

ANALYTICA

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. ETHIOPIAN RESTAURANT - NIGHT

VERA (mid-20s, mixed race, tall and slim, aggressively hip) sits at the bar, staring at her iPhone.

She refreshes her Instagram feed in the hopes of revealing a new "like" on her most recent post--one more empty hit of dopamine to pass the time.

No dice.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
Have you ever been on a blind date?

The youthful voice that asks this question belongs to a confident, seen-it-all confessor, who'll serve as our guide throughout the movie. We'll meet him shortly.

GREG (late-20s, white, conservatively dressed, early onset dadbod) enters the bar.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
Before you've even said "hey" and
leaned in for your first awkward
side-hug, you've already made all
kinds of snap judgments.

Greg spots Vera at the bar. He's pleased.

GREG
Vera?

An ON-SCREEN rundown reveals the instant data points on Vera that have already downloaded inside Greg's head.

SUPER: "Vera: Ultra-cool. Looks like a dancer. Freak in bed. Yes."

He approaches her with both arms outstretched. She forces a smile, trying in vain to mask her disappointment.

VERA
Greg.

Next, we see the data that's downloaded inside Vera's head, as she sizes Greg up.

SUPER: "Greg: Conservative. Probably some finance douche. Fucks like a sea urchin. Kill me now."

Vera rises from her bar stool, and they exchange an awkward side-hug.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
Those initial, surface-level
impressions often turn out to be
accurate.

GREG
Sorry, I'm a little late.

VERA
No, you're right on time. My dance
class got out early.

He smiles, pleased with himself for having guessed that she's a dancer. Vera, on the other hand, just wants to get this over with.

VERA (CONT'D)
Should we grab a table?

He brushes a hand against her shoulder. She arches her back, like she just stepped into a freezing cold shower.

Greg pulls a chair out for Vera and motions for her to sit. She rolls her eyes at the old-fashioned gesture.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
But other times, our instincts turn
out to be completely wrong. Think
about it. If love at first sight
were all it took, what would be the
point of dating? Why would anyone
waste precious time on actually
getting to know someone they've
already pre-judged?

Greg takes a seat across from Vera, who begins scrutinizing the Ethiopian menu.

VERA
(dubiously)
Hope you're OK with Ethiopian food.

GREG
Actually, I was psyched you picked
this place. I did Peace Corps in
Oromia.

VERA
You've spent time in Ethiopia?

GREG

Yeah, but I haven't had decent
cacabsa since I've been back. I'm
so hungry.

Vera looks pleasantly surprised. Maybe this guy's not as
terrible as she thought.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

Gender, age, race, height, weight,
hair color, voice, laugh, body
language, body type, body odor.
These are all quantitative data
points that we immediately pick up
on right away. And whether we admit
it or not, we use them to make snap
judgments about a person. Companies
who want to sell you something and
political campaigns who want your
vote have been doing the same thing
for a long time. Because it tends
to work. But only some of the time.

Vera takes a sip of water and leans forward in her chair,
ready to give this a shot now.

VERA

How long have you been in London?

GREG

About a year. But I've lived all
over the place. I get bored staying
in one place pretty easily.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

The only way to really get to know
someone is by asking them
questions. Their unique answers to
these questions are the difference
between a 28-year-old,
conservatively dressed white guy
and this particular 28-year-old,
conservatively dressed white guy.
Living, breathing human beings are
more than their demographic groups.

VERA

So what's the most interesting
country you've lived in?

GREG

Good question. Probably Bosnia, but
not for the reasons you'd expect.

VERA
Isn't it still kind of unsafe
there?

GREG
Not unless you're allergic to folk
music.

VERA
(laughing)
My training's in hip-hop, but I've
never broken out into hives at the
sound of a fiddle.

GREG
Hip-hop. Very cool. Who're your
favorite up-and-coming rappers?

She begins to answer, now enjoying the date every bit as much
as he is, if not more so.

INT. ETHIOPIAN RESTAURANT - LATER

Vera and Greg are at the bar now, indulging in what appears
to be their second or third post-dinner cocktail, and eye-
fucking each other aggressively.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
The questions we ask on a date are
usually pretty basic at first. But
the more time you spend with
someone, the longer you engage with
them, the more personal those
questions become. And the more
revealing the answers are.

VERA
So, what are you most afraid of?

GREG
Snakes, public speaking, and
getting sucked out of a plane in
mid-air.

VERA
In that order?

GREG
Reverse order, actually.

She grabs him by the elbow, and leans in closely.

VERA
Are you into EDM at all?

GREG
Not really.

VERA
Oh, because there's this DJ I know
who's playing a late-night set,
down the street. No snakes.
Promise.

GREG
I'd be down to check it out.

She smiles, as they grab their coats. Success.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
You see what just happened there?
Greg is not actually into EDM. He
said so himself! But he is into
Vera. And by asking him lots of
questions, Vera has already learned
enough about Greg to know that he's
more adventurous than he looks.

INT. NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

Thumping beat. Strobe lights. A sea of legs. Beads of sweat
rolling off faces and shoulders.

Greg is loving it, dancing like a maniac as he has his arms
wrapped around Vera's waist.

GREG
This is incredible.

VERA
I knew you'd like it.

She pulls him in close, and they embark on a drunken, sloppy
make out, their legs still pulsing along with the beat.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
In dating, the accumulation and
exploitation of data gleaned from
personality-revealing questions
often leads to mutually-beneficial
outcomes. In other words--

VERA
Let's go back to my place.

GREG
Let's go back to your place.

She grabs his hand and guides him toward the exit.

INT. VERA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Vera and Greg are going at it. She's on top.

Vera screams and then covers her own mouth, as if she's shocked by how much she's into him.

VERA
Honestly, when I first saw you walk
into that restaurant--

GREG
I know! I thought you--

VERA
--probably fucked like a sea urchin.

GREG
--were gonna be great in bed.

She rolls off of him, as they both break out into hysterical laughter.

CHRIS (V.O.)
But when it comes to the
psychological footprints that we
all leave behind online, believe me
when I tell you that it's not all
orgasms and giggles.

INT. FASHION SHOWROOM - NIGHT

Under a sexy beat, a spotlight illuminates the catwalk in an otherwise dark showroom.

A stone-faced FEMALE MODEL struts down the runway, sporting a convoluted ensemble of scarves, ribbons, and errant pieces of fabric that somehow come together to form an outfit.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
There are some very unscrupulous,
very rich, very powerful people out
there who've figured out how to use
that personal data to size you up
and then convince you to do things
that you otherwise wouldn't. I
should know. I was one of them.

TITLE: "ANALYTICA"

As the model makes her turn on the runway, the spotlight shifts to the back of the room where our narrator, Chris Wylie (29), is observing the fashion show.

With his bright-pink hair, horseshoe nose ring, neon-yellow graphic T-shirt, carefully manicured beard, and large-framed glasses, Wylie presents a picture-perfect--if deeply contrived--image of a hacker-chic Millennial troublemaker.

Wylie speaks STRAIGHT TO CAMERA.

CHRIS WYLIE

My name is Chris Wylie. I'm the gay Canadian vegan who somehow ended up creating Steve Bannon's right-wing psychological warfare mindfuck tool. A real-life, high-tech brainwashing tool that enabled greedy corporations and deranged politicians to play off of our worst instincts and pit us all against each other.

An annoyed FASHION DESIGNER who's sitting within earshot of Wylie shushes him, as the show continues.

Wylie lowers his voice.

CHRIS WYLIE (CONT'D)

I didn't mean to do it. But I take full responsibility, and I'm really sorry. I also know that "sorry" wasn't much of an excuse for Dr. Frankenstein either. I'm telling you all of this because I want you to know just how bad it really was and how much worse it might get.

A SECURITY GUARD taps Wylie firmly on the shoulder, indicating that it's time for him to leave. When our narrator hesitates for a mere moment, the guard starts pushing him toward the exit.

Wylie continues to speak to us, as he's being physically removed from the fashion show.

CHRIS WYLIE (CONT'D)

I always wanted to work in fashion. And everything could've been different, if I'd just stayed focused on that.

(MORE)

CHRIS WYLIE (CONT'D)
Kind of like what they say about
Fidel Castro and baseball.

EXT. CUBAN BASEBALL FIELD - DAY

An old-timey MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL SCOUT looks on, as young FIDEL CASTRO takes a practice swing at the plate.

The PITCHER winds up and throws a curve ball. Young Castro makes solid contact with the pitch, but he lines it right to the THIRD BASEMAN.

The Major League scout shakes his head, as he makes a note. Castro retreats to the dugout, dejected.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
Not that I'm comparing myself to
Castro. That olive-green uniform?
No. Just no.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

We're now in a Canadian classroom filled with six-year-old STUDENTS. Their TEACHER is going over a list of spelling words written on the blackboard.

TEACHER
Ball. Call. Fall.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
When I was six, I was abused by a
mentally unstable person at my
elementary school, which
administrators then tried to cover
up. I'm also dyslexic and suffer
from ADHD, which made for a
particularly potent one-two punch
for bullies in the classroom.

Sitting in the back row, SIX-YEAR-OLD CHRIS WYLIE (chubby, long hair, and deeply unsure of himself) struggles to read along with the teacher, mouthing the words to himself aloud.

TEACHER
Can anyone think of another word
that ends in "all"?

A bunch of eager little hands shoot up. Young Wylie raises his hand hesitantly.

TEACHER (CONT'D)
Yes, Chris.

CHRIS WYLIE

All-so?

A smattering of giggles reverberates around the classroom. Wylie clams up and shrinks into his seat.

TEACHER

Good guess, but we're looking for words that end in "all."

A YOUNG BOY sitting near Wylie leans into whisper into his friend's ear.

YOUNG BOY

Bet he's gonna pee his pants.

Young Wylie's breathing picks up, like he's about to have a panic attack.

INT. GYM - DAY

Six-year-old Wylie participates in a game of tag with his fellow students. He's so uncoordinated, he can barely run up and down the court without tripping over his own feet.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

The thing about being bullied is that it takes away your self-worth-- that deep-seated human need to feel valued. And for a kid, that's utterly devastating.

A YOUNG GIRL tags Wylie, but she pushes him too hard. He falls to the floor in a discombobulated heap of elbows and knees.

YOUNG GIRL

Oh, sorry, Chris!

Wylie winces in pain, as a MEAN BOY towers over him.

MEAN BOY

Chris got beat up by a girl!

The mean boy begins to laugh, encouraging his friends to do the same.

MEAN BOY (CONT'D)

Maybe he is a girl. He looks like one.

The GYM TEACHER pulls the mean boy away, as Wylie's breathing grows heavier.

GYM TEACHER
Are you OK?

Wyllie tries to answer, but he can't. He starts to hyperventilate.

The gym teacher turns to an AIDE.

GYM TEACHER (CONT'D)
Call an ambulance.

The aide runs back out of the gym to the nearest phone, as the gym teacher crouches down and tries to help Wyllie.

The helpless little boy continues to wheeze and gasp for air.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
Bullying destroys a lot of kids,
especially gay ones. But I was
lucky. With my parents' help, I
decided that I was going to fight
back. Not by being tougher than the
bullies, but by being smarter than
them.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

Flanked by his concerned-looking MOM and DAD, FOURTEEN-YEAR-OLD CHRIS WYLIE (just starting to come into his own as a gangly teenager) stands before a JUDGE, arguing his own case.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
When I was 14, I sued the British
Columbia Ministry of Education to
force them to change their policies
on bullying and inclusion.

Fourteen-year-old Wyllie raises a finger in the air.

FOURTEEN-YEAR-OLD CHRIS WYLIE
Your honor, bullying is a crime
against our humanity, and it is
time to restore some sanity.
Because this is not just about
vanity.

The judge furrows his brow, but he clearly admires the kid's pluck. He bangs his gavel.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
In spite of my painfully earnest
attempts to mimic Johnnie Cochran,
I won.

Wyllie embraces his parents.

EXT. CANADIAN PARLIAMENT HILL - DAY

Wearing a well-fitted suit, slim tie, and a bright-pink nose ring, NINETEEN-YEAR-OLD CHRIS WYLLIE approaches the imposingly austere towers of Canada's Parliament Building, perched high above the banks of the Ottawa River.

CHRIS WYLLIE (V.O.)

I've always been in a hurry, and while I don't recommend it, I dropped out of high school when I was 16. I started getting serious about a career in fashion a couple years after that. But since I can never do one thing at a time, I also taught myself how to code.

Wyllie walks into the Parliament Building.

INT. CANADIAN PARLIAMENT - DAY

Nineteen-year-old Wyllie sits at a computer, showing a group of fellow INTERNS an online fundraising tool that he's building for the Liberal Democratic Party.

CHRIS WYLLIE (V.O.)

It was my experience in court that led me to give politics a shot, and I started as an intern for the Liberal Democratic Party in Ottawa. I was still very young and very idealistic. I wanted to use my coding skills to make life a little more tolerable for gay kids like me. Rather noble of me, wasn't it?

INT. OBAMA PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - DAY

The iconic "Hope" poster, homemade "Obama 2008" campaign signs, and volunteer canvassing lists adorn the walls.

The 2008 Obama campaign's National Targeting Director KEN STRASMA (50s) stands before a blue and red map of the United States.

KEN STRASMA

Senator Obama likes to talk about the audacity of hope, which is why we're all here.

(MORE)

KEN STRASMA (CONT'D)

But what I want to do now is talk a little about the audacity to win.

Nineteen-year-old Chris Wylie is among the young Obama campaign volunteers, who're taking notes on Strasma's presentation.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

Through my connections with the Liberal Dems, I got a volunteer job, working under Ken Strasma, whose revolutionary microtargeting techniques helped get Barack Obama elected President in 2008. I learned a lot from Ken, and it felt great to be a part of something so world-changing. But I had a sneaking suspicion that we were only scratching the surface of what was becoming possible in the brave new world of data mining.

INT. UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE LAB - DAY

Two Cambridge University PSYCHOLOGISTS (MICHAL KOSINSKI and DAVID STILLWELL) look on as a FEMALE UNDERGRADUATE sits at a computer, answering a series of personality-based questions.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

Across the pond, a couple of Cambridge psychologists were experimenting with new ways of studying personality. Their idea was to quantify it by measuring how people scored on the "big five" personality traits: Openness, Conscientiousness, Extroversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism. OCEAN, for short.

ON THE UNDERGRADUATE'S COMPUTER SCREEN

The OCEAN personality test includes statements like, "I often feel overwhelmed when many people are around" and "I would rather be called practical than inventive."

The student moves her cursor left or right to indicate the extent to which she disagrees or agrees with each assertion "moderately" or "strongly."

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

The OCEAN Test ended up going viral on Facebook as an app, which the Cambridge psychologists marketed as a fun way to pass the time and learn a bit about yourself. They called it, "myPersonality."

MONTAGE: Young Facebook users answer questions on the OCEAN test and then forward the app to their friends with messages like, "Hey, this is pretty cool" and "Check out this test. I told you I'm an extrovert!"

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

Almost half of the people who completed the test consented to give the researchers access to their Facebook data to "further build their personality profiles." Now, for the first time ever, psychologists had developed a way to correlate millions of people's personality traits with what they had "liked" on Facebook.

ON A COMPUTER SCREEN

A graph depicts the results of a study, which correlates Facebook "likes" with specific personality traits.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

They found that Facebook "likes" could be used to predict everything from a person's use of addictive substance to, yes, their political views. And some of the results were rather surprising. For example, "liking" curly fries was closely linked to high intelligence. If a subject had "liked" at least 100 things on Facebook, researchers found that they could glean as accurate a depiction of that individual's personality traits as the one that their own spouse could provide.

INT. THE PENTAGON - DAY

Uniformed U.S. MILITARY PERSONNEL look on as a Michal Kosinski gives a PowerPoint presentation on the implications of his findings for modern warfare techniques.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
The U.S. military was among the
first institutions to realize the
potential of this ground-breaking
research.

