

THE HOTEL SU PHAN BOI

A screenplay

By

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FADE IN:

INT. JAIL CELL

One at a time, an unseen force pushes TOM, BRANTLY, TROY and ALEXIS into a cell in that order. All are shouting at once. The door slams shut.

TOM is late 20s, heavy-set, bespectacled, with full rims. A thick, doughy face is behind those glasses. A grudging smile every now and then, when something is really funny. It's easy to imagine him spending most of his off hours at the country club, on the course, or drinking a beer with the boys in the clubhouse.

BRANTLY is older, early- to mid-30s. He takes pains to be the responsible one in his marriage to

TROY, in his early- to mid-30s as well. Louder than his partner, unashamedly out.

ALEXIS is in her mid- to late 20s, attractive and fearless.

BRANTLY

To Troy

Will you please shut up?

TROY

No, I will not shut up. I refuse to shut up! What are we doing here?

To the door, more loudly

What are we doing here? Who are you people?

ALEXIS

I'm so sure. Like ask the guy who can't speak English why we're here.

TOM

He's a Vietnamese cop, or a soldier, or something.

BRANTLY

How do you know he can't speak English?

TROY

This is some vacation you brought us on, Alexis.

BRANTLY

I know Troy's like in a snit when he starts calling everybody by their first names.

TROY

Tom, you're a lawyer - can't you do something about this?

TOM

What would you have me do? My hands are tied here.

BRANTLY

Like get an injunction or something.

ALEXIS

Write a sharply worded letter to our like jailers.

TOM

Yeah, too funny - you're the one who had to come with me to Vietnam.

Mocking her

"It's the hot new tourist destination." I would have been happy with Florida.

BRANTLY

We know you would have been happy with Florida. You would have been happy with Kansas.

TROY

Would they have thrown us in jail in Florida for being gay?

BRANTLY

Not in South Beach.

TOM

That's not why they...

TROY

How do you know? How do we know anything?

Walks over to the door, starts pounding on it.

Let us out of here!

ALEXIS

Do I need to like remind you why we came here? This is supposed to be our baby trip.

TROY

Really?

TOM

No, this is a working trip. My company built the resort we're staying at. Nothing's changed. I'm sure this is all a huge misunderstanding.

BRANTLY

What's the matter, Tom? Don't your swimmers work in the like Western Hemisphere?

TOM

Yeah, I forgot - you guys know all about other guys' ... swimmers.

TROY/ALEXIS/BRANTLY

More or less at once

Whoa!

BRANTLY

Drop the hostility, mister.

TROY

Where did that come from?

ALEXIS

I don't know, but it's been happening more and more on this trip. Now, I want you to apologize to Troy and Brantly.

TROY and BRANTLY have huddled together, nearly convincingly acting hurt by TOM's remark.

Apologize.

TOM walks over to the door and kicks it several times.

TOM

Hey! What are we doing in here? You can't hold us without charges!

TROY

Good lawyering.

ALEXIS

That told 'em. Now, apologize.

TOM

I'm fucking sorry, OK?

ALEXIS

That was like so sincere. You have to mean it. Own it. That's a rule.

TOM

A rule of what?

ALEXIS

A rule of like apologizing.

TOM

Don't you see...

BRANTLY

Alexis...

TOM
... what's going on here? I think...

BRANTLY
It's OK.

TOM
... rules...

TROY
It's OK.

TOM
... don't apply in here.

ALEXIS
No, it's not OK. We have to keep some level of like manners or we're as bad as them.

She gestures broadly outside of the cell.

TROY
We'll never be as bad as them.

BRANTLY
Did you see that cabana boy?

TROY
He needed to like eat.

ALEXIS
Like seriously eat. He was hungry.

BRANTLY
I wonder what it would be like to ... you know ... like play with a cabana boy.

TOM
Dude, he's like twelve.

BRANTLY
Not that one. An old one. Like fourteen, fifteen.

ALEXIS

I don't think sex with underage boys is totally against the law here. You have to get a special visa or something.

TOM

Troy, I think your husband has a roving eye.

TROY

It's OK, Tom. We have an open marriage.

TOM, who is still by the door, kicks it again.

TOM

Help! Somebody help! What are we doing in here? You got the wrong people! You've got the wrong ... people.

TROY

That's telling 'em.

ALEXIS

Will both of you please stop?

BRANTLY

Yes, please ... come here, sweetie.

TROY and ALEXIS both cross toward him.

No, honey - I mean my sweetie. Your sweetie's over there, trying to alert the Vietnamese army to our location.

He kisses TROY.

There, there, stud muffin.

He fixes TROY's hair.

TOM

I'm going to be violently ill.

TROY

Fingers crossed.

ALEXIS

Please like shut up - we have a surfing class at one o'clock - it's prepaid on our credit card.

TOM

Wait ... what?

ALEXIS

I signed the three of us up for a surfing course.

TOM

Yes ... I know ...

