

THE AMERICAN

Screenplay
by
Rowan Joffe

Based on the novel *A Very Private Gentleman*
by
Martin Booth

4

EXT. LAKESIDE- MORNING

4

They continue through the woods until they reach the shoreline of the lake.

INGRID steps onto the ice.

Holds out her hand.

A beat.

JACK takes INGRID's hand.

Solid as stone, the frozen lake takes his weight.

They walk out, INGRID slipping and laughing.

The landscape is magical.

JACK begins to relax, slipping and swearing.

Suddenly, he stops.

There are footprints in the thin snow going out across the lake.

Beside the Snow-hare's prints are those of a man.

INGRID

A hunter?

JACK studies the two sets of tracks.

INGRID

Don't they always travel in two's?

Those of the Snow-hare are heading *out* into the lake. The man's prints are heading in the *opposite* direction, towards the shoreline.

JACK spins around in the direction they've just come from.

No one.

4A

EXT. FOREST - MORNING

4A

A man sits in a Mercedes Benz.

4B

EXT. LAKESIDE - MORNING

4B

Then, about ten metres inland from the edge of the lake, a low branch dips and a thick rug of snow falls from the branch.

JACK grabs INGRID, yanks her towards the cover of the lakeside trees and pushes her down into the snow.

She grunts, winded. He lies besides her.

We hear the CRACK of a bullet- so quiet it might be a bough snapping under the weight of winter.

It isn't.

INGRID

Jack?

JACK pulls a WALTHER PPK/S semi-automatic handgun from the pocket of his Parka.

Cocks it.

INGRID

You have a gun...why would you have a gun...

There's another CRACK from the trees.

JACK pinpoints the spot from the drift of BLUE SMOKE, almost invisible in the winter air.

There's someone in the shadows.

He rubs snow into his woollen hat, edges up until he can just see over the snow and pumps THREE SHOTS into the dusk under the trees.

We hear a muttering groan and then a sliding sound, as if JACK has just shot a tobogganist.

More snow slides off the trees.

4C

EXT. FOREST- MORNING

4C

Man steps out of the Mercedes, pistol in hand. Leaves car door open.

4D

EXT. LAKESIDE- MORNING

4D

JACK waits.

INGRID gathers her breath but loses her wits:

INGRID
You have a gun!

JACK keeps his eyes fixed on the trees.

INGRID

Jack?

He stands up slowly and walks inland towards the corpse that is just visible now in the shadows beneath the trees.

INGRID follows, frightened.

The MAN is slouched forwards in a drift of snow, his body cushioned in white softness.

JACK kicks the sole of his boot.

JACK grabs his collar and turns him over. He doesn't recognise him.

Checks his neck for a pulse.

There isn't one.

JACK fumbles at his buttons and rummages in his clothing.

Finds cash and a disposable cigarette lighter but no identification.

INGRID

What's happening Jack?

JACK

Ingrid, go back to the house and wait.

INGRID

Who are you?

INGRID sets off, stumbling up the track they have made through the snow.

JACK shoots her just once, in the nape of her neck.

She twitches in the snow, her blood staining the white fur of her coat collar.

From a distance, INGRID looks like a shot Snow-hare.

JACK approaches her.

And steps over her, trying not to look down.

Trying not to look back.

5 **EXT. FOREST - MORNING**

5

There is a MAN in the forest; he's standing about 5 meters away from a dark Mercedes-Benz sedan.

The second hunter.

He is holding an automatic pistol and he's on alert.

JACK comes from behind, walks around the car and kicks the car door closed. The man turns around surprised, and Jack gives him a bigger surprise, he fells him easily with a bullet in the head.

He removes the clip from his WALTHER and reloads it. Steps in to the Mercedes and drives to the House.

6 **INT. HOUSE - MORNING**

6

JACK packs a few belongings in a large holdall.

7 **EXT. HOUSE - MORNING**

7

JACK shoots the front right tire of the SAAB.

Then he gets into the MERCEDES.

And drives off down the forest road.

8 **EXT. FERRY - LATE AFTERNOON**

8

We see JACK on the moving ferry, standing next to his car, looking at the water, his surroundings.

9 **INT. ROMA TERMINI TRAIN STATION- DAY**

9

We're on JACK

*

PAVEL (V.O.)

*

Pronto?

JACK

It's Jack. I'm here.

PAVEL (V.O.)

*

What do you mean, "here"?

JACK

Rome.

Pause.

PAVEL
(calm)
Shit.

*

A beat.

PAVEL
There's a bar not far from the
station. Caffé Vigeti via Voltorno.
Wait here.

*

PAVEL puts the phone down.

*

10

OMITTED

10

11 INT. BAR- DAY

11

JACK washes his face in the cramped bathroom at the back of the bar.

JACK's well trained ear picks up sounds coming through the ventilation: sounds from the street, from the kitchen.

JACK stares at himself in the mirror. He looks exhausted.

~~12 INT. BAR- DAY~~

~~12~~

~~JACK waits.~~

~~PAVEL enters.~~

~~*~~

~~Sits at JACK'S TABLE.~~

~~He is older than JACK. Refined but tough. A man of few words but much gravitas.~~

~~It's clear there's a long history of mutual respect between these two men.~~

~~PAVEL~~

~~*~~

~~Who was the girl?~~

~~*~~

~~JACK~~

~~*~~

~~A friend. Who were the Swedes...~~

~~*~~

~~PAVEL~~

~~*~~

~~I'm working on that... It's going to take some time. Did she set you up?~~

~~*~~

~~*~~

~~*~~

~~JACK~~

~~*~~

~~She had nothing to do with it.~~

~~*~~

~~PAVEL~~

~~*~~

~~A pity. I've made arrangements for you in a small town in Abruzzo, while I sort this out.~~

~~*~~

~~*~~

~~*~~

~~JACK looks at him. There is tension between the two men.~~

~~*~~

~~PAVEL reaches into his inside pocket. JACK watches closely.~~

~~*~~

~~PAVEL produces an envelope and pushes it across the table.~~

~~*~~

~~PAVEL~~

~~*~~

~~Turn right outside the bar, then second left, Via Magenta.~~

~~*~~

~~*~~

~~*~~

~~We now cut to Jack at the car parked on the street,
(Previously hot.) as we hear Pavel.~~ *
*

~~PAVEL (V.O.) *
You'll find a dark blue Fiat Tempra *
with Pescara plates. I've marked a *
small town called Castelvecchio on *
the map. Stay there and lay low *
'till you get my call.~~ *

~~We cut back to the cafe.~~ *

~~PAVEL *
Don't talk to anyone. And Jack, *
above all else don't make any *
friends... you used to know that.~~ *

~~PAVEL rises.~~ *

~~JACK watches him go.~~ *

12A **INT. BAR - DAY (ALTERNATE VERSION)** 12A *

JACK waits. *

PAVEL enters. *

Sits at JACKS table. *

He is older than JACK. Refined but tough. A man of few words
but much gravitas. *

It's clear there's a long history of mutual respect between
these two men. *

PAVEL *
Who was the girl? *

JACK *
A friend. *

PAVEL *
A friend? *

JACK *
Who were the Swedes... *

PAVEL *
I'm working on that... It's going *
to take some time. Did she set you *
up? *

JACK *
She had nothing to do with it. *

PAVEL *
A pity. *

Beat.

PAVEL

I've made arrangements for you in a small town in Abruzzo while I sort this out.

~~JACK looks at him. There is tension between the two men.~~

~~PAVEL~~

~~Don't talk to anyone. And Jack, above all else don't make any friends... you used to know that.~~

PAVEL reaches into his inside pocket. JACK watches closely.

PAVEL produces an envelope and pushes it across the table.

PAVEL

Turn right outside the bar, then second left, Via Magenta. You'll find a dark blue Fiat Tempra with Pescara plates. I've marked a small town on the map, Castelvecchio. Stay there and lay low 'till you get my call.

PAVEL rises.

JACK watches him go.

13 **EXT/INT. CAR- DAY**

13

JACK walks down a narrow street lined with parked cars.

He passes an dark blue FIAT Tempra from around 1995.

JACK waits until he's certain no one's following him before he doubles back on himself, grabs the key from its hiding place on top of the rear right tire and climbs inside.

Checking the rear view mirror and the road ahead, JACK opens the glove compartment and finds a PLAIN MANILLA ENVELOPE. Inside the envelope is:

-a PASSPORT bearing Jack's photo in the name of *Edward Clarke*

-a DRIVER'S LICENSE in the same name

-several thousand euros in CASH

-A MOBILE PHONE in a cellophane bag.

-and a MAP.

14 **EXT. AUTOSTRADA- DAY - TITLES OVER THIS PART**

14

A long tunnel: one of the longest in Europe.

JACK at the wheel.

It seems like night: black ceiling, strip lights, shadows.

Vast fans suspended from the ceiling shift the traffic fumes.

A button of light, expanding...

...as we burst into daylight, blinding Jack.

15 **EXT. ITALIAN LANDSCAPE- DAY - TITLES CONTINUED**

15

We're in another world and Jack puts on his sunglasses.

The CAR crosses a spectacular VIADUCT that spans a deep RAVINE.

The passenger's window opens.

A MOBILE PHONE in a cellophane bag is thrown out.

It drops hundreds of feet down the ravine.

FADE TO BLACK

19 **EXT./INT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, MAIN SQUARE- DAY** 19

FADE UP

CASTEL DEL MONTE is a well preserved, happy looking little mediaeval town with a small handful of tourists.

A chunk of time has passed.

JACK is sitting at a table inside a small BAR wearing dark glasses, sipping a coffee and reading a guide book on Abruzzo. He looks like a tastefully dressed, almost Italian looking, educated American tourist. He blends in. And no one pays him much attention as he finishes his coffee, pays his bill, gets up and leaves.

20 **EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, OLD TOWN CENTRE- DAY** 20

At a leisurely pace, JACK passes a row of municipal rubbish bins just inside the fortified gates to the old town.

Behind the bins we catch sight of JACK's FIAT.

21 **EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, TOWN SQUARE- DAY** 21

We're right in the heart of the mediaeval old town: like the stronghold at the centre of a castle.

JACK comes out of a shop, clutching a bag containing bread, cheese and tomatoes.

JACK approaches an old building just off the main square: an ancient apartment block with a small sign that reads LOGGIA ABRUZZO.

22 **INT. LOGGIA ABRUZZO, JACK'S ROOM- DAY** 22

JACK walks in and puts the bag on the kitchen table and the guidebook on the bedside table. Apart for this, JACK has avoided unpacking: living entirely out of his holdall for some time.

In the bedroom, JACK takes his binoculars off the wall and goes to the window.

Looks at CASTELVECCHIO through his casement window.

He then hangs them back on the hook on the wall and starts doing push ups. While he does those, we look at elements of his apartment, the sound of his push-ups accompanying us:

A toothbrush in the glass by the sink

A Nikon camera with a long lens on the kitchen table.

One jacket hanging on a hanger.

It is sparse and spartan.

The HIDDEN ARCHWAY resembles an archer's slit but is big enough for a grown man to slip through. Unlike a window, the 'slit' is actually just a crack in a triangular convergence of two separate and slightly overlapping ancient stone walls. The confluence of two stone surfaces makes the narrow gap between them very, very difficult to spot.

JACK slips through the HIDDEN ARCHWAY, making sure no-one sees him.

Inside are a few steps with 3 front doors connecting to it.

27 **INT. BEHIND ARCHWAY- DAY**

27

Rotting doors lead to abandoned cellars and storerooms.

The MONGREL tied to a post is barking savagely, his leash keeping him inches from sinking his bared fangs into JACK.

JACK stares at the dog: a mysterious creature of fear and fury, he throws him a biscuit, the dog calms down.

28 **EXT. ALLEYWAY- DAY**

28

JACK reappears through the HIDDEN ARCHWAY and slips back into the alleyway. It's like he's materialised from thin air.

Just then a MAN on an old VESPA turns down the alleyway and drives towards him.

Casually, JACK continues walking.

The VESPA gets nearer. The MAN ON THE VESPA is wearing sunglasses.

JACK picks up his pace.

The VESPA is ten metres away.

Five metres.

JACK's face tenses up.

BANG!

JACK drops to his knees with his hand in his coat pocket, on his weapon we assume. As he goes down, he realizes this is not a gunshot; he turns around and the tension on his face disappears.

BANG!

The VESPA backfires for a second time.

JACK takes his hand out of his pocket.

Still on his knees, JACK pretends to tie his right shoe lace.

The MAN ON THE VESPA stops outside an apartment a few meters further up the alleyway and takes off his sunglasses. He's a corpulent, ruddy-faced Italian man in his late sixties.

He stares at JACK.

JACK stands.

MAN ON VESPA

Buongiorno!

JACK

Buongiorno.

MAN ON VESPA

Da dove provenite?

For an instant, the directness of the question catches JACK out.

JACK

America.

MAN ON VESPA

Ah! L'Americano!

JACK

Si. Il Americano.

JACK's pronunciation is good but his grammar is a bit rusty. Perhaps he's playing up on this. It suits the role of 'American tourist'.

The MAN laughs enthusiastically emphasizing the correct grammar:

MAN ON VESPA

L'Americano ! L'Americano!

A WOMAN'S VOICE comes from within the house- loud and angry- distracting the MAN ON THE VESPA, who screams back passionately, enters his front door, and shuts it behind him with a hearty slam.

JACK walks on.

29

EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, TOWN SQUARE- DAY

29

JACK puts some coins in a CANDY VENDING MACHINE outside a Tabacchi.

The MACHINE takes his money but won't dispense his chewing gum.

He hits the refund button but nothing happens.

