

# THE TRADE

Screenplay by  
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FADE IN:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD -- FADING LIGHT OF DAY

An old Jaguar travels along a muddied dirt road. It winds around a hill, headlamps pierce the deluging rain.

CLOSE ON the Jaguar's windscreen. Through the racing wipers, glimpses of the driver's face - a MAN, long hair, beard, early 20s, struggles to see the road ahead.

MAN'S POV

The dashboard lights flicker -- tired 1960's circuitry -- THUD! A strike above the radio sets them right. CLOSE ON the fuel indicator - RUNNING LOW on gas.

Rays of light from behind the hill. A car approaches. INTO VIEW, its headlights blind the Man's eyes. Caught in the cars' colliding beams, rocks and mud on the road in front -- a mud-slide -- the oncoming car skates on the debris, swerves, mud kicking up from its wheels.

The Man slows --

BACK TO

The ill-fated vehicle fishtails, spins, and crashes through the roadside fence, disappearing down an embankment.

The Man stops. Jumps from his IDLING car and rushes to the fence. MAN'S POV. The car's working headlamps pinpoint its resting place - on its side, in a field a hundred yards away.

The Man scrambles down the rocky embankment. Sprints to the wreck. No movement. Just steam escaping from the engine grill and the faint tune of Boy George's KARMA CHAMELEON coming from the radio.

He brushes a layer of mud from the windscreen. REVEAL the driver - a WOMAN, late 30s. Flames rise from the console. He THUMPS the windscreen --

MAN

Hey! Hey! Can you hear me? Ma'am?

No answer. A closer look reveals the woman is unconscious. Blood streams from a cut to her forehead.

The Man scrambles to the top of the tilted car and wrenches open the mangled door.

MAN (CONT'D)

Ma'am?

Still no response. He removes his jacket to douse the flames. Then, reaches down, takes hold of the woman's arms, and hauls

her limp body up through the opened door. The Man jumps from the car and lifts her to the ground. Wipes the blood-matted hair from her face and puts his ear to her nose - not breathing. Grabs her wrist - no pulse!

MAN (CONT'D)

Shit!

He links his hands and starts pounding her chest --

MAN (CONT'D)

One, two, three, four, five.

-- pinches her nose and breathes into her mouth. A deep breath and the same again --

MAN (CONT'D)

One, two, three, four, five.

Another breath. Another breath. Checks for a response. Nothing. Again, he pounds her chest --

MAN (CONT'D)

Breathe, damn it!

Still nothing. He stops and looks around -- no-one, nothing -- just sweeping plains and hills. Panicked, he yells out --

MAN (CONT'D)

Help! Somebody, help me!

-- but his cry trails off into the WHISTLING wind and rain.

FADE TO BLACK

SUPER: "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."  
The Bible.

FADE IN:

EXT. WESTBROOKE SCHOOL --

-- warm September MORNING. INTO VIEW, a busy suburban street.

SUPER: 8 YEARS EARLIER - LOS ANGELES, 1999

Congested, disorderly traffic as parents drop their children to school. A STATION WAGON crawls through the chaos, as a boy's voice masterfully recites Shakespeare --

MARK (O.S.)

Sweet are the uses of adversity,  
Which, like the toad, ugly and  
venomous, wears yet a precious jewel  
in his head -

INT. STATION WAGON

The boy is MARK WELLAND, 13 y.o., smart and charismatic. He sits in the passenger seat, wearing a white 49'ERS T-SHIRT sporting a red NUMBER 13. Mark pauses and glares at his despondent father --

-- JOHN WELLAND, mid 30s, intelligent, honest. A personable character and committed family man. But, beneath his well-balanced and composed facade, we sense a troubled soul.

JOHN  
(looking for a space)  
Go on. I'm listening.

MARK (CONT'D)  
And this our life exempt from public  
haunt finds tongues in trees, books  
in running brooks, sermons in stones  
and good in everything -

Again, Mark pauses.

MARK (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
You don't have a clue, Dad, do you?

John finds a space. Pulls to the curb.

JOHN  
I think so.

MARK  
Yeah, right. Tell me?

JOHN  
Something about a frog. An ugly  
frog. Wearing a jewel. Probably  
rich? No, hold on, it's in his head.  
A king or a prince?

Mark smirks.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
And, he reads books. In a lake.

MARK  
A brook.

JOHN  
Yeah, a brook. That's what I said.  
And, the trees talk. And, what's  
that thing about the rocks?

MARK  
I don't know you.

OUTSIDE - MOMENTS LATER

MARK grabs his backpack from the back seat. JOHN winds down the passenger window.

JOHN  
Don't forget I've got that meeting tonight. Mom'll pick you up from drama rehearsal.

MARK  
Cool, Dad.

Mark starts wandering towards the school gates --

JOHN  
Hey? Mark?

-- he turns.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
What does it mean?

MARK  
It's Shakespeare, Dad.

JOHN  
I know it's Shakespeare -

MARK  
He says you can find good in everything. Even when things are bad. It's just, you might have to look a little harder, ya know.

JOHN  
You believe that?

MARK  
Yeah -

Mark searches for support, but John 'the Cynic' takes over.

JOHN  
I'll see you tonight, son.

MARK  
Yeah. Whatever, Dad.

Mark disappears behind the gates.

INT. JOHN'S CAR

JOHN flips down the car's sun-visor. REVEAL a PHOTOGRAPH clipped to the back - Mark [a few years prior] hugging a GIRL, pretty, slightly older, a beaming smile. John stares at the snap, his face blank and removed.

The source of his pain, perhaps?

He flips up the sun-visor, and wipes a bead of sweat from his brow as he pulls from the curb.

DOWN THE STREET

A parked GRAY SUV. In the driver's seat, a man oddly dressed in a hooded sweater. He is PETER RAINES, early 40s, a tall and gangly character with a nervous demeanor. Through his fine-rimmed SPECTACLES, he watches the SIDE MIRROR as JOHN'S CAR approaches and drives past.

INT. THE WELLANDS' HOME -- LATER

CLOSE ON a RINGING PHONE. In b.g., a framed FAMILY PHOTO of MARK, JOHN, SUSAN (John's wife) and the GIRL from the photo, KATE (Mark's sister). The call is answered by the MACHINE --

MARK'S VOICE

(Terminator style)

Hey. The Wellands are busy saving the World from cyborgs. Please leave a message. We'll be back!

CALLER (V.O.)

(nervous)

Hello, Susan? It's Rick, Rick Bentley from John's office. John asked me to call. He said to tell you his meeting's been canceled, so he'll pick Mark up tonight. He just wanted you to know. Okay, bye.

INT. PHONE BOOTH -- CONTINUOUS

RAINES disconnects the call with his finger. Draws a deep and nervous breath.

EXT. WESTBROOKE SCHOOL GATES -- LATE AFTERNOON

A cast of animated DRAMA STUDENTS spills from the gates following after-school rehearsal. Some, in Shakespearean costume. Others, like MARK, changed back into their casual attire. Parents pull up in their cars and kids jump aboard.

ESTABLISHING SHOT. DOWNTOWN LA/STREET -- CONTINUOUS

JOHN'S CAR creeps along the outside lane of a busy street. Sounding HORNS and CURSING as frustrated drivers pull from behind and overtake.

INTERCUT between JOHN'S CAR and WESTBROOKE.

JOHN shares his attention between the road and an opened STREET DIRECTORY. Seemingly, lost. He turns into a corner GAS STATION.

MARK gives a dramatic bow as his best friend JOSH is driven away by his mom, TRUDY. Josh returns a royal wave. Other kids SHOUT good-byes to MARK. Mr Popularity.

JOHN grabs his DIARY from beside a TUTTLE'S TOYS zip bag on the passenger seat. Checks the entry --

-- 5.30PM. THE TOY KINGDOM. CORNER EL DORADO/FIFTEENTH --

John looks to the street signs -- EL DORADO ST -- FIFTEENTH ST -- surveys the intersection -- LIQUOR STORE -- LAUNDROMAT -- ADULT BOOKSTORE -- John flings the diary aside. A bum steer.

LATER

JOHN'S CAR drives along a highway on-ramp.

MARK hand-signals a peace-sign as the last of his friends drives away. Alone, he looks up and down the street, an unsettled look in his eye. An eerie QUIET descends. In distant b.g., the GRAY SUV slowly approaches.

FULL SHOT. LA SKYLINE/HIGHWAY -- SUNSET

City skyscrapers silhouetted against a vivid pink orange sky. A busy HIGHWAY -- road lamps flickering on -- follow JOHN'S CAR cruising in the stream of traffic.

Meets with congestion. Three lanes closed ahead.

Sound of scanning radio stations -- Station #1 -- Cliff Richard, "Summer Holiday". John wishes -- Station #2 -- Britney Spears, "Baby, One More Time". Grow up, for God's sake -- Station #3 -- a wrap up of weekend baseball. Sit on that. Yankees knocked over Boston.

INT. JOHN'S CAR --

-- crawling along. JOHN pulls a TOY BASEBALL from his opened Tuttle's Toys zip bag. Tired and frustrated, he fidgets with the ball. Flicks to Station #4 -- THE NEWS --

WOMAN NEWSREADER (O.S.)

World Trade talks with China are on the government's agenda again, with President Clinton and China's President Jiang Zemin declaring an official end to months of frozen

(MORE)

WOMAN NEWSREADER (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
 relations following NATO's accidental  
 bombing of the Chinese Embassy in  
 Belgrade -

Traffic grinds to a halt.

JOHN  
 Christ.

He winds down his window to investigate the road ahead.

WOMAN NEWSREADER (O.S.)  
 The resolution comes just days after  
 renewed safety warnings to US citizens  
 in China. Anti-American sentiment  
 flaring in the wake of further  
 speculation by Chinese officials  
 that the US-declared accident was,  
 in fact, a calculated act.

JOHN'S POV

Brake lights switch off. Traffic creeps forward. In the  
 distance - FLASHING emergency lights.

John gets closer. INTO VIEW, an ACCIDENT in the far lane.  
 Between passing cars, flickering images of EMERGENCY CREW  
 darting around the wreckage --

WOMAN NEWSREADER (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
 Local news, and the American Red  
 Cross has launched yet another urgent  
 appeal for blood.

-- cars speed up -- flickering images BLUR -- sounds MUFFLE --

WOMAN NEWSREADER (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
 Supplies said to have reached  
 critically low levels since the  
 holiday season, with blood reserves  
 at less than two days in many local  
 hospitals.

John caught in a hypnotic gaze -- his cell phone RINGS --

BACK TO

SWERVE! John GASPS, barely missing an oncoming car.

INT. THE WELLANDS' HOME - KITCHEN

SUSAN cradles the PHONE between head and shoulder as she  
 arranges a stunning floral centerpiece for the dining table.  
 Early 30s, petite, a soft-natured Christian, she smiles as  
 she waits for her husband to answer.



INTERCUT between JOHN'S CAR and THE WELLANDS' HOME.

John fumbles for his phone. Checks the caller ID - SUSAN. Composes himself after the close-call, then answers.

JOHN  
(shaken)  
Hey, Sue.

SUSAN  
Honey, are you okay? You sound -

JOHN  
I'm fine.

SUSAN  
When will you be home?

John glances at his watch.

JOHN  
Soon. A half hour, maybe. The meeting was a wild-goose chase.

SUSAN  
I know. I got your message.

JOHN  
What message?

SUSAN  
From your office. Rick? Or Ray, was it? No, Rick I think. He said your meeting was canceled.

JOHN  
Not canceled, Sue. It was a bogus appointment. What are you talking about? Rick? Rick who?

SUSAN  
I don't remember his last name. John, is Mark with you?

JOHN  
No. I thought you were picking him up?

Susan drops the flowers -- grabs the phone from her shoulder --

SUSAN  
He said you were picking him up. Your meeting was canceled and you were picking him up.

JOHN

Sue, what are you talking about? I don't know any Rick.

SUSAN

He said you told him to call. John, where's Mark?

John thinks. Traffic accelerates past the accident scene.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

John?

JOHN

I don't know, Susan.

John checks his rear view mirror for police -- plants his foot on the accelerator --

SUSAN

What's going on? Where is he?

JOHN

I don't know. Just calm down.

SUSAN

But, John?

JOHN

Sue, I'm sure he's fine. I'll drive by the school. He's probably there. Or, he could be with Josh. Give Trudy a call. I'll be home soon.

INT. LAX AIRPORT - CHINA AIRWAYS CHECK-IN

A Chinese CHECK-IN GIRL inspects flight documents and PASSPORTS. She leans forward, peering over the desk.

CHECK-IN GIRL

(smiling)

Handsome boy.

Across the counter stands PETER RAINES, nervous and standoffish. Beside him, a young boy asleep in a wheelchair. REVEAL, MARK WELLAND!

The girl hands Raines the documents. CLOSE ON the BOARDING PASSES. The passenger names read -- PETER IVAN RAINES -- and LUCAS PETER RAINES --

CHECK-IN GIRL (CONT'D)

Your boarding passes, Mr Raines. Tickets and passports.

(MORE)

CHECK-IN GIRL (CONT'D)  
 The flight staff are aware of your  
 son's condition, so if there's  
 anything you need, just ask.

Raines, ill-mannered, says nothing. Barely even a nod. He sets himself behind the wheelchair and pushes on.

EXT. THE WELLANDS' HOME -- LATER

JOHN'S CAR swings in front of a parked police car, and SCREECHES to a halt in the driveway of his modest two-story colonial-style home.

SUSAN peers through the living room window, her hopes dashed when she sees JOHN emerge from the car alone.

INSIDE -- SECONDS LATER

JOHN enters. SUSAN, distraught, rushes into his arms. Close by, stands Josh's mom and Susan's best friend, TRUDY, 30s, her hands tensely clenched beneath her chin.

JOHN  
 Hi Trudy. No news?

Trudy shakes her head.

SUSAN  
 John, I'm terrified. Where is he?

JOHN  
 It'll be okay.

Two police officers stand from the couch. Meet MITCHELL SIMMS, 30s, rugged, experienced, a man in control.

SIMMS  
 (shaking hands)  
 Officer Mitchell Simms, sir. And  
 this is Sergeant TOM GOMEZ, LAPD -

- a hispanic 20-something, green to the beat. Shakes hands.

SIMMS (CONT'D)  
 We'll do all we can to find your  
 boy. We just need to start with a  
 few questions.

LATER

Seated at the kitchen table, SIMMS replays the answering machine message to JOHN. Must be twenty times he's heard it now. In b.g., SUSAN anxiously rocks back and forth on the couch. TRUDY comforts her. Offers tea.

JOHN  
I can't place it.

SIMMS  
Accountant? Work colleague? A  
neighbor?

JOHN  
No.

SIMMS  
Do you want to hear it again?

JOHN  
No. I'm telling you, I don't  
recognize the damn voice!

SIMMS  
Okay, John. You say you last saw  
your son this mornin'. What'd you  
and your kid talk about?

JOHN  
He was practising for his school  
play, doing his lines. I was teasing  
a bit. Just fooling around.

SIMMS  
Fooling around?

Simms jots notes into his report. In b.g., GOMEZ descends  
the stairs, switching off his flashlight.

JOHN  
It was Shakespeare. Some fancy spiel  
about tongues in trees and books in  
rivers or something. I asked him  
what it was about. I remember, he  
said it was some metaphor for looking  
on the bright side of things.  
(gesturing at Susan)  
Find me the bright side of this?

GOMEZ  
Nothin' in the kid's room, Mitch.  
(turns to Susan)  
Did Mark have a diary, Ma'am?

SUSAN  
No, I don't think so.

Simms rises from his chair.

SIMMS  
Folks, if you could put together a  
list of friends, relatives, teachers,  
(MORE)

SIMMS (CONT'D)  
 any of Mark's contacts. We'll need  
 a written description. Any unusual  
 birthmarks, injuries, what he was  
 wearin', that sort of thing.

Simms points to a framed PHOTO on a side-table next to Susan --  
 CLOSE ON Mark and John, their arms playfully wrapped around  
 each other while jostling for a football. Mark wears the  
 49'ERS NUMBER 13 t-shirt. John sports the Cowboys.

SIMMS (CONT'D)  
 That your son, Ma'am?

Susan nods and hands him the frame.

SIMMS (CONT'D)  
 Recent?

SUSAN  
 His birthday last month.

JOHN  
 He was wearing the same shirt this  
 morning.

SIMMS  
 I'll just be a few minutes, folks.

SIMMS walks to the front door and exits. John stands.

JOHN  
 I'll get my address book.

PATROL CAR -- MOMENTS LATER

Passenger door open. SIMMS perched on the seat's edge holding  
 his police radio. Headquarters responds --

HEADQUARTERS (O.S.)  
 Three Adam Twelve, go ahead.

SIMMS  
 We've got a suspected two-o-seven  
 here at one-four-three Spring Hollow  
 Drive. Abduction, non-family. Require  
 investigative assistance, over.

HEADQUARTERS (O.S.)  
 We'll contact dispatch. Description?  
 Over.

Simms removes Mark's PHOTO from the frame.

SIMMS

White male, thirteen years old, five-one, brown hair, fair complexion. Last wearing jeans, white sneakers, and a white forty-niners t-shirt. Sending visual now, over.

He feeds the photo through a mobile car scanner.

BACK INSIDE -- LATER

SIMMS grabs his cap and jacket from a hat-stand next to the front door. JOHN stands by, his arms around SUSAN.

SIMMS

Best thing you good folks can do is stay calm. We've alerted patrols and local hospitals. Bulletins will hit radio and TV within the hour.

(to Susan)

We're doin' everything we can, Ma'am.

(to John)

Tom 'll stay until investigations arrive. If you need anything -

JOHN

Isn't there something we can do?

SIMMS

You religious folk?

John's face goes blank. The question hit a nerve. But, Susan looks up with hope. She nods.

SIMMS (CONT'D)

Have faith, Ma'am. A chat to the big man upstairs can't hurt.

Again, she nods.

JOHN

Thank you, officer.

Simms exits. INTO VIEW, TRUDY carrying her handbag.

TRUDY

You're sure there's nothing else?

SUSAN

No. Thanks for coming over.

TRUDY

(embracing Susan)

I'll call if we hear anything. You'll let me know if -

SUSAN  
Of course. Thanks, Trudy.

Trudy also leaves. Through reddened eyes, Susan looks up at her husband.

SUSAN (CONT'D)  
Why is this happening? I can't go through it again, John. I just can't. Promise me, we'll find him.

JOHN  
(pulling her close)  
It'll be okay. I promise.

-- but John's eyes tell a very different story.

INT. SITTING ROOM -- LATER

Darkness. SUSAN lights two candles on either side of the mantelpiece. She kneels on the floor in front.

MONTAGE SUSAN'S PRAYER with MARK'S BEDROOM.

Susan bows her head. Clamps her hands together.

Mark's room dimly lit by moonlight. INTO VIEW his bed -- his desk lined with collector Star Wars figurines --

Susan's lips moving. Above the mantelpiece, a hanging MOSAIC of the Lord, shimmering above the candles.

Movie posters on Mark's walls -- Star Wars Episode 1 -- The Matrix -- Wild Wild West -- corner of the room, two baseball bats, a football --

Susan lifts her head, eyes closed. She rocks back and forth.

Mark's bookshelf lined with sporting trophies and framed PHOTOS -- Mark acting in a play -- kitted up, striking a baseball -- hugging his sister. Curiously, she's bald.

Susan opens her eyes. CLOSE ON her welling tears.

END MONTAGE. A tear runs down Susan's cheek.

SUSAN  
Please, Father. You have my daughter.  
Don't take my son.

INT. AIRPLANE (CHINA AIRWAYS)

MARK's face, eyes closed. He is slumped in a middle seat, unconscious. Alongside, RAINES, anxious, in the isle seat. His white-knuckled hands fused to the armrests. A Chinese STEWARDESS approaches with a GLASS of WATER.

STEWARDESS

Your water, sir. You are okay?

Raines nods and accepts the glass. The stewardess turns to walk away, but Raines grabs her arm.

RAINES

How much longer?

STEWARDESS

About two hours, sir. Not too long.

She walks on.

Raines draws a calming breath. He checks the seat other-side of Mark, where A WOMAN huddles into a pillow against the window - asleep. He scopes surrounding passengers - all asleep or busy watching the in-flight movie --

-- Raines pulls a small PILL BOTTLE from his pocket and unscrews the lid. Empties a whitish powder into the glass and stirs with his finger. He tilts back Mark's head and pours the mixture between his lips -- Mark SPLUTTERS and COUGHS, but soon settles.

Raines nervously looks around to see if anyone noticed. Someone did. RAINES POV. Across the isle, a suspicious YOUNG CHINESE GIRL glares into his guilt-riddled eyes.

INT. BEIJING AIRPORT - TERMINAL GATE -- LATER

CROWDS of people, mainly Asian, mingle and welcome arriving travelers. A SIGN written in both Chinese and English reveals the destination - WELCOME TO BEIJING. RAINES emerges, pushing MARK asleep in the wheelchair.

RAINES POV. Through the horde of people, stands a short, middle-aged, Chinese man dressed in black - THE ESCORT. He holds up a whiteboard which reads -- P.RAINES --

Raines pushes through the noisy gathering.

THE ESCORT

(bowing)

Mr Raines. Welcome to Beijing.

The Escort reaches for the wheelchair, but Raines swings it from reach. An awkward moment.



THE ESCORT (CONT'D)  
Follow me, please.

AIRPORT ARCADE - MOMENTS LATER

RAINES wheels MARK through the mall. THE ESCORT leads by a few paces. Rushing people seemingly part from his path, while Raines ducks and weaves. In b.g., two uniformed CHINESE POLICE fall-in and follow, twenty yards behind.

EXT. AIRPORT ARRIVALS -- MOMENTS LATER

The outer doors slide open. THE ESCORT appears. Leads RAINES and MARK to an unmarked BLUE VAN parked curbside.

Standing aside the rear cargo doors - a WHITE-HAIRED MAN, 30s, Chinese, spiky peroxidized hair and a black goatee beard. He wears black gloves and a tailored Armani suit hugs his towering muscular frame.

