

Edwin A. Salt

by
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FADE IN:

SECOND VOICE
Verizon, mother fucker.

VOICE
Cingular.

SECOND VOICE
Verizon.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A HAND, a cigarette, a wedding ring, a coffee mug that says "PARANOID? ME???" - on the move down a hall.

VOICE

Cingu-fucking-lar. The signal's unquestionably superior.

SECOND VOICE

Signal? That's an intangible. How the hell are you going to measure signal?? What're you, a fucking Sprint Labs technician?

VOICE

I don't have to be a 'fucking Sprint Labs technician' to hear the signal's clearly better with Cingular.

ANOTHER hand, another wedding ring, another coffee mug - A RUNNING WHITE RABBIT - "NADJA'S DADDY" - no cigarette.

SECOND VOICE

You've compared it? You've been on both phones on the same call at the same time and you've compared it?

VOICE

That's absurd.

SECOND VOICE

My point exactly. It's totally subjective. Verizon simply has the highest transmission output and the best coverage.

VOICE

Then why don't you buy stock.

SECOND VOICE

I do own stock. Look, when the Mossad wanted to take out Abu Mohatmi for the assassination of that Israeli general, what did they do?

VOICE

Bullshit. I know where you're going with this, but it doesn't apply in this situation.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SECOND VOICE

Like fuck it doesn't. They targeted a fucking scud missile onto his fucking cel-phone signal - the second he answered, lock-on, smile asshole, ka-bango - and do you know which network they made sure he was using? Do ya, you fucking pig-fucker?

VOICE

You know what? You say 'fuck' too much.

SECOND VOICE

Verizon fucking WorldCom. And why? Because it has the strongest fucking signal-to-coverage ratio on the fucking planet, that's why.

VOICE

We're talking about a 9 year-old girl's birthday party. What're you gonna do? Send her a surface-to-air missile?

VOICE (CONT'D)

No ... of course not. But I want the party to be a success right? Guaranteed no screw-ups, right? And besides - check the logo ...

EDWIN A. SALT. 38 years old, a friendly everyman - holds up his Nokia - Verizon logo on its screen.

SALT

Meanwhile, consider yours ...

His boss and friend, TED WINTER - 40 - weighs his own Nokia in his hand - with its singular Cingular splotch-logo.

SALT (CONT'D)

A bug. Splattered on a windshield.

A MUSCULAR YOUNG MAN in a shirt and tie, passing in the opposite direction - mutters at Salt in a CHINESE ACCENT.

PEABODY

"My kung-fu is better than yours ... "

SALT

"We shall fight. But first - let us have some tea ..."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

They both strike rather silly but oddly competent kung fu movie poses, Salt with his coffee cup; both moaning like cats in heat.

PEABODY laughs, continuing on his way.

SALT (CONT'D)

Right. So anyway, when I leave here I use my phone which, as I was trying to explain, even gets signal in that sketchy stretch outside the gates - to text the wife that the 'rabbit is running' - and to initiate Operation Looking-Glass.

Winter rolls his eyes.

WINTER

... your poor freakin' kid.

SALT

So *anyway* - at what will be approximately...

He checks his watch ...

SALT (CONT'D)

... 1300 hours, I deploy directly to Fantasy World Party Store where I requisition two 40 gallon tanks of CO2, 500 Tweedledee balloons, 70 Alice in Wonderland-themed paper plates, 100 sets of Mad Hatter plastic eating-ware and - crowning achievement - one white rabbit-shaped cake.

WINTER

Don't forget the Semtex.

SALT

Meanwhile, Nadja - my unsuspecting daughter is just back from school ...

Winter trails Salt into his ...

INT. SALT'S OFFICE - DAY

.... office where Salt begins gathering his things as he talks. PICTURES of his wife and kid dot the walls.

And as he continues talking, we SEE his story ...

A pretty little 9 YEAR-OLD GIRL sits in a suburban kitchen, reading Lewis Carroll's Through The Looking Glass.

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CONTINUED:

SALT (V.O.)
 ... when she hears the doorbell ring.
 Perplexed, she goes to answer it ...

Not perplexed at all, the girl answers the door. Standing on the doorstep is a GIANT WALRUS COSTUME.

SALT'S VOICE
 A giant walrus is standing there.

WALRUS
 Hey Little Girl - are you Alice?

NADJA
 No, I'm Nadja Salt.

SALT arches his eyebrows at Winter.

SALT
 Guess who the Walrus is ...

WINTER
 Uh, Paul?

SALT
 No dumbass - it's me! Who the fuck is Paul?

Reaching behind Nadja's ear, THE WALRUS deftly and magically produces TWO JELLY BEANS - offering her ...

WALRUS
 A choice. The red pill takes you through the Looking Glass; green takes you down the Rabbit-Hole ...

The 9 year-old sighs.

NADJA
 Dad - those're just jelly beans.

WALRUS
 Okay, come on Kid ...

He pauses to take a drag off an awkwardly produced cigarette ...

WALRUS (CONT'D)
 ... this suit's a rental and it's riding up my butt ...

NADJA
 (shrugs)
 Okey-doke ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Taking the jelly beans, she promptly eats them both.

WALRUS

Ha! Through the Looking Glass it is!

He grabs her, hustling her squealing to a CARPET on the lawn - rolling her up in it and bundling the giggling package ...

SALT grins at Winter ...

SALT

Back to the back yard where ...!

In a sudden spiral, the carpet is UNROLLED, spinning Nadja out onto the lawn in a back yard WAY overdone in an Alice in Wonderland theme and 25 of Nadja's closest playmates.

EVERYONE

Surprise!

Nadja looks to her father in the Walrus suit who, arm around her PRETTY MOTHER, is beaming at her. Salt grins at Winter.

SALT

Perfection will plainly ensue.

WINTER

Someone should call Child Protective Services.

He pauses, retrieving his briefcase. Nods, thoughtful ...

SALT

You know that moment when you realize the real thrill of the amusement park is seeing the look on your kid's face?

Winter rolls his eyes. Salt gives him a wink.

SALT (CONT'D)

See ya Monday ...

... and heads off down the hall.

WINTER

Salt!

Salt turns.

WINTER (CONT'D)

Cingular.

Salt grabs his crotch and continues on his way.

EXT. SALT'S CAR - SECURITY CHECKPOINT - DAY

Salt drums his fingers on his wheel as he waits in the queue to exit the center's park-like setting. Glances at his watch.

SALT
... late ... late ... for a very
important date ...

He rolls forward to the heavily guarded gate ...

GUARD
Afternoon Sir, how are you today?

SALT
A bit tardy - but please don't let it
stop you from performing one of your
oddly thorough body-cavity searches.

The guard smiles, accepting Salt's identification: Which says:

EDWIN A. SALT
C.I.A.
RUSSIAN AFFAIRS

Salt places his hand on the BIOMETRIC SENSOR as he runs it.

SALT (CONT'D)
Say, you guys ever clean this thing?
You know, plenty of other fellows -
not me - don't wash their hands after
taking a leak. Right now, I could be
one step removed from touching the
genitals of a dozen different guys.

The scanner beeps. The Security Officer smiles.

SECURITY OFFICER
It's cleaned every morning, Sir.
(handing back ID)
Have a nice day.

The security arm goes up and the CRASH BARRIERS go down ...

But before Salt can drive on, both he and the Security Officer
REALIZE a MAN is standing in front of his car.

Unshaven, exhausted - HUNTED green eyes ...

Instantly the Security Officer's AR-15 is off his shoulder.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SECURITY OFFICER (CONT'D)
 Stop where you are! Do not approach
 the gate. I repeat - do *not* approach
 the gate!

The man raises his hands ...

MAN
 Don't shoot ...

Putting them behind his head, he drops to his knees ...

MAN (CONT'D)
 My name is Oleg Vassily Taktaroff.
 And I am a Russian spy.

Salt closes his eyes - *fuck* ...

EXT. OBSERVATION ROOM - DAY

Through a wall of reinforced glass the RUSSIAN can be seen now seated at a table in an empty room. SALT and WINTER observe him from a room jammed with monitoring equipment.

Salt clocks his watch - sighs. Looks to Winter.

SALT
 Cold War's ... well - cold. You
 realize that, don't you?

WINTER
 Given my office is next door to the
 Syria desk, it's a bit hard to forget.
 (turns to him)
 Look, this guy could have something.
 Ex-Soviet republic - predominantly
 Islamic - still has a couple nukes?
 Something sexy. Something that could
 give us some juice again, Brother.

He massages Salt's shoulder.

WINTER (CONT'D)
 Half hour - you're back on the road.
 Promise.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM

Salt sits opposite the Russian. The man pantomimes a CIGARETTE.
 Salt produces a pack, shakes one out. The man takes two.

TAKTAROFF
 What can I call you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Salt restores the cigarettes to his pocket.

SALT

Ed.

TAKTAROFF

Thank you, Ed.

Salt speaks now in unflawed Russian.

SALT

So now that we're best pals - why don't you be a mensch and tell me why exactly it is you're here.

The man smiles.

TAKTAROFF

Your Russian - it's nice ...

Salt sits stone-faced - waiting ...

TAKTAROFF (CONT'D)

You don't know me, yet you dislike me.

SALT

Sorry, I'm not much for traitors.

TAKTAROFF

But I'm not betraying you.

SALT

Still. Strikes me as a character flaw.

Taktaroff is silent a moment. Nods ...

TAKTAROFF

I have cancer.

SALT

Wonderful. You're selling out your motherland for the price of chemo. So you can waste air for, what? another year? What's the population of the R.F. these days? 150 million? 160?

TAKTAROFF

I thought you'd be pleased. Getting so much for so little ...

SALT

I might be delighted if only I knew what I was getting, Oleg.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Salt plays a tough game - but it's one he's good at. Taktaroff grinds out what's left of his cigarette. Lights the second.

TAKTAROFF

Can I give you some history?

SALT

I have a master's in Russian studies, but hey - if you can tell me something new, by all means - educate me ...

Taktaroff smiles ...

TAKTAROFF

I don't think they taught this in your Russian studies class ...

They regard each other. Salt turns up his hands. Well??

TAKTAROFF (CONT'D)

(a beat/nods)

1966. The Cold War, as you know, was sub-zero. In a gymnasium in Grozny, 500 miles south of ...

SALT

(interrupting)

Stalingrad - yes I know. Oleg - it's my daughter's birthday. So if you have something useful, possibly even current - I'm all ears. Otherwise, I do have other, better places to be.

Taktaroff just looks back at him, smoking his cigarette. After a moment, Salt sighs - sitting back ...

SALT (CONT'D)

By all means - please continue ...

Taktaroff regards him an unreadable beat before ...

TAKTAROFF

A gymnasium - in Grozny ...

The ROOM fades away, replaced by a SOVIET GYMNASIUM, packed with hardened state-sponsored athletes. A WRESTLER, body a continuous knot of muscle crowned by the brutal stub of a head...

Strains, pinned to the mat in the choking grip of an equally powerful opponent. Veins bulge as he struggles for air ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

TAKTAROFF (V.O.) (CONT'D)
... a Soviet Olympic wrestler named
Eugene Fyorodovich Chenkov met for the
first time a top Russian chess
champion by name of Anja Nureykova.

As EUGENE struggles, his eyes by chance connect with those of a
YOUNG WOMAN who, along with some other young Russian women, is
being given a tour of the facility by an apparachnik.

And all the world - the cold gymnasium, the stinking mat, the
crushing weight of his opponent - it all fades away for him.

Replaced - by the magnetic intensity of their shared gaze.

Abruptly, Oleg wriggles out of his opponent's grasp and WRAPS
him up like a python - defeating him with crushing ease.

Eyes finding Anja who is being led away by the apparachnik. Her
own eyes fastened over her shoulder ... onto his ...

TAKTAROFF (V.O.) (CONT'D)
They were married within two weeks ...

A simple but beautiful Russian Orthodox ceremony. Followed by
powerful, primitive love-making ...

TAKTAROFF (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And 9 months later - a child.

In Eugene's brutally powerful, cracked and calloused hands, is
cradled a NEWBORN child.

He stares at it with depthless wonder. There is no doubt ...
This child - in these hands - will be protected ...

TAKTAROFF (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Nine months after that, both parents
were shot.

EUGENE, in a cold, dark basement lost somewhere beneath the
Russian permafrost ...

He grits his teeth as he braces for the bullet.

ANJA, stares back at her own executioners in the women's prison.
An all-female firing squad led by a thick-waisted female
Colonel. They raise their rifles.

Anja, expressionless but for a single tear that freezes halfway
down her face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

TAKTAROFF (V.O.) (CONT'D)
No one remembers why.

THE INFANT CHILD is picked by feminine hands out of the bed his mother made for him in a wooden drawer ...

TAKTAROFF (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And the child became the property of
Mother Russia ...

... and placed into BLACK-GLOVED hands ...

TAKTAROFF (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Turned over to be nurtured at the
bosom of a secret program ... utterly
new to the great Soviet state.

... and in turn placed into a pair of PALLID HANDS that wear a RING bearing the STAR OF THE REPUBLIC - the highest and most sinister political award of the Cold War.

The RING'S OWNER, the two halves of his face displaced by a jagged purple keloid scar that strikes diagonally down it...

... watches as the KGB CAR pulls away from the LONELY ROMANOV ERA MANOR HOUSE, driving away into the bleak countryside.

Child in his hands, he turns and re-enters the old house.

TAKTAROFF (V.O.) (CONT'D)
The Cold War was at it's coldest and
Krushev was determined that it would
be America who would be crushed ...

SOMEWHERE in the dark of the manor house, the infant Child lies in an unlined basket on a table. Alone. Wailing.

TAKTAROFF (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And 2nd only to his nuclear arsenal,
Krushev's weapon would be espionage.

IN SOME rainy northern European country, COLD WAR SPIES lean in dark doorways, collars pulled up round their necks ...

TAKTAROFF (V.O.) (CONT'D)
But such spies as he had - were deeply
flawed. Limited by heavy accents and
complete ignorance of any culture but
their own. Krushev recognized that
if Russia was to win this war, she
must take a radical step ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

THE CHILD lies exposed, shivering, in an open BARN. OTHER INFANTS lie shivering around him. More than one, blue and still.

TAKTAROFF (V.O.) (CONT'D)

So he ordered a new program that would begin with a blank page - and fill it.

Morning. The small bundles that no longer shiver are dumped without sentiment into an icy pit behind the manor.

TAKTAROFF (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Only the very toughest, most durable Russian blood would be considered.

In the middle of a ROARING RUSSIAN STREAM whose banks are still FROZEN, nine naked 5 year-old boys, lips dark blue ...

... struggle against the icy torrent. Dragging EMPTY BUCKETS filling with thundering current, that drag like lead weights.

Boy after boy drops, succumbing to the brutal cold. But not the FIRST BOY, who trudges on ...

Staring ahead through the icy spray with his FATHER'S EYES, even as it freezes on his face like his mother's last tear.

Eugene. His father's namesake.

EUGENE, now 7, sits in a CLASS with his 8 remaining classmates.

TAKTAROFF (V.O.) (CONT'D)

They learned English long before they were allowed to learn Russian. Drilled in every idiom and idiosyncrasy ...

The Pallid Man stands at a blackboard instructing the class who dutifully repeats without any trace of accent.

CLASS

'Groovy'. 'Far out'. 'Out of sight'.

OLDER still now, Eugene sits with his FIVE remaining classmates intently watching EASY RIDER - taking copious notes.

TAKTAROFF (V.O.)

Trained in gymnastics ...

EUGENE, muscles like his father's, knotting under the terrific strain - hangs on the rings in the Iron Cross ...

His 4 remaining classmates give way, collapsing to the hard floor. But Eugene, staring ahead ... continues on ... and on ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

TAKTAROFF (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And in every possibly applicable
fighting style ...

A row of instructors, Russian, Chinese, Japanese, Korean - even an ex-American heavyweight champ, stand at the edge of the mat.

Watching as TWO TEN YEAR-OLDS brutally battle, using with great expertise a deadly mix of fighting styles.

Eugene K.O.s his opponent with a right hook that sends the other 10 year old in a spiraling 720 that leaves him unconscious.

Blood pouring from an open wound in his own forehead, Eugene turns expressionless to his instructors to receive their immediate and uncompromising critical evaluation.

TAKTAROFF (V.O.) (CONT'D)
They were taught to be self-
sufficient; to think on their own ...

Eugene, at 11, repels down onto the icy peak of a Siberian glacier. COPTER that brought him, winging away into the horizon.

He watches it go - with nothing but ragged Siberian peaks stretching between him and the ceaseless horizon.

TAKTAROFF (V.O.) (CONT'D)
To be masters of strategic thought; to
excel under the most extreme pressure.

Eugene slaps a SPEED-CLOCK and intently studies the CHESS BOARD. His PALLID GUARDIAN stands by with a RIDING CROP.

Across from Eugene - his opponent - another dry-eyed boy, whose face is swollen and purple from repeated blows.

TAKTAROFF (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And to have absolutely no feelings.
Whatsoever.

Outside the manor in the cold Russian autumn. Eugene is alone now in the class. The sole survivor. Only his RUSSIAN WOLFHOUND remains. The Pallid Man nods.

Eugene breaks the dog's neck.

TAKTAROFF (V.O.) (CONT'D)
... even on graduation day.

The Pallid Man now hands the boy his MAKAROV PISTOL. The 12 year-old puts it to his instructor's head and pulls the trigger.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

The SAME DARK CAR that brought him a dozen years before waits.

He climbs in and it pulls away down the desolate, crooked road, leaving behind the old manor house forever.

TAKTAROFF (V.O.) (CONT'D)

He was taken to Moscow, where his training continued ...

Eugene steps out of the car into snowy ST. PETERS SQUARE, a fresh-faced, good-looking Russian teenager ...

Who could just as easily be American.

TAKTAROFF (V.O.) (CONT'D)

He was trained in the arts of seduction...

A darkened apartment, in the shadows and moonlight, Eugene kisses an attractive teenaged Russian girl in bell-bottoms. His hand moves up under her sweater to her breast.

Abruptly, all the LIGHTS snap on, the walls of the SET pull away and a stern Russian woman storms onstage ...

