

THE DREAM MACHINE

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TITLE:

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INT. CONFERENCE ROOM.

Darkness, with only the slight WHIRRING sound of a small fan in the background. A bright light fills the room for a few seconds. A WING-TIPPED LEFT FOOT rests on a carpeted floor near the leg of a chair.

Brief TYPING on a computer keyboard is heard.

The illumination within the room changes suddenly. An ARM RESTS ON THE SIDE OF A LEATHER CHAIR. FOUR BUTTONS are on the dark suit coat sleeve. EXPENSIVE CUFF LINKS adorn the shirt sleeve.

Background TYPING on a computer keyboard, followed by a change in room illumination.

A HIGH BACK OF AN EXECUTIVE CHAIR AND THE HEAD OF THE CHAIR'S OCCUPANT are silhouetted against a bright photo projected on a monitor somewhere in front of the chair.

Background TYPING, followed by another change in room illumination.

A slight FINGERPRINT is observed on a clear GLASS HALF-FILLED WITH WATER as it sits on a table.

Background TYPING, followed by another change in room illumination.

A nearly intelligible REFLECTION of the projected photo shimmers on the highly polished surface of a long unoccupied conference table.

Background TYPING, followed by another change in room illumination.

A PICTURE is displayed on the large flat computer screen on the wall and shows a large group of individuals standing on the steps of a large building. Two US flags, held by individuals, are engulfed in flames. Police surround the group on the steps. A small circle highlights the face of a young man on the steps, standing next to a man holding a bullhorn. Words at the bottom of the photo read:

Capital Steps, Washington DC, 23 October 2007
Exhibit Q

A small box appears and surrounds the circled face.

More background TYPING.

The area in the box is zoomed to fill the entire monitor screen and highlights a long-haired young man among the mass of people. He is wearing a weak beard and his eyes are fixed upon the man holding the megaphone. His hand is forming a fist and is raised into the air above his head.

Background TYPING.

Another PHOTO appears on the large computer monitor and shows a mass of people surrounded by police clad in riot gear and carrying shields. SIGNS are being held by some individuals; one contains the words, "Occupy this! We are the 99%!" A group of individuals appear to be hollering at the police, mere inches from the police officers' faces. One man's face - the same face previously observed - is encircled by a white circle. Words at the bottom of the photo read:

ZUCCOTTI PARK, NEW YORK CITY, 15 November 2011
Exhibit R

Background TYPING, followed by another photo change.

A PICTURE of a large group of all black-clad persons, replete with black ski masks covering their faces, carrying sticks and SIGNS stating "This is War" and "Become Ungovernable." A mobile light generator and flood light system is seen ablaze in the background with the word "Milo" hand painted on the body of the generator unit. That same figure, wearing a camouflaged military jacket, is holding a bullhorn and appears to be addressing the crowd. A small group of people surrounds the speaker, apparently attempting to protect him from possible counter-protesters. The caption at the bottom of the photo states,

Berkley, CA., 15 April 2017
Exhibit S

Background TYPING, followed by another photo change.

This PHOTO shows a mass of people - two groups apparently angry and facing off with each other. A circle surrounds the face of one individual. The face is partially concealed by a scarf and the individual holds a megaphone and is standing near a SIGN that reads, "Smash White Supremacy". Another sign in the background reads, "Unite the Right". Words at the bottom of the photo read:

Charlottesville, Virginia, 12 August 2017
Exhibit T

Background TYPING.

A small box appears and surrounds the circled face, and zooms in on the face. It appears to be the same individual seen in previous photos.

More background TYPING.

Another PHOTO appears - this time a collage of four pictures. One picture is of a large group of black-clad individuals, many wearing helmets with face shields, some donning gas masks, some carrying SHIELDS stating "Abolish the Police" and "BLM", and some carrying large sticks and skateboards. The other three look as if it is a war zone - trash bins and police sedans ablaze, lots of smoke, some black clad persons throwing items, police in riot gear and standing in line with a large fireworks explosion detonating immediately behind them, and battles between police and black-clad individuals. A circle is drawn around a black-clad individual holding a SHIELD with a hammer and sickle on it. Words at the bottom of the PHOTO read:

Portland, Oregon, 12 August 2020
Exhibit U

Background TYPING.

A small box appears and surrounds the circled face and zooms in on the face. Although the individual is partially wearing a paper face mask, one can easily recognize the individual as being in the earlier photos.

More background TYPING.

Another PHOTO appears - a picture with the US Capital in the background. A large mass of people are gathered on the steps of the Capital. Standing at the top of the steps a figure wearing a camouflaged military jacket is holding a bullhorn and appears to be addressing the crowd. A small circle surrounds the speaker. SIGNS in the crowd contain the words: "Trump Won", "Biden stole this Election", and "I hope you're happy - LIARS RULE AGAIN!" The caption at the bottom of the slide states,

Washington, D.C., 6 January 2021
Exhibit V

As the area in the box is zoomed in, one can see a striking resemblance to the individual identified in the prior pictures.

EXECUTIVE (O.C.)
That's enough. Do it!

OPENING CREDITS

INT. CHEAP HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

CAMERA PANS the interior of a small efficiency apartment. The sound of an OLD OSCILLATING FAN is being generated from somewhere in the dark. Clothes, crumpled newspapers, and empty beer cans litter the floor. A glowing neon light from a neighboring lounge FLASHES intermittently, periodically illuminating the cluttered contents of the small room. A sheet-covered person lies on a bed by the window.

In the hallway, a group of about a dozen SWAT TEAM MEMBERS quietly move and stop at the door to a room. The leader of the group motions another individual to the door. This individual kneels down and inserts a tube-like item under the door while simultaneously watching a small hand-held video monitor.

A snake-like fiber-optic camera slithers under the door and creeps along the floor, scanning the room.

CLOSE ON THE VIDEO MONITOR. The snake-like object slowly scans the room from left to right.

The INDIVIDUAL OPERATING THE CAMERA motions to the LEADER that the target is to their left. Slowly, the individual withdraws the fiber-optic camera from within the room.

Inside the room, MICHAEL lies on the bed. The illumination from the flashing neon light lasts long enough to distinguish the long hair and ratty-looking beard on the individual. MICHAEL'S EYES can be seen moving, even though closed. The eyes suddenly open wide, looking first left then right, as if startled and searching for something.

CRASH - the door of the room disintegrates from the impact of the battering ram used upon it. A GLOVED HAND flicks on the light switch and the room is flooded with light as a surge of men in dark SWAT-type uniforms and protective equipment pour through the doorway.

Michael, clad only in a white t-shirt and briefs, attempts to exit the room through the window to the fire escape but is abruptly grabbed and hauled back into the room.

As he is being brought back into the room, Michael flails his arms, grabbing at anything, pulling the face mask off of one intruder and a glove from the hand of another. Four men wrestle him face-down to the floor with arms and legs extended in all directions. The faces of the intruders remain unseen.

A syringe and small bottle appear from the coat pocket of one man. Fluid is drawn from the bottle and fills the syringe.

A piece of flexible rubber tubing is wrapped tightly around the Michael's arm and the mysterious liquid is injected into his vein, then the rubber tubing is removed.

The gloveless intruder is holding Michael's arm down. The last thing Michael sees as he loses consciousness is that GLOVELESS HAND with an ugly scar and traces of an old tattoo of an eagle.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. AIRPORT HANGER - NIGHT

The light from a small pen light blinds Michael as the light is moved from side to side, shining directly into Michael's eyes. A man (DOCTOR) wearing a white robe, with a stethoscope around his neck, releases his hold on Michael's eyelids.

DOCTOR
He's coming around now.

A voice from the back of the room mumbles.

EXECUTIVE (O.C.)
Good. It's about time.

Michael, with his entire head and face now cleanly shaven, is clothed in well worn denim trousers, a plain OD green t-shirt, and work boots and is lying on a cot. He struggles to move but discovers his arms restrained by a straight jacket and his legs bound by leg cuffs. With great effort and a little assistance from a nearby armed guard, he assumes a sitting position on the cot. The large hanger room is barren except for the cot, a chair, a desk, and a small black stealth-looking jet airplane.

In addition to the doctor and the guard, three other men are in the room - one wearing a dark executive suit, the other two wearing military looking flight suits. The EXECUTIVE (age 55) in the suit approaches Michael.

EXECUTIVE (CONT'D)
You are probably wondering what is going on... As you know, once an individual's body has been invaded by a cancer agent, if left unchecked, this agent will spread its cancer throughout the body until the body dies. We can treat the cancer symptoms all we want, but the only way to rid the body of cancer is to remove the cancer causing agent.

(MORE)

EXECUTIVE (CONT'D)

(slight pause)

The United States has determined that you have been a cancer agent to our nation, protesting everything, advocating forceful demonstrations, and inciting violence and riots, and even an insurrection. As a result, it has been decided that in order to save our nation from your cancer, you will be removed.

(slight pause)

Although, the easiest method to accomplish this task would be to impose capital punishment, our nation's leaders have decided that that alternative would be too harsh. However, the cancer agent still needs to be removed from the body.

The executive nods to the two flight suited individuals, and turns to exit the room.

MICHAEL

I am a lawyer. I have rights, you know.

The executive turns and faces Michael.

EXECUTIVE

Yes, you do. And so do the other 300 million people in our nation. And your method of expressing your rights infringes on the rights of most everyone else.

The executive turns and walks towards the exit.

The two men in flight suits affix a blindfold to Michael; however, they allow it to hang loosely around his neck. They lengthen the spacer bar between the ankle cuffs to allow their captive to walk, although it is more like a waddle. They lead him towards the dull black jet aircraft inside the hanger room.

Michael shouts back over his shoulder.

MICHAEL

You can't do this! I have rights!

The two men in flight suits assist Michael to climb the steps into the plane.

INT. AIRPLANE - CONTINUOUS

Michael is strapped into an uncomfortable seat using a special harness as the door is closed and the plane is pulled out of the hanger. The bar of his leg irons is shortened until the ankles nearly touch. A pin is inserted into this bar and a red nylon cord, extending from the seat back, is clipped to the pin. A similar blue cord leading from the seat back is clipped to a pin extending from a small packet situated near the navel of the ensnared man. The cloth straps which attach to the ends of the straight jacket sleeves also seem to terminate here.

The two men then strap themselves into special harnesses, sit down, and fasten their seat belts as the plane starts its engines and begins to move. The cabin goes dark, illuminated only by a digital clock on the cabin bulkhead.

The plane is airborne in a matter of seconds. The only sounds heard are the high-pitched jet engine ROAR and the "WSHHHH" of the wind passing by the outside of the craft and Michael's HEARTBEAT. The clock on the cabin wall reads: **21:17**.

INT. AIRPLANE - LATER

The CLOCK on the wall reads: **03:51**.

The cabin suddenly becomes bathed with the dim light of red cabin lights. The two men get out of their seats. One clips a white strap, attached to the top of the back of the Michael's seat, to a special eye hook on the cabin's ceiling. The other man clips two ends of a V-shaped orange strap to rings on each side of the pivot area of Michael's seat (where the seat cushion joins the seat back). He then clips the strap to another eye hook on the ceiling.

Michael knows something is about to happen. His heartbeat begins to drown out the noise of the wind and jet engines. (HEARTBEAT gets louder and faster).

The two men then unfasten a short strap from each of their harnesses, attach the free end to eye hooks on the ceiling, sit back down, and fasten their seat belts.

INT. AIRPLANE - LATER

The CLOCK on the wall reads: **03:54**.

Suddenly the light on the wall begins flashing yellow and the plane immediately begins an extremely sharp dive. Michael screams, but no one cares. His heart races and the HEART BEAT dominates all other sounds.

After a few seconds, the plane levels off and the yellow light stops flashing.

The two men leap to their feet. One man scurries around behind Michael's seat. He affixes the blindfold over Michael's eyes, and then depresses two release levers at the base of his chair. The other man turns a large lever and opens the jet's door. A deafening ROAR is born. Both individuals maneuver the seat by the door, then turn to watch the yellow light on the wall.

Large drops of sweat run down Michael's forehead and face as he struggles to free himself. He hollers something at the men. No one hears him.

The CLOCK reads: **03:55.**

The yellow light suddenly turns green.

One man maneuvers a lever at the base of the chair, the two men give a slight push and the chair and occupant disappear through the door.

EXT. AIRPLANE - CONTINUOUS

The sudden blast of air practically knocks the breath out of Michael. The roar of the jet fades rapidly. Soon, all that can be heard is the loud rapid HEARTBEAT and the struggle to catch his breath between curses.

Suddenly, there is a sharp jerk. The lower portion of the seat falls away. Legs are suddenly free to move independently, and the straight jacket bindings come loose. The sudden pressure of the straps around his shoulders and groin area now cause him to cry out in agony. He is able to work his hands and arms free and remove his blindfold. But he still sees nothing, the night is dark; no moon, no stars - nothing. Michael's RACING HEARTBEAT is now all that can be heard for the jet is now gone.

Michael wonders if he is dead, but the pressure of the harness straps reassures him that he is still very much alive.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - MOMENTS LATER

Suddenly, without warning, he hits the ground and rolls, cursing. The risers to his parachute entangle him like a spider web around an intruding insect. As he gets up and untangles himself, a sharp pain stabs at his right ankle. It appears as if it may be sprained. He has difficulty unfastening his harness through the sleeves of his jacket.

Finally he is able to remove the harness and slips out of the jacket. It is at that time he realizes it is cold outside.

He checks his pockets - nothing. Using one of the harness buckles and his teeth, he is able to cut and tear the ends off of each of the jacket sleeves and dons the once binding garment in an attempt to keep warm.

He has no idea of what time it is or where he is, except for the fact that he landed in some sort of field or pasture.

He uses the harness buckle to cut and tear the parachute canopy free from the risers and wraps himself in the silky material to help try to stay warm.

He limps away, stumbling in the darkness - in what direction, he does not know.

EXT. FARM - LATER

Michael comes across what appears to be a barn or stable. He stealthily enters the structure, causing a slight amount of distress with the cows occupying the building. He finds an empty stall, buries himself in the straw to conserve his body heat. In only a matter of seconds, he is asleep.

INT. BARN - MORNING

An icy bucket of water abruptly awakens Michael. As his eyes come into focus, he finds the sun shining brightly outside. He also finds himself staring down the barrel of a World War II era rifle. Behind the rifle, a burly bearded man (FARMER), dressed in a long fur coat, is shouting something not understandable by the bleary-eyed intruder - some type of foreign language.

NOTE: Except where specified, dialog is in Russian with English subtitles.

FARMER

Who are you and what are you doing?

An eight or nine year old BOY, eyes wide with curiosity, is semi-hiding behind the big farmer. The farmer again shouts something incomprehensible.

FARMER (CONT'D)

Who are you and what are you doing?

Using the rifle, he points to the metal ankle cuffs, now exposed through the straw, and repeats his words.

FARMER (CONT'D)
Who are you and what are you doing?

Michael slowly raises his hands in surrender.

MICHAEL
(in English)
Take it easy, big guy. I can
explain everything.

It is obvious that the two are unable to understand the words of each other.

The man with the rifle motions Michael to his feet and says something to the boy.

FARMER
(to the boy)
Go get a chair and a rope.

Michael slowly and awkwardly gets to his feet, shedding the parachute blanket, and again raises his hands high overhead.

The boy returns with a wooden chair and some hemp rope. The farmer hands him the rifle.

FARMER (CONT'D)
(to the boy)
If he moves, shoot him.

The boy takes the weapon and with a nervous, yet a determined expression on his face, points the rifle at Michael.

The farmer motions for Michael to sit down on the chair.

FARMER (CONT'D)
Sit here.

Not wishing to test the boy's nervous trigger finger, Michael follows his instructions and sits. The farmer quickly ties Michael's hands and feet together and then ties them to the chair. He retakes the rifle from the boy and gives him some additional instructions.

FARMER (CONT'D)
(to the boy)
Go get the sheriff.

The boy runs off.

The captor sits down on a nearby milking stool and rests the butt of his rifle on the ground. He begins talking to Michael as if Michael could understand what he was saying.

FARMER (CONT'D)

I sent the boy for someone who could translate between us. I do not know who you are and what you are doing, but we are going to find out.

While talking, he pulls a small cloth package out of his pocket. Out of his other pocket, he pulls a pocket knife. He unwraps the fabric, carves a slice of cheese from the mass that was unveiled, and devours the slice.

Michael stares at the food with hungry eyes as the small mass of food as it is being consumed.

