

FINDERS KEEPERS

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FADE IN:

1

INT. APARTMENT -- DAY

1

A WINDOW

Is all that we see. The view is spectacular in the morning sun. Light glints off of high rise buildings.

PULL OUT to reveal a silhouetted FIGURE, staring out. PAN AROUND it to reveal its' face-- this is MICHAEL. 20s, attractive, and currently lost in the view.

A CELL PHONE RING pierces the tranquility. Michael reaches into his pocket and pulls out his PHONE.

ANGLE: THE PHONE

Someone named "Julia" is calling.

Michael picks up the phone and answers it.

MICHAEL

Jules?

JULIA (V.O.)

Mike.

MICHAEL

Where are you? You're supposed to be here.

JULIA

I can't be there.

MICHAEL

Why not?

(beat)

Julia?

There's no answer. Beat... then--

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

I'm coming for you.

The phone goes dead. Michael stares down at his phone, startled. He suddenly lifts his head, determination in his eyes, and turns. He walks out the door.

2 INT. HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS 2

Michael exits his apartment. We follow him as he approaches the elevator. He presses the button. The DOORS OPEN instantly. Puzzled, Michael gets in.

3 INT. OTHER HALLWAY -- SECONDS LATER 3

Elevator doors open. Michael steps out and surveys the hall. It looks exactly like the earlier one. He walks down the hall, passing each door.

ANGLE: THE DOORS

We pass by each door. There's no labeling on any of them, except for one. Michael stops and looks at it.

TWO SMILEY FACE LABELS adorn the door. One says "Marissa" under it. The other says "Julia".

Michael's face breaks into a smile. He knocks.

The door swings open, revealing MARISSA. She makes a face when she sees Michael.

MARISSA
What, Michael?

MICHAEL
Whoa, Marissa. What's with the scowl?

MARISSA
Bad day.

Beat.

MICHAEL
Care to share?

MARISSA
Just... bad day, okay? It's 11 AM, but still, I can tell already.

MICHAEL
Wait, it's not 11, it's 10. Unless my awesome Swatch watch is wrong...

He looks down at his WATCH. It's not a Swatch, for one thing, and it indeed reads 11 AM.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Huh. It's not 10.

MARISSA
It's not a Swatch, either.

MICHAEL
I know, but you'd think it would
be, right? They're my favorite.

They share a look.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Is Julia here? I'm supposed to
find her.

MARISSA
You won't find her here. She just
left.

Michael cocks his head quizzically.

MARISSA (CONT'D)
She knows you're coming.

MICHAEL
(smiling)
What, is she playing a game?

Marissa shrugs and says nothing. Beat.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Well, you're no help. As usual.

Michael shakes his head and looks down at his watch.
Impossibly, it now reads NOON. Fear crosses his face.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
That's...
(beat)
Okay. I'm gonna go.

He turns to leave.

MARISSA
She's not yours, you know.

Michael turns back.

MARISSA (CONT'D)
She's not yours to find.

MICHAEL
She's my girlfriend, I have to make
sure she's okay.

MARISSA
Not what I meant.

MICHAEL
(intense)
Alright, listen, I don't have time
for your head games. So just tell
me-- where is Julia?

Marissa shrugs. Michael looks like he's about to explode
when KATE suddenly appears at his side.

KATE
I think I saw her leave the
building.
(points to behind him)
That way.

MICHAEL
(to girl)
Thank you.

KATE
It's what I'm here for.

He nods, turns and walks away. Kate smirks at Marissa, who
slowly turns to go back into her room.

MARISSA
(to herself)
Bad day. Bad, bad day.

Michael strides down the hall with determination. Kate still
stands there.

KATE
Good luck!

4 INT. TV LOUNGE -- LATER

4

Michael exits an elevator, heading for the EXIT. He passes
by a couch, where a guy is sprawled watching TV. This is
LENNY. Michael calls to him as he passes by:

MICHAEL
Hey, Lenny!

Lenny doesn't turn from the TV.

LENNY
 (to Michael)
 Hey, Lenny.

Mike stops in his tracks and goes back over to him.

MICHAEL
 Don't you mean "Hey Mike?"

LENNY
 Oh. Right. Same thing, really.

FOR A SPLIT SECOND it looks like they're WEARING THE SAME CLOTHING. Then, everything goes back to normal.

