The background of the cover is a stylized map of the United States in shades of orange and red. Overlaid on the map is a detailed illustration of the United States Capitol building in white. In the lower half of the map, a human face is visible, with two blue eyes looking forward. The title 'THE METHUSELAH MAN' is written in a large, white, serif font with a black outline and a drop shadow effect, centered over the map and the face.

THE METHUSELAH MAN

**Screenplay by
Will Dresser and Ron Turouske**

A nighttime photograph of the United States Capitol building, illuminated with warm lights. The building's architecture is clearly visible against the dark sky. In the foreground, the silhouettes of two people are seen from behind, looking towards the Capitol.

**A Wes Franklin Novel
*Will Dresser***



THE METHUSELAH MAN

“GOD, I NEVER KNEW A MAN WHO WANTED SO MUCH TO BE DEAD...
OR DESERVED IT MORE.”

These are the opening lines of *The Methuselah Man*, a contemporary morality play set in Washington DC, California and Las Vegas – with a lethal train ride from Kiev to Istanbul. It is the story of...

...a new U.S. President determined to change the nuclear face of the world by unilateral example and a Vice President who opposes the new strategy;

...a man with a perfect genetic structure who has been abandoned by his God and abducted by a government gone mad; and

...Wes Franklin, racing to prevent a cataclysm of unimaginable magnitude and discover the true identity of The Methuselah Man.

Our story begins in California, where Jared Kennan Cain, a man who appears to be dying of fourth stage lung cancer, presents himself to Dr. Joseph Rosenfeld, world-renowned psychiatrist and author of a book on near-death experiences.

At the same time, across the country in Washington DC, the President is about to embark on a game-changing unilateral shift in the nuclear arms policies of the United States. The Vice President, convinced these new policies are both naive and dangerous, will go to any lengths to stop the President.

Halfway across the world, a group of ex-Russian officials are in the process of transporting a quantity of weapons-grade Plutonium from Kiev to Istanbul, where a consortium of Arab “businessmen” awaits delivery.

Secretary of State Crandall Forsyth, fearing the Vice President is about to take drastic steps to subvert the President’s nuclear agenda, and uncertain how deep the Vice President’s conspiracy runs, turns to the one man outside of the government he can trust – his long-time friend Wes Franklin.

The trail of conspiracy leads Wes – with his technology-savvy girlfriend, Ashley Jordan, and his weapons expert and international investigator, Rouzbeh Aryana – from the nation’s capital to a radioactive zero-sum climax on the streets of Las Vegas.

The Methuselah Man

By

Will Dresser and Ronald Turouske

Based on the novel
"The Methuselah Man"
by Will Dresser

Screen Writers Guild Registration Number: 1559005

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and Ronald Turouske

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THE METHUSELAH MAN

BLACK SCREEN:

ROSENFELD: (V.O.)

God, I never knew a man who wanted so much to be dead...or deserved it more.

FADE IN...

EXT: CALIFORNIA, A CEMETERY – MORNING

Close on: a SHALLOW HOLE and an unmarked LEAD CONTAINER slightly larger than a cigar box.

A thick marine layer hangs tight to the ground, it swirls a puff of foggy cloud as a shovelful of dirt is tossed into the hole.

ROSENFELD hands the shovel to the groundskeeper.

LIZ:

That's it? An entire lifetime summed up in one sentence?

ROSENFELD:

What am I going to tell God He doesn't already know?

LIZ:

I don't know, but damn, that's it?

ROSENFELD:

Look around, Liz. There's you, me, and the groundskeeper. And Jefferson there is on the clock. What's that tell you?

The GROUNDSKEEPER remains silent.

LIZ:

God, that's sad.

ROSENFELD:

You know, for the first time since we met Jared Kennan Cain, I'm starting to think maybe he was right. Maybe God can abandon some people.

ROSENFELD stares off momentarily, reflecting on the experience with CAIN.

ROSENFELD takes LIZ by the elbow and pulls her aside to speak quietly.

ROSENFELD:

I want you to take Cain's file home with you tonight and burn it. I started a dummy file (pause) before we left for Vegas. That's now the official version.

LIZ:

Good plan! No one in their right mind would believe the truth, anyway.

ROSENFELD:

Can you believe it's been less than four weeks since all this started?

FADE TO...

INT: ROSENFELD'S OFFICE

Text: "Four Weeks Earlier"

ROSENFELD sits at his desk, angry over the session that has just ended.

A single, soft tap on the door and LIZ sticks her head in.

LIZ:

Joe, there's a Mr. Cain here to see you. He doesn't have an appointment but he's a referral from Eddie.

ROSENFELD'S expression tells us he is not in the mood to see a new client.

ROSENFELD:

Have him fill out the intake form and work him in some time later this week.

LIZ:

Joe, I think you should see him now.

ROSENFELD makes a facial expression to indicate "not now".

LIZ makes her own expression that says "yes, now!"

ROSENFELD:

All right, send him in.

A very SICKLY MAN enters.

The two men do not shake hands, almost by unspoken mutual agreement.

CAIN:

Dr. Rosenfeld, my name is Jared Kennan Cain. Your friend, Dr. Bertaccini, was kind enough to make this referral, at my request actually. (He is aware of Rosenfeld's reticence) If this is a bad time...

ROSENFELD makes a dismissive gesture but his expression is less than enthusiastic.

ROSENFELD:

Please, Mr. Cain, have a seat. What can I do for you?

CAIN:

You can help me die.

He says this with a creepy nonchalance and a faint grin as if to make light of the statement.

ROSENFELD'S expression shows he is upset by this.

ROSENFELD:

I'm sorry, Mr. Cain, but I'm not that kind of doctor. Perhaps a hospice...

CAIN:

No, no, doctor. (he has a smile) I was only trying to...no, I'm afraid a hospice isn't what I need.

CAIN sits rigidly still for a moment, his eyes closed tight against a rush of pain.

CAIN opens his eyes and looks out the window past ROSENFELD.

CAIN:

Beautiful view (pause, then almost to himself) ...but I've seen enough. (enthusiastic again) Your book intrigued me and I thought we might talk about it some.

ROSENFELD:

My book? Which one, I've written five?

CAIN:

Yes, of course. But I think you'll appreciate my interest in your most recent work... Death: Just a Stroll in the Dark.

ROSENFELD:

Yes, I see. My book on near-death experiences. Mr. Cain, I'm truly sorry you have to go through this. Do you have family nearby?

CAIN:

No, they're all gone now. (he shifts in his chair at another stab of pain) What I need is a very public, much publicized death, in the company of strangers, for all to see.

This last comment catches ROSENFELD by surprise.

ROSENFELD:

Then I'm afraid there is really nothing much I can do for you in your current condition.

CAIN:

This? (he seems to shrug off the obvious) This will pass. The problem is that I won't. But we can talk about all this later.

ROSENFELD:

That will be fine. Have my secretary schedule whatever time is convenient for you. In the meantime, may God watch over you.

CAIN:

Thank you for the sentiment, doctor, but that's not likely.

CAIN gives a wry smile as he rises and heads to the door.

At the door he turns back to Rosenfeld.

I don't think there is a God. And even if there is, I'm quite convinced He hates me.

ROSENFELD raises an eyebrow at CAIN'S statement.

ROSENFELD is scribbling notes when LIZ opens the door, comes in and plops down on the leather chair.

LIZ:

Pretty sad, huh? Would you believe he made appointments every day for the next two weeks? I'll give you ten-to-one he doesn't make them all.

LIZ casually tugs at the hem of her already-too-short skirt, which is leaving a little too much skin in contact with the leather.

What d'ya think?

ROSENFELD:

I think you're a lot more in touch with his condition than he is. Did Eddie say anything when he referred this guy?

LIZ:

He said Cain specifically wanted to talk to you.

ROSENFELD grabs the phone, punches in some numbers, and waits a few seconds for the answer.

ROSENFELD:

Eddie, Joe...listen, I just met with your latest referral...Yeah, he sure is, so why'd you send him to me?...Yeah, yeah, world famous author! ...No, I've never seen the guy before in my life...I don't know what you expect me to do....

LIZ scoots to the edge of her chair listening to half a conversation and shooting EXASPERATED looks at ROSENFELD every other second.

ROSENFELD:

That bad, huh?... So just how much medication is he on? You're kidding!

LIZ is ready to explode.

ROSENFELD:

Well, he's got to be the world's greatest optimist. He made appointments every day for the next two weeks? If he makes it that long I'll give you a call...Okay, you too...Yeah, talk to you later.

ROSENFELD cradles the receiver and stares silently at the phone.

LIZ is beside herself.

LIZ:

Well?

ROSENFELD looks at her with a puzzled expression but doesn't answer.

LIZ:

What did Eddie say?

ROSENFELD:

Eddie said Cain came in a few days ago and asked for x-rays and a biopsy, (pause) and a referral to me. And get this, he didn't ask for any drugs of any kind.

LIZ:

What? You're kidding! Does he have his own supplier?
He has to be on something.

ROSENFELD:

Nope; nothing! He told Eddie to look closely at the lab
report and he'd understand.

LIZ:

Understand what?

ROSENFELD:

That Cain's body is producing so much natural pain
killer you'd get a contact high just shaking his hand! His
body is manufacturing endorphins like a damn
pharmaceutical machine.

FADE TO...

EXT: WASHINGTON DC, A COLD NOVEMBER MORNING

WES FRANKLIN stands quietly reading the names of the dead on the VIETNAM VETERANS WALL.

A familiar voice asks from behind.

FORSYTH: (O.S.)

Know anyone?

WES:

Yeah, a few unfortunately.

FORSYTH:

That was one hell of a mess over there. We should
have pulled all our people out and just nuked the whole
damn country.

WES turns with a look of DISBELIEF.

WES:

You're kidding right? You can't be serious. Nuclear
weapons?

FORSYTH:

Why, you have a problem with that?

WES:

Oh, c'mon Crandall, you mean that if you'd been
Secretary of State back then, you would've advocated
nuking Vietnam?

FORSYTH:

Wes, let's walk a bit. (takes Wes' arm and leads him toward Lincoln Memorial) Nuclear weapons are our strength, Wes. It's the 'super' in super-power. Why shouldn't we use them?

WES:

We shouldn't use them because we're Americans, Crandall, and Americans are better than that.

FORSYTH:

Just testing you, Wes. I needed to know where your sensibilities lie. Do you remember what our nuclear policies were called back in the days of the 'Cold War'?

WES:

Yeah, mad!

FORSYTH:

Right. M-A-D, Mutual Assured Destruction. That's all changed now, Wes. The threat of a thousand ICBMs raining down on us from the sky is gone. The threat is no longer the nation-state, or the city-state; it's the state-of-one!

WES:

It's some fanatical martyr in Times Square with a pound of weapons grade Plutonium strapped to his chest. What do we do then?

FORSYTH:

Then? Nothing. Now, Wes. NOW is when we do something.

WES:

I'm listening.

The two men have ambled over to the Lincoln Memorial.

FORSYTH:

He said it best. (he throws his chin toward Lincoln) A house divided against itself cannot stand. I'm afraid we have a severely divided house, Wes. The President and Vice President are no longer on the same page on this one. I'm getting worried how this rift will end.

CUT TO...

EXT: WASHINGTON DC, THE STATE DEPARTMENT – MIDDAY NOVEMBER

INT: SECRETARY OF STATE FORSYTH'S OFFICE

FORSYTH:

How much do you know about Vice President Austin, Wes?

WES:

About as much as the next guy, I suppose. War hero. Congressional Medal of Honor in Vietnam. An almost Faustian rise through the Senate. A liberal but I never got the sense he was married to it.

FORSYTH:

Did you happen to see him on Meet the Press just before the Texas primary?

WES:

Yeah, but nothing stands out.

FORSYTH:

Let me refresh your memory. The topic was nuclear energy.

WES:

Right. Austin was calling for more nuclear plants, rather forcefully as I recall.

FORSYTH:

Exactly! And Treem's position on that?

WES:

Treem was opposed to nuclear power. Too dangerous.

FORSYTH:

"Dangerous" doesn't begin to describe it. We have dozens of exercises to deal with nuclear incidents and accidents. Dozens! I mean, my god, how many different scenarios for screwing yourself do you need before you start questioning what the hell you're playing with in the first place?

WES:

So if that was 'Senator' Treem's position, what does 'President' Treem intend to do?

FORSYTH:

The President has called for a world nuclear summit.

WES:

And Austin?

FORSYTH:

The Vice President is old school on this one, Wes. He's willing to try carrots but he definitely likes the big stick. And that brings us to our 'house divided'. The two of them had one helluva shouting match over it a few weeks ago. You could practically hear them on Pennsylvania Avenue!

WES:

And after the confrontation?

FORSYTH:

For a couple weeks they didn't say so much as Hello in the halls. Then Austin apologized and as an act of reconciliation offered to handle security planning for the summit. He drafted General Wahl, an old pilot acquaintance, to help him. That's when I decided to get you involved.

WES:

Well, our days at Harvard Med notwithstanding, why me?

CRANDALL:

The situation is so volatile it's hard to know where loyalties lie. I had to go outside the government on this one. Your Ankh Network has always proven to be apolitical and beyond reproach.

FORSYTH presses a button on his intercom.

FORSYTH:

Carole, send in THE MAILMAN.

WES:

The mailman? You have a sudden need to send a letter?

The door opens and in strides Marine Corps four-star GENERAL RYAN WAHL.

GENERAL:

Mr. Secretary.

FORSYTH:
Wes, meet THE MAILMAN, General Ryan Wahl.

GENERAL WAHL cuts a strong Marine image. The GENERAL's left chest is full of ribbons...and at the top, the Congressional Medal of Honor.

GENERAL:
Dr. Franklin, it's a pleasure to meet you, sir.

WES is amused at the nickname.

WES:
Mailman?

FORSYTH:
Squadron nickname. Ryan could fire a three-shot burst from his M61 Vulcan cannon and not just hit a mailbox, but lower the door, raise the flag, and blow the stamp off a postcard!

GENERAL WAHL laughs modestly.

GENERAL:
My flight team did a lot of heavy drinking in those days.

WES:
From what I know of fighter pilots, they can drink with the best of them. But I also know they don't impress easily.

FORSYTH:
Now you know why the Vice President enlisted the general; fellow Annapolis grads, fighter pilots, both CMH winners. You'd think he might have vetted him a little better, though.

WES:
What do you mean?

GENERAL:
My wife, Mary Ann.

WES looks blankly from one man to the other.

GENERAL:
Her maiden name is Mary Ann Forsyth.

WES:

Forsyth?

FORSYTH:

My aunt.

WES:

Your aunt!

FORSYTH:

(with a smile) My father's baby sister.

GENERAL:

Vice President Austin asked me to handle security for the meeting. I'm to serve as the personal aide to President Treem and make sure the Vice President's special courier gets in and out of the meeting as scheduled.

WES:

What do you know about this courier?

GENERAL:

Nothing. If there's anything about it at all, it's either in the Vice President's head, or on his laptop.

WES:

Then I guess we need to have a look at his computer. Fortunately, A.J. is at the Watergate waiting for me.

FORSYTH:

A.J. is here? (to Wahl) General, when it comes to computers, Ashley Jordan is as good as it gets.

WES:

Can you find a reason for you and A.J. to meet with the Vice President today, (pause) let's say about three-thirty this afternoon?

FADE TO...

EXT: MENLO PARK OFFICE COMPLEX – DAY

INT: ROSENFELD'S OFFICE

ROSENFELD is standing near LIZ's desk, awaiting CAIN'S arrival.

ROSENFELD:

I suggested regressive hypnosis to help Cain come to terms with his condition. He said he couldn't be hypnotized. We'll see.

FADE TO...

CAIN is lying on a couch, apparently deeply asleep.

ROSENFELD:

Can you tell me your age?

CAIN'S answer seems garbled, unintelligible. It is a different language.

ROSENFELD:

I'm sorry I couldn't understand what you said. Can you tell me once more, how old are you?

CAIN seems to RECALIBRATE his speech.

CAIN:

I am a grown man.

ROSENFELD:

Can you tell me what you are doing?

CAIN:

Preparing for battle.

ROSENFELD:

For battle? You're at war?

CAIN:

Yes. It will be a glorious victory. With this new weapon, our army is invincible.

ROSENFELD:

What new weapon, what kind of weapon do you have?

CAIN:

It is khopesh.

ROSENFELD doesn't recognize the name. He jots down "copesh" in the margin as CAIN narrates a great battle in which he is MORTALLY WOUNDED.

We flashback to scenes of a massive battle, and a level of mayhem that seems unimaginable.

CAIN: (V.O.)

Today Lagash will be victorious over Umma. To my left I see King Eannatum of Lagash standing tall and proud in his chariot, khopesh in hand. I stand, with spear and shield, at the head of his first phalanx. The armies of Umma buzz before us, like an undisciplined street mob. (pause) In an instant Umma is upon us like a swarm of crazed ants. My phalanx holds steady against the chaotic onslaught. We fight off wave after wave of them, until at last our armies flow together like two raging rivers. We engage them fully in hand-to-hand pandemonium. We tear into the Ummans like an army of hungry lions savagely littering the desert plain with shredded corpses. Somewhere in the melee I feel a searing *swish* at my stomach. I look down to see a huge slash across my gut, now awash in crimson. I fall to a heap clutching at my wound as the world goes black. (pause) I awake some hours later lying in a sea of blood-soaked bodies. I grab urgently at the place I remember being struck. To my amazement, not only am I not dead, I am no longer even wounded. I stand up and stare quietly around at the bodies. *There must be a better way*, I think as I step sadly over and around the fallen.

CAIN, with no prompt from ROSENFELD, opens his eyes and sits up on the couch.

CAIN:

I'll see you tomorrow, Dr. Rosenfeld. I hope this session has been of value to you.

ROSENFELD sits speechless as CAIN leaves. Hurriedly looking over his notes, he finds what he has written in the margin and quickly retrieves his computer keyboard.

ROSENFELD types in 'Copesesh' and gets nothing. He tries 'Khopesh'... 202,000 hits.

Close on: a COMPUTER SCREEN.

ROSENFELD: V.O.

Khopesh (ḥpš) is the Egyptian name of the Canaanite "sickle-sword". Its origins can be traced back to third millennium Sumer. The khopesh was a crescent shaped axe used in warfare. The khopesh went out of use around 1300BC.

ROSENFELD has a puzzled look as he repeats the last sentence.

ROSENFELD:

The khopesh went out of use around 1300BC.

Close on sentence: Its origins can be traced back to third millennium Sumer.

FADE TO...

EXT: EISENHOWER EXECUTIVE OFFICE BUILDING – AFTERNOON

A SECRETARY emerges from the Vice President's office. She looks tense.

SECRETARY:

(whispering) He hates surprise visits but you can go in.

INT: VICE PRESIDENT AUSTIN'S OFFICE – AFTERNOON

The VICE PRESIDENT shows aggravation at the interruption. But the sight of ASHLEY JORDAN quickly turns the unwanted intrusion into a pleasant diversion.

GENERAL:

Mr. Vice President, I'm sorry to interrupt you unannounced but there is a security issue that needs immediate attention. Miss Jordan can explain.

AUSTIN:

Miss Jordan? (he smiles and pours on the charm)

A.J.:

Ashley Jordan, Mr. Vice President. Sir, you're on a wireless connection here for Internet access and there's an extremely dangerous red worm virus going around...I need to sweep your computer, sir. But I promise to do it as quickly as I can.