The farmer, realizing that his food is the object of curiosity and desire by Michael, scorns him, rewraps the parcel, and buries it back into his furry pocket.

FARMER (CONT'D)

No, not for you.

INT. BARN - AFTERNOON

A horse is heard approaching. As it comes into view, the stranger sees two riders - the boy sitting behind another large man (SHERIFF). They dismount.

As they enter the shadows inside the barn, the man with the rifle stands, points towards Michael, and mumbles something to the newcomer.

(NOTE: dialog is in Russian with English subtitles)

FARMER

Here is the man I found hiding in my barn.

They both approach the bound man. Using his rifle as a pointer, the farmer taps at Michael's ankle cuffs.

FARMER (CONT'D)

Escaped prisoner?

Michael jerks as the rifle strikes his sore ankle.

MICHAEL

(in English)

Hey! Watch it!

Startled, the two men jump backwards. The farmer raises the gun as if Michael was about to attempt an attack.

FARMER

Better not try anything stupid.

Under the security of the rifle, the sheriff searches the intruder's pockets and finds nothing. He then releases some of the bindings of the captive, however, ensuring that the hands remain secured behind Michael's back, and leads Michael outside.

EXT. BARN - CONTINUOUS

The sheriff ties the free end of the rope binding Michael around the horse's neck and mounts his horse.

SHERIFF

(to the farmer)

You did the right thing. I'll take him and keep him in jail until we find out more about him and what's going on.

He snaps the reins and initiates the horse's movement. Michael has no option but to limp along behind the horse and horseman.

EXT. OLD VILLAGE JAIL - LATER

The party arrives at an old clay building. The sheriff dismounts and leads Michael inside.

INT. OLD JAIL - CONTINUOUS

The rusting iron bars reveal the structure as being a place of detention.

Michael is given some instructions.

SHERIFF

(in Russian, English subtitles)

I'm sure you won't be surprised if we do not recognize who you are and what you are doing.

Michael is abruptly placed into a crudely constructed cell. The only item of comfort for his use in the cell is a wooden bench affixed to the wall. The iron bar door creaks closed with much effort by the captor sheriff. The fourth key tried finally secures the barred door. Fortunately, the sun beating down on the clay material provides some heat within the building.

The sheriff exits the building with keys in hand, closing and latching the door behind him. The already dim room fades to black.

INT. OLD JAIL - LATER

Hours pass by with not as much as a sound being heard within the ancient jailhouse. The clay walls and stagnant air have turned the building into an oven under the constant attack of the relentless sun.

Suddenly, the door opens. The direct light of a setting sun streams through the darkness of the room.

Through squinting eyes, Michael sees the silhouettes of two people moving about. As the sun is shielded momentarily, Michael believes one of the shadowy forms to be that of the sheriff. Words suddenly break the silence. The sheriff's voice confirms Michael's belief.

SHERIFF

(in Russian, English
subtitles)

This is the man we caught, the one
I told you about.

The other silhouette approaches the cell as the sheriff speaks. The aroma of fresh bread begins to permeate the air.

As the sheriff's body temporarily screens the blinding sunlight, Michael discovers the other silhouette to be that of a tall woman (KATHRINE), in her mid 30's, wearing a ragged fur overcoat and with her dark hair wrapped up tightly under a fur hat. She is carrying a wooden tray, on which rests a small loaf of bread and a small bowl half-full and steaming with a dark brothy substance. She offers these to the prisoner.

KATHRINE

(in Russian, English
subtitles)

Here is some food for you. Eat.

Michael limps from his wooden bed over to the iron bars. As he reaches to accept her hospitable gift, he can't seem to separate his eyes from hers. She looks at him in a curious manner. For the first time in days he finds something nice to say.

MICHAEL

(in English)

Thanks.

KATHRINE
 (in English with Russian
 accent)
 English?

Michael is startled by her words. Though not perfect English, hers were the first words he had been able to understand since he boarded the fateful jet aircraft.

MICHAEL
 (stammering)
 American.

KATHRINE
 (to the sheriff in
 Russian, English
 subtitles)
 An American.

The jailer nods his understanding.

SHERIFF
 (to Kathrine in Russian,
 English subtitles)
 He has no documents. Ask him where
 his papers are? Why is he in leg
 irons?

Kathrine turns to Michael.

KATHRINE
 Why have you no papers? Why are
 you in irons?

MICHAEL
 It's a long story, and I am afraid
 that I don't have all the answers.

KATHRINE
 You limp.

MICHAEL
 Yes. Unfortunately, I've injured
 my ankle and these damn cuffs don't
 make it any easier.

KATHRINE
 (to the sheriff in
 Russian, English
 subtitles)
 I need to go in and check on his
 injured leg.

His response was brief, but authoritative.

SHERIFF
 (shaking his head, in
 Russian, English
 subtitles)
 Absolutely not!

KATHRINE
 (to the sheriff in Russian
 after a brief pause,
 English subtitles)
 If we are going to try to find out
 what this man is doing here, we
 need to earn his trust. Taking care
 of his injury would be a first step
 in earning his trust.

SHERIFF
 (after a thoughtful
 hesitation, in Russian,
 English subtitles)
 OK, but be careful. I don't trust
 him.

KATHRINE
 (to Michael)
 Please rest. I will return.

Kathrine smiles, turns, and departs with the sheriff. Once again, the room becomes filled with darkness and Michael sits to consume his meal.

INT. OLD JAIL - LATER

Kathrine and the sheriff return. An old oil lamp is lighted. Kathrine carries a blanket and basin of steaming water. The sheriff unlocks and opens the cell door, allows Kathrine to enter the cell, re-secures the door, and takes a seat in a nearby chair, an old rifle on his lap. Kathrine sets her load on the floor, opens the blanket to reveal a towel and rag strips.

KATHRINE
 (calmly and quietly)
 I thought you would like to clean
 up.

As Michael swings himself around on his hard bunk, he grimaces with obvious pain.

KATHRINE (CONT'D)
 Your ankle?

MICHAEL

Yes.

KATHRINE

Let me help you.

She unties his laces and carefully removes his boots and socks. She notices an occasional wince of pain as she touches and examines the swollen right ankle.

KATHRINE (CONT'D)

I do not think it is broken. This will help the swelling.

Kathrine bathes the foot and ankle with the warm water, then wraps the ankle tightly with a long strip of cloth.

Michael relaxes and quietly absorbs the beauty of this young woman under the soft illumination of the flickering oil lamp.

KATHRINE (CONT'D)

Who are you? Why are you here?

MICHAEL

My name is Michael, and I don't really know why I am here.

Kathrine's puzzled look indicated that an explanation was needed.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

I was ambushed and kidnapped in America by some men. For what reason, I am not certain. They put me on a plane and dropped me off here. By the way, where is here?

KATHRINE

This is Petropavlovka, a small village in western Siberia.

(after a brief pause)

You have no papers?

MICHAEL

No, apparently not.

KATHRINE

These irons?...

MICHAEL

(interrupting)

I've done no wrong. I don't really know why....

KATHRINE

The men here, they think you might be an escaped prisoner. They have sent for the authorities. They will be here tomorrow.

MICHAEL

And what will happen to me?

KATHRINE

Strangers with no papers are judged as spies and sent to prison.

Michael leans forward and speaks in a firm, yet somewhat pleading whisper.

MICHAEL

I'm no spy! I'm no criminal! I've done nothing wrong! You must believe me.

Their eyes meet for a long moment. His dark eyes searching for help. Her dark eyes, soft and sensual in the dim light, but unable to answer his request, drop back to her task at hand.

KATHRINE

Hopefully, this will help you feel better.

As Kathrine begins to rise, Michael places a hand on her shoulder. Seeing this, the sheriff abruptly rises.

MICHAEL

(in a near whisper)
Help me.

Kathrine firmly removes Michael's hand from her shoulder.

KATHRINE

I shall return in the morning.

Kathrine gathers the basin and towel, stands, and turns towards the cell door.

KATHRINE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

(to the sheriff in
Russian, subtitled in
English)

I am completed here.

The sheriff unlocks and opens the door to allow her exit from the barred cage. He re-secures the iron door, turns the valve on the oil lamp, and exits the building with the woman.

The flame of the lamp slowly withers, and in a few moments, darkness again engulfs the room. Michael grabs the blanket and wraps himself in it to protect himself from the sudden presence of the cold night air. He curls up on the bench-like bunk and tries to sleep.

INT. OLD JAIL - LATER

Michael is awakened by a strange noise coming from outside the jail - from the other side of the clay wall - a sort of tapping, scratching sound on the wall adjacent to his bunk. The noise stops. For a few moments there is complete silence.

Suddenly, half of the wall disintegrates as the end of a large log penetrates the brittle clay material. Dozens of hands push large clay fragments from the new opening. Moonlight reflects off of a rifle barrel. TWO MEN leap through the new doorway, grab Michael, and shove him through the hole.

EXT. OLD JAIL - CONTINUOUS

Outside, TWO OTHER MEN grab Michael and throw him onto the back of a large black horse, behind the horse's master. Michael wraps his arms around the rider to keep from falling off as the rider immediately spurs the horse to a gallop.

The tandem of riders is soon joined by about a half dozen other horses and riders as they gallop out of the village.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - LATER

The horses slow to a trot, and then stop. No words are spoken. Without warning, the group of riders splits into groups of two and go in different directions.

EXT. SAWMILL - LATER

The horse on which Michael is a passenger stops outside an old barn-like structure. TWO MEN with antique rifles stand outside the door. As the horse stops, the two men move forward and assist Michael down from the horse. They lead him from the cold moonlit night into the old building.

INT. SAWMILL - CONTINUOUS

Flames from a small bon-fire located near the middle of the building warm the air and provide an orange glow to everything inside.

A small number of ARMED MEN sit silently on large burlap bags spread out on the floor or on bales of hay near the fire. Others stand about quietly watching. Curious eyes stare at Michael.

Michael is led around the fire to a bale on the other side of the room and is motioned to sit. He complies. Men whisper to one another.

After a couple of minutes, two figures, wearing long fur coats and heavy boots, enter the room. Michael is prevented from seeing the figures clearly through the flames of the fire.

A couple of men move to one of the two figures, apparently giving inaudible reports, and occasionally pointing in Michael's direction. With his back to the fire, this mystery person quietly gives instructions to those near him and points a gloved hand towards Michael. Then accompanied by a handful of men, the leader departs the building.

One of the men in the room approaches Michael and holds out a steaming cup of coffee. Another shakes open a heavy blanket and drapes it over Michael's shoulders.

As the warmth begins to once again flow through his body, Michael notices his guards to be much more relaxed - some men are laughing at what seems to be a joke. After a few minutes, it appears as if his presence is not even a factor to them, and the noise of the laughter grows to a friendly level.

The noise instantly disappears when the leader suddenly reenters the building. A hushed reverence could be felt and all eyes follow as the heavy boots march towards the visitor.

Michael sits and stares with apprehension as the figure comes between himself and the fire. The silhouetted face of the leader cannot be seen. The silence is broken by the leader's voice.

KATHRINE

I trust you are more comfortable.

Michael blinks hard upon hearing Kathrine's familiar voice.

Kathrine removes her hat, shakes her head, and Michael sees the silhouette of long curls fall to her shoulders.

KATHRINE (CONT'D)

May I sit?

MICHAEL

Certainly.

Michael moves over to share his seat on the hay bale.

KATHRINE
You will be safe here.

A man brings her a cup of hot coffee. Michael looks on in amazement.

KATHRINE (CONT'D)
My name is Kathrine. These are my friends - my family.
(slight pause)
We will help you - for now. You sparked my curiosity and I want to know more about you and what happened to you. But, you must rest now and stay hidden. The authorities will be at the village tomorrow looking for you. They will be very angry when they find that you are not there. You are now an escaped prisoner and will probably be shot on sight.

Kathrine stands.

KATHRINE (CONT'D)
Tomorrow, we shall talk more.

Kathrine turns and leaves the building. All but two men depart with her. These men look at Michael in a friendly manner. One man (NICHOLAS) winks.

Michael makes himself as comfortable as possible in the sawdust and straw. Soon he drifts off to sleep.

INT. SAWMILL - MORNING

The sun has already risen and is beginning to warm the cold earth. The two armed men notice Michael stirring. One man (NICHOLAS) reaches down and grabs a pot from near the fire and pours hot coffee into a metal cup. He walks towards Michael, smiling.

NICHOLAS
(in English with Russian accent)
Drink this. It help you wake up.

Michael takes the cup of coffee.

MICHAEL
Thanks.

NICHOLAS
Sleep good, hey?

Michael shrugs a stiff shoulder.

NICHOLAS (CONT'D)
(pointing to Michael's
ankle cuffs)
We get you out of these, then you
feel better.

Nicholas retrieves an old hack-saw, places a small board
between the metal cuff and Michael's ankle, and begins to saw
one of the cuffs.

NICHOLAS (CONT'D)
My name is Nicholas. Katrina say
you American. Some others think you
a spy.

The first cuff breaks free. Nicholas' and Michael's eyes
lock.

MICHAEL
What do you think?

Nicholas remains silent for a moment while he begins cutting
the second cuff. He shrugs his shoulders in response to
Michael's question.

NICHOLAS
(still looking down at his
work)
I dunno....

Nicholas slowly looks up and into Michael's eyes.

NICHOLAS (CONT'D)
(very serious)
But time will tell... then we see.

The second cuff breaks free.

NICHOLAS (CONT'D)
(once again smiling)
There.

Nicholas stands.

NICHOLAS (CONT'D)
You hungry? Eat this.

He tosses Michael a piece of sweet bread, takes a seat on the hay bale next to Michael, picks up a stick and begins whittling the stick using his pocket knife.

MICHAEL

Tell me about Kathrine.

NICHOLAS

(grinning broadly)

Oh, she some woman.

(pausing and shaking his head)

You see, she from Moscow. Her father an important man - a leader in the new government. He send her to this region before the coup for her safety and to teach and help the people. He believe that her education at the university help these people and better his standing in the new government. Since coming here, Katrina's eyes open. She see how Soviet system designed to be - and how it really operates. Those in power get everything. The workers - the people - get nottin. If this do not change, our nation will fall.

Nicholas stops whittling momentarily, turns, and eyes Michael with an intensely serious look.

NICHOLAS (CONT'D)

So, yes, Katrina is here teaching and helping these people, but in more ways than one. During the daytime she run the local school, teaching children and parents basic education skills. At night, she work with us - this group - to create a change in our government system. See, she quite some woman!

Nicholas returns to his whittling.

NICHOLAS (CONT'D)

Katrina tell us to look after you and make sure no trouble come to you.

He stops whittling, lays down the stick, and returns the pocket knife to his pocket.

NICHOLAS (CONT'D)
Come, we walk.

Nicholas slings his old rifle over his shoulder and leads Michael outside. The day is warming.

EXT. SAWMILL - CONTINUOUS

We see a landscape severely scarred from strip-mining.

NICHOLAS
(waving his arms)
Look around you. What do you see?

Michael looks and sort of shrugs his shoulders. Nicholas talks as they walk.

NICHOLAS (CONT'D)
You see trees and sky and earth and a few shacks, eh? Well, Katrina see a land and people, both stripped of their lifeblood. This land was once rich. Then the government come and strip it of its wealth. They make the people break their backs in these mines and what do they get in return? Nottin! Nottin but unusable land. We were proud of our land before - tall trees, clear water, and the best soil. Now we can't use it. They drained all the life from the land. When all of the coal was gone, the government left too. Many people died from having no food. And did the government help us? No! Others left to find work and better land. Some stay behind to try to rebuild this land. Some just don't care.

(long pause)
Everyone is afraid now. Afraid that the government will come back again and take everything that has been restored. All strangers are thought to be spies for the government.

Nicholas again turns and looks directly at Michael.

NICHOLAS (CONT'D)
That's why you were in jail.
(long pause)
But Katrina, she think you no spy.
(MORE)

NICHOLAS (CONT'D)
So she bust you out. Now you
here... safe... for a while.

EXT. SMALL SHACK - LATER

As they walk and are about to round the corner of a small run-down shack, Nicholas notices a cloud of dust in the distance. An old sedan is seen speeding down the dirt road towards them.

Nicholas pushes Michael inside the old wooden shack.

NICHOLAS
In here!

Nicholas follows, closing the door behind him.

INT. SMALL SHACK - CONTINUOUS

Both kneel on the floor as the vehicle passes by the building - out of sight of the vehicle's occupants.

