of my adventures. If we don't meet again, know that I have found who I am looking for.

Sister Margaret hugs Bob, then pulls back with her hands on his shoulders.

SISTER MARGARET

I know that the Lord will provide  
for you, and that I won't see you  
again. I will continue to pray for  
you that God gives you the guidance  
you need now, and forever.

Sister Margaret picks up her luggage and boards the train.  
Bob watches her board, and continues watching the train for  
a few moments after Sister Margaret has entered it, then  
picks up his bags and walks away from the platform.

EXT. FRONT OF MOSCOW TRAIN STATION - DAY

Bob walks up to a cab on the street, opens the door, throws  
in his luggage, and gets in the back seat.

INT. MOSCOW CAB - DAY

BOB

Otel' natsional'nyy pozhaluysta.

*Note*

*Subtitle "Hotel National, please."*

MOSCOW CAB DRIVER

Amerikanets?

*Note*

*Subtitle "American?"*

BOB

Da.

*Note*

*Subtitle "Yes."*

Cab pulls away from the curb.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. HOTEL NATIONAL - DAY

Bob walks through the hotel lobby to the concierge desk.

BOB

Yest' li vas sotrudniki, kotoryye  
govoryat po-angliyski?

*Note*

*Subtitle "Do you have any staff that speak English?"*

CONCIERGE

Da, yes. We are an international  
hotel, much of our peoples speak  
English.

BOB

The Good Lord never ceases to provide.

(smiles)

Perhaps you could help me check in?  
My name is Father Jack Daniels,  
from the United States?

The concierge walks around the desk, and leads Bob to the check in counter.

CONCIERGE

Follow please

The concierge approaches a clerk behind the counter.

CONCIERGE

Eto otets Jack Daniels iz Ameriki,  
ne mogli by vy proverit' yeg,  
pozhaluysta?

*Note*

*Subtitle "This is Father Jack Daniels from America, can you check him in please?"*

HOTEL NATIONAL CLERK

Da, yeah, I help you. Do you have the reservation?

BOB

Da, yes. Father Jack Daniels from the United States, staying three nights.

The clerk looks in the computer, and shakes her head, looks at the concierge, then looks back at Bob.

HOTEL NATIONAL CLERK

I have no reservation, could be another name?

BOB

Not that I know of, I hope you have a room that I can have.

HOTEL NATIONAL CLERK

Da, yeah, we have rooms. I check you in.

Hotel clerk begins typing into the computer.

BOB

(turns to the concierge  
and places his hand on  
his forehead)

Oh no. I was to have a ticket to  
tour the Kremlin tomorrow waiting  
here for me. I don't suppose you  
have that here for me either.

CONCIERGE

I'm sorry, no. We have no record of  
your visit.

BOB

I don't suppose you would have the  
ability to get me into the tour  
tomorrow.

CONCIERGE

No, cannot get ticket for tomorrow,  
but can get ticket for Friday?

BOB

That would actually be even better,  
just let me know what it cost.

CONCIERGE

There is special no cost ticket for  
priest. I will have deliver to your  
room.

HOTEL NATIONAL CLERK

Room 217 for 3 nights, 600 rubles.

Bob hands the hotel clerk a 1,000 ruble note. The clerk  
makes change, and hands Bob the key and 4 100 ruble notes as  
change. Bob hands two of the notes to the clerk, and two of  
the notes to the concierge.

BOB

Thank you for everything. I'm sure  
I'm going to enjoy my stay in your  
lovely city.

Bob picks up his luggage and walks toward the stairway.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. KREMLIN - DAY

A large tour group is inside the Kremlin. Bob is at the rear  
of the group. The group begins to move forward, Bob monitors  
their movement around a corner, as he pretends to be fixated

on a painting. Once the last person from the tour group has passed the corner and is out of site, Bob quickly walks to a door marked "PRIVATE", opens it, looks around to see the hallway is empty, and passes through the door to the hallway.

INT. HALLWAY IN KREMLIN - DAY

Bob continues to walk through the empty hallway, stopping at each corner to peer around it to see if anyone is present. While looking around one corner, he sees two armed guards standing outside a door. He pulls back, takes a deep breath, then walks around the corner boldly (to catch the guards attention). Once Bob sees that the guards have seen him, he turns around and runs back the direction he came from, slowly enough that the guards can catch him.

KREMLIN GUARD 1

Chto ty zdes' delayesh'? Eto  
zapretnaya zona.

*Note*

*Subtitle "What are you doing here? This is a restricted area."*

Bob struggles with the guard, but not so hard as to break free from his grip.

BOB

I'm American. I don't speak  
Russian.

The guards look at each other.

KREMLIN GUARD 1

Amerikanets?

*Note*

*Subtitle "American?"*

Bob nods his head.