INT. LECTURE HALL - DAY

Typing vigorously on his laptop, Wylie is seated in the back
row of the lecture, looking like he's taking notes.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
But I would soon discover myself
that the implications went far
beyond actual warfare.

A LAW PROFESSOR (late 60s with a wild, unkempt mane) keeps
looking up at Wylie as he drones on.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
I moved to the U.K. when I was 20
to begin studying law at the London
School of Economics. Not bad for a
high school dropout, eh?

ON WYLIE'S LAPTOP SCREEN

We see that he is coding, rather than taking notes on the
professor's lecture.

LAW PROFESSOR
Mr. Wylie.

Wylie stops typing suddenly and looks up.

LAW PROFESSOR (CONT'D)
What are the objectives that the
court infers, which are not within
the policies and goals of this
particular statute?

CHRIS WYLIE
(without skipping a beat)
The court appears to be especially
concerned that freedom of
association is not infringed upon,
determining that the legislative
body has not seen fit to compel a
citizen to control any other
parties who may be engaging in
illegal activity.

LAW PROFESSOR
Very good, Mr. Wylie.

Wylie returns to his coding, pleased with himself. But then--

LAW PROFESSOR (CONT'D)
What you just said makes absolutely
no sense whatsoever.

Uh oh. Wylie looks up from his computer again. Maybe he's not
as smart as he thinks he is.

LAW PROFESSOR (CONT'D)
But you've proven yourself to be an
expert bullshitter. One of the most
important qualities in a lawyer.

A couple of Wylie's fellow students giggle. Others dutifully
take notes on what the professor just said.

LAW PROFESSOR (CONT'D)
Please don't write that down.

INT. LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS COMPUTER LAB - DAY

Wylie shows a bunch of his fellow young COMPUTER CODERS a new
algorithm-based PLATFORM that he's begun working on. At the
bottom of the platform is a line that says, "By Chris Wylie."

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
I may not have devoted my best
efforts to learning about the law,
but by the time the first major
paper on the OCEAN Test was
published in 2013, I was beginning
to make a name for myself in the
insular little world of coders on
campus.

The other coders are deeply impressed with Wylie's work. One
of the nerdier-looking ones in the group puts his hand up for
an awkward high-five, and Wylie obliges.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
For the first time in my life, I
was the coolest kid among my peers.
Nerdy peers, no doubt, but still.
It was an intoxicating feeling, and
I wanted more. The Cambridge paper
on the OCEAN test got my attention,
and I started to wonder about other
real-world applications for this
psychographic research.

EXT. LONDON STREET - DAY

Still standing outside the fashion show that he's just been kicked out of, our narrator lights a cigarette and takes a puff.

CHRIS WYLIE

As I was finishing law school, I began working on my PhD in fashion trend forecasting at the University of the Arts London because it's impossible for me to focus on just one thing at a time. And also because I wanted options.

Wylie is intensely aware of the camera that he's speaking to. He's trying his very best to look cool, even as he confesses his deepest insecurities.

CHRIS WYLIE (CONT'D)

I'd like to be able to tell you that I set out to use my political campaign experience and coding skills to connect people. To make the world a better place. You know, the kind of trite talking points that every billionaire Silicon Valley tech bro trots out whenever he has to explain why his insidious company should be spared any meaningful government regulation.

He takes another long drag from his cigarette.

CHRIS WYLIE (CONT'D)

But I'm gonna be real with you here. I wanted to build something that would make people say, "Wow." I wanted to be important. I wanted the world to love and appreciate me. When it all comes down to it, isn't that what we all want?

Wylie shrugs nonchalantly and walks out of frame.

INT. LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY HEADQUARTERS - DAY

The adult version of Chris Wylie, sans the pink hair (we'll see him in this natural blonde color from now until the final act), strolls into the austere, brick headquarters of the U.K.'s third most powerful political party.

Super: "2013."

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
 I started with the Liberal Dems,
 figuring that the U.K.'s most
 progressive party would be most
 open to my brand new ideas.

INT. LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Wyllie sits at a conference table with an open binder in front of him labeled, "Liberal Dems Meeting."

He's wrapping up his sales pitch to two Liberal Democratic Party officials. The first is a SENIOR STRATEGIST (60s, white male, barely paying attention). The second is a Liberal Democratic SOCIAL MEDIA COORDINATOR (black female, early 30s, much more interested in what Wyllie has to say).

CHRIS WYLIE
 The recent psychographic research
 is conclusive. And I truly believe
 that if the Liberal Dems seize this
 rare opportunity to be the first
 out of the gate to use it, the
 party will be well-positioned to
 defeat the Tories and Labour going
 forward.

Wyllie closes his binder and waits for a response to his pitch. A long, painful silence hangs in the air.

SENIOR STRATEGIST
 Well. I'll be honest, Mr. Wyllie.

CHRIS WYLIE
 I've always found honesty to be the
 best approach.

SENIOR STRATEGIST
 I've been in British politics for
 over three decades. And this is the
 first time I've ever even heard the
 word, "Psychographics."

CHRIS WYLIE
 Hence, the opportunity. You don't
 want to be caught fighting the next
 war with cavalry while your
 opponents are using tanks, do you?

SENIOR STRATEGIST
 Mmhm.

SOCIAL MEDIA COORDINATOR
It's certainly fascinating.

CHRIS WYLIE
It is. And I've actually been beta testing a platform in my spare time that would combine results from the personality test with an algorithm--

SENIOR STRATEGIST
In your spare time? That's the spare time you have, while pursuing your PhD in ...

He glances at Wylie's CV.

SENIOR STRATEGIST (CONT'D)
Fashion trend forecasting?

Exasperated, Wylie takes a breath.

CHRIS WYLIE
The way I see it, sir, is you have two options. Option 1: Hire me to build a platform for the party that will provide accurate psychological profiles on the British electorate. You can then use that platform to create individually-tailored messages that will be most persuasive in targeting voters. Or Option 2: Wish me a good day, show me the door, and lose half of your seats in the next general election.

The senior strategist lets out a chortle and then rises to his feet. He extends a hand toward Wylie, who shakes it.

SENIOR STRATEGIST
Thank you very much for coming in, Mr. Wylie. We'll be sure to get back to you.

Wylie shoots the young social media coordinator a look and then heads for the door.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
He didn't get back to me. And the Liberal Democrats didn't end up losing half of their seats in the next general election. They lost 86 percent of them.

EXT. LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY HEADQUARTERS - MOMENTS LATER

Wyllie exits the building with a tote bag slung over his shoulder.

Before he can get more than a couple of steps, the door to the swings open after him, and the party's young social media coordinator follows behind him.

SOCIAL MEDIA COORDINATOR

Hold up.

Wyllie turns.

SOCIAL MEDIA COORDINATOR (CONT'D)

Sorry about that. The Party hierarchy's pretty old-school. We just got rid of our dial-up Internet last week.

CHRIS WYLIE

No wonder I kept getting a busy signal.

SOCIAL MEDIA COORDINATOR

Listen, I think there's someone you should talk to. Have you heard of a company called SCL?

Wyllie shakes his head.

SOCIAL MEDIA COORDINATOR (CONT'D)

We've done a couple of projects with them. They work in campaigns all around the world, and they're very open to new ideas.

CHRIS WYLIE

What kinds of campaigns?

SOCIAL MEDIA COORDINATOR

That's the thing. I don't really know. They're pretty secretive about what they do.

CHRIS WYLIE

Intriguing.

SOCIAL MEDIA COORDINATOR

The CEO is a guy called Alexander Nix. He's a bit ... stuffy.

CHRIS WYLIE

Stuffy and I don't usually mix.

SOCIAL MEDIA COORDINATOR
I think he'll really like you.

CHRIS WYLIE
(trying to play it cool)
Feel free to pass along my CV. But
I'm not sure the political world is
ready for what I have to offer.

He gives her a goodbye nod and continues on his way.

EXT. CARNABY STREET - DAY

High-end boutiques line the pedestrian shopping street in the heart of London's Soho neighborhood.

Wylie is being guided by his fashion school PHD ADVISER (40s), a melodramatic man in a black cape, who closely resembles a hairless cat.

The adviser scans their surroundings intently, as though he's trying to identify something that's vital but elusive.

PHD ADVISER
Of course, fashion forecasters keep tabs on Instagram trendsetters, industry-approved bloggers, and the like. But for the very best in the business, the process of identifying an emerging trend boils down to one thing only: the unquantifiable art of relentless street observation in the neighborhoods that matter. I like to call it "hunting and gathering."

The adviser suddenly points out a BEAUTIFUL YOUNG WOMAN who's crossing the street.

PHD ADVISER (CONT'D)
Her.

The woman is wearing crocs, department-store jeans, and a baggie sweatshirt.

CHRIS WYLIE
Her?

PHD ADVISER
Normcore. Dressing like a middle-aged mum, who works at the bank in Coventry. That right there. You're looking at the next big thing.

CHRIS WYLIE

Yeah? I've seen a few of my classmates dressing like that actually. Crocs, baggy jeans, comfortable sweatshirts.

PHD ADVISER

(pleased with himself)

Ah, you see?

CHRIS WYLIE

I thought you said normcore was going to be the next big thing.

The adviser stops in his tracks, annoyed by Wylie's attitude.

PHD ADVISER

Well, you're in art school. The trend hasn't exactly entered the mainstream yet, has it?

CHRIS WYLIE

But it will, very soon. Right?

PHD ADVISER

If you're hoping to learn what the future holds way down the line, I'd suggest you consult a fortune teller, rather than continuing to pursue your PhD. The time frames we work in are fairly limited.

CHRIS WYLIE

Actually, I'm developing an online platform that uses people's basic personality traits to predict their future behaviors. When it's finished, I'm quite sure it'll have applications in figuring out what styles people will want to wear months--even years--before they begin to think about buying new clothes.

The adviser scoffs.

PHD ADVISER

Let me give you some advice, Chris. I know you're spending lots of money on tuition, but here's the reality of trend forecasting: It's about personal intuition. Having an eye for what's next. Either you have it, or you don't.

(MORE)

PHD ADVISER (CONT'D)
 Do you think Gianni Versace used
 algorithms to figure out what was
 going to be the next big thing?

Wyllie thinks about it for a moment.

CHRIS WYLIE
 Probably not. But he's been dead
 for almost two decades, hasn't he?

The adviser storms off. This kid is helpless.

INT. CAMPUS CAFE - DAY

Fellow ART STUDENTS chat with one another, as Wyllie sits
 alone with earbuds in, a cup of tea in hand, and his laptop
 open to--what else--the platform that he's been working on.

Chris Wyllie (V.O.)
 The Liberal Dems didn't want me.
 The fashion industry was laughing
 at me.

Wyllie's cell phone buzzes on the table. He looks at it and
 sees that the incoming call is from an unknown number. He
 hits "END" and turns his focus back to his coding.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
 The only thing I could do was to
 just keep working.

Wyllie's phone buzzes again. Same unknown number. He sighs,
 annoyed to be taken away from his work, and answers it.

CHRIS WYLIE
 Hello.

INT. ALEXANDER NIX'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The minimalist, tasteful layout exudes wealth and power.
 Floor-to-ceiling windows offer a sweeping view of London.

Wearing a headset, SCL Group Director ALEXANDER NIX (38)
 paces in front of his standing desk. With his dirty-blond
 hair parted neatly to the side, Nix wears an expensive suit
 that accentuates his slender frame.

ALEXANDER NIX
 (upper-class English
 accent)
 Mr. Wyllie.

INTERCUT ALEXANDER NIX AND CHRIS WYLIE

CHRIS WYLIE

Ah, so she did give you my CV.

ALEXANDER NIX

Yes, and I've reviewed your credentials. They are certainly atypical.

CHRIS WYLIE

I do appreciate a good backhanded compliment.

ALEXANDER NIX

Don't get me wrong. I'm fascinated by the work you've been doing in the field of psychographics.

CHRIS WYLIE

When do you want me to start?

Nix is taken aback.

ALEXANDER NIX

I'm sorry? I haven't even made you an offer.

CHRIS WYLIE

But you're calling. Which means you've done your research, which means you understand the real-world applications of the platform I've been developing. Which means you're definitely going to make me an offer, unless you're an idiot. And you don't sound like an idiot. A bit straight-laced and pompous for my liking, but definitely not an idiot.

A long silence hangs in the air.

ALEXANDER NIX

How's Monday?

CHRIS WYLIE

Monday works. And my title?

ALEXANDER NIX

"Senior Associate."

CHRIS WYLIE

I'd prefer Research Director.

ALEXANDER NIX
That should be fine.

CHRIS WYLIE
I've done some research of my own
by the way. On SCL.

ALEXANDER NIX
Well, it is probably a good thing
to know a bit about the company
you're going to be working for.

CHRIS WYLIE
You like to brag to your clients
about how you conduct "information
warfare." That sounds pretty
violent.

ALEXANDER NIX
It's not actual warfare.

CHRIS WYLIE
What kind of black-ups are we
talking about here?

ALEXANDER NIX
Opposition research. It's a fairly
standard practice in this field.

CHRIS WYLIE
Do you entrap your opponents?

ALEXANDER NIX
No.

CHRIS WYLIE
Frighten voters? Use their
vulnerabilities against them?

ALEXANDER NIX
If you have moral qualms, you
should know that we don't lie. We
don't cheat.

CHRIS WYLIE
I don't have moral qualms.

ALEXANDER NIX
I can't tell whether or not you're
being serious.

CHRIS WYLIE
Maybe that's the idea.

Nix isn't sure what to make of this guy now, but he knows for certain that he wants him on his side.

ALEXANDER NIX

We'll give you total freedom.
Experiment all you want. Come and
test out all of your crazy ideas
with a nice salary and a big
office, instead of a dorm room.

Wyllie thinks it over for a beat.

CHRIS WYLLIE

Corner office.

ALEXANDER NIX

Now you're pushing it.

CHRIS WYLLIE

I'm not the easiest guy to work
with.

ALEXANDER NIX

Neither am I.

CHRIS WYLLIE

I know that.

ALEXANDER NIX

You don't even know my name.

CHRIS WYLLIE

Alexander Nix. You run the
Elections Division at SCL. You come
from one of those old gentry
families that somehow maintains
their grip on power in this
country, even though it's
supposedly the 21st century. Eton
class of '93. Art history major at
the University of Manchester.
Manchester, eh? You really must've
shit the bed on your A-levels.

ALEXANDER NIX

No, actually--

CHRIS WYLLIE

Your family is rich, but nothing
compared to your wife, who's a
billionaire shipping heiress.

(MORE)

CHRIS WYLIE (CONT'D)

I'm assuming you wear silk pajamas to bed, slippers around the house, and have a manservant, who butters your toast and tucks you in at night.

There is a long pause.

ALEXANDER NIX

Monday morning, 9 a.m. I don't expect you'll have trouble finding our offices in Mayfair.

CHRIS WYLIE

Can't wait.

Just as Nix is about to hang up--

ALEXANDER NIX

I butter my own toast.

He hangs up. Wylie puts his headphones back in and returns to his coding.

INT. SCL GROUP HEADQUARTERS - DAY

DAPHNE (late-20s, black), SCL's perceptive and skeptical office manager, guides Wylie into his pristine office, which overlooks the U.K. branches of Google and LinkedIn.

DAPHNE

Men's toilet is down the hall to the left. I have your computer log-in set up, but let me know if you need help with any tech stuff.

CHRIS WYLIE

I think I'm OK on the tech stuff.

She's not impressed.

DAPHNE

I've been onboarding new employees at SCL for almost three years. You're the first one with a nose ring.

CHRIS WYLIE

Are they against company policy?

DAPHNE

Why did someone like you take a job like this? Please don't say, "to change the world."

CHRIS WYLIE

To change the world.

DAPHNE

You must know this place is knee-deep in some really shady stuff.

CHRIS WYLIE

Maybe I'm prepared to go over to the dark side first, and then I'll cleanse my soul with other projects later.

She nods.

DAPHNE

Evil pays better than good does.
See ya around.

She exits abruptly, leaving Wylie alone in his new office.