After the car has passed, both men stand to watch the car disappear through the dust.

NICHOLAS
They look for you.

Michael looks around the small shack. On one wall, he sees a faded map tacked to the wall.

Nicholas eyes Michael as he examines the lines on the map.

NICHOLAS (CONT'D)
This show where the mines were.
Many cave-in and flood, and map no
good any more.

As Michael moves closer to examine the map, his boot heel steps into a hole left by a broken floor board. As he glances at the hole, he notices something strange about it. He kneels down again and reaches into the hole and feels something.

MICHAEL
What's under here?

Nicholas shrugs his shoulders.

With some effort, Michael is able to pry up the rest of the board. Through the much larger hole now created, he sees a portion of a wooden crate.

He wipes the dust from the top of the crate. The letters "ДИНАМИТ" become visible. Michael looks at Nicholas for an interpretation.

NICHOLAS
Explosives.

Together, they pry up adjacent boards until they are able to remove the crate. However, in the process, they discover two more crates with similar markings.

Michael looks around for an instrument with which to open the crates, but sees nothing. Nicholas, seeing nothing also, uses his rifle barrel to break the weathered bands.

They open the first crate and see neat rows of one pound sweating sticks.

NICHOLAS (CONT'D)
Dynamite.

They pry open the other crates. One contains hundreds of blasting caps - some electric and some non-electric. In the other crate, rolls of time fuse.

NICHOLAS (CONT'D)
Put these back. We will tell
Katrina of this. She will be
pleased.

Together, they replace the crates and the floor boards, returning the shack to its original condition.

EXT. SMALL SHACK - CONTINUOUS

Nicholas carefully opens the door, sticks his head out, and scans the countryside.

NICHOLAS
It's OK... We go.

The two men exit the shack walk silently back towards the abandoned mill.

INT. SAWMILL - EVENING

The armed men begin to gather in the old barn. Nicholas moves about talking and laughing with the growing group. A few smile and appear friendly towards Michael. However, three or four still stare with uncertain eyes.

Moments later, Kathrine enters and moves about the noisy room, talking with each individual present.

A fire is burning in the center of the building.

After a few moments, Kathrine joins Michael on his personal hay bale.

KATHRINE

(smiling)

I trust you are feeling better. How is your ankle?

MICHAEL

Much better, thank you.

KATHRINE

Nicholas told me of your discovery today.

(pauses while thinking)

These we can use for future tasks.

MICHAEL

Tasks? What kind of tasks?

Kathrine hesitates as she deliberates her answer.

KATHRINE

You will see. But now, tell me about yourself - why are you here?

Michael thinks for a moment, staring into the warm fire.

MICHAEL

Like you, I was not satisfied with the way my government was operating. We were fighting unjust wars in foreign lands, sending innocent young men to early deaths for no reason. I thought that a change was needed and joined in some small demonstrations against the wars. As I got more involved, I discovered how groups of people, collectively, can apply pressure to affect a change.

(long hesitation)

I enjoyed this very much and began to organize public demonstrations. Soon, I gave up all other interests to advance the cause.

KATHRINE

What cause?

MICHAEL

What cause?

(another hesitation)

I guess just about any cause. It started with our involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan. But after the war stopped, I guess it branched out to include other causes... like civil rights.

KATHRINE

What do you do?

MICHAEL

Well, the Iraq war wasn't too difficult. There were a lot of people who didn't want the US involved there. We would visit universities and talk with the students. We could really get them going. Once they got excited, we would convince them to join in a major demonstration at some large public event, especially if we knew that the news media would be there.

(slight pause)

Police and the local authorities normally didn't want any trouble, so they would attempt to comply with our demands in order to quell the demonstration. But sometimes they couldn't satisfy our demands - either through stalling techniques or deceit or they would not have the authority to satisfy our demands. Then, problems often arose - sometimes leading to riots and violence. Sometimes, the police would get nervous and would provoke violence. Sometimes, the students, impatient by no response, would release their frustrations by occupying public buildings or sometimes burning government buildings. Occasionally, nothing would happen, and the demonstrators tire and withdraw.

KATHRINE

I have seen something like this happening on our TV news. What happens to the demonstrators?

MICHAEL

Sometimes nothing. But sometimes the police would use physical force and violence to try to disperse us. Sometimes we would get arrested and spend the night in jail.

KATHRINE

Is there any killing?

MICHAEL

(looking at the ground)

No... seldom. Occasionally, things will get way out of hand - the people get riled up and you just can't stop them. And occasionally... occasionally, someone will die - normally one of us. The media gets word of this and jumps all over the government and a weak attempt at a weak excuse or apology would be given by some bureaucrat.

KATHRINE

I see. And you got here...?

Michael interrupts.

MICHAEL

Oh yes, let's see... I guess I got too involved with being an activist, looking for causes. I guess the authorities thought I was causing too much trouble. So, one night the bastards kidnapped me, put me in a plane, and dropped me off here.

(brief pause)

So there you have it - my whole life.

Kathrine looks at the fire as she digests what she just heard.

KATHRINE

(after a long silent pause)

Family... Do you have any family?

MICHAEL

No... not really. I have a sister - a younger sister, and my parents. But I haven't seen them or talked with them in years.

Nicholas approaches.

NICHOLAS
Excuse, Katrina. It is time?

Kathrine looks at her watch and nods in reply. She turns to Michael.

KATHRINE
I must go now.

MICHAEL
Go? Go where?

They stand up. She looks at Michael.

KATHRINE
You will stay here until we return.
We have a small task to do.

MICHAEL
(somewhat insisting)
I'm coming with you.

KATHRINE
(firmly)
No! It is too dangerous -
especially for you.

MICHAEL
Dangerous?! Here I am, an escaped
prisoner in a country where they
shoot strangers because they don't
have any papers. And you go out on
your secret Robin Hood tasks. Well,
I'm not going to rot my lousy life
away in this stinking barn doing
absolutely nothing. I'd rather die
a free man than a prisoner in this
barn.

Kathrine hesitates.

KATHRINE
Can you ride a horse?

MICHAEL
Yes, I learned when I was a kid at
summer camp.

KATHRINE
You can come - but only to observe.
Understand?

Michael nods.

There is a flurry of activity inside and outside the building. As they exit, Kathrine speaks in Russian to one of the men and turns back to Michael.

KATHRINE (CONT'D)
If you are caught, we will claim
that we do not know you.

Michael nods his understanding.

They exit the building.

EXT. SAWMILL - CONTINUOUS

A man brings a heavy coat, hat, and gloves and hands them to Michael. He dons them quickly for the night cold has arrived. The breath of people and horses is clearly seen. Moments later, two horses are brought to them. They mount their beasts.

Kathrine looks around. A group of about twenty men are mounted and ready to move. Two armed men are left behind at the barn to guard their hideout. Kathrine pulls on the reigns and leads her horse and the group quietly into the darkness. Michael follows.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE (BESIDE A SMALL RIVER) - LATER

The group stops beside a small river in a small tree-lined valley. Four riders approach Kathrine. She gives a silent nod and they gallop away - up the slope of one side of the valley and over the small ridge. Nothing is heard except the silence of the night. The horses exhale white smoke in the moonlight as they wait.

Nicholas rides up and stops beside Kathrine. A few moments later, one horse and rider return on the run and pull up beside Kathrine. His silent nod constitutes his entire report. Kathrine looks towards Nicholas and again nods her head. He pulls his reigns and rapidly moves off in the direction from where the lone rider returned. All but Kathrine, Michael, and two members of the group gallop after him. The two remain, evidently, as guards for their leader, Kathrine.

MICHAEL
(whisper to Kathrine)
What's going on?

Kathrine turns and glares at Michael, shaking her head, giving a silent rebuke for his breach of the silence.

After a few moments, Kathrine turns her horse and slowly moves up the incline in the direction of the others. Michael and one guard follow. The other guard remains behind to secure their secluded rally point.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE (NEAR RAILROAD) - CONTINUOUS

At the crest of the small ridge, Kathrine stops and watches.

Michael maneuvers his horse to a position beside her and peers into the moonlit night.

A single set of railroad tracks lay about 300 yards from their position. Nicholas' group had dismounted and are busily engaged in some type of activity at the tracks where the tracks make a turn. Not a sound is heard. The group works silently under Kathrine's watchful eyes.

After a few moments, the group remounts their animals and begin riding towards Kathrine and Michael.

Simultaneously, Kathrine and Michael turn and ride back down towards the river in the secluded valley.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE (BESIDE A SMALL RIVER) - MOMENTS LATER

After the rest of the group has returned to the valley, a silent nod from Nicholas to Kathrine indicates that the task has been completed. She acknowledges his report with her own nod, tugs on her reigns, and leads the group home.

The return route is different than the one used to get to the objective. Furthermore, the return, although still silent, seems much more relaxed. During the return trip, Michael notices that small groups of riders periodically separate from the main body and continue in a different direction.

EXT. SAWMILL - LATER

The moon has set when the remaining five or six members of the group finally return to their hideaway - the sawmill. One of the guards holds the reigns to Michael's horse.

Kathrine says something to the small group then turns to Michael as the other individuals depart.

KATHRINE

(to Michael)

I must leave now. You stay here where it is safe and I will return tomorrow to answer your many questions.

Without waiting for a response, she whirls her horse around, and looks back over her shoulder

KATHRINE (CONT'D)

Good night, Michael.

She spurs her horse and disappears into the night.

Nicholas rides up to Michael and tosses a cigarette lighter to Michael.

NICHOLAS

Here. You need this to stay warm.

Nicholas turns his horse and gallops after Kathrine.

Michael examines the object - an old tin cigarette lighter. He flips open the lid and tests the flint. A small flame darts up immediately. He closes the lid and shoves the lighter into his pocket.

Michael slips off the horse and looks at the guard. He smiles at the man. The guard smiles back, then turns and leads the horse away. Michael turns and enters the sawmill.

INT. SAWMILL - CONTINUOUS

The fire has diminished to a red glow, but the room is still warm.

Michael is offered a cup of coffee by one of the guards, but silently refuses the offer. He removes his winter overgarments, and sits on the ground with his back resting on his familiar hay bale. He lets his mind wander as he watches small sparks swim and swirl above the red ashes. Soon he is asleep.

INT. SAWMILL - NEXT DAY

Michael awakens the following morning to discover that he is alone in the mill. All that is left of the fire is a singular thin line of smoke rising from the grey ashes. Near the fire site, Michael finds a small covered basket containing fruit, bread, and dried smoked meat.

A covered tin of luke-warm coffee sits next to the basket. Michael examines each precious parcel momentarily before hungrily devouring it.

EXT. SAWMILL - LATER

Michael steps through the doorway to the sawmill and into the bright sunlight. After carefully looking in all directions, and seeing no other human, he begins walking to explore this area. He sees a ruined wasteland of stumps, weeds, and slag.

As he walks, he discovers small streams running between slag peaks. Along the larger streams, life has begun to regenerate. Small trees and shrubs line the stream banks. However, it will be generations before the land returns to its original condition.

As Michael walks between the slag hills, the earth suddenly opens under his feet and a sinkhole swallows him.

INT. UNDERGROUND I - CONTINUOUS

Michael falls approximately 25-30 feet into the remains of an old horizontal mine shaft. A large, soft, muddy mound of dirt and slag provides a cushion for his landing. He slides and rolls uncontrollably down this mound, coming to rest in about two feet of ice-cold water which covers the floor of the vacated shaft. He gets up and shakes the water off of his head.

MICHAEL

Ohhh shit... that's cold!

Fortunately, he is not injured from the fall, but only somewhat out of breath and dazed; partially from the impact of the fall and partially from the coldness of the water.

Michael attempts to climb the mound, but it is too loose and slippery. He merely ends up sliding back to the water.

He goes over to a nearby wall and attempts to climb it to escape. However, the walls are too steep and slippery and will not facilitate his efforts.

Michael becomes frustrated and angry as the full impact of his new predicament finally hits him. He stands in the two feet of icy water and looks at the sun-lit hole 30 feet above him. He vents his frustration on the water, slapping, kicking, and spraying water everywhere.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Damn it! Damn it! DAMN IT!

Michael sits down to rest on a small outcropping.

After pondering his situation for a while in the dim light, he notices a dried blade of grass that obviously entered with him, floating slowly from his left to his right on the surface of the water through a beam of sunlight from above.

He looks to his left (upstream) then to his right (downstream), then back to his left before standing and pulling the tin lighter out of his pocket and lighting it.

He begins walking upstream holding out his lighter to provide limited illumination and counting each pace.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
One...two...three...four....

INT. UNDERGROUND II - MOMENTS LATER

The small lighter illuminates Michael's face and the dimly lit slag mound he landed on can be seen in the background.

MICHAEL
176...177...178....

Michael stops and finds the shaft blocked, evidently from a previous cave-in. The material is loose under his hand, so Michael begins to scrape and pull large handfuls of the material in an attempt to clear this blockage. But each handful removed is replaced by an equal amount immediately above.

After scraping and digging for a few moments, Michael realizes that his effort is futile.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
(under his breath)
Damn it! Maybe there's something at
the other end.

Michael turns and wades back downstream through the water.

INT. UNDERGROUND I - MOMENTS LATER

Michael passes the mound, and wades into the darkness of the downstream mine shaft.

INT. UNDERGROUND III - MOMENTS LATER

He gropes his way through the dark corridor, with the water now waist deep, feeling his way along the walls while holding out the lighter and counting his paces.

MICHAEL
46...47...48...49....

INT. UNDERGROUND IV - MOMENTS LATER

The water is now nearly at Michael's shoulders.

MICHAEL
(shivering)
414...415...416.

Michael's movement and counting stops. He again encounters a solid wall dead end.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
That's about a quarter of a mile.

Suddenly, the tin lighter slips out of Michael's hand and falls. He is able to catch it, but not before it hits the water and goes out. The tunnel becomes black. Attempts to relight the lighter fail.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
(frustrated and angry)
God, you've got to get me out of here.

No sooner had those words left his lips, he realizes that there is some light along the floor - under the water. Just a sliver of light - but light just the same.

Michael moves his foot in the direction of the light and feels the outline of an opening approximately three feet wide and two feet high. The current of the water is much stronger at this opening.

Michael takes a deep breath, holds it, and lowers himself into the cold water.

INT. UNDER WATER - CONTINUOUS

With his hands grasping the edge of the small opening to steady himself, he looks into the opening and sees a very small corridor about twenty feet long. Although he does not see the source of the light, the far end of the narrow corridor is brightly illuminated.

INT. UNDERGROUND IV - MOMENTS LATER

Michael returns to the surface gasping for breath. He mumbles to himself amongst shivers.

MICHAEL
Good luck, Mike.

He takes three deep breaths, holds the third one, and submerges under the surface of the water.

INT. UNDER WATER - CONTINUOUS

This time he enters the narrow corridor and pulls himself towards the light. As he reaches the end of that tunnel, he looks up and sees patches of blue sky through the water.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE (BESIDE A SMALL POND) - CONTINUOUS

Michael breaks the surface of the water gasping for breath.

Michael finds himself in a small eight foot diameter pond, situated on the bank of one the larger streams that runs through the area. Small trees and shrubs, lining the stream valley and surrounding the small pond, seclude it from the rest of the world. A small sluice of water spills out of the pond, winds through the bushes, and gently cascades down to join the stream.

Michael climbs out of the water, shaking and shivering, and threads his way through the thickets in an attempt to retrace his steps above ground to the spot where he fell into the shaft. Being careful not to get too close, he logs its location in his mind, and begins his walk back to the safe confines of the old mill.

INT. SAWMILL - MOMENTS LATER

When he arrives at the sawmill, he recognizes that everything is just as he left it - empty and unoccupied.

EXT. SAWMILL - CONTINUOUS

Michael walks up the small grassy knoll located a couple hundred feet behind the old building.

EXT. GRASSY KNOLL - MOMENTS LATER

Michael peels off his wet clothes and spreads them out on the ground to dry under the warm afternoon sun. The same warm sunlight begins now to relax his body.

He spreads himself out on the grass covered ground and soon dozes off.

EXT. GRASSY KNOLL - LATE AFTERNOON

The tip of a long blade of grass tickles Michael's cheek. He twitches and the blade momentarily disappears. It returns, this time on his chin. He swats at it with his hand.

MICHAEL
(under his breath)
Damn it! Shoo!

The blade of grass again momentarily disappears. It reappears on the bridge of his nose and closed eyelids. He swats again and opens his eyes. When his eyes open he sees a warm sunset and Kathrine, smiling slyly, holding a long blade of wild grass in her hand.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Oh shit!