Shouting at Eugene, she shows him the correct way to massage the female breast, roughly demonstrating on the girl ...

Eugene nods attentively and duplicates the move himself. The instructor nods - better ...

TAKTAROFF (V.O.) (CONT'D)

In the arts of interrogation ...

Eugene circles some unfortunate in the same dark cellar his father was executed 15 years before, screaming at him alternately in Russian, then in perfect American.

He brutally punches the subject in the face, sending teeth flying. Then softens, kneeling by the man's side, massaging his neck, speaking soothingly to him ...

The man tied to the chair begins to weep ...

TAKTAROFF (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And being interrogated.

BAM! Eugene, tied to a chair, is punched square in the face for the nth time by a Russian powerlifting champion, while a thin sinister man circles, whispering insidious questions.

But Eugene only smiles through the blood.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (8)

EUGENE
Fuck you, Commie.

BAM! the powerlifter hits him again.

TAKTAROFF (V.O.)
But most of all - he was trained to
survive.

In the KREMLIN, for an audience of Brezhnev and the Russian
commistat, Eugene, a 16 year-old kid, with his father's body,
his mother's face, and the cunning and brains of both ...

Takes on every one of his childhood fight-instructors.

Simultaneously.

And cripplingly defeats them all - delivering the coup de gras
to the Russian powerlifter, breaking him down as though he were
no more than a Urals spring mountain-flower...

Only the quick intervention of soldiers with Kalishnikovs
prevents Eugene from instinctively killing his final opponent.

Brezhnev leads the entire commistat in applause. But it makes...

No visible impression on Eugene...

TAKTAROFF (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And then - at 17 - he was sent to
America.

The door to a PAN-AM JET opens and a teenager in BELL- BOTTOMS,
TENNIS RACKET under his arm - pauses at the top of the stairs.

Absorbing his new home ...

DISSOLVING back into the Langley interrogation room ...

Where SALT blinks back to reality ...

Cocking his head, not sure if he ...

SALT
Are you ... saying this person ... is
here ... in the United States ...

Takaroff says nothing. Salt swallows - a chill in the air.

SALT (CONT'D)
... where ...

Taktaroff smiles the softest of smiles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (9)

TAKTAROFF
Where do you think?

INT. C.I.A. OBSERVATION ROOM

DEF-COM 4. People moving, phones ringing. SALT stabs a finger at a Communications Technician.

SALT
Down! I want this place shut down!
Every inch of it.
(Comm-Tech 2)
Close the land lines - top to bottom
and jam cel-signal - in and out.
(comm-Tech 3)
That includes computers; *especially*
computers. I don't want anything going
out of this place.
(comm-Tech 4)
Gates; both ways, main and secondary -
freeze all that traffic. Now.

The SOUND of someone CLEARING their throat turns every head.
WINTER, stands at the 2-way glass - gazing in on Taktaroff.

WINTER
(Comm-Techs/quietly)
Put a pin in that. All of it ...

Salt blinks at him.

SALT
What are you talking about ... ?

Winter nods for Salt to join him at the window. Salt does.

WINTER
(confidentially)
Salt - run this kind of alert flags're
gonna fly all the way up to the Hill.

SALT
So? You heard what he said in there.
Even if the smallest part of it's true
we don't have a choice. Immediate
Response Protocol - you know that.

WINTER
(sharply)
And I also know the whole bureau's
hanging by a thread as it is.

Salt blinks, looking at him. Winter sighs, calming.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WINTER (CONT'D)

Look, I'm not saying we're not going to handle this the right way if it turns out he's legitimate - just that we should make sure he *is* legit before we go making a Federal case out of it.

Salt can hardly believe what he's hearing.

SALT

Ted - that's *illegal*. Every second we don't respond to this kind of breach it's a national security risk. You're going to get us court-martialed.

WINTER

Salt this guy's bluffing; he's *lying*. I can smell it.

(a pause)

I'll continue the interrogation myself.

Salt stares at him.

SALT

Winter ... we can't get physical with this guy. He came to us.

Winter just looks stolidly back at him. A mortal beat...

SALT (CONT'D)

Are you pulling rank?

WINTER

Yes ... I'm pulling rank.

SALT

Good. Then you can pull responsibility too.

(picking up his jacket)

'Cause I want no part of it.

He steps for the door, but Winter gets in front of him ...

WINTER

Salt. I thought we were friends ...

SALT

Winter, dammit, it's beyond illegal not to activate security protocols. And as for this other bullshit - are you kidding me? I'm out on a limb with a saw just by taking a powder here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Winter's jaw works ...

WINTER

Salt - they'll shut us down.

Salt just looks at his friend with deepest disappointment. Shaking his head, he reaches for the door ...

SALT

Excuse me - I have a birthday party to attend ...

But Winter blocks it. A taut stare-down between the two. Until Winter ... drawing a deep breath ... nods at the Techs.

WINTER

All right - close it down. *But call it a drill.*

They jump to it. Winter looks to Salt - who is surprised.

WINTER (CONT'D)

Now get in there - and *make* this mother fucker admit he's lying.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM

Salt sits opposite Taktaroff again.

SALT

I've been in a hundred rooms with a hundred guys just like you - and you know what I see when I look at you?

Taktaroff looks back at him.

SALT (CONT'D)

A con-artist. Because that's the best way to sell something you don't have, right, Oleg? Spin a tale; suck 'em in; make 'em work for it?

TAKTAROFF

No. I have facts. Ask me anything.

Salt looks to the TWO-WAY GLASS. Back at Taktaroff.

SALT

A name.

Taktaroff hesitates - equivocating ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SALT (CONT'D)
(abruptly rising)
Thank you. I didn't think so.

TAKTAROFF
His cover name is highly classified.

Salt has to smile.

SALT
You know, my supervisor just bet me
fifty bucks you're full of shit. I'm
happy for him - it's his lucky day.

Heads for the door.

TAKTAROFF
(quietly)
KA-88.

Salt stops Turns ... Blinks ...

SALT
What ... did you say ... ?

The Russian says nothing. Cautiously, Salt returns. Sits.

SALT (CONT'D)
What about it ... ?

TAKTAROFF
You tell me.

Salt studies the other man for a moment ...

SALT
Code name for the holy grail of Soviet
espionage. We knew you were doing
everything you could to steal it from
us at the end of the Cold War, only...
(hesitates)
...only we could never figure out what
it was you were trying to steal ...

Taktaroff smiles, amused. Shakes his head.

TAKTAROFF
That's because KA-88 was the most
closely kept secret of the USSR.
(leans forward)
There is, my American friend, a fatal
flaw in your market-driven economy.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TAKTAROFF (CONT'D)

KA-88 is a real-world scenario that would allow any 3rd party to start a domino-effect that would bring this entire country crashing in on itself in a matter of weeks.

Salt stares at him.

SALT

But ... why would we have something like that?

TAKTAROFF

Have it? My friend, you *invented* it.

Salt blinks back at him an instant. Then hardens.

SALT

Bullshit. Why would the CIA generate scenarios for America's destruction?

TAKTAROFF

The best defense is to anticipate the offense. What difference? KA-88 represents the Achilles heel of this entire country.

The mirth fades from his smile.

TAKTAROFF (CONT'D)

And 2 days ago, Eugene Chenkov got it.

Salt blinks at him ...

SALT

... what do you ... mean ...

Taktaroff sits back.

TAKTAROFF

KA-88 was Chenkov's sole purpose. For 7 years before the Cold War ended he'd been focused solely on obtaining this single document. Protecting his cover, climbing the ranks, obtaining security clearance after security clearance - waiting for the day when he could be alone in a room with KA-88.

Salt, still for an instant, swallows ...

SALT

... and then . . . ?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

TAKTAROFF

(shrugs)

And then - it all ended. USSR crumbled and he went to sleep. For over 10 years, he slept; a slumbering dragon.

(nods)

Until two weeks ago. When the dragon was awakened again.

Salt's jaw works.

SALT

I don't believe it. It'd be an act of war. The Kremlin's smarter than that.

TAKTAROFF

Smart enough to realize what you don't. That for one nation to rise, another must fall.

He shrugs.

TAKTAROFF (CONT'D)

Think what you like - but Chenkov is a machine whose parts are moving again. If he's allowed to leave this facility today, he will initiate the beginning of an irreversible freefall in your market-economy's by executing the first step in the KA-88 scenario.

Salt swallows - almost afraid to ask ...

SALT

... which is ... ?

TAKTAROFF

Very simple ...

He grinds his cigarette into the ashtray.

TAKTAROFF (CONT'D)

Chenkov will assassinate the new President-Elect of your United States.

Time - grinds to a halt. Taktaroff nods ...

TAKTAROFF (CONT'D)

High-powered rifle; at the AIDS summit in Philadelphia tomorrow afternoon.

Salt can only stare back at the other man.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

SALT
... I don't believe it ...

TAKTAROFF
As you like. But if Chenkov makes it
out of this building today...
(shakes head)
... nothing you have can stop him.

Salt's jaw works.

SALT
Give me a name.

TAKTAROFF
I told you, I don't...

SALT
Give me the fucking name!

TAKTAROFF
Eugene Vassily Porovich Chenkov!

SALT
Bullshit! Give me something I can
use! His operating name!

TAKTAROFF
I told you ...

Salt pounds the table.

SALT
I missed my daughter's birthday for
this, you pinko piece of shit! You
will give me the name or I will
personally tear you apart!!!

TAKTAROFF
Well I ... I ...

But SALT abruptly stops. Quietly CLAPPING. Taktaroff stares.

SALT
Nicely done. You almost had me going
there for a second with your Looking
Glass War, Sleeper-Spy under every
rock bullshit. What's it? More
preposterous the lie, the more likely
some sap'll swallow it? There's no
Chenkov and probably not even a KA-88.

Standing, he tosses the rest of the pack of cigarettes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

SALT (CONT'D)
Smoke up. You're finished ...

And heads for the door.

TAKTAROFF
You know ...

Salt slows ...

TAKTAROFF (CONT'D)
... when you do try to arrest him ...

He turns. Oleg is looking at him, almost trembling.

TAKTAROFF (CONT'D)
People are going to die.

He takes a MANILA FOLDER from under his jacket and sets it on the table. Despite being in Russian, it clearly says *CLASSIFIED!*

TAKTAROFF (CONT'D)
His name is Salt. Edwin A. Salt.

Salt stares at the other man. When he speaks, his voice is dust.

SALT
My name is Edwin A. Salt.

TAKTAROFF
Then you are a spy.

INT. LANGLEY

A CANARY YELLOW pair of latex gloves subjects the RUSSIAN FILE to fluoroscopic penetrative imaging ...

A ROBIN'S EGG pair of latex gloves subjects the FILE to comparative materials analysis ...

A SKY BLUE pair of latex gloves subjects the FILE to tetracyclaphenamine corrosive detection ...

A PEA GREEN pair of latex gloves subjects the FILE to biological residue illumination ...

A RUST RED pair of latex gloves subjects the file to fingerprint analysis ...

A HOT PINK pair of latex gloves subjects the file to D3 digital deductive decryption ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A JET BLACK pair of latex gloves subjects the file to passive radiative imaging ...

Their OWNER, the 7th of the Seven Dwarves of forensic analysis at the Central Intelligence Agency looks up.

He nods.

INT. A WINDOWLESS ROOM

WINTER stands staring at a wall as SALT - stunned look - numbly drops his possessions one by one into an envelope PEABODY holds.

SALT

Winter ... for god's sake ... at least
just look at me ...

A peremptory *tap* blinks his eyes back. Peabody, wearing a faint smile, raises the envelope. *The rest, please ...*

Salt shakes his head and drops his WALLET along with his PHONE into the envelope which Peabody smirkingly seals.

Winter turns slowly from the wall. Stands, looking at the floor. The RUSSIAN FILE open in his hands ...

Finally, he looks up - eyes connecting with Salt's ...

WINTER

(quietly)
Secret bank accounts ...

He suddenly *smacks* a SHEET from the file into Salt's face.

WINTER (CONT'D)

(quietly)
Transcripts of covert communiques...

He slaps the next sheet *smacking* into Salt's flinching face.

WINTER (CONT'D)

Decrypted orders for infiltration ...

Smack! he swats the next page into Salt's reddening features...

WINTER (CONT'D)

Primary *target* for psychological
manipulation ...

HOLDING up the next page for Salt - reeling - to see. Winter's hand is TREMBLING and so are his features.

It is a GRAINY KGB SURVEILLANCE PHOTO. Of WINTER himself.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WINTER (CONT'D)

I was godfather to your daughter.

SALT

Aw jesus ... Winter ...

WINTER

The Seven Dwarves determined beyond 99 percent certainty that *this* ...

He *smacks* the rest of the entire FILE into Salt's face.

WINTER (CONT'D)

... is authentic!

SALT

Winter, please, you gotta listen...

Winter suddenly goes still - angry breathing palpable.

WINTER

I've listened, Salt. For 15 years I've listened to your lies. Are you really going to make me listen to more now?

Winter sounds very, very dangerous right now. Salt swallows. Very slowly, very cautiously - he begins ...

SALT

Winter - okay - listen to me. Even you thought the Russian was lying.

WINTER

Oh ... oh, you played that beautifully, didn't you ...

He *shoves* Salt down into a steel chair.

WINTER (CONT'D)

You knew I'd resist any security alert - giving you the pretext to waltz out of here in a...

(fingers)

... "huff of moral indignation". Take the high road and fuck me in the ass for good measure, huh Salt?

SALT

Winter come on, you *know* me. We won a bowling tournament; you were best man at my wedding; you *know* me.

Winter raises the FILE.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WINTER
Explain this, Salt?

Salt looks helplessly back at his old friend - world spinning.

SALT
Winter I ... I don't know. But on
everything I hold sacred I swear...

He shakes his head ...

SALT (CONT'D)
... I'm not a spy.

Ominously, PEABODY begins REMOVING his watch. Salt SEES it.

SALT (CONT'D)
Wait. Stop. I mean Jesus listen to me!
Why, I mean...
(searching)
... how ... ?

WINTER
You're deep. And you've *been* deep.
Since you were seven-fucking-teen.

Salt just looks at him - helpless. Winter opens the FILE.

WINTER (CONT'D)
1984. 18 year-old, Edwin A. Salt,
a state tennis champion from
Wisconsin receives an invitation to
travel with players from 36 other
states to the USSR for a friendly
tournament. Young Edwin's parents
had been killed in a car crash four
years earlier.

A PHOTO of a TEENAGED SALT, dressed in tennis gear, shaking
GORBACHEV'S hand. Winter leans down in to Salt's face.

WINTER (CONT'D)
Edwin A. Salt never came back from
Russia - did he Chenkov ... ?

SALT
I'm not Chenkov!

WINTER
It was you, wasn't it Eugene!
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

WINTER (CONT'D)

The Soviets searched all over America until they found a match for you and then they invented some pretext to 'invite' him to Russia where I'm sure the poor teenaged sonofabitch has lain buried the last 20 years.

SALT

... god ... it's not true ...

WINTER

Yeah? Really? Then explain me this. After you returned from your little paid vacation to the Soviet Socialist Republic, you never once picked up a tennis racket again.

SALT

(faltering)

I ... I don't know ... I went to college, developed other interests.

WINTER

Oh, don't I know Salt. Like Russian studies in which you majored and excelled, or spoken Russian which - and I have your transcript here - which your professors were inspired to declare you the most gifted student they ever had.

SALT

The trip to Russia changed my *life* Winter. I've *told* you this before. I told my interviewers all this when I signed up for this fucking place! I fell in love with the country. The people, the language!

WINTER

Which, incidentally, you managed to pick up with nearly no accent.

SALT

But I do speak with an accent!

WINTER

Of course, Salt. A spy of your caliber would never be so stupid as to be too perfect. Just proficient enough where it counted to impress the hell out of the CIA recruiters.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

SALT

Please ... Winter, it's not true ...

He looks back at Winter, reeling, helpless ...

SALT (CONT'D)

Listen to what you're saying.
Everything you're accusing me of...

His eyes plead.

SALT (CONT'D)

You *made* me. A counter-espionage agent for the Russian division of the CIA!

But Winter's look back is only cold.

SALT (CONT'D)

Yes, I walked in speaking Russian but, *jesus christ*, you taught me to spy. You taught me to lie. To *kill*. I mortgaged my fucking soul for this place - for *you* Winter!

The file comes up in his hand again.

WINTER

Sure - you killed. KGB agent here, FSB agent there. Soviet, Russian...

(leans down)

Only you never really killed anybody did you, Salt ...

Salt stares at him.

WINTER (CONT'D)

How do we really know what goes on in the dark heart of Russia? Just your word and Russian intel intercepts. We hear Red cross-talk about how so and so was killed and we think mission accomplished. But it wasn't. No one was really killed at all. It was just a smokescreen. To get Salt that next promotion; that next security clearance.

SALT

(searching, confused)

No I ... I did kill those men. I've been haunted ... I've been ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

WINTER

Then let's see you spin this, Salt.

He drops a GOOGLE PRINT-OUT of a RUSSIAN NEWSPAPER into Salt's lap. On it, a SMILING HEAVY-SET MAN holding a prize goat.

WINTER (CONT'D)

Familiar face? Alexi Fodorovich.
Especially dangerous FSB Colonel?
You supposedly killed him on my
orders in 1998 and yet - I direct
your attention to the date of the
article - yet he was still winning
goat contests outside Odessa in
2002. Resilient, those Russians ...

Salt stares at the picture, brain tying in knots.

SALT

I ... it's ... I don't know - a
double, a forgery, how many times
can I tell you - *I don't know.*

They stare at each other a heart-pounding moment.

WINTER

(shakes head/wistful)

You even married a Russian woman...

SALT

Don't try to twist Kat into this,
Ted. It's bullshit and you *know* it.

WINTER

Sorry Salt - my bullshit meter's
clearly off. Where's KA-88?

Salt looks back at him - world destroyed.

SALT

I don't know, Ted. I'm not a spy.

INT. CHASEN'S OFFICE - DAY

WINTER POUNDS the desk of his branch head, BILL CHASEN.

WINTER

What I want to know is - DOES KA-88
EXIST -OR NOT!