He throws his bag onto his desk and walks over to the window, taking in the view.

There is a quick "knock, knock" on Wylie's door, and Alexander Nix enters, a manila envelope in hand.

ALEXANDER NIX

Getting settled in, are we?

CHRIS WYLIE

I like Daphne. She's sassy, like me.

Nix places the envelope on Wylie's desk.

ALEXANDER NIX

If you'd care to familiarize yourself with our most important clients.

Wylie returns to his desk and opens the envelope.

He sifts through its contents--a mix of campaign literature and photographs of world leaders and potential world leaders.

His eyes settle on one particular photo of a smiling African man in traditional dress and a black fedora.

ALEXANDER NIX (CONT'D)
Goodluck Jonathan.

CHRIS WYLIE
(confused)
Is Jonathan my new code name?

ALEXANDER NIX
No, Goodluck Jonathan happens to be the President of Nigeria, as well as an SCL client. He's up for reelection a year from now. A good Christian man in a country that's 51 percent Christian, 49 percent Islamic.

CHRIS WYLIE
That sounds convenient.

ALEXANDER NIX
Potentially. We don't like to rely on 51/49 splits here, but if that's what we end up with, we're quite alright with it.

CHRIS WYLIE
Divide and conquer.

ALEXANDER NIX
Indeed.

Wylie lands on a photo of a different African leader--a husky, tough-looking guy in a suit and tie.

ALEXANDER NIX (CONT'D)
President Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya.

CHRIS WYLIE
I've been following that race a bit on the BBC. He's up for reelection this year, right?

ALEXANDER NIX
(nodding)
We worked on his first campaign, as well. Your predecessor was quite effective in segmenting the Kenyan electorate into key target audiences for our digital ads.

CHRIS WYLIE
My predecessor? I'd love to look over his work.

At that request, Nix suddenly looks cagey, though it's unclear why.

ALEXANDER NIX

Yes, well he identified the youth vote as being particularly key to Kenyatta's party, the TNA. We've got a big social media campaign in the works down there.

CHRIS WYLIE

So why doesn't he still work here?

ALEXANDER NIX

Who?

CHRIS WYLIE

My predecessor.

Nix averts his eyes.

ALEXANDER NIX

I'll tell you more about it later. Shall we? I'll introduce you to the rest of the team at the 10am meeting.

Nix turns to leave, but then remembers one last thing.

ALEXANDER NIX (CONT'D)

Oh, and there's someone coming in from America tomorrow, whom you should meet.

CHRIS WYLIE

Who's that?

ALEXANDER NIX

No one you'd know. He's called Steve. Interesting chap.

INT. HEATHROW AIRPORT - DAY

Jet-lagged, transatlantic business-class PASSENGERS pour out of the gate from their arriving flight.

Among them is Breitbart News executive chairman STEVE BANNON (59), red circles ringing his weary eyes. Dressed in cargo shorts, sandals, and two layers of wrinkled, button-down shirts, which accentuate his protruding gut, Bannon looks like he slept in a trash can instead of a plane.

In spite of his haggard appearance, Bannon walks and talks like a man with boundless energy, dragging his carry-on bag with three newspapers tucked under his arm and a cell phone pressed to his ear.

STEVE BANNON

(into his phone)

What's with that snooze-fest of an image we have up on the home page right now? The one of Mitch McConnell looking like a deranged reptilian automation at that geriatric fundraising jerkoff session in Georgetown.

A beat.

STEVE BANNON (CONT'D)

Well, it's making me want to cut your dick off and serve it to you for breakfast. Swap it out with some scary-looking shit. We're talking about immigration policy here. I want to see some Mexican gangbangers covered head to toe in prison tattoos, pronto.

Bannon approaches a coffee stand and puts his hand over his cell phone to place an order.

STEVE BANNON (CONT'D)

Espresso. Quadruple shot.

He fishes his wallet out of his cargo shorts pocket, as he waits for his drink.

STEVE BANNON (CONT'D)

(into the phone)

And what's going on with the "Islamization of America" series? We need to fast-track that baby before Sharia Law gets implemented, and we're stoned to death for publishing it.

Bannon takes his quadruple espresso and make his way toward baggage claim.

STEVE BANNON (CONT'D)

This is the kind of punch-you-in-the-face shit that's gonna drive traffic, as we expand into the U.K. and--

The ANGRY CHANTS of a small but angry group of people in baggage claim stop Bannon in his tracks. It's a bit hard to hear at first, but eventually we can tell that they're chanting, "Scum! Scum! Scum!"

STEVE BANNON (CONT'D)
Sounds like my ride's here. Bye.

Bannon puts the phone back in his cargo shorts pocket.

INT. BAGGAGE CLAIM - MOMENTS LATER

Bannon descends the escalator and is met at the floor below by four ANGRY HECKLERS, who've encircled an unassuming middle-aged man in a double-breasted suit. The man they've surrounded is NIGEL FARAGE (51), the controversial leader of the right-wing, anti-immigrant UK Independence Party (UKIP).

HECKLERS
Scum! Scum! Scum! Scum!

Trying to find the hecklers off is Farange's reactionary young compatriot and unofficial handler, RAHEEM KASSAM (28, upper-class English, south Asian descent), who wears the tweed jacket of a man five decades his senior.

RAHEEM KASSAM
Yes, that's quite civil of you all.
Very polite.

A YOUNG HECKLER shoulders his way past Kassam and shoves a finger in Farage's face.

YOUNG HECKLER
Your party is full of racists,
fascists, and Holocaust deniers.

NIGEL FARAGE
I've heard that one before.

YOUNG HECKLER
Yeah?

Kassam steps in front of the heckler.

RAHEEM KASSAM
I take it you don't have the
education to come up with any
references outside of the obvious
tropes from the Second World War?

YOUNG HECKLER
 Fuck you. Your family must be
 ashamed of you.

RAHEEM KASSAM
 Who's the racist now?

A SECOND HECKLER (an older woman in a wheelchair) approaches
 Farage.

WOMAN IN A WHEELCHAIR
 (Scottish accent)
 You're not welcome here.

Farage smirks at her condescendingly.

NIGEL FARAGE
 Oh, I'm quite sorry. I didn't know
 you owned Heathrow Airport.

WOMAN IN A WHEELCHAIR
 You're a bawbag, Nigel.

Farage smiles, as she wheels herself away in disgust.

Bannon approaches Farrage, who exudes pure delight at the
 sight of his American friend. The two men shake hands.

NIGEL FARAGE
 Mr. Bannon. Perfect timing. How was
 your flight?

STEVE BANNON
 What the Hell is a "bawbag"?

NIGEL FARAGE
 I believe it's what they call a
 scrotum up in Glasgow.

They begin to make their way toward the airport exit with
 Kassam acting as a bodyguard.

STEVE BANNON
 (to Kassam)
 And how's the newly promoted Editor-
 in-Chief of Breitbart London. We
 won any Pulitzers yet?

RAHEEM KASSAM
 I wouldn't hold your breath on
 that.

Kassam pushes away another protester, who's gotten too close
 to Farage.

NIGEL FARAGE

As you can see, I'm not exactly the most popular man in London these days.

STEVE BANNON

No shit. Hanging out with you is like the opposite of Beatle-mania.

Farage laughs.

NIGEL FARAGE

Won't you please, please help me?

INT. BLACK CAB - DAY

As the traditional English taxi rolls down the highway, Bannon man-spreads in the back seat next to Farage with Kassam up front beside the DRIVER.

RAHEEM KASSAM

Despite that little display back there, there's just no doubt that the mood of the country on the whole is changing.

NIGEL FARAGE

It's true. Real, working people-- the ones who don't live in globalist London--they're angry.

RAHEEM KASSAM

But a lot of them are still afraid to say what they really believe. We just have to let them know that it's OK to not want England to become the next Pakistan.

STEVE BANNON

Praise Allah. I love hearing a good Muslim brother talking dirty like that.

RAHEEM KASSAM

Actually, I'm an atheist.

STEVE BANNON

Even better. No one to bow down to, other than the all-powerful spirit of righteous, populist nationalism.

NIGEL FARAGE

I thought you were a good Catholic boy, Stevie?

STEVE BANNON

Sure, but I'm also a Leninist, by the way. I don't just want to beat the permanent political class at the polls. I want to take down the whole international order.

NIGEL FARAGE

Speaking of which ...

Farage takes a Guardian newspaper out of his briefcase and points to the front-page headline: "David Cameron Promises In/Out Referendum on EU."

STEVE BANNON

Already read all about it on the flight over.

NIGEL FARAGE

Cameron's not really one of us, of course. He doesn't support Brexit. He just thinks he can keep his right-flank under control. He wants to placate the peasants with the pitchforks.

STEVE BANNON

That's what Von Hindenburg thought, too.

NIGEL FARAGE

So now you're comparing yourself to Lenin and Hitler. Who wouldn't love us?

STEVE BANNON

Understatement isn't really my thing. "Brexit" though. I like that. Solid branding.

The cab exits off of the highway and approaches Central London with Big Ben beckoning in the distance.

NIGEL FARAGE

(to Bannon)

Got time for a warm beer at one of our most traditional English pubs before your first meeting?

STEVE BANNON
It's 10 a.m., you goober.

NIGEL FARAGE
You're in England. The pubs close early here.

STEVE BANNON
Wouldn't know. I don't drink.

Farage looks him up and down.

NIGEL FARAGE
Could've fooled me.

STEVE BANNON
I don't drink anymore. And I'll take a rain check on that club soda, too. SCL's got some new boy genius on the payroll. They want me and Raheem to meet him over lunch.

NIGEL FARAGE
Ah, the "data analysis" firm. I thought you were here to help me win hearts and minds. SCL's work seems rather soulless, don't you think?

Bannon looks him directly in the eye.

STEVE BANNON
Brother, I'm a 21st century revolutionary. And I don't know about you, but I couldn't care less about any motherfucker's heart. I just want to win, baby.

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

A fancy farm-to-table place that exudes all of the warmth of an Apple store.

Seated on stools at their industrial-style table, Wylie, Nix, and Kassam watch as Bannon sucks down an oyster like a ravenous sea lion. He gets some of the juice on his shirt, and wipes it off with the back of his hand.

ALEXANDER NIX

(to Bannon)

Traditional data analytics firms have engaged in a fairly straightforward process when it comes to political work. They use electoral records, consumer purchase histories, and other easily obtainable data to predict voters' established proclivities. And then they focus on engaging their most reliable, core supporters with traditional messaging tactics.

Bannon paws another oyster and sucks it down, as Kassam works on his beer and Wylie picks at a salad.

ALEXANDER NIX (CONT'D)

What we want to do, in a way, is to turn that process on its head.

STEVE BANNON

And use these new methods to glean insights about individual voters' unique personality traits, in order to persuade them.

ALEXANDER NIX

Precisely. We don't just want to get our voters out to the polls. We want to convince people who aren't yet our voters by--

STEVE BANNON

Using their own psychology against them.

ALEXANDER NIX

You're a quick study, Mr. Bannon.

STEVE BANNON

I have to say. This all gets my nipples hard, but it's unproven.

CHRIS WYLIE

Actually, the research is very--

STEVE BANNON

It's unproven in the real world.
How do I make the case in simple
terms to my very skeptical, very
rich benefactor that SLC can make a
real difference in promoting the
populist Breitbart agenda?

Wyllie puts down his salad fork.

CHRIS WYLIE

Hopes and fears. Those are the two
biggest drivers of how people make
decisions.

STEVE BANNON

By the way, I like to lean toward
the fears. More reliable.

CHRIS WYLIE

I agree with that. But most of the
time, people don't even know what
they fear most until it smacks them
in the face and provokes a
visceral, negative reaction.

RAHEEM KASSAM

Was it like that with you and
vaginas, Chris?

Wyllie looks taken aback but does his best to ignore the
bullying, homophobic remark.

CHRIS WYLIE

With the platform I'm building, I
can figure out what people are most
afraid of before they do. And then
we're off to the races.

Bannon slurps down one more oyster and then uses his sleeve
to wipe his face.

STEVE BANNON

I like the sound of that. And I
apologize for my young colleague's
remark back there. He may look like
a fully woke, urban-dwelling person
of color. But they actually had
Raheem's DNA tested recently, and
it turns out he's 40 percent
Neanderthal, which also explains
the excess body hair.

CHRIS WYLIE

Oh, I can take a joke. I'm not a delicate flower.

STEVE BANNON

But you are gay, right?

CHRIS WYLIE

Yes, I am a homosexual.

He glares at Kassam.

CHRIS WYLIE (CONT'D)

"Faggot" is fine, too, if you'd prefer that one. Really, I don't mind.

Bannon waves him off.

STEVE BANNON

You've got me all wrong, kid. I love the gays.

CHRIS WYLIE

Oh?

STEVE BANNON

The gays are always on the cutting edge of society. Look at anything in the culture today, and the gays were there first. Music, food, design, fashion. Shit, they were even into being gay before it was cool.

Bannon abruptly checks his watch and then pushes his food away, throws a couple of hundred-pound notes on the table.

STEVE BANNON (CONT'D)

Shit, we're late for our meeting with Farage and the other Brexit lunatics.

ALEXANDER NIX

"Brexit." I like that.

Nix rises to his seat and extends a hand stiffly toward Bannon.

ALEXANDER NIX (CONT'D)

Why don't you come by the office tomorrow to discuss some more--

Bannon takes his hand reluctantly and releases it quickly.

STEVE BANNON

God, I hate corporate offices.
Corporate offices are intellectual
kryptonite.

Before Nix can come up with an alternate option, Bannon turns to Wylie and hands him his business card.

STEVE BANNON (CONT'D)

I want to hear more details about
what you're working on. You around
tonight?

CHRIS WYLIE

Sure.

STEVE BANNON

I'll pick the place. Don't worry,
Raheem, you don't have to come.

Always in a hurry with so much to accomplish, Bannon pulls out his phone and begins to make another call as he heads for the door. Kassam trails behind him, like an obedient, homophobic puppy dog.

RAHEEM KASSAM

I wasn't planning on it.

INT. GAY CLUB - NIGHT

Men bump and grind with one another on the dance floor, as scantily-clad waiters sling cocktails.

In a quiet corner of the club, Wylie and Bannon chat in a booth. The younger man sips a daiquiri, while Bannon nurses a club soda, enjoying this environment thoroughly.

STEVE BANNON

Do you know who Andrew Breitbart
was?

CHRIS WYLIE

I remember him from when he crashed
that Anthony Weiner press
conference. Solid trolling.

STEVE BANNON

Yeah, but Andrew wasn't just a
provocateur. He was a visionary.
God rest his soul.

A young, shirtless TWINK approaches Bannon with a glazed-over look in his eye. The twink puts his hand on Bannon's shoulder.

TWINK

Hi, daddy. Want to dance?

Bannon doesn't flinch. He's getting a real kick out of this.

STEVE BANNON

In a little bit, honey. I don't know this song.

The twink rolls his eyes and continues on his way. Bannon turns back to Wylie.

STEVE BANNON (CONT'D)

Andrew understood something very fundamental. It's what I call "the Breitbart Doctrine." And it's that politics exists downstream from culture. So in order to change politics, you first have to change the culture.

CHRIS WYLIE

I have a similar idea about fashion trend forecasting. But no one in the industry seems to care much what I think.

STEVE BANNON

I care.

Wylie looks Bannon up and down, taking in the rumpled ensemble that passes as his outfit.

STEVE BANNON (CONT'D)

Oh, come on. I may not be Ralph Lauren, but I'm here to learn, baby.

CHRIS WYLIE

Well, look at your boy Nigel Farage. Personally, I think the man is a drunk, not-so-closeted racist, who wants to turn the clock back a hundred years on civilization.

STEVE BANNON

That's why I love him.

CHRIS WYLIE

And I'm not the only one who thinks that. The majority of the British people do, too. But the majority of the British people thought Crocs were ugly as shit a year ago, and now they're becoming cool.

STEVE BANNON

What are Crocs?

