

THE BANKSTERS

By Marianda VP

WGAE Registration Number I355895

EXT. MAIDAN SQUARE, KYIV - NIGHT

SUPERIMPOSE: KIEV, NOVEMBER 21, 2013

A crowd of about fifty YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN gather in Maidan Square, their expressions a blend of determination and passion. They hold signs reading "UKRAINE BELONGS TO EUROPE" and "YANUKOVYCH: A RUSSIAN SPY." An American JOURNALIST reports for CNN with urgency.

JOURNALIST

President Viktor Yanukovich's refusal to sign the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement has sparked protests. Accusations of corruption and Russian influence are rampant among Ukraine's youth.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING STAIRWAY - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: BOSTON, NOVEMBER 22, 2013

High heels ascend grey stairs. MARLENE VIGILEOS, late 30s, approaches a locked metal door and rings the bell, glancing at the CCTV camera.

INT. MANAGEMENT'S FLOOR - DAY

The security guard opens the door. Marlene steps into the opulent surroundings, her face reflecting intrigue. Famous artworks line the walls. She shakes her head slightly, noticing faint elevator music.

GUARD

(receiving a call)
Yes, understood.
(to Marlene)
Please take a seat.

Marlene sits on a velvet couch, eyeing the surveillance cameras. On the coffee table, a photo book titled "Portman & Luchenko Investment Bank: A Century of Strategic Success" catches her eye. Flipping through, she pauses at a page showcasing a Kandinsky painting, then looks up to see it hanging on the wall. Another page shows Kandinsky with Phillip Portman (Sr.) and art collector Ionafan Dombrowski, dated 1913.

A SECRETARY's voice breaks her focus.

SECRETARY

Mrs. Vigileos? Mr. Portman will see you now.

INT. CEO'S OFFICE - DAY

PHIL PORTMAN, 60, sits comfortable in a plush armchair behind a formidable wooden Parnian desk. The grandson of one of the two founders of this historical investment bank used to be a heartthrob. Now, he looks rickety. Marlene walks cautiously in and Phil springs from his chair to greet her.

PHIL

Marlene Vigileos! Finally, a face to the name!

MARLENE

Actually, we've met before. The Federal Reserve presentation, four years ago.

PHIL

(embarrassed chuckle)
Ah, that's right. My apologies, so many meetings. But that day... best forgotten, eh?

MARLENE

It's a matter of time before you get your bank back.

PHIL

And we owe much of that to you.

MARLENE

It was team effort.

PHIL

Larry tells me the UK branch sale was your idea. Three hundred and fifty million, was it?

MARLENE

Yes, that's correct.

PHIL

Impressive! Please, take a seat.

Marlene sits, her gaze drifting to the art collection.

PHIL (CONT'D)

Russian avant-guard.

MARLENE

Are they originals?

PHIL

Absolutely! A legacy from my grandfather's cousin, Ionafan Dombrowski. His grandson is now one of our top clients.

MARLENE

And a significant debtor.

PHIL

An institutional debtor, with his own bank.

MARLENE

In Ukraine...

Marlene eyes Phil with concern. He forces a strained smile.

PHIL

Let's not worry about that now. Let's talk about you! Larry insists on a bonus for your hard work.

Marlene's expression brightens momentarily.

PHIL (CONT'D)

Trouble is, the regulator won't allow bonuses before the stress test.

MARLENE

Then perhaps a promotion or a modest raise...given our performance?

PHIL

(raises his eyebrow)
Ambitious! Larry might start watching his back.

MARLENE

Mr. Portman, with all due respect-

PHIL

You can call me Phil.

MARLENE

Mr. Portman, all I'm asking for is some form of acknowledgement.

PHIL

Rest assured, once we clear the final stress test, the bank will not forget your hard work.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING STAIRWAY - DAY

Marlene descends the stairs, her phone suddenly ringing. She glances at the caller ID: MOM.

MARLENE

(answering)

Hey! Everything OK? How's Dad?

INT. MARLENE'S HOUSE - DAY

Marina, Marlene's mother in her mid-70s, an impressive woman for her age, holds the phone in one hand and a letter in the other. In the background, a physiotherapist guides an older man through arm exercises.

MARINA

He's doing just fine...

Marina examines the letter in her hand with concern.

MARINA (CONT'D)

But this letter... they're threatening to take our house if we don't pay...

INT. OFFICE BUILDING STAIRWAY - DAY

Marlene leans against the wall.

MARLENE

Don't worry about it. I'll take care of it today.

INT. SPECIAL SITUATIONS DIVISION FLOOR - DAY

Marlene enters her division's bustling workspace. A dozen weary individuals, dressed in rumpled suits, toil at their desks, surrounded by stacks of paperwork. They glance up as Marlene passes through, heading to her modest corner office. She acknowledges them with a solemn nod, and they return to their work.

INT. MARLENE'S OFFICE - DAY

Marlene's boss, LARRY LUCHENKO, in his late 40s, is silhouetted against the window. Despite his average looks, there's an intriguing aura about him. His wedding ring seems a bit snug as he fiddles with it. Marlene, visibly tensed, greets him with a cautious smile.

LARRY
How did it go?

MARLENE
As expected.

LARRY
Right.

Larry turns, examining her with a mixture of professional respect and a hint of something more personal.

MARLENE
(slightly embarrassed)
Could you talk to HR about
advancing my paychecks?

LARRY
I could but there's a thirty or
thirty five percent cut for early
access...

MARLENE
(calculating in her head)
I need this.

LARRY
(leaning in slightly)
Sure, you know I'd do anything...

A charged silence hangs briefly.

MARLENE
(faintly smiling)
Really? Then join us for drinks
tonight. The team would like that.

LARRY
Your bonus for this year.

He lingers, his hand brushing her shoulder in a seemingly casual, yet loaded gesture. Marlene watches him leave, her expression a mix of resolve and hidden emotion.

Once alone, she notices a yellow envelope on her desk. She opens it, revealing cash inside.

MARLENE

What the f---

Marlene dials an internal number.

MARLENE (CONT'D)

Tiko, my office. Now.

TIKO COLEMAN, early 40's, enters hesitant. She senses the atmosphere.

MARLENE (CONT'D)

(showing the envelope)

What's this?

TIKO

I just wanted to help... You've helped me a million times in the past.

MARLENE

(slightly softened, she hands back the envelope)

Focus on that art gallery you've been dreaming about. Maybe you could hire me as a manager or something.

TIKO

What do you know about art?

MARLENE

I may know nothing about art, but I do know people pay good money to get some. And I know a lot about money.

Tiko gives a small, resigned smile. Marlene leans in for a comforting hug, mindful of their colleagues peeking through the glass wall.

EXT. HIGH STREET, BOSTON - NIGHT

Marlene, dressed in her running attire, jogs along High Street in Chinatown. She halts in front of a Chinese restaurant and enters. Moments later, she emerges with her hands full.

MARLENE

(waving for taxi)

Taxi! Hey!

INT. MARLENE'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

The kitchen table is covered with Chinese food, with a huge plate of deep fried spicy lobster in the middle. Marina dips her fork into the plate, while Marlene helps her father, Will, 80s, eat. Will has suffered partial hand paralysis from a recent stroke.

WILL

Leave me be! Enjoy your meal! You have a party to attend.

MARLENE

I will, don't worry.

MARINA

The physio said you'll be making your own spicy lobster soon.

WILL

(chuckles)

Yeah, right, after I run a marathon.

MARLENE

Dad!

They share a light moment, then Will's expression turns somber.

WILL

What's left for me anyway?
Everything's just...

MARINA

Ugh, Will...you're constantly nagging!

WILL

Easy for you to say. You don't pay the bills, you don't deal with the mortgage-

MARLENE

Dad, relax, we'll handle this together. Actually...

Marlene gets up from the table and returns with an envelope. She opens it and presents a letter to Will.

WILL

What's this?

MARLENE

A break... I made a partial repayment and the bank agreed to give us three months. By then, I should have my bonus, and we can sort things out. We're not losing this house.

MARINA

Baby, you shouldn't have-

MARLENE

It means I'll be crashing here a bit longer. But that's not too bad, right?

WILL

It's your home, always.

MARINA

Forty and still at home. How's that dating life going?

MARLENE

I'm thirty-nine!

MARINA

Well, last year...

WILL

Marina, leave her be! She's fine just the way she is.

MARINA

You selfish old man, you just can't let her go. Admit it.

WILL

Nonsense! Name one guy she was happy with.

MARINA

Because she keeps making all the wrong choices!

Marlene devours the lobster with her hands, savoring each bite as if it were her last.

INT. LADIES' ROOM / BAR - NIGHT

Marlene washes her hands. She looks at herself in the mirror, somewhat displeased about the wrinkles that have showed up. Tiko rushes in.

TIKO

Where are you? Are you ok?

MARLENE

I'm fine. I just had to pee!

TIKO

Whatever. Count to ten and come out looking surprised.

Tiko runs out. Marlene looks at herself again in the mirror with the same disapproval.

INT. BAR, BOSTON - NIGHT

Marlene emerges from the ladies' room, draped in a dark blazer, ripped jeans, and high-heeled boots. As she steps out, her colleagues, including TIKO and her direct superior GREG MILLER, greet her with a cake and a spontaneous rendition of "Happy Birthday."

GREG

(embracing her)
Happy birthday!

MARLENE

This is too much, Greg...

GREG

(with a wink)
Client's budget.

MARLENE

You're the best boss in the world.

GREG

Nah, I'm just a fancy decoration between you and...

Greg subtly nods towards Larry at the bar.

GREG (CONT'D)

I think he's in love with you.

MARLENE

Shush!

GREG

He never ever joined us for drinks before.

Marlene glances over at Larry, who seems engrossed in something on his tablet. She approaches cautiously.

MARLENE

Larry, you made it.

LARRY

You didn't tell me it's your birthday.

MARLENE

Would you come if you thought it was a party?

LARRY

Probably not.

Larry points at the screen of his tablet. Scenes from the protests in Kiev are being broadcasted on social media.

LARRY (CONT'D)

These protests... things are getting serious.

MARLENE

I don't like it either. We're too exposed.

He looks up, a sudden intensity in his eyes.

LARRY

What if we just left all this?

MARLENE

(confused)

What do you mean?

LARRY

Let's leave. Together. Greece, India... anywhere.

MARLENE

(whispers)

Are you drunk? You have a beautiful wife and a high paying job-

LARRY

(desperate)

You don't understand...

MARLENE

(whispers)

It was just a stupid kiss.

LARRY
Who are you trying to fool?

Marlene, sensing the conversation's turn, picks up his drink, takes a sip, and walks away.

EXT. MAIDAN SQUARE, KIIYV, UKRAINE - NIGHT

A group of teenagers, faces painted in vibrant blue and yellow, converge on Maidan (Independence Square). The crowd, resonant with the melodic strains of their national anthem, gathers around the Angel statue. Vodka is discreetly shared amongst them, a small act of rebellion and camaraderie. Nearby, policemen stand, vigilant but restrained. A convoy of sleek, black Mercedes G-Class SUVs cruises ominously past.

INT. SUITE, HAYATT HOTEL, KIIYV - NIGHT

JONATHAN DOMBROWSKI, mid-50s, exudes a weary elegance as he gazes from his luxury suite in the Hayatt Hotel at the passing convoy below. He empties his whiskey glass as his phone pierces the silence.

JONATHAN
(into the phone)
Phil.

INT. PHIL PORTMAN'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Phil, comfortably ensconced in his armchair by a crackling fireplace, enjoys a delicate foot massage from a YOUNG WOMAN. The atmosphere is one of decadent calm.

INTERCUT PHIL / JONATHAN

PHIL
(impatiently)
What is it, Jonathan?

JONATHAN
I've declared bankruptcy, Phil.

Startled, Phil involuntarily pushes the young woman aside with his foot and stands abruptly, his face a tableau of shock and anger.

PHIL
You did what?!

Through the hotel window, FOUR HITMEN emerge from their vehicles, eyes scanning, before they cross the street toward the Hayatt.

JONATHAN

Things have escalated. I need you to step in—take over the bank.

PHIL

Are you mad? I don't have the means, nor the desire, Jonathan!

JONATHAN

Your hands are just as dirty. If someone digs, you and Larry are going down too.

The faint, unsettling CLICK of Jonathan's suite door makes him pause.

PHIL

Jonathan...what's happening?

JONATHAN

They're here, Phil. Listen...sell it to—

The suite door violently BURSTS open. Jonathan drops the phone, a silent scream etched on his face.

PHIL

Jonathan? Answer me!

The abrupt chaos of crashes, shouts and a gut-wrenching scream bleeds through the line.

EXT. HAYATT HOTEL, KIYV- NIGHT

The teens from Maidan, now riotous and energetic, converge on the Hayatt, surrounding Jonathan's lifeless body sprawled on the pavement. The four men exit the hotel, moving with a methodical, unbothered cadence to their vehicles. A chilling tune begins to play loudly from one of the SUVs as the convoy nonchalantly drives away, leaving behind a scene of raw, visceral shock.