He thumps the machine.

Then sees the pattern of light alter in the shiny plastic of the vending machine and spins round to see:

The PRIEST.

PRIEST

Can I help you?

JACK

I'm no good with machines.

The PRIEST smiles at JACK. He is dressed in an ill-fitting, un-stylish black suit, a black silk stock and a deep Roman collar fraying at the edge. His name is FATHER BENEDETTO. He is older than JACK.

FATHER BENEDETTO

You are American.

This is stated matter-of-factly: like a man practising English.

JACK

Si.

FATHER BENEDETTO

You speak Italian?

JACK

Poco.

FATHER BENEDETTO

*Va bene! You stay at Loggia
Abruzzo.*

Also a statement: this time with touch of triumph.

JACK is disconcerted but doesn't show it.

JACK

Not for much longer.

FATHER BENEDETTO

On vacation?

JACK
Working vacation.

This much is true- after a fashion.

They speak in English unless otherwise specified:

FATHER BENEDETTO
Lavoro? Che genere de lavoro?

JACK
Photographer.

FATHER BENEDETTO
Va bene. Che genere de fotografia?

JACK
Pictures of the region.
Architecture, landscapes...

FATHER BENEDETTO
People?

FATHER BENEDETTO stands straight and poses winningly.

JACK
No people. Sights and landmarks.
For guidebooks, magazines...

FATHER BENEDETTO
Ah! Magazine! Which magazine?

JACK shows no discomfort.

JACK
Actually it's a syndicate. Lots of
different publications. Um... *Casa
editrice.*

Father Benedetto points to the camera, assuming it is
digital.

FATHER BENEDETTO
*Va bene. So you must share a glass
of wine with me. Questa sera. This
evening.*

A beat.

JACK is slightly thrown.

JACK
You're very kind, but I...

FATHER BENEDETTO
*Certo. You want to know the truth
about Abruzzo? A priest sees
everything.*

30

EXT. PAY PHONE, CASTELVECCHIO DAY

30

PAVEL

*

Pronto?

JACK

It's Jack.

PAVEL

*

You don't answer the cell I gave you.

A beat.

JACK

*

I'm calling you now.

*

PAVEL

*

You don't make this easy for me Jack. I have a job for you, it's a custom fit... You don't even have to pull the trigger.

*

*

*

*

*

Beat.

*

JACK

*

I'll think about it.

*

~~Beat.~~

~~*~~

~~PAVEL~~

~~*~~

~~That's a good idea.~~

~~*~~

31

INT. FATHER BENEDETTO'S HOUSE- MAGIC HOUR

31 *

The SUN is sinking behind the high mountains that overlook the hilltop town.

JACK is wearing an immaculate white linen shirt.

He's sitting in a small walled garden snuggled at the rear of a crumbling fifteenth century edifice, overlooked yet secluded and trapping the last rays of the sun.

FATHER BENEDETTO pours two large glasses of brandy from a globulous green bottle of ARMAGNAC and sniffs his drink like a honey bee hovering over a bloom.

FATHER BENEDETTO
Que siamo! The quality of the
brandy is good, the liquor is
smooth and the glass warmed by the
sun.

He pronounces *warmed* "war-med". His English is sophisticated but quaint, like an out-of-date book.

JACK sniffs his drink before he sips it. Not like a connoisseur: like a White House taster checking the safety of a Presidential beverage.

FATHER BENEDETTO
(in ENGLISH)
The only good thing to come from
the *French...*

FATHER BENEDETTO grimaces.

FATHER BENEDETTO looks at JACK.

A beat.

FATHER BENEDETTO
(in ENGLISH)
You study our history?

JACK
No.

FATHER BENEDETTO looks horrified.

FATHER BENEDETTO
You come to Italy to make a guide
book and you don't care about
history?

JACK
I take pictures, father.

A beat.

FATHER BENEDETTO
Of course. You are American. You
think you can escape history. You
live for the present.

A beat.

JACK likes this man. His shrewdness is disconcerting but humane.

JACK sips his brandy.

JACK
I try to, father.

32 **INT. LOGGIA ABRUZZO, JACK'S ROOM- DAY**

32

JACK completes his morning exercises (self made boxing bag) then showers and dresses. His manner is precise and methodical. Only a man who has lived alone for many years can live like this.

33 **EXT. L'AQUILA- DAY**

33

JACK drives through a sizeable suburban sprawl. There's a good deal of traffic and the landscape is peppered with shopping malls and office complexes.

JACK parks in a tourist car park just outside the mediaeval walls that surround the old centre of town.

He gets out of the car carrying a copy of the Italian daily newspaper *Il Messaggero*.

And folds the front page in half.

34

EXT. OLD TOWN- DAY

34

There's a MARKET in progress. The central piazza is a hive of activity. Food, local produce, clothes and cheap CD stalls.

The market has attracted TOURISTS. Standing not far from a cheese stall is an attractive WOMAN in dark glasses. She's rifling through her handbag, searching for something. Under her right arm is a rolled up copy of *Il Messaggero*.

The front page has been folded in half.

JACK decides to proceed with caution.

Moving through the busy market, JACK approaches the OLD WOMAN running a cheese stall.

JACK

Un po' di formaggio, per favore.

OLD WOMAN

Quale? Pecorino, parmigiano?

JACK

Questo.

He points.

JACK

E un po' di pecorino.

JACK glances casually around for the WOMAN.

She's sitting outside a CAFE about twenty metres away, chatting on her cellphone.

JACK pays for his cheese and approaches the cafe.

35

EXT. L'AQUILA, CAFE- DAY

35

JACK sits at an empty table next to the WOMAN.

She finishes her call in English. She's well spoken. As she replaces the phone in her handbag, she knocks the newspaper off her table.

JACK picks it up.

WOMAN

Grazie.

JACK

Prego. You're welcome.

~~WOMAN~~

~~You're American.~~

~~JACK~~

~~"Amidst gathering clouds".~~

~~The WOMAN speaks quickly, purposefully, barely looking at JACK.~~

~~WOMAN~~

~~You're assuming I'm English or you'd never have mentioned the weather. In fact I'm Belgian but I went to boarding school in England. And am quite happy to converse on all subjects meteorological.~~

~~Judging by her stilted choice of words this is code.~~

A WAITER comes out and flicks a cloth over the table. It's nearly midday and the sun is hot. He speaks with a tired voice:

WAITER

Buongiorno. Desidera?

~~He's addressing the WOMAN.~~

WOMAN

Una spremuta di limone. Per favore.

Her Italian accent is perfect.

WAITER

Signore?

The WOMAN looks at JACK for the first time, studying him, awaiting his answer as if a great deal depended on it.

JACK

Un gelato al lampone. Per favore.

The final fail safe.

Now they can introduce themselves:

JACK

Edward.

WOMAN

Mathilde.

~~The identification process over, there is nothing more to do but get down to business- and conversation becomes suddenly awkward.~~

~~MATHILDE~~

~~It's hot. My car has no air conditioning. I asked for it, but...~~

~~She trails off.~~

~~JACK~~

~~What car did they give you?~~

~~Her HAZEL eyes flick over the crowd in front of the cafe.~~

~~She doesn't answer.~~

~~JACK clears his throat.~~

Then says quietly:

JACK

Range?

She takes a long time to answer. When she does, she does so over the rim of her half-empty coffee cup, scanning the crowd like a cheating wife customarily anxious not to be seen by her husband.

MATHILDE

One fifty to one seven five meters.

JACK

Time?

MATHILDE

Five seconds. Seven at the most.

JACK

Targets?

MATHILDE

One.

JACK

Fire rate?

MATHILDE

Rapid.

JACK considers this.

JACK

Magazine capacity?

MATHILDE

Large. Preferably 5.56 millimeter.

~~The WAITER delivers the Spremuta and the raspberry ice-cream.~~

~~The glass of lemon juice twists in MATHILDE's slender fingers.~~

MATHILDE

The weapon must be fairly light.
And compact. Possible to be broken
down into its constituent parts.

L'AMERICANO

How compact?

MATHILDE

As compact as possible.

JACK clears his throat.

JACK

You want a semi automatic rifle to
fit in a lady's purse?

MATHILDE

A small vanity case would be
permissible.

JACK

A small *briefcase* would be
possible.

A beat.

~~JACK~~

~~X-rays? Camouflage: lap-top, DVD
player, MP3 or digital camera?~~

~~She's not sure if he's joking or not. Neither are we.~~

~~MATHILDE~~

~~Not necessary.~~

JACK

Noise?

MATHILDE

Silencer.

JACK

No such thing. You'll have to make
do with a suppressor like everyone
else. It'll dampen the decibels,
dislocate the sound source and
reduce muzzle flash. I can't make
you silent but I can make you
invisible but only as long as
you're prepared to lose some range.

JACK scans the crowd.

On the other side of the square he spots a YOUNG MAN in his mid-thirties with short blonde hair and slight sunburn, hovering by a stall. Average height, slim, athletic build; sunglasses, stone-washed designer jeans very neatly pressed with a sharp crease.

JACK
Two o'clock.

~~MATHILDE
Excuse me?~~

JACK
By the clothes stall. Light blue shirt. Is he with you?

The YOUNG MAN has disappeared into the crowd.

MATHILDE
I didn't see him. In any case, I'm alone.

A pause.

JACK's jaw muscles grind.

MATHILDE
I can accept a slight loss of range.

JACK
You want a weapon with the firing capacity of a submachine gun and the range of a rifle.

MATHILDE
Can you do it?

A beat.

~~JACK
Give me a month. To trial. Then a week for final adjustments.~~

JACK passes a sign for a MODELLING AGENCY. It's a small, inconspicuous sign, but it catches his eye because its graphics are subtly lewd and it's attached to the buzzer of what is otherwise a purely residential apartment block.

A beautiful twenty six year old girl, CLARA, pulls up on her Vespa and parks it on the sidewalk in front of the agency.

She takes off her helmet.

She and JACK look at one another.

She goes inside and JACK walks on.

36A

36A

37 **EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, LANDSCAPE- TWILIGHT**

37

The sun is sinking.

It's hunting hour.

An EAGLE hovers on the wind above the town, looking for prey.

38 **INT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, LOGGIA ABRUZZO- NIGHT**

38

JACK is lying on top of his bed, fully clothed but fast asleep.

He's dreaming.

In his left hand is a BOOK of MEDIEVAL ART AND ARCHITECTURE.

Twitching in his sleep, JACK's grip on the BOOK slowly loosens...

THUD!

As the BOOK hits the floor JACK opens his eyes, sits up and rips the taped WALTHER from beneath the right side of the bed, pointing it at the door.

Silence.

JACK's heart is beating.

39 **INT. LOGGIA ABRUZZO, JACK'S ROOM- MORNING**

39

JACK is looking through his Binoculars.

JACK'S POV:

...of CASTELVECCIO.

Empty but for the occasional stray dog and an old woman.

40 **EXT. L'AQUILA- DAY**

40

JACK parks his car in the same tourist car park.

...and reappearing with a PACKAGE.

The PACKAGE is from an Italian PHOTOGRAPHIC SUPPLIERS.

JACK

Grazie.

POSTMASTER

Identificazione.

JACK flicks his eyes downwards. He has already put his PASSPORT on the counter.

The POSTMASTER scoops it up with bony fingers.

Looks from the picture to JACK.

JACK bears the scrutiny with a deadly straight face.

43

INT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, LOGGIA ARBRUZZO- EVENING

43

JACK unwraps the PACKAGE.

He removes:

-film

-photographic paper

-development fluids

-fixing solutions

-film protection bags

Then:

-a solid, monolythic rectangular receiver made out of a single piece of lightweight alloy.

-a bolt assembly.

-a barrel.

Only with this final piece is the puzzle complete.

Laid out on the floor is a Ruger M14 semi automatic rifle.

Without touching it, JACK studies the weapon like a connoisseur looking at the hue of a wine. In particular he notices that the SERIAL NUMBER has been scratched off.

Then he moves slowly, assembling the weapon with precision engineered expertise:

-inserting the barrel into the front of the receiver and securing it with the nut,

-opening the sidefolding tubular stock and engaging the
buttpad,
-snuggling the buttpad to his shoulder,
-looking down the barrel,
-and slowly squeezing back the finger-grooved TRIGGER as we

SMASH CUT TO:

44

INT. L'AQUILA, VIA LAMPEDUSA, CLARA'S ROOM- NIGHT

44

Our beautiful twenty four year-old Italian girl enters.

CLARA.

She sits on the edge of the bed, whose aging metal springs
squeak slightly, and puts her smoking cigarette in an ashtray
on the bedside table.

She kicks off her slip-on shoes.

Lifts off her dress.

Slips off her panties and lies back on the bed in one
practised motion.

JACK sits on the bed beside her.

He doesn't look at her.

ITALIAN GIRL

Amore?

She reaches up to touch JACK as we cut to:

45

EXT. CASTELVECCHIO, PAY PHONE- DAY

45

JACK

I'll make the delivery and then I'm
out.

*
*

JACK knows this is impossible.

A very long pause.

JACK

Pavel?

*

When PAVEL speaks it's with a calmness pregnant with intent.

*

PAVEL

OK, Jack.

*

A beat.

PAVEL
You're out.

*
*

CU on JACK - suspicious.

45A **EXT. STREET ROME - DAY - CONTINUOUS**

45A *

We stay with Pavel on the phone. He dials and then...

*

MATHILDE (V.O.)
Hello?

*
*

PAVEL
Now listen to me carefully...

*
*

CUT TO:

*

45B

45B

46

EXT. ROAD- DAY

46

FATHER BENEDETTO...

...is sitting in his APE three-wheeler.

