

CHILD 44

by

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EXT. SOVIET UKRAINE - 1930'S - DAY

PAN OF - Hushed wintry rural landscape. Hamlets, farms, roads, forests - it all feels deserted or abandoned.

EXT. FOREST

CLOSE ON - LEO DEMIDOV (16), gaunt but steady-eyed, belly down on the forest floor, SASHA (11) in the same position, a body length behind him. Leo's barely breathing as he clutches the end of a cord, his eyes zeroed in on...

REVERSE - An emaciated cat, contemplating a fish head looped by the other end of the cord.

LEO
(whisper)
Come on, pussy...

The cat finally steps into the trap and Leo yanks, it's a foot-noose, but the cat takes off so fast that the end in Leo's hands shoots free.

SASHA
Leo!

Leo in pursuit, slaloming through a stand of thin trees until he's able to stomp on the trailing cord and dive on his prey, but the cat fights like, well, a cat, Leo struggling to subdue it until he gets clawed and his prey vanishes.

ON LEO, a moment later, trudging back to Sasha, except - the kid is gone.

LEO'S POV - through a scrim of those thin trees in the far distance, he sees Sasha struggling with a bearded man.

CLOSE ON - The bearded man, huge but strangely feeble, has Sasha half-stuffed headfirst inside a burlap sack, and is reaching for a downed tree limb to bash his brains out.

But a rock catches him square in the temple; the guy staggering, then seeing Leo ready to launch a second, running off.

ALPHA MALE (OS)
Squeeze...

Leo helps a dazed Sasha to his feet.

EXT. MANSION - A WINTER STORM - DUSK

Czar-grand in style but run down now; a state-run orphanage.

ALPHA MALE (OS)
Squeeze...

INT. MANSION - SAME

A huge white tiled bathroom. PAN OF accumulated foodstuffs - oak leaves, beechnuts, tree bark, a mouse.

ALPHA MALE (OS)

Squeeze...

CLOSE ON - Blue-lipped face of a BOY (12), stark staring, trying to remain rigid but violently trembling.

PULL BACK to see the boy is nearly naked in that white room; his arms raised in a Y, a water-logged sponge in each hand.

ALPHA MALE (OS)

Squeeze...

As boy squeezes, icy water cascades along his arms down onto his torso, making him spasm with cold.

PULL BACK further to see he's standing in front of an open window, wisps of that snowstorm whirling into the room like wind devils.

Along one wall, the other young boys (BETAS), including Sasha, cower above their gleanings in fascination at this spectacle.

Along the opposite wall a group of 16, 17-year-old boys (ALPHAS) lounge like malnourished wolves.

ALPHA MALE (MISCHA)

(17, a gaunt brute)

Squeeze...

Another cascade; another spasm-dance; the kid turning blue.

MISCHA

Nothing. All fucking day out there and you come back with nothing.

BOY

(wheezing chattering)

I couldn't find nothing! I swear!

MISCHA

Squeeze...

The sound of the window being shut turns everybody to Leo.

LEO

So he'll have better luck tomorrow.

MISCHA

Bullshit. Everything he found went right down his own gullet.

BOY

No! I swear!

LEO
Mischa. He'll have better luck
tomorrow.

Mischa eyes Leo. Although no bigger than the other Alpha Males, there's a confident menace behind his reasonable tone; he's no one to mess with.

But trapped by an audience of his flunkies, Mischa opens the window again.

MISCHA
No. No more tomorrows.

He gestures to one of the Alphas, JOSEPH, who grabs the kid by the neck and hustles him to the window, the storm.

Leo leans into Mischa.

LEO
(whispering)
He goes, you go right out after him.

Mischa leans back, assessing the threat...

LEO
May I?
(recloses the window; to
the boy)
Come back empty handed again I'll
airmail you out of here myself.

Gratefully, the kid rattles back into his clothes.

Mischa eyes Leo; i.e; you'll pay for this; then starts to walk out of the bathroom followed by his crew.

He stops to look down at the collected foragings set out by the Betas, truly disgusting fare.

He then eyes the younger boys strangely, the Betas, on their knees holding their collective breath.

He finally stalks out and the kids exhale. One by one they turn their dogs' eyes to Leo, still by the window.

LEO
The hell are you looking at.
(abruptly steps to them)
GO!

They fall all over each other racing out of the room.

Leo, alone now, stares out into the storm, the world...

EXT. ORPHANAGE - NIGHT

The storm has subsided.

INT. GREAT HALL

Converted into a dormitory for the Betas. PAN the beds to see they all lay there wide-eyed in the dark as if waiting for...

INT. DARKENED STAIRWAY

YURIJ, Ioseph, STEFAN and NICOLAI, four of Mischa's crew, float up the stairs like black clouds.

INT. GREAT HALL - BETAS' POV

Laying in bed and looking up at the Alphas looming down, Yurij holding a fistful of cotton balls and some matches.

YURIJ
Bicycle race...

INT. ANOTHER FLOOR - LEO'S BED

His area is half-ass barricaded; as if he always has to be on guard, an Alpha whose taken it upon himself to defend Betas.

Hearing screams; he sits up, lights a cigarette, takes a drag, then pissed-off, tamps it out, heads to the dorms.

INT. GREAT HALL

Terrorized 12-year-olds staring at the ceiling as two of their number are shoulder-pinned to their adjoining beds; their feet pedaling furiously in an effort to put out the flaming cotton between their toes.

Leo comes out of the darkness, clamps the back of Yurij's neck to drag him off, but Mischa, who'd been laying in wait, comes up behind him and presses a knife to his throat.

MISCHA
Hey, hero...

As Yurij and Ioseph close in, Leo pushes Mischa's knife hand away, the blade arcing forward and accidentally slashing Ioseph's throat.

For a moment Leo, Yurij, Stefan and Mischa stand paralyzed over the body. Then flee in separate directions.

ANGLE - Leo back upstairs, gathering whatever paltry belongings he has, going to a window.

LEO'S POV - Too high.

INT. GREAT HALL

The Betas, crouched at the foot of their beds, staring at Ioseph staring back at them sightless from the floor.

Leo comes racing back into the room, raises a window and after a fleeting 'You're on your own' look of pity, bails.

The Betas scramble to the open window to keep sight of him.

BETA 2
He's not coming back?

BETA 3
Shit! What do we do now?

MISCHA (OS)
Now?

BETAS' POV - Mischa and his crew, clustered across the room, featureless in the dark save for their lupine eyes...

Drunk and starving, LEV, the orphanage director finally makes an appearance, clothes and hair askew. He stands over Ioseph's body without seeing it.

LEV
(to the 12-year-olds)
You little monsters! Can't a man rest in peace?

ANGLE - The Alphas, melting into the shadows, Mischa staring with that eerie speculative look at the Betas in their beds.

EXT. FOREST FLOOR - DAWN

A pile of frost-covered leaves. Shadow of a spread-legged man, zzzip, an arc of urine. Suddenly the leaves explode and a formerly sleeping Leo leaps to his feet.

REVERSE to see the pisser, a startled RED ARMY SOLDIER WEARING TORTOISE-SHELL GLASSES, reach for his sidepiece and fire.

Leo rushes him, clips him on the jaw, the soldier stumbling.

Disoriented, Leo stands there, gawking at the guy, then, CLUNK, the butt of a rifle to the back of his head takes him out.

EXT. FOREST - 2 HOURS LATER

Leo, under a blanket, comes around.

LEO'S POV - A MASSIVE TANK seemingly in motion, about to flatten him.

Gasping, Leo rolls away, almost into a cooking fire.

Laughter refocuses his gaze; he's amidst a group of Red Army soldiers awaiting their field breakfast.

LEO
Is that a tank?

SOLDIER 1
(the pisser, aka TORTOISE-SHELL, 35)
Are you a spy?

LEO

What?

SOLDIER 2

I think he's a spy.

LEO

Where are you going?

TORTOISE

That's a very spy-like question.
Definitely a spy.

FIELD COOK

(tossing a carrying strap)
I need more wood.

SOLDIER 3

Spy, get more wood.

Leo struggles to his feet, picks up the carrying strap and under the eyes of the unit, staggers towards the forest. He gets halfway there... then faints from hunger.

TORTOISE

Shit.

EXT. BIVOUAC SITE - 1 HOUR LATER

Soldiers watching Leo wolf down food. There's something unnerving in the ferocity of his concentration which gets to them all.

EXT. BIVOUAC SITE - 1 HOUR LATER

Soldiers heading out, some walking, some riding atop the tanks.

ANGLE - Leo, alone at the campsite, watching them go.

The tanks rumble off; but then one of them stops. The hatch opens, words are exchanged, then Tortoise beckons to Leo.

Leo runs to the tank, is hoisted up by Tortoise. The tank moves out.

1945

EXT. SHATTERED BERLIN

A hellish landscape out of Breugel, tanks and troops moving like insects through the wreckage of a great city.

EXT. THE REICHSTAG BUILDING

under final siege by Red Army troops - the end of days.

INT. REICHSTAG

It's the Reich's last stand; floor to floor, door to door; every inch paid for in blood.

ANGLE - Mid-height in the building, a German machine gun has been set up at the top of sweepingly broad marble stairs, mowing down wave after wave of Russians attempting to break through to the higher floors.

CLOSE ON - LEO, 22, now a seasoned Red Army soldier in the thick of the battle for the stairs, German fire tattooing the plaster around his head, dead comrades piling up at his feet.

A Red soldier is blasted backwards almost into Leo's arms; Leo reflexively holding him up, then...

Leo, using the dead Red as body armor, works his way up, up...

CLOSE ON - Leo reaching for a potato masher grenade on his belt.

GERMAN POV - The dead Red slung over Leo's shoulder levitating up the stairs, machine gun fire impact-puffing on his back.

Leo's hand materializes from beneath his human serape, lobs the potato masher into the POV.

Flames, red hell, the nest taken out.

Soviet troops swarming up the stairs past lifeless German eyes.

INT. REICHSTAG BUILDING - HOURS LATER

The building taken; although we can still hear bursts of mop-up gunfire in the b.g.

Leo, and a second young soldier, ALEXEI ANDREYEV, weary and begrimed, slouch on a rubbed staircase, smoking and sharing a filched bottle of cognac with Tortoise (now 41), who sits a few steps above them.

Two Red Army Political Liaison Officers and a PHOTOGRAPHER stop before them; Leo and Alexei too exhausted to get up.

PHOTOGRAPHER
How about these two?

The officers shrug; whatever.

PHOTOGRAPHER
(carrying a red blanket)
Come with me.

EXT. DOME OF THE REICHSTAG - 20 MINUTES LATER

Leo and Alexei inch their way towards the edge of the roof, look down on the ruins of Berlin.

The photographer passes the folded blanket to Alexei. As Alexei passes it up to Leo, his uniform sleeves ride up to reveal a dozen looted watches.

PHOTOGRAPHER
Oh for Christ's sake... Lose the
goddamn watches.

Alexei and Leo laugh at this, and as Alexei busies himself hiding his booty, Leo finally unfolds the blanket and sees that it's a crude hastily sewn rendition of the familiar hammer and sickle Red Army flag.

Unexpectedly moved, Leo carefully attaches it to his bayonet.

ALEXEI

Leo, hold up, give me a second...

Leo once again looks out at the devastation, and swiping at six years of war tears, and those of a lifetime of suffering before that, he impulsively and passionately thrusts his bayonet-flag out over the ruined city - as much a statement of I AM as a gesture of Soviet victory... and, CLICK...

WE SEE THE IMAGE AS A BLACK AND WHITE PHOTO -

In PRAVDA

In the TIMES of LONDON

In LIFE MAGAZINE

In USSR APARTMENT WINDOWS; on buses, trams, trolleys

The Soviet equivalent of the flag raising at Iwo Jima.

Frozen History.

1951

INT. BOLSHOI BALLET

CLOSE ON - Male Bolshoi dancer suspended in mid-air (a la Nureyev in Le Corsair).

GO WIDE to see the gilded theater, the solemn audience.

CLOSE ON - a row of uniformed MGB AGENTS and their WIVES in better than decent seats, as riveted as anyone else.

PAN their faces, until we see first, Leo's war comrade Alexei and his wife NINA, then Leo and his wife RAISA (30). Raisa watches the ballet with the same rapt focus as everyone else but there seems to be a peripheral alertness about her that we don't quite know what to make of...

Without taking his eyes from the stage, Leo reaches for her hand, which she gives him.

ANGLE ON - Joseph Stalin, seated in a box, looking in Leo's direction.

INT. RESTAURANT - 11:00 PM

Noisy full house. Four portraits of Stalin on the walls.

ANGLE - Protesting diners being moved mid-meal from a large table which is quickly reset by the staff.

ANGLE - 15 MINUTES LATER - The same table is now hosting Leo and his MGB crew après-ballet. The mood is loud but affable.

However, the overall vibe at the surrounding tables has gone from relaxed and boozy to muted and tense.

RAISA

(Leo's hand on her arm)

So after the festival Leo comes up to me, says, "Miss, if I may, your name, please."

LEO

Raisa looks at me doesn't even blink, says...

RAISA

Lena...

As the MGB men laugh,

FLASH TO - other tables, tense, mute.

LEO

Then all week I'm going crazy until I can see her again, I just want to...

(mocks gnawing her knuckle - laughter)

The time comes for round two, she makes me walk three hours in the park, three. I thought I was back in the army and what do I get for it?

(he turns to Raisa)

RAISA

One kiss...

LEO

One. And, oh, this... "By the way, comrade Demidov..."

RAISA

...my name is Raisa."

ON RAISA, beaming, as the table erupts in a big laugh.

LEO

All week I'm mooning around Lubyanka babbling about this wonderful girl Lena, the next day I'm a head case over this wonderful girl Raisa, everybody's: "Last week Lena, this week Raisa, who's next, Natasha?"

(laughter, as he looks at her lovingly)

No next... Just you.

INT. LEO AND RAISA'S BEDROOM - ONE HOUR LATER

ON RAISA - lying in bed, her face a taut mask, so different from in the restaurant, as she barely listens to -

ANGLE - Leo, draped in a towel as he brushes his teeth in the adjoining bathroom.

LEO

(can see the bed, via the mirror)

Then the little Frenchman says to me,
"Your government tells you fairy tales,
tells you black is white, up is down.
They treat you like children."

FLASH TO Raisa - mask-like, far away. His words falling on deaf ears.

LEO

I told him, "You should have been with us *children* at Stalingrad. You should have been with us *children* when we took Berlin. But then no, you couldn't have been with us, could you. You were too busy surrendering."

(exits the bathroom, stands over her now)

You weren't thinking of going to sleep now, were you?

RAISA

(face reverting to her demure acquiescent expression; her Leo face)

Of course not.

She reaches up for him, as his towel falls away.

1953

SMASHCUT TO:

INT. MOSCOW APARTMENT DOOR

CLOSE ON - A boot - kicking in the door of a veterinary suite/apartment.

Led by Leo, five MGB agents pour in, including Alexei and VASILI (ambitious and edgy, with an "enthusiastic streak").

Panicked domestic animals, both in cages and free, raise an unholy flapping bleating barking ruckus as the agents begin tearing up the joint.

ON LEO - Compared to that buoyant confidant man in the mirror, the 1953 model Leo looks wearier now; as if the last two years have been an endless emotional/spiritual ordeal.

VASILI
Oh Doctor Brod-sky-y, come out, come out...

LEO
He's gone.

VASILI
(yanks a desk away from a wall)
Can't say I didn't tell you, boss.

LEO
I wanted, evidence.

CLOSE ON - A partially burnt letter behind the desk.

VASILI
You want evidence?
(holds up burned paper)
Here's your evidence.
(points to open window)
There's your evidence.
(to the portrait of Stalin)
Like the Big Man says, "First you collect..."

LEO
"...the man, then you collect the evidence." Won't someone please give Vasili his A-plus today?

ON THE OTHER AGENTS' low-key snickering.

ON ALEXEI, winking at his boss/buddy Leo.

ON VASILI, smoldering.

VASILI'S POV - next to Stalin, the equally near-obligatory photo of Leo waving the red flag atop the Reichstag.

He'd like to put his boot through it.

EXT. RURAL KIMOV DISTRICT - 100 MILES FROM MOSCOW - SAME

Hard winter country as seen through the eyes of someone running, the soundtrack, their labored breath.

INT. FARMHOUSE

SEMYON OKUN looks out his kitchen window to his barn.

He sees the barn door... swinging open, lock dangling.

INT. KIMOV - BARN - HOUR LATER

CLOSE ON - BRODSKY (45), asleep on hay, waking, looking up.

REVERSE - The farmer Okun, standing over him; a pitchfork pressed into his chest.

Both frozen in that tableau, their breath coming in clouds.

OKUN
You're running?

BRODSKY
Semyon, please, I had nowhere else to go... Please...

(Okun seems unassuaged,
ready to skewer him.)

By sunup I'm gone, no one will ever
know I was here, no one, I swear.

(Okun is still so close to
killing him he starts
whining like a dog)

Semyon, it's me. For the love of God...

Okun casts aside the pitchfork. Hauls Brodsky to his feet.

OKUN
Anatoly. What the hell did you do?

BRODSKY
I have no idea.

EXT. BARN

Okun closing the door. He steps to the road and using a downed tree branch, obliterates Brodsky's bootprints.

INT. APT. OF ZINA GUBINOVA

Another woman reduced to cowering in her own home.

LEO
(crowding her)
How is it that you're such good friends
with a man that everyone else in the
building mistrusted?

ZINA
What? Who said, that bitch on four? No.
He was a good man.

LEO
"A good man?"
(taking out that terror
pad)
This traitor, you say, was
(writing)
"a good, man."

ZINA
I meant he was considerate with the
noise. He was polite. That's all.
(MORE)

ZINA (contd)
(Leo continues to write her
ticket to the Gulags)
Sometimes I would post his mail for
him. That's all.

LEO
Mail to where...

ZINA
Kimov mostly, to an old colleague from
the medical corps.

LEO
Name?

She looks pleadingly at Leo; If she gives up the name she knows
she's killing the man. Leo detaches the page from his pad;
dangles it.

LEO
(like ice)
Name?

ZINA
(down low)
Okun, Semyon Okun.

Leo crumples her death ticket. Shamed by her desperation to
survive, Zina covers her eyes.

**ON LEO - a flash of moral doubt in his face too; the source of
his weariness.**

INT. KIMOV FARMHOUSE - EVENING

Okun and his WIFE stand by the kitchen window, as their TWO
GIRLS (8,10) eat at the table.

WIFE
Did you kill him?
(Okun is silent)
Then you just killed us all.

SMASHCUT TO:

EXT. RATTLING TRUCK IN RURAL NIGHT STORM - 4:00 AM

INT. TRUCK

Nine MGB agents, freezing and huddled, led by Leo. Alexei takes
a hit from a military-issued packet of methedrine then passes it
around, Leo the last to partake.

VASILI
(flourishing that letter)
Boss, this tells us Kiev. 200 miles the
other way.

LEO
A half-burned letter, address
conveniently still readable. Very cute.
Drive.

VASILI
(studying a map)
Well, in that case this is either Kimov
coming up or a speck of flyshit.

The other agents (except Alexei) laugh, Vasili putting on a
show, but there's something wolfishly dangerous beneath the
laughter.

VASILI
Seriously, all due respect, I'm just
saying, after letting him escape, if
you send us all night in the wrong
direction...

LEO
(Vasili could be right,
but...)
Drive.

MGB AGENT 2
It's freezing back here too.

VASILI
I mean if there's a hearing we'll all
speak up for you no doubt, but...

MGB AGENT 3
Freezing and fucked...

A tentative chorus of semi-mutinous grunts.

EXT. TRUCK SKIDDING TO A HALT IN THE FRIGID NIGHT

Leo jumping out, hauling Vasili and another agent out of the
back and shoving them into his vacated seat by the heater then
jumping in back himself.

INT. TRUCK

LEO
(in the freezing back)
We'll switch off every half hour.

He scans the stony faces of his team, everyone looking at him
like he's already dead meat.

VASILI
(muttering)
Two hundred miles...

EXT. KIMOV - SUNRISE

Primal Russian farmland blanketed in snow.

EXT. OKUN COMPOUND - 15 MIN. LATER

Chimney smoke, everyone still inside.

ANGLE - Copse of trees, 50 yards off. Leo and the others; all carrying AK's or machine-pistols. Another round of meth; everyone partaking.

Leo mimes the deployment; three to the front door, three around the back, Vasili and the two remaining, to the barn.

LEO
(pointedly to Vasili)
We take him, alive. He dies, his
information dies, and we've failed.

ON VASILI, speed-stoned, continuing to bristle.

INT. OKUN HOUSE

BOOM. Leo and the others busting inside, catching the family at breakfast. No one moves.

LEO
Semyon Okun.

OKUN
Yes.

LEO
Anatoly Brodsky. Tell me where he is.

OKUN
Brodsky? In Moscow I think. I haven't
seen...

LEO
Tell me where he is and I'm willing to
forget he ever came here. Your family
will be safe.

Okun stalls, chessing it through. But his wife reflexively looks towards the barn.

LEO'S POV - Barn as seen through the kitchen window. Stillness.

Then from inside we hear the BBRRRPT of an AK.

INT. BARN

Leo bursts in, pistol in hand; sees -

Smoking pile of hay. Vasili having just shot it up. Agents and cows.

VASILI
Not here. Unless he's turned into a
cow.
(edgier and edgier)
Should we interrogate the cows?

LEO'S POV - The forced lock. Grain sacks molded by a human form, laid out over hay.

EXT. BARN

Leo steps outside, sees fleeing boot tracks.