The Escort jumps into the driver's seat. Adjusts the SIDE MIRROR -- INTO VIEW, the tailing CHINESE POLICE board a marked police van parked thirty yards behind --

POLICE POV. The White-Haired Man lifts Mark over his shoulder and swings open the van's cargo doors. He helps Raines aboard, then jumps in after. Shoots a telling stare towards the police van, then slams shut the cargo doors.

INT. THE VAN

The WHITE-HAIRED MAN lays MARK on a cold steel table centered between two side bench seats. BANG! BANG! He thumps the cabin wall, then takes a seat across from RAINES and a THIRD CHINESE MAN wearing a gray lab coat. The van pulls away.

Raines' eyes scour the van. RAINES' POV. Medical equipment -- white linen -- gowns and masks -- drawers, cupboards -- and curiously, a CAMERA UNIT mounted in the front corner --

-- CAMERA'S POV. Black and white, fuzzy picture -- Raines' puzzled eyes fixed on the lens.

INT. THE WELLANDS' HOME -- NEXT DAY

SUPER: NEXT DAY

CLOSE ON a crumpled cigarette being lit. It hangs from the mouth of DETECTIVE LARRY PHELPS, 60s, cheap brown suit, fat, arrogant, and all the tact of a t-rex.

The home phone RINGS. JOHN leaps from the couch, but Phelps quickly drops his hand to the receiver --

PHELPS  
Easy, Welland.

-- gulps down a mouthful of coffee and slips on a headset.

PHELPS (CONT'D)  
Okay, people, we breathin'? [Cough]

INTO VIEW, a PHONE TRACE UNIT. TWO OPERATORS, a man and woman, frantically flick switches preparing to trace the incoming call. Headsets on -- red lights flashing --

WOMAN OPERATOR  
We're good, sir.

PHELPS  
Okay, you know the drill, Welland.

John lifts the handset. In b.g., SUSAN anxiously watches from the couch.

JOHN  
John Welland?

A pause, then --

-- in a HUFF, Phelps flings off his headset.

PHELPS  
Oh, Jesus fucking Christ. Again?

SUSAN'S eyes drill holes in Phelps, as the two operators whip off their headsets and dart outside for a smoke.

JOHN  
Bernice. No. Nothing.  
(crossing to Susan)  
Tomorrow. Okay. I'll pass you over.  
And, careful on that road. There  
was another accident on the news.  
(covers the mouthpiece)  
Sue, tell her to stop callin' the  
damn land-line.

Susan's disapproving stare turns to her husband. She snatches the phone and gestures at Phelps --

SUSAN  
I want someone else.

-- then storms off to the kitchen.

John returns to the couch, hidden beneath a sea of RING BINDERS. He continues flicking through pages of pictured child offenders. Phelps slumps into a nearby chair. Drags on his cigarette and blows a smoke ring --

PHELPS

Anyone?

JOHN

I can't believe how many -

PHELPS

And, that's just here in L-A. The one's we know about. Christ knows how many other sicko-fuckin' perverts are out there roamin' around.

JOHN

Reassuring, thanks.

FRONT PORCH -- MOMENTS LATER

The OPERATORS puff away on their cigarettes. INTO VIEW, a BROWN SEDAN rolls into the driveway. Its doors open. REVEAL the driver, JAMES KENDRICKS, 50s, tall, athletic, wearing a freshly pressed suit. And, his long-time trusted partner, ELLIS RYAN, 40s, African American, more casually-attired. They are FBI special agents, LA's finest, and their arrival can mean only one thing.

WOMAN OPERATOR

Oh, shit.

Kendricks and Ryan approach, coolly removing their shades.

KENDRICKS

Pack it up, people.

Kendricks TAPS on the opened door as he and Ryan slip through. The operators throw down their cigarettes and follow.

INSIDE

JOHN rises from the couch. SUSAN reappears, her eyes alight with hope. In b.g, the OPERATORS start unplugging cords.

PHELPS

Mornin' Jimmy.

KENDRICKS

Larry.

(drawing his badge)

Mr Welland. Mrs Welland. My name's James Kendricks. This is Ellis Ryan.

RYAN

Sir. Ma'am.

KENDRICKS

We're Special Agents with the Los Angeles F-B-I.

SUSAN

You've found him? He's okay?

KENDRICKS

Is there somewhere we can talk -

John notices the operators dismantling equipment.

JOHN

What's going on? Why are they -

KENDRICKS

Please, in private, sir?

The operators exchange a remorseful look.

SITTING ROOM

JOHN closes the door. Ushers KENDRICKS and RYAN to two armchairs, then takes a seat next to SUSAN on a Chesterfield.

JOHN

So, Agent Kendricks? Have you found our son?

John wraps his arm around his trembling wife. Kendricks pulls TWO PHOTOS from his pocket. Hands one to John.

KENDRICKS

Have you seen this before?

Susan burrows into John, her face stricken with fear.

CLOSE ON the photo - a fine gold chain adorned with a hand-made pendant, the letters K-A-T-E cleverly crafted into the shape of a heart.

JOHN

It was Mark's sister's. There's no way he would have taken it off. Where did you get this?

KENDRICKS

The photo was sent from our Consulate in Beijing, China. Folks, there's no easy way to tell you this. A boy's body has been found. We believe it may be your son.

SUSAN

No! It can't be.

JOHN

China? That's impossible. There's no way it could be him.

Pause.

KENDRICKS

I need to prepare you. This is a photo of the victim. We need an identification. Ma'am?

SUSAN

No. You'll see. It's not Mark.

KENDRICKS

Believe me folks, if there were any other way.

Kendricks passes John the second photo. John's face turns white. Susan SLAPS the photos from his hand and launches herself from the couch.

SUSAN

No! It's not him! It's not!

JOHN

I don't understand?

RYAN

We're unclear on the details. Everything's under Chinese jurisdiction. We'll know more -

SUSAN

(hysterical)

Get out! Get out of my house!

KENDRICKS

- we'll know more tomorrow.

Kendricks prepares to stand, but John grabs his forearm --

JOHN

No. Listen to me, Mr Kendricks. Mr Ryan. You tell me now.

KENDRICKS

Mark was murdered, John.

John releases Kendricks' arm. His eyes glaze over. In b.g., Susan watches from across the room. Her arms crossed low over her belly, tears dripping from her chin.

Kendricks and Ryan stand and walk to the door.

KENDRICKS (CONT'D)

(glancing back)

One of our trauma counselors will be in touch. I'm terribly sorry.

RYAN

Condolences, Ma'am. Sir.

Exit Kendricks and Ryan. Susan's tears turn angry.

SUSAN

You promised me he'd be okay. You promised!

John breaks his hypnosis and turns to his wife. She looks up and screams to the heavens --

SUSAN (CONT'D)

How could you do this? I hate you!  
Do you hear me, now? I hate you!

She snatches a statuette of Jesus Christ from a side-table, and SLINGS it across the room. It SMASHES into a hanging MOSAIC of the Lord -- ceramic fragments rain down onto the mantelpiece. Susan starts tearing at her neck beads --

John rushes to restrain her. She struggles. Hitting, pushing, trying to break free --

SUSAN (CONT'D)

No! No! This isn't happening.

John strengthens his hold. Tighter. Tighter. Susan tires, finally resigning to John's embrace. She sobs and wails, as John fights back his own tears. They collapse to the floor in agonizing despair. Their son is dead.

ESTABLISHING SHOT. FBI HEADQUARTERS (LA) -- NEXT MORNING

JOHN, on a mission, charges through the main doors of Wilshire Boulevard's FEDERAL BUILDING - home to LA's FBI.

INTERVIEW ROOM -- LATER

CLOSE ON a passport PHOTO of Peter Raines.

JOHN

Never seen him before. Who is he?

JOHN hands the photo to KENDRICKS, sitting other side of a small desk. In front of Kendricks, an opened FILE.

KENDRICKS

His name's Peter Ivan Raines. He's local. Lives in West Hills, not far from you.

JOHN

So?

KENDRICKS

John, was Mark, or any of your family, ever admitted to Northridge Memorial Hospital?

JOHN

Mark had some tests there a few years ago, but our daughter, mostly. Kate had leukemia. I'm sorry, Mr Kendrick, but what's this got to do with anything?

KENDRICKS

Mr Raines was employed at Northridge.

John shakes his head, confused.

KENDRICKS (CONT'D)

He's now confined to a detention cell in Beijing, charged with your son's murder.

John snatches back the photo.

JOHN

This is the man that killed my boy?

KENDRICKS

Allegedly, killed your boy. We do, however, know that he accompanied your son to Beijing. We believe Mark was smuggled out under someone else's passport. Maybe even Raines' son. We're confirming that.

JOHN

Mark would never cooperate. He'd tell someone. Make a scene.

KENDRICKS

We suspect he was drugged. Raines had him in a wheelchair and informed airline staff he was seriously ill. No-one ever saw Mark awake.

JOHN

But, none of this makes any sense. What would he want with Mark?

KENDRICKS

We don't know.

JOHN

Why take him to China?

KENDRICKS

We don't know that either.

JOHN

Christ, Agent Kendricks! What do you know?

KENDRICKS

John, dialogue with China's been deadlocked since the Embassy bombing. It's like trying to pry open a vault with a toothpick.

JOHN

Can't the government do anything?

KENDRICKS

We received word from the State Department an hour ago. Their unofficial response - they won't be making an official response.

JOHN

That's ridiculous. Why?

KENDRICKS

Political jeopardy. John, relations with China haven't been this bad since Tiananmen.

JOHN

I thought things were resolved.

KENDRICKS

Clinton and Jiang are on speaking terms, yes, but China's far from convinced the embassy bombing was an accident. Washington's walking on egg shells. Negotiating compensation settlements. Nursing Jiang through trade talks. They're concerned this incident could become a political playing card for the Chinese. And, in the unofficial words of our State Department, they don't want any unnecessary distractions.

JOHN

Unnecessary distractions? A U-S citizen was murdered! A child!

KENDRICKS

No argument here, John, but my hands aren't just tied, they're chained.

JOHN

(gesturing at photo)  
They're sure this is the guy?



KENDRICKS

Conclusive evidence. We're told,  
conclusive evidence.

JOHN

What sort of evidence?

Kendricks closes the file. Something to hide, perhaps?

KENDRICKS

We don't know.

JOHN

Do you know what happened to him?  
How he was killed?

KENDRICKS

No.

JOHN

Jesus Christ, Kendricks. What is  
this? The Federal Bureau of Beats  
The Fuck Outta Me? Tell me why this  
piece of shit killed my son?

KENDRICKS

John, we want to get to the bottom  
of this as much as you. And, we  
will. But, for now let's focus on  
what we can do. Get your son home.

Kendricks picks up a PHONE from the desk. Dials.

KENDRICKS (CONT'D)

I'll get you the number of our  
consular contact in Beijing. Morris  
Clark. He'll organize Mark's return.

Line's busy. Kendricks drops the handset. Rises from his  
chair and walks to the door, opening it just as the Bureau's  
most promising rookie -- DALTON, mid 20s, clean-cut -- happens  
to rush past --

KENDRICKS (CONT'D)

Dalton!

BACK TO THE TABLE. CLOSE ON the rim of a mini CD protruding  
from the closed file. In b.g., Kendricks chats with Dalton --

-- John seizes the moment. He plucks the CD from the file  
with his finger and conceals it in his palm --

Kendricks soon returns and perches himself on the desk.

## KENDRICKS (CONT'D)

John, I'm not gonna claim to understand what you're going through. I don't have kids, or a wife. But, I do have thirty years seeing this fucked-up kind-a shit happen to good people. Good people who either go on or go under. But, make no mistake, it's a choice. Don't get dragged under, John. All the why's and how's don't matter. It won't bring your son back, and it's not gonna bring you and Susan any peace.

A TAP on the door. Dalton squeezes through, waving a card. Kendricks grabs it and offers it to John --

## KENDRICKS (CONT'D)

Get your son home. Grieve with your wife and get on with your life.

-- John accepts the card and rises from his chair.

## KENDRICKS (CONT'D)

I'll be in touch.

John says nothing. An accepting nod and he departs.

EXT. WESTBROOKE SCHOOL SPORTS FIELD -- LATER

Mark's SCHOOLMATES run through baseball practice drills. In b.g., JOHN'S CAR sits parked beyond the school fence.

INT. JOHN'S CAR

JOHN watches the youngsters at play. A tear trickles down his face, as he hears them CHEER and rejoice.

He drags a LAPTOP computer from a bag in the back seat and rests it on his lap. Flips open the screen, then pulls the stolen CD from his pocket. Typed on the label is --

-- CASE 62-74H EXHIBIT A --

He slips the CD into the drive. A prompt appears -- RUN FILE? -- John wipes his eyes and confirms.

CLOSE ON SILENT FOOTAGE -- black and white, fuzzy picture --

MARK kneels, facing the camera. Head bowed, motionless. RAINES stands behind. One hand grasping Mark's shoulder, the other a pistol. He looks sideways, seemingly yelling. Then, moves the weapon behind Mark's head -- looks to the sky, and -- FLASH! Mark's head jerks forward and his limp body slumps to the ground.

BACK TO

GASP! John flings away the computer -- opens the car door and dives to the ground --

BESIDE THE CAR

JOHN crawls in circles, uttering GIBBERISH. He convulses. Gags. SLAMS himself against the car, again and again. Angry. Confused. Overwhelmed. A broken man.

INT. THE WELLANDS' HOME - MAIN BEDROOM -- MORNING

Rays of sunlight stream through the bedroom's second-story window. JOHN squeezes clothes into an overnight bag on his bed. SUSAN stands in the doorway, arms tightly crossed.

SUSAN

I don't see why you have to go?

John, silent.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

If they said they'd take care of it, why do you have to go? What about the travel warnings?

He stuffs in the last of his toiletries.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Well, I'll come with you then.

JOHN

You're not going anywhere, Sue.

SUSAN

I know why you're going. You want to see him, don't you? You want to see that animal? Why, John? What do you think you're going to do?

John zips up his bag and throws it over his shoulder.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

You can't just leave me alone.

JOHN

Your parents will be here in a few hours, and I'm back in two days. Two days. I'm going to get our son.

John walks to the doorway. Kisses his wife's turned cheek and leaves. Susan walks to the bedroom window and looks out over their front yard --

SUSAN'S POV. A small gathering of PHOTOGRAPHERS and REPORTERS huddled on the sidewalk. Moments later, a taxi pulls into the driveway. The group jump to their feet and rush towards the house, SNAPPING photos and firing QUESTIONS. JOHN barges through and squeezes into the waiting cab.

Susan drops to the floor. Looks across the room where fragments of the shattered MOSAIC lean against the wall.

Susan sinks her face into her hands and cries.

INT. LAX AIRPORT -- LATER

JOHN purposefully strides through the terminal, wearing dark sunglasses, clenching his bag and tickets. His cell RINGS --

JOHN

John Welland.

KENDRICKS (O.S.)

I just had a call from your wife, John. What the hell do you think you're doing?

JOHN

I'm getting my son.

KENDRICKS (O.S.)

Don't fuck with me. I just spoke with Morris. He hasn't heard from you. We both know your agenda. You're wastin' your time.

JOHN

Tell me why Mark was killed?

KENDRICKS (O.S.)

You know I can't answer that.

JOHN

Then, you're wasting my time.

KENDRICKS (O.S.)

John, the only way you'll get anywhere near Raines is if you're sittin' in a cell next to him. And, you're goin' the right way about it. The Chinese lock people up for stealin' chocolate bars. They're not gonna think twice about your sorry ass.

John hurries on. Glances at a flight board -- his watch -- accidentally, CRASHES into a passer-by. John's tickets spill to the ground. He looks up to see a towering Chinese man - the WHITE-HAIRED MAN. They eyeball each other --

KENDRICKS (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
 You hearing me, John? Or, do I need  
 to arrest you? You know, stealing  
 evidence is a federal offence.

The White-Haired Man walks on. John retrieves his tickets.

JOHN  
 What evidence, Kendricks? According  
 to you, you don't even know what the  
 evidence is. You don't know shit,  
 remember?

KENDRICKS (O.S.)  
 Part of my job's to protect you.

JOHN  
 What? Like you did my son?

John abruptly ends the call and continues to the gate.

ESTABLISHING SHOT. BEIJING SKYLINE/AIRPORT -- DAY

An American Airlines 747 approaches the runway and lands.

EXT. US EMBASSY BEIJING -- DAY

SUPER: UNITED STATES EMBASSY, BEIJING CHINA

JOHN steps to the sidewalk from a cab and slips his fare  
 through the window. He turns --

JOHN'S POV. The EMBASSY building. INTO VIEW, outside the  
 compound gates, a group of Chinese STUDENTS. They shout  
 slogans and wave banners, reading -- PROTECT SOVEREIGNTY --  
 US BULLIES -- NATO NAZIS -- and hold up pictures of President  
 Clinton defaced with Hitler moustaches --

A PROTESTOR charges at John --

PROTESTOR  
 Da dao meiguo! Da dao meiguo! [Down  
 with America]

Two SECURITY GUARDS appear. They grab John by the arms and  
 escort him past the SPITTING protestor.

MORRIS CLARK'S OFFICE -- MOMENTS LATER

MORRIS CLARK, an elderly man, stocky, well dressed with a  
 distinguished demeanor, sits behind a wooden desk. Engaged  
 in a phone call, he's cool but assertive.

MORRIS  
 (in Chinese)  
 Sir, your own Embassy issued the  
 visas. We both know -

JOHN is escorted through the door by another CONSULATE WORKER.  
 Morris gestures towards a seat.

MORRIS (CONT'D)  
 Bullshit. This is a blatant breach  
 of international press freedoms yet  
 again. Reissue the visas. Reissue  
 them now. Good day, sir!

Morris calmly replaces the handset. The phone sits beside  
 an opened Chinese newspaper, where something catches John's  
 eye - JOHN'S POV. Peter Raines pictured in a newspaper  
 ARTICLE. Morris confiscates the paper into a desk drawer.

MORRIS (CONT'D)  
 Communist con-artists. You can never  
 trust a red, Mr Welland. Or, can I  
 call you John?  
 (extending a hand)  
 Any trouble out front, son?

JOHN  
 (shaking hands)  
 Just a little rain.

MORRIS  
 (smiling)  
 Yes, of course. We had a multitude  
 out there a few months ago.  
 Thousands. But, the bombing's old  
 news now. Just a convenient media  
 decoy for China's own atrocities.

JOHN  
 I don't understand?

MORRIS  
 And, how lucky you are. Can I offer  
 you coffee? Cigarette?

JOHN  
 No. Thank you. Mr Clark, I'm hoping -

MORRIS  
 (waving a pipe)  
 Do you mind?

JOHN  
 It's fine. Mr Clark, I'm hoping -

Morris lights a PIPE -- chats from the corner of his mouth --

MORRIS

Morris, please. And yes, I'm aware of your little crusade. Deepest sympathies for your loss, son.

JOHN

I need to know why he was killed, Mr Clark?

MORRIS

We'd all like to know, John.

JOHN

Who's we?

MORRIS

Police. His lawyer. Me. Our Mr Raines isn't all that talkative.

JOHN

You've met him?

MORRIS

Yes.

JOHN

And, you don't know what happened?

MORRIS

We both know what happened, John. But, why? Well, that's the sixty four thousand dollar question?

JOHN

Isn't there an investigation?

MORRIS

No need. Raines signed a confession. Motive and authenticity are now immaterial.

JOHN

I have to speak with him.

MORRIS

Impossible.

JOHN

Where is he?

MORRIS

It's of no consequence to you, John. The only people permitted access to Raines are China's legal authorities, his lawyer and myself.

John drops his head.

JOHN

So, what happens to him now?

MORRIS

He'll be sentenced this afternoon.  
Likely, executed within the month.

JOHN

Executed?

MORRIS

You're in Communist China, John.  
Death sentences are dealt out like  
playing cards. There's no reason Mr  
Raines will be offered any reprieve.

JOHN

So, I may never know why my son was  
killed?

MORRIS

Does it really matter, John? The  
offender was caught, charged and  
will pay the ultimate price. Surely,  
this is what you would want?

JOHN

I want the truth.

MORRIS

Well, John. You'll never be further  
from it than the republic of smoke  
and mirrors. Trust me. Any truth  
in China got a death sentence a long  
time ago.

Morris pulls an airline ticket from a desk drawer and skims  
it across his desk.

MORRIS (CONT'D)

I've made arrangements for your return  
to the U-S. It isn't negotiable.  
You fly home this evening, and your  
son's going with you. Understand.

JOHN

I want to see him.

MORRIS

(shaking his head)  
You've already identified -

JOHN

Mr Clark, I've just traveled six  
thousand miles to get here. Please,  
I want to see my son.



Morris drags back a few puffs from his pipe. He rises. Lifts his jacket from the back of his chair, picks up a wooden cane, and gestures towards the door.

MORRIS  
You'll be on that plane.

EXT. BEIJING HOSPITAL - SECURITY GATE -- LATER

A LUXURY SEDAN stops at the hospital's security gates. Through the driver's window, MORRIS hands the GUARD a small satchel. The guard inspects its contents and waves him on.

INT. ADMISSIONS FOYER -- MOMENTS LATER

Enter MORRIS and JOHN into the crowded foyer. DOCTORS march around, clipboards in hand. PATIENTS and VISITORS occupy the many rows of chairs. In b.g., a patrolling GUARD.

MORRIS  
I'll be a few moments.

Morris walks to the main desk.

John finds a vacant seat. Seated opposite, a WOMAN in a hospital gown. She turns the page of a NEWSPAPER. REVEAL the ARTICLE seen in Morris's office. John leans forward for a closer look. CLOSE ON a PHOTO of Raines being escorted from a building by police. John leans in further --

MORRIS (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
John.

Startled, he looks up. Morris stands beside a young NURSE.

MORGUE -- MOMENTS LATER

The NURSE slides a steel table out from the cold chamber. She draws a cover sheet down to the base of MARK'S neck. Bows to MORRIS and JOHN, then exits.

John gazes at his son's lifeless body. He touches Mark's face. Strokes his hair. Fights back the tears, but surrenders to anger --

JOHN  
Where is he? Where's Raines?

MORRIS  
It's no use, John.

