

**LONDONGRAD**

**Screenplay by David Scarpa**

**Based on "The Terminal Spy"  
by Alan Cowell**

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FADE IN:

A HUMAN FACE

comes into SOFT FOCUS before us. A man's ghostly silhouette, viewed through an otherworldly blue GLOW. We can barely discern his features.

SASHA (V.O.)

My name is Alexander Valterovich  
Litvinenko. Call me Sasha.

We PULL BACK to reveal that he is not alone. He is seated at a table with three other seeming ghosts.

We view the scene through a high-powered radiation sensor: a *spectrograph*. The effect is akin to a night-vision scope.

The ghosts are drinking, toasting one another, laughing, but their words are as indistinct as their faces.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

One sunny afternoon in London, while  
drinking cup of tea with some very  
good friends of mine, I swallowed  
tiny nuclear bomb.

One of the men reaches offscreen and brings back a TEAPOT.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

This was not accident.

The teapot is GLOWING from within, phosphorescent, nearly  
burning a hole in the screen.

The ghost pours a cup of this phosphorescent liquid into  
Sasha's teacup, then pushes it across the table toward him.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I was given radioactive dose twice  
that absorbed by persons standing at  
center of Chernobyl nuclear meltdown.

Sasha takes the teacup and drinks from it.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I was given radioactive dose great  
enough, if placed in city's water  
system, to kill one million people.

Sasha looks at the cup quizzically. The tea tastes odd.

The other ghosts' blurred faces are like masks: all we see  
are their smiles.

Finally, they rise from the table, shake hands, embrace, say goodbyes. As they part, Sasha walks outside --

EXT. GROSVENOR SQUARE -- SPECTROGRAPH IMAGE -- DAY  
-- into the crowded street, dense with pedestrians.

SASHA (V.O.)  
And yet -- *I am alive.*

Now, as he moves through the crowd, we see that he too has begun to take on a phosphorescent glow.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
But as I lie here I can distinctly  
hear the wings of the Angel of Death.

His hands are stained with phosphorescence from the teapot. He emits faint traces of it as he walks.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
I may be able to give him the slip,  
but I have to say my legs do not run  
as fast as I would like.

His steps falter. He feels unwell. He stops. Something is terribly wrong.

He stands utterly still, glowing from within as oblivious pedestrians stream around him.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
I think, therefore, that this may be  
the time to say one or two things to  
the person responsible for this act --

He looks directly at us, and we

CUT TO:

HEADLIGHTS

on a taxicab streaming through the rainy London night.

INT. TAXICAB -- NIGHT

CLOSE on ALEXANDER "SASHA" LITVINENKO as he lies in the back seat of the Hackney carriage.

As the passing streetlights play over his face, he comes into sharp focus for the first time. He is forty-three years old, blond, handsome, and profoundly sick. He whispers:

SASHA  
*Marusya. Devotchka moy...*

He opens his eyes and gazes at his wife, MARINA, as she wipes the sweat from his face with a handkerchief.

MARINA (O.S.)  
*Tiho, Sasha. Tiho.*

She is delicate, graceful, and afraid. Sasha smiles sadly:

SASHA  
They finally got me.

INT. BARNET HOSPITAL -- EMERGENCY ROOM -- NIGHT

The waiting area is standing-room-only. We FOLLOW Sasha and Marina as she helps him through the crowd to the front reception area.

MARINA  
Please. My husband needs a doctor.

The ORDERLY doesn't look up from her computer.

ORDERLY  
National Health card, please.  
(taking it from her)  
Alan Carter?

SASHA  
No.

MARINA  
Yes. That's his name.

The ORDERLY looks at them. Then:

SASHA  
I've been poisoned.

ORDERLY  
Your symptoms are consistent with food poisoning, Mr. Carter, but we'll have to wait for the doctor to make --

SASHA  
Not food poisoning. Poison poisoning.  
(off her look)  
Murder. Someone is trying to murder me.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR -- NIGHT

The ORDERLY leads a visitor through the fluorescent maze: BRENT HYATT (33) wears a cheap rainmac to protect his flash suit from the rain.

HYATT  
(on mobile phone)  
Right. Take-away. Tikka, Chicken.  
Naan. Basmati. Chutney. Kingfisher,  
the big one.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- NIGHT

Hyatt points to a man in one of the beds as he enters.

HYATT  
That him? No?  
(to mobile)  
Right. English spicy, not Indian  
spicy. Now read that back to me.

He pulls back the curtain of the other bed -- it's empty.

HYATT (CONT'D)  
Where is he?

We hear a GROAN from O.S.

INT. BATHROOM -- MORNING

Sasha lies propped against the bleached bathroom tiles, clutching his abdomen like a stab wound. Marina crouches beside him, wringing out the rag she's using to clean him up.

HYATT  
Alan Carter? I'm with the  
Metropolitan Police.

SASHA  
This is not my name.

ORDERLY  
(off Hyatt's look)  
It's what's on his passport, his NHS  
card, all his identification --

SASHA  
They took away my name. They gave  
me new identity when I came here.

Hyatt looks right through him.

HYATT  
(to mobile)  
Right. Twenty minutes. Cheers.

Hyatt closes his phone. He watches Sasha as he struggles to lift himself up. Finally, he offers a hand.

SASHA  
I don't need your help.

With enormous will, Sasha manages to rise to his feet.

SASHA (CONT'D)  
You don't believe me. Do I sound  
like someone named Alan Carter?

He pushes past Hyatt and staggers to the hospital bed.

HYATT  
Right. As a matter of policy, this  
hospital notifies Scotland Yard when  
a patient claims to have been a victim  
of a crime. A report must be filed.

SASHA  
Of course. Nothing must get in the  
way of reports being filed.

HYATT  
I'm told you're experiencing symptoms  
of food poisoning. Can you tell me  
what you had for lunch, Mr. Carter?

Sasha looks annoyed. Then:

SASHA  
Sushi.

HYATT  
Right.

SASHA  
I know what is food poisoning. This  
is not food poisoning. This burns.  
This burns in my veins.

HYATT  
Perhaps you can tell me who poisoned  
you, Mr. Carter. Do you have a name?

SASHA  
I do.

Hyatt flips out his mobile to transcribe the name.

SASHA (CONT'D)  
*Komityet Gosudarstvyennoi*  
*Biezopasnosti.*

HYATT  
(typing furiously)  
Crikey. Spell that out for me, will  
you? Slowly this time.

SASHA  
Is OK. You just have to remember  
the initials.

Hyatt looks down at his mobile's screen. The name is a misspelled jumble, but the initials are clear enough:

HYATT  
K-G-B.  
(looking at Sasha)  
You're saying you were poisoned by  
the KGB.

Sasha nods slowly.

HYATT (CONT'D)  
Right.

Hyatt SNAPS his mobile closed and walks out.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR -- MORNING

Hyatt calls out over his shoulder to the orderly as he leaves:

HYATT  
Next time run this through in-house  
social services and save us all a  
bit of time, yeah?

MARINA (O.S.)  
They already did.

Hyatt turns. Marina is standing in the corridor.

HYATT  
What did they say?

MARINA  
I don't know. Maybe they believe  
him.

Hyatt laughs. Looks at her.

HYATT  
What do you think -- ?

MARINA  
I am Marina.

HYATT  
What do you think, Marina?

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

CLOSE on SASHA as he watches from his bed. Listening.

HYATT (O.S.)  
Do you believe he was poisoned by  
the KGB?

Marina looks at Hyatt pleadingly.

MARINA  
He's my husband.

Sasha closes his eyes. Hyatt glances at his watch.

HYATT  
I don't have time. My caseload --

MARINA  
Please.

Hyatt looks away. He nods grudgingly. He walks into the hospital room, where Sasha lies in bed with his eyes closed.

HYATT  
Mr. Carter.

SASHA  
Sasha.

HYATT  
Sasha. You do understand that there's no such thing as the KGB anymore.

Sasha opens his eyes.

SASHA  
Is that what you think?

HYATT  
All that ended twenty years ago.

Sasha shakes his head.

SASHA  
No. That's when it began.

He begins to drift away, losing consciousness, and we

CUT TO:

## ANOTHER WORLD

Of ice and snow and jagged black granite as we SOAR overhead. A herd of migrating caribou thunders below.

TITLE UP: **NOVOSIBIRSK, SIBERIA -- 1984**

Set against this uninhabitable landscape is a concrete APARTMENT COMPLEX. A LONE MAN walks down its only street.

## EXT. STREET -- NOVOSIBIRSK, SIBERIA -- DAY

He is a shadow against the blinding whiteness, clutching his too-thin wool coat around him. It's Sasha.

He pulls back his glove, checks his watch. He's late. Then he sees it -- a lamppost with an "X" marked in spraypaint.

He walks into the adjacent alley. He pries back the plywood that covers a broken window. Finally it comes loose.

## EXT. ROOFTOP -- HOUSING COMPLEX -- DAY

Up here, there is no shelter from the piercing wind. Sasha looks around, spots it: the chimney.

He kneels. Reaches down. Gropes around. Finds it. A rope. He reels it in like an ice-fisherman. Finally he lands it --

-- it's a Kalashnikov rifle. He turns and walks to the rooftop's edge. Far below us, a black ZIL 119 sedan on chained tires rumbles down the street.

Sasha crouches at the rooftop's edge as the ZIL pulls up to an empty storefront. He can't fit his gloved finger through the trigger guard, so he pulls off his glove with his teeth.

A driver emerges from the ZIL as Sasha takes aim. Another man -- a visiting dignitary? -- emerges.

SASHA  
*Zhdat', zhdat'...*

Now another man emerges from the storefront. They embrace.

Sasha hesitates -- the men turn to re-enter the storefront. He's losing the target. He pulls the trigger, FIRES --

-- and a plume of BLOOD flashes amidst the snow. Sasha looks at what he's done. A moment's silence, then we hear it --

-- the ALARM, like an air-raid siren. Sasha rises, stunned. He tries to throw the rifle down the chimney --

-- but it won't leave his hand. In the half-minute it took to pull the trigger, the gunmetal has frozen to Sasha's skin.

As the sirens HOWL, he tears the rifle from his hand and throws it down the chimney. His hand is turning blue, the skin bleeding. He looks for his glove, realizes, turns --

-- to see it blowing off the edge of the rooftop, borne aloft on the wind, threatening to give away his location. He turns and runs down the stairwell.

EXT. ALLEY -- DAY

He races through the labyrinth of concrete alleyways, clutching his bleeding, freezing hand. Then he sees it --

-- a Lada Samara idling in the alley, waiting for him. He climbs inside --

SASHA  
*Poékhali! Itdi idti idti -- !*

The driver, MISHA, is not much older than Sasha. He puts the Lada into gear -- and we hear a loud GRINDING noise.

He tries again. The car lurches forward. Stalls. Now, through the rear window, we see them --

-- two SHADOWS approaching in the background. Misha keeps turning over the engine, their desperation growing, and then --

-- a great gloved hand SLAMS down on the roof of the car.

VOICE (V.O.)  
Get out.

They cannot disobey. They climb out to face COLONEL EGOROV, a stone-faced man in a leather coat. He sniffs at the air.

EGOROV  
Do you know what that smell is?

MISHA  
No, sir.

EGOROV  
(to his partner)  
You see, Kostya? I told you. Country boys can be taught to kill. They slaughter pigs from the day they learn to walk. But put them behind the wheel of a car -- ?

(to Misha)  
What you smell is the clutch. You burnt it out.

Egorov walks away. In the distance we see the "visiting dignitary" cleaning the red paint from his neck. As we pull back, we realize the entire town is a KGB training complex.

SASHA  
Colonel Egorov? What happens now?

EGOROV  
Exercise is finished.

SASHA  
But -- what happens to *us*?

EGOROV  
You go back to the dormitory.  
(looks at his watch)  
You completed your assignment. Your  
time was best in class, not counting  
the business with the car. You  
continue in the program.  
(off Sasha's look)  
You'll need this.

He throws something at Sasha -- it's his lost glove. We  
PUSH IN on the two young men: they can't help smiling.

SASHA (V.O.)  
In 1984, if you were a young Russian,  
there was no greater dream than to  
become a member of the KGB.

CUT TO:

A SECRET AGENT

in a scratchy black and white movie: "THE SWORD AND THE SHIELD". Soviet movie hero ALEXSANDR BELOV is confronted at gunpoint, Dr. No-style, by the evil Nazi General SCHWARTZKOPF.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
These were the men who single-handedly  
defeated the Nazis during the Great  
Patriotic War.

BELOV  
Do what you will to me, General.

INT. MOVIE THEATER

We PULL BACK, taking in the audience. Entire families share meals in the aisles; old people sleep or drink vodka; young couples grope; and the young Sasha sits alone, rapt, reciting every word of dialogue along with Belov...

BELOV/SASHA

Soon my comrades will overtake this city, and your Nazi flag will come down forever.

Belov pulls out a hidden revolver -- Schwartzkopf FIRES --

-- and the battered, re-spliced B&W print JUMPS, clattering sprocket holes in the projector. The re-spliced action sequence makes no sense, but Sasha is spellbound nonetheless.

We abruptly cut to the aftermath: a Soviet soldier atop a parapet, waving a Soviet flag over Berlin as Belov looks on.

SASHA (V.O.)

These were heroes.

INT. SOVIET YOUTH TRAINING CENTER -- DAY

Two FENCERS square off, epees flashing in a furious fléche attack. We are in a large gymnasium, with a mural depicting idealized Soviet athletes with Olympic medals on their chests.

One of the fencers mounts a continuous riposte, risking a corps-a-corps collision -- and then he scores the hit. The BUZZER sounds, and the fencer pulls off his mask. It's Sasha.

SASHA

(breathless)

The epee is mine. If I can take the pistol and riding events, there's still a chance I can qualify --

Sasha's coach, BUNIN, throws him a towel.

BUNIN

Rest now. Don't talk so much. Rest for the next event.

Bunin gently takes Sasha aside.

BUNIN (CONT'D)

Sasha. Time has come to think about what you want.

SASHA

I want what everyone here wants.

BUNIN

The medal. But why.

Sasha looks at him. Is this a test?

SASHA

For Russia. I want it for Russia.

BUNIN  
There's someone I want you to meet.

In the distance stands an observer. We can't see his face, but his suit gives him away as an official of the state.

SASHA  
Is he from the Olympic Committee?

BUNIN  
I don't think that's in your future.

SASHA  
My times were improving.

BUNIN  
You're getting older. I have to think of the team.

Sasha is crushed, but tries to hide it.

BUNIN (CONT'D)  
But in a way, for you, this is even better.

Sasha doesn't understand.

BUNIN (CONT'D)  
The Company comes to me from time to time. I told them about you.

SASHA  
What company?

Bunin smiles.

BUNIN  
In all the Worker's Paradise, there's only one company. The KGB. That's what they call themselves: Kontora.

Bunin turns, and the observer approaches. We recognize him at once: it's Colonel Egorov. He extends his hand.

EGOROV  
Hello, Sasha.

INT. RED BANNER ACADEMY -- CLASSROOM -- DAY

Sasha wears the uniform of a KGB corporal as he sits in a classroom taking a test.

SASHA (V.O.)  
At Novosibirsk we learned counter-intelligence, KGB's *Spetznaz* hand-to-hand combat system, codebreaking.

We push in over his shoulder to see what he's working on --

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
But there were other things we had to learn about, things we had to know in order to survive in America, things we'd never even heard of --

-- it's an ordinary bank check. Sasha fills it out carefully, as if he were deciphering an exotic code.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
-- things like banks, and credit cards, and mortgages, and rent... in a word: money.

Sasha is almost finished with the check. He turns -- his friend Misha sits at the desk next to his. Sasha watches his friend struggle helplessly with a credit-card application.

MISHA  
(whispering)  
Credit reference? Sasha, what is this again?

SASHA (V.O.)  
You see, in the Soviet Union, money didn't matter. Money could even attract the wrong kind of attention if you had too much of it.

Sasha surreptitiously passes his own paperwork to Misha while the proctor isn't looking.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
What was important was power.

EXT. GORKY STREET, MOSCOW -- DAY

Sasha and Misha walk Moscow's main thoroughfare, provincial kids in the big city for the first time. They gaze up at 19th-century Palladian mansions and apartment buildings.

SASHA (V.O.)  
If you had power and you saw an apartment you wanted, it was yours. It didn't matter if someone was already living there. You just took it.

A GAZ Chaika sedan with curtained rear windows pulls up to the curb. A GRAY MAN climbs inside.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
There was a word for these men.  
They were *Siloviki*. It means, simply,  
"Men of Force".

The limo pulls away. Sasha and Misha descend into a subway.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
The *Siloviki* lived in a different world from everybody else.

INT. GORKY SUBWAY STATION

The platform is packed with sweaty proles packed five-deep. Sasha tentatively approaches a ticket-taker --

-- and he flashes his provisional KGB badge. The ticket taker shows him to a turnstile which leads to a separate platform.

INT. KGB SUBWAY CAR

Sasha and Misha walk into a well-appointed subway car that is empty but for four *Siloviki* in comfortable seats.

SASHA (V.O.)  
They had their own special subway,  
which couldn't be found on any maps.

The two boys do their best to look like they belong. It doesn't work. They step off the train and onto an escalator --

INT. "THE WOODS" -- DEPARTMENT STORE -- DAY

-- which unfurls into a mall-like complex sequestered from the rest of the city.

SASHA (V.O.)  
They had their own private compound,  
with a private spa and its own  
department store, where you could  
buy things that were only available  
in the West.

They sweep past endless rows of Italian suits, French perfumes, blue jeans, Japanese hi-fi equipment. Sasha approaches a microwave oven. He opens and closes its door.

MISHA  
I've seen these before, Sasha. It's a breadbox. It keeps the bread fresh.

SASHA  
Stupid. Who needs this?

Sasha turns -- and then he sees them: ORANGES arranged in a small pyramid on a platform.

SASHA (CONT'D)  
Misha, look -- !

They approach the little pyramid of oranges.

SHOPGIRL  
From Cuba.

Sasha picks one up and smells it. He reaches into his pocket and pulls out a wad of ruble notes. The girl smiles.

SHOPGIRL (CONT'D)  
Take it. It's yours. Just take it.

EXT. RED SQUARE -- DAY

Sasha's thumbs dig into the orange and tear it in two. He hands half to Misha, who walks beside him. Sasha glances up -- -- the other pedestrians on the street are staring at them. Amidst the grey of Moscow's winter, the orange is the *orangest* orange on earth. It's almost indecent.

Sasha pops a slice in his mouth. He walks taller with every step, drawing energy from the orange, from the attention it attracts. Then they round a corner, and they see it --

-- a huge BRICK FORTRESS that spans several blocks. They gaze up at it in awe.

MISHA  
That's it.

They turn and embrace one another out of sheer excitement.

SASHA (V.O.)  
Lubyanka Center. In all of human history, no single building has meant death to so many people as this one.  
(a beat)  
But back then we didn't know that.  
We thought it was fucking Valhalla.

SASHA (CONT'D)  
Let's go.

INT. LUBYANKA CENTER -- GREAT HALL -- DAY

A sea of crimson flowing banners and Soviet flags and triumphant MARTIAL MUSIC. Young KGB officers in uniform stand in parade formation as a grey, featureless man, KOMMISAR VIKTOR KOVALEV pins KGB shields to their chests.

KOVALEV

Andrey Andreevich Vostoy, you will be joining Fifth Directorate.

SASHA (V.O.)

The Fifth Directorate were charged with enforcing Ideological Purity. They were the most feared men in Russia. The KGB of the KGB.

Kovalev moves down the line, until he arrives at Misha.

KOVALEV

Mikhail Georgeivich Brodsky, you will be joining the First Directorate of the KGB. Well done.

Misha seems shocked at his own good fortune.

SASHA (V.O.)