INT. BAR, BOSTON - NIGHT

Marlene and Greg, lost in the rhythm of the music, share a carefree dance.

They beckon to Tiko, but she playfully waves them off. Larry, nursing his drink at the bar, sends covert, contemplative glances towards Marlene, who feigns ignorance.

GREG

Poor guy...

MARLENE

Your sympathy is misplaced.

GREG

He's not just in love with you, Marlene. He fears you too.

MARLENE

(raising one eyebrow)
"Too?"

TIKO

(leans in)

I overheard Peter earlier telling Mary from Compliance you're a blood sucking parasite and that you'd climb the corporate ladder over our cold dead bodies.

MARLENE

Peter? Isn't that the guy who couldn't tell the difference between a write-off and a write-down?

GREG

(secretly to Tiko)
Honestly, who can?

Larry's face tightens as he speaks urgently into his phone. He scans Marlene, a serious glint in his eyes, before approaching the trio with purposeful strides.

LARRY

I need to leave. Tomorrow, 8am, my office.

Without waiting for a response, Larry makes a swift exit. Marlene, sensing the gravity, hurries after him.

MARLENE

Larry, wait, what happened?

LARRY

It's Dombrowski. He just fell out of a window.

MARLENE

Jonathan Dombrowski? The seven
hundred million dollar debt
Dombrowski?

LARRY

Maybe I will have to flee to India
after all. With or without you.

EXT. UKRAINE'S SECURITY SERVICE (SBU) - DAY

Sleek Mercedes cars pull up at the SBU. The four hitmen step out, greeted by other operatives. The contrast between the luxury cars and the decrepit building is stark.

INT. UKRAINE'S SECURITY SERVICE (SBU) - DAY

The hitmen move through the building, greeted casually by public servants. An elderly lady opens a door for them, revealing a room where EGOR DOROKOV and YURI AZAROV sit with an intimidating figure, possibly the HEAD OF SBU.

HEAD OF SBU

(in Russian)

Call Moscow.

EXT. FEDERAL SECURITY SERVICE, MOSCOW - DAY

Birds fly above the Federal Security Service building. The Russian flag waves indifferently. The insistent ring of a phone permeates the atmosphere.

INT. FEDERAL SECURITY SERVICE, MOSCOW - DAY

High ranking officials gather around an oval table in a meeting room. One of the youngest men in the room answers the call.

HEAD OF SBU (O.S.)

Dombrowski is dead.

The room reacts with subdued celebration. A YOUNG SECRETARY, listening in, slips away to make a call.

EXT. CORPORATE OFFICE BUILDING, ODESSA - DAY

ALEXEI ALEXEYEV, tall, fair man in his 40s, emerges from a black Chrysler adjusting his cufflinks. He answers his phone.

YOUNG SECRETARY (O.S.)
 (whispered urgency)
 Dombrowski is dead.

INT. HOTEL BEDROOM, NY - DAY

New York skylines. A soft moaning. Heavy breathing. NIKOLAY ORLOFF, early 40s, in the midst of an intimate moment, is interrupted by his bodyguard. The bodyguard hands his phone over to Orloff.

ALEXEI (O.S.)
 Dombrowski is dead.

Orloff sighs deeply affected by the news.

INT. LARRY'S OFFICE - DAY

Larry's office, a testament to his career, is dimly lit, accentuating the mahogany desk and its array of accolades. Greg, Marlene, and Tiko are gathered around a smaller table, their focus on their tablets.

LARRY
 Before his dramatic exit,
 Dombrowski filed for bankruptcy,
 pushing EOB into our lap.

GREG
 EOB?

MARLENE
 Eastern Ocean Bank in Ukraine.

LARRY
 Do you think we can get rid of the
 shares before the next stress test?

MARLENE
 We could, the question is at what
 price. We need to run a Due
 Diligence.

GREG

I've already spoken with Risk. Most of the seven hundred million dollars in equity loans to Dombrowski were approved long before the crisis.

MARLENE

(calculating)

Which means at least a thirty-five percent discount.

TIKO

Also, things in Ukraine don't look too good right now. The Russians-

LARRY

Russians, Ukrainians, Martians... I don't care. Just sell to whomever is willing to buy.

MARLENE

Dombrowski would care. He hated Russians.

LARRY

And look how that worked out for him!

Marlene chooses silence, sipping water. Larry sighs heavily. Greg and Tiko exchange knowing glances.

LARRY (CONT'D)

(pointing at Marlene)

You're heading to Kyiv to run the process. I'll update Phil.

MARLENE

So, I have clearance to sell at any price over our capital buffer?

LARRY

No less than three fifty million. Otherwise we are screwed.

GREG

It's a bank sale! How wrong can it go?

INT. MARLENE'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

The room is bathed in soft light as Marlene packs her suitcase methodically.

Tiko, browsing through Marlene's lingerie, tosses a few pieces into the suitcase. Marlene sighs, removing them.

TIKO

Come on! Who knows? Kyiv might surprise you!

MARLENE

At our age, surprises usually come with unexpected back pain.

Marina enters with a playful glint in her eye and tosses the lingerie back in.

MARINA

Don't lose hope. With Communists you never know.

MARLENE

Mom, the Soviet Union collapsed decades ago.

MARINA

They still drink don't they?

Marina leaves. Tiko holds up a little black dress.

TIKO

For the Signing Dinner...Or before it.

Marlene packs her running shoes instead, drawing a mock frown from Tiko.

MARLENE

I can't wear this, if my ass is sagging over my knee.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

The dining table is set with grilled meats and wine. Will, showing progress, pours wine with effort but success.

MARLENE

Wow, Dad!

MARINA

He's been doing so well these past few days.

TIKO

Well done, Will! You make us proud!

WILL

No, you two make me proud. The way you look after each other-

MARINA

Nonsense! They should find husbands to look after them!

WILL

Leave them be, Marina. They're destined for greater things.

MARINA

The only thing they're destined for, is a greater waistline.

MARLENE

(eye roll)
Oh, God.

TIKO

(turning to Will)
So... You've been to Ukraine, right?

WILL

Ah, the '80s. Ukraine was a mix of spies, tycoons, and rogue dealers. It was thrilling, but never safe. One night, I was sleeping in my hotel room, when I heard screams and shattering glass. They had thrown someone out of the window.

MARLENE

Seems like some traditions never die.

MARINA

Then don't go!

WILL

She'll be fine. Just stay away from the windows... and take a tape recorder with you. I have mine in-

MARLENE

A tape recorder, Dad? What year is it?

WILL

Some things never change. And in Ukraine, leverage is your safest companion. Your bargaining chip.

INT. AIRPLANE - NIGHT

Marlene unbuckles her seatbelt and heads toward the lavatory holding a toothbrush. The airplane encounters turbulence. Marlene stumbles dramatically and braces for a crash landing from Economy into First Class. With reflexes worthy of an action movie, Nikolay's strong arms catch her mid-air and return her to upright position. Marlene is still holding her toothbrush. He flashes a beautiful smile and then breezes past her without uttering a word.

Marlene returns to her seat. She is all flushed. She hastily flicks on her air conditioning, turning it up to the maximum. The OLD MAN next to her stacks a second blanket on top of his first. He is shivering.

MARLENE

(turning off the a/c)
Oh, I'm sorry... I'll just-.

OLD MAN

No worries! Reminds me of when my wife was going through 'the change.'

MARLENE

The change? Oh, no! I'm not menopausal!

OLD MAN

So, she kept saying.

Marlene subtly cranes her neck, trying to catch another glimpse of the enigmatic Nikolay. Just as she spots him, he turns his head, locking eyes with her. She snaps back into her seat like a rubber band.

INT. AIRPORT, KIYV - DAY

Marlene stands by the luggage belt, scanning the crowd for any sign of Nikolay. She looks around for Nikolay, but he's nowhere to be seen. Suddenly, she realizes her suitcase has passed her by. She hurries up to catch it but the belt is moving too fast. A male hand reaches out and snags her suitcase. It's Nikolay.

MARLENE

(flustered)
Oh my God, you again! Saving me twice in one day... It's like you're my guardian angel or something.

Nikolay is standing there in front of her, smiling, but not saying anything.

MARLENE (CONT'D)
I mean, helping me. You're helping me, not saving me. Like a very helpful...person.

Still, Nikolay says nothing, but his eyes seem to speak volumes..

MARLENE (CONT'D)
You probably don't speak English. Thank God. I'm Marlene, by the way. Mar-lene.

Nikolay takes her hand gracefully, plants a kiss, executes a small bow like a man from a different era, and departs.

EXT. AIRPORT, KIIYV - DAY

MARLENE steps into the bustling Arrivals area. She catches sight of ALEXEI and NIKOLAY embracing nearby, flanked by imposing bodyguards. They look like they're ripped straight from a Bond film. She lets out a sigh.

Surrounding her are stunningly tall, blonde women and burly men who make her feel like she's in a land of giants. Just as she's about to lose hope, her eyes meet a sign reading "PORTMAN AND LUCHENKO." She spots two "height-challenged" gentlemen: MYKHAILO VOLOSHYN, in his mid-50s, and his junior associate IVAN DYRCHENKO, in his late 20s.

MARLENE
Mr. Voloshyn?

VOLOSHYN
(with heavy Ukrainian
accent)
Ah, yes! Mrs...?

MARLENE
Marlene Vigileos. VP at Portman and Luchenko.

VOLOSHYN
Welcome to Kyiv!

MARLENE
Nice to meet you.

VOLOSHYN

This is Ivan Dyrchenko. He's your
finance guy.

MARLENE

Great! Hi.

IVAN

(nervously, hand trembling
as he grabs her suitcase)
Very pleased to meet you.

Voloshyn and Dyrchenko share a troubled glance.

I/E. CAR / STREET, KYIV - DAY

Inside the car, Voloshyn drives, Ivan rides shotgun,
nervously sipping his coffee. Marlene lounges in the back
seat. Voloshyn keeps glancing at Marlene through the rearview
mirror as if he wants to say something but hesitates.

MARLENE

Come on, spill it. I promise I
won't bite.

VOLOSHYN

Well, you see—

MARLENE

Let me guess; you expected someone
more masculine.

VOLOSHYN

Larry should've told you. Around
here, counterparties expect to
negotiate with, ah, differently-
packaged senior officials.

MARLENE

I'll call Larry now, ask him to
promote me to a "Mr."

VOLOSHYN

Even then, you may not quite 'fit
the mold,' so to speak.

MARLENE

Didn't EOB's CFO break that mold
already? She's a woman, isn't she?

VOLOSHYN

So she claims, but nobody's seen
her birth certificate—or her naked.

MARLENE

But you'd like to?

IVAN

(almost choking on his
coffee)

Um, no!

Marlene grins playfully; Voloshyn chuckles but is abruptly interrupted. He hits the brakes as a group of police officers swarm the road, one of them thumping the car hood as if they own it. He points at a blocked street.

VOLOSHYN

Ah, Kyiv. Never a dull moment.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM, EASTERN OCEAN BANK - DAY

Marlene, Voloshyn and Ivan wait impatiently in the conference room. Voloshyn sips orange juice with zen-like calm, Ivan fidgets and Marlene checks her watch for the umpteenth time. Finally, the door creaks open.

In walks YEVA IVANOVA, a tiny old lady with short hair and a vicious face walks in first. She sits without acknowledging anyone. PAVLO MOROZ, EOB's cheerful CEO, follows with handshakes and business cards aplenty. VLADIMIR KOVALENKO, the stone-faced COO, speaks.

VLADIMIR

(to Marlene)

Kovalenko. Welcome to Kyiv.

A YOUNG WOMAN enters, huddling in a corner with her notebook, seemingly unnoticed.

VOLOSHYN

Thank you all for meeting with us in such a short notice. As you know, Jonathan left behind an enormous debt and as a consequence, your bank's shares, will now pass to his main creditor, Portman & Luchenko Bank. The transfer has already been initiated and Mrs. Vigileos is here as a representative of the new shareholder to share with you the next steps. Marlene...

MARLENE

To cut to the chase. Given our current commitments to the Fed, we cannot own a bank in Ukraine. So, we are running a fire sale. Having said that, we still have to run a Due Diligence process before we place a price tag on the bank.

Yeva now whispers something to Vladimir. Vladimir murmurs, while Pavlo gently quiets them.

MARLENE (CONT'D)

Something to ask?

VLADIMIR

What happens to us?

MARLENE

Depends on the buyer.

YEVA slams her palm on the table and fires off something in Russian.

PAVLO

Excuse us, Yeva not speak good English. Vladimir explain to her now.

VLADIMIR

Miss forgive me, but maybe this is a discussion to be held on a higher level.

Marlene takes out the Power of Attorney from Voloshyn's folder and slams it on the table.

MARLENE

Higher than this?