CHRIS WYLIE

Objectively unattractive footwear. But by the power of social persuasion, they were made to be at first acceptable, and then cool.

STEVE BANNON

You mean, like Birkenstocks?

CHRIS WYLIE

The point I'm trying to make is that Nigel Farage and UKIP right now are like a pair of Crocs two years ago.

STEVE BANNON

Uncool.

CHRIS WYLIE

So the question for you then becomes, "How do I get people to go from thinking, 'Ugh, disgusting,' whenever they see him to 'Maybe I'll give that racist drunk a shot after all?'"

STEVE BANNON

First, you'd take a psychological approach, and figure out a message for Farage to repeat again and again--probably something that speaks to people's deepest fears about "losing" their country. Then you'd get a few influential people to demonstrate active support for him, showing that it's socially acceptable to do so. And then before you know it, supporting the "reactionary" makes you cool and forward-thinking, whereas sticking with the liberal old guard makes you boring and behind the times.

CHRIS WYLIE
That's basically the size of it.

STEVE BANNON
So how do we get to that inflection point? How do we go to war?

Wyllie takes a big sip from his daiquiri.

CHRIS WYLIE
One step at a time. Most of what SCL does is in Third World countries. I'm aiming to test-drive my platform in Nigeria.

STEVE BANNON
Nigeria's well and good. But we're not looking to open Breitbart Lagos any time soon.

CHRIS WYLIE
I certainly think that everything we're talking about can be applied here in the U.K. soon enough.

STEVE BANNON
Me, too. But think bigger.

CHRIS WYLIE
And eventually America.

STEVE BANNON
Bingo.

CHRIS WYLIE
It'd take time, a trove of psychological data that I don't have access to, and a whole lot of cash to make a real impact there.

STEVE BANNON
Money ain't an issue. Daddy's got his own sugar daddy, if you know what I mean.

CHRIS WYLIE
Can you get us a meeting with him?

STEVE BANNON
Welp, that's the hard part. "Reclusive billionaire" doesn't even begin to cover it with this guy, if you know what I'm saying.
(MORE)

STEVE BANNON (CONT'D)

Robert Mercer is one smart sonofabitch, but he's also an absolute crazy man.

CHRIS WYLIE

How so?

STEVE BANNON

He's got a \$3 million model train set in his basement. When he's at sea, he likes to ride around in a pirate-themed yacht. And he's the proud owner of the world's largest private collection of machine guns.

CHRIS WYLIE

Cool.

STEVE BANNON

He's got a sheep ranch in Oregon where he runs a lab that's researching how to reverse the aging process.

CHRIS WYLIE

Very cool.

STEVE BANNON

He = thinks the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was a huge mistake and that the fallout from the atomic bombs we dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki actually made Japanese civilians healthier.

CHRIS WYLIE

Not so cool.

STEVE BANNON

Look. I'll sit you down with him when the time is right. But what you're talking about here is some heady, groundbreaking stuff. Serious intellectual work, my man. That kind of thing doesn't come out of some sterile corporate environment, right? We're not talking about making widgets here.

CHRIS WYLIE

I guess not.

STEVE BANNON

Combining your research with complicated algorithms and a brand new online platform--it adds up to a brand new art form. This shit is gonna be taught in the world's most prestigious academic institutions for the next hundred years.

CHRIS WYLIE

I think you may be right.

STEVE BANNON

I usually am.

Bannon winks at the twink who approached him earlier.

INT. ALEXANDER NIX'S OFFICE - DAY

Wyllie debriefs Nix about his meeting with Bannon.

ALEXANDER NIX

A gay club?

CHRIS WYLIE

It was his choice.

ALEXANDER NIX

This isn't some run-of-the-mill client we're trying to entertain for laughs. This is Steve Bannon. The man has access to the kind of cash that could single-handedly change the face of this company.

CHRIS WYLIE

What are you worried about? It went well.

ALEXANDER NIX

Did it? So he's ready to introduce us to Mercer?

CHRIS WYLIE

Almost, I think. I mean, he definitely wants to. But he's really concerned about ... atmospherics.

ALEXANDER NIX

What does that even mean?

CHRIS WYLIE
He's got a real intellectual bent,
and he sees himself as this
historically important
revolutionary in the making.

ALEXANDER NIX
Sounds familiar.

CHRIS WYLIE
I'm nothing like Steve Bannon.

ALEXANDER NIX
Go on.

CHRIS WYLIE
It's just that he'd be even more
excited about our work, if it felt
less, I don't know, profit-
motivated and more ... grandiose.

ALEXANDER NIX
How so?

CHRIS WYLIE
He's an ideas guy. He wants to feel
like he's at the forefront of a big
philosophical movement. He likes
having this image as an
intellectual pioneer.

Nix takes this all in.

ALEXANDER NIX
I've got an idea.

CHRIS WYLIE
What is it?

ALEXANDER NIX
Go buy a train ticket to Cambridge.

EXT. UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE - DAY

The soaring, fifteenth-century towers atop King's College Chapel reach toward the gray clouds that compose a typically dreary English sky.

Along a stone walkway spanning the impossibly green campus lawn, students, professors, and tourists stroll among the bronze statues and other ancient adornments that give this place its enduring old-English charm.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
Nix's idea was to set up a fake
office at the University of
Cambridge. That's right, a fake
office.

INT. FAKE SCL CAMBRIDGE OFFICE - DAY

Wyllie sits at a makeshift folding table, scrolling through
his cell phone aimlessly, bored out of his mind.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
We didn't yet have the funds for a
real Cambridge office. That's what
we needed Bannon for.

Around him, three other Cambridge Analytica EMPLOYEES
languish about aimlessly.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
I was allowed to hire a very small,
very cheap, part-time team of
psychologists and data scientists
to help with my research. Some of
them were loosely affiliated with
the university, but we did all of
our real work at SCL's London
headquarters.

There is a sudden knock on the door. Wyllie jumps to his feet
and claps his hands together, signaling the need for sudden
action. The four other employees all scramble to open their
laptops and look busy.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
We didn't even have a working WiFi
connection at Cambridge. But every
time Bannon came into town, we'd
all decamp to this little room that
SCL rented for a thousand pounds a
month, just to show him how
intellectually rousing we were.

One of the young employees picks up off of the carpet a
college dorm room-style poster, featuring the famous image of
Winston Churchill holding a Tommy gun with a cigar hanging
out of his mouth, looking like a gangster.

He holds the poster up against the wall with his hands, as if
he's in the process of decorating the place.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
I'm not kidding. We actually did
this.

Wylie opens the door, and Steve Bannon walks in. Noticing the Churchill poster right away, he gives Wylie the thumbs up.

STEVE BANNON
Badass. I love it.

The other employees smile and nod at Bannon, as they go about their fake work.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
And the really crazy part is this:
He bought it.

EXT. JFK AIRPORT - DAY

A British Airways 747 makes its final approach and then touches down on the tarmac.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
Bannon was sufficiently impressed
with this sham that he invited Nix
and me to New York to make our
pitch to the big guy himself.

INT. PLANE - CONTINUOUS

As the plane slows to a stop, Wylie reads from a Cambridge Analytica-produced biographical dossier about billionaire Robert Mercer.

The dossier notes that Mercer earned his PhD in computer science before running a multi-billion dollar hedge fund called Renaissance Technologies. He is known to be reclusive, eccentric, and has a difficult time warming up to people.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
Robert Mercer, who funded Breitbart News, also happened to be one of the richest human beings on the planet. The kind of man who made Ivan the Terrible seem like a bleeding-heart liberal, Mercer wanted to be the kingmaker in right-wing American politics.

EXT. TRUMP PLACE APARTMENT COMPLEX - NIGHT

A high-rise luxury building towers over its neighbors on the Upper West Side. "Trump Place" is emblazoned in big, gold letters on the skyscraper's glass-paneled exterior.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

Mercer had a daughter, Rebekah, who ran her dad's day-to-day philanthropic endeavors and also had a close relationship with Bannon. We met at her place on the Upper West Side--a Trump building.

A yellow cab pulls up to the curb. Wylie and Nix step out of it and then head into the building.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

Donald didn't actually own the place. He just licensed his name to it. Alas, there was no golden toilet.

INT. REBEKAH MERCER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Elevator doors open, and Wylie and Nix step out directly into the foyer of a stunning penthouse, complete with 30-foot ceilings, an array of striking modern art adorning the walls, and furniture that looks too expensive to touch.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

But I have to admit: To this day, it's by far the nicest apartment I've ever set foot in.

A BUTLER (50s), who carries himself like a time-traveler from the nineteenth century, greets Wylie and Nix.

BUTLER

Gentlemen, this way, please.

The butler escorts them down a long, dark hallway.

INT. DRAWING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

With the shimmering Manhattan skyline visible below, Wylie and Nix share a leather sofa with drinks in hand.

Facing them are Steve Bannon, ROBERT MERCER (68), cerebral and so painfully awkward that he avoids eye contact when he speaks, and REBEKAH MERCER (39), warm and boisterous with big red hair to match her bright-red lipstick and dress.

REBEKAH MERCER

(to Wylie)

I have to say. It's just so nice to meet a gay Republican.

Wylie smiles but keeps his mouth shut.

REBEKAH MERCER (CONT'D)

We need more of your type on our side.

STEVE BANNON

By the way, when he's not slinging algorithms over at Cambridge, Wylie here is working on his PhD.

ROBERT MERCER

(looking off into space)

Is that so?

STEVE BANNON

Tell him what it's in, Chris.

CHRIS WYLIE

Um. Well, it's in fashion trend forecasting.

Rebekah slaps her knee, nearly spilling her red wine on the preposterously expensive rug.

REBEKAH MERCER

I love it!

CHRIS WYLIE

Actually, Mr. Mercer--

ROBERT MERCER

Robert.

CHRIS WYLIE

Well, Robert. I'm actually using in my own work some of the algorithmic principles you developed for Renaissance Technologies. So I suppose I owe you a debt of gratitude.

ROBERT MERCER

You certainly know how to flatter an old man. But I'm not easily flattered.

CHRIS WYLIE

Oh, it's not flattery. I'm working on a platform that will use data-based personality profiles to target voters.

ROBERT MERCER

You're talking about psychographics. I've read quite a bit on it. There is a lot of debate about whether it actually works.

CHRIS WYLIE

There are some naysayers out there, who want to maintain the status quo. Kind of like the traders who once insisted that you'd never be able to replace their subjective judgments with computer programs.

Mercer scrutinizes Wylie, trying to determine if this is someone he really wants to work with.

ROBERT MERCER

I'm intrigued. But I want proof.

ALEXANDER NIX

Of course.

Nix pulls an iPad out of his briefcase and hands it to Wylie.

CHRIS WYLIE

I don't suppose you have a personal Facebook account?

REBEKAH MERCER

He barely uses email.

ROBERT MERCER

I'm not a big communicator. I prefer the company of cats to human beings.

Wylie isn't sure whether to laugh. Mercer doesn't, so neither does he.

ROBERT MERCER (CONT'D)

Plus, the unceasing threat of frivolous lawsuits is one of the few disadvantages of being a billionaire. I try to leave as limited a paper trail as possible.

CHRIS WYLIE

Smart man. I won't use you as an example then, but let me walk you through the latest research that I'm applying to my platform.

Robert Mercer leans forward in his seat. Wylie begins to scroll through a series of data charts on the iPad, pausing periodically to answer Mercer's questions about his approach.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

The money man is usually the dumbest person in the room. But with Robert Mercer, it was the other way around. He was skeptical at first, but he really listened to my pitch. He wanted to understand the science, and he asked a lot of questions.

Mercer walks over to Wylie so that he can point directly to one particular graph that's being displayed on the iPad.

ROBERT MERCER

Does the Y axis on this graph represent self-other agreement?

CHRIS WYLIE

Yes, the five-trait average is in red, and here are the trends for each individual trait, as it correlates to the number of Facebook likes in each instance.

Wylie continues his pitch to Mercer.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

I was worried that he would find a fatal flaw in my work--some seed of doubt that would hold him back from investing.

Mercer takes a moment to think it through. And then--

ROBERT MERCER

(to Wylie)

Do you smoke cigars?

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

Of course I don't.

Wylie smiles.

CHRIS WYLIE
Of course I do.

EXT. PENTHOUSE BALCONY - NIGHT

Robert and Rebekah Mercer, Wylie, Nix, and Bannon stand on the balcony, which overlooks Central Park. They each have a cigar in hand, their drinks resting on the railing.

ROBERT MERCER
It's safer to talk out here.

CHRIS WYLIE
Safer?

ROBERT MERCER
They've got the apartment bugged.

REBEKAH MERCER
Dad.

ROBERT MERCER
(waves her off)
They do.

CHRIS WYLIE
Who does?

ROBERT MERCER
That's what I'm trying to figure out. Could be the Deep State. Could be the Clintons. It's probably both.

He takes a puff from his cigar, as if what he just said is perfectly reasonable.

ROBERT MERCER (CONT'D)
Government is upside down. All it wants to do is make strong people weak.

STEVE BANNON
Amen, brother.

ROBERT MERCER
When I was at IBM in the early 90s, I led a team that pioneered the use of computers to translate foreign languages. My bosses were mildly interested in the project at best. But I was obsessed.

REBEKAH MERCER

He always is.

ROBERT MERCER

My idea was that instead of trying to teach the computer any concrete linguistic rules, we would download as many dual-language documents as we could get our hands on and then create code that analyzed the data and detected patterns from it to enable translations. At one point, I took six months off to manually type into a computer every single entry in a Spanish to English dictionary.

CHRIS WYLIE

Did it work?

ROBERT MERCER

Have you heard of Google Translate? Or maybe Siri? They both use the techniques that we pioneered.

REBEKAH MERCER

Why are you telling him this, dad?

ROBERT MERCER

Because it's not just about whose the smartest or which code is the best. It's about commitment. Are you committed to this project? I mean, deep inside your bones?

ALEXANDER NIX

Absolutely. One-hundred percent.

ROBERT MERCER

Thank you, Mr. Nix. But I was asking Mr. Wylie.

Wylie considers his answer for a moment.

CHRIS WYLIE

Since you told me a story about your work, let me tell you a very quick one about mine. For certain outcomes, the profiling algorithm that I've been tinkering with outperforms even self-rated personality scores.

REBEKAH MERCER

You're saying that computers can know more about someone's personality than that person knows about himself?

Wyllie nods.

CHRIS WYLLIE

And that's why I'm so committed to this. We're on the cusp of something truly revolutionary here. And with your help, we can be first out of the gate. We can be the Siri of psychographics.

Wyllie takes a big sip of his drink, waiting for the big guy's final word.

ROBERT MERCER

What, precisely, do you propose?

STEVE BANNON

We've got the midterms coming up. We can take this baby for a test drive. But to do that, we're gonna need to start a separate company that's under the auspices of SCL. One that's technically American.

REBEKAH MERCER

A shell company, you mean?

STEVE BANNON

Your words, not mine. The point is that American law is very strict when it comes to foreigners getting involved in U.S. elections, and everyone at SCL is a Canuck or Euro trash.

He turns to Robert.

STEVE BANNON (CONT'D)

You'd be the majority owner, and you'd grant Alexander a license to use the platform that Chris and his team have been developing. And then we'd help as many conservative, anti-establishment candidates win as many seats as possible in 2014.

ALEXANDER NIX

And I want to emphasize, Mr. Mercer, that we wouldn't just do data and targeting.

ROBERT MERCER

What else would you do?

ALEXANDER NIX

Well, data is certainly our bread and butter. But we'll apply that data to fundraising, oppo, media relations, debate prep, you name it. We'll be the biggest players in conservative politics. And we can completely change the way the game is played.

Mercer's eyes dart around, as if he's still concerned that someone might be listening.

ROBERT MERCER

How much do you need?

ALEXANDER NIX

Well--

Nix hesitates, unsure of the right number to throw out.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

I'm not sure what got into me. Probably the two-and-a-half neat scotches I'd already consumed. Somehow it just came out.

Wylie clears his throat.