He's broken down on the road between CASTEL DE MONTE and CASTELVECCHIO.

His comical and endearing method of rural transportation is a cross between a moped and a miniature pick-up truck.

In the back of the truck are two bleating LAMBS.

The APE is turning over but it won't start.

The bonnet is open. JACK- who's FIAT is parked just up the road- is fixing the engine.

He gives a signal and FATHER BENEDETTO turns the ignition key again.

This time the engine starts. FATHER BENEDETTO cheers.

FATHER BENEDETTO
(in italian) See you tonight !

And drives off. JACK only now sees the lambs. He walks towards his car. Castel del Monte is visible in the background.

47

INT. FATHER BENEDETTO'S KITCHEN- EVENING

47

Sixteenth century. Sombre wood panelling stained dark with polish and smoke. Two paraffin lamps stand on a huge antique sideboard, their frosted orbs engraved with scenes from the life of Our Lord.

The room is filled with a dining table: a massive black edifice of oak, five inches thick with six legs fluted like the columns of cathedrals.

Using antique crockery, ancient copper pots and utensils like old fashioned instruments of torture FATHER BENEDETTO performs culinary alchemy: transforming flesh into meat, dough into bread, hard earth nuggets into vegetables.

He hums as he cooks: Madame Butterfly arias.

JACK sips from a glass of wine and watches FATHER BENEDETTO potter around the wood fired stove. The priest has his own wine which he sips as he works between bouts of humming.

48

INT. FATHER BENEDETTO'S KITCHEN- EVENING

48

JACK eats a bowl of traditional Abruzzo lentil soup in silence.

FATHER BENEDETTO watches him, pleased to see his guest so absorbed.

As soon as JACK has finished, FATHER BENEDETTO invites him to help himself from the ancient tureen.

Then he bustles over to the stove, humming again.

JACK eats, studying a framed photo of FATHER BENEDETTO with his arm around a tough, corpulent Italian man in his mid-twenties. FABIO.

FATHER BENEDETTO returns to the table with a large covered dish issuing steam into his face.

He notices JACK's eye-line.

FATHER BENEDETTO
All the sheep in my flock are dear
to me, but some are dearer than
most. Especially those that have
strayed from the fold.

Off JACK's intrigued look FATHER BENEDETTO clarifies:

FATHER BENEDETTO
Fabio. He is a... [in ITALIAN] 'car
doctor'. But I suspect his practice
is not entirely sound. *Ecco!*

FATHER BENEDETTO whisks the lid off the covered dish revealing a lamb stew covered in sauce.

FATHER BENEDETTO
*Agnello. Lamb. With a sauce of
fresh herbs from my garden, garlic,
white wine, seasonal vegetables and
come si dice in Inglese? Brodo di
Agnello. Lamb broth.*

FATHER BENEDETTO serves each of them and pours white wine into fresh glasses.

FATHER BENEDETTO
Also: salsify in virgin olive oil,
zucchini, fried wild mushrooms with
delicate shavings of truffles.

JACK helps himself to vegetables.

FATHER BENEDETTO watches him as he savours his first taste.

JACK licks his lips and sips some cold white wine.

The two men regard one another, the priest awaiting a verdict.

JACK

It's good.

FATHER BENEDETTO shrugs.

FATHER BENEDETTO

The Holy Father eats better than this.

The flash of a smile crosses the priest's face.

JACK

Have you ever wanted to be anything other than a priest?

FATHER BENEDETTO

Have you ever wanted to be anything other than a... *come se dice in Inglese...*?

JACK

Photographer?

FATHER BENEDETTO

Photographer.

JACK

I do what I'm good at.

FATHER BENEDETTO

I'm sure you have other talents. You have the hands of a craftsman, not an artist. You are good with machines. Yet you told me just the opposite when we first met.

JACK hides his unease from the watchful priest.

FATHER BENEDETTO

Journalism cannot make you a rich man.

FATHER BENEDETTO's eyes flick over the OMEGA.

JACK

No.

FATHER BENEDETTO

Perhaps you are rich already?

JACK

I'm not a young man. I have my savings.

FATHER BENEDETTO

A man can be rich if he has God in
his heart.

He looks searchingly at JACK.

JACK

I don't think God is interested in
me. Father.

FATHER BENEDETTO

(in ENGLISH)

I know better than to try to make a
convert over stew and Trebbiano.

JACK is silent.

The two men continue eating.

*The priest is on a mission to extract the truth... and JACK
knows it.*

49

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF CASTEL DEL MONTE- DAY

49

JACK is driving.

He checks the rear view mirror.

All clear.

JACK accelerates the CAR, scraping the bumper against a small
wall, and drives on, confident he did some damage to the
bumper.

50

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE- DAY

50

A dirt track meanders downhill past a few small holdings and allotments.

The CAR moves slowly.

JACK pulls up beside a high chain fence.

The DOGS on the other side start barking. This sets off other dogs in other scrap yards.

JACK gets out of the car and approaches a makeshift hut beside the fence. Before he's a metre from the door it opens and a tough, well-built, unshaven Italian man in his mid-twenties looks him up and down.

FABIO.

JACK

I have some damage to my car.

FABIO (ITALIAN)

Sorry, too busy.

JACK

Sono un amico di Padre Benedetto.

Suspicion gives way suddenly to warmth:

FABIO

L'Americano?

JACK smiles politely.

JACK

Buon giorno.

FABIO

Ok, Ok, I fix.

51

INT. WORKSHOP- DAY

51

The metal door slides open. FABIO leads JACK inside.

At the back of the cluttered workshop is a blue ALFA ROMEO being resprayed white. Beside it, one half of a LANCIA is being welded to another.

JACK knows better than to stare. He follows FABIO through to...

52

INT. BACK OFFICE- DAY

52

Girlly calendars, Italian style.

JACK

I'm taking pictures forty minutes north of here. Right up in the mountains. Father Benedetto said you might be able to help.

FABIO
(in ITALIAN)
You need models. For your
photographs? Italian girls?

He winks at JACK. He's being friendly.

JACK
My publisher wouldn't stretch to a
four by four and the park trails
are playing havoc with my chassis.

The technical English is slightly beyond FABIO's grasp.

This suits JACK.

FABIO
(in ITALIAN)
Want me to take a look?

JACK
Non grazie! I just need something
to work on a ruptured driveshaft.

FABIO
(in ITALIAN)
You're a mechanic?

JACK
Just a hobby. I tinker.

JACK looks at the TOOLS hanging on the walls and littering
the work benches.

FABIO shrugs.

FABIO
(in ITALIAN)
Help yourself. [In ENGLISH] My
garage is your garage.

JACK
Grazie mille.

FABIO gets on with work, sliding himself beneath the re-
sprayed Alfa Romeo.

JACK picks out various implements, laying them on the work
surface: drill, hacksaw, lathe, vice, mallet.

Behind an oil pan with a jagged hole in it he discovers
several GEAR WHEELS with the teeth sheared off. He holds the
biggest one up.

JACK
Bene?

FABIO is engrossed in his work.

FABIO
Si! Si! Va bene!

JACK
Quant'e?

FABIO grins and growls. A gearwheel with no bite is useless to him.

FABIO
Niente!

JACK wraps the gearwheel in an oily rag and puts it in the sports bag with the tools.

At the door, he pauses.

That's when JACK sees it on the notice board. A *PHOTOGRAPH* of *FATHER BENEDETTO* and *FABIO*. FABIO is much younger in this photo: fourteen or fifteen years old. He's wearing an AS Roma football strip. Again: the priest has his arm around the boy.

On the workbench below the notice board is a *MOBILE PHONE* in a cellophane bag.

JACK
Where'd you get that?

FABIO
(In ITALIAN)
It was a gift from above.

53 **EXT. COUNTRYSIDE- DAY** 53

JACK exits Fabio's WORKSHOP and looks up...
...at the VIADUCT above him that connects the two towns.
We hear CHURCH BELLS as we cut to:

54 **INT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, CHURCH- DAY** 54

FATHER BENEDETTO rings the CHURCH BELLS for Mass.

55 **EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, CHURCH BELLS- CONTINUOUS** 55

Close up of church bells.
As the CLAPPERS hit the SOUNDBOWS we smash cut to:

56 **INT. JACK'S ROOM, LOGGIA ABRUZZO- CONTINUOUS** 56

JACK has laid out his newly acquired tools on the flag stone floor of his room.

JACK reaches a patch of soft grass beside the water.

This, he decides, is the perfect spot. He unrolls a blanket, kneels, and from his KNAPSACK he produces:

-a polystyrene cool box packed with ice and containing a chilled bottle of *Frascati*

-a loaf of coarse bread

-50 gms of *pecorino*

-100 gms of *prosciutto*

-a small jar of black olives

-an orange

-and a rolled blanket containing the disassembled parts of the M14 Mini Semi Automatic GUN.

JACK sets the stopwatch on his weather beaten OMEGA.

It takes approximately thirty-four seconds to assemble the bastardised M14 - including TELESCOPIC SIGHTS and SOUND SUPPRESSOR- and a further six seconds to press TEN ROUNDS into the magazine, slot it into the base of the hand grip, snuggle the butt to his shoulder and place his eye beside the rubber cup on the sight.

He's fast.

Carefully he surveys the lake. Settles on a CLUMP OF REEDS. And with the focus and dexterity of a surgeon, concentrates until his grip and aim are perfectly tense and still.

A beat...

...as JACK holds his breath. Then squeezes the trigger.

CHOOP!

CHOOP!

CHOOP!

Not the conventional "phut, phut, phut" of a movie silencer, but the genuine dampened sonic boom of a TAC 65 sound suppressor.

Through the sight we see the water churn at four o'clock to the REED CLUMP and four metres off.

From the knapsack, JACK takes a watchmaker's steel-handled screwdriver and adjusts the sight, then loads another ten rounds in the magazine.

CHOOP! CHOOP! CHOOP!

The reeds are clipped, the bullets slapping into the bank behind, mud spurting.

JACK adjusts again and reloads.

CHOOP-CHOOP-CHOOP-CHOOP-CHOOP!

The reed clump is shot to shit.

61

INT. LOGGIA ABRUZZO- DAY

61

The sound of CHURCH BELLS.

JACK is at work:

-modifying the SOUND SUPPRESSOR to make it more efficient

-filing a sear on the trigger mechanism until the trigger squeeze is softer

-adjusting the position of the TELESCOPIC SIGHT mountings

And finally:

-checking the balance of the weapon: JACK poises it on the edge of a ruler over the pencil mark he has determined to be the gun's centre of gravity.

The M14 balances perfectly.

By now the sun is low and the light fading. JACK's eyes are sore and his fingers aching.

He sits on his bed with his hands on his knees, silent in the dying light.

62

INT. BROTHEL, VIA LAMPEDUSA- NIGHT

62

We're in the living room of a small apartment. It's simply and attractively furnished. There are 3 GIRLS: not obviously hookers.

The FIRST GIRL is on her mobile phone. Every now and again she glances at JACK. The SECOND GIRL approaches him for a light.

JACK
C'è Clara?

JACK
Is Clara here?

SECOND GIRL
No, questa sera no.

SECOND GIRL
She's not here tonight.

She loops her arm through JACK's.

SECOND GIRL
Vuole bere qualcosa?
[Would you like a drink?]

JACK shakes his head.

JACK
Grazie, la prossima volta.
[Perhaps another time.]

63 **EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE- NIGHT**

63

JACK parks in his usual hiding spot and heads for the town square.

Suddenly, he spots something.

A hundred yards away is the same YOUNG MAN who JACK spotted in L'Aquila.

Cautiously, so as not to spook him, JACK continues walking.

The YOUNG MAN is several parked cars away on the opposite side of the street, leaning against a Fiat Punto, bending over as if speaking to the car's occupant.

JACK side steps swiftly down a back street, uncertain as to whether or not he's been spotted.

Closer on the YOUNG MAN: we reveal that there's no one in the Seat.

64 **EXT. SIDE STREETS- NIGHT**

64

JACK slips from one side street to another taking full advantage of short-cuts, alleyways and crumbling walls. His route is circuitous. It betrays a perfect knowledge of the maze-like back streets of the town.

Eventually JACK peeps out of a tiny passageway half-way down his own street and on the opposite side of the road from his LOGGIA.

The entrance to the LOGGIA is clear.

JACK crosses the street and slips inside.

65 **INT. LOGGIA ABRUZZO- NIGHT**

65

We're in the corridor outside JACK'S ROOM.

JACK takes his right hand from his pocket.

He's clutching the WALTHER.

Slowly, he reaches his left hand upwards, towards the lintel above the door where he finds...

...a single FEATHER.

66 **INT. JACK'S ROOM- NIGHT**

66

From the inside of the room we watch four sturdily fashioned deadbolt locks slide open. Each lock is new and home made.

JACK enters, shuts the door, locks all four bolts. And sits on the bed.

67 **EXT. STATION PLATFORM - MORNING**

67

There's a phone on the Station Platform, it's fixed to the wall of the station building.

JACK puts a coin in the slot. *Two rings.*

JACK
I've got company.

JACK scans the area outside.

PAVEL (V.O.)
You got a long list of enemies,
Jack.

*

JACK
He doesn't add up. If he's not baby-sitting the Belgian contract then what's he waiting for? A shooter would have taken care of business by now. When's he going to make his move?

The door next to the phone opens.

Jack's hand moves to his pocket.

PAVEL (V.O.)
Jack?

*

We hear a CLICK.

The STATION MASTER steps out onto the platform next to the phone. Apparently he has spooked Jack as Jack is no longer on the phone.

The PHONE is deserted.