VLADIMIR

What is this?

MARLENE

This is a 'She-Can-Do-What-She-Wants' certificate.

VOLOSHYN

A Power of Attorney. In the absence of higher management, it gives her the full authority to take over the bank and sell it with a single signature.

The room falls silent.

MARLENE

For EOB's valuation, I will need you to upload operating licenses, management contracts, financials, credit policies and especially loan approvals for your top fifty corporate clients.

PAVLO

Upload? But, but... files not electronic. Most of them paper.

VOLOSHYN

It's fine. We can designate this room as Physical Data Room and you can bring all the folders here.

YEVA abruptly exits, Vladimir in tow. PAVLO leaves but then returns to shake everyone's hands.

VOLOSHYN (CONT'D)

Well? What do you think? Does Yeva have a dick or not?

MARLENE

She may not have one, but she certainly looks like one, especially from the neck up.

Voloshyn and Ivan burst into laughter, momentarily forgetting the young woman in the corner who is now puzzled and slightly horrified.

INT. LOBBY, HAYATT HOTEL, KYIV - NIGHT

Marlene walks up to the reception desk. IVANA, wearing an affable smile, welcomes her.

IVANA

Good evening, welcome to Hayatt!
How can I help you?

MARLENE

Hi! I'd like to check in.

IVANA

Can I have your reservation please?

MARLENE

Marlene Vigileos. Portman and Luchenko.

IVANA

We have two reservations under that name—a standard room and an executive suite.

MARLENE

It's an one-woman show, so I'll stick with the standard.

In the background, DORA is in a heated debate with a GERMAN MAN, who's waving papers in the air.

DORA

I'm sorry Sir, but-

GERMAN MAN

Ja? Do you see this?

The man shows Dora his identity and a document.

GERMAN MAN (CONT'D)

International security! You must give me access to Dombrowski's suite!

DORA

I'm not authorized to provide access-

IVANA

(whispering to DORA)
I'll handle this.
(to GERMAN MAN)
Apologies, sir. That suite is currently... unavailable.

GERMAN MAN

Unavailable? It's a bloody crime scene!

IVANA

Exactly, and it is currently closed for further investigations. How about a free room until we get clearance? On the house.

Dora takes the German Man's passport, feigning a grateful smile. Ivana turns back to Marlene.

IVANA (CONT'D)

Sorry for the intermission. I am booking you for the premium executive suite.

MARLENE

I doubt my company's tab will stretch that far.

IVANA

We'll throw in a fifty percent discount. Cheaper than your standard room, actually.

Marlene takes her electronic key in awe.

MARLENE

Wow... Thank you!

INT. SUITE, HAYATT, KYIV - NIGHT

Marlene bursts into the luxurious suite, dropping her suitcase. She notices red "stay out" tape in the trash and a window that seems freshly installed. She gazes down at the street below, where Dombrowski met his end, then quickly steps back as her phone rings.

MARLENE

Hello?

INT. LARRY'S OFFICE - DAY

Larry's on the phone, multitasking as he seasons his salad.

LARRY

Tell me you're not stirring up trouble in Kyiv.

INTERCUT MARLENE / LARRY

MARLENE

I'm not stirring up trouble in Kyiv.

LARRY

Then why are angry Ukrainians calling me, thinking they're getting the boot?

Marlene puts him on the speaker and starts to get undressed.

MARLENE

Aren't they?

LARRY

Not yet! I had to promise them bonuses to keep things calm. We need them for the Due Diligence.

MARLENE

Phil's okay with this?

LARRY

Phil has no choice now. Also, why are you digging into corporate loans?

MARLENE

It's called doing my job, Larry. We can't price the bank without knowing its assets and liabilities.

LARRY

Marlene, this isn't Boston. It's Ukraine. Things work differently there.

MARLENE

Differently? Like how?

LARRY

Just follow the plan. Sell quickly and get out.

MARLENE

Yes, boss.

LARRY

Stay out of the corporate portfolio.

MARLENE

Buy, boss.

Marlene hangs up. Larry sighs, lights a cigarette, and exhales smoke at the fire detector. No response. He sits, dialing an internal number.

LARRY

We have a problem.

INT. CEO'S OFFICE

Phil puts down the phone, lets out a deep, frustrated sigh, and rests his forehead in his palms. He hits his desk with all of his strength, which he regrets right away.

PHIL

Ouch!

His secretary runs in.

SECRETARY

Everything alright, Sir?

PHIL

(in pain)

Call Yeva Ivanova.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM, EASTERN OCEAN BANK - DAY

Bustling activity fills the room as boxes of documents are hauled in. IVAN sifts through files, like a librarian doing inventory. VOLOSHYN supervises. MARLENE walks in, armed with coffees and a bag of croissants.

MARLENE

Good morning!

For you, a hot Americano.

(hands over Voloshyn's
coffee)

VOLOSHYN

Bless you, woman. How'd you know?

MARLENE

I got my sources...

Voloshyn pats Ivan on the back.

VOLOSHYN

Take a break.

Ivan, clearly reluctant, grabs coffee and a croissant. They sit, beginning to eat.

MARLENE

(scanning a random folder)

It's in Ukrainian! Fascinating!

VOLOSHYN

Well, it is a Ukrainian Bank.

MARLENE

Ever heard of globalization? It's
the new rave.

VOLOSHYN

Dombrowski would've adored you.
Yeva and Vladimir though—they have
other loyalties.

MARLENE

What are Russians without
intrigues? Though Moroz seems kind
of nice.

VOLOSHYN

Moroz was Dombrowski's man-managed
shipyards before the Chinese
muscled in. Ivan, show her the loan
files.

Ivan drags a box closer and hands Marlene a folder labeled
"Project Odessa."

IVAN

It's in English.

MARLENE

Project Odessa?

Marlene reads through the file.

MARLENE (CONT'D)

Port Monopoly for billionaires?

IVAN

Three hundred and fifty million
dollars vested in Odessa's coastal
ventures, all tied to Dombrowski's
JVs with the government.

VOLOSHYN

A grand plan to revive Black Sea
shipping, squashed by politics.
Money's gone, and everyone knows
it.

MARLENE

Are you trying to tell me that over
fifty percent of my bank's
investment in EOB is gone?

YEVA bursts in with a team, like locusts descending on crops.
They seize boxes, including Ivan's prized collection. YEVA
yanks the "Project Odessa" folder from Marlene's hands and
exits, Ivan chasing after her, jabbering in Ukrainian.

MARLENE (CONT'D)

Ivan, let it go.

IVAN

How will we evaluate the bank
without those files?

MARLENE

The good old POOMA method.

Voloshyn and Ivan look at each other. They don't seem to understand what she's talking about. Marlene spells it out for him. Ivan takes note.

MARLENE (CONT'D)

P-O-O-M-A: Pulled Out Of My Ass.

VOLOSHYN

It's a good thing then, that we already have a couple of interested parties.

MARLENE

Really? Who are they?

VOLOSHYN

A Russian fund and a Ukrainian private equity investor.

MARLENE

We need an institutional investor. A Ukrainian bank perhaps with skin in the same game.

Marlene gets up, packs her bag.

VOLOSHYN

I don't think any exist.

MARLENE

The create them! We need to maintain the value.

Marlene walks out the room.

VOLOSHYN

Where are you going?

MARLENE (O.S.)

Out!

EXT. STREET, EOB - DAY

Marlene strides out of the imposing bank building. Her eyes lock onto a quaint kiosk at the corner, peddling Matryoshka dolls. She dials TIKO.

MARLENE

Tiko, we need to talk. Can you step away?

INT. SPECIAL SITUATIONS DIVISION FLOOR - DAY

Tiko is at her desk. She looks around at her colleagues, a sea of focused faces.

TIKO

(whispering)

Give me a sec.

INT. MARLENE'S OFFICE - DAY

Tiko slips into Marlene's office, closing the door softly behind her.

INTERCUT BETWEEN MARLENE ON THE STREET AND TIKO IN THE OFFICE

TIKO

What do you need?

MARLENE

The top fifty debtor list of EOB.

TIKO

Can't you just pull that up there?

MARLENE

Nope. They refuse to give me access.

TIKO

Did you speak with Larry? Maybe he can-

MARLENE

Larry was the one who told me to stay out of it.

TIKO

What?! That's strange.

MARLENE

My thoughts exactly... Why don't you ask Greg, he used to be in Risk Management. He has access.

TIKO

I could, but Greg doesn't do anything without Larry's permission.

MARLENE

Then tell him that Larry needs it urgently but you're swamped. Use your charm.

TIKO

I can't lie to Greg! He's a good guy!

MARLENE

Need I remind you of all the times you told him you couldn't come to work because your grandmother was sick? God rest her soul.

TIKO

Ugh, fine.

Tiko hangs up the phone and peers through the glass into the main office area. She spots Greg with his coffee, straightens up, and lets out a resigned sigh.

INT. SPECIAL SITUATIONS DIVISION FLOOR - DAY

Tiko hangs up, her eyes scouring the room until she spots GREG meandering with his coffee. She adjusts her posture and takes a deep breath.

EXT. STREET, EOB - DAY

Marlene selects a Matryoshka doll from the kiosk, handing over cash. A sleek black SUV pulls up in front of EOB. Alexei Alexeyev and Nikolay Orloff step out. Marlene's eyes widen—Orloff is the dream man she spotted on the plane. Pavlo Moroz also exits the vehicle; the men embrace. Moroz enters the bank while Alexei and Orloff get back into the SUV and peel away. Marlene, energized, hastens her step to follow.

EXT. STREETS, KYIV - DAY

Despite the quickening pace of her heart, Marlene loses sight of the SUV as it turns a corner. She finds herself in an older, Soviet-era part of Kyiv. A group of MASKED MEN sprint past her; she pivots and starts walking towards the distant sound of protest chants, vigilance sharpening her every sense.

EXT. HAYATT HOTEL, STREET - NIGHT

Marlene's pace quickens as she approaches the hotel. A black SUV crawls near, its lights trained on her. She backpedals, stumbling onto the sidewalk, pulling out her phone. She aims the camera lens at the SUV, which suddenly accelerates away. Marlene rushes into the hotel.

INT. BLACK SUV - NIGHT

Inside the SUV, Nikolay Orloff and Alexei Alekseyev sit in the back seat. The dim light reveals Orloff's contemplative gaze fixed on the hotel entrance where Marlene disappeared. Alexei, his demeanor more aggressive, watches Orloff closely.

ALEXEI
(in Ukrainian)
This could be our chance.

Orloff remains silent for a moment, his eyes still on the hotel. Alexei studies Orloff, sensing his hesitance.

ALEXEI (CONT'D)
Why do you hesitate? If we don't
intimidate her into compliance, the
Russian's will.

Orloff's expression is unreadable, a mix of caution and an unspoken interest.

ORLOFF
(also in Russian)
Let her be. For now. Jonathan said
he had something against the
Russians. Find it.

Alexei frowns, not fully convinced, but nods. The driver, a serious-looking man, glances at them through the rearview mirror.

ALEXEI
(to the Driver)
Send the guys to search
Dombrowski's suite.

DRIVER
Yes, Sir.

The SUV slowly pulls away, blending into the night.

INT. HAYATT HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

Marlene's eyes dart around the luxurious lobby. A pair of MEN in the waiting area lock eyes with her, their gaze unnerving. She beelines for the elevator, thumbing the 'close door' button as if it's a life-saving device.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL SUITE, HAYATT, KIYV - NIGHT

Marlene swings the suite door shut, sliding home the lock. She sheds her coat, tosses her bag to the floor, and drags an armchair to barricade the door. Sweeping the room and bathroom, her eyes register 'all clear.'

Her fingers dance over mini liquor bottles from the minibar, and she swigs one down in a single gulp. The sudden ringing of her phone slices through the room's tension like a scalpel. The screen reads 'HOME.'

INT. MARLENE'S HOUSE - DAY

Marina and Will huddle over the phone on speaker, framed by well-worn family photos.

MARLENE (O.S.)
Hello, you two!

INTERCUT BETWEEN MARLENE/MARINA, WILL

Marina and Will start talking at the same time.

MARINA
Where the hell have you been?
Why haven't you called? Don't
you care about your parents?
Your father had a stroke, he
could have died! But you are
just like him!
(to Will)
She's just like you! You went
on business trips and
disappeared on me for days!
Who knows what you were up
to.

WILL
Hi honey! How are you? Don't
listen to your mother, I'm
doing fine.
(to Marina)
She's on a business trip! Of
course I cared, that's why I
went on that business trips!
Why on earth would you die?
Drama, drama, drama-

INTERCUT MARLENE/MARINA, WILL

MARLENE
I've been busy, but you two sound
alright...

MARINA

Have you met anyone, you know,
interesting?

MARLENE

Every one is interesting in Kiev.
Trustworthy? I don't know.

MARINA

Screw trust. Find someone dashing
and make a baby already!

