

The Interrogator

An Original Screenplay

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EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

SUPER: "Hafizabad, Pakistan"

A lonely house, inside imposing stone walls, set away from the bustle of the city, lights off in the darkness.

A Pakistani GUARD (20s) walks around the outside of the wall, his AK-47 slung over his shoulder. It's a routine patrol, and he's bored.

He doesn't notice the dark figure of SEAL #1, clad head-to-toe in black, face hidden behind a balaclava, a small camera attached to his night-vision goggles (NVGs).

The figure sneaks up behind the guard, raises a K-Bar knife, and without hesitation wraps one arm around the guard's face, covering his mouth.

He slides the knife under the man's ribs, up to his heart. He holds the body in position for a few seconds until it's clear he's dead, then slides it to the ground next to the wall.

He crouches next to the wall.

SEAL #1
(into his radio)
Clear.

Seven other black-clad NAVY SEALs emerge from the darkness. SEAL #1 leads them around the wall to the gate. He silently opens the gate and they enter.

Two of the SEALs peel off and disappear around the back of the house.

Seal #1 and his team of five approach the front door. SEAL #2 attaches a charge to the door and the team waits next to the wall. SEAL #2 glances at SEAL #1, who nods.

SEAL #2 presses a button on his detonator and the door disappears into the the darkness with massive WHOOMP!

The SEALs move into the house quickly but smartly, silenced MP-5s at the ready.

INT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The SEAL team moves through an entrance hall and into an open living room, facing a staircase.

A PAKISTANI MAN (50s) leaps awake off a couch and fumbles for his gun, but the closest SEAL drops him with a 3-round burst.

There's sounds of DISTURBANCE now, from upstairs and around the SEALs.

From a room to their left comes a group of three WOMEN (20s-50s) and three little GIRLS (4-10), screaming and terrified.

The SEALs turn toward them, but hold their fire. They start to move forward.

One of the women pulls a pistol from under her burka and starts to lift it at the SEALs.

SEAL #3 notices her, turns and puts her down with three quick shots.

PAKISTANI #2 (30s) appears on the staircase, holding an AK. Before he can get the gun in firing position, SEAL #1 drops him in his steps.

SEAL #1 motions to his teammates, and they split up to clear the other rooms. SEAL #1 heads up the stairs.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

SEAL #3 and SEAL #4 enter. PAKISTANI #3 jumps out from behind the counter and gets off a wild shot from his AK before SEAL #4 puts three rounds through his head.

They check the rest of the kitchen. It's empty.

SEAL #4
(into radio)
Kitchen clear.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

SEAL #7 and SEAL #8 clamber up the back stairs to a porch. They share a look, and SEAL #8 batters the door open with a violent kick.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Two PAKISTANIS (40s) whirl toward the door. Each SEAL takes one. Three shots later, both Pakistanis lie dead on the floor.

STAIRCASE

SEAL #1 makes his way up the stairs.

NVG POV - SEAL #1

To our right we see PAKISTANI #4 come out of a room, brandishing an AK. We drop him with three shots, and he topples over the railing and falls to the ground.

INT. WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

PRESIDENT ALAN BARTLETT (50s), patriarchal and stressed-out, watches the action on a bank of video monitors, each connected to the cameras on the SEALs NVGs.

Next to him is LAURA BELVEDERE (30s), wearing glasses. She taps a pencil on the table.

Around the table, some sitting and some standing, are a group of civilians and military officers, DAVID HINDS (50s) in a suit and tie among them.

A White House PHOTOGRAPHER (40s) unobtrusively moves around the table and snaps photos.

SEAL #7
(over the speakers)
Bedroom one clear. No Tango One.

SEAL #1
(over the speakers)
Let's clear the upstairs. Tango One
has priority.

SEAL #7
(over the speakers)
Roger.

The President turns to Hinds.

PRESIDENT
David, where the fuck is he? He's
there, right?

Before Hinds can speak, Laura puts her hand on the President's arm.

LAURA
(reassuringly)
He's there, sir. We have a ton of
intelligence that he hasn't left in
five years. They'll get him.

The President, mollified, gives her a quick smile and turns back to the action. Laura looks over at Hinds, who gives her a thumbs-up.

HOUSE - UPSTAIRS - CONTINUOUS

SEAL #1 joins up with SEAL #7 and SEAL #8 and they approach the last bedroom.

At the door SEAL #1 glances at the other two and nods. SEAL #7 kicks in the door and they storm the room.

INT. AHMED BIN-AWAD'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

In the room the SEALs encounter a bearded Arab man. This is AHMED BIN-AWAD (50s). He is unarmed, and holds his hands up in surrender.

The SEALs point their weapons at him.

SEAL #1
For God and country.

INT. SITUATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The President and the assembled crowd stare in shock at the screens, which have gone snowy.

PRESIDENT
What the fuck? What happened?

A TECHNICIAN (20s) fiddles with a machine in the back. David Hinds stands next to him, his finger holding down a button.

TECHNICIAN
It's...uh, it's an uplink problem,
Mr. President.

He fiddles with the dials. Hinds takes his finger off the button and suddenly the screens clear up.

The President focuses on the screen marked "TATE," on which he sees SEAL #1 standing alone, rifle hanging to the side, tapping his ear.

Behind him, SEAL #7 and SEAL #8 crouch over bin-Awad's body. SEAL #7 snips his hair, while SEAL #8 unrolls a body bag.

SEAL #1
Tango One down, Mr. President. It's
over.

The room EXPLODES into cheers, hugs and high-fives.

In the back of the room, Hinds grins. He leans over to the technician.

HINDS

I want you to burn one copy of the
footage on a DVD and give it to me.
Then delete it. You hear me? Every
fucking minute.

The technician nods, terrified. Hinds stares at him for a
moment, then breaks into a celebratory smile.

He slaps the technician on the back.

HINDS (CONT'D)

And have some champagne. It's a
great day to be an American.

He turns and joins the partying throng.

EXT. WHITE HOUSE - DAWN

Laura leaves through a side door, gets into a Toyota Corolla,
and drives away.

EXT. LAURA AND MIKE'S HOUSE - EARLY MORNING

Laura's Toyota pulls up in front.

INT. MIKE AND LAURA'S BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

The athletic, rugged form of MIKE LINDSEY (late 30s) sleeps
alone in the dark room.

Laura slips quietly into the room, strips and slides nude
into the bed next to him.

As she snuggles her naked front to his back, he stirs and
turns over.

MIKE

(sleepily)

Well, then. Good morning to you
too.

LAURA

Baby, we got him.

MIKE

Who?

LAURA

Ahmed bin-Awad.

Now she's got his attention. He wakes up and flips over, his eyes alight.

MIKE

You got...? How?

She reaches over, grabs the remote, turns on the TV to CNN. The President's face appears, with voiceover from THE HOST.

HOST (V.O.)

And we're getting word now that the President will be speaking in a few minutes, and sources say that he'll announce the death of the head of al-Q'aida and the most hunted man on the planet, Ahmed bin-Awad, at the hands of the U.S. Government. bin-Awad was one of the planners of 9/11 and was Osama bin Laden's second-in-command until bin Laden's death at the hands of the US Government, and bin-Awad's death is expected to give the President a major boost in his re-election bid.

Mike stares at Laura.

MIKE

Holy shit.

LAURA

I know, right?

MIKE

Is that...is that what you were doing all night? That was the operation you were talking about? And you couldn't tell me?

She just smiles.

LAURA

Need to know.

He rolls his eyes.

MIKE

It's not like I don't have a security clearance too.

LAURA

This one was sensitive. You know how it is.

MIKE

Yeah, yeah. My girlfriend the superspy.

LAURA

Super-analyst, maybe.

He leans forward, kisses her on the lips.

MIKE

You're super to me.

She kisses him back, and it quickly becomes passionate.

Behind them, the TV switches to a view of the President. Mike and Laura don't notice.

PRESIDENT

(on the TV)

My fellow Americans...tonight I come to report that US forces, acting on information collected by America's finest intelligence professionals, have killed Ahmed bin-Awad, ending his reign of terror.

As the President speaks, Laura and Mike make love, silhouetted in the glow of his image on the TV.

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)

(on the TV)

The architect of 9/11 is dead. Today is a great day for all Americans.

EXT. TIM AND MAUREEN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A farmhouse, secluded from any neighbors, overlooking the Potomac.

The Toyota pulls up out front; Mike and Laura get out. Mike carries a bottle of wine. They make their way to the front door and knock.

TIM LINDSEY (early 40s), Mike's older brother, opens the door. He's a former cop, intelligent and sarcastic.

TIM

Hey, little bro! And the heroine of the night!

He gives Mike a bro-hug, then envelops Laura in a real one.

TIM (CONT'D)
C'mon in. Maureen's getting dinner ready. She wanted me to send you in to help. I'll give Mikey here the nickel tour.

They follow him inside.

INT. TIM AND MAUREEN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Tim leads Mike into the bedroom. It's spacious, paneled with expensive wood and tastefully decorated.

Mike comes in, looks around, lets out a low whistle.

MIKE
So the PI business is really kickin', huh?

Tim laughs.

TIM
Lots of rich folks out there with cheating spouses.

He grabs Mike by the arm.

TIM (CONT'D)
Hey, you want to see something really crazy? Check this out.

He steps to the wall near the bed, pushes one of the panels. A section of the wall slides silently away. Mike's jaw drops.

MIKE
What the hell? Is that a secret passageway or something?

TIM
Not exactly. Come on.

He leads Mike inside:

PANIC ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Tim pushes a button and the wall slides shut. There's a slight WHIR in the background and low lights come on. Along the back wall is a screen showing feeds from cameras around the property, along with a telephone.

MIKE

You have a panic room? Why?

Tim shrugs.

TIM

Well, I didn't build it. The previous owners were really rich. And really paranoid. But it's pretty cool, huh?

He points to one of the screens, which shows MAUREEN LINDSEY (30) carrying food into the dining room.

TIM (CONT'D)

Chow time!

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Mike and Laura sit on one couch, Tim and Maureen (30) on the other. Each has a wine glass in various stages of emptiness. An empty bottle sits on the coffee table.

The two couples are laughing. Maureen holds up her glass.

MAUREEN

To our girlfriend-in-law, the gal who got bin-Awad.

Tim and Mike cheer, while Laura looks embarrassed.

LAURA

No, come on. Maureen, you as much as anybody know it's a team game.

MAUREEN

And this week, the good guys won.

TIM

Okay, so now that you've gotten bin-Awad, will you two finally get married?

MAUREEN

Yeah, Mike, when are you gonna ask her to marry you?

MIKE

What? I have asked her. Like...what, honey? 50 times?

MAUREEN

Then where's the ring?

MIKE
You'd have to ask her.

Tim and Maureen look to Laura, who ducks her head and gulps from her wineglass.

Mike's attention is drawn away, however, to the television.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Hey, look.

It's turned to CNN. Onscreen is a photo of Laura sitting next to the President during the operation, her hand on his arm. The headline reads "WHO IS THIS WOMAN?"

LAURA
Oh, shit.

INT. TOYOTA - NIGHT

Mike drives, Laura flips the radio, jumping from station to station. She stops when she hears NEWS TALK.

MIKE
Honey, I'm sure it's no big-

LAURA
No big deal? No big deal? They just fucking outed me on national TV! Of course it's a big deal! You don't think al-Qa'ida watches TV? They're gonna know-

She stops, points at the radio.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Listen.

NEWSCASTER
(over the radio)
...that woman? That's the subject of tonight's Washington Minute. Local tongues are wagging, asking themselves who is the beautiful, mysterious woman who can be seen with her hand on the arm of President Alan Bartlett in the official photo released by the White House taken during the recent raid by Navy SEALs that killed the world's most wanted terrorist, Ahmed bin-Awad.

LAURA
See?

MIKE
Shhh.

NEWSCASTER
Some wags say that she must be the girlfriend of the famously social President. I mean, look at the way she's touching him, they say...

LAURA
Oh my God.

She reaches over, turns it down.

LAURA (CONT'D)
You see?

MIKE
Wait.

He reaches over, turns it back up.

NEWSCASTER
...say that she must be a super-spook, but the CIA's not saying. Of course, if they told us they'd have to kill us. And that's tonight's Washington Minute...

INT. MIKE AND LAURA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mike sleeps soundly. Laura stares at the ceiling. The clock reads 3:17.

EXT. GEORGE WASHINGTON PARKWAY - MORNING

The Toyota passes a sign that reads "GEORGE BUSH CENTER FOR INTELLIGENCE - CIA."

INT. TOYOTA - CONTINUOUS

In the passenger seat, Laura puffs nervously on a cigarette and blows the smoke out the cracked window. Mike drives.

LAURA
I'll be late tonight.

MIKE
You're always late.

LAURA
I can't help it, Mike! It's--

MIKE
(interrupting)
--requirements of the job. I know.

LAURA
What do you want from me?

He shrugs.

MIKE
For once, I'd like to be first.

LAURA
First? Are you crazy? I love you!

MIKE
I know. But the only thing you love
more than me is your job.

This stings her. She looks away from him, blows a plume of
smoke out the window, speaks to her reflection.

LAURA
Let's get married.

MIKE
What?

LAURA
Let's do the wedding. It's time.
We'll do it at your mother's. It's
pretty in Georgia this time of
year. What do you think?

MIKE
Really? Why now?

She turns, looks at him.

LAURA
I'm...I'm ready to change things.

MIKE
Is it because of that picture?

LAURA
It's because of a lot of things.
I'm ready to give the government
less of my time.

EXT. GW PARKWAY - CONTINUOUS

The car turns off at an exit marked "HWY 123 - CIA
HEADQUARTERS."

INT. TOYOTA - CONTINUOUS

Mike gives Laura a look.

MIKE
Well...that's awesome, honey. I'll
talk to my mom about having the
wedding at her place.

LAURA
You don't exactly sound
overwhelmed.

MIKE
Sweetheart, I'll believe it when I
see it.

INT. GEORGETOWN ARABIC DEPARTMENT - DAY

Mike walks through a door that reads "GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY -
DEPARTMENT OF ARABIC AND ISLAMIC STUDIES."

He passes a reception desk, at which sits AFNAN (20), wearing
a traditional hijab.

AFNAN
A'salamu alaykum, Professor
Lindsey.

MIKE
Wa'alaikumussalam, Afnan.