John is distracted from his retort. INTO VIEW, a partially exposed SCAR to Mark's chest. John draws down the sheet, revealing a grotesque STITCHED INCISION running full-length down the center of Mark's torso.

JOHN  
What in the name of Christ?

MORRIS  
It'll be an autopsy, John. Standard  
procedure for time and cause of death.

JOHN  
Cause of death? Do you need fucking  
help?

Morris rests his hand on John's shoulder.

MORRIS  
Time to go, son.

John EXPLODES! Spins around. Grabs Morris by the collar  
and SLAMS him up against the chamber.

JOHN  
Where's Raines?

Morris glares back at John -- unmoved --

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Where is he? You can pull strings.  
You know the system. You can -

THUD! Morris employs a slick self-defense move and drops  
John to the floor, finishing with his cane planted in the  
nape of John's neck.

MORRIS  
Drop it, John. Drop it, or you'll  
end up here, too.

Morris removes his cane. John rises to his feet and glares  
at Morris. He takes a step back -- another -- then, crashes  
through the doors and sprints away. Morris shouts after him --

MORRIS (CONT'D)  
I know about your daughter, John.  
You want to leave your wife a widow  
as well!  
(to himself)  
Shit.

ADMISSIONS FOYER -- MOMENTS LATER

JOHN charges in. Spots the NEWSPAPER on a side-table. Grabs  
it and flicks to the ARTICLE on Raines. He works his way  
along a row of seated patients and visitors --

JOHN  
Do you speak English? English?

All return confused stares. He waves the newspaper in the air and calls out --

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Anyone speak English? Anyone?

INTO VIEW, a young CHINESE GIRL, 10 y.o. or thereabouts, rises from a chair a few yards away.

CHINESE GIRL  
English, I read. I can read.

John rushes across. Points to the article in the newspaper.

CHINESE GIRL (CONT'D)  
American man Peter Raines, confessed  
man to murder, be sentenced today  
afternoon -

JOHN  
Where? Where?

CHINESE GIRL  
People's Court? Fengtai -

In b.g., Morris appears, hobbling along on his cane.

John pulls back the NEWSPAPER. Smiles at the girl, then charges across the room and CRASHES out the main doors.

EXT. PEOPLE'S COURT COMPOUND -- LATER

JOHN, clenching the rolled-up NEWSPAPER, squats on a dirt strip outside the court's fenced compound. Sitting nearby, a REPORTER, 30s, bruised face, bandaged fingers on one hand, fiddles with an expensive camera.

REPORTER  
(cockney accent)  
Why you 'ere, then?

John ignores him. Anger simmering.

REPORTER (CONT'D)  
You ain't no journo. So, ya know  
this Raines fella?

John continues the stand-off.

REPORTER (CONT'D)  
He'll be another one of these Falun  
Gong fruit-cakes, I'll bet. I've  
been watchin'. They're fillin' the  
prisons with 'em. Hundreds of 'em.

The reporter raises his bandaged hand.

REPORTER (CONT'D)

See this? Got the stuffin' kicked out of me just for sniffin' around a protest at Tiananmen. Busted three of me fingers, miserable red bastards. It's gonna take more than that to scare me off. I tell ya, somethin's goin' on round 'ere. Somethin' bad. Somethin' real bad.

John's curiosity finally piqued. He turns to the reporter --

-- the building's doors CRASH open. John spins to see RAINES, hands and feet shackled, escorted by two POLICE GUARDS to the back of a waiting van.

The reporter starts SNAPPING photos. John's rage boils over. He hurls himself at the fence. SMASHES the wire with his newspaper, YELLING at the top of his lungs --

JOHN

Raines! Raines, you son-of-a-bitch!  
Why'd you kill my son?

REPORTER

Sweet Mother of Moses -

The reporter swings his camera to John.

JOHN

Why, Raines? Why?

The van's cargo doors SLAM shut and the vehicle starts creeping towards the compound gates. John CRASHES past the reporter, knocking his camera to the ground.

REPORTER

Wanker!

JOHN

Raines! Raines, you fuck!

John storms towards the van, his path quickly blocked by two armed GUARDS.

GUARD

(Chinese)

Step back! Step back!

John tries to barge through, but the guards wrestle him to the ground. One guard pushes a rifle tip into John's abdomen. The other crushes his head against the gravel with his boot.

GUARD (CONT'D)

Stop! Stop! We shoot!

John HUFFS through his squashed mouth.

KAYNE (O.S.)

(Chinese)

Hey! He's with me. Let him go,  
please. Please?

The appeal comes from a young Chinese man wearing a suit and carrying a brief case. He is baby-faced KAYNE LIU WONG, mid 20s, innocent, upbeat, but equally smart and insightful. He knows things aren't always as they appear.

The guards glance at each other, then release John and wander back to their posts. Kayne helps him up. John dusts himself off, half his face cut and bleeding from the gravel --

JOHN

Thanks.

Kayne picks up the soiled newspaper. Hands it back to John.

KAYNE

You're the boy's father. Mark  
Welland's father, yes?

JOHN

Who wants to know?

Kayne throws out his hand for a handshake.

KAYNE

My name is Kayne Liu Wong. I  
represent Peter Raines.

JOHN

(ignoring the handshake)  
You're his lawyer?

KAYNE

Yes.

John turns his back and walks. Kayne follows.

JOHN

What are you? Sixteen? Seventeen?

KAYNE

I am twenty-six.

JOHN

Do you know why he did it?

KAYNE

I cannot tell, no.

John stops and fronts Kayne.

JOHN

You can't tell or you don't know?

KAYNE

I do not know. He never speak -

JOHN

Look, Mr Wong, Loo, whatever the hell your name is. Thanks for your help back there. You seem like a nice kid. Just don't waste a career trying to put killers back on the streets, eh? Go stock supermarket shelves or something.

John walks on. Kayne stands firm. Toughens.

KAYNE

My name is Kayne Liu Wong. I am defense lawyer for Peter Ivan Raines. And, I wish to ask you a few questions, Mr Welland.

John rushes back.

JOHN

I saw your client put a gun to my son's head and pull the trigger. Then, I watched my boy slump to the ground like a rag doll. There is nothing Mr Wong, absolutely nothing I will do to help Peter Raines. Do you understand me?

The two eyeball each other, neither giving an inch. Blood from John's scratches starts dripping from his chin. Kayne quits the standoff. Pulls a BUSINESS CARD and HANDKERCHIEF from inside his jacket. Wraps the card in the handkerchief and places it in John's top pocket.

KAYNE

I will be in the lobby bar of Beijing International tonight. Eight o'clock. I know you look for answers, Mr Welland. As I do. I just want to be sure we ask the right questions.

Kayne turns and walks away. John retrieves the handkerchief, removes the card, and wipes his bloodied face.

INT. BEIJING INTERNATIONAL HOTEL - BATHROOM -- EVENING

JOHN stares at the bathroom mirror. Turns his head side-to-side -- half his face clean -- the other half, scratched and bruised. He scoops water from the basin to clean the wounds.

BEDROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

JOHN buttons up a clean shirt. His cell phone RINGS. He grabs it from the side-table and checks the caller ID -- SUSAN -- John hesitates, then throws the phone to the bed. He picks up the battered NEWSPAPER and exits.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. COUNTRY FIELD -- DUSK (PRESENT DAY)

CLOSE ON the unconscious WOMAN's face. We realize it's SUSAN, older and heavier set. Rain washes blood from her forehead. Sounds of GRUNTING, as --

-- the MAN, straddled on top of her belly, pumps Susan's chest. Again, he breathes into her mouth. COUGH! She stirs -- GASPS for breath -- COUGHS again! Her eyes slowly open. She looks up at the Man and peacefully smiles --

SUSAN

Mark?

-- then, drifts back into unconsciousness.

The Man checks her vitals. Stable for now.

He surveys the area. Night is falling and the RUMBLE of thunder reveals a brewing storm. He needs help and needs it fast. The Man climbs back onto the tilted car and peers inside. MAN'S POV. Susan's HANDBAG.

He lowers himself through the car door. RIPS open the handbag and rummages through its contents --

-- a WALLET -- flips it open -- Susan's DRIVER'S LICENSE. CLOSE ON an ORGAN DONOR sticker --

-- finds a CELL PHONE -- battery's dead --

MAN

Shit! Shit!

The Man looks out through the windshield. MAN'S POV. His Jaguar -- headlamps DIMMING -- he forgot to cut the engine!

MAN (CONT'D)

Shit!

He clambers from the car. A quick check of Susan's pulse, then he sprints back to the roadside.

ROADSIDE / MAN'S JAGUAR -- MOMENTS LATER

The MAN climbs up from behind the embankment. The Jaguar's engine, silent.

He darts to the driver's side -- flings open the door -- turns the key -- the engine sluggishly turns over and dies. CLOSE ON the fuel indicator - EMPTY. WHACK! He thumps the steering wheel with his fist.

MAN

Think. Think.

He stares into the distant sky. MAN'S POV. The lights of a landing airplane. Must be ten mile away.

-- A FLASH OF LIGHTNING fills the night sky --

Struck by an idea, the Man leans across and opens the glove box. He flicks onto the passenger seat -- pens, papers, batteries, parking fines -- a TORCH and a CIGARETTE LIGHTER! He grabs the lighter and strikes a flame.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BEIJING INTERNATIONAL HOTEL - LOBBY BAR -- NIGHT

JOHN sips a beer as he studies the newspaper ARTICLE. CLOSE ON the PHOTO of Raines - in b.g. stand several well-dressed men. John senses he knows one of them, but the paper is scuffed and torn. He signals the bartender.

JOHN

Do you have another -

The bartender collects a fresh copy. He does recognize the man - the same man he collided with at the airport - the WHITE-HAIRED MAN! A tap on John's shoulder --

KAYNE

Like to walk, Mr Welland?

EXT. BEIJING CITY STREET -- MOMENTS LATER

JOHN and KAYNE stroll along a bustling city street.

KAYNE

The warrant will be signed tomorrow. Barring appeal, he will be executed in twenty-eight days.

JOHN

How?

KAYNE

Injection.

JOHN

Why do you think he did it, Kayne?



KAYNE

I do not know. I had six meetings with Peter and he did not speak.

JOHN

Why'd you agree to defend him?

KAYNE

I not given choice. I was assigned by the State. They tell me I am ideal because I not lose a case. John, I am lawyer for only nineteen days. I not yet try a case. This is why I feel something is wrong. The arrest was from anonymous tip. There is no investigation. Why?

JOHN

Raines confessed. Why waste time on details?

KAYNE

Is that not why you are here, John? You look for details?

JOHN

I want reasons. There's no doubt he did it, Kayne. You've seen the video evidence. It speaks for itself.

KAYNE

Speak? It does not speak, it scream. So loud, you not hear anything else. No motive. No record. No apparent connection with your son. But the question remains, John. Why bring a boy such long way to China just to commit this horrid crime?

Kayne leads John to an outside table-for-two at a busy alfresco cafe. They take a seat.

JOHN

At the court, some reporter mentioned a name. Falling Gong, or -

KAYNE

Falun Gong. John, you must not speak of this in China or you be arrested, you understand?

JOHN

Why? What is it?

Kayne lowers his voice.

KAYNE

It is a spiritual practice. Combines teachings and meditation for well-being. But, Government ban the practice two months ago. Call it superstition. An evil cult.

JOHN

Is it?

KAYNE

I have Falun Gong friends. They are virtuous people. Believe in truth, compassion, tolerance. But, their principles are seen as threat to communist system. And, the movement expand fast in China, now rumored to have more followers than members of the Communist Party. Make government very nervous. Jiang announce the ban in July and thousands are now in prison. Some say tortured and killed. Every day, more followers protest. Every day, more are taken away.

A female WAITRESS approaches and fills their water glasses.

WAITRESS

Your order, I take now?

KAYNE

(in Chinese)

A few more minutes, please.

She bows and leaves.

JOHN

Why did you call me here, Kayne?

KAYNE

Help me find Peter's son.

JOHN

Peter's son? The passport?

KAYNE

Yes. If we find Lucas Raines, I believe we will find answers.

JOHN

Why don't you find him?

KAYNE

I try. I speak with your American Consulate, Police, State Department, Passport Agency.

(MORE)

KAYNE (CONT'D)

All confirm there is a Lucas Raines, but no-one tells where he is or gives me information. Likely, he is in your country for Mark to have traveled on his passport, but -

JOHN

No. You're out of your mind if you think I'm gonna help Raines.

KAYNE

John, what if Peter is innocent? His execution will be no less of a crime than your son.

John rises from his seat. Seething.

JOHN

Kayne, how innocent is a man that sinks a bullet into a thirteen-year-old boy's head. My son is dead. And, in twenty-eight days, Raines will be too. Twenty-eight days more than he deserves.

John pulls the EVIDENCE CD from his top pocket and throws it across the table.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Grow up, Kayne.

John walks off. Kayne shouts after him --

KAYNE

Explain something, John. If Peter came to Beijing to murder your son, and if Lucas is in the U-S, why did Mark have a return ticket home?

John stops momentarily. Then, continues.

FADE TO BLACK

FADE IN:

EXT. LA CEMETERY -- DAY

SUPER: LOS ANGELES, 3 DAYS LATER

JOHN and SUSAN, dressed in black, stand with friends and family around Mark's burial site. Beside it, Kate's grave. Wind WHISTLES through the trees, muffling the MINISTER's speech as he reads his sermon --

MINISTER

We may question why in our hearts  
and minds, but we are not here for  
answers.

John looks around the gathering -- to his teary wife --

MINISTER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Jesus says, it's not the will of our  
Father that one of these little ones  
should perish. God is not to blame.

JOHN'S POV. Masked by shadows of distant trees, a mysterious  
OBSERVER looks on. In b.g., a parked BLACK MERCEDES with  
dark tinted windows.

MINISTER (CONT'D)

Instead, we turn to our Father,  
remembering that He too gave up His  
own son. We ask for His comfort and  
grace to be upon us. Let us pray.

The congregation bow their heads. John's eyes remain on the  
curious guest. A wind gust scatters the trees and sunlight  
strikes the observer's face - the WHITE-HAIRED MAN!

John wrestles with giving chase. Susan notes the distraction  
and tugs at his sleeve. Reluctantly, John bows his head.

MINISTER (CONT'D)

Our loving God, comfort us and breathe  
peace into our pained hearts. We  
thank you for Mark's short time with  
us, and pray that you have received  
him and that you will keep him, now  
and forever. Amen.

John looks up. The White-Haired Man, vanished. John sweeps  
his head around, but the man and the Mercedes are gone.

INT. ITALIAN CAFE -- NIGHT

JOHN sits with SUSAN and SUSAN'S PARENTS in a busy Italian  
cafe. BILL and BERNICE, late 60s, hard-working country folk  
and by-the-Good-book Christians. John pokes and prods at a  
full plate of uneaten risotto. Susan watches with concern.

BILL

Fixin' that road's been shelved again.  
Can't stop the mud slides by pourin'  
tar on the road, they say. Now,  
they're talkin' 'bout building some  
fancy new freeway.

BERNICE

They've been talking about it for years, Bill.

SUSAN

(to John)

So, who was he?

JOHN

Who?

SUSAN

The man at the cemetery?

JOHN

What are you talking about?

BERNICE

Yes, what man, dear?

SUSAN

The man watching from the other side of the park, John. Who was he?

JOHN

I don't know. Didn't see him.

John refuses to look up.

SUSAN

Why are you lying to me, John? What is it you're not telling me? Is this still about Peter Raines?

Bill and Bernice exchange a glance. John looks up --

JOHN

We just buried our son. Bad day. Can we just eat?

John takes a mouthful of cold food.

BILL

I think we all need to just -

SUSAN

I can't eat, John. I haven't eaten for a week, but how would you know? You don't seem to care -

BERNICE

Sweetheart -

SUSAN

You won't talk to me. You don't even seem to be grieving. Just tell me. What is it? What's going on?

JOHN

Susan. Please. Just drop it.

SUSAN

No, I won't. You're scaring me,  
John. Was that man involved -

John pushes aside his plate -- SLAMS his fork to the table --  
a WINE GLASS topples and SMASHES to the floor --

JOHN

Jesus Christ, forget it, alright!

A HUSH falls on the cafe. PATRONS turn to watch. Bill and  
Bernice glare at John, as Susan beams a look of disgust.

SUSAN

You never acted like this when we  
lost Katherine -

JOHN

(shouting)

Damn it, Susan, Mark was never lost,  
he was stolen! Don't you get it?  
Killed in cold fucking blood!

John throws his napkin to the table. Jumps to his feet and  
bolts from the cafe. Susan stands and cries out --

SUSAN

Who are you?

She falls to the floor sobbing, her dress soaking up the  
spilt wine. Her parents drop and comfort her.

OUTSIDE

JOHN stops beyond the cafe's glass doors. Looks back at the  
scene inside. BILL looks up. Disapproving. John avoids  
eye contact and walks away.

INT. PHONE BOOTH - MOMENTS LATER

JOHN grabs a DIRECTORY. Filled with purpose, he flicks  
through the pages of listings and finds --

-- RAINES, P. 1034 JACARANDA ST, WEST HILLS --

EXT. RAINES' APARTMENT COMPLEX -- LATER

JOHN exits a cab. Looks up at the run-down, circa 60s  
apartment building. He climbs the stepped terrace and scans  
the intercom for Raines' apartment number. INTO VIEW, a  
BURLY WOMAN, African American, weighed down with shopping  
bags and a screaming INFANT, climbs the stairs.

## BURLY WOMAN

Hey! Would you mind, sonny?

John reaches out for her bags. Instead, she drops the infant into his arms. She unlocks the door and John follows her wide frame through the doorway.

HALLWAY -- MOMENTS LATER

Wallpaper peeling from walls. Stained carpets. The crime scene TAPE across Raines' door doesn't seem out-of-place. JOHN checks the handle. Locked, but the frame is split. It's been forced before. John scans for company, then pushes his weight against the door. Harder. The lock gives.

INT. RAINES' APARTMENT

JOHN flicks the light switch. Power's cut. JOHN'S POV. His eyes slowly adjust to the darkness, REVEALING the apartment's been ransacked.

John sidesteps toppled furniture and scattered books. Reaches an old-style kitchen. Rummages through the cupboards and finds a LIGHTER -- strikes a flame -- takes a step --

-- CRACK! Glass shatters under foot --

JOHN'S POV. Looking down, a framed PHOTO of Peter Raines fishing with a young boy. John picks up the frame. The boy looks remarkably like Mark. Lucas, perhaps? He touches the boy's face, removes the photo and slips it into his pocket.

RAINES' BEDROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

JOHN sits at a small desk and ignites a CANDLE in a dish on the desk corner. Most of the desk's contents have been taken. A keyboard, all that remains of a computer.

John searches the drawers. Flicks through spared papers. Reaches the bottom drawer. Locked. He jimmy's out the drawer above and sees the locked drawer is jammed with files. One-by-one, he pulls out the documents and scans them. INTO VIEW, the burning candle -- time passes --

MATCH DISSOLVE TO:

-- the candle burns to within an inch of the CANDLE DISH --

JOHN finishes reading the last file and tosses it aside. He stares at the flickering candle. CLOSE ON a WAX DROPLET spilling over the top -- down the side -- into a pool of wax in the dish. John notices a folded piece of paper beneath the candle, encased in the cooling wax.

John tries to pry the candle from the dish. The fix is too strong. He SMASHES it across the edge of the desk. CRACK! The candle and dish break apart --

Blackness. John reignites the lighter. Gently, peels the NOTEPAPER from the wax and unfolds it. Handwriting reads --

-- MIAO-SHAN - All,32 B37,51 Dr3,16 --

And, a printed monogram in the corner, addressed to --

-- DR RICHARD FEWSTER, NORTHRIDGE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL --

The lighter goes out. John shakes it and strikes again. No luck. He pockets the notepaper and clambers for the door. Blinded, he knocks over a BOOKSHELF -- THUD! THUD! THUD! Books cascade to the floor --

-- the bedroom light flicks on -- WHACK! John is knocked off his feet. He tries to right himself, when the voice of an old lady comes from behind --

SHELBY (O.S.)

Don't move, fella. Ya hear! Don't even think of movin'.

John freezes. The old lady's breathing quickens.

SHELBY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Okay, put your hands on ya head mister. Nice and easy, like. I've got ya this time. I've got ya.

John struggles to his knees. Puts his hands on his head.

JOHN

Ma'am, I've never -

In a dress mirror, John sees the old lady propped up in a wheelchair. She is SHELBY FARROW, toothless and wretched, wearing milk-bottle glasses and worn-out clothes. Her arms tremble as she fights to hold up a heavy TWIN-BARRELED RIFLE pointed at John. She begins to GASP --

SHELBY

Oh. Chompin' chestnuts.

-- and the rifle THUDS to the floor. She raises a finger, stealing a few seconds to gather her breath.

SHELBY (CONT'D)

Wait. Wait a cotton-pickin' minute. I know you. You're that fella been on the news. Welling, yeah?

JOHN

Welland. Yes, ma'am.

SHELBY

Your boy? Max, yeah?



JOHN

Mark. Yes, ma'am.

SHELBY

Dreadful thing. Just dreadful.  
But, I'll tell ya somethin', sonny.  
Sure as my name is Shelby Farrow,  
they got the wrong man. Ain't no  
way it was Petie. He's a good boy,  
ya hear.

SHELBY'S KITCHEN -- MOMENTS LATER

JOHN sits with SHELBY at her art deco kitchen table,  
complemented by art deco appliances, art deco cupboards and  
art deco curtains. They share tea and art deco cake.

SHELBY

He was a grand help to an old wretch  
like me. Would do my shoppin', fix  
things, bring meals from the Red  
Cross. He was a volunteer, ya know.  
Yip, a real darlin' man.

John nods, humors her with a smile.

SHELBY (CONT'D)

But after his wife died, he just  
wasn't the same. And, with little  
Luke being sick'n all -

JOHN

Well, that's kind of why I'm here  
ma'am. You say he was sick?

SHELBY

Always sick. In and out of hospital  
all the time. I never knew what was  
wrong. Didn't want to ask. They  
coped for a while, but when Jenny  
died, Petie and Luke just disappeared.  
The neighbors say Petie called here  
at nights, but I never saw him.

JOHN

Do you know where Lucas is?