He forces himself to calm.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WINTER (CONT'D)

Did we generate a scenario for
collapsing this country's economy?

Chasen only looks coldly back at him.

CHASEN

Let me be very clear on this - under
no circumstances would this agency do
something so foolish as to generate an
fictional scenario for the implosion
of our economy that could be stolen by
our enemies and used against us. Such
an act of unbridled stupidity would
spell the end of numerous careers.
Possibly even some in this very room.

Winter blinks at him a moment. Feeling a chill.

WINTER

So then ... I should release Salt.

CHASEN

I didn't say that.

The two men regard each other.

WINTER

May I speak completely hypothetically?

CHASEN

Of course.

WINTER

If an intelligence agency had ...
foolishly generated such a document,
one would assume their first course of
action would be to ascertain the
current status of said document...

CHASEN

One would assume.

WINTER

And what do you think they would have -
as a matter of conjecture - found the
status of said document to be?

CHASEN

In the imaginary world you speak of?
(he nods)
Stolen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Winter swallows.

WINTER

When?

CHASEN

Two days ago.

INT. POLYGRAPH ROOM

The CIA's Evasion Detection Unit. SALT, sits, dozens of wires and sensors streaming off his body.

CIA POLYGRAPH TECH

Did you recently steal documents from this facility?

SALT

No.

CIA POLYGRAPH TECH

Have you ever stolen documents from this facility?

SALT

No.

CIA POLYGRAPH TECH

Have you ever stolen documents?

SALT

Yes.

CIA POLYGRAPH TECH

From who?

SALT

Russia.

INT. OUTER ROOM

WINTER faces the debriefing Polygraph Technician.

CIA POLYGRAPH TECH

In every instance, the graph indicates frankness. No signs of deception.

WINTER

So, in your opinion, he's telling the truth.

CIA POLYGRAPH TECH

It's not an exact science - but yes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Winter takes the graph out of the man's hand. Studies it - jaw working. Shows it back ...

WINTER

Let me ask you - in 30 years - have you ever seen a graph this perfect?

The Technician blinks at the graph. Hesitates ...

CIA POLYGRAPH TECH

... it's ... hard to say ...

WINTER

You mean *no*. Why? Because you've never come up against anyone so well-trained to beat the machine.

INT. POLYGRAPH ROOM

Winter, Peabody and several agents enter as the last sensor is removed from Salt. Salt's eyes quietly meet Winter's.

SALT

I told you I was telling the truth.

But Winter just says ...

WINTER

Catch ...

Salt, surprised, *catches* the CEL-PHONE Winter tosses him.

Winter holds up the PHOTO of SALT shaking GORBACHEV'S hand when he was a young tennis-playing teenager visiting Russia.

WINTER (CONT'D)

Thought you were left-handed Salt?

Salt has caught the phone with his RIGHT hand.

SALT

I can catch a phone with either hand Winter. And I think if you'll check you'll find Gorbachev was left-handed.

But Winter only coldly takes his phone back from Salt.

WINTER

It has always been my opinion ...
(a nod)

...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WINTER (CONT'D)

there exist far more conclusive
tools for eliciting truth than the
polygraph.

INT. SERVICE TUNNEL

Winter leads as Salt, HANDS cuffed behind him, is hustled
through the warren of nuclear-hardened tunnels under Langley.

Salt clocks their progress with deepening concern.

SALT

Winter...where are you taking me...

Winter says nothing.

SALT (CONT'D)

What are you going to do with me...

Winter remains unresponsive. They stop outside a SHORT STEEL
DOOR. Salt registers it with mounting panic.

SALT (CONT'D)

Wait I ... I want to talk to an
attorney ...

Winter just waits as PEABODY unlocks the door ...

SALT (CONT'D)

Jesus christ Winter wait - even if
I were a spy I'd have some right to
due-process!

Now, finally, Winter looks at him.

WINTER

I think the view is - given this
represents an intelligence breach
of potentially fatal proportions,
in this particular instance certain
constitutional guarantees will have
to be ... set aside.

The empty look in his eyes chills Salt to the bone.
He swallows, nearly trembling ...

SALT

... can I at least call my wife...

Winter just looks back at him - expressionless.

SALT (CONT'D)

... oh winter ...

INT. EMPTY CONCRETE ROOM

The door BURSTS open, Salt rushed in fighting and struggling.

SALT
Winter you can't do this! We don't
do this anymore.

Forced down to his knees, head pushed into an EMPTY TIN PAIL.

SALT (CONT'D)
Winter! Wint..!

His protests are drowned out by a HOSE one of the agents
shoves gushing down into the pail - filling it with water.

While Salt struggles, drowning, Winter watches his watch ...

Finally, he nods to Peabody who yanks Salt up in a huge gasp.

WINTER
Where is KA-88?

SALT
Winter I swear..

Peabody *shoves* his head back down into the pail.

Winter watches his watch

Time ... ticks by ...

Shrugs to Peabody. Who hauls Salt back up choking.

SALT (CONT'D)
Winter for God's sake, I have a
wife and child!!!

WINTER
Then - for their sake - tell me.

Salt looks at him. Dripping water, mouth working; trying to
think of something, of *anything* ...

SALT
... KA-88 ... is ... is ...
(reaching)
... I ... I hid it! In an office!

WINTER
Which one?

Salt's blinks - brain racing, mouth working ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WINTER (CONT'D)

You don't come back out this time.

SALT

N...!

Peabody slams his head back under the water.

Winter pensively studies the dimly lit room . . .

Finally, he sighs and nods to Peabody who, with a vague look of disappointment, hauls up Salt violently coughing.

SALT (CONT'D)

Winter listen to me! Alexi Fodorovich!
The FSB Agent I killed in '98! It's
policy we verify our kills! I have
polaroids at my house! Check! I'm
telling the truth!

Winter sighs. Shakes his head at Peabody.

WINTER

He's not going to tell us anything
this way ...

Peabody nods, another agent handing him a SMALL BLACK CASE.
Winter pulls SOMETHING from his pocket and shows it to Salt.

WINTER (CONT'D)

Found in your briefcase. One-way to
Philadelphia; this afternoon ...

A PLANE TICKET. Salt blinks at it, dripping ...

SALT

That's not mine ...

WINTER

So much for your kid's fucking
birthday party, Salt.

SALT

It's not mine!

WINTER

(Peabody)

I shouldn't be here for this.

Peabody shrugs, nodding, and begins rolling up his sleeves.

SALT

Winter . . .

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WINTER

Try to be philosophical about it,
Salt.

He sighs. And heads for the door ...

SALT

Winter

Closing it behind him with a mortal *clank* of heavy locks.

SALT (CONT'D)

Winter!

Peabody OPENS the black case on a small table.

PEABODY

I always knew there was something
screwy with you, Salt. Everything
came too easy.

Seeing the four non-descript BROWN BOTTLES and package of
DISPOSABLE HYPODERMICS inside - Salt violently recoils.

SALT

No! That shit melts spinal cords!
We don't even use it anymore!

PEABODY

(filling a hypodermic)
You could always just tell us Salt.

SALT

Peabody I'm begging you! Don't put
that stuff in me! It'll put me in
a coma!

PEABODY

So you see how important it is that
you tell us where KA-88 is ...

He nods to an Agent, who forces Salt to turn away on his knees
as Peabody approaches with the needle.

SALT

Peabody! Think about it! If the
Seven Dwarves said 99% certainty
the file is authentic. That means
there's a one in a hundred chance
I'm telling the truth!!

Peabody presses the needle's tip to the back of Salt's neck.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SALT (CONT'D)

Peabody for god's sake what if this
kills me?

PEABODY

Agents disappear all the time Salt.

He PUSHES the needle sinking into the flesh of Salt's neck.
Salt is in tears.

SALT

At least let me say goodbye to my
family first you son of a bitch...

PEABODY

The woods are lovely, dark and
deep...

His thumb presses to flood the chemicals into Salt's spine ...

When he *FEELS* a white-hot flash of pain LEAP up his arm.

REALIZING that SALT, having snapped his head round, has BITTEN,
like a mother-fucking WOLF, DEEP into the flesh of his wrist.

Peabody SCREAMS as SALT ...

Hitting his feet, hands cuffed behind him, does a cartwheel over
the top of Peabody's arm, SNAPPING it like a piece of chalk.

As Peabody melts screaming, Salt lands on both feet - facing the
OTHER FOUR astounded men in the room. Panting, desperate ...

SALT

Please. Just let me talk to my wife
and kid first ...

The other four exchange a startled glance ...

And RUSH. But Salt is gone. And when they turn - he is there.

Proceeding, HANDS cuffed behind, to literally dismantle them.

An instant and a half and it is over - leaving Salt standing
alone amidst a room of twisted bodies.

BANG! the door flies open and HALF A DOZEN more agents burst
into the tiny concrete room, GUNS drawn.

JUMPING through his bound wrists, Salt *grabs* the first man
through, tying him into a pretzel of crunching cartilage.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

The room is filled with the flash and explosion of gunfire and three seconds later, only one man is left standing.

Edwin A. Salt.

INT. C.I.A CORRIDOR - DAY

WINTER bursts out into a corridor erupting in chaos. PEABODY, arm in an emergency pressure-cast, is being hurried his way.

WINTER
What's happening!

AGENT
Salt.

WINTER
Aw shit!

INT. COMM ROOM

Winter skids in.

WINTER
Shut this place back down! Now!
He's gonna go for the exits!

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

The ALARMS begin clanging as SALT moves at pace down a hall. LOOKING for something.

INT. CIA ENTRANCE - DAY

The whole place accelerates into overdrive. BLAST SHIELDS sliding over the doors as Security Teams skid into position.

EXT. ROOF - DAY

SNIPERS drop into position across the rooftops as STEEL SHUTTERING closes over all the windows ...

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

Salt slides into a remote corridor. LIGHTS flicking off, replacing with flashing emergency red. Redoubles his pace.

INT. SECURITY HUB

Winter bursts in - hundreds of surveillance feeds are being cycled and scanned by the technicians there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WINTER

Where!?!

SECURITY TECH

Got him in the Southeast wing!

WINTER

Evacuate ahead, isolate and seal!

INT. CORRIDOR

Salt skids into a hall of REINFORCED STEEL DOORS - rushing down, kicking each open in turn, until he FINDS what he's looking for.

INT. HOLDING CELL

OLEG TAKTAROFF looks up, startled, as the door of his stark holding cell bursts open and he sees Salt COMING FOR HIM.

Quickly readjusting something in his mouth, BITING DOWN as ...

Salt *grabs* him and *forces* his mouth open. GLASS sparkles in the man's teeth as the light fades from his eyes. *Cyanide*.

SALT

Who sent you!

He shakes him.

SALT (CONT'D)

Who sent you!

But Oleg is gone. Salt strips the WATCH off his wrist.

INT. CORRIDOR

Salt skids back out. SECURITY DOORS are clanging closed ahead.

INT. SECURITY HUB

Winter watches the monitor as SALT heads the other direction.

WINTER

What about the other exits??

SECURITY TECH

Sealed.

WINTER

Windows??

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SECURITY TECH

Blast-proof and un-openable. He's not going anywhere.

Winter thinks a second - then blinks - realizing something.

WINTER

What about weapons?? Is there an armoury in that wing??

SECURITY TECH

No Sir - just intel offices.

Winter looks relieved. AGENT BOTTOMS, an academic-looking young Yale graduate, looks at him quizzically.

BOTTOMS

I don't understand. Where's he going to go? Why're you so worried?

Winters looks at him like he's nuts.

WINTER

Because I've worked this guy for 17 years. Trust me, we've got a major fucking problem on our hands.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

SALT skids into another corridor - STEEL DOORS at the far end SLAMMING into place. Knows - he's TRAPPED.

INT. SURVEILLANCE HUB - DAY

With satisfaction, Winter nods.

WINTER

Now gas him.

The Security Tech looks up startled.

SECURITY TECH

But Sir ...

WINTER

I said gas the wing!

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

Salt is running back, testing doors, FEELING walls. Searching for some way - any way - out.

A THICK YELLOW GAS begins seeping out the ventilation ducts.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SALT
... uh-oh ...

Sharply halting, he snatches back his sleeve and quickly activates the STOPWATCH function on his wristwatch.

INT. SECURITY HUB - DAY

Winter raises his own watch.

WINTER
How long till he goes down ...

SECURITY TECH
90 seconds. But - Sir - respiratory
arrest is a serious probability ...

click! Winter dispassionately activates his own stopwatch.

WINTER
I want a team geared up and in
there by the time he drops.

His lip twitches.

WINTER (CONT'D)
And I'm not talking search and
rescue. I want a fucking hit-squad
in there.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

Numbers falling fast from here ...

Breath held - Salt is MOVING.

He skids into an OFFICE - quickly *scans* ...

DESK ...

GERANIUMS ...

FIRE-EXTINGUISHER ...

WALL THERMOMETER...

TELESCOPE at the window.

He jumps up on the desk, stripping the cover off the FLUORESCENT LIGHTS, yanking out the four 12-inch fluorescent tubes.

Twisting the metal caps off the ends ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GLANCES at his watch. *30 seconds down.*

INT. SURVEILLANCE HUB - DAY

Winter and the others - PERPLEXED - watch Salt on the grainy surveillance monitors.

BOTTOMS

What's he doing? Did he hide KA-88 in that office? Or maybe some kind of covert communication device?

WINTER

What's the ETA on that team?!?

SECURITY TECH

En route. Making entry now ...

EXT. CORRIDOR

A FULLY ARMoured CIA TACTICAL TEAM halts outside the closed blast doors. TEAM LEAD punches a code and the doors open.

Dropping GAS MASKS and sweeping with HK's, they make entry.

EXT. OFFICE - DAY

Wiping the tears from his watering EYES, SALT skids to the window - grabs the PLANT FOOD sitting next to the GERANIUMS.

SPINS the box - zeroing the contents. AMMONIUM NITRATE ...

Rushing back to the desk, he sends the fertilizer spilling across the open NEWSPAPER lying there ...

GRABS the decorative NAUTICAL THERMOMETER off the wall, *shattering* it against the side of the desk ...

Draining the MERCURY over the ammonium nitrate.

GRABBING the fire extinguisher off the wall, he inverts it and BLASTS the mixture with pure depressurized CO2 - freezing the liquid instantly into crystals.

CLOCKS his watch - *60 seconds!*

INT. SURVEILLANCE HUB - DAY

Winter and the others cock their heads

BOTTOMS

I don't get it - doesn't he know we're coming? What's he doing??

INT. SOUTHEAST WING CORRIDOR

Silent as ghosts in the fog of thick gas, the CIA TEAM creeps tactically down the hall towards the office ...

INT. OFFICE - DAY

FROZEN CRYSTALS packed into the glass fluorescent tubes ...

Salt, breathing heaving, quickly screws the metal caps back onto the ends of the tubes and WRAPS them into a quick bundle with SCOTCH TAPE from the desktop dispenser.

LOOKS at his watch - *75 seconds!*

Turning, he dashes ...

INT. OFFICE BATHROOM - DAY

Into the bathroom where he grabs the ELECTRIC TOOTHBRUSH off the sink, tossing away the interchangeable head and ...

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Skidding back to the TELESCOPE where, HANDS SHAKING, he uses the stripped toothbrush as an electric screwdriver to quickly UNSCREW the eyepiece and front lens of the scope.

INT. SURVEILLANCE HUB - DAY

All observing are mightily confused.

SECURITY TECH

You know ... it's almost like he's
...like he's *building* something ...

WINTER cocks his head - PIECES starting to fall into place ...

EXT. CORRIDOR

The TACTICAL TEAM reaches the closed door - hand-signaling as they take flanking positions around it - rifles ready.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

COUGHING, Salt slides back to the desk with the EMPTY TELESCOPE BODY ...

MUZZLE-loading the Fire Extinguisher - a near perfect fit - into the cylinder of the telescope.

PUSHING the bundled glass cylinders in after it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LOOKS at his watch.

90 seconds elapsed.

He spares only the most cursory GLANCE up at the SURVEILLANCE CAMERA in the corner of the office...

And SWINGS the telescope up onto his shoulder ...

INT. SURVEILLANCE HUB - DAY

Winter and the others stare at the BLACK AND WHITE IMAGE of Salt - telescope body on his shoulder.

And Winter realizes ...

WINTER

Aw fuck me ...

INT. OFFICE - DAY

BAM! the office door splinters off its hinges, kicked in by the Commando Team - which finds itself staring ...

At a man with a telescope mounted on his shoulder ...

Pointed directly at them.

INT. SURVEILLANCE HUB

Winter stares - voice hardly above a stunned whisper.

WINTER

He built a rocket-launcher.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

WHOOSH! Salt pulls the fire-extinguisher pin jutting through the empty telescope eyepiece socket ...

RELEASING entire pressurized contents of the extinguisher...

Commandos DIVING out of the way as ...

The MISSILE of fluorescent bulbs fires past them ...

Through the doorway ...

Striking the opposite wall in the hall behind ...

KABOOOM!! the ammonium nitrate mercuride - a crystal solution so volatile that an ant walking across it will set it off...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BLOWS a GAPING hole in the wall.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

The TACTICAL COMMANDOS, stunned, crawling and stumbling ...

Can only blink ...

As SALT jogs lightly out of the office and steps disappearing through the hole he has created ...

INT. SURVEILLANCE HUB - DAY

Winter's eyes nearly pop out of his skull.

WINTER
FUUUUUUUCK!!!

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

Arriving, Winter and Bottoms are met by the TACTICS TEAM LEAD.

TACTICS TEAM LEAD
We can't find him anywhere, Sir.

Winter swallows hard. HIS PHONE rings. He snaps it out.

WINTER
Winter ...

VOICE
Hello Ted ...

Winter turns - blinking at BOTTOMS ...

WINTER
S..Salt?? W ... where are you?

SALT'S VOICE
On my way to see my family, Ted.

Winter's mouth works.

SALT'S VOICE (CONT'D)
I've been set up. I know that and I know there's nothing I can do to change it. But I also know this and you should know it too:

Winter stares.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SALT'S VOICE (CONT'D)

If it's my time to die - before I do,
I will hold my wife and my child. And
nothing - no nation, no god, no power
on earth - will stop me.

click the line goes dead. Leaving Winter - eyes bugging.