AUSTIN is technologically-challenged but happy to accommodate a beautiful lady.

AUSTIN:

Please take all the time you need, my dear.

AUSTIN and GENERAL WAHL adjourn to another area of the office.

A.J. inserts a FLASH STICK, hits a couple keys, and launches a program comprising an ALGORITHM of her own design.

Close on: Computer screen, racing through files.

A.J.:

There! All done. Sorry for the inconvenience, sir.

AUSTIN:

Not at all, my dear. You're a very pleasant interruption indeed.

A.J. and the GENERAL make a hasty exit.

FADE TO...

EXT: WATERGATE HOTEL COMPLEX

INT: HOTEL ROOM – LATE AFTERNOON

WES, A.J., FORSYTH and the GENERAL study items on a COMPUTER SCREEN.

Close on: Laptop Screen – and several items of interest:: GENETIC DISCOVERY CORPORATION in Palo Alto, California; a file named THE METHUSELAH MAN; and OPERATION: STAR COVER, with an email address familiar to WES “astar@ankh.net.ur.”

A.J.:

Wes, isn't that email for someone in your Ankh Network?

WES:

Yeah. But what's it doing on the Vice President's computer?

WES opens his cell phone, hits a speed dial number, and waits for an answer.

WES:

Aryana, find out what you can about a company in Palo Alto...the GENETIC DISCOVERY CORPORATION on El Camino. And see if you can get anything on The Methuselah Man.

INT: ARYANA'S HOME – AFTERNOON

ARYANA:

Who's the Methuselah man?

INT: WES'S HOTEL ROOM - AFTERNOON

WES:

Not a Who; a What. It's a file. It could be a research project. Don't take any unnecessary chances. We'll be back tomorrow night.

WES closes his phone and turns to the group.

FORSYTH:

What now, Wes?

WES:

At this point, all we know is that Austin has an uncharacteristic interest in a field of science.

A.J.:

Not exactly an impeachable offense.

WES:

General, the summit is in three weeks. We still don't know anything about this courier.

FORSYTH:

Or OPERATION: STAR COVER.

WES:

When A.J. and I get back to California, we'll try to find out why the Vice President suddenly has an interest in genetics.

CUT TO...

INT: ROSENFELD'S OFFICE - DAY

ROSENFELD is looking over CAIN'S FILE.

LIZ pokes her head in the door, an URGENT, PUZZLED LOOK on her face.

LIZ:

Joe, there's an FBI agent here to see you.

ROSENFELD is preoccupied with the file; LIZ tells him again.

Joe, the FBI?

ROSENFELD:

Yeah, show him in.

A clean-cut man in his mid-thirties steps confidently into the office.

He flips open his government identification and introduces himself as SPECIAL AGENT VICTOR SAMSON.

ROSENFELD gives a cursory glance at the ID.

ROSENFELD:

Yes, what can I do for you Agent Samson?

FBI:

Doctor, we have reason to believe a man by the name of Jared Kennan Cain has made or will make contact with you.

ROSENFELD gives no answer.

FBI:

Sir, this is a matter of national security, so I must ask you...has Mr. Cain contacted you, either by phone or in person?

ROSENFELD:

Agent Samson I'm sure you know that even the name of one of my patients is privileged information.

FBI:

Sir, I must impress on you the serious threat this person poses not only to our country, but to anyone he comes in contact with.

ROSENFELD maintains an even demeanor, says nothing.

FBI:

Cain was doing sensitive research for the government involving certain biological strains that, if not contained immediately, will pose an unimaginable threat to our country. Note that I did not say *could*; I said *will*.

ROSENFELD listens, still unwilling to expose his client.

FBI:

Cain was the chief biologist on a special project. Two weeks ago he accidentally infected himself with a mutant strain of the plague. He was in quarantine until he suddenly chose to leave the treatment facility without telling anyone. The disease took a severe toll on his body, but it also affected his mind. The antidote has not yet been developed for this mutation. If Cain exposes the general population, he could send us all back to the Dark Ages.

ROSENFELD's outward calm belies his inner turmoil.

AGENT SAMSON scribbles a number on the back of a business card and extends it to ROSENFELD.

SAMSON moves to leave but as he reaches the door he stops.

FBI:

Doctor, your dedication to your client's privacy is very noble; stupid but noble. You have my personal number, sir.

ROSENFELD sits at his desk fixated on the government calling card, rubbing his thumb over the embossed FBI logo.

LIZ comes in, curious and anxious.

LIZ:

What was that all about?

ROSENFELD:

It seems Mr. Cain's disease may carry some complications with it — national security complications. And you and I may be at some risk.

LIZ:

What kind of risk, Joe?

ROSENFELD doesn't get a chance to answer the question. It is answered for him.

CAIN: (O.S.)

I pose no risk to you, Miss Charles, nor you Dr. Rosenfeld; no matter what that man said.

CAIN stands in the doorway, his breathing labored, his knees ready to buckle at any second.

LIZ rushes to assist the man, but ROSENFELD yells at her...

ROSENFELD:

No, don't touch him!

LIZ recoils in shock, her eyes jump from man to man, tears of FEAR and CONFUSION pool in her soft blue eyes.

ROSENFELD:

Back away from him Liz. (he gestures her away) Mr. Cain you owe us an explanation. Why is the FBI suddenly knocking on our door.

CAIN falls into the nearest chair, struggling for air and looking worse than a cadaver.

CAIN:

FBI? That man said he was with the FBI?

ROSENFELD:
Read it yourself.

ROSENFELD flips the agent's card into CAIN's lap.

CAIN stares vacantly at the card through glassy yellow eyes.

CAIN:
One more day...please. One more day and I can explain everything.

ROSENFELD:
From where we sit, you don't have one more day! And if what Agent Samson said is true, how long will it be before we follow you to the grave?

LIZ gasps and recoils at this pronouncement.

CAIN:
This will pass.

ROSENFELD explodes!

ROSENFELD:
This will pass? This will pass? You keep saying that day after day. Don't you get it? It's YOU that will pass, Mr. Cain. And thanks to you, so will we!

CAIN:
Tonight... (he pauses to gulp air) Tonight, doctor. The cancer will be finished tonight. I can feel it. It's run its course. Tonight it will be finished and tomorrow....

ROSENFELD:
Tomorrow what? Tomorrow you'll be dead, and without an antidote, so will we!

FADE TO...

EXT: PALO ALTO, CALIFORNIA – DAY

EXT: GENETIC DISCOVERY CORPORATION

INT: GENETIC DISCOVERY CORPORATION LOBBY – AFTERNOON

DR. CORNELL BRIDGER is answering a question for ARYANA.

BRIDGER:

I'm afraid our projects mostly involve worms, flies, mice; not exactly the sexy Hollywood stuff. Mutations in the gene for IGF1R and longevity. (pause) We're learning how to make mice live longer, Mr. Aryana.

FADE TO...

EXT: GENETIC DISCOVERY CORPORATION – LATE AFTERNOON

INT: CAR

ARYANA, WES, and A.J. are parked across the street from the GENETIC DISCOVERY CORPORATION.

WES:

He was playing with you. (Aryana looks puzzled)
C'mon, you told him you were a science reporter investigating genetic research (pause) and you don't know anything about science?

ARYANA:

Hey, I was just trying to check out the building like you told me to. So how was he playing me?

WES:

He was talking about the Methuselah Gene.

ARYANA:

Methuselah? Like the guy in the Bible?

WES:

Exactly. Methuselah was the oldest character in the Bible – more than nine hundred years old. Today's researchers call the gene dealing with longevity the Methuselah Gene. Bridger said they weren't doing sexy Hollywood-type research but we're talking Fountain of Youth stuff here...doesn't get much sexier than that.

ARYANA:

Eternal youth?

WES:

Well, that's an overstatement, but I've seen some research suggesting we could live to about a hundred-twenty, maybe a hundred-thirty.

A.J.:

Do you think this is that Methuselah Man project Vice President Austin was interested in?

WES:

Could be.

A.J.:

But the data we saw from Austin's files suggested a person.

WES:

A hypothetical one.

A.J.:

Maybe.

WES shrugs a 'yeah, maybe'.

WES:

Can you get in tonight and look for the files?

ARYANA:

No chance, Wes. Maybe with a week or two to prepare...But I get the feeling we don't have that kind of time.

A.J.:

Now what?

WES looks at the building trying to think of an answer.

None comes.

CUT TO...

INT: ROSENFELD'S BEDROOM – EARLY MORNING HOURS

Close on: Alarm clock - 4:00am

ROSENFELD can't sleep.

He lies staring at the ceiling. He is troubled.

FADE TO...

EXT: MOUNTAIN VIEW, CALIFORNIA NEIGHBORHOOD – 8:00AM

AGENT SAMSON stands at a residential home.

SARAH JENKINS opens her door.

SAMSON shows his FBI identification.

FBI:
Miss Jenkins, I would like to ask you a few questions.

CUT TO...

AGENT SAMSON in the kitchen of SARAH JENKINS.

JENKINS is eating breakfast as SAMSON interviews her.

FBI:
Has anyone at your lab seen any unusual blood or tissue samples in the past few weeks?

SARAH:
Sanjay and Luis got all excited over some biopsy samples from a cancer patient about two weeks ago, but I didn't see the report.

FBI:
Do you know the name of the doctor who ordered the lab work, as well as any assistants who might have been involved or had contact with that particular patient?

SARAH:
Dr. Bertaccini. Dr. Eddie, we call him. Shirley Dunphy and Brianna Eastland work with him.

JENKINS stands at the sink rinsing her cup, bowl, and spoon.

SAMSON quietly removes a small METAL CYLINDER from his coat pocket, screws it onto the end of his SERVICE REVOLVER, and puts a bullet through the back of JENKINS' head.

CUT TO...

EXT: SAN FRANCISCO – 9:00AM

INT: FBI OFFICE – RECEPTION AREA

ROSENFELD has asked for AGENT SAMSON and now stands waiting.

The SECRETARY leads a MAN to ROSENFELD, then takes her seat at the reception desk.

An AGENT addresses ROSENFELD.

FBI SAMSON:
Yes, sir, can I help you?

ROSENFELD:
Actually, I'm looking for Agent Samson.

FBI SAMSON:
Yes, sir, what can I do for you?

ROSENFELD is momentarily confused.

ROSENFELD:
I'm sorry. I'm here to see Special Agent Victor Samson.

FBI SAMSON:
Yes, sir; I am Special Agent Victor Samson. What can I do for you?

ROSENFELD extends a card to AGENT SAMSON.

ROSENFELD:
The man who gave me this card yesterday identified himself as Special Agent Victor Samson. He said a client of mine posed a serious health threat to the community, that it was a matter of national security.

FBI SAMSON:
What kind of health threat?

ROSENFELD:
Some kind of plague. (he immediately feels the fool) I feel like an idiot now, but at the time it sounded real.

AGENT SAMSON does not react to ROSENFELD, but is all business.

FBI SAMSON:
Is your client actually sick?

ROSENFELD:
Yes, but with cancer not the plague.

FBI SAMSON:
Diane, tell Brad to join us in Picasso. Dr. Rosenfeld, follow me please.

INT: PICASSO CONFERENCE ROOM - MORNING

ROSENFELD and SAMSON are seated at a long table, when AGENT BRAD ANDREWS enters.

AGENT SAMSON:
(hands the card back to Rosenfeld) Have you tried the number?

ROSENFELD:

No, sir.

AGENT SAMSON:

(pushes a phone toward Rosenfeld) Give it a try.

ROSENFELD dials the number from the back of the card.

ANSWER SRVC: (O.S.)

FBI, how may I direct your call?

ROSENFELD:

Special Agent Victor Samson, please.

ANSWER SRVC: (O.S.)

Agent Samson is not available. If you leave your name and number he will call you back.

ROSENFELD gives his number and hangs up.

ROSENFELD:

Now what?

FBI ANDREWS:

Give it a minute. She's obviously at a relay post. He'll most likely get back to you in...

Phone rings. ROSENFELD has a questioning expression.

FBI ANDREWS:

Well, answer it! And try to set up a meeting.

ROSENFELD:

Rosenfeld. (pause) Yes, Agent Samson... (pause) thank you for getting back to me so quickly. I wanted to let you know that Mr. Cain called this morning to set up an appointment. (pause) Yes, sir, at two this afternoon. (pause) Yes, sir, two-fifteen. (Hangs up phone and turns to FBI Agents) I think you got that.

CUT TO...

EXT: ROSENFELD'S MENLO PARK OFFICE

INT: ROSENFELD'S OFFICE – EARLY AFTERNOON

ROSENFELD stands looking out his window at the parking lot.

A YOUNG MAN in a gray suit walks at a brisk pace toward the building entrance.

There is something familiar about the YOUNG MAN but ROSENFELD is quickly drawn to...

AGENTS SAMSON and ANDREWS waiting in their car.

Suddenly...

LIZ rushes in speechless.

The YOUNG MAN in the gray suit follows behind her.

ROSENFELD does not recognize the YOUNG MAN until he speaks.

CAIN:

Hello Dr. Rosenfeld.

ROSENFELD is DUMBSTRUCK, SPEECHLESS for a moment. Finally...

ROSENFELD:

Cain?

CAIN:

Yes, Dr. Rosenfeld.

CAIN is soft spoken.

CAIN looks to LIZ and speaks kindly to calm her.

CAIN:

You have a unique beauty, Miss Charles. You remind me of someone I once knew, a long time ago — a very long time ago.

ROSENFELD fumbles to grab his chair and sit without averting his eyes from CAIN.

CAIN:

Dr. Rosenfeld, I want to thank you for the compassion and caring you showed during our sessions. I know it was not always easy for you. I visited your colleague, Dr. Bertaccini, not to prove to myself that I had cancer, but rather to prove that fact to you for when this time came (pause) as I knew it would.

CAIN's smile and gentleness of voice are MESMERIZING.

CAIN:

I told you in our first meeting, what I need is a very public, much publicized death.

ROSENFELD is even more BAFFLED that this suddenly healthy CAIN should still want to DIE.

ROSENFELD:

But....

A loud BANG is heard in the parking lot.

All three jump in their seats, exchange bewildered looks, and rush to the window to see what is happening.

AGENT ANDREWS is lying on the ground; AGENT SAMSON is bent over him.

A THIRD MAN runs to his car, jumps in and speeds away.

ROSENFELD:

Liz, call 9-1-1, and tell them an FBI agent has been shot. Cain, you stay here; I don't want you involved with the FBI (pause) and I get the strong impression you don't want that either.

ROSENFELD runs to the parking lot to assist the agents.

CAIN watches their conversation from the office window.

CUT TO...

EXT: MENLO PARK OFFICE PARKING LOT - AFTERNOON

ROSENFELD stares back at CAIN in his window. ROSENFELD punches in a number on his cell phone.

Cut to...

WES picks up his ringing phone.

ROSENFELD: (ON PHONE)

Wes, Joe Rosenfeld. I need your help. What do you know about spontaneous regeneration of cancer cells?

FADE TO...

INT: ROSENFELD'S OFFICE

ROSENFELD rushes to his filing cabinet and withdraws the FILE on JARED KENNAN CAIN.

ROSENFELD removes several pages and transfers them to another folder.

ROSENFELD scans the room for a hiding place and walks quickly to his CLOSET.

ROSENFELD crams CAIN's file behind a tall STACK OF MAGAZINES.

ROSENFELD:

Okay, let's get the hell out of here.

CUT TO...

EXT: PRIUS HEADING SOUTH ON HWY 280

ROSENFELD has called BERTACCINI from his car phone.

ROSENFELD:

Eddie...Joe.

INT: STANFORD HOSPITAL, OUTSIDE DR. BERTACCINI'S OFFICE – AFTERNOON

The scene is chaotic. Uniformed police are present. Everyone seems upset and frenetic.

INT: STANFORD HOSPITAL, INSIDE DR. BERTACCINI'S OFFICE – AFTERNOON

BERTACCINI is on the phone with ROSENFELD.

BERTACCINI:

I can't talk now, Joe. Three of our lab techs were found murdered this morning. We've got cops all over the place.

ROSENFELD:

Eddie, this can't wait. Cain showed up this afternoon in perfect...

Another doctor interrupts BERTACCINI at his end.

BERTACCINI:

Joe, hang on a minute. (to Dr. Sinclair) Come in and close the door, David. Go on, Joe, what were you saying?

ROSENFELD:

Cain showed up for his appointment today in perfect health!

BERTACCINI:

What do you mean 'perfect health'?

ROSENFELD:

I mean the guy is healthier than you and I. Did your dead lab techs have anything to do with Cain?

BERTACCINI:

Yeah. Luis Gonzales brought me Cain's lab results all excited. He had never seen anything like it. For that matter, neither had I.

ROSENFELD:

Listen, Eddie, you need to get out of there! And whatever you do, stay away from a guy identifying himself as FBI Agent Victor Samson.

BERTACCINI:

Joe, there's an FBI agent here right now wanting to see me.

ROSENFELD:

Alert the cops, Eddie. This could be who they're looking for! Cain and Liz and I are headed to Big Sur.

BERTACCINI:

Big Sur! (to Sinclair) tell the officers out there to detain the FBI agent. (Sinclair exits) (to Rosenfeld) Joe, I'm going to check out this FBI guy while the cops are here. I'll call you later.

INT: STANFORD HOSPITAL, HALL OUTSIDE BERTACCINI'S OFFICE

BERTACCINI'S POV: SINCLAIR shoves a MAN toward the exit.

The MAN takes the stairwell exit.

SINCLAIR walks over to two POLICEMEN standing nearby.

BERTACCINI approaches SINCLAIR and the cops.

BERTACCINI:

Where's the FBI agent?

SINCLAIR:

I got rid of him.

BERTACCINI:

(angrily to Sinclair) I told you to have the police hold him. The guy's an impostor, damn it! (to the police officers) Catch the man that just left. Treat him like he's armed and dangerous. I think he just shot a real FBI agent. (to Sinclair) I'm leaving town for awhile.

SINCLAIR:

Are you going to Big Sur, too?

BERTACCINI:

(gives Sinclair a suspicious look) No, and don't mention Big Sur to anyone.

CUT TO...

INT: AUSTIN'S OFFICE – LATE AFTERNOON

VICE PRESIDENT AUSTIN is on the phone and fit to be tied.

GENERAL WAHL enters the office and AUSTIN speaks guardedly.

AUSTIN:

Damn it, Bridger! Get someone down to Big Sur immediately. Don't fuck this up!

GENERAL WAHL:

If this is a bad time, sir, we can reschedule.

AUSTIN:

Yeah, let's do this in the morning. Something just came up that needs my attention.

GENERAL:

No problem, Mr. Vice President.

FADE TO...

EXT: EISENHOWER EXECUTIVE OFFICE BLDG - EARLY EVENING

GENERAL WAHL is on his cell phone to FORSYTH.

GENERAL WAHL:

All I could hear was the name Bridger, Big Sur, and something about an FBI agent getting shot.

EXT: WASHINGTON DC, MARRIOTT'S RESTAURANT – EARLY EVENING

INT: JW Marriott's Restaurant

CRANDALL FORSYTH and SYLVIA BERGSTROM are finishing dinner.

FORSYTH places a hand over his cell phone.

FORSYTH:

(to Bergstrom) Does the name Bridger mean anything to you?