ALEXIS

You didn't want to go ...

TOM

Yes ...

TROY

Do you remember? You said "I wanna go golfing," and she said "We're going surfing," and then I said, "You'll look like a beached whale."

BRANTLY

With man boobs.

TOM

Yes yes yes - it was a sparkling, witty dialogue. It was prepaid? Why would you do that?

ALEXIS

It was through the hotel. We had to book the hour in advance. There's a waiting list.

Raising her voice.

I didn't anticipate getting thrown in a prison cell for no good reason!

TOM

OK, OK - check with me first next time.

ALEXIS

We did.

TOM

Do you know what I have to go through to get a tee time here?

BRANTLY

I would imagine you have to pay an exorbitant fee and then wait in line behind the other rich white lawyers.

TOM

I earned my place in that line.

BRANTLY

Puh-leeze. We made more flipping our first house than you make in a year.

TOM

Do you tell these two everything?

BRANTLY

She didn't ...

TOM

And is that your net or your gross?

BRANTLY

Our ... gross.

TOM

And how long did it take you to flip that house?

BRANTLY

A year.

TOM

So you see? You're not doing better than me at all.

BRANTLY

Actually ...

TOM

Never get into a financial pissing contest with the guy who does your taxes.

TROY

Yes, we're all doing the same and we're all rich and we're all American. We need to escape!

ALEXIS

Yes - and get my new one piece back ...

TROY

Come on!

ALEXIS

And we can still make our surfing class.

TROY

Come on!

Rises and moves toward the wall.

And we're escaping, we're escaping.

He feels along the mortar joints in the wall. ALEXIS joins him and does the same.

TOM

What are you doing?

BRANTLY

Yes, dear - what are you doing?

TROY

We're looking for the loose mortar, you idiots. Have you never seen a prison movie?

TOM

You have loose mortar in your head. Get over here - both of you.

ALEXIS

Excuse me?

TROY turns and makes a scratching gesture with his fingers, to ALEXIS. ALEXIS follows suit, directs her scratching gesture at the others.

TOM

This ...

Repeats scratching gesture.

is not helping.

BRANTLY

We need to figure out why we're here.

TROY

If we can skroonch out one of the blocks, then others will follow, and we can dig our way through the substrate.

Pause. Everyone just stares at him.

What? I spend a lot of time around masonry workers.

TROY and ALEXIS resume scratching.

TOM

Under his breath.

Skroonch this.

To BRANTLY.

Look - as the two males in our respective relationships, it's up to us to come up with a plan.

ALEXIS

That is so sexist ... homophobic ...

TROY

I'm not a woman.

ALEXIS

... offensive ...

TOM

Well, while you two are otherwise engaged ...

BRANTLY

I think you're referring to my position in this marriage as the top ...

TROY

We could use some help, you know ...

BRANTLY

... and Troy's as the bottom ...

TOM

No ...

BRANTLY

... but we try different positions. We're equals in everything.

TOM

Then why aren't you scratching the mortar like a mental patient?

BRANTLY

Well, I had that manicure before.

TOM

Oh ... Lil - didn't you and Troy get manis and pedis too?

ALEXIS

Yeah, we did - see?

She reaches back with one arm and raises her middle finger to TOM.

TOM

Lovely ...

ALEXIS

They use like that MMA shit here.

TOM

So ...

ALEXIS

So, it's bad for your nail beds long term ...

TROY

... and harmful to the environment.

He stops.

I'm done.

TOM

Brantly ...

BRANTLY

If I don't get a salon fix once a week I go into withdrawal. And this particular salon in the hotel is to die for.

TROY

Did you see that hairdresser?

ALEXIS realizes the futility of what she's doing and stops, exhales loudly.

BRANTLY

Follicle engineer. And moreover, Tom, all they do is push the cuticle back, trim the nail and put a coat of polish on. No MMA.

TOM

Let's see.

BRANTLY Shows TOM his hands.

Those are some lovely fucking nails. Lex, tell me again why we came here with these two.

ALEXIS

Because your firm does all of the legal work for the company that built the hotel. And they're our friends. And we got like an extra twenty percent off.

TROY

Sidles up to BRANTLY.

Speaking of firm. It's been hours.

BRANTLY

Um ... not now, baby.

TOM

Whoa! You two are not performing oral sex in here.

TROY

Who said I was looking for oral? Anyway, why not?

ALEXIS

Ewww!

TOM

Because this is a Vietnamese prison cell, not a fucking adult bookstore - OK? So you will keep it in your pants, and you will keep it in your ... um ...

TROY

I wish I could keep it in my ... um. What's the matter, counselor? At a loss for words?

TOM

... tired all of a sudden.

BRANTLY

Actually, like I am too.

He sits down, cross-legged on the floor.

ALEXIS

That's like really disgusting. I don't know if it's sanitary to even be like standing on it right now.

BRANTLY

Can't help it ...

TROY drops to his knees, begins kneading BRANTLY's shoulders.