LEO
You three with me.
(to Vasili & others)
Search the house.

EXT. CLOSE ON - LEO - MINUTES LATER

Jogging through the fields, chasing the boot tracks. Behind him are Alexei and 2 other agents; 50 yard gap.

Leo reaches a snowy rise, looks ahead and sees -

BRODSKY, 100 yards ahead, where the field meets the forest. Brodsky just standing there, looking at Leo.

Leo takes out his pistol strides towards his quarry.

Still not fleeing, Brodsky actually gives Leo his back.

ON LEO - What the hell?

LEO'S POV - As he gets closer he finally sees the frozen river between Brodsky and the forest.

LEO
Brodsky, it's over.

Brodsky steps onto the ice.

LEO
(25 yards off)
It won't hold you. You won't reach the woods.

BRODSKY
(mid-river)
I don't want to reach the woods.

Brodsky stomps on the ice and plummets out of sight.

Leo turns to see the other agents just making it over the rise. To them it looks like Brodsky was never here.

VASILI
(pleased)
Where's Brodsky?

In a real jam now, Leo sheds his coat and ventures out on the frozen river, each fragile step cracking like a gunshot. He crawls to the ice hole looks down and sees -

BRODSKY - calmly gazing up at him; unblinking, implacable. Then, Brodsky simply pushes off with the current.

LEO'S POV - Brodsky moving away, waving farewell, as -

Leo, on hands and knees, scrabbling on top of him, both men staring at each other through the skin of ice until -

Brodsky disappears beneath a buildup of snow. Leo brushes away the powder to see - nothing.

Rising to his feet, he takes a breath, closes his eyes and STOMPS on the brittle surface, once, twice, thrice, until...

ALEXEI
(racing down)
No!

WHOOSH - Leo is gone.

A BEAT of the ice covered river; silence, stillness, then -

LEO - shooting back up to the surface like a breeching whale, his meth-whacked eyes wide in shock.

FLASH TO - the agents on this rise; in awe, who among them could/would do that?

Then - REPLUNGING...

FLASH TO - Vasili - cold envy.

ANGLE - Below the ice. LEO in the light green cathedral of water - thrashing about. The further he swims, the darker the water, no Brodsky. Leo starting to panic, until...

CLOSE ON - Leo's hand brushing fabric, a trouser leg.

It's Brodsky, suspended against the bottom of the ice.

With Brodsky in tow, Leo looks for the breach. But the murk has him all turned around until finally he sees, in the distance, those shafts of sunlight stabbing through the gap.

EXT. THE FROZEN RIVER

Leo surfacing, dragging the unconscious Brodsky. He crawls out, hauling Brodsky after him, belly-slithers towards land.

Alexei crouches on the bank, extends a hand.

ANGLE - The snowy bank. Leo, gasping and spasming, Brodsky flat-line motionless. He grabs his own tossed coat and covers Brodsky.

Alexei takes his own coat and drapes it over Leo.

Leo does mouth to mouth. Nothing. Mouth to mouth. Nothing.

ALEXEI'S POV - On the rise the two other MGB men still standing there in astonishment.

Vasili, however, is now dangerously expressionless.

Alexei vigorously waves for them to haul ass.

LEO
(pounding on his chest)
Breathe you fucker!

Brodsky gives up a great spout of water.

ALEXEI
Your coats!

They stand there, still gawking. Alexei rips the coat off one of them, the other shedding voluntarily.

ALEXEI
He dies, it's your necks on the block.
Get wood. NOW.

Alexei drapes a second coat over Leo, lays the other on top of Brodsky.

BRODSKY
(throttled, hoarse)
Save me to kill me... So kind...

One of the agents returns with tree limbs. Alexei begins to build a fire.

ANGLE - The rise - Vasili still standing there impassively. He finally turns and heads back to the farm.

EXT. SNOWFIELD APPROACHING FARMHOUSE - 45 MIN. LATER

Walking back from the river - Brodsky being supported by the agents; Leo staggering forward on his own..

BRODSKY
Understand, these people, they threatened to call the authorities, they wanted nothing to do with me, that's why I had to break into their barn.

LEO
(rattling with cold)
I don't give a rat's ass about your friends..

LEO'S POV - Ahead, the Okun family on their knees in the snow. Vasili standing behind them, his men in front.

A CLOSER LOOK - Father, mother, two girls coatless and shivering, their hands bound behind their backs.

Vasili, his arms folded across his chest, paces behind them.

Leo stops, is about to speak when Vasili unfolds his arms reveals his gun...

BRODSKY

No!

... and fires.

No one moves, the wife and children staring at the body laying before them.

Vasili steps behind the mother.

LEO

Vasili! Lower your gun! That's an order!

VASILI

(enraged by Leo's bravado)
These people are traitors.
(he kills the mother;
Brodsky moans)
We need to make an example.

Brodsky tries to break free. Two agents kick the back of his knees, dropping him.

As if in a heart-pounding trance, Vasili moves behind the older daughter.

LEO

(homicidal growl)
Lower... your weapon.

Vasili finally comes back to Earth. Leo has the drop on him. Vasili knows Leo will most definitely kill him. He casually holsters his gun.

VASILI

Let's hope something's been learned here today. Maybe now these girls will grow up to...

Before he can finish, Leo covers the ground between them and pistol-whips his deputy to his knees.

Staring at the bodies of the senselessly murdered victims, Leo grabs Vasili by the hair, his gun to Vasili's temple.

Vasili closes his eyes. Leo tests the pull on the trigger, almost, almost, Vasili's lips quivering...

ALEXEI

(soft warning)

Leo...

LEO

(snapping out of it)
You'll stay here and wait for the Militsia. You'll explain what's
(MORE)

LEO (contd)
happened and assist them. Then you'll
find your own fucking way back to
Moscow.

(to the others)
Get the girls in the truck.

The girls are unbound and lifted.

Brodsky, wailing inconsolably, is hustled to the truck.

ON VASILI, on his knees, his expression going from terror to
relief before finally morphing into a cold, cold rage.

EXT/INT. THE TRUCK

ON LEO - seated next to the two traumatized farmgirls. Can't
even bring himself to look at them.

He looks down at his own hands. They're shaking.

EXT. ESTAB. SHOT - MOSCOW - SAME

ANGLE - TRAIN TRACKS. A hundred yards down from the station,
JORA (9), places a few nails and a metal spoon on the tracks.

JORA'S POV - Train coming.

He steps back as it roars by in a blur, then returns to collect
the now-flattened objects.

MALE (OS)
Did you ever try that with a kopeck?

Jora looks up, shakes his head.

MALE (OS)
It's best with a kopeck.

We see a man's extended fist opening up to reveal five coins.
Intrigued, Jora rises. (Note: We never see the person OS)

MALE (OS)
I'll show you, OK? But not here.
(hand on Jora's shoulder)
A little further down the line would be
better.

INT. MOSCOW CLASSROOM - SAME

CLOSE ON - FOUR 8-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN, imitating a train, chugging
in lockstep in front of their classmates. Ahead of them a 5th
child stands beneath a blackboard to the side.

CLOSE ON - Raisa, seated behind the teacher's desk. Above her
head is the ubiquitous portrait of Stalin.

RAISA
Should he cross?

CLASS
NO!

The child-train shuffles and chugs past the 6th child.

RAISA
Now should he cross?

CLASS
NO!

RAISA
What does he need to do?

CLASS
LOOK BOTH WAYS!

RAISA
Our leader loves his children and wants
them all to be safe.
(surveying the kids)
And we don't want him to worry for us
when there's so much he needs to do.

INT. SPECTORG - SAME

Small uncrowded shop offering otherwise inaccessible luxury items to the Kremlin crowd, from tropical fruits to prime cuts of meat to imported hosiery and shoes, dresses, bonded scotch and American cigarettes.

Raisa, in her don't-see-me neutral-wear, walks tensely among the other women like a mouse in a roomful of cats. She wants to get what she needs then get the hell out.

RAISA'S POV - VEGETABLE BIN. There's only one head of lettuce that's not browning and wilted. She reaches for it at the same moment as another older woman.

The woman stares at her and Raisa relinquishes her claim.

ON RAISA, moving down the aisle - a quick half-smile to another woman then her face resets itself.

INT. LUBYANKA BASEMENT - A FEW HOURS LATER

CLOSE ON - Brodsky's cell door. Glittery with fever, Leo raps sharply.

A young GUARD opens to show us the room again; but this time it's illuminated by insanely bright lights.

Brodsky, wrists and ankles bound, is sitting on that plush velvety couch, the only furniture in the room.

GUARD
He keeps trying to go to sleep. But me,
I belt him one every time he closes his
eyes. It's the sofa. Have a sit, you
sink right in.

Ignoring the guard, Leo sits next to Brodsky, taking his measure; the man desperately sleep deprived. It takes him a minute to become cognizant of Leo.

BRODSKY
The children. Semyon's daughters...

LEO
They've been placed in an orphanage.
They're safe.

BRODSKY
Safe...
(million dollar question)
Have you ever been to an orphanage?

LEO
That's no concern of yours.

BRODSKY
They'd have a better chance of
surviving if you had left them in the
woods.

Leo succumbs to a brief coughing fit, Brodsky studying him, then...

BRODSKY
You. I know you. The Photo. You're The
Photo.

LEO
Listen to me. You can save yourself
unnecessary suffering by talking to me.
Will you talk to me?

BRODSKY
You have a fever, Photo. You should be
at home. Do you men have homes?

LEO
Cut the shit. Will you talk to me.

BRODSKY
Yes. Of course.

LEO
You'll tell me the truth?

BRODSKY
Absolutely.

LEO
Excellent. Who do you work for.

BRODSKY
Anna Akmatova. Her pug is going blind.
Mattias Rakowski, his terrier won't
eat. Dora Andreyeva. Her cat...

LEO
No. Which officials from the British
Embassy.

BRODSKY
Which what?... A young man comes to see
me. Anderson something. Something
Anderson. His mutt has an abscess. I do
the best I can without antibiotics...
So, that's why...

LEO
And what information did you pass to
him.

BRODSKY
To clean the abscess and redress it
every day.

LEO
I thought we had an agreement.

BRODSKY
We do. And I am honoring it, Photo. I
am a veterinarian. Nothing more.

LEO
Do you know what will happen to you if
you don't talk to me?

BRODSKY
A child knows what will happen to me.

LEO
I hoped this could be avoided.

BRODSKY
You're the enemy here, not me.

The cell door opens. Vasili enters, sporting a head bandage and
accompanied by an individual in a lab coat, XZOSTOV.

Vasili briefly locks eyes with Leo. Another silent confirmation
of their new relationship, then...

VASILI
Did he confess?

LEO
You should have taken my offer.

BRODSKY
Tell me, Photo... Do you really think
I'm a spy?

INT. XZOSTOV'S SURGERY ROOM

Dentist chair bolted to the floor. White walls lined with
cabinets. A tray of surgical instruments.

Brodsky is strapped into the chair by guards.

XZOSTOV
(filling a syringe with a
thick yellow sera)
Gag...

Vasili lights a cigarette.

XZOSTOV
(disgusted)
Please.

Vasili stubs it out.

Leo is physically deteriorating by the minute. Brodsky stares at him, entreating, condemnatory, as camphor oil is plunged into a vein.

XZOSTOV
A little more...
(Brodsky foaming)
Wait, wait...

He injects the rest.

ON VASILI - fascinated.

ON LEO - gripping the corner of a steel table for balance.

The shakes begin to peter out. Brodsky becomes comatose.

XZOSTOV
Voila...
(the bit is removed)
Ask your questions.

LEO
What the hell can he say like this?

XZOSTOV
Give it a shot.

LEO
Who are you working with?

Brodsky's mouth opens, his tongue flopping out like a sock.

XZOSTOV
Try again.

LEO
Who are you working with?

Brodsky's eyes roll up in his head.

XZOSTOV
Start with something simple.

LEO
Hell no.

Leo can barely stand now, his forehead shining with sweat.

VASILI
What is your name.

BRODSKY
Anata... Anat...

VASILI
Who are you working for.
(no response)
Who are you working for.
(no response)
Who are you...
(to Xzostov)
This is useless.

BRODSKY
Arkad Mas... Mat Rakowsk...
(Vasili writing)
Dor Andreye...

VASILI
Recognize these names?

LEO
Yes.
(knees buckling)
Rakowski... His dog won't eat...
(beat)
Excuse me...

Leo leaves the room. Vasili coolly stares after him.

EXT. MOSCOW RAILYARD - SAME

A forager is singing to himself as he trolls the cinderpath sidings with a stick and a sack. Behind him in the distance we see the train station.

He picks up a rusted railspike, walks on, stoops to pick up a butt, then... Sees something, half in the grass; what...

Forgetting the cigarette, he comes closer; then freezes.

BLURRY FLASH of a young male body; Jora (the child we saw on the tracks earlier), half covered in pine needles and snow.

BACK TO - Forager, initially aghast, then, having lived through the Famine, the War, he simply straightens up, his face drawn in pity.

INT. LEO'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN

Raisa is chopping vegetables. Next to her on the drainboard is a bowl of washed tropical fruit, another major luxury.

Above the dining table, Stalin, in his picture frame, sees all.

Leo, in uniform, comes up behind her and kisses her neck.

RAISA
(softly but without
turning)
You feel hot.

Leo turns her around. Raisa, knife still in hand, slides without resistance into his embrace.

LEO
Just for a minute. Lay down with me...

Then taking her hand, he turns to the bedroom, gently pulling her along, Raisa laying the knife on a table right outside the door.

INT. BEDROOM - 15 MINUTES LATER

Still in uniform, Leo spoons her, his face in her hair. Above their heads, Leo's iconic photo is framed and hung.

LEO
(exhausted whisper)
Just for a minute... One minute...

Leo falls asleep. Raisa laying there with that tense alert detachment we've seen before, the arm of Leo's MGB tunic coiled around her like a snake.

INT. BEDROOM - THREE HOURS LATER

They're both asleep now, Leo rasping with pulmonary distress.

(OS) - An abrupt RAPPING at the door. Raisa bolts upright, her face ghost-white with alarm.

LEO
I'll get it...

ANGLE - Apartment door. Coughing, Leo opens to a young MGB agent. We can't hear what it is being said.

ANGLE - Bedroom. Leo returns. Still sick and exhausted, he puts his uniform back on and without a word to Raisa, exits.

A moment later we hear (OS) the front door closing, Raisa laying there wide-awake.

INT. MOSCOW MORGUE - 2:00 AM

Leo walking down a long corridor at the end of which he sees -

LEO'S POV - a covered gurney, behind which an attendant and Major Kuzmin stand expressionlessly as they watch Leo coming on.

LEO
I'm sorry, I got here as fast...

The attendant pulls off the sheet to reveal young Jora lying on his stomach. We sense the savagery done to him through Leo's wincing reaction.

CLOSE ON - Water, spilling from the boy's parted lips.

ON LEO - jarred by that.

The morgue attendant turns the body on its back; more savagery.

Leo sees the face now.

LEO

Jora...

KUZMIN

I'm guessing a train.

LEO

(sharply)

A train with a knife?

Kuzmin starts almost violently in response to Leo's raw near-mutinous tone.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE THE AUTOPSY ROOM - 10 MINUTES LATER

Kuzmin and Leo; Kuzmin furious, in mid-speech.

KUZMIN

(low hiss)

You know what has to be done.

LEO

(drained, pained)

Major...

KUZMIN

And who better than you.

LEO

But...

KUZMIN

(handing him a file)

And who, better than you...

LEO

(with an edge)

Yes. Right. Who better than me.

Leo walks off, Kuzmin giving him a darkly assessing look.

EXT. CITY OF CEMENT - 1 HOUR LATER - DAWN

Leo walking through the weave of high-rises.

INT. HALLWAY

Leo knocking. Alexei opens up. He wears the same MGB tunic as Leo, but his is unbuttoned, unironed. The father of Jora, he looks insane with grief. They embrace.

LEO

Alexei...

LEO'S POV, over Alexei's shoulder - A small parlor packed with Andreyevs.

LEO

Can we talk alone?

ALEXEI

Please, this is my family.

INT. PARLOR

Alexei's MOTHER, WIFE, brother, sister, brother-in-law. Everyone seated except Leo and Alexei.

LEO

I remember coming here to congratulate you on the birth of... And now... It's, it's unimaginable...

(then an ominous shift in tone; formal, stagey)

And, maybe I'd feel the need to blame someone too... But I'm here to reassure you that the cause of Jora's death is not in dispute. I brought the report for you to look over yourself.

ALEXEI

Leo, no. My son, he was murdered.

The room rocks with murmured grief and anger.

LEO

Your son was caught by a passing train. It was an accident, a terrible accident.

ALEXEI

No, Leo, please, I spoke to the man who found him. His body was slashed. He was, he was naked.

ALEXEI'S WIFE

A train doesn't undress a boy!

LEO

Undressed?

(frowning at the report)

No. We have the man's signed words here. He said he was clothed.

ALEXEI'S WIFE
Why would a report even bother to
mention that he was clothed?

ALEXEI'S MOTHER
Because the report is *shit*.

Leo appraises the old woman for a moment, then looks at the report again.

LEO
And as far as the injuries to the torso, the coroner said that was from being dragged along the tracks.

ALEXEI
No no no, Leo, listen to me. There's a witness. A woman, her windows overlook the tracks, she saw Jora with a man last night. She heard about the murder and found us. She can identify him. We need to open an investigation.

LEO
You're not listening to me.

ALEXEI
Have you at least seen his body?

LEO
(unblinking)
There was no murder.

ALEXEI'S WIFE
No! Of course not! Murder is a western disease! No murder here! All crime!
Only in the west! Why?
(pointing to Stalin on the wall)
Because he says so!

Leo regards her in that chillingly calm way of his, then taking Alexei by the arm, ushers him into the hallway.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE THE APARTMENT

ALEXEI
My wife, you have to understand...

LEO
(opens the door, offering Alexei the sight of his surviving family)
...do you want your terrible loss to breed an even greater one. Do you understand what I'm telling you?

ALEXEI
(grabbing Leo)
You talk like this to me? After what
we've been through together?

LEO
(door still open to the
family)
Do you understand, what I'm telling
you.

There's no 'give' anymore in Leo's eyes, no compromise.
Defeated, Alexei bows his head.

ALEXEI
The witness, she's on her way here.
Should I send her away?

INT. ALEXEI'S PARLOR - HOUR LATER

The witness enters, looks at the family, her face soft with
pity, then she sees...

Leo, in full regalia, and she starts to tremble.

LEO
My name is Leo Demidov. I'm in charge
for the moment.
(takes out that pad)
Your name please?

WITNESS
(eyes on that pad.)
Galina Shaporina.

LEO
And you saw something. What did you
see.

WITNESS
See? A man. For a moment. It was
nothing.

LEO
A man with a young boy?

GALINA
No. No boy. A bag of tools, he was a
worker on the tracks, working on the
tracks. It was a bag of tools.

LEO
(shutting the pad)
Thank you.

ALEXEI'S WIFE
(grabs Galina's wrist)
You saw him with my son! Tell him!

GALINA
(polite, terrorized)
Will you be needing to ask me more
questions later?

LEO
(after a power beat)
You can go.

As Galina reaches for the door, Alexei's mother spits in her path. Leo looks at Alexei. Alexei hangs his head; it's over.

INT. HALLWAY - 15 MINUTES LATER

Leo finally exiting the apartment. His fearsome calm crumbles instantly. He looks ten years older. Morally ill.

Coughing wetly, he heads for the stairs.

EXT. DEMIDOV APT. HOUSE - 30 MINUTES LATER

Leo walks shakily from his car to his building, gets nearly there... then collapses.

ON LEO, as we hear -

VOICES (OS)
Is he dead? What should we do? He's
MGB. Don't get involved. He's MGB. Help
him. Are you crazy? They'll blame us.
INT. DEMIDOV BEDROOM

CLOSE ON - Raisa, on the edge of the bed, expressionless as she applies a damp cloth to Leo's forehead, Leo near-comatose and wheezing like a bellows.

There's a knock.

INT. APARTMENT DOOR

Raisa opens to a portly sweating man.

ZARUBIN
I'm Doctor Moiseyev Zarubin. I've been
sent by...

RAISA
Do you have identification?

ANGLE - Zarubin quietly admiring Raisa's figure as he follows Raisa her through the dim apartment.

INT. BEDROOM

Zarubin examining Leo, barely responsive. Raisa stands in a far corner, her arms over her chest.

ZARUBIN
He's no orchid, he'll live.

RAISA
He won't eat.

ZARUBIN
It's the fever. Or the
methphetamines. Do you know anything
about that?

RAISA
If it's anything to do with his work I
know nothing.

ZARUBIN
(prepares a spoonful)
Come here.
(Raisa approaches warily)
Lift his head.

RAISA
What is that.

ZARUBIN
It's a tonic to help him sleep.

RAISA
That's all he does, sleep.

ZARUBIN
Madame please. Lift his head.
(she does, down the hatch,
then...)
May I have some tea?

INT. KITCHEN - SMALL CRAMPED

Zarubin checking Raisa out as she reaches up for a jam jar.

RAISA
Would you like sugar too?

ZARUBIN
Yes, please.

RAISA
(with jam and knife)
Will my husband be alright?

ZARUBIN
He has pneumonia from his little dip in
the river and I would be prepared to
say that...

RAISA
Prepared...

ZARUBIN
To say that he was genuinely sick.

RAISA
But he is. Any fool can see...

ZARUBIN

(moves in)

But I'm the one who decides whether he's ill or just trying to avoid work for reasons unknown to me. And I could recommend that he be investigated.