BERGSTROM:

Bridger! Cornell Bridger, the geneticist? (Forsyth shrugs his uncertainty) How does Austin know Bridger?

FORSYTH:

(into phone) See what you can find out about Austin's link to Bridger and get back to me.

FORSYTH closes his phone.

BERGSTROM:

How does Austin know Bridger? Austin is one of the most unscientific guys in this town.

FORSYTH:

Who is Bridger?

BERGSTROM:

A genetics wunderkind the Company recruited after Saddam's chemical reign of terror on the Kurds. We built him a state-of-the-art research lab in California - GENETIC DISCOVERY CORPORATION. It's a front for our biological weapons research and chemical counter-measures programs. So what's Austin's connection with Bridger?

FORSYTH:

I don't know, but it seems that just after Austin took office, he started having a lot of communication with your GENETIC DISCOVERY CORPORATION.

BERGSTROM:

That would be a little over a year ago. Interesting.

FORSYTH:

What's interesting?

BERGSTROM:

That was about the time Bridger started his fountain-of-youth rants.

FORSYTH:

Fountain-of-youth rants?

BERGSTROM:

Well that's what some of the Langley crew dubbed them. Bridger developed a big interest in Methuselah gene research and started going on and on about human longevity and the body's ability to rejuvenate spontaneously.

FORSYTH:
You ever heard of something called The Methuselah
Man project?

BERGSTROM:
Doesn't ring a bell.

FORSYTH:
Can you nose around for me a bit and see if you can
find anything on it.

SYLVIA BERGSTROM glances at her watch.

BERGSTROM:
Hey, we need to get going. The curtain goes up in
twenty minutes.

FORSYTH flags the waiter for the check.

FADE TO...

EXT: CALIFORNIA COASTAL HWY 1 – AFTERNOON

EXT: BIG SUR LODGE

INT: BIG SUR LODGE

ROSENFELD takes a cabin card-key from receptionist.

EXT: BIG SUR LODGE, CABIN 20

INT: CABIN 20 - EVENING

ROSENFELD sits on a sofa; LIZ sits on the floor poking at...

FLAMING LOGS in the fireplace; CAIN sits on the couch directly in front of the FIREPLACE.

CAIN:
Are you fond of the early Egyptians, Liz?

LIZ is surprised by the question.

LIZ:
I've never really thought about it.

CAIN looks affectionately at LIZ. He is thinking and remembering.

CAIN:

They were a wonderful people, Liz. You would have fit their time very easily. (Liz has a curious expression) It's your eye makeup. The coloring has an Egyptian quality; beautiful and distinctive. (pause) Are you familiar with the transmigration of souls?

LIZ:

What...you mean reincarnation? (pause) So you think I'm an (finger quotes) "ancient Egyptian soul"?

CAIN, with a serious contemplative look.

CAIN:

You just remind me of someone I knew (pause) a very long time ago.

LIZ shifts on the floor and moves CLOSER to CAIN. She leans against the couch and looks up at CAIN.

A KNOCK at the cabin door shatters the mood.

ROSENFELD moves quickly to the door and calls out...

ROSENFELD:

Who's there?

WES:

It's Wes Franklin.

CUT TO...

INT: CABIN 20 – EVENING

WES, ARYANA, ROSENFELD, LIZ, and CAIN are huddled around the fireplace in conversation.

WES:

Why is someone trying to kill you, Mr. Cain.

CAIN:

They don't intend to kill me; they have other plans for me. But I believe the lab techs were killed because of what they knew about me. If they're willing to shoot an FBI agent, you can bet they won't think twice about...

CAIN checks his speech as he looks at LIZ.

WES gives an almost imperceptible head gesture that sends ARYANA outside to establish a watch for the night.

WES:

How did you get involved with these people in the first place?

CAIN: (V.O.)

Quite by accident (pause) literally.

EMERGENCY ROOM scenes of frantic activity as CAIN is brought in on a gurney.

Two years ago I was nearly killed in a car accident. I was taken to the ICU with massive internal injuries. I wasn't expected to live through the night.

COLLAGE of scenes of wounds/abrasions healing. LOOKS OF WONDER on faces of staff

But after the first two hours most of my external injuries had miraculously healed. By the third hour my vital signs had stabilized.

By the time I regained consciousness, the attending physician - a Dr. David Sinclair - had transferred me to a genetic research lab for further study and care.

CLOSE ON: Dr. SINCLAIR having CAIN taken out of hospital to GENETIC DISCOVERY CORP.

My time at the genetics facility was initially a fascinating learning experience for me. For the first time in my life I was getting a scientific explanation for my curse.

WES is surprised at CAIN'S statement.

WES:

Curse! The ability of your body to regenerate is a curse? I think most people would consider that a blessing!

CAIN:

Wes, one man's blessing is sometimes another man's curse. People need to be careful what they wish for. For months I was probed and prodded and studied. Then they introduced bacteria and toxins directly into my body. One they called Yersin...

WES:

Yersinia pestis?

CAIN:

Yes.

LIZ:
What's Yersna pectis?

WES:
Yersinia pestis - the Black Plague that killed
somewhere between 75 and 200 million people in the
Middle Ages.

LIZ:
My God! (to Cain) These people intentionally gave you
the Plague? Why didn't you die?

CAIN:
My body saved me. As time passed, I became more
and more convinced that their experiments had some
ulterior purpose beyond pure scientific research. That's
when I decided to escape. I exposed myself to high
level radiation, which is what led to my cancer. As I
became sicker and sicker, even Dr. Bridger became
concerned.

WES:
Bridger! Cornell Bridger?

CAIN:
Yes. Do you know him?

WES:
Only by name. What's this facility you were at?

CAIN:
It's called the GENETIC DISCOVERY
CORPORATION. Why? Is that important?

WES:
More than any of us knows, I think! (Wes goes to the
door and calls out) Aryana, come in here!

ARYANA:
It's all clear out there, Wes. What's up?

WES hurriedly points to a seat and again addresses CAIN.

WES:
How familiar are you with the layout of this building?

CAIN:
After two years of daily visits I know it pretty well.

WES:

Do you think you could draw out a floor plan of the place, including shifts and manpower routines?

CAIN:

Certainly.

WES:

And one other thing. This may be a long shot, but do you know anything about a research project called The Methuselah Man?

CAIN laughs softly to himself.

CAIN:

Yes, it's what they called the file on me.

WES has a moment of ILLUMINATION.

WES:

Joe, I thought you were pulling me away from another important assignment, but I think that job and this one just intersected. (to everyone) I'd like you all to stay here another day or two while we look into this some more.

CAIN:

Wes, I have to be in Las Vegas by the weekend.

WES:

Las Vegas!

CAIN:

I have to retrieve an important package that will be waiting for me at the VENETIAN. You have your priorities, Wes, and I have mine. But to tell you the truth, I'm rather hoping you'll come with me; and you Dr. Rosenfeld — and you, Liz.

WES'S expression shows he doesn't like this development.

WES:

One more day. Let's get those records first. We can still be in Las Vegas by Friday night.

CAIN agrees.

WES:

Joe, can I talk to you in private for a minute?

WES and ROSENFELD step out to the back patio.

WES:

Joe, are you absolutely sure Cain was as sick as he claimed?

ROSENFELD:

Wes, I'm telling you, this guy was a walking corpse. The man shouldn't be alive. Now we have to figure out how to keep him that way, especially since he still wants to die!

WES:

What do you mean he wants to die?

ROSENFELD:

From the very first session, he made it clear he wants to die. At the time it made sense; he was suffering and as good as dead anyway. But even today, after his full recovery, he still claims that's what he wants.

WES:

Why does he need to go to Las Vegas?

ROSENFELD:

Until five minutes ago he never said a thing about it.

WES:

You think he's suicidal?

ROSENFELD:

My professional opinion? No, I don't. He wants to die (pause) but he doesn't want to kill himself.

WES:

Does he think he'll go to hell if he takes his own life?

ROSENFELD:

No. On the one hand he tells me he doesn't believe in God; on the other, he tells me God is punishing him.

WES:

Fascinating. Okay, looks like we go to Las Vegas.

FADE TO...

EXT: CIA – LANGLEY, MORNING

INT: DCI BERGSTROM'S OFFICE

SYLVIA BERGSTROM, elbows on her desk, steadies a hot cup of coffee with clenched hands. She is nursing a hangover.

The INTERCOM ruptures the quiet.

JAMIE: (O.S.)

Ms. Bergstrom, the Vice President has just entered the building.

BERGSTROM:

Jamie, is this on my schedule?

JAMIE: (O.S.)

No, ma'am.

BERGSTROM:

Okay, thanks. (to herself) Shit, just what I needed this morning!

CUT TO...

INT: CIA LOBBY - MORNING

AUSTIN strides confidently across the CIA lobby over the GRANITE SEAL of the agency.

The MARINE SENTRIES snap to as AUSTIN crosses the lobby. Other passers-by nod greetings.

PATRICK GAFFNEY, the Middle East Section Chief, calls a loud greeting with a distinct Irish accent.

GAFFNEY:

Good morning, Mr. Vice President. What brings you to our part of the world on this fine November morning?

AUSTIN extends his hand and smiles broadly.

AUSTIN:

Well, Patrick, my lad, to see you in all your fine Irish glory, of course!

GAFFNEY beams a ruddy-faced smile.

GAFFNEY:

I'd think you full o' the Blarney if it weren't so true. And what might your second bit of business be?

AUSTIN places a familiar hand on GAFFNEY's shoulder as the men walk.

FADE TO...

INT: GAFFNEY'S OFFICE - MORNING

AUSTIN:

The White House is being briefed on OPERATION:
STAR COVER and I'm being cut out of the loop.

GAFFNEY:

And I know how you hate that! Let's see if I can shed
some light on it for you.

GAFFNEY searches his database. NO MATCH is found.

GAFFNEY:

Nothing in the Middle East, George, or I'd know about
it. Here, have a look.

GAFFNEY pivots the screen so AUSTIN can see the list. There are a total of 53 ongoing operations.

GAFFNEY:

You sure you have the right title? Anything else you
can tell me about it; the mission, personnel involved,
dates, possible targets?

AUSTIN:

Sorry, Pat. The only thing I might offer is that President
Treem has an upcoming summit meeting in Tehran.
The discussions will have a 'nuclear' element to them, if
you catch my drift. Maybe it's connected to that.

GAFFNEY:

Nuclear, huh? Okay, let me see what I can come up
with. How soon do you need this?

AUSTIN:

This week would be nice.

GAFFNEY:

All right, by the end of the week then.

AUSTIN:

I knew I could count on you, buddy. Now I better go give my regards to your boss before she has a conniption over my jumping protocol and going straight to her staff. You know how it is with these lady bosses—always trying to prove they have the balls for a man’s job!

FADE TO...

INT: CIA HALLWAY - MORNING

AUSTIN exits an elevator.

CUT TO...

INT: DCI BERGSTROM’S OUTER OFFICE - MORNING

AUSTIN enters and walks past the DCI’s secretary with a good-natured greeting.

AUSTIN:

She in, Jamie?

AUSTIN doesn’t wait for an answer.

INT: DCI BERGSTROM’S OFFICE

BERGSTROM:

Well hello Mr. Vice President. What brings you to Virginia on such a cold, blustery morning?

AUSTIN:

Just making some last minute arrangements with a friend of mine, one of your section chiefs, Patrick Gaffney. Couldn’t leave the building without looking on your sweet countenance, Madame Director.

BERGSTROM senses he is after more.

BERGSTROM:

Can I offer you some coffee, George, or maybe some herbal tea? (Austin affects a mock cringe and shudder) I’d offer something a tad stronger but as we have a full workday ahead of us...

AUSTIN waves off the offer.

AUSTIN:

Thanks Sylvia. But you know what you could help me with? I've been hearing bits and pieces of something called OPERATION: STAR COVER and for the life of me, I can't find anyone who knows a thing about it.

BERGSTROM:

Now, George, you know better. Any information on an operation would be on a need-to-know basis. And simple curiosity doesn't constitute 'need'.

AUSTIN feigns comic surrender before making his exit.

The DCI buzzes her assistant.

BERGSTROM:

Jamie, please have the Middle East Section Chief come see me this afternoon.

CUT TO...

EXT: KIEV TRAIN STATION - MORNING

Crowds shuffling to and fro.

Pairs of POLICE stand in various locations, their breath ghosting in the COLD AIR as they rub their hands and slap their arms.

The POLICE survey the crowds for nothing in particular.

A YOUNG MAN with a METAL VALISE enters a car.

INT: TRAIN CAR

The YOUNG MAN makes his way through the car toward the 1st Class section.

He is VIGILANT of the PEOPLE INSIDE the car and the POLICE outside.

He OBSERVES with SUSPICION two older, GRUFF MEN.

INT: FIRST CLASS CAR - MORNING

The YOUNG MAN enters his car, secures the door, and pulls the shade. He unfolds his bed, places the METAL VALISE behind it, and closes the bed again.

The YOUNG MAN lights a cigarette, raises the curtain, and calmly watches the POLICE outside until the train begins to pull away from the station.

The YOUNG MAN stubs out his cigarette and rises to leave his compartment.

CUT TO...

EXT: OVERHEAD OF TRAIN SPEEDING THROUGH THE COUNTRYSIDE

INT: CLUB CAR - MORNING

The YOUNG MAN enters the dining car. He is well-dressed and muscular beneath his suit.

The YOUNG MAN steps carefully to the gentle rocking of the CLUB CAR as he weaves his way to a table for a drink.

The YOUNG MAN runs a quick visual inventory of the car's OCCUPANTS.

The TWO GRUFF MEN in their early fifties sit at the far end. He is acutely aware of them.

The YOUNG MAN lights a cigarette. Smoke wafts in the air, sucked toward the ventilation system.

Midway up the car sits a pretty GIRL sipping a cup of tea, staring out the window at the passing countryside.

The GIRL is in her late twenties, with short-cut brunette hair and a slim petite body. Thin, WHITE CORDS fall from her ears to a PINK IPOD on the table.

The YOUNG MAN sits opposite the GIRL at the table.

The GIRL ignores him.

With a fair bit of histrionics, the YOUNG MAN flicks an ash into the empty ashtray.

The GIRL takes no notice, her thoughts miles from him.

The YOUNG MAN waves to the STEWARD and points at the table to indicate this is where to bring his drink.

Over the clacking of the wheels he says loudly...

T.O.:

My name is T.O.

The GIRL does not respond.

The YOUNG MAN smiles at her resistance and playfully BLOWS SMOKE at the window to RICOCHET gently into her face.

The GIRL swipes the cloud away and shoots him a stern look.

T.O.:

What is your name?

The GIRL returns to gazing out the window.

The YOUNG MAN reaches across the table and raps his knuckles to get her attention.

The GIRL looks at him with her best 'go away' look.

The YOUNG MAN gives her a TOOTHY SMILE and comically signals for her to remove the headphones.

At last the GIRL produces a coy smile and pulls the WHITE PLUGS from her ears.

The YOUNG MAN transfers the cigarette to his left hand and extends his right to her.

T.O.:

My name is Taras Ostrovsky but my friends call me
T.O.

The GIRL shakes his hand and responds rather formally.

ANZHELA:

Mr. Ostrovsky.

T.O.:

Oh, please...T.O. Mister sounds so formal and we are
nearly the same age.

The GIRL smiles and relaxes a bit.

ANZHELA:

Anzhela, Anzhela Starkova.

T.O.:

Much nicer. (he smiles and winks) And what is your
destination Anzhela Starkova?

ANZHELA:

Istanbul.

T.O.:

Wonderful! Then we have two days to become life-long
friends! What are you listening to.

ANZHELA:

REVOLVER's new CD. You know them?

T.O.:

These days everyone knows REVOLVER. But I tend
more toward Zeerok.

ANZHELA:

Yes, they are very good. I have their new album on here as well. It has many good songs.

T.O.:

And what takes you to Istanbul?

ANZHELA:

I have a job as an au pair until after the New Year.

T.O.:

Is this what you do full time, care for children?

ANZHELA:

No. I am a student full time but the job of student does not pay very well, so I take care of rich kids while their parents run off on holiday.

T.O.:

What do you study when you are not baby-sitting rich kids?

ANZHELA:

Geopolitics, with a special interest in the world's energy supplies.

T.O.:

Whoa! Such a pretty girl with such a good brain! I'm impressed.

ANZHELA:

Why so surprised? Are you one of those relics who think a pretty girl cannot be intelligent too?

T.O. laughs innocently.

T.O.:

Anzhela Starkova, you should meet some of the girls I know then you would not ask this question. Pretty as picture but dumb as posts! (pause) And what can you tell me of the world's energy supplies?

ANZHELA:

Depends. To the east is the Caspian Sea, one of the richest oil fields in the world. But the idiots bordering it would rather fight than prosper. Morons! Then there is nuclear energy. Big problem! Since the breakup of the Soviet Union, too much nuclear material has gone missing. It can only be a matter of time before this stuff shows up in the hands of terrorists who are too stupid to understand the full impact of their actions.

(Ostrovsky's smile has faded and his eyes gone blank)

But this is all too boring for you. Tell me something about yourself. What do you do?

T.O.:

I'm a businessman.

ANZHELA:

That covers a lot of territory. What kind of business?

T.O.:

I'm an exporter...of...how shall I say, hard-to-come-by goods.

ANZHELA:

Okay...and what goods are you taking to Istanbul?

T.O.:

I am delivering some semi-precious material to a group of Arab businessmen... but enough about business. Surly we can find something more interesting to talk about than our work!

ANZHELA smiles and lets the awkward moment pass.

T.O. looks at his watch.

T.O.:

Seven o'clock! Amazing how time passes in such lovely company. I should like to freshen up a bit, if you don't mind. You will join me for dinner, say, at eight?

ANZHELA smiles in agreement.

FADE TO...

INT: 1ST CLASS CAR - EARLY EVENING

T.O. enters the First Class car to see the TWO GRUFF MEN standing at his cabin, fumbling with the handle.

T.O.:
Hey there! What the hell do you think you're doing?

One of the men looks up at the number on the door then down at the key in his hand.

GRUFF MAN_1:
Sorry, they all look alike.

T.O. hurries to his door and lets himself in, now cursing himself for having stayed so long away from his treasure.

T.O. closes and locks the door behind him, pulls down the curtain, and hurriedly retrieves the briefcase from the bed. He opens it and sees...FOUR METALLIC HALF-SPHERES.

T.O. breathes a sigh of relief.

FADE TO...

EXT: BIG SUR LODGE – CABIN 20, MIDDLE OF NIGHT

ARYANA:
What's this guy's story, Wes?

WES:
Cain? I'm not sure what to make of him. Joe claims that till yesterday, Cain was dying from fourth stage lung cancer. Now he's in perfect health.

ARYANA:
Is that possible? I mean people do experience remission, right?

WES:
Remission, yes. But Cain has apparently had a complete recovery. And that, my friend, is not possible.

ARYANA:
What's next, Wes?

WES:
Later today we stake out this GENETIC DISCOVERY CORPORATION and tonight you and A.J. are going inside to get a closer look at those Methuselah Man files.

FADE TO...

EXT: BIG SUR LODGE, CABIN 20, 1:30AM

A van with a BIG SUR LODGE MAINTENANCE sign on the side rolls into the campground.

The vehicle rolls slowly past and parks in front of Cabin 28 where it sits idling for a few more minutes before going quiet.