CHRIS WYLIE

I think \$15 million would suffice. Initially, at least.

Nix cringes. It's an absurd number. His young protege has just blown everything.

But Robert Mercer maintains a straight face.

ROBERT MERCER

Alright. I'll have it wired over to you tomorrow morning.

Wylie shakes hands with the billionaire. And just like that, it's done.

INT. HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

A high-end suite, complete with a full wet bar and plenty of space for a couple of high-rollers to celebrate a major deal.

Nix pours two shots of vodka. He and Wylie clink glasses and then down their shots.

ALEXANDER NIX
\$15 million?

CHRIS WYLIE
\$15 million.

ALEXANDER NIX
I mean where'd you even get that number?

CHRIS WYLIE
I don't know. I was feeling good.

ALEXANDER NIX
You were feeling good?

Nix shoves the young man in the chest playfully, but the effete Brit strains his own shoulder in the process of doing so.

CHRIS WYLIE
You alright?

He is.

ALEXANDER NIX
I've got an idea. Champagne.

CHRIS WYLIE
Yes.

Wylie makes his way to the wet bar and grabs a bottle of high-end bubbly. He sets to work on twisting off the wire cage that fits over the cork, but Nix puts a hand out to stop him.

ALEXANDER NIX
Wait a moment.

Nix reaches into his luggage and pulls out an ancient Japanese samurai sword, wielding it gleefully like he's about to mount a drunken attack.

CHRIS WYLIE
How the Hell did you get that thing through customs?

ALEXANDER NIX
Just hold the bottle out and away
from your face.

Wyllie grabs the champagne bottle by the neck and extends his arms out.

ALEXANDER NIX (CONT'D)
I'd grab it by the bottom, if I
were you.

Wyllie shifts his grip to the base of the bottle and closes his eyes, turning his head to the side.

Nix positions himself next to Wyllie, performs an exaggerated bow, and then raises the sword, executioner-style.

CHRIS WYLLIE
Come on. Just do it!

Nix takes a test stroke against the side of the bottle, pushing the blade just an inch or so from Wyllie's longest finger. He winds up and then slices the blade forward in a sudden, profoundly unathletic motion.

CHRIS WYLLIE (CONT'D)
AHHHHHHH!

The bottle EXPLODES, as it splits into two in Wyllie's hands.

The good stuff gushes everywhere--all over the carpet, soaking them both. Wyllie's hand is shaking, but he's unhurt.

Wyllie opens his eyes and tries and fails to hold the bottle together, as its contents continue to spill all over his pants and shirt. Then he begins to laugh.

They exchange an awkward, unlikely, extremely drunken bro-hug. This two-man party is just getting started.

INT. HOTEL BEDROOM - DAY

A sliver of sunlight cuts through the cracked-open window curtains, landing on one of Wyllie's closed eyes. He's lying facedown on the floor next to the bottle of vodka.

The hotel phone rings. He groans. It keeps ringing.

Wyllie swipes his hand in the general direction of the phone. He manages to grab hold of the receiver and knocks the whole thing off of the coffee table.

His attempt to silence the phone results in actually answering the call, and a familiar voice comes through on the other end of the line.

STEVE BANNON (O.C.)

Dude.

Wyllie groans again. He pushes himself up onto his knees.

STEVE BANNON (O.C.) (CONT'D)

Wyllie. You there?

Wyllie searches around for a glass of water. He finds one on the nightstand and takes a long chug.

STEVE BANNON (O.C.) (CONT'D)

Yo. Wyllie.

Wyllie finally takes the phone.

CHRIS WYLLIE

What.

STEVE BANNON

Nice work last night. Gotta say,
I'm impressed. I only convinced him
to throw \$10 million into
Breitbart.

CHRIS WYLLIE

Guess you should've asked for more.

STEVE BANNON (O.C.)

So, I got it.

CHRIS WYLLIE

What?

STEVE BANNON (O.C.)

The name. For our new company.
Listen to this: Cambridge
Analytica.

Wyllie manages to pull himself up onto his feet. He collapses onto the bed.

CHRIS WYLLIE

It sounds impressive, I guess.

STEVE BANNON (O.C.)

And it's gonna be just as
impressive as it sounds. I've
already begun putting out feelers.

(MORE)

STEVE BANNON (O.C.) (CONT'D)
John Bolton's super PAC wants to
sign on the dotted line today. Ted
Cruz's people are very interested.

Wyllie rubs his temples.

CHRIS WYLLIE
I'm afraid we may have overpromised
just a bit here.

STEVE BANNON (O.C.)
What do you mean? The science is
sound. You said so yourself.

CHRIS WYLLIE
Yeah, it is. But in order to build
accurate psychographic profiles on
a national scale--tens of millions
of American voters we're talking
about here--we're gonna need a huge
amount of raw data on all of them.
And that doesn't come easy.

STEVE BANNON (O.C.)
Nothing good ever does. What do you
think the 15 million bucks is for?

CHRIS WYLLIE
It's not just a money issue. The
research that's been done so far
isn't on a big enough scale. And
millions of people aren't just
gonna give up their most sensitive
private data for nothing.

STEVE BANNON (O.C.)
We're Cambridge Analytica for
Chrissakes, and we're rich. Come on
now, son. To be the best, you have
to act like the best. Now go get
it.

Bannon hangs up, leaving Wyllie to deal with his crippling
hangover and self-doubt.

Wyllie rises to his feet and rubs his eyes. He stumbles into
the bathroom. And then he screams at the top of his lungs.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Alexander Nix is lying face down on the bathroom floor, hair
looking like a hornet's nest, and wearing last night's
clothes. Wyllie is looking down at him, taken aback.

ALEXANDER NIX
Breakfast?

Wyllie sighs, retreats back into the bedroom, and shuts the bathroom door behind him.

EXT. UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE - DAY

With the midday sunlight beating down on him, Wyllie walks like a man on a mission along the expansive campus lawn with a tote bag slung over his shoulder.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
The most straightforward way to get the data I needed was to try to acquire it from Michal Kosinski. The young Cambridge Psychologist was one of the coauthors of the original OCEAN Test research that had gotten me interested in psychographics in the first place.

A brick academic building is engraved with bold letters above its stone archway: "University of Cambridge Psychometrics Centre."

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
But Kosinski was a respected professor, not a hard-bitten capitalist, like Mercer. I knew it wasn't going to be easy to convince him to work with me.

Wyllie enters the building.

INT. PROF. KOSINSKI'S OFFICE - DAY

Neat stacks of academic books line the shelves. From his desk, Professor MICHAL KOSINSKI (31, boyishly handsome with a carefully trimmed beard) scrutinizes Wyllie, who sits on a low-slung couch.

The confidence that Wyllie projected when he pitched Robert Mercer is no longer apparent, as he looks up at Kosinski with an air of desperation.

CHRIS WYLIE
A successful conversion rate for an ad campaign that uses traditional targeting methods is about one percent.

(MORE)

CHRIS WYLIE (CONT'D)

I'm confident that by taking the data you've already gleaned from the myPersonality app and incorporating it into the platform I'm developing at Cambridge Analytica, we can achieve a conversion rate for American voters of four to five times that. It's kind of thrilling, really.

MICHAL KOSINSKI

(light Polish accent)

"Cambridge Analytica"?

CHRIS WYLIE

That's the name of our new company.

MICHAL KOSINSKI

You're affiliated with the university?

CHRIS WYLIE

No, it's just a name.

MICHAL KOSINSKI

I see. And Cambridge Analytica wants to work in American Politics.

CHRIS WYLIE

Yes, the goal for "Project Ripon" is to target five to seven million key voters ahead of the American midterm elections.

MICHAL KOSINSKI

Project what?

CHRIS WYLIE

Ripon. We named it after the town in Wisconsin where the Republican Party was formed in 1854.

MICHAL KOSINSKI

Ah, the Party of Lincoln.

CHRIS WYLIE

Indeed.

MICHAL KOSINSKI

Times have changed though.

CHRIS WYLIE

Well. I have to admit that I'm not exactly the most conservative guy around.

MICHAL KOSINSKI

No? Then why do you want to do this?

Wyllie tries to think of the right answer.

CHRIS WYLIE

Because it's going to be a test run for much bigger things to come in the future.

MICHAL KOSINSKI

What kinds of bigger things?

CHRIS WYLIE

Things that will benefit all of mankind.

MICHAL KOSINSKI

How so?

CHRIS WYLIE

By helping people learn more about who they really are on a fundamental level, we can better connect them to things they like.

MICHAL KOSINSKI

You mean connect them to politicians. Politicians that you like.

CHRIS WYLIE

Like I said, I'm not a Republican.

MICHAL KOSINSKI

Again, that's what confuses me here.

CHRIS WYLIE

It's about applying your research to a real-world setting. Doesn't that interest you?

MICHAL KOSINSKI

My research interests me, yes. But that's just what it is. Research.

(MORE)

MICHAL KOSINSKI (CONT'D)
 I didn't conduct it to help one
 American political party win more
 votes.

Kosinski crosses his arms skeptically. Wylie is really
 flailing now.

CHRIS WYLIE
 I'm sure that we can work out a
 financial arrangement that will be
quite agreeable.

MICHAL KOSINSKI
 For over 800 years, this
 university's mission has been to
 benefit society through the pursuit
 of education and research at the
 highest levels. We are not a vendor
 for a corporation like SCL...excuse
 me, Cambridge Analytica--

He practically sneers out the words.

MICHAL KOSINSKI (CONT'D)
 --a corporation that I understand
 has been acting as a neo-colonial
 power in elections around the
 world, corrupting already fragile
 democracies in the process.

CHRIS WYLIE
 I can assure you that --

MICHAL KOSINSKI
 The research that Professor
 Stillwell and I conducted was not
 intended to be used for commercial
 purposes, and neither of us is for
 sale. But I wish you the best of
 luck with helping to elect more
 right-wing politicians, whose
 policies you don't support. Have a
 wonderful day.

Kosinski returns to his work, and Wylie gets up slowly to
 leave, trying to think of something else to say.

CHRIS WYLIE
 Just think about it?

Kosinski glares at him. Wylie slinks out of the office.

EXT. UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE - DAY

Wyllie walks out of the Psychometrics Centre, his head hung in defeat.

A tall, curly-haired man who looks young enough to be an undergraduate student follows behind him out of the building.

This is DR. ALEKSANDR KOGAN (28). Showcasing a surface-level charm that's common among charlatans and a carefully cultivated informality, Kogan is a Senior Research Associate at Cambridge's Department of Psychology.

He jogs up from behind Wyllie.

DR. KOGAN
(American accent)
Hey, Chris?

Wyllie stops and turns.

CHRIS WYLIE
Yeah?

Kogan flashes his best attempt at a reassuring smile.

DR. KOGAN
Hey, man. Sorry to bother you. I'm Aleksandr Kogan. I'm actually a research associate here at the Psychometrics Centre.

CHRIS WYLIE
Yes, I've read some of your work.

Kogan extends his hand. Wyllie shakes it hesitantly.

DR. KOGAN
Oh, yeah. Very cool. Well, hey. I don't mean to pry, but I heard about some of the things that you and your team have been up to here. And well, it's just really exciting, man.

CHRIS WYLIE
(surprised)
How'd you hear about us exactly?

DR. KOGAN
I'm just a really big fan of your work. I mean, the idea of applying psychographic data to elections is nothing short of brilliant.

CHRIS WYLIE

I don't know about "brilliant." But thanks.

DR. KOGAN

Hey, I'd love to tell you a little bit about my own work.

CHRIS WYLIE

Sure. Should we schedule a lunch?

DR. KOGAN

We could do that. But it's such a nice day out for once, isn't it?

EXT. RIVER - DAY

Several long, four-person boats crowd the narrow River Cam in two-lane traffic. These are the famous punts of Cambridge, and they're a lot harder to control than the university's promotional videos would have you believe.

Wyllie sits in the front of his punt, steering as best as he can with a single oar, while Dr. Kogan stands on the small platform on the back of the vessel, using a long pole to propel it forward.

DR. KOGAN

Left, left!

As a second punt approaches from the opposite direction, Wyllie digs his oar onto the left side of the boat and begins to paddle frantically.

DR. KOGAN (CONT'D)

No, I mean steer to the left. Oar on the right side.

Wyllie shifts the oar to the opposite side, soaking himself in the process. Too late. His and Kogan's punt collides with the oncoming vessel.

CHRIS WYLIE

Sorry. I was always more of an arts and crafts kid.

DR. KOGAN

Happens all the time.

They get their bearings and continue down the middle of the river, taking in the expansive views of Cambridge's picturesque academic buildings.

CHRIS WYLIE

So how did you end up at Cambridge?
I haven't met many Americans here.

DR. KOGAN

Actually, I was born in the Soviet Union, but my dad was an enterprising guy. He moved us to the States when I was a kid.

CHRIS WYLIE

Got it.

DR. KOGAN

My day job is here at the university, but I also have a little side-hustle that's entirely separate from my academic work. It's kind of what I wanted to talk to you about actually.

Wyllie is starting to get the hang of steering the punt.

CHRIS WYLIE

I'm listening.

DR. KOGAN

I've been test-driving an app that I call, "thisisyourdigitallife." It correlates people's answers to a personality test with their facebook likes, giving me a treasure trove of psychological data.

CHRIS WYLIE

Sounds a lot like your colleagues' "MyPersonality" app.

DR. KOGAN

But here's the key difference: My version is explicitly for private commercial purposes. People who agree to take the quiz get paid three or four bucks each, so everything's above board.

CHRIS WYLIE

Sounds intriguing.

DR. KOGAN

You haven't asked me what the best part is.

CHRIS WYLIE
What's the best part?

DR. KOGAN
My app doesn't only harvest the data of the people who take the test. It picks up all of their friends' data, too.

Wylie is simultaneously intrigued and deeply skeptical.

CHRIS WYLIE
Isn't that unethical?

DR. KOGAN
Nah, not really. I mean, there are hundreds of other apps that do the same thing.

CHRIS WYLIE
Why doesn't Facebook shut them all down?

DR. KOGAN
Facebook explicitly permits outside developers to do this. In fact, they encourage it. Guess they want a piece of the action.

CHRIS WYLIE
That's insane.

DR. KOGAN
I know, right? But it's not like I'm stealing people's Social Security numbers or their credit card information. When people sign up for a Facebook account, they're pretty much waiving their right to privacy. It's just data.

CHRIS WYLIE
Man. And there's no regulation at all? It's the Wild West out there.

Kogan nods.

DR. KOGAN
And we can be the cowboys.

Wylie thinks about it, as their punt passes under the MATHEMATICAL BRIDGE--an iconic 18th-century wooden footbridge.

CHRIS WYLIE

I'm not sure how much I'd be able to pay you up front. All of this is brand new to us, too, and I'm still figuring out what kind of overhead I'm gonna need.

DR. KOGAN

Don't worry about that. I'll get you the data first to prove I'm the real deal, and we can figure out terms from there. I trust you, man.

Wyllie considers this proposal that seems too good to be true, as he continues to paddle.

CHRIS WYLIE

Should I trust you?

Kogan laughs a little too hard.

DR. KOGAN

I just told you, I'm not gonna charge you anything up front. You don't have to trust me.

Kogan shoves the pole hard into the shallow river and propels their punt forward.

INT. DR. KOGAN'S COMPANY HEADQUARTERS - DAY

The office has the bare-bones feel of a brand new startup. Dr. Kogan sits at his computer.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

Kogan started advertising online, looking for any Americans who wanted to be paid to take his personality quiz, in exchange for access to their Facebook profile data. And, more importantly, their friends' profile data.

ON KOGAN'S COMPUTER SCREEN

Kogan's advertisement for the "thisismydigitallife" quiz offers payment to anyone who wants to learn more about their own personality quirks by filling out a questionnaire.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

It was the digital equivalent of handing people a couple of bucks, in exchange for cutting open the skulls of everyone they knew and tooling around inside their brains, using them as a for-profit laboratory.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

A MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN lies in bed with her laptop on her chest, filling out Kogan's questionnaire.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

Of course, the people who took the quiz didn't think of it that way. Almost no one cared about giving up their private data back then. And why would they? The importance of safeguarding your digital footprints wasn't yet well-understood.