Michael, clad only in his skivvies, suddenly begins flailing around, looking for his clothing.

He jumps up, grabs his pants, and attempts to don them quickly. Of course, the results are disastrous. He stumbles and falls back to the ground with trousers wrapped around his ankles.

Kathrine tries to hold back a giggle, and attempts to conceal this by covering her mouth with her hand - but to no avail. She lets go with a laugh.

Meanwhile, Michael has managed to get his pants on and is attempting to button his shirt.

When he gets to his last button, he discovers there is no button hole for it; for in his haste he had started buttoning it out of sequence.

Kathrine roars with laughter.

Michael throws his hands up in frustration.

Kathrine reaches towards Michael.

KATHRINE
 (between giggles)
 Here, let me help.

Michael backs away as she takes a step forward. Holding his hands out to stop her.

MICHAEL
 No. No! I think you've already done quite enough.
 (somewhat angrily)
 Just who do you think you are, sneaking up on me like that? Someone could have gotten hurt...
 (calming down slightly)
 or worse.

Michael unbuttons his shirt, then glances up into Kathrine's smiling face. He then diverts his eyes to the ground.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
 I guess I did look kind of funny, though.

He cracks a smile and looks back at Kathrine.

She steps forward and corrects the buttons on his shirt. When completed, their eyes meet for a long moment. Michael attempts to kiss her, but she pulls away and turns from him.

KATHRINE
 The others are starting to gather.

Kathrine turns and begins to walk down the hill towards the old mill building.

MICHAEL
 I'm sorry.

Kathrine pauses for a brief moment, smiles to herself, then erases her smile, turns to Michael, and allows him to join her. Together, they walk the rest of the way down the hill.

INT. SAWMILL - MOMENTS LATER

Michael and Kathrine enter the building, move to Michael's hay bale, and take a seat. The other men in the room are noisily talking to each other, some laughing, oblivious to their presence.

Kathrine and Michael sit quietly for a few moments before she looks at Michael.

KATHRINE

You explained how you would protest against your government. Last night you saw how we speak out with action against ours. Actions speak louder than words.

MICHAEL

What exactly did I see last night?

Kathrine thinks for a moment, stands up, moves to the remnants of last night's fire, picks up a twig, and returns to her seat. Using the twig, she draws a rough sketch in the dirt on the floor. She uses the stick to point to items in her sketch.

KATHRINE

(pointing to a crescent shaped oval on the floor)

The mountain region around Lake Baikal - about 300 km east of here - is rich with coal. The government has set up huge mines there and are milking the earth, just like they did here. The coal is moved through special pipelines from the mines to the lake. There, it is loaded onto large barges and transported to Irkutsk...

(points)

a large port city. It is transferred to large railroad cars, and long trains carry it to Krasnoyarsk...

(points)

where it is stored in large mountains until shipped by rail through Novosibirsk...

(points)

to Moscow and West. The hills of Khakasskaya, here...

(points)

are also being bled of their precious coal. There, they also load great barges and float them down the Yenisey River...

(points)

to the Krasnoyarsk storage depot...

(points)

to wait for transportation to the west.

(brief pause)

(MORE)

KATHRINE (CONT'D)

Last night, four groups like this one here, simultaneously attacked this coal transport system which does nothing but destroy our land and lives, and gives the people - the workers - nothing in return. One group was to destroy sections of the pipelines.

(points)

Another group was to sink barges loaded with coal along the Yensey river.

(points)

A third group was to enter the storage depot...

(points)

and set the coal mountains on fire. These mountains smolder for hours before they are discovered. If left unattended too long, they cannot be extinguished and burn until nothing is left but ashes. Our task was to disrupt the railroad transport of the coal to the west. We loosened rails and ties, but left them in place. The engineers will not see any damage, but the rails will separate after the first few cars have passed, causing the train to derail and stopping railroad movement in both directions for more than a week.

(brief pause)

Four groups always strike at the same time at different locations. The authorities in Krasnoyarsk, here...

(points)

have contacted the military for assistance. But the closest military unit is a regiment located in Novosibirsk...

(points)

more than 500 Km west of here. And they do not know where the strikers are coming from, so they have not been able to take any action against us.

(another pause)

We do similar tasks with our grain. We will destroy grain depots at Achinsk...

(points)

and disrupt the grain supply.

(MORE)

KATHRINE (CONT'D)

Like the coal system, all of the grain grown and harvested here is sent west to feed Moscow. They get fat - and these people get nothing. We work to correct this.

(another pause)

Tonight, we go to a location near Bogotol...

(points)

to cut government telephone lines leading from this region. Other groups will disrupt electric supply to the mines and depots. The authorities understand our intent, but have not been able to identify us or stop us.

MICHAEL

(nodding his head)

Wow. I see. It appears that you and I are much alike.

Kathrine looks at Michael with an expression mixed with anger and sadness.

KATHRINE

Our tasks always involve slowing the process that is destroying our land and people. We deal only with material and equipment - not people. This is where you and I differ. You affect people. We affect a process or product. You are authorized by law to participate in protests. We cannot. If caught, we will be exiled up to the great salt mine prisons for the rest of our life, or summarily executed on the spot.

Kathrine stands up, uses her toe to erase the map on the floor.

KATHRINE (CONT'D)

I must go now to prepare for tonight's task. You may observe again, if you like, but your safety....

Michael interrupts.

MICHAEL

I understand completely.

Kathrine turns and exits the building.

Nicholas walks over to Michael and motions for him to follow.

NICHOLAS

Come, I show you something.

They move to a dark corner of the mill. Nicholas pushes aside a couple of hay bales to reveal a footlocker-sized wooden box. He opens it, reaches inside, pulls out a small can-like object, and hands it to Michael.

NICHOLAS (CONT'D)

Grenades. American grenades. We find these some time ago.

Michael examines the rusting item. The word "Thermite" is printed on the side of the canister.

MICHAEL

These are old thermite grenades... used for burning steel or starting fires.

Nicholas nods his understanding, replaces the grenade, closes the box, and conceals it with the hay bales. He then exits the mill to join Kathrine and the rest of the group.

BEGIN MONTAGE

EXT. AREA SURROUNDING THE SAWMILL - DAY

Michael no longer with a bald head and with a beard beginning to grow back.

Michael walks the land surrounding the sawmill. He stops and jots notes onto a pad of paper.

INT. UNDERGROUND TUNNEL - LATER

Michael is pacing off a distance of an underground tunnel and recording the data onto a pad of paper.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

Michael sits on his horse beside Kathrine as a group of men use knives to deflate tires on large bucket-loaders and earthmoving trucks, and pour salt and bleach into the fuel tanks of bulldozers and other earthmoving equipment.

EXT. AREA SURROUNDING THE SAWMILL - DAY

Michael completes a pace count to an old mine shack and writes the data onto the pad of paper.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

Michael and Kathrine sit on their horses as Nicholas gallops up and nods to Kathrine. As they all turn to ride away, detonations appear at the base of large electric power line towers, causing the towers to collapse, resulting in massive arcing as the power lines fall to the ground.

INT. UNDERGROUND TUNNEL - LATER

Michael is stacking crates of dynamite, caps, and det cord. And writes some data onto his pad of paper.

END MONTAGE

INT. SAWMILL - NIGHT

Michael and Kathrine sit on the hay bale by the fire.

MICHAEL

What's going on tonight.

KATHRINE

Tonight we hit the Achinsk grain depot. The grain is stored in large metal silos inside a fenced compound. Security at the depot consists of five or six roving guards and a centralized guardhouse. Our scouts report that the sentries follow prescribed routes and adhere to a definite schedule. The task to be accomplished tonight involves opening the large vents located on the roof of each metal storage bin to allow the rain to enter and spoil the grain. This task must be completed between security checks by the guards.

EXT. GRAIN DEPOT - NIGHT

Kathrine, Michael, Nicholas, and about thirty men crouch behind some small trees and bushes on a small ridge. Through the vegetation and the rain, their eyes follow a lone ARMED SENTRY as he walks past a large canister-shaped metal structure, stops and inspects the lock on the door of the storage building, then moves on to the next. He walks along the long chain-link fence which encircles the depot. Soon, he disappears from view.

Nicholas taps the shoulder of one of the men next to him, who repeats this action to his neighbor. Nicholas and the two men scurry down the slippery grassy slope to the fence.

Crouching, they silently cut some of the woven strands of wire until a wedge-shaped slice about half the height of the fence is created. One man drops a small coil of wire beside this opening to be used in mending the fence after the task is completed.

Two men scamper through this newly created gap and quickly move to far side security positions by two storage bins - one on the left and one on the right.

Michael and about two dozen men slide down the hillside and follow through the gap. They quickly and quietly disperse throughout the compound, disappearing in the darkness and rain. Each man moves to an assigned storage bin and begins to climb the attached metal ladder to the structure's roof. There, each man releases two latches and slides open two large doors on the roof. Large black holes now become visible atop each structure and the rain pours in.

As Michael completes opening his vent door and prepares to descend his ladder, he notices the door to the guardhouse open and TWO SOLDIERS step outside onto the covered porch entrance. Their LAUGHTER and TALKING could be heard over that of the POUNDING RAIN. They light cigarettes and stand there conversing with each other.

Michael, catches the attention of the man on the bin immediately to his left, and signals his discovery. The neighbor, then, passes this information on down the line. Everyone's actions stop, as if frozen in time. Michael scans the top of the bin to his right - the bin closest to the guardhouse. The vents are open but no one is visible. Then he sees Nicholas clinging to his ladder, about halfway down his tall bin, attempting to press himself up against the side and become one with the metallic surface.

The soldiers toss their cigarette butts off of the porch and onto the rain-soaked ground. They turn to re-enter the guardhouse.

However, the strange bulky mass on the ladder catches the eye of one of the soldiers. He stops his partner and they cautiously move over towards the bin to better examine the discovery.

As they approach the ladder, they recognize the form as that of a man.

They stop near the base of Michael's bin, unslinging their weapons.

GUARD
(to Nicholas in Russian,
subtitled in English)
You - come down off that ladder!

Nothing happens. Aiming their rifles, they repeat their command.

GUARD (CONT'D)
(to Nicholas in Russian,
subtitled in English)
Come down off that ladder now or we
will shoot.

NICHOLAS
(to guard in Russian,
subtitled in English)
OK. OK. Don't shoot. I'm coming
down.

Nicholas begins to slowly descend his ladder.

Michael takes two running steps and leaps off of his structure. Arms outstretched, his body slams into the two soldiers. All three tumble to the ground. The impact of the blow separates the weapons from the soldiers.

Michael, dazed from the impact, lies near an unconscious victim of his assault. The other soldier merely received a glancing blow and begins to scurry over to recover his weapon. As he bends to pick it up, his head and body are snapped sharply backwards by a blow from Nicholas's right boot, rendering him temporarily unconscious.

With both soldiers temporarily incapacitated, Nicholas moves to Michael and assists him to his feet. They hurry towards the gap in the fence.

Other members of the group have begun to assemble and pass through the hole.

Meanwhile, the soldiers have regained consciousness, sound an alarm, and begin shouting and running towards the group as they hastily pass through the wire.

Nicholas holds the wire open as each member of the group and then Michael pass through. Michael returns the favor.

Just as Nicholas clears the wire, a growing number of SOLDIERS begin firing their weapons. Rounds land in the soggy hillside as they scurry up the slope.

Nicholas stumbles momentarily but Michael catches him. They thread their way through the trees and bushes with bullets ricocheting around them. They finally roll over the crest of the ridge, out of the pathway of the incoming rounds, and slide to the road below.

The members of the group are mounting their horses when Michael and Nicholas arrive. Kathrine is holding their horses' reins.

KATHRINE

What happened?

MICHAEL

Tell you later! We need to get out of here now!

They quickly mount, spur their animals, and gallop away into the darkness in different directions.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - LATER

The group of riders slows to an easy walk for the horses. The rain has slowed to a drizzle.

MICHAEL

(to Kathrine)

There were soldiers there - not just the security guards. We didn't know there were soldiers until we were in the middle of our mission. We managed to complete the task, but were observed by the soldiers. Everyone was able to get out....

Nicholas slumps forward, then slowly rolls off of his horse face down along the side of the road.

Michael and Kathrine quickly jump off of their horses to investigate.

As they turn Nicholas over, he coughs up blood. They carefully move him under the shelter of a nearby dilapidated shanty. It is then that the two discover that Nicholas had been wounded and his abdomen is bleeding profusely.

They sit Nicholas up against the wall of the shanty and cover him with a blanket to try to keep him warm.

Kathrine is in near shock from their discovery. She leans over Nicholas.

KATHRINE
(in Russian, English
subtitles)
Nikolai! I'll get a doctor.

Nicholas places a finger on her lips to silence her.

NICHOLAS
(in Russian, English
subtitles)
No... Do not worry... What is done
is done... We all take risks... You
must go now... Don't let them get
you, too....

Nicholas struggles and removes a NECKLACE from around his neck - a silver cross, made from delicate silver braids, with one of the horizontal members partially broken off. Nicholas places it in Kathrine's hand and wraps his hands around hers.

NICHOLAS (CONT'D)
(in Russian, English
subtitles)
You keep this for me... It was my
mother's... Now it is yours....

Everyone is silent for a moment.

NICHOLAS (CONT'D)
(looking at both Michael
and Kathrine, in English)
You two... you are a good team...
good for each other... and good for
the people.
(to Michael)
You a good man... You take care of
Katrina... She some woman, eh?...

Nicholas gives a little chuckle and immediately coughs more blood.

NICHOLAS (CONT'D)
You go now... I rest here
awhile....

He closes his eyes. Soon his body goes limp and his breathing ceases. Michael checks Nicholas's neck for a pulse. He looks at Kathrine and shakes his head.

Tears flow down Kathrine's cheeks and mingle with drops of rain.

KATHRINE
(whispering)
Nikolai.

Michael reaches over and gently wipes away her tears with his thumb.

MICHAEL
For the safety of the others, we
must go now.

Kathrine nods in agreement.

Michael pulls the blanket to completely cover Nicholas and then covers the blanket with some vegetation in the vicinity.

They quietly get up and walk back to their horses, which were being held by a member of the group. They mount, and silently ride into the dark rain.

EXT. SAWMILL - LATER

The rain is still drizzling as the group arrives at the sawmill.

Michael and Kathrine dismount while two men exit the sawmill and hold their horses.

Kathrine says something quietly to the two men. The two men then take their horses to an adjacent shed and exit the shed with two different horses. They join the rest of the company, solemnly bid their farewells, and disperse.

Michael and Kathrine, now alone, enter the warm, dry mill.

INT. SAWMILL - CONTINUOUS

A small fire is burning in the center of the building, casting a warm eerie light throughout the structure.

With the exception of the drizzling rain and an occasional crackle of the fire, silence fills the room.

They remove their ponchos and drape them over a nearby half-wall. Kathrine sits cross-legged on the floor near the fire as Michael stokes the flames.

He watches large tears, illuminated by the orange fire's glow, roll slowly down Kathrine's cheeks.

Michael picks up a blanket lying on a nearby hay bale, unfolds it, and carefully drapes it around Kathrine's shoulders. He wraps another around himself. He sits down beside her, places his arm around her, and gently draws her towards him.

Kathrine curls up in Michael's arms as he softly caresses her hair. No words are spoken as they both stare into the fire. Michael gently kisses her forehead. The warm fire, the soft illumination, the sound of the gentle rain, the quietness of the moment, all create a shared emotion between the two.

Kathrine looks up into Michael's face, eyes darting back and forth in the orange firelight. She gently strokes his face, allowing her fingertips to trace the outline of his lips. She leans forward and kisses him tenderly. Michael responds eagerly as they embrace.

INT. SAWMILL - MORNING

As the faint streams of the dawn sunlight begin to spill into the room, Michael slowly awakens. Lying among the two crumpled blankets, he sees Kathrine standing nearby, tucking in her shirt. As she stoops to get her boots, she notices that he is awake.

KATHRINE
(somewhat cheerfully)
Good morning.

MICHAEL
Yes.

She sits on the hay bale and begins pulling on her boots.

KATHRINE
I must go. My students will be waiting.

She kneels down beside Michael and kisses him on the forehead.

KATHRINE (CONT'D)

Thank you.

Then she quickly stands, grabs her dry poncho, and disappears through the doorway, closing the door behind her.