One of the guards removes a blackjack from his pocket and strikes Bob on the head. Bob is immediately rendered unconscious, and falls to the floor. The two guards grab Bob by his feet, and drag him down the hallway.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. KREMLIN INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Bob sits on a metal chair at a metal table, in a cinder block room. He is disheveled, with a large bruise on his face. His hands are handcuffed behind him, and his feet are shackled to the chair. The RUSSIAN INTERROGATOR (40's),

large in both height and girth, enters the room. The interrogator holds a bag in his hand.

RUSSIAN INTERROGATOR  
So tell me your name.

Bob just stares at the interrogator.

RUSSIAN INTERROGATOR  
Father Jack Daniels?

Bob continues to stare without saying anything.

RUSSIAN INTERROGATOR  
When we checked your room at the Hotel National, there was nothing of interest there. Actually, there was nothing there at all. As if you were planning on a quick departure.

Bob continues to stare silently

RUSSIAN INTERROGATOR  
Perhaps you can explain these things we found on you when you trespassed into a prohibited area in the Kremlin.

The interrogator empties the contents of the bag he carried in. In it is the spy camera, recording device, wristwatch, and lock picks purchased at the spy shop in NY, along with several pages of the codes written on the plane.

RUSSIAN INTERROGATOR  
(holding up each item as he describes them)  
Spy camera, eavesdropping equipment, lock picks, murderer's wristwatch. Why would a Catholic priest have a need for these items? What were your intentions, Father Jack Daniels?

The interrogator moves behind Bob, pulls the crown to exhibit the garrotte, and holds it up to Bob's neck.

RUSSIAN INTERROGATOR  
But most concerning, are these coded messages. Perhaps you would like to explain these things, tell us what these messages say?

BOB  
Those aren't mine, you must have planted them.

The interrogator leans over to look at Bob, stands back up, and slaps him across the face with his beefy hand.

RUSSIAN INTERROGATOR

Let's start again. Your joke name is not funny. What is your name? Who do you work for? What is your mission.

BOB

As you can see, I live to serve the Lord.

RUSSIAN INTERROGATOR

You know, Father Jack Daniels, there is no record of you arriving in Russia. There is no longer any record of you at the Hotel National. There is no trace of you anywhere, especially here in the Kremlin. You are evidently a man who will never be missed, because you are a man who doesn't exist.

The interrogator again slaps Bob, this time with enough force to knock him over in the chair. The interrogator looks at Bob lying on the floor, spits on him, and exits the room.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. KREMLIN PRISON CELL - DAY

Bob is shackled to the wall in a small cell, with his arms above him. Bob's ankles are shackled as well, with longer chains. Two guards sit outside his cell. The cell is dimly lit with no window, and rats scurry around his feet on the floor. As Bob begins to fall asleep, one of the guards outside his cell pokes him with an electrified cattle prod to wake him. Bob reacts to the shock of the prod, and slowly looks up at the guard.

BOB

Read any good books lately? Do you like the books of the month?

The guard prods Bob again with another shock from the cattle prod. After recovering from the shock, Bob looks to the other guard.

BOB

How about you? You look like you enjoy romance novels.



The guard prepares to shock Bob again, when two new guards enter the cell area to replace the existing guards. The exiting guard begins to hand the cattle prod to the replacement guard, but turns and shocks Bob one more time before relinquishing the cattle prod to his replacement. Bob looks at the replacement guard with the cattle prod.

BOB

I guess your pals aren't literary experts. How about you? Read any good books of the month lately?

The second replacement guard (without the cattle prod) steps up to the cell, looks at Bob.

REPLACEMENT GUARD 2

What do you know about that?

BOB

I know everything about that. I suppose you do as well.

Replacement guard 1 looks quizzically at them both. Replacement guard 2 looks at replacement guard one.

REPLACEMENT GUARD 2

Nam nuzhno doprosit' etogo  
cheloveka seychas otsyuda.

*Note*

*Subtitle "We need to question this man now away from here."*

REPLACEMENT GUARD 2

Prikroy yego, poka ya yego  
vypuskayu.

*Note*

*Subtitle "Cover him while I let him out."*

Replacement guard 1 sets down the cattle prod, removes his gun, previously slung over his shoulder by the strap, holds it waist high, and points it toward Bob. Replacement guard 2 opens the cell, removes the shackles from Bob's hands and feet, levels his gun at Bob, and pressing the gun barrel into Bob's back, directs him down the cell corridor, through a door, into a dark hallway. Bob's hands are in the air. Replacement guard 2 removes the gun from Bob's back, but keeps it leveled at Bob. Bob turns to face the guards. He speaks to replacement guard 2.

BOB

So you are the one who will  
detonate the nuclear bomb hidden in  
the Kremlin?