VOICE

Personal call?

Winters turns - ashen - to see CHASEN standing there.

WINTER

It ... it was Salt, Sir.

Chasen looks from the SMOKING HOLE in the wall - to Winter.
If looks could kill ...

CHASEN

What's our friend Salt up to these
days?

WINTER

(hard swallow)

Uh ... he uh ... says he's going to
see his family, Sir ...

CHASEN

I see. Well then - that would imply
he's off the reservation, wouldn't it?

His look is coldest contempt. Winter wilts.

CHASEN (CONT'D)

There's something I want to show you.

INT. IMAGE ANALYSIS - DAY

Winters and Bottoms follows Chasen into CIA Image Analysis.

CHASEN

When we checked the security camera
monitoring the Black Class Documents
Vault, we discovered its tape had been
wiped clean - this morning ...

He nods to one of the TECHNICIANS.

CHASEN (CONT'D)

Some quite sophisticated software is
rebuilding the erasure as we speak...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

An IMAGE pops onto the technician's screen.

CHASEN (CONT'D)

This is what we have so far. Starting
from two days ago ...

ON SCREEN is a *surveillance video of SALT punching a code into a secure door and entering.* A moment later, he RE-EMERGES ...

A MANILA FOLDER under his arm. Chasen turns to Winter.

CHASEN (CONT'D)

I presume an exhaustive search of his
house has been conducted.

Shifting uncomfortably - Winter coughs ...

WINTER

Actually, uh - it appears Salt altered
his place of domicile 6 months ago. We
don't know why exactly, but where I...
(shit-eating)
I'm confident we'll know any moment...

Chasen regards him with cool loathing.

CHASEN

This is a private matter, Ted. A CIA
matter. If Salt gets to Philadelphia,
it becomes a public matter.

(shakes head)

If it becomes a public matter, some
among us - who feel they've already
tumbled as far down in this world as
they possibly can ...

(nods)

Will discover they were mistaken.

Winter's Adam's apple bobs hard as he manages a nod.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

Winter converges with his agents - moving quickly.

WINTER

Where the *fuck* did Salt get a phone??

Peabody - pale - holds a MANILA ENVELOPE in his good hand.

PEABODY

I uh - re-checked his personal effects
Sir and... well, I don't understand...
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PEABODY (CONT'D)
 (coughs nervously)
 His phone - it's ... it's not there...

Winter blinks at the envelope an instant. *Flushes* red.

WINTER
 It's not there - you fucking vegetable
 - because it never *was* there.

Peabody blinks back, cow-like.

WINTER (CONT'D)
 Prestidigitation! Amateur fucking
 sleight-of-hand. Like pulling jelly
 beans from little girl's ears. It's
 not there because he never dropped it
 in the envelope in the first place!

He slashes his furious eyes toward Bottoms.

WINTER (CONT'D)
 Notify Secret Service. Let them know
 Salt's coming at the President-Elect.

BOTTOMS
 But Sir ... Chasen was explicit ...

WINTER
 Screw Chasen! If he developed some
 unauthorized scenario during the Cold
 War and now it's come back to bite his
 ass, that's his problem. Alert them.

BOTTOMS
 Sir, if they didn't back down from
 Jerusalem for the President, they
 surely won't back down from Philly on
 the President-Elect - not for one man.

WINTER
 That's their business - but at least
 they'll have the intel they need to
 reinforce their detail and properly
 protect our President-to-be.
 (nods/pointedly)
 And we won't burn for Chasen.

ARMSTRONG
 But Sir, how do you know ... ?

Winter's eyes flutter at the politically naive young agent ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WINTER

I beg your pardon?

ARMSTRONG

Well - how do you know Salt's going for the President-Elect? And not really just trying to get back to see his family one last time ... ?

Winter's masked contempt mutates into a half-smile.

WINTER

Simple. Because - like everything else about Edwin A. Salt - his family is total and utter bullshit.

EXT. STREET CORNER - DAY

A big 18-wheeler turns a corner, SALT stepping off the back.

Checking both ways, he walks quickly away down the sidewalk. Pushing his hands into his jacket pockets ...

And remembering ...

WINTER PRE-LAP

Congratulations ...

INT. WINTER'S OFFICE - DAY - PAST

A YOUNGER, confused SALT faces a YOUNGER WINTER across his desk.

SALT

Congratulations? On what ... ?

WINTER

Your marriage.

He tosses a PHOTO across. Salt picks it up. A YOUNG, PRETTY FACE. *Future mother of his daughter.* He blinks up, surprised ...

WINTER (CONT'D)

Russian national, working locally at their embassy. We lost our last 'in' and she's perfect. Establish contact and work her till she's working for us. Whether she knows it or not.

Salt blinks back down at the woman - her bright expressive eyes. Winter yawns, leaning expansively back in his chair.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WINTER (CONT'D)

Agency'll foot the bill up to a grand.
Rest of the wedding's on you.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

Summer day. The sun-bathers are out. SALT, in shorts, scans.
Zeroing what he knew he'd find here.

Light-haired and pretty, a YOUNGER VERSION of his future wife
sits under a tree, reading *Through the Looking Glass* in RUSSIAN.

Salt wanders a casual path that passes him close by. He pauses.

SALT

Ah ... excuse me ...

Her flashing eyes glance up ...

SALT (CONT'D)

I'm so sorry - do you speak English?

She holds on him a mildly amused moment.

YOUNG WOMAN

Can I help you ... ?

Her accent is both lyrical and beautiful.

SALT

Oh - good. Well, listen, I'm sorry -
don't get alarmed - but you have a
huge spider in your hair...

Her eyes flutter momentarily - then restabilize on him.

YOUNG WOMAN

Thank you.

She makes no other move. An awkward beat ...

YOUNG WOMAN (CONT'D)

Is there something else?

SALT

Well I ... no ... I just thought you'd
like to know - that's all.

She nods.

YOUNG WOMAN

And this generally works for you? It
has a certain staged quality.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Salt blinks at her - then has to smile.

SALT

Lady, there's a spider in your hair.
I just thought you'd like to know it.

He starts to walk away ...

YOUNG WOMAN

Then take it out and show it to me.

He stops. Looking back into her challenging eyes ...

With a shrug, he returns and, kneeling, works for a moment to remove something from her hair which he starts to toss away ...

YOUNG WOMAN (CONT'D)

Wait - I thought you were going to show it to me.

Salt pauses, looking into her flashing green eyes.

SALT

You really don't believe me do you?
You really don't believe there was a spider in your hair.

YOUNG WOMAN

No, I don't.

He studies her a beat. Smiles.

SALT

If I open my hand - and there really is a spider in it - will you still go to dinner with me?

She cocks her head a curious look - has to smile too.

YOUNG WOMAN

I wasn't going to dinner with you in the first place.

SALT

Possibly not. But would you go anyway. Even if the spider turned out to be real?

She looks at him with a confounded sort of curiosity.

YOUNG WOMAN

... I ... don't know yet ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

She blinks down at his closed fist ...

YOUNG WOMAN (CONT'D)
What if there's no spider at all?

Salt just shrugs. She hesitates still ... looking at him ...

Then, voice almost a whisper ... nods ...

YOUNG WOMAN (CONT'D)
Okay . . .

He raises his closed hand ...

SALT
... now, it's a jumping spider ...

Extending it slowly toward her ...

SALT (CONT'D)
... so ...

Imperceptibly, she swallows. Takes her eyes from his hand ...

Putting them instead into his own, as his hand stops before her face...

His fingers bloom open ...

But still ...

She does not look. Until, finally ...

She *must*.

Empty.

She releases her held breath.

SALT (CONT'D)
Seven tonight okay?

She looks at him, surprised.

YOUNG WOMAN
But there was no spider.

SALT
I know.
(soft smile)
But you believed me.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Salt and KATJA sit at the bar, Kat out of breath from laughter.

KATJA

'I Am The Walrus'!? That's priceless.

SALT

Hey - it was like, a Top 10 hit. And, it's based on a poem from my favorite book. What's *your* favorite song.

KATJA

Not 'I Am The Walrus'. 'I am he as you are he as you are me, goo goo g'joob'!

She laughs brightly.

SALT

How did we get on this anyway. I thought we were talking about you.

KATJA

No, we were talking this shady import-export thing you're into and you quickly changed the subject.

SALT

Look, not everyone involved in import-export is a drug dealer. *Somebody's* got to be a real import/exporter.

KATJA

Yeah. Of drugs!

She raises a shot of VODKA, intertwining her arm with his.

SALT

Nas ... Nasda ... how's it go ...?

KATJA

"Nasdarovia"

SALT

Like I said - *cheers*.

They drink, Katja slamming her glass upside down on the bar.

KATJA

Worst trait?

Salt looks at her - surprised. Thinks. Draws a deep breath ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SALT

Sometimes ... I dunno ... I feel so ... fucking alone. In this world. And then I hate myself for being so weak.

KATJA

So which is the worst trait - the hating or the feeling?

He looks at her frankly.

SALT

Both.

They hold each other's eyes a moment.

SALT (CONT'D)

And you - what's yours?

She thinks a moment. Then nods.

KATJA

Trust. Because for me love and trust are the same. When I trust, I trust completely. And I've been burned.

He studies her. Fascinated by ... her way ...

SALT

Best trait ...

She smiles. Shrugs.

KATJA

You'll think this is incredibly unoriginal. Trust. Because no matter how badly I've been burned, I don't think I'll ever stop loving.

He continues looking at her a deep moment.

INT. BAR BATHROOM - NIGHT

Salt leans on the sink. LOOKING at himself in the MIRROR.

EXT. STREET CORNER - DAY - PRESENT

Back in the present, Salt blinks back to reality. He stands on a corner - observing a HOUSE in Reston, Virginia.

Glancing both directions, he starts to cross the street, but the appearance of a THICKSET MAN walking out his front door and down to the end of the driveway to light a cigarette ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FREEZES him. Salt hovers - one foot off the curb, one on ...

EXT. SALT'S HOUSE - DAY

The THICKSET MAN doesn't make Salt till he's 3 steps away and by then it's way too late. Larynx broken, he *drops* as Salt passes.

EXT. SALT'S FRONT DOOR - DAY

Salt minutely listens at his door. Pushes it gently open ...

INT. SALT'S HOUSE - DAY

WHAM! he is PISTOL-WHIPPED by a man standing just inside.

But instead of going down, SALT just goes for the guy. But a half-dozen more GUNS bring him up short.

His hands float ... there are quite a few people in his house. All look RUSSIAN and none look especially friendly.

RUSSIAN MAN

Respect his space - he'll kill you as soon as look at you - only faster.

Salt's eyes move - warily assessing each of them ...

SALT

Look ... I don't know who you are, or what you're doing in my house - and frankly I don't care - I just want to know where my wife and kid are ...

RUSSIAN MAN

(laughs)

Oh come on - you're not going to try to convince us you risked coming here just for your family, are you Chenkov?

Salt *double-takes* him. *Chenkov?*

RUSSIAN MAN (CONT'D)

You came for the same reason we did.

Salt blinks another instant. Then shakes his head. Has to laugh.

RUSSIAN MAN (CONT'D)

You think this is a joke, Chenkov?

SALT

(still chuckling)

Yeah. God's joke. On me.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SALT (CONT'D)
 (suddenly serious)
 Okay. You think my name's Chenkov...?

RUSSIAN MAN
 I *know* your name's Chenkov.

SALT
Why? What makes you so sure?

The Man smiles.

RUSSIAN MAN
 The simple fact I met a man in a diner
 two weeks ago who agreed to kill the
 future President of the United States.
 (nods)
 And you are that man.

All amusement drops out of Salt's face.

SALT
What ... ?

He looks - stark - to the other Russians staring down their guns
 at him ...

SALT (CONT'D)
 I swear to you - I've never this man
 in my life...

RUSSIAN MAN
 Where's KA-88!

SALT
 Goddamit, will you listen to me? I'm
 not who you think I am!

GUNS cock all around the room.

RUSSIAN MAN
 Your safe! Where is it?!?

SALT
 I don't have what you're looking for.

RUSSIAN MAN
 Bullshit Chenkov! *Where's your safe!?*

SALT
 I'm telling you, I'm not Chenkov and I
 don't even have a safe. There's no
 reason for me to lie to you ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ANOTHER MAN sticks his head in.

SECOND RUSSIAN MAN
I found the safe.

Salt sighs. *Fuck ...*

INT. BEDROOM WALK-IN CLOSET - DAY

They stand encircling the FLOOR SAFE that's been exposed.

RUSSIAN MAN
Open it.

Salt looks at him. The Russian cocks his weapon.

RUSSIAN MAN (CONT'D)
I really mean it.

Without much choice, Salt sighs, kneels and spins the dial.

RUSSIAN MAN (CONT'D)
When it's open, you don't reach in ...

The safe clicks open, door sliding away sideways.

RUSSIAN MAN (CONT'D)
Now step back - I said *step back*.

Standing, Salt takes a step back from the safe. The Russian points his gun into his face ...

THE MAN
10 seconds. Think your final thoughts.
Ten ... nine...

But to the surprise of all - SALT says:

SALT
Three ...

Startled glances. *What the ... ?*

SALT (CONT'D)
Two ...

He shrugs.

SALT (CONT'D)
One.

TSCHING! a REVOLVER spring-loaded in the safe JUMPS upward ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Rising to just about chest-level where Salt ...

... *snatches* it out of the air and within the same instant - has placed it forcefully against the nearest man's forehead.

SALT (CONT'D)

Do svidanie.

POW! he blows the man away and the 6X6 closet goes to hell in a firefight that churns it into a shit-storm of lead and plaster.

When it is over, ONLY ONE MAN stands amidst the settling dust.

SALT kneels back to the safe, quickly extracting a THIN MANILA ENVELOPE and stowing it inside his jacket. Starts to rise ...

But stops. Eye CAUGHT by something in the safe. He hesitates. Then, reaching back in - withdraws a FRAMED PHOTO ...

HE & KATJA - smiling on their wedding day ...

INT. ALTAR - RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH - DAY - PAST

POP! A flashbulb flashes. TWO SETS OF PRESSED LIPS part.

PRIEST

Katja and Edwin - you are now as one.

FLOWERS come showering down ...

EXT. RECEPTION - DAY

Audience clapping, Salt and Kat stand at their WEDDING CAKE. *Flipping* the CAKE-KNIFE in his hand with startling precision, Salt politely proffers it to a slightly-startled Kat. Smiles.

SALT

Cut the cake?

She holds a curious beat. Then, taking the knife, she places his hand over hers - allowing it to guide hers as the cameras flash and the first cut is made into the confection of their union.

EXT. RECEPTION - DAY

GLUMLY, Winter stands with SALT. Watching as KATJA, trim and beautiful, laughs her musical laugh with the wedding guests.

WINTER

Wouldn't you know it - the week you get married the Wall comes down.

He practically spits in his champagne.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WINTER (CONT'D)
 Fuck Glasnost. Fuck Perestroika.

He sighs - sympathetically massages Salt's shoulder.

WINTER (CONT'D)
 Stick it out a while anyway, Brother.
 Hopefully things'll turn our way again
 and she'll turn out handy after all.

He shrugs again and, seeing KATJA approaching laughing, TINY
 PIECE of WEDDING CAKE on a napkin in her hand, clears out.

KATJA
 Hyenas! Can you believe this is all
 they left us?? Who are these people??

Salt regards the tiny remaining fragment of cake. Smiles ...

SALT
 Nothing that can't be broken in two...

Taking it, he efficiently crumbles it into 2 equal pieces and
 STARTS to pop his half into his mouth when she *catches* his hand.

Holding his eyes, she gently pulls his piece forward. Taking
 it softly into her own mouth.

Then raises her own piece to his lips ...

He looks back a curious moment. Then - takes it into his mouth

INT. SALT'S HOUSE - DAY - *PRESENT*

Salt's eyes blink back to focus on the PHOTO of him and Katja.

Outside, the sounds of CARS screeching up.

EXT. FRONT DOOR - DAY

The SWAT team hits the door at full impact, batter-ramming it
 down as they stream in just ahead of WINTER and his people.

But as soon as they're in - Winter can smell it ...

Salt's gone.

INT. CLOSET - DAY

They stand over the BODIES littering the floor. A GROAN.
 Winter kneels, pulling the RUSSIAN MAN'S bloody face to his.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WINTER

Who are you??

The Russian coughs feebly. Winters shakes him - speaks RUSSIAN.

WINTER (CONT'D)

Who are you? I'll let you die in this
crappy closet! Who do you work for!

But the man dies anyway. Winter drops him with disgust.
BOTTOMS, rifling through the open floor-safe, looks up ...

BOTTOMS

If KA-88 was here it's gone now ...

Winter purses his lips - pissed. PEABODY clears his throat.

PEABODY

There are options ...

Everyone looks at him. Peabody nods ...

PEABODY (CONT'D)

If civilian casualty isn't a priority
issue and Salt's carrying his phone...
(nods)

We can target a surface-to-air missile
onto its signal if he turns it on.

(shrugs)

'Reach out and touch someone'.

Winter looks for a moment like he's almost *considering* this
insane proposal. BOTTOMS rises from searching the SAFE ...

BOTTOMS

Uh, Sir ...

He hands Winter a SET OF POLAROIDS he pulled from the safe.
Candid photos of a RUDDY HEAVY-SET MAN, HEAD blown half-away.

BOTTOMS (CONT'D)

If I'm not mistaken - that's Alexi
Fodorovich. The FSB Colonel Salt was
ordered to kill in '98...

Winter stares a rigid beat at the photos. Then snaps them back.

WINTER

Fabrications. I'd expect nothing less.

ARMSTRONG breathlessly arrives - clutching a DOCUMENT.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ARMSTRONG

From a locked drawer in his desk ...

Looks uneasy as his boss takes and examines it.

ARMSTRONG (CONT'D)

A CIA psychological profile...

(hesitates)

Yours Sir ...

Winter stares at the document - hands trembling. Very abruptly, he crumples it, pockets it, and heads wordlessly for the door.

BOTTOMS

But Sir ...

Winter pauses hovering in the doorway - but does not look back. Nervous, Bottoms apologetically gestures with the POLAROIDs ...