(closer)

A few minutes is hardly a high price to pay for the life of your husband.

RAISA

(with terrible heat)

Do you have any idea who my husband *is*? What he can *do*? To *you*, to your family?

ZARUBIN

The suspicion is already there. All it needs, is a little push.

RAISA

(frightened)

Major Kuzmin is a good friend of ours.

ZARUBIN

(hand moves to her hip)

Only children believe in friends...

Raisa quickly steps back out of his reach and with a trembling hand points the knife at his heart.

RAISA

(very frightened)

I want, another, doctor.

Zarubin shrugs (win some, lose some), collects his bag, and smiling back at her, exits.

Raisa stands there, shaking like a leaf.

EXT. LUBYANKA SQUARE - 3 DAYS LATER

Leo, still wobbly, returning to work.

He stops and glances up at the statue of Felix Dzerzhinsky, the founder of the Checka, the MGB's antecedent; Dzerzhinsky's bronze profile scudding through the clouds.

INT. MAJOR KUZMINS OFFICE

Kuzmin behind his desk, Leo standing.

KUZMIN

Feeling better?

LEO

Yes, thank you

KUZMIN

I was concerned. It's the first time you've been ill. I checked the records.

LEO
I apologize.

KUZMIN
Please, we're just flesh and blood. And you did us a great service by talking to the Andreyevs. One day Alexei will thank you.

Still sick about what he did, Leo simply nods. Kuzmin studies him with that mixture of paternal concern and something colder.

KUZMIN
By the way, Brodsky? Full confession.

LEO
Yes? Where is he now?

Kuzmin looks at him... and...

FLASHCUT TO:

INT. LUBYANKA BASEMENT

Brodsky is being race-walked down a long corridor by two uniforms. The walls are timbered to absorb bullets, the floor canted for the running of blood.

One of the uniforms smoothly produces a gun, and without breaking stride, raises it to the back of Brodsky's head.

WHITEOUT:

Leo nods.

KUZMIN
(handing him an envelope)
He gave us seven names. Six went to others. This one's yours. We don't have much, as you'll see, so you're to collect further information, and if Brodsky was telling the truth, if this individual is a traitor...

ON LEO - as he opens the envelope. Some documents...

And then the surveillance photos... Of Raisa...

KUZMIN
(studying him)
Any questions?

LEO
(stunned)
What? No, this can't... This...

KUZMIN
(deadly dark)
Yes?

INT. LUBYANKA STORAGE ROOM - SAME

Miles of shelves filled with the clothes of victims; the recycling bin from hell. Leo is selecting his stakeout wardrobe...

EXT/INT. VESTIBULE OF A BUILDING DIRECTLY ACROSS THE STREET

Leo in his stake-out clothes taking up his post. He checks the time, then unscrews the bulb over his head.

INT/EXT. SCHOOL - YARD

Raisa among the students at the end of the school day. As she passes a door marked 'Library' another teacher, IVAN SUKOV, (handsome, bearded, 40s) exits, falls in step with her.

ANGLE - Leo watching, but unable to hear.

IVAN

You know if reading were an Olympic event, maybe they'd give me more than a goddamned broom closet. What do you think?

RAISA

(fighting down a smile)

Sssh.

IVAN

Sssh.

RAISA

Did you bring it?

IVAN

Are you crazy?

There's a sudden commotion at the school door entrance leading into the yard and it's coming their way.

A female teacher, Zoya, is being escorted from the school by 2 MGB agents, everyone in their path quickly stepping aside as if she's contagious.

As she comes abreast of Raisa and Ivan she looks to them beseechingly, her eyes watery with terror.

RAISA

Zoya?

IVAN

Those bloody...

(barking)

Hey...

He moves to intercept them, then...

CLOSE ON - RAISA, grabbing his wrist, pulling him back, saving his life. They look at each other, Ivan furious, Raisa frightened but in survivors mode.

ANGLE - Leo watching this.

RAISA
Why Zoya?

IVAN
Why? Because she couldn't keep her goddamn opinions to herself, that's why... How many times did you tell me that about her. Why Zoya...
(pacing now)
But do you really want to know "Why Zoya"? Because it was her turn, that's why...

RAISA
(panicking)
We should go our separate ways.

As she starts to walk off...

IVAN
I thought you were made of sterner stuff.

ANGLE - Leo frustrated; watching, but unable to hear.

EXT/INT. VESTIBULE ACROSS THE STREET - LEO'S POV

Raisa and Ivan leaving school together, deep in conversation.

Leo waits a beat, the streets are too empty, then follows.

(**In this surveillance sequence, Raisa seems totally transformed; easy and animated, engaged and full of life; as if she and Ivan were lovers, and this never-seen-before radiant version of his wife is not lost on Leo; is splitting his skull; this go-through-the-motions shadowing of Raisa bringing true revelation to his eyes; one much more shattering than any threat to the security of the state.**)

ANGLE - Raisa and Ivan walking, Leo a half block behind. They turn onto Avtozavodskaya Street, milling and busy.

ANGLE - Avtozavodskaya Street. Using the crowd as cover, Leo gets closer to his quarry.

ANGLE - METRO STATION ENTRANCE - Bottlenecked mob entering from the street, Raisa, Ivan, and, further back, Leo - filing in.

INT. METRO STATION

Opulent, marble domed. It's a commuter madhouse; a sea of hats.

ON LEO - he's lost them already. He races back up the stairs to get a bird's-eye view.

Sees them queing up for the down escalator, almost there.

Leo plunges back into the crowd, bulling his way to the front of the escalator line.

JOSTLED COMMUTER
Who the hell do you think...

Leo flashes his State Security card and the guy reacts as if scalded.

LEO'S POV - As he descends the escalator - below him, a sea of downdrifting hats. Where are they? Then only five steps below him - Raisa and Ivan. Raisa turns her head back and up to Ivan, Leo in her sightlines.

Leo quickly slides behind another body.

INT. TRAIN PLATFORM

CLOSE ON - LEO, working his way through, using his grip on people to launch himself forward.

LEO'S POV - standing a further ten away, A MAN reads Pravda.

We see, in Leo's eyes, a recognition; and we can tell, by Leo's reaction that this innocuous guy is also an MGB agent. Leo looks from the man to Raisa and back, his face registering confusion - what, or who, is he here for?

The train pulls in. And as the mob surges for the open doors Leo hesitates, watches Raisa and Ivan go into one car, then -

Leo gets into the adjacent car.

LEO'S POV - the second agent entering his car, not Raisa's.

ON LEO - He's the one being followed.

LEO'S POV - through the adjoining windows, Raisa and Ivan next car over (Ivan with his hand familiarly on Raisa's shoulder). Second agent - ignoring/watching Leo.

Train pulls into Kuzminki Station.

LEO'S POV - Raisa and Ivan getting off.

LEO'S POV - Second agent, watching/ignoring Leo.

Leo torn, follow or stay? He stays on, acts as if he's still watching Raisa in the adjoining car, still on the case.

LEO'S POV - on the Kuzminki platform, directly behind the second agents window, Ivan and Raisa linger (Raisa bright-eyed, touching his arm as she talks into his eyes). All this guy has to do is turn his head to see them disembarked and the gig is up.

ON LEO - sweating, staring off, willing them gone.

But they just stand there talking animatedly, and the fucking train is not leaving the station. Then Ivan suddenly laughs so loudly that the agent turns his head to the platform.

LEO'S POV - the second agent turning to look - just as a group of uniformed Young Pioneers walking on the platform block Raisa and Ivan from his view

Then the train finally, mercifully, pulls away.

ON LEO - blank-faced but sweating.

The train goes into a tunnel, the car lights go out, stay out until the next station.

INT/EXT. TRAIN

pulling into the *Belyayev Station*.

INT. CAR

SECOND AGENT'S POV - as the lights go on. Leo is gone.

The second agent jumps up scans the car, no Leo, then looks into the next car - no Raisa no Ivan. You blew it, dunsky.

He steps out onto the platform and freaked, plunges into the crowd heading to the street.

ON LEO - slipping back into the train car.

The train leaves the *Belyayev Station* without the second agent, Leo's troubled face visible through the moving window.

INT. LEO AND RAISA'S APARTMENT - TWILIGHT

Raisa entering. She turns on the light and sees Leo sitting in the parlor.

RAISA

Jesus!

LEO

(with Herculean restraint)
You're coming from work?

RAISA

(faltering, then...)
I had a doctor's appointment on
Kuzminki Prospekt.

LEO

What doctor?

RAISA

Maslov.

LEO
Maslov. Where's his office again?

RAISA
I said. Kuzminki Prospekt... Do you want to write it down?

LEO
Why would I do that?

RAISA
Why are you wearing those clothes?

LEO
I borrowed them from work.

RAISA
There's blood on them.

LEO
I'll change. You took the train there?

RAISA
What? Yes. How else would...

LEO
By yourself?

RAISA
With a colleague from school, Ivan Sukov, that's his stop. Why are you asking...

Leo raises his hand to cut her off then closes his eyes in relief, inhales her apparent honesty.

RAISA
Leo?

LEO
(softer)
So the doctor, is everything OK?

Raisa doesn't respond. Is suddenly shaky. Teary.

LEO
(alarmed)
Raisa, what's...

RAISA
I'm pregnant.

LEO
What? No, no... How can that... They told us...

RAISA
What can I say? They were wrong.

She tries to cop a happy flip attitude but her face keeps crumpling through her smiles.

LEO
(rising)
I don't... This is... Yes?
(he fervently embraces her)

ON LEO - his face over her shoulder darkening again as he remembers his Kafkaesque assignment.

INT. SHABBIER APARTMENT - 9:00 PM

ON LEO, seated on a low ottoman, looking up searchingly at someone in a larger chair.

Half-hidden in the shadows is a middle-aged woman and two teenaged boys.

LEO
Nana [father], how can I save her.

MALE (OS)
You can't, Leo. All any of us can ever do is try to save ourselves.

REVERSE - It's Tortoise, Leo's de facto War Father.

TORTOISE
If I could take it off you and onto myself I would... But this I know. If you don't dance their dance, it's not just the two of you that are done for. They'll come after everyone you love.
(re: his wife and boys)
It's not even math, Leo. It's arithmetic.

INT. BEDROOM - WEE HOURS

Leo staring at the ceiling, one hand on her hip; Raisa on her side, staring off too.

EXT. BUS STOP - MORNING

Raisa standing with Leo. Her bus pulls up. Raisa starts to get on. Leo desperately grabs her hand. She's startled and a little frightened by his intensity. He kisses her.

LEO'S POV - over Raisa's shoulder he sees Vasili, Alexei and two others sitting in an MGB car, watching them.

A fifth MGB agent materializes and boards Raisa's bus.

Leo knows what's expected of him. He turns back to his building.

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT - MOMENT LATER

Leo re-enters. Rolls up his sleeves.

VARIOUS ANGLES - Leo methodically searching and dismantling his home.

Going through drawers, palming all undersurfaces, upending the dresser.

Upending his mattress, feeling for hidden pouches, slits...

Testing his walls for hollowness.

Dismantling the picture frames (including Uncle Joe and the Great Photo).

Dismantling the plumbing.

Unscrewing floorboards...

INT. APARTMENT - 2 HOURS LATER

The place has been completely taken apart. Sweaty and brooding, Leo is washing his hands. There's a knock at the door.

LEO'S POV - through the peephole - Vasili's face, the others behind him.

VASILI
C'mon, Boss, it's cold.

Leo reluctantly opens up; Vasili, knowing the tide has turned, chirpily barging in followed by the others.

VASILI
Kuzmin sent us. We're here to help.

LEO
That's not necessary.

VASILI
(ogling the apartment)
Very nice. I mean it. Wow.
(heading to the bedroom)
So. You find anything?

As Alexei and the 2 others begin re-tossing the parlor and kitchen, Leo walks into his bedroom to see Vasili upending the mattress again, a springblade in his free hand.

Leo grips his wrist as if to break it.

LEO
There's a way to feel. You don't have to...

VASILI
Still think she's innocent?
(drops dozens of photos of
Raisa and Ivan on the bed;
none of which were taken
yesterday)
She's a traitor to you and the state.

Vasili moves to the closet, begins tossing clothes, having a ball.

LEO
(rocked)
They're colleagues...

VASILI
Colleagues. Is that what they call it these days?

LEO
(murderous)
Be very careful what you say to me.

VASILI
Oh sure.
(opens Raisa's drawers)
May I? Come on Boss, turn the old girl in, we'll go out and get hammered, by the end of the night we'll all have new women.

As he starts to go through her delicates Leo finally makes a move for him but Alexei hauls him out of the bedroom. Alexei looks at him; i.e; save yourself.

EXT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - 4:00 PM

CLOSE ON -

IVAN
(walking backwards)
Gentlemen, please, she teaches domestic arts...

GO WIDE to see him facing two dark-suited MGB, another wretched teacher sandwiched between them. Students and teachers, both transfixed and averting their eyes, line the hall.

IVAN
...sewing, for god's sake, what could she have possibly...

One of the MGB agents stops, stares at Ivan expressionlessly for a beat, produces a book, St. Augustine's *City of God*, and takes a moment to patiently show it to him before abruptly SLAMMING him in the face with it.

Then the agents and their prisoner exit the front door, dissolving into the sunlight.

Ivan stands there, trying to tamp the blood that streams from his nose.

ON RAISA - fixated on Ivan, his courage.

EXT/INT. DEMIDOV APARTMENT HOUSE - 30 MINUTES LATER

Raisa approaching the building. Leo materializes, grabs her elbow and hustles her into the lobby, then into the elevator.

RAISA

Leo, what are you...

The door opens onto their floor, Leo grabbing her elbow again and hustling her into...

INT. APARTMENT

Leo nearly bursting the door apart, bumrushing her over to the kitchen table.

RAISA

Leo! Stop...

Leo removes the surveillance photos of her and Ivan from inside his jacket and slams them down for her perusal.

RAISA

(breathless)

He's been denounced?

LEO

Him? No. You? Yes.

(Raisa is speechless)

Don't you want to know by who?

RAISA

(dully accepting her doom)

Does it matter?

LEO

Is it his?

RAISA

Is what his...

LEO

(bellowing)

IS... IT... HIS!

RAISA

No.

(Leo rears back as if to hit her)

NO!

LEO

Are you a spy?

RAISA

Are you my husband?

LEO

Are you a spy?

RAISA

(dully)
You're MGB. You tell me.

Leo clutches his head then SWEEPS the photos to the floor.

LEO

Do you know what my choices are?

RAISA

(dully)
I can imagine.

LEO

Anatoly Brodsky.

RAISA

Who is that.

LEO

The one who denounced you.

(beat)

Are you a spy?

This time Raisa just laughs at the ghastly stupidity of it all.

LEO

Then that's what I'll tell them.

RAISA

(echoing Alexei)
No, it's too late. Save yourself.

Leo turns away from her and starts gathering up the photos.

Raisa watches him her eyes filled with bitterness and despair.

INT. MGB HEARING ROOM - NEXT DAY

CLOSE ON - LEO sitting in full uniform as if lost in thought.

GO WIDE to see that we're at Leo's deposition. He's seated alone in a large near-barren room, facing Major Kuzmin and two other officers.

KUZMIN

Leo. Today, please. Tell us what you've found.

Leo slowly rises; adjusts the jacket of his uniform.

LEO

What I found? I found nothing... Raisa Demidov, is innocent.

ON KUZMIN - the face of doom.

ON LEO - This didn't save Raisa; and it's the end for him too.

INT. LEO AND RAISA'S APARTMENT - THAT EVENING

They sit across from each other at the dinner table. There's an air of grinding anticipation.

Leo reaches for the bottle of vodka, begins to pour, then... He rises, heads to a cabinet and brings back an unopened bottle of the premium stuff, cracks the seal.

RAISA

I thought you were saving that for a special occasion.

Leo looks at her, i.e.; this could be their last drink ever... and between their glasses, pours out half the bottle.

INT. LEO AND RAISA'S BEDROOM - 3:00 AM

Leo holding her, desperately speed-whispering as if this is their last second on earth...

LEO

Listen to me... I am who I am and they know that. We get through this night and it's over. We get through this night and
(touching her belly)
the three of us...

BOOM - The door flying open, flashlights blinding them. There are 3; half-drunk, dead-eyed and armed.

Leo is instantly alert; from being on the other end of this countless times, he knows how to play it; Steady Eddie; head down, hands dangling at his sides; submissive, obedient.

Raisa in her nightgown rises, terrorized but taking her cue from her husband.

MGB 1 leaves the room, returns with two small cases.

MGB 1

This is all you can take. You carry nothing on your person except your clothes and your papers. We leave in one hour.

LEO

(low, to Raisa)

Wear as much as you can. And take our best shoes, one pair each.

As Raisa begins to undress, 2 of the guards smoke and stare.

LEO

All due respect, can you wait outside?

MGB 2

The answer to everything is no.

ON LEO - biting the bullet, intent on their survival.

He packs the required Political Books, (they're watching), scant clothes, then removes his beloved iconic photo from the wall, stares at it, puts it in the case...

Then, in a final moment of rude awakening, takes it out of the case, returns it to the wall.

EXT/INT. CAR - 15 MIN. LATER - 4:00 AM

Leo and Raisa being hustled inside, the car peeling out.

INT. CAR - 10 MIN. LATER

LEO'S POV - They're bypassing the train station.

ON LEO - That is very bad news. A whole 'nother ball of wax.

EXT. CAR - 10 MIN LATER

Pulling up behind Lubyanka, Leo and Raisa hustled out. Raisa is frightened, but Leo truly knows what's to happen.

As they're rushed through a rear door...

LEO

Listen to me. Call Major Kuzmin. I'm the one.

INT. LONG BASEMENT CORRIDOR IN LUBYANKA

This is the killing floor where we briefly witnessed Brodsky's execution.

LEO'S POV - timbered walls, canted floor, only a few hundred feet but they'll never make it to the other end.

LEO

I'm the one.

The walk begins.

RAISA'S POV - the bullet pocked half-timber walls; the blood sticky floor slanted to the guttered edges.

She gets it.

LEO

Get Kuzmin...

(they walk)

Let her go...

(walk; Raisa softly weeping now)

LEO'S POV - The end of the corridor, 20 yards ahead.

LEO

Let...

The SNICK of a cocked pistol from behind them. Raisa moans in terror; any second now...

LEO
For the love of God, she's pregnant,
you son of a bitch!

And then, and then... Nothing. They're at the end of the gauntlet, unscathed.

Directly in front of them a door opens. And there's Vasili.

VASILI
I thought you'd like to see the place
one last time.
(beat)
I'm sentimental like that.

Leo, drenched in sweat, tries to mask the murder in his eyes. Raisa collapses.

INT. DEPARTURE HALL - 5:00 AM

Leo and Raisa with their paltry luggage hemmed in by Vasili and their guards in the already crowded train station. The regular commuters intuitively give them a wide berth.

LEO'S POV - Various trains. He keys in on a track with *Red Cattle Cars*, viscerally distinct from all the others; the doomed being herded on board for the Gulags.

VASILI
Regrettably that's not your track. It's too much of a personal embarrassment for Major Kuzmin to send his, his bright shining protege straight to the camps, so for now, for now... you're going to Voualsk, which, from what I've been told, is pretty much the asshole of the earth, and join the Militsia.

LEO
(carefully)
I'll do my duty wherever I'm needed.

VASILI
(to Raisa)
You hear that? What a patriot. A true son of the revolution. You must be so proud.

RAISA
(carefully)
Yes.

VASILI
"Yes," she says. "Yes".... You know, all he had to do was denounce you and in a year the whole building would be kissing his ass. Me personally? I'd've
(MORE)

VASILI (contd)
 had you shot and gone for the promotion. Or at least have kept that nice apartment.
 (clucking)
 Throwing it all away...

Their train arrives. Vasili hands Leo their travel papers, then pulls him close enough to whisper.

VASILI
 (hateful heat)
 This dance is a two-step, you know that, yes? And once your star dims out in the sticks? I promise, you'll never even get to see the inside of a camp. Neither of you.
 (then sighing, to Raisa)
 All I can suppose is that you must be some wild fuck.

INT/EXT. TRAIN TO VOUALSK

(**In this and future Raisa scenes, gone is the demure MGB wife as we witness her evolve into someone more outspoken, her intelligence [which she's always kept hidden to avoid notice] now coming to the fore - but also in letting herself BE herself we can see her beauty more clearly - the marriage of personality and smarts in an already striking woman**)

Leo and Raisa in cramped quarters, riding in silence until...

RAISA
 You know, they assigned me so many children this year, too many, but when they raised their hands I didn't like just pointing and saying "you in the back" so I memorized all their names. I was so proud of myself. But then they all stopped raising their hands. Do you know why? Because it frightened them. If I can remember your name I can denounce you... So I went back to just pointing... We all did that in school.
 (withering)
 Defeaters of fascism... Poor Zoya...

LEO
 You never talked like this before.

RAISA
 I was too afraid.

LEO
 Of me? We are on this train together because I didn't give you up.

RAISA
 Then you're a fool. It was a test of blind obedience. That's what wives are for.

LEO
(stunned by her tone)
But you're my wife. I was hoping...

RAISA
Leo. All the suffering you've caused...
Can you be this naive?

ON LEO - rocked into silence.

INT/EXT. TRAIN - LATE AFTERNOON

Leo and Raisa looking out the window at...

A massive Volga assembly plant - belching chimneys, steel presses, black smoke; an ugly industrial fist smashed down into the Ural pine forests; the actual town itself attached to one side of the complex like a tick on a dog.

EXT. VOUALSK STATION

Leo and Raisa, with their two cases, on the deserted platform. They look bewildered; like refugees.

EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF THE STATION

Leo and Raisa facing a parked Volga; two men in front. The front seat passenger rolls down his window. Leo and Raisa approach.

GENERAL NESTEROV
(squat, burly, 40's)
Get in.

INT/EXT. DRIVING

Leo and Raisa in back, gawking at the smashed landscape.

NESTEROV
(via rearview)
I was told only three days ago that you were coming. It's unusual because I made no request for additional men... And I'm a little confused about the orders. They said you were to be a *uchastkovy*, which is a significant demotion for a man of your, stature.

LEO
We go where we're needed. I leave my rank in your hands.

Nesterov doesn't like this non-answer but is too smart to push.

The car pulls up to BASUROV'S INN, a sodden dump.

NESTEROV
Once an apartment is found you'll be assigned but there's a very long waiting list.
(nodding to Basurov's)
(MORE)

NESTEROV (contd)
There's no advantages to being a
Militisioner... You start tomorrow.

INT. BASUROV'S INN

Leo and Raisa enter the filthy main room.

BASUROV
(bearish, slovenly)
We're not open.

LEO'S POV - His iconic Photo, hung behind the counter, as if to mock him.

LEO
My name is Demidov. General Nesterov...

BASUROV
Oh you. Upstairs.

INT. THEIR ROOM

A portrait of Stalin hanging over a saddlebacked bed, toothpick-rickety dresser, grease-bubbled wallpaper. A filmy window overlooks the blighted landscape.

BASUROV
Where the hell am I supposed to park
the girls now...
(exiting)
You're costing me money.

In a suffocating panic, Raisa tries to open the sole window; can't; it's nailed shut.

LEO
(re; the nailed window)
Only one way out means one less man for surveillance.

An unseen train roars by rattling the walls. Raisa curls on her side, her back to Leo.

After the roar passes she remains in that posture, her hands still clapped to her ears.

Leo attempts to rest a reassuring hand on her belly. But the minute he does she rolls away from his touch.

ON RAISA - jumping out of her skin as the door slams like a gunshot.

INT. BASUROV'S INN - ONE HOUR LATER

Leo, downstairs, his career and his marriage both bloody frauds, throwing back shot after shot.

PAN of the room - Raucous Red Army soldiers, Volga factory workers, Local Militsia and part-time whores, most everybody, how do we say in English, fucked up.

The Militsia eye him with wary hostility.

Leo eyes The Photo behind the bar, throws back another shot.

EXT. VOUALSK - NIGHT

Leo walking through the town. He's drunker still, disheveled, indistinguishable from every other man.

A group of three young louts bump into him, then walk on.

INT. BASUROV'S RESTAURANT - HOUR LATER

Drunken, smoky, crowded. Hookers and potential customers drinking at separate tables. Raisa sits alone, cupping a mug and staring at air.

FACTORY WORKER(OS)

You.

(she looks up. A giant)

How much.

Suddenly the guy levitates, someone having grabbed him by the back of his pants and the nape of his neck. Flailing, he turns into a sharp practiced blow to the kidney - Leo, drunk as he is, bringing him to his knees.

RAISA

Leo...

LEO

(hoarsely, fists in knots)

What have you done to me...

RAISA

(rising, in equal fury)

To you?

It looks like any second they're going to go for each other's throats; the room silent now, everybody wanting to see blood.

ANGLE - Table. Raisa's hand behind her back, scrabbling for a weapon.

LEO

(aware of the audience,
with great effort)

Would you please come upstairs with me
now? Please?

Raisa still looks ready to rumble, fuck these drunks.

LEO

(murderously polite)

Please...

INT. DEMIDOV ROOM - 5 MINUTES LATER

CLOSE ON - a glass smashing into a wall.

GO WIDE to see Leo and Raisa having a close quarters knockdown dragout, Leo only trying to overwhelm her rather than hurt her, but Raisa is going buckwild, every suppressed fearful day of her life with Leo, every held breath exploding out of her now - if she were stronger, Leo's life would be in danger.

Bleeding from a cut on his temple, Leo pins her against a wall, their faces inches apart, his hand clutching her jaw. And then, and then, instead of smacking her, he tries to kiss her, Raisa thrashing to fend him off until he forces his mouth onto hers then forces her to move with him to the bed.

Now Raisa is just laying there, looking off dead-eyed. But Leo, still so crazed with desire for her, rises to tear off his shirt.

LEO'S POV - Raisa resigned to his will but dead to him.

ON LEO - absorbing Raisa's true face in bed, her true feelings towards making love to him. He rebuttons his shirt then leaves.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS AT BASUROV'S INN - MORNING

Leo is facedown sleeping at one of the tables.

ANGLE - Nesterov standing over him, i.e., Who is this guy? He kicks the table leg, jolting Leo awake.

NESTEROV

Shall we?

EXT. MILITSIA HQ - MORNING

ESTAB. SHOT OF NONDESCRIPT BLDG. None of Lubyanka's charismatic dread.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - CLOSE ON - LEO

as he achingly strips off his tattered and somewhat bloody clothes and changes into his new uniform - coarse trousers with red piping and a heavy ill-fitting tunic.

Then, WIDE to the locker room to see the other Militsia, hung over, sullenly avoiding their newest colleague.

ANGLE - NESTEROV, leaning in the doorway, as if refusing to let Leo out of his sight.

NESTEROV

(pushing off)

Wash your bloody face and come to my office.

INT. HALLWAY - 15 MINUTES LATER

Leo heading to Nesterov's office. Walks past a small room where three Militsia are eating as they laboriously type up reports.

Past another room where two Militsia are playing cards, a cuffed drunk dead asleep on a bench.

Past a third, where two investigators from the prosecutor's office are seated at a small table facing a handcuffed simpleton (VARLAM). Nesterov is leaning against a wall.

NESTEROV

Tell these men what happened, Varlam.

VARLAM

She never lets me touch her hair and so I followed her when she went out in the night and when she was flat I cut it.

INVESTIGATOR 1

How did she get flat?

VARLAM

By being bad.

INVESTIGATOR 2

Did you get her flat?

VARLAM

I'm in so much trouble...

NESTEROV

He has a history of harassing her in the orphanage, the director will testify to it.

INVESTIGATOR

(holding up a hacked-off braid in a clear bag)

This was found under his pillow.

NESTEROV

And the tracks around the girl's body match his boots exactly.

VARLAM

(re: the braid)

Can I have that back now?

Nesterov looks up to see Leo standing there in the hallway. He jerks his thumb in the direction of his office and closes the door.

ON LEO - What the fuck was that?

INT. NESTEROV'S OFFICE

Leo tentatively enters the unoccupied room.

The walls are covered with framed certificates, commendations and 15-year-old photos of Nesterov, his hand raised in victory at national wrestling competitions.

CLOSE ON - Four B&W photos on his desk of a savaged adolescent girl half-buried in snow; (a graffiti-covered metal shed in the b.g., and train tracks in the fore), her open mouth packed with white as she stares back at the photographer, a frozen arm reaching out as if to beg him for help.

ON LEO - Her body rocks him, throws him back to seeing Jora.

He impulsively swipes one of the four photos as...

Nesterov enters, takes the remaining photos off the desk, slips them into a slim file and takes his seat, again taking Leo's measure.

MILITSIA
(at the door)
General...

A small bespectacled man in a dusty black suit (THE COLLECTOR) enters the office and just stands there. Nesterov grunts and hands the file to the Militsioner who hands it to The Collector, who then leaves without anyone having said a word to anybody.

NESTEROV
Bookkeepers...

Suddenly a still-cuffed Varlam sticks his head in the doorway, dragging along the two investigators who try to haul him out.

ANGLE - Nesterov casually sliding his side piece out of its holster.

VARLAM
Goodbye, General Nesterov.

NESTEROV
(holding his gun below the desk)
Goodbye, Varlam.

The investigators finally succeed in hauling the giant back out in the hallway. Nesterov reholsters, sits.

NESTEROV
He's morally unformed. It's tragic, but you have to admit, even the party can't be responsible for the acts of a mental defective.

LEO
(dryly)
Perfect.

NESTEROV
So. Your rank is in my hands, you say?

EXT. MILITSIA BUILDING

Leo, shin-deep in slush, is changing a tire on a Militsia sedan.

ANGLE - A GROUP OF THE MILITSIA solemnly watching him, no wisecracks; who is this Moscow MGB fucker and why is he here...

INT. BASUROV'S HALLWAY - DUSK

Leo coming back to the room. The door is unlocked.

INT. ROOM

Leo entering. All of Raisa's stuff is gone.

EXT. VOUALSK TRAIN STATION - 20 MIN. LATER

CLOSE ON - the young ticket taker, ALEKSANDER (22), behind his kiosk window looking at...

GO WIDE - Raisa standing alone on the platform. We register Leo's approach in her eyes.

LEO

Where do you think you're going.

(she ignores him; grabbing
her arm)

I asked...

Raisa wheels and throws a haymaker which he catches in his fist.

LEO

(pulling her close)

Listen... Whatever you feel or don't
feel about me, this is where we find
ourselves and there's nothing we can do
about it.

As the train appears in the distance, Raisa pushes him off.

ANGLE - Aleksander, watching them from behind his barred window.

Raisa lifts her bag and steps to the edge of the platform.

LEO

(rapidly)

That being said, all I can add is that
I'd rather live in this shithole of a
town with you than in a Moscow mansion
without.

The train comes screaming into the station. The doors open.

LEO

(desperate, angry)

You want to leave? Leave. But take it
from the monster you married, you'll
get stopped, questioned and with no
paperwork, you'll be arrested. And do
you have any idea what happens then to
a woman like you?

That does the trick, Raisa faltering before the open door. The door closes. The train departs.

ON LEO - Exhaling in relief.

Raisa picks up her luggage and without even glancing at Leo begins the walk back to the hotel. Leo starts to go after her but...

ALEKSANDER (OS)
All due respect, sir? I'd let her be
for now.

LEO
(bemused by this young
kid's advice)
You would?

ALEKSANDER
(offers Leo a cigarette)
My parents always know when to back off
from each other. That's the only way to
fight in a marriage. And they go at it
like gladiators...

A customer steps up to the empty kiosk, Aleksander heading back.

ALEKSANDER
(shaking Leo's hand)
Anyways, Aleksander.

LEO
Leo.

ANGLE - Leo walking back along the tracks to Basurov's, falters as he passes a riot of churned frozen snow before a graffiti-covered metal maintenance shed.

He takes the pilfered crime scene photo of the girl from inside his coat.

It's the death spot.

LEO'S POV - Aleksander in his kiosk; only 200 yards from the scene.

INT. LEO AND RAISA'S VACATED MOSCOW APARTMENT - SAME

Vasili comes through the door followed by a young MGB agent carrying luggage. As his minion stands awaiting orders he peruses his new digs.

INT. DINING AREA

Vasili strolls over to the dinner table, takes in the remains of their last meal. As if lost in thought, he leisurely takes the plates to the sink, then slowly screws the cap back on their vodka bottle.

INT. BEDROOM

Vasili peering at the Great Photo hung on wall. Removes it, is ready to toss it then reconsiders. Puts it back on the wall.

The bed is still in disarray from the night of the raid. He wanders around a bit, then in that same casual manner, strips the sheets down to the mattress.

It's his bed now.

INT. BASUROV'S - EVENING

Leo returning, walks past Basurov and his customers, many of them casually tracking him to the stairs as if in expectation.

Basurov turns and with a filthy rag, mockingly dusts off The Photo which hangs behind his bar.

INT. OUTSIDE THEIR ROOM

Leo coming up the stairs to see Raisa sitting in the hallway, atop her luggage.

LEO
What are you doing?

Raisa is too freaked to respond. Leo tracks her gaze to their door. It's ajar.

INT. ROOM

Leo standing in the doorway. The room is in utter disarray; completely tossed. Very professional; very frightening.

INT. TRAIN STATION TICKET KIOSK - MIDNIGHT

Aleksander alone in the small room, studying his face in a mirror, grimly staring into his own eyes as if he doesn't like what he sees. He turns out the light.

EXT. KIOSK

Aleksander quietly exiting. He looks around, turns up his collar and walks past the crime scene into the nearby forest.

EXT. FOREST

Aleksander walking along a footpath. Deserted. Then someone is there; another man, middle-aged, walking the other way. He stares at Aleksander who, not interested, ignores him.

Another man comes into view; younger. They pass each other then slow down. Aleksander stops turns to see this guy has stopped too. Aleksander walks back, then walks past him...

ALEKSANDER
I know a place... just keep behind me.

INT. LEO AND RAISA'S ROOM - SAME

In taut silence, they're putting the room back into some semblance of order. Leo steals a glance at his wife, then...

LEO
They found a politically acceptable murderer today. "Comrade, even the party can't be responsible for the act of a mental defective."

RAISA
And so what... This bothers you?

LEO
When Alexei's son was in the morgue, my, assignment that night was to...
(disgusted)
What a bloody stooge I've been.

This makes Raisa laugh. Leo senses again the depth of her alienation from him.

RAISA
Listen to you. Two days without power and suddenly you've got the big picture? Trust me, you've just tasted the icing, the cake is yet to come.

LEO
The cake? You're so experienced with suffering? You know what I did and you still married me. You enjoyed the apartment, the specialty shops, the clothes, the food. I asked you to marry me and you said yes, so don't you dare...

RAISA
(seething)
I said yes because I was afraid if I said no I'd be arrested. That story you love so much about me giving you a false name when we met, so funny so romantic. I gave you a false name because I was worried. You say seduction, I say surveillance. I married you out of fear. I married you because that's what people do. They put up, they tolerate. They do whatever they have to do to survive.

(coldly assessing)
I guess it could've been worse. At least you weren't a pig or a wifebeater. Not that I could've done anything about it if you were.

LEO
(sadly)
So... I lose track. Who's turn is it to walk out on who now?

EXT. FOREST - 1:00 AM

Aleksander and his pickup are down on the ground in the inky black woods.

Aleksander's hand stretches out and he touches something that makes him start...

PICKUP
What! Is someone coming?

As the moon comes out from behind a cloud and the forest turns to silver, Aleksander sits up to see...

A YOUNG BOY, his open mouth dripping stalactites of ice, staring back at him with a lifeless frost-rimed eye.

EXT. THE LOCAL SCHOOL - NEXT MORNING

INT. SCHOOL OFFICE

Raisa, as usual dressed down and bunned up, is seated waiting for the SCHOOL DIRECTOR, walking in.

RAISA
(jumping up)
Comrade Director, Raisa Demidov. I've been assigned here, if you could be so kind as to show me to my classroom.

DIRECTOR
Your classroom?

EXT. MILITSIA BUILDING - SAME

Leo, heading in to start the day, sees Aleksander, just staring at the building and shaking like a leaf as if he's trying to screw up his courage to go inside. He looks like he's been standing like that all night long.

LEO
What's wrong?

ALEKSANDER
(wild-eyed)
Last night... In the woods... I was taking a walk...

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - SAME

The Director leads Raisa to a locked door. Opens it to reveal a slop sink, janitorial supplies. He rolls out the mop and wringer bucket for her.

DIRECTOR
Here's your classroom.

INT/EXT. MILITSIA CAR - LATE MORNING

Leo is chauffeuring Dr. Tyapkin past Raisa's school to the forest, where a dozen high-ranking officials mill around the body.

Leo pulls up. Tyapkin exits, med bag in hand, heads for the scene.

Leo remains on the outskirts of the crowd with the other low-level Militsia.

LEO'S POV - Aleksander, having led everyone to the scene, is now sitting on a tree stump off to the side.

INT. SCHOOL - SAME

Raisa mopping the hallway. There's an agitation in the air; teachers and students running to windows. She joins them.

RAISA'S POV - out the window, a hundred yards off, the massed Militsia at the scene. Some of the teachers and a few students are already outside race-walking to the drama in the near woods.

EXT. CRIME SCENE

The low level Militsia are shooing away both the teachers and kids coming out of the school.

LEO'S POV - The forensic scrum around the body as Tyapkin does an *in situ* examination.

CLOSE ON - Tyapkin, Nesterov, Budenny.

DOCTOR TYAPKIN
Been here awhile.

NESTEROV
What's awhile.

TYAPKIN
A month? Two? Do you know him?

NESTEROV
Could be another one from the
orphanage.

TYAPKIN
Like the girl...

NESTEROV
And like the poor imbecile who killed
them both.

LEO (OS)
(gingerly)
If I may ask...

They all turn to him, Nesterov darkening but letting him play his hand.

LEO
These red dots above the irises...

TYAPKIN
(after getting the nod from
Nesterov)
Hemorrhaging. You see it in
strangulations.

LEO
But his throat is unmarked.

TYAPKIN
You also see it in drownings.

ON NESTEROV - watching, listening.

LEO
But where's the water around here?

TYAPKIN
About 6 kilometers east, the river in
Tobol.

LEO
And the girl near the station. The
photo shows ice in her mouth too, yes?
Was she strangled?

TYAPKIN
No.

LEO
So maybe they were drowned somewhere
else and dumped? But why...

Tyapkin takes forceps and extracts a long sliver of ice from the
victim's throat. Then another. And another.

TYAPKIN
Someone should examine his lungs.

LEO
Will you?

Tyapkin glances at Nesterov who shakes his head no.

TYAPKIN
Not without authorization.

LEO
These cuts. They seem purposeful.

TYAPKIN
They are. Someone knew their anatomy.

LEO
What did he take?

TYAPKIN
(morgue humor)
The fleshiest chops.

LEO
Like a butcher?

TYAPKIN
Like a surgeon.

LEO
So, professional...

TYAPKIN
Yes. Very.

NESTEROV
As I said, we have his confession on
the girl, we'll get it on this one too.

A TRAIN is seen/heard in the near distance.

LEO
(eyes on the train)
Yes, no, I understand, no doubt you
will but I'm just wondering, with all
due respect, this poor imbecile of
yours? When exactly did he get around
to attending medical school?

NESTEROV
(rising, to Tyapkin)
Will you excuse us?

Tyapkin amscrays.

Nesterov takes Leo's arm and walks him off as a black tarp
floats down over the body.

LEO'S POV - Raisa, part of the crowd being held away from the
scene.

NESTEROV
What are you doing here...

LEO
General, in Moscow there was a boy, cut
up like this one, found near train
tracks. Nowhere near water but when
they turned him over in the morgue, it
spilled out of him like he had
swallowed the sea.

NESTEROV
What are you doing here.

LEO
His "confession"...

NESTEROV
What are you doing here.

LEO
I wrote the fucking book on
confessions.

ANGLE - The crowd gawking at Leo giving Nesterov shit.

CLOSE ON - Raisa, aghast. Leo's voice keeps rising; he'll get
them both killed.

Nesterov takes Leo's arm and walks him further away; out of earshot.

LEO'S POV - Raisa keeping pace with them but at a distance. Aleksander seated on the stump, adrift in nightmare.

NESTEROV
Are you still MGB?

LEO
What? No.

Nesterov grabs a fistful of Leo's tunic, pulls him close.

NESTEROV
I think you are. I think you've been sent. Why are these murders so important to Moscow?

LEO
Trust me, they're not.

NESTEROV
Listen, you... I haven't arrested Varlam because he said the wrong thing or failed to show enough enthusiasm at a workers rally. I arrested him because he killed that girl and *this* boy.

LEO
I don't think he did it.

ANGLE - RAISA, walking in helpless circles; she wants to scream at Leo to shut up but can't. Wants to flee for her life but can't.

NESTEROV
(kissing close)
Whatever it is you've been sent here to do, remember you're not in Moscow anymore. Here we have an arrangement. My men are safe. None of them have ever been or will be arrested. If you do anything to endanger my team, if you report anything which undermines my authority, if you portray my officers as incompetent, if you make any denunciations regarding my people; if you do any of these things?

Nesterov lifts Leo's chin and lightly runs the flat of his hand across his throat.

TYAPKIN
His name is Isaac Rudensky, from the Gorky School in Oblast X.

Tyapkin approaches, an identification card in his hand.

TYAPKIN
Stuck to the back of his leg.

LEO
Oblast X... Where's that.

BUDENNY
About 50 miles east. Seven stations
down the line.

ON NESTEROV - The vic is no kid from the orphanage; Varlam's
strictly a local yokel.

LEO
Seven stations...

BUDENNY
If he came here by train, maybe the
ticket seller would remember seeing him
with someone.

NESTEROV
Or perhaps...
(grabbing at straws)
Where is Aleksander...

ON ALEKSANDER, still in a daze, seated on that stump. Nesterov
kneels in front of him.

NESTEROV
Aleksander, when you found the body
last night... You were taking a walk,
you say?
(no reply)
Or perhaps doing something else...
(no reply)
Ours is a very small town.

ANGLE - Raisa coming up on Leo, down low pleading.

RAISA
You'll get us killed...

LEO
What?

RAISA
Leo, I beg you...

He stares at her for a beat then takes her by the arm and
hustles her over to the tarp.

LEO
Have a look...

He uncovers the body; Raisa gasps, staggers back. Then with
tears in her eyes, she runs at him, wanting to belt him for
searing her mind's eye like that, but stops short, afraid of
drawing even more attention. She turns and heads back to the
school.

LEO'S POV - Halfway there Raisa intercepts two boys running to the scene and herds them back towards the building.

LEO'S POV - Aleksander being hustled into a Militsia sedan.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - MILITSIA HQ - ONE HOUR LATER

Aleksander is seated facing Nesterov; Leo and others lining the walls.

NESTEROV

Sodomy is a serious crime. Five years if a day, and even if you survive the camps, the disgrace...