He opens a door marked "PROFESSOR MICHAEL LINDSEY" and
enters:

INT. MIKE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Mike tosses his bag on a chair, grabs a remote and switches
on a TV hanging in the corner to Al-Jazeera US. He sits
behind the desk and turns to his computer.

He moves the mouse, and the screen pops up, then immediately goes to the BLUE SCREEN OF DEATH.

MIKE

Shit.

He punches at the space bar a couple of times, then gives up, grabs the phone.

MIKE (CONT'D)

(into the phone in Arabic,
with titles)

Hassan, it's Professor Lindsey. I
need your help....yes, again.
Thanks.

He hangs up and checks out the TV.

Onscreen is the PHOTO of Laura and the President.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Shit.

He grabs the remote and turns up the volume.

ANNOUNCER

(from the TV)

American media has been speculating
about the identity of this woman
for days since the assault on...

A KNOCK at the door.

MIKE

Come!

He mutes the TV. The door opens and HASSAN (early 20s), an Arab wearing jeans and a t-shirt, walks in.

Mike moves around the desk so Hassan can sit at the computer.

HASSAN

Just give me a second. I don't know
why this keeps doing this. I just
have to reconfigure your connection
to the network.

He starts typing. Mike looks back at the TV, turns the volume back up.

ANNOUNCER

Some in the media are now calling
her "America's Number One Terrorist
Hunter."

MIKE

Jesus.

HASSAN

Fixed.

He gets up, heads to the door. Mike mutes the TV again.

MIKE

Thanks, Hassan. Hopefully we won't have to do this again.

HASSAN

No problem.

He exits.

Mike sits behind the desk, turns back to the computer. He pulls up Google, types in "PRESIDENT RAID PHOTO WOMAN."

He looks at the first entry, and his eyes grow wide. He clicks on the link, and a site pops up.

It reads "THE KEEVY REPORT." At the top of the page is a picture of a cheesy-looking LYLE KEEVY (30s) wearing a fedora. Mike scrolls down past the picture to the headline, which reads IDENTITY OF PREZ'S MYSTERY WOMAN UNCOVERED."

He looks down a little farther to find the name LAURA BELVEDERE in the text below.

MIKE

Oh, shit.

He pulls up a new tab and types in "JIHADONLINE.COM." A new page pops up with a crescent moon and Arabic writing.

He scrolls down and focuses on the name LAURA BELVEDERE next to the photo of Laura with the President.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Fuck me.

He grabs the phone and dials.

CARL ABRAMSON

(over the phone)

Abramson.

MIKE

Carl. It's Mike Lindsey.

CARL

Mike! How are you, brother? You ready to come back yet? We just brought some new fish into the Pit. Or maybe you want to work over the guys at Gitmo?

MIKE

That does sound like fun, but no.

CARL

I'm sorry to hear that. The Bureau interrogators are useless. They're not half as effective as we used to be.

MIKE

Well, the rules are different, too.

CARL

Don't get me started.

MIKE

Hey, it went too far, Carl. You know that just as well as I do.

CARL

Man, you really did go soft, didn't you?

MIKE

No, I just remembered I had a conscience. But listen, that's not why I'm calling.

CARL

What can I do for you, then?

MIKE

Laura.

CARL

And how is America's #1 terrorist hunter?

MIKE

A little terrified, to tell you the truth. How the hell did her picture get on TV?

CARL

I don't know, man. Apparently the White House fucked up.

(MORE)

CARL (CONT'D)

They were trying to make the President look, y'know, Presidential for the campaign and somebody got ahead of themselves.

MIKE

You saw that she's been outed, right? Just like Valerie Plame.

CARL

Yeah, I heard that asshole Lyle Keevy published her name.

MIKE

Everything but our home address. And the jihadis have noticed. Her info's all over their sites.

CARL

Yeah. We saw it too.

MIKE

Is there a threat estimate yet?

CARL

We're working on it.

MIKE

Can you give me a heads-up when it's ready?

CARL

Yeah, of course. And think about coming back, brother. We need more good men working on these guys. The quality of the intel gathered from detainees nowadays is just shit.

MIKE

Don't hold your breath.

INT. MIKE AND LAURA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Mike sits on the couch, papers spread out around him. He clicks the remote, and his attention is drawn to the TV.

It's turned to MSNBC, with the headline "BIN-AWAD RAID: JUSTICE OR EXECUTION?"

He turns up the volume.

Onscreen, host CHRIS MATHESON (50s) is flanked by two men, one with a ponytail (20s), the other patrician, clean-cut, wearing an expensive suit (50s).

Under the ponytail a caption reads "ANDREW GLEASON, ACLU."
Under the suit it reads "ALBERT STINSON, R-GA."

MATHESON

Conflicting reports out of Washington today regarding the raid on a compound in Pakistan that killed al-Qaida leader Ahmed bin-Awad. The Washington Times reporting this morning that the raid was designed to capture, not kill, bin-Awad, but that he came at the SEALs with an AK-47. However, Reuters has reported that Pakistani Intelligence claims that Awad was unarmed and was, in their words, "executed." Andrew Gleason, your thoughts?

GLEASON

While everyone in the US is happy bin-Awad is dead, we're still a nation of laws, and unfortunately this type of unchecked aggression is sadly typical of this militaristic White House. The bigger question is, when will they end the so-called War on Terror? bin Laden's dead, bin-Awad's dead, we've won. It's time to get back to what made America great, taking care of our education and infrastructure and economic problems.

Mike rolls his eyes.

MATHESON

Congressman Stinson, is it time to end the War on Terror?

STINSON

Of course not. But forget that for a moment. What's most galling to me and to so many other Americans is the insistence by some on the left, typified by our ponytailed friend here, is the idea that the United States would ignore its own laws and summarily execute anybody.

(MORE)

STINSON (CONT'D)

And more importantly, let's not forget that this slimeball bin-Awad was responsible for the deaths of over 3,000 Americans. Whatever happened to him, he deserved it.

GLEASON

(interrupts)

--So we should ignore our own--

Mike rolls his eyes, changes it to CNN. The headline reads "TIME TO END THE WAR ON TERROR?"

He picks up the remote, but is interrupted by the house phone. He picks it up.

MIKE

Hello?...No, she can't come to the phone. Oh, you're from FOX? Then, yeah, no...I don't care who you are, lady. She's not talking to the press.

He hangs up, grabs the remote, flips the channel again. It lands on FOX News, where the headline reads "TREASON?"

There's a KNOCK at the door.

Mike mutes the TV, gets up to answer, and finds David Hinds, FBI AGENT SMITH and FBI AGENT JOHNSON (both 40s).

MIKE (CONT'D)

Can I help you?

HINDS

Is Laura home?

MIKE

Sure. Can I ask who's looking for her?

LAURA (O.S.)

David! What's going on?

Mike turns to find her behind him.

HINDS

Hi, Laura. Can we come in for a few minutes?

LAURA

Sure, of course. Come on in.

They move to the:

LIVING ROOM

Where they all sit down. Agent Smith shows Laura his badge.

SMITH

Ms. Belvedere, I'm Special Agent Smith of the FBI. This is Special Agent Johnson. We came by to see you at Mr. Hinds' request.

Mike and Laura look at Hinds.

HINDS

Well, with all the media attention on you, we know that you're concerned about the possibility of being targeted for some sort of revenge. I know Mike spoke to Carl Abramson--

LAURA

(interrupting, to Mike)
-- You called Carl?

He shrugs.

MIKE

I just wanted to see if the Agency had an estimate on whether there was anything to be concerned over.

SMITH

That's why we're here, Ms. Belvedere. We've run some sources into mosques and checked on some phone lines used by known extremists, and right now it appears that there is no threat.

LAURA

There's not?

SMITH

No, ma'am. Our evidence, and the information we've received from the intelligence community writ large, suggests that al-Qaida's too busy focusing on other issues to worry about you.

The relief is obvious on Laura's face.

LAURA

Oh, thank God.

Mike puts an arm around her, gives her a squeeze.

HINDS

So that's good news. I wanted you to hear it directly from the horse's mouth, so to speak.

Smith and Johnson stand. The others follow.

SMITH

We will of course be keeping an ear to the ground, and if anything changes we'll let you know. But it looks like you're in the clear.

INT. MIKE AND LAURA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mike and Laura lie facing each other in the bed.

MIKE

I told you it would be okay.

LAURA

I'm so glad they came. It was really weighing on me.

MIKE

I know. I could tell.

She slides closer to him.

LAURA

(flirtatiously)

So you called Carl to check up on me?

He smiles.

LAURA (CONT'D)

He asked you to come back, didn't he?

MIKE

Of course.

LAURA

You told him no, though, right?

MIKE

Of course.

LAURA

You can't ever go back to that life, Mike. You were a different person when you were doing....that job. That person's not the guy I fell in love with.

MIKE

Honey, I don't want to go back to that life. You know I don't like that person any more than you do. I'm out of the interrogation business for good.

LAURA

I'm glad. It's just that doing that really made you...harder. Angrier. Different.

MIKE

I know, and I'm not going back. Nope, I just called Carl because I was lookin' after my...what are we now?

She slides up against him.

LAURA

Now I'm your fiancée. Soon I'll be your wife.

She kisses him.

MIKE

My wife. I like the sound of that.

They kiss again.

LAURA

Me too. As long as we both shall live.

Another kiss which draws out a bit.

MIKE

Till death do us part.

The kissing gets passionate, and momentarily she's on top of him. He pulls off her pajama top, and they kiss again. Then their clothes are gone in a whirl, and they make love, quickly and passionately.

INT. DINING ROOM - MORNING

Mike sits at the table, reading the paper and drinking coffee.

Laura enters, wearing an engagement ring. She puts her arms around Mike's neck and kisses him. She makes a point to show him that she's wearing the ring.

MIKE

I like what you've done with that finger. Actually, I like all the things you do with that finger.

She laughs and playfully smacks him on the chest.

LAURA

Let's go out today.

MIKE

You're not working?

LAURA

I told you, it's time to take some time for us. The government's taken enough.

MIKE

I couldn't agree more.

He pulls her down and kisses her.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Where do you want to go?

LAURA

Let's go down to DC, do the tourist thing.

He gives her a long look.

MIKE

Really? What, like the Smithsonian or something? Who are you, and what have you done with my wife?

She smacks him again. She bounds away, grabs the keys from the counter.

LAURA

C'mon. I'm driving.

EXT. GEORGE WASHINGTON PARKWAY - DAY

The Corolla cruises down the Parkway. Dark clouds form in the sky.

A white van with tinted windows follows a few car lengths back. In the passenger seat, a shadowy PASSENGER (dark, 30s, wearing aviator shades) talks into a radio.

INT. TOYOTA - CONTINUOUS

Laura drives. Mike fiddles with the radio.

ANNOUNCER
(over the radio)
...as pressure continues to mount on President Bartlett to end the War on Terror and bring our troops home from Afghanistan. Today the first Republican broke ranks with his party to publicly call for an end to hostilities in Afghanistan and a reduction in defense spending, as Senator...

Laura clicks off the radio.

LAURA
Man, am I tired of politics.

MIKE
You and me both.

He pulls out his iPhone.

LAURA
What are you doing?

MIKE
Taking video. I want to be able to prove that you actually took a Saturday off and came to DC with me.

She laughs, rolls her eyes, then points out the windshield toward the looming clouds.

LAURA
Looks like it's raining ahead.

Mike points his iPhone out the windshield.

MIKE

(narrating)

Welcome to Ripley's Believe it or Not! No, that's not a time/space vortex you see in front of you, it's just a storm cloud. No the really unbelievable thing is--

He breaks off, looks at Laura.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Why are you slowing down? You're not getting off at the Key Bridge, are you?

Laura briefly looks surprised.

LAURA

Yeah, I thought we'd drive through Georgetown.

Suddenly rain-- huge drops coming down in sheets-- starts splatting off the windshield.

MIKE

But isn't it faster to go to the Roosevelt?

LAURA

Probably, but it'd be nicer to go through Georgetown, don't you think?

MIKE

In this weather? I don't know.

LAURA

Maybe we can stop and get some lunch here, then head down to the Smithsonian.

EXT. GW PARKWAY/KEY BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

The Corolla takes the Key Bridge exit and circles around to get on the bridge. The white van passes the exit and keeps moving down the Parkway.

Traffic is light, with only a motorbike sitting on the shoulder next to North Lynn Street. Two helmeted figures sit on the motorcycle. The DRIVER holds a radio to his helmet.

As the Corolla passes the intersection and heads onto the Key Bridge, the motorbike pulls out and follows it.

The rain continues to pound.

As the Corolla crosses the bridge, the motorbike pulls up behind it, then starts to come alongside.

INT. COROLLA - CONTINUOUS

Mike points his iPhone at Laura.

IPHONE VIDEO POV

Laura laughs at Mike's silliness.

MIKE
...that's right, folks, you won't
believe it, that's Miss Laura
Belvedere, soon to be Mrs. Laura
Lindsey, who's-- what the hell?

The motorbike pulls up alongside and the PASSENGER pulls out a 9-millimeter pistol. He shakes his head at the rain, raises the facemask. We get only a glimpse of his face, but he looks Arab.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Oh, shit, Laura, watch out!

Before she can react, the passenger starts firing into the car. The driver's side window shatters, and Laura tries to duck.

Something hits the iPhone, and a spiderweb crack appears in the middle.

SCREAMS and the sound of GLASS BREAKING.

Our view twists crazily around as the phone FLIES out of Mike's hand, CAREENS through the air and LANDS camera-up, still recording.

Laura slumps over the steering wheel, Mike falls on the seat. There are blood spatters on the seat and dashboard.

KEY BRIDGE

The Corolla swerves crazily, finally bangs into the guard rail, where it comes to a stop.

The motorbike zooms away, darting around cars as it disappears into the rain and gloom.

The Corolla rests against the guard rail, bullet holes riddling the side, both front windows shattered, the horn WAILING.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

MIKE POV

It's pitch black. From somewhere there's a GROAN. Our eyes slowly open to harsh, fluorescent lights. Blink- once, twice, three times, then they finally stay open.

All we see are the ceiling panels and the lights-- until the face of DR. BARNES (50s) comes into view.

DR. BARNES

Mike? Mike, can you hear me?

Without waiting for an answer, he holds our eyes open-- right first, then the left-- and shines a light in them.

HOSPITAL ROOM

Mike reacts to the light, turns his head and moans. He waves a hand at the doctor.

MIKE

Where...where am I?