At the sound of the van, ARYANA hurries from the back of the cabin.

Upon seeing BIG SUR LODGE MAINTENANCE on the van, he relaxes and returns to the back of the Cabin.

FADE TO...

INT: CABIN 20, 3:00AM

ROSENFELD is asleep in the bed in the main Cabin area.

CAIN sits pensively in front of a flickering orange fire.

LIZ comes out of her room wearing a long t-shirt and nothing else.

LIZ hooks a finger seductively toward CAIN.

CAIN shoots a glance over toward ROSENFELD, who is dead to the world, then silently rises and moves toward LIZ.

When he reaches her, LIZ raises her arms and drapes them round his neck, then gently yet passionately presses her lips to his.

LIZ breaks her hold and moves back, stares into his eyes and smiles.

LIZ takes both of CAIN's hands and backs slowly into her room, pulling him deeper into her dark sanctuary.

CAIN:

Liz, it's been much too long for me, far too many years.
I don't think I can do this.

LIZ:

That's okay. I'm in no hurry.

LIZ slides her smooth, soft legs under the covers, first one, then the other, slowly.

LIZ:

You'll find your way.

FADE TO...

EXT: BIG SUR LODGE, CABIN 20, 7:30AM TUESDAY

The door to CABIN 20 opens and ROSENFELD, LIZ and CAIN step onto the front porch.

ROSENFELD:
Good morning.

WES/ARYANA:
Good morning.

WES:
I trust you slept well.

ROSENFELD:
Like the dead.

From the gradually stirring hills behind WES and ARYANA comes a sound like a plastic ruler slapping hard against a Formica counter.

In the same instant CAIN, standing next to the large tree in front of their cabin, is thrust violently backward, crashing into LIZ, who is directly behind him.

CAIN and LIZ are thrown hard to the ground.

Another clap sends a screaming hiss by the ear of a ducking ROSENFELD.

Something slams into the DOORSILL and WOOD-CHIPS EXPLODE in the air, some landing in ROSENFELD's curly red hair.

WES draws his MICRO DESERT EAGLE .380 pistol.

WES scans the slope and quickly picks out a small CLOUD of what can only be GUNPOWDER hanging in the crisp morning air.

WES fires two shots at the heart of the cloud about fifty yards away.

WES gestures a left flanking maneuver to ARYANA and in the same instant charges up the hill in a daring frontal assault.

ARYANA runs left and then angles his way up the mountainside.

Close on: KNIFE CONTRAPTION strapped to ARYANA's arm. With a subtle wrist-twist, a perfectly balanced throwing knife drops into his palm.

WES crouches and scans the hill for a sign of the shooter.

WES and ARYANA remain frozen in place, listening, watching.

In an instant a FIGURE in JUNGLE CAMOUFLAGE leaps up from a clump of brush and fires.

WES instinctively DIVES to his right and lies flat on the ground.

A BURST OF DIRT AND STONE erupts inches from WES's face, peppering him with a mist of soot and leaves.

THREE MORE SHOTS come in rapid succession as WES rolls hard to the right.

WES fires two more shots in the general direction of the SNIPER.

The SNIPER runs downhill away from WES, right into the waiting arms of...

ARYANA rises and pivots and with a discus-like sweep of his arm sends a KNIFE HURLING toward his target.

The BLADE STRIKES with deadly accuracy at the SNIPER's heart, hangs upright for a split-second, then falls harmlessly to the ground, no match for the Kevlar body armor of the CHARGING FIGURE.

In full stride the SNIPER fires a round at ARYANA, who throws himself hard left to the ground, affecting a classic SHOULDER ROLL.

The SNIPER rushes past ARYANA and jumps in the van near Cabin 28.

With a SPRAY OF LOOSE STONES and a squeal of hot rubber, the van speeds toward the park's exit.

WES, carrying the rifle the shooter has abandoned, links up with ARYANA and the two men run to the cabin.

WES:

Let's get them inside.

FADE TO...

EXT: BIG SUR LODGE, CABIN 20 – MORNING

INT: CABIN 20 - MORNING

WES finishes examining and dressing LIZ's wound then joins the men in the main room.

WES:

She's fine for the moment, but we need to get her to a hospital to get that bullet out.

CAIN:

No, we can't take that risk.

WES:

That's not your call Cain. Without full medical help, Liz could die.

CAIN:

Wes, please...you don't understand.

WES:

I understand better than you think. Aryana, let me see that rifle.

ARYANA, who has been inspecting the weapon, hands it over to WES.

This is an M110 Sniper Rifle. (no reaction from the others) Civilians can't get these yet. They're strictly U.S. military.

ROSENFELD:

The guy who tried to kill us was U.S. military?

WES:

I don't know, but more to the point, he definitely wasn't trying to kill you.

ROSENFELD:

Well, for someone who wasn't trying to kill us, he sure fooled me!

WES:

Joe, believe me, if that sniper had wanted you dead, you wouldn't be standing here now.

CAIN gives no answer.

ROSENFELD:

What about Liz?

WES:

Liz was only hit because she was standing directly behind Cain. And I think the shooter only wanted to scare the shit out of you so you'd run away.

ROSENFELD:

Well he sure succeeded at that!

CAIN:

Wes, the bullet was tipped with poison.

WES is puzzled and curious about this statement.

WES:

Poison! How can you tell?

CAIN:

I've been exposed to it before and I can feel it at work in my body.

WES is unbelieving but patronizes CAIN.

WES:

All right, let's say for a minute I believe you about the poison. That's all the more reason to get her to a hospital and get the bullet out?

CAIN:

No, Wes! The poison will kill her within twenty-four hours if you remove it.

WES gives CAIN a puzzled look.

WES:

Why should we leave the bullet in if the poison will kill her?

CAIN:

Because when the bullet passed through me, it took some of my tissue with it. For the time being, Liz has a temporary inoculation against the poison.

WES is stunned at this pronouncement.

CAIN:

The only thing that can save her, Wes, is more of what is guarding her for the moment. If you give her a transfusion of my blood, she will be fine within a few days. (pause) How long can she wait before she absolutely has to go to the hospital?

WES:

An hour at most...why?

CAIN glances briefly at ROSENFELD with an enigmatic expression.

CAIN:

In one hour you'll have an answer.

WES has registered a strange look CAIN gives ROSENFELD. WES looks curiously at ROSENFELD then back to CAIN.

WES:

One hour.

CAIN breathes a sigh of relief and smiles.

FADE TO...

WES, ARYANA and ROSENFELD are huddled in conversation.

CAIN sits studying them from across the room.

WES checks his watch then turns to CAIN.

WES:
Your hour is up. It's time to get Liz and you to the hospital.

CAIN does not resist. He smiles cryptically.

CAIN:
Would you change my dressings first?

WES takes hold of the tape.

WES:
I'll try to do this as gently as I can.

CAIN's eyes never leave WES's face.

CAIN:
Sometimes it's best to just do it and get it over with.

WES tears off the adhesive in one swift motion.

INCREDULITY registers on WES's face.

WES:
This isn't possible!

ROSENFELD and ARYANA rush to the bed to see what has so surprised WES.

Close on: CAIN's wound. The skin around the wound is almost fully healed.

CAIN:
Wes, give Liz an injection of my blood. She'll be fine in a couple days. In the meantime, I'm on a tight schedule and need to get to Las Vegas.

WES stands speechless for a long moment.

WES tosses ARYANA the AUDI keys without averting his eyes from Cain's shoulder.

WES:
Find out what you can at the GENETIC DISCOVERY CORPORATION, then meet us in Las Vegas on Friday.

FADE TO...

EXT: WASHINGTON DC – AFTERNOON

Overhead of STRETCH LIMO on freeway.

INT: VICE PRESIDENT AUSTIN'S LIMO

AUSTIN is on the phone...ANGRY. He is losing control of events.

AUSTIN:

What the hell is going on out there, Bridger?

BRIDGER: (O.S. – THROUGH PHONE)

Cain has apparently picked up some help along the way.

AUSTIN:

Goddamit, I told you never to use his name on the phone? What help? You mean that touchy-feely shrink and his slutty little secretary? What the hell could they do? Just fuckin' kill them if you have to!

BRIDGER: (O.S. – THROUGH PHONE)

No, sir. Two men we've never seen before. They showed up last night. Faustini called to say he hit Cai...the target. The bullet was highly toxic and the load was just enough to keep it from going all the way through. They'll have to get medical treatment, and when they do, we'll grab him.

We see the PRIUS heading south along Coastal Highway 1.

BRIDGER: (V.O.)

Sir, they will undoubtedly head south toward Santa Barbara. We'll follow them till we have an opening and then we'll grab your man.

AUSTIN:

The President leaves for Tehran in ten days. You get that freak back under control fast, got me?

BRIDGER: (O.S. – THROUGH PHONE)

Understood.

AUSTIN:

Yeah, you better understand. Don't fuck this up!

CUT TO...

EXT: CIA HEADQUARTERS, LANGLEY - AFTERNOON

INT: AUSTIN'S LIMO

AUSTIN claps his cell phone closed from the BRIDGER conversation as GAFFNEY approaches the car.

The REAR PASSENGER DOOR swings eerily open without so much as a glimpse of the hand that moves it and GAFFNEY climbs in.

GAFFNEY:

Good day to you, Mr. Vice President. I trust the world is your oyster this bright autumn day.

AUSTIN:

Pat, I don't know how you do it. The sun hasn't made it through the clouds in six weeks and you sound as cheery as a college freshman on spring break!

GAFFNEY:

Well that's because the good Lord planted a little bit o' the green right here (taps his heart) so I'll always remember how grand it is to be Irish!

AUSTIN:

Can't argue with that. (he chuckles but gets right to business) So what have you got for me on OPERATION: STAR COVER?

GAFFNEY:

The Company isn't involved in any operations dealing with nuclear matters but I have a good lead for you. My friend Yahkin with Metsada knows everything.

AUSTIN:

What's Metsada?

GAFFNEY:

Metsada is Mossad's Special Operations Division. They handle the serious highly sensitive shit. Yahkin knows of only one operation involving nuclear material. Two days ago in Ukraine, a group of ex-Soviet businessmen made plans to transfer a shipment of Plutonium to a group of Arabs.

AUSTIN:

What Arabs?

GAFFNEY:

We don't know. Yesterday a courier for the Russians boarded a train in Kiev bound for some unknown rendezvous location to meet the Arabs. We don't know how much material he is carrying, but it was a small portion of what the Russians intended to eventually transfer.

AUSTIN:

Intended?

OVERLAY SCENE of a shootout at the RUSSIAN WAREHOUSE.

GAFFNEY: (V.O.)

The Russians were taken out by a group that had them under surveillance. But here's the thing, the local authorities were contacted and told where to find the bodies and the stockpile of plutonium. It was all done anonymously. The only thing the authorities could get out of the caller was that a young courier boarded the train in Kiev with a small valise of Plutonium. This anonymous group has the guy under surveillance on the train.

AUSTIN:

Son-of-a-bitch. That's just fucking great! All we need now is an incident in the news about some fucking Arab terrorists and nuclear material!

GAFFNEY:

If it helps, George, the story never made it to the media. Apparently, whoever is taking these people out doesn't want a lot of publicity either (pause) and the Ukraine authorities were more than happy to oblige.

AUSTIN chews on this idea for a second and seems to like what he has heard.

GAFFNEY:

We don't know who the good guys are or how many of them are on that train, but I have a feeling that a whole lot of bad guys are about to become ex-terrorists. My only concern is why the hell don't our people know anything about them or what they've been up to?

FADE TO...

EXT: TRAIN HEADING FOR ISTANBUL – NIGHT

INT: DINING CAR

T.O. enters the dining car.

ANZHELA sits waiting, WHITE SPAGHETTI STRINGS falling from her ears to the ever-present PINK IPOD on the table in front of her.

T.O. approaches her from behind, intending to surprise her, but as he gets within a couple feet she says, without turning around...

ANZHELA:

You are very punctual Taras Ostrovsky.

T.O.:

But how did you know it was me.

ANZHELA:

You radiate a distinctive sound unlike any other man on this train.

T.O.:

No, really, how did you know? Ah, you saw my reflection in the window.

ANZHELA:

No. I have told you, now sit so we can order; I'm famished!

T.O. is both BRUISED at her tone and EXCITED by her appetite.

FADE TO...

T.O. and ANZHELA have finished dinner when...

T.O. locks his eyes onto the GRUFF MEN he has previously had words with.

The larger of the two sees T.O. staring in their direction and proffers a SMIRK.

ANZHELA looks over her shoulder then quickly back at T.O. with a scowl.

ANZHELA:

You men! Is everything in this world just another pissing contest to you? So what? These men were at your compartment. They all look alike. They weren't trying to rob you. I swear this is too much!

ANZHELA slaps her napkin on the table and begins to stand.

T.O. grabs her hand.

T.O.:

No, please. You are right, we men are all jerks and I am our king! Please, don't leave.

ANZHELA hesitates but does not withdraw her hand. T.O. implores her...

Please, my angel, sit.

ANZHELA studies him critically for a moment then slowly lowers back into her seat.

ANZHELA:

What is this all about, really? You said you dealt in, how did you say it, hard-to-come-by-goods. You are a diamond smuggler? (T.O. says nothing) That's it, isn't it? Your pockets are full of diamonds and you fear these men will rob you.

They sit staring at each other for a long moment.

Suddenly T.O. lights up in a broad smile and a good laugh.

ANZHELA remains serious for a moment before she too bursts into laughter.

T.O.:

No, I am not a diamond smuggler.

She frowns.

ANZHELA:

No? No diamonds? Then what good are you? So what is this business that is so secretive and so dangerous? You are a spy? KGB?

Again T.O. laughs, completely disarmed.

ANZHELA:

Not KGB?

T.O.:

Please, my beautiful angel, must we speak of business? We were doing so well.

ANZHELA:

Yes, until those men stole your attention from me.

T.O. hesitates, CONFLICTED. He wants to tell her what he shouldn't.

T.O.:

I must tell you something, something you must keep to yourself. I think these men are following me. (She looks disbelieving) No, I mean it. Ever since I boarded in Kiev, I seem to be constantly running into them.

ANZHELA:

Of course you do, this is a small train. Put these men out of your mind. They are just two old men who wish they could trade places with you.

T.O.:

You are right, my angel.

ANZHELA suddenly lights up in an impish grin.

ANZHELA:

I think I have the solution to your problem.

T.O.:

(leans in over the table) Oh?

ANZHELA:

Come with me, (her impish grin now turns devilish) We will go to your compartment. Just take my lead.

They stand and walk toward the exit.

ANZHELA leans hard against T.O. as they sway to the rocking of the car. Her arm is wrapped up in his, her free hand clenches his bicep.

As they come even with the two men, she suddenly stops and pirouettes in front of T.O. She wraps her leg around his, making sure the two old men get a good look at her creamy soft thigh as she kisses T.O.

ANZHELA:

My darling, I can wait no longer. Please take me now!

CUT TO...

INT: FIRST CLASS CAR – EARLY EVENING

The two would-be lovers double over in laughter.

They walk gingerly, half bent laughing all the way to OSTROVSKY's door.

Inside they kiss hard once more, this time more seriously.

ANZHELA leans back from their kiss with a coquettish grin.

ANZHELA:
I have nothing to wear. Do you have an extra shirt?

T.O. pulls a shirt from his suitcase and hands it to her.

ANZHELA:
You must give me a moment to change.

He hesitates in confusion until she makes a shooing gesture.

ANZHELA:
Give me five minutes. (Then more forcefully) Go on
now, go. Five minutes!

T.O. walks to the end of the car to use the common lavatory to freshen up.

He checks his watch several times to be sure he gives her the full five minutes, then returns to the compartment.

As he slides the door open he sees...

ANZHELA sits on the hide-away bed in his large blue shirt, the ubiquitous PINK IPOD again strung to her ears.

On her lap is T.O.'s briefcase — it is open and she is holding photographs of the ARAB MEN he is to meet.

T.O.:
This is most unfortunate.

T.O. steps over and closes the briefcase slowly.

He takes it away from her, sets it on the counter.

ANZHELA:
These are the Arab men you will be meeting?

Her lower lip quivers ever so slightly. Her right hand slips down between her legs, pulling tightly at the shirt as if to protect the treasure that T.O. will now never enjoy.

She lowers the photos to her lap.

T.O.:
Yes.

T.O. opens the briefcase and withdraws a SMALL GUN from a hidden compartment.

T.O. points the GUN at ANZHELA.

T.O.:

I am truly sorry you stumbled into this situation, my angel. I'm afraid there are many chance meetings in life, some good (pause) some bad.

ANZHELA:

Everything happens for a reason.

T.O.:

Well, whatever reason you might think brought us together, it will not end well for you. Perhaps if you close your eyes...

ANZHELA:

Actually, there is one thing I was hoping to share with you.

This catches T.O. by surprise. ANZHELA holds out the iPod to T.O. He does not understand.

ANZHELA:

Please, put on the earphones and press the play button.

T.O. waves his gun disapprovingly.

T.O.:

Really, Anzhela, this is hardly the time...

ANZHELA:

Please.

T.O.:

Very well, then. I will humor you this one last request.

T.O. places the WHITE BUTTONS in his ears and hits PLAY.

He hears a steady, fast-paced clacking sound that leaves him momentarily confused.

It is the even, ratchety clacking of a RADIATION DETECTOR.

T.O. pulls the WHITE STRINGS from his ears and shoots her a CRUEL LOOK.

T.O.:

So this meeting of ours has not been by chance. I see now how you always seemed to be aware at my approach. The faint clacks being read off my clothes told you when I was near. (She nods) Very sneaky plan. But perhaps you should have planned better, my little angel.

T.O. points the GUN at her and without a second's hesitation COLDLY PULLS THE TRIGGER.

There is only an empty CLICK.

T.O. stretches the gun toward her and pulls three more times, CLICK-CLICK-CLICK.

ANZHELA:

I was so hoping you would not pull the trigger, T.O. I wanted to believe there was something good in you that could be saved.

ANZHELA moves the PHOTOS from her lap as her right hand comes up from between her legs holding a MICRO DESERT EAGLE with a small silencer attached.

She slowly raises her left hand to display the FIRING PIN from T.O.'s pistol.

The SURPRISED look on T.O.'s face turns to SHOCK and HORROR and then to PAIN as the girl squeezes a SINGLE SILENT ROUND into his already dead heart.

FADE TO...

ANZHELA finishes dressing, grabs the VALISE containing the PLUTONIUM, and steps over T.O.'s lifeless body, pausing to place a SMALL BUSINESS CARD on his chest.

Close on CARD: the likeness of a winged angel embossed in the center. Over the angel's flowing wings is a canopy of stars. Beneath the star covered angel is the phrase: IN THE SERVICE OF HUMANITY...THE ANKH NETWORK.

FADE TO...

EXT: WASHINGTON DC, EEOB – MID MORNING

INT: AUSTIN'S OFFICE

AUSTIN is again on the phone with BRIDGER.

AUSTIN:

Bridger, talk to me. And it better be good news.

BRIDGER: (O.S. – THROUGH PHONE)

My men picked up the target just south of Cambria.

AUSTIN:
Picked him up? You mean we've got him back?
Excellent!

BRIDGER hesitates, stammers.

BRIDGER:
No, sir, I mean we have him under surveillance and
there is no way he can escape again.