BOTTOMS (CONT'D)

Why would Chenkov fabricate evidence
of a kill and not show the Bureau... ?

It is a beat before Winter turns. But when he does, in his eye is the very dangerous look of a man mocked and played the fool.

WINTER

Maybe because he wasn't asked. Maybe
because, at the time, we trusted him.

He steps back in - face moving aggressively close to Bottoms'.

WINTER (CONT'D)

A defecting Russian spy told us an
unpleasant truth today. You resist
that truth, Bottoms, because you still
believe in humanity and you yourself
are still a good person at heart. What
you're failing to take into account -
is that *he* is not. That he is a
inveterate and remorseless liar. Would
you like to know how I'm so sure?

He leans his face closer to the other man.

WINTER (CONT'D)

Because he's spent the last 15 years
lying for *me*.

INTERROGATOR PRE-LAP

Once more - you're a spy for the
United States, yes, Mr. 'Freeman'...

INT. TURKISH INTERROGATION ROOM - PAST

Salt GRITS HIS TEETH as ELECTRICITY *surges* through his body.
Slumping when it relents - HANGING spread-eagled by 4 chains.

His TURKISH INTERROGATOR circling ...

SALT

(panting)

I swear to you ... I swear to God on
everything holy, I swear on the lives
of my fucking children! I'm not who
you keep saying I am. I'm a business
man from California, I've got a wife,
three kids, a dog, a fucking goldfish.

INTERROGATOR

Again the children's names please?

SALT

Alexander, Bobby, Lori; my wife's name
is Carol - what do you want me to say!
I'll say it; I'll say anything ...
(breaking down/weeping)

I just want to get back to my family.

Without prompting, the TECHNICIAN at the GENERATOR throws the
switch, sending another huge surge of ELECTRICITY through Salt.

Arching his body, teeth grinding audibly - until it stops again.

SALT (CONT'D)

(deranged/weeping)

Carol ... Carol ... baby ...

INTERROGATOR

This can go on every day for years.

I won't be here, of course ...

(technician)

But he will. Costing less even than
the electricity he sleepily uses
electrocuting you day in and day out.

He lifts Salt's chin with his riding crop.

INTERROGATOR (CONT'D)

Won't you just tell me who you really
are - Mr.'Freeman'?

EXT. TURKISH PRISON YARD - DAY

Bitter cold. Haggard, SALT stares at mountains visible thru the
rusting fence. A few other prisoners shuffle round the yard ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

One stops next to him - speaks in Turkish.

PRISONER
Cigarette?

Salt looks at him. Shakes his head.

SALT
Sorry. Don't speak Turkish.

The Prisoner nods - lights one of his own, exhales in ENGLISH.

PRISONER
Beautiful this time of year ...

Salt glances at him again - surprised.

PRISONER (CONT'D)
Not to worry. I'm a relation. Distant.
But 'Family' nonetheless ...

Salt watches him cautiously. The other man's voice lowers.

PRISONER (CONT'D)
Our 'Family' asked that I reinforce
your awareness that, because this
country has certain strategic value to
Russia, it is of utmost gravity she...
(a glance round)
... not discover we may be cultivating
our own competitive presence here...

Salt's gaze slackens.

PRISONER (CONT'D)
And that - no matter how strenuous it
may become for you in this place ...

He nods, handing Salt a CIGARETTE.

PRISONER (CONT'D)
You have your 'Family's total support.

The prisoner shuffles off. Salt watches him go for a moment.
Then CRUSHES the cigarette in his hand.

Into his palm rolls a GLASS CAPSULE. Marked *CYANIDE*.

INT. DARK TURKISH PRISON CELL - DAY - *PAST*

Bruised. Filthy. Exhausted. SALT squats hunched against a wall.
In a sliver of LIGHT that somehow lost its way into this hell...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He *contemplates* the tiny GLASS CAPSULE in his fingers...

Freedom ...

ABRUPTLY, the heavy door swings open. His TURKISH INTERROGATOR standing framed in the doorway, riding crop tapping at his side.

He looks *pissed*.

INT. PRISON EXIT - TURKEY - DAY

When the buzzer sounds a very worn, very RELIEVED-looking SALT walks through the door to freedom, met by an AMERICAN DIPLOMAT.

SALT

Friend, I thought it was the Midnite Express or Vitamin C for me for sure. I don't know how you did it but...

AMERICAN DIPLOMAT

We didn't.

Salt blinks - confused. The Diplomat steps aside, nodding ...

AMERICAN DIPLOMAT (CONT'D)

She did.

Allowing Salt to see - KATJA - standing back at the door. Face glowing, tears in her eyes.

Stunned, Salt's eyes snap back. The Diplomat lowers his voice.

AMERICAN DIPLOMAT (CONT'D)

Don't worry. Your cover's intact. As far as she knows, Turkey *mistook* you for an American businessman named 'Freeman' who had Russian mob ties.

SALT

But how... did she ... ?

AMERICAN DIPLOMAT

Brass balls. 3 phones worn out on her calls. No joke. My poor secretary's got post-traumatic stress now.

(shakes head)

Once she found out where you were, it wasn't up to us anymore. Heaven and earth were gonna get moved or she was gonna freakin' invade Turkey herself.

He nods to SALT'S INTERROGATOR who stands by watching intently.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AMERICAN CONSUL

I suggest we get moving before Allah
Akbar here changes his mind ...

INT. CAR - DAY

In the back of the U.S. Embassy car, Katja takes Salt's hand tightly in her own as Ankara rolls by.

SALT

Kat ... I ...

But she just squeezes his hand - their WEDDING RINGS glittering side-by-side in their tangled fingers ...

KATJA

Don't say anything.

Shakes her head ...

KATJA (CONT'D)

I just want to look at you ...

He looks back. Trying to grasp - the dragons stirring within ...

PRE-LAP VOICE

Right this way, Mr. Walken ...

INT. BANK - DAY - PRESENT

Salt blinks back to reality. A smiling BANK MANAGER stands in front of him, handing him back A PASSPORT. Salt takes it ...

SALT

Thank you. It's 'Walker'.

BANK MANAGER

So sorry. Right this way, Mr. Walker.

INT. BANK PRIVACY CUBICLE - DAY

Salt opens a SAFE DEPOSIT BOX. Inside, only two items ...

A GOLDEN WEDDING RING ...

And a BRASS LOCKER KEY.

Pocketing them both, he walks out.

EXT. BANK - DAY

But as he exits ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WHAM! a HALF DOZEN BLACK CARS slam sideways into the curb.

Spilling guns and men like a falling shelf of books

EXT. SIDEWALKS - DAY

PINBALLING through the crowd - SALT RUNS.

INT. ALLEY - DAY

Ducks into an alley - CARS roaring at him from both directions.

Darts quickly through a doorway.

INT. STAIRWELL - DAY

Racing upwards, taking steps three at a time.

INT. RENOVATION FLOOR - DAY

Bursting breathless out of the stairwell into an empty floor undergoing extensive renovation.

WHAM! his pursuers explode through behind him, *lighting* up the exposed concrete and drywall with small-arms fire as Salt ...

INT. RENOVATION ROOM - DAY

Dodges through the next doorway into a a DEAD-END ROOM. Outer walls gone - sprawling city exposed 27 stories below.

End of the line. Behind - he can hear them COMING.

He *kicks* open the final door - a SMALL UTILITY ROOM.

INT. UTILITY CLOSET

A narrow closet four feet wide - ten tall. HEARING ...

His pursuers slamming into the room behind, he ...

Swings himself upward *just* as the walls around him ERUPT in an implosion of plaster ...

Wedging himself high up between the walls as the bullets chew through them below with the flash and explosion of fire.

Devouring and destroying everything in the space beneath ...

Tornado of lead RISING higher and higher up the wall until...

Fire and bullets flash mere millimeters beneath his face

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Burning his eye-lashes burn away.

He closes those eyes ...

And - suddenly - it stops.

His eyes pop back open - ears pricking. Whispering and the *distinctive sound of reloading* coming from the next room ...

Dropping down he quickly ...

INT. RENOVATION ROOM - DAY

Steps, hands floating, into the next room, where *click* PEABODY and 3 AGENTS - just finishing reloading - glance sharply up.

SALT

Say, could we please not tell my wife about these little meetings of ours?

PEABODY just smiles, shakes his head, and sticking his gun under an arm, gets a cigarette out with his good hand.

PEABODY

I'm glad you're enjoying your joke Salt. Laugh while the laughing's good.

SALT

Come on, Peabody. I'm sorry about your arm, but for Christ's sake, you don't really think I'm a Russian spy do you?

PEABODY

Why shouldn't I?

SALT

(quietly)

Maybe because Winter *told* you I'm not.

The other three Agents exchange a startled glance. Peabody has to chuckle. Shaking his head again, he lights the cigarette ...

PEABODY

Divide and conquer - that it Salt?

Salt's jaw tightens.

SALT

Look - kill me, disappear me; I don't care. It's the job; I'm prepared. But for crissakes, my wife and kid don't know what I really do.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SALT (CONT'D)

I just don't come home one day? It'll destroy them. All I want - is to say goodbye.

PEABODY

How touching. But from what we could tell - Salt - your wife and kid don't even live in that crap house with you.

Salt's lips tighten. Saying nothing. Peabody raises his gun. As do the THREE OTHER widely-separated Agents ...

SALT

Just let me finish my business. Then you can do whatever you want to me.

PEABODY

Salt - I'm already going to do whatever I want to you.

Salt glances at the cold faces around the room ...

The writing's on the wall. They're going to kill him. He shrugs, sighs and nods at Peabody's CIGARETTE ...

SALT

Last drag then? For the condemned?

Peabody just breathes SMOKE into Salt's face with a *'yeah, like I'm gonna fall for that'* look. Salt coughs.

PEABODY

Here's what's going to happen. I'm going to count to five - and then I'm going to pull this trigger. If you're Salt, and you're really just trying to get back to see your family one last time - you'll die. Because Salt was never as fast as Peabody ...

He smiles faintly.

PEABODY (CONT'D)

But if you are fast enough to get this gun away from me - then you're Chenkov and you're a traitor on your way to kill the President-Elect - which pays you out one bonus milli-second of life before my colleagues here ...

He nods to the OTHER THREE AGENTS with guns on Salt ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PEABODY (CONT'D)
... put you under.

A cold smile travels round the room.

PEABODY (CONT'D)
So let's see - who you really are ...

Four clicks as four guns cock. Peabody ... leveling his revolver three inches from Salt's head - starts his count.

PEABODY (CONT'D)
O...

PAPAPOW! the other 3 men around the room drop dead.

Blinking, Peabody looks from their sprawled bodies, to his *astonishingly empty hand* ...

To SALT - whom he sees, in addition to HOLDING HIS GUN, is also now also smoking his CIGARETTE. Salt blows smoke into his face.

SALT
The woods are lovely, dark and deep...

EXT. BUILDING DAY - DAY

A silently screaming man comes flying out of the 27th floor.

The man is not Edwin A. Salt.

INT. 27TH FLOOR - DAY

HE ... stands in the cold wind blowing through the open walls. Looking down at the HANDS that just threw a man to his death.

They are trembling.

INT. DELIVERY ROOM - DAY - PAST

Into those same trembling hands is placed a NEWBORN child.

HIS DAUGHTER NADJA, less than a minute old, pink and silent.

Salt stares into the tiny wondrous face ...

Juggernauts he never knew - stirring within him ...

Placing his daughter back into the hands of the nurse, he goes to the bedside of KATJA - exhausted from her titanic battle with the forces of nothingness to secure the victory of life.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Kneeling at her bedside like a knight before his queen, he takes her pallid hand and, placing it to his head ... closes his eyes.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK PLAYGROUND - DAY - PAST

Not far from where they first met - Salt and Katja sit watching their 4 YEAR-OLD DAUGHTER play laughing with the other children.

NADJA, pink-cheeked, tow-headed and beautiful, frolics happily with the other children in the playground.

Asian, Jewish, Arabic, Hispanic, Caucasian, Black ...

A faraway look in her eyes, Katja watches the greatest social experiment in the history of mankind - AMERICA.

Looks to her husband. Who has been watching her watch it.

KATJA

This is a great country you have, Ed.

Salt looks back at her - a million parts moving behind his eyes. Reaching, he takes her hand ...

SALT

Yes. It is.

INT. MUSEUM - DAY - PAST

SALT, KATJA and NADJA, atop Salt's shoulders, stand before *The Farewell of Telemachus and Eucharis* - David's tender portrait of two young lovers and their wordless final embrace.

Telemachus looks frankly out from the canvas while Eucharis rests her cheek on her lover's shoulder, trying to capture into her heart for the rest of all time this final moment.

KATJA

He reminds me of you ...

Salt looks curiously at his wife.

SALT

He doesn't look anything like me ...

She just smiles back at him - and simply says ...

KATJA

I know. But she loves him.

He blinks back - into her open, honest gaze.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WINTER'S VOICE PRE-LAP
36 years old. 30 pounds overweight,
10 by Russian standards. Unmarried;
boyfriend; nothing serious. Foreman at
the gas refinery outside Rostov...

INT. WINTER'S OFFICE - DAY - PAST

SALT - at Winter's desk - stares at surveillance PHOTOS of the
RUSSIAN WOMAN - attractively buxom.

WINTER
Make contact, develop, seduce and get
the tolerance specs for that plant.

Salt hesitates - continuing to stare at the photo ...

WINTER (CONT'D)
What?

Salt equivocates ...

SALT
I don't know - it's just ...

WINTER
It's nothing you haven't done plenty a
dozen times before Salt ...

SALT
Yes ... I ... I'm aware of that. But
... aren't I getting a little long in
the tooth for this sort of thing ... ?

WINTER
What can I tell you? Our analysis
indicates women prefer mid to late
30's. Reminds them of their fathers or
some psycho-neurotic madness - lowered
sex-drive; enhanced stability ...

But still, Salt struggles.

SALT
Isn't there someone else? Peabody,
Bottoms, Armstrong ...

WINTER
Salt - it's you. They have the Russian
proficiency, but face it - for some
unfathomable reason - women dig you.

(beat)
You're with me, right?
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WINTER (CONT'D)
 (finding his eyes)
 Country still needs you, partner.

Salt looks back at him - eyes someplace else.

VOICE PRE-LAP
 Your ticket, Sir ...

EXT. BUS STATION - NIGHT - *PRESENT*

SALT blinks at the BUS DRIVER, standing outside a GREYHOUND BUS.

BUS DRIVER
 Ticket? No tickee, no ridee? Hello?

Shaking it off, Salt hands him his TICKET and boards the bus.

Whose DESTINATION HEADING reads ...

PHILADELPHIA.

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING - PAST

SALT lies on the bed, snoring loudly. KAT and NADJA - now EIGHT - stand at the bedside, observing and assessing.

NADJA
 I can see up his nose.

KATJA
 Hush now - your poor father just got
 back from a long business trip ...

She offers Nadja her choice from various items of MAKE-UP.

KATJA (CONT'D)
 How we'd hate to wake him ...

Nadja chooses her weapons and the two quietly go to work.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING - PAST

SALT sits reading the morning paper, oblivious that he does so in FULL MAKE-UP - resembling the unholy offspring of a circus clown and a hirsute transvestite.

He periodically glances over the top of the paper to Katja and Nadja who appear to be doing everything in their power to contain internal explosions of laughter. Finally, he gives up.

SALT
 Okay - *what* ... ?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATJA
 What? Huh? What what?
 (shrugs/Nad)
 Nad? Do you know what?

Bursting inside, the girl only manages a quick head-shake.

SALT
 Then why do you 2 keep staring at me?

KATJA
 Us? Staring? Well - that would be
 because we ... love you? Right Nad?

They look at each other. *Burst* out laughing.

Salt blinks at them. Then, setting down the paper, he stalks off to the bathroom. Katja and Nadja exchange a glance.

KATJA (CONT'D)
 We really should be going

INT. HOUSE - MORNING - PAST

Salt roaring playfully, Nadja and Katja run for their lives.

SALT
 Oh you've done it now. You've pushed a
 mild-mannered father over the edge!

KATJA
 (laughing)
Run Nadie, run!

INT. CLOSET - MORNING - PAST

Katja and Nadja skid into a closet, hiding behind SALT'S COAT.

Blood pounding in their ears, they hold their breath, listening.

Katja's fingers becoming aware ...

Of a SEALED LETTER - peeking from the pocket her hands rests on.

Left by some anonymous sender ...

For the owner of the coat to find after fond farewells ...

Intuitive weight of destiny descending upon her, she draws the letter out. And turns it over - cold fist closing within ...

As she sees ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

In a FEMININE SCRIPT. The Russian words ...

My Love ...

WINTER PRE-LAP

Still think the bastard's just trying
to get back to see his wife and kid??

INT. ARMSTRONG'S OFFICE - DAY - PRESENT

Winter enters, *smacking* PHOTOCOPIES down onto Armstrong's desk.

WINTER

Not only was his whole marriage a sham
but now it turns out he's not even
fucking *married* anymore. He'd been
keeping it from us. His wife filed
for legal separation 6 months ago and
all that crap about his rich family
life and his daughter's birthday party
was just that - *bullshit*.

INT. SALT & KATJA'S HOME - MORNING - PAST

Salt stands by, crushed, as Katja, LETTER open in her hand,
alternates between rage and tears.

KATJA

How could you do it?! How could you
do this to me!?

She points to Nadja, standing terrified in the doorway.

KATJA (CONT'D)

To us!

SALT

Baby, I swear I don't know what ...

KATJA

Oh *horseshit!* Stop *lying*. It's all
right here, Edwin. All of it! Every
gory fucking little disgusting det...

She suddenly sits onto the bed, grasping her head ...

KATJA (CONT'D)

I feel sick . . . sick . . .

Salt places an uncertain hand on her back ...

SALT

Baby ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Swatting him away, she is suddenly back up again.

KATJA

Get the fuck away from me! Don't touch me. Do not touch me you mother fucker!

She snaps the letter in his face.

KATJA (CONT'D)

You told her your name was Yuri! That you were Russian??? What the fuck is wrong with you!?! Who are you?? I thought I knew you! I *trusted* you ...