DR. BARNES

You're in Georgetown Hospital, Mike. I'm Dr. Gregory Barnes. You were...well, you were in a terrible, um, car accident. You were attacked.

At this, Mike starts to remember. He tries to sit up, but he grimaces and lies back down. His upper left arm is wrapped in a bandage.

DR. BARNES (CONT'D)

You hit your head, got a concussion. You've been unconscious for two days.

Mike grips the doctor's arm, starts to speak.

DR. BARNES (CONT'D)

And you got shot. Once, through the muscle in your upper arm. A through-and-through, no bone. Amazing, a miracle really.

MIKE

Laura.

The doctor looks away.

DR. BARNES

Mr. Lindsey. Mike.

MIKE

Tell me. Where's Laura? What happened?

DR. BARNES

Mike. I'm sorry.

MIKE

What? Sorry for what?

DR. BARNES

Mike, she's gone. She died in the accident.

Mike's eyes go wide with shock, then his face goes blank. His head falls back on the pillow.

EXT. ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY - DAY

Laura's funeral.

Mike sits with TED and PATTY BELVEDERE (60s) in the front row. David Hinds stands behind them, along with assorted suits and politicians.

TV cameras and reporters watch silently from a respectable distance.

The President stands at a lectern at the head of the gravesite.

PRESIDENT

...and, finally, I want to say that Laura Belvedere was an American patriot, someone who gave her life for her country. She has left us behind, here on this mortal coil, but she'll always be in our hearts, and as we remember her heroism, she'll always remain in the heart of every American. God bless Laura, and God bless the United States of America.

He steps away from the lectern and makes his way to the front row.

LINE OF REPORTERS AND CAMERAS

NBC reporter JOHN CANCELOR (40s) looks into his camera.

CAMERA POV

CANCELOR
(into the camera)
And now we see the President giving
his condolences to the fiancée and
parents of slain CIA analyst Laura
Belvedere, the woman who led the
Navy SEALs to the door of Ahmed bin-
Awad.

The camera zooms in on the President's back and Laura's
parents. It swivels to Mike, who stands to the side.

His face is blank, devastated.

INT. MIKE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

The wake. Guests mill around. They talk, eat, drink in quiet,
respectful tones.

Mike sits on the couch, desolate and alone, a half-full glass
of Scotch in his hand.

He stares into the middle distance.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Tim stands at the kitchen counter, pouring a Scotch.

David Hinds approaches.

HINDS
Could I get one of those?

TIM
Sure. Take this one.

He pushes the glass over to Hinds, who downs it in one pull,
slides it back across the counter.

TIM (CONT'D)
Another?

HINDS
Absolutely.

Tim gives him a grim smile, pours two fingers for each of them. He pushes the glass back to Hinds.

TIM
Salud.

They clink glasses, then each down the shot.

TIM (CONT'D)
So how did you know Laura?

Hinds just smiles.

INT. FRONT HALLWAY - LATER

Mike stands at the front door with Tim and Maureen. Guests file past, each stopping for a handshake or a kiss on the cheek.

Mike's an automaton.

MIKE
Thank you for coming...thank you
for coming...thank you for
coming...

INT. MIKE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mike lies alone in the bed, curled in the fetal position, eyes wide open.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Mike stands alone in the kitchen, holding a cup of coffee.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Mike walks alone along the sidewalk, head down. He passes a COUPLE (20s) walking hand-in-hand, ignores them.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Mike sits at the end of a bar, anonymous and alone, drinking Scotch.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Mike sits alone on the couch in a bathrobe, wineglass in hand. He stares at the TV, which is off.

Listlessly he takes the remote and clicks it vaguely in the direction of the TV, which turns on to MSNBC.

It's Chris Matheson again, with one guest, LYLE KEEVY (late 20s), dressed casually in the snarky/hipster style. Under Keevy onscreen, it reads "LYLE KEEVY, BLOGGER - OUTED SLAIN CIA ANALYST."

Mike's eyes narrow, but he doesn't change the channel.

ON TV

MATHESON

And how do you respond to charges that you were responsible for the death of Laura Belvedere?

KEEVY

That's insane! That's like saying Woodward and Bernstein were responsible for getting Nixon fired.

MATHESON

I'm sorry, are you actually comparing yourself to Woodward and Bernstein?

KEEVY

Only in the sense that we both broke big scoops.

MATHESON

But your scoop got Laura Belvedere killed, didn't it? You were the first person to publish her name.

KEEVY

Her death was absolutely not my fault, Chris. Besides blaming the terrorists who killed her, maybe we should be looking at the government's responsibility here. In fact, this week I'll be starting an investigative series on the failure of the government to protect its heroes. That's www.LyleKeevy.com.

(MORE)

KEEVY (CONT'D)

It particularly interests me, Chris, that everyone in the so-called mainstream media is focusing on me, and nobody is asking the really important questions.

LIVING ROOM

Mike's face is red. He squeezes the wineglass tighter.

ON TV

MATHESON

It interests me how cavalier you seem to be with the real-world consequences of your work. But what is the really important question none of us are focusing on?

KEEVY

How can you call me cavalier? And not focus on how cavalier the government was with the identity of one of their spies? Why is it I'm being held to a higher standard than the US Government?

LIVING ROOM

Mike's furious. His face is beet red, and he's squeezing the glass even tighter.

Suddenly the glass SHATTERS into a thousand pieces, cutting Mike's hand. Blood seeps out from between his fingers.

Mike doesn't notice.

He just keeps staring at the TV, focusing on Keevy. He mutes the TV, but pauses the DVR and stares at Keevy's smug face, frozen on the screen.

INT. TIM'S OFFICE - DAY

Tim sits at his desk. Through the pebbled glass on the door, we can see "TIM LINDSEY, PRIVATE INVESTIGATION."

Mike paces back and forth in front of the desk.

MIKE

It's his fault, Tim. That little bastard Keevy. It's all about page views for little pricks like him, Tim. He doesn't give a shit about the lives he destroys, or the careers he ruins, or even if the shit he prints is true. And to sit there and say it's the government's fault for not protecting her? From scum like himself? He's got to pay, Tim. He's got to fucking pay.

TIM

You know I agree with you, little brother, but...what exactly are you planning on doing?

MIKE

I'm gonna take the little fuck down.

TIM

How? Kill him?

Mike shoots him a look.

MIKE

Are you kidding? This is America, Tim. I'll do something much worse.

INT. LAWYER'S OFFICE - DAY

ROBERT ERICKSON (50s), wearing a \$3,000 suit and a \$5,000 Tag Heuer watch, sits and peers at Mike from across his desk.

MIKE

I want to sue him.

ERICKSON

For what? Did he slander your fiancée?

MIKE

For wrongful death.

ERICKSON

Did he kill your fiancée?

MIKE

Not directly.

ERICKSON
Meaning...?

MIKE
Meaning that he published her name
and position on the Internet, which
led the terrorists who did kill her
right to her.

ERICKSON
Was it his intention to get her
killed?

MIKE
I...I doubt it.

ERICKSON
Can you draw a line between Mr.
Keevy's actions and the death of
your fiancée? A direct line?

MIKE
Sure, like I told you--

Erickson holds up a hand.

ERICKSON
I'm sorry, Mr. Lindsey. It doesn't
work that way. It's not like Mr.
Keevy built a defective car or a
faulty guardrail. In the United
States the First Amendment
guarantees the right of a free
press. Which means that, unless Mr.
Keevy slandered your fiancée or
printed something untrue about her,
there's nothing we can do.

MIKE
But--

ERICKSON
Mr. Lindsey, you can try to sue
him, but you'll lose. I know how
angry you must be, and that this is
a terrible time for you, but I
would suggest moving on with your
life. Perhaps take a vacation? Or
go visit family? Something to help
move you past this.

MIKE
No, he has to pay.

ERICKSON

I wish I could help you, Mr. Lindsey. Personally I'm of the opinion that what he did was abhorrent and repugnant. But it's not actionable. I'm sorry.

Mike's pissed, but he keeps his face politely neutral. He stands, shakes Erickson's hand.

MIKE

Thanks for the advice, Mr. Erickson.

ERICKSON

My pleasure. Good luck.

Mike turns, heads for the door.

ERICKSON (CONT'D)

Remember, Mr. Lindsey. Try to move past this.

Mike doesn't turn to face him.

MIKE

Sure thing.

He leaves.

INT. MIKE'S OFFICE - DAY

The door is closed. Mike sits at the computer, typing furiously.

On the screen, he's got four browser windows open. Each is open to a different jihadist website. Mike jumps from window to window, searching "Lyle Keivy" in each one.

On the first, nothing.

Second, same thing.

Third, nothing.

On the fourth, the name LYLE KEEVY is highlighted. Mike expands the window and looks at it closely.

It reads, "BROTHERS READ THE BLOG BY LYLE KEEVY. HE'S BEEN A RELIABLE SOURCE FOR US MANY TIMES."

EXT. TIDAL BASIN - NIGHT

Mike stands at a rail, looking over the Tidal Basin. He's pensive.

Tim approaches.

TIM
Dude, you look like you're about to jump.

MIKE
Not exactly.

TIM
What's going on? What'd the lawyer say?

MIKE
He says I can't sue the rat bastard.

TIM
Why?

Mike waves his hand diffidently.

MIKE
Forget it. It's time for more direct action.

TIM
Direct--? What the hell are you talking about?

MIKE
He's a traitor, Tim. And I'm gonna make him pay.

He's got an edgy, obsessed look on his face. Tim puts a hand on his arm.

TIM
Dude. You're starting to scare me. Why don't we get out of town for a few days? We can head up to New York, maybe catch a Yankees game. Or maybe we could go see Mom. I'm sure she'd love to spend some time with you.

MIKE
No.

TIM

C'mon, Mike. I miss Laura too. I know it's breaking your heart that she's gone. It's breaking mine too. But you've got to get back to life. When are you going back to work?

Mike shakes his head.

MIKE

You're not hearing me, Tim. Keevy's a real traitor. I'm not just saying that because of Laura. I found forum posts about him on jihadi sites. Apparently he's been passing information to terrorist groups.

TIM

Like what?

MIKE

I don't know. All I know is I read a post on one site that said the brothers should read his blog because he's been a reliable source for them in the past.

TIM

That's it?

MIKE

What?

TIM

That's it? That's what you've got?

MIKE

Seems pretty clear to me.

TIM

Oh, little bro, c'mon. That doesn't prove anything. They could have been talking about reading his fucking blog.

MIKE

No. I know he's a traitor.

TIM

So you're gonna report him to the FBI, right?

Mike just looks at him.

MIKE

Did you bring it?

Tim steps back.

TIM

I don't think I should give it to you, Mike. You're worrying me.

MIKE

C'mon, Tim! You know me. You think I'd do something that stupid?

TIM

Right now, I don't know.

MIKE

Look, bro. I'm gonna have a chat with Mr. Keevy and find out about his terrorist connections. For that I'll need leverage. So help me out, okay?

Tim rolls his eyes, pulls a 9-millimeter pistol out of the back of his waistband, hands it to Mike.

TIM

It's unregistered, no serial number. It's untraceable. But for the love of God don't shoot anybody with it.

Mike tucks the gun in the back of his waistband and covers it with his shirt.

MIKE

I won't.

He pauses.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Probably.

He grins at Tim's look.

MIKE (CONT'D)

I have to go. I've got work to do.

TIM

Wait.

MIKE

Tim--

TIM
No. Hold on. I've got something
else for you.

He pulls a USB drive out of his pocket, hands it to Mike.

MIKE
What is this?

TIM
It's a little dossier I put
together on Keevy. Address,
telephone numbers, some lifestyle
info that I thought you could use.

Mike takes the USB, starts to turn away, but Tim grabs his
arm.

TIM (CONT'D)
But bro, seriously, you can't shoot
him.

Mike just smiles.

MIKE
I won't.

EXT. KEEVY'S TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

Mike sits in a brown Honda Accord across the street from a
set of row houses. He wears a baseball hat and a pair of
glasses.

On the seat next to him is a map, a notebook, a digital
camera and a new iPhone.

He grabs the camera and snaps some photos as Keevy approaches
the townhouse door and goes in.

He checks his watch and makes a notation in the notebook.

A moment later he drives away.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

Mike sits on a park bench across the street from an office
building, notebook on his lap. He's wearing a fake mustache.

He checks his watch: 5:47.

Surreptitiously, he takes some photos of Keevy walking away, then makes a note as Keevy exits the building and heads up the street.

He waits a moment until Keevy disappears, then gets up and heads the other direction.

INT. FIVE GUYS BURGERS - DAY

Mike, wearing a suit with a set of reading glasses perched on his nose, a blond wig on his head, watches as Keevy finishes a burger a few tables away.

On Mike's table is a tray with the detritus of a finished meal.

Keevy washes down his burger with a swig of Coke, then gets up, leaving his tray behind on the table, and leaves.

Mike makes a note in his notebook, then gets up, throws away his trash and leaves through a different exit.

INT. MIKE'S DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Mike sits at his dining room table, papers and photos piled around him. He pores over the notebook.

There's a KNOCK at the door. Mike gets up, answers it. It's Tim, who pushes in past him carrying a duffel bag.

He strides into the living room, drops the bag on the couch, turns to face Mike.

MIKE

Well, hey.

TIM

Hey.

MIKE

Uh...can I help you?

TIM

All this stuff you're planning?
Don't do it.

MIKE

I have to.

TIM

You don't have to, little brother.
We can find another way to bring
him down.

Mike's already shaking his head, on the verge of tears.

MIKE

There is no other way, Tim. He's
responsible for her death, and
nobody's gonna hold him
accountable. It's...it's like it is
with everything today. Nobody's
accountable for anything anymore.
Well, fuck that bullshit, Tim. Fuck
that. It's time somebody paid for
the bad shit they did, and this
time it's gonna be him, and it's
gonna be me who's holding his
goddamn head in the toilet, making
him weep for all the lives he's
ruined, but most especially for
Laura's life, because he's got to
see that it is his goddamn fault
that she's dead and I have to go to
bed alone every night...

He's breathing hard and sweating. Tim steps around the coffee
table and envelops his brother in a hug. After a few moments,
Mike is still.

Tim takes Mike by the cheeks and gives him a long look.

TIM

Okay. You're right. He's a
slimeball and it's time somebody
held him to account for all the
shit he slings. And if you're
determined that it's gonna be you,
then you have to let me help.

Mike starts to shake his head, but Tim won't let him.