ALEKSANDER

Please, just say... what do you want...

NESTEROV

A list of men in this town who have sex with other men.

ALEKSANDER

What?

NESTEROV

Men who have sex with younger men, with boys.

ALEKSANDER

What?

NESTEROV

A few names. We'll take it from there.

(hand on his knee)

Open the door for us and maybe your, issue can remain a secret.

Aleksander looks pleadingly to Leo, who has to look away.

NESTEROV

Tell me, your parents... Shall we bring them in and explain what's going on? Or should we just wait for the trial, invite them to court...

ALEKSANDER

(tremulous)

The men I give you... What will happen to them?

Leo leaves the room.

INT. HALLWAY

The Collector, that small bespectacled man in the dusty suit is back, standing there impassively as he waits to confiscate the latest there-is-no-murder-here murder-file.

INT. BASUROV'S INN - EVENING

Leo glances at Basurov and his customers as he heads up the stairs. Again Basurov makes a show of dusting The Photo.

INT. THEIR ROOM

Again, violently disemboweled. Raisa is sitting on the floor, in a corner.

LEO

We've been dead since we left Moscow.
They're just having their sport.

RAISA

Sport... And you? Tell me that fight
you had today was really about the boy.

LEO

Three butchered children all found near
train tracks with ice coming up from
their lungs; each child accompanied by
his or her own personal uniformed clown
to arrest the nearest deviant or
imbecile and call it a day.

RAISA

I see.

LEO

The animal who did that also killed the
girl and killed Alexei's son. I know it
and I'll prove it. I will shove it
right up their asses. I will lift the
rock off this whole stinking system.

RAISA

Do you know what you sound like, Leo?
An abandoned lover. And do you know who
it was that ran out on you?

(points to Stalin)

Him. Mister Universe. Universal
education, universal health care,
universal slaughter.

(beat)

And what happens to me with your
crusade? What do I do, sit in this room
and wait for the knock at the door?

LEO

No. When the time's right I'll give you
some correspondence, you bring it to
them and denounce me.

(dryly)

You'll be the queen of the Mayday
parade.

RAISA

What are you talking about? What
correspondence?

LEO
Who the hell knows. I haven't made it
up yet...

Leo starts to put the room back together. Raisa watches him for a moment, her face fleetingly softening with pity. And then she collects herself and pitches in.

RAISA
(gentler toned)
Leo, do you know what people get around here when they demand justice? They get terror.

INT. TRAIN TICKET KIOSK - MIDNIGHT

Aleksander alone, staring into the darkness.

EXT. FOREST - MIDNIGHT

Young Man X cruising. Another one, Y, appears. The silent courtship dance. Silent agreement. Then X turns to lead the way. But Y throws his arm around X's throat. He's an undercover. Two plainclothes Militsia materialize, and silently drag X away.

Y goes back to his hunting.

INT. LEO'S MOSCOW APARTMENT - MIDNIGHT

CLOSE ON - A bare spot on the wall where the Great Photo had hung; the outline still visible.

GO WIDE - Vasili is hosting a drinking party in his new digs. Exclusively MGB underlings, exclusively MALE.

INT. VOLGA CAR PLANT - 7:00 AM

TIBOR whisked from the assembly line by the Militsia.

INT. CAR PLANT CANTEEN - 7:30 AM

Tibor, bloody-mouthing, writing names which leads to...

EXT. BREADLINE - 8:00 AM

Apprehension of CYRIL, which leads to...

INT. MILITSIA OFFICE - 8:30 AM

Cyril, also battered, writing names which leads to...

INT. GYMNASIUM - 9:00 AM

Apprehension of STEPHAN...

INT. MILITSIA OFFICE - 9:30 AM

Stephan staring aghast at the photo of dead boy.

MILITSIA 1
This was done by one of your kind.

STEPHAN
How can you think... I have children of my own!

MILITSIA 1
(sliding pen and paper)
Names.
(withering beat)
Children of your own...

GO WIDE to see - MILITSIA HQ - Cells filled with homosexual arrestees; more cuffed to radiators, water pipes, furniture, to anything that can anchor a soul.

ANGLE - Leo at his desk processing an arrest. He looks to Nesterov, who looks away.

INT/EXT. TRAIN KIOSK - 10:00 AM

Aleksander behind his bars. A single person repeatedly asks for service. A train approaches; the customer getting more agitated. Aleksander finally looks up, but only to watch the train.

INT. SCHOOL - NOON

Raisa mopping. Suddenly she's nearly overrun by children scampering through the halls.

ON RAISA - In the midst of shouting kids...

FLASH TO - that frozen body in the woods, calling to her.

THEN BACK TO Raisa, surrounded by living children, her eyes as big as dishes.

FEMALE JANITOR 1
I hear it's a child itself who's doing it. Got lost in the woods as a baby and was raised by bears... Hates the sight of normal children.

FEMALE JANITOR 2
You're an idiot, you know that? The bears would have eaten him on the spot... It was a family of wolves.

They sense that Raisa might be listening and clam up.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - NOON

ANGLE - Train nearing the station.

ANGLE - The kiosk - unmanned - people clamoring for their tickets.

ANGLE - Aleksander on the platform among the crowd watching the train approach.

ANGLE - Kiosk - From the POV of the barred grill we see Aleksander calmly step off the platform and into the path of the oncoming train.

The shrieks of the commuters compete with the piercing whistle of the murdering train.

EXT. THE STATION

Leo now on foot, near the frantic crowd around the first railcar.

Stepping back, Leo looks southwards down the length of the tracks until they merge into a single point like a dagger.

ON LEO - The tracks, the tracks hold the answer.

He looks northwards, same optical illusion, then sees The Collector standing by the kiosk.

EXT. SCHOOL - SAME

Raisa walking home. A sedan slows alongside her.

RAISA'S POV - two men in there, not the local bumpkins. The car stops a little bit ahead of her; front seat passenger reaches around the outside of the car and opens the rear door. They don't even bother to turn their heads. Nobody ever runs.

She walks to the open door like walking the plank. But as she reaches them, they take off, leaving her in the street.

INT. MOSCOW RESTAURANT - EVENING

It's the restaurant that we was earlier apres-ballet. Vasili, in uniform, is eating by himself and unabashedly eyeing a young waitress.

Sensing eyes on her, she quickly looks his way, takes in the dreaded uniform and frightened, looks off.

Vasili smiles to himself, returns to his dinner.

INT. BASUROV'S - HALLWAY

Raisa coming in, rattled to the core. She runs into Leo, red-faced with fury, racing out.

LEO
Another life-lesson for Citizen Leo.

RAISA
What? Where are you going?

LEO
I'll be back...

RAISA
(quickly, desperately)
When.

Leo takes pause as he finally absorbs how frightened she is.

LEO
(softly)
Come with me.

INT. NESTEROV'S HOUSE - EVENING

A knock at the door. INESSA, Nesterov's wife (mid-30s) opening to see Raisa and Leo.

INESSA
Mikhail?

Nesterov comes to the door. Leo's face is full of reproach. With a hand on Leo's chest to back him up, Nesterov comes out of the house.

NESTEROV
(to his wife, re: Raisa)
Take her inside.

EXT. NESTEROV'S HOUSE

Leo and Nesterov standing there half in shadow.

NESTEROV
We gave him a chance to sort himself out. Maybe he couldn't. Maybe he was too sick.

LEO
No.

NESTEROV
He was ill.

LEO
He was a goddamned kid. He had a mother and father and a decent job and now he's dead. But the good thing is? Now we can just pin this other dead boy on him, say he threw himself under the train because he couldn't live with what he'd done. Voila... Case closed.

Nesterov stares at him half shamed, half furious; i.e., that's exactly what they did.

LEO
No. You... No.

Then surprising himself as much as Nesterov, he throws a punch, clipping the General on the chin.

They stare at each other in mutual astonishment.

LEO
We're butchers ourselves, no better
than the killer. And you've solved,
nothing.

Nesterov nods as if that's a reasonable observation then blasts Leo into the side of the house.

NESTEROV
Go home.

LEO
(on his ass)
You've solved, nothing.

Leo rises and goes at Nesterov, and the two men begin trading shots. Leo is skilled, but Nesterov is a bull and soon enough, Leo is back on the ground, battered and dazed.

NESTEROV
Demidov, last warning...

LEO
(staggers to his feet)
You've solved,
(throws a punch)
nothing.

Nesterov, a former wrestling champion, easily puts him in a crippling hold; Leo in agony.

NESTEROV
(in his ear)
Why are you in Voualsk.

LEO
Go to hell.

NESTEROV
(cranking it up)
Come again?

LEO
(in agony)
To die. Out of the light.

NESTEROV
You know? For the first time I believe
you.

Nesterov releases him, Leo drops to his knees.

INT. NESTEROV'S HOUSE

The house. Too small. Things in a state of repair or jury-rigged; strategic buckets under a water-stained ceiling, a plastic sheet-insulated window, structural fissures in a wall.

Two boys, EFIM (5) and Vadim (7), play in the parlor.

Raisa stands silently against one wall. Inessa, her hostess, stands against another. Both women, in their burdened silence, watch the boys.

Nesterov enters with Leo, moves to a table upon which some kind of disemboweled appliance awaits his attention. Pours out two shots of vodka.

LEO
And what happens to Varlam?

NESTEROV
(embarrassed)
We have his confession.

LEO
What a bloody farce.

NESTEROV
(to Raisa)
I don't understand, is Voualsk really such a dump that he'd rather die in a gulag?

LEO
Listen to me. I've been thinking. The killer is a traveler. The girl was found near the station. The boy farther off but still in walking distance from the tracks. And he came from a town 50 miles away. How else would he get here? Now, this boy in Moscow?

NESTEROV
Again with Moscow.

LEO
This boy in Moscow. His father was like a brother to me, I had his entire family telling me their child had been murdered, pleading with me but The Big Man says murder is a capitalist perversion so I threatened them into silence, I covered it up, just like you're doing right now.

ON RAISA - listening intently, absorbing this new Leo.

LEO
And how many other child-murderers have been hushed up because of party goons like us? And how many more kids will die? Because this, this animal, he'll never quit on his own.

Nesterov wavers, Leo's pitch getting to him. But in his own way he's a Party man, loyal and true.

ON INESSA - taking it all in, quietly freaking.

NESTEROV

So...

LEO

So I want to stop him. I probably won't live long enough to ever lay eyes on my own child...

ON RAISA - hearing this, too.

LEO

...it won't make a difference what I do and so I choose to do this.

NESTEROV

Stop a ghost.

LEO

No ghost.

NESTEROV

No? Describe him to me.

LEO

I can't...

(then, dawning)

But there's someone who can.

(upright w/energy)

There's a woman in Moscow who saw him. The first time I spoke to her, my job was to shut her up, but she's seen him with Alexei's son... I want, I need to go back there and speak with her again.

Nesterov says nothing; bottoms up.

ON RAISA - all eyes and ears.

LEO

But we also need the murder records from every major town from Sverdlovsk to Leningrad. If we know of three victims just by chance...

NESTEROV

There are no records. There's only that little vampire in the bowler. Anything happens a little off line we surrender the reports to him.

LEO

And then what. Where do they go?

(Nesterov shrugs)

Then you need to find out. You need to get your hands on them.

NESTEROV

Me. And why would I do that for you?

LEO

For me?

RAISA

(everybody's forgotten
about her; to Inessa)

Your boys... Do they walk to school by
themselves?

INESSA

(startled)

Normally, yes, but this week with those
poor children, either myself or my...

RAISA

And from here to school it would seem
the shortest way is through the forest.
Is that the way they go?

ON LEO - absorbing this new Raisa.

INESSA

Usually. But again, this week, the way
through town seems safer.

RAISA

Of course. But now that both of the
killers have been caught, will they be
walking through the forest by
themselves tomorrow like usual?

Inessa blanches, looks to her husband. Anger/fear at the lie.

ON LEO - still looking at Raisa with new eyes, then...

LEO

Will you do this?

NESTEROV

(bottoms up)

No... And if you take off for Moscow on
your own I'll turn you in myself.

INT. MOSCOW RESTAURANT - SAME

Vasili rising from his dinner, dropping rubles. The young
waitress, at another table, is still peripherally eyeing him
with deer-like fear. Vasili leaves.

ON WAITRESS - relieved, then...

VASILI [OS]

Let's go..

The waitress turns, Vasili right in her face.

WAITRESS

What?

VASILI

Now.

EXT. NESTEROV'S HOUSE

Leo and Raisa leaving, Leo unthinkingly taking Raisa's arm.

LEO

I need you to come with me.

RAISA

Where.

LEO

To Moscow. You're very good with women.
Me, not so much.

RAISA

He just said...

LEO

I heard him.

Raisa stops walking, Leo walks on; turns.

LEO

What? Trust me. There's ways to...

RAISA

Leo. The baby.

LEO

What.

RAISA

This morning, I felt sick. I came home.
And...

LEO

You lost...

RAISA

Yes.

Leo's face is like the northern lights; a ceaseless shifting of myriad dark thoughts, scenarios. The whole nightmare that their life has become.

Braced for an explosion, Raisa watches him like a hawk.

LEO

Raisa...

Not knowing if she would allow him to embrace her, comfort her, he does the hesitation waltz; awkwardly stepping forth, stepping back, his arms open, then at his side, finally...

LEO

Raisa, I'm so sorry.

INT. BASUROV'S - HALLWAY OUTSIDE THEIR ROOM - 30 MIN. LATER

Already in a dark and muted mood from Raisa's announcement, they hesitate - what are they going to find in there? Leo opens the door. The room appears orderly. They step in. Raisa spots them first.

TWO BULLETS, one on each of their pillows.

Leo collects the bullets and walks out of the room.

INT. BASUROV'S INN

Leo coming down the stairs, expectant eyes sliding his way. He leans into the bar, the bullets jingling in his palm, gestures for Basurov. Basurov comes over, a brutish hulk of a man, half-smiling.

LEO

I would like you to give a message to
whoever's been coming into our room.

Everybody's paying attention now, the bullets on the bar.

BASUROV

A message, uh?

LEO

Please.

And without another word Leo grabs Basurov by the back of his neck, drags him over the bar to the customer side and proceeds to beat him senseless.

LEO

Do you think you can remember all that
or would you like me to repeat it...

Leo takes down The Photo, breaks it over his knee.

EXT. TOWN OF GUKOVO IN ROSTOV-ON-DON - NEXT A.M.

INT. TRAIN STATION WAITING AREA

Benches filled with morning commuters, the drone of PA announcements, the riffle of newspapers.

CLOSE ON - ARTUR, 11, sitting there absorbing his surroundings.

MALE (OS)

And where are you headed today?

ARTUR'S POV - ANDREI, 30s, jacket, tie, overcoat, glasses, travel bag; bland, your basic mid-level bureaucrat.

ARTUR

Nowhere. I'm just waiting to buy stamps
but the kiosk isn't open.

(rising)

Maybe it is now.

As he walks away...

ANDREI

You collect stamps? I used to be a collector at your age.

ARTUR

(turning back)

New or old?

ANDREI

Only new. From a kiosk like you.

ARTUR

I just have old, from envelopes. But today I'm buying new.

(opens his hand; kopeks)

I saved for three months.

ANDREI

That's not much... Let me ask, are you a tidy boy?

ARTUR

I don't know.

ANDREI

Let me put it another way. Do you take care of your collection?

ARTUR

Yes. I keep them in a wooden box.

ANDREI

You know, I have a son, about your age, but he's a very messy boy. And he could care less about stamps. As for me, I don't have the time for them anymore.

ARTUR

Maybe you should give them to someone to take care of them for you.

INT. TRAIN FROM ROSTOV - 30 MINUTES LATER

Artur and Andrei sitting together, Andrei snacking out of a bag.

ARTUR

Only 3 stops?

ANDREI

You'll be back before lunch. Speaking of which...

(offers the bag)

I made them myself. The dark ones are the best.

Artur tentatively picks a few, pops them in his mouth.

ANDREI
You have your return ticket?
(Artur pats his pocket)
Don't lose it.
(then, re: the countryside)
If you knew what you were looking for
out there? You could eat like a king.

Artur takes some more candy from the bag.

EXT. STATE RUN WINTER RESORT - SAME

Nesterov unloading the car. His sons make a beeline for the skating lake.

INESSA
Boys!

NESTEROV
Let them run...

EXT. TRAIN STATION IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE - 20 MIN. LATER

Artur and Andrei get off the train. The view is of a snowy meadow leading to a dense treeline.

ARTUR
(a little woozy)
This is where you live?

ANDREI
This is where I keep my stamps... I
have a dacha just past the first line
of trees.

EXT. STATE RUN WINTER RESORT

Nesterov on the ice with his boys, Inessa watching.

EXT. MEADOW

Andrei and Artur walking towards the treeline, Artur weaving.

ANDREI
When all this snow melts? This area
becomes a 12 course feast.
(points out fronds)
For example, that there? It's called
Arms to Heaven, grows everywhere, good
source of starch but it's very bitter.
The best parts are the young leaves as
long as they're tender but you only
have about 2 weeks before they get
tough. Then it's too late.

ARTUR
(dizzy)
Sir...

ANDREI

Now all around that pond down there, come the spring you have cattails, the easiest food to find, another good source of starch. The thing is, you have to clean them very thoroughly because they're growing in stinking mud.

ARTUR

Sir...

Artur stumbles, Andrei catching him as they enter...

THE FOREST... sunlight abruptly blotted out.

ANDREI

Come April there'll be wild garlic bulbs here, and later in May there'll be lily bulbs. You have to gather a lot for a meal but they have more nutrition than potatoes.

ARTUR

(slurring)

Sir, how far...

Andrei just marches forward half-carrying Artur, his travel bag in his other hand.

ANDREI

(tone shift)

But when I was your age? You couldn't even find these simple things. They had all been eaten. You had to forage for days for a fistful of shit. You'd wind up clawing through the dirt for insects, eat the bark off a tree, mix clay and oak leaves or, or sawdust and chopped straw.

Andrei stops in the middle of nowhere, looks about and then almost absently lets go of Artur who falls in a heap on the snow-covered forest floor. He can't move.

Andrei squats above him, starts stripping off his clothes.

ANDREI

And every once in a while...

(peeling off Artur's shirt)

You picked the wrong thing and the people who ate it started to act like they were drunk or they started seeing things...

Artur leaps to his feet, starts to run. Andrei just watches him until he suddenly drops back into the snow, immobile.

ANDREI
(strolling over, re-squatting)
...or suddenly they couldn't move a muscle. That's how you learned the good from the bad. By mistake.

Artur lays there paralyzed except for the involuntary shivering.

ANDREI
Terrible times when I was your age, the things people did to survive.

Andrei takes off his glasses...

ANDREI'S POV - ARTUR now a blur to him, depersonalized.

He opens his traveling case and takes out a piece of cloth. He then produces a bottle of water.

As we hear (but not see) the water being poured...

ANDREI
(voice breaking)
But even in good times like now, good being a relative term, mind you, the one thing you can't ever find out here...
(in tears)
is adequate protein.

EXT. WINTER RESORT - SAME

Nesterov and Inessa in lakeside chairs, chins to the sun. Efim, his oldest boy, comes off the ice, approaches.

INESSA
You left your brother on the lake?

EFIM
He said he was going back to you.

NESTEROV'S POV - the dark forest that horseshoes the lake.

NESTEROV
(to wife)
Check the pond, I'm going...
(to his son)
You. You sit right here and you do not move. No matter who talks to you, no matter what they say you stay glued to this chair.

Frightened by the vibes, Efim mutely nods. Nesterov takes a few steps towards the woods, wheels back.

NESTEROV
(grabbing his hand)
Come with me.

They take off but he's walking too fast for his 7-year-old boy and so he scoops him up then starts to run.

ANGLE - Ice pond. Inessa, without skates, is stumbling through dozens of skaters.

INESSA
(tremulous, whispery)
Vadim?
(louder)
Vadim?

A skater accidentally knocks her down, extends a hand

INESSA
(trying not to panic)
Help me, my son, he's only 5, he's,
he's blond. We have to find him.

SKATER
He's here somewhere.

INESSA
(drawing a crowd)
You don't understand! He's in danger!

SKATER 2
From what?

Increasingly losing it, Inessa doesn't answer, just stumbles forward on the ice, her eyes searching, searching...

The skaters all stare at her.

EXT. ANDREI'S FOREST - SAME

The light has changed considerably. Andrei trembling with cold, has been sitting over Artur's body for a while now, his head is buried in his arms, then...

ANDREI
Oh...

He reaches into the traveling bag and removes a knife...

EXT. EDGE OF THE SKATING POND FOREST - SAME

5-year-old Vadim, in his own world, is trying to make a snowman. He turns.

VADIM'S POV - His father, holding his older brother, staring at him with blessed relief.

EXT. SKATING POND - SAME

Crowd around Inessa.

SKATER 4
Why don't you calm down...

INESSA
No! He'll be murdered like the others!
Help me find him! Please!

SKATERS 5 AND 6
Murdered?/ What others?/ What the hell
is wrong with her?

INESSA'S POV - Nesterov coming towards her with the boys, scared and crying, in his arms. Inessa crying, the whole family a spectacle surrounded by wary stares.

NESTEROV
(low, alert)
In the car.

ANGLE - Nesterov's sedan pulling out, as the skaters stare.

ANGLE - Gray-haired female skater, takes a notepad out of her coat, writes down their license plate number.

EXT. ANDREI'S FOREST - SAME

Artur, covered in branches and snow. A few yards off, Andrei is foraging. He finds what he wants, puts a fistful in his satchel, picks up a parcel neatly wrapped in butcher's paper and walks away.