ON HER SCREEN

The woman chooses among a set of possible responses to the question, "Which Pokeman Are You?"

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

320,000 people ended up taking Kogan's quiz. On average, each of those 320,000 people gave us access to 160 friends' profiles, none of whom had any way of knowing that their data was being harvested without their permission.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

An OLDER MAN sits at his computer with his morning coffee in hand.

ON HIS SCREEN

He answers a question about whether he likes art and another about how talkative he tends to be in social situations.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

People started sharing the quiz widely on Facebook.

(MORE)

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Within a couple of months, we had access to every status update, every "like," every photo, every dick pic, and even supposedly private messages from 87 million Americans. The results from the quiz were combined with this other Facebook data and then extrapolated out into a predictive voting model.

EXT. FACEBOOK HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Establishing shot of the social media giant's sprawling Menlo Park campus.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

We didn't use the dick pics. But even if we had done so, Facebook probably wouldn't have cared.

INT. FACEBOOK HEADQUARTERS - DAY

A FACEBOOK SECURITY OFFICER (30s), a clean-cut guy in a starched shirt and khakis, looks concerned as he stares at his computer screen.

ON HIS SCREEN

An internal Facebook Security Alert notifies the security officer about the particularly enormous amount of data that Kogan's app is pulling from Facebook's platform.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

The amount of private data that Kogan was pulling from Facebook's platform was unprecedented in scope. It was clear that something unusual was going on. But Kogan lied to them and told them that it was for academic use, and Facebook was like, "OK, fine. Whatever."

The Facebook security officer picks up his desk phone and makes a call. He starts explaining the situation to the person on the other end of the line.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

Facebook didn't even attempt to verify Kogan's claim. They were totally unconcerned about how their own users' data was being treated. What they cared about was growth.

(MORE)

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Facebook users, after all, have
 always been the company's product.
 Their customers are the outside
 vendors, like Kogan, who profit
 from the users.

The security officer nods a couple of times, hangs up the
 phone, and gets back to work. Business as usual.

INT. BREITBART LONDON HEADQUARTERS - DAY

The makeshift newsroom is decorated with traditional British
 adornments: A red telephone booth, a painting of Queen
 Elizabeth II, and a wood-burning fireplace.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
 Meanwhile, as Kogan's continued to
 pour in, Steve Bannon was setting
 into motion his own plans to take
 over the world.

Above the fireplace hangs a framed photograph of a honey
 badger in the wild, engraved with the unofficial motto of
 Breitbart News: "Honey badger don't give a shit."

Raheem Kassam shows Bannon around the place, which is still
 in the initially stages of becoming fully operational.

RAHEEM KASSAM
 We've got three reporters working
 full time and will have another
 three in place before the E.U.
 vote.

STEVE BANNON
 Make it four.

RAHEEM KASSAM
 I'm not sure there's room in the
 budget for--

STEVE BANNON
 There's room.

RAHEEM KASSAM
 Great. Got it.

STEVE BANNON
 I want to make sure that we're
 integrating the work that Cambridge
 Analytica's doing to inform the
 editorial decisions we make on the
 site.

(MORE)

STEVE BANNON (CONT'D)
Let the data decide what gets the
biggest psychological reactions
from our readers.

RAHEEM KASSAM
Like how Netflix does it?

STEVE BANNON
Yeah, only better.

Something isn't sitting well with Kassam.

RAHEEM KASSAM
Speaking of Cambridge, I did a bit
of background sleuthing on Chris
Wyllie. Did you know he worked for
the Obama campaign?

STEVE BANNON
You mean the campaign that used
cutting-edge data analysis to get a
black guy named Barack Hussein
Obama elected President of the
United States?

RAHEEM KASSAM
I take your point. But I'm afraid
he's going to stab us in the back,
if we're not careful. I mean, he is
a progressive, globalist ideologue.

STEVE BANNON
I can't wait to hear about why you
think I should care.

RAHEEM KASSAM
Well, you should care because he--
or should I say, "she"--

STEVE BANNON
Cute.

RAHEEM KASSAM
Is fundamentally not on our side.
When push comes to shove,
fashionista Chris Wyllie is not
exactly gonna go to war to promote
our nationalist principles.

STEVE BANNON
Let me tell you something, Raheem.
I don't care if Chris Wyllie likes
to engage in occasional butt play
with Kim Jong-un.

(MORE)

STEVE BANNON (CONT'D)

The guy is building the instrument that's gonna allow us to shock the world.

Kassam isn't convinced.

STEVE BANNON (CONT'D)

By the way, I've met one or two guys in my life who're just like Chris Wylie, and I can assure you of this: He may have a nose ring and something to say about whether he should be allowed to marry his boyfriend, but that's not what drives him. He's very smart, and he's got a big ego. The ideological stuff is gonna continue not to matter to him, so long as he can get his invention out into the world and make a name for himself.

RAHEEM KASSAM

I hope you're right.

Bannon takes his phone out of his pocket to make another call, as he heads out of the office, leaving Kassam standing there alone.

STEVE BANNON

It's a story old as time, my friend. There's no going back on a Faustian bargain.

INT. CAMBRIDGE ANALYTICA'S LONDON OFFICE - DAY

Wylie sits at the head of a conference table next to Daphne. A dozen new Cambridge Analytica EMPLOYEES, all of them working away on laptops, fill out the rest of the seats. Most of them are even younger than Wylie is.

CHRIS WYLIE

Daphne, do you have the updated design for the "voter engagement" button?

Daphne hands Wylie a printout of his platform's design, as everyone in the room continues to focus on their work.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

With the funds from Robert Mercer, I was finally able to hire a real team of designers, videographers, and copyrighters.

(MORE)

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Just about all of them were in their 20s and at least as liberal as I was. But like me, they also wanted to win, and the work was exhilarating. With the data from Dr. Kogan, we set to work on finalizing my interactive software. We then marketed it to Republican political campaigns across America, most of whom wanted our people on the ground in America to show them how the platform actually worked.

INT. AIRPORT PASSPORT CONTROL - DAY

A U.S. IMMIGRATION OFFICIAL looks over the work visa documents of a female Cambridge Analytica STAFFER.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

The company's lawyer warned us to be very careful about how we worked inside the United States because, like Bannon said, American law when it came to foreign election interference was quite stringent.

The immigration official gives the young Cambridge Analytica staffer another once-over before waving her through.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

There were rumors internally that company administrators were filling out inaccurate immigration documents to help our employees get past U.S. immigration. I don't know whether that's true. But I do know that we never had any problems getting into the country.

EXT. NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY FAIR - DAY

Hundreds of NORTH CAROLINA VOTERS eat chili and drink soda, as a BANJO PLAYER performs. It's the typical autumn gathering that takes place all across America during election season.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

We devoted dozens of employees and contractors to Project Ripon, spending half of the \$15 million that Mercer gave us from April to July of 2014 alone.

(MORE)

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And like Nix said, we didn't just
do behavioral microtargeting.

A MALE CAMBRIDGE ANALYTICA EMPLOYEE hands out "Thom Tillis for North Carolina" stickers to arriving attendees as his clipboard-weilding FEMALE COLLEAGUE greets a fair ATTENDEE.

FEMALE COLLEAGUE
(smiling to the attendee)
Just write down your name and email
address right here, and we'll make
sure to keep you updated on the
campaign.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - DAY

With a full house looking on, Oregon Congressional Candidate ARTHUR B. ROBINSON (72), wearing a down-home plaid shirt, speaks at a lectern that's adorned with a banner reading, "Robinson for Oregon's Fourth District."

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
This guy, Arthur Robinson, for
example. I called him the Mad
Scientist. He'd run for Congress
four times before and got crushed
each time. Why? Well, he scared the
moderate electorate in his
district, talking a lot about how
global warming was a hoax and even
signing a petition that directly
challenged the theory of evolution.
Cambridge Analytica rehabilitated
his image, emphasizing that he was
a serious family man and got him to
talk about the things that would
resonate in the general election.

Robinson continues his boilerplate Republican stump speech.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
So if you're still not entirely
sure if foreigners influenced
American elections, let me clear
that up for you right now. Yeah, we
did.

Robinson pauses his speech to let the crowd applaud.

The two Cambridge Analytica employees, who're now seated in the back row, exchange a surreptitious low-five.

EXT. BREITBART NEWS HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Establishing shot of a three-story, brick row house with the U.S. Capitol dome visible just down the street.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

The row house basement, which functions as the Breitbart newsroom, is a gaudy, incongruous hodgepodge of golden drapes, a chandelier that looks like it belongs in a haunted house, and a cheap rip-off of an ancient Greek mural.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

Meanwhile, inside the basement of the Capitol Hill row house that he grandiosely referred to as "the Breitbart Embassy," Steve Bannon was already thinking beyond the midterms.

A half-dozen young Breitbart REPORTERS sit around a table in the middle of the room, littered with coffee mugs. The young reporters work sources on the phones and type their stories into their laptops, all within arm's length of one another.

AT A WHITEBOARD NEAR THE STAIRS

A young BREITBART REPORTER in an ill-fitting suit stands at the whiteboard with a sharpie in hand. Under a list titled, "Political Slogans For Cambridge Analytica To Test," are two phrases: "Drain the swamp" and "Build the wall."

Deep in thought, Bannon closes his eyes as he tries to come up with another one.

STEVE BANNON

Add one more. "Deep State."

The reporter adds the soon-to-be familiar phrase to the list.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

This was still a year before Donald Trump announced his candidacy, and Bannon was already laying the groundwork for a populist uprising on the presidential level. Say what you want about the man, but he was never lacking in vision or confidence.

INT. CHRIS WYLIE'S LONDON OFFICE - NIGHT

It's late, and everyone else has gone home for the night.

Wyllie is still burning the midnight oil, looking over a series of internal Cambridge Analytica strategy memos. He lands on one particular memo from Steve Bannon that's headlined, "Strategies For Discouraging Voter Turnout In Key Demographics."

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

Back in London, I was just as focused on winning at all costs. So focused, in fact, that I was genuinely shocked when I discovered one night that Bannon had crossed a bright, red line.

The memo outlines ways in which Cambridge Analytica is working to suppress African-American turnout in the midterms.

Wyllie appears to be genuinely shocked by what he's looking at. He picks up the phone and dials.

INT. BREITBART NEWS HEADQUARTERS - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Bannon steps away from the whiteboard for a moment to answer his phone.

STEVE BANNON

(into the phone)

Yeah.

INTERCUT STEVE BANNON AND CHRIS WYLIE

CHRIS WYLIE

What is this racist bullshit?

STEVE BANNON

You're gonna have to be more specific.

CHRIS WYLIE

This memo. You want to actively suppress African-American turnout in the midterms?

Bannon retreats into a quiet hallway to continue the conversation.

STEVE BANNON

I want to win. Are you after something different?

(MORE)

STEVE BANNON (CONT'D)

A social justice crusade maybe? If so, you're working at the wrong place. I hear Amnesty International is hiring.

CHRIS WYLIE

I developed my platform to target individual voters, not to generalize about entire groups of people. That's the old way of doing things, remember?

STEVE BANNON

African-Americans vote 95 percent Democrat. There's no reason why we shouldn't target them as a group, at the same time we integrate the individualized approach.

CHRIS WYLIE

I can think of two reasons actually. One: It's possibly illegal to actively discourage people from voting. Two: It's definitely immoral to do it.

STEVE BANNON

Are you really this naive? Why do you think 90 percent of campaign ads are negative? Might it be that negative campaigning actually works?

CHRIS WYLIE

Negative ads are one thing. But I'm not gonna be involved in a racist campaign from my cozy office in London.

STEVE BANNON

Oh, get over yourself, and stop being a little bitch.

CHRIS WYLIE

(breathing heavily)

And I'm also not gonna succumb to your bullying tactics.

Bannon laughs.

STEVE BANNON

Bullying tactics? OK, dude. Whatever helps you sleep through the night.

(MORE)

STEVE BANNON (CONT'D)
 Just remember it's your platform
 we're using here. Your work is the
 entire basis of this company.

Wyllie looks like he might break down, but he manages to keep
 it together.

CHRIS WYLIE
 But I'm not like you. I'm not
 trying to tear everything down,
 just because I can.

STEVE BANNON
 Clearly, I mean look at you with
 your contrived little cyber-punk
 outfit and your situational moral
 outrage. Anyone can see what a
 special snowflake you are.

CHRIS WYLIE
 Fuck you.

STEVE BANNON
 You may not see the world like me.
 But you sure as shit enabled me.

Bannon hangs up.

Wyllie doubles over and clutches his knees, left to ponder the
 validity of this accusation, as he struggles to catch his
 breath.

INT. CHRIS WYLIE'S OFFICE - DAY

Wyllie sighs as he scans through his overflowing inbox.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
 I should've quit right then and
 there. I knew, deep in my bones,
 that Bannon was right.

ON WYLIE'S COMPUTER SCREEN

He opens an email from Alexander Nix, the subject line of
 which is, "Lukoil Pitch."

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
 But I convinced myself that I could
 somehow make it better. That I
 hadn't really sold out completely.

Wyllie begins reading Nix's email: *"Lukoil is a Russian oil
 and gas company and interested in what we do."*

They understand behavioural microtargeting in the context of elections, but they're not making the connection with how we could appeal to their customers. Lets discuss."

INT. CAMBRIDGE ANALYTICA OFFICES - MOMENTS LATER

Wyllie emerges from his office and enters the main lobby where an array of young staffers work in cubicles.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

I wasn't brave enough to admit that I'd completely lost control of the monster I'd created. And by the time I began to open my eyes to its destructive capabilities, it was already too late.

Wyllie approaches Daphne at her desk.

CHRIS WYLIE

Hey.

DAPHNE

What's up?

CHRIS WYLIE

I just got a kind of random email from Nix about some Russian oil and gas company.

DAPHNE

Lukoil?

CHRIS WYLIE

You know them?

She hesitates.

CHRIS WYLIE (CONT'D)

What?

DAPHNE

Dan would've been the guy to ask. He was the point person on the ground for our Russia clients.

CHRIS WYLIE

Who's Dan?

Daphne rises from her desk and grabs her jacket.

DAPHNE
Let's get a cup of coffee across
the street.

EXT. LONDON STREET - DAY

Wyllie and Daphne walk among the high-end shops along the busy
Mayfair street, as a double-decker bus passes by.

 DAPHNE
Your predecessor. His name was Dan
Muresan.

 CHRIS WYLIE
Was?

 DAPHNE
He passed away.

 CHRIS WYLIE
Oh. How old was he?

 DAPHNE
31? Maybe 32.

 CHRIS WYLIE
What happened?

 DAPHNE
Well. He was in Kenya last year
working on a campaign.

 CHRIS WYLIE
Uhuru Kenyatta? Nix told me about
him. He said we're going to be
working on his reelection, too.

 DAPHNE
I'm sure we will be.

 CHRIS WYLIE
How did he die?

Daphne takes a deep breath.

 DAPHNE
In his hotel room in Nairobi. The
authorities said it was a heart
attack.

 CHRIS WYLIE
At 32 years old?

DAPHNE

I know. It was complete bullshit.
He'd been working on a deal that
went sour.

CHRIS WYLIE

What kind of deal?

DAPHNE

I don't know any of the details.
But the word is that he was
poisoned.

CHRIS WYLIE

Jesus.

DAPHNE

Apparently, someone bribed the
Kenyan police not to enter his
hotel for a full day after his
death. And then it was all just
swept under the rug.

CHRIS WYLIE

Be straight with me, Daphne: What
have I gotten myself into here?

They stop in front of a coffee shop.

DAPHNE

Whatever you do, just be especially
careful with this Russia deal. I've
heard Lukoil's CEO answers directly
to Putin.

Wylie nods, trying to absorb the gravity of all of this.