TIM (CONT'D)

No, little brother, don't argue
with me on this one. We do this
together, we do it right, or we
don't do it at all.

Mike gives him a half nod. Tim smacks him on the shoulders.

TIM (CONT'D)

Great. Now let's go over your plan.

INT. MIKE'S DINING ROOM - LATER

Mike and Tim sit at the dining room with the maps and notebook between them. The duffel bag is on the chair next to Tim.

TIM
Does Keevy have an alarm system?

MIKE
I don't know.

TIM
No problem. I've got just the thing
for you.

Tim hands Mike a small black device which looks like an iPod-- a digital screen and one button.

MIKE
What's this?

Tim just smiles.

INT. MIKE'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Mike stares at himself in the mirror. His face is haunted.
He turns and heads into the:

BEDROOM

The TV is on, but Mike doesn't pay attention at first. He sits on the edge of the bed, puts his head in his hands.

He grabs his cell phone and dials.

MIKE
Tim. It's me. I'm not sure if I
can...

His voice trails off as he looks at the TV. It's a replay of Matheson's show with Keevy.

TIM
(through the telephone)
...not sure if you can do what?

As Mike sees Keevy's smug face on the screen, his own expression hardens.

MIKE
Never mind. It's a go. See you
tomorrow.

He hangs up the phone and stares at the TV, his face hard.

EXT. KEEVY'S TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

Mike sits in the Accord just down the street from Keevy's townhouse. He wears a hooded sweatshirt.

On the seat next to him is the map, iPhone and duffel bag.

He picks up the binoculars and searches up and down the street. Nothing.

The iPhone RINGS. He answers it.

MIKE
Go.

EXT. BAR - NIGHT

Tim stands in the shadows half a block from the door of a bar. Keevy totters down the street away from him.

TIM
OK, he just left the bar. He's
drunk, but not so slammed that you
won't be able to talk to him.

INTERCUT BETWEEN THE TWO.

MIKE
Which direction?

TIM
Toward the townhouse. Ten minutes,
tops.

MIKE
He didn't see you, did he?

TIM
Not my first rodeo, lil' bro.

MIKE
Stay with him, okay?

TIM
I got him. I'll keep you updated.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

Mike grabs the map. Keevy's townhouse is marked with a circle, the bar with an X.

The iPhone rings again. Mike grabs it.

MIKE

Yeah.

EXT. SIDEWALK - CONTINUOUS

Tim follows Keevy, about a block behind.

TIM

He's not going straight home.

INTERCUT.

MIKE

What?

TIM

No, he just turned off about five blocks from his house. Looks like he's making a detour.

MIKE

Okay, that's not fatal.

TIM

You sure? If he takes too much longer to get home, you're not gonna have enough time to...do what you want to do.

MIKE

Yeah. Stay with him and let's see what the detour is.

TIM

Okay.

Tim hangs up the phone and follows Keevy, who stumbles as he steps over a curb.

Suddenly Keevy stops at the bottom of a short flight of stairs leading to a row house.

He starts looking around. At this, Tim ducks into a doorway. He waits for a moment, then peeks out.

Keevy's marching up the stairs. Tim sticks his head out and watches.

Keevy starts banging on the door.

KEEVY
Leila! Leila! It's Lyle! C'mon, let
me in! I just wanna talk! C'mon!

He keeps banging. Tim watches from his doorway perch.

KEEVY (CONT'D)
Come on, Leila! Let me in!

There's no response. Tim looks up and sees movement in a second-floor window.

A curtain pulls back and he sees the terrified face of LEILA (20), who looks like a college student.

TIM
(to himself)
Nice. Scumbag.

From across the street, a window opens.

MAN IN WINDOW
Hey, asshole! Shut the fuck up!

Keevy half-turns.

KEEVY
Hey, fuck you, dildo! Get back
inside! Private business here!

Tim glances back up at Leila, whose face is now stricken with shame. She looks up and down the street, closes the curtain.

Finally Keevy stops banging. He looks up at Leila's window.

KEEVY (CONT'D)
I know you're in there, Leila!

No answer.

KEEVY (CONT'D)
Fine!

He turns away.

KEEVY (CONT'D)
Fuck it.

He starts trudging up the sidewalk toward Tim.

TIM
(to himself)
Shit!

He looks around for an escape, but doesn't see one. He quickly sits, leans against the doorjamb, hides his face and pretends to sleep.

Keevy walks past him, glances down, snorts.

KEEVY
Loser.

He keeps walking up the street.

Tim pulls out his phone, dials.

MIKE
(through the phone)
Yeah?

TIM
He's heading your way.

MIKE
What was he doing?

TIM
Harassing some college girl. Looks like he struck out, though.

He hangs up the phone, stands. Keevy disappears around the corner. Tim follows.

INT. HONDA - NIGHT

Mike waits.

The iPhone RINGS, he answers.

MIKE
Yeah.

TIM
(over the phone)
He's making the corner to you. I'm breaking off.

MIKE
Okay.

TIM
Don't do anything stupid, little
bro.

MIKE
I won't.

He hangs up.

He checks the street, finally sees Keevy come around the corner, head for the row house.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Thank God.

Keevy stumbles to his house, fumbles with his keys, and finally gets the door open. He disappears inside.

Mike checks his watch. 11:24.

INT. HONDA - LATER

Mike checks his watch again. 12:32. Keevy's house is dark.

MIKE
Showtime.

He pulls a set of latex gloves from the duffel bag, puts them on, then pulls the hood over his head. His face is partially covered.

He exits the car, looks both directions. When he sees there's nobody there, he crosses the street.

He doesn't notice a dark FIGURE standing in the shadows a block up the street, watching his progress with interest.

Mike reaches the door. He glances both directions one more time, then takes Tim's device out of the duffel bag.

He awkwardly points the device at the door and pushes the button. A series of lines and dashes appears on the screen.

INT. KEEVY'S ENTRANCE HALL - CONTINUOUS

The alarm panel hanging by the door silently lights up.

FRONT PORCH

As Mike watches, the lines and dashes are replaced by numbers. Finally on the screen it simply reads 5-3-9-7-1.

MIKE
(to himself)
Sweet.

He hits the button again.

ENTRANCE HALL

The alarm panel goes from red to green and beeps softly.

FRONT PORCH

Mike puts the device back in the bag and pulls out a small lockpick kit.

He goes to work on the lock on the front door.

After a few moments, he hears a CLICK and the door softly slides open.

Mike looks around one more time, then heads inside.

Down the street, the figure in the shadows notes the time. He pulls out a cell phone and makes a call.

ENTRANCE HALL - CONTINUOUS

Mike slides the door shut behind him and relocks it. He checks the alarm panel. It's green and disarmed.

The house is dark. Mike slowly picks his way down the hall to a set of stairs at the end.

He stops at the bottom of the stairs, pulls a black ski mask from the duffel bag and puts it on.

He creeps up the stairs, stopping every few steps to listen. The house is quiet.

At the top of the stairs, he finds three closed doors.

MIKE
(to himself)
Of course.

He puts the duffel bag down on the landing. From it he pulls two sets of zip-ties and a Ziploc bag with a handkerchief in it. The zip-ties go in his pocket.

He removes the handkerchief from the bag and takes it in his left hand.

He opens the first door to find a workout room. He closes the door, moves on to the second.

He opens the second to find an empty bedroom, looks like a guest room with a twin bed.

He opens the third to find:

INT. KEEVY'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mike looks into the room, sees Keevy's bed-- empty. The bathroom door is closed, the light coming out from under the door.

He rolls his eyes, starts to make his way across the room to set up an ambush on Keevy.

But as the door closes behind him, Keevy comes running out from behind, SCREAMS like a drunken banshee. He's got a metal bookend, which he raises over his head.

Mike gets half-turned around before Keevy hits him with the bookend on the shoulder. Mike YELLS in pain; the bookend falls away to the floor.

Keevy's momentum carries the two men over the bed and they crash into the wall.

The handkerchief flies out of Mike's hand, ends up on the floor.

Both men are briefly stunned. They lie there, next to each other.

Keevy recovers first. He jumps up, astride Mike, and swings wildly at him, barely connecting with the side of his face.

Mike throws him off, and Keevy bangs off the wall.

Mike lunges for the handkerchief, but as he grabs it, Keevy tackles him and they slam into the side of the bed. Keevy reaches for the bookend, grabs it, swings it wildly at Mike.

Mike ducks and the bookend barely misses him. He smacks it out of Keevy's hand and gives Keevy a solid backhanded slap. Keevy YELPS, grabs his face, rolls away.

Mike snatches the handkerchief.

He grabs Keevy from behind and forces the handkerchief over his face.

Keevy thrashes and struggles, tries to pull away, but eventually Mike and the chloroform overpower him and he weakens and finally passes out.

His head lolls to the side. Mike pulls the ski mask up, grimaces, tests his shoulder. He gives Keevy a glare and shakes his head.

MIKE
Dumb drunk fucker.

INT. KEEVY'S GUEST ROOM - LATER

Keevy is lashed down on the bed, lengths of rope around his chest, waist, thighs and shins. His wrists and ankles are zip-tied.

His hands are over his head in an extremely awkward position, held in place by a piece of rope tied to the underside of the bed.

Mike sits next to the bed in a chair. The ski mask is nowhere to be found, but he's wearing a fresh pair of gloves. Next to him is a tray with a towel and a pitcher of water.

This is not the Mike we've seen moping around his house. This Mike is a man of power, totally in control.

He watches Keevy, his face dispassionate.

Keevy MOANS and starts to shift. Mike waits until his eyes start to flutter open, then backhands him across the face.

It's an attention-getting slap, not a hard shot, but it stings Keevy and wakes him all the way up.

MIKE
Welcome back.

KEEVY
Ow. What the fuck?

Another slap, this one with a little more authority.

MIKE
A bad attitude on your part is going to make this very uncomfortable for you.

KEEVY

A bad--? Are you nuts? You break into my house, assault me, and expect me to welcome you with candy and flowers?

He flinches as Mike moves, but there's no slap.

Instead, Mike stands, takes one of Keevy's fingers in his hand, and pulls it back almost to the breaking point.

Keevy YELPS in pain.

KEEVY (CONT'D)

Yow! Motherfucker, stop!

Mike holds it there for a few moments. Keevy's yelp fades into a whimper.

KEEVY (CONT'D)

Okay...I'll be good. Please stop.

Mike lets the finger go. There are tears in Keevy's eyes.

KEEVY (CONT'D)

What the fu-- what do you want?

Mike sits back down.

MIKE

I just want to talk.

KEEVY

About what?

MIKE

Your website.

KEEVY

Oh, shit. Are you with PETA? Look, I don't know where that story came from, I love dogs as much as you guys--

MIKE

(interrupting)
I'm not from PETA.

KEEVY

The College Democrats? New York Times? Hollywood! That's it! Do you work for Russell Crowe?

MIKE

Shut up.

Keevy shuts up.

MIKE (CONT'D)

I want to talk about Laura Belvedere.

KEEVY

The CIA agent?

MIKE

She was an analyst, you asshole. Not a case officer.

KEEVY

Whatever.

He peers more closely at Mike.

KEEVY (CONT'D)

Wait a minute. You're her boyfriend or whatever. I saw you on TV. Dude, you're going down. It's all over for you.

Without thinking, Mike smacks Keevy with his open hand across the face. Keevy YELPS.

KEEVY (CONT'D)

Cut that out!

MIKE

Listen to me, you little vermin.

He picks up the pitcher of water and shows it to Keevy.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Do you understand what this is for? Just nod if you do.

Keevy shakes his head. Mike smiles grimly.

MIKE (CONT'D)

You've heard of waterboarding, I assume.

Keevy nods, and now his face goes white.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Good. I'm something of an expert at it.

Keevy closes his eyes, whimpers.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Look at me.

Keevy opens his eyes.

MIKE (CONT'D)
This is going to be a very long
night for you. I have some
questions, and you need to answer
them honestly, or this will go from
being a long night to the worst
night of your short life. Do you
understand? Just nod if you do.

Keevy nods slowly, his eyes wide.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Good. I would like not to use this
on you, but I will if I need to.

He pauses for a moment.

MIKE (CONT'D)
In fact, maybe I should show you
how it feels one time, just to make
sure you understand.

KEEVY
No! No! I'll answer your questions,
I swear!

Mike looks at him for a long moment, the longest moment of
Keevy's life, and then nods.

He sets the pitcher down on the tray.

MIKE
We'll see, Lyle-- can I call you
Lyle?

KEEVY
Please, whatever you want to call
me.

MIKE
Okay. Why did you publicize Laura's
name?

KEEVY
It was news, man. She was famous,
and I had the scoop. I'm a
journalist.

MIKE

And you never stopped to consider
the harm you might do to her, that
maybe there would be people who
would be looking for her?

Keevy gives a pained shrug.

KEEVY

I can't worry about that, man.
Journalism is more important than
any individual life. The right of
the people to know means
everything. If Woodward and--

Mike cuts him off mid-sentence with another slap.

KEEVY (CONT'D)

Ow! What the fuck?

MIKE

Stop comparing yourself to Woodward
and Bernstein, Lyle.

KEEVY

O- okay. I'm sorry, man.

MIKE

Where did you get your information?
Who leaked it to you?

KEEVY

I can't answer that, man.
Confidentiality.

Mike looks at him for a moment, then reaches for the water
pitcher. Keevy blanches.

KEEVY (CONT'D)

Okay, wait. Fine. Fuck it.

MIKE

Tell me.

KEEVY

The truth is, I don't really know.

Mike gives him a baleful look and turns back toward the tray.

KEEVY (CONT'D)

No, no! I mean it. I don't know. I
got an email.

Mike picks up the pitcher and the towel, turns back toward Keevy.

MIKE

Tell me about it.

KEEVY

You- you can have everything if you want, man. It's on my laptop.

MIKE

Tell me first.

Keevy stares at the pitcher as he talks. He speaks rapidly, fearfully.

KEEVY

It came in on my private email, not the website. And it came from a secure, anonymous site. It includes Laura Belvedere's photo and all her personal information. Said she worked at the CIA and that she was the one who figured out where the al-Qaida guy was.

MIKE

Did you follow up on it?

Keevy gives another half-shrug.

KEEVY

How? I didn't know who sent it. But I'll tell you this: it had to be somebody from the government, somebody with a boner for your girlfriend.

MIKE

Fiancee. And why do you say they had to be from the government?