WILL

Let me take this. You sound...off-
kilter, sweetheart. What's going
on?

MARLENE

I don't know Dad. It feels like
there's a shadow play, and my
colleagues back home are-

WILL

Dirty!

MARLENE

No, I don't think so. But they're
not helping and I don't know why.

WILL

They're laundering money, that's
why.

MARINA

It's that damned Larry, isn't it?
He oozes shadiness.

MARLENE

Larry may be an insufferable
narcissist, but he's not a
gangster!

WILL

Anyone dealing in Ukraine is on the
grift, mark my words.

MARLENE

Dad, it's not a John le Carré
novel.

WILL

Regardless, three golden rules:
inspect your room;

(MORE)

WILL (CONT'D)

carry a tape recorder; and never stand near windows.

MARLENE

Well, considering I'm staying in a room where the last guest won't be checking out—ever— Anyway, I got to go. Love you both.

Marlene gets off the phone and walks into the bathroom. There's the sound of someone fumbling at the door.

INT. CORRIDOR, EXT. PRESIDENTIAL SUITE - NIGHT

NIKOLAY'S BODYGUARDS, previously seen at the airport, are standing at Marlene's door, trying to pick the lock. The armchair inside blocks them. A BELL BOY exits the adjacent room.

BELL BOY

Excuse me, can I help you?

The bodyguards share a quick glance.

BODYGUARD

(in slavic accent)

Ah, we mistake room. This one empty, yes?

BELL BOY

No, it is occupied.

BODYGUARD

Occupied by whom, would you know?

The bodyguard's hand covertly extends, offering money to the Bell Boy.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL SUITE, HAYATT, KIYV - NIGHT.

Marlene steps out of the dimly lit bathroom, her eyes narrowing as she catches a glimpse of Dolph Lundgren on the screen of her muted TV. She takes a sip of wine, turns off the lights and crawls into bed. Now it's Nikolay Orloff on the screen. She turns off the TV and throws away the remote control.

Suddenly, a repetitive tik-tik-tik pierces the silence.

Marlene sits up, her eyes darting around the room. The sound is incessant, maddening.

She locates the source: the air vent above her nightstand. Tentatively, she clambers onto the nightstand and removes the metal grate.

As she reaches inside, something cold tumbles down, hitting her forehead before clattering to the ground—a set of keys, marked "Saint Irene."

EXT. MAIDAN SQUARE, KYIV - DAY

Hundreds of people have gathered under the towering angel statue at Maidan Square. Some are hooded, some are masked. Signs bearing the face of Yulia Tymoshenko bob above the crowd. Police look on, restless fingers on riot gear. The air is electric with suppressed tension.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM, EASTERN OCEAN BANK - DAY

Marlene and Ivan, her eyes piercing the computer screen, his hands rifling through folders.

MARLENE

Committee resolutions for the past three years?

IVAN

Check.

MARLENE

Management contracts?

IVAN

Check.

MARLENE

Are you thinking what I'm thinking?

Ivan smirks and flips the pages until his finger stops abruptly.

IVAN

Wow! Look.

MARLENE

Three hundred thousand dollars, a year? That's- that's abhorrent. That bloodthirsty... rat faced... old woman? Or man. Who knows.

IVAN

Check out Vladimir's housing allowance. Man could buy a palace with that.

The door swings open; it's VOLOSHYN. Ivan clumsily hides the folder as Marlene feigns distraction with her phone.

VOLOSHYN

What are you still doing here? Come, it's time.

INT. DOMBROWSKI'S OFFICE - DAY

LARYSA, Dombrowski's captivating secretary, adorned in a provocative black ensemble, ushers Marlene, Ivan, and Voloshyn into an opulent, larger-than-life office. The decor is a cacophony of maritime artifacts, contrasted by sleek modern furniture.

As they enter, Marlene's eyes catch a bizarre sculpture— a female figure with three breasts. Her gaze lingers on it, a silent testament to the surreal world she finds herself in.

MARLENE

What the...

LARYSA

Jonathan had a fondness for the provocative, much like his grandfather.

MARLENE

It shows. I'm sorry for your loss.

LARYSA

Thank you. There are plugs under the meeting table. Projector's ready. If you need anything, I'll be outside.

Larysa exits. Marlene starts to set up her laptop. Ivan and Voloshyn surreptitiously admire Larysa as she leaves.

VOLOSHYN

Ivan, order her a bouquet— for condolences.

IVAN

From you?

VOLOSHYN

Why not? You think I'm too old for her?

MARLENE

I knew this Investment Banker back in NY. Age was just a number to him.

VOLOSHYN

I couldn't agree more.

MARLENE

He died in bed with a woman half his age.

VOLOSHYN

A happy death, then.

MARLENE

Sure, if you discount the mortification of his, ah, "remaining disposition" at the open-casket service.

VOLOSHYN

My God... You hate us, don't you?

MARLENE

Not at all. I feel the greatest sympathy for you. You are God's first effort to create mankind. Let's begin, shall we?

Ivan dials on the spider phone.

INT. PHIL'S OFFICE - DAY

Phil and Larry are around a conference table, grappling with a complex "spider phone." Larry takes over from a confused Phil, activating the speaker.

LARRY

Let's hear it.

INTERCUT BETWEEN KIEV / BOSTON

MARLENE

We're ready on this end.

VOLOSHYN

Phil, Larry, good to hear you again!

PHIL

Mykhailo, it's been too long.

VOLOSHYN

Indeed, Phil. Like good old times...

LARRY

We'll see...

A notification sound. Marlene checks her email.

MARLENE

First bid's in. Diamond Global Investment Fund.

VOLOSHYN

Ah, the Russians.

Marlene scans the email quickly, focusing on the key details.

MARLENE

Three hundred million. They want us to finance it, no due diligence.

LARRY

(sarcastically)
Great.

PHIL

No due diligence? That could be simpler, right?

MARLENE

Except we'd be depleting our reserves and dealing with a Russian fund. There'll be compliance hurdles.

PHIL

I trust Mykhailo's judgment on this.

LARRY

And they take it 'as is.'

Marlene glances at Voloshyn, who avoids eye contact. Another email notification.

MARLENE

Here's another. From Nikolay Orloff.

VOLOSHYN

Dombrowski's buddy.

MARLENE

Two seventy million, all cash, no due diligence.

LARRY

Fuck him!

MARLENE

But it's cash, Larry. We might push for more.

LARRY

Orloff's not a negotiator.

PHIL

How do you know?

LARRY

How do I know? You know Nikolay, Phil.

PHIL

I do?

LARRY

Seriously, Phil, all those Christmas parties at his mansions? Nothing?

Phil nods like he remembered, but he still has no idea who Larry is talking about. Another email. Marlene opens it.

MARLENE

Third bid. From SUB. Signed by Oleg Luchenko?

LARRY

(confused)
My cousin. Who brought him in?

VOLOSHYN

That was me. Marlene wanted an established bank in the mix.

LARRY

(furious)
Marlene wanted-

MARLENE

It's four twenty million, with due diligence and a ten percent cap on price adjustments.

Voloshyn claps his hands. Ivan too.

PHIL

I take it this is good?

LARRY

(looking at Phil,
defeated)

Yeah, sure, Phil. It's fantastic...

INT. DOMBROWSKI'S OFFICE - NIGHT

The room is dimly lit. Marlene, dressed in a running outfit, is packing her laptop and papers. Larysa walks in, her eyes lingering on Marlene.

LARYSA

Do you need anything?

MARLENE

I've got it, thanks. Sorry to have kept you. But hey, at least it was fruitful.

LARYSA

You think SUB is actually going to merge with us?

MARLENE

Their offer is very reasonable.

Larysa moves to the bar, pours two shots of vodka, and offers one to Marlene. They clink glasses and drink.

LARYSA

It won't happen. Diamond Global, the Russians—they'll make sure of it.

MARLENE

What are you talking about?

LARYSA

They killed Jonathan. They'll kill you. They'll kill anyone who threatens their interests.

MARLENE

You can't be serious.

LARYSA

This bank was supposed to empower Ukraine, alter the geopolitics of the Black Sea. A merger with SUB would continue that legacy. The Russians won't allow it.

MARLENE

Larysa, you sound like my father... So, I'm going to tell you, what I told him. It's 2013, not some Cold War espionage novel.

LARYSA

Who said anything about cold war? If they fail to control the economy from inside, they will take Crimea, and then attack Odessa.

MARLENE

Look, after we finalize with SUB tomorrow, let's celebrate, okay? You can even take home that triple-breasted sculpture.

LARYSA

That piece is more valuable than you might think.

MARLENE

Good for you!

Larysa laughs. Marlene looks at the time.

MARLENE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. I gotta go. Got 10k to run. This vodka should make it interesting.

She wears her backpack and heads to the door. Laryssa follows Marlene and gives her an unexpected hug.

LARYSA

Thank you!

MARLENE

For what?!

LARYSA

For including me. It's not a given around here.

EXT. STREET, EOB - NIGHT

Marlene stands in front of the sleek building, scrolling through her phone. She pulls up the address from Diamond Global's offer. She types it on Maps.

MARLENE

Time for a little reconnaissance.

She starts her running app and takes off.

EXT. OLD SOVIET BUILDING, KIV - NIGHT

Marlene slows down as she approaches a shadowy area. Her app signals arrival. Two imposing men stand guard near a rusty door. Black SUVs and motorcycles are parked around the corner.

MARLENE

(whispering)

What is this place?

As she hides and observes, a luxury car pulls up. Egor Dorokov and Yuri Azarov, which were in the head office of Ukraine's Security Service, when Dombrowski's death was announced, step out of the car. They converse with the guards and disappear inside the building.

Suddenly, one of the guards spots Marlene. She bolts.

EXT. MAIDAN SQUARE, KYIV - NIGHT

Marlene's heart pounds as she joins a throng of protesters. The city is a labyrinth, but in this moment, it's her sanctuary. Riot police begin to assemble, their shields catching the reflection of fire from the protesters' torches.

INT. HAYATT HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

Marlene, eyes darting, walks briskly through the opulent lobby. She scans the faces as she heads toward the elevator.

INT. CORRIDOR, EXT. PRESIDENTIAL SUITE

Marlene spots the Bell Boy near her door. He avoids eye contact and scurries away.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL SUITE, HAYATT, KIYV

Marlene enters, locking the door behind her. She flicks on the lights and scans the room, sensing something amiss. She checks the closet, peeks under the bed-nothing. In the bathroom, she spots a droplet of urine on the toilet seat. She bolts, barricading the door with a chair and an ironing board. She collapses onto the bed, then notices the ceiling grid is ajar. Her heart races.

INT. BREAKFAST DINER, HAYATT - DAY

With dark circles under her eyes, Marlene surveys the room before choosing a table near a family, distancing herself from clusters of men. Smoke from Maidan can be seen in the horizon. She checks her phone; it's Tiko.

INTERCUT MARLENE / TIKO

Tiko, alone in Marlene's office, looks weary.

MARLENE

Oh my God, Tiko, you have no idea-

TIKO

What happened? You sound off.

MARLENE

(whispers)

Nothing, nothing, all good. Kiev's ablaze, got KGB contenders for our business deal, and someone sneaked into my room-though that might've been the Bell Boy taking a piss. How's your night?

TIKO

Greg sent me the list with EOB's top exposures. No surprises with the top twenty. But the others are a mystery. It looks like smaller funds funneled into offshore companies in Malta, Cyprus and Liberia, with no collaterals or repayment schedules whatsoever.

MARLENE

Sketchy. Send me the list.

TIKO

Done. Good luck with SUB today.

MARLENE

Thanks. Bye.

Tiko sees her own note "find top 50 debtors" on Marlene's desk. She throws it in the bin.

INT. LOBBY, HAYATT HOTEL - DAY

Marlene descends in a sleek black suit, meeting Voloshyn and Ivan.

MARLENE

Let's close this deal.

EXT. SUB HEADQUARTERS, KYIV - DAY

They arrive at the modern SUB building. Marlene takes it all in. She looks worried.

VOLOSHYN

Very good retailers. But they need a stronger investment arm. It will be a good deal.

INT. RECEPTION, SUB HQ - DAY

Marlene looks around while Ivan and Voloshyn talk with the receptionist. A security guard comes and leads them to the elevator.

INT. MANAGEMENT FLOOR, SUB HQ - DAY

The elevator arrives at the top floor. Another gorgeous receptionist welcomes them and shows them into a conference room.

MARLENE

(to Voloshyn and Ivan)

Thank God for Yeva. At least I don't feel out of place among the Ukrainian supermodels.

IVAN

You'd be a rare gem here.

VOLOSHYN

A bit vintage, perfect for our demographic.

A swarm of suited men floods in, business cards and handshakes flying.

LUCHENKO

My apologies for the delay! Let's get to it.

Everyone takes out the print outs of SUB's offer.

EXT. SUB HEADQUARTERS, KYIV - DAY

Marlene, Voloshyn and Ivan exit, euphoric.