The First Directorate was the KGB'S elite: the men who went to America as agents. We'd made it.

Finally he reaches Sasha.

KOVALEV

Alexander Valterovich Litvinenko, you will be joining the Third Directorate of the KGB.

Sasha looks stunned. Kovalev has already moved on.

INT. LUBYANKA CENTER -- GREAT HALL -- NIGHT

Music, dancing, and lots of drinking. Sasha stands at the edge of the circle, watching. Careful not to attract too much attention, he picks up a glass from one of the tables...

INT. LUBYANKA CENTER -- MEN'S ROOM

...and rinses it out. He fills it with cold water, then heads back toward the party.

EGOROV (V.O.)

Litvinenko.

Sasha turns. Colonel Egorov stands in the hallway, smoking a cigarette. He holds his liquor well.

SASHA  
Colonel.

The Colonel embraces him.

EGOROV  
*Serdechnye pozdravleniya.*

Sasha bows his head in thanks and turns to go. Then he stops.

SASHA  
Colonel.

EGOROV  
Yes, Alexander Valterovich.

SASHA  
Why Misha and not me? I was smarter than the rest. I was faster than the rest, stronger --

EGOROV  
You were.

SASHA  
Then why wasn't I chosen for the First Directorate?

EGOROV  
You talk too much.  
(a beat)  
You were too smart. Too fast. You wanted to be the best, to get attention. It's a bad trait in this profession. The *Kontora* man never stands out. Never attracts attention.

Egorov admires a portrait of Yuri Andropov on the wall.

EGOROV (CONT'D)  
You know, it's been said that our own Chairman Andropov had no distinguishing qualities at all.  
(a beat)  
Counterintelligence is the place for you. You'll fit in there.

SASHA  
I see. Thank you, Colonel.

EGOROV

Wait a minute. Come here. What's  
that in your glass?

Sasha gives it to him. Egorov sniffs it.

EGOROV (CONT'D)

Water.

SASHA

I don't drink, sir.

EGOROV

Why not?

SASHA

I don't like to lose control.

EGOROV

You've never been in control.

He dumps the water on the floor, then hands Sasha the glass.

EGOROV (CONT'D)

No one trusts a man who drinks water.

Sasha turns and walks back inside.

SASHA (V.O.)

The Colonel was right.

EXT. MOSCOW STREETS -- NIGHT

Sasha walks home from work, laughing with two comrades.

**TITLE UP: MOSCOW, 1987**

SASHA (V.O.)

I was happy in Moscow. It was good  
to be KGB.

They approach an unmarked, windowless building, knock on the door, and show their badges. The door opens and we enter

INT. CLUB DZHERZINSKY -- NIGHT

A nightclub wallpapered in red velvet, packed with *Siloviki* in booths, tended to by gorgeous Siberian girls.

SASHA (V.O.)

KGB had everything. They even had their own nightclub, named after Felix Dzherzinsky, founder of the KGB, with the most beautiful girls shipped in from all over USSR.

A bust of Felix Dzherzinsky watches over it all.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
They didn't give us all this out of  
kindness. They gave us everything  
to keep us from temptation. And for  
some, it still wasn't enough.

Sasha turns -- and spots Misha across the crowded room.  
Sasha calls out to him. He presses through the crowd --

-- when suddenly there's a hand in his chest. A Fifth  
Directorate agent gently takes him aside.

5TH AGENT  
Major Brodsky is not available.

Sasha pushes the man's hand from his chest.

SASHA  
So Misha doesn't want to be seen  
with his old friends? Then fuck  
him, and fuck you too --

5TH AGENT  
(sotto voce)  
Comrade. It's you that doesn't want  
to be seen with him.

Sasha looks at him, uncomprehending. The agent walks back  
to the table, where Misha is very drunk.

EGOROV (V.O.)  
You're friends with Misha Brodsky,  
yes?

INT. SASHA'S APARTMENT -- BEDROOM -- DAY

Sasha sits on his bed, talking on the phone as his first  
wife, NATASHA, looks on with keen interest.

EGOROV (V.O.)  
He's back from the USA.

SASHA  
Yes. I know.

EGOROV (V.O.)  
How do you know?

SASHA  
I saw him at Club Dzherzinsky.

EGOROV  
You should invite him for a drink.

SASHA

Yes sir.

EGOROV

Tell him you're bringing two friends.

SASHA

What friends?

EGOROV

You don't know them. You just invite him for a drink. That shouldn't be too hard.

SASHA

No. It's not a problem.

EGOROV

*Horoshoo'.*

SASHA

Colonel. Why are you asking me to do this?

EGOROV

Because you're his friend.

DIAL TONE.

NATASHA

What do they want?

Sasha gently puts down the receiver.

MISHA (V.O.)

It's not just the quality, Sasha.  
It's the variety.

INT. SHERATON MOSCOW HOTEL BAR -- NIGHT

Sasha, Misha, SERGEY and GENNADY drink, laughing loudly.

MISHA

Here, they all come in the same color.  
There, it's white, black, brown, any color you want.

GENNADY

(laughs)

How about blue?

SASHA

You've had a black one?

MISHA  
Of course, I would never compromise  
my prime directive.

Everyone laughs. Sasha knocks back another shot.

MISHA (CONT'D)  
So you drink vodka now?

SASHA  
Just for tonight.

Misha looks at Sasha. His expression clouds over.

SASHA (CONT'D)  
(very drunk)  
Any color you want. Any size. Cars,  
washing machines, women. One big  
supermarket. That's all it is.

MISHA  
That's not all it is. It's more  
than that.

SASHA  
Didn't take long, did it.

MISHA  
You have no idea. No idea.

Misha rises from the table.

MISHA (CONT'D)  
I'm going for a piss.

GENNADY  
I'll go with you.

Misha looks at him. They exit, leaving Sergey with Sasha.

SERGEY  
You know, Alexander Valterovich, you  
can't talk a man out of a thing he's  
already done.  
(a beat)  
Finish your drink. When they get  
back, we're going.

EXT. M10 HIGHWAY SHOULDER -- NIGHT

Misha's SCREAMS and CRIES can be heard over the HOWL of traffic  
from the M10 highway.

Misha stumbles along, PLEADING for mercy as Gennady kicks  
him like a deflated football along the shoulder.

SASHA

That's enough. He made a mistake,  
he's sorry. He's had enough.

GENNADY

(kicking Misha)

*Shlyuha!*

SASHA

That's enough, I said. What is this?

SERGEY

*Vyshaya Mera.* That's what this is.

The words are a slap in the face. Sergey offers him a gun.

SERGEY (CONT'D)

No? Didn't think so.

Misha can't walk anymore, so they drag him facedown along the ground until they reach a suitable ditch. Then they prop him up before it, weeping.

SERGEY / GENNADY

*Predatel'.*

MISHA

I'm sorry.

In unison, they FIRE high-caliber rounds into the back of Misha's head. Misha's body lands softly, his blood and brains melting through the fresh snow.

They walk back to their car. Drivers on the highway have watched the entire thing, wide-eyed, causing a mini-traffic jam on the M10. Sergey glares at them and they speed off.

Sasha stands by the ditch, staring at Misha's faceless body.

SERGEY

You staying or you coming with us?

INT. SASHA'S APARTMENT -- BEDROOM -- DAY

Sasha lies in bed, pale and hung over. From outside he hears a woman's WAILING. He rises from his bed, goes to the window --

EXT. APARTMENT COURTYARD -- DAY

-- where Misha's wife is speaking to two MOSCOW POLICE as her uncomprehending CHILDREN look on.

NATASHA (O.S.)

What happened?

INT. SASHA'S APARTMENT -- BEDROOM -- DAY

Natasha, Sasha's wife, stands in the shadows as he looks out the window. He whispers to himself:

SASHA  
*Vyshaya Mera.* The punishment for traitors.

NATASHA  
What did they do to him?

Sasha doesn't answer.

NATASHA (CONT'D)  
We can't be seen with them anymore.

SASHA  
Where are they going to go? How are they supposed to survive?

NATASHA  
It doesn't matter.

Natasha dissolves into the shadows.

SASHA (V.O.)  
I felt such pity for his family.  
But for Misha, I felt nothing.  
(a beat)  
To me, the USSR was the best, the fairest society on Earth. I couldn't imagine how he could betray it.

Sasha drops the curtain, leaving us in DARKNESS --

SASHA (CONT'D)  
And then everything changed.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

-- and the curtain surrounding Sasha's bed is DRAWN BACK, flooding the room with daylight.

Everything is OUT OF FOCUS: we can barely make out the forms of nurses and orderlies bustling around Sasha's hospital bed, and a DOCTOR's white coat talking to Marina:

DOCTOR  
Blood work and urinalysis all came back normal.

Sasha raises his hand and FOCUSES his gaze on it. He runs his fingers through his hair. His hand comes back matted with clumps of the stuff.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)  
Few cases of food poisoning last  
more than 48 hours. I'm going to  
release him tomorrow.

Sasha wipes the hair off on his bedsheet, then runs his fingers through his hair again. It comes out effortlessly.

SASHA  
Is this symptom of food poisoning?

The Doctor comes into focus as he approaches Sasha's bedside.

DOCTOR  
Hair loss is not a symptom of  
poisoning. It is a symptom of middle  
age.

MARINA  
He always had the most beautiful  
hair. It's not like him.

The Doctor turns to leave. Sasha watches as Marina follows the Doctor into the hallway outside, whispering:

MARINA (CONT'D)  
Something is wrong with my husband.

DOCTOR  
Cephalosporin 40mg, twice daily, bed  
rest, plenty of fluids.

Marina watches him walk away. She pulls out her mobile phone. She scrolls through the names until she finds one labeled, simply, "BORIS". She gazes at it for a moment, uncertain.

Finally, she stabs the DIAL button. Raises it to her ear.

MARINA  
This is Mrs. Marina Litvinenko. Is  
he available?  
(a beat)  
Of course.

She gazes skyward, unsure, anxious. Then:

MARINA (CONT'D)  
Hello, Boris.  
(a deep breath, then:)  
We need your help.

Marina glances back at us. An orderly pulls the curtain closed again, drawing Sasha into darkness...

SASHA (V.O.)  
One morning, we woke up to find that  
our country was gone.

CUT TO:

A STATUE OF LENIN

as it's dragged through the streets of Moscow behind a truck,  
throwing glowing sparks in its wake.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
For you, it was victory. For us, it  
was tragedy.

**TITLE UP: MOSCOW 1993**

EXT. TYVERSKAYA PROSPEKT -- DAY

As the statue passes, we MOVE with it through streets crowded  
with dazed, aimless-looking, hungry people. Most stores are  
boarded up. The ones that aren't have lines around the block.

SASHA (V.O.)  
The ruble was worthless. Millions  
of people starved on the streets.

Now we hear SIRENS in the distance -- we turn another corner,  
breaking away, leaving the statue behind --

EXT. WAREHOUSE -- DAY

-- and approach the flashing sirens just as a government-  
issue VOLGA SEDAN pulls up outside the warehouse.

SASHA (V.O.)  
They called it the Wild East.

A major bust is in progress. ANDREI GUSAK, a dead-eyed  
chainsmoker with a scar down one cheek, climbs out.

INT. WAREHOUSE -- DAY

As we enters the warehouse we see dozens of tattooed GANG  
MEMBERS lying facedown on the floor in handcuffs.

SASHA (V.O.)  
The prisons just opened their doors  
and let everyone out.

A MOSCOW PD officer leads Gusak to a platform overlooking  
the warehouse --

-- and he looks out upon their haul: GUNS as far as the eye  
can see.

Crates of AK-47's, RPG's, rocket launchers, jeeps, even a MiG helicopter.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
Thousands of men who'd taken the  
Oath of Thieves in the Gulag were on  
the streets.

Now Gusak examines the gangsters as they're being photographed shirtless against the wall --

INT. FLASH PHOTOS -- INSERTS

-- and in a series of Weegee-like FLASH PHOTOS we see their elaborate tattoos depicting their lives and crimes: an entire pictorial history of Russia inked upon their wiry flesh.

SASHA (V.O.)  
There was not one, but hundreds of  
Russian *mafiyas*. Not just the ancient  
ones like the Slavs, the Mohammedans,  
the Chechen Thieves' World --

One after another, they flash countless indecipherable obscene gestures at us. Finally, we recognize one of the gangsters --

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
-- soon policemen, military units,  
circus performers, even Olympic teams  
formed their own *mafiyas*.

-- it's Sasha, himself covered in tattoos. Gusak roughly grabs him out of the lineup and leads him out.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
And to stop it all, to hold back the  
tide, there was only us. *Kontora*.

The gang leader, ORHUK THE BEARDED ONE, cries out to Sasha:

ORHUK, THE BEARDED ONE  
*Kontoristi!* You're dead, *blivad*!

Sasha stops. Turns.

SASHA  
What's that?

ORHUK, THE BEARDED ONE  
We know who you are.

The other gangsters begin to chant *Kontoristi*, a low ominous oath upon Sasha's life.

ORHUK, THE BEARDED ONE (CONT'D)  
You. Your mother. Your wife. We're  
coming for you.

SASHA  
Why wait?

Sasha reaches for Gusak's holster and pulls out a 9mm Makarov. He hands it to the gangster. The other cops react.

SASHA (CONT'D)  
Go ahead. Kill the *Kontoristi*. See  
what happens.

He steps forward until he's at point-blank range. The gangster does nothing.

SASHA (CONT'D)  
I think you already know.

Sasha quickly disarms the Bearded One by grabbing the Makarov and twisting it sharply backwards, twisting his finger and dropping him to his knees. Sasha then hands the Makarov back to Gusak. He announces to the assembled thugs:

SASHA (CONT'D)  
When you get to prison, spread the word. Tell your friends. The KGB is taking back Russia.

EXT. TYVERSKAYA PROSPEKT -- NIGHT

It's raining as Sasha, Gusak and the young PONKIN climb into their Volga. They are a team of *opers*, Anti-Gang operatives.

GUSAK  
That trick with the Makarov? I never get tired of seeing you do it. But someday somebody's going to pull the trigger.

Sasha doesn't answer. He's trying to scrub off his temporary tattoos.

PONKIN  
Did you see what those cavemen had in there? Fucking helicopter! A year ago it was knives and rocks!

GUSAK  
(shrugs)  
The cavemen are *biznesmeny* now.

SASHA  
We're all *biznesmeny* now.

He says it ruefully, as if lamenting Russia's lost innocence.

SASHA (CONT'D)  
Pull over here.

INT. BALLET STUDIO -- EVENING

BALLERINAS practice Arabesques to Prokofiev's "Romeo and Juliet". Another world entirely from the street outside.

Sasha, Gusak, and Ponkin enter and everything stops, as if a pack of wolves had wandered in. The studio's owner, OLGA, sees Sasha and smiles nervously.

OLGA (V.O.)  
We can't pay this money. Every week  
they want more than the week before.  
Everyone pays, they said. Everyone.

INT. BALLET STUDIO -- LATER

Sasha glances at the studio mirrors: they've all been smashed.

OLGA  
We're a ballet studio. We don't  
have this kind of money.

GUSAK  
You should be happy with the Jap.  
Everybody needs a *krisha* these days.  
If it's not the Jap, maybe it's  
someone worse.

OLGA  
The Jap is gone, disappeared. No  
one knows where. It's Karoly now.

Sasha reacts with surprise.

SASHA  
*Lieutenant Karoly did this?*

Olga sobs, nodding. Sasha and Gusak exchange a look.

OLGA  
Alexander Valterovich -- you could  
be our *krisha*. We could pay you.

SASHA  
I can't do that.

OLGA  
I don't mean to offend.  
(sobs)  
These times we live in -- !

SASHA

I'm not offended. But we're not like Moscow PD. There's a code we follow. Some of us, at least.

Sasha takes it all in: the dancers, the music. It seems like a remnant of a better time.

SASHA (CONT'D)

We can reason with Karoly.

GUSAK

You may have to hand over a little *babki* each week so he doesn't lose face --

OLGA

(embracing Sasha)

You are an angel, like Vitaly says. Tonight I am having a birthday party for a friend. You must come.

SASHA

I'll try.

Olga kisses him goodbye. Gusak and Ponkin smirk.

PONKIN

Sasha, you angel. Are you going to the ballet party? You must come!

SASHA

You people have no culture.

INT. BAR LUBYANKA -- DAY

A cavelike cop bar. LT. KAROLY follows several football games at once on satellite TV as he works off a hangover with three of his *opers*. He shrugs agreeably.

LT. KAROLY

She'll still have to pay a little something, of course.

GUSAK

Of course. Naturally. Thanks, Volya.

Sasha pointedly doesn't thank him.

LT. KAROLY

You haven't touched your drink.

SASHA

I'm nursing it.

LT. KAROLY

You know, Sasha, it's social graces.  
The bottle gets passed. Everyone  
drinks. After a while, someone  
doesn't drink, people begin to wonder  
if he didn't piss in it, you know?

SASHA

You got me, Volya. I pissed in it.

Everyone laughs nervously.

SASHA (CONT'D)

Whatever happened to the Jap, anyway?

LT. KAROLY

He went home. To Japan.

SASHA

The Jap isn't Japanese.

LT. KAROLY

I know. You should collect on a few  
shopkeepers for yourself, Sasha.

SASHA

I'm busy.

LT. KAROLY

Then we'll get some for you.

SASHA

Too much work.

LT. KAROLY

You'd only have to count the money!

SASHA

Eh. It could get confusing, you  
know? Being Anti-Gang Division and  
a gangster at the same time. I might  
get up one morning, arrest myself,  
bribe myself, then beat myself to  
death in custody. Dangerous!

Nobody's laughing.

GUSAK (V.O.)

Don't even talk to me.

EXT. BAR LUBYANKA -- DAY

Sasha and Gusak stand waiting for the light to change.

SASHA  
You expect me to apologize?

GUSAK  
No. I expect I'll have to apologize  
for you. Like always.

SASHA  
Don't worry. Fat *bolvan* won't get  
away with this. When this gets out --

GUSAK  
He is getting away with it.

Sasha thinks about this.

SASHA  
It's stupid, what he's doing.

GUSAK  
Karoly isn't stupid.

SASHA  
(realizes)  
He must have someone's blessing.  
Someone high up.  
(finally)  
The *krisha* has a *krisha* of his own.

Sasha looks stunned, and angry. Gusak smiles.

GUSAK  
Things change.

INT. ROOFTOP PARTY -- NIGHT

Christmas lights and Eurodisco music on a summer night.  
Even amidst dancers, Marina is possessed of a unique grace.

MARINA  
You invited an *agent of the KGB* to  
my birthday party?

OLGA  
Marina. They changed the name.  
It's not the KGB anymore.

MALE DANCER  
KGB, FSB -- whatever they call it,  
it's still *Kontora*.

People nearby overhear this. They stub out their joints and  
rush to the bathroom.

OLGA  
Besides, he's very nice.

MARINA  
Olga, how could you?

We hear the TOILET FLUSHING in the BG as people flush their drugs. The rooftop is already starting to clear out --

-- the crowd that separates Sasha and Marina dissolves. Sasha is overdressed in a suit and utterly out of place.

MARINA (CONT'D)  
Is that him?

MALE DANCER  
Dear God, he's coming this way...

He slips away, leaving Marina alone. Sasha approaches.

SASHA  
Where is everyone going?

MARINA  
They're leaving.

SASHA  
What for?

MARINA  
They're afraid of you.

SASHA  
Oh. Are you afraid of me?

MARINA  
I have nothing to be afraid of.  
Besides, it's my party. I can't leave.

SASHA  
I'm very sorry. I'll go now.

MARINA  
No. You are a guest at my party.  
Can I offer you something to drink?

SASHA  
I don't drink.

MARINA  
Something to eat, then. No? Do you dance?

EXT. ROOFTOP -- DANCE FLOOR -- DAY

The dance floor clears out as the music changes to a sentimental Chanson.