KEEVY

Dude, who else knew about her? And with all the security bullshit, anonymous email, super encrypted, all that stuff? The guy sent me a second email to my second private email account with the encryption key so I could decrypt it and read it. From where I'm sitting, somebody in the government didn't like her.

(MORE)

KEEVY (CONT'D)

In fact, I wonder if someone in the government wanted her to die.

Mike's face goes red.

MIKE

What?

KEEVY

The email said if I didn't print it, he'd resend it to Drudge and Gawker, so I knew-- and whoever sent it knew-- that if I didn't get it out, they would.

MIKE

So you didn't even stop to think about the consequences of what you were doing?

KEEVY

You mean like this?

MIKE

I mean like giving al-Qaida a map to our house.

KEEVY

Look...I know that people sometimes hate journalists, but it's my responsibility to bring the people the news. If I stop to think about consequences, I lose the scoop and nobody reads me. If people stop reading, the advertisers go somewhere else and then I have to find another job.

MIKE

That would be a shame.

KEEVY

I know you hate me, dude. I get it. You think I'm the bad guy here. But the fact is, you should be sending all your hate to the White House. Once they published her face in that photo with the President, it was just a matter of time before her name followed. It's just the way the game works.

Mike puts the pitcher and towel down.

MIKE

The game, yeah. What a game.

He turns toward the duffel bag.

KEEVY

It is a game, dude. Don't hate me
for playing it well.

Mike gives him a venomous look, then turns back to the duffel bag. He takes a USB drive from the duffel. As he bends over, Keevy sees the pistol tucked in the back of his waistband. His eyes go wide.

Mike turns, looks at Keevy.

MIKE

Where's your laptop?

EXT. KEEVY'S HOUSE - LATER

The front door opens. Mike peeks outside, glances both directions.

Seeing nothing, he creeps outside and hurries down the street to the Honda. As he walks, he unconsciously stretches his shoulder.

He gets in, starts it up and drives away.

Down the street a little farther, the figure watches dispassionately from the shadows.

INT. MIKE'S BEDROOM - DAY

It's bright, maybe mid-day. Mike sleeps soundly.

On the bedside table, his cell phone RINGS. He stirs but doesn't wake.

It RINGS again. Again he moves, GROANS, but doesn't turn over.

A moment later there's a powerful, aggressive KNOCKING at the front door.

Mike pops awake.

MIKE

What the...?

He sits up, stretches, gets out of bed. He grabs a robe and throws it on. The pounding downstairs continues.

MIKE (CONT'D)
(shouts)
Just a minute! I'm coming!

He hustles out of the room, downstairs, and to the:

FRONT DOOR

Mike rips the door open to find Tim in mid-knock.

MIKE
Tim? What's going on?

TIM
What did you do, little bro?

MIKE
What?

TIM
Keevy. What did you do?

Mike looks confused.

MIKE
Nothing. I mean, I talked to him, I scared him a little, I -- wait. Why?

TIM
Don't lie to me, Mike.

MIKE
Tim, what the hell are you talking about?

TIM
Turn on your TV.

He follows Mike into the:

LIVING ROOM

Mike grabs the remote, flips on the TV. It comes up to CNN with the headline AL-QAIDA REVENGE PLOT?

MIKE
What the...?

Onscreen, a police car sits outside the front of Keevy's house.

ANNOUNCER

...and Washington police are speculating that perhaps Keevy drew al-Qaida's attention with his recent article outing Laura Belvedere, America's top spy and the woman who led the Navy SEALs to Ahmed bin-Awad's house on a lonely plain in Pakistan...

MIKE

Tim, what happened?

TIM

What do you think happened? Or maybe you could just tell me what happened.

MIKE

Tim, dammit, I didn't do anything. What the hell is going on here?

TIM

Keevy's dead, Mike.

MIKE

What?

His eyes are wide. He sits heavily on the edge of the couch.

TIM

Shot. According to a police buddy of mine, with a 9-mil. Y'know, just like the one I gave you.

MIKE

You think I shot him?

TIM

Did you?

MIKE

No, of course not.

TIM

They said he was tortured before he died. Did you do that?

MIKE

No...not exactly.

TIM

Mike.

MIKE

No, I just smacked him a couple of times, just to get his attention. I didn't hurt him.

Tim sits on the couch next to Mike. He puts his arm over his brother's shoulder.

TIM

Little bro, you know you can talk to me. This is an awful time for you, the worst. I understand if you lost it with that little punk--

Mike throws Tim's arm off, stands abruptly, gives his brother a look of death.

MIKE

Tim, I. Did. Not. Kill anybody. Dammit, why won't you believe me?

He holds up a hand.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Wait.

He disappears into the dining room. Tim waits for a moment until Mike reappears, carrying the pistol. Tim raises his hands.

TIM

Dude, there's no--

Mike looks at him incredulously.

MIKE

Seriously?

He flips the gun over, hands it butt-first to Tim.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Go ahead. Check it.

Tim pops out the magazine and ejects the chambered round. He does a quick count.

TIM

Okay, it looks like all the rounds are here.

MIKE

Take it apart if you want to. The barrel's clean. It hasn't been fired, Tim.

Tim puts the gun and bullet on the coffee table. He leans back on the couch, gives Mike a long, appraising look.

TIM

Okay, so you didn't kill him. Then what the fuck happened? They said he was tied to his bed with his hands zip-tied. Tortured. Cigarettes put out on his skin, shit like that.

MIKE

Wait.

TIM

What?

MIKE

When I left him, he was untied. I warned him that if he said anything about me being there, I'd be back and it would be really unpleasant. Then I chloroformed him, left him unconscious. Then I cut the zip ties and untied him. When I left, he was alive, unconscious, and untied. And very much unshot. Hell, I never even showed him the gun.

TIM

Then who shot him?

MIKE

I don't know.

TIM

Well, what did he say?

Mike thinks for a second.

MIKE

He got an email with Laura's info. He gave it to me. It's on a USB in the duffel.

TIM

Who was the email from?

MIKE

He didn't know, it was anonymous,
from a hushmail address. But he
said he thought it was from
somebody in the government.

TIM

What are you doing with it?

Mike grins.

MIKE

I've got a guy.

INT. GEORGETOWN LIBRARY - NIGHT

Mike enters the library. The long wooden tables are filled
with students poring over books and writing on notepads.

Mike makes his way down the aisle, checking both directions.

He finally finds Hassan, sitting alone at the end of one of
the tables.

Mike slides into the seat across from Hassan. He pulls out
the USB drive and slides it over to Hassan, along with an
envelope.

Hassan looks at him suspiciously.

HASSAN

What's that?

Mike smiles.

MIKE

Beer money.

Hassan gives him a long look.

EXT. CIA HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Mike parks the Honda in front of the New Headquarters
Building, gets out.

INT. MAUREEN'S OFFICE - DAY

Maureen sits in a small, windowless office, clacking on a
computer.

There's a soft KNOCK at the door.

MAUREEN

Come in!

The door opens, Mike comes in.

MAUREEN (CONT'D)

Mikey!

She stands up, gives him a hug.

MAUREEN (CONT'D)

What are you doing here?

MIKE

I need to talk to you.

They sit down.

MAUREEN

What about?

MIKE

Laura.

MAUREEN

What about her?

MIKE

I think somebody inside the
government--

Maureen's eyes go wide. She shakes her head, points at the ceiling.

MAUREEN

(cutting him off)

--I know, I miss her too. Maybe we
should get together tonight and
talk about her. Reminisce a little.

MIKE

Um, sure. When and where?

Maureen grabs a notepad and a pen. She scrawls "7 pm Chuck's Bar" while she speaks.

MAUREEN

Eight o'clock? At Harry and
David's?

MIKE

Sure. Sounds good.

She drops the paper in the shredder. They walk to the door.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Okay, so I'll see you at 8, then.

She engulfs him in a tight hug, putting her mouth close to his ear.

MAUREEN
(whispers in his ear)
Be careful. They watch.
(out loud)
See you tonight.

Mike exits.

INT. CHUCK'S BAR - EVENING

A sports bar, TVs on the walls, already-drunk sports fans on the barstools.

Mike enters, sees Maureen sitting alone in a booth near the back. He makes his way to her, sits down.

MAUREEN
Hey--

MIKE
Why all the theatrics, Maureen?
What the hell's going on?

MAUREEN
I don't completely know, to be honest. Tim told me what you found out, and I think you're right. I've been poking around a little, and...there's definitely something going on.

MIKE
Like what?

MAUREEN
Remember the bin-Awad raid?
Apparently it didn't go down like the White House has been saying. I heard there's a DVD with footage of the raid that would be dangerous for the White House if it got out. At least that's the story around the halls.

MIKE
Where is it?

She shrugs.

MAUREEN

No idea. But I wonder if Laura knew something about it. Maybe that's why they killed her.

MIKE

Keevy said that he got Laura's information from somebody inside the government, but he didn't know who. If I can somehow get my hands on the DVD, maybe I can draw them out.

He pauses for a moment.

MIKE (CONT'D)

What about the shooters? Anything on that?

MAUREEN

Apparently there's nothing. My boss told me that the Bureau report says that the motorcycle was stolen from Rockville. It was found abandoned the next day, no fingerprints.

MIKE

What about video? Red-light cameras? ATMs?

MAUREEN

There's no good video. They managed to avoid most of the cameras, and the couple of shots they did get, the guys were wearing helmets.

But Mike's not listening anymore. His eyes are blank.

MAUREEN (CONT'D)

What?

MIKE

(to himself)
Video. Video!

Without explaining, he gets up and bolts for the door, leaving Maureen staring at his back.

INT. MIKE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The front door slams open, and Mike comes through it at top speed. He rushes to a box in the corner, starts going through it frantically.

MIKE

Yes!

He pulls out a Ziploc baggie with his iPhone inside. Frantically, he pulls at the bag but in his haste he can't open it.

Finally he rips it apart, pulls out the phone. He stabs at the button, but nothing happens. He traces his finger over the crack in the screen.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Shit.

He touches the button again, but still nothing. Then his face changes, a look of hope.

He races back to the box, starts digging through it. He pulls out a white Apple charger.

He plugs the phone into the wall and stares at it like a talisman. It's dark.

Then, finally, the Apple logo pops up.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Yes!

He waits for a moment, then watches the main menu appear. He quickly pages to the videos.

A video pops up, and we're back in the car before the shooting.

IPHONE VIDEO POV

Laura laughs at Mike's silliness.

MIKE (CONT'D)

...that's right, folks, you won't believe it, that's Miss Laura Belvedere, soon to be Mrs. Laura Lindsey, who's-- what the hell?

LIVING ROOM

Mike smiles, traces his finger along Laura's face.

VIDEO

The motorbike pulls up alongside and the passenger pulls out a 9-millimeter pistol. He shakes his head at the rain, raises the facemask.

We get only a glimpse of his face, but he looks Arab.

MIKE

Oh, shit, Laura, watch out!

LIVING ROOM

Mike's face is a mask of anguish.

VIDEO

Before she can react, the passenger starts firing into the car. The driver's side window shatters, and Laura tries to duck.

Something hits the iPhone, and a spiderweb crack appears in the middle.

SCREAMS and the sound of GLASS BREAKING.

Our view twists crazily around as the phone FLIES out of Mike's hand, CAREENS through the air and LANDS camera-up, still recording.

LIVING ROOM

Mike stops the video. He sits heavily on the couch, staring at the frozen image of his and Laura's limp bodies.

After a few moments, he rewinds the video to the image of the shooter, sans facemask. And he sits and stares through the crack at the face of the man who killed Laura.

INT. TIM'S OFFICE - DAY

Tim sits at his desk, tapping away on his keyboard, when the door flies open and Mike bursts in.

Tim looks up in surprise.

TIM

Mike? What's going on?

Mike sits down, slides the iPhone across the desk to Tim. Tim picks it up, looks at it, looks at Mike.

TIM (CONT'D)
What's this?

MIKE
I got video of the shooting.

TIM
What?

MIKE
Yeah.

He turns on the phone, shows Tim the still shot of the shooter.

TIM
Holy shit.

MIKE
Exactly. I would take it to the Agency, but Maureen thinks they're involved, so...do you have somebody who could do something with it?

A slow nod.

TIM
Yeah, I've got a buddy in the Bureau. Let me give it to him. I bet he can put it through their facial recognition software. Or maybe the guy's a known terrorist.

MIKE
At least it's a start.

As he stands to leave, his phone BEEPS. He checks it.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Excellent!

TIM
What?

But Mike is gone.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Mike enters to find Hassan sitting alone at a table, sipping an espresso. Mike bypasses the counter, heads straight to the table.

MIKE
You have something?

Hassan gives him a cocky grin.

HASSAN
Dr. L, you knew I'd find something when you gave it to me. That's why you chose me.

MIKE
So that's a yes?

HASSAN
That's a yes.

He pulls a single sheet of paper from his jacket pocket, slides it across the table to Mike.

Mike opens it, reads through it.

MIKE
Dan Storen?

HASSAN
Yes, sir. He's a White House staffer.

MIKE
And you're sure.

HASSAN
Of course I'm sure. He definitely created the hushmail account, and he definitely sent the email you gave me.

Mike pulls an envelope out of his pocket, slides it to Hassan.

Hassan takes the envelope, pockets it.

MIKE
You're not gonna count it?

HASSAN

Two reasons. One, I trust you. And two, if you short me I can access your bank account and get it anyway.

Mike gives him a look that sets Hassan back in his chair. Hassan holds up his hands.

HASSAN (CONT'D)

Just kidding, Professor L. Just kidding.

EXT. STOREN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A BMW, totally at home in this neighborhood, sits silently half a block down from a stately brownstone.

Mike sits inside the car, wearing the same hoodie as before, with the duffel bag on the seat next to him. The car is dark and silent.

Across the street, he sees the only light in the house go off. He checks his watch: 11:07.

LATER

Still dark and quiet.

Mike checks his watch: 12:47.

MIKE

(to himself)

Go time.

He pulls on a pair of latex gloves, checks both directions on the street, grabs the duffel and exits the car.

He makes his way across the street and up to Storen's front door.

He presses the button on the small device. Nothing happens. He hits again, but nothing.

He shrugs.

TIM

(to himself)

No alarm? Huh.

He starts to pick the lock, but then just turns the handle and opens the door.

Now he's suspicious. He puts the duffel bag down on the floor.

He pulls the pistol out of the back of his waistband and slowly enters the house.