INT. CAMBRIDGE ANALYTICA CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

With Wylie looking on, Alexander Nix stands with a clicker in
hand, delivering a PowerPoint presentation that's being
projected onto a screen.

Seated at the table in front of him are three Russian Lukoil
executives, including the company's CEO VAGIT ALEKPEROV (64),
a stern, white-haired billionaire who looks like he could
have you killed with a snap of his fingers.

ALEXANDER NIX

In Nigeria, SCL was successful in
our efforts to spread the message
in that country's Islamic community
that the election would be rigged.

ON THE SCREEN

An old SCL Elections FLYER warns Nigerian voters that the upcoming election won't be free and fair.

ALEXANDER NIX (CONT'D)

This had a dramatic effect on depressing overall Islamic turnout, to the advantage of our client, Goodluck Jonathan, who's up for reelection next year.

CLOSE on Wylie's blank expression, as Nix continues his presentation to the Lukoil executives.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

It struck me as odd that Nix's presentation to these Lukoil executives, who supposedly wanted to learn how to boost their company's bottom line, actually had nothing to do with the oil and gas industry at all. Instead, it was all about how SCL--and now Cambridge Analytica--had established a track record in disrupting elections abroad.

INT. WINDOWLESS ROOM - DAY

A FOCUS GROUP consisting of twenty American men and women of various ages and ethnicities, all sitting in neat rows as the MODERATOR (British, 50s) stands at the front of the room.

MODERATOR

Please raise your hand if you have a positive opinion of Vladimir Putin.

Only a couple of hands go up.

MODERATOR (CONT'D)

OK. Now, for those of you who do not have a positive view of Putin, how many of you have a negative opinion of recent Russian expansion activities in Eastern Europe?

Most of the hands in the room go up.

FROM BEHIND A TWO-WAY MIRROR

Alexander Nix looks on, as the moderator continues to ask the focus group questions about Putin and Russian aggression.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

As my own team and I continued to focus on Project Ripon ahead of the midterms, Cambridge Analytica on the whole seemed increasingly preoccupied with Russia--and specifically, Americans' opinions about the Putin regime.

EXT. ST. PETERSBURG STATE UNIVERSITY - NIGHT

Street lights illuminate the imposing, 18th century Russian university, founded in the 18th century by Peter the Great.

A steady snowfall is steadily adding to the thick coat of white that's already fallen on the university grounds.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

And here's the kicker: Right when all of this was going down, my new friend Dr. Aleksander Kogan--the man who got us the data that made our work possible--traveled to Russia three separate times.

Dressed in a heavy overcoat and fur hat, Dr. Kogan greets a fellow professor before entering an ACADEMIC BUILDING.

INT. ST. PETERSBURG STATE CLASSROOM - DAY

Dr. Kogan lectures a group of St. Petersburg State University undergraduate students.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

Kogan was ostensibly participating in an academics' exchange program, funded by Russian government grants. He gave lectures on his research at St. Petersburg State University--lectures that he conducted in fluent Russian.

DR. KOGAN

(in Russian; subtitled)

The level of what can be predicted about you based on what you "like" on Facebook is higher than what your wife could say about you.

(MORE)

DR. KOGAN (CONT'D)
Facebook knows more about you than
any other person in your life.

The students look impressed, and also a bit disturbed.

DR. KOGAN (CONT'D)
(in Russian; subtitled)
We also have access to private
Facebook messages and can use all
of that. We usually load 3,0000
messages per person. You'd be
amazed by the kinds of things
people talk about in private
messages.

EXT. ST. PETERSBURG STATE UNIVERSITY - DAY

With a heavy snowfall still coming down, Dr. Kogan walks out
of the building and heads toward the university's gates.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
Kogan denies that he had any
contact with Russian government
officials during his three trips to
the country.

Kogan exits the gates and heads out into the shadows of
Vladimir Putin's hometown.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
Whether he did or not, I'm afraid
that our successes, which Kogan
boasted about inside Russia, put
the idea in the Putin regime's
head: A brand new, cheap, and
effective way to wage cyber warfare
and weaken democratic institutions
by interfering with elections in
Western Europe and the United
States.

INT. BREITBART NEWS HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

Steve Bannon and his team of young reporters gather around a
TV, as the midterm election results pour in.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
On Election Night 2014, the
Republicans took control of the
Senate for the first time in eight
years and increased their majority
in the House.

(MORE)

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

It was the lowest turnout for a
midterm election since 1942.
African-American voters, in
particular, stayed home.

Bannon grins and pumps his fist.

INT. FACEBOOK HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Top Facebook executives, including MARK ZUCKRBERG and SHERYL
SANDBERG huddle inside Sandberg's office, as the security
officer we met earlier gives a presentation.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

Soon thereafter, Facebook realized
that Kogan had passed on the data
he'd acquired to a commercial third
party entity--that would be
Cambridge Analytica--in violation
of their policies. They removed
Kogan's app from the site, even
though they didn't dispute that his
methods for acquiring this data
were in keeping with their own
rules.

The security officer addresses Sandberg.

SECURITY OFFICER

But what do we do about the user
data that he's already obtained?
Most of it comes from people who
didn't even take the quiz.

SHERYL SANDBERG

Let's just ask the guy to delete
it.

SECURITY OFFICER

Ask him to delete it?

SHERYL SANDBERG

OK, demand that he deletes it.

The security officer nods.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

Fearing the PR disaster that would result from a disclosure that user data from the world's most popular social media platform had been harvested and illicitly used to influence an American election, Facebook executives declined to say anything publicly. They didn't notify the 87 million people whose data had been taken without their knowledge, and they didn't even follow up to verify whether Kogan had actually deleted that data. They just took his word for it, and crossed their fingers that it wouldn't become public.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Wyllie lies in bed staring at the ceiling, unable to sleep.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

Meanwhile, I started thinking more seriously about quitting. The guilt, the stress, the uncertainty of it all were getting to be too much. If this was "success"--if this was what it felt like to be somebody--I didn't want it anymore.

Wyllie pulls the pillow over his face.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

I thought about starting my own data mining company and took some steps to feel out how that would work. But I had no clients of my own to bring along, and I just didn't have the courage to join the ranks of the unemployed.

INT. CAMBRIDGE ANALYTICA CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Wyllie and Nix sit with two stern-looking prospective American clients.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

And then one morning, during a meeting with a couple of prospective clients, I got just the push that I needed.

Nix sits back in his chair with the confidence of a successful CEO--one who no longer needs to make the hard sell.

ALEXANDER NIX
So, gentlemen. What might Cambridge Analytica do for you?

The OLDER PROSPECTIVE AMERICAN CLIENT (late 60s, humorless as an undertaker) folds his hands before answering, as if he's prepared carefully for what he's about to say next.

OLDER PROSPECTIVE AMERICAN CLIENT
Well, I don't think we'd be your typical client, Mr. Nix. We're a Christian group.

ALEXANDER NIX
You say that as if it's something to be ashamed of.

The YOUNGER PROSPECTIVE AMERICAN CLIENT (40s, slightly more affable) waves Nix off.

YOUNGER PROSPECTIVE AMERICAN CLIENT
(Texas drawl)
We're unabashedly proud to be followers of Christ. It's just that we're also a non-profit organization in the eyes of the IRS, and not all of our donors care to be identified publicly.

ALEXANDER NIX
That certainly isn't an issue for us. In fact, we thrive under the cloak of anonymity.

OLDER PROSPECTIVE AMERICAN CLIENT
That's good to hear. Because it's very important to us that, if we were to work together, we keep it as discreet as possible.

YOUNGER PROSPECTIVE AMERICAN CLIENT
We've got plenty of enemies, you see.

ALEXANDER NIX
Well, that makes two of us. So what kind of campaign are we talking about here?

YOUNGER PROSPECTIVE AMERICAN CLIENT
 There's gonna be a big Supreme
 Court ruling next year that could
 legalize homosexual marriage in all
 50 states.

Wyllie fidgets in his seat.

YOUNGER PROSPECTIVE AMERICAN CLIENT
 (CONT'D)
 And before the judges hear the
 case, we want to put some public
 pressure on them. Help instill an
 anti-gay message in the population.

Nix nods as he considers his response.

ALEXANDER NIX
 I think that's definitely something
 that we can help--

CHRIS WYLIE
 I'm gay.

Nix shoots daggers at Wyllie. The two prospective clients are
 taken aback. Silence hangs in the room for a long beat.

CHRIS WYLIE (CONT'D)
 I just wanted to make that clear to
 both of you: I fuck guys. I might
 even want to marry one some day.

The older man looks like he might be about to have a stroke.

CHRIS WYLIE (CONT'D)
 (to the younger man)
 You should try it sometime. Fucking
 guys, I mean. You might find you
 like it.

OLDER PROSPECTIVE AMERICAN CLIENT
 Son, that is quite enough.

CHRIS WYLIE
 Oh, you already have tried it? Does
 your wife know?

The older man turns beat red.

INT. CHRIS WYLIE'S OFFICE - DAY

Wyllie stuffs a few documents in his tote bag.

Nix enters, looking like he might reach out and strangle him.

ALEXANDER NIX
Get out.

CHRIS WYLIE
Already on my way.

ALEXANDER NIX
You have committed treason.

CHRIS WYLIE
Oh, I'm just getting started.

Nix is apoplectic. Now he looks like he might actually take a swing at Wylie.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
At the time, I had no idea what that threat even meant. I just didn't want him to have the last word.

ALEXANDER NIX
My lawyers will be in touch.

Wylie shoulders him out of the way as he makes for the door.

CHRIS WYLIE
I'll look forward to that.

INT. TED CRUZ CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Alexander Nix delivers another version of his now familiar PowerPoint presentation to Texas Sen. TED CRUZ and a small group of CRUZ CAMPAIGN STRATEGISTS.

SUPER: "Houston, Texas"

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
Cambridge Analytica didn't need me anymore. They already had my software. A few weeks after I left, they signed their biggest client yet: Texas Senator Ted Cruz, who was launching his 2016 presidential campaign.

Nix flips the PowerPoint presentation to a map of Iowa, which shows the electorate broken down not by county, age, and gender, but by psychological data points.

ALEXANDER NIX

This will be the first presidential campaign in history to use the psychographic voter modeling techniques that we've developed over the last year. I assure you, it will not be the last to do so.

EXT. IOWA SOYBEAN FARM - DAY

Cruz stands on a bail of hay, delivering his stump speech to a large and enthusiastic crowd of IOWA CAUCUS-GOERS.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

In short order, Cruz surged from a no-chance long-shot to a real contender in the Republican primaries.

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM - NIGHT

A triumphant Ted Cruz delivers his Iowa caucuses victory speech before a cheering crowd.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

And when Cruz won an upset victory in the Iowa Caucuses over what had been considered the strongest GOP field in decades, Cambridge Analytica claimed its highest-profile triumph yet.

INT. HAIR SALON - DAY

Wylie sits in a barber chair with his hair wrapped in a towel. He's reading his phone.

ON WYLIE'S PHONE SCREEN

A New York Times report tells the story of Ted Cruz's surprising Iowa victory.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

I wasn't able to get my own company off the ground, but I had no regrets about leaving Cambridge.

A female HAIR STYLIST (tattoos, tight black shirt) removes the towel from Wylie's head, revealing that she has dyed his hair bright-pink.

Wyllie admires his eye-catching new hairstyle approvingly in the mirror.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
Still, for the first time in my
adult life, I was unemployed. And
for someone who has a compulsive
need to stay busy, it wasn't easy.

INT. FASHION DESIGNER'S STUDIO - DAY

Mannequins and colorful fabrics fill the studio.

Wyllie hands his resume to a fashion designer's female ASSISTANT (early 20s, so over it), who gives it a quick glance.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
I wanted to get as far away from
politics as possible and set my
sights on the industry I'd always
wanted to work in.

The assistant gives Wyllie a patronizing, insincere smiles.

ASSISTANT
I'll make sure he gets it.

Wyllie nods half-heartedly.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
But the work I'd done on behalf of
corrupt African leaders, shady
Russian oligarchs, and right-wing
American politicians wasn't winning
me many friends in fashion.

EXT. LONDON STREET - DAY

Wyllie walks the street with his hands in his pockets--alone and aimless--seemingly invisible to everyone in the world.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
After winning Iowa, Ted Cruz
faltered in the subsequent
primaries. But with Cruz out of the
race, Cambridge Analytica soon
picked up a brand new client, who'd
recently hired Steve Bannon to run
his campaign.

Wyllie passes an OLD MAN IN A BOWLER CAP, who's sitting on a bench and reading a newspaper, which announces that Donald Trump has just won enough delegates to secure the 2016 Republican presidential nomination.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

The revolutionary platform I created--the one that I hoped would change the world forever--had done just that. It was now being used to create targeted ads, craft fundraising appeals, and determine the most efficient campaign travel itineraries for Donald Trump.

EXT. LONDON EYE - DAY

The giant, iconic Ferris wheel towers above the River Thames.

INT. LONDON EYE - CONTINUOUS

Standing in one of the glass-paneled capsules are Wyllie and Daphne, who still works at Cambridge Analytica. As they rise above the city, Big Ben, Buckingham Palace, and the Tower of London are all visible below.

DAPHNE

I can't believe he's our client.
Trump can't actually win, can he?

CHRIS WYLIE

The pundits don't seem to think so.

DAPHNE

(sarcastically)
And they're always right.

CHRIS WYLIE

Speaking of things that will never happen, what's the latest on Brexit?

DAPHNE

We've been officially hired by Vote Leave. Cambridge Analytica is all in on Farage's crazy train.

CHRIS WYLIE

How much of Mercer's money are you spending on that?

DAPHNE

Enough to break every British campaign finance law, I reckon, but we're doing it through another shell company.

CHRIS WYLIE

If you don't get caught, you can't be punished, right?

DAPHNE

I think those Lukoil guys are involved in it somehow. Big, scary Russian men keep showing up at the office for Brexit-related meetings. Nix says not to worry about it and that everything is above board.

CHRIS WYLIE

I wouldn't believe Alexander Nix, if his tongue were notarized.

DAPHNE

I thought you were pro-Leave anyway.

CHRIS WYLIE

I am. But I'm also anti-cheating. And this isn't some city council race. We're talking about the future of Europe. The future of the world. What if the Russian government is behind all of this?

DAPHNE

Honestly, someone should go to the cops.

CHRIS WYLIE

Totally.

DAPHNE

Maybe you should.

CHRIS WYLIE

And what would I tell them? That I have reason to suspect Putin is engaged in an international conspiracy to use the platform that I myself created, in order to swing the Brexit vote?

As they reach the top of the Ferris wheel, the River Thames looks like a tiny stream below.

DAPHNE

I don't know. You could go to the press?

CHRIS WYLIE

Nix is already trying to sue me. I literally can't afford more PR trouble right now.

DAPHNE

OK, but is doing nothing really an option at this point?

CHRIS WYLIE

Daphne, it's the only one I have.

They stare out the window as the Ferris wheel begins its descent.

EXT. LONDON EYE - MOMENTS LATER

As Wylie and Daphne disembark from the capsule, Wylie's phone buzzes.

ON WYLIE'S PHONE SCREEN is a high-res photo of Wylie entering his London apartment with an accompanying text message that reads, "Nice place, Chris. Nervous?"

CHRIS WYLIE

The fuck?

DAPHNE

What?

He shows her the photo of himself and accompanying text.

DAPHNE (CONT'D)

Who's it from?

CHRIS WYLIE

It says "unknown number."

Daphne looks genuinely afraid for him.

DAPHNE

You can stay at my place tonight.
Stay as long as you need to.

CHRIS WYLIE

Thanks. Maybe I should.

As they continue on their way, Wylie scans his surroundings with a palpable sense of trepidation.

INT. TV NEWS STUDIO - NIGHT

A female NEWS ANCHOR speaks straight to camera from ABC News' London Bureau.

ABC NEWS ANCHOR

The official results are in, and in a major surprise that will rock the international system to its core, the people of Britain have voted for an exit from the European Union, dubbed Brexit.