And suddenly, it all goes out of her again. She wilts down to the floor, arms wrapped round her body.

KATJA (CONT'D)

I trusted you ... I trusted you ...

Salt feels like dying.

INT. CIA CORRIDORS - DAY - PRESENT

WINTER moves at speed just ahead of Bottoms and Armstrong.

WINTER

Shake my hand - Chasen's being run up a pole and I've been put in charge.

Dubiously, Bottoms and Armstrong shake the proffered hand.

WINTER (CONT'D)

(practically buoyant)

Gentlemen - the CIA's Division of Russian Affairs is officially *back*.

VOICE PRE-LAP

\$21.65 . . . \$21.65 ...

INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY - PRESENT

Salt blinks at the CHECKOUT GIRL who nods to the BIG BOX OF MATCHES, FOLDING BUCK KNIFE and BALL OF TWINE between them.

CHECKOUT GIRL

\$21.65. People are waiting ...

Shaking it off, Salt nods, pays, takes his items and heads out.

EXT. SUPERMARKET - DAY - PRESENT

He stops beside the 25 cent mechanical horse. A LIGHT RAIN is falling. *The store PARKING LOT is filled with ARMED RUSSIANS.*

WHO - WITHOUT REGARD for the store behind - open fire.

Behind Salt - the great panes of glass - begin dropping ...

A WOMAN carrying a SMALL CHILD spirals downward - SHOT ...

A breath ...

Salt steps down off the curb...

EXT. SUPERMARKET - DAY - PAST

... following KATJA, ignoring him as she carries a bag of groceries towards her car.

SALT

Kat, please, I'm begging you - don't do this ...

She just continues straight ahead.

SALT (CONT'D)

What does it solve?? How does it make anything better?

He gets in front of her.

SALT (CONT'D)

Please Kat, I ...

He searches, trying to grasp what he himself is feeling. Suddenly, all at once - it hits him. He looks at her ...

SALT (CONT'D)

Kat, I'm scared.

She looks back - surprised by the confession. But shakes it off.

KATJA

Scared of what Ed? Being alone?
Weren't you alone when you met me ...?

She cradles the grocery bag as she opens her trunk.

KATJA (CONT'D)

You can do it again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Shutting the trunk, she heads for the driver's side. Salt feels everything going into a freefall panic.

SALT

Kat wait - listen - I got this great idea for Nadie's birthday ...

But she only pauses in the door of her car ...

KATJA

Just one thing. Was the spider in her hair real, Ed?

Then gets in and drives off, leaving him there ...

EXT. SUPERMARKET PARKING LOT - DAY - PRESENT

... standing in the middle of the parking lot. Behind, between him and the store, the remains of a WAR-ZONE ...

A dozen dead Russian operatives sprawled behind ...

In Salt's hands, TWO EMPTY, SMOKING GUNS ...

He tosses them on the hood of a car - sizzling in rain water.

EXT. HELIPAD - DAY - PRESENT

Winter yells as he, Bottoms and Armstrong fight their way through the rain and rotorwash to the waiting CHOPPER.

WINTER

I've been greenlit to use all force to stop Chenkov. Now that prick's gonna learn firsthand what they mean when they say 'wrath of God'.

He nods at them from the bottom of the chopper's steps.

WINTER (CONT'D)

Only my wrath's made of bullets.

INT. MACDONALDS - DAY - PAST

Salt sits across from Katja. Both silent. Finally ...

SALT

I wouldn't have blamed you. If you hadn't come ...

She looks like she almost didn't.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SALT (CONT'D)

I know it's over. I know I fucked up.
I know there's no going back. But I...
(searches)
I had to be honest finally.

She watches him - unreadable.

SALT (CONT'D)

I want - need to - tell you what I do.
(a hesitation)
What I really do ...

She sits. Silent. He shakes his head, eyes glistening.

SALT (CONT'D)

I'm an Intelligence Officer, Kat.

Her face doesn't change. But, invisibly, she swallows.

KATJA

What do you .. mean ...

SALT

I work for an Intelligence Agency.

She struggles - not wanting to engage - but ...

KATJA

Intelligence Agency ... ? What does
that ... mean...?

Salt looks back at her a long time. Finally, he nods.

SALT

My name is Eugene Porovich Chenkov.
I'm a Russian spy.

INT. PHILADELPHIA BUS STATION - DAY - PRESENT

Salt threads through the crowd to a LOCKER which he opens with
the KEY he retrieved from the safe-deposit box ...

Removing a LONG BRIEFCASE and quickly walking away.

INT. MEN'S BUS STATION RESTROOM - PRESENT

Salt enters, heading purposefully into the first stall ...

SALT (V.O.)

After the Soviet Union collapsed I
heard from my handlers less and less.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SALT (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Then, for over ten years, there was no contact at all. Until two weeks ago...

He opens the case. Inside, a RIFLE with a SNIPER'S SCOPE gleams.

SALT (V.O.) (CONT'D)

A cell inside the Kremlin discovered the existence of two things long-forgot: a CIA document called KA-88...
(nods)
... and me.

His fingers run down the rifle's silky length ...

SALT (V.O.) (CONT'D)

They informed me I was reactivated ...
(a nod)
And that if I didn't do exactly as they said, they'd expose me. And then go after the only two things I care about in this world.

He snaps the case closed, bundles it under his arm and exits.

INT. CIA JET - DAY

Armstrong hangs up the jet-phone. He looks to Winter - pale.

ARMSTRONG

Sir - it appears you were right ...
(nods)
Chenkov was spotted at the bus station in Philadelphia.

EXT. PENNSYLVANIA CONVENTION CENTER - DAY

Choppers are airborne over the heart of downtown Philadelphia. Streets and parking lots surrounding the massive complex jammed with civilians and traffic police.

NEWS CREWS broadcast out of the parking lot.

NEWSCASTER

... of the first appearances for the President-Elect since the primary ...

A SMALL ARMY of SECRET SERVICE coordinates in the parking lots, their black cars highly visible along with the vans housing COMMUNICATIONS equipment and ANTI-AIRCRAFT defenses.

INT. FRONT ENTRANCES - CONVENTION CENTER - DAY

By-passing the mass of civilians waiting to be meticulously searched with metal detectors at the front entrances, WINTER, enters at speed. Bottoms and Armstrong racing to keep up ...

ARMSTRONG

Sir, we've got every available on it, but Russian names are transliterations from Cyrillic. There's literally 100's of spellings she could be using ...

WINTER

Goddamit, I don't want excuses - I want Chenkov's fucking ex-wife.

EXT. LOADING DOCK - DAY

The docks are busy with caterers organizing final details - each entrance manned by a local Philly police officer.

At the lift entrance a POLICE OFFICER nursing a cup of coffee...

NOTICES a MAN - who has materialized out of literally nowhere - coming at him fast in an overcoat and carrying a longish case.

POLICE OFFICER

Hey - you can't come through here ...

But the man doesn't slow. DROPPING his coffee, the cop *reaches* for his gun but SALT *knocks* it away and ...

STRIPS the man's handcuffs as he ducks under, snapping one end round a wrist and twisting the man into a figure-8 with the *POP!* of a dislocating shoulder ...

As he SNAP!s the cuff around the man's ankle. A PUNCH to the side of the neck puts the man into black unconsciousness.

INT. CONVENTION CENTER - DAY

WINTER descends powerfully upon the Secret Service SUPERVISOR IN CHARGE amidst the chaos of the massive crowd.

WINTER

(flashing I.D.)
Is he on the floor?

SECRET SERVICE SECURITY SUPERVISOR

Just got there. He'll be shaking hands with the Mayor and staff then moving up to the podium for his speech ...

INT. CONVENTION CENTER STAGING AREA ELEVATOR - DAY

The radio in the ear of the SECRET SERVICE AGENT guarding the elevator from the staging docks, crackles ...

RADIO

A-29 ...

SECRET SERVICE AGENT

A-29. Omega Code - 3 dash 38 Tango.

RADIO

Read that 29. Back to you in 60.

The ELEVATOR behind him OPENS. The Agent turns. Nothing. He shrugs, turning back - and SALT *puts* him OUT with a flat strike.

INT. CONVENTION CENTER - DAY

WINTER, looks up - surveying the BLACK GLASS BUBBLES that dot the ceiling - housing the Center's SECURITY CAMERAS.

WINTER

What's the detail?

SECURITY SUPERVISOR

Quadrupled. Every available reserve called up. They're on a revolving code that sounds off every 60 seconds.

INT. 6TH FLOOR - CONVENTION CENTER - DAY

The SECRET SERVICE AGENT on guard here turns to see SALT coming at him down the corridor, case in hand - *fast*.

He *goes* for his gun, but Salt's faster, *putting* it into the air.

BREAKING THE MAN'S NECK with the same hand. CATCHING his RADIO HEADSET and putting it on before his body even hits the ground.

RADIO

A-34 - sound off.

SALT

A-34. Alpha Code 16 - 8 dash 59 Zebra.

RADIO

Check that 34 - back in 60.

He ducks through the now-unguarded door of the REHEARSAL HALL.

INT. CONVENTION CENTER FLOOR - DAY

Winter - jaw working as he studies the crowd - shakes his head.

WINTER

This so-called 'revolving code' ...

The Secret Service Super looks over at him ...

INT. CONVENTION CENTER REHEARSAL ROOM - DAY

SALT moves quickly into the empty, mirrored REHEARSAL HALL, assembling the RIFLE with machine-accuracy as he goes ...

INT. CONVENTION CENTER FLOOR - DAY

Winter's eyes are sharp back into the Secret Service Super's ...

WINTER

What makes you think any determined effort to kill the future leader of this nation wouldn't have already broken that code?

The Supervisor blinks at him. Abruptly, his RADIO crackles.

RADIO

PC-21.

SUPERVISOR

Go PC-21.

RADIO

Two M.I.A on the loading docks. I can't raise them.

INT. CONVENTION CENTER REHEARSAL ROOM - DAY

SALT - 2 LASER DISTANCE MEASURERS held together between his fingers at 90 degrees, beams lancing the walls south and west...

WALKS quickly towards a MIRRORED WALL, eyes sharply monitoring the rapidly changing numbers on the DIGITAL READ-OUTS until ...

He abruptly STOPS, snapping out a GREASE-PENCIL and ...

Slashes an 'X' at the precise point on the mirror ...

INT. LOADING DOCKS ELEVATOR - DAY

WINTER and the others skid to the OPEN ELEVATOR where the 1st Secret Service agent lies UNCONSCIOUS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Winter *spins* to the Secret Service Team Lead.

WINTER

He's in!! High vantage points! He'll be somewhere overlooking the floor!

SECURITY SUPERVISOR

Not possible! I've got maximum detail in every room with line-of-sight!

WINTER

Are you positive!? Every room??

SECURITY SUPERVISOR

Every room with a window, yes!

Winter stares at him a racing, dawning beat ...

WINTER

You fucking *idiot!*

INT. CONVENTION CENTER REHEARSAL ROOM - DAY

Flicking up an ANTENNAE on the RIFLE'S BIG ELECTRONIC SCOPE, Salt thrusts his eye into it ...

A VIDEO-SCREEN displaying a DIRECT RADIO-TAP of the Convention Center's SURVEILLANCE CAMERA SYSTEM ...

CAMERA ANGLE that corresponds to his precise position ...

PRESIDENT-ELECT's ENTOURAGE tightly knotted in grainy black and white amidst a heavy phalanx of Secret Service inside his scope.

Wrapping the rifle's strap round his hand ...

Salt steadies the barrel ...

And aims it directly at the X on the mirror.

INT. STAIRWELL - DAY

WINTER and the Secret Service go POUNDING up the stairs.

INT. CONVENTION CENTER REHEARSAL ROOM - DAY

SALT CALIBRATES on the crosshairs in his scope-screen ...

Then pans off - across the crowd ...

To the smiling, hand-shaking ...

PRESIDENT-ELECT.

INT. 6TH FLOOR - DAY

The stairwell door flies open, WINTER and the others skidding to a breathless halt at the SIGHT at the far end off the corridor.

SECURITY SUPERVISOR

My god . . .

The lone 2ND SECRET SERVICE AGENT guarding the door to the Rehearsal Hall lies DEAD. Neck broken ...

INT. CONVENTION CENTER REHEARSAL ROOM - DAY

Click! SALT disengages the rifle's safety and ...

Finger wrapping the trigger ...

His heartbeat drops...

thump . . . thump thump thump ...

INT. 6TH FLOOR - DAY

WINTER *launches* ...

WINTER

Go!

Leading the *charge* for the door at far end of the corridor.

INT. CONVENTION CENTER REHEARSAL ROOM - DAY

Beyond which, SALT ...

click!

Pulls the trigger.

KA-POW! - fire spits out the gun's flash-suppressor, mirror in front of him *spiderwebbing* as the bullet smashes through ...

And, in his VIDEO-SCOPE ...

The PRESIDENT-ELECT drops like a stone and all goes into chaos.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

The RINGING GUNSHOT and crowd's distant eruption bring Winter and the others sharply up short at body of the dead agent ...

WINTER

Christ ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They *go* - hitting the door ...

INT. CONVENTION CENTER REHEARSAL ROOM - DAY

BURSTING into the long room. Immediately spotting the RIFLE, left leaning against the catastrophically cracked mirror.

But the SPY himself - *is gone*.

WINTER

Block it off! Seal everything! Don't let him get out of here!

Pale, he picks up the rifle - whose sophisticated camera radio-tap SCOPE gives a black and white window down onto the floor where a SECRET SERVICE MEDIVAC TEAM is deploying rapidly in.

WINTER (CONT'D)

(shellshocked)

... my god ... he really did it ...

SECURITY SUPERVISOR'S VOICE

... but ... I don't understand ... ?

They all look - he is kneeling at the door next to the BODY of the 2nd Secret Service Agent whose neck Salt snapped ...

SECURITY SUPERVISOR

This ... this is one of the last-minute reserves we called up ...

He raises from the dead man's jacket, what looks for all the world ... *like a RADIO DETONATOR*.

BOTTOMS

Sir!

Winter turns. Bottoms looks off his 2-way RADIO.

BOTTOMS (CONT'D)

He missed! The Elect's okay. Salt hit one of his secret service personnel.

ARMSTRONG

And Sir ... christ ... *look* ...

He's staring over Winter's shoulder at the SCREEN on the rifle's BIG SCOPE. Reaching, he twists - *zooming* the scope's image-feed.

On the convention floor, Paramedics have just opened up the HEAD-SHOT secret service agent's jacket ...

Revealing a chest STRAPPED WITH HIGH-EXPLOSIVES.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

If one didn't know better, one might think ...

That Eugene Porovich Chenkov

a.k.a. Edwin A. Salt ...

Had just saved the life of our next United States President.

EXT. DINER - DAY - PAST

Salt is sitting at the bar when A MAN - now dead and familiar as the same RUSSIAN MAN whom he found waiting for him in his house in Virginia with his thugs - takes the seat next to him.

RUSSIAN MAN

Have you gotten KA-88 yet?

Salt just gives an irritated look.

SALT

How can I steal something that doesn't exist? It was disinformation. Invented by the CIA to keep KGB off-balance.

The Russian smiles a slight smile.

RUSSIAN MAN

It might interest you to know - we've made another friend inside Langely. And that's not what he tells us.

SALT

Well, I'd post-date the check if I were you because if your new friend's a spy and his lips were moving when he did - he was lying.

RUSSIAN MAN

Perhaps. Except this spy, who has seen what you claim doesn't exist, has - as an act of faith - outlined for us its first and most difficult step ...

(a smile)

And offered to do what you would not.

Steal it. Salt's own smile fades.

RUSSIAN MAN (CONT'D)

Don't feel left out, Chenkov. We'll still need an individual equal to the challenge of setting it all in motion by executing this critical first step.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Salt only stares as the Russian slides a PIECE OF PAPER over.

RUSSIAN MAN (CONT'D)

A rifle is in the location noted.

Salt stares at it, microscopically trembling in his hand.

SALT

If it's so critical, why use me?
Surely you've got a back-up in place.

RUSSIAN MAN

A back-up's just that, Chenkov - a
back-up.

(nods)

If you're not in Philadelphia at the
time and place indicated we'll expose
you. And then we'll find and kill the
things in this world you love most.

Salt swallows invisibly. Finally, he nods and stands ...

SALT

I'll be there.

EXT. DINER - DAY

The Russian trails Salt out onto the sidewalk.

RUSSIAN MAN

Chenkov ...

Salt turns.

RUSSIAN MAN (CONT'D)

If you betray us - we can take you out
with a single man.

Salt just turns and continues walking away.

The Russian exchanges a glance with 2 OTHER MEN who join him on
the sidewalk. One - now dead - we remember as OLEG TAKTAROFF.

The other is THEODORE WINTER.

INT. PENNSYLVANIA CONVENTION CENTER - DAY - PRESENT

The doors are all closed down. The mob of detained civilians
stands massed restlessly - being searched and questioned.

WINTER, CIA SUPER at his side, heads towards the elevators ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CIA SECURITY SUPERVISOR
The two dead were Secret Service
reserves we called up when we got
notification of a possible attempt ...

He shakes his head.

CIA SECURITY SUPERVISOR
What I can't wrap my head around is -
if we hadn't been notified of an
attempt, they'd've never been called
up in the first place ...

WINTER
Back-ups. Who knows how deep. Salt was
plainly the primary. He just missed
and hit the back-up plan.

BOTTOMS falls into step with them.

BOTTOMS
Sir? A word?

INT. ELEVATOR

In the elevator's privacy, Bottoms shows a DOCUMENT his way.

BOTTOMS
Found in the barrel of the rifle. Like
he meant for us to find it ...

Winter stiffens.

WINTER
And ... ?

BOTTOMS
Well Sir - it's a photo-copy of the
records of a Panamanian bank account
into which a large sum was recently
deposited. We haven't yet tracked the
account's signatory or where the
deposit came from yet ...

Winter reaches - but microscopically, Bottoms pulls it back.

BOTTOMS (CONT'D)
But - of course - we will.

He produces from his jacket a CLAM-SHELL CD PLAYER.

BOTTOMS (CONT'D)
And there's also this, Sir ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He activates it. MORE of the surveillance-camera footage of the Black-Class Security Vault entrance ...