68

EXT. TRAIN STATION - CONTINUOUS

68

Little more than a halt: one platform, one track, one station building - locked and shuttered.

Apart from the STATION MASTER, no one's around.

JACK checks his watch: it's exactly noon.

A TRAIN approaches. On the platform, there is also a MAN WITH A BRIEFCASE. Jack is on high alert.

The train is a Four-carriage local. It rattles round the bend in the track up the valley, diesel fumes pluming. There are no more than a dozen passengers on board.

MATHILDE is the only one to alight while the man with the briefcase boards.

Mathilde's once brown hair is now BLONDE. She's wearing a skirt and carrying a navy blue canvas sports bag.

They shake hands as the train pulls away, belching and honking as it rattles over the girders of an iron bridge and crosses some alpine rapids.

MATHILDE

Edward. How good to see you again.

Something quaint, old fashioned in her diction. English with the hint of a Belgian accent.

JACK opens the boot of his car and she places her sports bag beside a WICKER PICNIC HAMPER.

MATHILDE

Refreshments?

JACK

The Carabinieri around here like checkpoints. It's cover.

She nods.

They get into the car.

As JACK's door slams we smash cut to:

69

INT. CAR- DAY

69

MATHILDE's sunglasses reflect the alpine landscape.

MATHILDE

You picked a beautiful spot.

She takes off her shades.

Her once hazel eyes are now GREY-BLUE.

She glances round the car's plastic interior.

MATHILDE

You would be hard pressed to make a
fast get away in this.

Perhaps she's nervous. Her attempt at humour isn't working
and she stumbles slightly on her grammar:

MATHILDE

I would have thought you to have
had at least an Maserati.

JACK

This attracts less attention.

MATHILDE

Is it far?

JACK

Fifty minutes.

She looks at the high mountains in the distance.

MATHILDE

Up there?

JACK nods.

She eases herself back, resigned to a long climb.

MATHILDE

The train was tiring. One has to
keep alert so much in cities.

Her eyelids are drooping.

JACK

I'll wake you before the turn-off.

She smiles gratefully. But does not shut her tired eyes.

The CLOCK on the dash reads 12:17

70

INT. CAR- DAY

70

They drive in silence.

JACK negotiates the alpine road, leaning into the steering
wheel, shifting up or down a gear and glancing from the
mirror to the road and back again.

JACK secretly scans her, taking in every detail: her low-
heeled shoes are expensive but she wears no jewelry except a
Seiko wrist-watch on a metal strap and a thin gold chain at
her throat. Her tan is light, her slightly exposed breasts
and her legs shapely and recently waxed.

But JACK doesn't look at her like an object of desire. He looks at her cautiously, with an expression that says: "this young woman is ruthless. If she were not, she wouldn't be alive."

That's when he notices the CAR in his rear view mirror.

It's too far behind to decipher the make or model and it weaves in and out of frame as JACK negotiates the alpine road.

MATHILDE

Are we nearly there?

JACK

The turn-off's up ahead.

His eyes flick to the rear view mirror. Hers to the wing.

She spots the CAR behind. JACK catches her eye questioningly.

MATHILDE

I told you I work alone.

JACK slows just before the turn off and pulls over.

Then stops.

Now its MATHILDE's turn to look questioning.

JACK

Just a precaution.

He gets out of the car and pretends to urinate.

The CAR behind passes at speed.

A gray Fiat Punto. The driver neither slows down nor looks in their direction.

JACK gets back in the car.

And turns off up a dirt track that disappears into the meadows.

71

EXT. WOODS- DAY

71

JACK parks his FIAT in the shade of a TREE, near the river. This is the exact spot where he came to test the weapon.

MATHILDE gets out of the car and stretches.

MATHILDE

Does this place get many visitors?

JACK

This is the only way to get here.

MATHILDE

Did you check it for footprints and
tire tracks?

JACK

Three days ago. I walked along the
river in both directions.

MATHILDE

Let's check again.

73

EXT. RIVER - DAY

73

MATHILDE

You have tested the gun here
before?

JACK

Yes.

MATHILDE surveys the shimmering water.

Takes a deep breath of mountain air.

MATHILDE

It's beautiful here.

She sits on a tree trunk not far from the water's edge. Her dress dips between her legs as she leans forward and rests her forearms on her knees, tired from the journey and the long, sultry walk.

MATHILDE

I wish everywhere could be this
tranquil.

JACK looks at her, sensing a kindred spirit.

JACK

You'd be out of a job.

MATHILDE

You don't like the peace?

JACK

It's hard to like something you
know nothing about.

74

EXT. RIVER- LATER

74

The WICKER PICNIC HAMPER is sitting on a rug by between the parked car and the lake. From the hamper, JACK removes:

-a polystyrene cool box packed with ice and containing a chilled bottle of *Aspirinio*

-a loaf of coarse bread

-two clods of *mozzarella*

-150 gms of *prosciutto*

-100 gms of salame

-a large jar of pitted green olives

-a Thermos of sweet black coffee

-and, wrapped in cloth squares, the disassembled parts of the improved M14 semiautomatic rifle.

As MATHILDE starts to assemble the weapon with easy skill, JACK checks the stopwatch on his Omega.

It takes her approximately twenty-six seconds to assemble the bastardised gun- including TELESCOPIC SIGHTS and SOUND SUPPRESSOR- and a further three seconds to slot the empty magazine into the base of the hand grip, snuggle the butt to her shoulder and place her eye beside the rubber cup on the sight.

She's almost ten seconds faster than JACK.

He stares at her: not an alluring young woman with good legs and nice tits but an extension of the weapon itself and everything it means.

MATHILDE

Rounds?

JACK

I've made up two sorts.

He reaches into the PICNIC HAMPER.

JACK

Ten expanding and ten jacketed.

MATHILDE

I should like twenty of each.

It's an order: her voice is emotionless.

MATHILDE

And ten explosive.

JACK

Not a problem.

He hands her the practise ammunition in two small cartridge boxes: the shells snug in little plastic trays.

JACK

Will mercury do?

She smiles almost imperceptibly.

MATHILDE

Mercury will do very nicely.

She puts the gun down butt-first on the blanket.

MATHILDE

I've brought my own target.

She reaches into her BLUE CANVAS SPORTS BAG and removes a life size SUNFLOWER made of metal and plastic. She slots the three sections together and fixes them into a plastic base. The plant is approximately six foot tall and the sunflower itself is roughly the size of a human head.

JACK

I know a place where we can use it.
Follow me.

And gets up, walks towards a tiny path thru the high grass.

MATHILDE follows without speaking. In her wake flutters a confetti of autumn leaves as her loose summer skirt sweeps across the forest floor.

JACK

Watch out for vipers.

He keeps his voice down but she hears him nonetheless, waving with her right hand: the hand holding the AMMUNITION BOXES. She's no fool.

Neither is he. He has the gun.

He stops and points at a very overgrown field on a hill, surrounded by trees.

Mathilde walks on and at ninety meters distance she stops besides some purple trumpet blooms and 'plants' the SUNFLOWER.

Returning to Jack, he hands her the weapon.

MATHILDE

Muzzle velocity?

JACK

At least three hundred and sixty miles per hour. That's including twenty off the top for the sound suppression.

Impressed, MATHILDE looks at the marks on the metal where the serial number has been burned off.

MATHILDE

RUGER?

JACK

M14.

MATHILDE

I've not had one before.

JACK

You'll find it easy. I've re-balanced it for the weight of the suppressor. The fulcrum is two centimetres forward of the grip now. Which won't matter if you're firing- and I'm guessing you are- from a fixed position.

No answer.

JACK

No major recoil issues. You should
be able to hold onto any target.
Even the smallest.

MATHILDE puts two jacketed rounds into the magazine and stands with her feet apart, braced. The breeze beneath the walnut tree ruffles her summer skirt and presses it against her legs.

CHOOP! CHOOP!

For a moment longer she holds on the target then lowers the gun, holding it under her arm like a lady on a shire hunt would hold a 12 bore.

MATHILDE

You've done a good job, Edward.
Thank you. Thank you very much.

She makes a minute adjustment to the telescopic sight, with her fingernail. She can't have turned the vertical screw more than one notch.

Then she fully loads and fires again.

CHOOP-CHOOP-CHOOP!

JACK lifts his binoculars and looks at the target. In the centre of the sunflower head are three small HOLES.

With the magazine containing the remaining 28 jacketed rounds, MATHILDE takes aim again.

CHOOP-CHOOP-CHOOP-CHOOP!

Through his binoculars, JACK can see the empty space where the sunflower head used to be, the scarred stones behind and the little scraps of yellow plastic floating on the warm air.

JACK

Good shot.

MATHILDE says nothing. She fills the magazine with expanding rounds, snaps it in place and hands the weapon to JACK.

MATHILDE

Go to the Flower and fire near me.

He's taken aback.

MATHILDE

Say...

She looks round for a target.

MATHILDE

...two steps away from me. Two bursts. Five seconds apart.

Slowly, JACK walks down to the stones, turns and looks back. Mathilde is well hidden in the deep shade of the trees. In the poor light all he can see is her dress and her blouse. He wipes the sweat from his eyes and shuts them tightly.

This is not just a weapon test... it's a test of trust.

He opens his eyes again.

MATHILDE turns to face him as he shoulders the weapon.

He aims the M14 at the TREE right beside her.

Holds his breath.

And pulls the trigger.

CHOOP! CHOOP!

MATHILDE remains untouched.

So do the LEAVES.

Troubled, JACK blinks rapidly and counts to five.

Then he fires again.

CHOOP! CHOOP! CHOOP!

Through the sight, we see the leaves fall and the branch moving sideways.

Relieved, JACK walks slowly back towards Mathilde.

MATHILDE

The sound suppression is superb. I couldn't place the direction of fire.

From her sports bag she removes a plain brown MANILLA ENVELOPE.

MATHILDE

I shall require the rounds and the weapon by the first of next month. In the meantime would you tighten the adjusting screws on the sight, they are too loose. And shorten the stock by two centimetres. I also want a thirty round magazine.

JACK
You'll upset the balance.

MATHILDE
I'm prepared to accept that.

JACK
Then I'm happy to oblige.

MATHILDE
What about the case?

JACK
A briefcase. Samsonite. Standard
pattern in black with combination
locks. Is there a number you'd
prefer?

She thinks.

MATHILDE
Zero-one-four.

JACK
Zero-one-four.

MATHILDE hands him the ENVELOPE and disassembles the weapon.

JACK wraps the M14 parts up in their cloth squares and places
them in the bottom of the PICNIC HAMPER.

MATHILDE
What do you want done with these?

She has collected up the spent CARTRIDGE CASES.

JACK
Throw them in the water.

They walk back to their picnic place.

She walks down to the river and hurls the brass cases in.

Again, the beauty of the place transfixes her.

By the time she turns back, JACK has laid out the picnic.

MATHILDE
How thoughtful.

She reads the label on the bottle of wine.

MATHILDE
Aspirinio. I don't know it.

JACK
Like Moscata but *frizzante*.

Deftly he uncorks a bottle.

And pours it into the grass.

JACK

It wouldn't look right if the picnic wasn't touched.

MATHILDE

You chilled the wine. I thought...

JACK

It *had* to be chilled. They're Italian cops.

MATHILDE

(disappointed)

You think of everything.

JACK

I'm paid to. Don't move.

She freezes.

JACK points slowly.

On her tanned forearm is a BUTTERFLY.

MATHILDE

Wow.

They both stare at the insect, transfixed.

MATHILDE

It's so beautiful.

JACK

It's endangered.

She looks up at him. Like it's a revelation she says:

MATHILDE

You *like* coming here.

JACK

It serves its purpose.

MATHILDE

You've never taken a woman here before?

JACK is momentarily taken aback.

JACK

No.

The BUTTERFLY flits away.

MATHILDE

(sadly)

Perhaps you do not have a woman in your life. It is not easy for us to keep relationships. Not in our world.

JACK

I have an acquaintance.

A beat.

She waits for him to say more.

He doesn't.

MATHILDE

Friendships are transitory. It is...

Suddenly, there's movement in the bushes.

JACK snatches up his BINOCULARS. MATHILDE scans the tree cover.

JACK

Wild boar.

He hands her the binoculars. And hurriedly packs up the picnic.

75

INT. CAR- DAY

75

Her sunglasses back on, MATHILDE watches the meadows slip backwards in the nearside wing mirror as the car bumps back down the alpine track.

MATHILDE

I wish you hadn't brought me here.

Again... a real sadness.

JACK glances at her.

MATHILDE

This is the sort of place I wish I'd discovered by myself. Then maybe one day I could have retired here. But you already know it.

JACK is touched.

JACK

I'm much older than you. By the time you've retired I'll be dead.

78

INT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, LOCAL BAR- NIGHT

78

Two OLD MEN drinking beer at the bar. Two more at a table, playing Scopa with old fashioned Trentine playing cards.

Sitting at the back of the room, JACK stares at a shot of Grappa.

Above him, mounted on the wall, is a TELEVISION. On the TV is a Western: Charles Bronson and Henry Fonda in ONCE UPON A TIME IN THE WEST.

JACK downs his shot, gets up and walks over to the bar. Pays.

The BARMAN nods at the screen.

BARMAN

Sergio Leone. *Italiano.*

JACK turns and looks.

HENRY FONDA in close-up, is about to shoot a red headed BOY of seven in the head.

JACK stares. *Just at the moment that the gun goes off...*

...JACK turns away.

79

INT. BROTHEL, VIA LAMPEDUSA- NIGHT

79

CLARA and JACK are naked.

JACK tries to kiss her on the lips but CLARA turns away: just enough to let him know this is against the rules.