MARINA

You dance very well. Do they teach  
dancing at Lubyanka?

SASHA

No.

MARINA

You're a natural dancer, then.

SASHA

And you?

MARINA

I was, once. I used to travel around  
the world, dancing for the Motherland.

SASHA

What happened?

MARINA

They offered me the chance to join  
the youth wing of the Party. I turned  
it down. I was nineteen. I couldn't  
see becoming part of the system for  
the sake of having a career.

SASHA

What do you do now?

MARINA

I teach aerobics to Japanese tourists.

SASHA

That was stupid.

MARINA

It probably was.

SASHA

I didn't mean that how it sounded.

MARINA

Yes you did. I don't mind.

SASHA

I meant to say -- the system wasn't  
perfect. But it was fair. Russia  
was strong. And people were safe.

MARINA  
Some people were safe.

She pulls away from him. The rooftop is near-empty.

MARINA (CONT'D)  
It seems my birthday is over.

SASHA  
I'm sorry.

MARINA  
Don't be. I have to get up early to  
take a driving test that I will fail.

SASHA  
You don't know that.

MARINA  
Yes I do. I don't have money to  
bribe the examiner, so he keeps  
failing me.

Marina puts on her coat.

SASHA  
Let me drive you. Moscow's dangerous.  
(as she walks away)  
What's the use of having an agent of  
the KGB break up your party if he  
can't escort you home safely?

MARINA  
I was raised in Moscow. I'm not as  
delicate as I look.

INT. LADA AUTOMOBILE -- DAY

Marina sits behind the wheel of a tiny Lada hatchback. A  
DRIVING EXAMINER sits beside her, examining his clipboard.

EXAMINER  
Do you have the payment?

MARINA  
I paid my fee at the window.

EXAMINER  
You waste the resources of the state  
with this game, Miss. It is a crime,  
what you do.

Someone slips into the seat directly behind him.

EXAMINER (CONT'D)

There are people who are forced to  
wait months for a driving examination  
because people like you insist --  
(cranes his neck)  
Excuse me. Who are you?

The RED BADGE of the KGB/FSB appears before him. The very  
sight of it strikes fear into the Examiner.

EXAMINER (CONT'D)

(to Marina)

Take this to the window to collect  
your drivers' license.

SASHA (O.S.)

What are you doing?

The Examiner goes pale. He tears up the form.

EXAMINER

She fails the test.

SASHA

Wrong again.

Now the Examiner is really frightened.

EXAMINER

There must be some mistake. I've  
done nothing wrong.

SASHA

Is that what you think?

EXAMINER

What do you want me to do?

SASHA

I want you to do your job.

EXAMINER

I don't know what that means.

SASHA

You're so far gone you don't even  
know what it means to do your job?

The Examiner is on the verge of tears.

EXAMINER

I want to do my job. Please. Tell  
me what my job is, and I'll do it.

MARINA  
This isn't necessary.

Sasha leans forward.

SASHA  
You're going to administer the test.  
If she passes, you give her her  
licence. If she fails, you don't.  
That's your job. Can you do that?

EXAMINER  
I think so.

SASHA  
Good. Let's go for a drive.

CUT TO:

MARINA'S DRIVERS LICENSE

in Sasha's hands.

SASHA (O.S.)  
Not even the photographers of the  
Ministry of Automotive Vehicles can  
dim your beauty, Marina.

Marina drives while trying to conceal her happiness at getting her license. Sasha places her license on the dashboard, then gazes silently at his red KGB badge.

MARINA  
What's wrong?

SASHA  
The red paint is beginning to wear off, that's all.  
(a beat)  
I've never done that before. Used my badge to frighten someone.

MARINA  
I thought that was what they were for.

SASHA  
I just wanted someone to do something, just once, without first collecting a bribe.

Marina pulls over.

MARINA  
Here we are.

Lubyanka Center looms in the distance. She has given him a ride back to work. She gazes at the fortress on the horizon.

MARINA (CONT'D)  
The ballet studio. Why did you help them?

SASHA  
I don't know. I thought it was beautiful. I wish I had a better reason.

MARINA  
There is no other reason.

She takes his ID badge from him.

MARINA (CONT'D)  
Litvinenko, Alexander Valterovich.  
Captain, Anti-Gang Division. 185  
centimeters. 81 kilograms. Hair  
blond. Eyes blue.  
(a whisper)  
What kind of KGB agent is this?

She looks up at Lubyanka, then at Sasha.

SASHA  
I'm married.

MARINA  
I don't care.

They kiss, passionately, in the shadow of Lubyanka.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- NIGHT

Sasha is sleeping. Brent Hyatt sits in a chair, studying him. His mobile VIBRATES. He answers, whispering:

HYATT  
Hyatt. Yeah. At the hospital. The Russian. Dr. No. I don't know. Sometimes I think he's having me on. Sometimes I'm sure of it. Wait. He's waking up.

A SQUEAKING from the hallway outside. Sasha wakes. It's a bald CHEMOTHERAPY PATIENT pushing an IV drip.

SASHA  
My new comrade.

Sasha nods to her as she passes, and she nods back.

MARINA  
No, Sasha. She has cancer.

SASHA  
It's not the cancer that makes her  
hair fall out.

Something seems to dawn on Sasha, a recognition...

SASHA (CONT'D)  
Bastards. Get me out of here.

He abruptly sits up and tries to climb out of bed. Marina  
rushes to stop him.

MARINA  
Sasha, no -- !

Marina struggles to get him back in bed. Hyatt watches the  
whole thing without lifting a finger. HEADLIGHTS play over  
the window beside him. Hyatt glances outside --

HYATT  
What's this?

We PUSH OVER HIS SHOULDER to see what he's looking at:

A CONVOY OF VEHICLES

pulls into the hospital's driveway: a MAYBACH LIMOUSINE  
flanked by two armored SUV's, all in black.

Marina approaches the window. The Maybach's windowshade  
retracts, and a single dark eye peers out at us...

MARINA  
Boris.

A BODYGUARD opens the Maybach's door. A dark, bald, compact  
man emerges, wearing a bespoke suit.

MARINA (CONT'D)  
Sasha... Boris is here.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR -- NIGHT

BORIS BEREZOVSKY rolls down the hallway like a small tank,  
flanked on all sides by his team of bodyguards, his publicist  
LORD TIMOTHY BELL, and a private physician, DR. JOHN HENRY.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- NIGHT

Once the bodyguards have swept the room, Boris enters. He  
approaches Sasha's bedside. Sasha seems wary of Boris.

BORIS

What have they done to you, my old friend? I brought a doctor for you. He is world's foremost specialist.

HYATT

World's foremost specialist in what?

BORIS

Poison.

SASHA

Thank you for coming, Boris Abramovich.

BORIS

Sasha. I would come from the ends of the Earth if you were in trouble.

Boris bows to kiss Sasha.

BORIS (CONT'D)

I will never forget that you saved my life.

EXT. MOSCOW SIDE STREET -- MORNING

Boris Berezovsky slips out of his posh row house and into the back seat of a waiting Mercedes limo, and the car speeds off. He takes a call on his 1995-era mobile phone.

Up ahead, the one-lane road is blocked by a little AutoVAZ with its hood up for repairs.

BORIS

What's the delay?

The car's DRIVER sees the Mercedes coming and runs away, abandoning his vehicle. Boris sees this, realizes --

BORIS (CONT'D)

*Chërt poberí!* Back up -- !

THE CAR EXPLODES

and the fireball BILLOWS skyward, shattering every window on the narrow street. The Mercedes is blown off its tires, flipping sideways into the row of cars parked along the sidewalk. A cloud of SMOKE overtakes everything --

INT. MERCEDES SEDAN -- MORNING

-- and all is darkness. Boris looks up from the bottom of a deep hole. The interior of the car is drenched with blood.

SASHA (V.O.)  
To some people, Boris' survival was  
a miracle, an act of God.

He gazes up into the light from the rear-passenger-side window. Boris claws his way toward it, shoves the door open --

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
But for most of Russia, it only proved  
what they already knew: that Boris  
must be in league with the Devil...

EXT. MOSCOW SIDE STREET -- DAY

-- and tumbles onto the asphalt below. He crawls between two parked cars, taking cover --

SASHA (V.O.)  
...or, just perhaps, that Boris  
Berezovsky was the Devil himself.

-- as the Mercedes gastank BLOWS and we

CUT TO:

BORIS BEREZOVSKY

working at a blackboard covered with abstruse mathematical formulae as he speaks, a cigarette dangling from his lips.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
Boris was a mathematician. He worked  
on Nobel Prize-winning research. He  
was one of the first in USSR to see  
the end coming.

INT. UNIVERSITY CLASSROOM -- DAY

We MOVE AROUND Boris, REVEALING that we are in a lecture hall packed with earnest students. A Soviet banner overhead.

STUDENT 1  
But Professor Berezovsky, isn't it  
true that capitalism is nothing more  
than the law of the jungle?

We keep MOVING, revealing what Boris is working on --

BORIS  
The law of the jungle is the only  
law that needs no police to enforce  
it. Soon it will be the only law  
there is.

-- it's not a mathematical formula, but a crude picture of a shark devouring a smaller fish.

BORIS (CONT'D)  
If you want my advice, *tovarischi*,  
you will leave this classroom today  
and you will never return.

STUDENT 2  
What would you have us study?

BORIS  
*Biznes.*

Boris looks at his watch. Packs his briefcase to leave.

STUDENT 1  
They don't offer business at Soviet  
university! Where are we supposed  
to study it?

Boris closes his briefcase and smiles.

BORIS  
In the streets, children. That's  
where you'll find me.

EXT. MOSCOW BACK ALLEY -- DAY

Boris kicks the tires on a Trabant 601 along with another professor. Boris examines the car's lawnmower-like engine.

BORIS  
Two-cylinder, two-stroke engine. A  
masterpiece of socialist engineering!

SASHA (V.O.)  
Boris saved twenty years to buy his  
first car. He was forty years old.

Boris takes out a wad of ruble notes and starts counting.

BORIS  
Professor Mostov and I can only afford  
one cylinder apiece. So we will  
have to share the car.

BLACK MARKETEER  
Very Soviet of you.

BORIS  
It's a temporary arrangement.

Boris SLAMS the hood and hands the Black Marketeer his money.

SASHA (V.O.)  
Within five years, he was one of the  
richest men in the world.

Professor Mostov starts to climb behind the wheel. Boris  
pushes him aside.

BORIS  
Me first.

Boris gets behind the wheel, puts the key in the ignition,  
TURNS -- the car's engine ROARS unexpectedly as we

CUT TO:

INT. MERCEDES -- NIGHT

-- the German car's engine ROARS thunderously as Boris revs  
the gas. The Mercedes rolls down a long metal ramp --

SASHA (V.O.)  
When the time came, Boris was ready.  
He bought Mercedes used in West  
Germany then sold them for double  
price in Moscow. His biggest problem  
was keeping up with demand.

-- and we REVEAL that it's one of twenty brand-new Mercedes  
being unloaded from a transport trailer as Boris's partner  
BADRI and a tattooed Uzbek MOB BOSS look on.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
Of course, in those days, you needed  
a *krisha*, a roof, to protect you.  
Boris' *krisha* was the ancient Thieves'  
World of Uzbekistan.

The Mercedes drives up to us --

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
It was the price of doing *biznes*.

EXT. MERCEDES DEALERSHIP OF MOSCOW -- NIGHT

-- and we PULL BACK from the same gleaming sedan in the window  
of Moscow's first Mercedes dealership.

SASHA (V.O.)  
Soon Boris had the very first Mercedes  
dealership on the very finest street  
in Moscow. But people got jealous,  
like people often do.

Suddenly the window SHATTERS before us as a brick crashes  
through it. We PULL BACK --

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
The whole thing ended in the final  
battle of the Great Mafiya Wars.

-- to reveal a line of UZBEK GANGSTERS with AK-47s sandbagged  
on the rooftop, firing at a mob of angry SLAVS.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
It was the Uzbeks versus the Slavic  
Alliance, fighting for control of  
Boris' car dealership, right across  
from the Bolshoi Ballet.

The Slavs return fire from behind parked cars. Theatergoers  
leaving the Bolshoi Ballet scramble for cover.

The Uzbeks hoist a shoulder-mounted RPG and LAUNCH it at the  
Slavs, DETONATING a the cars the Slavs are hiding behind.  
The Slavs fall back, dragging their dead with them.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
And when it was over, Boris was still  
standing.

Boris emerges from his dealership to a chorus of shrieking  
CAR ALARMS, surveys the scene, and GRUNTS with satisfaction:

BORIS  
*Horosho'.*

INT. LOGOVAZ FACTORY -- ASSEMBLY LINE -- DAY

All work ceases as Boris, Badri, and their retinue inspect  
the assembly line like the Party bosses of old.

SASHA (V.O.)  
Boris went from selling cars to taking  
over whole car company, LOGOVAZ. But  
this he did in his own special way.

At the end of the line, Badri hands one of the factory  
managers an envelope filled with US dollars.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
He paid the company's executives to  
siphon its cashflow to shell  
corporation in Switzerland. Then,  
when the company was starved and  
ready to collapse, he bought it for  
a fistful of rubles. Or not.

EXT. PANEL DISCUSSION -- DAVOS, SWITZERLAND -- DAY

Boris sits on a panel of mega-moguls alongside GEORGE SOROS.  
Flashbulbs POP and WHIRR. We MOVE DOWN the panel --

SASHA (V.O.)

One day they were students, cab drivers. Next day they were billionaires. Multi-billionaires. And Boris was their leader.

-- to take in the faces of self-satisfied young billionaires: -- ROMA ABRAMOVICH, MIKHAIL KHODORKOVSKY, MIKHAIL GUSAK, etc.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

They called them the Oligarchs.

EXT. DACHA DRIVEWAY -- DAY

An OLIGARCH leaves his country estate and steps into a Bentley with gold-plated wheels. As the car rolls away, we see that it is flanked on all sides by ARMORED SUVs carrying Kevlar-ed members of the oligarch's PRIVATE MILITIA.

SASHA (V.O.)

For the first time in Russia, it was money, not power, that mattered...

EXT. M10 HIGHWAY -- DAY

A ZIL limousine rolls toward Moscow, bearing a grey-suited *Silovik* reading his *Pravda*. Suddenly, the very highway beneath us begins to RUMBLE --

SASHA (V.O.)

...And the *Siloviki* were left in the dust.

-- and the Oligarch's convoy BLASTS past at 140 km/h, practically running the ZIL off the road.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Or so it seemed. Certain people got jealous, like people often do.

EXT. VOLGA RIVER BRIDGE -- DAY

A GUNSIGHT flips up, drawing the Bentley into its crosshairs --

-- and a shoulder-mounted ROCKET launches, its vapor trail corkscrewing over the river --

-- and the Bentley is BLOWN CLEAN OFF THE BRIDGE, tumbling like a blackened beer can into the Volga below.

The convoy rolls to a stop. The militia climbs out, gazing down helplessly at the Bentley bubbling into the water. We

MATCH CUT TO:

BORIS' MERCEDES

As it smolders in the alleyway following the car-bomb attempt on his life. Firemen hose it down to douse the flames.

EXT. MOSCOW SIDE STREET -- DAY

Boris sits on the curb where he took shelter from the blast. He stares shell-shocked at the scorched hubcap in his hands.

BORIS

My own car. They tried to kill me  
with one of my own cars -- !

A leather-jacketed man approaches. He flips out a badge -- the Red Badge of the KGB/FSB. Boris won't look at it.

BORIS (CONT'D)

I have nothing to say.

SASHA (O.S.)

Whoever did this will try again.

We TILT UP to reveal Sasha. Boris glances at his badge.

BORIS

It's you I have to worry about.

Sasha takes out a business card and offers it to Boris.

SASHA

You can buy all the private security  
in the world, but you still have to  
live in Moscow.

Sasha walks away. Boris looks at the card, bemused.

BORIS

"Alexander Valterovich Litvinenko".  
Why should I trust you?

Sasha turns.

SASHA

Even a criminal needs a cop  
eventually.

INT. SASHA'S APARTMENT -- KITCHEN -- DAY

A celebration. The kitchen table is laden with serving trays and cookpots. The women dole out dumplings, stew and stuffed cabbage leaves onto plates for the men. Marina poses for pictures with Baby Tolik, who wears a Russian Orthodox christening gown. Her mother NADJA takes the baby from her.

NADJA  
So big like his father! Feels like  
five kilos already!  
(embracing her)  
You did the right thing, Marina.  
The smart thing.

MARINA  
I don't know what smart had to do  
with it.

NADJA  
Soon you'll get a bigger apartment.

MARINA  
Not with what Sasha brings home.

NADJA  
Marina. Your husband is *Kontora*.  
What he wants he can take.

EXT. SASHA'S APARTMENT -- BALCONY -- DAY

Sasha wears a denim suit for the celebration. Gusak and Ponkin stand with him on the balcony overlooking the 20-story apartment bloc. They look serious, almost grave.

SASHA  
You know something? It was harder  
to have someone killed back in the  
old days than it is now. There were  
documents to be signed. Permissions  
to be granted.

GUSAK  
There was a system. Now there is no  
system.

SASHA  
Someone gets it in his head that  
someone should be gone and it becomes  
an order that has to be carried out.  
(a beat)  
This guy is one of ours --

The screen door opens: it's Marina's sister bringing plates of food for them. Gusak waves her off. The door closes.

SASHA (CONT'D)  
This is one of the good guys. They  
should give him a medal.

PONKIN  
They'll give him five medals. And  
one to the head, for insurance.

Sasha takes an envelope from Gusak: inside is a surveillance file with a photo of a lumpy man named MIKHAIL TREPASHKIN.

SASHA

They should be after the *blijad* that sold the guns to the gangsters, not the one who told about it.

GUSAK

You know that's not how it works.

SASHA

Let them find someone else to do it.

GUSAK

They want us to do it. They want to know where you stand. It's a test, Sasha. Old-style. A test of loyalty.

SASHA

No, it's not. It's insurance. If we do it, they'll have the murder to put on us if we ever try to talk. If we don't do it, they'll kill us. We're fucked.

GUSAK

You know what? You're right. You had to mouth off to Karoly. One time too many. This is what it gets you. So. What's it going to be?

SASHA

We're going to let it pass.

GUSAK

They won't let it pass.

Sasha hurls the file at him. Gusak steps aside and it flies over the railing. Sasha shoves him, hard.

SASHA

You bring shit like this to my son's christening? What's wrong with you?

Gusak shoves Sasha back, and Ponkin steps between them. Gusak glares, but lets it go.

Sasha goes back inside. Gusak and Ponkin watch as the papers drift to the courtyard below like dying birds.

INT. SASHA'S APARTMENT -- LIVING ROOM -- EVENING

The party has ended. Sasha watches TV amidst the detritus. The phone RINGS. Sasha picks it up.

Marina is washing the dishes in the kitchen. She steps outside to find Sasha whispering urgently on the phone.

SASHA

Don't let them take you. If they do, you'll die in custody. They'll call it a heart attack. Try to hold them until I get there.

Sasha hangs up. He grabs his jacket. Sees Marina.

SASHA (CONT'D)

If I don't come back --

Sasha hesitates. She looks panicked.

MARINA

What?

SASHA

*Marusya.* Don't be afraid.

He kisses her and goes. She's left standing there in her dishwashing gloves, terrified.

EXT. CLUB LOGOVAZ -- EVENING

A large Palladian mansion in the center of Moscow. A bulletproof SUV blocks the driveway. Sasha steps past it --

-- To find Boris' security detail face-down in handcuffs on the asphalt. He crouches, whispers:

SASHA

Who's inside?

BODYGUARD

Moscow PD.