INT. FRONT HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

It's dark and silent.

He closes the front door behind him and looks around carefully. He notes the alarm panel, green light on, next to the door.

He heads across the living. There's no sound.

He checks the kitchen.

Nothing.

He exits the kitchen, makes his way to the staircase and heads upstairs, holding the gun in front of him.

At the top of the stairs, he sees three open doors. He creeps to the doorway to his left, at the end of the hall, glances inside.

STOREN'S BEDROOM

DAN STOREN (30) and MEGAN STOREN (25) lie motionless in the bed. Mike "pies" the room, checking each section and finding nothing.

He steps inside the room and quietly pulls the chloroform handkerchief from his pocket.

But as he approaches the bed, his eyes go wide, as he sees that both Storens have neat, clean bullet holes in their foreheads.

MIKE

Shit.

He quickly checks the bathroom and the closet, but finds nothing.

He pulls his cell phone from his pocket and dials.

MIKE (CONT'D)

(into the phone)

Hey, Tim, it's me. We got a problem. I'm at Storen's house.

(MORE)

MIKE (CONT'D)

He and his wife were dead when I got here. Somebody's cleaning up loose ends.

TIM

(over the phone)

Mike, we have bigger problems than that. I think we're one of the loose ends.

MIKE

What?

TIM

My buddy ID'd the shooter. It's a guy named Farid al-Zubaidi. He was in Afghanistan.

MIKE

al-Qaida?

TIM

Not exactly. He was there with us.

MIKE

Us? What the fuck are you talking about?

TIM

Mike, he's American. He was a Special Forces guy.

MIKE

What?

TIM

Yeah. And here's the really fucked-up part. According to Army records, he was killed in Afghanistan.

MIKE

Then how is he--?

TIM

I think he's a hitter, Mike. A pro. Somebody the military or the CIA created for exactly this kind of work. And now we're on the wrong side. You've got to get out of there.

MIKE

Okay. I'll call you once I'm out.

He hangs up. He creeps to the door, checks the hallway.

In the room down the hall, FARID AL-ZUBAIDI (30s), dark and lithe, crouches and points his Glock at the far bedroom door.

It's hard to see. Mike sticks his head out, then ducks back into the room. He pokes his head back out, but much lower.

al-Zubaidi adjusts and SHOOTs, but the round ZINGS off the doorframe a few inches from Mike.

Mike ducks back inside the bedroom.

MIKE (CONT'D)
(to himself)
Shit.

He sits for a moment, back against the wall, thinks. He turns, crouches, fires at al-Zubaidi, drawing a return shot that WHINGS off the bed behind him.

He ducks back behind the wall.

He looks up at the bed, gets a crafty look on his face. He moves toward the far side of the bed, pulling his shirt off as he goes.

INT. FAR BEDROOM - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Al-Zubaidi lies prone on the floor, watching the door to the Storens' bedroom.

In the gloom he sees Mike poke out from behind the doorframe, squeeze off a SHOT. Al-Zubaidi fires back.

MIKE
Ow!

Al-Zubaidi grins, waits.

Suddenly, without warning, Mike stiffly comes down the hall toward al-Zubaidi.

Al-Zubaidi is surprised at first, but starts firing. One shot after another thuds into the body in front of him.

The body starts to fall, distracting al-Zubaidi.

At the same time, Mike-- clad only in his underwear-- darts out from behind the body of Drew Storen, which wears Mike's clothes, and runs down the stairs.

Al-Zubaidi is distracted just long enough for Mike to disappear behind the rail.

AL-ZUBAIDI

Shit!

He jumps up and chases. But just as he gets past Storen's body, a SHOT rings out and almost clips his arm. He ducks behind the rail.

DOWNSTAIRS

Mike squeezes off another SHOT, then ducks around the staircase and heads through the living room. He hears al-Zubaidi creeping down the stairs.

AL-ZUBAIDI

That was a nice move with the dead body, Mike.

Mike ducks behind a couch.

AL-ZUBAIDI (CONT'D)

You've done a lot better than we expected.

Al-Zubaidi fires a covering shot and comes around the corner of the staircase. He crouches behind an easy chair.

AL-ZUBAIDI (CONT'D)

Your wife would have been proud of you.

At this Mike, enraged, stands up and fires off three wild SHOTS in quick succession.

This just serves to show al-Zubaidi where he's located, and he takes a SHOT from around the chair, narrowly missing Mike's ear.

Mike quickly ducks behind the couch, hits the ground, and rolls away. Al-Zubaidi fires another two SHOTS at the couch where Mike used to be.

Mike hides behind an end table, breathing heavily.

MIKE

(to himself)

Don't be stupid, Mike.

He looks both directions for a way to get to al-Zubaidi.

AL-ZUBAIDI
You're out of your depth, Michael.
If you keep this up, I'm gonna kill
you.

Al-Zubaidi breaks to his left and ducks behind the end of the couch where Mike was originally hiding.

MIKE
It's good to know my government's
so invested in killing me.

He fires a cover SHOT and then repositions himself at the other end of the couch.

AL-ZUBAIDI
It's just business, not personal.
Remember what you told your brother
about loose ends?

MIKE
That doesn't make me feel any
better.

He glances over the couch and squeezes off a SHOT, then follows it by climbing over and diving toward al-Zubaidi's head.

He doesn't quite make it, as al-Zubaidi turns and sees him and twists out of the way, but he knocks al-Zubaidi's gun out of his hand and lands on top of him.

They roll over across the floor, grappling for supremacy.

al-Zubaidi ends up on top. He punches Mike in the face, but Mike clocks him on the side of the head with his gun handle and knocks al-Zubaidi on to the floor.

Al-Zubaidi recovers and sends Mike sprawling with a violent kick to the chest. He jumps up and chases Mike.

He grabs him by the shirt, pulls him up and punches him viciously-- once, twice, three times.

Mike shakes it off and swings wildly but misses.

Al-Zubaidi shoves him back into the couch and dives for the nearest pistol on the floor.

Mike bounces off the couch and grabs a heavy glass ashtray from the coffee table.

Just as al-Zubaidi turns to fire the gun, Mike brings the ashtray down viciously across his head.

The SHOT rings out, but misses Mike.

Al-Zubaidi's eyes go blank and he topples back onto the floor, unconscious, blood dripping from the side of his head.

Mike-- sweaty, breathing hard-- drops the ashtray and backs away for a moment. He leans over, puts his hands on his knees.

He goes through al-Zubaidi's pockets and pulls out a cell phone.

He looks at the recent call list. There's just one, marked "Hinds."

MIKE (CONT'D)
What the fuck.

He clicks the "Call Back" button and puts the phone to his ear. Through the phone we hear the RING.

DAVID HINDS
(through the phone)
Farid. Lindsey's dead?

MIKE
Not exactly.

A long pause.

HINDS
Michael. What a pleasure to talk to you.

MIKE
We've met, haven't we?

HINDS
We have. I knew your wife.

MIKE
Are you in charge?

HINDS
No. I'm more of a...middle manager.

MIKE
I want to meet your boss.

HINDS
Why?

MIKE

I need to see the face of the guy
who ordered the murder of my wife.

A pause.

HINDS

All right. Come to the World War II
Memorial at midnight. We'll talk.
If you still want to meet my boss,
I'll see what I can do.

Mike shuts the phone. He grabs his pistol off the floor,
bounds upstairs.

INT. STAIRCASE - LATER

Mike comes back down the stairs wearing slightly ill-fitting
jeans and a t-shirt.

He checks the living room-- and sees that al-Zubaidi's not
there.

MIKE

Shit!

He pulls the pistol out of his waistband. He creeps toward
the door, picks up the duffel bag, and bursts out the door.

EXT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

He runs across the yard, throws the duffel bag in the BMW.

As he starts to get in the car, al-Zubaidi staggers out of
the house.

He raises his pistol, takes a wild SHOT that hits nothing.

Mike fires back, SHATTERS a window.

He starts the engine, drives off.

Al-Zubaidi stumbles across the yard, falls to his knees. He
fires another wild SHOT, then collapses.

EXT. WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL - NIGHT

Empty, mostly dark.

As Mike approaches the memorial, David Hinds steps into the
light from behind one of the columns.

HINDS
Hello, Michael.

Mike walks over to him.

MIKE
It's David, right?

Hinds nods.

HINDS
If you don't mind me asking, what exactly did you do to Farid? He's extremely displeased with you at the moment.

MIKE
Mostly, I didn't die.

Hinds gives a small chuckle.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Why did you have Laura killed?

HINDS
It's complicated.

He pauses.

HINDS (CONT'D)
I know this has been hard on you.

MIKE
You do, huh? And let me guess, you want to offer me your condolences too, right?

Hinds shakes his head.

HINDS
No, I want to offer you the opportunity to meet the person behind everything that's happened.

MIKE
Really. And why would you do that?

HINDS
Because you said you wanted to meet the boss. And the boss wants to talk to you.

MIKE
Great. Let's do it.

Hinds makes a hand signal to someone over Mike's shoulder.

Mike turns, and sees Laura step out from behind a column. She smiles somewhat shyly, but doesn't look him in the eye.

Hinds pats Mike on the shoulder.

HINDS

You said you wanted to meet the
boss. Well...meet the boss.

Mike gapes silently. Laura beckons him, and he walks toward her, his eyes wide and disbelieving.

He doesn't notice, but Hinds follows a few feet behind him.

When he reaches Laura, she engulfs him in a hug. He doesn't react at first, but finally he puts his arms around her too.

He pulls away. She gives him an appraising look.

LAURA

What are you wearing?

MIKE

Laura? What the...?

LAURA

I'm so sorry, Mike.

MIKE

What...? What's going on? What are
you doing here?

LAURA

It's a long story. I got recruited
into a project for the White House.

MIKE

A what?

LAURA

We wanted to use bin-Awad's death
to draw out a domestic al-Qaida
cell we'd been monitoring but
didn't have enough on yet. So they
used me. We had people monitoring
the domestic jihadist sites after
we got him. I said we should just
put me out there and see who bit,
but David wouldn't hear of it. He
insisted that we set up the fake
shooting and see how the extremists
responded.

MIKE

Fake, my ass. I got shot in the arm!

LAURA

I know. Farid got his hand slapped for that.

MIKE

And you couldn't tell me?

LAURA

I couldn't tell you.

MIKE

Need to know, right?

She shrugs.

MIKE (CONT'D)

I guess it's not surprising. Work was always more important to you than me.

She grabs his hand, shakes her head.

LAURA

No. Part of the deal was that the Agency lets me go after this. With a big payout to disappear with you.

Mike doesn't notice, but behind him Hinds pulls out a 9-mil pistol and starts screwing on a silencer.

MIKE

Then why was your good friend Farid trying to kill me an hour ago at Dan Storen's house? With real bullets and everything?

Her eyes go wide.

LAURA

What?

Hinds raises the silenced pistol and points it at the back of Mike's head. He gives Laura a look and waves his hand as if to say, "Continue."

Laura reaches out and touches Mike's arm.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Mike, listen to me.
(in Arabic w/titles)
Duck.

Mike looks surprised, but ducks out of the way. Hinds is shocked. He tries to track Mike, but he's distracted by Laura pulling a pistol from the back of her waistband and aiming at him.

Laura and Hinds fire at the same time. Hinds' round misses completely, but Laura's clips his arm and sends him spinning around.

Laura grabs Mike's hand and they start running.

The memorial erupts in GUNFIRE. Al-Zubaidi steps out from behind a column and sprays shots in their direction.

Hinds fires off a couple of rounds, but both he and al-Zubaidi are surprised when Tim steps into the light from behind a column and fires back.

He provides cover fire for Laura and Mike to get past him, then Laura turns and sprays a couple of shots so he can join them.

They disappear into the darkness. al-Zubaidi starts to run after them, but Hinds holds up a hand.

HINDS
Let them go.

AL-ZUBAIDI
But sir--

HINDS
No. We have other things to do.

Al-Zubaidi drops his head, but follows Hinds in the other direction.

INT. BMW - NIGHT

Mike drives, with Laura in the passenger seat and Tim in the back.

Mike checks the rearview mirror.

MIKE
Looks like we're alone.

TIM
Okay, so now what?

LAURA
Now we've got to disappear.

MIKE
Disappear? Why?

LAURA
All that stuff I told you back there? It's all bullshit.

MIKE
What do you mean?

LAURA
There was no domestic terror cell. The White House freaked out when people started saying we should end the war on terror. We got ordered to find a way to keep the public interested in fighting al-Qaida. So David came up with this plan to have al-Qaida kill me.

There's a moment of silence while Tim and Mike digest the information.

LAURA (CONT'D)
David's not the kind of guy who likes loose ends. We've got to bail. Disappear. If we stay here, he'll find us and kill us.

MIKE
Maybe not.

LAURA
The DVD, right?

MIKE
You know about it?

LAURA
I heard rumors. And our video uplink broke down at exactly the same time bin-Awad got shot. I have a feeling that's what's on there.

MIKE

That's our leverage. Whatever happened in those few seconds has to be scaring the shit out of the White House. But where is it? And why in the hell would the White House keep it?

Laura shakes her head.

LAURA

It's not the White House. It's David, it's got to be. He's the smartest political infighter I know. He'd never pass up an opportunity to hold that kind of leverage, even over a President.

MIKE

Well, shit. We'll never break it out of CIA Headquarters. This isn't Mission: Impossible.

LAURA

We won't have to. He doesn't keep anything there. He told me once he doesn't trust Security not to go through his stuff.

MIKE

Then where?

LAURA

His house. He's got a state-of-the-art safe hidden there.

In the back, Tim's phone RINGS. He answers.

TIM

Hey, baby...what? You're where? What the-- oh, shit. Okay. I'll be right there. You don't move.

He snaps the phone shut.

TIM (CONT'D)

Let me out, Mike.

MIKE

Why?

TIM

Your boy David made his play. He
and his goon are at the house.
Maureen's hiding in the panic room.

MIKE

Let's go, then. The disk can wait.

TIM

No. You need to go get that disk. I
can handle Hinds and that muscled-
up piece of shit he carries around
with him.

LAURA

You sure?

TIM

Yeah. You guys go find that disk.
Mike's right, it's the leverage we
need.

Mike stops the car and Tim opens the door. He puts his hand
on Mike's shoulder.

TIM (CONT'D)

Do what you gotta do, little bro.
But watch your ass. See you in a
while.

He exits, disappearing into the darkness.