AUSTIN is confused by the report.

AUSTIN:
What the hell are you talking about, Bridger?

BRIDGER:
Sir, the target will have to stop sooner or later, and
once he does, my men will be able to bring him in.

AUSTIN:
What do you mean he'll have to stop sooner or later? I
thought you told me your men shot Cain...and the girl...

BRIDGER:
Yes, sir.

AUSTIN:
So why didn't they head for the nearest hospital like
you said they would?

BRIDGER is silent.

AUSTIN:
I'll tell you why. Because that damn freak-show didn't
need a damn doctor. If he died from a simple gunshot
wound, (his voice is sing-songy and laced with
contempt) wouldn't that kind of make this whole
exercise meaningless?

BRIDGER:
But the girl, sir. Certainly they will have to get medical
attention for the girl.

AUSTIN:
The girl is nothing, Bridger. For all we know she's
already dead from the poison.

BRIDGER tries to refocus the discussion.

BRIDGER:

Sir, right now I think we need to concentrate on the main objective.

AUSTIN:

And just to be clear, (his voice drips with sarcasm) what is your main objective?

BRIDGER:

To retake the target, sir.

AUSTIN:

And how long do you have to do that?

BRIDGER:

We need to bring him in this weekend so he can be ready to travel by next Wednesday, the day before Thanksgiving.

AUSTIN:

And the other people in the car —

BRIDGER:

They need to be removed, sir.

AUSTIN:

Killed, Bridger. They need to be killed. (Bridger is silent and Austin pounces) Say it, Bridger. They need to be fucking killed.

BRIDGER speaks softly...he is not a killer.

BRIDGER:

They need to be killed.

AUSTIN:

Killed. Dead. Make no mistake, Bridger. Cain is a matter of national security. He can be used to do great things for humanity or he can be the worst kind of biological weapon. Whichever, I want it to be America's advantage. Got it?

BRIDGER:

Yes, sir.

The line goes dead with no further comment from AUSTIN.

FADE TO...

EXT: HIGHWAY 15 TOWARD LAS VEGAS – MORNING

INT: PRIUS

CLOSE ON SIGN: HWY 15, LAS VEGAS

ROSENFELD and CAIN are in front. WES and LIZ are in back. LIZ sleeps quietly with her head in WES's lap.

CAIN:

(Cain looks to the back seat) Wes, have you read Dr. Rosenfeld's book on near-death experiences?

WES:

Yes, I have. Fascinating work! Five hundred subjects revived after being declared clinically dead (pause) some for as long as 2 hours. Their backgrounds were all different yet their descriptions of the "afterlife" were uncannily similar (pause) right down to the "Being of Light".

CAIN:

Yes...the Being of Light.

OVERLAY scenes against WES's narration showing an overhead operating room perspective from a disembodied spirit. The spirit moves into an undefined environment. We see a sphere of bright light with a faint silhouette inside the light.

WES: (V.O.)

His subjects differed in who they thought this Being was (pause) based on their religious orientation (pause) but they all reported an overwhelming sense of non-judgmental love emanating from this Being. They all said the Being asked them a question, generally something like 'Are you ready to die' or 'What have you done with your life that is sufficient'. And in the end, they all had one other thing in common. (pause) They were all sent back, sometimes to complete something for themselves; sometimes to help someone else.

CAIN has been quietly attentive, with a touch of melancholy.

CAIN:

And all of these people had a similar encounter with this Being of Light?

ROSENFELD:

Yes, they all experienced this Being of Light. It was the thing that gave them such peace.

CAIN faces forward and is silent for a moment. Then...

CAIN:

My experience of this is very different.

ROSENFELD:

What do you mean your experience? You've had a near-death experience?

CAIN:

No, doctor, I've not had a *near*-death experience.

CAIN is again softly commanding and confident.

CAIN:

There is only one ending to the cancer I had, doctor: it kills the body. In that lone respect, I was no different from any other man with the disease. Sometime around 1:00 A.M. my body died. Then sometime later — I don't know exactly how long — I awoke as if from a short sleep and a black dream, whole and healthy. For me there was no 'Being of Light,' no friends or dearly departed to guide me to another side, no apparition of love, no forgiving God. Just an expanse of black space. (pause) That is my punishment, my curse; to be cast into eternal darkness, to be abandoned by the Being of Light, by He who holds no judgment against any living being save for one: (pause) me!

FADE TO...

EXT: HWY TO LAS VEGAS – EARLY EVENING

INT: PRIUS

LIZ stirs. She yawns, sits up, looks out the window at the DARK DESERT.

ROSENFELD:

Feeling better?

LIZ:

Yeah, that was great. Where are we?

ROSENFELD:

Almost there. Another ten minutes.

WES:
How is your shoulder?

LIZ:
It feels pretty good. A little stiff and sore, (she twists her wounded shoulder tentatively) but it feels good.

WES:
Good. Now for the news you may not want to hear. We should get that bullet out when we get to Las Vegas. What do you think, Cain? Is it safe to take it out now?

CAIN:
Yes. The worst has passed.

ROSENFELD:
Where do we stay tonight?

CAIN:
I have some business at the VENETIAN, but that can wait till tomorrow morning. Anywhere is fine with me.

ROSENFELD stares into the REAR VIEW MIRROR, his expression serious, his eyes focused on the traffic behind them.

ROSENFELD:
I don't want to alarm anyone, but the car behind us...I think it's been following us.

WES:
All right, let's not take any chances. When we get to Vegas, head over to the PARIS HOTEL. Drop us off then park in the garage. If we are being followed, they'll have to split up. We'll register under Cain's name, then cross the street to the BELLAGIO. This time we'll register under my name.

FADE TO...

INT: PARIS PARKING GARAGE

ROSENFELD exits the PRIUS.

A MAN follows him - the fake AGENT SAMSON.

ROSENFELD quickens his pace, his heart pounding.

ROSENFELD steps into the elevator behind three other people. He is too nervous to press the button.

A DISTINGUISHED LOOKING GENTLEMAN reaches in front of ROSENFELD and presses the button for the top floor.

As the door closes, ROSENFELD presses the second floor button.

CLOSE ON JOE'S HAND: HIS HAND IS JITTERY FROM FEAR.

ROSENFELD exits the elevator and angles toward the STAIRWELL down to the lobby.

In the bustle of the main floor, ROSENFELD lowers his head and rushes past the Eiffel Tower, out to the Strip.

In a CRUSH OF TOURISTS he waits impatiently for the light to change.

ROSENFELD hurries up the inclined sidewalk to the BELLAGIO entrance, through the revolving door, and finally to the reception desk.

At his room, ROSENFELD reaches a trembling hand to insert the KEYCARD in the slot.

CLOSE ON: LOCK GIVES A CLICK AND A GREEN LIGHT, THE DOOR OPENS.

ROSENFELD collapses onto a sofa, his breathing labored.

He is safe for now!

FADE TO...

EXT: GEORGETOWN NEIGHBORHOOD – 7PM

INT: SECRETARY FORSYTH'S HOME – A PARTY

AUSTIN is chatting with FORSYTH and BERGSTROM.

AUSTIN sees GAFFNEY and signals with a NOD toward the FOYER.

AUSTIN and GAFFNEY rendezvous.

AUSTIN:
What have you got?

GAFFNEY:
The courier on the train (pause) he ended up in Istanbul...with a bullet through the heart. (pause) His consignment was missing. (Austin has a twinge of controlled panic) That means someone from that train is now in possession of enough weapons grade Plutonium to vaporize some major American real estate.

AUSTIN mutters a string of obscenities under his breath.

AUSTIN says a quick goodbye to FORSYTH and exits.

As quickly as AUSTIN is gone, FORSYTH and BERGSTROM are at GAFFNEY's side.

FORSYTH:
How'd he take it?

GAFFNEY:
Slightly worse than a kick in the nuts.

BERGSTROM:
What about our girl?

GAFFNEY:
Her flight gets into Las Vegas around midnight.

FORSYTH:
You're sure she can be trusted to return the package?

GAFFNEY:
You tell me, she's Ankh Network, same as your man.

FORSYTH is guarded at GAFFNEY's knowledge of Wes Franklin.

GAFFNEY flashes FORSYTH a wide ruddy-faced smile.

CUT TO...

EXT: GEORGETOWN NEIGHBORHOOD – 8PM

INT: AUSTIN'S LIMO

AUSTIN punches his cell phone.

AUSTIN:
You better have some good news, Bridger.

BRIDGER: (O.S. – THROUGH PHONE)
He checked into the PARIS HOTEL in Las Vegas. We'll
have him back in our control by tomorrow morning.

AUSTIN slaps his phone shut without saying anything further.

FADE TO...

EXT: LAS VEGAS, BELLAGIO HOTEL – NIGHT

INT: BELLAGIO PENTHOUSE SUITES

WES exits a bedroom where he has just removed the bullet from LIZ.

CAIN stands at the window looking out at the city.

WES comes quietly alongside CAIN.

WES:

Beautiful view.

CAIN says nothing.

Below, the FOUNTAIN springs to life with its bi-hourly show.

WES:

How's your shoulder? (he reaches toward Cain) May I?

WES peels CAIN'S shirt back - there is not even a mark on the flesh.

Amazing! (mumbles to himself) I've seen a lot of miraculous things in my years of medicine, but nothing like this.

CAIN gives an ENIGMATIC SMILE and continues to watch the street below.

WES:

How long has your body been able to regenerate like this?

CAIN:

All my life.

A silent pause is followed by a faint...

CAIN:

Ten thousand years.

WES:

Excuse me! Ten thousand years?

CAIN:

Huh? Oh, sorry. I was just thinking; can you imagine what this region was like ten thousand years ago (pause) a vast meadow oasis? And look at them now, a sea of nomads in search of easy wealth!

WES:

No such thing!

CAIN:

Very true. I have a limitless supply of material wealth - but it didn't come easy.

WES:

I've known some wealthy individuals, but even the richest of them never characterized his wealth as limitless!

CAIN:

Let's just say I had mountains of gold when it was only a pretty rock!

WES:

Is that even possible? I mean, most men would trade their soul for even a small piece of that!

CAIN:

Then those men would be fools! (he gives an ironic smile) What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world but loses his soul?

CAIN breaks his trance-like gaze, turns and smiles enigmatically.

WES:

So why are we here? What does Las Vegas have to offer the man with mountains of gold?

CAIN:

In 1951 the first atomic bomb was exploded at the Nevada Test Site just north of here.

WES:

What does that have to do with you?

CAIN:

Humankind has lost its way, Wes. Hiroshima and Nagasaki are just shadows in history now. The images of irradiated Japanese men, women, and children, their flesh rotting on the bone, have faded from our conscious awareness. We need to be reminded again, Wes; made to see the horrors once more that come with our nuclear waste.

WES tenses.

WES:

What are you planning to do, Cain?

CAIN seeks to assuage his fears.

CAIN:
Nothing that will harm anyone, Wes.

WES locks eyes with CAIN, unwilling to yield even an inch.

CAIN:
You must trust me on that count.

FADE TO...

EXT: PALO ALTO, EL CAMINO REAL, OUTSIDE GENETIC DISCOVERY CORP - NIGHT

INT: AUTOMOBILE – NIGHT

A.J. and ARYANA sit quietly.

CLOSE ON: ARYANA'S WATCH: 2:15 A.M.

A VAN approaches from behind...BLINKS it's lights twice.

CLOSE ON THE VEHICLE: NIGHT MAIDS JANITORIAL SERVICE.

A.J.:
Okay, let's go.

A.J. and ARYANA cross the street and hurry to the back of the building.

BETTY GARZA:
Hi Ashley. Here...

GARZA hands them COVERALLS with the bright yellow, green and red NIGHT MAIDS logo; the front pocket-patches bear their new identities: MARIA and JORGE.

As the CLEANING TEAM approaches the building, the metal WAREHOUSE DOOR rolls slowly up, exposing the knees, then the torso, finally the face of night guard DENNIS PAULSON.

PAULSON:
Hola, Betty. What's with the extra crew tonight?

BETTY GARZA:
New employees. Orientation. Gotta show 'em what's expected before we send 'em out on their own.

PAULSON gives the once-over to 'JORGE' but lingers twice on 'MARIA.'

PAULSON:
(to A.J./Maria) Buenos noches, senorita.

GARZA:
Now don't distract my employees. I want their attention
on their work, not on you.

PAULSON laughs.

PAULSON:
Okay, okay.

PAULSON lowers the door and hands GARZA a small black plastic DEVICE.

PAULSON:
You know the drill. Just push that button if you need
anything. I'll meet you back here in two hours.

GARZA:
Gracias, Dennis.

CUT TO...

INT: GENETIC DISCOVERY CORP – HALLWAY, EARLY MORNING

A.J. aims a SMALL LASER POINTER at the surveillance CAMERA.

CUT TO...

INT: THIRD FLOOR SECURITY ROOM – MONITORS

CLOSE ON: A SURVEILLANCE MONITOR: A FLICKER ON-SCREEN CHANGES THE SCENE OF A.J.
AND ARAYANA TO AN EMPTY HALL.

CUT TO...

INT: BASEMENT, OUTSIDE OF LAB ROOM WHERE FILES ARE KEPT

A.J. points her LASER POINTER once more, this time at the INNER OFFICE CAMERA.

A.J.:
You're up.

ARYANA manipulates the LOCK and the lab door CLICKS quietly open.

A.J.:
That was fast!

ARYANA:
You have your talents, I have mine.

A.J. and ARYANA enter the lab room.

INT: LAB ROOM – File cabinets line two walls, a double desk-set with desktop computers are in the center of the room; a small, separate office is along one wall. There is medical test gear all around. A security camera is in one corner.

A.J.:
How do we know which files are Cain's?

ARYANA:
That's easy. They all are.

A.J.:
They ALL are! How are we going to go through all these files in two hours?

ARYANA:
And don't forget the guard is scheduled to check this room in twenty minutes.

Close on: Watch showing 2:40

But don't worry about it. Cain told us we only need that cabinet over there. You take care of the computer files; I'll get the paper ones.

We see time-lapse of A.J. and ARYANA going through their tasks.

A.J. and ARYANA hear the ELEVATOR DOOR open down the hall.

Close on: Wall clock showing 2:59

ARYANA:
Okay, let's close it up now.

A.J. points her LASER POINTER to reactivate the INNER OFFICE CAMERA.

A.J. and ARYANA go into side office, lock the door, and hide behind the desk.

DENNIS PAULSON steps into the room.

PAULSON reaches for the MICROPHONE clipped to his epaulet.

PAULSON:
Hey Gordo, you there?

BENSON:
Gotcha, Paulie, bright and clear. Camera's fine.

PAULSON:
Ten-four, Gordo. Comin' back yer way then.

At the door, PAULSON takes one last look around and...

PAULSON sees the TOP DRAWER of a file CABINET AJAR.

PAULSON looks around the room again studying everything a little closer.

He walks to the INNER OFFICE WINDOW and swaths it with his FLASHLIGHT.

A.J. and ARYANA huddle tighter under the desk as the beam washes by.

PAULSON frowns and shakes his head as he moves to the cabinet.

MUTTERING to himself he SLAMS the drawer shut.

PAULSON:

Damn scientists, can't tell 'em a friggin' thing. In one ear; out the other.

PAULSON continues JABBERING to himself all the way down the hall.

At the sound of the ELEVATOR DOOR closing, A.J. takes a deep breath.

A.J. disables the INNER OFFICE CAMERA with her LASER POINTER.

A.J. and ARYANA hurry back to work.

FADE TO...

EXT: LAS VEGAS AIRPORT FROM ABOVE

INT: LAS VEGAS AIRPORT, BAGGAGE CLAIM, VIEW FROM TOP OF ESCALATOR

We see A.J. and ARYANA walking in the CROWD OF ENERGETIC PASSENGERS and we feel the excited anticipation of LAS VEGAS.

CUT TO...

INT: LAS VEGAS AIRPORT, BAGGAGE CLAIM AT FLOOR LEVEL.

A.J. and ARYANA walk past BAGGAGE CLAIM and exit airport.

CUT TO...

EXT: LAS VEGAS, BELLAGIO HOTEL

INT: PENTHOUSE SUITE

A.J. is in a TERRY CLOTH ROBE, drying her hair.

There is a knock on the door.

A.J.:
Who's there?

ROOM SERVICE:
Room service, ma'am.

A.J. opens the door, points toward the couch.

A.J.:
Right over there will be fine.

The WAITER pushes the cart into the room, hands A.J. a TICKET to sign.

A.J. scribbles her name, and hands it back to the man, smiling.

The WAITER smiles and reaches for the ticket.

Suddenly and without warning, the WAITER sends a HARD RIGHT FIST smashing flush against A.J.'s left temple, sending the surprised woman sprawling to the floor.

In an instant the WAITER is on her.

He grabs two fistfuls of TERRY CLOTH, wrenches A.J. to her feet and throws her like a rag doll crashing over the back of the couch.

The absence of a second blow gives A.J. time to shake the fog out of her head.

A.J. bounces off the couch and leaps to a DEFENSIVE STANCE.

CHAZ FAUSTINI laughs derisively and moves in to subdue the hapless female.

A.J. feigns a kick with her left foot then throws a tremendous roundhouse kick catching FAUSTINI squarely on the ear with the ball of her foot.

FAUSTINI is staggered in surprise.

FAUSTINI shakes off the blow and laughs.

FAUSTINI:
So you like it rough, eh?

FAUSTINI creeps cautiously toward her.

A.J. throws a left jab but FAUSTINI swats it away like a mosquito.

FAUSTINI grins and growls.

A.J. throws a right fist but FAUSTINI merely grabs it in mid-air and squeezes hard.

FAUSTINI yanks her toward him and plants a firm RIGHT JAB squarely on her jaw.

A.J. goes slack in an unconscious heap on the couch.

A.J. comes to in a cloud of pain as COLD WATER hits her face.

She moans involuntarily trying to decipher the meaning of "Take it, take it" as the words are barked at her repeatedly as if from a tunnel.

Finally her eyes come into focus on a CELL PHONE hovering inches from her nose.

FAUSTINI:

Take it and get that boyfriend of yours on the phone.

A.J. reaches an UNSTEADY HAND toward the phone but her hand collapses to her lap.

More COLD DROPLETS hit her face as she snaps back awake.

FAUSTINI:

Call him.

A.J. hits her SPEED-DIAL.

CUT TO...

INT: LUCKY SEVEN DINER ACROSS TOWN, WES AND REPORTER DAN HAMILTON AT TABLE

WES:

Hi, Ash, I thought you were gonna get some sleep.

FAUSTINI grabs the phone from A.J.

FAUSTINI:

Listen hero, you want to see your little friend alive again you better get that freak-azoid back to us toot sweet, you hear?

WES:

Who is this?

FAUSTINI:

This is the guy that's gonna teach this karate bitch of yours what real pain is all about if you don't get Cain back up here in one hour. You got that...one hour!

FAUSTINI slaps the phone shut and throws it back in A.J.'s lap.

FAUSTINI:

Let's hope Mr. Hero doesn't try anything stupid.

A sudden LOUD RAP at the door...FAUSTINI and A.J. stiffen.

FAUSTINI waves the gun toward the door.

FAUSTINI:
Don't try anything stupid.

A.J.:
Who is it?

HAWORTH:
Chaz, you in there?

FAUSTINI pushes A.J. away from the door.