INT. CLUB LOGOVAZ -- EVENING

Boris' private club, complete with a stuffed alligator and a PIANO PLAYER and BARTENDER who are both face-down on the floor. We hear a loud POUNDING from upstairs --

-- where five MOSCOW PLAINCLOTHES POLICE carrying riot guns are POUNDING on a reinforced metal door.

INT. BORIS' OFFICE -- EVENING

Boris is holed up inside, with a single bodyguard holding a shotgun covering the door as the cops POUND away. He watches the cops outside from a surveillance monitor.

INT. CLUB LOGOVAZ -- STAIRWELL -- EVENING

SASHA (O.S.)  
FSB! What's going on here?

The cops all turn -- to see Sasha standing on the stairwell beneath them, holding his red badge aloft.

MOSCOW COP  
This is Moscow PD business. We're here to arrest Boris Berezovsky.

SASHA  
Moscow PD! My goodness! Don't you have any hairdressers to shake down?

The cop descends toward him.

MOSCOW COP  
You go home now, *bratán*. You were never here.

SASHA  
But I am here.

The cop raises his shotgun.

SASHA (CONT'D)  
And three *opers* like me are on the way.

The cop presses his muzzle into Sasha's cheek. In reply, Sasha raises his red badge in his clenched fist, inches from the cop's face, as if it were a weapon. Which it is.

SASHA (CONT'D)  
*Muzhik*, beware.

The cop lowers his gun. Gusak and Ponkin appear downstairs.

MOSCOW COP  
We're going to ask around about you.

SASHA  
You ask around. I'm very well-known.

The cops glower at him as they file past. Sasha turns to see Boris Berezovsky standing at the top of the stairs.

BORIS  
How long until they come back?

SASHA  
They need permission to kill me first.  
That could take a while.

Boris reaches into his pocket and pulls out a large roll of \$100 bills. He offers it to Sasha. Sasha shakes his head.

BORIS

Come on, take it. Who refuses money?

Sasha says nothing. Boris shoves the wad back in his pocket.

BORIS (CONT'D)

Here, then.

He removes his watch.

BORIS (CONT'D)

It's a Patek Phillippe. It's a \$50,000 watch.

SASHA

\$50,000? What does it do?

BORIS

It tells time. It's yours. Take it.

SASHA

My Volga keeps good time.

Boris watches as Sasha walks away.

INT. SASHA'S APARTMENT -- BATHROOM -- MORNING

Sasha is shaving when he hears his mother-in-law SHOUTING from the terrace. He walks outside --

EXT. SASHA'S APARTMENT -- BALCONY -- MORNING

-- to find Marina and her mother already outside. Everyone in the apartment bloc is out on their terraces, gazing down at a convoy of black SUV's waiting in the street below.

INT. SUV -- MORNING

The only sound is that of cut-crystal decanters tinkling as they ride in the back seat. Marina stares at the tattoos etched upon the driver's neck. Soon they've arrived at a private airstrip where a GULFSTREAM JET idles.

SASHA

Wait. What is this?

BODYGUARD

It's lunch.

INT. GULFSTREAM JET -- MORNING

We PUSH down the aisle of the wood-paneled compartment. Boris sits with his back to us, his Italian loafer bouncing nervously as he scans the morning's *Pravda*.

BORIS

You must be Marina. So beautiful.

Across the aisle sits a quiet blond man named ANDREI LUGOVOI.

BORIS (CONT'D)

Sasha, I believe you know Andrei Lugovoi already.

SASHA

(shaking his hand)

I thought you were still with FSB.

LUGOVOI

I work for Boris now. I'm his Chief of Security.

SASHA

You're doing a hell of a job.

Lugovoi flinches a bit at Sasha's sarcasm.

BORIS

I hope you didn't have plans. We're going to Geneva.

The plane is already taking off.

INT. GULFSTREAM JET -- LATER

Boris eats his soup course, napkin tucked into his collar.

BORIS

With Berezovsky, nothing is hidden! Who I am, my history, everything has been laid out for all to see. This is why I say I am the most honest man in Russia today!

SASHA

There is a saying. Behind every great fortune lies a great crime.

BORIS

Balzac. You have good taste, Sasha.

SASHA

I've never read any of his books.

BORIS

Neither have I. Who has the time?  
The idea is what matters. Andrew  
Carnegie, J.P. Morgan -- these were  
hard men. It took men like these to  
build a great country.

Boris reaches over and opens the window shade. The vast  
Russian landscape sprawls beneath them.

BORIS (CONT'D)

Russia needs men like this if she is  
to be a great country again. But  
she also needs men like you.

MARINA

Like Sasha?

BORIS

The security services are corrupt.  
Someone has to clean them up. A  
brave man. An uncorrupted man.

MARINA

Sasha can't afford to be brave.

SASHA

Marina.

Marina falls silent.

BORIS

We can help each other, Sasha.

Sasha shakes his head.

SASHA

We're different, you and I. You  
want cars, watches, jets, factories.  
I don't want these things.

BORIS

Not everyone wants things. But  
everyone wants. Even you.

Sasha is silent, wary.

BORIS (CONT'D)

I have friends in the Kremlin. You  
know this. I own television stations,  
media --

Sasha reacts visibly. Boris picks up on this. He leans in:

BORIS (CONT'D)  
Tell me, Sasha. What is it you want?

Sasha thinks a moment. Then:

SASHA  
I want people to fucking listen.

INT. SASHA'S APARTMENT -- BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Marina watches Sasha as he gazes into darkness. Baby Tolik sleeps between them. Marina whispers:

MARINA  
He's a gangster.

SASHA  
He's a capitalist.

MARINA  
I don't like him putting ideas in  
your head. It scares me.

SASHA  
Somebody has to get the truth out.

MARINA  
You're a pawn to a man like him.

SASHA  
A pawn is what I am. He's giving me  
a chance to be something more.

(off her look)  
When this gets out, the Kremlin will  
have to investigate. They'll clean  
out the Bureau. Men will finally be  
recognized for what they've done.

MARINA  
You think your life is some kind of  
movie.

SASHA  
There's a lot I don't tell you. I'm  
in constant danger. They want me to  
do things to prove myself. If I  
don't, they're going to kill me.

MARINA  
Then quit.

SASHA  
You don't quit this.

MARINA

Then keep your head down. Keep quiet.

SASHA

Now you've waked the baby.

Sasha climbs out of bed. Marina grabs his arm.

MARINA

This isn't a movie, Sasha. This is  
our life.

INT. LUBYANKA CENTER -- ANTI-GANG HEADQUARTERS -- MORNING

A great room with old Soviet desks in rows and yellowing  
portraits of forgotten *apparatchiki*. Sasha enters to find  
it empty. He goes to the samovar of tea, shakes it.

SASHA

Empty. Always empty.

In the distance he hears SHOUTING.

INT. KOMMISAR'S OFFICE -- MORNING

The entire department has been summoned here: the Bureau's  
Kommisar, KOVALEV -- the same man who first gave Sasha his  
KGB badge -- is on a red-faced tirade.

KOVALEV

Russia is being picked clean by  
parasites and gangsters! And you do  
nothing. You pursue common thugs  
while the real criminals eat caviar!  
Is there a single pair of true iron  
Cheka balls left in all of Lubyanka?

Approving nods and grunts from the audience.

KOVALEV (CONT'D)

Enough, I say. Enough. Let's start  
with Berezovsky! Who will volunteer?  
Who will kill this Kremlin jew?

Silence. Kovalev searches the crowd.

KOVALEV (CONT'D)

Alexander Valterovich. You're friends  
with Berezovsky.

SASHA

What? No. I'm not his friend.

KOVALEV

Then you will kill him.

SASHA  
What? What is going on here?

All eyes are on Sasha.

SASHA (CONT'D)  
Is this a trap? Is this room wired?

Kovalev says nothing. Sasha raises his index finger to his temple, circling, as if to say "you're crazy".

SASHA (CONT'D)  
I'm not saying anything.

He turns and walks out of the room.

INT. SASHA'S CAR -- UNDERGROUND GARAGE -- DAY

Sasha sits behind the wheel, utterly wired. Ponkin's in back. Gusak slips in the passenger seat.

SASHA  
It's out in the open, finally.

GUSAK  
You must admit you brought this on yourself.

SASHA  
Maybe. Maybe. But now there's just one thing to do.

GUSAK  
Yeah. What's that?  
(realizing)  
No. No. You made me a promise.

Sasha says nothing.

GUSAK (CONT'D)  
You son of a bitch. I vouched for you. It's only because of me you're alive this long.

SASHA  
I can't keep quiet anymore.

GUSAK  
Anymore? You never could shut up!  
You've fucked yourself. Now you're going to get us both killed. *Otvali*, what's the point? I'll do you myself --

Gusak reaches for his holster. Sasha grabs his arm. They struggle. Sasha shouts:

SASHA  
Yeah? Let's do it.

PONKIN  
Ho! Not in the car!

SASHA  
Let's do it. For real. A duel.  
Right here. Swords or pistols. I  
should warn you, I'm very good with  
both.

Gusak just stares at him. He's insane.

GUSAK  
You and me. We're done.

Gusak SLAMS the door behind him. Sasha looks at Ponkin.

SASHA  
So? What about you?

INT. LUBYANKA CENTER -- ANTI-GANG HEADQUARTERS -- DAY

Sasha walks the rows of desks. One by one, without a word, he selects people, simply by tapping them on the shoulder, then pointing upwards, as if to say *meet me upstairs*.

The *opers* either nod, rise from their desks and quietly drift out of the room, or they shake their heads no.

EXT. LUBYANKA CENTER -- ROOFTOP -- DAY

Two dozen *OPERS* are standing on the rooftop, waiting for Sasha to arrive. Sasha walks into the center of the circle.

SASHA  
Someday soon, each one of you is  
going to be asked to commit murder.  
Some of you have already gotten the  
order. This is what it's come to.

(a beat)

Each of you has three choices. Number  
one. You can commit murder and get  
rich. The market price to commit  
murder in Moscow today is \$10,000,  
and there's lots of work to be had.

(a beat)

Number two. You can ignore your  
orders. If you do this, you will be  
demoted, ostracized, and humiliated  
but they'll never let you go. Or:

(a beat)

Number three. We can go public.

(MORE)

SASHA (CONT'D)

(a beat)

I don't have to tell you what this would mean. It would be like standing in front of a cannon.

Silence from those assembled.

SASHA (CONT'D)

Each of you has to make his own decision.

(a beat)

As for me, my choice is made.

CUT TO:

SASHA

as he walks down a backstage corridor wearing a dark suit.

Following him are a dozen other *opers* wearing ski masks and mirrored sunglasses to conceal their identities as they enter

INT. INTERFAX NEWS AGENCY -- PRESS CONFERENCE

Every flashbulb on Earth is inside this white room and they're all going off at once. Camera shutters SNAP and WHIRR like hungry locusts. The *opers* file in and sit down at a long table, with Sasha at its center. They look around, a little dazed, muttering to each other through their ski masks:

PONKIN

Fucking discotheque in here!

Of all those at the table, only Sasha wears nothing to disguise his identity.

SASHA

My name is Alexander Litvinenko. For the past several years, I believed that I was a special agent of Russian State Security. I was wrong.

(a beat)

Over the past several weeks I have come to realize that I am actually a member of a criminal gang.

The camera shutters start CLICKING ravenously.

SASHA (CONT'D)

This gang is engaged in extrajudicial killings, drugs, extortion, torture, robbery, counterfeiting, weapons smuggling, and contract murder.

INT. SASHA'S APARTMENT -- LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Marina's mother SCREAMS. Marina enters holding the baby. Her mother points at the TV, shouting:

NADJA  
Marina, look -- !

Marina turns to see Sasha on television.

SASHA (O.S.)  
This gang goes by many names -- *Cheka, Kontora, KGB, FSB* -- but it has only one intent: to gain a monopoly on all criminal activity in Russia.

Marina covers her mouth in horror. She's watching him commit suicide on live television.

MARINA  
*Sasha -- nyet!*

SASHA (O.S.)  
I have personally been ordered to commit murder to prove my loyalty to the Gang from Lubyanka.

MARINA  
(kneeling)  
*Tiho, Sasha!* No more!

INT. BORIS BEREZOVSKY'S OFFICE -- DAY

Boris watches the broadcast from his sofa, practically purring with contentment.

SASHA (O.S.)  
The victim was Boris Berezovsky, the billionaire industrialist.

JOURNALISTS  
Why would anyone want to kill Berezovsky?

SASHA  
They say Boris stole Russia. They want to steal it back.

JOURNALISTS (O.S.)  
Mr. Litvinenko, why are you coming forward now?

SASHA  
I am a patriot. I love my country.

JOURNALISTS (O.S.)  
Why didn't you simply resign from  
the FSB?

SASHA (O.S.)  
You don't just *resign* from a gang.  
When you join, they own you. Until  
the day you die, or until the day  
they kill you.

Sasha motions at the others.

SASHA (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
We have no choice, me and these men  
who have joined me today. We cannot  
leave the FSB.

(a beat)  
So we are forced to save it.

Boris reaches for the telephone:

BORIS  
Get me the Kremlin.

INT. THE KREMLIN -- MORNING

Boris moves with silent steps down marble hallways where Rasputin himself once schemed. He reaches a great wooden desk flanked by a military honor guard.

ATTENDANT  
The President will see you now.

INT. THE KREMLIN -- MAIN RESIDENCE -- MORNING

Boris holds his breath as he enters the chambers where slept the Tsars, Catherine the Great, Lenin, Stalin. He gazes up at the icons, the marble, the gold leaf... and he wants it. He wants everything, but more than anything, he wants this.

Then he hears a SOUND -- a splashing echo from the next room. He moves toward the open doorway and peers inside

INT. MASTER BATHROOM -- DAY

A 65-year-old man crouches over the toilet, VOMITING loudly. He is naked but for a pair of white jockey underpants. Boris tries to duck away discreetly, but it's too late. PRESIDENT BORIS YELTSIN beckons him forth, waving.

YELTSIN  
Borya, come here! I need your help.  
It's this fucking cold. I can't  
seem to shake it.

BORIS

There's a bad one going around.

YELTSIN

Get us a drink, will you?

Boris goes to the nightstand by the bed, where rests an open bottle of vodka. He pours a glass and brings it to Yeltsin.

YELTSIN (CONT'D)

Where's yours?

BORIS

I have meetings with City bankers all morning long.

YELTSIN

Are you worried they'll mistake you for a Russian?

Boris flinches. He pours a glass, and they drink together.

YELTSIN (CONT'D)

Ah. Better.

The TV is playing footage of Litvinenko's press conference.

YELTSIN (CONT'D)

Have you seen this?

(realizes)

What am I saying? It's your network.

BORIS

That's what I wanted to speak to you about, Boris Nikolayevich.

Yeltsin reaches for the intercom while pulling on his pants.

YELTSIN

Send Volya in, will you?

BORIS

The Security Services have gone rotten. They can't be trusted.

YELTSIN

Not by you, it seems.

BORIS

Exactly. This proves what I've been telling you all along. There is a plot to kill me.

YELTSIN

So?

BORIS

So... there can be no question as to  
why this order has been given.  
Because of my loyalty to you. Once  
I'm gone, they can retake my network.  
My greatest fear is not for myself,  
Boris Nikolayevich, but for you!

Yeltsin nods. He'd never thought of it that way.

YELTSIN

What are you proposing?

BORIS

A new man to run *Kontora*. An  
uncorrupted man. A brave man.

YELTSIN

(re: Litvinenko)

Him? It's madness, what he's doing.

BORIS

The same might have been said of you  
the historic day you climbed atop  
that tank --

YELTSIN

Yah, yah. Enough. I agree with  
you, Borya.

BORIS

I'm glad.

YELTSIN

But I have my own man for the job.

Boris reacts. A door opens and someone enters the room.

YELTSIN (CONT'D)

A man of lifelong service to the  
state. A man known to be untouched  
by corruption.

The man steps out of the shadows and into SHARP FOCUS. A  
compact man, with a pale, clammy gaze and an air of supreme  
self-discipline. He extends his hand toward us.

YELTSIN (CONT'D)

This is Vladimir Putin.

EXT. LUBYANKA CENTER -- DAY

Sasha Litvinenko climbs the steps to the great fortress,  
clutching a briefcase and dressed in his best suit.

INT. LUBYANKA CENTER -- MEN'S ROOM -- DAY

Sasha stands before a mirror in the men's room. He combs his hair. Straightens his tie. There is a sense of anticipation. This is his moment.

INT. VLADIMIR PUTIN'S OFFICE -- DAY

Vladimir Putin rises from his desk as Sasha enters. He does not extend his hand.

PUTIN  
Lieutenant Colonel Litvinenko.

SASHA  
Lieutenant Colonel Putin.

Putin seems molded from the same concrete as his surroundings.

PUTIN  
Please sit down.

Sasha sits. He gazes across the mausoleum-slab of a desk.

SASHA  
Felix Dzherzinsky.

PUTIN  
Excuse me?

Sasha nods at a bust of Dzherzinsky behind Putin.

PUTIN (CONT'D)  
Ah, that. This was his office.

SASHA  
I didn't know that.

PUTIN  
I am having everything restored to how he had it, down to the last detail. Then it will be made into a permanent exhibition. For visitors. Velvet ropes and all that.

SASHA  
Where will you go?

PUTIN  
Down the hall. An office more suitable for a simple civil servant.

SASHA  
You won't have to restore much.

PUTIN

Little changes have been made over the years. The integrity of the design has been compromised.

(a beat)

So much has been lost. We have to preserve what we can.

SASHA

I agree, Lieutenant Colonel. Boris Berezovsky assures me that you share my desire to restore the integrity of our institution.

Putin says nothing. Sasha reaches into his briefcase and pulls out a stack of files.

SASHA (CONT'D)

These files contain information I have collected over several years on corruption inside the bureau. Names, photos, financial transactions.

Sasha places the files on Putin's desk. Putin makes no move to examine them. They lie there like a dead body, ignored.

Putin stands. Sasha stands as well.

PUTIN

Tell me. Which directorate did you serve in?

SASHA

Third Directorate. And you?

PUTIN

The Fifth.

Sasha says nothing. He waits for a goodbye. When none is forthcoming, he turns and exits.

Putin stands behind his desk for a long moment. Then he reaches out with one finger and presses the intercom button.

PUTIN (CONT'D)

Tap his phone.

CUT TO:

SASHA'S FRONT DOOR

POUNDS, over and over again, splintering. We PUSH IN on it --

INT. SASHA'S APARTMENT -- LIVING ROOM -- DAY

-- and it EXPLODES, disgorging a dozen MOSCOW POLICE with battering rams and body armor. Marina SCREAMS. Tolik SCREAMS. They kick down the bedroom door --

-- where they grab Sasha and shove him on the bed, bellowing obscenities. They pin him, cuff him, lock him in a strangle hold, and drag him backwards by the throat into

INT. FEDERAL COURTROOM -- DAY

A CAGE of wrought iron stands at the center of the room. The walls are painted bright red. There are no windows. A crowd of jeering FSB/KGB and Moscow Police officers has gathered nonetheless, spilling into the corridor outside.

Sasha stands inside the iron cage in shackles, pacing back and forth like an animal, shouting back at his tormentors.

JUDGE

Quiet! If order is not restored, contempt citations will be made!

The crowd ignores him. After all, they are the cops. An elderly SHOPKEEPER sits in the dock, mumbling his testimony.

PROSECUTOR

You'll have to speak up, sir.

SHOPKEEPER

I said: "And that was when Sasha demanded the money."

PROSECUTOR

Precisely how much money?

The shopkeeper glances into the crowd beseechingly.

SHOPKEEPER

Ten thousand rubles?

SASHA

He's forgotten his lines again!

JUDGE

Quiet!

SASHA

Ratko, you know me! How many times have I helped you on the street?

PROSECUTOR

He's tampering with the witness!

The shopkeeper covers his face in shame.