MICHAEL
 No, it's... never mind. What are you watching?

Lenny perks up.

LENNY
 Oh, you have to see this. It's this great movie about Russian Spies. And American Spies. There's guns and trickery.

Michael looks at the screen and shrugs.

MICHAEL
 Looks kinda dumb. I gotta go.

He turns to leave when Lenny PULLS him back.

LENNY
 No, dude, this is awesome.

MICHAEL
 (exasperated)
 Fine, what's going on now?

ANGLE: THE SCREEN

It's a shadowy SCIENCE LAB. TWO FIGURES sit in chairs, unconscious. They're wearing HELMETS and attached to WIRES. Their faces are cloaked in shadows. All around them, SCIENTISTS mill about.

As the movie on the TV continues, we hear our boys talk--

LENNY

See, the Russians have this secret. This big secret, possibly having to do with nuclear weapons. Blow-up-the-world type shit, you know?

MICHAEL

Crucial stuff.

LENNY

Damn straight. Anyway, the good guy-- you know he's the good guy, 'cause he's American-- he has to find out what the secret codes are.

MICHAEL

Codes?

LENNY

The ones that activate the world-blowing-up shit.

MICHAEL

Right.

LENNY

Only, those codes are buried in the bad guy's head. The bad guy being the Russian spy.

MICHAEL

Naturally. You know, I think I've seen this.

LENNY

Of course you have, it's the story of my life.

ON THE TV, a FEMALE SCIENTIST monitors one of the figures.

LENNY (CONT'D)

So, this female scientist-- she doesn't have a name 'cause all she is is a plot device and love interest. But she's found a way to enter the bad guy's head. So she sent the good guy into the bad guy's mind, to look through his subconscious. To find the codes.

Michael stares at the screen, transfixed. Then, he laughs.

MICHAEL
That's so retarded.

Michael turns to leave.

LENNY
What do you mean, retarded? You
have to keep watching, this is
quality sci-fi, buddy.

MICHAEL
Maybe, but... it's been done
before.

He shrugs and walks away, leaving an indignant Lenny.

LENNY
By who?

A shadow crosses Michael's face.

MICHAEL
People...

He walks away. Lenny is still agitated.

LENNY
You have to watch!

5 EXT. COLLEGE CAMPUS -- LATER

5

Michael walks along a bustling college walkway. STUDENTS
hand out FLYERS left and right. It's loud and confusing.
Michael walks through the crowd, ignoring their calls to him.

He tries to concentrate... tries to focus... and that's when
he sees her. He looks up and strains his eyes--

MICHAEL'S POV

In the distance behind the crowd, a BEAUTIFUL GIRL walks
alone. She's practically glowing, she's that radiant.
Clearly, this is JULIA.

She's walking away from the crowd, looking back, fear in her
eyes.

MICHAEL
Julia! Jules! Wait up, I'm--

But he begins to be distracted by the crowd. He slows down
and listens to what they have to say.

Michael then notices a SEXY GIRL standing at the front of the crowd. She doesn't say anything, but her seductive smile does the talking for her.

Michael smiles slightly and heads in her direction. Just as he's near her, Kate comes up to him and shoves a FLYER in his face.

KATE

Students for worshipping the Big Dude in the Sky! Take a flyer.

MICHAEL

(annoyed)

I don't have time for this.

KATE

Everyone has time for the Big Dude in the Sky.

Michael is still transfixed by the Sexy Girl.

MICHAEL

Can't you go away?

KATE

(cheerful)

I'm the best one here. You want to listen to me, I can help you.

MICHAEL

Why can't I just--

KATE

(dead serious)

Because, Michael, those other groups aren't going to help you. So I really think you need to take a flyer.

Michael is confused. He turns back to the crowd and sees that the Sexy Girl is unbuttoning her shirt seductively to reveal a LACY BRA. Kate rolls her eyes.

KATE (CONT'D)

All that? Means nothing. It's kind of like the Last Temptation, if you dig Biblical references.

MICHAEL

I'm not really into religion.

KATE

It was a metaphor, dumbass. And
you're falling for it.

Michael comes closer to the Sexy Girl and stares longingly at
her. He smiles as she models her bra for him.

SEXY GIRL

How do you like my metaphors?

Michael is about to touch her "metaphors" when he is YANKED
out of frame by Kate.