SHELBY

Not a clue, dear. Haven't seen the  
little angel in months.

JOHN

Before. In Peter's apartment. You  
said I've got you this time. What  
did you mean, 'this time'?

SHELBY

I thought you were the same fella  
that snitched Petie's place a few  
days back. Found 'im snoopin' around.  
I called the cops, but they ain't  
too quick respondin' to calls round  
'ere anymore. Don't know if they  
got 'im. Doubt they did.

JOHN

Did you see what he looked like?

SHELBY

It was dark. And, my eyes aren't  
much chop anymore. But, he wasn't  
from 'ere. A yella, I think.

John draws the newspaper ARTICLE from his pocket. Passes it  
over and points out the White-Haired Man.

JOHN

Could this be him?

Oddly, she removes her glasses for a closer look.

SHELBY

Yeah, could be. I remember he had  
blonde hair. Yeah, could be right.  
That could be him.

EXT. RAINES' APARTMENT COMPLEX -- LATER

JOHN walks from the apartment building and continues down  
the street. Parked in b.g., the ominous BLACK MERCEDES.  
The driver's door opens --

INT. THE WELLANDS' HOME -- LATER THAT NIGHT

SUSAN rests on the couch, tears in her eyes. BERNICE offers  
a tissue, as the front door latch CLICKS open. JOHN enters.

SUSAN

Go, John. Just go away.

JOHN

Sue, we need to talk.

SUSAN

I don't want to hear it. You  
abandoned me. The day our son was  
buried, you abandoned me. What kind  
of man does that, John?

Enter BILL from the kitchen, two cups in hand.

JOHN

Susan, you wanted me to tell you?  
I'm telling you. There's more going  
on here. The man at the cemetery?  
I've seen him before. And, Raines?  
Raines has a son.

John approaches his wife. Pulls the PHOTO of Lucas from his pocket and shows it to her. She looks. Confused. John then reveals the stolen NOTEPAPER --

JOHN (CONT'D)

Look at the name, Sue. It's Chinese.

SUSAN

Where did you get these?

John's silence gives up his source. Susan sweeps away his hand, spilling the paper and photo to the floor.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

What? You're breaking into people's  
houses now? What's wrong with you?  
He's dead, John! Mark's dead!  
Nothing you do will bring him back.  
Why can't you just accept it?

JOHN

We need to know why -

Susan jumps to her feet and pushes John away.

SUSAN

No. You need to know why. What I  
need is a husband who's not on some  
wild vendetta trying to get himself  
killed. I've lost my daughter.  
I've lost my son. And, now I've  
lost my husband. How is it, you  
can't see that, John? How? How?

Susan falls back to the couch, sobbing. John looks at his distraught wife -- then, Bernice -- then, Bill. He kneels down and collects the notepaper and photo from the floor.

JOHN

You don't understand.

SUE

That's just it, John. I don't need  
to understand.

MAIN BEDROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

JOHN packs his overnight bag. Enter BILL. John continues.

BILL

Son, none of us can be expected to understand this. It's just a part of God's plan.

JOHN

How can you still believe, Bill.

BILL

Do you think this is what Mark would have wanted? Or, Katherine? To abandon their mother.

John zips up his bag and pushes past.

JOHN

I'm sorry.

BACK TO LIVING ROOM

SUSAN on the couch, BERNICE at her side. JOHN descends the stairs, bag and jacket over his shoulder. BILL follows and delivers a shake of the head. John stops and stares at his wife. Concerned, but determined. A solemn moment. He walks to the front door and exits. Susan drops her head.

SUSAN

He's all I have left, Mom.

EXT. NEARBY BEST WESTERN HOTEL -- SOON AFTER

JOHN SLAMS shut a taxi door. The taxi drives off as John carries his bag and jacket towards reception.

ESTABLISHING SHOT. NORTHRIDGE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL -- MORNING

Hospital's main entrance. INTO VIEW, the bulkhead sign.

RENAL WARD -- MOMENTS LATER

JOHN stops at a junction of corridors. Looks around. Lost.

NURSE (O.S.)

Sir? Can I help you?

John turns. A nurses' station. The voice comes from a friendly NURSE, heavy-set, not blessed with looks.

JOHN

I'm trying to find a doctor here, a Richard Fewster?

NURSE

I'm sorry, sir. He doesn't consult  
Friday mornings. Would you like to  
make an appointment for next week?

In b.g., a SEXY NURSE flirts with an athletic man dressed in  
tennis apparel and carrying a sports bag and racquet.

JOHN

Do you know where I can find him?  
It's urgent.

NURSE

Regrettably sir, he's unavailable.  
Can we make a time -

The 'athlete' interrupts. He is DR RICHARD FEWSTER, 40s,  
good-looking, cool and charismatic. His style is fast cars  
and fast women. The consummate playboy. But, you'll never  
find a more accomplished doctor.

RICHARD

It's okay, Margaret. What can I do  
for you, sir?

JOHN

You're Doctor Fewster?

RICHARD

I am.

JOHN

(shaking hands)  
John Welland.

RICHARD

Welland? I've seen you in the - oh,  
yes, your son - I'm truly sorry.  
How can I help you?

JOHN

A few minutes of your time?

Richard checks his watch. Turns to the flirtatious nurse.

RICHARD

Sweetheart, call the club and let  
them know I'll be another half hour.

She replies with a sexy smile.

RICHARD'S OFFICE -- MOMENTS LATER

RICHARD seats JOHN at a large antique desk. The office is  
spacious and opulent. Audio visual equipment, mini-bar, and  
a floor-to-ceiling library of books, videos and cd's.

JOHN'S POV. A wall plastered with CERTIFICATES and AWARDS. Tighten focus to the corner of Richard's desk. A spectacular TROPHY featuring a sculpted crystal 'hand holding a scalpel'. CLOSE ON the inscription --

-- RECOGNITION OF EXCELLENCE IN TRANSPLANT SURGERY, MAYO CLINIC --

Richard drops his bag and racquet on the desk and takes his seat. John's eye drawn to a BLACK EYE-PATCH twisted around the racquet's handle.

JOHN  
Where do you play?

RICHARD  
(taking a seat)  
Physicals Tennis Club. Corner of Second and Roosevelt. Well, they call it a tennis club. Really, it's more like a social playground for desperate doctors and neglected housewives. I go in this getup every Friday morning and all I ever seem to exercise are pick-up lines.

Richard leans back in his chair. We note a slight squint in his left eye.

RICHARD (CONT'D)  
So, how can I be of assistance?

JOHN  
I'm hoping you can tell me your connection with Peter Raines?

RICHARD  
Well, there's no real connection. I know he worked here. Downstairs, I'm told. A lab technician.

JOHN  
And, do you know of anyone called Miao-Shan?

RICHARD  
Miao-Shan? Chinese, is he? She? Can't say I have.

John slides the stolen NOTEPAPER across Richard's desk.

JOHN  
This was found in Peter Raines' apartment.

Richard takes a look. He pulls a plastic-wrapped note-pad from his draw and flicks it in front of John.

RICHARD

Drug companies dump hundreds of these on my doorstep every year. I hand them out like aspirin. Anyone could have given it to Mr Raines. And, certainly, anyone could have written on it.

John points to a handwritten PRESCRIPTION on the desk --

JOHN

In your handwriting, doctor?

-- the writing is similar on both the prescription and notepaper, sharing a unique swirl on the LETTER 'M'.

Richard glares at John. Caught squarely in a lie, he rips the monogram from the corner of the notepaper and hands John the remaining piece. Then, rises from his chair.

RICHARD

There's something you'd better see.

PASSAGEWAY -- MOMENTS LATER

RICHARD hands JOHN a surgical MASK as they walk the corridor.

RICHARD

This hospital's gone to great lengths to ensure the secrecy of what I'm about to show you. You're to tell no-one.

Richard pushes through a set of swinging doors into --

INTENSIVE CARE UNIT (ICU)

-- critical patients, rushing staff, BEEPING monitors and GASPING respirators. RICHARD leads JOHN to a cubicle screened by privacy curtains. They raise their MASKS and slip inside --

INTO VIEW, a hospital bed where a teenage boy lies unconscious amid a tangle of wires and tubes. Beside him, various monitors and a working KIDNEY DIALYSIS MACHINE.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

John, meet Luke Raines.

John is taken aback. 14 y.o. LUCAS RAINES, though gaunt and pale, bears an uncanny resemblance to Mark.

JOHN

Raines' son. What's wrong with him?

RICHARD

Luke has a condition called glomerulonephritis. Kidney failure.

JOHN

How serious?

RICHARD

Turned critical about a month ago.  
He has a few weeks. Days, maybe.

JOHN

You're his surgeon?

RICHARD

No. I don't operate anymore. I'm  
just his physician now.

JOHN

Can't you do anything? Transplant?

RICHARD

We can. We did. Luke and his mother  
were in a car accident two and a  
half years ago. Luke pulled through,  
but not his mother. We transplanted,  
but the organ turned septic from  
injuries sustained in the accident.  
It had to be removed.

JOHN

He can't have another?

RICHARD

No donors, John. Average waiting  
time's six years, and that's for  
patients with common tissue types.  
Young Luke is far from common.

John returns a puzzled glance.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

His tissue type is extremely rare.

JOHN

The code on the note?

RICHARD

Yes. Complicated further by the  
number of transfusions he had after  
the accident. A donor organ needs  
to be virtually identical.

John moves closer to the boy. CLOSE ON Lucas's upper arm -  
a blood-filled tube protrudes from a snaking FISTULA implanted  
beneath the skin.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

John, for many patients, the waiting  
time's a lifetime.

(MORE)



RICHARD (CONT'D)

They never get a chance at a donor organ. Families get desperate.

John knows only too well.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Look, I don't know anything about your son, but I might have some idea why Peter was in China.

John turns to Richard.

HOSPITAL GARDENS -- MOMENTS LATER

RICHARD and JOHN stroll along a pathway flanked by manicured lawns and colorful gardens. In b.g., children, some in hospital gowns, frolic in a playground.

RICHARD

The hospital knows nothing about this. And, if anyone asks, I'll deny all knowledge of it.

John nods.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

The name on the note. I know who it is. Miao-Shan is an organ broker.

JOHN

A what?

RICHARD

He arranges transplants on the Chinese black market. I was speaking at a conference in Shanghai two years ago and a colleague passed on the contact. To be frank, I find the whole notion of buying and selling body parts quite offensive, but for some reason I kept it. Certainly, never thought I'd use it. But, seeing what Peter had gone through, losing his wife, now his son, I had to do something.

JOHN

Where is this Miao-Shan?

RICHARD

I don't know. Nobody knows. And, for the sake of my conscience, I don't want to know. I just gave Peter the name and told him that's all I could do. But, it seems a plausible reason why he would have been in Beijing.

JOHN

But, Lucas was here?

RICHARD

Yes. And, far too ill to travel. But John, a kidney can travel. Up to twenty hours on ice. It could make it here from Beijing.

JOHN

You'd transplant it?

RICHARD

Sure.

JOHN

Even knowing the source?

RICHARD

You mean, not knowing the source. I wouldn't ask questions. Maybe, some license in the paperwork, but there's no way I'd let a healthy organ go to waste.

Richard stops. Glances at his watch.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. There's really nothing more I can tell you, John.

JOHN

One last thing. You say Raines worked here in the labs. He did blood tests? Tissue tests?

RICHARD

Amongst other things. Sorry, John. I really must go.

Richard starts heading back. John shouts after him --

JOHN

How do I contact Miao-Shan?

Richard turns. Stalls.

RICHARD

You know, Peter called me just before he was arrested. He was terrified, John. Scared of something happening to Luke. I know you don't care about Peter. That, I can understand. But for Luke's sake, if you're looking for the rapids, don't make too many waves of your own.

Richard walks on. John pulls out the NOTEPAPER. CLOSE ON the CODE. He slips the note into his wallet and draws out a business card for --

-- DR WAYNE CAREY, FAMILY DOCTOR --

INT. LIBRARY -- LATER

JOHN sits in a private booth. On the desk, opened BOOKS on organ transplantation, and a COMPUTER. John googles --

-- HUMAN ORGANS, CHINA --

-- results appear -- CHINA'S TRANSPLANT BUSINESS BOOMS -- AMERICANS BUYING CHINESE BODY PARTS -- DO YOU NEED AN ORGAN TRANSPLANT? -- John clicks here --

A webpage written in English and Chinese. CLOSE ON texts -- ORIENT ORGAN NETWORK -- DONORS FOUND IMMEDIATELY -- TRANSPLANT WITHIN 2 WEEKS -- KIDNEY US\$50,000 -- LIVER US\$80,000 -- LIVER-KIDNEY US\$120,000 -- HEART US\$100,000 -- LUNG US\$110,000 -- HEART-LUNG US\$170,000 -- CORNEA \$US20,000 --

John's cell RINGS. He fumbles for it under the books --

JOHN

John Welland.

ALISON (O.S.)

John, it's Alison from Doctor Carey's office. I've got Mark's H-L-A code.

John whips out the stolen NOTEPAPER. Grabs a pen and copies down the code under Lucas's --

ALISON (O.S.) (CONT'D)

It's A-Eleven-Thirty-Two  
(John stops writing)  
B-Thirty-Seven-Fifty-One D-R-Three-Sixteen. Did you get all of that?

John stares at the code. Mark and Lucas, a perfect match.

ALISON (O.S.) (CONT'D)

John?

JOHN

Yeah, got it. Thanks, Alison.

John drops the phone and returns to the computer screen. Returns to the SEARCH RESULTS --

-- INSIDER TELLS OF CHINA'S SHAME -- WHISTLE-BLOWER AIDS LOS ANGELES FBI -- John clicks the link --

JOHN (CONT'D)

(whispers to himself)

Former Chinese doctor, George Ling, recently assisted Los Angeles F-B-I in a local sting operation resulting in the arrests of two men, both charged with the illegal brokering of human organs on China's black market. Ling, who was imprisoned in China after speaking out on the illegal organ trade, escaped and defected to the United States two years ago.

(looking up)

He's here.

EXT. GEORGE LING'S HOUSE -- LATER

JOHN rings the doorbell of a narrow-fronted home. Moments later, a voice is heard from inside --

GEORGE (O.S.)

Coming. Coming. Coming.

The door opens. John is greeted by an elderly Chinese man wearing a traditional collarless shirt and a Fu Manchu moustache. He is GEORGE LING, worldly and wise. He tries hard to grasp the lighter side of life, but his cheeky wit is a thin disguise for a regretful and homesick heart.

JOHN

Dr Ling?

GEORGE

Mr Ling, yes.

JOHN

My name is John Welland, sir.

GEORGE

I know who you are.

JOHN

Sir, I'm here because -

GEORGE

And, I know why you here.

INSIDE -- MOMENTS LATER

GEORGE leads JOHN through a series of dark rooms. A smoky haze hangs from burning oils and incense. Walls are plastered with newspaper clippings. The floor, hidden beneath stacks of magazines, books and journals.

GEORGE

I follow your story with interest,  
Mr Welland. The question you ask is  
why Mr Raines in China, yes?

JOHN

I think I know.

John SNIFFLES from the potent oils.

GEORGE

Yes. Yes. Yes. You sniff something.

George CHUCKLES to himself as he exits a rusty old door into --

GEORGE'S BACK GARDEN --

-- more like a Kingdom. A fairy-tale scape of manicured  
plants and herbs, Chinese statues and water features. John  
sweeps his head around, amazed. The property seems boundless.

JOHN

You did all of this?

GEORGE

Yes. It is like my home.

George squats and picks two leaves from a herbal plant. He  
pokes one in his own mouth, and the other into John's.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Chew. Chew. Chew. So, tell me Mr  
Welland, who is sick?

JOHN

(choking on the leaf)  
Peter Raines' son. How did you know?

GEORGE

I Chinese. Know everything. Heart?  
Liver? Kidneys?

JOHN

Kidneys.

They walk a path alongside a brook streaming with goldfish.

GEORGE

What brings you here?

John pulls out the stolen NOTEPAPER. Hands it to George.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Ah, Miao-Shan. Very, very dangerous.  
One of Trade's best.

JOHN

Trade?

GEORGE

Tissue code is Raines boy?

JOHN

And, my son's.

GEORGE

It will be rare.

JOHN

So, I'm told.

GEORGE

Reason why Mr Raines need your son.

JOHN

Yes, but why does he need an organ broker if he already has an organ?

GEORGE

Better question is why he need organ if he already have organ broker? Broker make money selling organ, not from surgery. But, unlikely Miao-Shan could supply kidney with rare tissue type.

JOHN

So, Raines found the organ himself. If that's the case, why did he even need the broker?

GEORGE

Still need illegal surgery to remove organ. Too difficult in United States. Brokers access China's black-market transplant hospitals. Military hospitals. Much easier.

JOHN

That's why he used Miao-Shan.

GEORGE

Perhaps. Or, perhaps Miao-Shan use Mr Raines?

John looks confused.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Something rare also very precious, Mr Welland. Broker, like Miao-Shan, make very large profit on organs with rare tissue type.

JOHN

What are you saying? You don't think Raines did this?

GEORGE

If you here, Mr Welland, you not look for who pull the trigger. You look for who load the gun.

JOHN

Who?

GEORGE

The one who stand to gain most and risk least. The parasite preying on Mr Raines' desperation.

JOHN

The broker?

GEORGE

The Trade, Mr Welland.

George leads John across a small bridge to an ornate Chinese hut. They sit at a table setting where, mysteriously, two China cups and a steaming teapot await.

JOHN

What is the Trade, Mr Ling?

GEORGE

(pouring the tea)

China's dirty secret. Imagine, Mr Welland. Being able to buy human organs like second-hand cars. Kidney, heart, lung. No wait. Always supply.

JOHN

Supply from where?

GEORGE

Not where, Mr Welland. Who. Human resource. Hidden behind concrete wall, wire fence and iron bar.

JOHN

Prisoners?

-- FLASH -- RAINES, hands and feet shackled, violently forced to sit on a wooden chair by two PRISON GUARDS.

GEORGE

Yes. They harvest and sell organs from executed prisoners.

JOHN

Who's they?

GEORGE

A cartel of doctors, medical executives, corrupt justice and prison official. Organ trade, very big business. When China change to market economy, Government stop funding health. The Trade start as revenue source just to keep hospital door open. But, now it worth millions. Make many people wealthy. They fill prison with petty thief, political dissident, innocent people tortured to confess. Execute simply to meet demand. In single year, there more people executed in China than rest of world combined.

-- FLASH -- RAINES is STRUCK across the face with a gun. He sits at a desk, an unsigned confession and pen close by.

JOHN

Falun Gong?

GEORGE

In past, many prisoner have disease or from poor family. Organs not so good. But, Falun Gong people live very healthy lifestyle. Organs very good quality. Demand higher price.

JOHN

That's genocide.

GEORGE

Indeed.

JOHN

But, what about blood types? Tissue matches?

-- FLASH -- RAINES, face cut and bruised, has blood taken from his arm by a gray-gowned prison DOCTOR.

GEORGE

All new prisoners given medical examination with blood test. They not told why. When broker has client, cartel matches donor from database. Execution then timed with surgery in Chinese transplant hospital.

JOHN

So, how were you involved?

GEORGE

I was surgeon. Work in vans.

(MORE)



GEORGE (CONT'D)

Called death vans in China. We wait for executed prisoner outside camps, or wait outside courtrooms and execute prisoner ourselves. Then, we harvest required tissues and -

JOHN

Deliver the organs to the hospitals?

GEORGE

And, remains to crematorium. Evidence destroyed immediately.

JOHN

Why'd you blow the whistle?

George stalls. A look of horror sweeps across his face. We sense a shocking secret.

GEORGE

I not proud of what I did, Mr Welland.

JOHN

Then, help me find Miao-Shan.

GEORGE

Before you embark on a journey of revenge, dig two graves. Confucius.

JOHN

Not revenge, Mr Ling. Justice.

GEORGE

Ever been game fishing, Mr Welland?

John shakes his head.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Need big hooks to catch big fish.

JOHN

I'll find the hooks.

GEORGE

No. These hooks too big even for your esteemed F-B-I.

JOHN

I read the F-B-I caught two brokers.

GEORGE

And, lost two agents, Mr Welland. Two of F-B-I's best. Killed by one that got away. Miao-Shan.

JOHN

I'll find him with or without your help, Mr Ling.

George sweeps the teacup from John's hand -- it SMASHES to the ground --

GEORGE

Hand quicker than eye. You seek. Miao-Shan find. And, you die. It not enough to learn the truth. You must learn from the truth, Mr Welland. Peace come from understanding, not from vengeance.

John stares at the broken cup. Rises from his seat.

JOHN

You mean justice, Mr Ling. I see there's nothing more to discuss here. I thank you for your time.

George bows his head. John walks, then turns back.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Are you at peace, Mr Ling? Because, if peace comes from understanding as you say. And, you claim to know everything. Why do I feel like I just had a conversation with a man still trapped in a death van?

George remains silent as John departs.

INT. JOHN'S HOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT

JOHN, shoes off, lies propped up on his bed reading a MENU while fidgeting with the TOY BASEBALL from his sample bag. No appetite, he puts the menu aside. Picks up the remote and flicks on the TV -- A NEWS REPORT --

NEWSREADER (O.S.)

Most political analysts agree that a failure to reach the W-T-O agreement with China would result in a regression of Beijing's reform efforts and severely damage China's relations with the U-S.

Enough of China. John turns off the TV. Drops the baseball and pulls his WALLET from his pocket. Flips it open. One side, his driver's license, the other, a PHOTO OF SUSAN.

EXT. THE WELLANDS' HOME - FRONT PORCH -- EARLY MORNING

SUSAN stands in the doorway, bedraggled, dressed in a night-robe. BERNICE on the porch, carrying her handbag. In the b.g., BILL packs a suitcase into an old Ford pick-up.

BERNICE

I still think we should stay a few more days.

SUSAN

Mom, I just need to be alone.

BERNICE

Well, I don't understand it.

Bernice pulls a book from her handbag. Susan sees the BIBLE, book-marked throughout with notes and tags.

SUSAN

Mom -

BERNICE

Susan, please.

SUSAN

Mom, we've been over this.