FAUSTINI:
Get back there.

FAUSTINI opens the door to let STAN HAWORTH in.

HAWORTH:
Everything all right? Hey, nice digs.

FAUSTINI:
Piece of cake. Don't get too close though; the bitch can throw a good punch. Where's Shoemaker?

HAWORTH:
Him and Tony is across the street at the PARIS. Cain's registered there so they figured they better stake it out just in case.

HAWORTH grabs a triangle of toast off the cart and chomps on it as he flops onto a couch. He smiles through crumb-covered teeth at A.J., who looks away in disgust.

FAUSTINI opens the bedroom where LIZ is sleeping.

FAUSTINI:
Well, well, what do we have here?

FAUSTINI walks to the side of the bed and grabs LIZ's right arm to shake her awake.

LIZ awakes screaming in pain.

FAUSTINI is surprised and falls back toward the curtain.

FAUSTINI:
What the fuck's your problem?

Tears well up in LIZ's waking eyes; FEAR is etched on her forehead.

FAUSTINI:

Get up.

LIZ moves too slowly for FAUSTINI.

He lunges at her, grabs a FISTFUL OF BLOND HAIR, and yanks LIZ to her feet.

FAUSTINI:

Now!

LIZ steps crying into the living room.

LIZ sees an ugly, brutish man sitting on one couch, and A.J. sitting quietly, stoically on the other.

LIZ sees A.J.'s bruised jaw and a touch of BLOOD at the corner of her mouth.

LIZ:

A.J., what's going on? What did they do to you?

FAUSTINI:

Shut the fuck up, both of you, if you know what's good for you!

CUT TO...

INT: LUCKY SEVEN COFFEE SHOP

WES snaps his phone shut.

WES:

Dan, A.J. has been taken hostage.

HAMILTON:

What can I do?

WES:

Get the tab...then get busy on what we talked about.
Get all your media buddies gathered at the BELLAGIO
FOUNTAIN tomorrow at three o'clock.

CUT TO...

EXT: LUCKY SEVEN COFFEE SHOP – MORNING

WES opens his cell phone.

WES:

Cain, Wes. They've got A.J. They've threatened to kill her if I don't turn you over to them within the hour.

CAIN:

Then I guess that's it. I'll head back there now and surrender to them.

WES:

What? Bullshit, you'll do no such thing!

CAIN:

But A.J...

WES:

A.J. will be fine; she knows how to take care of herself. Where are you now?

CAIN:

I'm at the VENETIAN.

FAUSTINI:

Meet me at the BELLAGIO GARDENS in 20 minutes.

CUT TO...

INT: BELLAGIO SUITES – MORNING

FAUSTINI:

This must be the bitch that Cartwright shot.

HAWORTH:

Nah, couldn't be. I thought he was gonna use a poison bullet.

FAUSTINI twiddles LIZ's hair with his gun.

FAUSTINI:

What about that, honey? How is it you're still alive?

LIZ jerks her head away from the gun in disgust.

FAUSTINI and HAWORTH laugh.

FAUSTINI:

What's the matter, sweetie...cat got your tongue?

FAUSTINI strokes LIZ's soft blond hair with his free hand, running it down to the nape of her neck.

As she wriggles to flick his hand away, FAUSTINI grabs her by the throat and CHOKES her firmly.

FAUSTINI:
Settle down! I'm sure a pretty little thing like you gets plenty of attention.

FAUSTINI loosens his chokehold and slides his hand down her blouse.

A.J.:
Leave her alone, you pig!

HAWORTH laughs.

HAWORTH:
This one's quite the feisty little whore, eh Chaz?

HAWORTH stands and steps toward A.J.

HAWORTH:
You jealous of the attention your little friend is getting. Maybe old Stan-the-Man has a little something for you.

A.J.:
From the looks of you, I'm sure it's a very little something.

FAUSTINI laughs out loud at this, while HAWORTH draws back his hand to slap her.

Suddenly there is a KNOCK ON THE DOOR.

FAUSTINI:
You (to A.J.) get up and find out who it is.

A.J. moves tentatively toward the door.

A.J.:
Who is it?

A THICK ACCENT replies.

MAID:
Housekeeping.

FAUSTINI:
Get rid of her.

A.J.:
Can you come back later, please?

MAID:

Housekeeping...I make beds now, okay? I make up beds?

FAUSTINI:

Okay, let her in.

A.J. opens the door to see a diminutive twenty-something girl in a maid's uniform, her short brunette hair sporting a cute little maid's cap, as she pushes a large cart full of fresh sheets and towels into the room. (We do not see the MAID's face.)

MAID:

Sorry to bother you, ma'am. I am running late today. This will only take a few minutes and I'll have everything back the way it should be.

A.J. gives a smile of RECOGNITION as she takes a step backward, closer to FAUSTINI.

As the door drifts shut, the petite MAID reaches for the STACK OF TOWELS on the cart.

In one fluid motion she withdraws a small PISTOL from beneath the top towel, and puts a single round between the two dense eyebrows at the bridge of HAWORTH's nose.

HAWORTH's knees buckle as an expression of surprise and pain freeze forever on his face. He crumples to the floor like a pile of dirty sheets.

In that same instant, A.J. slams the heel of her left fist into FAUSTINI's groin.

As FAUSTINI doubles over in pain, A.J. pivots sharply and shoves the heel of her right hand upward into his OVERSIZED NOSE.

FAUSTINI falls forward, clutching his groin and the gush of blood from his nose as he crashes headfirst into the corner of a table. He lands in a mountainous heap unconscious on the floor.

We now see the MAID'S face...it is ANZHELA STARKOVA.

A.J.:

Anzhela, what on earth are you doing here?

ANZHELA:

From what I can tell, saving your life!

A.J.:

I mean what are you doing in Las Vegas...but yeah, thanks!

ANZHELA:

It seems Wes and I have taken on different ends of the same job again. Rather like the Bulgarian operation, but this time it was I who was in a position to help you.

A.J.:

But how did you know about these two, and how...?

Suddenly WES and CAIN appear.

WES:

Ashley, what happened? Are you alright?

WES does a quick inventory of the scene.

HAWORTH lies in a pool of blood: dead.

FAUSTINI is also covered in blood, out cold.

LIZ is red-eyed and shaking on the couch; but okay.

A.J., now wrapped up in WES's arms, is shaken but safe.

ANZHELA STARKOVA is...a surprise to WES.

WES:

Anzhela Starkova! Where the hell did you come from?

ANZHELA:

Good to see you, too, Wes, (she smiles and winks) We can say our hellos later but right now I think we do a little housecleaning, da?

CAIN kneels in front of LIZ, one hand gently touching her knee.

CAIN:

Are you okay, Liz?

LIZ lunges and throws her good arm around his neck.

LIZ sobs into his collar more from fright than pain.

CAIN:

It's okay, Liz, it's okay. It's all over. They can't hurt you now.

ROSENFELD enters the room unaware of the drama that has just taken place.

ROSENFELD:
Is this some kind of convention?

ROSENFELD's smile instantly dissolves at the sight of two bloody bodies on the floor.

FADE TO...

INT: BELLAGIO SUITES – MORNING

INT: BEDROOM – MORNING

CAIN comes out of the bedroom and closes the door.

WES, A.J., and ROSENFELD are huddled around a LAPTOP, talking in low voices.

WES:
Ah, Cain, we were just studying the files on you. I find it hard to believe what I'm reading. How is it possible that you survived the things Genetic Discovery Corporation has done to you?

CAIN remains quiet, focused on WES.

WES:
They aren't just studying the deadliest diseases known to man; they're in the business of developing new strains with the intent of weaponizing them.

A.J.:
My God, Wes! This sounds like a bunch of mad scientists gone completely berserk!

WES:
Smallpox, cholera, tuberculosis...all of these are re-emerging as modern killers. This group has even been modifying the Black Plague for God-only-knows-what!

ROSENFELD:
Son of a...

WES:
From what I've read, you've been given enough deadly diseases to wipe out whole continents and yet you survived. How long have you been able to resist injuries or diseases?

CAIN:
This curse has gone on for a very long time, Wes.

WES:

Curse! My God man, you're the key to our entire genetic code! A living, breathing fountain of youth!

CAIN:

Do you really think you'd like to live forever?

A.J. doesn't need even a second to think about it.

A.J.:

Absolutely; who wouldn't?

CAIN:

What if you were the only one doing it? I've seen the look of deep and profound love you feel for Wes.

A.J. looks at WES and smiles as their eyes hold each other.

Would you like to live long enough to see him age, suffer, and die while you remain in a perfect state of health?

A.J.:

Of course not, but we've seen how your blood helped Liz. It's just a matter of time before science could decode your genes and make longevity available to everyone.

CAIN:

And how long would you like to go on, Ashley (pause) even if Wes were your constant companion?

A.J.:

As long as possible, I would think.

CAIN:

Then you don't believe in heaven?

A.J.:

Of course I do!

CAIN:

So you would be willing to forsake heaven for this world so long as the man you loved could stay with you?

A.J. looks first at WES then back to CAIN, unable to speak whatever thoughts are racing through her mind.

CAIN:

You see, Ashley, the choice is not so clear after all, is it? Would you exchange God for longevity?

WES:

Exactly how long have you been alive?

Three pairs of eyes fix on CAIN, anxious to hear his answer.

Suddenly...a BLOOD-CURDLING SCREAM comes from LIZ in the other room.

All leap to their feet and rush to LIZ's room.

A.J. reaches the door first.

Inside A.J. throws her arms around LIZ.

A.J.:

What's the matter, Liz?

LIZ:

I had the most terrifying nightmare! It was horrible! He was covered in a blue light and his skin was melting!

ROSENFELD:

Who was? Who was melting?

LIZ:

Jared. Mr. Cain.

A.J., JOE, and WES turn to look at CAIN.

Standing there instead is ARYANA.

WES:

Where's Cain?

ARYANA:

I saw him on the elevator. The door was just closing as I...

WES races out of the room in hot pursuit of their mystifying METHUSELAH MAN.

CUT TO...

INT: BELLAGIO HOTEL, LOBBY – NIGHT

CAIN goes through the revolving door.

CUT TO...

EXT: BELLAGIO HOTEL, PORTE COCHERE – NIGHT

WES comes out through the REVOLVING DOOR, looks left and right but does not see CAIN anywhere.

WES heads straight ahead, toward the FOUNTAIN.

CAIN stands alone quietly looking at the LIGHTED POND.

WES approaches from behind, quietly, almost reverently.

WES and CAIN stand in silence watching the river of humanity flow along the LAS VEGAS STRIP.

WES:

You left without saying anything.

CAIN continues to watch the night scene.

CAIN:

How is Liz?

WES:

She had a nightmare.

CAIN says nothing.

WES:

...it was about you.

CAIN hears but gives NO RESPONSE.

CAIN rolls his head slowly as if in pain, STRUGGLING against an inner conflict, unseen demons gnawing at his heart.

CAIN:

Wes, she can't come down to the fountain tomorrow.

CAIN'S expression shows frustration and anger with himself. He pounds a FIST on the cement rail.

I knew better yet I pretended it was okay. Why? For my own self-delusion (pause) that we could somehow be like any other man and woman in love.

WES:

There was more in that file...you know that, don't you! They've created a new strain of plague (pause) It makes the old one seem as harmless as the common cold.

CAIN nods, his jaw contorts as though fighting the words he wants to speak.

WES:

Six months ago they infected you with this new strain.

CAIN:

Twenty-four hours. That's how fast it kills, Wes. (pause)
Those were possibly the worst twenty-four hours of my
life.

WES:

When did you learn what they planned to do with it?

CAIN:

About six weeks after they infected me. That's when
Austin came into the picture and I started hearing about
the President's summit meeting.

WES:

What was your role to be?

CAIN:

Their unwitting TYPHOID MARY. They would infect me
a couple hours before entering the conference room.
Within five minutes my breath would have
contaminated the entire room. Every person in
attendance would be dead by the next day. (Cain
stares into the distance) Can you imagine that, Wes?
Every head of state of every nuclear country on the
planet suddenly and mysteriously drops dead at a
nuclear summit meeting on Iranian soil!

WES:

Given this death wish you have, why didn't you just kill
yourself and eliminate the threat?

CAIN:

Don't think I haven't tried, Wes!

Halfway down the sidewalk CAIN stops to look out across the fountain.

CAIN:

It took a lot of years to grow tired of living, but when I
eventually decided to end it all, I discovered the worst
part of my lot: no person or thing could kill me, not even
myself. But for the first time I began to see my condition
as a license to get whatever I wanted; to take with
impunity, with utter disregard for any other man. In
short, the world was mine to do with as I pleased.

CAIN laughs sarcastically then goes silent, lost in thought.

WES:

You said God is punishing you. What could you possibly have done to warrant such complete and utter condemnation.

CAIN:

I killed a man, Wes.

CAIN's eyes turn to the FOUNTAIN as it springs to life, strains of Celine Dion's MY HEART WILL GO ON fill the air.

As CAIN turns back to WES, his eyes shoot past him, out to the street...And...

CAIN:

Wes...Porter and Shoemaker...they're crossing the street, heading this way...

WES turns to see the TWO MEN kick up their heels and begin RUNNING TOWARD THEM.

WES swings back to CAIN and grabs his arm.

WES:

We need to get out of here. (he spins Cain in the direction of the porte-cochere) Let's go!

WES and CAIN dash up the grade, two steps at a time, and zigzag between the vehicles at the hotel entrance.

They negotiate the obstacle course of BELLMEN and LUGGAGE RACKS, then once inside slow to a less conspicuous pace, and make their way deliberately to the elevators.

FADE TO...

EXT: BELLAGIO HOTEL, FRIDAY MORNING

INT: BELLAGIO HOTEL, PENTHOUSE SUITE – MORNING

WES:

Joe, keep Liz away from the Fountain this afternoon.

ROSENFELD looks PUZZLED then CONCERNED but nods.

CUT TO...

EXT: BELLAGIO FOUNTAIN, 2:45PM

The KVBC-3 NBC van with its relay dish on the top and its "Watching Out For You" catchphrase emblazoned on the side pulls up to the curb on LAS VEGAS BLVD.

Almost immediately, vans from Fox, ABC, CBS, PBS, and Telemundo arrive and people begin to congregate.

A half-dozen black-and-whites join the scene, BLUE AND RED LIGHTS FLASHING.

CUT TO...

EXT: MARGARITAVILLE, PATIO – NEARLY 3:00PM

A.J., ARYANA, and ROSENFELD sit at a table, with two pitchers of Margaritas and several glasses. LIZ leans out over the balcony to view the street below.

Liz sees a mass movement south, in the direction of the BILLAGIO FOUNTAIN.

LIZ:

What do you think is going on?

A.J.:

Whatever it is, I don't want any part of it! I hate crowds.
Come back and sit down.

LIZ:

Let's check it out! (she heads for the stairs)

A.J., ROSENFELD, and ARYANA rise quickly to follow after LIZ

CUT TO...

EXT: PARIS HOTEL, NEARLY 3:00PM

PORTER, FAUSTINI and SHOEMAKER emerge from the EIFFEL TOWER. exit

SHOEMAKER:

What the hell's goin' on?

PORTER:

I don't know, but I got a bad feeling about this.

PORTER and SHOEMAKER, with FAUSTINI behind, guarding his BANDAGED NOSE, push, shove, and squeeze their way to the wall.

Suddenly the decibel level drops at the curious sight of...

A MAINTENANCE RAFT in the pond, its lone occupant gazing at the throng pressing against the wall.

CROWD:

"What's that" or "What's he doing" can be heard in a dozen spots scattered throughout the crowd.

The NEWS CREWS exchange empty, curious glances.

DAN HAMILTON is nervous, hoping there is more to this than one little man on a raft.

A young woman screams. The crowd nearest the scream turns to see the source...it is LIZ.

LIZ has come close enough to see CAIN standing tall and proud on the raft.

A.J. wraps an arm around LIZ and pulls her close.

LIZ begins to shake with FEAR.

At the other end of the pond, WES and ANZHELA have found each other, and DAN HAMILTON has found the two of them.

HAMILTON:

This better be good! (his tone is part threat and part pleading)

WES raises a questioning eyebrow, shrugs a non-specific answer.

HAMILTON:

Oh, Great! I hope you're a better job reference than a news source.

The NEWS ANCHOR from Channel 8 Eyewitness News, weaves his way through the crowd.

CHAMPAGNE:

Nice prank, Dan! So what's your next career going to be?

Suddenly a VOICE rings out through the WALL SPEAKERS.

CAIN:

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for your kind indulgence.

LIZ gulps a breath and starts to weep at the sound of CAIN'S voice.

The world has become a more dangerous place than ever.

CROWD SHOT with murmurs of 'what the hell is this?'

Fanatical groups around the world have made little secret of their desire to cause widespread destruction and panic throughout America.

Murmurs are now more acquiescent.

We no longer scan the skies for Soviet missiles.
Instead, we live in fear of suspicious foreigners with
briefcases or knapsacks.

There is general agreement muttered by the attentive mass, which presses forward to hear and see more.

Tears stream down LIZ's cheeks.

We have come to think of nuclear weapons only as big
explosions. We have forgotten the true horror posed by
nuclear material: radiation and radioactivity. The
tragedy of Hiroshima and Nagasaki has been reduced
to a couple of paragraphs in our history books. We
have allowed ourselves to pretend we could safely use
nuclear power and dispose of our radioactive waste.
We have taken an 'out-of-sight; out-of-mind' attitude to
the growing threat posed by our nuclear garbage.
Experts will tell you that the half-life of the stored
material is ten thousand years. What they don't tell you
is that the life of the containers holding that material is
only one hundred years. What nightmare awaits your
great-grand-children?

The POLICE have wedged their way to the front of the CROWD and are trying to decide what to do about
this CRACKPOT.

OFFICER:

The three o'clock show begins any second now. That
should put an end to this joker's fifteen minutes.

CLOSE ON CLOCK ABOVE: 3:00PM STRIKES.

The WATER SHOW does not start.

CAIN:

But there is a greater, more immediate threat posed by
the world's nuclear waste. Unscrupulous factions in the
world want nothing more than to create chaos and
destruction in the west. The sheer amount of nuclear
material available almost guarantees this will happen.
It's time you were reminded of the real danger so you
will stop deferring this responsibility to someone else.

CAIN turns and reaches for the METAL VALISE behind him. It is the same VALISE that T.O. was carrying.

A POLICE OFFICER quickly draws his service REVOLVER, but the OFFICER-IN-CHARGE barks a
command to holster it. They continue to watch and wait.

CAIN turns to face the CROWD, now deathly silent.

CAIN raises two shiny HALF-SPHERE objects and shows them to the people.

CAIN:

This, ladies and gentlemen, is weapons grade plutonium.

There is a collective GASP throughout the CROWD.

This material will very soon be back in the hands of the authorities. But there is much more where this came from. Radiation does not discriminate rich from poor, old from young. It is an equal opportunity killer and you must know what it can do.

CAIN brings the TWO SPHERES together in front of him.

A great BLUE LIGHT engulfs CAIN.

After only a few seconds CAIN separates the SPHERES and returns them to the METAL VALISE.

He looks again to the people standing quietly before him.

CAIN:

In the next hours — perhaps days — your news people will report to you the details of my agonizing death by lethal radiation.

CAIN lowers himself shakily to the raft.

He sits propped up by one hand, the other clutching at his now nauseous stomach.