EXT. DAVID AND INGRID'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A neat ranch house in a neighborhood full of them, surrounded
by a copse of trees.

Mike and Laura walk up the sidewalk toward the house, looking
as nonchalant as you can at two in the morning. At the Hinds'
walk, they break off and head for the front door.

Mike uses Tim's device to check for alarms, then quickly and
efficiently picks the lock. They enter.

INT. ENTRANCE HALL - CONTINUOUS

Not surprisingly, the house is dark and quiet. Pistols
raised, Mike and Laura creep through the entranceway and down
a hallway.

INT. DAVID AND INGRID'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

INGRID HINDS (30), Nordic and spectacular, sleeps naked and barely covered in the bed. Mike and Laura enter the room.

Mike's eyes go wide. Laura rolls hers, swats him on the back of the head.

The noise disturbs Ingrid, who begins to stir. Mike quickly approaches the bed, chloroformed handkerchief in hand.

He covers her nose with the handkerchief. She thrashes briefly, her eyes fluttering open in fear, before giving in. Soon she's unconscious.

MIKE

OK, let's set up.

LAURA

Set up? For what? I'm going to look for the safe.

Mike shakes his head brusquely.

MIKE

No time. We have to find out where to look and how to open it.

LAURA

So what are you gonna do?

MIKE

Laura, only one of us in this room knows where the safe is located and what the combination is. It's not you and it's not me. That only leaves one course of action, as far as I can tell.

LAURA

So you're going to torture her?

MIKE

That's up to her.

Laura rolls her eyes.

LAURA

Up to-- give me a break, Mike. Once you go down that road, there's only one place it can lead. You know that. Unless you break her, you can't trust what she tells you.

(MORE)

LAURA (CONT'D)

You've been an interrogator too long to trust her word on anything. Remember how this ended for you before? Are you back to that, so addicted to the power and the knowledge that you'll torture an innocent woman?

Mike drops his head.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Here's what it comes down to, Mike. What kind of man are you? Are you the kind of man I fell in love with? Or the kind who gets off on torturing people?

Mike hesitates, but when he looks up, his eyes are hard.

MIKE

The kind who wins.

INT. BEDROOM - LATER

Ingrid's wrists are zip-tied at her waist, her shoulders, waist and legs lashed to the bed.

Mike sits next to the bed, a tray next to him containing a jug of water, a full glass of water and a towel.

Laura is nowhere to be found.

Mike holds smelling salts under Ingrid's nose. Her eyes flutter and she wakes.

As she gets her bearings, she glares at Mike with white-hot hatred.

INGRID

Who the fuck are you? Untie me, you asshole!

Mike doesn't respond. Instead, he takes the water glass and pours about half the water in her face. She shakes her head, chokes, sputters.

INGRID (CONT'D)

Ahhh! Stop- stop that, you animal!

Again he doesn't respond. He just holds her head and pours another few drops into her nose, leaving her choking and spluttering.

MIKE

Ingrid, my name is Mike. I used to be a professional interrogator. Normally I'd take days or even weeks, put you through some pretty bad experiences, but eventually I'd become your best friend. I'd do some ugly things to you, sure, but that would just break your spirit and make you dependent on me. Then, after awhile, you'd tell me all your secrets, even the things you were sworn to secrecy on.

He pauses for a moment.

MIKE (CONT'D)

However, tonight I don't have that kind of time. So I'm just going to ask you two very simple questions. If you answer them truthfully, I'll go away and your life will continue without any repercussions. However, if you don't tell me what I need to know- where your husband's safe is and the combination- then I'm going to slowly, painfully drown you, right here in your bed.

He pauses, looks closely at her.

MIKE (CONT'D)

So what do you think? Can we do this simply and painlessly?

She gives him a long look, her eyes red with anger.

INGRID

Fuck. You.

He sighs, shrugs.

MIKE

I tried.

He covers her face with the towel. She tries to shake it off, but it's too big and she can't generate enough leverage.

Mike lifts the water jug, holds it in place for a moment.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Last chance.

Silence.

He tilts the jug and begins to pour. At first it's a few drops, and then he waits for a moment. Then he pours a little more.

Her reaction is hard to see for a moment, but then she starts thrashing and screeching, a loud desperate MEWLING that chills the spine.

Mike lets her thrash for a moment, then holds her down and pours another few drops.

The mewling gets louder and is now a full-on SCREAM.

Mike puts down the pitcher and removes the towel.

Ingrid's face is unharmed but wet, her eyes red. Her breathing is ragged, harsh, her eyes aflame.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Where's the safe, Ingrid?

She starts to lash at him, but catches herself.

INGRID
Li...library. Behind the
desk...wall safe, behind the
painting.

MIKE
Thank you, Ingrid. And the
combination?

It's too much.

INGRID
Fuck you, you animal!

He sighs, picks up the towel, starts to cover her with it again. Her eyes widen in desperation.

INGRID (CONT'D)
No! No! I'll tell you!

He just looks at her.

INGRID (CONT'D)
87 left...19 right...74 left.

MIKE
87-19-74. Thank you, Ingrid. And
I'm sorry we had to do this.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Laura sits on a couch, her arms folded tightly over her chest, tears on her cheeks.

Mike enters.

MIKE
The safe is in--

LAURA
I heard.

MIKE
I'm going to get the CD. You coming?

LAURA
So you tortured an innocent woman.
Are you proud?

He reacts like he's been slapped.

MIKE
Proud? Proud? Laura, you fucking hypocrite! How can you sit there like one of those smug assholes on TV and ask me if I'm proud?

He stalks across the floor toward her. Seeing his intensity, she scrambles up onto the couch, a protective crouch.

MIKE (CONT'D)
This is all your fault, Laura. You understand that, right, that we're here right now because of you? You and your asshole boss David and the President of the United Fucking States.

A brief pause. Laura looks at him-- is it over?

MIKE (CONT'D)

I was out, Laura, I was done. I did what I thought I had to do, yeah, but I was done, I was out, I was ready to marry you and live the rest of my life on an island somewhere and never think twice again about throwing a terrorist against a wall, or playing Eminem or fucking Barney "I love you, you love me" at top volume for days on end, or trying to scare the shit out of a Pakistani teenager who didn't think about the consequences when he joined the Taliban.

He pauses. Pensive, Laura waits.

MIKE (CONT'D)

And no more waterboarding, ever.

A deep breath.

MIKE (CONT'D)

I was happy, Laura, I was happy and normal and finished with interrogations forever. But then you and David and President Fucking Bartlett decided to turn into Maxwell Fucking Smart and fool the world, disappear you and make me think you were fucking dead!

Now Laura's crying. Mike's breathing hard, sweating.

MIKE (CONT'D)

And now here we are, where I have to waterboard that woman in there to find the one piece of information that might, might!, save our fucking lives! And you have the gall to sit there and ask me if I'm fucking proud? Fuck! You!

Now he's standing over her, his breathing forcing its way out in sharp, ragged bursts, and she's bawling, tears rolling down her cheeks.

He starts to say something else, but then he just stops and shakes his head.

He turns and stalks away, leaving her crying on the couch.

EXT. TIM'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Tim appears from the trees at the back of his house. He holds a 9-mil pistol, and he picks his way through the backyard, moving from shadow to shadow.

He slides up against the wall, keeping his back against the house as he crosses the patio to the back door. He shifts the pistol to his left hand and pulls a key from his pocket. He uses it to unlock the door.

Quickly but quietly, he slides inside the:

BASEMENT

He eases the door shut and moves quietly through the darkness.

At the bottom of the stairs, he stops to listen. He can hear VOICES drifting down the staircase.

HINDS

Damn it, find me a way into that room. Burn the house down if you must. We need that woman.

AL-ZUBAIDI

I'm working on it, sir.

HINDS

Well, work faster! One of them will be here soon, I'm sure of it.

AL-ZUBAIDI

Yes, sir.

Tim heads up the staircase, keeping his back to the wall and the pistol in front of him.

He reaches the first floor and stops to listen again. There is the sound of MOVEMENT on the floor above, then the sounds of BANGING.

HINDS

Is that working?

AL-ZUBAIDI

Yes, sir. I'm almost in.

Hearing this, Tim charges up the stairs.

LANDING

At the top of the stairs, he crosses the landing into the:

BEDROOM

Where he stops short, as he sees Hinds sitting calmly in a chair across the room, holding a digital voice recorder, which he turns off on seeing Tim.

Hinds smiles.

Then Tim hears the CLICK of a pistol being cocked and feels it pressed against the back of his head.

TIM

Shit.

HINDS

So it would seem. Tim, you remember my associate Farid?

Tim glances over his shoulder at Farid.

TIM

Yeah. Hi. Love your work.

AL-ZUBAIDI

Likewise.

HINDS

Now that we have the pleasantries out of the way, could you please put your weapon on the ground?

Tim leans over, drops the gun on the ground.

HINDS (CONT'D)

Thank you.

(calling out)

Maureen! As you can see, we have your husband. Please come out so my friend Farid doesn't have to shoot him in the head.

Tim seethes.

Silence, then a slight WHOOSH and the wall slides back, revealing Maureen.

TIM

Mo. I'm sorry.

She starts to come out.

Suddenly, Tim drives his foot down onto al-Zubaidi's. At the same time, he sweeps his elbow up and knocks the gun away. He slams al-Zubaidi backward into the wall, knocking his breath out.

Hinds calmly lifts his pistol and fires once, twice.

The first shot catches Tim in the shoulder and spins him around. The second opens up a bloody hole in his chest. He slams backward into al-Zubaidi, then slumps to the floor, his eyes blank.

MAUREEN

Tim! No!

She grabs Tim's pistol from the floor and fires wildly at Hinds, sending him scurrying for cover.

She grabs Tim and drags him toward the open door of the panic room.

Hinds pokes his head out, sees that only Tim's feet are still out.

HINDS

Farid! Stop them!

Al-Zubaidi stumbles off the floor, starts to make his way toward Tim and Maureen.

Maureen points the pistol at him, squeezes off a shot. It misses, but he has to scramble out of the way, giving her time to disappear with Tim inside the panic room.

The door closes behind her with a WHOOSH.

INT. HINDS' OFFICE - NIGHT

Mike sits at Hinds' desk, raptly watching video on a laptop.

Laura enters, her arms wrapped tightly around her. Her eyes are dry but red.

Mike looks up, sees her, looks back to the laptop.

MIKE

Well, I can certainly see what all the fuss was about. Watch.

He clicks a button.

ONSCREEN

We're watching through SEAL #1's NVG camera. We watch as SEAL #7 kicks a door open, and along with SEAL #7 and SEAL #8 we go into:

INT. BIN-AWAD'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

At the other end of the room is the tall, skinny figure of bin-Awad. He is unarmed, and holds his hands up in surrender. We all point our weapons at him.

SEAL #1
For God and country.

SEAL #7
We sure, sir? He's trying to
surrender.

SEAL #1
He doesn't get to surrender. Order
of the President.

SHOTS ring out from all three weapons, ripping through bin Awad's body and sending him spinning, bouncing and finally falling to the floor, dead.

The echo of the shots fades into the gloom.

OFFICE

Mike hits the mouse and the video stops. He looks at Laura.

LAURA
Shit.

MIKE
Yup. That was nothing but an
execution. A war crime.

LAURA
What do we do with it?

MIKE
We use it. It's leverage.

LAURA
Leverage for what?

MIKE
Leverage to stay alive.

He starts tapping on the keyboard.

LAURA
What are you doing?

MIKE
Emailing Wikileaks, letting them
know I've got a video they might
want.

Mike's phone RINGS. He answers it.

MIKE (CONT'D)
(into the phone)
Maureen? What's wrong?

INT. PANIC ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Maureen sits against the wall, sobbing. Tim is on the floor
next to her, covered in blood.

MAUREEN
It's Tim.

HINDS' OFFICE

Mike slams his phone shut. His face is pale, his eyes wide.

LAURA
What?

MIKE
It's Tim. He's been shot.

He stands, ejects the CD, heads for the door. Laura follows,
her eyes hollow.

INT. BMW - NIGHT

Mike drives, Laura sits in the passenger seat, looking out
the window.

Mike's phone RINGS. He answers it.

HINDS
(through the phone)
Hello, Michael.

MIKE
What do you want?

HINDS

Michael, I believe it's time we talked. Face to face. I believe we can resolve this, and there's no reason anyone else has to die.

MIKE

I have your CD, Dave.

There's a long silence.

HINDS

Ingrid?

MIKE

She's fine. I don't think she'll be inviting me to Christmas dinner, but she's fine.

HINDS

If you injured her--

MIKE

(interrupting)

You mean like you shot my brother? Unlike you, David, I don't hurt civilians.

HINDS

Come to your brother's house, Michael. We'll all sit down and talk like adults, resolve all of this. You, me and Laura.

MIKE

I'm on my way.

He hangs up.

LAURA

Just you?

He smiles.

EXT. TIM'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Mike pulls up in the BMW. He's alone.

He gets out, walks to the front door, hands in the air.

As he approaches the door, it's opened by al-Zubaidi, who's holding a pistol.

AL-ZUBAIDI

Come in.

Mike enters.

ENTRANCE HALL

Al-Zubaidi quickly and expertly frisks Mike. He points toward the living room.

LIVING ROOM

Hinds sits in a wingback chair, his legs crossed.

HINDS

Come in here, Mike.

Mike enters, al-Zubaidi behind him, pistol raised.

AL-ZUBAIDI

He's clean.

HINDS

Of course he's clean, Farid. He didn't come here to engage us in a shootout. He came here to negotiate.

(to Mike)

Where's Laura?

Mike just smiles.

HINDS (CONT'D)

I assume she has the disk?

Mike gives a half-shrug, the smile still on his face.

HINDS (CONT'D)

How do you see this ending, Michael? What exactly are you expecting to win here?

MIKE

Win? I didn't ask to be a part of this, David. A win for me is just surviving. This was your rodeo. Yours and the President's.

HINDS

And your fiancée's.

He pauses.

HINDS (CONT'D)
Did she tell you the assassination
was her idea?

Hinds grins as he sees from Mike's expression that she
hasn't.

HINDS (CONT'D)
Oh, yes. We were talking about the
liberal media proclaiming the end
of the war on terror after bin-
Awad's death--

MIKE
(interrupting)
-- Execution, you mean.

HINDS
We were talking about it, and she
suggested that perhaps a high-
profile terrorist act could be just
the thing to remind the American
public that they still need people
like us.