BOTTOMS (CONT'D)

The technicians managed to reconstruct the entirety of the erased portion of the tape. This is the most recent piece - from yesterday morning ...

(nods)

Just prior to it being wiped clean.

It shows WINTER punching a code and entering the room. And then re-emerging. An ASTONISHED LOOK on his face. *And empty-handed.*

His image blinks up at the CAMERA. Winter's lips tighten.

WINTER

I have clearance to access that room; I really don't see the point. Haven't we already established with certainty how KA-88 left that room? That *Salt* walked out with it.

BOTTOMS

Yes Sir - I believe so. But have we established with certainty *why* he did it? To turn it over to our enemies...?

He himself swallows almost imperceptibly.

BOTTOMS (CONT'D)

Or to keep them from getting it?

The two men hold each other's gaze a moment.

WINTER

I sense you have a theory ...

Bottoms hesitates ...

BOTTOMS

Just Sir ... that maybe Chenkov didn't steal KA-88 to use against us. Maybe he took it to *keep* it from being used against us ...

(an invisible swallow)

And that he maybe didn't miss at all.

(a hesitation)

Maybe he *hit* what he was aiming for. And saved our next President of the United States.

They hold on each other.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WINTER

Is that the extent of your theory?

BOTTOMS

(a swallow)

Yes Sir ... it is.

WINTER

May I offer an alternative scenario?

BOTTOMS

(relieved)

I was actually hoping you might Sir...

BLAM! a smoking hole appears in the document Bottoms holds and, an astonished look on his young face, he drops dead.

Winters now points the GUN he'd quietly drawn down at the floor.

Methodically FIRING into it as he calmly pockets the document.

Abruptly the elevator doors open. A HALF DOZEN CIA agents standing there - guns drawn - stunned to see Bottoms dead.

WINTER

He was in the shaft! He's probably out of the building by now! Go!

EXT. PHILADELPHIA SIDEWALKS - DAY

SALT RUNS, caroming through the crowd. Breathlessly punching a NUMBER into his phone and thrusting it to his ear as he goes.

SALT

(breathless/Russian)

We are go!

PHONE

(Russian)

How many will be traveling?

Salt hesitates. Then nods.

SALT

Three.

The hesitation is now on the other end.

PHONE

Are you sure you know what you're doing?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SALT

You owe me. Just be there.

EXT. CONVENTION CENTER PARKING LOT - DAY

Winter moves at a run towards the cars with Armstrong.

WINTER

Light up the boards. Chenkov is armed,
extraordinarily dangerous and to be
put down on sight without question.

(another Agent)

And I want a dragnet dropped over this
city like the hammer of God. Every
street, every artery out - I want it
blocked, barred and barricaded.

Skidding to the cars with MAPS of Philly spread across hoods.

WINTER (CONT'D)

He's on foot. I want every train
station, bus terminal, river-boat or
pogo-stick in a 10-block radius.

AGENT

Nothing inside those parameters ...

(nods)

But there is this ...

He taps the MAP spread on the hood of the car.

AGENT (CONT'D)

Four blocks due east of here ...

(looks up/significant)

Russian Consulate.

Winter blinks - astonished.

WINTER

Christ that's where he's taking KA-88!

He spins to the others.

WINTER (CONT'D)

We have to stop him.

EXT. SIDEWALKS - DAY

SALT skids to a panting halt across from the RUSSIAN CONSULATE.

In either direction, FEDERAL CARS come skidding round the
corners down-block. He *darts* into traffic.

EXT. RUSSIAN CONSULATE - DAY

From either direction a small army of Federal Vehicles comes skidding up, Federal Agents jumping out of cars everywhere.

WINTER meets an AGENT already quickly returning from the UNIFORMED RUSSIANS who stiffly guard the Consulate gate.

AGENT 1

No-go. The only way we're getting in is if we break the lock.

Winter glares at the Consulate like an enemy fortress ..

WINTER

90 seconds and KA-88'll be the screen-saver on every computer in the Kremlin...

(Agent/suddenly)

Fill the roofs. First one with crosshairs - put his brains out.

As the Agent dashes off, Armstrong look to Winter, surprised.

ARMSTRONG

Sir - by the Vienna Convention this is Russian soil. Any aggressive act could be technically classified as an act of war ...

WINTER

And the forcible theft of KA-88? How do you classify that? 'Technically'?

ARMSTRONG

But ... Sir ... we don't even know he's in there for sure ...

ANOTHER AGENT skids breathlessly up.

AGENT 2

Sir! We found out where the wife went after she left Chenkov!

He pauses, catching his breath - and nods.

AGENT 2 (CONT'D)

She transferred *here*. Philadelphia.
(points)
To this Consulate.

INT. RUSSIAN CONSULATE LOBBY - DAY - PRESENT

Standing at a colleague's desk at the periphery of the CROWDED LOBBY of people waiting for visas and other consular business...

KATJA is *staring* at the NEWS on a work-mate's computer.

CNN ANCHOR

... we don't know the President's condition at this point but as earlier indicated, the FBI has released the name of 'Edwin A. Salt' whom they are characterizing as a 'terror suspect'.

WORKMATE

Wasn't that your name ... ?

Katja, stunned, blinks over at her friend ...

KATJA

Wh.. what ... ?

KATJA'S WORKMATE

'Salt'. Wasn't that your married name?

Kat blinks back a reeling instant ... head ... shaking ...

KATJA

no ... no not Salt ... 'Saltz' ...

Her friend shrugs, returning her attention to the screen. In a shell-shocked daze, Kat gathers her papers and, turning, takes two steps - *running* SMACK into SOMEONE ...

Blinks up to see SALT standing there. She *stares* a stunned fish instant ...

KATJA (CONT'D)

Ed ... Ewin ...

Her mouth drops ...

KATJA (CONT'D)

What ... the hell ... are you *doing* here ... ?

SALT

You wouldn't take my calls; evidently didn't listen to my messages ...

(shakes head)

I had no choice.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATJA
... choice ... ? ...to what ...?

SALT
Get you.

She blinks at him a second.

KATJA
Get me... ? You mean...to go with you?

SALT
Kat - I just pulled my thumb out of a dam holding back 30 years of secrets. A lot of people around this world are going to be extremely unhappy and no one close to me is going to be safe.

She looks back at him a disbelieving instant.

KATJA
Ed ... I don't care *what* you did. I wouldn't go with you to hell just to drop you *off*.

But he is right back at her - just as intense.

SALT
Kat - listen to me - under normal circumstances, if I were you - I wouldn't trust me either ...

He nods.

SALT (CONT'D)
But trust me ...
(shakes head)
These aren't normal circumstances.

His eyes are deadly serious.

SALT (CONT'D)
For for your sake and Nadja's - you need to come with me. Right now.

Her own eyes hesitate - a floating, unbalanced instant. Then abruptly RE-HARDEN ...

But before she can retort *POW!* the COMPUTER SCREEN at her elbow *explodes* in a spray of glass. People scream and yell everywhere as EVERYONE - including SALT and KAT - *gets down*.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

On the floor with Kat, Salt looks quickly from the spiderwebbed BULLETHOLE in the window - to the CONSULATE SECURITY MONITORS.

Where Winter and his people are storming through the gates.

SALT (CONT'D)

(Kat)

Look at your phone.

She blinks at him. Then does. The SIGNAL BARS abruptly go DEAD.

SALT (CONT'D)

Power's next. Winter'll use everything including lethal force to stop what I know from making it out of here today. Which means stopping me ...

He nods meaningfully into her eyes ...

SALT (CONT'D)

And anyone I might have told.

MUFFLED SHOUTING. A gasp goes through the prostrate crowd. On the CLOSED-CIRCUIT MONITORS, *Winter and his weapons teams, flowing through the crashed OUTER CONSULATE DOORS ...*

Are brutally overwhelming the Russian Consular Guards there.

Whump! the monitors go BLANK as Consulate POWER abruptly *dies*. With a panicked murmur, the crowd's frightened eyes turn to the Consulate's BIG INNER DOORS. Salt, steady, looks back to Kat ...

SALT (CONT'D)

I locked them on my way in ...

WHAM! the big doors *shudder* - but Salt's eyes stay on Kat ...

SALT (CONT'D)

But he will get through. And when he does - if you and I are still here - that's when he'll start shooting.

(shakes head)

I won't die. And - like it or not - neither will you ...

(nods/crowd around them)

But others will.

Crack! the DOORS shake again - *starting to give way*. Salt eyes remain locked into Kat's - torn and deeply struggling ...

She looks to the Consulate's back entrance. Him ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

KATJA

You honestly think you're that good?

He looks back at her a hard instant.

SALT

Depends on what I'm fighting for.

INT. CONSULATE BACK STAIRWELL - DAY

Salt and Kat burst out into the back stairs just as a CIA AGENT hits the top step, gun slamming out - 3 inches from Salt's face.

A heart-pounding micro-instant. He *pulls* the trigger.

But Salt's hand is there first - RACKING back the slide and *ejecting* the bullet cartwheeling out the ejection port as he *catches* it in air with that same hand while his ...

OTHER HAND simultaneously *ejects* the gun's dropping magazine...

Catching that too while, in the same instant, his KNEE slams into the side of the Agent's head - putting him OUT.

In an instant, the ELECTRIFICATION of charged energy - vanishes.

Salt looks to KATJA who stands jaw-dropped and stock-still. With a *snap!* and *click!* he loads the bullet and mag back in the gun.

SALT

Let's go.

INT. PARKING GARAGE - DAY

KAT and SALT burst out into the garage at a breathless run.

KATJA

But Ed - I don't understand. Why would *Winter* want to kill you?

SALT

Same reason you did.

He skids up to a CADILLAC CONVERTIBLE - quickly unlocking it. She pauses, blinking at the big car ...

KATJA

(to herself)
... *he knew I'd come* ...

Quickly shakes it off ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATJA (CONT'D)

Ed, what're you talking about? The reason I did??

He jumps in, engine roaring to life, passenger window powering down, looking out.

SALT

I betrayed him. Coming?

EXT. STREET - DAY

The car slams out and merges into the camouflage of traffic just as FEDERAL VEHICLES come screaming around the corner down-block.

Katja watches over her shoulder as they screech into a blockade in front of the garage just exited. *They didn't see them.*

Looks to Salt, expertly spinning the wheel, power-sliding them out of sight around the next corner.

KATJA

You betrayed me by lying. How could you betray Winter by lying when lying is practically Rule Number One in the Good Housekeeping handbook for spies?

SALT

Easy ...
(shrugs)
I broke Rule Number One.

He looks at her. Deep breath. Shakes head.

SALT (CONT'D)

When I was recruited, spy-wise, I was 100% on the level. Every word out of my mouth - who I was, what I believed in - flat-out lies. But then - time passed; the words stayed the same...
(shrugs)
But the truth changed ...
(nods)
That's how I betrayed Winter. One day my lies stopped being lies. And I never told him.

He looks at her.

SALT (CONT'D)

And after a point, it wasn't the lies between us anymore either, Kat ...
(shakes head)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SALT (CONT'D)

It was the fact I didn't tell you
they'd become the truth.

He skids the car to the curb and slaps it in park ...

SALT (CONT'D)

On the floor - by your feet.

Before she can say anything, he grabs a BAG out of the back and is dashing up the steps of the SCHOOL he parked in front of.

Her eyes move - to the PINK BOX she now realizes sits wrapped in twine by her feet. A swallow ... She reaches down ...

INT. RUSSIAN CONSULATE LOBBY - DAY

FUNCTIONARIES for the US and Russia argue loudly while WINTER stands angrily in his own head at the eye of the hurricane.

ARMSTRONG skids breathlessly up.

ARMSTRONG

Security cameras track Salt entry to
exit ...

(shakes head)

No stops, no contact with anyone
except his wife.

His voice rises - almost hopeful.

ARMSTRONG (CONT'D)

Maybe he really did just come here to
see her after all ...

Winter spares him a withering look.

WINTER

Did you actually *study* stupidity in
college? If he'd just wanted to say
goodbye, he would have *said* it. His
wife is the hand-off - *get it?*

He is already *moving* towards the doors.

WINTER (CONT'D)

They're going to try to leave the
country with KA-88. Confirm lock-down
and blockade of all city exodus. Get
me a chopper and put everything we've
got on the school their kid goes to.
If they make one stop - that'll be it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARMSTRONG

But ... Sir - if Salt doesn't care
about his family - why would he risk
stopping for his daughter ... ?

Winter stops, looking fiercely back at him from the door.

WINTER

Do I look like I have the capacity to
explain what goes on inside the brain
of a sociopath?

INT. CAR - DAY

KATJA sits alone. BOX open on her lap ...

Her hands, her lips - are minutely shaking.

Inside is a CAKE in the shape of a WHITE RABBIT WITH A POCKET-
WATCH. In icing, the words *Eat Me - surrounded by* NINE CANDLES.

She quickly smears away a TEAR before it drops onto the cake.

INT. CARVER ELEMENTARY CORRIDOR - LOCKERS DAY

The hall is emptying out as kids head into their next class.
NADJA, balancing her books on a knee, closes up her locker.

STARTLED to see a large WALRUS standing there.

WALRUS

Hey Little Girl - are you Alice?

A glistening grows in the girl's wide eyes. She ...

NADJA

Dad!

... *throws* her arms around him. Removing the Walrus head, Salt
kneels, squeezing her tight - his own eyes glistening.

From behind her ears, he MAGICALLY produces 2 JELLY BEANS.

SALT

Red or green?

She doesn't even look at them.

NADJA

Whichever takes me with you ...

INT. CAR - DAY

KAT watches surprised as Nad jumps into the back seat ...

NADJA

Hi Mom!

KATJA

Hello Hon ...

NADJA

Dad's back.

Kat looks to Salt, jumping in behind the wheel.

KATJA

Yeah ... I noticed that ...

A SHADOW sweeps the windshield. Salt takes a quick glance up. A HELICOPTER hovers above the rising CANYON OF BUILDINGS.

Looks back. SEVERAL BLOCKS BEHIND - from their high vantage at the hill-crest Carver Elementary sits on ...

The BRISTLING LIGHTS of dozens of law enforcement vehicles. Kat sees the same thing coming at them from the opposite direction.

A minute - tops. She looks to Salt - face etched with worry.

KATJA (CONT'D)

We're not going to make it, are we...

SALT

Piece of cake.

She looks back at him with disbelief.

KATJA

Are you seriously saying there's even a chance of us getting out of this...?

SALT

No. I'm saying I'd like a piece of cake.

He nods at the CAKE in her lap. Using the BOX OF MATCHES he bought at the grocery store with the twine, he quickly lights the candles and displays the cake for Nadja in the back.

SALT (CONT'D)

Sorry I was late, Angel ...

Nad squeals, bouncing on the back seat. Salt starts to sing ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SALT (CONT'D)
'Haaaappy Birthday - to you ...

Kat, watching her husband with a kind of perplexed amazement - finds herself picking up the next verse ...

KATJA
'Haaaappy Birthday to you ...

They hold each other's eyes - then look back to Nad ...

SALT AND KATJA
Happy Birthday dear Naaaadja ...
Happy Biiiiirthday to you...'

Nadja laughs, claps and, leaning forward, blows round the cake.

SALT
Make a wish?

NADJA
Yuh-huh ...

He glances through the windshield. The FEDERAL VEHICLES are hardly 2 blocks away - fighting towards them in traffic ...

His eyes remain intently focused a moment. Abruptly he turns to Kat, *snapping* open the BUCK KNIFE with startling precision.

She *freezes for a moment*. But he just smiles.

SALT
Cut the cake?

Relaxing, she smiles too, taking the knife. But stops - paused on the unorthodox shape of the rabbit-and-pocketwatch cake.

KATJA
... how do I cut it ... ?

SALT
Three equal pieces?

KATJA
(looks at him)
But ...

Flummoxed, she looks back to the cake ...

KATJA (CONT'D)
It doesn't go into three pieces ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He says nothing. She looks over - seeing the faintest smile floating on his lips. He shrugs.

SALT

So what do we do ... ?

Kat studies him - trying to figure where he's going with this. Shrugging, she picks up the whole cake and offers it back ...

KATJA

First bite for the Birthday Girl?

Nad doesn't need to be asked twice. Plunging her face into the cake, she comes away munching, face plastered in icing.

SALT

How is it, Babe?

Cheeks bulging, Nad pops up two thumbs. Salt looks to Kat. She appears uncertain what to now do with the rest of the cake ...

Salt nods out the windshield. Freed from traffic, the LAW-ENFORCEMENT VEHICLES racing towards them are seconds away.

SALT (CONT'D)

If we're gonna have that piece of cake, I guess we oughta have it ...

She studies him. Starts to raise the cake to her mouth ...

But Salt catches her hand. And her eyes ...

Pulling her hand from her mouth, he brings it instead to his.

Taking her bite into his own mouth ...

And removing the cake from her hand he puts it back to her lips.

Her eyes blur as - suddenly - she understands. With all the gratefulness of a human heart she takes his bite into her mouth.

Salt's eyes glisten back.

SALT (CONT'D)

Happy birthday ...

And, as the FEDERAL CARS come screaming up at them from either direction, Salt *slams* it into gear and *stands* on it ...

Tires smoking under them as the car auto-gyros on its smoking tires out from the curb and as the Federal Cars ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Come ROARING up, he *guns* it hard left - the only direction open - threading the *needle* of two Federal Cars that *slam* head-on into each other just behind, as Edwin A. Salt ...

Blasts his family onto the FREEWAY ENTRANCE opposite the school.

INT. CHOPPER - DAY

GHOSTING the car high above, WINTER barks into his microphone.

WINTER

He dodged! 219 exchange east-bound.

RADIO

On 'em!

INT. CAR

Nadja - her father's daughter - seems to be actually enjoying this - but Kat - from the real world - is holding on for dear life as they POWER-SLIDE out onto the busy freeway.

KATJA

Edwin ...

SALT

Don't worry - I'll take care of you.

She looks back - studying the husband she just met ...

KATJA

Promise ... ?

SALT

I'll do better than that.

Pulling a GUN, he swings it past startled Kat's face and ...