Kate drags Michael away from that part of the crowd. He
looks back at Sexy Girl before asking:

MICHAEL

Was that a test? Did Julia put her
up to that?

KATE

She's tricky like that.

MICHAEL

Alright, consider me tempted. Can
I go now?

KATE

Sure, you did great. Just like I
predicted. You stayed on task.

Michael stares at her, taking this in.

KATE (CONT'D)

Now go. Oh, and take a flyer.
(she hands him one)
Jesus saves!

Michael looks down at the flyer. It reads "PASS". He smiles
and keeps walking.

He walks forward and is surprised to see a TABLE full of
ANGRY STUDENTS is in front of him. A BANNER above the table
reads "RUSSIAN CLUB". A RADIO sits on the table, playing the
RUSSIAN NATIONAL ANTHEM.

ANGRY STUDENTS

(in Russian)

You can't go through! Stop! No!

Michael is confused.

MICHAEL

Wait, stop! I can't understand you
guys!

Michael's eyes widen as he sees Marissa standing behind the table. She smirks as she observes his predicament.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Marissa?

She doesn't respond. Michael tries to move past the table but the Russian Club blocks his way. The chanting builds, louder and louder. Michael panics and slows down. He can't focus...

ANGLE: THE RADIO

As the RUSSIAN ANTHEM blares from it, a HAND reaches into FRAME and turns the VOLUME KNOB all the way down.

Michael stares in wonderment as the song dies, and soon... ALL THE CROWD'S NOISE dies out too. The chanters continue shouting, but we can't hear them.

Michael looks over to the radio and sees that it is Kate who has made the noise stop.

KATE

That should keep them quiet.

Michael regains his bearings as he gets used to the quiet. He smiles at Kate.

MICHAEL

Why are you always helping me?

Beat.

KATE

Duh. I'm the Big Dude in the Sky.

Michael nods, and runs off. Kate stands by the table.

6

EXT. LIBRARY -- MOMENTS LATER

6

Michael runs, faster and faster, toward the library. Ahead of him, Julia runs up the steps into the building.

7 INT. LIBRARY LOBBY -- CONTINUOUS 7

We catch a glimpse of Julia as she runs through the lobby. HOLD on the door as Michael enters, breathless.

Michael notices the ELEVATORS, and runs toward one of them. He gets there just as the doors are closing. Julia stands behind them, sadness in her eyes. The elevator whirs away.

Michael stands, infuriated. He starts PUNCHING the UP BUTTON mechanically. After a few punches, he stops and turns to look to his side, noticing something.

Michael runs from the elevator to the DOOR TO THE STAIRWELL.

As he enters the stairwell, Marissa stands by the door. She watches him go in, angry.

MARISSA
(to Michael)
You just don't quit!

Fear shows in her eyes as she continues watching the door.

8 INT. STAIRWELL -- CONTINUOUS 8

Michael races up the stairs. His feet are lightening quick.

9 INT. LIBRARY HALLWAY -- MOMENTS LATER 9

The stairwell doors FLY OPEN as Michael speeds into the hallway. He stops as he sees--

THE HALLWAY

Long and empty.

Michael cautiously begins walking along the stacks. He makes his way along the hall until something catches his eye. He stops and turns to his left.

ANGLE: THE BOOKSHELVES

On the floor sits Lenny. He's watching something on his LAPTOP. He's dressed very similarly to Michael.

MICHAEL
Lenny, why are you here?

LENNY

Dude, I came to watch.

Michael's eyes widen in confusion. Lenny points to his laptop.

MICHAEL

Oh, you mean that movie?

LENNY

Yeah, what'd you think I meant?

MICHAEL

(in Russian)

It's not important.

Michael stops, realizing he's just spoken Russian.

LENNY

Russian?

MICHAEL

I got mad skills.

LENNY

Clearly.

(points to laptop)

Oh, man, you have to see this. The good guy almost has the codes. 'Cause he's the good guy, and in movies, the good guy always gets what he wants.

MICHAEL

So I guess that means I have a shot?

LENNY

I don't know...

Beat. Lenny looks up and in that moment HE IS MICHAEL.

LENNY (CONT'D)

You a good guy, Mikey?