SHOPKEEPER  
I didn't want this, Sasha. They  
give me no choice!

Chaos. Everyone in the room is SCREAMING. But Sasha screams loudest, clutching the bars and rattling his own cage:

SASHA  
He admits he's giving his testimony  
under duress! What more do you need?  
This system is a fucking joke!

JUDGE/PROSECUTOR  
Quiet, you! Bailiff!

The Bailiff SLAMS Sasha's fingers with his billy-club. Sasha recoils in pain -- then he turns and sees them --

-- the CAMERAS from Channel One, Boris' network. The cops are jostling them, trying to push them out the doorway, but the cameramen keep shooting. Sasha raises his hands like a ringleader in a circus, ROARING:

SASHA  
You! The cameras! Get a good shot  
of this! Beam it off a fucking  
satellite! Let the world see what  
justice looks like in our New Russia!

Pandemonium. The cops struggle to wrest the cameras away, but the cameramen keep shooting. Sasha paces his cage like a panther, reveling in the madness. Then he sees her --

Marina, standing at the edge of the fray. She's in tears, covering her face. Sasha calls out to her:

SASHA (CONT'D)  
Marusya. Marusya! Don't be afraid --

But she can't hear him. The judge pounds his gavel, looking directly at the cameras:

JUDGE  
Does the accuser wish to recant his  
testimony?

A bored SILOVIK in the crowd flips out his *mobilnik*.

SILOVIK  
The judge is ready to dismiss.  
Fucking TV cameras, that's what.

SASHA

Look at me, Ratko! Don't look at them, look at me! These bastards can't make you do this --

SHOPKEEPER

(whispering)

Yes, Judge. I wish to recant.

More screaming and jeering from the crowd.

SILOVIK

The witness is recanting. We'll need to take Litvinenko.

JUDGE

The accuser recants. Criminal proceeding #R994042 is dismissed under the legal authority of the Russian Federation.

The bailiffs open the cage and lead Sasha out as the crowd shouts and spits at them.

SASHA

Take these shackles off me. Marusya!

Through the crowd, he finds her, her eyes shining with tears.

SASHA (CONT'D)

Marusya!

He struggles to reach her as the bailiffs fend off the mob. Then we HEAR something over the crowd --

-- a low RUMBLE, thunderous and rolling toward us. The confused courtroom falls silent. *What's that sound?*

We PUSH IN on the Silovik as he leans against the wall with a satisfied smile, waiting for what is to come --

-- and then it hits. An EIGHT-MAN PARAMILITARY TEAM storms the courtroom bearing guns and ski-masks. The mob parts --

MARINA

*Sasha!*

-- as they head straight for Sasha. He holds onto the bars of the cage he's just escaped from as the paramilitary squad wrests him away. The Judges rise from the bench, stunned:

JUDGE

*What's going on here? What's happening here!*

Sasha SCREAMS as the paramilitary squad peels him loose, lifts him up, and carries him forcibly out of the courtroom -- and as suddenly as they appeared, they're gone.

INT. ARMORED TRUCK -- DAY

A THUD as we hit something metal. Frantic, suffocated breathing. We're inside a plastic garbage bag. An ENGINE REVS. TIRES peel. We're moving fast, too fast. CAR HORMS.

VOICE (V.O.)  
*Otvali, I want him to see this.*

They pull off the garbage bag. Sasha GASPS for air.

VOICE 2 (V.O.)  
Open your eyes. Open your eyes!

Someone punches him in the head. He opens his eyes --

-- and we see the worst view on Earth through the windshield: the cold stone face of Lubyanka Center hurtling towards us.

VOICE  
Now you make the trip to Lubyanka.

INT. LUBYANKA PRISON

The legendary prison GROANS around us. Sasha is shunted down corridors and through doorways, the millionth rat in this ancient maze. A door opens. The Special Prosecutor is waiting for us, a file open before him. His name is BARSUKOV.

SASHA  
Don't waste your time with the  
theatrics. I know all the approaches.  
All the routines.

BARSUKOV  
Litvinenko, Alexander. You have  
been accused of a criminal offense.

SASHA  
The case was thrown out.

BARSUKOV  
Not that offense. A new offense.

SASHA  
New offense? What offense?  
(interrupting)  
No, wait. Don't bother. Whatever  
it is, I confess. There. Now that  
that's done, you can execute me.

Barsukov just looks at him.

SASHA (CONT'D)  
What are you waiting for? Do you  
need me to sign something? No?  
Then execute me. We still do that  
on the premises, right?

Barsukov says nothing.

SASHA (CONT'D)  
Oh, that's right. You can't. You  
can't kill me. You know why?

BARSUKOV  
Why.

SASHA  
Because I'm famous. And that makes  
it so much harder. It just wouldn't  
do to have me turn up face-down in a  
ditch one week after I accused FSB  
of murder on international television.

BARSUKOV  
You like being on television, don't  
you?

SASHA  
Fucking love it! I think I have a  
talent for it, you know? A face like  
this is wasted in the Secret Services!

BARSUKOV  
You're disgusting.

Sasha smiles. Barsukov quickly recovers his composure.

BARSUKOV (CONT'D)  
I don't think you appreciate the  
gravity of the charges against you.

SASHA  
Let's hear it. What's the charge?  
Murder?

BARSUKOV  
You are charged with extortion.

SASHA  
What am I accused of extorting?

BARSUKOV  
You are accused of extorting...  
(MORE)

BARSUKOV (CONT'D)  
(reads from his file)  
"...A can of sweet peas."

SASHA  
A can of sweet peas.

BARSUKOV  
It's a very serious charge. Of course, the courts face a heavy caseload. There is so much crime these days.

SASHA  
I never stole anything. We both know that.

BARSUKOV  
It may take a very long time to get a hearing before a judge.

SASHA  
Who is this accuser -- ?  
(catches himself)  
No. There is no accuser. Look.  
There's no use in playing this game.

BARSUKOV  
It's a very serious offense.

SASHA  
There is no offense.

BARSUKOV  
In time, as your case moves through the system, you will face your accuser. Until then --

SASHA  
There is no accuser. There is no crime. Just admit it.

Someone grabs Sasha from behind. He struggles. As they haul him away, Sasha shouts:

SASHA (CONT'D)  
There is no accuser. There is no crime. There is no anything. *There is no fucking can of peas --*

They whisk him away to

INT. LEFORTOVO PRISON -- DAY

Sasha is led, shirtless, past lightless cells with men stacked to the ceilings in bunks, twelve or fifteen to a ten-foot cell. They gaze out at us like chickens on a factory farm.

BARSUKOV (V.O.)

Every prisoner at Lefortovo is an enemy of the state.

The prisoners are covered in PRISON TATTOOS. Sasha is paraded before them, his pale, unmarked skin glowing in the dark.

BARSUKOV (V.O.) (CONT'D)

*Kontora killed their fathers, tortured their brothers, raped their women, worked them to death.*

Sasha pleads with the guard:

SASHA

I need my own cell. I'm a cop. I can't be in the population.

The guard doesn't hear him.

SASHA (CONT'D)

I have friends on the outside. Money. Anything you want.

They approach a communal cell, with dozens of gang members pressed against the bars.

BARSUKOV (V.O.)

This is where you will wait for trial.

The guard throws Sasha tumbling into the cell. The tattooed crowd gathers round, then parts --

-- to reveal ORHUK THE BEARDED ONE, the gangster Sasha sent to prison. He gazes at Sasha and hisses:

ORHUK, THE BEARDED ONE

*Kontoristi -- !*

Sasha leaps from the ground, lunging at Orhuk -- the crowd is upon him, tattooed hands tearing him away as he sinks his teeth into Orhuk's face and holds on for dear life.

We GAZE DOWN upon Sasha as the tide of tattooed limbs claw at him, tearing at his flesh, bearing him up on a swell of flesh, ink, grime and blood --

-- and then it swallows him whole, and he is gone.

BLACK OUT.

EXT. CONCRETE WALL -- DAY

A great wall looms before us. A metal door opens. A wizened, emaciated man shuffles out. It is only from his clothes that we realize it's Sasha. Despite his condition, he smiles:

SASHA  
*Devotchka moya.*

Marina has been waiting for his release outside the prison along with the 3-year-old Tolik. She gazes at him, stunned.

INT. MARINA'S CAR -- DAY

Sasha sits in the passenger seat, motionless.

SASHA  
When they put me into the population  
I did everything I could to get  
killed. Then, when they put me in  
confinement, I went on hunger strike.  
They were forced to release me.  
(smiles)  
I knew they had to keep me alive.  
So I made that impossible for them.

Marina sobs. Sasha reaches out to her.

SASHA (CONT'D)  
*Kroshka.* Don't be afraid. I've got  
it all under control.

MARINA  
Is that what you think?

Marina clutches herself, rocking back and forth.

SASHA  
You should have seen it, Marusya.  
Every day in the mines we walked  
over fragments of bones from all the  
men who had been worked to death.  
The other prisoners buried their  
bodies where they fell and then kept  
on working. Everywhere, little pieces  
of bone, like seashells on a beach.  
(a beat)  
I thought the system was broken.  
But this is how the system works.  
How it's always worked.

MARINA  
What are we going to do, Sasha?

SASHA  
I've got a plan.

INT. SASHA'S APARTMENT -- MORNING

Sasha combs the apartment for listening devices.

SASHA (V.O.)  
I knew the whole apartment would be  
wired when I got out of prison.

He finds one in the kitchen lamp, the phone, the lightswitch.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
This was good. It meant they were  
following textbook procedure.

He carefully replaces the fixtures, leaving the bugs in place.

EXT. STREET CAFE -- DAY

An FSB agent in a ZIL across the street is watching Sasha,  
taking pictures. Sasha moves his chair into the light to  
give the guy a clearer shot.

SASHA (V.O.)  
They would also have someone informing  
on me -- probably a friend. It's  
always someone from the old days.

Someone approaches his table -- it's Ponkin. They embrace.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
I thought it would be Gusak, but it  
turned out to be my old friend Ponkin.

SASHA (CONT'D)  
I was thinking of taking the family  
on holiday for a few days.

PONKIN  
Holiday? Yeah? That's nice. Where?

SASHA (V.O.)  
I was happy for Ponkin. He was always  
a good kid. Informing on me would  
advance his career.

INT. SASHA'S APARTMENT -- KITCHEN -- DAY

SASHA (V.O.)

Most important was to make sure they always knew my whereabouts. The intel from the wires and from Ponkin had to sync up perfectly.

Sasha literally reads his travel itinerary over the phone, enunciating loudly and clearly:

SASHA (CONT'D)

Then, on Thursday at 10AM, I thought we'd go to the beach at Zelenogradsk.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I was going to have to bore them to death. Then could I make my move.

Sasha glances down at the table, where lies a PASSPORT, FOREIGN CURRENCY, MAPS, PREPAID MOBILEPHONES and SIM CARDS.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

They could watch me, but they couldn't kill me, as long as I stayed famous. Important thing was to stay famous.

Sasha hangs up the phone. We HOLD ON the phone --

INT. SASHA'S APARTMENT -- KITCHEN -- NIGHT

-- and then, hours later, it RINGS. Marina is carrying Tolik to bed in his pajamas. She picks it up.

VOICE (V.O.)

Sasha Litvinenko.

MARINA

May I give him a message?

VOICE

Tell him we are going to kill him.

MARINA

Who is this?

VOICE

Either him, or his son.

MARINA

(rising panic)

Who are you? What do you want?

VOICE

Sasha or Tolik. One or the other.  
Deliver the message.

MARINA

Who are you? Whatever you want --

DIAL TONE. She stands there with the receiver in her hand, overcome. We MOVE AROUND her to look through the doorway to the living room, where Sasha is watching television.

She hangs up the phone without saying a word.

EXT. TYVERSKAYA PROSPEKT -- NIGHT

Marina pulls her little car into a parking space. She checks her makeup in the mirror. Her hands won't stop shaking.

INT. RESTAURANT -- NIGHT

The Maitre D' unlocks the door and shows her in. The restaurant is closed, but one table is set for dinner. An old *Silovik* rises from the table as she approaches --

-- and, though he is ten years older, we recognize him at once. It's Egorov, the man who trained Sasha.

INT. RESTAURANT -- LATER

A waiter brings plates of food. Marina shakes her head.

EGOROV

Please, eat. My chef is the best on Tyverskaya Prospekt.

MARINA

You are very kind, just as Vladimir Bukovsky said.

EGOROV

He also said you were very beautiful.

Marina reluctantly picks at her food.

MARINA

He said you might be able to do something for Sasha.

EGOROV

(shrugs)

I am retired.

MARINA

No one ever retires from *Kontora*. Even I know that.

EGOROV

Whatever influence I might have would be meaningless. Sasha's life belongs to *Kontora*. This is like a law. More than a law. There can be no exceptions. If I saw Sasha on the street, I would be honor bound to kill him myself.

Marina stares at him. Then:

MARINA

They said they would kill my son.

EGOROV

That's possible.

MARINA

He's four years old.

EGOROV

I don't know what to say.

MARINA

Why not me?

EGOROV

I don't understand.

MARINA

Why don't they just kill me?

EGOROV

That would never happen.

MARINA

If you can kill my son instead of my husband, then you can kill me instead of them.

EGOROV

We would never harm a woman.

MARINA

Well. You are men of honor.

For an instant, the mask falls away.

EGOROV

Be careful what you say to me.

Marina falls silent.

MARINA

Why did you agree to meet with me?

EGOROV

Sasha is lost. No one can help him now. But you can protect your son.

(a beat)

Cut all ties to Sasha. Move to another town. The farther you are from Sasha, the more likely they are to seek him instead of Tolik.

MARINA

That's it?

EGOROV

That's all I can offer you.

Marina rises to leave.

EGOROV (CONT'D)

Sasha is a reckless man. He was wrong for us. I could see that from the start, but I did nothing. He was so gifted...

MARINA

I know.

EGOROV

For this, I will always be sorry. I know you won't make the same mistake.

EXT. MOSCOW STREETS -- NIGHT

Sasha emerges from the Moscow subway. He walks the streets without any attempt to conceal his identity.

SIRENS blaze by. Fire trucks pass, then an ambulance. Sasha follows, passing people with panicked looks on their faces.

There's an infernal glow on the horizon. Sasha moves toward it. We FOLLOW him round a corner to see

A DEMOLISHED APARTMENT COMPLEX

Lying in smoldering ruins. Bodies are hauled from the wreckage as people watch in tears. An OLD MAN hisses:

OLD MAN

*Terroristi!*

**TITLE UP: SEPTEMBER 9, 1999**

We PUSH IN on Sasha as he stands bathed in the infernal glow, a look of gathering recognition in his eyes...

INT. SASHA'S APARTMENT -- MORNING

Marina walks into the living room wearing the t-shirt she sleeps in. The bombing coverage is on Channel One. Sasha is working at a laptop computer via screeching dial-up modem.

MARINA

Have you been up all night?

Sasha puts a finger to his lips: *hush*. He turns the volume on the TV all the way up.

MARINA (CONT'D)

So loud -- !

Then she sees what's on TV. Bodies, wreckage, wailing relatives, angry onlookers.

MARINA (CONT'D)

Oh God. What now?

Sasha unplugs the laptop. Leads her outside, to

EXT. SASHA'S APARTMENT -- BALCONY -- MORNING

Sasha reads rapid-fire from his laptop screen:

SASHA

June 22. Three months ago.  
*Moskovskaya Pravda* publishes leaked documents about Operation "Storm in Moscow" in which the FSB would organize terrorist acts to bring about a state of emergency --

MARINA

I'm not even dressed. This is crazy.  
I'm going back in --

She tries to go back inside, and he stops her.

SASHA

Don't go in there. They're listening.  
(resuming)

Three weeks before that, Swedish paper *Svenska Dagbladet* reported that the Kremlin was planning "a series of bombings that could be blamed on the Chechens to justify an invasion that would rally the public around the new regime -- "

Now, on the TV in the living room, a familiar face appears --

-- the face of Vladimir Putin. He is giving an emergency press conference, his voice bland and emotionless:

PUTIN  
...These attacks must be answered with force. Russia will protect her citizens from these terrorists...

Beneath him reads: *Vladimir Putin, President of Russian Federation.* Sasha watches Putin, and Marina watches Sasha. Each is horrified, but for very different reasons. Sasha resumes reading the evidence:

SASHA  
There's more --

Marina reaches out and covers his mouth.

MARINA  
No. No more. Please. *Tiho.*

SASHA  
Let go of me. Don't you see what they're doing?

MARINA  
They're going to kill Tolik.

Sasha blinks, uncomprehending.

MARINA (CONT'D)  
They're going to kill one of you.  
You or him. As punishment. They've been calling on the phone.

SASHA  
Why didn't you tell me this?

MARINA  
You have to apologize, Sasha.

SASHA  
Apologize?

MARINA  
You have to publicly recant everything you said. Like the old days. Confess your crimes. Read whatever statement they hand you. We'll be ruined, but they'll let you and Tolik live.

SASHA  
Marina. This isn't the old days.  
They won't let anyone live.

MARINA  
It's our only chance.

SASHA  
Marina, these people blew up buildings  
full of people! They're not just  
killers! They're terrorists!

MARINA  
I don't want to hear it!

SASHA  
And you want me to apologize?!

She lunges at him, trying to cover his mouth.

MARINA  
*Shut up! Shut up! I don't want to  
hear it! I don't want to hear it!*

Sasha pulls her into a bear hug.

SASHA  
Marina. They're watching. They  
can't see this.

MARINA  
*Shut up! Shut up!*

Marina struggles, then breaks down, utterly bereft:

MARINA (CONT'D)  
Oh God. Not my baby. Not my baby.

SASHA  
They can't see this.

He turns her so her back is to the apartment building opposite --

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING OPPOSITE -- MORNING

-- as an FSB SURVEILLANCE OPERATOR wearing headphones steps  
out on his balcony with his morning tea and toast. He looks  
through his camera's viewfinder --

-- to see Marina in just her t-shirt on the balcony, with  
Sasha holding her. He smirks and starts shooting pictures  
for his own private collection.

EXT. SASHA'S APARTMENT -- BALCONY -- MORNING

Marina is silent now, her eyes glassy, her face streaked  
with tears. If Sasha weren't holding her, she would collapse.

SASHA  
Marusya?

She doesn't answer. He turns so his back is to the building opposite. He reaches into his pocket and pulls something out -- it's a tiny ISM card.

SASHA (CONT'D)  
This is a clean SIM card. For your  
mobilnik. They don't know about  
this number.

She looks at him, uncomprehending.

SASHA (CONT'D)  
Wait a few days. Then put this card  
in your phone.

MARINA  
What -- ?

SASHA  
The plan wasn't supposed to go live  
yet, but I have to move now. I can't  
tell you any more. This is for your  
own protection.  
(a beat)  
We'll be together again, Marina.

Marina stares at him, expressionless.

SASHA (CONT'D)  
I swear it.

We hear an oncoming ROAR --

EXT. TRANS-URAL EXPRESS -- DAWN

-- as we ROAR out of a tunnel into daylight. Sasha wakes in a cramped 3rd class compartment aboard the trans-continental train. The endless Russian landscape is a blur.

He carries nothing but the clothes on his back and a crumpled PAPER BAG, which holds an object the size of a small handgun. He gazes out at the approaching horizon --

EXT. GEORGIAN BORDER FERRY -- EVENING

-- and fourteen hours later, he's at a ferry crossing at the Russian/Georgian border. Sasha eyes two RUSSIAN BORDER GUARDS with rifles slung over their shoulders as they examine passports at the checkpoint gate to the ferry.

Sasha checks his watch -- it's two minutes to 6PM. He reaches into the bag -- and pulls out not a gun but a bottle of CHEAP

COLOGNE. He splashes it on by the handful, then throws the bottle away. He runs, as if racing to make the ferry.