Pow! puts a bullet through the front quarter-panel of the CAR they are passing, BLOWING it's alternator and electrical system.

As that car - suddenly dead - fades away, Salt swings the gun back out his own window and *pow!* kills the CAR on that side.

Both dying, weaving cars bringing all trailing TRAFFIC skidding to a log-jammed HALT on the freeway behind them.

INT. HELICOPTER - DAY

High above, WINTER'S COPTER sweeps past over the TRAFFIC-JAM Salt just created - effectively CLEARING the interstate below.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WINTER

He jammed traffic! Coming right at the bridge - 3 miles and counting.

RADIO

Clearing traffic and locking down. He won't get past this bridge, Sir.

WINTER

He won't get to it, if I can help it. It'll take a lot more than little traffic games to keep me off his ass.

EXT. INTERSTATE - DAY

A FLEET of OPEN-TOPPED HUMVEES blasts at 90 on the shoulders round the barrier of stopped cars and back onto the interstate.

INT. CAR - DAY

Speedometer ticking 80, Salt looks from HIS PHONE to Kat

SALT

Kat - my phone doesn't have signal ...

A numb instant - then realizing what he is asking, she finds HER PHONE and hands it to him. Dialing, he slaps it to his ear.

SALT (CONT'D)

(phone)

Coming up on arrival.

Killing the connection, he nods to the FLAT-BED 18-WHEELER they are coming up at *fast* on the interstate ahead.

SALT (CONT'D)

Our ticket out.

Kat blinks at it ...

KATJA

Ticket? It's a truck ...

SALT

Fine - boarding pass.

Abruptly, the back window explodes and *DROPS*. Salt immediately *CLOCKS* the HUMVEES racing up behind them in the rear-view.

SALT (CONT'D)

Nadja - down Baby-Girl! Now!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

But, with her father's instincts, the girl's already down as bullets begin ripping through the car all around them.

But Kat's slower and ...

SALT (CONT'D)

There's an armor plate in the trunk!

... grabbing her, he *pushes* her down just as a bullet *bursts* her headrest. *Punching* the accelerator to the floor.

SALT (CONT'D)

Hold on ...

Kat peeks up. *Sees they're about to hit the back of the flatbed.*

KATJA

Edwin!

But *BAM!* - too late. Passing under the back of the speeding flatbed, the Lincoln's nose *slams* the 18 wheeler's mud-flaps.

A bursting squeal of smoke as it bounces back off the truck's quad-set screaming rear wheels.

Salt hits CRUISE-CONTROL - matching speed with the big truck.

SALT

Ears! Cover!

He *hits* a Radio Shack switch, CORDITE lining the WINDSHIELD ...

Blowing - windshield ejecting upward like a fighter-pilot into wind where it goes whipping back down the interstate ...

EXPLODING a mortar of glass shrapnel as it hits the 1st HUMVEE racing up behind - ripping past the two ducking CIA Agents who were just standing to open fire over the SUV's windshield.

As that vehicle goes veering screeching off the highway, Salt scrambles up over the dash and out onto the Lincoln's hood ...

Speeding nose-nuzzled drafting beneath the truck ahead's flat-bed back edge like a baby whale swimming beneath it's mother.

GLANCES - up the truck's long, flat bed into the truck cab where his eyes MEET the driver's in the rear-view mirror.

The DRIVER nods. Turning, Salt *thrusts* a hand back into the car.

Katja hesitates - looking at the hand - then up into his eyes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SALT (CONT'D)

Trust me.

A last instant ...

Then quickly *reaching* into the back seat, she hoists Nadie out to Salt who lifts the girl up onto the truck's speeding flatbed.

Thrusting her own hand up, she allows him to pull her out and lift her up onto the wind-rushing bed of the truck beside Nad.

Her eyes immediately *clocking* the 3 REMAINING HUMVEES speeding up to fill the hole vacated by the first one. Salt sees it to.

SALT (CONT'D)

Just get up to the front of the truck!

He quickly thrusts the GUN up into her unfamiliar hands.

KATJA

But ... what about *you*?

His eyes snap left. Their speeding collective of truck and car is BEARING DOWN FAST on an OBLIVIOUS MOTORCYCLE COP ahead ...

SALT

Just get up there!

And to her astonishment, he *swings* back through the Lincoln's windshield, dropping neatly back into the driver's seat and ...

Wrenching the wheel - veering out *hard* from beneath the semi ...

Screeching back out onto open road - Lincoln swinging out wide, clipping just past the startled Motor-Cop's rear wheel and ...

Stomping it - Salt *surges* the big car forward ...

Blasting past the motorcycle cop and ...

SNATCHING the man's GUN out of its holster as he shoots by.

Hitting the convertible's TOP RELEASE, letting the wind RIP IT flying away back down the interstate as he ...

Leaps to his feet, wind lofting him sailing over the back seats, where he lands skidding to the rear edge of the car's trunk ...

Just as Humvees 2 and 3 surge up to slam the rear of the car ...

PA-POW! he puts two precisely timed shots into the wheels of the Lead Humvee, sending it into a spin that COLLIDES into its twin, carrying them spiraling away in a wheel-smoking locked scream...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

TOPLESS HUMVEE 4 coming roaring up behind, its 2 SHOOTERS rising above its windshield, shouldering AUTOMATIC RIFLES and *lighting* the trunk Salt stands on into a grenade of spitting metal ...

HE responds putting a SINGLE SHOT through its on-coming grill...

BLOWING the hood-lock and releasing the hood into the catching 90mph wind that *slams* it backward like a 150 pound RAT-TRAP that *crushes* the windshield and panickedly ducking snipers flat.

SALT whirls. SEES the FLYING DUTCHMAN LINCOLN on whose trunk he stands is *veering* sharply across the lanes TOWARDS the flatbed.

KAT and NAD can only watch wide-eyed atop its bed as the big car carrying Salt sheers towards them ...

All 3 simultaneously knowing - even were Salt to dive into the Lincoln's back seat - *the big car just rides INCHES too high ...*

To pass under the flatbed and avoid a devastating parallel collision with the vehicle carrying Salt's wife and daughter.

10 feet and one quarter second from catastrophic impact, SALT *fires* four blurring shots through the car's four corners.

BLOWING all four of the car's tires simultaneously ...

SLAMMING the car FOUR INCHES down onto its rims ...

As he himself leaps *upward* ...

CAR *shrieking* on its rims away beneath him in a grinding sideways sliding spray of sparks ...

As it *just barely* clears passing beneath the speeding flat-bed.

And away out the other side as SALT lands, light as a canary, on the flat-bed - skidding to a stop beside Katja and Nad. *Agape.*

SALT (CONT'D)

You two cool?

Numbly, Kat nods. He gives thumbs up.

SALT (CONT'D)

Good. Me too.

Kat nods dazed at the DRIVER in the cab of their rig.

KATJA

What about him?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

SALT

Don't worry. He's going to make more money pumping iron in jail for a year than most people make in ten working.

He glances back down the interstate. Checks his watch.

SALT (CONT'D)

Right on time ...

Kat and Nadja look startled back to see a LEAR JET *coming in fast for touch-down on the traffic-cleared interstate behind.*

INT. HELICOPTER - DAY

The EXPRESSION of fury on Winter's face as he wings over the MASSED WRECKAGE of Humvees below, drops *slack* as a LEAR JET ROARS past beneath - headed in for a landing on the freeway.

WINTER

Oh ... shit ...

He snatches his helmet mike to his mouth.

WINTER (CONT'D)

A jet! He's got a jet! The semi!
We have to take him out on the semi!

RADIO (ARMSTRONG)

Sir - we can't. He just took *us* out.
We've got nothing till they reach the
blockade on the bridge ...

Winter's mind races an angry instant.

WINTER

The Secret Service's anti-aircraft
battery - did we pull it with us??

RADIO (ARMSTRONG)

Uh - possibly Sir but ...

But Winter has already killed connection, snapping at the Pilot.

WINTER

Get me to that bridge!

EXT. SEMI FLAT-BED - DAY

Wind rushing their hair, Kat, Nad and Salt watch as, incredibly, the JET touches down in a burst on the interstate behind them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Engines winding, the rolling plane pulls parallel with the speeding flat-bed - fuselage easing up beside mere meters away.

PLANE'S WING, extended out over the speeding flatbed, creeping up its length toward them like a mother bird's sheltering wing.

Salt looks to Katja who is speechless. Shrugs.

SALT

Once you fly private - you just can't go back.

Directly opposite, the racing Lear Jet's door opens, a HEAVY-SET MAN telescoping the stairs down out over the speeding asphalt...

Salt winks at him and shouts to Katja over the wind.

SALT (CONT'D)

Alexi Fodorovich! I did him a favor once! Now he's doing one for us!

Kat looks to the ruddy-faced RUSSIAN who grins and tips his hat.

SALT (CONT'D)

You first! I'll hand Nad over!

She hesitates. Jet stairs little more than a gangplank bridging the fury of flying cement separating truck from plane ...

Salt glances ahead. Coming up fast - a BRIDGE BLOCKED BY DOZENS of vehicles. His eyes return to Kat. Deeply calm.

SALT (CONT'D)

I promised you I'd take care of you...

A beat in those eyes. Then, slipping her hand into his, she ...

Steps out over the howling void - making the wildly vibrating stairs, grabbing Alexi's waiting hand, and quickly turning back.

Across the river of wind Salt, on a knee, looks into Nad's eyes.

SALT (CONT'D)

Sorry I missed your birthday, Doll.

The girl just shakes her head - and smiles beyond her years.

NADJA

You didn't miss it, Dad. You made it.

The look in his eyes says it all. She knows him. She *knows* him. He combs his fingers once through her hair. Hands her his PHONE.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SALT

Carry it over for me, willya?

She willingly takes it and, standing, he lifts the girl across to Kat - but as Alexi pulls her inside, the TRUCK...

Abruptly drifts left, closing the gap between itself and the racing plane. Kat retreats up into the doorway of the plane.

Where she reaches across the rushing chasm to Salt ...

SALT (CONT'D)

This first!

He hands across the MANILA ENVELOPE. She looks at him ...

SALT (CONT'D)

It took me ten years to get it. I
can't afford to lose it now!

Grabbing the envelope, she hands it to Alexi and thrusts her hand back across the gap.

Stretching across - he clasps his hand around hers ...

But makes no move to step across the void. Her eyes leap to his. A sad smile haunts his lips.

SALT (CONT'D)

That day in the park - when I opened
my hand - there wasn't any spider ...

She *looks* back. He nods ...

SALT (CONT'D)

But now - it's definitely there ...

And *opens* his hand. *Realizing*, she lunges to grab it back...

KATJA

Edwin!

But his fingers slip away - falling back across the void.

SALT

You'll only be safe without me.

KATJA

Edwin - *goddamit* ... !

Ahead, the BLOCKADE is coming at them *fast*.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

KATJA (CONT'D)
Winter'll kill you!

But he just shakes his head with a serene calm.

SALT
As long as you're in possession of
what's in that envelope ...
(a soft smile)
There's nothing anyone can do to me.

He looks to Nadja, holding Alexi's meaty hand in the doorway.

SALT (CONT'D)
And you, Princess - I think your wish
just might come true.

They share a smile.

Salt looks to the BLOCKADED BRIDGE mere moments away ahead. If
the racing plane doesn't take off, and now, it'll crash into it.

He looks back to his family. Swallows invisibly.

SALT (CONT'D)
Goodbye.

Trembling, Kat's glistening eyes never part his as the plane's
wheels rise up from the interstate, lifting her away ...

Her husband becoming a diminishing figure that stands on the
flatbed of a truck speeding out onto the high bridge below ...

As her plane *blasts* over the tops of the VEHICLES BLOCKING it.

ALEXI FODOROVICH
(Russian/Kat)
We have to close the door ...

Below, the truck her husband stands upon slams its brakes and
goes into a smoking slide out on the tall, blockaded bridge.

Kat lowers her eyes a moment ... nods.

EXT. BRIDGE - ROADBLOCK - DAY

More than 100 Federal and local law enforcement officers brace
as the big semi comes SKIDDING sideways towards their vehicles.

Stopping mere smoking meters away from their barricade.

GUNS converge everywhere instantly. As SALT - hands raised -
drops down, his eyes connect with Winter's gleaming own ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WINTER

Hiya Salt. Hear the woods are lovely
this time of year ...

But Salt just smiles back.

SALT

Be sure to send a postcard.

Smirk transforming into a scowl, Winter shoots Armstrong a look.
Well?? Covering his PHONE, Armstrong reluctantly nods.

ARMSTRONG

Eyes in the sky confirm - he gave her
an envelope and his phone.

Winter looks coldly from the LEAR JET winging away from them...

To SALT, corralled 30 feet away at the bridge's dizzying rail by
the rifles of a DOZEN NATIONAL GUARDSMEN. And then Armstrong...

WINTER

Shoot it down.

Armstrong stiffens - startled.

ARMSTRONG

Sir, there's a nine-year old child on
that plane...

WINTER

(coolly)

And what's in that envelope endangers
every child in this country. Do it.

Armstrong glances to SALT - almost desperate.

ARMSTRONG

Sir - we're 2 miles from the airport.
A SAM could lock onto another plane's
exhaust

WINTER

(temper rising)

Did you not say she's carrying Salt's
phone? Target its signal and *fire*.

ARMSTRONG

But Sir, we're not even certain KA-88
is what's actually *in* that envelope...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WINTER

(turns/points toward Salt)
That *spy* over there just moved a
mountain to put it in her hands. You
tell me. What the fuck *else* could be
in that envelope that's so important?
Now shoot the goddam plane down!

A swallow. Armstrong nods to the Secret Service ...

INT. PRIVATE JET - DAY

KATJA buckles Nadja in - SALT'S PHONE and ENVELOPE in her lap...

EXT. BRIDGE - ROADBLOCK - DAY

At gunpoint, SALT can only watch as - WHOOSH! - the ROCKET
blasts off out of the Secret Service mobile missile battery -
streaking away after the Lear Jet like a dog after a bird ...

Off Salt's blank response, Winter smirks toward Armstrong.

WINTER

Still think he's human? It's only my
god-daughter and *I* can barely watch.

Almost disappointed, Armstrong looks to Salt - facing the guns
at the railing without expression - hands behind his head.

NOT SEEING KAT'S PHONE slip from Salt's SLEEVE - into his hand.

INT. PLANE - DAY

Kat CONSIDERS the ENVELOPE. As if it might contain a snake ...

EXT. BRIDGE - ROADBLOCK - DAY

WINTER spectates with poorly disguised satisfaction as the
missile closes on the plane. Abruptly, HIS PHONE rings...

Annoyed, he flicks it sharply out...

WINTER

Yes what??

But the VOICE that comes back ...

VOICE

Do try to be philosophical about it,
Winter ...

Causes his features - to go *slack*.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He blinks a stunned beat. Then *snaps* round to SALT. Corralled in the semi-circle of National Guard over by the bridge's railing.

Every set of National Guard eyes stares up after the missile...

But SALT'S - KAT'S PHONE at his ear - are *looking directly back into Winter's*. His lips' quiet smile - forming a single word...

SALT'S VOICE

Verizon ...

Winter stares back a ringing beat as ...

All at once ... *it hits him* ...

He LOOKS at the Nokia in his hand. Identical in every way to his *own* Nokia, except, instead of Cingular, the screen says...

He *FLASHES BACK* ...

To the *POLYGRAPH ROOM* - *TOSSING* his phone to SALT.

WINTER

Funny Salt - I thought you were left-handed ...

SALT hands him back ... a Nokia phone.

WINTER'S VOICE

Prestidigitation! Amateur fucking sleight-of-hand. Like pulling jelly beans from little girl's ears ...

WINTER'S EYES SHOOT UP. His phone-screen now says *VERIZON*.

He *spins* round just in time - to see THE ROCKET...

Streaming back down at him.

ARMSTRONG - and all the others who saw the missile's turn ...

Clearing like a swarm of rats the hell away from him.

Leaving him only time to snap his eyes back to ...

WINTER

SALT!

Before the missile's *VAPORIZING EXPLOSION* rocks the bridge.

WHEN everyone dazedly finds their feet again, tiny pieces of Winter are still pelting down everywhere like soft bits of rain.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The anti-aircraft gunnery sergeant looks dazed Armstrong's way.

GUNNERY SERGEANT

Sir ... ? The plane ... ?

Armstrong hesitates, looking after the distantly receding plane. Then shakes quietly his head, turning to the National Guardsmen.

ARMSTRONG

No. We got who we came for ...

But the National Guardsmen - just finding their own feet...

Realize that Armstrong is now staring past them. *Horrorified*.

Their eyes - and all others - TURN.

To that place at bridge's edge where EDWIN A. SALT had stood at gunpoint a moment before...

Occupied now only by AIR.

INT. PLANE - DAY

Warily, Kat shakes ENVELOPE's contents into her hand. A SINGLE SCRAP OF PAPER. Turns it over ... Swallows ...

KATJA

Nad ...

NADJA

Yuh-huh, Mom ... ?

Kat stares at the paper trembling microscopically in her hand.

KATJA

What was it you wished for ... ?

The girl smiles and shrugs. *That's easy ...*

NADJA

Just that - on my next birthday - we'd all be together again.

Kat's eyes fill. On the scrap of paper trembling in her fingers, in a loopy scrawl - are 3 brief words. Ten years in the making.

I love you ...

EXT. BRIDGE - ROADBLOCK - DAY

ARMSTRONG and the others hit the bridge railing - panickedly scanning the surface of the water far below ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Not a ripple. Not a bubble. *Nothing*. Armstrong spins, looking in every direction. But all he can see for certain is that ...

Edwin A. Salt - formerly Eugene Chenkov - is gone.

EXT. RIVERBANK - DAY

WET PANT-LEGS, emerging from the river, pause in the shallows.

A SCUBA MASK and TANK splash into the water - followed by FINS removed from feet raised out of the water one at a time ...

Those feet step onto shore and slip into a waiting pair of COMFY SHOES while a hand retrieves a LOUIS VUITTON valise from a bush.

The feet then proceed - strolling their owner out of frame.

VOICE SINGING

*'I am he as you are he as you are me
and we are all together. I am the
Walrus - goo goo g'joob...'*