TROY

You OK, snooky-ookums?

TOM raises a finger as if to speak, then just giggles. He yawns.

ALEXIS

Please, cover up the next time you decide to do that.

TOM

It is an involuntary funcking ...
involuntary fucking bodily function ...
fuction ...

He does it again.

All four fall silent - it's an alien state to them. BRANTLY tips over.

TROY

Uh-oh.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOTEL SUITE - DAY

A SOLDIER, Vietnamese, enters, and lets the door close behind him. He pockets the plastic card. There is a sitting room and a small kitchenette. He overturns the sofa and chair cushions and leaves them upset, deliberately. He searches the closet with a quick look. He enters the bedroom and sees a carrying case on the king bed. He opens the case and sees an accordion folder and a laptop. He takes the case and its contents, and exits.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JAIL CELL

TOM awakens with his hands, feet and torso strapped to a metal table with zip ties. The SOLDIER, an imposing man, stands guard by the door. His sidearm is plainly visible.

TOM

Still groggy.

Where is everybody? Lexy?

Looks around, sees the SOLDIER.

Who the hell are you?

He attempts to rise. He struggles against the straps and thrashes around.

Now, look ...

The SOLDIER shouts something unintelligible, approaches and points his gun at TOM.

Look, I think I know what this is about.

The SOLDIER is silent, falls back into position at the door in guard mode.

TOM shouts.

What have you done to us? Where are my wife and my friends? Let me see your superior officer! If this is about money, my firm took care of all the payoffs. You want a little for yourself? I'm sorry - you took my fucking wallet!

GENERAL ODD enters the cell. He is a smallish, upright, stern commander. The SOLDIER snaps to attention, if such a thing is possible from his bolt-upright post at the door.

ODD

Where are they?

TOM

What?

ODD

Where are they?

TOM

I don't know what you're talking about.

ODD

Where. Are. They.

TOM

If you're referring to my wife and friends, I don't know where they are. You took them away.

ODD gestures to the SOLDIER, who approaches and hits TOM with the butt of his sidearm. TOM yelps in pain.

If this is about money, we can pay more!

The SOLDIER hits him again.

OK, stop!

ODD

You're in a position to commit your firm to more money? Where are they?

TOM

Look - the war is over. Why don't you just tell me what you want?

ODD

You Americans. It's always about war with you. Make war here, war there. All about business. Now, where are they?

Silence.

ODD snaps his fingers and the SOLDIER leaves the cell.

TOM

Where are my wife and fr ...

ODD

If I were you, I would stop worrying about my wife and those two degenerate scum you call friends, and start worrying about myself.

TOM

If you hurt anyone ...

ODD

I won't touch them.

The SOLDIER re-enters with a bucket of water and a towel.

My charge, however, will hurt all of them on my orders if you don't tell me where they are.

TOM

You know what? Those things you keep asking me about? They're up my ass ...

ODD

ODD nods to the SOLDIER, who shoves the pistol barrel into TOM's chest, causing TOM to yelp and gasp for breath.

Normally, I would not do this sort of thing myself. Our army generally patrols the streets. We keep a small contingency force for policing and securing the border. The rest of our force is comprised of mercenaries hired to protect business interests - American, Chinese, European, Middle Eastern, Australian.

TOM

What are you talking about ...

ODD

You've heard of waterboarding before,

I'm sure.

TOM

No! That's illegal!

ODD

For two nations governed by the rules of war, I suppose it is, in the strict legal sense. But this is the private sector. Where are they?

TOM

You know what? They're back at the hotel. Why don't you just let me go and I'll go get them for you.

ODD

I believe you. Except ... we have your laptop computer. On it I'm sure are your client's plans. My client has hired me to obtain those plans.

TOM

If you want to steal my client's plans, why not just hack in to my laptop? Why do you need me?

The SOLDIER, who has maneuvered behind TOM by this time, grabs his head and holds it down. TOM struggles, but the SOLDIER is much too strong, and he manages to get the towel over TOM's face. ODD pours water from the bucket onto the towel. TOM chokes and gasps, and the SOLDIER removes the towel.

ODD

Do you think we're stupid? Do you think we're still fighting a war from fifty years ago? Driven underground like rats?

TOM

No!

ODD

Those files are encrypted ...

TOM

Stop!

ODD gestures to the SOLDIER, who wraps up TOM.

I'm on vaca ...

ODD pours water from the bucket onto the towel again. TOM chokes and gasps and jerks his head violently back and forth in an attempt to get away. Water sloshes onto the floor. ODD stops. The SOLDIER removes the towel.

ODD

In some ways, the old methods are more effective.

Someone pounds at the cell door. LANSDALE enters. He is late 20s, professional, with a white shoe insouciance. Born into the manner TOM appears to be striving for. ODD and THE SOLDIER practically bow as he enters.

LANSDALE

I came as soon as I heard.

TOM

Lansdale! What are you doing here?
Who ... who else knows we're here?