GUARD  
Passport and visa.

SASHA  
(searching his pockets)  
Shit. I forgot it. Shit! I've got  
a girl waiting across the river.

GUARD  
So I smell.

The border guards laugh. Sasha reaches out, buddy-buddy --

SASHA  
Help me out. If you saw what I had  
waiting on the other side --

-- and slips a 100-ruble note into the guard's pocket.

GUARD  
Maybe I should just take your money  
and your girl.

Sasha looks panicked.

GUARD (CONT'D)  
Easy on the aftershave next time.

The guard motions him through. Sasha walks the gangplank, and as the ferry takes off, he watches Russia drift away.

INT. SASHA'S APARTMENT -- BEDROOM -- DAWN

Marina stands in the doorway, staring at her empty marriage bed. Sasha is gone. She goes to the closet --

-- and pulls out all of Sasha's belongings. QUICK CUTS: she stuffs all of Sasha's things into garbage bags, and her belongings into suitcases and boxes.

EXT. APARTMENT COURTYARD -- DAY

She throws the bags in a dumpster. She packs the boxes into her little car. When it's done, her face is soaked in sweat.

She takes out the SIM card Sasha gave her. She considers throwing it into the dumpster as well. But she can't help herself. She inserts it into her mobile. It comes to life --

-- and there is one INCOMING CALL on its screen. She hesitates, then presses the button to return the call --

SASHA (O.S.)  
*Devotchka moya.*

Marina hesitates, then:

MARINA  
Where are you?

EXT. ISTANBUL, TURKEY -- DAY

The minarets of Topkapi and the Blue Mosque loom in the distance. Sasha stands on the terrace of his hotel.

SASHA  
I'd rather not say. We have to be careful. Look, I want you to book a package tour somewhere in the West. Costa del Sol, something like that. When you get there, I'll contact you on this number with more instructions --

MARINA (V.O.)  
I'm not going.

SASHA  
What?

EXT. APARTMENT COURTYARD -- NIGHT

MARINA  
I'm happy you made it, Sasha. But Tolik and I won't go with you.

SASHA  
Marina, we're almost clear! I've been planning this operation for weeks! They'll never find us --

MARINA  
It's you that I'm afraid of.

A stunned SILENCE on the other end.

MARINA (CONT'D)  
You can't change, Sasha. It's what you live for. This fight. You feed on it. For me, I don't care. I would die with you. But not Tolik. I can't bear to leave you, Sasha. But I will, for him.

SASHA  
Marusya, I love you --

MARINA  
It doesn't matter.

INT. SASHA'S APARTMENT -- BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Marina lies on the bare mattress with Tolik in her arms. Their bags are packed and ready to leave the next morning.

The phone RINGS. Marina rises. She goes to the kitchen phone, stares at it, but doesn't pick up. She steps outside --

EXT. SASHA'S APARTMENT -- BALCONY

-- and looks down. Boris' armored convoy is idling below, waiting for her.

MARINA (V.O.)  
My decision is made.

INT. ARMORED MERCEDES -- NIGHT

Tolik sleeps in the front passenger seat next to Boris' bodyguard/.driver. Boris and Marina sit in the back seat.

BORIS  
I'm sure you think it is. But you will go with Sasha. You will go with him because you love him, and because he will die without you.

MARINA  
I didn't realize you were a romantic.

BORIS  
I'm not. I'm a mathematician. You see, like numbers, human emotions have an inescapable logic.  
(a beat)  
Sasha loves you. Am I correct?

MARINA  
Yes.

BORIS  
If you don't go to Turkey, Sasha will come back here for you. He won't be able to help himself. When he returns, they will kill him.

Marina is silent. He's right.

BORIS (CONT'D)  
You are faced with a choice between the possibility of Tolik's murder  
(MORE)

BORIS (CONT'D)  
and the certainty of Sasha's. You  
will be compelled to take a chance  
on Sasha. Because you love Sasha as  
much as he loves you. Maybe more.

(a beat)  
Is there a flaw in my reasoning?

Marina can't breathe.

MARINA  
No.

She looks out the window: they have arrived at the airport.

BORIS  
When you reach Spain, you should  
immediately board a flight for Ankara.

Boris hands Marina a pair of airline tickets.

MARINA  
But our things -- my clothes, and  
Tolik's --

BORIS  
There's no time. You must leave  
now, before they know Sasha is gone.

Marina climbs out of the car, then takes Tolik from the front  
seat, bundling him up in her arms. She turns:

MARINA  
What do you get out of all this?

BORIS  
Everything.

INT. ANKARA AIRPORT -- DAY

Marina and Tolik exit their plane, utterly bleary after 24  
hours of nonstop flying. Marina looks up, sees him --

-- it's Sasha, wearing sunglasses and a tan, like an actor  
in a spy movie of his own imagining. Tolik runs into his  
arms. In spite of herself, Marina smiles.

SASHA (V.O.)  
American Embassy is surrounded by  
FSB surveillance, 24 hours a day.

INT. TAXICAB -- AMERICAN EMBASSY -- ANKARA, TURKEY -- DAY

The American Flag flies atop the white-walled compound.  
Sasha and Marina eye it from the back of a taxi.

SASHA

It's standard procedure. They photograph everyone. As soon as we walk in, they'll know we're in Ankara.

MARINA

Sasha -- I don't want to hear things like that anymore.

Sasha nods, chastened.

SASHA

I never meant to frighten you.

SASHA (CONT'D)

(brightening)

That's all over now. Tonight we sleep in a hotel suite, with clean sheets, and room service. Tomorrow we fly to America, and we begin again.

(to Tolik)

How does that sound? Are you ready? Let's go for a walk.

EXT. AMERICAN EMBASSY -- ANKARA, TURKEY

We watch the small family through a TELEPHOTO LENS as they walk hand-in-hand up the stairway to the American Embassy. A SHUTTER CLOSES and we cut to

INT. AMERICAN EMBASSY -- CONFERENCE ROOM -- DAY

Sasha sits alone in a windowless room with two sad-looking American flags and a framed photograph of Bill Clinton. A 35-year-old man in a BROOKS BROTHERS SUIT enters.

BROOKS BROTHERS

I'm afraid the news is not what we'd hoped for.

SASHA

What?

(blinks, stunned)

The information I gave you.

BROOKS BROTHERS

The intelligence checked out. It simply wasn't enough. In order to take a step like this, we would need more.

SASHA

More? There is more. I will give you more when I defect.

BROOKS BROTHERS  
No one "defects" anymore. We would  
be granting you political asylum.

SASHA  
I was *Lieutenant Colonel in KGB*, do  
you understand?

BROOKS BROTHERS  
Mr. Litvinenko, the Cold War is over.  
Russia is an ally of the United  
States. We would be taking a  
significant diplomatic risk. To  
justify that risk, we would need --

SASHA  
More. I will not negotiate with  
you. I will not let you use me up  
and throw me back to FSB. I know  
what you're doing. Who are you --

A business card lies on the table. Sasha picks it up.

SASHA (CONT'D)  
"Doug Clancy"? You wear Brooks  
Brothers suit. You are Ivy League.  
You speak perfect Russian. And you're  
supposed to be "Embassy Assistant"  
stationed in Ankara, Turkey?

BROOKS BROTHERS  
I don't understand you.

SASHA  
*I know what you are.* And you are  
making big fucking mistake.

BROOKS BROTHERS  
I don't think so.  
(rising)  
Good luck to you on your journey.

INT. AMERICAN EMBASSY LOBBY/EXIT -- EVENING

Embassy workers go home for the night. Marina and Tolik sit  
silently on a bench by the exit.

Sasha paces in front of the glass doors and the dangers that  
lie beyond. The fluorescent lights overhead go dark.

SECURITY GUARD  
The Embassy is now closed.

EXT. AMERICAN EMBASSY -- EVENING

The doors BOLT shut behind them. They stand on the Embassy steps, utterly exposed. Sasha doesn't know what to do.

TOLIK

Can we go to the hotel now?

Sasha picks Tolik up, holding him tightly, as if shielding him from unseen snipers, and runs down the stairs.

MARINA

Sasha. What's happening?

SASHA

Nothing's happening. Come on.

Once in the street, he frantically hails a taxi.

INT. ANKARA AIRLINES -- TICKET COUNTER -- NIGHT

An AIRLINE TICKETING AGENT clicks away at her terminal.

TICKET AGENT

You're in luck. I have a direct flight to Moscow leaving in one hour.

SASHA

I don't want direct flight. I want flight to Moscow... with a connection in London.

TICKET AGENT

The connecting flight would add nine hours to your trip. Why would you --

SASHA

We like to shop Duty-Free at Heathrow. Gifts. Whiskey. Perfume.

TICKET AGENT

You don't have visas for travel to London.

SASHA

We don't need them to fly to Moscow.

He lays the cash out on the counter, speaking slowly:

SASHA (CONT'D)

I want a flight to Moscow... with a connection in London.

The Ticket Agent looks at him... and she hits "PRINT". The boarding passes are mechanically SPIT OUT --

INT. ANKARA AIRPORT -- MAIN CONCOURSE -- NIGHT

-- and, as they make their way to their gate, Marina spots them: two TURKISH SECRET SERVICE AGENTS in cheap suits and earpiece wires shadowing them.

SASHA

They're Turkish Secret Service. The Americans must have called them. They're going to arrest us and extradite us back to Russia.

They hurry toward their gate. They hand their boarding passes to the ticket-taker, then run through the boarding bridge toward the airplane. Sasha casts a glance back --

-- to see the Secret Service whispering to the ticket-taker. He hurries Marina and Tolik along. They enter the plane. The stewardess is closing the door behind them when:

TICKET-TAKER (O.S.)  
Hold the door! Mr. Litvinenko!

Sasha closes his eyes. It's over. He turns --

-- to see the ticket-taker holding their boarding passes.

TICKET-TAKER (CONT'D)  
Your boarding passes, Mr. Litvinenko.

Sasha takes the tickets, a little stunned. The Secret Service Agents are still at the ticket desk, watching.

SASHA

Thank you.  
(a beat)  
Excuse me. Those two men. What did they say to you?

TICKET-TAKER  
They said to make certain you left on this plane.  
(off his look)  
You are not welcome in Turkey, Mr. Litvinenko. Enjoy your flight.

She closes the airplane door and we BLACK OUT.

SASHA (V.O.)  
We are political refugees from Russia.  
We request asylum in your country.

INT. HEATHROW AIRPORT -- CUSTOMS -- DAY

They stand at the customs desk at Heathrow. The British customs agent signals for security.

CUSTOMS AGENT

Without a visa, you will not be admitted to the UK. You will be deported to your home country --

SASHA

Is British law. You must take us in once we request political asylum.

He throws down their Russian passports. They are torn in half. The customs agent glowers unhappily.

SASHA (CONT'D)

So. Here we are.

INT. THE KREMLIN -- DAY

Boris Berezovsky walks the marbled corridors once more. He shoots his cuffs, preening, confident. He is at home here. A Presidential AIDE opens a door for him --

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM -- THE KREMLIN -- DAY

-- to reveal a dozen OLIGARCHS seated around a conference table, with Vladimir Putin at its head.

PUTIN

You're late, Borya.

BORIS

The meeting starts at 10AM. So I was told.

Putin ignores him. An AIDE reads from a legal document:

AIDE

Finally, 50% of these properties will revert to state control, effective upon the signature of the President.

A silence. Finally one of the young Oligarchs, MIKHAIL KHODORKOVSKY, speaks:

KHODORKOVSKY

You can't do this. We have property rights. You can't simply expropriate 50% of our private property!

PUTIN

It was never your property to begin with. It belongs to the State. I've chosen to leave you with 50%. This is very generous, you will agree. In exchange, you will abstain from any criticism of the State.

KHODORKOVSKY

You little thug. You third-rate *apparatchik*. We put you in that chair you're sitting in. We financed your campaign. We made you.

PUTIN

Russia made me.

Khodorkovsky rises, throws open the door, and walks out. A long SILENCE ensues. Finally, one of the Oligarchs rises:

ABRAMOVICH

Mr. President. I applaud your decision.

With that, Abramovich begins to CLAP. One by one, the other oligarchs rise as well. They all stand there, terrified smiles plastered to their faces, APPLAUDING Putin. Only Boris remains seated, visibly sinking into his chair.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM -- THE KREMLIN -- LATER

The meeting is over. As Putin exits, Boris speaks:

BORIS

Vladimir Vladimirovich, I must ask: does this decision apply to me as well?

Putin turns on his heel, red-faced with anger:

PUTIN

It applies to you *most of all*.

Boris is stunned.

PUTIN (CONT'D)

Why do you attack me, Borya? Your television network. Every night.

BORIS

Volya. I don't tell them what to report! It's a free press!

PUTIN

You are trying to weaken me.

Putin seems genuinely wounded.

PUTIN (CONT'D)  
I thought we were friends.

BORIS  
We are. I helped you, Volya!

PUTIN  
You wanted someone you could control.  
You knew I was loyal. You never  
thought about who I'd be loyal to.  
(a beat)  
Get your affairs in order.

INT. MERCEDES SEDAN -- BACKSEAT -- DAY

Boris speaks breathlessly on his *mobilnik*:

BORIS  
Frozen? All our assets? Everything?  
(grim)  
Surprised? No. I prepared for this.  
This is why God created Switzerland.  
Tell them to have the jet fueled and  
ready when we arrive. Where?  
(a beat, thinking)  
London.

EXT. PICCADILLY CIRCUS -- DAY

Sasha walks through Piccadilly, huddled against the wind.  
He could easily be a lost tourist. He approaches a newsagent  
and buys the Russian newspapers, one of each, then descends  
into the Piccadilly tube station.

INT. LONDON APARTMENT -- DAY

Marina sits at the kitchen table, a manuscript box open before  
her. She reads the final page, then places it in the box.  
Sasha enters to find her staring silently into the box.

MARINA  
What are you calling it?

SASHA  
*The KGB Blows Up Russia.*  
(a beat)  
My publisher seems to like it.

MARINA  
Boris? I'm sure he does.

She gently closes the box and pushes it away.

MARINA (CONT'D)  
They'll never allow this to be  
published in Russia. Never.

SASHA  
We're smuggling it over the border.  
It's all there, Marina. No one's  
put the evidence together like this.  
When this comes out, Putin is going  
on trial at the Hague. For murder.  
And he might have gotten away with  
it, if his own agents hadn't been  
caught planting the bomb at Ryazan --

MARINA  
You can't do this.  
(a beat)  
We're safe here. We have a life.  
School for Tolik. But only because  
they don't know where we are. If  
this gets out, they'll come for you.

SASHA  
You don't even believe they did this.

MARINA  
It doesn't matter what I believe.

SASHA  
It matters to me.

MARINA  
Sasha, don't.

SASHA  
I have to know whether you believe  
they did this or not.

MARINA  
Don't make me prove my loyalty to  
you. Please.

A silence. Then:

MARINA (CONT'D)  
I don't believe it. It's too much.  
To kill three hundred of their own  
citizens this way? To start a war?  
It's too monstrous. Even for them.  
(a beat)  
You have my confession. Are you  
happy?

SASHA  
I am happy.

Marina seems impossibly weary.

MARINA

You never left, Sasha. You're still back there. In Moscow. You've never tried to fit in here, never tried to speak English, to find a job --

SASHA

This is my job.

MARINA

You must not do this. You must not publish this book. I'm begging you.

SASHA

It's already done.

EXT. GEORGIAN-RUSSIAN BORDER CROSSING -- NIGHT

HEADLIGHTS illuminate a border-crossing checkpoint as the small truck pulls over. A RUSSIAN BORDER GUARD climbs into the payload area with a flashlight --

-- inside is a shipment of REVOLVING TABLE FANS in boxes. He checks a few boxes, OK, but then he goes deeper -- and these boxes are heavy. He tears one open, revealing --

THE KGB BLOWS UP RUSSIA, by Alexander Litvinenko. Dozens, hundreds of copies. The guards spill them out --

EXT. INDUSTRIAL PAPER SHREDDER -- DAY

-- and they EXPLODE. Thousands of books devoured in the shredder's whirling maw, rendered into snowflakes, then dust, then nothing at all.

FADE TO BLACK.

SASHA (V.O.)

They have a saying here. I hear it all the time. It goes like this: "We are born alone, and we die alone".

EXT. LONDON STREETS -- MONTAGE -- DAY

Sasha walks the streets of London wearing an ill-fitting suit, searching for a job.

SASHA (V.O.)

The first time I heard it, I thought it was the stupidest thing I'd ever heard.

We peer through doorways to see him speaking to receptionists who can't understand his accent.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
I grew up sleeping in the same bed  
with four cousins. I never had this  
luxury of loneliness. I didn't know  
what it was to take a shit in private  
until I was eleven.

Sasha waits in lobbies for appointments that never come.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
But then I realized: that's the pact  
Russia makes with her children.

At every office, Sasha is turned away.

SASHA (CONT'D)  
Whatever else happens, whatever  
suffering she makes you endure, you  
will never be alone.

He shuffles through windswept streets, carrying a stack of misspelled resumes under his arm.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
Because in a cold country the child  
who sleeps alone wakes up dead.

He turns a corner and he sees them: ORANGES, hundreds of them, spilling from a rubbish bin, left to rot in an alleyway behind a supermarket. Sasha gazes at them, astonished.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
I don't want to live the way these  
people live. I don't want to die  
the way they die, in their hospital  
beds, alone.

He sits at a bus stop, gazing at the endless parade of solitary Londoners weighed down by their shopping bags.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
We aren't whole people, Marina.  
We're just pieces of Russia -- a  
clump of hair, a tooth, a fingernail --  
that's been torn away and lost to  
the wind. We're nothing on our own.

INT. LONDON APARTMENT -- BEDROOM -- EVENING

Night is falling. Sasha sits in darkness, with Marina watching him.

MARINA

Maybe Boris can help us.

SASHA

Boris is cutting me off. He told me a few days ago, there's no more money. I'm not useful to him anymore.

MARINA

How will we live?

SASHA

I have to find a job. There must be a job somewhere for an old Russian to do. Otherwise we won't survive.

BLACK OUT.

AMBULANCE DOORS

burst open. ORDERLIES reach in, hauling out the gurney --

EXT. UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON HOSPITAL -- NIGHT

-- and we're flying, fast, toward the entrance of a steel-and-glass hospital in the distance. Brent Hyatt leads the way while talking on his mobile:

HYATT

Fades in and out. Afraid not. He's in no shape for questioning. I will.

NEWS HELICOPTERS hover overhead, searchlights beaming down. A scrum of REPORTERS surrounds the hospital entrance.

REPORTER

Please give comment on reports that a former agent of the KGB is under Scotland Yard's supervision after being poisoned in Mayfair --

HYATT

What? How did you get that? No.

REPORTER

"No, there is no KGB agent?" Or "No --

HYATT

We have no statement. Excuse me.

The gurney blows past and we are joined by two uniformed Metropolitan Police officers.

HYATT (CONT'D)  
(into mobile)  
This department leaks like a bloody  
sieve!

INT. UNIVERSITY COLLEGE HOSPITAL CORRIDOR -- NIGHT

Doctors, medical personnel and police are waiting for the gurney. Sasha spots Marina and Tolik amongst them.

SASHA  
(hoarse)  
Marusya. Tolik. Give us a kiss.

Tolik breaks away from Marina and runs toward Sasha's gurney.

DOCTOR (O.S.)  
Keep him away from the boy!

Someone grabs Tolik and pulls him away from us. Sasha turns to see Tolik gazing back at him in tears.

SASHA  
Tolik. Don't. It's me. Just me.