His head wobbles under its own weight, his chin bounces unsteadily against his chest as he struggles to remain conscious.

LIZ's knees buckle and she COLLAPSES UNCONSCIOUS into ROSENFELD's arms.

POLICE try to get the crowd to move away.

MEDIA PEOPLE press closer to the wall to get better angles.

DAVE CHAMPAGNE looks over to DAN HAMILTON in disbelief.

HAMILTON is too stunned to gloat.

As HAMILTON looks at the lone figure on the raft, the FOUNTAIN erupts in ghostly pillars of spray swaying mournfully to the sound of the HALLELUJAH CHORUS.

PORTER, FAUSTINI, and SHOEMAKER are forced back by the POLICE but are determined not to retreat too far.

PORTER jabs at the numbers on his cell phone. BRIDGER will want to hear about this immediately.

Short, intermittent bursts from an AMBULANCE SIREN force a path through the SEA OF PEDESTRIANS craning for a look at the drama.

A second raft with THREE UNIFORMED OFFICERS glides through the still-falling mist of the swaying plumes and docks beside CAIN's raft.

The OFFICERS' initial instinct is to grab CAIN roughly, but on coming close to the man who is looking at them with a sad, weak expression, they feel COMPASSION instead.

The OFFICERS take a knee next to CAIN, asking respectfully after his condition.

CAIN speaks a one-word response, unable to manage more.

CAIN:

Pain!

OFFICER DILLNER, a man with powerful shoulders and a steel jaw, quietly tells CAIN to sit tight and not worry, they will get him to the AMBULANCE as quickly as possible.

There is already NOTICEABLE SWELLING in CAIN's hands.

CUT TO...

EXT: UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER – 3:40PM

WES comes out to meet the arriving ambulance.

WES'S expression shows anger and frustration.

EXT: UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER – 3:45PM

Two EMTs lower the gurney from the ambulance amidst a blur of GREEN SCRUBS and WHITE LAB COATS.

A SEA OF SURGICAL MASKS lends an aura of false hope to the scene.

I-V Bags sway over the gurney to the flutter and clack of the wheels as the gurney is propelled from the Emergency Entrance to a waiting elevator.

A MALE NURSE holds the elevator doors open in anticipation of the gurney's arrival.

WES, two doctors, three nurses, and two FBI agents stand by CAIN in the elevator.

The DING of the OPENING DOORS produces a burst of FRENETIC ENERGY as the gurney is thrust down the corridor, past the nurses' station, and into the waiting and sterile CLEAN-ROOM.

DR. DARRYL MUKAI, a longtime friend of WES is the doctor-in-charge of this emergency. He bears a faint resemblance to Mr. Sulu of Star Trek.

MUKAI:

What would you like me to do?

WES:

Keep him comfortable with morphine — as much as you can give him. Let's at least let him go out with a little dignity.

MUKAI:

What the hell was he trying to do out there, Wes?

WES:

He was trying to give us a wake-up call, Darryl. He was trying to save us from ourselves.

FBI DRISCOLL:

Excuse me, Dr. Franklin.

WES:

Ah, Agent Driscoll. (Wes waves over Driscoll's partner)

FBI DRISCOLL:

What would you like us to do, sir?

WES:

Darryl, this is Special Agent Driscoll and Agent Nyes of the FBI. Gentlemen, Dr. Mukai is the head of the medical detail here.

FBI DRISCOLL:

Yes sir.

WES:

How are you men at undercover work?

FBI DRISCOLL:

Sir?

WES:

(to Mukai) Darryl, have someone get these men some scrubs? (to the agents) There are men who might try to get access to Cain - dangerous men. Hover around the nurses' station. Get to know what everyone looks like on this floor.

CUT TO...

EXT: MCCARRAN AIRPORT – 7:10PM

INT: MCCARRAN AIRPORT ESCALATOR

BRIDGER rides the escalator to BAGGAGE CLAIM.

CUT TO...

EXT: PARIS HOTEL – 7:50PM

INT: PARIS HOTEL – PORTER'S ROOM

BRIDGER is in the room with PORTER, SHOEMAKER, and FAUSTINI.

BRIDGER looks at the bandaged nose of FAUSTINI, shakes his head in disapproval.

BRIDGER:

Nice job, Porter. (sarcastically) Sit down, all of you. In as few words as possible, tell me what Cain's status is and how you plan to get him out of there.

PORTER:

The hospital is a fortress, boss. We can't even get into the building, let alone get Cain out.

BRIDGER:

Okay, I'm going to the hospital...alone.

PORTER begins to speak an objection but BRIDGER will have none of it.

Quiet, Tony. I need to see Cain for myself. I need to know what his current condition is so we can estimate when his 'miraculous recovery' will begin and get him out before they notice.

BRIDGER moves to the door. He starts to pull it open, then turns once more to the three men, his LASER GAZE on FAUSTINI.

BRIDGER:

Beaten up by a girl!

BRIDGER gives a pathetic laugh and shakes his head as he leaves the room in disgust.

FADE TO...

INT: UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER – NIGHT

INT: CAIN'S ROOM

CAIN lies still, almost corpse-like, his breathing is shallow. He is red and bloated.

CAIN moans at a flush of PAIN.

WES activates the MORPHINE DRIP and the MOANS cease.

Wires lead from CAIN to a MONITOR near the bed.

MUKAI's question goes round in WES's brain.

WES:

What the hell were you trying to do out there? Did you really think it would have some lasting impression?

CUT TO...

INT: UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER – STAIRWELL DOOR

The STAIRWELL DOOR inches open and HAMILTON slips in with photographer PETER PAVONI close in tow.

HAMILTON looks left, sees the TWO UNIFORMED COPS at the elevator, and instinctively moves right.

Up the corridor HAMILTON sees WES bedside looking down on what has to be the now-famous MYSTERY MAN of Las Vegas.

HAMILTON and PAVONI quickstep their way up the hall but are quickly spotted by the COPS AT THE ELEVATOR.

At the far end of the hall, the SCRUBS-CLAD FBI AGENTS see the uniforms move toward the two unidentified men, and move to intercept the gatecrashers.

CUT TO...

INT: CAIN'S ROOM

WES sees the developing scene. In an instant he is on the move. He heads out the door to intercede in HAMILTON's behalf before the POLICE and FBI grab them.

WES:

Dan (in a loud whisper) what are you doing up here?

POLICE and UNDERCOVER FBI agents turn to WES, alertly awaiting his instruction.

How did you get past security downstairs?

WES waves off his sentries.

It's okay, guys. I'll handle this.

HAMILTON:

You've got one hell of a pissed off media klatch downstairs, Wes.

HAMILTON is chomping at the bit for information; Pavoni produces a STACCATO burst of SHUTTER CLICKS.

Did you think they'd all just pack up and go home when the ambulance carted this guy off? And who is this guy anyway? What the hell was he trying to prove out there? Did you know this is what he had in mind?

WES:

Whoa, whoa!! Jeez Dan, come up for a little air once in awhile. (Wes toward Pavoni) Who's the crazed tourist?

HAMILTON:

Sorry, Wes. That's Pavoni, Peter Pavoni.

PAVONI wears an Army flak jacket, two more cameras strung across his shoulders bandoleer-like and bouncing freely at his sides.

WES:

Let's talk in the waiting room.

CUT TO...

INT: WAITING ROOM

HAMILTON:

C'mon Wes, what's the story here?

WES:

The 'story' Dan is that a man is lying in a room up the hall dying of radiation poisoning.

HAMILTON:

I mean why did he do it? And why did you let him?

WES:

First, I didn't 'let him'. You know me better than that, Dan. And I sure as hell didn't know he had Plutonium in his possession!

HAMILTON:

Fair enough. So what was the point of this public suicide attempt?

WES:

You heard him. And by the way, thanks. You sure stirred up a hornet's nest of news people.

HAMILTON:

Yeah, well they were getting pretty antsy (pause) till that blue light flashed! What the hell was that anyway?

WES:

Technically? Technically it was ionized atoms of air. But for all practical purposes (pause) it was the moment of Cain's death.

HAMILTON:

That's his name? Cain? Cain what?

WES:

Jared Kennan Cain.

HAMILTON:

Strange name. What do you know about the guy? Where's he from? What's he do? Family? Friends? Anyone who would benefit from his death?

WES:

With your help, we will all benefit from his death. But now you tell me something, (glances at his wristwatch) it's been a little over five hours. Is anything being reported or was this all just a tragic waste of time and life?

HAMILTON:

Are you kidding! This thing went viral at six, and it's been non-stop since. Every station around the country is digging through its archives for anything it can find on our nuclear energy programs. Hell, they're showing clips from Hiroshima and Nagasaki like it just happened yesterday. He's got all the media in a word-war over our nuclear policies and strategies.

WES:

What's Washington saying about all this?

HAMILTON:

Surprisingly, it's one of the first times I've seen those sons-a-bitches mute on a topic this big. I'll tell you this much, if this Cain wanted us to take a good hard look at what we're doing, he sure has succeeded at that!

WES:

You said stations have dug up archive footage of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. I don't know if the stations are ready for it but I think it's time to update those images. (glances over at Pavoni) Mr. Cameraman, you ready to earn your pay?

PAVONI jumps to his feet.

CUT TO...

INT: OUTSIDE CAIN'S ROOM

WES:

This won't be pretty.

WES enters the room first. HAMILTON is followed by PAVONI, camera raised to eye level now.

Even in the low light of the room we can see the magnitude of the devastation to CAIN.

PAVONI drops the camera, which JERKS at the strap around his neck. He rushes from the room, gagging back the sickness.

HAMILTON is close at his heels, his stomach churning.

TEARS wells up in WES's eyes.

WES:

(softly) God help you, my friend.

WES exits the room.

WES:

(to Pavoni) Are you going to be alright?

PAVONI braces himself against the nurses' hutch. He nods.

WES:

How about you Dan? You okay?

HAMILTON, ghostly pale, doesn't respond immediately but after a couple deep breaths BOBS HIS HEAD slowly.

WES turns toward CAIN's room and reaches to push the door open.

Suddenly...

MUKAI:

Dr. Franklin.

WES turns to see TWO WHITE-COATED MEN walking toward him.

MUKAI:

Wes, this is Dr. Cornell Bridger.

WES feels an electric charge pulse through his brain.

MUKAI:

Dr. Bridger is the head of the GENETIC DISCOVERY CORPORATION. They're over in your neck of the woods.

BRIDGER extends his hand.

BRIDGER:

Dr. Franklin.

WES smiles and takes BRIDGER's hand.

WES:

(affably) Dr. Bridger.

MUKAI:

It seems our patient has been working with Dr. Bridger's group for the past couple years.

BRIDGER:

Yes, Mr. Cain has a somewhat atypical genetic makeup that we have been studying. In certain situations his immune system gives him a shorter recuperative period than one might expect.

WES:

Really?

BRIDGER:

(Bridger begins to backpedal) Oh, nothing significant, mind you. Small things like viruses or bacteria.

WES:

What have you learned?

BRIDGER:

Well, everything is really very preliminary, you know.

WES:

Of course. I'm sorry this tragedy will bring that work to an end.

BRIDGER:

What do you mean?

WES:

This isn't a case of the flu. Cain probably won't live through the night.

BRIDGER:

(to Mukai) Perhaps I could see Mr. Cain now so I can get a better idea of just how tenuous his condition is.

MUKAI:

Certainly. Wes, will you join us?

WES:

Of course! (Wes gestures to Hamilton and Pavoni) I've asked these men to join us as well. I want to document Cain's condition...

BRIDGER:

Are you sure that's advisable, Dr. Franklin? Too many people in the room could upset Mr. Cain's rest and interfere with his healing process.

WES:

Dr., let me be clear: there is no 'healing process' going on in that room. There's only a man dying.

CUT TO...

INT: CAIN'S ROOM – NIGHT

PAVONI clicks off a dozen pictures then quietly leaves the room.

HAMILTON cranes an ear to hear the WHISPERING DOCTORS and scribbles notes in a concerted effort not to look at the bloated, oozing carcass in the bed.

BRIDGER:

(to Mukai) What are you doing for him?

Suddenly...

The MONITOR sounds an alarm as we see CAIN's pulse flatline.

In a matter of seconds NURSING STAFF rush into the room, squeezing past the men to get to the patient.

One turns off the incessant wailing tone on the MONITOR while two others inspect the I-V bags and connections.

Yet another wheels a crash cart closer to the bed and prepares to jolt the quiet heart back to life.

WES:
Nurse...that won't be necessary.

MUKAI gives a confirming nod and lowers his eyes.

Minutes pass.

Suddenly the silent MONITOR pulses back to life with its steady blip-blip-blip.

BRIDGER shows an arrogant smile.

WES and MUKAI look at each other in stunned disbelief.

WES shoots to the side of the bed as CAIN appears to speak.

CAIN's face is swollen and distorted. He can barely move his lips to speak.

WES leans down, straining to understand what CAIN wants to say.

WES sees pools well-up in CAIN's eyes.

Through a steady stream of tears CAIN whispers weakly a single word over and over into WES's ear.

CAIN:
Magnificent! Magnificent! Magnificent!

The soothing blip-blip-blip of the MONITOR abruptly, and with a sense of finality, changes once more to its steady FLATLINE TONE.

WES:
(whispers a variation of Psalm 103 into Cain's ear) The
Lord is merciful. He will not always show hostility nor
maintain it for ever.

BRIDGER has been on his cell phone. He closes his phone and as if in charge, begins giving orders.

BRIDGER:
I'll take responsibility for the body from here,
gentlemen.

MUKAI:
I'm afraid I can't let you do that, Dr. Bridger. Not without
clearance from the Las Vegas Police Department.

WES is silent, choosing his moment and studying BRIDGER.

BRIDGER:

This is no longer a local matter, doctor. This is now a matter of national security.

WES:

You seem to be giving out an awful lot of orders for someone who doesn't even work in this hospital.

BRIDGER:

I'd stay out of this if I were you, Franklin.

MUKAI:

Dr. Bridger, you have no authority here...

BRIDGER:

I was hoping it wouldn't come to this, doctor. But since you raise the question of authority...

BRIDGER pulls an ENVELOPE from his breast pocket and hands it to MUKAI.

MUKAI removes a LETTER and reads it quickly. His hand begins to tremble.

WES takes the LETTER and reads it.

CLOSE ON: Letter with VP Seal.

CLOSE ON SIGNATURE: GEORGE S. AUSTIN

BRIDGER:

(to Wes, arrogantly) I trust that covers any additional comments you might have.

WES:

This is the Vice President's order and his signature?

BRIDGER:

Yes it is. And under the authority of the Vice President, I expect full cooperation.

WES:

(gestures to the office) Let's take this discussion in there.

BRIDGER:

There is no discussion. Cain's body must be moved downstairs immediately (pause) I insist!

WES:

And I insist, that we take it in there. Now!

MUKAI and BRIDGER go into the office first, with WES bringing up the rear.

As WES passes his two MEN IN SCRUBS he gives a wink and cocks his head toward the room.

DRISCOLL and NYES follow quickly behind.

WES gestures to NYES to pull the door shut.

BRIDGER:

What are these two doing here? You two, out!

Neither man moves.

WES:

Dr. Bridger, I must apologize, (his voice is playful but with an edge) I neglected to make proper introductions. This is Special Agent Driscoll (he smiles to the man on his left) and this is Special Agent Nyes (he smiles at the man on his right) They're with the FBI.

The blood drains from BRIDGER's face and his knees go weak.

WES:

(to the agents) Gentlemen, last Monday a San Francisco FBI Agent — Brad Andrews; I think you know him — was gunned down outside the offices of Dr. Joe Rosenfeld. The man who did the shooting was working under the direction of this man.

The agents stiffen and glare at Bridger.

Oh, and the man who shot your colleague (pause) he'll be arriving in a van downstairs in a few minutes. As to the other two with him, I'm confident you'll find a long list of things to charge them with. Now, if you don't mind, (Wes glares at Bridger one last time) would you please get this garbage out of here.

BRIDGER escalates his objections as the TWO AGENTS handcuff him and lead him away.

FADE TO...

EXT: UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER – MORNING

INT: MORGUE

M.E. MARSHALL:
Here are the ashes, Wes.

The ashes are in a SMALL METAL BOX.

ROSENFELD:
That's it? Hunh! Amazing. A lifetime reduced to a boxful
of ashes not much bigger than a cigar box.

WES exchanges a cryptic knowing look with MARSHALL.

WES:
I owe you one, Jim.

CUT TO...

EXT: UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER, PARKING LOT – MORNING

INT: PRIUS, DRIVING AWAY

WES:
Joe, I need to ask a favor of you. A.J. and I have to
finish some business in Washington before we go
home. Would you take the ashes back to California and
bury them.

ROSENFELD:
No problem. Any place special?

WES:
No. You pick. Just one caveat, Joe. This thing with
Cain...it was related to another job I'm working on.
There may be others with an interest in locating Cain.

ROSENFELD:
Cain! The man is dead for god's sake! What the hell
could anyone possibly want with a boxful of ashes?

WES:
Let's just say some mysteries aren't lost to the grave. It
would be helpful if any search for Cain's ashes were at
least complicated, you know what I mean?

FADE TO...

EXT: WASHINGTON DC, WHITE HOUSE – SUNDAY MORNING

INT: WAITING ROOM OUTSIDE OVAL OFFICE

Three CABINET MEMBERS emerge from the OVAL OFFICE. All three nod a practiced professional smile as they walk past.

PRES. ADMIN:

The President will see you now.

WES, A.J. and ANZHELA rise and enter the OVAL OFFICE, where PRES. TREEM, FORSYTH, and BERGSTROM are already present.

FORSYTH makes the formal introductions.

FORSYTH:

Madame President, I would like to introduce you to Dr. Wes Franklin and Ms. Ashley Jordan. And of course you already know Ms. Starkova.

PRES. TREEM:

Dr. Franklin, Ms. Jordan, it's an honor to meet you both. (to Anzhela Starkova) My dear, it's so nice to finally meet you in person. (the two ladies touch cheeks)

WES is surprised and curious that these two women seem to know each other.

PRES. TREEM:

Please make yourselves comfortable. (She gestures toward the couches.)

WES:

Thank you Madame President. I must admit to some curiosity at your knowing Anzhela.

PRES. TREEM:

(she drapes an arm around Anzhela's shoulder)
Anzhela is a new friend but I trust the relationship will grow over the years.

WES has a quizzical smile on his face.

PRES. TREEM:

Maybe we should back up to when Secretary Forsyth summoned you to Washington last week. (to Bergstrom) Madame Director...

BERGSTROM:

Our operatives in Ukraine have been following the dealings of a consortium of players for quite some time. This group had been trying to find buyers for some nuclear material from Chernobyl.

PRES. TREEM:

A month ago things got extremely interesting. The Ukraine consortium made contact with a group of Arab businessmen looking to buy a quantity of weapons-grade Plutonium.

That's where your ANKH NETWORK came in, Dr. Franklin. The Ukrainians enlisted a young man to deliver a sample of their material to the Arabs. I wanted to outsource this operation because...well frankly, because we didn't know who to trust...and your group are beyond reproach.

WES:

So you found a lovely young Russian girl (he smiles at Anzhela) to keep an eye on their young man? I've been wondering since Friday afternoon where Cain got hold of weapons-grade Plutonium. Suddenly Anzhela shows up. Now I hear about the operation she was on for you and it starts to become clear. But how is my sweet Russian friend able to smuggle a briefcase full of Plutonium into Las Vegas?