Michael nods, but he's unsure. He looks out and sees the hallway stretching out before him. Impossibly long. Somewhere in the distance, we can make out a FIGURE.

Michael takes a deep breath.

And runs like hell.

Faster and faster he goes... The shelves and stacks fly by. We're getting closer and closer to the FIGURE.

Finally, we're close enough to see that it's indeed Julia. She's backed into a corner.

MICHAEL
(breathless)
Jules!

JULIA
You found me.

MICHAEL
Yeah! Been a weird day, but... I did!

JULIA
(sadly)
Congratulations.

MICHAEL
Why aren't you, like, happy? I mean, you're the one who started this whole game.

JULIA
This isn't a game, Michael.

MICHAEL
Yeah, it is, you said--

Julia shakes her head.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Oh. But then, why the hide and seek all day?

JULIA
I wasn't playing, I was running.

MICHAEL
From what?

JULIA
From you.

MICHAEL
Why?

JULIA
Because I'm not yours. I don't know why you think I am.

MICHAEL
(matter-of-fact)
But I found you. There was a game
and I played by the rules and I
resisted the temptation and you're
my shiny reward. That's how it
works.

Julia says nothing.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
I got you fair and square... I
mean, "finders keepers", right?

Tears well up in Julia's eyes.

JULIA
(barely audible)
You don't know what you're risking.

Michael steps closer to her.

JULIA (CONT'D)
You don't know who I am.

Michael comes even closer.

JULIA (CONT'D)
You don't know what I do--

Michael puts a finger over her lips and smiles.

MICHAEL
You don't know what you're talking
about. Now...
(beat)
Time for a kiss, baby.

Julia nods, emotionless-- she's lost the game. Michael puts
his arms around her and kisses her hard. Then he squeezes
her tight and a smile plays across his lips.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
(whispering)
I found you...

Michaels slowly pulls away from Julia, and looks into her
eyes. His eyes widen as we see that JULIA IS NO LONGER IN
HIS ARMS.

Standing there instead is MARISSA. She is silent.

CLOSE ON MICHAEL'S EYES. They're different now. They're alarmed... scared, even.

PULL OUT to reveal a very different Michael. His face is scruffier, and he's wearing other clothes. On his head is a HELMET with WIRES coming out of it. He looks around at his surroundings. PULL OUT TO REVEAL--

10

INT. SCIENCE LAB

10

Michael sits in a chair in a dimly lit science lab. SCIENTISTS mill about. Behind him, a MONITOR SCREEN shows IMAGES of Michael's journey-- looking for Julia, seeing Lenny, etc.

A FEMALE SCIENTIST (who looks EXACTLY LIKE KATE) comes up to Michael, smiling. She takes his helmet off and helps him up. Michael is bewildered.

MICHAEL

What... ?

SCIENTIST

Congratulations, Agent Carlton.
You did it.

MICHAEL

Did what?

SCIENTIST

Oh... you're still disoriented.
(beat)
Well, it'll pass. So you really
chose college as your playing
field?

She looks at the MONITOR and shrugs.

SCIENTIST (CONT'D)

Whatever works. The important
thing is, you got the codes.

The Scientist keeps on TALKING TO HERSELF.

Michael drifts away, looking around the lab. His eyes widen with horror. He staggers away from the Scientist... over to a dark corner of the lab... where he sees--

A CHAIR

With a FIGURE sitting in it, a similar helmet on its head.

Michael gets closer and is horrified to see that THE FIGURE IN THE CHAIR IS MARISSA.

The Scientist comes up behind him, speaking in soothing tones.

SCIENTIST (CONT'D)
 You did great, Mike. Agent Kovalenko was a tough one to crack... but you went in there and you did your country proud.

Michael turns and stares at the Scientist.

MICHAEL
 What now?

SCIENTIST
 With these codes... well, the world's going to change in a big way.

The Scientist walks away briskly.

PULL OUT as CIA Agent Michael Carlton considers her words. He's alone, save for Russian Agent Marissa Kovalenko, slumped in the seat beside him.

11 INT. APARTMENT -- NIGHT 11

Michael enters his apartment. He walks through the hall, his eyes haunted. He makes his way toward--

THE WINDOW

Michael stands in front of it and takes in the nighttime view. A shadow plays across his otherwise expressionless face. He stares down at the dazzling cityscape.

The city glitters. Unsuspecting.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END