LANSDALE

I got a call from the consulate -

He pulls a note from his pants pocket.

they said you and Alexis were in jail
with Troy and Brantly.

TOM

They drugged us! They pulled us off
the street! I've been waterboarded! I
think.

LANSDALE approaches TOM's chair. ODD waves off TRON.

It's some kind of corporate
terrorism.

He points at ODD.

Where is my wife? I had a tee time!

LANSDALE

Odd, leave us for a minute, won't you? And take him with you, please.

ODD

Yes, but be aware these people have broken the law. We are holding them on our own authority.

LANSDALE

On what charge?

TOM

What law have I broken?

LANSDALE

Wait wait wait ... We'll get to the bottom of this. Now please ...

ODD

We will be right outside this door.

LANSDALE

Go interrogate the two degenerates, if you're looking for something to do.

TOM

Those degenerates are our friends.

LANSDALE

Go interrogate their two friends, if you're looking for something to do. I'm not sure what you're looking for, Odd. What are these people doing here? What law have they broken?

ODD

Perhaps you can learn that for yourself.

ODD and TRON exit.

LANSDALE

These locals. Honest to God - they're the price you pay for doing business overseas.

TOM

Get me offa this thing, then get me the fuck out of here.

LANSDALE

I will, I will ... but first we need to figure out why we're here. What happened?

TOM

He struggles in an attempt to free himself.

We were walking down the street ... Get me outta here!

LANSDALE

Where?

TOM

What?

LANSDALE

Where were you walking?

TOM

In the shopping district, outside the resort. Like near the clothing store.

LANSDALE

What clothing store, Tom? Armani? Prada? The Gap?

TOM

I don't know. You know how they like to shop for clothes. It was a whirlwind tour. They grabbed Lexy, they floated down the street, I followed ...

LANSDALE

I would stop focusing on your wife

and friends, who are innocent in this thing, and start worrying about myself.

TOM

I'm innocent in this thing! Get me outta here!

LANSDALE removes a knife from his pants pocket and cuts the zip ties restraining TOM as he shouts and struggles. TOM unsteadily rises to a seated position, his feet hanging over the metal table.

LANSDALE

You can't be too careful. It's like Vietnam out there. Hell, it is Vietnam out there. Well, just pick an American city. That's what it's like out there. Why did you go off the resort?

TOM

Slumped, rubbing his wrists.

Alexis wanted to experience Vietnam.

LANSDALE

Well, she's experiencing it now, all right.

TOM

Where is she? Is she OK? They drugged us or something.

LANSDALE

She's fine under the circumstances. They put her in a cell with Troy and Brantly.

TOM

How many cells are there in this shithole?

LANSDALE

You know, I never counted. This is the Ho Chi Minh City jail.

TOM

It's remarkably clean for a Vietnamese jail. Once I figured out where I was, I was surprised. I expected ...

LANSDALE

I know, I know ... bamboo and rats.

TOM

If it wasn't for the kidnapping, the drugging and the torture, this really might have been an acceptable place to stay.

LANSDALE

This is like where they kept McCain - we built lots of these in the 50s and 60s. Of course there have been some upgrades since we were involved over 50 years ago.

TOM rises and goes to the door up C, trying the handle.

TOM

You keep saying we.

LANSDALE

What are you doing?

TOM

I'm finding my wife and getting out of here.

PUSH IN ON LANSDALE

LANSDALE

Wait ... stay with me ... you know, we were here in 1947 - the campaign for the hearts and minds. We ran black ops against the North Vietnamese, burned crops, poisoned wells, blew up buildings. We sent advisors into villages, trying to educate people in the South who have lived the same way for hundreds of years on how to use

electricity and toasters. Well, you know how it turned out. It worked about as well for us as it's working now. The North rose up. They booted us out of here. They pushed the last helicopter off the boat about a block from here. Now look at this place. But you think we lost that war? No. We won.

TOM

What are you talking about? Who's this we?

LANSDALE

What do these guys want from you? They mentioned some kind of open records law.

TOM

Christ, was your dad even alive in 1947?

A pause.

I don't know. Something about plans for a new resort.

LANSDALE

I guess you better hand them over.

TOM

What?

LANSDALE

Yeah ... they're claiming it's some kind of open records law we've violated that has you in here.

TOM

Open records? I don't think so. And who's this they?

LANSDALE

General Odd - the little guy ... he's your jailer at the current moment.

TOM

This guy's still fighting the war,
isn't he?

LANSDALE

Don't be ridiculous. This is a
Communist country. You must comply.

TOM

If these guys are such hardcore
commies, why are they building all
these resorts here?

LANSDALE

They're commies in the Eastern
commerce embracing sense rather than
in the repressive Soviet sense. I
mean, they have beaches.

TOM

But they'll still violate my civil
rights.

LANSDALE

You lost those when you got off the
boat.

TOM

I have the duty of confidentiality to
my clients. I can't just turn over
the plans.