BERNICE

I know. I just think - anyway, you know what I think.

She places the Bible in Susan's hand. Kisses her cheek.

BERNICE (CONT'D)

Call if you need anything. We love you, sweetheart.

SUSAN

Love you too, Mom.

INT. NORTHRIDGE MEMORIAL PARKING LOT -- CONTINUOUS

JOHN sits in his parked CAR, door open. Dials his cell. Watches the sun rise behind a nearby APARTMENT BLOCK.

INT. KAYNE'S OFFICE -- NIGHT

KAYNE, asleep at his cluttered desk. His phone RINGS. Startled, he knocks over a stack of files. Grabs the phone.

KAYNE

Ni hao. Ni hao. John?

INTERCUT between JOHN'S CAR and KAYNE'S OFFICE.

JOHN

Kayne, you were right. I found Lucas.  
He's in a hospital here in L-A.  
What do you know about the Trade?

KAYNE

I know enough. Enough to not know  
any more, if you understand.

JOHN

It seems Raines was in contact with  
one of the Trade's brokers, someone  
called Miao-Shan.

KAYNE

(knowingly)  
Miao-Shan.

JOHN

You know him?

KAYNE

John, Miao-Shan is a character of  
Chinese folklore. Goddess of Mercy  
and Healing, Kuan Yin.

JOHN

Goddess. A she.

KAYNE

Yes. She is called the one who hears  
the cries of the world.

RICHARD drives past in a midnight blue PORSCHE. License  
plate -- K-D-N-E --

KAYNE (CONT'D)

As story goes, she was born youngest  
of three daughters to -

JOHN

Kayne, gotta go.

The line disconnects. Kayne left hanging.

KAYNE

Americans.

BACK TO PARKING LOT -- MOMENTS LATER

BLIP! BLIP! RICHARD locks his Porsche with the key remote.  
Briefcase in hand, he turns -- eye-to-eye with JOHN --

JOHN

How's the tennis game, doc?

RICHARD  
Excuse me, John.

Richard steps across. John follows.

JOHN  
How do I contact Miao-Shan?

RICHARD  
You don't.

JOHN  
How did Raines?

RICHARD  
Trust me, John. This is one party  
you don't want to crash.

Richard brushes past. John shouts after him --

JOHN  
I'm sure you'll be fine.

Richard stops.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
I mean, you'll deny all knowledge,  
right? Isn't that what you said?

Richard turns and casts an evil eye.

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE -- MOMENTS LATER

RICHARD scribbles on one of his notepads. Tears out the  
NOTE and rips away the corner monogram.

RICHARD  
You've no idea what kind of people  
you're dealing with.

He slides the paper across the desk to JOHN.

JOHN  
You knew where the organs came from.

RICHARD  
You're so fucking naive, John. Tell  
me you wouldn't sacrifice the life  
of Mark's killer for even ten more  
minutes with your son?

John says nothing. He grabs the note and leaves.

INT. JOHN'S HOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT

JOHN sits at a small desk, LAPTOP opened in front. He pulls Richard's NOTE from his wallet, and drops the wallet [opened] onto the desk. John stares at the note. Fidgets with his TOY BASEBALL. A SHUFFLING sound outside -- a yellow envelope slips underneath the door --

John drops the baseball, walks over and collects the envelope --

-- ATTENTION JOHN WELLAND - URGENT & CONFIDENTIAL --

-- he checks outside the door. No-one.

John resumes his seat and tears open the envelope. Empties its contents onto the desk, including a PROFILE, PASSPORT, and SIM CARD. His cell phone RINGS. John answers --

GEORGE (O.S.)

Getting Miao-Shan will change nothing.

JOHN

Getting Miao-Shan is a start.

GEORGE (O.S.)

No. It only job vacancy. Someone take their place. Maybe someone more ruthless than Miao-Shan. You cannot stop supply. Trade stop only when you stop demand.

JOHN

How?

GEORGE (O.S.)

Less disease. Better treatment. More donors. More consenting donors.

John glances at his DRIVER'S LICENSE. No donor sticker.

JOHN

Why'd you send me this stuff, George?

John picks up the SIM CARD and starts fidgeting again.

GEORGE (O.S.)

Because, I only one who stop you getting killed. You now have Miao-Shan's email address, yes?

JOHN

How did you know?

GEORGE (O.S.)

I Chinese. Know -

JOHN

Everything, I get it. So, what now?

GEORGE (O.S.)

We go fishing, Mr Welland.

SERIES OF SHOTS as George charts the course.

John opens the passport. His photo, but the citizen's name reads -- SIMON TIMOTHY FOREST --

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

Bait is Simon Forest. Thirty-nine.  
Widowed father of two boys. Daniel,  
five, and Damien, seven.

John picks up the inch-thick profile. The title page reads --  
BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILE : SIMON TIMOTHY FOREST (CLASSIFIED) --  
turns a page -- PERSONAL DETAILS -- MEDICAL CONDITIONS :  
GLOMERULONEPHRITIS -- flicks through -- CREDIT CARD ACCOUNTS --  
UTILITY BILLS -- DENTAL RECORDS -- OVERDUE LIBRARY BOOKS --

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

Last year you diagnosed with kidney  
failure. Dialyze four times every  
week. But, hospital visits, taking  
care of boys, your business. You  
have no time. Health is suffering.  
Work suffering. Medical bills adding  
up. You in trouble. Desperate.

John opens HOTMAIL on his laptop. Copies from the profile --  
SIMONFOREST59@HOTMAIL.COM -- then, a PASSWORD which launches  
the account. Clicks the DRAFTS mailbox, and an email titled --  
FOR URGENT ATTENTION OF MIAO-SHAN -- highlight email texts --  
MIAO-SHAN, PLEASE HELP -- KIDNEY TRANSPLANT -- HLA A1,2 B7,8  
Dr3,4 -- WILL TRAVEL ANYWHERE -- IN DESPERATION, SIMON FOREST --

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

You do whatever it take to get well.  
Pay whatever cost. This what Miao-  
Shan want to hear. You email. Miao-  
Shan will call. This how it work.

JOHN (V.O.)

How long before Miao-Shan replies?

GEORGE (V.O.)

Simon Forest given common tissue  
type. Reply will come quickly.  
Change SIM card in phone and memorize  
profile. Read. Read. Read. If  
Miao-Shan smell something fishy,  
fisherman become the fish.

John copies Miao-Shan's email address from the NOTE into the  
EMAIL TO: field. Tracks the cursor to the SEND button.

John procrastinates. Almost unconsciously, swaps SIM CARDS in his phone without shifting his eyes from the SEND button.

JOHN (V.O.)  
How did you arrange all this?

GEORGE (V.O.)  
Let's just say your F-B-I owe George Ling a few thousand favors.

John finally commits himself. Clicks SEND.

BACK TO

John drops the SIM CARD to the desk. Again, starts fidgeting with the toy baseball.

JOHN  
George, what happened in China? Why did you speak out?

An empty silence. John stops playing with the ball.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
George?

Tighten on John's face. Follow his reaction.

GEORGE (O.S.)  
One day, body of woman brought to my van. She very young. Just girl really. I to remove eyes and skin, but very hard for me. She very pretty. Take eyes first. Always eyes first. Not want them to see what I do. Then, her skin -  
(stumbles)  
I start to cut from her legs - three cuts - she -

George stops.

JOHN  
What George?

Silence. John's eyes fill with horror.

GEORGE (O.S.)  
Not a day go by, Mr Welland, I don't hear her screams.

George hangs up. John drops his head and draws a breath. The baseball hits the floor, rolls and stops at the leg of the chair. CLOSE ON the label --

-- MADE IN CHINA --



INT. KAYNE'S OFFICE -- DAY

KAYNE analyses the VIDEO EVIDENCE. Replays it again and again. Slows it down. Speeds it up. Searches for clues --

-- Kayne hits PAUSE. Something amiss. He pulls the PHOTO OF MARK from the original police report. CLOSE ON the white 49'ERS T-SHIRT. NUMBER '13'. But, on the video, it's an '18'. Kayne studies the '8'. Closer. Closer.

INT. JOHN'S HOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

RING! RING! JOHN is woken by his hotel phone. He flicks on the side-table lamp. Beside it, George's DOCUMENT, dog-eared and creased. John wipes the sleep from his eyes and glances at his watch -- an unGodly hour --

JOHN

John Welland.

INTERCUT between JOHN'S HOTEL ROOM and KAYNE'S OFFICE.

KAYNE

John, he did not do it.

JOHN

Kayne. Who didn't do what?

KAYNE

Peter. He did not do it. The scar you saw on Mark's chest. It was not autopsy. There was nothing to do autopsy on.

JOHN

Kayne, for Christ sake, what are you -

SHOT of video. CLOSE ON a series of irregular stains running down the side of the '3' making it look like an '8'.

KAYNE

The video. Mark has blood stains running down center of his shirt. They took his organs, John. They took Mark's organs. He was dead before Peter fire the gun.

JOHN

The video was staged?

KAYNE

Yes. I am sure.

JOHN

Why would Raines do that? Why didn't he say something after his arrest?

KAYNE

Peter must have been given threat.

JOHN

No. Not Peter. Lucas.

John's cell RINGS. Caller ID reads -- NUMBER WITHHELD --

JOHN (CONT'D)

Gotta go, Kayne.

John abruptly disconnects. Kayne left hanging. Again.

KAYNE

(shaking his head)

Americans. Need law against them.

BACK TO JOHN'S HOTEL ROOM

JOHN stares at his RINGING cell phone. Is it Miao-Shan? He draws a nervous breath and answers --

JOHN

Simon Forest.

MIAO-SHAN (O.S.)

(electronic disguise,  
Chinese accent)

Your daughter middle name and date  
of birth?

JOHN

Who is this?

MIAO-SHAN (O.S.)

Final chance. Daughter middle name  
and date of birth?

JOHN

I don't have a daughter.

MIAO-SHAN (O.S.)

Daniel last dental appointment?

JOHN

A week ago.

MIAO-SHAN (O.S.)

Wife place of employment nineteen-  
ninety-three?

John draws a blank. He grabs the document and quickly scans.

JOHN

Nineteen-ninety-three? Um, Walmart.

MIAO-SHAN (O.S.)  
That nineteen-ninety-two. Enough.

JOHN  
No, wait. My firm. From February,  
my firm. Belinda worked for me.

John breaks into a sweat. An anxious pause.

MIAO-SHAN (O.S.)  
I have piece to your puzzle, Mr  
Forest. Cost is fifty thousand U-S  
dollar. Pay half to me now. Half  
at hospital. You have forty-eight  
hours or I find new puzzle -

John scrambles for the hotel pen and paper. Scribbles down --  
-- MULLER-SCHEIDLIN BANK, ZURICH 5-7-8-2-0-0-6-X --

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SANTA MONICA PIER (PACIFIC PARK) -- SUNRISE

GEORGE scans the BANK DETAILS through a pair of trendy red-  
framed shades, then slips the note into the top pocket of  
his flamboyant tropical shirt. He looks back at JOHN.

GEORGE  
We run account number through U-S  
bank records. Search for outgoing  
transfers to Miao-Shan's account.  
The money, Mr Welland. You have  
twenty-five thousand?

JOHN  
I'll get it.

GEORGE  
We must wire to Miao-Shan today.

JOHN  
I understand, George. I'll get it.

GEORGE  
Toy salesman, you say. I choose  
career better in next life. Miao-  
Shan will move quickly when money  
appears. We have much to do.

George passes John a SHOULDER BAG. John falters.

JOHN  
What the hell's in here?

GEORGE  
Homework, Mr Forest.

John unzips the bag and a library of BOOKS spills to the pier. He looks at George - he's got to be kidding! George CHUCKLES to himself, then turns and strolls away.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Read. Read. Read, Mr Forest. I  
give spot quiz later.

John kneels and retrieves the books. Scans some titles --

-- DISEASES OF THE KIDNEY -- CLINICAL NEPHROLOGY -- THE  
KIDNEY: FAILURE AND FACTS -- THE SPY WHO LOVED ME --

INT. CITY NATIONAL BANK -- LATER

A female BANK CONSULTANT places a PEN on a DOCUMENT and slides them across a desk to JOHN. CLOSE ON document texts --

-- TELEGRAPHIC TRANSFER -- TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND WHOLE DOLLARS --  
TO: MULLER- SCHEIDLIN BANK -- FROM: MARK WELLAND/KATHERINE  
WELLAND COLLEGE FUND --

INT. JOHN'S HOTEL ROOM -- LATER

The door opens. JOHN enters. Places the DO NOT DISTURB tag over the door handle and closes the door. Throws the SHOULDER BAG onto the bed and RIPS back the zipper.

INT. JOHN'S HOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT

George's BOOKS strewn across the bed. JOHN asleep, fully clothed with an opened BOOK across his chest. CLOSE ON an image of an implanted FISTULA. John's cell RINGS --

-- he wakes and scrambles for the phone. No greeting. John grabs a nearby pen and notepad, and jots down --

-- 501 MILITARY HOSPITAL, BEIJING - CHINA AIRWAYS/CA984 --

John continues copying down the details.

INT. GEORGE LING'S HOUSE -- DAY

GEORGE spreads BLUEPRINTS of the 501 across a table. John stands by, flicking through PHOTOS of the hospital. CLOSE ON images of the -- BUILDING COMPOUND -- GUARDED SECURITY GATE -- ADMISSIONS FOYER -- BUSY NURSES' STATION -- in b.g., garbled sound of a TV news report.

GEORGE

Five-o-one is Beijing's primary transplant hospital. All brokers details are stored on hospital's main server, but cannot be accessed from outside hospital building. You will access from remote terminal at renal ward nurse station, here.

George points to the NURSES' STATION on the blueprints.

SERIES OF SHOTS as George explains the plan to JOHN.

A CHINESE NURSE operates a computer terminal in the nurses' station. She enters a PATIENT NAME and CODE into an online ADMISSION FILE REQUEST form --

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

You must log on and load your patient admission file. But, you will need a code. It is your patient code, which you will find on the top right corner of your medical chart.

A MEDICAL CHART hanging on the end of a hospital bed.

The nurse submits the form and a PATIENT ADMISSION FILE pops up on-screen. The nurse scrolls to the bottom of the file and moves the cursor over a text link called -- REFERRING --

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

After you access the file, scroll to the bottom and look for a text link called 'referring'. Click it and you will be taken to your referrer's profile. Miao-Shan's profile.

JOHN

How do I get past the nursing staff?

A patient CALL LIGHT starts BLINKING. The nurse quickly rises from the computer and hurries off. The station left unattended. In b.g., a clock reads 01:14-AM --

GEORGE (V.O.)

During normal day, five nurses posted, but only two at night. Station is sometimes left unattended. This is your only opportunity.

BACK TO BLUEPRINTS

Sound of a RINGING PHONE. George's fax intercepts the call.

JOHN

How long will I have?

GEORGE

Five-o-one allow twenty-four hour flight recovery before tests. You get Miao-Shan's identity and location and return to Embassy before time.

George crosses to collect the FAX. John's attention turns to a TV NEWS REPORT. The inset picture of SHELBY FARROW.

NEWSREADER

Eighty-two year old Shelby Farrow was found dead in her apartment with a single gunshot wound to her throat. Police say they have no official leads, and have rejected any possible connection with Farrow's neighbor, convicted murderer, Peter Raines.

George returns. Notes John's unease.

GEORGE

You know her?

JOHN

No.

George hands the fax to John. A DEPOSIT TRANSACTION RECORD. Listed amounts, all under \$50,000 bar three -- \$250,000 -- \$160,000 -- \$210,000 --

JOHN (CONT'D)

What's this?

GEORGE

Transfers to Miao-Shan's bank account for two weeks before Mark's death. Three large amounts from U-S buyers. Amounts I expect to see for rare tissue organs.

JOHN

All my son was worth to this son-of-bitch.

GEORGE

No. This U-S only. Will be more amounts from foreign buyers.

John slowly scrunches up the fax as his hand makes a fist.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

You almost ready, Mr Welland. Just one thing left to do?

JOHN

What's that?

INT. JOHN'S HOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT

JOHN's upper right arm, exposed. CLOSE ON a lumpy FISTULA implanted beneath the skin. Down to his hand, writing on a sheet of paper. In b.g., several screwed up sheets.

DEAREST SUSAN. TOMORROW, I LEAVE FOR CHINA. YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT PETER RAINES DID NOT MURDER OUR SON. IT WAS --

-- John stops. Susan's last words replay in his mind.

SUSAN (V.O.)

That's just it, John. I don't need to understand.

John RIPS out the page and balls it up. Rubs his eyes. Stuck for the right words. JOHN'S POV. On the desk, atop a pile of George's books -- THE SPY WHO LOVED ME --

INT. THE WELLANDS' MAIN BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

The FAMILY PHOTO under a lamp on the bedside table. INTO VIEW, used tissues, a half-eaten plate of pasta, and a phone handset. It RINGS. SUSAN lies in a tangle of sheets on her bed. Ignores the call. CLOSE ON her lifeless eyes as the machine picks up downstairs -- the SOUND travels --

SUSAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Leave a message after the beep.

SUSAN'S POV. MOSAIC fragments casting shadows on the wall -- the CROSS -- the Lord's HAND -- MOUTH -- EARS -- EYES --

JOHN (O.S.)

Sue, it's John.

Susan's eyes turn to the bedroom door. A pause.

JOHN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I just wanted to tell you - I needed to tell you - I love you.

A brief silence. The call disconnects. SUSAN'S EYES return to the mosaic. A glint of faith returns.

BACK TO JOHN'S HOTEL ROOM

JOHN hangs up the phone. Takes a deep breath and sighs.

INT. THE WELLANDS' STAIRS/KITCHEN - SOON AFTER

SUSAN, dressed in her night-robe, descends the stairs cradling a clump of MOSAIC fragments. She walks to the kitchen table. Starts spacing out the pieces. In b.g., dirty dishes, cluttered bench-tops. Life's been on top of her.

INT. LAX AIRPORT - TERMINAL PASSAGEWAY -- NEXT DAY

JOHN and GEORGE pace along the passageway. John carries his jacket and tickets, and George is unfashionably dressed in a Don Johnson white suit, red t-shirt and sunglasses.

GEORGE

I have informant at embassy. Molony.  
Knows everything about the Trade.  
Number is programmed into your phone.  
You call if anything go wrong.

They step onto a moving sidewalk.

JOHN

George, what's the legend of Miao-Shan?

GEORGE

Mr Welland, you have been doing your homework.

(smiles)

It is most glorified Chinese legend. Miao-Shan was youngest of three daughters to a very powerful Chinese King. The King wish for Miao-Shan to marry to provide an heir, but Miao-Shan refused. Instead, she choose to join monastery and pursue life of religion. Her father was enraged.

INTERCUT traditional Chinese INK-WASH ILLUSTRATIONS, like turning pages from a book.

Nuns, in their hundreds, flee the burning convent.

GEORGE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

He set fire to the monastery and ordered Miao-Shan to be executed. Beheaded.

An executioner's sword snaps across Miao-Shan's neck.

GEORGE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

But, when the executioner's sword fell upon her neck, it snapped in two. And, a spirit -

Miao-Shan mounting a tiger as her wary executioners retreat.

GEORGE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

- in the form of tiger rescued Miao-Shan and took her to faraway island to pursue enlightenment.

John and George step from the moving sidewalk and continue.



GEORGE (CONT'D)

Years later, the King became very ill with ulcers. The only remedy, a special medicine made from the eye and hand of an immortal.

A monk holds the ulcerated hand of the bedridden King.

GEORGE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

A visiting monk knew of an immortal in the hills. So, the King sent his ministers to ask for her help.

The two ministers meet with the immortal - Miao-Shan.

GEORGE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Hearing of the King's suffering, she agreed, and the ministers cut out her eye and cut off her hand.

John and George continue.

JOHN

It was Miao-Shan?

GEORGE

Yes. She sacrificed herself to cure her father. It is said that when Miao-Shan died and rose to Heaven, she chose to return to help all who suffered on Earth. And, was then renamed Kuan Yin, Goddess of Mercy and Healing. The one who -

JOHN

- hears the cries of the world.

GEORGE

Our villain believes their service to be one of good, not evil. Means you battle with more than just person. Also, purpose.

MOMENTS LATER

They reach the security doors to the INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL.

JOHN

See you soon, George.

GEORGE

Zai jian, Mr Welland.

George bows. John reciprocates. A silent moment of respect. Then, John disappears through the doors.

INT. BEIJING AIRPORT - TERMINAL GATE -- LATE AFTERNOON

JOHN enters the gate area. Behind the crowd, THE ESCORT holds up a white-board -- S.FOREST --

AIRPORT ARCADE -- MOMENTS LATER

JOHN and THE ESCORT pace through the busy shopping arcade. John's eyes scope for any sign of danger. In b.g., like clockwork, the TWO POLICE OFFICERS fall in. SMASHING GLASS! John spins around. JOHN'S POV. TRADESMEN knock a shattered window from a perfume shop.

EXT. AIRPORT ARRIVALS -- MOMENTS LATER

THE ESCORT leads JOHN out of the main doors to a waiting LIMOUSINE with tinted windows. He opens the rear door.

ESCORT

We take you to five-o-one, Mr Forest.

JOHN'S POV. In front of the limo, TWO TRADESMEN lift a large pane window from the back of a truck. Reflected in the glass, John catches the eye of the limo driver - THE WHITE-HAIRED MAN - watching him, expectantly.

John's eyes dart around. He sees the police accomplices exit the main doors. The gig is up. Panic sets in.

THE CHASE -- SERIES OF SHOTS

John buries his knee into the Escort's groin and shoves him into the opened car door.

The White-Haired Man leaps from the driver's seat.

John sprints from the scene. In b.g., the police jump into their van and quickly pull from the curb.

John bounds along the sidewalk, dodging people, jumping suitcases and trolleys -- crosses the road -- glances over his shoulder -- the White-Haired Man in hot pursuit --

John weaves through crawling cars and buses. Ducks behind a mini-van. Peers through its windows looking for his assailant. Sees a taxi -- scampers over and jumps in --

INT. THE TAXI

The DRIVER checks his side mirror and pulls from the curb.

JOHN

The United States Embassy.