Michael hears the muffled sounds of the horse's hoofs rapidly diminish as it gallops away.

NICHOLAS (V.O.)

She some woman, Eh?

A slight smile comes to Michael's face.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - AFTERNOON

A shirtless Michael sweats as he places the last rock on a long mound of rocks near a small dilapidated mine shanty. A crudely made cross stands at the top of one end of the mound.

Michael wipes the sweat from his face using his shirt.

MICHAEL

Farewell, my brother....
(holding out a pocket
knife)
And thanks for the knife.

He slides the knife into his pocket, slips into his shirt, climbs onto his steed, pulls on the reins, and trots away from the grave site.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - LATE AFTERNOON

The sun paints a beautiful multi-colored portrait as it begins to set.

Michael is riding in a small valley lined with small trees.

The sound of vehicles in the distance gets his curiosity up. He halts his horse, ties it to a tree, and climbs a slope to the crest of the adjacent ridge. Ensuring that he is concealed by the trees, he sees five or six military troop transport trucks speeding down the dirt road.

Michael runs down the slope, jumps back on his horse and speeds after the vehicles. The vehicles are going much faster than he is, and they are heading for the abandoned mines.

Michael turns his horse and gallops cross-country towards the old mill.

EXT. SAWMILL - EVENING

As he reaches the crest the last hill before the mill, he stops the horse and crawls forward to examine the situation.

In the fading light, Michael sees the trucks parked outside the mill and ARMED TROOPS are moving about. Kathrine's and the others' HORSES are audible with nervous energy in the shed adjacent to the mill, but they are not visible.

An OFFICER exits the structure and shouts commands to the soldiers.

OFFICER
(in Russian, English
subtitles)
They are in the area. Find them!

Dogs exit the building, noses to the ground and trying to break free from their masters' leashes.

MICHAEL
(whispering to himself)
Good, they got away.

He watches through the near darkness as the attack dogs lead the soldiers out into the middle of the mines. They stop at the entrance of one of the shafts. With flashlights in hand, a few soldiers enter the shaft.

A few seconds later shots could be heard and the flashlights and soldiers hurriedly exit the mine. They speak to the officer, who throws his hands in the air in disgust. He shouts something to some other soldiers who immediately run back to the trucks. The vehicles are started and moved to a position just a few yards outside the mine entrance. The trucks are left idling and the lights are focused at the mouth of the shaft.

A second set of soldiers are sent into the shaft, only to be repulsed by more shots a few seconds later.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
(whispering to himself)
This Kentucky standoff will end in
the morning.

After a few moments, Michael moves out stealthily towards the old shack with the map on the wall.

INT. MINE SHACK I - NIGHT

Michael cautiously enters and quietly closes the door behind.

He flicks on his lighter and closely examines the map on the wall, tracing his finger along one of the mine shafts on the map, stopping at a specific point. His finger taps the map three times and he nods his head.

Michael then sets the lighter on the floor.

Pulling up the floorboards and removes the crates from under the floor and opens them. He stuffs as many sticks of dynamite and blasting caps in his pockets as possible, wraps a large coil of time fuse around his body, and replaces the crates back under the floor.

EXT. MINE SHACK I - CONTINUOUS

Carefully, he exits the building and under the cover of darkness, Michael is able to sneak back to the mill. No one is there. The soldiers are all down at the mine entrance.

INT. SAWMILL - CONTINUOUS

A small fire is burning in the center of the mill. Michael finds the old burlap bags and fills six of them with saw dust. He fills one bag with grenades from the wooden footlocker. Grabbing a coil of hemp rope, he ties the bags closed and together. Draping the bags on his back and grabbing the coil of hemp rope, he quietly leaves the mill.

EXT. SAWMILL - CONTINUOUS

Michael quietly moves towards the mines. Remembering which of the old shacks are closest to the soldiers, he darts towards them with his materials.

INT. MINE SHACK II - CONTINUOUS

He enters the first shack, removes a stick of dynamite and one blasting cap. He counts a number of yellow lines on the olive drab time fuse.

MICHAEL
(whispering to himself)
5...10...15...20...25...30...35...40.

Using the pocket knife, he cuts the time fuse and inserts the newly cut end into the blasting cap. He carefully crimps the cap onto the time fuse using his teeth, and inserts the cap into the dynamite.

Nervously, he breaks off the clip and spoon portion of one of the rusting thermite grenades and carefully removes the fuse and detonator.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
(whispering to himself)
This ought to add a little kick to everything.

He then twists the free end of the primed dynamite into the opening in the grenade and gently inserts both explosives into one of the bags of dried sawdust.

Michael uses the lighter and ignites the free end of the time fuse. It fizzles and dies. Again, he tries to light it. This time it works. The time fuse burns - slow and invisible.

EXT. MINE SHACK II - CONTINUOUS

Michael cautiously exits that shack and scurries to another nearby.

INT. MINE SHACK III - CONTINUOUS

He repeats his procedure, except this time, with a slightly shorter piece of time fuse.

MICHAEL
(whispering as he counts
the yellow lines)
5...10...15...20...25...30...35.

EXT. MINE SHACK III - MOMENTS LATER

Michael sneaks out of the shack one bag lighter and scurries away.

EXT. MINE SHACK IV - MOMENTS LATER

Michael quietly opens the door to another shack and enters it.

EXT. MINE SHACK IV - MOMENTS LATER

Michael quietly exits the shack, again one bag lighter, and scurries toward another mine shack.

EXT. MINE SHACK V - MOMENTS LATER

Michael quietly opens the door and enters this mine shack.

EXT. MINE SHACK V - MOMENTS LATER

Michael quietly exits shack and scurries toward another mine shack.

EXT. MINE SHACK VI - MOMENTS LATER

Michael quietly opens the door and enters this mine shack.

EXT. MINE SHACK VI - MOMENTS LATER

Michael quietly exits shack and scurries away.

EXT. RIDGE NEAR SAWMILL - MOMENTS LATER

Michael moves up a nearby ridge. Looking back, he sees the soldiers at the mine entrance and behind them, in the distance, the saw mill. Michael primes the rest of the blasting caps (about forty or fifty in all), but retains three for later use. The time fuse for the large group of caps are entwined and the caps are spread out on the ground at the crest of the ridge.

Michael carefully ignites these fuses, ensuring that the lighter's flame is not observed by the soldiers. Michael now has only a half-dozen sticks of dynamite, three caps, and a small amount of time fuse left.

He scrambles down the far side of the ridge, moving to a location between two slag hills.

EXT. AREA NEAR SAWMILL - MOMENTS LATER

Slowly and carefully, Michael approaches the hole in the earth that once swallowed him. He passes the hole and races to the secluded little pond he discovered earlier. He drops the rope, and runs back to the ominous hole.

Michael turns his body, and points with his hand in one direction.

He moves to sit at the edge of the hole.

MICHAEL
 (whispers to himself)
 You can do this, Mike.

With a little push with his hands, he again falls into the darkness below the earth's surface.

INT. UNDERGROUND I - CONTINUOUS

The soft mound of dirt and slag again breaks his fall, and he slides down into the shallow water. Being careful not to get his explosives wet, he rapidly moves towards the upstream end of the shaft.

INT. UNDERGROUND II - MOMENTS LATER

Michael reaches the pile of rubble blocking the mine tunnel. He quickly digs two holes with his hands, primes two sticks of dynamite, rams them into the hole, and back-fills the holes. A one-minute piece of time fuse is cut and ignited. Michael scrambles for cover.

The explosion is not loud, but moves much of the blockage. Again, Michael repeats this procedure. Again, more of the rubble is removed. Michael only has enough explosives for one last attempt. He digs it in, covers it, primes it, ignites it, and gets out of the way.

When he returns to the rubble, a small hole has been created, through which the faint glow of torch lights appears. As he begins to pull and push the soil, enlarging the hole, he is suddenly greeted by the barrel of a rifle.

MICHAEL
 (shouting)
 Nyet! Nyet! Don't shoot!

A voice is heard from the other side of the newly created hole.

KATHRINE
 Michael?... Is that you, Michael?

MICHAEL
 Yes. You must all come with me, we haven't any time to lose!

Kathrine shouts instructions to her colleagues in Russian (English subtitles).

KATHRINE (O.S.)
Quickly. Clear this hole so we can
pass through.

A dozen hands begin pulling and pushing the dirt away from the newly created opening. Soon, it is large enough to permit the individuals to pass through - Kathrine first. Michael takes Kathrine's hand to help her through the hole. The others follow, some carrying torches.

MICHAEL
Tell them they must follow... and
quickly.

Kathrine speaks to the others.

KATHRINE
Prihodite i sleduyte bystro. (Come
and follow quickly)

Kathrine then turns back to Michael. Leading her by the hand, they hastily wade through the knee-deep water, downstream through the corridor. The water gets deeper as they progress.

INT. UNDERGROUND I - MOMENTS LATER

The group sloshes by the underground slag & mud mound.

INT. UNDERGROUND III - MOMENTS LATER

The water approaches Kathrine's shoulders.

KATHRINE
Are you certain you know what you
are doing?

MICHAEL
Trust me.

The group reaches the end of the shaft with the water at Kathrine's neck. Michael feels with his foot for the opening and finds it.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Wait here.

Michael takes a deep breath, and submerges below the water's surface.

Kathrine and the group are left alone in the cold deep water. The men begin to murmur amongst themselves.

KATHRINE
 (sternly in Russian,
 English subtitles)
 You must trust your brother!

After a few moments, Michael resurfaces by Kathrine, startling her. He hands her one end of a rope.

MICHAEL
 Tell them that they will have to swim under water for about ten meters and will exit at a small pond. I've tied the other end of this rope to a tree there. All they have to do is follow the rope.

KATHRINE
 (to the others in Russian,
 no subtitles)
 You will have to swim under water for about ten meters and go outside at a small pond. All you have to do is follow the rope.

Kathrine then turns back to Michael.

KATHRINE (CONT'D)
 (nervously)
 I can't swim.

MICHAEL
 Great... No problem. Just take a big breath on the count of three and hold on to me.
 (slight pause)
 Ready? One... Two... Three.

They both take a deep breath. Michael submerges, pulling Kathrine with him.

INT. UNDER WATER - CONTINUOUS

Using one hand to hold on to Kathrine, and the other to pull himself along the rope, Michael soon reaches the end of the water-filled passageway.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE (BESIDE A SMALL POND) - CONTINUOUS

They surface, Kathrine gasping for breath. Michael pulls her to the edge of the pond, where she sits and attempts to regain her senses.

Michael assists the others as they emerge. After all have surfaced, Michael whispers to Kathrine.

MICHAEL

Have everyone quickly and quietly follow me, and tell them not to be alarmed if all Hell breaks loose in a few moments.

KATHRINE

(in a soft voice to her comrades in Russian, no subtitles)

Follow Michael quickly and quietly, and don't be alarmed if all hell breaks loose in a few moments.

The full moon, now high in the sky, provides ample illumination for them to move quickly and quietly. Michael leads them stealthily away from the pond.

EXT. AREA NEAR THE SAWMILL - NIGHT

As they approach the old mill, a loud explosion shatters the silence of the night. Soon, there is another, then a third. Each old shack disappears in a ball of flame and dust.

The soldiers begin running in all directions; the officer calling instructions. Suddenly, the caps on the ridge ignite. The soldiers, thinking these to be gunfire, take cover, then attempt to return fire.

As the caps run out, the soldiers begin an assault of the ridge (away from the sawmill), firing at their enemy as they run up the slope.

EXT. SAWMILL - CONTINUOUS

Michael leads the group safely to their horses at the mill. They quickly mount and gallop off into the night, away from the one-sided battle.

INT. EMPTY RAILROAD FREIGHT CAR - DAY

The repetitious "clackity-clackity-clack" of the boxcar's heavy steel wheels on the tracks creates a slow hypnotic metronome-type of effect.

Michael and Kathrine lie cuddled in a corner of a swaying dark boxcar. Sunlight streams in through the large partially-open door.

Kathrine sleeps with her head resting on Michael's shoulder, her hand clasping the delicate silver cross hanging from a fine silver chain around her neck.

Michael slowly awakens and begins running his fingers gently through her hair. This, in turn, awakens Kathrine. She looks up at Michael and smiles.

MICHAEL

I'm glad you decided to come with me. I feel bad about the circumstances leading to your departure, but I'm glad you're here. Nicholas was a fine man and knew the risks involved with his participation with you. But now, the situation has gotten much too risky. I just wish you would come back to America with me.

KATHRINE

You know I can't. Maybe I can't do much more at Petropavlovka, but maybe I can do something somewhere else.

Kathrine stands and walks to the door of the boxcar, bracing herself on the wall of the vehicle. Although the mile-long train is moving relatively slowly, a breeze pushes her hair back away from her face.

Michael rises and walks to the other side of the door and leans against the door.

MICHAEL

Where do you think we are?

After searching the prairie landscape and thinking for a few moments, Kathrine responds.

KATHRINE

The railroad runs south from Novosibirsk through Semipalatinsk to Alma Ata. Then it turns west and leads from the mountains to the plains of Tashkent. Since we are heading west, with no mountains in sight, I would say that we are probably near Tashkent and moving towards Krasnovodsk. We will take the ferry across the Caspian and board the train out of Baku to Batumi on the Black Sea.

(short pause)

(MORE)

KATHRINE (CONT'D)

I have a friend at Chakva - a small fishing village about ten kilometers north of Batumi. He will help get you home.

MICHAEL

And you?

KATHRINE

I will return to my home. Maybe I can do something there. Remember, my father has much influence in the government.

EXT. RAILROAD - CONTINUOUS

As the train slowly rolls along, they relax in the doorway of their boxcar, sitting with boots off, trousers rolled up, and bare feet dangling in the breeze, enjoying the warm sun and golden scenery.

EXT. FISHING VILLAGE WHARF - LATE AFTERNOON

The old fishing trawler coughs, sputters, and slowly pulls away from the wharf. Michael, attired in well worn fisherman's coveralls and boots, silently stands on the afterdeck, looking as if he is inspecting netting, as the vessel heads toward the open sea.

Kathrine stands among the sailors' wives and gently waves goodbye to Michael. The afternoon sunlight sparkles off of a tear as it sneaks down her cheek. Her left hand clutches the braided cross Nicholas had given her.

Michael returns her wave and wipes the wetness from his eyes, knowing that this would be the last time they would ever see each other.

Soon, the spectators on the shore become undistinguishable specks, then disappear from view.

The trawler, laden with salted fish, hardly recognizes the presence of the three foot waves as it roars into the setting sun. No other vessels are visible on the water.

EXT. FISHING TRAWLER - NIGHT

Small red and green flashing lights appear on the horizon. The skipper's eyes carefully study these lights. Suddenly, he shouts some commands to his crew.

TRAWLER CAPTAIN
(in Russian, English
subtitles)

Cheer up, boys, we're about to be
boarded and searched by the Russian
Coast Guard.

He then turns to Michael.

TRAWLER CAPTAIN (CONT'D)
We approach Bosphorus Strait now.
You hide below.

He grabs Michael's arm and leads him to the forward hold.
Quickly opening the hatch, he motions Michael below.

As Michael jumps into the hold, the skipper hands Michael two
cigarettes.

TRAWLER CAPTAIN (CONT'D)
Here. Use these.

Michael notices the colored lights much closer and a bright
searchlight attempting to focus on their vessel.

INT. FISHING TRAWLER FORWARD HOLD - MOMENTS LATER

The hatch closes behind Michael and he buries himself with
the large fish stored in the hold. He takes the cigarettes
and snaps off the filters and inserts them into his nose to
help stem the strong acrid odor.

After a few moments, the old diesel engines of the trawler
slow, then stop completely.

Michael hears footsteps and mumbled Russian voices on the
deck. The hatch door is opened for the forward hold and a
bright flashlight momentarily scans the mountain of fish.
Michael hears the skipper's voice saying something to the
inspecting officer as the hatch door is re-secured.

After a few more moments, the engines start up again and soon
return to their earlier roar. The hatch again opens and the
skipper's voice is heard.

TRAWLER CAPTAIN
It OK now. You stay until we pass
Dardanelles Strait and on the
Aegean. OK?

Not waiting for a response, he closes the hatch.

Pushing aside some of the fish, Michael uncovers himself.

The gentle swaying of the vessel in the waves coupled with the constant drone of the vessel's engines induce a type of hypnotic affect and soon, Michael is asleep.

EXT. AEGEAN SEA - EVENING

Michael, now sporting a short scraggly beard, shakes the hand of the trawler skipper as he steps off of the trawler and onto a small motorized skiff bouncing in the small waves.