LANSDALE

I'm just telling you as a friend ...

TOM

What do they care about my client's
plans anyway? The resort will be
under construction soon and they can
see it like everybody else.

LANSDALE

Well, that's just it - there's a
competitor.

TOM

Who? A competitor to what? That's my

client's land.

LANSDALE

Some Chinese group.

TOM

Let them design their own damn hotel!

LANSDALE

They want dominance over the coastline. They want to push our group out. But what do you know about other bidders? You're just a lawyer for our investment group.

TOM

The Chinese?

LANSDALE

Hell, old man - look around you. Well, not here. But this whole coastline is made of money. It's been rebuilt from the bamboo cages on up. Can you go into some American shithole and say everything's new? There is no U.S.A. There is no China. What you think of as the world, is a conglomeration of dollars, yen and euros. Combine that investment with a suppressed indigenous population and you have instant vacation paradise.

TOM

I don't understand why the Chinese don't just join our investors.

LANSDALE

They don't want their money mixed in with the dollar. They claim it has no value.

TOM

We're still the greatest country on earth.

LANSDALE

The dollar is based on the promise to

pay. When the government looks like it's about to break its promise, it loses value.

TOM

And when it finally breaks its promise?

LANSDALE

World War Three.

TOM

Bring it, bitches.

LANSDALE

Big talk for a prisoner of the Vietnamese. Come on, just give them what they want.

TOM

Sigh.

This is how you lose clients.

LANSDALE

I wouldn't worry too much about that. Worry about what they might do to Alexis and the other two lives you're currently responsible for.

TOM

OK ... OK.

LANSDALE walks over and bangs on the door. It opens and he escorts TOM out.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JAIL CELL

Some minutes later. LANSDALE is sitting on the table. ODD and TRON enter and flank him.

LANSDALE

Is it all there?

ODD

It's all there. E-mails, government secrets ... Our friend in China should be pleased.

LANSDALE

And our friend Tom is none the wiser. He just became the latest in a long line of great American turncoat spies. Benedict Arnold, Edward Snowden, Tom.

ODD

And his wife and friends?

LANSDALE

Innocent victims. Leave them to me.

ODD

Did you learn these deceptions in the Key Club at Yale?

LANSDALE

Actually, Odd, I learned the underpinnings of what I know now in the Key Club. The artifices we learn at a young age follow us to adulthood. You know what I did before I went to work as a lawyer. I was with the State Department. Far East, Asia affairs. I was a statesman. In negotiations, I advanced the U.S. position with backing by force, or the threat of force. Now I advance business interests. And you know what? My job hasn't changed.

ODD

And what happens to Tom?

LANSDALE

Once our government discovers the breach, he is vilified by many segments of our society - a seemingly normal man, yet a spy for the Chinese government the entire time. He is held up by our media as a traitor. He

pals around with deviates. It becomes a circus, a cluster fuck. It's the American way. He is nobody, from nowhere. A middle class striver seduced by the almighty dollar. Through economy and hard work, he was able to become a pillar of the community, as if that's what it takes.

ODD

You are the real spy.

LANSDALE

My clients are happy. I get a percentage of that happiness.

ODD

What happens to his wife and his friends?

LANSDALE

Don't worry about them - they'll be fine. Why are you asking so many questions?

ODD

I have a curious and inventive mind.

LANSDALE

Well, you need to be more of a solider and less the type who questions. Be more like Tron here. The answer is, I don't know.

ODD

They are at the hotel, getting ready to go on the beach.

LANSDALE

He certainly recovered from that ordeal quickly. Maybe you're losing your touch, Odd.

ODD

If you say so, sir.

LANSDALE

No worries - the real ordeal starts
when he gets home.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BEACH - DAY

The beach at the resort. TOM, ALEXIS, BRANTLY and TROY all sit in lounge chairs, with umbrellas. There are identical lounge chairs and umbrellas lined up in rows along the beach.

TOM wears oversized swim trunks and a tee shirt, and is reading. ALEXIS wears a bikini and sunglasses. TROY and BRANTLY wear Speedos and Hawaiian shirts.

BRANTLY

I heard the sand here is air
conditioned.

TOM

Where did you hear that?

TROY

I don't mind hot sand.

BRANTLY

I know - it like toughens your feet
or something.

TROY

Cold sand makes your feet think it's
winter.

TOM

What?

TROY

Cold sand ... you know what? Like
forget it.

TOM

The rest of your body knows it's 90
degrees out. And who wants to walk on

hot sand anyway? You have to step on towels, or walk on the balls of your feet, to get anywhere in comfort. Air conditioned sand is a convenience.

ALEXIS

I don't see what the big deal is - so you had to turn over plans for a new resort. So what?

BRANTLY

Why all the secrecy? What are they gonna steal? Wall sconces?

TROY

Maybe they wanted to learn how to air condition sand.

TOM

Haven't you guys ever heard of trade secrets, financial secrets? Of course, you must have. You're in business. You know what it's like to develop a piece of real estate so just back off.