VOLOSHYN

A celebration is in order.

MARLENE

How about drinks later? I have an appointment now.

VOLOSHYN

Only if we're getting properly sloshed.

MARLENE

Trust me, it's that kind of day.

Marlene hails a cab.

MARLENE (CONT'D)

See you at happy hour.

INT. DOMBROWSKI'S OFFICE - DAY

Elegant finger foods artfully decorate a coffee table. Larysa sips wine from a delicate glass. Marlene fills her own.

MARLENE

(toasting)

To Jonathan's dream and the Russians can suck on it!

LARYSA

I can't believe you did it. When Jonathan passed, I thought that was the end.

MARLENE

It's never over until we put pen to paper. But there are things I need to know.

Larysa nods. Marlene pulls the set of keys from her pocket.

MARLENE (CONT'D)
Do these keys mean anything to you?
St. Irene?

LARYSA
Where did you find those?

MARLENE
They were hidden in my hotel suite.
I think I'm sleeping in the crime
scene.

Marlene offers the keys, but Larysa recoils.

LARYSA
No, no. He wouldn't want me to have
them.

MARLENE
So they are his! What do they
unlock?

LARYSA
His grandfather's old boat, St.
Irene. It was all he had left from
him.

MARLENE
I thought they were wealthy.

LARYSA
Immensely. But they fled the
Bolsheviks on that boat. Left
everything else behind. Including a
significant part of their art
collection. In terms of communist
propaganda, that was the most
important asset of all. Even today,
the most prestigious Russian art
museums in Moscow and St.
Petersburg display the artworks the
Dombrowskies had to leave behind.

Larysa sips some wine, while Marlene hangs from her lips.

LARYSA (CONT'D)
Jonathan brought the boat back
secretly, just a few years ago. He
took me there. Our love was our
secret.

MARLENE
Was he married?

LARYSA
No, but I am.

MARLENE
You're married? To whom?

LARYSA
Hans. He's German. I don't see him
that much. He always comes to
Ukraine in secret and stays in
hotels. Probably to spy on me.

Marlene remembers the German man that was making a scene at
the hotel.

FLASHBACK:

GERMAN MAN
Ja? Do you see this? You are
obliged to-

END FLASHBACK

MARLENE
What does your husband do?

LARYSA
He works for Interpol.

MARLENE
Holy hell... I need to show you
something.

Marlene slides her phone across, displaying Tiko's email.

MARLENE (CONT'D)
This is the list with the bank's
major debtors. Look at this.
Unsecured loans from EOB to
offshore companies. Did Jonathan
have something going on with the
government? Or the Russians?

LARYSA
You don't know? Those "loans" went
to Phil and Larry... gifts.

FLASHBACK:

INT. DOMBROWSKI'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Dombrowski, Phil, an Accountant and Larry seal a deal. A wire transfer is confirmed.

LARYSA (V.O.)

They wouldn't approve all these millions in unsecured Equity Loans, if there wasn't something in it for them.

END FLASHBACK

INT. DOMBROWSKI'S OFFICE - DAY

Marlene's hands tremble. She drains her glass.

MARLENE

So that's why Larry didn't want the due diligence. If this gets out, they're finished.

LARYSA

Yeva knows.

MARLENE

Which means the Russians do too. I've got to go.

Marlene stumbles, falling back onto the couch. Larysa comforts her.

LARYSA

Men are pigs. But we have each other.

MARLENE

Right...Your husband's at the Hayatt. He was snooping around Jonathan's suite. He's onto something.

EXT. STREETS, KYIV - DAY

Chaos. Protesters, Ukrainian flags, cacophony. Marlene walks back to her hotel, donning black sunglasses. Tears streak down her face. Her phone buzzes. Caller ID: "Larry." She ignores it.

INT. SPECIAL SITUATIONS DIVISION FLOOR - DAY

Larry navigates the barren floor. It's still early; no one has arrived yet. He rifles through Tiko's meticulously arranged desk but comes up empty-handed. With a restless sigh, he moves to Marlene's office.

INT. MARLENE'S OFFICE - DAY

Larry scans the room, perusing each folder on Marlene's desk. He attempts to access her computer, but it's locked. Frustration mounting, he slumps into her chair. That's when he spots a crumpled note in the wastebasket: "Find top 50 debtors." He picks up Marlene's office phone and dials her number.

INTERCUT MARLENE / LARRY

MARLENE

Tiko?

LARRY

No, it's me.

MARLENE

Why are you in my office?

LARRY

Heard from Oleg. Looks like you've got things under control.

MARLENE

Signing's next week.

LARRY

Good, good. So no surprises?

MARLENE

Nothing that should surprise me, anyway.

Tiko stands at the doorway, her eyes narrowing at Larry's presence.

LARRY

Good. I'll be there for the signing. We need to wrap this up and get out of the country, fast.

MARLENE

Can't wait.

He ends the call. Shares a tense glance with Tiko, who looks seriously alarmed. Larry walks out.

EXT. SUB HEADQUARTERS, KYIV - DAY

Oleg Luchenko exits his office, parting ways with his associates amidst cheerful goodbyes. As Oleg walks away alone, a black motorcycle starts tailing him from a distance. Oleg glances back once, a fleeting look of recognition crossing his face, but he continues without altering his pace.

EXT. STREETS, KYIV - DAY

Marlene moves through the bustling streets, her intuition on high alert. She notices a man on a motorcycle with a black helmet following her. Picking up her pace, she quickly hails a taxi. As she gets in, she glances back; the motorcycle is gone. She lets out a relieved sigh, but her worry is evident.

EXT. VOLOSHYN'S HOUSE, KYIV - DAY

Voloshyn walks home, his eyes casually scanning the surroundings. He pauses briefly, his gaze lingering on the street longer than necessary, then enters his house. Moments after he disappears inside, another motorcycle rounds the corner, slowing down as it passes his house.

INT. LOBBY, HAYATT HOTEL - DAY

Marlene arrives at the hotel. Ivana greets her with a secretive wave.

IVANA

(whispering)

Laryssa's friends are my friends.
If you need anything, just ask.

MARLENE

(quietly)

Thank you...just one thing. Don't
tell anyone my room number.

Ivana shows understanding. Marlene rushes to the elevator. As the door starts to close, she spots a man in the lounge. He takes out his phone, his gaze locked on her. The door shuts.

INT. OLEG LUCHENKO'S HOUSE, KYIV - DAY

Oleg enters his house, calling for his wife with no response. He fetches a bottle of white wine from the fridge and pauses, sensing something amiss. He sniffs the air, checks the stove, then picks up a cigar and lighter. As he strikes the lighter, the room plunges into pitch black.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL SUITE, HAYATT - DAY

Marlene locks the door, peering through the peephole. Footsteps. A figure appears— it's the man from the lobby. She tenses as he reaches into his jacket but exhales in relief when he pulls out a babushka doll. He moves on, knocking on the next door.

KID (O.S.)
Mommy, daddy got me a babushka!

Once again, Marlene barricades the door with the armchair, collapsing into it, spent.

INT. VOLOSHYN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The house walls are covered with heavy wallpaper and hundreds of photos from Voloshyn's past. Among them, photos of him and Larry and Phil, but also Jonathan Dombrowski. Michaylo Voloshyn pours himself a whisky, swaying to classical music. His phone interrupts his dance.

VOLOSHYN
Da.

He listens intently, switches off the music, and turns on the TV. He gasps.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL SUITE, HAYATT - NIGHT

Marlene's is still asleep in the armchair behind the door. She can't hear her vibrating cell phone. She finally jolts awake to the incessant ringing of the hotel phone.

INTERCUT MARLENE / VOLOSHYN

MARLENE
Hello?

VOLOSHYN
(concerned)
You all right?

MARLENE

Yes. Why?

VOLOSHYN (O.S.)

Turn on the TV. Local channels.

The channels are broadcasting from a crime scene. Police officers. A house on fire. The reporter is talking Ukrainian.

MARLENE

What is this?

Oleg Luchenko's photo appears on screen. Then a house on fire.

VOLOSHYN

That's Oleg's house. He's dead.

MARLENE

What?

VOLOSHYN

They say it was an accident. Gas leak. With Oleg gone, SUB's likely to pull out. We'll need to pivot to Diamond Global.

Marlene discreetly activates her voice recorder.

MARLENE

I'm sorry, what did you say?

VOLOSHYN

I said-

The recorder beeps. Voloshyn catches on.

VOLOSHYN (CONT'D)

Are you recording this? You know that's illegal.

MARLENE

So is leaking confidential client information with their counterparties. Your point?

VOLOSHYN

Maybe we should meet for that drink after all. We can come meet you at the hotel.

MARLENE

No, the are is blocked. There's a bar near the bank. An hour?

Voloshyn hangs up. Marlene pockets St. Irene's keys.

INT. HAYATT HOTEL - NIGHT

Ivana discreetly leads Marlene through a service exit. A waiting taxi revs its engine.

INT. AIRPORT, KYIV - NIGHT

Marlene rushes through the terminal, eyes darting to the flight board. She picks up her pace. Just as the attendant moves to close the gate, Marlene slips through, boarding the plane.

INT. BAR, KYIV - NIGHT

Voloshyn and Ivan sit at a worn table, surrounded by flickering lights and hushed conversations. Voloshyn repeatedly glances at his wristwatch, each look deepening his worry. He pulls out his phone, dials Marlene. No answer. He hangs up, exhales deeply.

IVAN

She's not picking up?

VOLOSHYN

No. I'm calling Larry.

IVAN

I don't know... Do you trust him?

Voloshyn takes a moment, then calls Larry anyway. Again, his phone screen flashes "No Answer."

INT. LARRY'S OFFICE - DAY

Larry's phone screen lights up, displaying "Mykhailo Voloshyn." He ignores the call. Phil paces nervously, circling the room's central desk.

LARRY

We got Oleg killed!

PHIL

No, she and Voloshyn did when they invited him to bid. Just tell Marlene to cozy up to the Russians, for God's sake!

LARRY

A non existent fund? I'm pretty sure she has already figured everything out!

PHIL

So what? What's she going to do? She's nobody!

LARRY

You don't know her like I do. Push her and we could both end up in jail!

PHIL

Fine. Would you rather end up like Oleg?

LARRY

But if Diamond Global defaults, we are still going to be liable-

PHIL

We're talking about Ukraine, Larry. It's chaos; no one's keeping tabs. We'll downsize, lay off some folks, and move on.

EXT. LARRY'S OFFICE - DAY

Tiko approaches Larry's office, gripping a presentation binder. She's about to knock when she overhears the muffled conversation inside.

LARRY

(inside, muffled)
You don't understand, Phil. Marlene is relentless.

PHIL

(inside, muffled)
So let the Russians handle her. Tell them she acted alone inviting competition to the sale process.

Tiko's eyes widen. She steps back. Just then, SARAH, Larry's secretary, surprises her.

SARAH

Tiko, you okay?

Startled, Tiko drops her binder. Larry bursts out of his office.

LARRY
What's the matter?

TIKO
Uh, the presentation for the EOB-
SUB sale.

LARRY
Forget it. Tell Marlene we're
greenlighting Diamond Global.

Larry quickly returns to his office, shutting the door with a decisive click.

INT. MARLENE'S OFFICE - DAY

Tiko sits, phone in hand, trying to reach Marlene.

EXT. POTEMKIN STAIRS, ODESSA, UKRAINE - DAY

Marlene walks down the storied Potemkin Stairs, her eyes lost in the majesty of the harbor and the Black Sea. Her phone buzzes. It's Tiko. She answers.

INTERCUT TIKO / MARLENE

TIKO
Where the hell are you? Why aren't
you picking up?

MARLENE
Woah. Sounds like your day could
use a dash of this serenity.

Marlene unfolds a tourist map with a smile.

TIKO
There's a lot more serenity where
you're going! Larry and
Phil—something about letting the
Russians "handle you."

Marlene walks towards a yacht marina complex. The water of the Black Sea is so calm that all the yachts are mirrored on its surface.

MARLENE
If I sign with the Russians,
they'll let the bank default and
blame me.

(MORE)

MARLENE (CONT'D)

Phil and Larry will claim I acted alone. That's a one-way ticket to prison.

TIKO

And if you don't? They'll kill you, Marlene! Do you want to die?

MARLENE

I don't want to live like that either. I'm forty and I'm tired. Tired of trying to be seen, to be heard, to be respected and to finally be paid what I'm worth! I'm not going to spend another forty years trying, just because I wasn't lucky enough to be born with a dick. Fuck it. Let them come.

TIKO

Marlene!

Marlene hangs up, her decision made. She walks past an array of yachts until she finds a beautifully restored 40-meter brigantine: St. Irene.

EXT. ST. IRENE YACHT, ODESSA - DAY

Marlene takes a deep breath, pulls out the keys, and steps onto St. Irene. She wanders along the deck, feeling the weight and history of the boat beneath her. She finds the door, inserts the key, and turns.