A pause. Mike's hurt by the revelation, but tries not to show
it.

HINDS (CONT'D)
So I take it you watched the video.

MIKE
Interesting viewing. I can't wait
to see what Chris Matheson does
with it.

HINDS
What exactly do you think you have,
Mike?

MIKE
Leverage, David. And a path out of
the country, safe, with Laura, Tim
if he's still alive, and Maureen.
We disappear, and you and your boss
never see this video again.

Hinds' eyebrows shoot up, a look of amusement.

HINDS
And you think you can blackmail the
President?

Mike smiles.

EXT. TIM'S BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Laura sneaks out of the copse of trees, her pistol raised. Unknowingly, she follows the same path Tim did earlier, all the way to the back door.

She opens it, disappears into the house.

LIVING ROOM

Mike smiles.

MIKE

That's for me and the President to discuss.

Hinds shakes his head.

HINDS

Oh, no. There will be no meetings with the President, Michael. You deal with me.

MIKE

Then Laura releases the video, David. And your President finds himself out of a job.

A pause.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Here's how this is going to happen, David. You're going to call the President and get me a meeting with him. And he's going to agree to let me and my family disappear with enough money to live the rest of our lives in peace and quiet. Otherwise, he gets to follow Richard Nixon's late-career path, and you get to follow Scooter Libby's. You ready for prison, David?

INT. STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS

Laura sneaks up the stairs.

LIVING ROOM

Hinds smiles.

HINDS

Maybe I want you to release the video. Did you ever consider that?

Mike laughs.

MIKE

Right.

HINDS

Did you ever stop to consider the question of why I saved the video in the first place? Perhaps I'm just a concerned citizen who abhors the violent US military culture and wants to change things.

STAIRCASE

Laura pauses, listens.

LIVING ROOM

Mike laughs.

MIKE

Well, if that's the case, then you better go ahead and put a bullet in my head.

HINDS

Maybe we should.

In response, al-Zubaidi presses the gun hard against the back of Mike's head.

STAIRCASE

Laura pauses, then continues upstairs.

INT. TIM'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Laura enters. She crosses to the door of the panic room. She knocks on the wall, first softly and then a little harder.

LAURA

Mo, it's me. Open up!

A moment, then the soft SWISH and the wall slides back, revealing Maureen's bloody, worried face.

She practically runs out and falls into Laura's arms.

MAUREEN
Oh my God, Laura!

LAURA
How's Tim?

Maureen shakes her head into Laura's shoulder.

LIVING ROOM

Mike smiles at Hinds.

MIKE
Nice try, Dave. But you can't shoot
me, and you know it.

AL-ZUBAIDI
Wanna bet?

He pushes the pistol even harder against Mike's head.

Hinds holds up a hand.

HINDS
No, Farid. Mike is correct. We have
to kick this up to the managerial
level.

He pulls out his cell phone, dials.

HINDS (CONT'D)
(into the phone)
Good evening, sir. My apologies for
bothering you this late. I'm with
Michael Lindsey, and he would like
to meet with you this evening.
Alone.

A pause.

HINDS (CONT'D)
Yes, sir. Of course. Thank you,
sir.

He claps the phone shut.

HINDS (CONT'D)
Congratulations. You have your
meeting. One hour, in his office.

MIKE

Now let me take Tim out of here and
get him to the hospital.

HINDS

Not until after your meeting.

MIKE

If he dies, I release the video.

Hinds shrugs. He starts to respond, but--

MAUREEN (O.S.)

No. If he dies, I shoot David here
in the balls.

Mike's and al-Zubaidi's heads turn incrementally, and Hinds
leans over to see Maureen and Laura entering, guns raised.

HINDS

Look, Michael. The cavalry has
arrived.

MIKE

(over his shoulder)
Glad you could make it, honey.

Al-Zubaidi puts an arm around Mike and slowly shuffles him so
they're turned around and facing the women.

Laura and Maureen's view of Hinds is obscured by the bodies
of al-Zubaidi and Mike; Hinds takes advantage by reaching
down between the chair cushion and the armrest and half-
pulling a pistol out.

LAURA

Okay, David. Enough is enough.
We're going to go upstairs, get Tim
and take him to the hospital.

HINDS

Unfortunately, you're not. Your
fiancee has a meeting in an hour,
and when the President gives me
clearance to let your brother-in-
law go, I'll let him go. Until
then, everyone should put their
guns down and relax.

Mike gives Laura a raised eyebrow and slyly tosses his head
toward al-Zubaidi. She responds with a slight nod.

LAURA

David, it's not really--

Mike suddenly drops toward the ground and sweeps his leg, catching al-Zubaidi in the knee, buckling his leg and knocking him off balance.

Laura and Maureen immediately open up, firing a volley of SHOTS.

Half a dozen carve a line across al-Zubaidi's chest. He drops to the ground, dead before he gets there.

Hinds pulls the pistol out from the chair cushion and returns fire, leaping from the chair and diving for cover at the same time.

His shots are wild, but they force the women to duck.

Laura recovers first, and gets off a couple of SHOTS.

One catches Hinds in the back of the shoulder, driving him into the ground near the couch.

He hits the ground and doesn't move.

As the room falls silent, Mike stands, goes to Laura, engulfs her in a hug. She buries her head on his shoulder.

MIKE

You okay?

LAURA

(shakily)

I've been better.

Maureen isn't done, though. Her face blank, her pistol raised, she walks slowly toward Hinds' motionless body.

Mike looks up, sees her, turns to chase her.

MIKE

Mo--

MAUREEN

He shot Tim, Mike. He has to die.

MIKE

Mo, don't do it.

He catches up with her, puts his hand on her shoulder. She jerks, turns and points the pistol at Mike. He steps back, his hands raised.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Mo. You don't want to do this.

MAUREEN

I...I have to.

He shakes his head.

MIKE

You don't.

Hinds GROANS. Maureen turns the gun toward him.

He rolls over. His chest is bloody.

MIKE (CONT'D)

He's gonna die anyway, Mo. Don't do it. You'll never be able to get over it, I promise.

MAUREEN

But...but he shot Tim.

But her voice is wavering. Mike steps forward, puts his hand on the gun. Maureen relinquishes it to him.

He ejects the magazine, clears the chamber, and tosses the gun away. He takes Maureen in his arms, holds her close.

She practically collapses against him.

INT. OVAL OFFICE - NIGHT

President Bartlett sits behind the desk. He wears a suit, despite the late hour.

There's a discreet knock at the door.

PRESIDENT

Come!

The door opens, and a SECRET SERVICE AGENT (30) escorts Mike into the room. The President stands, comes around the desk.

He shakes Mike's hand as the agent discreetly leaves.

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)

So, Michael. But you go by Mike, right?

MIKE

Yes, sir.

PRESIDENT

Pleasure to meet you. Let's have a seat.

They sit across from each other on the office couches.

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)
So this is quite the situation we
have ourselves in here.

MIKE
Yes, sir. It is.

PRESIDENT
I understand that you're in
possession of something that
belongs to me.

Mike smiles.

MIKE
Two things wrong with that, Mr.
President. First, I'm not in
possession of anything right now.
And second, I'm not sure it belongs
to you.

PRESIDENT
Who does it belong to, then?

Mike shrugs.

MIKE
The American people?

The President throws his head back and laughs.

PRESIDENT
Lord, you're even more naive than
David said you were! The American
people! The American people, Mike,
are nothing but a construct. A
fiction we use to get elected. Or
maybe to get something done once
we're here.

MIKE
So the public that elects you is
just there to be manipulated?

Another disbelieving headshake.

PRESIDENT
Mike, once you're President,
everybody's there to be
manipulated. Manipulation is part
of the job, maybe the most
important part.

MIKE

And you and David Hinds manipulated the media and the public.

PRESIDENT

Your fiancée was a part of that as well.

MIKE

I know. But she's not the President.

A pause.

MIKE (CONT'D)

She just works for him.

PRESIDENT

Mike, can I give you some free advice? Worth what you pay for it? You need to realize that there's no such thing as a free press. When you read stories in the newspaper, do you honestly believe they just ended up there because of some dogged, nicotine-stained newsman's hard work and elbow grease? Please.

He gives Mike a long look, grins, shakes his head like he can't believe how simple Mike must be.

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)

What you should be asking yourself is, who does it benefit? Who does it hurt? Who gains, who loses? In Washington and everywhere else where power resides, the press exists to be manipulated. If you think the Washington Post is any freer than the North Korean state news service, you're just fooling yourself.

MIKE

At least the North Koreans admit that their media is state-run.

The President shrugs.

PRESIDENT

Don't shed any tears over the media getting manipulated, Mike. It's what they're there for. It's a win-win situation.

(MORE)

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)

They get their scoops, their stories, their headlines, their page views, and we get the business of the American people accomplished.

MIKE

The American people? I thought they were just a construct.

The President just smiles. There's a pause.

PRESIDENT

So what is it you're looking for, exactly?

MIKE

Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

PRESIDENT

So I pay you off, and you disappear with the video, is that it?

MIKE

And you leave us alone.

PRESIDENT

You're actually trying to blackmail the President of the United States?

MIKE

No sir. I'm negotiating with a guy who left himself open to being blackmailed.

PRESIDENT

Twenty million.

MIKE

Excuse me?

PRESIDENT

Twenty million dollars. Five for you and each of your family members. And you give me the video.

Mike shakes his head.

MIKE

Can't do that, sir. It's my only guarantee you won't send more goons to kill me.

The President shrugs.

PRESIDENT

Fine. But you get the fuck out and disappear. And you don't come back in 3 years and tell me you've blown the money and need more.

MIKE

Fair enough.

A brief pause before the President slaps his knees, stands. Mike follows suit.

PRESIDENT

Fine. Enjoy your blood money.

He turns his back on Mike, walks to his desk. Mike waits a moment, then heads toward the door.

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)

Mike.

Mike stops.

MIKE

Yes, sir?

PRESIDENT

He deserved it, you know. Bin Awad, I mean. He was a mass murderer, and he was our enemy.

Mike doesn't look back.

MIKE

(over his shoulder)

You know the funny thing, sir? I agree with you. But then, that's the point, isn't it?

He walks out, closes the door behind him. The President sits behind the desk. A moment later, the door opens and the Secret Service agent enters.

AGENT

Everything okay, sir?

The President smiles.

PRESIDENT

Yes indeed.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Mike and Laura lounge lazily on a beach in an undisclosed location, an old boom-box style radio on the sand next to them.

A few yards away, Maureen feeds a still-bandaged Tim with a spoon.

LAURA

I can't believe we're free. And I really can't believe you double-crossed the President.

MIKE

He deserves this, Laura. You're talking about a guy who would pay me off instead of taking a chance that maybe he was right and the people would see that. A guy who doesn't trust the people who voted him into office. And now the voters will know exactly who he is. This time next year he'll be out of a job, if not in prison.

He sips from a fruity drink.

LAURA

Speaking of...

She reaches over and turns up the radio.

RADIO ANNOUNCER

And the release via Wikileaks of a video showing the cold-blooded slaying of unarmed al-Qaida leader Ahmed bin-Awad, who was shown in the video raising his hands in apparent surrender, has stirred up international human rights activists against the White House. The International Criminal Court is considering bringing War Crimes charges against President Alan Bartlett.

Mike looks at Laura, smiles triumphantly. But the announcer continues.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

However...

Mike screws up his face in surprise. However?

RADIO ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)
While the release of the video has served to further isolate the US from the rest of the world, domestically it has shot the President's approval ratings through the roof. Polls show Americans feel the President has shown the willingness to do, quote, "whatever it takes" to secure the country. "For God and country" t-shirts are now the best-selling clothing in America. President Bartlett's at 74% positive approval now, which all but assures his re-election...

INT. OVAL OFFICE - DAY

ANGLE ON: IPAD SCREEN

Onscreen is a satellite video feed of Mike and Laura lying on the beach.

Laura reaches over and turns down the radio. Mike looks shocked, and silently mouths the words "Oh, shit."

PRESIDENT (O.S.)
Best twenty million I ever spent.

HINDS (O.S.)
They're still a loose end, Mr. President. Would you like us to finish this?

OVAL OFFICE

The President puts down the iPad and looks up at David Hinds, who stands behind him, his shoulder in a sling.

He picks up a pen, rolls it between his fingers, thinks for a moment, then shrugs.

PRESIDENT
Not yet. They've earned the vacation.

He pats Hinds on the arm.

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)

As have you, David. I have to admit, I never thought this cockamamie plan of yours would fly. Even after all your focus groups, I never thought people would actually react this way. And Lindsey was a perfect choice. Genius on your part, really. It's hard to believe you predicted his behavior so...exactly. How you knew he'd double-cross us and release the video? Well, however you did it, it was a work of fucking art. So why don't you disappear for a couple of weeks? Take that pretty wife of yours and go drive up to Vermont, watch the leaves change or something?

Hinds bows his head, smiles.

HINDS

I might do that, sir. Thank you.

He picks up the iPad and heads toward the door.

As he does, he runs a finger, almost lovingly, over the video of Mike and Laura lounging completely unawares on the beach in a supposedly undisclosed location.

Suddenly there's a SOUND, like the breeze ruffling leaves on a tree, and Hinds shudders.

He reaches back, his eyes wide and suddenly unsure, and swats at his neck, but misses his target.

He spins around, stumbles, claps his hand to his chest, falls backward on to the couch. The iPad clatters to the floor, its screen cracking.

The President approaches, pen in hand, the front end empty.

He pulls a dart out of the back of Hinds' neck, slides it back into the pen with a CLICK, puts the pen back in his shirt pocket.

PRESIDENT

Something the CIA dreamed up.
Irony, isn't it? I'm pretty sure
they never imagined I'd try it out
on one of their own.

He leans over, pats Hinds on the cheek.

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)
It's a heart attack, in case you
were wondering.

He checks the pulse in Hinds' carotid artery.

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)
I hope you know it's business,
David, not personal. But you're a
loose end too, and I have to
protect the Presidency. At all
costs.

HINDS POV

The room shimmers, wobbles, then starts to fade.

The President gives us one last sympathetic look, then starts
shouting toward the door.

It's as though his voice is coming from the bottom of a well.

PRESIDENT
(shouting, muffled)
Help! Oh my God! It's David!
Paramedics! Hurry!

And finally it's all too much, and our eyes start to flutter,
blink once or twice, then shut for the last time, and we:

FADE OUT.