TROY

Hostile ...

TOM

How is that ...

ALEXIS

Don't take it out on them just because you got us arrested.

TROY

Thrown in a smelly cell.

BRANTLY

With nothing to sit on.

TOM

I said drop it! Don't make me say it again.

TROY

Oh please.

ALEXIS

You did get us arrested, dear.

TOM

I'm not going to play this game with you guys. Please shut up.

TROY

Now that you said please.

ALEXIS

We missed a surfing class.

TOM

Call the embassy.

TROY

Can you at least show like a little emotion? Like, acknowledge something has happened to us. We were violated.

TOM

Were you, Troy? Were you waterboarded? Was my wife there when it happened? Funny she didn't mention it. Did you at least put up a room divider?

He puts down the book, stands.

Something in a bamboo print to accent the Far East motif of the cell?

BRANTLY

It's good to see your true colors coming out.

TROY

Who knew you were such a homophobic bigot?

TOM

I am defending myself. You ass clowns should know the difference.

ALEXIS

Whoa!

TROY and BRANTLY rise and sort of square off against TOM.

That was out of line!

TOM

I apologize.

ALEXIS

Say it like you mean it.

TOM

I did mean it. And I'm going swimming.

TOM starts to make his way through the rows of chairs, in the general direction of the sea.

ALEXIS

"I apologize." That was really like sincere. You hurt Troy and Brantly. Say it like you mean it.

TOM

No.

TOM exits.

TROY

What do you like see in him?

BRANTLY

You should divorce him already.

They all sit back down.

ALEXIS

Don't repeat this, but ... we've talked about it.

BRANTLY

What? Really?

ALEXIS

I know, I know - all married couples threaten each other with divorce, like "if you do so and so, I'll divorce you."

TROY

We've never said that to each other.

ALEXIS

Well, you know, it's different for ... I mean, you guys are g..., um, unusually close.

BRANTLY

No, we're not - I mean, we love each other but we have fights just like um ...

TROY

Heteros ...

BRANTLY

... where I want to club him like a baby seal ...

TROY

Laughs mockingly.

Ooh, discipline ...

BRANTLY

... but you know all this. We share everything with you.

TROY

Some shame over your gay friends, Alexis?

ALEXIS

No, of course not.

TROY

I thought this was your baby trip.

ALEXIS

Yeah, blah blah. We're never in that apartment long enough together to raise a kid.

BRANTLY

What's the problem?

ALEXIS

This feels like a make or break trip for us. Everybody fights, but lately ours have seemed more serious.

BRANTLY

Is it the incipient he boobies?

TROY

Because he has no sense of humor?

ALEXIS

More like, he goes silent on me, and doesn't say anything at all. I state my case calmly and reasonably ...

TROY

Of course you do ...

ALEXIS

Hush ... and he just goes off somewhere. It's very frustrating.

BRANTLY

We've probably heard every insult, every gay joke there is. It's easier when you're married to like insulate yourself from it. But, nothing's more insulting than Tom's failure to engage.

Pause, as they consider this.

I meant to say something earlier.

ALEXIS

It's nothing. We're fine.

TROY

Sounds fine. Magical. I hate people who don't engage.

BRANTLY

Why do you stay with him?

ALEXIS

My parents want an heir.

TROY

I want another drink.

BRANTLY

Good idea. Why don't you go get us all one?

TROY

Excuse me. Do I have cabana boy tattooed on my ass?

BRANTLY

Not as of a half hour ago.

ALEXIS

Ha!

TROY

These lounge chairs are like really comfortable. We wait until he comes around again.

BRANTLY

Great. Now that that's settled ...

LANSDALE

There you are!

He enters from L, wearing swim trunks, a tee shirt and sunglasses.

ALEXIS/TROY

Waving enthusiastically.

Hi! Hi!

BRANTLY

He rises.

Is that ...

TROY
Lansdale, you toad.

BRANTLY
Lanny?

TROY

To BRANTLY

Would you get us a drink as long as
you're up?

ALEXIS
I'll take a mai tai.

TROY
I'll have a hurricane. You know how I
like them.

BRANTLY
Hi, Lanny!

ALEXIS
Hello.

TROY
Down girl.

ALEXIS
When they're that good looking who
like cares?

LANSDALE
Hello all.

He checks out ALEXIS while shaking BRANTLY's hand. ALEXIS
and TROY finally rise. ALEXIS leans in for a kiss on the
cheek. TROY approaches and shoves ALEXIS out of the way.

TROY
Hi, Lanny ... you remember me?

He leans in slightly for the kiss that ALEXIS wanted. ALEXIS and BRANTLY pull him away.

From Georgetown?

LANSDALE

Of course - how could I forget? You two did amazing things with that house.

TOM walks up, grabs a towels and starts drying off.

BRANTLY

Troy, you goat - this man just saved our lives. Of course he remembers us.