JACK kisses her neck. Her breasts. Her stomach.

As he moves his head between her legs, her fingers (already ensnared in his hair) tighten their grip, stopping him from going further.

JACK looks up at CLARA, across her belly, and she looks back at him, her expression fixed yet curious.

Against her rules but not, we sense, against her wishes, JACK kisses CLARA softly, tenderly, deeply until she is moving against his tongue, using her sex like a mouth to kiss him in return.

He then turns her over by moving her legs around and positions himself behind her.

CLARA

Careful, careful!! (slight resistance)

JACK starts slowly and she starts enjoying it.

CLARA comes, not wanting to.

Preoccupied, JACK does not. Instead he kisses her.

80

INT. BROTHEL, VIA LAMPEDUSA- NIGHT

80

JACK is in bed with CLARA, covering himself with a sheet.

CLARA

Morboso?

She looks at him.

CLARA

(with certainty)

Morboso.

JACK

Morboso?

CLARA

Morboso is like... when you can't stop thinking about something.

He stares back at her: wordless.

CLARA

Or someone.

A long pause: her eyes searching his. JACK gets out of bed and stands by the window, looking through the blind, down into the street.

JACK

You needn't act.

CLARA

Act?

CLARA watches him, confused but fascinated. JACK is getting dressed.

JACK

You might have to act with your other clients but you don't have to pretend anything at all with me.

She lights herself a cigarette.

JACK

I want you to be yourself with me. I came here to get pleasure, not to give it.

He hands her CASH.

She counts it.

CLARA

Maybe I pretend very well. I got
more tip than the other girls
usually get.

He walks to the door.

Pauses.

JACK

I don't sleep with the other girls.

And leaves.

81 **INT. JACK'S ROOM- NIGHT**

81

JACK is asleep.

He is not alone.

On the floor next to the bed lies:

INGRID.

Pale as death.

INGRID slowly sits up.

* * *

JACK wakes up suddenly, gasping.

The floor is empty, JACK's sheets twisted and damp.

82 **EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE- DAWN**

82

SUNRISE...

...over one of the most desolate and beautiful landscapes in all Italy.

83 **INT. JACK'S ROOM- DAWN**

83

In the gun-metal light of dawn, tricky work:

-cartridges taken apart

-tiny holes drilled in the nose to a depth of precisely 3mm

-the hole half-filled with mercury

-and plugged with a drop of liquid lead.

JACK is converting jacketed ammunition into EXPLOSIVE BULLETS.

84

INT. CHURCH- DAY

84

Outside, the sun is merciless. Inside, JACK has taken refuge in the cool of the church. He is alone. He is not praying. Just staring impassively at the gaudy crucifixion: at the thorns and the nails and the running blood.

Footsteps. JACK checks behind him.

It's FATHER BENEDETTO: dressed for Mass.

FATHER BENEDETTO
I've been looking for you.

He mops the sweat from his brow with the hem of his Soutane, takes JACK by the arm and leads him to one side, away from the light of the candles.

FATHER BENEDETTO
A stranger was here.

A beat.

FATHER BENEDETTO
He came to the church this afternoon.

Another beat.

FATHER BENEDETTO leans close and whispers:

FATHER BENEDETTO
If you live in Italy, and you are a man of the cloth, you meet many people. Besides, I lived once in Napoli. If you live in Napoli you know the difference between a fat wallet and a... *custodia per armi di spalla*. How you say in English?

JACK
Shoulder holster.

FATHER BENEDETTO
Si.

JACK glances up and down the aisle.

OLD LADIES are dribbling into church in twos and threes.

The BELL for mass starts ringing.

JACK
You're a true friend, father.

FATHER BENEDETTO
(shrugs)
I'm a priest.

85 OMITTED 85

86 **EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, STREETS - NIGHT** 86

JACK walks down the streets towards the town square.

87 **EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, TOWN SQUARE- NIGHT** 87

A Fiat Punto is parked just off the square. JACK immediately notices the car and its occupant. He hesitates and then decides to walk on towards the bar, knowing the car's occupant will spot him.

88 **INT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, LOCAL BAR- NIGHT** 88

JACK is drinking a coffee.

He has a pretty good view of the car and the young man sitting in it. JACK knows the guy can see him too.

The BARMAN hands JACK his change.

BARMAN
Letter from a friend.

BARMAN
Lettera da un amico.

And hands him a small white ENVELOPE.

JACK turns casually away from the BARMAN's prying eyes and opens the envelope with extreme caution.

Inside is a folded CUTTING. It's from the Swedish Daily newspaper JACK unfolds the cutting. We catch a glimpse of:

-Ingrid's winter house.

-A police line.

-Three COVERED BODIES in the snow.

JACK slips the cutting in his pocket and looks outside.

The car is empty. The YOUNG MAN has disappeared. JACK hesitates. Then decides to make a move. He *grabs three SUGAR CUBES from a silver bowl on the bar and exits.*

With one hand, JACK feeds another SUGAR CUBE to the MONGREL.
With the other hand, he holds his WALTHER behind his back...
...and cocks it.

93

EXT. ALLEYWAY- NIGHT

93

The YOUNG MAN is walking on, past the hidden archway, scanning the CROSSROADS ahead, unsure which of the possible alleyways holds his prey.

JACK emerges from the HIDDEN ARCHWAY and walks quickly up behind him.

JACK has removed his shoes and his bare feet are silent.

He has thirty metres to cover. The gun hangs heavy in his right hand. It's fitted with a TAC 65 SOUND SUPPRESSOR. He raises his right hand.

Twenty metres.

The gun is pointing at the YOUNG MAN.

Fifteen metres.

His finger takes up the slack of the trigger.

Twelve meters.

Then:

A VESPA turns into the alleyway behind JACK, its headlights on full beam.

JACK drops his right hand and thrusts his silenced WALTHER deep into his jacket pocket.

The YOUNG MAN looks his way.

JACK is outlined by the moped's beam of light.

The two men are face to face, within a stone throw of each other.

The YOUNG MAN's eyes widen with fear.

The VESPA hurtles towards JACK.

The MAN ON THE VESPA is wearing SUNGLASSES.

The YOUNG MAN starts to panic.

BANG!

The VESPA misfires.

JACK doesn't stand a chance if he doesn't act straight away. He reaches for his pistol, from his belt at the back, with his left hand.

JACK shoots once, hits the rear window and rearview mirror.

The Fiat Punto swerves left, hitting the trash cans lining the side of the road. The car brakes to avoid crashing into the right corner at the road-junction. The car comes to a temporary halt and backs up to turn to the left. The car takes off again like a rocket. JACK is now right next to him and aims again, shooting at the front right side tire. The car violently swerves right and forward and hits the low wall - the car crashes sideways into the wall. As a result, the Vespa hits the car.

JACK gets up unsteadily. He's badly scraped but otherwise unhurt. The crash has made his gun fly thru the air, it must be somewhere on the road.

He walks around the smashed up Fiat Punto. (shot as the POV of the driver)

Inside, the YOUNG MAN groans and twitches, locks his doors.

JACK tries to open the driver door unsuccessfully. He bends down to pick up a stone from the roadside.

The YOUNG MAN goes for what might be a gun but JACK smashes the car window with the stone and punches the YOUNG MAN in the face.

Grabs him by the head.....and breaks his neck.

He looks for his gun on the road, finds it, and walks away back in the direction of the town.

JACK gets into his own car and drives off.

97

EXT. L'AQUILA, TOWN SQUARE- NIGHT

97

JACK is on the phone.

JACK
The Swedes found me.

A beat.

PAVEL
Stay put. Finish the job.

*

JACK
How did they know I was here?

PAVEL
Because you've lost your edge,
Jack.

*
*

98

EXT. L'AQUILA- THAT NIGHT

98

JACK comes out of a pharmacy with a disinfectant and bandages...

...and quite literally bumps into CLARA.

JACK winces with pain.

CLARA

Buongiorno!

JACK

Buongiorno.

CLARA
You are hurt?

JACK
I came off my scooter.

CLARA
Madonna! and NO shoes!

JACK
Yeah, well. It's nothing to worry
about really. Maybe a bruised rib.
Una costola incrinata?

CLARA
Stronzo! Let me help you!

JACK
I'm fine.

CLARA
But you have to go to the hospital!

JACK
No, no, no. I have pain killers. I
just need a strong cup of coffee.

CLARA
I know a place which make the
strongest coffee in L'Aquila.

Her limpid brown eyes twinkle.

99

INT. CLARA'S APARTMENT- NIGHT

99

A small, simply furnished kitchen.

As JACK sips a large cup of strong black coffee, CLARA cleans
a vicious welt on his right shoulder blade.

On JACK's back is an exquisite tattoo...

...of a BUTTERFLY.

CLARA
*Ve bene. Tutto posto. Signor
Farfalla. [Good. Everything's OK.
Mr. Butterfly.]*

His eyes open wide and he turns to her quickly.

JACK
Why d'you call me that?

A beat.

CLARA

You have a tattoo. On your back.

Of course.

He relaxes.

But not completely.

99A **EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE - EARLY MORNING/ DAWN**

99A

JACK drives into town, past the Fiat Punto and Carabinieri cars. The area is taped off and the police are stopping the cars leaving town.

100 **INT. LOGGIA ABRUZZO, JACK'S ROOM- DAY**

100

TINS of fruit drops: three kinds: *black cherry, pineapple* and *lemon*. Each tin is emptied of its fruit drops.

Twenty rounds of ammunition- each round packed in silica- fit exactly into each tin.

Expanding tipped rounds in the black cherry, *jacketed* in the pineapple and *explosive* in the lemon.

JACK re-seals each tin with sellotape.

101 **INT. L'AQUILA, CAFE - DAY**

101

A popular and busy cafe provides JACK with ample cover. Sitting alone amongst the shoppers, tourists, old men and office girls, JACK has positioned himself with his back to the wall, next to a window with a good view of the entrance.

He is reading a copy of Il Messagero, flicking his eyes back and forth from the cafe entrance to a small column concerning the murder of two prostitutes in the nearby city of Chieti.

There is a knock on the window.

JACK looks up and sees, CLARA, with a girl he has not seen before, ANNA. Clara is smiling and waving to him from outside.

JACK beckons them to come in and they enter the cafe.

CLARA

Signor Farfalla. This is my friend
Anna.

CLARA's eyes twinkle mischievously.

ANNA offers her hand to JACK. JACK half rises like the perfect gentlemen, folding his newspaper and accepting ANNA's greeting.

CLARA

How are you? Feeling better?

JACK

Yes, much better thank
you...Grazie.

He indicates two empty chairs and sits down again.

JACK

Prego...Will you take a coffee with me?

CLARA

Grazie but we're going to see an American movie. Anna is learning English.

ANNA

Lui Americano?

JACK

I am.

JACK glances at CLARA. How much has she told her friend?

ANNA

I would love to go to America.

CLARA looks at ANNA and then at JACK, waiting to see if there is any reaction. There isn't.

Beat.

CLARA

So perhaps we will have a drink
together soon? I am free...

Her words sound rehearsed. She considers a crowded timetable.

CLARA

...on Wednesday.

JACK

Great. I'll see you then.

CLARA

But Eduardo... Where would you like
to meet?

Again: rehearsed. JACK is not expecting this. CLARA looks at him mischievously. ANNA is listening.

JACK
How about our usual place?

CLARA
Our usual place?

She feigns complete perplexity.

CLARA
I forgot. Where is our usual place?

The twinkle in her eye. She's testing him. JACK is the perfect gentleman.

JACK
Maybe we should try something
different...Why don't you suggest a
place?

There is no warmth in his suggestion. But CLARA doesn't care.

CLARA
Locanda Grapelli?

ANNA
Si! This is the best food in the
area.

JACK
Locanda Grapelli.

CLARA
You'll be there? At eight?

JACK
I'll be there. At eight.

CLARA
See you then, Eduardo.

JACK gets up to say goodbye.

JACK
See you then, Clara. It was a
delight to meet you Anna.
Arrivederci.

ANNA
Arrivederci, Signor Farfalla.

Anna kisses Jack swiftly and softly on the cheek.

CLARA does the same on the lips. Behind the mischief in her
eyes is something doubtful. Has she gone too far?

102 **OMITTED** 102

103 **EXT. DOWNTOWN L'AQUILA- DAY** 103

From a LUGGAGE SHOP that also sells OFFICE SUPPLIES Jack buys
a black combination lock SAMSONITE BRIEFCASE, invoice books,
notepads, envelopes, metal pens and a calculator.

104 **INT. JACK'S ROOM- NIGHT** 104

JACK opens the black combination lock SAMSONITE BRIEFCASE and
lines the bottom and sides with lead-lined film protection
bags, cut to fit.

Into the base of the briefcase he glues pre-shaped pieces of
firm grey plastic foam. These form the pockets into which he
slots the constituent parts of the Ruger M14 semi automatic
rifle. They fit perfectly.

Over this JACK uses the HOOKS and EYES to clip a false
bottom: a tough card cover onto which are pasted the custom
made headed notepaper, invoice books, notepads and envelopes.

.

To the briefcase's central divider he adds the metal pens, a calculator and a mobile phone. He sets the combination to 014. Then shuts and locks the BRIEFCASE.

This done he sits on the bed and stares at the case. With his work complete, he is struck by a terrible sense of emptiness.

105 **INT. JACK'S ROOM- NIGHT**

105

Time has passed. JACK is fully clothed. He is lying in bed on his back, staring at the ceiling. An alarm clock tells us it's 05.13 am.

106 **EXT. PARCO DELLA RESISTENZA - JUST AFTER DAWN**

106

A small park not far from Castel Del Monte's town square.