INT. ST. IRENE YACHT, ODESSA - DAY

Marlene enters the yacht's opulent bedroom, an air of elegance and nostalgia surrounding her. She kicks off her shoes, sinking into the luxurious bed, her eyes closing as she takes a deep, relaxing breath. Upon opening her eyes, a painting across the room catches her attention.

The painting, a simple vase with flowers, strikes her as familiar yet enigmatic. She rises, intrigued, and examines the painting. Her phone in hand, a quick Google search reveals a startling fact— it's a Van Gogh and the original is listed in a Moscow museum. Confusion and suspicion cross her face.

Marlene adjusts the painting, finding it slightly askew. She carefully takes it down, searching for clues behind it, but finds nothing.

Returning the painting to its place, she probes the closet, uncovering a paper-wrapped package. Inside is a painting identical to the Kandinsky in Portman's office.

MARLENE
(under her breath)
What the...?

Back in the lounge, Marlene methodically photographs each painting, cross-referencing them online. Each one aligns with those hanging in renowned Russian museums. An article catches her eye.

MARLENE (CONT'D)
(reading from her phone)
Twenty iconic artworks that turned
three Soviet museums into all time
stars... the artworks were all
confiscated by the Bolsheviks...
from prominent Ukrainian art
collector Ionafan Dombrowski...

Settling onto the plush sofa, Marlene contemplates a painting of a tempestuous sea, her mind racing. She dials Tiko.

INT. SPECIAL SITUATIONS DIVISION FLOOR - DAY

Tiko's phone lights up. She grabs it.

TIKO
You're still alive!

INTERCUT MARLENE / TIKO

MARLENE
Can a museum unknowingly display
forgeries?

TIKO
That's a scandal they'd never
admit... But It has happened. Why
do you ask?

MARLENE
Who's they?

TIKO
Governments. Museums. Apart from
the international embarrassment,
think of the financial impact it
would have on the museum. Why?

Marlene smiles cunningly.

MARLENE
(smirking)
I just discovered Dombrowski's
bargaining chip.

INT. SPECIAL SITUATIONS DIVISION FLOOR - DAY

Larry, red-faced, storms over to Tiko's desk. Tiko senses him coming and quickly hangs up on Marlene.

LARRY
Where the fuck is she?

TIKO
Um...

LARRY
Don't you um me! I know you know
where she is.

TIKO
Last I heard, she was at EOB.

LARRY
Fine. It seems I will have to close
the deal myself.

TIKO
I wouldn't go alone, if I were you.

Larry storms off, enraged.

LARRY
(screams)
Greg! Now!

Greg scurries behind Larry into his office.

INT. ST. IRENE YACHT, ODESSA - NIGHT

Marlene sits relaxed on the bed, a laptop on her lap, a glass of wine at her side. On her screen, a photo of her and Larry at a Christmas party.

FLASHBACK:

INT. HOTEL BAR - NIGHT

The bar is aglow with Christmas lights. Everyone is well-dressed and cheerful. Larry, serious as always, talks to Phil and Greg, who are itching to join the dance floor.

Marlene and Tiko walk in, glittering more than their colleagues. Larry's breath catches at the sight of Marlene.

Later, Marlene tries to coax a reluctant Larry onto the dance floor, but he guides her instead to a quieter corner of the bar.

MARLENE

You better not start talking shop!

In the quiet corner, Larry gazes at Marlene, his internal struggle apparent.

LARRY

Marlene, I... I see you everywhere
I go. I just...

He leans in slowly, giving Marlene a chance to pull away, but she doesn't. Their kiss is hesitant at first, then turns passionate. A waiter's arrival interrupts them, and they part quickly.

END FLASHBACK

INT. ST. IRENE YACHT, ODESSA - NIGHT

Marlene's face shows a tumult of emotions—anger, regret, resolution.

MARLENE

(frustrated)
Fuck you, Larry.

She stands up decisively, her resolve hardening. She takes out Orloff's offer, her fingers pausing over the keypad as she contemplates her next move. With a deep breath, she dials Alexei's number.

EXT. CAFE, ODESSA - DAY4

Marlene walks towards Alexei Alexeyev, who is sitting at a table by the street. They exchange a courteous greeting.

MARLENE

Mr. Alexeyev.

ALEXEI

Mrs. Vigileos. Pleased to meet you.

They sit. A WAITER approaches.

WAITER

Madam.

MARLENE

Cappuccino. Double.

The waiter nods kindly and walks away.

MARLENE (CONT'D)

In your offer letter, you mentioned investments, but it is a pretty generic term. What exactly is it that your company does, really?

ALEXEI

We trade. Mr. Orloff is very active in imports and exports.

A FLASHBACK sequence starts—her brief, inadvertent encounters with Nikolay.

The waiter brings Marlene's cappuccino. Marlene catches the waiter's gaze fixed on Alexei. She reconsiders her untouched cappuccino, places it down gently.

MARLENE

Raise your offer by a hundred million dollars.

ALEXEI

(laughs ironically)
Why don't you round it to two hundred?

MARLENE

A hundred tips the scale just enough to edge out the competition and fulfill our capital requirements.

ALEXEI

Don't you think we know who our competition is? They will default their debt payments. You will end up bankrupt.

MARLENE

We can always liquidate Dombrowski's assets.

ALEXEI

Like what? The bank's outdated premises and a couple of houses?

MARLENE

And all of the other assets that Dombrowski has left behind.

ALEXEI

What kind of other assets?

MARLENE

Assets that could give you unparalleled access and all the leverage you will need for your... trade.

ALEXEI

Dombrowski already promised something to Nikolay.

MARLENE

Something? He didn't say what or where it was?

ALEXEI

We knew where. Who told you how to get there before us. Voloshyn?

MARLENE

Voloshyn doesn't know anything. Nobody does.

ALEXEI

How do we secure these assets? What if something happens to you?

MARLENE

Make sure nothing does.

ALEXEI

Are you going to tell me what they are?

MARLENE

First, you raise your offer.

INT. LOBBY, HAYATT HOTEL - DAY

The hotel's staff are decorating a huge Christmas tree. Larry and Greg walk through the hotel lobby, approaching the reception desk where Ivana stands cheerful.

IVANA
Welcome to Hayatt hotel, Gentlemen.
How may I assist you?

LARRY
Luchenko. Portman and Luchenko
Investment Bank.

Larry slides his passport across the counter. Greg follows suit. Ivana types briskly.

IVANA
One moment please.

Ivana gives them one door key (card) and a guide.

IVANA (CONT'D)
Breakfast is from 6 to 10 on the
top floor. Room service is open
until midnight.

LARRY
I'm sorry, this is just one key.

IVANA
Correct.

GREG
We, uh, we're not sharing a room.

IVANA
(checking online)
Under Portman and Luchenko I see
one standard room, currently
occupied by Mrs. Vigileos, one
executive suite marked as a no-show
and therefore cancelled, and
another standard room booked two
days ago.

LARRY
Fine, whatever, just give me
another executive suite.

IVANA
I'm sorry, Sir, but we are fully
booked.

LARRY
What room is Marlene Vigileos in?

IVANA
I can't disclose guest information,
sir.

LARRY
I'm paying for her room!

IVANA
Does this mean you should have
access to it?

LARRY
Print out the invoice, would you?

Ivana prints the invoice, hands it to Larry.

LARRY (CONT'D)
One of these rooms is cheaper.

IVANA
Mrs. Vigileos' room.

LARRY
At least you did something right.

Ivana shoots him a disapproving look. Larry storms off, agitated. Greg awkwardly waves goodbye to Ivana and follows.

INT. LARRY'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Larry and Greg step into a cramped room, clearly not what they expected. Greg tips the bell boy, who exits, and locks the door. Larry's phone buzzes. Marlene's name flashes on the screen.

LARRY
Where are you?

MARLENE (O.S.)
Open the door, Larry.

A knock. Greg peeks through the peephole. It's Marlene. He opens the door.

MARLENE (CONT'D)
Well, this is cozy.

Marlene hugs Greg. Larry doesn't move.

LARRY
How'd you find us?

MARLENE
I had the front desk notify me when
you checked in.

LARRY
(sarcastic)
Great. They respect your privacy
but not mine. Where were you?

MARLENE
Taking care of business.

LARRY
Everyone was looking for you: me,
Voloshyn, Ivan—

MARLENE
Luchenko's killer...

GREG
What killer? Larry said it was an
accident.

MARLENE
If Larry thought that, you'd both
have your own rooms.

LARRY
Whatever. Get Voloshyn to respond
to Diamond Global. Time's ticking.

MARLENE
Already did. He'll be here in ten
minutes.

GREG
We just got here!

MARLENE
Word of advice: don't get too
comfortable in hotel rooms in
Ukraine.

I/E. CAR / STREET - DAY

Rioters stream by, singing Ukraine's national anthem.
Voloshyn and Ivan are waiting in the car. The back seat door
opens. Larry, Greg, and Marlene hop in.

VOLOSHYN
Ah, the prodigal daughter returns.

MARLENE
Missed me?

VOLOSHYN

No woman has ever stood me up
before!

MARLENE

That's because you're paying them.

VOLOSHYN

Apparently, money well spent.

Marlene laughs at Voloshyn's joke, and he strokes her on the back gently. Larry doesn't appreciate their intimacy.

LARRY

Diamond Global's execs are meeting
with us at EOB at 1pm...

MARLENE

Or we could take the initiative and
surprise them. GPS says they're
nearby.

Voloshyn catches Marlene's eye in the rearview mirror. She has her phone's camera on.

GREG

Ambushing them, do you think it's a
good idea?

LARRY

No, it's not-

MARLENE

We can at least drive by, check out
their premises.

LARRY

Bad optics. We'll look desperate.

MARLENE

Speaking of optics, how do you
think this video will look online,
Larry? A team unwilling to vet a
three hundred million dollars deal?

Voloshyn slams on the brakes; a car nearly rear-ends them.

MARLENE (CONT'D)

The camera is still on Mykhailo.

LARRY

Fine, let's do a little recon.

Voloshyn resumes driving, eyeing Marlene in the mirror. She blows him a playful kiss.

I/E. CAR / OLD SOVIET BUILDING - DAY

They pull up to the decrepit building, the alleged HQ of Diamond Global. The SECURITY GUARDS approach the car. One of them says something to Voloshyn in Russian.

MARLENE

(to the camera)

Behold, the prestigious Diamond Global HQ. Larry what do you think of the fund's premises? Dodgy right?

Voloshyn drives off. Marlene puts her phone away.

MARLENE (CONT'D)

Don't worry. Video's safe. Just in case.

LARRY

In case of what? You driving me to homicide?

MARLENE

Oh, but it's the closest you'd get to touching me.

INT. DOMBROWSKI'S OFFICE - DAY

Everyone is seated. Larysa brings in refreshments. She looks unhappy. A new email pings on the projector. Voloshyn opens it, his face tensing.

VOLOSHYN

(disbelief)

You have to be kidding...

LARRY

What? Are the Russians backing out?

VOLOSHYN

No, it's Alexeyev. New bid. A hundred million more, in cash. Wants to proceed to Signing right away, no liability for the Seller.

LARRY

What the-

VOLOSHYN

It's a solid offer. We should consider it.

LARRY

And the Russians?! They are going to kill us, like they did with Oleg!

VOLOSHYN

How do you know it was not Orloff?

MARLENE

I don't think-

Marlene starts to speak, but Voloshyn cuts her off, his agitation slipping through.

VOLOSHYN

Orloff is possibly involved in arms dealing. He's no less dangerous! However, he does have the better offer.

Larysa enters, interrupting them.

LARYSA

They're here.

Egor Dorokov and Yuri Azarov enter, flanked by two men. The atmosphere tenses. They exchange curt greetings, ignoring Marlene and Ivan.

DOROKOV

Egor Dorokov.

AZAROV

Yuri Azarov.

Voloshyn gestures for them to sit, his stress barely concealed.

VOLOSHYN

Gentlemen, thanking you very much for your offer and for coming here today. Unfortunately, our situation has changed...

AZAROV

You're referring to Mr. Luchenko? How unfortunate...

DOROKOV

But now Diamond Global has best offer.

VOLOSHYN

No, you see, what I'm trying to say is... that you don't. Have the better offer anymore...

AZAROV

What are you talking about?

LARRY

(spontaneously)

There's been another offer.

Marlene subtly kicks Larry, signaling him to be cautious.

LARRY (CONT'D)

(under his teeth)

We're assessing all options...

Dorokov slams the table angrily.

DOROKOV

What options?!

AZAROV

(firmly)

Your process letter was clear. Late bids aren't valid.

MARLENE

(confidently)

Market practice allows for flexibility. You know that.

AZAROV

Is it also common practice for banks to offer undisclosed personal loans to the executives of their creditors?

LARRY

(muttering)

Fuckin' Yeva...

Larry tries to regain composure, but his anxiety is palpable.