He moves in for a handshake.

Thank you, Lanny.

LANSDALE

You're wel ...

TOM

You know, I'm right here.

ALEXIS

So you are.

TROY

Yes ... and?

TOM

I just ...

ALEXIS

Don't mind him.

TOM

... got waterboarded for you.

ALEXIS

Yes, and now it's over. Don't be such a baby.

TROY

Yeah.

He muscles BRANTLY out of the way.

ALEXIS

Always focusing on the negative.

She sits in the lounge chair.

Put some lotion on my back.

TOM gives her the finger behind her back, sits beside her and dutifully applies the lotion.

LANSDALE

Now, please Alexis - he did go through a lot today. It was just a big misunderstanding, and we can move on from this.

TOM

We?

LANSDALE

Yes, well - in light of the day's events and to avoid a diplomatic incident, they've agreed to comp your stay here for the entire week.

TOM

Who has?

LANSDALE

The government - I went to the embassy, they went to the government, they went to the hotel and straightened it all out. You're comped.

TOM

Great.

BRANTLY

Wonderful!

TOM

Delicious - it almost makes up for the false imprisonment and the

torture.

TROY

Lanny - we were gonna take a dip in the ocean, toss the football around. Care to join us?

LANSDALE

In a bit. I have some things to talk over with Tom first.

BRANTLY

Down boy. Let's go. See you in two shakes of a lamb's tail.

TOM

Oh, good lord ...

TROY and BRANTLY run off toward the sea. TROY has indeed grabbed a football and they run off, tossing it.

LANSDALE

Watching them.

They're not our biggest clients, but they're definitely the most fun.

TOM

If that's your idea of fun ...

LANSDALE

No, but it might be yours.

TOM

Fuck you.

LANSDALE

Aw, lighten up old man. They're lively, they're entertaining, they're rich. What more do you want from friends?

TOM

They travel well?

LANSDALE

What are you gonna do? Swap wives?

ALEXIS

Hey!

TOM

Not cool, Lanny.

LANSDALE

From what I've heard, you'd enjoy it,
Tom.

TOM

Really not cool ...

ALEXIS

What?

TOM

Nothing ... it's a joke ... nevermind.

LANSDALE

Remember the office Christmas party.
"I bagged him with me bare hands!"

TOM rises and tenses up.

A little too much Cristal, you snuck
off ...

TOM

Approaches LANSDALE, ready to hit.

Liar!

LANSDALE

... with Troy

TOM attempts to cuff him, but LANSDALE fends off the blow.

to get your weenie satisfied.

TOM lunges at LANSDALE and the two fall to the sand. TOM
attempts to land flailing blows, but LANSDALE pins TOM's
arms down, whirls him around, and puts his knee against his

throat. ALEXIS attempts to intervene, to break up the fight, but LANSDALE keeps pressure on TOM's throat until he stops struggling somewhat.

TOM

Struggling to get the words out.

Lying sack of shit ...

LANSDALE

You don't deny it?

ALEXIS

Why?

TOM

... no ... stop ...

ALEXIS

Where was I?

LANSDALE

Say uncle ... I was all conference. I could do this all day.

ALEXIS

All conference what?

LANSDALE

Does it matter?

TOM

... can't ... breathe ...

ALEXIS

Is this true? Where was I when all this happened? Get off him!

LANSDALE

Uncle Sam ... come on, let's hear it.

TOM emits a high pitched suffocated sound.

ALEXIS

I actually think you're like hurting him.

LANSDALE

Uncle Sam ...

TOM

Un ... Sa ...

LANSDALE

Close enough for government work!

He releases pressure from TOM's throat. TOM rolls around, trying to get air. He ends up on all fours, heaving.

TOM

You're dead ...

LANSDALE

No, you're dead.

TOM

Wait till the partners hear about this.

LANSDALE

My uncle is a partner ...

ALEXIS

Both of you stop!

LANSDALE

... or have you forgotten?

ALEXIS

Stop it!

LANSDALE

Anyway, tell them what?

ALEXIS

Tom, is this true?

TOM

Absolutely not.

LANSDALE

Denial. OK.

ALEXIS starts to exit L.

TOM

Where the fuck are you going?

ALEXIS

Don't talk to me that way. I am so warning you right now.

LANSDALE

Go ask him.

ALEXIS

I am going to talk to my gay friends. And see if I have to spend the rest of my life as a fag hag.

LANSDALE

I wouldn't want to do that.

TOM

I am NOT ...

ALEXIS

I would have to seriously like reevaluate this marriage in light of this new information.

She exits L.

LANSDALE

Well, that worked better than I thought.

TOM

You're dead. Do you hear me?

LANSDALE

You couldn't get to me on your best day. Now be quiet, and listen.

TOM

I don't quit.

LANSDALE

You will. And here's why - When you get home and you experience the

fallout from what you did, you will.
See, I wanted to give you this whole
speech about how there are no borders
anymore and how the world is just one
big trading pit, etcetera, etcetera ...
We trade grain with Vietnam that
trades fish with Russia, that trades
ideology with the U.S., etcetera ...