It is just after dawn. The pine trees and the poplars are silent. The sun is not yet up but the day is light. Sparrows hop about, searching for crumbs.

JACK, ravaged by lack of sleep, wanders about like the demon of a lost darkness, looking for his hole down to the underworld.

FATHER BENEDETTO
Buongiorno! You're up early!

He's twenty meters away, his hand raised in half-welcome, half-benediction.

JACK
I just needed some air.

They greet one another and FATHER BENEDETTO falls into slow step with JACK. The priest walks with his hands behind his back. JACK with his hands in his pockets.

FATHER BENEDETTO
I walk here to meditate. Once a week. The trees are like the Stations of the Cross: by certain trees I thank God for certain favours he has granted me. For example, here by this pine, I thank him for the many friendships I have and ask him to look after those of my friends who are sinners.

They reach a Cypress tree and FATHER BENEDETTO bows his head in prayer.

He gives a small sideways glance at JACK.

JACK

All men are sinners.

FATHER BENEDETTO

Some are greater sinners than others. And those who seek peace have *much* sinning in their history.

JACK

I don't seek peace.

FATHER BENEDETTO

Until now.

JACK

Maybe.

FATHER BENEDETTO

Forgive me. This is the priest in me speaking. But you have done much sinning, Signor Clarke. You still do.

JACK

Well you know, I see a whore. She's young enough to be my daughter.

FATHER BENEDETTO

I do not refer to the sins of carnality. But to the deadly sins...

JACK
Aren't all sins equal?

FATHER BENEDETTO
We are not discussing theology, my
friend, but you.

JACK is silent.

FATHER BENEDETTO
What job do you do, Signor? Are you
on the run, as they say?

JACK
Everyone's on the run from
something.

FATHER BENEDETTO
Some men watch *some* of the shadows.
You watch them all.

JACK
Everything I've done, I've had good
cause to do.

FATHER BENEDETTO
Do you wish to tell me?

JACK
Confess?

FATHER BENEDETTO
Yes.

JACK
For what reason?

FATHER BENEDETTO
For your own sake. Perhaps I can
pray for you?

A YOUNG COUPLE kissing on a nearby bench are part hidden by
the shade of the trees.

FATHER BENEDETTO
I wonder how many bastards have
been made here?

A change of pace.

FATHER BENEDETTO

You work in metal. You are given
some steel by Fabio, the car
doctor.

They stare at one another. *JACK wants to confess. He does not know why.* But he doesn't.

The couple catches JACK's eye and he does something we're not expecting:

JACK

Was he conceived here father?
Fabio. The 'car doctor'?

FATHER BENEDETTO is motionless.

FATHER BENEDETTO

Why do you ask me that?

JACK

You have each other's photos, you
have each other's eyes. Where *was*
he conceived, Father? Under one of
these trees? At night? Like all the
other bastards?

There is a very, very long pause. FATHER BENEDETTO stares up at JACK with extraordinary intensity.

FATHER BENEDETTO

I do not remember, Signore. It was many years ago.

FATHER BENEDETTO walks. JACK follows. A gust of wind makes dust swirl from the gravel path. The two men do not speak again until they reach the next set of Cyprus trees.

FATHER BENEDETTO

In the end it is I who confesses to you.

JACK

And you want me to do the same?

FATHER BENEDETTO

Perhaps. For your own good. You cannot doubt the existence of Hell. You live in it. It is a place without love. As for me, I go about my daily duties because the town requires it of me. Some know what you know. Perhaps I have no right to wear these robes. But I do have a heart full of a father's love. Something close to His heart! And for that I am both grateful and happy.

On JACK.

FATHER BENEDETTO

What do you have, my friend?

Another gust of wind. The priest looks up into JACK's face.

The assassin's eyes are red and stinging. Perhaps its from the dust.

107 **INT. JACK'S ROOM- EVENING**

107

JACK dresses very carefully for dinner. He checks himself in the mirror.

It is clear he wishes to make a favourable impression upon CLARA.

108 **INT. LOCANDA GRAPELLI- EVENING**

108

Of the thirty or so candle-lit tables that dot the restaurant, more than half are occupied by romantic couples.

JACK scans the tables and checks his watch. It's shortly after seven pm and there's no sign of CLARA.

He waits. Then turns to leave.

CLARA (O.S.)

Ciao.

She kisses him once on the lips. She's hot and flustered. She's been rushing.

CLARA

I did not think you would come.

JACK

I wasn't sure you meant me to.

CLARA looks doubtful. It's the same look she gave him at the cafe. She is breaking the golden rule of prostitution. Getting involved. Her heart is pulling one way and her head another.

CLARA

Certo.

A WAITER approaches.

WAITER

Per due?

Judging by his disapproving tone, the WAITER seems to know what CLARA does for a living. CLARA senses this immediately.

CLARA

Si.

109

INT. LOCANDA GRAPPELLI- NIGHT

109

CLARA and JACK sit at their table, the WAITER lights their candle and deposits two menus peremptorily.

CLARA

*Una bottiglia di acqua minerale non
gassata e... una Parasini, per
favore.*

Completely ignoring her, the WAITER addresses JACK with a
wink.

WAITER

Menu in Inglese?

A beat.

JACK

No, grazie.

WAITER
Tedesco? Olandese?

CLARA
(to the WAITER, in
ITALIAN)
He speaks Italian. So do I.
Listen:

CLARA
Parla italiano. Come me.
Quindi ripeto:

She repeats her order, articulating each word emphatically,
like a teacher to a slow school child:

CLARA
*Una bottiglia di acqua minerale e
una Parasini, per favore.*

She isn't upset. It's just her way of letting both men know
that she's in charge.

The WAITER turns to her, deferring to her strength of
character.

WAITER
Gassata?

CLARA
Non gassata.

He nods with some genuine deference and leaves.

CLARA sighs.

CLARA
(mostly to herself)
Gente di paese.

JACK
Small towns.

JACK smiles. CLARA smiles back. They have this contempt in
common.

The WAITER reappears and pours a thumbful of wine. It is pale
red in colour and *frizzante*. At CLARA's insistence, JACK
tastes it. It is dry and has a tar-like aftertaste.

CLARA
*Parasini. From Calabria. It is
good, you will agree?*

JACK
It is. Very good.

He looks at her and- for a brief moment- he undergoes what is a unique experience for him: a positive longing to repeat this brief moment many times in the future.

CLARA catches the glow of his warmth and blossoms.

CLARA
Can I ask you something, Eduardo?

JACK
Sure.

CLARA
You are married?

JACK
No.

A beat.

JACK
I doubt any of the couples here are. With the exception of the Germans at table seven. She's wearing a wedding ring and they haven't spoken a word to each other for eight and half minutes.

CLARA
I was sure this was your secret.

JACK
What makes you think I have a secret?

There's something desolate about this that JACK can't hide.

CLARA
I do not think you are ordinary man. I think you are good man. But you have secret.

A GYPSY approaches, offering CLARA a ROSE. She refuses firmly.

CLARA
He thinks we are couple.

JACK signals to the GYPSY and buys CLARA a ROSE.

JACK
Why spoil the illusion?

She looks at him and smiles.

CLARA
As long as we know it is an illusion.

CLARA
Già, basta saperlo.

Her smile is only a little bit sad.

Nonetheless, JACK doesn't know what to say.

They are saved by the appearance of the WAITER.

WAITER

Buona sera. Desidera?

CLARA orders, full of Italian charm, putting JACK at his ease. He watches her contentedly: the way she talks and moves.

110 **EXT. CORSO FREDERICO- NIGHT**

110

JACK and CLARA are walking. They look like film stars. CLARA slips her arm through his. They say nothing. The pedestrian shopping street is thronging with other couples. CLARA spots a GELATARIA and leads JACK towards it.

111 **EXT. STEPS- NIGHT**

111

JACK and CLARA are sitting on some stone steps in the main square. CLARA is holding a magnificent ICE CREAM CONE. She's a little bit drunk.

CLARA

Woooow!

She eats, savoring the ice cream. JACK watches, savoring her pleasure.

JACK

How is it?

CLARA

Bitchin'.

JACK

(amused)

Bitchin'?

CLARA

*It's- come se dice- 'slang', no?
Ecco.*

She licks a tongue-ful, dripping with nuts and chocolate sauce, then holds the CONE out to JACK.

JACK

No thanks.

CLARA

Come on, Eduardo!

He hesitates. Takes out his gum. Doesn't know where to put it. CLARA grabs it and wraps it in her paper napkin. JACK smiles. Eats.

CLARA
It is good, you will agree?

JACK
(his mouth full)
I will agree.

CLARA
(sensing his teasing)
My English is nice!

JACK
It's bitchin'.

CLARA
(defending herself)
You know how to swear in Italian?

JACK
Sure. *Bastardo. Imbecille.*

CLARA
"Imbecille?" Eduardo! Try: *In cul'a sorete.*

JACK
In cul'a sorete?

CLARA
Fuck your sister.

CLARA
Scusa!

JACK
I guess I've led a sheltered life.
Of sorts.

CLARA
Shell-tered?

JACK
Too much work.

CLARA's CELL PHONE starts to ring. It's on silent, but the screen is flashing, just visible where it sticks out of her handbag. CLARA looks down at the phone.

CLARA
Too much work.

She turns the phone to silent. And looks up at JACK.

CLARA
I don't apologise, Eduardo.

JACK
For what?

CLARA
For this I do. My job.

JACK
Never apologise.

He means it.

A beat.

CLARA
Except this job is full of *testa di cazzo*.

JACK
Mine too.

CLARA
Lei?

JACK
Si. In fact, I'm retiring.

CLARA
But you are too young to...
pensione?

JACK
Retire?

CLARA
Si.

JACK
You're flattering me.

CLARA
Si!

JACK
Would you be flattering me if I
wasn't a client?

He's put CLARA on the spot.

JACK
Am I a client?

CLARA takes a deep breath.

CLARA
This say yes.

She points at her head.

CLARA

This...

She points at her heart.

CLARA

This cannot be for sale. But I am not want to... *come se dice?*

JACK

Give it away.

She looks at him.

JACK studies her, searching for his own feelings.

CLARA

Stronzo! I buy you a present!

She fishes about in her handbag...

...and produces a SILVER BOX.

JACK unwraps the shiny paper. Inside is a plastic case like the sort you put engagement rings in. Inside the case is a BADGE, hand-painted, depicting the symbol of the region: the eagle of L'Aquila. JACK sticks the BADGE in his lapel.

JACK

Grazie.

An embarrassed beat.

CLARA kisses him.

JACK

Grazie, Clara.

CLARA

Prego. Eduardo.

A pause.

CLARA

My appartamento is not far from here.

112

INT. CLARA'S APARTMENT- MORNING

112

JACK opens his eyes.

He sits up like a shot, doesn't immediately know where he has woken up.

We hear CLARA in the shower.

JACK sits up and looks around at the little room partly like a curious lover, partly like a very alert man.

Beside him, the drawer of the bedside cabinet is open slightly. Inside is a plethora of accessories: tissues, eye make-up remover, a chocolate bar, a notepad, a vibrator and a RED PURSE.

Curious JACK lifts the RED PURSE. It's surprisingly heavy. He opens it. Inside the RED PURSE...

...is a Beretta single action Model 950B Pistol.

Just at that moment we hear CLARA turn the shower off.

JACK shuts the drawer and pretends to be asleep.

113

EXT. CASTELVECCHIO, PAY PHONE- DAY

113

JACK is on the phone.

JACK
I need more time.

*
*

PAVEL
You're testing my patience.

*
*

JACK
Give me a few days.

*
*

PAVEL
I'll give you two days... then you
make the drop.

*
*
*

A beat.

*

PAVEL hangs up.

*

113A

EXT. ROME - STREET -DAY

113A

PAVEL talks on his cell phone.

*

We cut back and forth between them.

*

PAVEL
Another Swede?

*

JACK
I need a few days.

PAVEL
Not a good idea, Jack. We've got to
make that drop.

*

~~JACK~~

~~If we make the drop. I gotta make
sure my side of the street's clean.~~

~~PAVEL~~

~~*~~

~~Listen to me, Jack. The Belgians
are already jittery. [A BEAT] Our
pretty young client and her
associates think someone might have
put a tail on you.~~

~~JACK pops a piece of gum.~~

~~JACK~~

~~Where are they getting their
information from?~~

~~PAVEL~~

~~*~~

~~Who knows. But I told 'em. I told
'em if there was even the slightest
chance security had been breached,
you'd deal with it immediately. I
told 'em you were the most security
conscious professional I know. I
told 'em no one gets close to you.~~

~~JACK~~

~~They don't.~~

~~PAVEL~~

~~*~~

~~Exactly. If I can't trust you to
keep a tight lid on operations then
who can I trust?~~

~~JACK is tense. Every word is carefully enunciated:~~

~~JACK~~

~~I've never jeopardized an operation
in my life.~~

~~PAVEL~~

~~*~~

~~You don't have to tell me that,
Jack. I know you. You shot your own
girlfriend.~~

~~ECU on JACK.~~

~~He's silent.~~

~~PAVEL~~

~~*~~

~~Clean up what you have to, Jack.
I'll stall them for two days. Then
you make the drop.~~

~~JACK hangs up slowly, lost in thought, jaw muscles grinding.~~

114

EXT. L'AQUILA, JACK'S CAR- EVENING

114

JACK is sitting in his parked car looking through the Nikon
with the TELEPHOTO LENS.

His POV:

Of CLARA seated in a cafe talking to a slick, tough YOUNG
ITALIAN MAN in a suit.