MARLENE

Accusations without proof are worthless, Mr. Azarov.

AZAROV
 (smugly)
 We have connections in this bank,
 Miss. And they go all the way up.

MARLENE
 Not that high up-

AZAROV
 My dear, please... don't put
 yourself in danger.

MARLENE
 (continues)
 Because if they were that high up,
 they would have warned you about
 the cameras in top management
 offices.

Marlene points to the ceiling. All eyes follow. They see this
 round object that looks like a bulb.

MARLENE (CONT'D)
 Now, we would invite you to
 increase your offer to four hundred
 million dollars, in cash, but we've
 seen your offices and we know you
 can't afford it.

DOROKOV
 This is not over!

Dorokov and Azarov stand, visibly upset. Larysa runs in.

LARYSA
 Everything ok?

MARLENE
 Just another day in the office.

LARYSA
 Good. Why is it so dark in here?

She presses a button and the bulb turns on. It's just a
 light. Larry leans over a trash can, nauseated. Voloshyn
 collapses onto a sofa. Ivan smirks.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL SUITE - DAY

Marlene buttons her shirt. Her phone rings. It's Larry.

MARLENE
 I'm coming.

She dons her sunglasses and walks out, exhaling deeply.

INT. HAYATT HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

Larry, Voloshyn, and Ivan stand in well-tailored suits, scanning the crowd. Marlene enters.

LARRY
About time.

VOLOSHYN
She's worth the wait.

Marlene greets Voloshyn and Ivan with a warm smile but doesn't acknowledge Larry.

I/E. CAR / STREET - DAY

Voloshyn maneuvers the car through streets choked with smoke and chaos. He's clearly anxious. Larry sits shotgun, tense. Marlene and Ivan are in the back, engrossed in something on Ivan's phone.

MARLENE
Oh, hit 'like' on that one!

IVAN
Uh, sure, but—

Marlene taps the screen, Ivan looks slightly freaked out. Larry watches Marlene through the rearview mirror.

VOLOSHYN
(to Larry)
By the way, how's your wife?

Larry diverts his gaze from the mirror.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM, EASTERN OCEAN BANK - DAY

Larry, Voloshyn, Marlene, Ivan, Pavlo Moroz, Yeva Ivanova and Vladimir Kovalenko sit at a conference table. Alexei and his team enter. Handshakes circulate, with Alexei and Marlene acting as if they've never met.

ALEXEI
Alexeyev.

MARLENE
Vigileos.

ALEXEI

Pleasure.

MARLENE

Likewise.

VOLOSHYN

Should we wait for Mr. Orloff?

ALEXEI

Mr. Orloff is unavailable today,
but he'll attend the signing
tomorrow, assuming we make
progress.

VOLOSHYN

Great, should we start turning
pages?

ALEXEI

I would get the Warranties out of
the way.

The teams open the Sale and Purchase and turn the pages to
find the Warranties section.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM, EASTERN OCEAN BANK - NIGHT

It's 2:00 a.m. Everyone's drained. Larry pats Voloshyn's
back, Ivan half-sleeps on Marlene's shoulder. Alexei eyes
Marlene.

MARLENE

Mykhailo, can we talk privately for
a moment?

VOLOSHYN

Sure.

LARRY

About?

MARLENE

Negotiating his fees. You
interested?

LARRY

Uh, hard pass.

Voloshyn walks out with Marlene. A minute later Alexei looks
at his watch.

ALEXEI

(to Larry)

I need to step out for a minute.
When I return we wrap this up.

Larry nods positively and grabs a cookie from the plate in the middle of the table. He gives Ivan one too. Ivan seems surprised by Larry's sudden friendly behavior. Ivan tries the cookie, it's awful.

INT. DOMBROWSKI'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Marlene leads Voloshyn in and switches on the lights. She gestures to the couch. Alexei enters and closes the door quietly behind him.

VOLOSHYN

We're really doing this now?

MARLENE

Absolutely.

VOLOSHYN

In front of Alexei?

MARLENE

Alexei and I have come to an agreement.

VOLOSHYN

About my fees?

MARLENE

Your firm emailed us an absurd invoice of 350k for your services. Ninety five percent of the fees are for your time.

VOLOSHYN

I did-

MARLENE

So here's the deal. Instead of cash, you get Dombrowski's yacht.

VOLOSHYN

Dombrowski had a boat?

MARLENE

In Odessa. Worth a cool million. Interested?

VOLOSHYN

What's the catch?

MARLENE

I'm going to give you the keys and you are going to take Alexei to the yacht. He will see what he wants to see, he will take what he wants to take and the rest you can keep. If everything is in order, Alexei will notify Mr. Orloff to sign the agreement. What do you say?

VOLOSHYN

And you?

MARLENE

What about me?

VOLOSHYN

What's in it for you?

ALEXEI

(to Voloshyn)

If she pulls this off, we'll owe her. Big time.

EXT. OLD SOVIET BUILDING, KYIV - DAWN

Azarov and Dorokov emerge from the building, shrouded in the morning mist. They step into a black luxury car. Armed guards follow, some on motorbikes, others climbing into a black van.

EXT. CORPORATE BUILDING - DAWN

Nikolay Orloff strides out of an imposing structure, getting into an armored black limousine. His guards fan out, entering black SUVs that trail behind him.

EXT. MAIDAN SQUARE, KYIV -DAY

The policemen are building barricades to control the protesters, who are gathering by thousands.

INT. ST. IRENE, DOMBROWSKI'S BOAT - DAY

Voloshyn unlocks the door, allowing Alexei to step inside. The yacht is a vessel of hidden treasures. Alexei finds a stash of paintings. An old man, an ART APPRAISER, follows Voloshyn into the room.

INT. EOB BANK LOBBY - DAY

Nikolay Orloff, impeccably dressed, enters the bank. The Board of Directors stand in quiet anticipation. Handshakes are exchanged, yet nothing is settled.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Marlene, wrapped in a black coat, relishes the cold as she walks toward the bank. Along the way, she captures the city's unrest through her phone, selfies with protesters forming the backdrop.

INT. DOMBROWSKI'S OFFICE - DAY

Larry, Greg, and Ivan are huddled around a table. Messages from Marlene keep popping up on Ivan's screen. Larry sneaks a look, glimpses a photo of Marlene, and clenches his fist, slamming it onto the table.

INT. ST. IRENE YACHT - DAY

The art appraiser places his glasses on the bridge of his nose, examining the paintings with an almost childlike wonder. Alexei dials Nikolay, a smile creeping onto his face.

INT. EOB BANK LOBBY - DAY

Nikolay picks up his phone, listens, says nothing. Marlene walks in. Her face, windswept and red-nosed, lights up at the sight of him. Their eyes meet, and for a moment, the world fades away.

MARLENE

(stuttering)

Um, I'm, I'm Marlene. Hi.

Nikolay mutters something in Ukrainian. They don't understand each other's language, but their eyes speak volumes. He leads her toward the elevator, their hands accidentally touching.

INT. ELEVATOR EOB - DAY

Marlene seems too conscious to look at Nikolay. He, however, can't stop admiring her.

EXT. DOBROWSKY'S OFFICE - DAY

Larysa greets them warmly as they step out of the elevator. She hugs Nikolay and then turns to Marlene.

LARYSA
My dear! Congratulations!

MARLENE
We haven't signed anything yet...

LARYSA
Come on then!

INT. DOBROWSKI'S OFFICE - DAY

Inside the office, contracts are passed around. Nikolay, Larry, and Greg sign wherever Marlene, Voloshyn, and Ivan guide them. The atmosphere is palpable. When they're done Nikolay whispers something to Larysa.

LARYSA
Mr. Orloff wishes to extend an invitation for dinner at 359-Ukraine's most exclusive enclave-to commemorate this occasion.

VOLOSHYN
Ah! Finally, someone said it out loud.

GREG
I second that!

LARRY
The country's on the brink. Perhaps, celebrations can wait.

MARLENE
(to Larry)
Don't be such a buzzkill.

LARRY
Fine, fine.

LARYSA
Excellent. A car will collect you at 8 pm from your hotel.

The mood lifts, but Larry's eyes fixate on how Marlene looks at Orloff and the way Orloff's eyes meet hers.

EXT. MAIDAN SQUARE, KYIV - NIGHT

The atmosphere is electric. Protesters and police clash; Molotov cocktails illuminate the sky, tear gas clouds the air.

EXT. HAYATT HOTEL, STREET - NIGHT

Policemen are guarding the hotel. Police cars block the protesters and any vehicles from approaching.

A black van arrives, parking in the shadows. Two motorbikes trail behind it, their engines humming softly. Helmets and tinted windows conceal identities.

EXT. HAYATT HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

Voloshyn and Ivan are waiting outside. Voloshyn is smoking a cigarette. Larry and Greg join them.

LARRY

Where is she?

VOLOSHYN

(dissapprovingly)

She?

LARRY

So, you 're taking her side.

VOLOSHYN

I thought we were all on the same side.

A stunning woman exits the hotel, distracting everyone momentarily. Then, Marlene appears, radiant in the little black dress Tiko had packed for her.

VOLOSHYN (CONT'D)

Ah, the woman of the hour.

Voloshyn tenderly kisses Marlene's hand.

LARRY

I don't think your dress is appropriate-

MARLENE

(flipping him off)

Sue me.

Two policemen come to their escort. They walk them through the police cars and around the corner where Orloff's luxurious van waits. The doors open. Two blonde young women dressed alike welcome the team on board. As Orloff's van drives away, the motorbikes follow discreetly. Dombrowski's killers come out of the van that is parked opposite the hotel.

EXT. 359 RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Voloshyn, Larry, Greg, Ivan and Marlene arrive at a seemingly abandoned building. The distant rumbles of unrest make the silence unnerving. A series of locks unlatch from within, and doors swing open.

INT. ELEVATOR 359 RESTAURANT - NIGHT

In a dark elevator, Voloshyn presses the lone button. They ascend, tension thickening the air.

INT. 359 RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The group steps into a room wrapped in red velvet. A cacophony of languages fills the air—English, Russian, French. Vodka flows like water. Nikolay and Alexei rise as they approach.

They all exchange warm handshakes and take their seats around the table. Voloshyn sits next to Alexei, on the same side with Orloff. Ivan sits opposite Voloshyn, Marlene sits opposite Alexei and Larry sits opposite Nikolay.

Vodka shots arrive and everyone cheers.

VOLOSHYN

To the victors, the spoils.

The men drink, but Marlene subtly pushes her shot away.

ALEXEI

Nervous, my dear?

MARLENE

Cheap date, actually.

ALEXEI

Among your virtues...

Alexei whispers something into Nikolay's ear and now Nikolay doesn't look happy. Larry clenches his jaw, Greg looks increasingly uncomfortable.

GREG
 (to Marlene)
 Why don't you just take a sip?

LARRY
 (muttering)
 Drink the fuckin shot...

MARLENE
 (in a raised voice, to
 Nikolay)
 If I drink, I sleep.

GREG
 He's not deaf, he's Ukrainian.

Nikolay sips her shot, then returns it to Marlene.

VOLOSHYN
 You better drink the rest.

GREG
 That's how people end up in
 ditches...

Marlene finally downs it. The tension breaks; laughter among the Ukrainians erupts.

LARRY
 I need a cigarette.

VOLOSHYN
 I'll join you.

The two men rush out.

EXT. TERRACE 359 RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Larry lights a cigarette, the flame momentarily illuminating his anxious face. He inhales deeply.

LARRY
 Are we in danger? There's something
 in the air.

VOLOSHYN
 Really? I think Orloff is pretty
 relaxed.

LARRY
 What about her? Is she safe? I
 don't like the way he looks at her.

VOLOSHYN

Perhaps you don't like the way they
look at each other.

INT. 359 RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The table is a feast of excess; lobsters, caviar, champagne.

ALEXEI

Marlene, you've reviewed EOB's
assets. What do you suggest we do
next?

MARLENE

Beyond the development in Odessa?

ALEXEI

Precisely.

MARLENE

I'd put money in Donbas, especially
the heavy industries.

Alexei translates to Nikolay. Larry and Voloshyn rejoin the
table. Suddenly, Nikolay beckons Marlene to switch seats with
Larry. She hesitates, confused.

ALEXEI

Larry, do sit next to me.

Larry shifts, begrudgingly. Marlene sits, now opposite
Nikolay.

ALEXEI (CONT'D)

Nikolay finds your ideas
intriguing. However, most of the
Donbas land is under Russian
control.

MARLENE

Lands that are drowning in
unsustainable debt... Refinance
those debts. Step in when they
default.

ALEXEI

Just like you stepped in EOB.

Alexei translates. Nikolay laughs uproariously, mutters
something to Alexei's ear but then goes conspicuously silent.

MARLENE

What did he say?

ALEXEI
Enough business, let's eat.

Larry and Greg bend over to Marlene.