EXT. SCHOOL - MORNING

Raisa walking. That sedan slows alongside her again, but this time...

DRIVER
Get in.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - SAME

Nesterov is standing by his car waiting for...

The Collector - exiting the station.

INT/EXT. NESTEROV'S PARKED CAR - 5 MINUTES LATER

COLLECTOR
Is there something insanity-making in
the water here? This is my fourth
visit.

Nesterov doesn't answer. Doesn't pull out.

COLLECTOR
I demand...

NESTEROV
We picked up your journalist friend at
his hotel.

COLLECTOR
What journalist friend?

NESTEROV
The one you've been selling case files
to.

COLLECTOR
ME? I would never...

The snick of a pistol aimed at his belly shuts him up.

NESTEROV
Time for an audit.

EXT. UNDISCLOSED OFFICE - 20 MINUTES LATER

Raisa flanked by the two men, one of whom is on the phone. He hands Raisa the receiver.

INT. DEMIDOV APARTMENT (MOSCOW) - SAME

Vasili is sitting at the edge of the bed wearing a towel. Behind him, awake but unmoving, is the waitress.

VASILI
(on the phone)
So. How's tricks?

BACK TO - OFFICE

RAISA
(shaking)
What?

VASILI (OS)
See the bald one in the blue suit?
(guy who handed her the
phone)
Leo arrested his wife last year. God
knows where she wound up, we lost her
file.

(guy staring at her now)
He says he personally has no problems
with that but who the hell knows what
anyone really thinks these days.

(Raisa can't speak)
I mean what do you think is going
through his head right now?
(guy staring at her)
In any event the poor man is so lonely.
You know what would be nice? If you
gave him a kiss...

RAISA
What?

VASILI (OS)
Do it for me...
(guy staring at her)
No kidding. Do it or I'll snuff your
wick faster than you can hang up the
phone.

The guy casually extends a foot, props it on a chair as if to bar her way out.

INT. FILEROOM

NESTEROV'S POV - A bureaucratic nightmare of Dickensian proportions; a surreal labyrinth of ceiling-high, precariously tilting stacks of files; each one a life lost. (And a none too subtle metaphor for the Orwellian logic and human disregard of Stalinthink.)

ON NESTEROV - jaw to the floor.

NESTEROV
Bring me all files involving the death
of children between the ages of nine
and fifteen. Everything you have and
pray they're all there.

EXT. ROSTOV TRAIN STATION - 4:00 PM

Train pulling in. Andrei exits; his murderous carry-all looking as innocuous as any other attaché case coming off.

ANDREI'S POV - The crowded station, commuters, police, soldiers and one 11-year-old BOY sitting alone.

ANGLE - The boy on the bench. Andrei takes the spot next to him. Sighs, massages his temples then...

ANDREI
Are you here alone?
(the boy nods his head)
Does your mother know where you are?
(he shrugs)

Andrei takes that bag of homemade candy from his side pocket and pops a few. The boy looks interested.

ANDREI
(offering)
Watch it doesn't ruin your appetite.
(he picks one)
Not those. Try the dark ones.

Andrei then rises, stretches.

BOY
(re: the murder kit)
Is that heavy?

ANDREI
Heavier than it looks.

BOY
I could carry it.

ANDREI
You think?

BOY
Easy.

Andrei thinking on it, the kid watching him from the bench.

ANDREI
I parked at the far end of the street.
It's a bit of a walk.
(the kid shrugs)
Alright...
(offering the bag)
Let's see what you're made of.

The boy rises, takes the bag and the two of them leave the station together, Andrei's hand on the kid's shoulder.

INT. FILEROOM - 4:00 PM

Nesterov sitting at a desk poring over documents, writing down information while The Collector frantically but unerringly pulls the files from the seemingly impenetrable towers of paper.

EXT. BASUROV'S - 4:00 PM

The sedan dropping Raisa off.

BALD AGENT
Hey...
(hands her a package)
From me to your husband.

INT. KITCHEN OF A HOUSE IN ROSTOV - 5:00 PM

The woman of the house (ALICIA) is preparing a meal, her daughter (FIONA) doing homework at the dining table.

ALICIA
It's almost 5. Where's your brother?

FIONA
He went down to the trains.

ALICIA
He what? When...

FIONA
I don't know. An hour ago?

ALICIA
What did I tell you about going there!

FIONA
Tell me? I'm here. He's the one.

INT. FILEROOM - 5:00 PM

ANGLE - THE COLLECTOR, sitting in a chair sweating out Nesterov's alleged file comparisons.

Nesterov's note taking has run into dozens of pages. Most files have photos, which he pins to the corresponding notes.

NESTEROV
That's it? This is all?

COLLECTOR
(shooting to his feet)
Yes.
(crazed)
May I continue my work?

NESTEROV
No.

COLLECTOR
But there's a situation in Rostov.

NESTEROV
What situation.

COLLECTOR
A boy has been discovered near the train station. They think he was attacked by a wolf.

NESTEROV
(alertly)
Write everything down, I'll make sure it's covered. And you stay in this room until a decision is made. You're being watched.

Nesterov leaves; The Collector terrified.

INT. KITCHEN OF THAT HOUSE IN ROSTOV - 5:30 PM

Alicia pacing, pacing, then, tossing on her coat.

ALICIA
I'm going down to...

There's a knock at the door, Alicia startled. She opens to see the boy straddling Andrei's shoulders.

ALICIA
(to the boy)
What did I tell you!

ANDREI'S SON
I wanted to meet daddy.

ANDREI
What are you worried about. He's with me.

INT. VOUALSK - MILITSIA OFFICE - 7:00 PM

Nesterov, walking through the outer office, subtly tilts his head for Leo to follow.

INT. NESTEROV'S OFFICE

Leo enters, closes the door. Nesterov unrolls a map on his desk, dumps a fistful of pins alongside it.

Leo watches as Nesterov, consulting his notes, plants his homicidal flags - along the train lines running west - 2 children in Voualsk, 2 Perm, 2 Vyatka, 3 Nishky Novgorad, 2 Kazan. Then south - 3 in Tula, 2 Orel, 3 Belgorod.

NESTEROV

(whispering)

All children 9 to 14. All found in forests or parks near the train lines, naked and either marked for cuts or with cuts. Drowned when they bothered to examine the remains.

Shaking out another fistful of pins for the Ukraine - 3 in Kharkov, 4 in Gorloyka, 3 Zaporoshy, 3 in Kramatorsk, 3 in Kiev...

NESTEROV

Every one of them solved by arrest; deviants, half-wits, politicals, gypsies.

Then going out of the Ukraine - planting 4 in Taganrog, 3 in Petrovka, 2 in Kalinin. He finally straightens up.

NESTEROV

(whispering)

Forty-three in all.

LEO

(takes a last pin, puts it in Moscow for Jora)

Alexei's boy. Forty-four.

NESTEROV

And there's a new one in Rostov. I'm heading there tomorrow.

LEO

So I'll ask you again. My witness in Moscow...

NESTEROV

I'm granting you a walking holiday. That'll explain your absence from here. And I'll have your new identity papers for the train to Moscow ready by tomorrow.

INT. LEO AND RAISA'S ROOM - 8:00 PM

Raisa, still in shock from whatever transpired with Vasili's goons, sits in a robe on the bed, her hair wet from the healing shower, unwrapping the box as gingerly as if it contained a bomb. She removes Tortoise's tortoise-shell glasses; the lens shattered and bloody.

We hear Leo racing up the stairs. She hides the package. Leo enters, tosses two trekkers outfits on the bed; grins in triumph.

INT. ANDREI'S HOUSE - 8:00 PM

The kids doing homework, Alicia in the kitchen. Andrei, carrying his travel bag, approaches a locked door.

ANGLE - Andrei's son, at the table, perks up as he hears the jingle of his father's keys.

ANGLE - Andrei unlocking the door, then starting down the stairs.

ANGLE - The boy, lurking around the corner, getting a quick glimpse of the basement - Something shiny on a wall, an icebox, the edge of an old tub, then he quick-ducks as Andrei reaches back up to close the door behind him.

EXT. FOREST - NEXT MORNING

Leo and Raisa coming to a secluded spot then swiftly, silently stripping out of their trekker's gear and changing into commuter clothes. They bury their clothing, then help each other secure Nesterov's documents about their bodies.

CLOSE ON - Leo behind Raisa, wrapping a document along her bare ribs, his fingers lingering a moment longer than necessary.

Raisa suddenly turns in his arms, Leo's heart pounding.

RAISA
Behind you...

Leo turns, sees an escaped document trembling in a bush.

EXT. FOREST SPOT - HOUR LATER

Leo and Raisa sit on boulders, Leo looking at his watch.

Leo's POV - through the trees - the train station.

INT. TRAIN PULLING INTO MOSCOW STATION - NOON

The platform; lousy with uniforms and undercovers.

LEO'S POV - Eyeing possible agents among the milling crowd - Smallish man reading a newspaper; Big man rolling a cigarette; Middle-aged woman applying lipstick.

Can't tell your players without a scorecard.

LEO
If you catch anyone's eye don't look away. Just count to three then focus on something else.

INT. STATION

Leo and Raisa blankly wading through the human tide, making their way to the street.

EXT. ESTAB. SHOT - ALEXEI'S HOUSING COMPLEX - 1:00 PM

INT. ALEXEI'S APARTMENT

Leo and Raisa stand before the family.

ALEXEI
(angry sarcasm)
You've come to the wrong address. No boy was murdered here.

LEO
Alexei, no...
(he starts stripping down
to the documents taped to
his body, like an act of
humility and penance)
...you were right. All of you.. You
were right...

As he lays it all out on the table, the old lady breaks down, which causes a chain reaction, equal parts relief and grief.

RAISA
43 other children so far, all killed in
the same way as, as your son.

ALEXEI'S WIFE
Say his name.

RAISA
Jora.

The mother then stares demandingly across the room at Leo.

LEO
(shamed)
Jora Alekseevich Andreyev.

Alexei, hunched over the documents, swallows a sob.

GRANDMOTHER
And if you catch him, what will you do?

ON LEO - startled, looks to Raisa; they never spoke of this.

LEO
(after a beat, calmly)
I'll kill him.

INT. GALINA SHAPORINA'S FLAT - 15 MIN. LATER

Galina sits on her couch, unable to make eye contact.

GALINA

How can I help? I don't know anything.

ALEXEI

Listen to me!

(Galina jumps)

The bastard who murdered my son is
still out there, still...

Raisa lays a hand on his arm, takes charge.

RAISA

Galina. Alexei isn't here for the MGB. He... We, are here... We just want to protect the children. Your name won't appear on any documents, there are no documents and you'll never see us again. All we need to know is what he looked like.

GALINA

But the man I saw wasn't with any child. I told him [Leo] that.

RAISA

Yes. I know. You said he had a tool bag. So fine. Just describe the man with the tool bag.

LEO

No one can get in trouble for describing a worker going about his business.

(Leo's voice makes her tense up like a deer)

Believe me, I'm no threat to you any longer.

Galina finally looks at him directly, can read his downfall in his appearance and the slightest hint of a bitter smile appears on her face (i.e., fuck you). And then it's gone.

GALINA

It was dark.

ALEXEI

For the love of God!

Suddenly the apartment door swings open and Galina's huge husband enters, followed by half the tenants in the building.

HUSBAND

What the hell is this. Who are you talking to. Who the hell are you?

The neighbors are squawking, pushing, everyone on their feet.

HUSBAND
Get out of my house!

LEO
Easy, easy...

HUSBAND
You want easy?

The big man goes for Leo, and in the ensuing moment of chaos; the neighbors shouting, pushing in, Alexei pushing them out, Leo and the husband struggling, Raisa quickly brings Galina to her in a hug.

RAISA
(in her ear)
Tell me what he looked like. Whisper it...

THEN FLASH TO Leo subduing the bigger man, dropping him to his knees with a crippling wristlock, the man crying out. BACK TO:

RAISA
(whispering)
Please...

HUSBAND (OS)
Goddamn you bastards!

GALINA
(disengaging, icy)
I told you. It was dark.

LEO'S POV - Neighbors staring from the doorway.

ALEXEI
(low, to Leo)
Any of them could be informers. Go.

INT. APARTMENT - ROSTOV - 2:00 PM

CLOSE ON - A small black wreathed photo of Artur, next to his wooden box of used stamps.

GO WIDE - we're with his grieving PARENTS and Nesterov.

FATHER
Listen you. In the war I saw what those monsters did in retreat, I saw what they were capable of... And so believe me if I tell you Hitler left hidden revenge squads all the way back to the Rhine. He fed them special drugs to made them addicted to the blood of children and now it's all coming to a head. Nine children around here found like Artur in the last two years.

NESTEROV
Nine?

FATHER
That miserable butcher is still killing
us, even from his grave.

NESTEROV
Nine...

MOTHER
He doesn't believe us.

EXT. MOSCOW STATION

A mixed group of Militsia and MGB rushing into the station.

LEO
(on the street)
Can't risk it.

Raisa looks to him, has an idea.

EXT. MOSCOW BREADLINE - 3:30 PM

Bedraggled queue, Leo and Raisa, hiding in plain sight.

LEO
I don't like this. I don't know him.

RAISA
Well I do. We talked about everyone and
everything. We trusted each other with
our lives.

(Leo stares at her)
What choice do we have?
(face quickening)
There he is...

LEO'S POV - Ivan Sukov walking to his building.

As Raisa begins to hail him, Leo pulls her back.

LEO
Just... He could be under surveillance.

Leo steps out and checks the street; foyer of cinema, shop
fronts, doorways, windows, rooflines. Nothing apparent.

He shrugs, hating this.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING HALLWAY

CLOSE ON - RAISA, alone, softly knocking on Ivan's door

IVAN (OS)
Yes?

RAISA
(hand flat on the wood)
Ivan? It's Raisa.

The sound of a bolt sliding back, an eye peeking through a crack then a wide-open door and an even wider smile.

IVAN

Oh!

(in her hair)

You're alive...

IVAN'S POV - LEO's face emerging from the gloom of the hallway, his flat stare.

INT IVAN'S APARTMENT

LEO'S POV - Well appointed parlor, bookcases filled with approved reading, Stalin on the wall.

LEO

Are we alone?

IVAN

My children are with my parents and my wife is in hospital. Tuberculosis.

Raisa touches his arm in sympathy. Leo looks off.

IVAN

We all thought you've been arrested or worse.

RAISA

We've been relocated to a town in the Urals. Leo refused to denounce me.

IVAN

Really. Why?

LEO

Because she's my wife.

IVAN

Are you still MGB?

LEO

No.

IVAN

And you've traveled all the way back to Moscow, at, I assume great personal risk. Why?

LEO

Can you help us get out of the city or not?

IVAN

I repeat. Why are you here.

Hesitating, deeply disliking this chastising prick, Leo rises and starts to take off his shirt to get at the crime scene photos and other documents. He lays them on the table.

LEO
They've been "solved".

IVAN
Meaning the man who's doing this is
still out there.

RAISA
Yes.

IVAN
And so you two are working together
now? As what... outraged citizens?

RAISA
More or less. Yes.

IVAN
Going to capture this monster by
yourselves.

LEO
If the state won't...

IVAN
Demidov, please, you've spent your
whole life being a Doberman for the
"state." And now I'm supposed to
believe, what... You've seen the light?

LEO
If I hadn't you'd be in a ditch covered
in lime right now.

RAISA
Ivan! Look at these pictures! Look at
them! They're real!

IVAN
Yes, the documents, examine carefully
the documents.

Gathering up their papers, they rise to leave, Ivan studying
them, then...

IVAN
Alright, alright, you're making me
nervous. Close the curtains please.
(grudging beat)
Look, I know someone, if he's willing,
can get you out of the city. But I make
no guarantees.

Ivan removes a phone from a cabinet. Leo looks disconcerted.

IVAN
They forgot to remove it when the last
tenant died. I keep it hidden and
disconnected save for emergencies.

And with his back to them he plugs it in, starts to dial.

RAISA'S POV - On a windowsill, a familiar-looking book. She gestures for Leo to give it to her. It's St. Augustine's *City of God*, still spattered with Ivan's dried blood.

RAISA'S POV - Other nooks, other forbidden books: Walt Whitman, Twain, Emerson, Thoreau, Cardinal Newman, Orwell, Hemingway...

IVAN

Zalman, I have a problem I need your help with. Are you free at the moment?

Raisa leans into Leo, whispers her discovery.

IVAN

Could you come to the apartment? Yes, immediately if possible. I'm afraid time is of the essence.

Without a word Leo rises, walks over to Ivan and calmly wraps the phone cord around his neck.

RAISA

Leo!

Leo gestures for silence and with Ivan's eyes red and bulging he yanks the phone out of the wall.

RAISA

Leo! Stop it! I don't know why he has it!

LEO

(pushing her off)

It's his prop. And that was his State security contact.

(throttling him)

They're on their way to arrest us right now, right Ivan?

RAISA

Leo, please...

LEO

Zoya, the other teachers... You never told me about any of your friends. Who did you confide in?

(mockingly)

We talked about everyone and everything.

(squeeze)

We trusted each other with our lives.

(squeeze)

Poor Zoya...

Raisa's expression turns stony with realization. Ivan's kicking is becoming more feeble.

LEO

Look away...

RAISA

(coldly)

No.

LEO

(into Ivan's ear, with cold-blooded pleasure)

Woof woof.

INT. ANDREI'S HOME IN ROSTOV - SAME

Late afternoon stillness. Andrei's son is home alone doing schoolwork. He looks up, stares at the padlocked door to the basement for a beat, then returns to his studies. Another beat. Looks at that locked door again. Amidst his rulers and pencils, his fingers find a paperclip which he straightens into a pick.

He rises. Approaches the door. Kid is scared. Finally starts to pick the...

ALICIA (OS)

Yah!

Big sister grabbing him from behind, big joke. Kid has a coronary. So much for exploring...

INT. ANOTHER HOME IN ROSTOV - SAME

CLOSE ON - Nesterov, staring in solemn astonishment at...

More than a dozen men and women, the parents of Rostov's child victims, the silence in the room like a scream.

INT. IVAN'S APT. - SAME

Ivan, the cord still tightly coiled around his throat, is staring bug-eyed at...

VASILI - regarding him with his usual dispassionately curious expression.

Vasili wanders over to the window - looks out on the street corner where Leo and Raisa have taken shelter.

VASILI'S POV - They melt into the crowd but with their backs to him and the number of people on the street..

ON VASILI - Seeing but not seeing them; intuitively on edge.

INT. MOSCOW STATION - 30 MIN. LATER

Leo and Raisa hiding in plain sight. Have to chance it.

PAN of Militsia, checking papers.

Leo picks one and starts to lead Raisa but she stops him.

RAISA
No. That one.

CLOSE ON - Young Militsia, his eyes narrow and his lips moving as he checks travel documents.

RAISA
(experienced teacher)
He can't read.

INT. TRAIN - 15 MINUTES LATER

CLOSE ON A map in Nesterov's lap; towns along train routes, fifty-two sets of dates and victim initials superimposed, the greatest cluster by far, in Rostov. It looks like a heart from which all the other murders branch out like arteries.

EXT. VOUALSK STATION - NIGHT

Leo and Raisa disembarking, heading for the woods.

EXT. FOREST CLEARING

Leo and Raisa stripping off their Moscow clothes. At first, they avert their eyes from each other's nakedness.

Then they don't. They stand there drinking in the sight of each other's bodies for the first time since this all began. It seems like any second they're just going to fling themselves at other.

Then the moment is shattered by the shriek of the train whistle.

Snapping out of it, and without a word, they start to redress in their trekking gear. They get half way done, stop, look at each other once again, and... Fuckit. They strip as fast as they can and go at each other like cannibals...

INT. BASUROV'S INN

Leo and Raisa enter and head for the stairs.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE THEIR ROOM

They can't even wait to go inside - hands all over each other.

LEO'S POV - A note sticking out under the door; very distracting.

RAISA
What...
(Leo stoops, retrieves it)
Leave the damned...
(he reads it)
Oh for... What, what, what...

INT. NESTEROV'S OFFICE - 10:00 PM

The room is dark. One dim light, blinds drawn. Leo enters. Nesterov grabs his elbow, reshuts the door.

LEO
Moscow was a washout.

NESTEROV
(shows him the map)
Forget Moscow. We go to Rostov. It's the heart of this, all the kill routes passing through, plus twice the children murdered there than anywhere else. You said he kills as he travels, yes? So it's likely he works there. Find his job, find him.

LEO
What's the connection between Voualsk and Rostov.

NESTEROV
No murders east of here. This may be his end point.

LEO
What's here for him.

NESTEROV
The Volga factory?

LEO
What's in Rostov for the factory.

NESTEROV
The Rostelmach tractor factory.

LEO
So, what... Share components?

NESTEROV
Possibly. And if Volga sends deliveries to the Rostelmach then the Rostelmach employs a Tolkach to come here to see that Volga fulfills its quota obligations. There's only 2 murders here and they're recent. So either he just got the job or just been assigned this route.

LEO
We need to look at the employment records of the Rostelmach. Find the right posting...

NESTEROV
(turns out the light)
...and he's ours.

EXT. NESTEROV HOME - HOUR LATER

Nesterov begins to pull in but then sees two unfamiliar sedans parked near the house.

Alert now, he quietly begins to reverse out of there, gets halfway down the street...

CLOSE ON - Nesterov.

His family is in there. Where can he go?

EXT. NESTEROV'S CAR

turning around again.

INT. HOUSE

Nesterov walking in, then freezing like a deer.

REVERSE POV - His wife, sitting in a chair, blood matted along one side of her face. Standing behind her are 2 MGB agents, one with a truncheon.