He is showing her photographs. Of what- we cannot see. CLARA looks very, very serious.

The YOUNG ITALIAN MAN leaves. JACK watches him get into a smart black ALFA ROMEO containing two other ITALIAN MEN. Rome plates.

When he looks back at the cafe, CLARA has gone.

114A **INT. LOGGIA ABRUZZO, JACK'S ROOM- DAY**

114A

JACK opens his PICNIC HAMPER and in it he puts:

-a polystyrene cool box packed with ice and containing a chilled bottle of *Aspirinio*

-a loaf of course bread

-two clods of *mozarella*

-150 gms of *proscuitto*

-and his *WALTHER PPK/S*.

116 **EXT. L'AQUILA- DAY**

116

CLARA is waiting at the end of her street.

She is holding the RED PURSE. At her feet is a blue plastic bag rounded out by a watermelon.

JACK pulls his CAR into the curb.

CLARA

Ciao, Eduardo!

She opens the passenger door, leans in and kisses JACK long and full on the lips.

JACK

Put them in the back. We've got a way to go.

She puts the plastic bag in the trunk.

Inside the trunk is the PICNIC HAMPER.

117 **INT. CAR- DAY**

117

CLARA climbs in and fastens her seat-belt.

She puts the RED PURSE between her legs. JACK glances at the RED PURSE.

And drives.

CLARA

Where we go?

JACK

Somewhere beautiful.

CLARA

How far do we go? To Fanale?

JACK

An hour. And we're not going to the sea, we're going to a river. Near mountains.

CLARA

For a... *come se dice*... you have in the back... Scampagnata...

JACK

A picnic.

She looks at him.

CLARA

A pick-nick! I have practise my English, Eduardo. I love to have pick-nick. It is a beautiful day, isn't it?

JACK

It is.

118 **EXT. ALPINE ROAD- DAY**

118

The CAR negotiates a familiar hairpin bend.

119 **INT. CAR- DAY**

119

JACK is concentrating on the road.

CLARA

Is it more far?

JACK

Ten kilometres. Another twenty minutes.

She pauses to work out the mathematics. She's smart. And puzzled. But she's not frightened. Not yet.

CLARA

Twelve kilometres? In *twenty* minutes?

JACK

We're going off the beaten track.

She looks confused.

JACK

Lontano. Fuori mano.

CLARA laughs.

CLARA

You will speak Italian. One day, I will teach you.

120 **EXT. ALPINE TRACK - DAY**

120

JACK turns off the main road and onto an alpine track.

This is the same route he took with the Belgian woman.

The CAR bumps and tilts on the rough terrain.

121 **INT. CAR- CONTINUOUS**

121

CLARA is startled by such an insignificant track.

CLARA

Where are we going?

Now she's anxious. This is not what she expected.

JACK

You shall see.

CLARA

I think it is good we should stay close to the road.

JACK

There's no need to worry. I've been here before several times. Taking photographs.

He swings the wheel suddenly to avoid a large boulder and the Fiat pitches as if struck by a wave.

CLARA clings to the door with her right hand, her left hand dug deep into the fabric of the seat to steady herself.

JACK

You're not afraid of coming into the wild with me, are you?

CLARA

No!

She laughs tensely.

CLARA

Of course not. Not with you. But
this...

She snaps her fingers.

CLARA

...*sentiero!*

She waves her hand in the air.

CLARA

You need a jeep. A Toyota. It is
not good for a... *berlina*.

It's as if the increased danger of the track diminishes her
English.

JACK

This is a Fiat!

He strikes the steering wheel hard with the palm of his hand.

JACK

Fabbrica Italiana Automobili
Torino. They build tanks. Besides,
I always come here in this car.

CLARA

You sure?

JACK

Of course. I don't want to walk
back to town any more than you do.

CLARA

I think you are crazy. This will go
to nowhere.

JACK

I assure you it does.

She pouts her reply.

After 50 metres JACK twists the steering wheel slightly and applies the brakes. They roll gradually down to the outer edge of the woods and come to a stop beneath a familiarly squat but ample TREE.

Beyond them is the RIVER. The hidden valley is a riot of autumn colors, the reds and golds more brilliant than we've ever seen them.

CLARA gets out of the car, dumbstruck. JACK gets out too. He watches her... then swiftly checks the RIVER through his miniature binoculars. Deserted. By the time CLARA turns towards him, the binoculars are hidden.

CLARA

No one comes here?

She speaks so quietly JACK can barely hear her.

JACK

No.

CLARA

Just you.

JACK

Yes.

CLARA turns away, unbuttons her blouse and drops it on the grass. She is wearing no bra. On her back dapple the shadows and patches of sun eking through the branches of the tree. She kicks off her shoes, which curve through the air... and unzips her skirt. It falls to the grass. She bends and steps daintily from her knickers. Then turns to face JACK.

JACK cannot take his eyes off her. Dizzy, he steps forward without meaning to.

CLARA

Well?

She is coquettish- and tosses her auburn hair to one side.

CLARA

I am going to swim in the water.
Are you coming?

She doesn't wait for his reply, but turns and runs through the grass towards the water.

JACK

There are vipers! *Vipera! Marasso!*

CLARA

Maybe! But I am lucky!

Quickly, JACK glances inside the FIAT.

The RED PURSE is nowhere to be seen.

CLARA

Come, Signor Farfalla!

JACK undresses. As he removes his clothes, he stalls for time, using the cover of undressing to search for the RED PURSE.

We can see it wedged under the passenger seat.

Due to the design of the car, JACK cannot.

CLARA

Come!

JACK turns to face the lake. He is naked. Yet with the caution of years he does not remove his shoes until he reaches the water's edge.

CLARA is standing in the middle of the River.

CLARA

Stand by me.

He obeys her order. As he steps into the water the cold hits him and he gasps. CLARA holds out her hand and he takes it.

CLARA
It is beautiful, no?

JACK
It's cold.

CLARA moves close to him. Looks up into his eyes.

JACK looks down at her and for a moment he forgets the awful plan in his head.

She kisses him, pressing herself against him, her skin and body as pure and warm as the water.

He tries helplessly to pull away.

JACK
Maybe we should...

CLARA
Do you make love in the water?

JACK
I haven't.

She places her arms around his neck and raises her feet from the smooth stones, wrapping her legs around his waist. She tries to push herself onto him but he resists.

CLARA
What's wrong?

He doesn't know what to say. She looks at him: confused, searching.

JACK
I'm cold.

He walks towards the bank. She follows, but just as JACK climbs onto the shore she shouts.

CLARA
AOW !

CLARA has stepped on something, she bends down in the water to pick it up. It is a spent cartridge.

CLARA
Look Jack, a bullet. Maybe hunters were here?

The word HUNTERS resonates with JACK, a deja vu he is not wanting to revisit. He is trying not to look too worried.

JACK
I don't think so, besides it looks ancient. Let's have some lunch.

122

EXT. RIVER BANK - DAY

122

CLARA is lying naked on a blanket, warming herself in the autumn sunshine.

Beside her is the RED PURSE.

Through sleepy, half-closed eyes she is watching JACK.

From her POV, JACK is kneeling behind the open PICNIC HAMPER, unpacking the food and wine. The LID of the basket obscures his hands.

CLARA

Eduardo.

JACK looks at her.

CLARA
Is this your real name?

A beat.

JACK
Is Clara yours?

CLARA
Si. Yes.

She looks at him. Waiting for his reply.

JACK
Edward is my real name.

CLARA
Ed-ward.

She doesn't believe him.

CLARA
You sure you not married, Eduardo?

JACK
Quite sure.

About this he's telling the truth.

CLARA reaches for the RED PURSE.

From behind the picnic hamper lid we hear the CLICK of a cocking mechanism.

CLARA hesitates for a moment.

JACK watches her intently.

She reaches into her purse.

JACK is expressionless.

When CLARA withdraws her right hand she is holding a tube of SUNTAN LOTION.

A beat.

JACK watches as she commences smoothing it into her skin, rubbing it around her breasts, pushing them aside, pressing them upwards. Then she caresses the lotion into her belly and down her thighs, bending at the waist as she works it into her shins.

CLARA
Will you put this behind me?

She proffers him the SUNTAN LOTION.

JACK stares at her baking body, transfixed by its terrible and perfect beauty.

Hidden behind the LID of the picnic hamper...

...his trembling right hand grips tightly to his WALTHER.

A long pause.

CLARA

Eduardo?

He's frozen.

CLARA

Amore?

Time seems to stop.

ECU on JACK.

Suddenly, CLARA sits up.

CLARA

Eduardo, what's wrong?

JACK swallows.

When he speaks his mouth is dry.

JACK

Nothing.

When he moves towards her, he is holding nothing in his hands.

He takes the tube of SUNTAN lotion.

JACK (V.O.)

Dear Father Benedetto...

And begins to run it into CLARA's back.

JACK (V.O.)

I promised myself that I would
write to you- as your friend- to
say goodbye.

123

EXT. WOODS- DAY

123

SLAM!

JACK shuts the boot of the car.

He scans the river banks.

No sign of the picnic.

No sign of CLARA.

JACK (V.O.)
Everything I've ever done...

Then he spots something.

On the ground, not far from the car.

He walks over and picks it up.

It's one of CLARA's shoes.

JACK (V.O.)
I've done for a reason. *

JACK is staring at the SHOE.

JACK (V.O.)
I never thought the day would come
when I'd run out of reasons.
Reasons to worry. Reasons to run.
Reasons to pull the trigger.

JACK turns and walks over to the car.

CLARA is in the passenger seat.

JACK (V.O.)
Maybe that day's come.

JACK gets into the Fiat.

JACK (V.O.)
Or maybe I've just found a reason
to stop.

And hands CLARA her shoe.

CLARA
Grazie, Eduardo.

JACK
I still don't understand. What's
the point of a gun if it's not
loaded?

CLARA
One of the girls borrow it to me
after two prostitute in Pescara is
murdered. It make me safe with
clients. I don't tell the police,
certo, but... *Madonna*, Eduardo. How
they do to these two women!

CLARA

A police *agente* from Rome show me photographs. They show photographs to everyone around *Via Lampedusa*.

CLARA shivers with disgust.

CLARA

Non capito... how one person hurt another this way.

JACK looks lost, like a man drained of all resolution.

JACK

Does the gun make you feel safer with me?

CLARA

You are not client.

JACK

Then why's it in your purse?

CLARA looks unhappy.

CLARA

I work tonight, *amore*.

Silence.

JACK looks away.

JACK (V.O.)

There's a chance this is suicide. Cops often put the heat on working girls. The girl I told you about, Clara, might have sold me out, or maybe she's a hired gun. Then again, maybe Clara *is* exactly who she says she is, and my Belgian clients will take the gun, shoot me and keep the money. Always a risk in my profession, or it's possible my trusted colleague in Rome no longer trusts me. Maybe he just wants out and is tying up loose ends... maybe...

CLARA

There's a *processione*...?

JACK

Procession?

CLARA

Tomorrow. In *Castel Del Monte*. We go to this together.

JACK

Maybe.

CLARA's eyes light up.

CLARA

And after that? After tomorrow and the next day.

JACK

I can't stay here forever, Clara.

As the words leave his lips he thinks how much he wishes he could.

JACK (V.O.)

It's not that I've given up on life. Just the way that I was living it. If you can call it living.

JACK

It's time to go home.

CLARA

Let me come to your home.

JACK

I can't, Clara.

She's upset but decides not to press her demand. Jack starts the car.

JACK (V.O.)

If I had one wish, Father, it would be this. That it's not Clara who finally pulls the trigger. But whoever it is... One thing is certain...

CLARA kisses him and simply says:

CLARA

Stay forever.

The car drives off.

JACK (V.O.)

...by this time tomorrow I'll be dead.

Fade to black.

A POSTMAN hands the mail to FATHER BENEDETTO.

FATHER BENEDETTO
Ciao Enzo, come stai?

IL POSTINO
Bene grazie, Padre.

We follow FATHER BENEDETTO inside as he rifles through a bunch of church circulars. One LETTER catches his eye.

He opens it and starts to read aloud:

FATHER BENEDETTO
Dear Father Benedetto. I promised myself that I would write to you- as your friend- to say goodbye...

125 **INT. JACK'S ROOM- DAY**

125

JACK is standing in his room with a very troubled look on his face. After staring, for what feels like minutes, he walks over to the table and takes the M14 out of the briefcase.

JACK is making a final adjustment to the Ruger M14 rifle.

~~FATHER BENEDETTO (V.O.)
Everything I've ever done...~~

~~We cannot see what he's doing, but we sense the significance of the moment.~~

~~FATHER BENEDETTO (V.O.)
I've done for a reason.~~

126 **INT. JACK'S ROOM- DAY**

126

JACK is standing by the door in an impeccably pressed suit, the black SAMSONITE BRIEFCASE in his hand.

He surveys his room. All evidence of his existence has been meticulously tidied away. Only his holdall and suitcase are standing near the door.

JACK picks up his belongings and leaves.

127 **EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - DAY**

127

The sun is shining. The mountains young and sharp and beautiful. The CAR moves swiftly across the great setting the road is surrounded by.

128 **INT. CAR- CONTINUOUS**

128

JACK watches the road. On the long straights he looks backwards and forwards.

129

EXT. HIGHWAY SERVICE STATION- DAY

129

JACK comes off the highway on a slip road and pulls into a forecourt consisting of several rows of pumps, a WC, a repair garage and a CAFE.

The car park is not large. JACK parks the Fiat near the CAFE.

JACK double checks the magazine in his handgun is full and slips his WALTHER into his jacket pocket.

Stepping out of the car he looks around the car park. It's ominously empty. In the near distance we can hear the ROAR of highway traffic.