INTO VIEW through the rear window, the White-Haired Man catches up where the taxi left off. Hands on hips, he watches John's getaway. Then, turns and rushes back.

MOMENTS LATER

JOHN pulls out his cell phone and dials MOLONY's number --  
an ENGAGED SIGNAL --

JOHN

Shit!

He tries GEORGE's number. Seconds later --

JOHN (CONT'D)

George! They know! They know  
everything!

GEORGE (O.S.)

Where are you?

The taxi slows in congested traffic.

JOHN

On my way to the Embassy.

GEORGE (O.S.)

Did you call Molony?

JOHN

I can't get through.

A GARBLED CALL over the cab's radio. JOHN'S POV. The DRIVER  
adjusts his mirror. Looks at John, then through the rear  
window. John swings around. JOHN'S POV. the BLACK LIMOUSINE.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Christ, George! They found me.

John throws open the taxi door and leaps out -- the cab driver  
SHOUTS abuse --

THE CHASE CONTINUES -- SERIES OF SHOTS

John bounces off the side of a passing vehicle. Scrambles  
to the sidewalk, clutching his thigh.

The White-Haired Man, the Escort and a third MAN jump from  
the limo and give chase.

John hobbles down the road. Corners into a narrow street  
full of food carts and crowds of people - a BUSY MARKET.

He clammers through the congestion, bumping people out of  
the way, his pursuers close behind.

John ducks into a busy coffee shop. Runs to the back of the  
store. Turns and watches as two pursuers pass by. The White-  
Haired Man appears. Stops and chats with market-goers.  
Then, spins round and catches John inside!

WHITE-HAIRED MAN  
 (shouting in Chinese)  
 Here! In here!

John dashes through the kitchen into a service lane behind the shop. Hurries down the alleyway -- crossing side to side, checking for unlocked doors --

-- Jackpot! John ducks inside.

INT. GALLERY STOREROOM

JOHN locks the door behind. Descends a flight of stairs into a dark basement.

CLICK! John pulls a light cord. REVEAL a room full of ART CANVASES. Some, blank and stacked. Others, leaning against crates, seated on easels -- INTO VIEW, eerie ABSTRACTS of body parts painted in red, purple and bluish tones --

John weaves his way through the canvases, frequently ducking to avoid pipes and conduits. CRACK! Sound of the door being forced open. John takes cover behind a large, blank canvas --

-- CHINESE VOICES -- SHUFFLING footsteps -- silhouettes of three men projected onto John's canvas shelter. John sits paralyzed, holding his breath, when --

-- his cell phone RINGS! John jumps to his feet and shoves a row of canvases into his assailants. Clammers up the stairs and into the service lane. JOHN'S POV. An open city street at the end of the alleyway.

John makes for the street. Moments later, the Chinese men appear and give chase. John glances at the caller ID on his ringing phone -- MOLONY -- he throws the phone to his ear.

JOHN  
 I was told to call if I was in  
 trouble, and I'm in a whole shit-  
 load of trouble.

In b.g., the pursuers slow to a walk, as if resigning their chase. The White-Haired Man drops a radio from his ear.

MOLONY (O.S.)  
 (female Irish accent)  
 Where are you, John?

John exits the alleyway into the street. He looks one way -- then, the other -- then, from nowhere, the TWO POLICE OFFICERS plus ANOTHER pounce and wrestle him to the ground. John's phone spills to the gutter. The officers bury their rifles into John's torso and start kicking at his head and neck.

OFFICER  
 (in Chinese)  
 Why you run? Eh? Why you run?

The White-Haired Man and his partners amble up to the scene. John is lifted to his knees.

WHITE-HAIRED MAN  
 Stupid fool.  
 (to the officers)  
 Don't let him see daylight again.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM -- LATER

CRACK! A hand crashes across JOHN's face. CLOSE ON blood trickling from his nose and mouth. John sits at a small desk in a windowless room with concrete walls and a blood-stained floor. Wrists and ankles shackled, he's worked over by a vicious INTERROGATOR while TWO GUARDS standby.

INTERROGATOR  
 (in Chinese)  
 Tell me why you are in Beijing?

JOHN  
 (trembling)  
 I don't understand?

The interrogator SLAPS John's cheeks with a passport and flicks it [opened] onto the desk in front -- the FAKE PASSPORT for SIMON FOREST --

INTERROGATOR  
 Answer me!

John quivers, unsure what to say. The steel door opens and an OFFICER enters. He hands the interrogator a DOCUMENT.

OFFICER  
 (in Chinese)  
 Two weeks ago.

The interrogator reads the document. Circles John and SLAMS the page over the top of the fake passport -- a photocopy of John's GENUINE PASSPORT --

INTERROGATOR  
 You are a spy, yes? The Americans  
 up to more tricks?

He leans in, his face an inch from John's.

INTERROGATOR (CONT'D)  
 What do they want now?

JOHN

I don't understand. I want a lawyer.  
I want to speak to my Embassy.

INTERROGATOR

(English)

What you want not matter!

The interrogator whips a baton from his belt. WHACK! He STRIKES John behind the neck! John grimaces at first, then his eyes close and head drops forward. Unconscious.

EXT. ESTABLISHING SHOT OF DETENTION CENTER -- SUNRISE

-- POV from a gravel PARKING LOT -- cell-blocks flank a large compound where a PATTERN OF PRISONERS kneel with their backs bolt upright and heads bowed. GUARDS patrol the assembly as PROPAGANDA rings out over loudspeakers --

LOUDSPEAKERS

(in Chinese)

Falun Gong is evil. Falun Gong is a cult. You have been brainwashed. Denounce Falun Gong. Go home to your families -

INT. DETENTION CELL -- CONTINUOUS

-- the PROPAGANDA repeats. JOHN's battered head asleep on the concrete floor. His body jerks. He wakes and looks up to see a CHINESE WOMAN gripping his shoulders.

CHINESE WOMAN

You wake. They come soon.

Still in handcuffs and leg-irons, John struggles to his knees. He wears a fresh pair of blue prison overalls, already blemished with blood-stains.

JOHN'S POV. He looks around the tiny cell --

-- crammed with CHINESE PRISONERS. Skinny, haggard, their overalls in varying states of wear. Some inmates meditate. Some fight for water from a cracked wash basin. Another squats on a stained toilet below a barred window.

BACK TO

-- A CLANGING lock -- instantly, the inmates struggle to their feet and assemble at the door with heads bowed. The Chinese woman helps John up, then pushes his head forward to conform. The door opens and a uniformed GUARD enters. Prisoners shuffle out of the door, occasionally copping a light blow from the guard's BATON. John follows into --

## THE PASSAGEWAY

JOHN joins the larger POPULATION. Hundreds, all stumbling along in leg-irons under the punishing eyes of prison GUARDS.

## WORKSHOP -- MOMENTS LATER

The PRISONERS spill into a workshop and head for their posts. A hive of activity. GUARDS lift MASKS to their faces as the odors hit JOHN like a truck. He stops, unsure what to do --

## JOHN'S POV. SERIES OF SHOTS

Rusted metal equipment, including vats, buckets and molds.

Shelves of toxic chemicals and compounds.

Racks of molds and rubber products.

A mesh bin full of rubber boots. Another, full of dog toys.

Patrolling GUARDS wear masks and gloves. PRISONERS work with no protection at all.

## BACK TO

John is shoved forward by a GUARD. Reaches a large mixing vat. Beside it, containers of silicone and other chemicals. CLOSE ON container warning symbols -- IRRITANT -- POISON -- PROTECTIVE CLOTHING REQUIRED --

The guard removes John's handcuffs.

GUARD

(in English)

You start here.

JOHN

What do I do?

He knocks the side of John's head with his baton. Then, gestures at a nearby PRISONER who stirs chemicals in a similar mixing vat. CLOSE ON the prisoner's blistered hands.

## INT. PASSAGEWAY -- LATE THAT NIGHT

Exhausted PRISONERS stagger to their cells. Some helped along by fellow inmates. An OLDER PRISONER collapses to the ground. Inmates walk on, seemingly uncaring, but JOHN stops to assist. WHACK! A GUARD clubs his back with a baton and shoves him forward. The fallen prisoner left to be trampled.

JOHN continues, glancing back with concern. CLOSE ON his swollen eyes -- burned and blistered hands --

DETENTION CELL -- SECONDS LATER

JOHN and his CELLMATES collapse against the walls. John closes his eyes. Exhausted. INTO VIEW, half-filled bowls of soup in the middle floor. Inmates grab their portions. The CHINESE WOMAN takes two. Prods John. He opens his eyes.

CHINESE WOMAN

Must eat.

John accepts the bowl and takes a sip. Watches the others help to feed the weaker inmates.

JOHN

You are Falun Gong?

CHINESE WOMAN

(smiling)

Falun Gong, yes.

EXT. THE WELLANDS' HOME -- DAY

A BROWN SEDAN corners into the Wellands' driveway. The driver's door opens and Kendricks emerges.

KITCHEN -- LATER

KENDRICKS and SUSAN talk at the kitchen table. Pushed to the side, opened GLUE TUBES and RAGS, and the partly repaired MOSAIC. Susan's strength is restoring.

SUSAN

I have to go there.

KENDRICKS

You can't see him, Susan.

SUSAN

Can I contact him?

KENDRICKS

No. No phone calls. No letters.

SUSAN

I can't even write?

KENDRICKS

Not until after the trial. Susan, you have to understand. Governments are iron-fisted in cases of espionage. Alarms go off if a pigeon flies overhead.

SUSAN

Tell me what to do, James?



KENDRICKS

Stay here. I'm getting updates from the embassy by the hour. If he does so much as pull a thread in his shirt, I'll let you know.

Susan nods.

INT. WORKSHOP -- NEXT DAY

JOHN RIPS the sleeves from his overalls. Wraps one around his hand and ties the other around his head, covering his nose and mouth. John picks up a heavy CHEMICAL CONTAINER and pours the toxic liquid into the mixing vat. He recoils from the fumes --

GUARD (O.S.)

Clean up. You have visitors.

John looks up. The GUARD throws him a new uniform.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM -- SOON AFTER

JOHN is escorted into a room divided by glass. The GUARD remains posted at the door, while ANOTHER GUARD sits in the corner wearing headphones. Other side of the glass, sits KAYNE, looking unimpressed, and a stunning, pale-skinned woman in a business suit. They pick up phone handsets.

JOHN

Kayne. Thank God.

KAYNE

John, this is Deborah Molony. She's from the Embassy.

MOLONY

(Irish accent)

Hello, John.

John recognizes the accent. MOLONY is early 40s, classy, educated and professional. Her surreptitious wink signals their connection should remain secret.

JOHN

Where am I?

MOLONY

Guanyuan Detention Facility. How are they treating you, John?

JOHN

As well as the others.

MOLONY

Is there anything we can get you?

JOHN

Out.

EXT. PRISON PARKING LOT

The WHITE-HAIRED MAN walks behind a row of parked vehicles. In b.g., an empty prison compound.

INTERCUT between the PARKING LOT and INTERVIEW ROOM.

KAYNE

Who is this Simon Forest?

John looks to Molony. She discreetly shakes her head.

JOHN

I don't know.

KAYNE

Explain the passport.

JOHN

I can't.

KAYNE

I think you can.

The White-Haired Man continues. Slips on his BLACK GLOVES.

KAYNE (CONT'D)

Why are you back in Beijing?

John squirms. Looks to Molony, searching for help.

KAYNE (CONT'D)

Answer me, John! Do you know what my country does to spies?

MOLONY

Kayne.

The White-Haired Man reaches a TWO-DOOR HONDA CIVIC. He feeds a metal lever beneath the hood and in a flash, the hood pops open.

JOHN

How do I get out of here, Deborah?

MOLONY

Conventional channels? We're talking international lawyers, negotiators, appeals. Prepare yourself, John. It could take years.

(MORE)

MOLONNY (CONT'D)

They can keep you here another six months before we even go to trial.

JOHN

Unconventional channels?

The White-Haired Man drops the hood and walks away.

MOLONNY

There may be something.

KAYNE & JOHN

What?

MOLONNY

It's unconfirmed and from an unverified source. Possibly just political chain-pulling, so don't get your hopes up. But, we received a leaked transcript this morning. It suggests the Chinese have reciprocated an offer to the U-S in relation to property settlements for the NATO bombing.

JOHN

What's it got to do with me?

MOLONNY

Rumor is your extradition's part of the deal.

JOHN

Me? Why?

MOLONNY

We're guessing it's to do with the world trade talks. China wants in. The U-S wants China in. It seems clear cut. But, John, if the media beats up your arrest, particularly after widespread public sympathy for your son, Clinton will have no choice but to back off negotiations again. Another freeze on relations. Another roadblock neither governments want. Reality is, China may want to see this thing go away as much as we do.

JOHN

When will we know?

MOLONNY

Maybe, a few days. If the data's accurate. But, John, if the Chinese want to keep you here -

JOHN

You asked if I wanted anything.

MOLONNY

What can we get you, John?

JOHN

They took my wallet. There's a photo.  
My wife.

MOLONNY

I'll see what I can do.

EXT. PRISON PARKING LOT -- SOON AFTER

KAYNE and MOLONY exit the prison gates and walk across the parking lot. Gravel CRUNCHES under foot.

KAYNE

The government would not release a suspect U-S spy without knowing his intent. You must know that.

MOLONNY

And, when have they ever put spies in a prison's general population, Kayne? They don't think John's a spy any more than they think you are. And, I know, you know that.

MOMENTS LATER

KAYNE walks between the parked vehicles. In b.g., MOLONY drives away in a silver MERCEDES SPORTS. Kayne reaches his humble TWO-DOOR HONDA CIVIC -- opens the door -- boards -- key in the ignition -- turns the key --

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. COUNTRY FIELD -- NIGHTFALL (PRESENT DAY)

Thunder CRACKS and LIGHTNING strobes across the night sky. Wind and rain bite at the MAN's body as he shelters half-naked beside the wrecked car. TORCH clenched between his teeth, he tears his shirt into strips.

MOMENTS LATER

In the distance, the flashing lights of another AIRPLANE.

The Man twists and ties the last strand of material to the end of a long make-do rope. He drops the rope and hurries across to SUSAN, still unconscious. Checks her wrist - a strong pulse. Moves to her feet and grabs her ankles.

MAN

Sorry 'bout this, ma'am.

The Man drags her across the wet grass. Susan's head bumps along the ground. He pulls her further and further, coming to rest some fifty yards from the wreck.

The Man rushes back. Gathers his torch and rope and launches himself on top of the tilted car. He reaches down through the window, locates the gas tank release and pops the cap [topside]. Then, feeds the cloth rope into the tank and draws out a long gasoline-soaked fuse.

The Man jumps to the ground. Pulls the CIGARETTE LIGHTER from his pocket and strikes a flame. A final glance at the passing airplane and he lights the fuse --

-- the flame climbs the rope. He sprints back to Susan --

BOOM! The car explodes. Knocks the Man from his feet. He flips himself over. Watches the massive FIREBALL rise high into the wintery night sky.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DETENTION CELL -- LATE AT NIGHT

JOHN'S POV. A FULL MOON in a clear night sky -- looks down from his cell window -- his CELLMATES included in the PATTERN OF PRISONERS kneeling in the compound.

John's face caught in the bright moonlight. He holds up a NOTE attached to a NEWSPAPER CLIPPING --

REVEAL the note -- JOHN, I'M SORRY, DEBORAH -- REVEAL the clipping -- YOUNG LAWYER DIES IN CAR ACCIDENT --

INT. PRISON FACTORY -- DAY

JOHN packs DOG TOYS from a mesh bin into crates. A PRISONER wheels across a new bin. John peers inside. Its contents, all-too-familiar -- the TOY BASEBALL sold by Tuttle's Toys --

SHRILL SCREAMS from across the factory. John spins around.

PRISONERS abandon their posts and charge to the scene. GUARDS follow, YELLING orders. BANG! BANG! GUNSHOTS. John drops the baseball and sprints toward the commotion. Barges through a wall of ONLOOKING PRISONERS to find --

-- an elderly CHINESE PRISONER, stripped of his clothes and handcuffed to a pipe. A GUARD tortures him with an ELECTRIC BATON. ZAPS his neck -- armpits -- abdomen -- ears -- the prisoner SCREAMS and writhes. Fellow inmates powerless under the eyes of jeering GUARDS.

An enraged PRISONER breaks from the pack. Launches himself at the offending guard and tackles him to the ground.

He POUNDS the guard's face, again and again. Blood pours from his mouth and nose --

-- John rushes over. Locks the wild prisoner in a bear hug and wrestles him off the battered guard --

-- a SECOND GUARD steps in and drags John from the melee. A THIRD GUARD pins down the unruly prisoner.

John looks back at the courageous inmate. Astonished. REVEAL the man's identity - PETER RAINES.

GUARD

You white men like to fight, eh?

(to John)

You want to hurt him, yes?

The guards loosen their holds. One guard hands John a baton while the other keeps Raines at gunpoint.

GUARD (CONT'D)

Do it.

John stands motionless, staring at his defenseless adversary. WHACK! The guard STRIKES John's face.

GUARD (CONT'D)

Do it, now!

Raines delivers a compliant nod, but John remains transfixed in his gaze. Irresolute. Conflicted. Moments later, he lets the baton slip from his hand.

GUARD (CONT'D)

You defy me?

The guard retrieves the weapon and BELTS John across the knees. John drops to the floor. Grimacing but silent. Still locked in a stare with Raines. Guards seize him by the throat and drag him from the factory.

FADE TO BLACK

FADE IN:

INT. SUSAN'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

SUPER: 2 WEEKS LATER

SUSAN lies asleep in a mess of sheets. A restless night. Her hand rests on an opened newspaper. CLOSE ON an article --

-- RAINES EXECUTED AFTER FAILED APPEAL --

The phone RINGS. Susan wakes and grabs the handset from her bedside table. INTO VIEW, her Mom's BIBLE. Many of the tags and notes removed and piled beside it.

SUSAN

Hello?

KENDRICKS (O.S.)

Susan, it's James. I have news.

INT. JOHN'S CELL -- EARLY MORNING

JOHN, bearded, sleeveless overalls hanging from a sligher frame, stares at the PHOTO OF SUSAN. Molony came through.

CHINESE LADY

She very pretty.

CLUNK! The door unlocks and opens. INMATES rise to their feet and file through the door. JOHN, last in line, is halted by the GUARD's extended arm and baton. The guard hands John a plastic bag. John peers inside -- his CLOTHES --

The door slams shut. John ruffles through the bag. The clothes are cleaned and pressed, just a few faded blood-stains on his shirt collar. John lifts the shirt to his nose.

INT. MEETING ROOM -- LATER

Handcuffed, but at least well-dressed, JOHN is escorted into the room by TWO GUARDS. Inside are TWO POLICE OFFICERS -- TWO CHINESE OFFICIALS -- MORRIS -- MOLONY -- and, to John's surprise, GEORGE LING, wearing traditional Chinese attire.

JOHN

George?

GEORGE

(comforting smile)

Mr Welland.

An official nods to the two officers. One approaches George and cuffs his hands. The other, moves to free John's hands.

JOHN

What the hell's going on here? No.

George, I won't let you do this.

(to Molony and Morris)

Don't let him do this.

GEORGE

Is already done. This my home, Mr Welland. Not yours.

JOHN

This is no-one's home, George.

GEORGE

China, my home.

John stares at his mentor. George smiles and bows. John reciprocates.

JOHN

Thank you.

GEORGE

No. Thank you, John. The girl screams no more.

Morris grabs John's arm. Reluctantly, John turns to leave.

EXT. PARKING LOT -- MOMENTS LATER

MORRIS and MOLONY guide JOHN through the lot. Morris, on occasion, steering him by the arm.

MORRIS

Take a vacation, John. You and your wife get away for a while. Somewhere a little less oriental, I'd suggest. Maybe, take a leaf from Molony's travel book.

(to Molony)

Where are you roughing it this time? Tahiti, was it?

MOLONY

Cancun.

MORRIS

Ah, yes, the Caribbean. Where red simply means a bad case of sunburn.

They reach Molony's car. She and John shake hands.

JOHN

Can you do anything for George?

MOLONY

Not this time. He wouldn't leave even if we could.

(shaking hands)

Slawn lath, John. Good luck.

JOHN

Thanks for everything, Deborah.

MOLONY

(to Morris)

See you in a couple of weeks.

MORRIS

Enjoy. And, for pete's sake, get some color, will you. I'm sick of having to slip on shades every time I look at you.



Deborah smiles. She gets in her car, starts up and drives away. John and Morris continue to Morris's car.

JOHN

Will it ever stop?

MORRIS

John, China's been violating human rights laws for decades. They cop a slap on the wrist from time to time, but generally Western governments turn a blind eye. They're too smitten with China's economic potential to take any serious action.

They reach Morris's car.

MORRIS (CONT'D)

Oh, I almost forgot.

Morris pats down his jacket. Pulls a BOOK from his pocket and passes it to John. An exquisite hard-cover with gold-leaf embossed lettering -- THE LEGEND OF MIAO-SHAN -- John opens the cover -- a handwritten inscription inside --

-- MAYBE, VERY SLIM CHANCE I NOT KNOW EVERYTHING, GEORGE --

John smiles and closes the book.

INT. MOLONY'S CAR -- CONTINUOUS

MOLONY navigates the road ahead while speaking on her cell. A devilish look in her eye.

MOLONY

(in Chinese)

He's going back tonight.

FADE TO BLACK

FADE IN:

INT. KENDRICKS' CAR -- NIGHT

KENDRICKS gives JOHN a lift home. John explains --

JOHN

Miao-Shan assured Raines he was coming home with the organ and with Mark. Alive. Knowing full well Raines didn't have time to question motives or investigate.

KENDRICKS

But, double-crosses aside, he must have known we'd catch up with him.

JOHN

Raines didn't care. As long as his son survived. That's all he wanted. It's all I would have wanted.

EXT. THE WELLANDS' HOME - CONTINUOUS

KENDRICKS pulls to the curb outside JOHN'S HOME. His quiet street, a stark contrast to the bustling traffic of Beijing.

MOMENTS LATER

JOHN shuts the trunk, jacket and bag in hand. He pulls the news ARTICLE from his bag and hands it to KENDRICKS through the car window. The WHITE-HAIRED MAN, circled in red pen.