Replacement guard 2 shoulders his gun pointing it at Bob.

## REPLACEMENT GUARD 2

I was told one may come to stop me,  
and also that once I receive the  
code that I was to stop at nothing.

Replacement guard 1 shoulders his gun as well, and looks  
nervously back and forth at Bob and replacement guard 2.

## REPLACEMENT GUARD 1

Ob'yasnit' chto proiskhodit.

Note

*Subtitle "Explain what is happening"*

Replacement guard 2 lowers his gun and looks back at  
Replacement guard 1.

## BOB

Kill me now, and we are all dead in  
a few months. Stand down, and we  
all live. Don't kill us all.

Replacement guard 2 reshoulders his gun and points it at  
Bob. He chambers a round and a shot rings out. Replacement  
guard 2 falls dead from the shot by replacement guard 1.

## REPLACEMENT GUARD 1

YA ne sovsem ponimayu, no ubivat'  
svyashchennika nepravil'no.

Note

*Subtitle "I don't fully understand, but killing a  
priest is wrong."*

## REPLACEMENT GUARD 1

Sleduy za mnoy, otets. Tebe nuzhno  
ischeznut', ya eto prikryt'.

Note

*Subtitle "Follow me father. You need to disappear, I'll  
cover this up."*

Replacement guard 1 leads Bob through a maze of hallways and  
stairways to a door.

## REPLACEMENT GUARD 1

Eto vedet snaruzhi.

Note

*Subtitle "This leads outside."*

## BOB

Spasibo.

Note

*Subtitle "Thank you."*

## REPLACEMENT GUARD 1

Menya zovut Diak, vspomni menya  
otets.

*Note*

*Subtitle "My name is Diak, remember me father."*

Bob steps out the door.

EXT. ALLEY OUTSIDE THE KREMLIN - DAY

Bob takes a few steps from the door, draws a long breath of the fresh air. He looks up at the sky, closes his eyes to embrace the warmth of the sun, and is suddenly struck in the back of the head with a blackjack and knocked unconscious.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. PRIVATE PLANE - DAY

Bob is the only passenger. Bob has on fresh clothes, is cleanly shaven and groomed. There is no more of the grey in his hair. A flight attendant is sitting across the aisle from Bob. Bob is asleep, but begins to wake. As he wakes, the flight attendant stands next to him. She smiles at Bob.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

Welcome back. We thought you were gone, but we're glad to have you back.

She hands Bob a drink.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

Drink this, it will make you feel better.

Bob empties the glass, then falls back asleep.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. MERRILL'S BEDROOM - DAY

Bob wakes up in Merrill's bed. He is tired and disoriented. He looks around the room and recognizes it, it is the same, but somehow different. He sees the wedding picture of he and his wife on the nightstand next to the bed. A valet enters the room.

VALET

It's getting late, you need to shower and get into the office. You have a big day ahead of you today sir.

The valet exits the room before Bob can collect himself. He heads into the bathroom, showers, dries off, and goes into the closet. A suit, shirt, and tie has been laid out for him by the valet. He dresses, makes his way downstairs, and heads outside.

EXT. MERRILL'S HOUSE - DAY

Merrill's car is waiting with it's engine running, with the driver holding the rear driver's side door open for Bob. Bob enters the backseat, the driver closes the door, gets into the drivers seat, and drives them away.

INT. HALLSTROM PUBLISHING - DAY

Bob enters Hallstrom Publishing, still quite dazed and confused. The office workers greet him with "good mornings." He walks toward Merrill's office, where Delores sits outside. Delores stands, hands him a cup of coffee.

DELORES

Good morning sir.

Bob is stunned, he stands there holding the cup of coffee. Delores ushers him into Merrill's office.

DELORES

Mr. Abboud will be in to see you in  
a few minutes Mr. Hallstrom.

Bob begins to speak, but Delores quickly leaves, closing the door behind her.

INT. MERRILL'S OFFICE - DAY

Bob slowly moves around the office, looking around the office. Pan to the pictures around the office, they are all the same as before, only Bob's face has been photoshopped in where Merrill's face had been before. Bob takes a seat behind Merrill's desk. There is a double knock on the door, and Joe enters.

JOE

Merrill, we really need to get  
going on next month's Book of the  
Month.

Joe drops a manuscript on Merrill's desk. Bob picks it up and looks at the title page, which reads, in bold type, "Diak's Consent."

Bob studies it for a few moments, and looks up at Joe.

BOB

OK, get right on it.

Bob hands the manuscript back to Joe, and Joe leaves. Bob leans back in the office chair, crosses his legs, and admires his immaculate leather Berluti shoes, same as the ones he had worn in the first scene, only now with no scuff and a high polish.

FADE OUT:

End

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