LARRY
I'd suggest you stop giving them ideas. If there's a Russian spy among them, you know where you'll end up, right?

MARLENE
No, why don't you tell me?

GREG
Why can't we just eat?

MARLENE
You eat, I need to get some fresh air.

Marlene leaves the table and heads to the terrace.

EXT. TERRACE 359 RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The terrace is lit with Christmas lights. Marlene stands at the balcony's edge, the night wind carrying a faint scent of smoke, strangely cleansing. Nikolay appears behind her, a shot of vodka in hand. He sips a little and offers her the rest. Marlene drinks it all in one go, then impulsively throws the glass into the street, barely hearing it shatter.

MARLENE
Did you kill Oleg?

Nikolay smiles faintly, a hint of sadness in his eyes, as if understanding but choosing not to answer directly.

MARLENE (CONT'D)
I don't think you did. No one would be afraid of death, if it looked like you. Not that I'm afraid of death really.

She peers down at the distant street, lost in thought. Nikolay watches her, visibly uncomfortable with her proximity to the edge.

MARLENE (CONT'D)
You know what I'm afraid of? An insignificant life.

Nikolay gently takes her hands, warming them. Marlene looks up into his eyes. A waiter brings another shot of vodka. Nikolay drinks half, then hands the rest to Marlene.

MARLENE (CONT'D)
 (slightly slurred)
 All my life, I've tried so hard to do the right thing, you know? But right and wrong? I don't think I can tell anymore.

Marlene, visibly intoxicated, perches precariously on the hurdle. Nikolay, quick to react, wraps his arms around her, pulling her to safety.

MARLENE (CONT'D)
 Funny, isn't it? A few hours ago I was just a pawn in your game, and now that I left myself me at your mercy, you're afraid to let me fall.

As they stand in close embrace, the distant sounds of explosions break the silence. Maidan Square is ablaze. At that moment, Larry steps out onto the terrace, his expression darkening at the sight of Marlene in Nikolay's arms. Jealousy and a sense of loss flash across his face before he silently retreats, unnoticed.

EXT. HAYATT HOTEL STREET IN FRONT OF LOBBY - NIGHT

Orloff's van stops discreetly in the back alley. Larry and Marlene exit, while Voloshyn, Greg, and Ivan remain inside to continue the party.

GREG
 Sweet dreams! You party poopers!

LARRY
 At least I won't have to share the bed with you.

VOLOSHYN
 You should call your wife, she must be worried.

As Orloff's van drives away, the shadowy figures from the opposing black van reunite with their motorcycles. Dombrowski's assassins reunite.

INT. HAYATT HOTEL - NIGHT

Marlene takes her shoes off and walks barefoot through the corridors. Larry hurries after her. He pulls her by her arm on to him.

LARRY

What are you doing? Put your shoes on.

MARLENE

I can't, they are killing me.

LARRY

You're drunk... Maybe you shouldn't be alone tonight.

MARLENE

Answer this, and I'll go with you: What's the difference between a write-off and a write-down?

LARRY

There's no difference...

MARLENE

Wrong answer.

They split, each taking a different elevator. The Russian assassins head to the reception. ILYA, the biggest guy of them all, approaches Ivana.

INT. LARRY'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Larry comes into the room. He smashes the door behind him. The phone rings.

LARRY

Hello?

(Pauses)

No, she's not with me. I don't know her room number. There are two reservations under Portman and Luchenko, she has the cheaper room. Wait... Wait until she has fallen asleep.

Larry hangs up the phone, tears in his eyes.

INT. HAYATT HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

Ilya gives the phone back to Ivana.

ILYA
Room numbers for Portman and
Luchenko?

IVANA
887 and 107.

ILYA
Which is the cheaper one?

IVANA
Normally 107...

The men leave. Ivana quickly dials a number.

IVANA (CONT'D)
They're here.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Larysa in her bed wearing lingerie hangs up the phone with Ivana. Quickly she dials someone else.

LARYSA
They are there. Hurry!

INT. PRESIDENTIAL SUITE - NIGHT

Marlene is throwing her clothes all over the floor. She dances her way into the shower.

EXT. 359 RESTAURANT / STREET - NIGHT

Nikolay and his bodyguards hurry into two black SUV's.

INT. LARRY'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Larry lies on the bed, still dressed, crying.

INT. HAYATT HOTEL, CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Ilya and his men approach a room, readying weapons.

EXT./INT. MAIDAN SQUARE, KYIV /CAR - NIGHT

Nikolay in the back seat of the car, taps the drivers back to hurry up.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Larysa keeps calling Marlene, no answer. Desperate, she calls someone else.

LARYSA
Hans, it's urgent.

INT. HAYATT HOTEL, CORRIDOR

Hans comes out of his room holding a gun. Quickly he makes his way down the corridor.

INT. HAYATT HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

Nikolay and his four bodyguards enter the lobby. Ivana nods. Nikolay and the bodyguards split in two teams. Nikolay and two bodyguards get into the left elevator, and the other two into the right.

INT. HAYATT HOTEL, CORRIDOR - NIGHT

The assassins stand at the door of 107. Ilya places his ear on the door and takes a key card out of his pocket.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL SUITE - NIGHT

Marlene is singing in the shower. She gets the words wrong all the time.

INT. LARRY'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Larry shuts off the lights and goes to sleep.

INT. HAYATT HOTEL, CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Nikolay and the two bodyguards now stand at the door of 887. They take their guns out, while Nikolay takes a key card out of his pocket.

INT. LARRY'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Ilya and his gang break into the room. It's dark. Ilya takes a pillow and attempts to suffocate Larry, thinking it's Marlene. They struggle, knocking a lamp over.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL SUITE - NIGHT

Marlene hears something, she cautiously comes out of the shower, wrapping herself in a towel.

INT. LARRY'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Nikolay's two bodyguards enter the room and attack Ilya and his gang. They all start shooting at each other. One of the bullets hits Larry in his thigh.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL SUITE - NIGHT

Nikolay's bodyguards break the bathroom door open. Marlene is standing in shock in front of them. Nikolay steps in the bathroom and closes the door behind him.

EXT. HAYATT HOTEL, STREET - NIGHT

Gunshots and commotion spill out onto the street. Police cars arrive amidst the chaos.

INT. LARRY'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Larry, injured, crawls out as Nikolay's men and the Russian assassins take each other down.

EXT. HAYATT HOTEL, CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Hans is approaching 107. He sees Larry crawling out of his room.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL SUITE - NIGHT

Nikolay approaches Marlene. He gently pushes her back into the shower. She throws the towel off. They kiss passionately while she undresses him. They are together in the shower now. He lifts her up against the wall.

INT. HAYATT HOTEL, CORRIDOR - NIGHT

The police arrive outside Larry's room. Hans shows his ID, helps Larry to his feet, and hands him over to a medical crew that has just arrived. Hans quickly heads toward the staircase.

EXT. PRESIDENTIAL SUITE - NIGHT

Nikolay's two imposing bodyguards guard the room.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL SUITE - NIGHT

Marlene and Nikolay are making love in the shower.

NIKOLAY
 (whispers in perfect
 English)
 I did not kill Oleg.

MARLENE
 You speak engli-

A series of gunshots erupt outside the door. Nikolay swiftly places his fingers over Marlene's lips, urging her to be silent. He steps out of the shower, wrapping himself in a towel, and cautiously approaches the door. Marlene quickly wraps herself in another towel.

One more gunshot is heard, louder than before. The door opens and Nikolay falls on the floor. Hans appears.

HANS
 (German accent)
 Marlene? Are you Ok?

INT. BOSTON LOGAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (ARRIVALS) - DAY

Marina, Will, and Tiko wait eagerly. The doors slide open. Marlene, Greg, and a limping Larry appear. Marlene looks radiant, Greg seems drunk, and Larry struggles to walk.

Marina, Will, and Tiko rush to Marlene, ignoring the others. They hug and kiss.

MARLENE
 (to Will)
 I did everything you told me
 to-surveillance, blackmail, the
 works.

WILL
 Good girl!

MARINA
 Did you meet anyone interesting?

MARLENE
 You know what Mom? I did!

MARINA

Who? Where is he now?

MARLENE

He got shot.

MARINA

It's just not meant to happen, is it?

They all walk out the airport holding each other. Tiko turns around and waves goodbye to Larry and Greg.

INT. MANAGEMENT'S FLOOR - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: BOSTON, FEBRUARY 28 2014

Marlene sits on a plush cream couch, smirking at a questionable Kandinsky painting. CNN plays on mute. The TV volume goes up as news on the Russian invasion in Crimea airs.

The same American JOURNALIST that covered the Maidan Revolution is now in Crimea.

JOURNALIST

Three days after the removal of pro-Russian President Viktor Yanukovich from the Ukrainian government, dozens of heavily armed men seized government buildings in Crimea. A region in Ukraine with an ethnic Russian majority.

The Secretary's phone rings.

SECRETARY

(to Marlene)

Mr. Portman will see you now.

Marlene gets up and enters Phil's office, closing the door behind her.

INT. STRATEGIC PLANNING DIVISION FLOOR - DAY

Marlene walks into her office, where Tiko and Greg await.

TIKO

How did it go?

GREG

Let me guess. He gave you fifty thousand... kisses!

MARLENE

Gosh no...

TIKO

What about the big fat bonus he had promised you?

MARLENE

He gave me something, and it's big and it's fat but it's not a bonus. What is it?

GREG

Let me guess. His unreserved gratitude!

Marlene and Greg high five.

TIKO

But, but, but he said, that the Bank does not forget!

MARLENE

The Bank doesn't. He does.

GREG

(checks at his watch)
Shit! I got a meeting!

Greg hurries to the meeting room. Marlene keeps looking at her screen.

Marlene locates a file on her computer: FUCKYOU.docx. She prints it. Tiko grabs it from the printer.

TIKO

You can't be serious.

Marlene gets a big plastic bag out of the closet and begins to throw stuff in. She does it blindly. Notebooks, folder files, cereal bars, tea bags, tombstones.

TIKO (CONT'D)

Got another job lined up?

MARLENE

No. Don't need one. Nor do you. Hurry up.

Marlene exits her office holding the plastic bag. She heads to Tiko's desk. She starts throwing her stuff into the plastic bag as well. She makes an awful lot of noise, but her colleagues pretend they don't hear anything.

MARLENE (CONT'D)

Trust me.

With a single move Tiko wipes out her desk. They laugh. Greg and Larry come running out of the meeting room.

LARRY

What the fuck is going on?

She takes the folded resignation letter out of her pocket and hands it over to him.

MARLENE

We quit. I'm going to email you Tiko's.

Now, she has everyone's attention. They all wait for Larry's reaction.

LARRY

Marlene-

MARLENE

What?

LARRY

(whispering)

What are you doing? You can't leave like this.

MARLENE

Like this, you mean alive?

LARRY

(grabbing her arm)

Look around you. You and me, we're corporate hamsters. It's what we do.

Marlene takes a look around at her colleagues.

MARLENE

I'm nothing like you.

LARRY

You still owe ten monthly salaries and a big fat mortgage.

MARLENE

Good news. My debt has been repaid.

FLASHBACK:

INT. BANK - DAY

Voloshyn enters the Bank holding a briefcase. He approaches the first available employee and places the briefcase on the desk.

END FLASHBACK

INT. STRATEGIC PLANNING DIVISION FLOOR - DAY

Larry doesn't say anything. He just steps out of her way. Marlene and Tiko walk out of the office dragging the bag. They hit the elevator button. Greg hurries after them.

GREG

(to Marlene)

I'm going to miss you.

(to Tiko)

Both of you!

Group hug.

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY

The door opens, and Phil is inside. He kindly greets them but, once again, he doesn't recognize Marlene as she and Tiko enter dragging with their plastic bag. The elevator descends in silence.

PHIL

Do you need help with that?

INT. GROUND FLOOR LOBBY - DAY

Phil tries to drag the plastic bag outside but is evidently too heavy for him. The guards see him struggling and hurry up to help. They simply assume it's trash. The two women watch the guards take their bag outside and throw them in the trash bin on the street. Phil smiles to Marlene expecting a thank you or at least a nod with gratitude.

MARLENE

(to Phil)

That wasn't trash.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Marlene and Tiko walk out the building without looking back.

TIKO

What now?

A limo pulls up. The door opens. Marlene shows Tiko in. Voloshyn sits comfortably in the back seat.

EXT. ST. IRENE YACHT IN GREEK PELAGOS - DAY

Marlene and Tiko relax in a jacuzzi on the yacht's sundeck, sipping cocktails.

MARLENE

(toasts)

To all those fools who think that
money can't buy happiness.

TIKO

Cheers!

They clink glasses. Voloshyn emerges with a fruit plate. Tiko rushes to him, and they kiss. Marlene stays in the jacuzzi, savoring the sun and breeze. In the distance, a dark yacht appears. Two figures on the deck, resembling Nikolay and Alexei, observe Marlene through their binoculars.

THE END