TOM

Thanks for the economics lesson.

LANSDALE

... but instead I'll just say this -
you have something I want.

TOM

What's that?

LANSDALE

She just left.

He points in the general direction of
the sea.

CUT TO:

EXT. SHORELINE - DAY

Long shot of ALEXIS and TROY talking, with BRANTLY standing
some distance apart, holding the football.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH - DAY

An extremely awkward pause.

TOM attacks LANSDALE. He manages to push LANSDALE back
several feet and onto the sand. TOM begins flailing at
LANSDALE, but does not land any blows. GENERAL ODD and TRON
suddenly appear. They are both still in uniform. TRON peels
TOM off LANSDALE and holds TOM up. LANSDALE rises,
approaches, and doubles TOM over with a gut punch.

ODD

It's checkout time. We will help you pack.

ALEXIS, TROY and BRANTLY enter.

TROY

We can't leave for a few minutes without you boys fighting?

BRANTLY

What is going on here?

TOM

Still gasping, struggles to maintain relatively normal posture.

Tell her it isn't true, Troy.

TROY

What are you people talking about?

TOM

The Christmas party ... tell her.

TROY

I don't remember anything about a Christmas party.

BRANTLY

What?

TROY

Alexis said I went into the bathroom and ...

BRANTLY

And?

TROY

... with Tom ... you know ...

He mimes oral sex.

BRANTLY

I am so like nauseous right now.

ALEXIS

Yes, but is it true?

TROY

You expect me to remember what I did at that party? I certainly wouldn't speak of it even if I could remember.

LANSDALE

Well, there you go.

TOM

What are you talking about? That's not an admission of anything.

TROY

We have like attorney-client confidentiality.

BRANTLY

That doesn't apply to you, you idiot.

TROY

Even after an alleged blow job? Well, we have something. How about the confines of good old fashioned discretion?

LANSDALE

So there was something between you two?

TROY

I'm not saying that. I'm saying I don't remember. And I would never do anything with Tom even if I was shitfaced drunk.

TOM

Thank you!

LANSDALE

Because you're not attracted to him?

TROY

Because he's Lexy's husband! Jesus, what do you people take me for? I am

neither cheap nor easy.

TRON grabs TOM by the arms, from behind, and zip ties him.
TOM struggles.

TOM
What, again? No! I'll go.

He struggles to get away from TRON.

No.

He goes slack.

I'll go.

He starts off R with TRON and ODD. TOM shouts to LANSDALE,
over his shoulder.

This isn't over!

TROY follows them.

BRANTLY
Where are you going?

TROY
With Tom.

BRANTLY
You are?

TROY
Yes, we are.

BRANTLY reluctantly follows them.

PAN OF ALL OF THEM LEAVING.

TOM
Stop! You guys aren't helping me
right now.

TROY
Don't worry, Tom - you'll always have
us.

CUT TO:

LANSDALE and ALEXIS watch the others leave. They look at each other and laugh.

ALEXIS

Do you think this will work?

LANSDALE

He is upset, and justifiably so. He took a waterboarding for you people, and he doesn't know why.

ALEXIS

You ...

Her phone rings.

... hold on ... it's my friend Madison. She was making fun of the fat middle aged guys at the gym.

She answers.

Yeah, like, I'll call you back. No, can't talk. Bye.

She tosses the phone into her oversized bag.

You could have gone a little easier on him.

LANSDALE

Business is business.

ALEXIS

Is that what I am to you? Another like business deal?

LANSDALE

This was your idea as much as mine.

ALEXIS

I'm not going to stay married to him now. We were always so busy with work, we never really had a chance to

start a family. You listened to me.
What you told me about life, it like
made sense.

LANSDALE
Really? What part?

ALEXIS
I'd rather not work.

LANSDALE
With me you won't have to.

Pause

Hey.

ALEXIS
What?

LANSDALE
We're here.

ALEXIS
Yes?

LANSDALE
I got some toot in my room.

ALEXIS

Looks off somewhere, at the sea, her attention briefly
diverted.

You would, wouldn't you?

Beat

Lanny?

LANSDALE
Yes?

ALEXIS
Why are you doing all this?

LANSDALE

What do you mean?

ALEXIS

I mean, we could have done this at home. Why wait until we're on vacation? Why ruin his life?

LANSDALE

Because I can. Look, if you need me to say it, I'll say it. I'm the type of guy who can do things like this. Tom ... isn't. He's nobody, from nowhere.

ALEXIS

So I married nobody from nowhere.

LANSDALE

You were young and he was moving up in the world. But he's moved as high as he's going to. Hey, I love you and respect you no matter what. You'll always be special to me, whatever you decide.

He begins his move toward the hotel. He starts walking off. ALEXIS stares ahead for a moment. Her phone rings again.

FADE OUT

THE END