On the small dining table are all his earlier notes and documents re: the child killer.

A third agent enters from his kitchen - it's the gray-haired woman who had taken down his license number at the resort.

INT. BASUROV'S - MINUTES LATER

Leo entering through the rear, slipping past the near deserted front room then flying up the stairs.

INT. HALLWAY

Leo softly tapping. Raisa comes to the door. Leo reaches for her; is startled when she pushes him off

LEO

What...

Then steps inside to see - Vasili and his two local MGB goons lounging on their bed, Vasili in the middle, his elbows propped on the others' shoulders.

VASILI

Miss me?

INT. RAISA'S CELL IN LUBYANKA (MOSCOW) - NEXT DAY

She's standing in the center of the cell, avoiding the eyes of the young guards who appraise her like meat on the hoof.

VASILI

(enters, to guards)

Out.

Vasili offers her one of the two stools, takes the other

VASILI

Sit.

(she hesitates)

Today, please.

(MORE)

VASILI (contd)

(sits)

So... Assuming Leo never brought his work home with him, maybe you think you can hold out in here... And I understand your desire to stay loyal to him.

RAISA

Do you?

VASILI

Well, no, not really... My point being is that it would be better for you to tell me everything immediately.

RAISA

Will it make a difference if I do?

VASILI

Oh sure...

(a beat, then laughing)

I'm sorry. Were supposed to say that.

RAISA

Monster.

VASILI

Who, me? You think I'm the monster? Let me tell you something... Everything I learned in these rooms I learned from your husband. He excelled at this. Very sincere. A traitor was a traitor was a traitor...

(cynical sing-song)

A revolution hated around the world, enemies within, enemies without...

They were the monsters, not us. Although he always left before the party really started.

(more intimately)

You know, I used to study his every move, Leo. What made him better than me. I mean, we all knew how to extract a confession down here. And then, and then... I finally figured it out..

(whispers in her ear)

He was a true believer.

INT. LEO'S CELL - 30 MIN. LATER

The Doctor, without anesthetic, sewing up Leo's face. Vasili enters, watches with his hands behind his back.

VASILI

Christ, you're a butcher.

LEO

Where is she!

VASILI
Right next door! Still a virgin!

LEO
Vasili, please...

VASILI
Oh for...
(to guard)
Open the door.
(then loudly)
Raisa! Say hello to your husband, he's
worried about you.

RAISA(OS)
Leo!

The guard slams the door shut.

VASILI
Get out.

DOCTOR
But I'm not...

VASILI
Out.
(Doctor exits)
I wouldn't trust him to lace my boot.

LEO
There's no need to torture her. Ask me
any question, I'll answer.

VASILI
But I already know everything. I read
the files you collected, I've spoken to
General Nesterov, he's very keen that
his kids shouldn't grow up without
their momma and poppa...
(Vasili sits knee to knee)
I only have one question. Why?

LEO
Why what...

VASILI
Why risk the little you had, the little
we left you... for this?

LEO
The murders? I had a theory. It was
wrong. I retract it fully. Let me sign
a confess -

VASILI
Oh please, don't just tell me what you
think I want to hear, it's very
insulting. And you're probably right,
there's likely some sick twist out
(MORE)

VASILI (contd)

there eating children like an ogre in a
fairy tale. But compared to everything
else in the last forty years?

(shrugs)

But I just have to get at this. Why
would one man want to kill all these
children? Why would anyone?

LEO

Why?

VASILI

(true cynic's heart)
What's the angle, the point... Where's
the profit... It makes no sense.

LEO

The profit? Are you *insane*?

VASILI

I don't know if you're just not telling
me? Or you truly don't know yourself...
In any event...

Doctor Xostov enters the room, syringe in hand.

VASILI

You know the drill.

As Xostov ties off Leo's arm for the shot, Leo, without looking
away from Vasili, opens his mouth for the rubber bit.

But at the last moment, Vasili stays Xostov's hand.

VASILI

Actually, I do have another question
for you...

On LEO - a glimmer of hope.

VASILI

What is it with the goddamned heat in
your apartment? I'm thinking of having
the superintendant shot.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - A FEW DAYS LATER

There are the regular commuter trains. And there's the red
train, the Kolyma milk run, obscured from the eyes of the so-far
unindicted Russian population.

Countless souls are shuffling towards these cattle cars, then
muscled inside when the line backs up on the platform.

ON RAISA - Emotionlessly eyeing her destiny.

GUARD

Wait..

RAISA'S POV - the far end of the platform. She sees Vasili and an older man walking towards her. Vasili waving, the older man shuffling, eyes to the ground. But as they get closer...

RAISA

Leo?

Leo finally raises his eyes. Stares at her then looks away.

Vasili is avidly watching their reunion as if it were a tennis match.

Leo looks at him uncomprehendingly then he and Raisa are herded towards an open car.

VASILI'S POV - watching them disappear into the humanity, the doors closing after them.

Then three last prisoners - *Urkas* - hulking tattooed professional criminals - each one the size of a bear, are brought onto the platform.

GUARD

They said to ask you which car.

INT. CATTLE CAR

Crammed to the rafters. The sliding door reopens, people already sighing for the air.

RAISA'S POV - The Urkas enter, people instinctively trying to clear a path for them.

She looks at Leo. He is gone, gone, gone...

The door slides shut.

EXT. PLATFORM

The train leaving the station.

ON VASILI - strives to feel triumphant, complete, but...

EXT. TRAIN - 100 MILES EAST OF MOSCOW - NEXT DAY

It's moving at a sluggish pace through the countryside. A door slides open and a corpse is tossed to the sidings.

INT. TRAIN - SAME

Surreally crammed, the walls triple tiered with narrow ledges, each plank supporting three and four prisoners; the body heat stultifying.

ANGLE - The Urkas, sitting at ease on their own ledge, imprisonment their métier, everyone steering clear.

ANGLE - through a jungle of legs, we see Raisa and Leo sitting on the floor, Leo with his head in her lap. Raisa feeds him a bit of fish.

RAISA'S POV - The bruises and strap marks on Leo's arms from his time with Vasili.

LEO
(eating, hoarse)
More...

RAISA'S POV - Urkas. One of them winks at her.

INT. LEO AND RAISA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Vasili is laying in bed with the young waitress. He's just staring at the ceiling. He rises goes into the parlor.

INT. PARLOR

Wearing Leo's bathrobe, Vasili wanders about handling objects; whatever remains of them. He pours himself a drink and flops into a chair, lost.

WAITRESS
(entering the room)
Did I do something?

VASILI
Go back to bed.

EXT. TRAIN - ESTAB. SHOT - SECOND DAY

INT. TRAIN

People descending into a stupor. Raisa and Leo still in their corner, Leo's head in her lap. But he's feeding himself now, and his eyes are less vacant.

RAISA'S POV - A guard, walking past her through the mob into the Urka clearing. He says something to them, then walks out of the car.

Like big carnivorous cats, the four Urkas slip lazily, gracefully, from their perch, and start to work their way through the human press.

ON RAISA - Oh-shit-wild-eyed, looking about, no place to escape, Leo half-dead in her lap.

RAISA
Leo.
(Leo, unresponsive; Urkas closing)
Leo, I'm begging you...

Raisa rises to face them, Leo's head slipping to the floor.

There's a massive scurrying, a clearing made.

As the Alpha Goon grabs her, she goes wild, starts fighting for her life, the Urka amused by her fierceness until she rakes his face with her nails. Jerking his head to the side, he lets go.

When he turns back to her, his face is striped with blood. And before she can react, he has her turned around and bent over, the other three closing in.

RAISA'S POV - Leo is gone. Then he's back. He flings himself at the Alpha, but is elbowed in the face for his troubles; goes down in a heap.

The Urkas laugh, get back to business.

But Leo is up again, looking totally disoriented; in fact, he's standing now with his back to them, as if he has no idea where they all went.

ALPHA
(shank in hand)
Pain in my balls...

He comes up behind Leo, but as he attempts to run him through, Leo sidesteps, wheels and punches the man in throat. And as the Urka gasps for air, Leo grabs his shank hand and forces him to drive the steel into his own chest.

A second Urka attacks face to face, Leo allowing him to grab his neck with both hands then skewering him through his unprotected gut with that shank, the guy dying wide-eyed, his hands sliding down Leo's chest.

LEO'S POV - The one remaining Urka, the size of a bus.

Drained of all vitality, Leo staggers to keep his balance, braces for the attack.

But then, as if disowning failure, he simply gives Leo his back and returns to his perch.

Raisa and Leo look at each other, then realize the entire car (except the one surviving thug) is staring at them.

LEO
Those men were ordered to kill us. The next time those doors open the guards expect to find us dead.

EXT. TRAIN - 200 MILES FROM MOSCOW - 2:00 AM

CLOSE ON - The undercarriage of the car, rolling along the rails. We see a hand poking through, using the shank to try and pry the nails out of the double floorboard.

INT. CAR

Leo lying belly down, hand extended through that small cut-out. He's wearing a mask.

MAN 1
(standing over him)
I'm sorry. It's urgent.

Leo nods, rolls away, and we realize that the hole is the toilet, the mask for the stench.

LEO
(to Raisa)
One last nail...

MAN 1
Sorry. Thank you.

EXT. UNDERCARRIAGE - MINUTES LATER

Leo's bloody hand working that last nail free... The underplank falls away, bouncing along the tracks.

INT. CAR

Leo rising, pulling off that mask.

ANGLE - MINUTE LATER

Leo and Raisa trying to pull back the top plank of the hole.

They can raise it up enough to see the rails beneath, to see freedom, but the plank is too thick.

LEO'S POV - A group of prisoners standing over them.

EXT. TRAIN - MINUTES LATER

Moving slowly through silent country.

INT. CAR

The prisoners bending the plank back just far enough.

Raisa is poised to drop through to the rails, her legs already in the hole.

LEO
Wait! Hold on...

EXT. UNDERCARRIAGE

Leo's head coming through.

LEO'S POV - Dangling from the last car, hundreds of swaying hooks of varying heights; escape draggers.

INT. CAR

LEO
I should have known.

RAISA
It's getting light. We can't wait.

LEO'S POV - The dead Urkas. Leo looks to the silent prisoners.

LEO

(to Raisa)

When you drop down, he's coming right after. Get him on top of you.

(frightened, Raisa nods animatedly)

Do you want me to go first? If it doesn't work...

(Raisa shakes her head)

You won't have much time. If even one hook...

She looks at Leo, then drops through. Leo and the others quickly drag the Urka to the hole.

EXT. UNDERCARRIAGE

OOF. Raisa landing dazed, the cars rolling over her.

RAISA'S POV - Those swaying hooks on the last car, hundreds of them, slowly coming closer.

INT. CAR

Leo and the others struggling with the body.

EXT. UNDERCARRIAGE

The corpse of the Urka finally dropping, but not all that close to Raisa, and it's a race between those oncoming hooks and the sheltering stiff, Raisa belly-crawling forward as fast as she can, the hooks slowly gaining...

She reaches the Urka but the big facedown fucker is too heavy to flip, so she frantically burrows under him like a mole.

ANGLE - RAISA, flat on her back, face to face with her would-be rapist-killer, the guy's dead eyes boring into hers without expression, their lips almost brushing... Then... WHOOSH, he's not there, dragged off by the hooks.

RAISA'S POV - The Milky Way... the train receding into the distance.

EXT. UNDERCARRIAGE

ON LEO - hanging upside down from the hole.

LEO'S POV - Down the line of cars... Sees there's a body snagged on the hooks, bouncing along the tracks.

INT. CAR

Some prisoners drag the second Urka in position to drop after Leo. Others draw back the plank.

MAN 2
(re: Urka)
No good. Too big.

Leo looks at everybody, half-salutes, drops through.

EXT. UNDERCARRIAGE

Leo landing awkwardly, his head inches from the steel wheels.

LEO'S POV - That body on the hooks jouncing his way.

ON LEO - waiting, pancaked; please God... He raises his head, sees the Urka coming fast, then brushing over him. A heartbeat of relief then...

CLOSE ON - Stray hook, digs into his shoulder. Leo crying out, as it drags and drags him until he can yank it free.

WIDE - The train rolling away.

Leo flat on the rails, eyes closed. Then opened.

LEO'S POV - Raisa, smiling down on him, her face framed by the stars.

She kneels and kisses him.

EXT. VLADIMIR TRAIN STATION - DAWN

The train parked on a side track. MGB agents and local Militsia coming and going like insects from a hollow log.

ANGLE - The body of the Urka, still ensnared on the drag hooks of the last car.

INT. RAISA and LEO'S FORMER APARTMENT - DAWN

The vestibule. Gray with the hour, stillness. (OS) timid knock at the door. A nervous cough. A second knock, louder. The shuffle of approaching slippers.

Vasili comes to the door in Leo's bathrobe, a Luger behind his back.

VASILI'S POV - Two young MGB agents. They look terrified.

VASILI
What.

AGENT 1
Sir. Two prisoners escaped a transport.

VASILI
For Christ's... *Which* prisoners, *which* transport...
(then dawning, slow grin)
No. Let me guess...

ON THE AGENTS - flummoxed by his chipper reaction.

EXT. FOREST - 170 MILES FROM MOSCOW - 10:00 AM

Leo and Raisa break from a forest and stagger to a stream. On their knees, they douse their heads, drink like animals.

RAISA

You're still bleeding.

(Leo shrugs)

It leaves a scent for the dogs.

She steps to a tree, comes back with a spiderweb, which she lays on his hook-gashed shoulder to staunch the flow.

RAISA

Where are we, do you think.

LEO

48 hours on the train, so say, 200 miles east of Moscow? Maybe 24 hours from Rostov. By train.

RAISA

Rostov. So we continue...

Leo just looks at her. Raisa nods in acceptance.

INT. DARKENED BASEMENT IN ANDREI'S HOUSE - SAME

Poorly lit by the weak light coming through a single grimy window. We hear a click.

See a silhouette framed in a spilling rectangle of light from the head of the stairs.

Andrei descends, the steam-chug of his breath visible in the subterranean winter air.

ANDREI'S POV - A cot. A padlocked wooden icebox. A small work table. A water bucket. A battered tub.

Andrei is holding one of his wrapped packages. He crouches in front of the icebox, opens the padlock, puts the package inside, then relocks.

Rising, he moves to the tub. We see that it's half-filled with ice.

The wall above the tub seems to shimmer; there's something religious, silvery going on but Andrei is blocking our view.

Andrei begins to slowly almost ceremoniously strip off his clothes. As he bends to unlace his shoes the shimmer defines itself as...

A SHRINE TO LEO DEMIDOV - Archival clippings, photos from the TASS agency, PRAVDA, and the lesser newspapers, the centerpiece an enlargement of that iconic shot; Leo waving the Red Army flag in victory.

But this newsphoto, which is printed in black and white, has been painstakingly reworked in vivid colors, except for the outline of Leo himself towering over shattered Berlin...

Which has been flaked in silver and gold like a Russian Orthodox icon and given huge black warrior-wings worthy of Saint Michael. Leo as Warrior-Saint; as Savior.

ANDREI
(gasping as he submerges)
Oh Jesus...

Hold a beat on Andrei as the shock sets in; then Andrei, trembling with hypothermia, starts to weep.

EXT. APPROACH TO A FARMING VILLAGE - EVENING

Late, light fading. Leo and Raisa standing on the outskirts; the Collective split by the river.

LEO
Some of them will still be out in the field. We can sneak in and take some food.

RAISA
Why sneak?

LEO
If they find us they'll turn us in.

RAISA
These people don't give a damn for the state.

LEO
So, just waltz right in?

EXT. VILLAGE - MINUTES LATER

Leo and Raisa, battered and gaunt, walk down the sole street as if it were sewn with mines. The houses on either side of them are primitive affairs; mud-daubed wood.

People slowly come out and stare, their faces blank as masks. The squinting silence, the slow study, is unbearable.

OLD WOMAN
(stepping in their path)
Running?

They nod.

INT. LUBYANKA - KUZMIN'S OFFICE - NEXT DAY

VASILI

We've saturated every possible border route, to the northern coast, to the Baltic, to Finland. The prisoners said they escaped on their own. And trust me they told the truth. The guards were thoroughly interviewed...

KUZMIN

Somebody on that train helped them...

VASILI

Impossible. The arrangements were last minute, no paper trail, no one able to pre-plan, no one even knew which transport they'd be on.

KUZMIN

Well, you did.
(slow lizard-eye beat)
Didn't you?

ON VASILI - Shit...

KUZMIN

You wanted his desk? Then take the weight that comes with it.

INT. VASILI'S OFFICE

Vasili frantic, pacing, on the edge...

He flings himself at his desk and begins to go through Leo and Nesterov's accumulated files - the lists of victims, of suspects, the notated maps - finger-tracing the date-notated towns along the rails, looking for anything, anything... And then he finds it...

VASILI

(on phone)
Bring me Andreyev.

EXT. VILLAGE COMMUNE - SAME

Crates of produce and dry goods are being transferred from the back of one truck to another.

Leo and Raisa emerge from one of the huts and make their way over. They hoist themselves up amongst the loaded crates as the villagers watch.

COLLECTIVE LEADER

Dimitri can take you as far as the outskirts, but he has no business in Rostov itself. There's an open crate back near the cab. Close the lid after yourselves.

As the two of them back into the jungle of crates...

LEO
Which is Dimitri?

Dimitri steps forward - a heavyset man with hidden-agenda eyes, looking at them like rubles on the hoof.

COLLECTIVE LEADER
Good luck and God bless.

Dimitri gives them a long last look then slams down the rear gate, plunging them into darkness.

INT. VASILI'S OFFICE

CLOSE ON - Alexei Andreyev; submissive, blank-faced.

He sits facing Vasili across the document-littered desk.

VASILI
You know why Leo was arrested?

ALEXEI
Anti-soviet agitation. We've been briefed.

VASILI
(shaking his head)
The bosses, they're convinced he was working for the west.
(rising)
But I believe, he was working on this...

Alexei rises to peruse the displayed files, his face remaining impassive. Vasili stands alongside him. He's positioned the crime scene photos in the forefront to jolt Alexei.

VASILI
A series of child murders, you see?

ALEXEI
Yes...

Vasili pulls out Nesterov's final map, the towns notated with the dates of murders, and as he continues to speak he slowly slides his finger along the tracks...

VASILI
(his sliding finger finally comes to a stop at Child 44)
Your son was murdered, yes?

ALEXEI
No. He was killed in an accident.

VASILI
But at first you believed that the boy was murdered?

ALEXEI
At first. Yes. I was upset.

VASILI
Understandable. And Leo was sent to deal with the matter?

ALEXEI
Yes, but...

VASILI
But so when Leo came back to Moscow this time... It wasn't your son's murder that he was interested in?

ALEXEI
(careless)
His death. No.

VASILI
How do you know what he was or wasn't interested in?

ALEXEI
(sweating it)
All I'm saying is that if my son's death was his reason for returning here he didn't contact me.

VASILI
(after a beat)
You must have a very low opinion of me...

(takes out a photo with sons)
For the love of God, if there's a murderer of children out there...
(Alexei is impassive)
Right now I believe that they're hunting this, this thing, but given the circumstances, I mean for God's sake, what chance do they have?

ALEXEI
I don't know what to say. I don't know how I can help you.

VASILI
I thought if I at least knew where they're headed, maybe I could divert the manhunt, give them a fighting chance. But if I don't even...

(Alexei impassive)
Alright, alright... For obvious reasons, this conversation remains between us. Yes?

(Alexei nods)
You can go.

Alexei gets as far as the door, turns...

ALEXEI
If I may ask... Where exactly did they escape?

VASILI
Come here...

They stand over the map again, Alexei leery, hopeful.

VASILI
Here, near Vladimir...

Vasili watches Alexei's gaze traveling south, Leo heading south...

ALEXEI
(ever so carefully)
Well... it seems that the earliest incidents were all in this area, the highest concentration around Rostov-on-Don. So, perhaps this man, if he exists, he lives there, near there...

VASILI
If you say Rostov and you're wrong...

ALEXEI
If I were him I'd be heading to Rostov.

VASILI
He came to see you, didn't he.
(Alexei mute, stares fixedly at the map)
I thought so.
(clapping him on the back)
Hey. If he had come to see me about this? I'd've kept my mouth shut too.

ALEXEI
(turning to him)
Sir...

Vasili shoots him in the head.

INT. LUBYANKA - TWO HOURS LATER

Alexei's body being carried out of Vasili's office on a tarp.

VASILI
(to Kuzmin)
I asked him a few indirect questions about Demidov's whereabouts, next thing I know I'm fighting for my life... However, that being said...

INT. WOODS - SAME

Raisa and Leo stretching their legs. In the background, Dimitri takes a leak near the truck.

RAISA

What will happen when this is over.

(Leo doesn't answer)

The west will want you. They'll protect you.

LEO

No. This, this is *my* country. I'd rather be shoveled under Russian dirt than live anywhere else as a traitor.

(beat)

If you want to defect I'll do everything I can to get you onto a boat.

RAISA

And then you'll what, hide for the rest of your life?

LEO

Hide? What can I change around here if I hide? No. I'm a soldier. And once he's dead I'll find my way to the next battle.

(Raisa looks like hell)

What...

RAISA

Leo... the baby.

LEO

I know.

RAISA

No. You don't. There never was any baby. No baby, no miscarriage, no pregnancy.

LEO

But why...

RAISA

I knew I was in trouble the night you were waiting for me in those bloody clothes and I panicked. I figured...

LEO

...You figured I'd have a harder time turning you in if I thought that you... Raisa, was I that much a stranger to you?