JACK takes the BRIEFCASE from the rear seat and walks away. He makes a show of locking the car but doesn't.

130

INT. CAFE- DAY

130

Almost empty.

JACK sits at a table at the back of the cafe. From here he can see both entrances: the public entrance and the service entrance and also the door to the bathrooms. Through the window, he has a good view of the garage forecourt and the slip road to and from the autostrada.

JACK places the BRIEFCASE on a chair beside him and puts a PAPER BAG on the table next to the sugar dispenser. He checks his watch. It is two minutes before noon. He orders an *espresso*.

His nerve-heightened senses take in everything: the sound of the hum of traffic, the buzz of the refrigeration units and the murmur of the cafe's few occupants.

~~JACK's eyes flick outside to the forecourt.~~

~~We hear the cafe door open.~~

And in an instant, MATHILDE is at his table.

She is dressed in a tight black skirt, a simple blue blouse and a dark blue jacket. Her hair is neatly styled, her make-up immaculate and heavier than we've seen her wear before. She looks exactly like the kind of woman who might carry a Samsonite briefcase.

MATHILDE

~~Hello.~~ I see you have brought it in from the car with you.

She speaks quietly: her voice low and attractive.

JACK

All there, as agreed.

MATHILDE

What's in the paper bag?

~~The WAITRESS comes over with Jack's coffee. MATHILDE orders another for herself.~~

JACK

Sweets. For your journey.

She opens the bag and takes out one of the TINS.

She can immediately feel that it's heavier than it should be.

JACK

I guessed you'd have a sweet tooth.

MATHILDE

That is most thoughtful of you.

The polite phrase sounds even more polite with her slight Belgian accent.

The WAITRESS returns with the second *espresso* and MATHILDE pays for them both.

~~JACK watches as she stirs her coffee to cool it. She's nervous.~~

JACK

I suppose I'll read about this in the Times.

For a moment she is pensive.

MATHILDE

Yes, I expect so.

She drinks her coffee, holding her cup in mid-air and looking out the window.

JACK follows her eye-line to check she's not signalling to an accomplice.

The FORECOURT is still empty.

In the silence we can hear the buzz of the refrigeration units.

MATHILDE looks at JACK. Her expression is impossible to read. Perhaps it's tinged with sadness. ~~She drinks the rest of her coffee.~~

MATHILDE

I'm just going to the ladies. Wait here.

She picks up the CASE.

There is nothing JACK can do about this. She has taken him off guard and grasped the initiative.

All he can do is wait.

131 **INT. BATHROOM- CONTINUOUS**

131

MATHILDE enters a cubicle, opens the CASE, bypasses the stationery, lifts the false bottom and checks the M14 parts are present and correct.

Then she loads a magazine of her handgun.

132 **INT. CAFE- DAY**

132

MATHILDE returns from the bathroom.

~~MATHILDE~~

~~Shall we go.~~

~~Not a question, a command.~~

JACK is obliged to stand up.

133 **EXT. HIGHWAY, CAR PARK- DAY**

133

MATHILDE walks towards a silver 5 series BMW with slightly tinted windows.

She is carrying the BRIEFCASE.

JACK has his right hand in his jacket pocket.

MATHILDE

You won't need your piece.

JACK

You never know.

She stops beside the BMW.

JACK still has his hands on the Walther.

~~MATHILDE~~

~~OK?~~

~~JACK~~

~~Sure. You?~~

~~MATHILDE~~

~~Everything's just fine.~~

Her RIGHT HAND slips into her pocket.

JACK twists his wrist upwards and thumbs the cocking lever.

MATHILDE

Final payment.

~~She hands JACK an ENVELOPE.~~

MATHILDE

Buy yourself a retirement clock.

JACK braces himself for a bullet.

Just then...

...a COACH pulls into the car park.

It stops with a hydraulic hiss and dozens of TEENAGE KIDS descend.

MATHILDE and JACK are surrounded. There is nothing either of them can do.

MATHILDE looks suddenly relieved.

~~She leans forward and kisses JACK lightly and quickly and on the lips.~~

~~MATHILDE~~

~~Have you taken your girl up to the meadow yet?~~

~~JACK doesn't answer. His whole body is still tense for the bullet that he knows is coming. Perhaps there is a second person in the car.~~

~~MATHILDE~~

~~(whispers to JACK)~~

~~Do it.~~

She gets into the driver's seat of the BMW and swings the BRIEFCASE into the back.

MATHILDE

Goodbye, Mr. Butterfly.

JACK tenses as MATHILDE raises her hand in farewell.

The BMW pulls away and disappears down the slip road onto the autostrada.

~~JACK watches it go.~~

~~Thumbs back the lever on his Walther.~~

~~Gets into his Fiat.~~

And opens the ENVELOPE.

~~No wires.~~

~~No tricks.~~

~~Just TWENTY THOUSAND US DOLLARS.~~

JACK stares at the money. He isn't supposed to be alive. For a while he stays put. He shuts his eyes in the sunshine and listens to the laughter of the teenage kids. To a girl calling: "Amore!" To the cicadas. To the distant rush of traffic on the autostrada.

SMASH CUT TO:

134 EXT. AUTOSTRADA SLIP ROAD - DAY

134

JACK'S FIAT turns off the highway beneath a sign.

The sign reads CASTEL DEL MONTE.

~~EXTRA MATHILDE/ PAVEL PHONE CALL~~

*

~~PAVEL~~

*

~~Change of target.~~

135 EXT. ITALIAN COUNTRYSIDE - MATHILDE'S BMW IS FOLLOWING JACK'S FIAT

MATHILDE

It didn't work out, but I'm following him.

~~PAVEL~~

*

~~Stay on him!~~

~~135A~~ EXT. BAR HOME - DAY

~~135A~~

*

~~PAVEL~~

*

~~Yes.~~

*

~~JACK~~

*

~~It's done.~~

*

~~PAVEL~~

*

~~I'll confirm with her.~~

*

~~JACK~~ *
~~You'll confirm with me, I'm~~ *
~~finished...~~ *

~~Beat.~~ *

~~JACK~~ *
~~Pavel?~~ *

~~PAVEL~~ *
~~Have a nice life Jack.~~ *

~~JACK~~ *
~~I will...~~ *

~~JACK hangs up. PAVEL dials another number. We stay on his~~ *
~~face.~~ *

~~MATHILDE~~ *
~~Hello...~~ *

~~PAVEL~~ *
~~Just go off the phone with Jack, he~~ *
~~told me the exchange was~~ *
~~successful.~~ *

~~MATHILDE~~ *
~~There wasn't an opportunity...~~ *

~~PAVEL~~ *
~~Find one.~~ *

135 (ALTERNATE) *

PAVEL'S phone rings. He answers. *

~~PAVEL~~ *
~~Is it done?~~ *

~~MATHILDE~~ *
~~No.~~ *

~~PAVEL~~ *
~~What happened?~~ *

~~MATHILDE~~ *
~~There wasn't the opportunity.~~ *

~~Beat.~~ *

PAVEL *
Find one. *

*

136

EXT. AUTOSTRADA SLIP ROAD- DAY

136

The BMW exits the highway on the same slip road signed CASTEL
DEL MONTE.

137 **OMITTED** 137

137A **OMITTED** 137A

138 **EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, CHURCH STEPS- DAY** 138

The town square is jam-packed with cars and coaches.

Hundreds of tourists and locals have gathered near the church square. There is even a camera crew.

The church doors open. As FATHER BENEDETTO steps out a CHOIR starts to sing.

Behind him, LOCAL MEN are carrying a larger-than-life painted wooden STATUE OF SAINT DOMINIC.

Draped over a shepherd's shoulder and wrapped around his neck is a lamb.

The CHOIR, standing outside the church, keeps singing while the procession, with the STATUE, moves onto the small church square. FATHER BENEDETTO walking now behind the statue as this strange annual religious parade is about to start its trip thru town.

139 **EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, STREET- DAY** 139

MATHILDE is carrying the SAMSONITE BRIEFCASE, she is forcing her way into a home by breaking a locked door.

CLARA
Come away with you?

JACK
Why not?

CLARA
Together?

JACK
Together.

144 **EXT. ROOFTOP - DAY** 144

MATHILDE is on the roof, taking up her position to shoot. She looks thru the viewfinder, adjusting the sight, trying to locate Jack. The Church clock behind her indicates it is nearly noon.

145 **EXT. TELESCOPIC SIGHTS- DAY** 145

Other HEADS...

-TOURISTS

-PROCESSION CROSSES

-KIDS on their PARENTS' SHOULDERS

...keep blocking our view of JACK.

146 **INSERT:** 146

The TRIGGER FINGER, hesitating.

147 **EXT. OPEN SPACE- DAY** 147

We're right in the midst of the crowd.

CLARA
Where?

JACK
~~Wherever. We could come back here.
For good.~~

CLARA
To live?

JACK
Where else?

~~JACK
Forever?~~

~~JACK
Forever.~~

~~A pause.~~

~~JACK
Unless you have other plans.~~

~~CLARA
Other plans?~~

~~She swears in Italian. Obscenities. Then throws herself
around JACK and squeezes him with all her strength. There are
tears in her eyes.~~

~~CLARA
I love you, Signor Eduardo
Farfalla.~~

~~He looks at her.~~

~~JACK
I...~~

148 **INSERT:**

148

The TRIGGER FINGER squeezes.

The M14 Mini fires.

An EXPLOSIVE BULLET travels down the chamber at approximately
360 miles per hour headed straight for JACK's temporal lobe.

Only it never gets there.

The gun jams.

A chamber explosion is a nasty thing. Instead of shooting out
of the barrel, the round explodes in the cannon's chamber.

*Hot shrapnel fragments like a land mine, ripping into
MATHILDE's hands, forearms and face...*

149 **EXT. OPEN SPACE- DAY**

149

A loud BANG pulls JACK and CLARA apart as...

...MATHILDE drops two stories onto the street.

~~CLARA
What happens?~~

Jack sees Mathilde's fall.

JACK

Take this...meet me at the river!

He gives her the money.

~~They become separated by the procession...~~

~~JACK~~

~~Meet me!~~

CLARA

Who are you!?

JACK

My name is Jack!

~~CLARA~~

~~Jack!~~

She looks worried.

~~JACK~~

~~Go!!~~

CLARA turns and walks off through the crowd.

~~JACK watches her go.~~

Then runs through the Procession and catches the attention of Father Benedetto. He runs up the steep slope towards the place he saw Mathilde fall. Another person in the crowd also watches Jack run away, he keeps a keen eye on Jack's movements. Father Benedetto lets the procession go on and attempts to follow Jack, who is much faster of course. Some other people from the choir follow their priest, not knowing why he is leaving the procession. The other person (PAVEL) slowly follows them, up to a certain point from where he cannot possibly be seen by Jack.

*

The explosion has torn the flesh from Mathilde's hands and lacerated her face. The fall has crippled her.

But as JACK kneels beside her, her pulse confirms that she's alive.

JACK
Who do you work for?

The explosion has deafened her. She can't hear him.

He presses his mouth close to her ear. And shouts:

JACK
Who?

Her bloodshot eyes struggle to focus on JACK as she starts to form the words:

MATHILDE
Same man as you, Jack.

*

Suddenly, JACK spins around, his WALTHER in his right hand.

Father Benedetto stands quite close to Jack, and is totally out of breath.

FATHER BENEDETTO remains where he is.

JACK cocks his weapon, steadying it straight at the priest's heart.

A beat.

JACK stares at FATHER BENEDETTO, his finger clenched tightly on the trigger.

The priest swallows, looking from the bloody body of MATHILDE to JACK.

Her eyes are closing.

JACK
Who's friend are you, Father?

FATHER BENEDETTO looks at JACK.

There is great compassion in his voice:

~~FATHER BENEDETTO
I'm a friend of Jack's.~~

A beat.

~~JACK un-cocks his WALTHER.~~

~~And pockets his weapon.~~

~~JACK~~

~~Maybe you'd better do what you do.~~

~~He looks down at MATHILDE.~~

JACK turns to leave. Sees the choir boys.

JACK walks across the half-empty open space with his hand thrust deep in his pocket...and turns down a narrow alleyway.

A long pause.

Then a single figure steps from a hiding place near the steps.

~~And follows.~~

~~1) 2-shot Jack and Father B. "I'm sorry father".~~

*

150

EXT. ALLEYWAYS- DAY

150

JACK uses his knowledge of the medieval maze at the heart of town to elude the procession.

PAVEL follows, his hand thrust deep in the right hand pocket of his suit jacket, gaining swiftly on JACK...

*

30 metres

20 metres

10 metres

We hear the unmistakable CLICK of the cocking mechanism in PAVEL's pocket and see the shape of the barrel through the expensive material, pointing at JACK as...

*

...JACK turns and shoots.

Both men fire at the same time.

JACK is the better shot. His first bullet hits PAVEL in the heart.

*

The second shot hits PAVEL in the middle of the forehead. The impact of the bullet destroys his face, plunging him suddenly back into anonymity.

*

JACK turns and continues on his way.

We can tell by his face he's in extreme pain.

151

OMITTED

151

CLARA stands there.

JACK'S car slowly crawls towards her.

His view of her is getting hazy...

Sunlight taking over, his car eases slowly past her and gently comes to a stop against the trunk of the tree.

Silence.

Then the steady sound of the horn honking.

~~From beyond the car we see a single butterfly fly up and rise towards the sky.~~

157

OMITTED

157

158

INT. FIAT- DAY

158

JACK is slumped against the wheel.

He isn't breathing.

On his face is an expression of serene peace.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END.