EXT. AEGEAN SEA - MOMENTS LATER

Michael sits on the seat of the skiff as it moves away from the fishing trawler. Michael turns and looks in the direction that the skiff is traveling. There rests a large Greek container ship - the "Alcaeus".

EXT. ALCAEUS - MOMENTS LATER

Michael crawls over the railing and onto the deck of the monstrous Alcaeus.

INT. ALCAEUS - MOMENTS LATER

Michael is shown to his quarters on the container ship - a decent sized stateroom, replete with twin bed, small desk, sofa, private bathroom, and a number of wall compartments for storage of clothing and other personal items.

EXT. ALCAEUS - NIGHT

Michael, now sporting a nice beard, and toting a backpack over his shoulder, shakes the hand of the ship's captain as he heads down the gangplank at the New York City Harbor.

EXT. DARK NYC ALLEY - NIGHT

Michael walks along in the alley, when he is suddenly accosted by a group of teenagers. They yank his backpack from him, while simultaneously hitting him and kicking him as he falls to the ground. Michael, at first, attempts to shield himself from the barrage of fists and feet, but ends up protecting himself in the fetal position on the ground.

As some teens are pummeling Michael, others dump the contents of the backpack onto the ground. Quickly rummaging through the items, they grab an envelope and empty the cash from it.

Seeing nothing else of any interest, the group of teens depart as quickly as they appeared, laughing and trash-talking.

INT. OLD WAREHOUSE - MORNING

Michael awakens and finds himself in a dirty, trash-infested room in a vacant warehouse. The sounds of traffic on the street nearby penetrate the graffiti stained plywood which covers all the windows.

His lip is split, his arm is slightly bruised, and he winces as he opens and closes his right hand and rotates his right shoulder.

He stumbles over boxes and bags overflowing with trash as he exits the room and moves through a darkened corridor, looking for an exit to the maze. A loose board covering a non-functional door frame provides adequate space for an escape from the building.

EXT. OLD WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Michael squints and uses his hand to attempt to shield his eyes from the bright sunlight as he exits the old warehouse building.

He observes a New York license plate and "I LUV NY" bumper sticker on a nearby parked car.

MICHAEL
 (under his breath)
 New York - A great place to be
 from.

EXT. PILOT TRUCK STOP - AFTERNOON

Michael sees the sign of a Pilot Truck Stop. He sees a trucker having a difficult time tightening straps over the cargo on his flatbed trailer.

MICHAEL
 Here, let me lend you a hand with
 that.

TRUCKER
 (somewhat suspiciously)
 Uh... OK.

Together, they are able to get the straps snugly fastened.

MICHAEL
Which way are you heading?

TRUCKER
South towards Atlanta.

MICHAEL
You going through Baltimore?

TRUCKER
That's the plan.

MICHAEL
Would it be possible to catch a
ride with you to Baltimore?

TRUCKER
I guess so. Get in.

The truck begins to accelerate out of the truck stop and onto the freeway. Michael leans his head back onto the top of the seat. Even with Willie Nelson blaring on the radio, he closes his eyes.

EXT. BALTIMORE RESIDENTIAL STREET - DAY

Michael slowly walks down the street of an old secluded neighborhood. He glances at the children as they play in the street.

Michael comes to an old brick house and hesitates on the steps for a brief moment. Taking a deep breath, he ascends the porch steps and knocks on the door.

After a few moments, an older lady (MRS. JOHNSON) opens the large wooden door. Looking out through the mesh of the outer screen door at the scraggly-looking man, she says nothing. Michael breaks the silence.

MICHAEL
(hesitantly)
Mama?

MRS. JOHNSON
(after a brief hesitation)
Michael?

MICHAEL
Yes.

She opens the screen door and invites Michael in.

INT. WOMAN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

MRS. JOHNSON

We hadn't heard from you in such a long time. Your papa said you were probably dead.

MICHAEL

Is he still angry?

MRS. JOHNSON

(after a pause)

You shouldn't have run away like that. You should have stayed and kept that job. He had such high hopes for you.

MICHAEL

I know, mama. Is papa home?

MRS. JOHNSON

You had everything going for you, then you threw it all away to go march in those demonstrations.

MICHAEL

Mama, where is papa?

She looks at Michael and says nothing. Her eyes and face show signs of confusion.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

(more firmly)

Where is papa?

Tears begin to fill her eyes.

MRS. JOHNSON

He's dead... Been over two years now....

(pause - then somewhat angrily)

and now you come home and ask about your papa. Well, you're too late!

She suddenly begins sobbing.

Michael tries to hug her and console her, but she fights him, not wanting him near her. His strength soon overpowers her and he hugs her tightly.

MICHAEL

I'm sorry, mama. I'm back now and I'm sorry....

TITLE: **THREE YEARS LATER**

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

A clean-shaven Michael, wearing a fresh business suit and briefcase in hand, greets numerous individuals as he walks through a busy open office area. He opens the door to a small private office, throws his briefcase onto his desk, and sits in the chair behind the desk. He picks up the newspaper resting on his desk and begins to quickly scan through it. A photo and headline on the front page of section B gets his attention.

Ex-Federal Agent to be Sentenced Today.

The PHOTO shows a man in handcuffs being led by police officers down a crowded corridor. The man is holding his hands up in an attempt to shield his face. It's then that Michael sees an ugly scar and traces of an eagle tattoo on the man's cuffed hand.

Michael hastily grabs the paper and exits his office, pausing momentarily at the SECRETARY's desk.

MICHAEL

I'll be out the rest of the day.

Not waiting for a response, he runs down the hallway towards an open elevator.

EXT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

Michael exits a taxi and runs up the steps of the giant granite and marble courthouse.

INT. COURTHOUSE HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Michael finds the courtroom, slips through the heavy doors.

INT. COURTROOM - CONTINUOUS

Michael enters quietly and takes a seat in a back row of the nearly empty room. A nervous buzz fills the room.

Michael sees the familiar man (GARY), cuffed, standing, holding hands, and talking to a teary-eyed 40-yr old woman (SUSAN) who was standing in the front row of the spectator section.

BAILIFF

All rise!

Those who were seated, stand. Others scurry to their appropriate seats, and remain standing.

The black-robed JUDGE enters the room, takes his seat behind the large wooden desk, and sharply RAPS his gavel one time. Everyone takes their seat.

JUDGE

Will the defendant, Gary Stevens,
and counsel please rise.

(brief pause)

Having considered the nature of
this offense and all requests for
leniency, based on your past work
record and no previous arrests or
convictions, the following
punishment is imposed: five years
confinement in the federal
penitentiary followed by a five
year probationary period.

The judge pauses as he looks at the standing defendant.

JUDGE (CONT'D)

Confinement is to begin
immediately.

The judge again RAPS his gavel, everyone stands and he exits the room.

Susan stands sobbing and gives Gary a long embrace before he is led away by the guards.

She sits back down to regain her composure while the courtroom slowly empties. Before long, only Susan and Michael remain in the room.

After regaining her composure, she stands and begins to exit the room.

Michael approaches her.

MICHAEL

How long have you known Gary?

She stops and looks at Michael, somewhat startled by his directness.

Realizing her uncertainty and possible mistrust, he continues.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

I knew Gary a few years ago. We were both involved with the same project. We've sort of lost contact with each other since then. Oh, by the way, I am Michael... and you are...?

SUSAN

Susan.

MICHAEL

Have you had lunch, Susan?

She shakes her head.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Let's go then. My treat. I'm really confused about this situation. Maybe you can help fill in some of the blanks.

Susan meekly nods her consent.

INT. COURTHOUSE HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

They exit the courtroom and walk together down the large highly shined hallway towards the building entrance.

INT. RESTAURANT - LATER

Michael and Susan sit across from each other in a small booth of a restaurant. Large potted ferns are suspended from the ceiling. Other green plants are planted on ledges separating booths. Both are about half completed with their luncheon salads.

SUSAN

You see, you couldn't find another individual who was more loyal to the agency than Gary. He loved his work... his work was his life.

(hesitates briefly)

Then all of a sudden, things went sour. The agency fired him. He was living off of his savings while looking for a new job. He would get a good job, then BOOM, he'd get fired again. Gary kept saying that the agency was feeding fraudulent reports to his employers to punish him for not cooperating.

MICHAEL

Punish him?

SUSAN

Gary never talked much about what he did with the agency, but he once said something about them being rather angry about his objections over a particular job.

MICHAEL

And Gary thinks that the agency fired him and was putting the squeeze on him because of his objections?

SUSAN

It goes beyond that.

Her eyes drill into Michael's.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

This whole arrest and trial was a scam. Gary despised drugs and had no tolerance for those who used drugs. Someone planted those drugs in his apartment and those witnesses were bought. Gary didn't know those guys and he wouldn't have bought any drugs from them. He was set-up and framed... by the agency, I'd bet.

INT. PRISON VISITORS ROOM - DAY

The heavy steel door closes behind Michael with a loud BANG, the sound reverberating for a moment in the nearly empty room. Michael sees Gary sitting on the other side of a thick glass window. A small table protrudes from both sides of the wall just below the window. The straight-backed chair SQUEAKS on the floor as Michael moves it and sits down. The puzzled look on Gary's face convinces Michael that he is unknown to Gary.

MICHAEL

You don't know me.

(brief pause)

I think I can help you. But I need some help in return.

Gary says nothing, but merely continues to eye Michael with suspicion.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
 I spoke with Susan, and I
 understand your situation.
 (another brief pause)
 I, too, was a victim of such a set-
 up. I can help you.

Still nothing from Gary - no words, no gestures - nothing.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
 Here's my card. You think about it
 and give me a call.

Michael pushes a small business card through the tiny round
 hole in the window. Gary takes the card and examines it.

Both individuals get up to exit the room. As he leaves, Gary
 turns and studies Michael as he stands there.

EXT. PRISON - MOMENTS LATER

The sun is beginning to set as Michael opens the door to his
 car. He gets in, closes the door, and just sits there for a
 while in the silence, thinking.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

Michael greets numerous individuals as he walks through the
 busy office area towards his office. Bright sunlight streams
 in through large windows nearby. He opens the door, throws
 his briefcase on the desk, and sits in the chair behind the
 desk. As he reaches to pick up the newspaper on his desk, he
 sees a message slip by the telephone. He picks it up and
 reads it.

Gary called. Wants to talk to you this morning.

Michael hastily grabs his briefcase and exits his office,
 once again pausing by the secretary's desk.

MICHAEL
 I'll be out for the rest of the
 day.

Not waiting for a response, he runs down the hallway towards
 an open elevator.

The secretary looks at a nearby coworker.

SECRETARY
 Deja vu.

CO-WORKER

Huh?

SECRETARY

Oh, nothing.

INT. PRISON VISITORS ROOM - LATER

Michael sits opposite Gary through the glass window. This time Gary appears more relaxed.

GARY

So how can you help?

MICHAEL

I think I can get enough information to prove that you are innocent. But I need information about a project you once worked on... One that I was also involved in, but on the receiving end.

GARY

I thought you looked familiar. Yes, I know what you are talking about. But you've got to help get me out of here.

Michael nods his agreement.

GARY (CONT'D)

(whispering so that the guards cannot hear)

We were to capture and reprogram known American dissidents. The targeted individual would be captured, drugged, and taken to an old underground bunker facility in Northern Virginia at Fort Belvoir. This place was built during World War Two as a major command post if the USA should come under attack. The location and use was kept as a tight secret and most who once knew of it have long forgotten about it.

(slight pause)

Special electronic probes are inserted through the skull into specific areas of the brain.

(MORE)

GARY (CONT'D)

Wire leads from these probes connect to a computer and a digitized sequence of information is fed from the computer to the various probes, stimulating various portions of the brain affecting the senses and memory - the person dreams a dream created by the computer.

(slight pause)

This dream sequence is repeated time and time again for weeks until it becomes ingrained in the person's memory and he vividly remembers each detail as if the dream were a reality.

MICHAEL

(interrupting)

But why?

GARY

When released from the program, the person will possess a new set of values - he has been reprogrammed, so to speak. There were different programs for different people, based on their physical status - age and sex - and their background. After their completion of this program, individuals are programmed to be passive and extremely 'pro-America'. They merely blend in with society and never again cause the government any trouble.

MICHAEL

How can I get to this place?

GARY

You can try, but you'll never make it. The place is built under ground with security fence above ground and electronic surveillance all around.

MICHAEL

What kind of electronic surveillance?

GARY

The fenced-in area has remote video cameras keeping watch over the entire area, to include an area about a hundred feet outside the security fence. An infrared camera system is set up to supplement the video system for night surveillance.

Using a piece of paper and pen located at the table, Gary draws a hasty sketch of the fence and camera locations.

GARY (CONT'D)

Video cameras are located here (points to locations on the drawing).)
Starlight night-vision cameras are located at same spots.

MICHAEL

Aren't there any weaknesses?

GARY

(after a brief hesitation)
The antique starlight cameras aren't thermal cameras, but they work using limited light. They are old and are only about twenty percent effective during severe thunderstorms due to lightning. Each time lightning flashes in the area, the starlight cameras white out. It takes approximately fifteen to twenty seconds for the cameras to recover.

MICHAEL

How do you get into and out of the facility?

GARY

There is only one entrance/exit, a one-lane vehicle entrance located here (points to drawing). It is secured by armed security guards and as you can see, highly visible by the cameras.

MICHAEL

There's nothing else?

GARY

Wait a minute. There is an air vent leading to the surface... located about here

(points to sketch)

It would be a long shot, but who knows.

MICHAEL

Where does it lead to?

GARY

I'm not certain, but I think it leads to the air handler, which is located near the underground parking garage.

Michael nods his head with interest.

EXT. BUCK'S HUNTING & SURVIVAL STORE - DAY

Michael parks his car and enters Buck's Hunting & Survival Store.

INT. BUCK'S HUNTING & SURVIVAL STORE - MOMENTS LATER

Michael sets items into his shopping cart and moves to the checkout station. The CLERK scans each item and places it in plastic bags: nylon rappelling rope, four snap links, two thermal ponchos (made from the same material as NASA thermal blankets), a hunting knife, fishing line, an LED light on a headband, a box of small chemical light sticks, and a rappelling/climbing harness.

EXT. BUCK'S HUNTING & SURVIVAL STORE - MOMENTS LATER

Michael exits the store and puts the items in the trunk of his car.

EXT. C&C PHOTOGRAPHY SUPPLY STORE - DAY

Michael parks his car and enters another store - a photographic supply store.

INT. C&C PHOTOGRAPHY SUPPLY STORE - MOMENTS LATER

MICHAEL
(to store WORKER)
Do you have any radio-operated
remote flash units?

The WORKER (25-yr old male) shows Michael some units.

WORKER
These are pretty much state of the
art flash units with about a 300
foot range for the remote, allowing
you to set up your lighting...

MICHAEL
(interrupting)
How many lumens?

WORKER
I think these put out close to a
million lumens.

MICHAEL
Perfect. I'll take four of these
and where are your camera tripods?

WORKER
(pointing)
They're over there.

MICHAEL
Great. Thanks again.

He picks out a small telescoping tripod and heads towards the cashier station.

EXT. ACE HARDWARE STORE - DAY

Michael walks from his parked car to the door of the store and enters the facility.

INT. ACE HARDWARE STORE - MOMENTS LATER

At the checkout station, the CASHIER scans a medium size bolt cutter, a Bernzomatic TS8000BT torch, and some duct tape.

EXT. ACE HARDWARE STORE - MOMENTS LATER

Michael places everything into the trunk of his car.

EXT. FORT BELVOIR - NIGHT

Michael hides in the trees at the edge of a forest area. The rain falls in near sheets. Lightning flashes frequently - about every thirty seconds. The sound of the rain pelting his poncho is all that can be heard.

A one hundred foot wide grassy clearing is situated between the tree line and a tall chain-link fence.

Security cameras are situated on top of the fence at about fifty yard intervals.

Immediately following a bright flash of lighting, Michael carefully tosses a flash unit packaged in a zip-lock bag into the clearing near the fence. It trails a strand of fishing line. Michael presses the button on the flash remote control. When the flash unit goes off, it is oriented in the wrong direction - face down.

Using the fishing line, Michael retrieves the flash unit and again tosses it towards the fence. This time it lands facing the direction of the security camera.

Following another bright lighting flash, he tosses another flash unit in the direction of a neighboring security camera. This one lands with the flash pointing straight up.