RAISA

(teary)

Yes.

(taking his hand)

But Leo... After eight years, I've finally... I've fallen in love with you.

LEO
I've always loved you.

DIMITRI
Pissbreak's over.

LEO
So where were you going that day with
Ivan?

RAISA
(embarrassed)
He was lending me a book.

Despite everything, Leo smiles, almost (but not quite) laughs.

INT. ROSTOV STATE SECURITY OFFICE - SAME

VASILI
(addressing local troops)
Appearances are meaningless. He might
have grown a beard, she might have cut
her hair...

EXT. PRODUCE DISTRIBUTION CENTER - SAME

Outskirts of Rostov; city-wide terminal; trucks, horses.

VASILI (VO)
...they might be traveling as a couple,
or parted ways.

Leo slips out of Dimitri's truck, shakes his hand.

VASILI (VO)
One of them might be dead...

Then Raisa exits and they both disappear into the crowd.

VASILI (VO)
Ignore all paperwork. Detain any one
remotely suspicious. I'll make the
final decision whether to release them
or not.

EXT. ROSTOV COMMERCIAL STREET - 15 MINUTES LATER

Leo and Raisa scan a line of taxis. They walk to one towards the
end.

LEO
(to driver)
Dimitri says you drink too much.

DRIVER
He should talk.

EXT. ROSTELMACH PLANT - NIGHT

A fortress of industry going full tilt around the clock. The taxi rolls up away from the front gates.

INT. TAXI

Leo and Raisa in back.

LEO
If I'm not back in an hour...

RAISA
You will be.

LEO
If I'm not...

RAISA
I know.

The driver attempts to pass back a gun in a paper bag.

LEO
Not yet.

EXT. SECURITY FENCE - 10 MINUTES LATER

Section sheltered from view by a jutting brick wall. Leo climbs the ten feet, straddles the barbed wire then drops.

EXT. FACTORY GROUNDS

Leo walks to the largest building. Reaches a side door just as two MEN come out.

LEO
I'm from the Volga plant in Voualsk. My train was delayed. Where's the administration building?

WORKER 1
Inside. It's just an office. I'll take you.

LEO
No, that's not...

WORKER 1
No problem.

INT. FACTORY

It's titanic; a cathedral of industry, sky high and deafening, workers everywhere; milling like ants.

WORKER 1
You like living in Voualsk?

LEO
Wouldn't live anywhere else.

They pass a group of men checking inventory. One of them is Andrei.

ANDREI's POV - Leo walking by.

He blinks, Looks again. It's Leo. As if in a dream, Andrei drops his clipboard, and floats after them to catch another confirming glimpse.

Worker 1 and Leo head up a flight of stairs, Andrei remaining at the base. It's Leo...

Thunderstruck, he stands there, lost in thought. He takes off his glasses, bows his head as he cleans them. When he puts them back he's smiling beatifully.

INT. STAIRCASE

WORKER 1
I can't guarantee anybody'll be there.
The paper pushers usually don't work
nights.

INT. CORRIDOR

Leo and Worker 1 heading to the office door. The entire walkway is glass-walled, overlooking the main floor.

ON LEO - tense. Anything that goes down will be in plain view of the personnel below.

Worker 1 knocks on the door. Nothing. Knocks. Nothing. He turns to Leo, and shrugs apologetically. Then the door opens.

BOOKKEEPER
What do you want.

LEO's POV - The office behind. No one else there.

BOOKKEEPER
I said...

Leo wheels and punches his escort in the stomach, the guy folding like a jack knife. He grabs the bookkeeper by the throat, squeezes.

LEO
Do as I say and you'll live. Close the blinds, remove your tie.

ANGLE - Lower half of the struck worker's body being dragged inside.

INT. OFFICE

Blinds drawn, bookkeeper seated, watching Leo bind the worker

with his tie.

BOOKKEEPER

What do you want.

LEO

Employment records.

BOOKKEEPER

Why?

ANGLE - The bookkeeper unlocking a file cabinet.

LEO

Keep your hands on top of the cabinet.

(Leo pulls out a drawer.

Thousands of files)

Where are the *Tolkach's*.

BOOKKEEPER

(re: hands)

May I?

He pulls out the bottom drawer, extracts five files. Then places his hands back on top of the cabinet.

Leo takes a list of towns and murder-dates out of his boot. Opens the first file, compares the *Tolkach's* itinerary with the towns on the list. All wrong. Quickly opens the second. Nope. The third, scanning, comparing, discarding.

The fourth, scanning, comparing, dis... Whoa...

ON ITINERARY AND LIST - West to Moscow - Voualsk, Perm, Nizhniy, Novgorad. South of Moscow - Tula and Orel. In the Ukraine - Kharkov, Gorloyka, Taganrog, Zaporoshky; etc.

ON LEO - Home run. He quickly glances at the fifth file, discards it, then returns to this fourth *Tolkach*.

ON FILE - Leo's jittery fingers flip to the first page. The personnel photo there.

ON LEO - Excited, but something else too, something about this face...

INT. HOTEL ROOM - ROSTOV - SAME

MGB personnel coming and going bringing reports to...

VASILI - sitting on the bed red-eyed with exhaustion, chain smoking, skimming then discarding everything handed to him. His phone rings. Vasili flinches, picks up.

VASILI

Yes Major. Nothing yet, noth... They're idiots here. I'm surrounded by... Yes, of course... I understand... I ...

Kuzmin hangs up on him. In the shit, Vasili ditches his cigarette on the carpet, lights another.

A local agent enters, already cringing; offers a slim report.

AGENT

The Rostlemach. Two men attacked in the administration office tonight.

VASILI

So?

AGENT

Just... Some employment files were stolen?

Vasili slow smiles, then shoots to his feet.

VASILI

They're here.

EXT. WOODED AREA OVERLOOKING ANDREI'S HOUSE - 1:00 AM

Leo and Raisa stare at the sleeping house. Raisa looks crushed.

RAISA

If he's in there... That's the end of us, isn't it.

(Leo silent; what's there to say?)

Go.

LEO

If for any reason you see him leave...

Leo finally opens that paper bag; a gun in there.

RAISA

Go.

INT. ANDREI'S SLEEPING HOUSE - 1:15 AM

ON the front door; softly clicking open. Leo in moonlight, stepping inside. Moves like a wraith; sees -

The tiny kitchen, a parlor, then an adjoining space, not quite a bedroom - Sees a mother and daughter sleeping in the one bed, a boy sleeping on a cot.

Where's Andrei?

LEO'S POV - A dim bar of light under another door off the kitchen.

INT. BASEMENT - the head of the stairs.

Leo quietly pushing the door open, crouching at the top step to get the lay of the land, then drawing his gun and catpawing down the stairs.

LEO'S POV - Most of the basement in shadow. Then he sees the lower half of Andrei's camp bed, his legs protruding from the shadows.

He moves closer and sees the whole of Andrei, shirtless and curled on his side, his back to Leo.

On a small table beside him, his murder kit is laid out as if for inspection - water jug, throttling cloth, butcher's blade.

LEO'S POV - The wall bearing his shrine.

ON LEO - Stepping to his sanctified collage, stunned.

And then we see, behind Leo, rising from the bed...

ANDREI
I hoped and I prayed...

Leo wheels, gun trained.

ALEXEI
But I never thought you'd come...

LEO
Into the light.

Andrei slowly steps forward. Shirtless, he looks as weak and vulnerable as a shelled turtle.

ANDREI
You delivered me once, Leo. Now please, deliver me again.

LEO
Who are you.

ANDREI
It's me, Andrei. Orphanage 41.

LEO
Andrei...

ANDREI
Yes, Andrei. Every day you saved me from those wolves... Mischa, Yurij, Stefan. You saved so many of us... And then... you just left. Went out a window and never came back.

LEO
(dredging up the memory)
I killed a boy.

ANDREI
I don't understand... There was so much death... You left because of one boy?
(beat)
A few days after you were gone, the older ones, they started taking us for
(MORE)

ANDREI (contd)

food, did you know that? Every other day, someone was taken. No one knew who was next... You just waited to see... That was the worst, waiting, for the footsteps, the shadows, the hands reaching for you...

LEO

Andrei...

ANDREI

Then one day I came back from foraging with a new weed. It made everybody sick. Sick so they couldn't move. They were better in a few hours but the next day I went out got more, the day after more, more, more and then one night I put all of it in everything the big ones ate.

Then I laid them out in lines, all the big ones, their eyes were wide open, but not one of them could move.

LEO

Andrei, I...

ANDREI

Do you remember how they used to torture us with ice water in the winter? Well one by one I drowned them where they lay. The weed makes it so that you can't swallow, so all you need is just a little water, just enough to flood the lungs... Watching their eyes...

LEO

(trying to tell him)
Andrei, I don't...

ANDREI

Then you know what I did? The dog ate the wolf. Ate all the wolves... And when they were gone I was still hungry so I went after the younger ones, the other dogs until no one was left.

Six months later when the Nazis came, they looked around and most of them got sick. They thought all the boys had been eaten by the villagers.

And they pitied me, the only one left.

But you know, in all that time back then I kept hoping you'd come back through that window, and then...

(beat)

Well, no matter, you're here now.
You're here now...

LEO
(finally)
Andre... The orphanage, it was so long ago... I don't remember you.

At first Andrei is stupified, but...

ANDREI
(crushed but just shrugs)
I understand... there were so many of us... so many of us. And, it doesn't really matter. Does the Big Man know all our names? Yet he's still our father, our deliverer.

LEO
Andre, all those children...

ANDREI
Leo, let me ask... Once you start to do the things you do in order to survive... How do you stop?

LEO
You just do.

ANDREI
(teary laughing)
'You just do.'
(beat)
Good. Very good.
(beat)
I suppose many people have suffered for my crimes. I should write a confession.

LEO
No one wants your confession. I'm not here for your confession.

ANDREI
(Eyes gun)
No. I suppose not.
(stands up, arms spread)
So, then, one last time, Leo... Deliver me.

ANDREI'S SON (OS)
Daddy?

They turn to see the kid standing on the stairs.

ANDREI
(to his son)
Leo...

ON LEO - jarred; the boy having his name.

ANDREI
Leo, go back to bed.

YOUNG LEO
I can't. I heard you talking. Can I stay?

ANDREI
(gently)
First go make us some tea. When you're done you can stay as long as you like.

The kid takes a long chary look at Leo and his father, then does as he's told.

INT. KITCHEN

Young Leo entering, sees a looming shadow that stops his heart. It's Raisa.

EXT. HOUSE

A silent stampede of shadows - security agents, directed by Vasili, encircling the house.

INT. STAIRS TO BASEMENT

Led by the hand, Raisa steps lightly.

EXT. HOUSE - SAME

Ringed with state security.

VASILI
(to ranking officer)
Unless I call for you, don't, do not enter. Is that clear? If I'm not out in ten minutes storm the house, kill everyone.

INT. BASEMENT

Raisa beholding Leo and Andrei.

LEO
For god's sake...

RAISA
(nodding to the gun)
Do it.

VASILI (OS)
I'd rather you didn't.

All eyes turn to see Vasili casually seated on the lowest stairs, a pistol loosely dangling over his crossed knees, his other arm slung almost chummily around Young Leo's shoulder (low-key version of "...or I plug the kid.")

VASILI
Leo, please lose the gun and get on your knees.
(Leo does as he's told)
(MORE)

(5)

VASILI (contd)
 Raisa... if you'd be so kind.
 (Raisa joins Leo on her
 knees; Vasili rises, turns
 to Young Leo)
 Go stand in a corner or something.
 (saunters over to Andrei,
 his gun loosely trained on
 the other two)
 So you're the stuff of nightmares.
 (gives him the once-over as
 Andrei stares back
 myopically)
 Well that's disappointing...

Vasili then turns to Raisa and Leo. Leaning down to be on eye level with her, he peers into Raisa's eyes, studying her, while holding the gun to her temple.

VASILI
 Truly, truly, truly... I just don't get
 what he sees in you. Maybe you're just
 not my type.

LEO
 Vasili, please, listen to me...

VASILI
 (aping)
 Vasili, please, listen to me...
 (pistol-whips the side of
 Leo's head)
 And that's how that feels.
 (the gun now pressed to the
 back of Leo's head)
 You're an idiot, Leo, you always were.
 But you were a golden idiot, weren't
 you...

LEO
 Vasili...

VASILI
 So many of us know how the game is
 played, but you, you were the only
 pious whore in the nunnery, and, at
 times... it was almost enough to make
 me want to be, aspire to be... You made
 me want...
 (breathe Vasili, get a
 grip)
 Well, no matter, we are who we are,
 (the pistol cocks)
 the face in the mirror is the face in
 the...

Suddenly Vasili seems to go off in his thoughts, dreamy-eyed, his head cocked as if to pick up a faint sound. He looks down at himself, sees the tip of Andrei's knife protruding from his belly.

Andrei stands behind him, chin resting intimately on Vasili's shoulder. Andrei jerks forward, Vasili groaning.

ANDREI

Leo. Get up.

Leo rises, turns to face Vasili, Andrei's chin still on his shoulder like a second head. He takes Vasili's gun.

Vasili looks searchingly at him, then places his hand on his chest, as if to tenderly say goodbye to a friend. Collapses.

Leo is now face to face with Andrei, both men armed and standing close enough to shake hands.

Andrei reaches out and almost tenderly wipes the blood from the side of Leo's pistol-whipped face.

ANDREI

(dropping his knife)

Finish it.

Leo presses the gun to Andrei's chest.

LEO'S POV - Young Leo still at the foot of the stairs. Staring.

Leo freezes.

CLOSE ON - The gun. Raisa's hand slides over Leo's.

RAISA

(whispering)

Like this...

As she pulls the trigger for him.

Andrei looks up as if someone has just called his name from a window. Drops.

At the sound of gunfire, the security forces storm the house, dozens of uniforms, fanning out above and flying down the stairs; take aim at Leo, who drops the gun.

Suddenly from above, from outside the house, from the city of Rostov, seemingly from the earth itself rises an eerie disembodied crooning and wailing punctuated by shouts and wails.

The lead officer stares at Vasili's body laying next to Andrei's.

LEO

This man was a murderer. Your superior officer died trying to apprehend him.

The outside wails and cries of chaos increase.

LEAD OFFICER

What man?

(drawing a bead)

You're the one he was after.

LEO
 (the seasoned MGB
 investigator)
 Fact. This man was a murderer. Fact.
 Your superior officer killed him. Fact.
 He died a hero. Other than that...
 (staring them down)
 Step carefully, comrades.

The officers look at each other warily. Suddenly one of the agents, equal parts panic and resolve, draws a bead on Leo.

LEAD OFFICER
 (hand on barrel)
 Don't be a fool.

LEO'S POV - Utter confusion. Save for Young Leo.

He hasn't moved since the moment he came upon Leo and his father facing each other. Since Raisa and Leo pulled the trigger. But now as if possessed with his father's spirit, he stares at Leo with dull homicidal eyes.

EXT. ANDREI'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Leo and Raisa led out in cuffs by the agents.

INT/EXT. MGB VAN ROLLING INTO MOSCOW - DAWN

LEO and RAISA'S POV - Crushing crowds, people babbling, shouting, running blindly, confusion, grief, hysteria, and an undercurrent of relief.

Everyone in the truck; agents, prisoners are bewildered.

INT. LUBYANKA - 15 MINUTES LATER

The same chaos in the building; babbling MGB agents milling.

VOICES
 What do we do? / Follow orders? / Whose
 orders? / Who's in charge? / What do we
 do?

A security agent comes tumbling down the stairs, his eyes wild in his head.

SECURITY AGENT
 He's dead!

LEAD OFFICER
 Who, Kuzmin?

SECURITY AGENT
 No... Not Kuzmin.

Raisa and Leo look at each other.

FLASHCUT TO:

CLOSE ON - a burning but unsmoked cigarette held between motionless fingers. At this point it's been reduced to a long barrel of ash, which threatens to scorch the skin of the holder.

A second hand comes in from above and gently removes the burning butt, dropping some ash on the tunic of...

GO WIDE to see, through a fog of a dozen exhaled cigarettes, JOSEPH STALIN - laying on the floor of his *dacha*, dead of a stroke, a forest of spit-shined boots milling about the corpse.

EXT. RED SQUARE, MOSCOW - DAYS LATER

Massive line. Black coffin on a pedestal. Gray rain.

CLOSE ON - Leo, back in uniform, in the line, one man in thousands. Behind him is MAJOR GRACHEV.

GRACHEV
(speaking to Leo's back, no eye contact)
Kuzmin was arrested today, you know.

LEO
I've heard.

LEO'S POV - Nikita Kruschev, the new Big Man, being escorted under heavy guard to pay his (token) respects to Stalin.

GRACHEV
We're in new times Demidov.

LEO
I've heard that too.

GRACHEV
I've been authorized to offer you a promotion within the new state security organs. There's a clear route to a political role if you should want it.
(Leo remains silent)
Andrei Siderov... Pravda labelled him the *Werewolf of Rostov*.

LEO
Werewolf, huh?

GRACHEV
We discovered that he spent two years in a German camp during the war. No one survives two years in that situation unless they turn. Obviously we repatriated a Nazi agent. Wouldn't you agree?

LEO
Well, he survived a childhood in an orphanage... Compared to that...

GRACHEV

We now believe he was trained to take revenge on us for their defeat. They wanted the Soviet people to believe our society could produce such a monster, when obviously he was corrupted and transformed by his time in the west.

(Grachev steps in front of Leo, eyes into eyes)

Was this not your thinking, Demidov? People need to hear it from you.

LEO

(playing for high stakes here)

Well, perhaps...

GRACHEV

(watch it now)

Perhaps what.

LEO

In all honesty, who's to say which society made him what he was, but if...

GRACHEV

If what.

LEO

Sir. I would like permission to turn down the offer. And instead make a request of my own.

(Grachev stares, waiting)

I would like to create and take charge of a Moscow homicide department.

GRACHEV

What need is there...

LEO

As you said, murder has been used as a weapon to tear at us from within. No doubt they'll try it again. And I want to be there when they do.

GRACHEV

And Andrei Siderov?

LEO

And then Andrei Siderov was obviously returned to us with a poisoned foreign heart.

(eyes into eyes, sealing the deal)

No doubt about it.

(Grachev nods - the deal closed)

And one last...

FLASH TO:

INT. NEW MOSCOW HOMICIDE OFFICE

Shabby, half a dozen desks but only five detectives. Leo is directing traffic; you there, you there... One desk remains vacant, until...

Nesterov walks in carrying a box of personal items.

LEO (VO)
I would like General Nesterov transferred to Moscow. I think he'd be ideal for this new department.

Nesterov grins.

BACK TO:

EXT. RED SQUARE

LEO
That is, if the state approves...

LEO'S POV - Kruschev looks Leo's way, smiles... the grin both hearty and a little frightening.

ON LEO - unnerved (i.e.; was he looking at me? Or just in my direction?)

INT. ANONYMOUS OFFICE - WEEK LATER

Leo and Raisa seated facing an empty desk. Although they're alone, they speak in whispers.

LEO
What's taking so long.
(beat)
Something's wrong.

RAISA
Nothing's wrong. Relax.

LEO
Relax...

The DIRECTOR (mid-40s bureaucrat) enters the office.

DIRECTOR
I found them.

Found who? He steps aside, and we see Tamara and Elena Okun, (8 and 10) the orphaned daughters of Semyon Okun, murdered with his wife by Vasili. The girls look like institutionalized hell - dead-eyed, undernourished, lice-cropped hair.

RAISA
Can we have a moment with them?

The Director doesn't like the request. Leo glares at him. He leaves without a word.

Alone now with the two strangers, the girls ease away. Leo squats to be on eye level but takes great care not to move towards them.

LEO'S POV - Their hands, clean, but only up to the mid forearms - and the fingernails are etched in grime.

LEO
Hello Tamara, Elena... I'm Leo.
(slides two chairs towards
them)
And this is my wife Raisa. She's a
teacher.

RAISA
Why don't you sit, sweethearts. It's
much nicer sitting down.

The girls do as they're told.

LEO
(nervous)
My... Raisa and I... We would... We'd
like to give you a home. Our home.

TAMARA
(big-eyed with recognition)
You came to our farm...

Leo bows his head - this is so fucked.

LEO
No. I mean yes, I did. I was, I was
with the man who... I tried to stop him
but I couldn't... Girls. I would have
done anything but this I swear. I am
not like him. I am not like that man.

RAISA
We want to look after you, take care of
you.

LEO
We can't give you back your parents. We
would if we could, it's just... This
place... I was raised... This is no
place for you.

RAISA
We won't take you if you don't want to
come with us. We can find another
family for you. But I promise, we won't
leave you here.

LEO
My wife and I will go for a walk. You
can have this room to yourself. Make
whatever decision you like. You have no
reason to be afraid.

Nonetheless Leo lingers, the girls unreadable, just staring at him. Raisa has to move him to the door.

INT. DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

The girls alone. Silent. Blank as Sphinxes. Then the younger one takes the elder's hand.

EXT. ORPHANAGE

Raisa and Leo sweating it out; Raisa hugging herself, Leo anguished, pacing like an expectant father. Abruptly, he stops; stares searchingly into Raisa's eyes.

LEO
Raisa, the truth... Am I a frightening man?

The sound of the main door opening turns their heads to see -

The two Okun girls, still holding hands and staring with both fear and hopefulness at their new parents.

The orphanage door quietly closes behind them.

No one - Leo, Raisa, the two girls - can make a move; everyone wanting this so badly...

And then Leo, looking scared, slowly walks towards them, his arms extended.

END

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