JOHN (CONT'D)

That's him. He probably pulled the trigger on Shelby Farrow as well.

KENDRICKS

Okay. Now go, Columbo. Just remember you sell toys for a living.

John steps back and flicks Kendrick's a one-finger salute. Kendrick drives away.

JOHN

(to himself)

Not for long.

John turns and faces his home -- glimpses SUSAN walking past the windows -- takes a deep breath --

MOMENTS LATER

KNOCK! KNOCK! John taps on the front door. Nervous.

The door opens. SUSAN appears. Never more beautiful. A cloud of disunion casts a shadow.

SUSAN

They said you were okay.

JOHN

I'm fine. You're okay?

SUSAN

I'm okay.

Susan adjusts to John's weakened condition. Sheds a tear.

JOHN

Do you still believe, Sue?

SUSAN

Yes.

JOHN

How? After all that's happened.  
How do you keep your faith? How can  
you still believe?

SUSAN

He brought you home.

A tear rolls down John's cheek. Susan reaches out and John falls into her arms. They drop to the floor, Susan rocking John back and forth as he coils into her arms and cries.

INT. JOHN'S BEDROOM -- THAT NIGHT

JOHN lies in bed, staring at the ceiling. SUSAN, alongside. A restful sleep at last. Careful not to wake her, John slips from the sheets and tip-toes to the door.

SUSAN (O.S.)

You okay, honey?

John turns. Susan props herself up on her forearm.

JOHN

Just getting some water.

SUSAN

You want to talk?

JOHN

Go on back to sleep.

John walks from the room. Susan shows concern.

MARK'S BEDROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Washed in moonlight. Enter JOHN. He slides his hand along Mark's bed. Picks up the pillow and lifts it to his nose.

John FLICKS on the desk lamp --

-- REVEAL the TROPHIES and FRAMED PHOTOS on the bookshelf. John picks up the photo of Mark with his ailing sister. CLOSE ON Kate's pendant around her neck --

John replaces the photo. On the shelf below, he spots the copy of SHAKESPEARE'S 'AS YOU LIKE IT'. John slips out the book and opens it to a marked page -- the passage last spoken to him by his son --

MARK (V.O.)

And churlish chiding of the winter's  
wind, which when it bites and blows  
upon my body -

EXT. LA CEMETERY -- DAWN

JOHN walks through the cemetery, Shakespeare's BOOK in one hand, a bouquet of FLOWERS in the other. In b.g., a dawn service. A blanket of fog sets an eerie tone.

MARK (V.O.)

Even till I shrink with cold, I smile,  
and say this is no flattery. These  
are counselors that feelingly persuade  
me what I am. Sweet are the uses of  
adversity, which, like the toad,  
ugly and venomous, wears yet a  
precious jewel in his head.

John reaches Mark and Kate's graves. He places the flowers at Kate's headstone. Then, kneels at the foot of Mark's grave and reads the last few lines from the play --

JOHN

And this our life, exempt from public  
haunt, finds tongues in trees, books  
in running brooks, sermons in stones,  
and good in everything.

He places the book against the headstone.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I just wanted you to know, son. I  
understand. I understand.

John rises to his feet. Distant b.g., Kendricks' BROWN SEDAN.

INT. BROWN SEDAN -- MOMENTS LATER

KENDRICKS flicks through AIRPORT SURVEILLANCE PHOTOS of the White-Haired Man boarding the black Mercedes. His cell rings.

KENDRICKS

Ryan.

RYAN (O.S.)

No match on the plate, Jimmy.

KENDRICKS' POV. The BLACK MERCEDES parked fifty yards ahead. John strolls back through the cemetery, unaware.

KENDRICKS

Yeah, well he's sticking to John  
like white on rice. Talk later.

Kendricks drops his cell, and looks on.

INT. JOHN'S CAR -- LATER

JOHN coasts along a highway, cell phone hard to his ear.

NURSE (O.S.)

Dr Fewster's not available, sir.  
Can I take a message?

JOHN

No. I really must speak with him.

NURSE (O.S.)

I'm sorry. But, the doctor -

JOHN

You don't understand -

NURSE (O.S.)

Sir, he's not in the hospital. Can  
I put you through to the resident -

JOHN

Wait, what day is it?

NURSE (O.S.)

Friday, sir. Look, if you -

John throws aside the phone. Hits the brakes and turns back.  
The Mercedes passes by -- then, swings around to maintain  
pursuit -- Kendricks does the same --

INT. THE WELLANDS' SITTING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Morning sun streams through the windows. Highlights the  
repaired MOSAIC back above the mantelpiece. Sets a happy  
tone. SUSAN lifts John's JACKET from the back of the  
Chesterfield and hangs it over her arm. A book slips to the  
floor. She picks it up -- THE LEGEND OF MIAO-SHAN --

EXT. TENNIS CLUB - MAIN ROAD / PARKING LOT -- LATER

JOHN'S CAR turns off the main road and down a ramp. INTO  
VIEW, the building's signage -- PHYSICALS TENNIS CLUB --

RECEPTION -- MOMENTS LATER

The elevator doors retract and JOHN enters a swanky-looking  
foyer. CLUB MEMBERS strut their stuff in designer sportswear  
and business suits. STAFF would be better placed on a  
catwalk. John approaches a foxy young RECEPTIONIST.

RECEPTIONIST

Can I help you, sir?

JOHN

Yes, hello. I need to speak with  
one of your members. Richard Fewster.

RECEPTIONIST

And, you are?

JOHN

His brother.

She turns suspicious. We detect she knows Richard 'well'.

RECEPTIONIST

I'm sorry, sir. I don't believe Richard has any brothers.

JOHN

Yes. Of course, he doesn't.

From the corner of John's eye, a burly-looking MEMBER slides an access card across a nearby gate scanner. John bolts for the gate. The receptionist calls out --

RECEPTIONIST

Sir! Sir!

John knocks the member aside. Slips through the opening and disappears into the club. The receptionist lifts the phone handset and speed-dials -- SECURITY --

INTERCUT between THE CLUB and PARKING LOT.

The BLACK MERCEDES descends the ramp into the parking lot.

John forges his way through a crowded CLUB BAR. INTO VIEW, a SECURITY GUARD gives chase.

Kendrick's BROWN SEDAN enters the parking lot. Passes the parked black Mercedes - its brake lights switching off.

John CRASHES through the bar's outer doors. Scans an ARENA of tennis courts and sights RICHARD in a game of mixed doubles on the far side. John bolts, the guard in hot pursuit.

Kendricks reverses his sedan into a vacant park. KENDRICKS' POV. The Mercedes - motionless, thirty yards away.

Black-gloved hands loading a PISTOL with a bullet.

BACK TO TENNIS ARENA

JOHN stands court-side of FEWSTER'S FOURSOME.

JOHN

Hey, doc!

Every MEMBER within earshot spins their head.

RICHARD

Nothing to say to you, Welland.

JOHN

And, what if I've got something you  
wanna hear?

The SECURITY GUARD catches up and grips John's shoulder.  
Richard throws up the ball and serves.

SECURITY GUARD

You know this guy, Rich?

Richard turns as the returned ball whisks past. REVEAL the  
BLACK EYE-PATCH over his left eye. He removes it.

RECEPTION -- MOMENTS LATER

RICHARD, changed into work attire, paces through the foyer  
with JOHN. He awkwardly tucks in his shirt while removing a  
CELL PHONE from his sports bag.

RICHARD

I swear, Welland. If you're fucking  
with me.

They enter the elevator. He notes John's facial SCARS.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

What the hell happened to you, anyway?

JOHN

Game fishing. You?

John gestures at the eye-patch tied around Richard's racquet  
handle. Query, ignored. The elevator doors slide closed.

PARKING LOT -- KENDRICKS POV

KENDRICKS checks his watch, then jots into a LOGBOOK --

-- 11.20AM - PHYSICALS TENNIS CLUB --

JOHN and RICHARD exit the elevator. Richard dials his cell.  
Seconds later, he dials again. And, again. Cell to his  
ear, Richard ducks and weaves as if being attacked by bees.  
Kendricks glances at his own cell -- a WEAK SIGNAL --

BACK TO

RICHARD shuffles around, trying to maintain his signal.

RICHARD

Cancel the meeting. Just cancel it.  
I'll explain later.

Richard slips the phone into his pocket and turns to JOHN.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

You're coming with me.

EXT. TENNIS CLUB - PARKING LOT / MAIN ROAD -- MOMENTS LATER

Richard's PORSCHE climbs the ramp and turns onto the main road. Followed by the MERCEDES. Lastly, the BROWN SEDAN.

MAIN ROAD -- MOMENTS LATER

Richard's PORSCHE roars along the busy multi-laned road. The BLACK MERCEDES trails by three cars. Kendricks' BROWN SEDAN by three again. Traffic stops at a set of lights.

INT. RICHARD'S PORSCHE -- MOMENTS LATER

RICHARD dries his hair with a HAND-TOWEL. JOHN loosens his white-knuckled grip on the armrest.

RICHARD

So, Welland. Explain to me why you want to do this?

JOHN

Why do you care?

RICHARD

I don't. You can donate your body for high school anatomy classes for all I care. But, I need something for the paperwork in order to proceed with the tests.

JOHN

What's first? The first test?

RICHARD

Normally, the psyche assessment -

JOHN

I need a shrink?

RICHARD

You need a department, but we're out of time. Luke's other organs are showing signs of shutting down. We'll have to fudge the psyche.

Lights change and Richard speeds off. John grips his seat.

BACK TO MAIN ROAD

Traffic flows, but curiously the MERCEDES sits idle. Drivers blast HORNS and CURSE as they peel off from behind.

KENDRICKS winds down his window and leans out to investigate. Two cars pull away in front. Kendricks edges forward. Another car pulls away. The Mercedes now in front. Lights change to AMBER. RED. The Mercedes tears off, dodging traffic and darting through the intersection.



INT. KENDRICKS' CAR

Kendricks hits the gas. Then, SLAMS on the brakes. His path choked by stopping cars. He BELTS the steering wheel --

KENDRICKS  
Son-of-a-bitch!

-- grabs his cell phone and dials --

KENDRICKS (CONT'D)  
It's Kendricks. I need an A-P-B on a Mercedes. Black. Plate X-ray-Juliet-Papa-two-two-three-four. Last seen on Roosevelt. And, dig up details on a midnight blue Porsche. L-A plate Kilo-Delta-November-Echo.

EXT. NORTHRIDGE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL - PARKING LOT -- LATER

JOHN pads his brow with Richard's HAND-TOWEL as he shuts the Porsche door. BLIP! RICHARD locks up.

INT. THE MERCEDES - OUTSIDE THE HOSPITAL GATES

DRIVER'S POV. GLOVED hands on the steering wheel. Looks left, RICHARD and JOHN walk towards the hospital's main entrance. Looks right, the APARTMENT BLOCK directly across the road. The driver turns down a ramp into --

THE APARTMENT BLOCK - BASEMENT -- MOMENTS LATER

The Mercedes crawls along a row of numbered parking spaces, then turns into a vacant spot near the fire exit - No. 777.

7TH FLOOR HALLWAY -- MOMENTS LATER

The fire escape door opens. Enter the WHITE-HAIRED MAN. He walks to a WINDOW at the end of the hallway. INTO VIEW, the hospital's main entrance, two hundred yards away. He back-steps to ROOM 777. Knocks on the door. No answer. A hairpin and heartbeat later, the door CLICKS open.

INT. THE WELLANDS' SITTING ROOM

SUSAN slouching on the Chesterfield, sipping tea. Settled in with George's BOOK. She turns a page. The heading --

-- THE IMMORTAL MIAO-SHAN GIVES THE GRUESOME REMEDY --

-- also, a traditional INK-WASH ILLUSTRATION of Miao-Shan, her arm severed beneath the elbow, dripping blood, and the minister gouging her eye with a knife. CLOSE ON her eye.

DISSOLVE TO:

SERIES OF SHOTS - JOHN'S TESTS

RICHARD examines JOHN'S EYE with an ophthalmoscope.

John cringes as a NURSE sinks a syringe needle into his arm.

John is given a CHEST X-RAY.

Richard performs an ULTRASOUND on John.

John undergoes an ARTERIOGRAM. Richard and a RADIOLOGIST examine the captured images on a MONITOR.

Blood collection tubes spin around a CENTRIFUGE.

INT. ROOM 777 - BATHROOM

The WHITE-HAIRED MAN splashes his face from a basin of gray water. An opened tube of black hair color lies next to the tap. He looks up. His hair, black. Face, clean-shaven.

BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The now BLACK-HAIRED MAN walks from the bathroom, wiping his face with a towel. He drops the gray-stained towel to the floor and sits on the corner of the bed. Unzips his SPORTS BAG. Removes and assembles sections of a SNIPER RIFLE.

EXT. ROADSIDE CAFE

KENDRICKS flicks coins to the CAFE ATTENDANT and grabs a take-away coffee. His cell RINGS - RYAN. He steals a handful of sugar sachets and spoon, and heads back to his car --

KENDRICKS

What ya got, Ryan?

RYAN (O.S.)

No sight of the Mercedes, Jimmy. We got a take on the Porsche though. Registered to a Richard Bartholomew Fewster.

KENDRICKS

(opening the car door)  
Fewster? I know that name.

RYAN (O.S.)

Says here he's a quack.

KENDRICKS

Northridge?

RYAN (O.S.)

Yeah.

KENDRICKS

What the hell's John up to now?  
 Ryan, run a check on Fewster. Then,  
 meet me at Northridge in thirty. If  
 John's there, so's the Mercedes.  
 And, bring Dalton and a uniform.  
 I'm gettin' that bad-shit twitch.

INT. ROOM 777 - BEDROOM -- LATER

The BLACK-HAIRED MAN, RIFLE at his side, peers between the curtains. His cell RINGS. He raises it to his ear. Listens a moment. Then, drops it to his side. BLACK-HAIRED MAN'S POV. The hospital's main entrance.

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

JOHN, fully dressed, sits in front of Richard's desk. He examines the crystal TROPHY from Mayo -- the door opens -- enter RICHARD carrying a stack of PAPERWORK.

RICHARD

That's all for now, John.

JOHN

When will we know?

RICHARD

Soon enough. Hopefully, soon enough.

Richard hands across the paperwork --

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Read all of this carefully.

-- John tries to accept, but Richard maintains his grasp.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

You have to understand. Even if  
 you're a match, there are no  
 guarantees that this'll even work.  
 Luke's weak. There's a chance he  
 won't even survive the surgery.

Richard's hand begins to tremble. The paper tips flutter.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

And, for you John, the risks are substantial. If you should ever lose your other kidney, for whatever reason, you'll end up fighting the same battle as Luke.

Richard's trembling hand releases the paperwork.

JOHN

Why don't you operate anymore, doc?

RICHARD

What?

JOHN

You said you don't do surgery anymore.

RICHARD

An accident. A couple of years ago.

JOHN

Your eye?

Richard stalls. Dismissive. Then, pulls his wallet, slips out a twenty and offers it to John.

RICHARD

Grab a cab out front. You can go and get your car.

John shakes Richard's hand. Leaves behind the twenty --

JOHN

Thanks, doc.

-- heads for the door.

RICHARD

John.

John turns.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

It's an incredible thing. What you're doing.

John returns a humbled smile and leaves.

INT. ROOM 777 -- MOMENTS LATER

The BLACK-HAIRED MAN kneels at the room's opened window. His cell, resting on the windowsill, RINGS three times. He cradles the rifle against his shoulder and peers through the rifle sight -- teases the trigger --

EXT. HOSPITAL'S MAIN ENTRANCE

KENDRICKS, RYAN, DALTON and a police officer, BENSON, walk the hospital sidewalk towards the main doors.

RYAN

No priors. But, he is under investigation from the I-R-S.

KENDRICKS

You mean, like every other doctor in America.

JOHN appears. Walks towards a waiting taxi. Reaches for the door -- Kendricks SHOUTS --

KENDRICKS (CONT'D)

John!

John turns -- THUD! -- his body jerks, followed by a FAINT CRACK! A distant rifle shot. John slumps to the ground.

Kendricks tracks the sound of the shot -- the APARTMENT BLOCK. Panic sets in. The taxi driver ducks down. Nearby people scurry for cover. SCREAMS. Kendricks sprints over to John, now propped up against the taxi clenching his shoulder --

JOHN

I'm okay. Go.

KENDRICKS

Keep your head down.

(shouting)

Benson, get some help over here.

Ryan, Dalton, come with me!

(to nearby people)

Everyone! Please move inside the hospital now! Inside, now!

Kendricks, Ryan and Dalton race through the hospital parking lot towards the apartment block.

The BLACK-HAIRED MAN hastily retracts his weapon from the window and accidentally knocks his cell phone off the windowsill -- KENDRICKS' POV. The phone tumbles down the face of the apartment block and SMASHES to the pavement. Kendricks looks up to an open seventh-floor window. The shadowy figure lurks inside --

KENDRICKS (CONT'D)

There!

The team scrambles across the road, dodging traffic, brandishing pistols. They charge up the terrace steps, carefully sidestepping the PHONE FRAGMENTS --

INT. APARTMENT BLOCK - FOYER -- MOMENTS LATER

KENDRICKS and RYAN head for the stairwell.

KENDRICKS  
Dalton, stay here.

STAIRWELL

KENDRICKS opens the fire escape door. Cocks his gun and enters. Looks down, then skyward up the center of the staircase -- no sign of the suspect --

KENDRICKS  
Cover the basement.

RYAN  
Jimmy. Get back-up.

KENDRICKS  
No time. Go.

RYAN slips through and heads down the fire escape. KENDRICKS cautiously climbs the stairs. Opens the first floor door and scans the hallway -- nothing --

7TH FLOOR HALLWAY -- MOMENTS LATER

KENDRICKS squeezes through the fire escape door. Sees a SMASHED WINDOW at the end of the hallway. Races over and looks out. KENDRICK'S POV. A clear drop --

CRASH! The fire escape door. Kendrick sprints back. A RACKET from the stairwell. Kendrick charges through. Looks over the railing. KENDRICKS POV. The suspect descending --

KENDRICKS  
Stop! F-B-I!

-- he continues. Kendrick aims but can't make a clear shot. He bounds down the stairs. Grabs his radio --

KENDRICKS (CONT'D)  
He's coming down! He's coming down!

Kendricks continues. GARBLED YELLS echo up the fire escape. Sound of a SCUFFLE. BANG! BANG! Two gunshots.

BASEMENT -- MOMENTS LATER

KENDRICKS storms through the fire escape door. He finds RYAN lying in a pool of blood from a bullet wound to the throat. Barely alive. Gasping.

SCREECHING tires! The MERCEDES speeds through the parking lot and up the exit ramp. BANG! BANG! Kendrick fires off two ambitious rounds, but the villain makes his getaway.

Kendricks drops to his knees and wraps a hand around Ryan's wound. Blood spurts between his fingers. He grabs his radio --

KENDRICKS

Hang in there, Ryan.

(to dispatch)

It's Kendricks. I've got an officer down at Northridge Memorial Apartments. Officer down. Need urgent medevac. Over.

DISPATCH (O.S.)

Medevac on its way. Over.

The squirting blood subsides --

KENDRICKS

Stay with me partner.

-- then, stops. Ryan dies. Anguished, Kendricks hurls his radio across the basement and yells at the top of his lungs --

KENDRICKS

Fuck!

LATER

KENDRICKS looks on as a body bag is loaded into an ambulance. DALTON emerges from the crowd of EMERGENCY CREW. He holds up a CLEAR BAG - fragments of the SMASHED PHONE.

KENDRICKS (CONT'D)

The SIM card?

DALTON

Cracked in half, sir. Tech may be able to pull something, but -

KENDRICKS

Run the fragments for prints. A-P-B the car again. And, alert medical centers to be on the look out for bullet wound victims. Ryan's pistol was short a round. With any luck, this prick may have taken a hit.

DALTON

I'm sorry about Ryan, sir.

KENDRICKS

Let's just find this fucker, Dalton.

DALTON

Yes, sir.

EXT. AIRPORT CARWASH -- AFTERNOON

A busy carwash occupied by rental cars from the nearby airport. The BLACK-HAIRED MAN steps from the BLACK MERCEDES. An ATTENDANT approaches. A hispanic 20-something, wet towels dangling from his belt and a back-to-front baseball cap.

ATTENDANT

You want the whole enchilada, amigo?  
Polish the paint-work, buff the  
chrome, slick the tires. You go  
cruisin' the strip tonight, you  
guaranteed the ladies.

The Black-Haired Man flicks his keys to the attendant.

BLACK-HAIRED MAN

You not leave finger-mark.

ATTENDANT

Sure, man. We'll even steam clean  
inside the exhaust pipe for ya.

The villain grins and walks away.

INT. JOHN'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- LATER

KENDRICKS stands beside a hospital bed where JOHN, shoulder strapped, inspects the AIRPORT SURVEILLANCE PHOTOS.

KENDRICKS

We ran the photo you gave me through  
L-A-X surveillance. These were taken  
five hours after you arrived.

CLOSE ON the White-Haired Man outside arrivals.

JOHN

That's him.

KENDRICKS

I took a stab he'd show at your house.  
Tailed until you both left the club.

JOHN

He's the shooter?

KENDRICKS

I didn't get a good look, but we're  
acting on that assumption. John, we  
ran the photo through immigration.  
Miao-Shan, or whoever this prick is,  
he's been in the U-S under four  
different passports in two years.

(MORE)



KENDRICKS (CONT'D)

He's trained in covert OPS, carries paramilitary weaponry, and just took out an accomplished federal agent. He's a trained assassin, John. He knows you've taken a hit, but unless he sees the zip drawn on a body-bag, he'll be back. I've sent for Susan. We're gonna keep you both here under security until we find this guy.

JOHN

Sorry about your partner, James.

KENDRICKS

Me too, John. But, not half as sorry this asshole's gonna be.

INT. AIRPORT CARWASH - OFFICE -- LATE AFTERNOON

The carwash BOSS, fat, lazy, and never without his foam cup of coffee, leans back in his chair, feet on his desk, watching a TV quiz show. A KNOCK on the door. Enter the ATTENDANT.