Moments later, Michael trips the flash units and makes a dash towards the fence, carrying a backpack with him. Laying down motionless beside the fence, he waits for a few moments. Then trips the flash units again.

He uses the bolt cutters to snip a gap about half-way up the fence - large enough for him to slip through.

He trips the two flash units and bolts through the fence and in the direction of some nearby brush.

As Michael nears the location of the suspected vent, he hastily places last two flash units - taped together, ensuring that the wide-angle lens diffusers are attached and that the units are facing upward and towards the cameras on the fence. He flashes them.

Michael soon finds the air vent, covered by a steel grate and secured with an old government series 200 case-hardened steel lock. He quickly snaps the tripod open, extends the legs, and drapes the second poncho over it - creating a small teepee. He reaches into his bag and extracts the rope, small flashlight, snap links, and his portable torch.

Ensuring the torch is under the Poncho teepee, he ignites and fine-tunes the flame.

The torch cuts a large enough slot in the hasp-like bracket to allow the padlock to slip through. He quickly extinguishes the flame and opens the grate. With one silent movement, he attaches a snap-link to the grate.

Michael shines a small pocket flashlight down the opening and slowly lowers his backpack tied to one end of the rope until it reaches the bottom of the shaft. He pulls the rope back up about three feet, ties a double-overhand knot in the rope, and clips the loop of his knot into the snap-link.

As he carefully lowers himself into the shaft, he again flashes the flash units and collapses the tripod so that the poncho lies flat over the grate.

INT. AIR DUCTWORK - MOMENTS LATER

When Michael reaches solid footing, he quietly releases himself from his harness, unties his backpack, and removes his wet poncho, revealing that he is clad in dark coveralls.

He removes the LED headband flashlight from his backpack, slips it on, and turns it on.

He begins crawling through the narrow concrete ductwork, wiping away spider webs as he goes, and pulling his backpack behind him.

He crawls only a few feet at a time, attempting to remain as silent as possible. Every ten feet, he tears off a six inch strip of duct tape, SNAPS one of the chemical light sticks, wraps it at one end of the tape, and attaches the tape to the ceiling of the duct.

Looking back over his shoulder, Michael clearly sees the illuminated light sticks, indicating the path that he had just recently travelled.

He reaches an intersection in the ductwork. The larger concrete duct continues straight, however, reduced in size. Two significantly smaller metal ducts leave this intersection - one to the left and one to the right.

Michael listens and hears the sound of an automobile engine, then tires squeaking, coming from the duct in front of him.

Michael begins pulling himself on his stomach through the narrow concrete ductwork, scooting only a few inches at a time, attempting to remain as silent as possible

Michael reaches the end of the duct, he looks through the old steel grate and into the parking garage.

In the dim light of the underground parking garage, the only things visible are a few vehicles, of which some are parked right in front of the air grate, but no persons.

Retrieving the torch from his backpack, he uses it to cut through the 75-year old rusty bolts holding the grate to the wall. In a matter of moments, the grate is free and Michael guides it quietly to the base of the wall.

INT. PARKING GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

He exits the air duct, silently removes his filthy coveralls, tossing them back into the air duct, and remains crouched by the vehicles.

Looking around, he sees an entrance door leading from the parking garage. However, he also sees a badge-reader lock system on the door.

Michael stealthily moves towards the entrance door, crouching behind a large trash bin situated near the door.

The door suddenly begins to open - someone inside the facility pressed the handicap door opener button. THREE INDIVIDUALS emerge into the parking garage conversing as they walk.

INDIVIDUAL I

I hate working swing shifts. I had to miss my daughter's band concert tonight.

INDIVIDUAL II

Me too. I frequently have to miss my son's football games.

INDIVIDUAL III

Yeah, I'll be glad when this month is over and I get back onto days.

As the people pass by the trash bin, the door remains open for a brief moment. Michael quickly and quietly extracts himself from behind the trash bin and slips into the building before the door automatically closes.

INT. HALLWAY OF FORT BELVOIR FACILITY - CONTINUOUS

Michael stands in a recessed doorway near the exterior door. Similar recessed doorways to various rooms line the hallway - both on the left and the right. Each door has a small square window at about eye level.

Michael quietly shuffles down the hallway glancing through the windows of the doors, but all the rooms are dark.

He finally comes across a room where there is dim light emanating through the small window from within. He looks through the small window into a hospital-like ward room.

INT. WARD ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A lone white-clad NURSE sits at desk on the left side of the room, with her back to the door.

Beds are aligned on either side of the room, four on each side. Three of the beds are occupied while the others are empty. Each patient has an IV tube running from a suspended bag to his forearm. Each bed has two monitors on the wall above it. Michael is able to read the monitors on the bed closest to the door.

One monitor displays the patient's name and vital statistics - blood pressure, EKG, heart rate, temp, etc. The other monitor displays the name on the top line and immediately under the name, the words:

Current Sequence: 53T	Next Sequence: 54T
Next Start Time: 42:03	Duration: 76.43

The time counts down:

42:03...42:02...42:01...42:00...41:59...

The bottom half of the screen has eight horizontal wavy lines running across the screen.

As Michael stands there watching, a monitor for the patient in an adjacent bed begins to light up with activity. Michael notices the eight horizontal lines are no longer gently curved, but rather, very jagged and irregular, with numerous large peaks and valleys. These lines scroll from left to right.

The words at the top of the screen:

**Duration:13...12...11...10...9...8...7...6...5...
4...3...2...1...0.**

Suddenly, the screen calms and the lines go flat and the words at the top read:

Current Sequence: 24N	Next Sequence: 25N
Next Start Time: 60:00	Duration: 64.02

The digits for the Next Start Time begin ticking away.

60:00... 59:59...59:58...59:57...59:56...

INT. HALLWAY OF FORT BELVOIR FACILITY - CONTINUOUS

Michael slowly and carefully turns away from that door and moves further down the hallway. As he nears the next door, he hears a faint TELEVISION. Being careful not to make any noise, he inches towards the door.

Peering through the small square window, he looks into a sterile room with about a dozen computer work stations lining the walls. Each work station has two monitors, displaying the same information as those in the previous room. A solitary man sits in a chair at a desk near the center of the room. His feet are propped on the desk, a small television is perched on the desk, and his eyes are closed.

Michael silently turns and heads back to the ward room.

Looking in through the glass of the door, he sees the nurse still with her back to the door, reading a paperback book under a desk lamp.

He slowly turns the door knob and opens the door without making a sound.

INT. WARD ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Michael enters the room and silently closes the door behind him.

As Michael approaches the nurse, she suddenly swings around and sees him. Her mouth drops and her eyes widen as if she had just seen a ghost. After a moment's pause, she quickly reaches for the phone on the desk. Michael jumps towards her and grabs the phone from her hand, replacing it in its cradle, and simultaneously grabbing her outstretched arm. Looking as if she were about to scream, Michael places his hand over her mouth. Panic fills her eyes.

Michael attempts to reassure her.

MICHAEL

(in a near whisper)

I don't want to hurt you. Please.
Just cooperate with me and nobody
will get hurt. OK?

Still somewhat panicky, she nods her head.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
You know who I am?

Again, she nervously nods her head.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
I'm not here to hurt you or anyone else. I merely want to rescue these individuals from these machines. Please cooperate with me so that no one will get hurt.

Again, she nervously nods her head.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
I'm going to let go of you now, OK? I am going to have to tie you up though, so don't panic and for God's sake, please don't scream, or someone might end up getting hurt. OK?

She nods her head. Michael slowly withdraws his hand from her mouth.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Please, move over to that bed and lie down on it.

She hesitates for a moment, but then complies with his directions. Michael grabs a sheet from the neighboring bed, twirls it a couple of times making a fat rope and drapes it over the lady's body. Grasping the two ends, he ties them together under the bed. He grabs another sheet and repeats this procedure; this time securing her feet to the bed. He quickly grabs a pillow, shakes the pillow out and onto the floor - retaining the pillow case, spins it into a short rope, and carefully ties a gag around the mouth and head of the nurse.

Michael goes over to the nearest patient and examines the bottle of clear liquid draining into the individual's body via the IV.

As he begins removing the IV needles from the forearm of each of the patients, he notices the bruise tissue around the spot where the IV enters the arm - the same spot that was bruised and sore on his body after his altercation with the gang of youths in New York.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
How long will it take for this stuff to wear off?

The nurse doesn't respond.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Well, we'll just have to see.

The clock on the wall reads: **24:42**.

Seeing a file cabinet, Michael moves towards it and pulls on the top drawer. He examines the labels on the files contained inside. Nothing of any significance.

Opening the second drawer, he discovers a number of files with names of individuals on them.

Richards, Stuart	(Political Extremist)	Completed
Occupation:	College Professor	
Jenkins, William	(Illegal Arms)	Completed
Occupation:	Lobbyist	
Haidle, Mark	(Political Extremist)	Completed
Occupation:	Unknown	
Poppe, James	(Narcotics)	Completed
Occupation:	Unknown	
Briley, Randal	(Smuggling)	Completed
Occupation:	Automobile Salesman	
Dreher, Matthew	(Terrorist)	Completed
Occupation:	Unknown	
Woodbury, Phil	(Political Extremist)	Completed
Occupation:	Construction Laborer	
Johnson, Michael	(Political Extremist)	Completed
Occupation:	Lawyer	

He stops at the file with his name on it. As he pulls it out, he hears footsteps walking down the hallway. Grabbing the file, he quietly closes the drawer and hides behind the desk. The footsteps get louder as the person nears the door, then they begin to fade away.

Michael sits at the desk and flips through the file.

He sees photos of himself in his earlier years, demonstrating at various locations (same photos shown at the beginning). Then he sees a more recent photo. He flips through more pages and comes to one with the word "COMPLETED" stamped across it in bold red letters. He scans this document and learns that sequence #4 was used for him, a start date of 19 April 2024, and a completion date of 6 September 2024.

Going back to the filing cabinet, he opens the third drawer labeled, "Sequences".

Flipping through this drawer he finds a folder labeled, **SEQUENCE #4 - PETROPAVLOVKA, SIBERIA**, and withdraws it.

Back at the desk, Michael opens the folder.

CLOSE ON A BRIEF OUTLINE SUMMARY of everything that happened to him:

Parachute experience

Breakout of the jail

Meeting Kathrine and Nicholas

Secret missions

Nicholas' death

Near capture of Kathrine

Trip back to the USA

Escape from the gang in New York

A large envelope falls out of the folder and onto the floor. Michael picks it up and examines it.

A gummed label on the envelope reads: **Sequence #4.**

Michael opens the envelope and discovers numerous 5"x 8" black and white PHOTOGRAPHS - photographs of his recent experience - as if seen through his own eyes.

The man in the dark suit along with the two men in flight suits;

The Russian peasant farmer with his old rifle and the young boy;

Kathrine and the jailer in the small jailhouse;

Nicholas and others sitting and standing in the sawmill illuminated by the glowing fire;

Kathrine on horseback observing the others working at night on the railroad tracks;

Nicholas and the two men cutting the fence at the grain depot with the large grey storage bins in the background;

Nicholas' death, leaning up beside the shanty wall,
Kathrine tearfully clutching the fragile cross;

The Soviet soldiers and their attack dogs at the mines;

The countryside as seen from the train;

Kathrine standing on the wharf among the fishermen's
wives, waving goodbye and clutching the silver broken
cross necklace;

The New York street gang confrontation.

Michael's face gets angry as the full impact of what he had
just discovered hits him. But Michael controls himself,
knowing that he has come too far to blow it now.

The clock on the wall reads: 01:33.

Michael moves over to the bound nurse.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Are you OK?

She responds with a nod of her head.

Her cheeks are red from the tight gag.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
I tell you what I'm going to do.
You promise to remain quiet and
I'll loosen this (points to the
pillowcase gag).

Again, the young lady nods.

Michael reaches behind her head and loosens the knot securing
the pillowcase, pulls the gag away from her mouth, and allows
it to drape across her chest as a reminder of their unwritten
contract.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
I'm sorry I had to do this, but I
couldn't afford to take any
chances. When does the next shift
come on board?

NURSE
Seven.

MICHAEL
I hope these guys wake up before
then.

He glances at the names on the monitors for each of the sleeping patients. Then returns to the file cabinet and retrieves each of their files.

He sits down at the desk and begins to study the contents of each folder.

Armistead, George (Political Extremist)
Occupation: Unknown Age: 58
Synopsis: Leader in Ku Klux Klan

- Arrested 14 times for various reasons including unlawful possession of narcotics, unlawful possession of firearms, illegal transportation of firearms, assault, assault with a deadly weapon, and conspiracy to commit murder.
- Convictions: None - each time, charges dismissed by plaintiff or dismissed due to legal technicality.
- Active Klansman (White Knights of Mississippi): 1976-1981
- Dropped out of sight following near conviction for murder conspiracy of Richard McDonald in 1981. Resurfaced with recent growth of KKK and neo-Nazi skinheads.
- Actions:
 - Charlottesville riots - 2017
 - Phoenix riots - 2010
 - Toledo riots - 2005
 - Leipzig (Germany) riots - 1992
 - Nazi convention, Denmark - 1996
 - LA riots - 1992
 - Skinhead violence - San Francisco - 1988
 - Skokie demonstrations & riots - 1985
 - Portland, Oregon riots - 2020
 - January 6th insurrection - 2021

Lee, Joseph (Political Extremist)
Occupation: Unknown Age: 57
Synopsis:

- Arrested 19 times - various offenses including assault, unlawful possession of a weapon, disturbing the peace, instigating a riot, resisting arrest.
- Convicted numerous times: No prison time (fines only). Each time, bail/fines paid within 12 hours of arrest/conviction.
- Dropped out of sight in 1992 until reemergence at 2001 Cincinnati Over the Rhine demonstrations and again in 2005 Toledo riots.
- Actions:
 - Member, Black Panthers - 1986-1991
 - Observed at NAACP rally against Skokie Nazis - 1985
 - Observed participating in LA riots - 1992
 - Cincinnati riots - 2001

- Toledo riots - 2005
- Benton Harbor, Michigan riots - 2007
- Oakland, California riots - 2009
- Wisconsin State Fair riots - 2011
- Inauguration Day riots - Wash D.C. - 2013
- St. Louis Black Lives Matter riots - 2020

Stogdale, Walter T. (Political Extremist)
 Occupation: Federal Judge Age: 64
 Synopsis: First elected to judicial post - 1981
 Federal District Judge, Wash D.C. - 1989

- Tendency towards trying plaintiffs and witnesses rather than accused.
- History of dismissing cases on extremely minor technicalities.
- Since March 2013, has released 17 obvious and certain criminals on minor technicalities. 9 of those 17 murdered another individual within 72 hours of their release; one a violent slaying of a family of five who were vacationing in the Wash D.C. area.

INT. WARD ROOM - LATER

Michael sits on the floor beside the desk, files laying on the floor beside him, head resting back on the side of the desk, eyes closed.

The clock on the wall reads: **04:53.**

Michael is suddenly startled awake when he hears a stirring sound coming from one of the beds. He hurries to the bed. A large black man (LEE) lies there weakly moaning and mumbling something incomprehensible.

Noticing the monitors alive with activity, Michael gets ready to begin disconnecting the lead wires from the sensors taped to the man's shaved head. But he stops and glances towards the nurse, who is now looking in his direction and observing his actions.

MICHAEL

(to nurse)

Is there a way to freeze the information on the monitors?

NURSE
 (nodding her head)
 In the upper right corner, press
 the "HOLD" button. Everything will
 remain as its current reading.

Michael presses the "HOLD" button and begins to disconnect all of the wires.

With the lead wires disconnected, he now begins to remove the sensors and probes. Sensors attached to the man's arms and legs are removed with little effort.

Then Michael reaches to work on the sensors taped to the man's head. The nurse, who had been observing Michael's actions GASPS.

NURSE (CONT'D)
 (in a loud whisper)
 Be careful!

Michael freezes his work and looks at her.

NURSE (CONT'D)
 Please be careful! The probes
 attached to the head - please be
 careful when removing them.

Michael's eyes move back to the man's head. He points to the pieces taped to the man's head and glances back toward the nurse. She nods.

As he carefully removes the tape and the sensor, a hair-like wire is pulled through the skull - from the brain.

Michael holds the piece close to his eye for examination and a strange look crosses his face - one combining bewilderment and anger.

NURSE (CONT'D)
 Band-Aids and alcohol wipes are
 over there.
 (nods her head towards an
 examination table)
 You must bandage each wound.