TREEM's eyes smile.

WES:

So here is what I come up with. Anzhela successfully recovers the Plutonium from the courier. Your CIA is happy with this but decides to go for the gold and thinks, 'Why don't we see if the bigger threat is possible? Could someone smuggle nuclear material into our country without getting caught?'

TREEM has an appreciative look.

PRES. TREEM:

Yes, we would be thrilled to prove that nuclear material could NOT be smuggled into the country. Now my government is left wondering how Anzhela got through our security with a valise full of Plutonium?

ANZHELA:

When you asked me to try to bring this material into your country, I contacted Mr. Cain for his help. Mr. Cain has been a friend and benefactor since I was a baby. My life would be very different if not for him. In my book, he is a saint. (she chokes back a tear) I wish I had never asked him to help with this whole Plutonium business! (to Pres. Treem) He told me you were trying to do good and important things to reduce the nuclear threat to the world. He said this Plutonium might help him make your point to your people. I do not know if your people will appreciate what he did. But you must make them understand. You must make everyone at your summit meeting understand.

PRES. TREEM:

I will do my best, Anzhela. You can believe that. I will do my best.

ANZHELA:

I know you will. And they will believe you. Mr. Cain's sacrifice will help.

BERGSTROM:

Anzhela, we're counting on you to help us. We need to know how you got into the country with that Plutonium without being detected.

ANZHELA:

Yes. When we are finished here, I will tell you everything.

The INTERCOM suddenly squawks.

PRES. ADMIN:

President Treem, the Vice President is here.

TREEM walks to her desk and presses a button.

PRES. TREEM:

Send him in.

AUSTIN enters the room in his typical arrogant, self-confident persona.

AUSTIN:

Good morning. (his eyes sweep the room) Mr. Secretary, Madame Director.

AUSTIN doesn't recognize WES or ANZHELA but brightens at seeing A.J. again.

Ms. Jordan! Don't tell me the President has a computer virus, too!

PRES. TREEM:
More like a cancer, George.

AUSTIN and TREEM exchange stares for a long moment before she says coolly.

Have a seat. (pause) I understand you've taken a late-life interest in genetics.

We see a look of concern and apprehension on AUSTIN'S face.

PRES. TREEM:
What exactly have you been discussing with Dr. Cornell Bridger?

AUSTIN seems to fumble for a plausible explanation.

AUSTIN:
Dr. Bridger's group is at the center of our biological counter-measures research. His program is a matter of national defense, so naturally I...

TREEM has reached her limit on patience. She unfolds a letter and looks it up and down as panic sets in on AUSTIN's face.

PRES. TREEM:
What exactly was Dr. Bridger doing that warranted this letter, George?

AUSTIN stares at TREEM. His expression morphs from panic to anger. He sits silent for what seems an eternity.

PRES. TREEM:
Yes, I surmised as much. Well, no matter. Dr. Bridger has been quite forthcoming. (long pause) Would you really have killed me, George?

The question hangs in the air for what seems an eternity.

AUSTIN's frozen stare is as much an answer as she needs.

TREEM walks to the RESOLUTE desk and grabs a MANILA FOLDER and ballpoint pen.

TREEM crosses the room and extends the folder and pen to AUSTIN.

AUSTIN looks angrily at the folder.

AUSTIN:

What's that?

PRES. TREEM:

That's your final heroic act for the country, George. It's your resignation. (pause) You have a bad heart, George...and this job is too much stress for you.

AUSTIN:

I'm not going to sign that.

PRES. TREEM:

Do you want to put the country through the turmoil of discovering what you were trying to do here? Instead you go out with honor, your legacy intact.

AUSTIN:

You can't prove a thing.

PRES. TREEM:

You're right, George; I can't prove it in a court of law. But you and I, (she looks around to the others) and everyone in this room knows the truth. It would be bad for the country—and bad for your legacy—to drag this into the light of day. This way you go out on top.

AUSTIN makes eye-contact with everyone in the room, finding no sympathy from those present. His expression changes from defiant to defeated until he finally scratches out his name.

FADE TO...

EXT: LAKE BARCROFT, VIRGINIA – EARLY EVENING

EXT: OVERHEAD VIEW OF LARGE MANSION ON THE LAKE

INT: AUSTIN'S STUDY

There is a buzz from AUSTIN's FRONT GATE.

AUSTIN presses the intercom button for his GATED ENTRANCE.

AUSTIN:

Yes?

EXT: GATED ENTRANCE TO AUSTIN'S HOME

GAFFNEY:

George, 'tis Patrick. I come bearing gifts!

INT: AUSTIN'S STUDY

AUSTIN:
Patrick my lad! Come on up!

CUT TO...

EXT: GAFFNEY'S CAR DRIVES UP TO THE FRONT DOOR

AUSTIN answers the door wearing a maroon silk SMOKING JACKET.

GAFFNEY:
I hope I've not come at an inopportune time. Are you expecting guests?

AUSTIN:
No, Patrick, it's simply that old habits die hard. Ginny bought this for me in Hong Kong.

AUSTIN runs his thumb and finger along the lapel, lost momentarily in thought.

Since she died I've kept the habit.

AUSTIN'S jovial mood snaps back.

But Patrick, my friend what brings you to my little corner of the world?

GAFFNEY:
Well first and foremost, Happy Thanksgiving to you!

AUSTIN has forgotten it is Thanksgiving, but covers quickly.

AUSTIN:
Yes, yes, of course, certainly and a Happy Thanksgiving to you Patrick.

GAFFNEY:
Couldn't just let you fade into history without so much as a small parting gift, now, could I?

GAFFNEY hands AUSTIN a box.

CLOSE ON: Wrapping paper is the CMH design, blue paper with five blue stars.

GAFFNEY:
Congressional Medal of Honor, Mr. Vice President, highest honor in the land. I assure you, George, you may have left the stage but you will always be remembered. You're a hard act to follow.

AUSTIN:

Thank you, Pat. That means a lot coming from you.

AUSTIN looks once more at the ribbon then, with a touch of introspection.

I wonder what I would have been without the medals;
probably just another two-bit, self-promoting
congressman.

GAFFNEY:

(ignores the comment) Go ahead George, open it.

AUSTIN opens the box and withdraws a RARE BOTTLE OF WINE.

AUSTIN:

My gawd, man!

GAFFNEY:

So I assume it meets with your approval?

AUSTIN:

Montrachet 1978 from Domaine de la Romanée-Conti.
The most expensive bottle of wine in the world! But
how...

GAFFNEY:

Friends in high places.

AUSTIN:

Please, Pat...by all means come in. Let's retire to the
study and put a good-sized dent in this baby!

INT: AUSTIN HOME, STUDY – EVENING

AUSTIN opens the bottle of wine and pours a small amount in a glass. He offers the first taste to Gaffney.

GAFFNEY:

No, sir, the honor is all yours.

AUSTIN swirls the wine once and sniffs its bouquet.

AUSTIN:

Mmmm, delightful!

AUSTIN sips some and gently swirls it over his tongue.

Absolutely splendid!

AUSTIN begins to pour two glasses but GAFFNEY stops him.

GAFFNEY:

Ah, Mr. Vice President, you have a much better palette in these matters than I. Truth be told, I'd rather fancy a bit of that 15-year-old Jameson's you have on the shelf.

AUSTIN:

Of course, by all means.

GAFFNEY pours his whiskey and extends his glass.

GAFFNEY:

May you arrive in heaven an hour before the Devil knows you're dead.

AUSTIN:

Thank you, my friend. With the life I've led, that's probably the nicest toast anyone could ever give me!

They take a swallow and lower themselves to their chairs.

AUSTIN:

This is truly a wonderful wine, Patrick. Thank you so much! It has an unusual taste. I can't quite identify it (looks pensively at glass)...

GAFFNEY sips his whiskey and shudders.

GAFFNEY:

Brrrr, Now that's the taste of Ireland.

AUSTIN:

(laughs) Then here's to you, my boy! You help yourself to as much as you like because you and I are going to swap war stories and drink till we can't get out of these chairs! And then we'll drink a little more!

The men light cigars and sit back in their chairs.

AUSTIN:

Patrick, I haven't felt like this since...well, since I was a hotshot young pilot.

A twinge of melancholy colors the recollection.

GAFFNEY:

I saw your movie.

AUSTIN:

You and everyone else in the country. TNT ran that thing continuously for three days!

GAFFNEY:

No, it was a good movie. Of course, you're much better looking than Paul Newman! How much of the story was true and how much was Hollywood?

AUSTIN:

You know, this might be one of the few times they didn't have to embellish the truth.

GAFFNEY raises his glass and an eyebrow.

GAFFNEY:

Amazing. All those MiG kills on your first sortie! That's got to be some kind of record!

AUSTIN:

Beginner's luck. Maybe there's a little Irish in me after all!

GAFFNEY:

George, not even the Irish have that much luck! You can never underestimate the value of a hero in war time, George.

AUSTIN shifts uneasily in his chair, a wave of discomfort washes over his face.

AUSTIN:

(His mood changes abruptly) This policy is all wrong, Patrick. She's weakening this nation! It's the Arab mentality; they only understand fear and strength. They aren't motivated by lofty ideals or political theories. They want to kill us and the only thing stopping them is they know we'd vaporize them if they ever tried something stupid.

GAFFNEY:

But George, she's the President.

AUSTIN:

Dammit, that's the problem! How the hell did she ever get elected? I was the one; it should've been me. I paid my dues. She never had the guts to put on a uniform and fight for the damn country. Now she's making the world a more dangerous place. Sooner or later we're going to have to send more brave young men and women into harms way. And for what, some stupid idealistic gamble?

AUSTIN'S hand goes to his side as an apparent wave of pain makes him squirm.

This world is a dangerous place, Pat. It's too damned dangerous to let a woman run it! They can't make the tough decisions about life and death with a clear head.

AUSTIN pauses for another swallow of wine.

GAFFNEY sees discomfort and pain on AUSTIN's face but says nothing.

GAFFNEY:

George, I think you're letting your age show.

AUSTIN takes this wrong and snaps.

AUSTIN:

What does that mean, what's my age got to do with anything?

GAFFNEY:

Not so much your 'age' as your 'era', Mr. Vice President. The roles women play have changed quite a bit since your combat days, George. You'll find they are as capable of making life-and-death decisions as any man.

AUSTIN:

Right! I plan to kill her and all she can manage to do is make me resign! She's a simpering coward, Patrick.

GAFFNEY:

Don't mistake compassion for weakness, George.

GAFFNEY clinks his glass to AUSTIN's and takes a good-natured swig of whiskey.

AUSTIN, in turn, raises his glass in solute.

GAFFNEY:

All the way back to the pharaohs, you'll find evidence that a woman's dark side is just as accessible as a man's. She simply has greater mastery over it!

AUSTIN squirms in his chair at a tightening in his chest.

GAFFNEY:

George, I think you should sit back and relax now, okay?

GAFFNEY helps AUSTIN sit comfortably back in his seat.

AUSTIN suddenly explodes.

AUSTIN:

She'll get us all killed! That's the raw truth. Eleanor Treem is a woman and as such is incapable of functioning in the cutthroat arena of backroom politics, in the bloody alleyways!

GAFFNEY:

Perhaps you underestimate her, Mr. Vice President. A woman takes her enemies by surprise, close in, when they least see it coming. This predator prefers nectar over daggers.

GAFFNEY's tone causes AUSTIN to straighten in his chair.

AUSTIN's eyes dart to the WINE BOTTLE on the table.

GAFFNEY:

Friends in high places. You asked me where I got such an expensive bottle of wine. And I answered 'Friends in high places' remember? (a brief silence) She really did want you to have that wine, George. She liked you. And she respected your years of service to the country.

AUSTIN appears to wrestle with his thoughts.

He suddenly realizes: he has been POISONED and will soon be DEAD.

GAFFNEY is sympathetic to AUSTIN's plight and wants to ease his mind.

GAFFNEY:

George, I hope you understand this is strictly business. You can't plot to kill the President then just walk away. And, dammit George, the last thing anyone wants to see is you hustled off in an orange jumpsuit. You're too important a symbol to the country. We need to believe the best about you. So you see, she really is strong enough to be our President. (pause) But more than that, George...

GAFFNEY leans close to AUSTIN'S ear and gives a coldblooded whisper.

...she IS our President.

Gaffney sits back and sips his whiskey.

I'm here as a friend, George.

AUSTIN'S expression shows he is angrily unappreciative of GAFFNEY'S statement.

That's true. I'll be the one to call 9-1-1 and I'll be here when they arrive. I'll control the information to the press. Your legacy is untarnished. You died of a bad heart, though for my money, my friend, you had a great heart! You just had a lapse in the thinking department. You'll always be remembered well, sir.

We see that AUSTIN'S eyes have gone vacant.

GAFFNEY casually cleans his Jameson's glass and puts away the bottle.

GAFFNEY takes one more long look at AUSTIN and scans the room, then punches in 9-1-1.

FADE TO...

EXT: CALIFORNIA, A CEMETERY – MORNING

We have come full-circle to CAIN'S burial.

GROUNDSKEEPER:

What about a headstone, sir? I don't have any instructions about a headstone or ground plate.

ROSENFELD:

There won't be one. Also, (he looks around the grounds) is there someplace else this could be buried? Something more out of the way?

GROUNDSKEEPER:

Yes, sir, (begins to point) There's a couple plots over....

ROSENFELD pushes the GROUNDSKEEPER'S hand down and looks around suspiciously.

ROSENFELD:

No, that's okay. I don't want to know. After we're gone pick out a nice, out-of-the-way spot. I just want to be able to say honestly that I don't know where these remains are buried. Understand?

JEFFERSON has a worried expression.

ROSENFELD:

Look, I'm not asking you to break the law, Jeff. I just want to make sure those remains never see the light of day again.

GROUNDSKEEPER:

Yes, sir. I 'spose I could do that.

JEFFERSON has his hands in his pockets, nervously stretching his coveralls.

Memory's not all it once was. And with an unmarked grave this small, it could take a little time to get the exact spot.

ROSENFELD:

Good. I have every confidence in you, Jeff. And here's a little something for your trouble.

ROSENFELD extends two folded FIFTY-DOLLAR BILLS.

JEFFERSON looks at the money. He smiles and sticks the money in his coveralls.

FADE TO...

EXT: CAYMAN ISLANDS, LUXURIOUS VERANDA OVERLOOKING THE BEACH – DAY

WES sips iced tea looking out at the water, lost in thought.

The phone rings.

WES:

Hello, Wes Franklin.

VOICE ON PHONE:

Wes, it's good to hear your voice.

WES:

Where are you?

VOICE ON PHONE:
I'm in Bangkok now.

CUT TO...

INT: HOTEL LOBBY IN BANGKOK

CAIN is sitting talking on his phone looking around at people moving about the hotel.

CAIN:
Such wonderful people, Wes. Have you been here?

EXT: Cayman Islands.

WES:
Yes...(pause) Liz is not handling this very well. And I'm having a bit of a problem myself. What...what was it like? What happened?

INT: Bangkok Hotel.

CAIN:
What was it like? It was, for what seemed an eternity, an intense suffering like nothing I have ever experienced. My own agonized annihilation left me shrieking silently in my skull. There was no escape, Wes. And the pain would not subside.

CAIN is silent for a moment.

WES hears breathing on the other end.

CAIN (V.O.):
I found myself in the blackness. Then something happened that never happened to me before: images began to form and flow.

We see a montage of scenes of CAIN'S life spanning the aeons: as a SUMERIAN WARRIOR, as an EGYPTIAN GENERAL, in an ELIZABETHAN town, in a CIVIL WAR town, in a EUROPEAN city in WWII, and his final actions in LAS VEGAS at the FOUNTAIN.

I looked closely as they streamed past and was suddenly struck by the notion that these were scenes from my life.

We see a burst of light that gradually takes on a humanoid form.

Suddenly a bright light flashed and drowned out everything. I felt this light as a personality, felt it as the Being of Light that Dr. Rosenfeld wrote about in his books.

The BEING OF LIGHT appears to reach out and touch CAIN, as the scene changes to a location in BANGKOK.

I wanted to go forward, but I was told I couldn't stay this time. I was shown a moment in time, (pause) in Bangkok (pause) where my presence was needed to save a life, a very important life to a lot of people.

EXT: CAYMAN ISLANDS

WES:

Did the Being of Light ask you a question?

INT: BANGKOK HOTEL.

CAIN:

Yes, He asked me casually, almost in passing, 'Have you answered your question yet?' I said a very heartfelt 'Yes' and began to laugh and cry at the same time, overwhelmed beyond description.

WES (ON PHONE):

I don't understand. What question did you ask—which you now had to answer?

CAIN:

The question I was asked to answer was the same question I had once shouted defiantly at this same Being of Light. (pause) I asked Him long, long ago, 'Am I my brother's keeper?'

We see the scene of CAIN arguing with the BEING OF LIGHT

INT: BANGKOK HOTEL

We see an expression of contrition, yet a visage of peace on CAIN'S face.

(Pause) Others may have a different answer, but I've had an eternity to consider this and for me - and especially for my beloved brother, Abel - the answer is a simple one: Yes.

EXT: CAYMAN ISLANDS

WES is stunned at the final realization of CAIN'S true identity.

WES:
Will we see you again? Or...

CAIN (ON PHONE):
I can say with absolute certainty, Wes, we will see each other again.

WES:
Where? When?

CAIN (ON PHONE):
Soon, and when you need me the most. You see, Wes, you are the reason the Being of Light sent me back. Just remember that when we see each other again. Whatever happens, don't be sad; there will be no tragedy. In that moment both of us will be saved.

WES:
Where? Where will I see you again?

WES is shouting into a dead phone.

The front door opens, A.J. comes in from the beach and walks out to the veranda.

WES:
You missed his call.

A.J. slowly shows a recognition of who WES means.

A.J.:
How is he?

WES can barely corral his thoughts. He looks at ASHLEY and feels peace.

WES:
He's doing just fine.

A.J.:
Thank God!

WES takes A.J. in his arms.

WES:
Yes... (pause) Thank God.

DISSOLVE TO CREDITS...

Casting suggestions based on the writers' images of the principle characters in the story...

Wes, A.J. & Aryana...



(Karl Urban)
Wes Franklin

(Bridget Moynahan)
Ashley Jordan

(Oded Fehr)
Rouzbeh Aryana

In Washington DC...



(John Cusack)
Secy of State
Crandall Forsyth



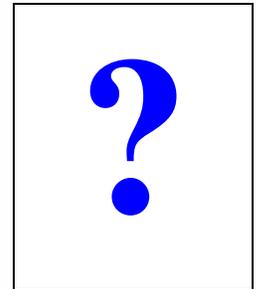
(Julie Delpy)
Dir. CIA
Sylvia Bergstrom



(David O'Hara)
CIA Section Chief
Patrick Gaffney



(Frank Langella)
V.P. George S. Austin



President Treem

In Menlo Park, CA...



(Scott Grimes)
Dr. Joe Rosenfeld



(Kristen Bell)
Liz Charles



(Viggo Mortensen)
Jared Kenan Cain

On the Train...



(Kellan Lutz)
Taras Ostrovsky – T.O.



(Olga Kurylenko)
Anzhela Starkova