We keep MOVING, leaving Tolik behind, entering

INT. ELEVATOR

The elevator's walls are made of reflective glass. Sasha turns to see his own reflection, REVEALING --

-- that he has been transformed. His hair is completely gone. His skin has turned to yellowed parchment. He gazes back at his reflection in disbelief, almost laughing:

SASHA  
What? No. What did they do? Doctor --

He looks up: he is surrounded by figures in white RADIATION SUITS with hoods. The elevator doors open --

INT. HOSPITAL 3RD FLOOR CRITICAL CARE WARD -- NIGHT

-- and we're ROLLING down the hospital corridor. All the rooms are empty: the entire corridor has been evacuated.

SASHA  
Marusya... Doctor...

Suddenly Sasha convulses, racked by a meltdown at his core. He SCREAMS, writhing. The Suits struggle to hold him down as we PUSH through a door marked CAUTION/RESTRICTED --

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- NIGHT

-- and the gurney is locked down. The Suits surround him, attaching diodes, wires, morphine drips to his body. The pain abates for a moment, and he gazes up into the light:

SASHA

...Somebody...

INT. HOSPITAL 3RD FLOOR MEZZANINE/CORRIDOR-- NIGHT

The mezzanine has become an impromptu crisis center, teeming with doctors, police and public health officials. A WALL OF GLASS overlooks the TV satellite trucks gathered outside.

Marina and Tolik drift through it all, ignored. She guides Tolik to a hospital lounge and sits him down in front of the TV with a female Metropolitan Police officer.

Then she walks outside, toward the doors marked CAUTION/RESTRICTED, when a young POLICE OFFICER stops her.

OFFICER

Read the sign, Ma'am. This is a quarantine site.

Dr. JOHN HENRY, Berezovsky's specialist, sees Marina and breaks out of a conference with two representatives of COBRA, the British government's emergencies committee.

DR. HENRY

Terribly sorry, Ms. Litvinenko. We can't take the risk of exposure.

MARINA

I am already exposed. I have been with him, 24 hours, for days.

The doctors exchange glances.

MARINA (CONT'D)

So if you will excuse me --

DR. HENRY

During that time, have you ever been exposed to your husband's bodily fluids?

MARINA

I cleaned up his vomit that first night. And many times after. Vomit, sweat, tears, all of it.

DR. HENRY

Your son. What about him?

MARINA  
No. Not at all.

DR. HENRY  
He must not be exposed to Sasha.

MARINA  
He's his father.

The doctor is silent.

MARINA (CONT'D)  
I'll take him home, then.

COBRA OFFICIAL  
You can't go home.  
(off her look)  
Your home is a radioactive contaminant  
site, Ms. Litvinenko. It will have  
to be sealed.

MARINA  
For how long?

COBRA OFFICIAL  
Permanently. It will be completely  
gutted by a contaminant-disposal  
team.

She stares at him.

DR. HENRY  
We realize this is difficult. None  
of this is meant to frighten you.

MARINA  
It is frightening me.

DR. HENRY  
I'm sorry. But you must know. What  
Sasha's been exposed to -- as a result  
of your contact with him, you may  
suffer the effects as well.

MARINA  
(nods)  
If as you say, the damage is done, I  
would like to see my husband now.

Marina turns and walks through the RESTRICTED doors, into  
the empty, silent corridor. As she walks, she allows herself  
a moment of private grief, but then, as she turns the corner --

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

-- she puts on a brave face. Sasha sits upright in the hospital bed, his pain kept at bay by morphine. The sight of her brings a smile to his eyes.

SASHA  
*Devotchka moya.*

MARINA  
Sasha.

SASHA  
My hair seems to have escaped in the night. Maybe it knows something I don't.

(a little self-conscious)

I think I'll keep it this way. What do you think?

MARINA  
(kissing him)  
Not even the photographers of the Ministry of Automotive Vehicles could dim your beauty.

SASHA  
It wasn't them that did this to me.

Marina kisses him again. For a moment they seem possessed of the same effortless grace they've always had.

SASHA (CONT'D)  
Marusya. My love. From your smile I know the news must be very bad.

MARINA  
It isn't good.

SASHA  
Nobody talks to me. Nobody will say what's happening to me.

MARINA  
They've explained it to me.

She recites it mechanically, as if that's the only way she can bring herself to say it at all.

MARINA (CONT'D)  
You have swallowed a substance called Polonium-210. It is extremely rare, and it is extremely radioactive.

(MORE)

MARINA (CONT'D)

Even a microscopic dose is fatal to human beings. And you have swallowed much, much more than that.

Sasha says nothing.

MARINA (CONT'D)

The doctors say that it would be impossible for you to have been exposed by accident. Polonium-210 --

SASHA

I know what Polonium-210 is.

Marina reacts. Sasha's voice is numb.

SASHA (CONT'D)

In the Soviet times, there was a town where they made it. This town had no name. Just a number. They produced the Polonium to be used in nuclear bombs. People were considered very fortunate to live there. The whole town worked all year, like little elves, to produce just a thimbleful of Polonium to use in the bombs.

He holds an imaginary thimble before him.

MARINA

How do you know this?

SASHA

I was KGB. KGB did research, looking for other uses for Polonium. New uses. KGB found it was almost impossible to detect in the blood, even in an autopsy, unless you knew how to look for it.

He gazes at his yellowed, skeletal hands, the veins coursing with radiation.

SASHA (CONT'D)

And that is how KGB realized that Polonium would make pretty good poison.

EXT. HOSPITAL 3RD FLOOR MEZZANINE/CORRIDOR-- NIGHT

Brent Hyatt paces anxiously by the glass windows as his boss, PETER CLARKE, takes part in a conference call by mobile phone.

CLARKE  
 (whispering)  
 Sit down, Hyatt. You're hovering.

Hyatt spies someone collecting files from a doctor at the central desk -- a man and a woman, both smartly dressed.

HYATT  
 Oi. What's this?  
 (hurrying over)  
 Can I help you?

JOHN ACKERLEY's Windsor knot is just a little more discreet than Hyatt's, his accent a little more polished.

ACKERLEY  
 We've got everything sorted, thanks.  
 This case is now under the oversight  
 of Her Majesty's Secret Service.

HYATT  
 What? Under what authority?

Ackerley nods at his boss, MCLAREN, also on his mobile.

ACKERLEY  
 We're on the phone with the Home  
 Office right now.

HYATT  
 As it happens, so is Scotland Yard.

Hyatt nods at Peter Clarke. They're all on the same call.

ACKERLEY  
 This is case of nuclear terrorism.  
 It's an international incident.  
 It's out of Scotland Yard's league.

HYATT  
 It's a murder case. You lot don't  
 know the first thing about solving  
 murders. You only know how to cover  
 them up.

SIMULTANEOUSLY, in the BG, Peter Clarke and his MI6 counterpart are having the same argument with the Home Office. As the four-way argument reaches a crescendo, they fall silent as, somewhere at the Home Office, a verdict is reached:

CLARKE  
 Thank you, sir. Good evening.  
 (rings off, smiling)  
 It's final.  
 (MORE)

CLARKE (CONT'D)  
The investigation will proceed under  
the supervision of Scotland Yard  
Murder Division...  
(a courtly nod)  
...in close consultation with Her  
Majesty's Secret Service.

Ackerley nods grimly as he rings off as well. Hyatt beams, triumphant. Then, from O.S.:

MARINA (O.S.)  
Murder Division?

All turn to see Marina standing nearby.

MARINA (CONT'D)  
But my husband isn't dead.

No one says it, but it's there on their faces: *Not yet.*

MARINA (CONT'D)  
Why is investigation needed at all?  
Isn't it obvious who did this?

CLARKE  
Ms. Litvinenko, this has been a  
difficult ordeal. One of our officers  
will take you and your son home --

MARINA  
We have no home now. So we will  
stay here, with Sasha.  
(a beat)  
This poison they used on my husband.  
Only Kontora could have gotten it.

ACKERLEY  
That's why they couldn't have been  
the ones that did it.

HYATT  
What?

ACKERLEY  
If there's one thing the Russian  
government is good at, it's killing  
Russians. It's something of a  
specialty.

HYATT  
You don't say.

ACKERLEY

They had countless methods with which to murder Mr. Litvinenko. A gun, a knife, a staged mugging. They could have simply pushed him off a tube station platform.

CLARKE

Must we have this discussion in front of Ms. Litvinenko?

MARINA

Yes. Continue.

ACKERLEY

With all the weapons available to the KGB, why would they use an exotic radioactive isotope that *only they* had access to? Why would they leave physical evidence that pointed *directly and exclusively at them*?

He's got a point.

HYATT

So because KGB were the *only* ones that could have committed this crime, this means they *could not possibly* have committed it?

ACKERLEY

In my business, the only time anything is ever obvious is when somebody wants it to be obvious. In this case, somebody wanted the evidence to point directly at Vladimir Putin.

HYATT

Who.

ACKERLEY

By our estimates, the dose of Polonium-210 that poisoned Alexander Litvinenko would have cost ten million dollars on the open market.

HYATT

That's a lot of cash.

ACKERLEY

Right. So ask yourself: who had one, the money and two, the motive to pin a murder on Vladimir Putin?

Hyatt's face falls. He sees what Ackerley's driving at. Marina and Hyatt turn to look through the wall of windows beside them. We CRANE UP, gazing down with them --

EXT. UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON HOSPITAL -- NIGHT

-- at the front steps of the Hospital, where Boris Berezovsky is holding a press conference with his publicist.

ACKERLEY  
There's your leak, Mr. Hyatt.

CUT TO:

EXT. LONDON -- OVERHEAD -- HELICOPTER SHOT -- MORNING

The streets surrounding Piccadilly Circus have been cordoned off, with crowds pressed against the barricades. White QUARANTINE TENTS are set up at several sites along the route.

EXT. ITSU SUSHI -- PICCADILLY CIRCUS -- MORNING

ON THE MONITOR in the quarantine tent we see a SPECTROGRAPH IMAGE of the interior of the restaurant.

CLARKE  
How many people have eaten at this restaurant in the past two weeks?  
How many people have walked this street?

Inside, the Radiation Suits are doing the painstaking work of analyzing the entire restaurant, centimeter by centimeter.

CLARKE (CONT'D)  
Somebody's going to have to go in and question Litvinenko in detail.

Clarke looks around. No volunteers. Finally, Hyatt nods.

HYATT  
I've already been with him for days.  
I've got nothing to lose.

EXT. UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON HOSPITAL -- DAY

Hyatt's Vauxhall pushes through the ever-growing crush of media and reporters. Hyatt emerges and looks out upon it all, a little amazed.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

Hyatt enters the room where lies Sasha Litvinenko: spotlit, hairless, his chest covered with diodes, his skin waxy, more a statue than a man. Hyatt approaches Sasha's bedside --

-- and the eyes open. With a gesture, Sasha motions him closer. Hyatt bends close, and Sasha smiles weakly:

SASHA  
Now you listen.

CUT TO:

SASHA'S BOOTS

As he pulls them on in the morning, the shoebox on the bed beside him. They're brand-new, bought for a special occasion.

We recognize his clothes: they are the same he wore when he checked into the hospital. This is the day of his poisoning.

INT. LONDON APARTMENT -- ENTRYWAY -- MORNING

Sasha grabs a pear from a bowl of fruit as he hurries out. Marina grabs him playfully as he heads out the front door.

MARINA  
Don't go. Stay home today.

SASHA  
After all it took me to get this?

EXT. LONDON APARTMENT -- DOORSTEP --- MORNING

He kisses her on the doorstep as he goes.

SASHA  
It's a job, Marusya. A job!  
(kissing her)  
I'm going to make you proud.

EXT. PICCADILLY CIRCUS -- DAY

Sasha ascends from the Tube station into sunlight. He makes his way through the lunchtime crowds in a hurry.

SASHA (V.O.)  
It was beautiful day to be murdered.  
I had very busy schedule.

Sasha approaches Itsu Sushi --

INT. ITSU SUSHI -- SPECTROGRAPH IMAGE -- DAY

-- and, as he enters, we view the restaurant as a SPECTROGRAPH IMAGE, with ghostly patrons eating at the sushi bar. One of the ghosts rises to greet us --

SASHA (V.O.)

First there was lunch with a good friend of mine, Mario Scaramella.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

As Sasha speaks, Brent Hyatt surreptitiously types the name into his mobile -- *S-c-a-r-a-m-e-l-l-a* -- then hits SEND --

SASHA (V.O.)

London has many many little Marios, all peddling rumors and intelligence in hotel bars for money.

INT. ITSU SUSHI -- NORMAL IMAGE -- DAY

-- as the doughy MARIO SCARAMELLA shakes Sasha's hand.

SASHA (V.O.)

Mario had called to tell me he had evidence that Romano Prodi, head of European Commission, was actually a spy for KGB, and would I like to get some sushi, and I said, why not?

INT. APARTMENT CORRIDOR -- DAY

A rumpled Mario Scaramella, just rousted out of bed, is led down the corridor by detectives from Scotland Yard.

INT. ITSU SUSHI -- NORMAL IMAGE -- DAY

Six neatly sliced *tekka maki* are set before us. Sasha eats with chopsticks as he listens to Scaramella's pitch.

SASHA (V.O.)

It was good lunch, though the *tekka maki* could have been fresher, but when the check came Mario handed me an email he'd gotten that said that somebody was going to kill me.

As Sasha examines the printed email, we catch a glimpse of a few words -- TARGETS LISTED INCLUDING LITVINENKO, ALEXANDER V. -- before Sasha folds it and puts it in his coat pocket.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I think Mario hoped I would pick up the check, but I just thanked him and said I had to run.

INT. SCOTLAND YARD -- MEN'S ROOM/CORRIDOR-- DAY

Mario Scaramella urinates into a plastic cup under the watchful eye of a roomful of policemen and scientists.

SASHA (V.O.)  
Next stop was offices of my very  
good friend Boris Berezovsky.

As soon as he's done, Mario hands the cup over, and one of  
the cops runs with it, delivering it to the crime lab.

INT. MAYFAIR ROW HOUSE -- DAY

Sasha is greeted by Boris' SECRETARY as he enters Boris'  
sumptuously decorated offices.

SASHA (V.O.)  
Boris always lets me use his fax  
machine. I was expecting a very  
important fax.

Sasha watches anxiously as a FAX SCREECHES slowly out of the  
fax machine, then drifts to the floor like a dead leaf.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
The fax was for the dossier I was  
preparing for my client.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

Sasha has fallen silent, his gaze faraway.

SASHA  
I was to deliver this dossier to my  
client at the Pine Bar of the  
Millennium Hotel in Mayfair...  
(a beat)  
...and I was running late.

EXT. GROSVENOR STREET -- DAY

Sasha runs down crowded streets, the dossier clutched under  
his arm, sprinting like the Olympian he once dreamed of  
becoming, sprinting as if his very life depended on it.

Finally he arrives at a door with a brass sign that reads  
PINE BAR. He throws open the door --

INT. PINE BAR, MILLENNIUM HOTEL -- SPECTROGRAPH IMAGE

-- and we behold a radiological disaster zone. Glowing  
stains, streaks, ghosts, even hand prints are everywhere,  
like the aftermath of some nuclear bloodbath.

The RADIATION SUITS enter the scene. We hear only their  
BREATHING as they move through this deep-sea darkness, taking  
in glowing traces of Polonium-210 scattered everywhere.

Now, from O.S., they see an even stronger glow. It's coming from behind the bar. We MOVE AROUND the bar with them --

-- REVEALING that the glow is coming from within a luminous dishwasher behind the bar. The Radiation Suits exchange baffled glances. One of them crouches, opens the dishwasher --

-- and an UNEARTHLY LIGHT beams out from within. It's almost miraculous. The Radiation Suit reaches inside --

-- and pulls out an object so impossibly bright as to burn a hole in the screen.

It's a teapot.

INT. PINE BAR, MILLENNIUM HOTEL -- DAY

The door is thrown open, and we enter the crowded hotel bar. Sasha moves through the crowd, his face slick with sweat. The teatime crowd is a mélange of bored Saudis, tourist Japanese, dissipated City bankers, well-dressed prostitutes --

-- and, most of all, extremely wealthy Russians. Sasha approaches a table where three such Russians are sitting --

-- and we recognize the man at the center immediately. It's Alexander Lugovoi, Berezovsky's former security chief.

LUGOVOI

We were worried about you.

SASHA

So sorry, Andrei. I know I'm late.

Then Lugovoi smiles that familiar ghostly smile.

LUGOVOI

Somebody get this man a drink.

MARINA (V.O.)

Don't go. Stay home today.

EXT. LONDON APARTMENT -- DOORSTEP -- MORNING

We're back on the doorstep with Sasha and Marina.

MARINA

Something's not right about this.

SASHA

He's giving me a chance. Besides, Lugovoi used to work for Boris --

MARINA

Everyone connected to Boris is either dead or in exile. But Lugovoi stayed in Moscow and got rich. How?

SASHA

He owns a security business now, and a soft drink bottling company --

MARINA

He's one of them, Sasha. The Siloviki. He never left them, even when he was working for Boris. Why do you think there were so many attempts on Boris' life back then?

(a beat)

It's like you said: no one ever leaves Kontora. No one gets rich in Russia without their blessing.

INT. PINE BAR, MILLENNIUM HOTEL -- DAY

Lugovoi pores over the dossier Sasha's brought with him.

LUGOVOI

This is good, Sasha. Thorough.

LUGOVOI (CONT'D)

I think we'll be doing a lot of business together.

SASHA

Whatever you need, Andrei. I was always a hard worker, you know that.

Lugovoi explains to the man on his right, DMITRY KOVTUN:

LUGOVOI

Companies in the West ask us to prepare intelligence dossiers on their business partners in Moscow.

(shrugs)

For some reason, don't ask me why, they're scared to do business with Russians.

KOVTUN

Crazy.

LUGOVOI

Either way, we're happy to take their money, right, Sasha?

(puts dossier away)

Enough of that. Where's that waitress?

The man on Lugovoi's left, heretofore known only as THE THIRD MAN, rises from his chair.

THE THIRD MAN  
Never mind. I'll get the vodka.

SASHA  
Tea for me. A pot of green tea.

They all look at Sasha.

LUGOVOI  
Sasha doesn't drink.

KOVTUN  
Some sort of health thing, is it?

SASHA  
I just don't like to lose control.

The others smile blankly.

LUGOVOI  
He'll outlive us all.

EXT. LONDON APARTMENT -- DOORSTEP -- MORNING

Marina stands on the doorstep, imploring Sasha:

MARINA  
No one ever leaves *Kontora*. And no one gets rich in Russia without their blessing.

SASHA  
Listen to you. You've been living with a madman for too long.  
(kissing her goodbye)  
It's a job, Marusya. A job!  
(turns to leave)  
I'm going to make you proud.

As Sasha hurries off, she whispers:

MARINA  
I am proud.

But he's already gone.

INT. PINE BAR, MILLENNIUM HOTEL -- DAY

(NOTE: What follows is a shot-for-shot duplicate of the film's opening scene -- but viewed without spectrograph imagery)

Lugovoi pours a round, commencing the complicated business of Russian drinking etiquette with the first toast:

LUGOVOI (V.O.)  
*Budem zdroy!*

They drink. Lugovoi quickly pours another round.

LUGOVOI (CONT'D)  
"Between the first toast and the second, a finger must not pass."

Lugovoi raises his glass, then glances up at Sasha.

LUGOVOI (CONT'D)  
You haven't touched your drink.

SASHA  
(a little embarrassed)  
It's tea, not vodka. Besides --

He tilts up his cup to show that it's empty.

LUGOVOI  
Pour him a cup of tea.

The Third Man reaches offscreen -- and he comes back with the teapot. He pours Sasha a cup of tea.

LUGOVOI (CONT'D)  
For missing the first toast, Sasha, you must make the second.

SASHA  
"To the dead."

KOVTUN  
That's the third toast! The third toast is always to the dead!

LUGOVOI  
Dmitry's right. We need a different toast.

Sasha thinks a moment, then:

SASHA  
To *biznes*.