Michael moves over to the exam table, opens a drawer and withdraws a box of small circular Band-aids and a box of alcohol wipes.

He looks back towards the nurse. She nods, then allows her head to fall back onto the pillow.

Michael returns to LEE and carefully wipes down the spot of the withdrawn wire and places a Band-Aid on it.

Michael then repeats this procedure slowly and carefully with each of the dozen probes attached to the man's head.

Michael immediately jumps from bed to bed, pausing the monitors, disconnecting, and removing the sensors from the other two men.

Michael then moves back to Lee's bed and unfastens the velcro straps that hold the man's arms to the bed. Gently shaking the man and lightly slapping his face, Michael attempts to awaken him.

MICHAEL

Hey! Hey! Come on now. It's time to wake up.

The man begins to respond and slowly opens his eyes, using one hand to shield his eyes from the light.

LEE

What's going on? Where am I?

MICHAEL

Don't worry about that now. We've got to get you up and out of here before someone comes along.

The large black man, clad only in his hospital gown, attempts to stand up and stumbles. Michael reaches out to catch him, but nearly collapses under the weight of the man. With considerable effort, Michael is able to get the man seated on the edge of the bed.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Easy there big fella. Lee... Joe Lee, right?

The big man looks dazed and inquisitively at Michael.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Its a long story, and I don't have all the answers, but you've been lying here for quite some time and it might take a few minutes for you to get your legs back.

Just then, another patient begins to cough and toss about.

Michael moves over to the nurse.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Clothes... Where's their clothes?

NURSE
In their bed stands, I think.

Michael jumps over the empty bed to Lee's bed stand. Opening the drawer, he finds some garments and boots neatly placed inside. He grabs the bundle of clothes and tosses them to the big man.

MICHAEL
Here, put these on.

Lee sits there with the items in his lap as Michael quickly pulls the curtain around the bed to give the man some privacy.

Michael hustles to the second awakening man, STOGDALE, shaking him and lightly slapping his face.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Come on judge... wake up.... You're going to be late for work.

He retrieves Judge Stogdale's belongings from the bed stand and tosses them onto the judge's body and bed.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Here's your clothes... Come on... You've got to get dressed and get going.

Slowly the judge sits up, holding his head.

STOGDALE
Woah... What in the world was I drinking?

The third man, ARMISTEAD, begins to stir. Michael retrieves his belongings and tosses them on the bed, then begins to try to further awaken the man, using the same tactics as he had on Lee and Stogdale.

Lee yanks back the curtain, now dressed and standing. He looks directly at Michael with an angry look on his face.

LEE
What the hell is going on here?

Michael returns Lee's gaze.

MICHAEL

You were being brainwashed... you and him...

(points to the judge, now sitting on his bed)

and him...

(points to the third individual, now starting to come to life)

I don't know how long you've been here or what exactly happened, but I know that the government was attempting to brainwash... re-program you into being something or someone completely different.

LEE

And who the hell are you?

MICHAEL

I've been here too. They already completed their work on me. And I guess it worked. But I accidentally discovered what was going on and snuck in here to get you out. Now you can stand around here and get caught... and who knows what will happen then. Or you can help me get these guys going and get out of here. Do you see what time it is?

Michael points to the clock on the wall.

The clock now reads: **06:01**.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

The day shift will be getting here in a few minutes and we'd best be long gone before they arrive.

LEE

And why should I believe you?

MICHAEL

You don't have to. But any way you look at it, you have only three choices. You can stay right here until the next shift comes on board... or... you can try to get out on your own, but you don't know the way... or... you can help me get you and these other two out of here. I got in here and I'm gonna get out.

LEE
OK, so what do you want me to do?

MICHAEL
Help the judge there get dressed.

LEE
Judge! I ain't gonna help no judge!

MICHAEL
Hey man, he's in the same situation
as you... and anyways, maybe he'll
be able to return the favor one
day.

Lee hesitates, but then assists the judge in getting his
clothes on.

Meanwhile, Michael assists Armistead - the last man - to get
dressed.

LEE
Now what?

MICHAEL
Walk him around a couple of minutes
until he gets his legs back.

Lee complies while Michael attempts to get Armistead walking,
but has much difficulty. The judge soon seems to be
recovering well, and Lee allows him to begin walking on his
own.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Here, take Armistead.

LEE
Who?

MICHAEL
Armistead - this is Armistead.

LEE
(mumbling under his
breath)
What a stupid name.

Lee wraps Armistead's arm over his broad shoulders.

Michael moves over to the nurse.

MICHAEL
Are you OK?

The nurse nods.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
How do we get to the main exit?

LEE
Hey, I thought you knew how to get out of here.

Michael looks directly at Lee.

MICHAEL
Keep it down, will you. You want the whole building to hear what's going on?

Michael turns back to the nurse.

NURSE
The hallway - go until you come to the second corridor on the left. That one leads to the main exit. There are guards at the exit.

Michael nods his head.

MICHAEL
I know. Sorry about leaving you here like this.

Michael looks at the judge - he looks weak, but OK - and then looks at Lee.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Let's go.

Michael grabs the files laying on the desk as the four men gather by the ward room door.

Cautiously, Michael opens the door, sticks his head out to examine the hallway, turns back towards the others and nods his head. The group silently exits the room. As the door clicks closed behind them, the clock on the wall reads:
06:12.

INT. HALLWAY OF FORT BELVOIR FACILITY - CONTINUOUS

The four men move awkwardly down the hall - staying near the left wall. Michael guides the judge and Lee supports Armistead.

As the group reaches the first corridor, they stop and Michael sticks his head around the corner to ensure the way is clear. No one is in sight. The four men hastily cross the danger area and continue down the quiet hallway. As they arrive at the second corridor, the group again momentarily halts as Michael again inspects the way. Again, the corridor is vacant.

Without warning, VOICES are heard - men's voices. The group freezes and Lee's near panicky eyes connect with Michael's.

A door that they had just passed - approximately fifty feet from where they now stand - swings open as the men's conversation continues. Fortunately, the door swings towards the escapees.

Michael grabs the judge and pulls him with himself as they rapidly disappear around the corner. Lee and Armistead are right behind. After rounding the corner, the four press themselves up against the wall, as if to try to become one with the inanimate structure.

Holding their breath, they hear the DOOR CLOSE and the FOOTSTEPS FADE - the men are walking the other way. Suddenly, a worried look crosses Michael's face and he looks to Lee.

MICHAEL AND LEE
(whispering together)
The ward.

Michael maneuvers himself to observe the fading footsteps. He breathes a sigh of relief when the men turn and head down the first corridor the four had recently passed.

Michael looks first at Lee and Armistead and then at the judge and nods his head.

MICHAEL
It's OK, they took the side hallway.

The group of four quickly continues down the dimly lit corridor a couple hundred yards until the corridor abruptly turns to the right. When they reach the corner, Michael again peaks around to inspect the way. This time he sees the exit door to the underground parking garage.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Wait here.

He hustles to the door and glances through the door window. Fortunately, no one appears to be in the garage. He presses the handicap door opener button and turns and waves for the others to join him. The door opens slowly.

About a dozen empty government sedans and privately owned vehicles are parked, backed into parking stalls which line both sides of the garage. There are approximately three empty spaces for every car sitting in the room. At the far end of the room - about a hundred yards away - sits the guard shack with a security guard inside. A simple striped board gate - similar to that of a toll gate - and a row of one-way traffic spikes are all that separates the group from freedom.

The group crouches behind one of the parked government vehicles.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

(to Lee)

You think you can start one of these?

LEE

Piece of cake.

STOGDALE

What you're doing is illegal.

LEE

(sarcastically)

Well lookee here, the man can talk.

STOGDALE

Stealing one of these cars is grand theft, and I'll not be involved with anything to do with grand theft.

LEE

That's OK with me. That's just less dead weight I have to lug around.

MICHAEL

(interrupting)

That's enough! Right now, we need each other. Judge, you have only two choices... you can come with us in one of these cars... through that gate... or you can stay here until you get caught and get put back on that machine. The choice is yours.

Michael turns to Lee.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

I'll grab Armistead, you get us some wheels.

Lee nods in agreement, then disappears around the vehicle.

Maintaining a low profile, he slips up to the closest sedan, but finds the doors locked. He stealthily moves to another nearby car. Again locked. He moves to a third vehicle - an old green Volkswagen van. This time he finds the sliding door unlocked. Quietly, he opens the door and unlocks the front door. He opens the front door and crawls in, staying low in the seat.

Supporting Armistead, Michael slips from the safety of behind the government vehicle and scurries to the vehicle's open side door. He tosses Armistead in and is preparing to enter himself when a hand on his shoulder causes him to spin around in fear. Seeing Judge Stogdale crouching beside the VW, Michael breathes a huge sigh of relief and motions him to crawl in

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
(to Judge & Armistead)
Keep down and out of sight.

Michael quietly closes the back door and crouches by the front door, serving as a lookout while Lee does his thing.

INT. VW VAN - CONTINUOUS

Lee yanks a bunch of wires loose from under the dash and twists two of them together. He scoots over to the driver's position and looks at Michael.

Lee gets into the driver's seat and Michael in the shotgun seat. They close their doors as quietly as possible. Lee reaches down underneath the steering column and grabs the wires.

LEE
Ready?

Michael holds his hand up.

MICHAEL
Wait!

Two cars can be seen coming down the ramp - approaching the guard shack. The guard, evidently recognizing the vehicles and occupants, raises the gate, lowers the traffic spikes, and motions them through.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
(whispering to Lee)
OK. Go ahead and start it.
(MORE)

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Turn on the headlights, and begin
to drive slowly towards the gate.
When I give the signal, floor it
and get us through the gate.

As the two vehicles enter the darkness of the parking area,
the VW comes alive.

ARMISTEAD

Noisy ol' beast.

Everyone turns and looks at Armistead, dumbfounded to hear
another strange voice at such a strange moment.

ARMISTEAD (CONT'D)

What? I'm not allowed to talk?

INT. PARKING GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

One of the approaching vehicles turns into a parking space.
The VW lights flick on. The van lurches forward and turns
towards the exit gate. The lights from the second on-coming
vehicle create a temporary moment of blindness. Then, only
the guard house and gate lie in front of the four men and
their beast of burden.

INT. VW VAN - CONTINUOUS

Michael's eyes are wide with anticipation as the VW
approaches the guard. Lee's face is glistening with
perspiration. The judge and Armistead crouch like scared
children in the back seat.

INT. PARKING GARAGE, BY SECURITY GATE - CONTINUOUS

Suddenly, the guard, recognizing the vehicle, but not seeing
the occupants, raises the gate and motions the vehicle
through.

SECURITY GUARD

Good day, Mr. Johns.

The four men pass through the security gate, basically
undetected.

EXT. PARKING GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

The morning sun is beginning to break the horizon as the car
climbs the steep sloped entrance/exit to the underground
facility.

More cars, with headlights beaming, can now be seen approaching the facility. It will be only moments now before the escape is discovered.

TITLE: **ONE YEAR LATER**

INT. LARGE SENATE COMMITTEE CHAMBER ROOM - DAY

--RAP -- RAP -- RAP -- RAP -- A dark stained wooden gavel STRIKES a small similarly colored wooden pedestal and is set down beside the pedestal on the glossy surface of a large wooden desk. A nameplate, **SENATOR P. GRIFFIN**, sits on the desk near the pedestal. Eight other similar nameplates sit on the massive desk which resembles a judicial bench. Behind each of the nameplates, distinguished looking MEN and WOMEN in expensive suits, sit in various positions in high backed executive chairs. Two men whisper to each other. A sign attached to the front of the desk contains these words: **SUB-COMMITTEE ON COVERT OPERATIONS.**

All of this is situated at one end of the large room with twenty-foot high ceilings. Scores of SPECTATORS and REPORTERS sit and stand in the other half of the room. The buzzing of voices soon quiets as SENATOR GRIFFIN begins to speak.

SENATOR GRIFFIN

After reviewing all evidence presented by Mister King, representing Johnson, Stogdale, Lee, Armistead, Richards, Jenkins, Haidle, Poppe, Briley, Dreher, Woodbury, and Stevens; and by Misters Conroy and Vavrin, representing the United States Government, this committee has determined to submit a resolution before the floor of the Senate, stating that the United States Government did, in fact, wrongfully and illegally apprehend, detain, and conduct actions of an experimental nature against individual citizens of this country...."

Suddenly the large room bursts with activity. Reporters, cameramen, and photographers all rush forward to the front table, where Michael, Judge Stogdale, Lee, and others are seated.

Questions - too many and too fast to understand - begin flying in all directions from reporters now surrounding the group of men. Flash units burst and flood lamps blind the individuals as microphones are pressed in front of their faces.

The POUNDING of the Senator's gavel has no impact on the hungry horde of reporters looking for more information.

Mister KING stands to make a statement and answer questions shot at the group.

As the throng quiets, Michael feels a tug at his elbow. Gary Stevens, a large grin on his face, attempts to pull Michael out of the midst of the crowd. Judge Stogdale's eyes meet Gary's.

STOGDALE

Good afternoon, Mr. Stevens.

GARY

Hello, Judge. Thanks again for helping me out of that mess.

STOGDALE

(smiling)

The feeling is mutual.

Gary succeeds in removing Michael from the crowd. They move to a more isolated corner of the room.

GARY

I would have gotten here earlier, but you know how it is trying to find parking places around here. Anyways, I thought I'd bring you the latest copy of the Post which discusses the pro's and con's of this hearing, regardless of what the outcome is. Here, on the front page....

Gary opens the paper for Michael to see.

Headlines on the front page read: **Loss of Cheer in Gov't Brainwashing Scheme May not be all that is Lost.**

A large PHOTO directly under that story shows a man shaking hands with the President. The man is accompanied by an attractive lady and a small group of people. The photo caption reads: **New Soviet Foreign Minister and daughter are welcomed by President during their visit to the US.** The woman in the picture looks very familiar.

MICHAEL

Kathrine!

GARY

What?

MICHAEL

Oh, nothing. Just thinking out loud. Tell me, Gary, what do you think of her?

Michael points to lady in photo.

GARY

I guess she looks OK on paper. But she's much better in person.

MICHAEL

What do you mean?

GARY

I saw those people in the hallway out there. I guess they were visiting the Speaker and getting a tour of the Capital or something.

Michael reaches out and grabs Gary by the lapels.

MICHAEL

When?

GARY

(startled)

Just a couple minutes ago - while I was coming into the building.

Michael grabs Gary and hastily leads him out of the room.

MICHAEL

Where? Show me where!

INT. CAPITAL BUILDING HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Once outside the room, Gary manages to partially free himself from Michael's grasp sufficiently to point in the direction where he saw the people.

GARY

Over there.

As suddenly as he had grabbed him, Michael releases Gary and races down the corridor in the direction Gary had pointed. Gary attempts to follow.

They run down a flight of steps and through the main foyer of the building, dodging tourists and lobbyists enroute like professional running backs.

INT. CAPITAL GREAT ROTUNDA - CONTINUOUS

Stopping in the Rotunda, Gary sees four sleek black chauffeur-driven limousines pull up to the curb, alongside the group he had previously seen.

GARY
(pointing)
Over there!

They hurry to the massive steps at the building's entrance.

EXT. CAPITAL STEPS - CONTINUOUS

As they begin their running descent of the steps, Michael sees the young lady begin to enter the third vehicle in the motorcade.

MICHAEL
(shouting)
Kathrine!

The young lady briefly stands erect, as if attempting to see who had called her.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
(shouting and waving his
arms)
Kathrine!

This time she sees him and waves modestly in return.

As Michael descends the steps he is quickly swept off of his feet by two secret service agents moving equally as fast up the steps. Another agent quickly pushes the lady into the car and closes the door behind her.

As the motorcade prepares to depart, the dark rear window of the third vehicle opens and the young lady leans towards the opening. Her right hand clutches a necklace.

As the vehicles begin to pull away, it appears as though she whispers the word, "Michael", and drops the necklace out of the window and onto the sidewalk.

The security agents release their hold on them. Michael quickly runs down the remaining steps to the necklace lying on the sidewalk. Gary is close behind him.

Carefully picking it up, Michael closely examines the object attached to the necklace - a silver cross, made from delicate silver braids, with one of the horizontal members partially broken off.

The vehicles speed away.

GARY
You know her?

A puzzled look crosses Michael's face as he watches the vehicles disappear in the distance.

MICHAEL
That's a good question.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END