ATTENDANT

The slope's a no show, boss. What ya wanna do with it?

A NEWS FLASH appears on the TV --

NEWSREADER

Police are on the lookout for a late model black Mercedes sedan, registration X-J-P-two-two-three-four. The vehicle was last seen at Northridge Memorial Apartments this afternoon. The public are warned not to approach the vehicle or its occupants, and to report any sighting to L-A crime-stoppers on -

The attendant and boss look out the window at the Mercedes' LICENSE PLATE. They turn to each other, speechless.

INT. JOHN'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

JOHN, SUSAN and KENDRICKS discuss the latest calamity.

SUSAN

I just can't believe this is happening. I thought it was over.  
(to John)  
What were you doing here, anyway?

John hesitates. The door swings open and RICHARD enters.

JOHN  
Doc, my wife, Susan, and -

KENDRICKS  
(shakes hands)  
James Kendricks. F-B-I.

RICHARD  
Agent Kendricks. Ma'am.

SUSAN  
How is my husband, doctor?

RICHARD  
John, you're a lucky man. No ligament damage. No bone damage. Just some local nerve trauma and superficial bruising. A nasty scratch.

Kendricks' cell phone RINGS.

KENDRICKS  
Kendricks. I'm on my way.  
(hanging up)  
They found the car. You folks will be safe here. There's a guard outside. I'll be back later.

JOHN  
Thanks, James.

Exit Kendricks.

RICHARD  
John, I have some news on our other matter.

JOHN  
The tests?

SUSAN  
What tests?

RICHARD  
It's a green light. John, I can appreciate this is a less-than-ideal time, but we'll need to be prepared. We need to know what you want to do. We need to know now.

SUSAN  
Know what? What tests? For crying out loud, what's going on now?

INTENSIVE CARE UNIT -- MOMENTS LATER

Masks strapped to their faces, JOHN and SUSAN slip through the privacy curtain to LUCAS's bed. Susan stares at the unconscious boy.

SUSAN

He looks like Mark. This is Peter Raines' boy, isn't it? What's wrong with him?

JOHN

His kidneys. He's dying, Sue.

SUSAN

Oh, my goodness.

She moves closer and brushes the hair from his brow.

JOHN

We can save him.

SUSAN

What?

JOHN

I can save him, Sue. Raines wanted Mark's organ because he was a match. I thought I might be too, so I had the tests. That's why I was here.

SUSAN

John, he's not your responsibility. He's not our boy. And, his father -

John leans back and removes his mask.

JOHN

Sue, I've been replaying this over and over in my head since the minute I got home. And, the one thing I can't get past is - in Raines' position, I'm not sure I wouldn't have done the same thing.

SUSAN

John, forgiveness is -

JOHN

Hard. I'm not sure I can. But, equally, I can't deny a boy a chance at life as penalty for his father. Sue, we should never have had to bury our son, or our daughter, and we'll wear that pain to our graves.

(MORE)

JOHN (CONT'D)

But, this is our chance to give some meaning to all this. Save this boy's life. Honor our son. Let me do this, Sue.

Enter RICHARD. John looks imploringly at his wife. She turns to Lucas. Her conflict fades. She takes hold of John's hand and turns to Richard.

SUSAN

You'll save him? And, you won't let anything happen to my husband?

RICHARD

That's my intention.

Susan nods, compliantly. John smiles and embraces his wife.

EXT. AIRPORT CARWASH -- EARLY EVENING

KENDRICKS interviews the carwash ATTENDANT and BOSS. In b.g., a FORENSICS TEAM work over the abandoned MERCEDES.

INVESTIGATOR

Sorry, Jimmy. It's spotless. Couple of hairs on the seats, a few partial prints, but -

(to the Boss)

- you've got my business.

Kendricks hands the attendant an AIRPORT SURVEILLANCE PHOTO.

KENDRICKS

This the guy?

ATTENDANT

No, man. This guy had -  
(looks closer)

Hold on. Yeah, I think that's him, dude. But, he had black hair and no crumb catcher, ya know.

KENDRICKS

You're sure?

ATTENDANT

Yeah, man. That's the guy.

KENDRICKS

(retrieving the photo)

Thanks.

(turns away)

Shit!

Kendricks whips out his cell phone and dials.

KENDRICKS (CONT'D)

Dalton, the slippery son-of-a-bitch changed his appearance. Alter the description to black hair, clean shaven, re-post a mock-up and alert patrols. And, notify airports, docks and hospitals. I'm heading back.

INT. AIRPLANE GANGWAY -- CONTINUOUS

The BLACK-HAIRED MAN hands his BOARDING PASS to an attractive MEXICAN STEWARDESS as he boards a 747 jumbo.

MEXICAN STEWARDESS

Hola Mr Ch'in. Row four, seat D.  
We'll be serving refreshments shortly.

The villain walks forward to first class. Locates an isle seat, then looks to the far window. REVEAL, MOLONY looking back, expectantly. The BLACK-HAIRED MAN shakes his head and throws his jacket to the vacant seat between them.

INT. JOHN'S HOSPITAL ROOM

JOHN and SUSAN play Chinese checkers on the edge of the bed. Enter RICHARD, John's medical chart tucked under his arm.

RICHARD

Chinese checkers?

JOHN

Just checkers.

RICHARD

John, when was the last time you had anything to eat or drink?

JOHN

Breakfast. A couple of glasses of water since. Why?

RICHARD

Luke has stabilized. Enough for surgery. If we're going to do this, we need to do it now.

SUSAN

Now? My husband's just been shot!

RICHARD

I appreciate that Susan, but John is perfectly fine. The window for a transplant is already small and may be open for the last time.

(to John)

I can pull together a surgical team and if you're okay to go, we'll get you prepped within the hour.

John looks reassuringly at his wife, then turns to Richard.

JOHN

You'll be at the surgery?

RICHARD

I'll assist.

INT. KENDRICKS' OFFICE -- LATER

KENDRICKS sits behind his desk in a small, well-organized office. He reviews the AIRPORT SURVEILLANCE PHOTOS and LOGBOOK. Rubs his brow in frustration. DALTON appears at the door holding a bunch of papers.

KENDRICKS

Tell me you've got something, Dalton?

DALTON

Nothin', sir. The car's squeaky clean. Hairs and prints were all matched to car wash employees.

Kendricks inspects one of the photos. CLOSE ON the White-Haired Man's BLACK GLOVES.

KENDRICKS

Vehicle I-D number?

DALTON

Purchased at a dealer on Wilshire by a Terence Priest. Ran his details. Nothing checked out.

KENDRICKS

You cross-checked -

DALTON

It gets worse, sir.

KENDRICKS

What do you mean?

DALTON

He's gone.

KENDRICKS

What?

DALTON

L-A-X made a positive match against the new mock-up. He left for Mexico an hour and a half ago. Cancun.

Kendricks looks confused.

DALTON (CONT'D)

Should I contact Interpol?

KENDRICKS

Don't bother. We've got nothin'.  
(to himself)  
Why would he go without tying off the hit?

DALTON

Tech lifted a call log off the SIM card, but it's not much use.

Dalton hands the PHONE LOGS to Kendricks.

DALTON (CONT'D)

Times of calls, but all the numbers are scrambled. There is one thing, though. There were five incoming calls before the shooting. Can't trace the numbers, but tech say that on each occasion, the caller was transmitting on the same tower as the receiver. The caller was close.

KENDRICKS POV. Call logs at -- 2.15PM -- 2.27PM --

KENDRICKS

What time was the shooting?

DALTON

Two thirty.

KENDRICKS

He was there.

KENDRICKS POV. Call logs at -- 11.20AM -- 11.21AM -- 11.21AM --

KENDRICKS (CONT'D)

Oh, shit.

Kendricks flicks through his logbook to the entry --

-- 11.20AM - PHYSICALS TENNIS CLUB --

FLASHBACK of RICHARD searching for reception on his cell.

Kendricks leaps from his chair. Grabs his pistol and keys.

KENDRICKS (CONT'D)

Time for a check-up, Dalton.

INT. NORTHRIDGE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL - PASSAGEWAY

JOHN's bed is wheeled by TWO ORDERLIES. SUSAN walks alongside, clutching her sedated husband's hand. They reach a set of swinging doors. A YOUNG NURSE awaits.

YOUNG NURSE

I'm sorry, Mrs Welland, but you can't go any further.

Susan leans in close and kisses her husband.

JOHN

I love you.

SUSAN

I love you, too.

The orderlies push the bed through the doors.

RICHARD'S OFFICE -- MOMENTS LATER

The door opens. The YOUNG NURSE escorts SUSAN into the room. In b.g., a haunting CONCERTO plays from Richard's hi-fi.

YOUNG NURSE

Dr Fewster insisted you make yourself at home. You can watch a movie. There's cable if you like. If there's anything I can get you?

SUSAN

A glass of cold water would be nice.

YOUNG NURSE

I'll bring one shortly.

Susan nods appreciatively and the nurse exits.

INT. KENDRICKS' CAR / HOSPITAL -- LATER

RED LIGHT spinning on the dashboard. KENDRICKS drives while DALTON chats on his cell, jotting notes in a pad.

DALTON

Got it. Thanks.

(MORE)



DALTON (CONT'D)

(hangs up and redials)

Well, it's more than a few missing paychecks. The I-R-S has been monitoring Fewster for over a year. Some of his luxuries, including a late model blue Porsche, are being financed with a credit card linked to a private bank account in Zurich. But, here's the kicker, sir. Guess who's named on the card?

KENDRICKS

Who?

DALTON

(on the cell phone)

L-A-X passenger information, please.

(to Kendricks)

Terence Priest.

Kendricks corners through the GATES into Northridge.

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

SUSAN browses the wall of CERTIFICATES and AWARDS -- CLOSE ON, HONORS IN TRANSPLANT SURGERY from JOHNS HOPKINS. KNOCK! The door opens and the YOUNG NURSE enters with Susan's water. Susan accepts the glass.

SUSAN

Thank you.

The nurse smiles and turns to leave.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Dr Fewster was such an accomplished surgeon. Why doesn't he operate anymore?

YOUNG NURSE

The accident.

SUSAN

Accident?

YOUNG NURSE

Yes, ma'am. It was on the news and in the papers. He calls it an accident, but it wasn't really. He was attacked by a group of thieves after speaking at the World Transplant Congress in Beijing two years ago. They injured him pretty bad. He lost an eye and nearly his arm.

SUSAN

His eye and his arm?

YOUNG NURSE

They attacked him with those martial arts swords. Doctors were able to reattach his arm, but he has an artificial eye. It was devastating. Before they took his license, he was like a God in the medical community. They called him the Immortal.

Color drains from Susan's face.

YOUNG NURSE (CONT'D)

What is it ma'am?

SUSAN

Nothing. Nothing. Thank you.

The nurse nods and leaves.

INT. THEATER PRE-OP -- MOMENTS LATER

RICHARD removes a stethoscope from JOHN's chest. In b.g., the pre-op doors swing open and LUCAS is wheeled in.

John, sedated, grabs Richard's coat lapel and mumbles --

JOHN

I don't want the boy to know.

RICHARD

He won't.

Richard nods to the ORDERLIES. They move to the back of John's bed and wheel it through the theater doors.

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE -- MOMENTS LATER

SUSAN scrambles through Richard's desk drawers. In the bottom drawer, she finds a PHONE DIRECTORY and cell phone [same as the White-Haired Man's]. Susan whips out the directory.

INT. HOSPITAL FOYER

KENDRICKS strides through the hospital foyer. DALTON follows, hanging up his cell phone.

DALTON

L-A-X confirms Terence Priest was booked on the same flight to Cancun as Mercedes Man. But, called at twelve twenty-five and rescheduled for an eleven-thirty flight tonight.

Kendricks quickens his stride.

KENDRICKS  
Unfinished business. Me too.

INT. OPERATING THEATER

The CONCERTO plays in b.g., in sync with Richard's office.

JOHN lies on the operating table, mask fitted, intravenous needle protruding from his arm. RICHARD enters, his sterile hands raised. REVEAL a deep SCAR circling his left forearm. A NURSE slips on his gloves, fixes his mask. RICHARD nods to the ANESTHESIOLOGIST, who in turn darts a look of concern to the rest of the SURGICAL TEAM.

RICHARD  
Count back from ten, John.

JOHN  
The surgeon? The surgeon?

Richard leans in close to John's ear --

RICHARD  
(whispers in Chinese)  
I warned you not to crash the party.

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE

SUSAN's finger on the phone directory listing for --

-- FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION --

She leans across to grab the phone. Glimpses a FOLDER in the opened bottom drawer, with Chinese hand-writing along the top. She grabs the folder and examines its contents -- TRAVEL DOCUMENTS -- an AIRLINE TICKET to CANCUN --

INT. OPERATING THEATER

The SURGICAL TEAM manoeuvre JOHN onto his side. Sheets are draped over his body, lights moved into place, trays of instruments wheeled across. RICHARD is handed a scalpel by an ASSISTING NURSE.

RICHARD  
Let's turn up the music, shall we?

INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE

The CONCERTO builds. SUSAN continues flicking through the FOLDER -- finds REAL ESTATE documents, FREIGHT receipts and a PROPERTY TITLE for a luxury villa in BELIZE, CARIBBEAN -- finds a BELIZE PASSPORT and opens it. Richard's photo, but the citizen's name is -- MR TERENCE PRIEST --

The door CRASHES open! Susan lifts her eyes to see KENDRICKS and DALTON -- guns in hand --

SUSAN

It's him.

KENDRICKS

We know. Where is he?

SUSAN

Surgery. He's got John!

KENDRICKS

Stay here, Susan.

SUSAN

No. I'm coming. I know what it's about. The legend. I know about Miao-Shan.

KENDRICKS

Okay. Tell me on the way.

INT. OPERATING THEATER

RICHARD makes his first incision. Blood weeps from the cut.

INT. HOSPITAL PASSAGEWAY -- MOMENTS LATER

The hospital's ADMINISTRATOR leads KENDRICKS, DALTON, SUSAN and a new SURGICAL TEAM to the operating theater.

ADMINISTRATOR

The surgery was never authorized.

EXT. OPERATING THEATER -- MOMENTS LATER

DALTON takes position outside the theater doors. Behind him, a SECURITY GUARD, the ADMINISTRATOR, and the PREPPED SURGICAL TEAM. Dalton lifts his radio --

DALTON

Scrubbed and gloved, sir.

INSIDE THEATER

The CONCERTO roars. RICHARD hums and conducts with his scalpel, as the piece heads to its climax, then -- SILENCE -- music stops -- a spooky static CRACKLES over the intercom --

KENDRICKS (O.S.)

Miao-Shan!

Richard FREEZES. INTO VIEW behind him, the OBSERVATION GALLERY window, where KENDRICKS stands with a lowered pistol in hand. SUSAN nervously stands behind.

The theater door opens. DALTON and a SECURITY GUARD slip through with their guns raised. Assisting surgical STAFF hesitate. Richard simply shakes his head and continues.

RICHARD

And, the clouds formed, the earth trembled, and flowers rained down from above. And, in a moment, the immortal reverted to her former self. Whole, again.

KENDRICKS

Step away from the patient, Fewster.

Dalton edges his way around the room's perimeter. Takes position opposite Kendricks, fronting Fewster. Surgical staff step away, but Richard's commanding eye sees them resume their positions.

RICHARD

Of course, Miao-Shan had earned her place in Heaven. But instead, she chose to remain on Earth and heal all who suffered. The ultimate gesture of compassion, wouldn't you say, Agent Kendricks?

KENDRICKS

I'm not interested in your mythical motives, Fewster. In truth, you're just a run-of-the-mill, garden-variety killer. You and the rest of your butcher buddies.

RICHARD

Really, James. Do you know how many lives are saved doing what we do?

KENDRICKS

And, how many die?

RICHARD

Criminals. Thieves. Filth that must be cleansed.

KENDRICKS

Mark Welland?

RICHARD

And, mindful of my father's love, I have repaid him with my arms and eyes. Sacrifice, James. Tell me, how many die doing what you do? Pawns, like Ellis Ryan? And Susan, you're there, I'm sure. You should understand. Christ gave his life for your salvation. It's the path to enlightenment. Immortality.

KENDRICKS

So, nothing to do with the millions stashed in offshore accounts? Or, luxury villas in the Caribbean? You have a God complex?

Richard turns. Looks up at Kendricks, bloodied scalpel in hand. The surgical team seize the chance to pull back.

RICHARD

You fool! The best God can give is hope. I give promises, James. I give life when no-one else will. Not your fickle God. Not your Government. And, certainly not the egocentric society you waste your dismal life trying to protect. Six years for an organ? What an insult. What a stain on man's compassion for fellow man. I don't care who you are, you want to live, you come to me. I'm a true healer, James.

KENDRICKS

Bullshit. You're a petulant child pissed off 'cause someone ended your candy-coated career. Now, step away you sick son-of-a-bitch.

Richard turns back and continues the surgery.

RICHARD

Go home, James. You're endangering my patient.

Dalton edges closer. In a flash, Richard's scalpel presses against John's jugular. Susan GASPS. Richard kicks away tray-tables and equipment, and positions himself at the table's head. His eyes dart between Kendricks and Dalton.

KENDRICKS

Easy, Fewster. Don't make this any worse than it is. Just back away.

RICHARD

Or what, James? You'll shoot? You're not gonna shoot me? You don't take the life of a man who saves them. I save lives, James.

(pointing the scalpel  
at Kendricks)

I save lives!

Kendricks seizes the moment --

KENDRICKS

Dalton.

-- Richard swings his eyes to Dalton. CLOSE ON Dalton's eyes. CLOSE ON Richard's eyes. BANG! Dalton SHOOTs. Richard tumbles backwards. CRASHES into a tray-table, then collapses to the floor. The doctor writhes, smearing blood over the floor -- then, stops --

Dalton, in total control, rushes over and checks his vitals. Looks up at Kendricks and shakes his head. Richard is dead.

OBSERVATION GALLERY

KENDRICKS lowers his gun. In b.g., the SECURITY GUARD opens the theater doors and ushers in the new SURGICAL TEAM --

KENDRICKS  
Not immortal after all.

-- they attend to Richard's body and rescue John's surgery from shaken staff.

Kendricks turns to SUSAN. She cries tears of relief as she walks to the window and places her hands on the glass. She looks to her husband, fighting the urge to go to him.

KENDRICKS (CONT'D)  
He's fine. He's fine.

Susan nods. Turns to Kendricks and squeezes out a smile.

BACK TO OPERATING THEATER

AERIAL ON the new surgical team surrounding John --

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. COUNTRY FIELD -- NIGHT (PRESENT DAY)

AERIAL ON a team of PARAMEDICS surrounding SUSAN. She's covered in blankets, oxygen mask over her nose and mouth.

TWENTY YARDS AWAY --

-- stands the MAN. CLOSE ON his face, water dripping from his hair and beard. He shivers under a blanket as he watches a RESCUE CHOPPER descend. RUSTLING grass, someone approaches --

-- an INVESTIGATOR, stocky, 50s, a country cop, carrying a tattered umbrella, his cheap suit drenched. In b.g., flashing lights from EMERGENCY VEHICLES line the roadside.

INVESTIGATOR  
Ya know, they saw that fireball ten  
mile away. Clever. Where ya from,  
son?

MAN  
L-A.

INVESTIGATOR

Go figure. The lady too. You city folks are sure out of your way, ain't ya? Ya know her?

MAN

Don't think so.

INVESTIGATOR

Well, I'll be damned. Ain't seen no-one use this track since the new road opened. You get yourself lost and wind up savin' a neighbor.

THE RESCUE CHOPPER landing --

A deafening DRONE. Air churning as it lands. THREE RESCUE CREW jump out and help a plain-clothed man to the ground - it's JOHN. They sprint across to Susan. A PARAMEDIC holds John at bay --

PARAMEDIC

(shouting)

She'll be fine. Just let 'em do their job.

John sees she's okay. His anxiety settles.

JOHN

Where is he?

PARAMEDIC

Over here.

The paramedic leads John towards the Man.

PARAMEDIC (CONT'D)

He saved her life. The kid too. Five months?

JOHN

Four and a half.

They reach Susan's rescuer --

PARAMEDIC

Chief. The husband.

JOHN

(shaking hands)

John.

INVESTIGATOR

Bud. Think you might owe this guy a few crates of Whiskey.



JOHN  
 (offers a handshake)  
 Thank God you were here. What's  
 your name?

The Man's caped blanket parts as he reaches for John's hand.  
 REVEAL scars to the side of his lower torso.

MAN  
 Lucas. Lucas Raines.

John stops cold. Unable to let go Lucas's hand. In b.g.,  
 crew lift Susan onto a stretcher and rush her to the chopper.

RESCUE OFFICER  
 John! Let's go!

Susan's loaded in. The crew jump in after.

JOHN  
 Thank you, Lucas.

John releases Lucas's hand and bolts for the chopper. Crew  
 gesture toward the cockpit. John jumps in next to the pilot.  
 Turns and locks eyes with Lucas. The cargo doors slam shut.

A PARAMEDIC signals a thumbs up. The engine ROARS --  
 onlookers cover their ears and turn away from the blasting  
 wind -- but, not Lucas -- his eyes fixed on John. He senses  
 they've met before.

INT. RESCUE CHOPPER COCKPIT

JOHN stays on LUCAS as the chopper lifts from the ground.  
 JOHN'S POV. Lucas and the accident scene fade into the  
 distance, disappearing behind the clouds and rain.

FADE OUT

SUPER: The alleged persecution of Falun Gong practitioners  
 in China has never been officially proved, nor disproved.

In July 2006, a controversial report was published by  
 international human rights lawyer, David Matas, and former  
 Canadian Secretary of State, David Kilgour. It concluded  
 that a large number of transplant organs were not only coming  
 from death row prisoners, but also from detained practitioners  
 of the Falun Gong spiritual practice.

Allegations of the Falun Gong's persecution have been strongly  
 denied by the Chinese Government, and also questioned by  
 credible Chinese human rights activists. However, the  
 government has admitted to knowledge of the illegal harvesting  
 of organs from executed prisoners, and called for a strict  
 code of conduct and better record-keeping to stem the Trade.

THE END