They all drink. Sasha grimaces at the taste of the tea:

SASHA (CONT'D)  
Ach. Bitter.

KOVTUN  
Another! Do dna!

The Third Man pours. Lugovoi raises his glass and smiles.

LUGOVOI  
Now we drink to the dead.

EXT. GROSVENOR SQUARE -- DAY

Sasha makes his way home through the crowded square, past shoppers loaded down with shopping bags.

His steps falter. He feels unwell. He stops. Something is terribly wrong.

He stands utterly still as oblivious pedestrians stream around him. He looks directly at us, and then --

-- he begins to run. Slowly at first, then faster, even as the knot tightens within him.

INT. CITY BUS -- DAY

Sasha rocks in his seat, clutching his head in pain as the other passengers stare. He's reached his stop --

EXT. MUSWELL HILL -- DAY

-- and he's running again, sprinting, then stumbling, until --

INT. LONDON APARTMENT -- DAY

-- he throws open the door, stumbling to the bathroom --

INT. BATHROOM -- DAY

-- and throws open the cabinet beneath the sink, searching frantically, spilling everything out onto the floor --

MARINA  
Sasha?

-- and then he finds it: a bottle of AMMONIUM CARBONATE, labeled in Cyrillic and English. He fumbles with the cap, then gulps down a slug of it --

-- and VOMITS violently. No sooner does he stop heaving than he drinks another slug and vomits again.

MARINA (CONT'D)  
What are you doing? Stop -- !

She crouches, holding him, trying to grab the bottle from him. He keeps drinking, desperate for the emetic it contains.

Finally the bottle is empty. He tosses it aside, utterly drained, and then he begins to weep like a child in her arms.

SASHA

They got me, Marusya. They got me.  
They got me they got me they got me.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- EVENING

Sasha lies in bed, tears streaming down his face, whispering:

SASHA

They got me.

Hyatt sits in the gathering darkness, watching him.

BARSUKOV (V.O.)

Is very sad story. Very sad.

INT. RUSSIAN MINISTRY OF JUSTICE -- HEARING ROOM -- DAY

Behind a long wooden table sits Andrei Lugovoi as well as Dmitry Kovtun, whose head is wrapped in bandages, as if from third-degree burns. Speaking on their behalf is none other than Litvinenko's Special Prosecutor, Barsukov.

BARSUKOV

A pity it makes no sense.

Across the table sits a delegation from Scotland Yard and the Home Office, including Brent Hyatt and Peter Clarke.

BARSUKOV (CONT'D)

It seems you do police work much different in London. We would be asking different questions.

CLARKE

Such as?

BARSUKOV

If a former CIA agent, say, were to be found beaten to death with a suitcase nuke in the middle of Moscow, we would not ask "who beat this unfortunate CIA agent to death?"

CLARKE

What would you ask?

BARSUKOV

We would ask "what in God's name is a suitcase nuke doing in Moscow?"

A silence.

BARSUKOV (CONT'D)

Gentlemen, you have problem. You have discovered ten million dollars of nuclear precursor at large in the middle of London. And yet, for some reason, you choose to come here to accuse these men.

CLARKE

Who should we be accusing?

BARSUKOV

Is obvious. It was not these men that poisoned Litvinenko --

-- he motions at the bandaged Kovtun --

BARSUKOV (CONT'D)

-- it was Litvinenko that poisoned them. Either accidental, or on purpose.

The Home Office types are starting to look anxious.

HYATT

I've been a detective for nine years now.

BARSUKOV

Not so long.

HYATT

(shrugs)

I've seen a lot of murders. And I've seen a lot of murder weapons. And I've seen a lot of murderers leave a lot of fingerprints all over those weapons.

(a beat)

But this is the first time I've ever seen a murder weapon leave its fingerprints all over the accused.

INT. HOTEL ROOM -- MILLENNIUM HOTEL -- SPECTROGRAPH IMAGE

Glowing traces of Polonium-210 are everywhere as the Radiation Suits scan Lugovoi's hotel room.

HYATT (V.O.)

Polonium-210 left its fingerprints all over Andrei Lugovoi's hotel room.

## INT. LUFTHANSA AIRLINES 727 -- SPECTROGRAPH IMAGE

The Radiation Suits move down the aisle of the 727 until we come upon a small explosion of Polonium-210 in a window seat.

HYATT (V.O.)  
Polonium-210 left its fingerprints  
all over the Lufthansa 727 that Dmitry  
Kovtun flew from Frankfurt to London.

## INT. RUSSIAN MINISTRY OF JUSTICE -- HEARING ROOM -- DAY

Hyatt slides the photographs across the table toward Barsukov. He nods at Dmitry Kovtun's bandaged head.

HYATT  
And from the looks of it, Polonium-  
210 left its fingerprints all over  
Dmitry Kovtun himself.

Barsukov pushes the photos back at Hyatt.

BARSUKOV  
Lugovoi was visiting London with his family. His wife slept in that hotel room. His children! Why would these men -- why would anyone -- knowingly expose themselves to Polonium-210?

HYATT  
(nods grudgingly)  
Couldn't make sense of it myself.

BARSUKOV  
Then this matter is closed.

HYATT  
But someone else did.

## INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- NIGHT

Darkness. The only sound is the faint beeping of the EKG. Marina keeps her vigil at Sasha's side. Hyatt enters.

MARINA  
I want to touch him, but they tell  
me his bones, they are... what was  
the word? Disintegrate.

Hyatt says nothing. His mobile VIBRATES. He shuts it off. Suddenly Sasha starts WHEEZING violently --

-- and they both leap to their feet. This is it.

HYATT  
I'll get the doctor.

Suddenly Sasha starts shaking his head -- no, no, no -- and he begins to CACKLE. Seems he's not dying, but LAUGHING, painfully but with wicked glee:

SASHA  
Stupid! Stupid stupid stupid!

MARINA  
(to Hyatt)  
Dementia. The drugs.  
(to Sasha)  
Sasha, my love, it's Marina --

SASHA  
Oh. Oh. Hurts.

MARINA  
What's wrong? Are you all right?

SASHA  
*Marusya... Krosha moy... The bicycle I got for Tolik on his birthday. I put it together one way, other way, but every way at the end always more parts were left on the carpet.*

MARINA  
(pityingly)  
Yes, Sasha, he still has that bicycle.

SASHA  
Marina! I'm trying to speak!

MARINA  
All right! I'm listening!

Sasha turns to Hyatt, exasperated.

SASHA  
I thought there was this thing. It was called Evil. And somewhere there was a door, and if you could find this door and open this door you would find Evil there, sitting around a table, making its plans. And its plans would be terrifying. Because Evil is smart.

HYATT  
(humoring him)  
Right.

SASHA  
(exasperated)  
No! That's your problem. Cops!

HYATT  
All right, you tell me.

Sasha grabs Hyatt, with a force that surprises him:

SASHA  
I found the door. I opened the door.  
I went into the room. Do you know  
what I found?

HYATT  
What? What did you find?

INT. BRIEFING ROOM -- LUBYANKA CENTER -- DAY

A concrete room with a table at its center. At the table sits DMITRY KOVTUN. Across from him sits A GRAY-SUITED SILOVIK who holds a package in his hand.

SASHA (V.O.)  
The plan was efficient. The plan  
was compartmentalized. The plan was  
like this:

SILOVIK  
I am giving you a package to deliver.  
You do not open the package. On  
November 1st, you will hand this  
package to your contact at the  
Millennium Hotel.

KOVTUN  
That's all? Deliver the package?

SILOVIK  
Deliver the package. That is all.

INT. BAR LUBYANKA -- DAY

The Silovik briefs the Third Man.

SILOVIK  
You will take the package from your  
contact. Inside the package will be  
a lead vial.

INT. PINE BAR, MILLENNIUM HOTEL -- DAY

The Third Man stands at the bar with the vodkas and a teapot. He empties the contents of a LEAD VIAL into the teapot.

SILOVIK (V.O.)  
You will empty the vial's contents  
into Litvinenko's drink.

THE THIRD MAN (V.O.)  
That's all?

SILOVIK (V.O.)  
After, you re-seal the vial, throw  
it into the Thames, and you're done.

INT. HOTEL ROOM -- MILLENNIUM HOTEL -- DAY

Lugovoi takes a call on his *mobilnik*.

SILOVIK (O.S.)  
Do you remember Alexander Litvinenko?

LUGOVOI  
Yeah, of course.

SILOVIK (O.S.)  
You're going to invite him for drinks.  
3PM, November 1st at the Pine Bar.

LUGOVOI  
I haven't seen him in years.

SILOVIK (O.S.)  
Find a pretext. Business opportunity.  
Simple enough. Two friends will  
join you.

LUGOVOI  
Who?

SILOVIK (O.S.)  
You don't know them.

LUGOVOI  
So that's all? Invite him to drinks?

SASHA (V.O.)  
Invite him to drinks. Deliver the  
package. Empty the vial. No one  
knowing more than their little task.  
No last-minute attacks of guilt. No  
one to tell anything if questioned.

CUT TO:

THE PACKAGE

On a kitchen table.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
This was KGB tradecraft! When it comes to killing people, no one is better than KGB! And this...

INT. KITCHEN -- NIGHT

We PULL BACK to reveal Dmitry Kovtun sitting at his sad little kitchen table as he stares intently at the package, trying to summon the power of x-ray vision.

SASHA (V.O.)  
...is their downfall. They know everything about killing people but nothing about living people, nothing about real living human beings.

Finally, Kovtun's curiosity gets the better of him. He reaches for a kitchen knife. Carefully opens the sticky envelope. Reaches inside --

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
If they did, they would have known what would happen next.

-- and pulls out the metal vial. He gazes at it for a moment, then unscrews the cap --

INT. KITCHEN -- SPECTROGRAPH IMAGE -- NIGHT

-- and POLONIUM-210 RADIATION is released into the air, blooming forth like a GLOWING GENIE unleashed from its bottle.

INT. KITCHEN -- NIGHT

DMITRY'S BLOODSHOT EYE gazes down into the tiny vial. What he sees there is not terribly interesting to him.

There's an air of anticlimax to the whole thing. He screws the cap back onto the vial, re-seals the package --

INT. FRANKFURT AIRPORT -- SPECTROGRAPH IMAGE -- DAY

-- and carries the package beneath his arm as he makes his way to the Lufthansa gate, the Polonium Genie following him all the way.

SASHA (V.O.)  
You see? This is why there were always parts left all over the carpet!

INT. LUFTHANSA AIRLINES 727 -- DAY

Dmitry furtively skims a German porno mag whilst relaxing in Business Class, the Polonium Genie hovering over his shoulder.

SASHA (V.O.)  
This was my mistake! I thought evil  
was smart!

INT. HOTEL ROOM -- MILLENNIUM HOTEL -- SPECTROGRAPH IMAGE

The three murderers inhale tiny minibar Vodkas, blissfully unaware of the Polonium Genie in their midst.

SASHA (V.O.)  
But when you open that door, you  
don't find smart. You find stupid.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- NIGHT

CLOSE ON Sasha as what seemed to be a morphine-induced rant comes into very sharp focus.

SASHA  
You're not listening.

HYATT  
Oh, I'm listening.

SASHA  
You're not typing.

Hyatt fumbles for his mobile and starts typing.

SASHA (CONT'D)  
Evil is stupid. Is an idiot child  
that survives only because we feed  
it. We feed it because we fear it.  
What we must do is call it what it  
is and let it die.

INT. RUSSIAN MINISTRY OF JUSTICE -- HEARING ROOM -- DAY

Silence. Barsukov is stone-faced. Lugovoi looks at Kovtun with disdain. Kovtun looks away sheepishly. Finally:

BARSUKOV  
We will not extradite these men.  
Two reasons why. First, they did  
not kill Litvinenko.

HYATT  
Then prove it in open court.

BARSUKOV  
Second, even if they did kill  
Litvinenko, this was not a crime.

CLARKE  
Excuse me?

BARSUKOV

Six weeks ago, law was passed in Russia making legal to kill enemies of the state on foreign soil.

CLARKE

What serendipitous timing.

BARSUKOV

So even if Litvinenko's killing was illegal in Britain, it is not illegal in Russia. So... there is no crime.

Hyatt and Clarke are flummoxed.

BARSUKOV (CONT'D)

Besides. These men are heroes in Russia.

HYATT

How's that?

BARSUKOV

Litvinenko was a traitor.

CLARKE

But you just said they had nothing to do with Litvinenko's murder.

BARSUKOV

They didn't.

HYATT

Then how can they be heroes?

BARSUKOV

Because Litvinenko was a traitor.

Hyatt just stares at him. Then:

HYATT

Stupid. Stupid stupid stupid.

BARSUKOV

I remind you that you are guests of the Russian state.

HYATT

And what exquisite hospitality you've shown.

He rises abruptly, knocking over his chair, and storms out, muttering as he goes:

HYATT (CONT'D)  
Beg pardon if I don't stay for tea.

EXT. TYVERSKAYA PROSPEKT -- DAY

Hyatt fumes as he rides off empty-handed in the back of a diplomatic sedan, the Kremlin receding in the rear window.

BORIS (V.O.)  
Surely you can't be surprised. Did you think they'd just hand them over?

INT. HOSPITAL LOBBY -- DAY

Back in London, Hyatt gazes out at the media outside, still angry. Boris seems amused.

HYATT  
They didn't even try to hide the fact that they did it.

BORIS  
(shrugs)  
They never did.

HYATT  
What do you mean?

BORIS  
Their plan was always to get caught.

HYATT  
You're joking.

BORIS  
Don't tell me you didn't realize this. One thousand trained assassins in *Kontora*, and they send these three idiots? Think!

HYATT  
But they've just been exposed as murderers before the international community --

BORIS  
The international community! Oh dear! Who knows what revenge they will take! They might send a strongly worded letter!

Boris' bodyguard helps him with his camel-hair topcoat as he makes his way to the elevator.

BORIS (CONT'D)

You are an addict. They are the dealer. They control 70 billion barrels of your drug of choice. The dealer has sent message to the world, signed in Polonium-210. It says we are in control now. We play by Siloviki Rules. What we want, we take. We can kill your citizens at will, at home, on your soil, and you can do nothing.

Hyatt is silent. Boris stabs the "down" button.

BORIS (CONT'D)

Don't look so sad. Is how Russians have lived for a hundred years. We got used to it. So will you.

INT. HOSPITAL LOBBY -- NIGHT

Boris walks out, straightening his tie, smoothing his hair, preparing for the cameras outside.

BORIS

You see, is not you they're afraid of. Is their own people they fear. This is why they must keep killing them. They know the dissident is out there, the one that will bring them down. They just don't know who it is.

HYATT

Do you?

BORIS

I had always hoped it would be Sasha. But now? I wish I knew.

EXT. UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON HOSPITAL -- NIGHT

As Boris steps outside, the flashbulbs begin. Boris pretends to be in deep, important conversation with Scotland Yard.

Boris' Maybach has appeared. His driver opens the door.

BORIS

One day my enemies will float facedown in the Volga. On that day...  
(climbs inside)  
...I am going home.

HYATT

And that's when you become our dealer.  
Right, Boris?

BORIS

Someone has to do it.

He closes the door, pulls the windowshade shut, and is gone.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAWN

Sasha's eyes open. Marina has fallen asleep in her chair, her head resting on his blanket. He touches her hair and she wakes. His voice is pale and thin.

SASHA

*Kroshka.*

(a beat)

I'm sorry. For everything.

MARINA

I am sorry for nothing.

Sasha turns to look out the window. Outside, the satellite trucks stand waiting for him to die.

SASHA

I need your help, Marina.

MARINA

Anything.

SASHA

I want to write a letter.

Marina nods. She knows what this means. She goes to the nightstand. Pulls out a pad and pencil.

SASHA (CONT'D)

I want to thank the British people for their support. And I want to thank my wife, Marina, who has stood by me.

MARINA

You don't have to write that.

SASHA

My love for her and my son knows no bounds.

Sasha waits. Finally, she writes it down.

SASHA (CONT'D)

As I lie here I can distinctly hear the wings of the Angel of Death at my back. I may be able to give him the slip, but I have to say my legs do not run as fast as I would like.

(a beat)

I think, therefore, that this may be the time to say one or two things to the person responsible for my present condition.

CUT TO:

A FLASH as Sasha sits for a photo portrait, the diodes on his chest exposed for the world to see.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

You may have silenced me. But that silence comes at a price.

CUT TO:

SASHA in bed, convulsing violently beneath the fluorescent light as his vital systems fail.

SASHA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

You have shown yourself to be as barbaric and ruthless as your most hostile critics have claimed.

Marina watches her husband trembling in his bed like a man freezing to death. Finally, she crosses to his bed --

SASHA (CONT'D)

You may succeed in silencing one man.

-- and she climbs in with him.

SASHA (CONT'D)

But the howl of protest from around the world will reverberate in your ears for the rest of your life.

She holds him as he trembles, as, in the window behind them, a HOWLING northern wind strips the leaves from the trees, until, finally, Alexander Litvinenko is still.

CUT TO:

THE REAL VLADIMIR PUTIN

at a TV news conference at the Russia-EU Summit in Helsinki.

PUTIN  
Mr. Litvinenko's death is a tragedy.

INT. HOSPITAL LOUNGE -- NIGHT

Hyatt, Clarke, Boris and other cops and doctors, all utterly spent, stare up at the TV bolted to the ceiling.

PUTIN  
But there has been no suggestion from the British authorities that Mr. Litvinenko's death was foul play.

No one even raises an eyebrow at this.

REPORTER (O.S.)  
But what about the letter released after his death which accuses you --

PUTIN  
I don't believe he wrote this letter.

Putin speaks directly to the camera, smirking:

PUTIN (CONT'D)  
And to those who wrote this letter I say, alas, you are not God... and Mr. Litvinenko is not Lazarus.

INT. AUTOPSY UNIT

Sasha's body lies on a slab. Nearby lies the lead casket in which he must be buried. Marina touches his face one last time. Then walks away, leaving his body to the pathologists.

As she enters the basement elevator, she sees them. They are all clad in radiation suits. As they crowd around Sasha's body, the elevator doors close, shutting us out.

INT. HOSPITAL LOBBY -- DAY

Hyatt stands in the lobby, gazing at the satellite trucks and cameras outside. He turns and spots Marina a few feet away, saying goodbye to Sasha's doctors.

She approaches the glass doors that lead to the front steps, and the gauntlet of cameras beyond. Hyatt stops her.

HYATT  
You don't have to go out there. A car will take you out through the basement. No one will see you.

Marina says nothing. She stares out the window, utterly still. Then:

## MARINA

In Soviet Union, it was a crime to be unhappy.

(a beat)

Of course, it was never written in the law books that way. It was an unspoken thing. Sasha told me. KGB would sit down with an informant, give him a cigarette, and ask them, Who's unhappy?

(a beat)

It makes sense, in a way. Unhappy people cause all the trouble in the world. They meet together in basements. They write pamphlets. Unhappy people start revolutions.

She carefully dries her tears.

## MARINA (CONT'D)

That's how they are, you see. They take every light from your life, and then, when unhappiness is all you have left, they come to claim that as well. Well they can't have mine. They took my joy, but my pain is mine alone. You see, I intend to use it. I'm supposed to be quiet, to live as a warning to anyone who would do what Sasha did. But I can't swallow it anymore. I don't even want to. I want to scream.

She pushes the door open and walks outside.

EXT. UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON HOSPITAL -- DAY

As she steps outside, the flashbulbs begin. This is what they have been waiting for. The widow.

But as she descends the staircase, the ravenous clicking of cameras ebbs away. There are no tears, you see.

There is only the dancer's preternatural grace, and all the force of will that lies behind it.

Finally, the cameras fall silent. She takes her first steps before the microphone and lifts her voice to speak.

BLACK OUT.