The live news footage cuts to an entirely white, largely older CHEERING CROWD of pro-Brexit Britons.

ABC NEWS ANCHOR (CONT'D)

Immigration was at the forefront of the Leave campaign, as voters were apparently swayed by an effort to "take back control" of their country's borders.

The report cuts to archival footage of pro-Leave activists arguing with a diverse group of immigrant rights advocates on a London street.

ABC NEWS ANCHOR (CONT'D)

Make no mistake, this result to leave is monumental--a political earthquake with the financial and societal implications deeply uncertain.

INT. UKIP PARTY HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

Delivering his Brexit victory speech, a sweaty, almost maniacal-looking Nigel Farage stands before an exuberant crowd of pro-Leave supporters.

NIGEL FARAGE

We have fought against the multi-nationals, we have fought against the big merchant banks, we fought against lies and deceit. And today, honesty, decency, and belief in nation is going to win.

The pro-Brexit crowd explodes into visceral, wild-eyed shouts of unadulterated triumph that are reminiscent of another time and place.

INT. MISSISSIPPI COLISEUM - NIGHT

Spray-tanned and ready to rumble, Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump stands behind a podium on stage, with Nigel Farage just off to his side.

Super: "August 24, 2016. Jackson, Mississippi."

In front of a revved-up crowd of a few thousand of the most hardcore #maga faithful, on this particular night, Trump is actually playing the role of Farage's warmup act.

DONALD TRUMP

I am going right now to invite onto the stage the man behind Brexit and the man who led brilliantly the United Kingdom Independence Party in this fight and won despite all odds. And he's a great guy, that I can tell you.

FROM BACKSTAGE

Steve Bannon watches the festivities with an actual, real-live tear in his eye. That Trump and Farage have come together on a big stage like this clearly means a lot to him.

Bannon turns to Alabama Senator and future U.S. Attorney General JEFF SESSIONS, who is almost equally enraptured by the scene.

STEVE BANNON

The two great populist leaders on stage. Together. In the heart of Mississippi. This is the beginning of a new era in world history.

JEFF SESSIONS

Amen.

DONALD TRUMP (O.C.)

Ladies and gentlemen, Nigel Farage!

The crowd goes nuts.

STEVE BANNON

Listen to that crowd.

JEFF SESSIONS

We better be careful, Steve. The folks down here may get inspired to secede from the union again.

STEVE BANNON

Nah, we're still a few years away from that.

BACK ON STAGE

Farage takes the stage and Trump shakes his hand. The Englishman adjusts his microphone.

NIGEL FARAGE

Well, thank you, and good evening, Mississippi. I come to you from the United Kingdom with a message of hope. It's a message that says if the little people, if the real people, if the ordinary and decent people are able to fight and stand up for what we believe in, we can overcome the big banks, we can overcome the multinationals.

The crowd cheers again. Real people vs. multinationals. This is just the kind of coded language they speak fluently in certain pockets of the Deep South.

BACKSTAGE

Bannon continues to bask in the rapturous reception that Farage is generating.

STEVE BANNON

He speaks the language, doesn't he?

JEFF SESSIONS

I've been reading these polls, and I can do basic arithmetic. But it really doesn't feel like Hillary is that far ahead. I just don't believe the numbers.

STEVE BANNON

That's because they're not the correct numbers. We get those from Cambridge, and we don't make them public.

JEFF SESSIONS

This thing really feels like it's gonna happen, doesn't it?

STEVE BANNON

Just wait.

INT. NEW YORK CITY HILTON MIDTOWN - NIGHT

An almost confused-looking President-Elect DONALD TRUMP stands at an American flag-backed podium where he is addressing his exuberant Election Night victory party.

Vice President-elect MIKE PENCE and Trump's son BARRON cheer him on, as the man who's just stunned the world adjusts the microphone.

DONALD TRUMP

Thank you all. The forgotten men
and women of our country will be
forgotten no longer.

The crowd erupts.

INT. BACKSTAGE AT THE HILTON - LATER

Having wrapped up his speech, Trump is now being surrounded by his family and a coterie of Secret Service agents.

Red-faced and giddy despite the early-morning hour, Steve Bannon approaches Robert and Rebekah Mercer with the grin of a kid who somehow just got away with eating dessert for dinner.

He hugs Rebekah and then gives Robert an extended bro-hug, complete with multiple, hard pats on the back.

STEVE BANNON

I always knew you were a savvy
investor.

ROBERT MERCER

Best money I ever spent.

STEVE BANNON

Brother, we're just getting
started.

INT. HIGH-END LONDON RESTAURANT - MORNING

At a corner table that's secluded from the other restaurant patrons, Alexander Nix and two other Cambridge Analytica executives pitch a PROSPECTIVE AFRICAN CLIENT (60s, solemn).

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

As for Cambridge Analytica, they
were just getting started, too.

The other Cambridge execs are MARK TURNBULL (mid-50s, doughy and animated) and ALEX TAYLER (late 30s, thin with a prominent forehead).

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

Alexander Nix, Cambridge's new managing director Mark Turnbull, and chief content officer Alex Tayler went on a client shopping spree. And they weren't shy when it came to bragging about all of the recent success they'd had.

Tayler leans forward in his seat, as if he's about to let the prospective client in on the opportunity of a lifetime.

ALEX TAYLER

With the data that we use to profile voters, we can segment the population and craft messages and imagery that they're most likely to engage with.

PERSPECTIVE AFRICAN CLIENT

In which countries have you been?

MARK TURNBULL

America, of course, with Trump. Mexico, Malaysia. We're going into Brazil.

ALEXANDER NIX

Kenya, right now, is one of our biggest projects.

PERSPECTIVE AFRICAN CLIENT

You're doing Kenyatta's reelection, yes?

ALEXANDER NIX

Yes, and we did his 2013 campaign, too.

The client nods, impressed.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

Remember: That's the one where my predecessor died under mysterious circumstances.

MARK TURNBULL

In Kenya, we've rebranded the TNA Party twice, wrote their manifesto.

ALEXANDER NIX

Huge amounts of research, analysis,
messaging work.

ALEX TAYLER

We even write all of Kenyatta's
speeches. We run just about every
element of his campaign.

Nix opens a laptop and places it in front of the prospective client.

ALEXANDER NIX

Let me show you an ad we put
together targeting swing voters,
based on the psychographic research
we conducted among the Kenyan
electorate.

Nix hits play on the video.

ON NIX'S LAPTOP SCREEN

A barrage of ominous, black-and-white images set to a
dramatic musical score attack the screen all at once.

Superimposed text appears over a desolate, post-apocalyptic
landscape: "Raila Odinga's Kenya: 2020."

ALEXANDER NIX (CONT'D)

We found that Kenyatta hadn't
previously done enough anti-Odinga
messaging. We aimed to hit on a few
specific fears that were
particularly common among key
Odinga-leaning voters.

"Food is scarce," the ad continues. "People are begging. The
Constitution has been revoked. Parliament dismantled. Women
are giving birth in the streets."

The ad then cuts to a photo of Kenyatta's opponent, Raila
Odinga, with the word, "Liar" branded across his face in big
red letters.

ALEXANDER NIX (CONT'D)

That one's gone viral. And the best
part of all is that no one knows
who's behind it. The mystery only
adds to its impact.

The prospective client takes this in.

PERSPECTIVE AFRICAN CLIENT

Was it true?

MARK TURNBULL

Was what true?

PROSPECTIVE AFRICAN CLIENT

All of those things you said about
Odinga in the ad. Does he really
want to revoke the Constitution?
Dismantle the Kenyan parliament?

Turnbull leans forward in his seat.

MARK TURNBULL

What we've found is that it's no
good fighting an election campaign
on the facts. It's all about
emotion.

INT. UPSCALE HOTEL BAR - NIGHT

The top Cambridge Analytica execs--Nix, Turnbull and Tayler--
this time sit at a high-top table inside a dimly lit bar with
a PROSPECTIVE SOUTH AMERICAN CLIENT (thin mustache, wearing
sunglasses inside).

MARK TURNBULL

You mentioned your interest in
intelligence gathering.

PROSPECTIVE SOUTH ASIAN CLIENT

Yes, that's very important to us.

ALEX TAYLER

We have partnerships with certain
specialist organizations that do
that kind of work. People with lots
of experience at MI5, MI6.

ALEXANDER NIX

We can pose as tourists. Or we can
pretend we're researchers attached
to a university. Anything like that
to dig up dirt on your opponent.

MARK TURNBULL

We also can put rumors into the
bloodstream of the Internet, and
then just watch them grow. Maybe
give a little push every now and
again.

PROSPECTIVE SOUTH CLIENT
Like a remote control?

MARK TURNBULL
Yes. But it has to happen without anyone thinking, "that's propaganda," because the moment you think, "that's propaganda," the next question is, "Who's put that out there?"

The prospective client nods. He gets it.

ALEXANDER NIX
Here's another tool at our disposal: We work with a company called Black Cube, which is run by former Israeli intelligence officers. They're quite adept at honeytraps.

PROSPECTIVE SOUTH ASIAN CLIENT
You mean you'll send girls to our opponent?

ALEXANDER NIX
Yes, we've found that Ukrainian girls tend to work quite well. They're very beautiful.

MARK TURNBULL
We're looking for anything that will keep your opponent off balance.

ALEXANDER NIX
We want to get inside their heads any way we can.

They continue to chat and sip their drinks, as if this is all a perfectly normal conversation.

EXT. LONDON STREET - NIGHT

Wylie walks alone in a deserted neighborhood. It's nearly pitch black and eerily quiet in the wee hours.

He turns onto a narrow alley and glances over his shoulder.

A SHADOWY FIGURE trails behind him.

Wylie quickens his pace. The shadowy figure keeps his distance, but he's walking in the same direction as Wylie.

Suddenly, Wylie stops in his tracks. He collects himself and then reverses direction, marching toward the shadowy figure.

CHRIS WYLIE

Hey!

His pursuer begins to backtrack. But Wylie won't let him get far.

CHRIS WYLIE (CONT'D)

Who's paying you?

The figure retreats as quickly as he can in the other direction.

CHRIS WYLIE (CONT'D)

Answer me.

Wylie begins to jog after him but then gives up quickly. He hunches over and catches his breath, winded by the intensity of the moment.

CHRIS WYLIE (CONT'D)

(struggling to get the
words out)

I'm not afraid of you!

EXT. HAMPTONS MANSION DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Two SUVs roll past the imposing gates and into a roundabout driveway in front of the mansion. Two SECRET SERVICE AGENTS jump out of the first SUV and scope out the scene.

One of the agents opens the back door of the second SUV. Out walks President-elect Donald Trump, dressed in his usual baggy suit and long, red tie.

Trump strolls toward the sprawling, multi-turreted mansion that its owner, Robert Mercer, refers to as "The Owl's Next."

He waves to a small group of POOL REPORTERS on his way in.

DONALD TRUMP

Don't you have something better do
to tonight?

POOL REPORTER

Mr. President-elect, what are you
going as tonight?

Trump points a finger at himself.

DONALD TRUMP

Me.

He heads into the mansion with the agents trailing him.

INT. HAMPTONS MANSION - NIGHT

A ten-piece swing band sets the mood for a lively, "heroes and villains"-themed costume party inside the expansive and opulent Mercer residence.

All eyes are on Trump, who works the room, as key members of the incoming administration and other right-wing political players nibble on hors d'oeuvres and drink too much.

KELLYANNE CONWAY (49)--wearing a spandex and thigh-high boots Superwoman costume--chats with Steve Bannon, who holds his Darth Vader mask in hand, so that he can eat. Even the security guards are dressed as Hells Angels.

Clutching a glass of white wine and greeting well-wishers with the vivacity of a woman in her element, Rebekah Mercer (dressed as a convincing Cruella De Vil), parades her father Robert around the party.

REBEKAH MERCER

Thank you all so much for coming.

Rebekah gives Bannon and Conway a wave and approaches them with her father, who's dressed in a blue velvet, early-19th century military uniform, his white hair brushed back.

KELLYANNE CONWAY

(to Robert Mercer)

Napoleon? I love it.

ROBERT MERCER

Do I look like a diminutive Frenchman? I'm Andrew Jackson.

Kellyanne laughs too hard.

STEVE BANNON

Well, Old Hickory, you're the hero of the Battle of New Orleans, you routed the Seminoles, and now you've taken over the White House. What are you gonna conquer next?

ROBERT MERCER

I'd say it's about time to focus on policy.

(MORE)

ROBERT MERCER (CONT'D)
Mass deportation of illegals,
algorithmic policing, keeping
government small, ineffective, and
out of the way.

KELLYANNE CONWAY
Did you say "algorithmic policing"?
What is that?

REBEKAH MERCER
Don't ask, unless you have all
night. Now, come on. Can't we all
just enjoy ourselves?

Bannon's phone rings.

STEVE BANNON
Excuse me.

He brushes past one of the Hells Angels and heads outside to
take the call.

EXT. HAMPTONS MANSION - CONTINUOUS

Bannon stands alone beside the covered swimming pool, his
breath visible in the cold, late-December air.

STEVE BANNON
(into his phone)
Sorry, buddy. But I'm afraid all of
the key administration positions
have already been filled. We might
have something for you in custodial
services. Are you as good with a
toilet brush as you are with an
algorithm?

EXT. LONDON STREET - CONTINUOUS

Wyllie stands alone in the alley where we left him.

CHRIS WYLIE
(into the phone)
I just want you, Alexander Nix,
Raheem Kassam, and all of your
goons to know that you deserve
every bit of what's coming to you.

STEVE BANNON
What's coming to us? You mean, the
presidency? The most powerful
office in the world?
(MORE)

STEVE BANNON (CONT'D)
I have to agree, but that's nice of
you to say so.

CHRIS WYLIE
Maybe I was complicit in all this.
But I'm done letting you roll over
me. Don't forget to pick up a
newspaper in the morning.

He hangs up.

INT. THE GUARDIAN NEWSROOM - DAY

Dozens of ink-stained wretches pour over the latest drafts of
their stories, as editors jump from desk to desk.

Award-winning reporter CAROLE CADWALLADR (48, Welsh) is
finishing up a phone call with a source when she notices
Chris Wylie standing in front of her desk.

CAROLE CADWALLADR
(into the phone)
Let me call you back.

She hangs up.

CHRIS WYLIE
Carole?

CAROLE CADWALLADR
Christopher.

CHRIS WYLIE
You can call me Chris.

She takes out her digital recorder and gives the empty chair
beside her a pat.

CAROLE CADWALLADR
Please. Make yourself comfy.

Wylie sits down. Carole hits "record."

CAROLE CADWALLADR (CONT'D)
I guess my first question is this:
How did you end up here?

CHRIS WYLIE
Funny, I've been asking myself the
same thing.

Wylie settles into his seat, as Cadwalladr takes notes.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
 When I first approached her, Carole
 was concerned about my safety. But
 The Guardian was vigilant about
 protecting their sources.

INT. BREITBART NEWS HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Steve Bannon sits with copies of The New York Times, The
 Guardian, and his morning coffee.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
 I spoke to the New York Times, too.
 They broke their stories on the
 same day in March, 2018.

The top story on the front page of The New York Times is
 headlined, "How Trump Consultants Exploited the Facebook Data
 of Millions," while The Guardian has gone with, "Meet The
 Data War Whistleblower."

Both newspapers feature prominent, posed photographs of a
 grim-faced Chris Wylie, decked out in his meticulously
 affected cyber-punk outfit from head to toe.

STEVE BANNON
 Shit.

INT. ALEXANDER NIX'S OFFICE - DAY

Alexander Nix reads the Guardian story at his desk, literally
 pulling his hair as he does so.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
 It didn't take long for the
 floodgates to open. The very next
 day, Channel 4 in the U.K. ran an
 undercover video of Nix and other
 Cambridge Analytica execs boasting
 about the corrupt tactics that they
 employed. Nix later claimed he was
 merely embellishing. Right.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

REAL FOOTAGE from the Channel 4 report shows Nix proposing an
 entrapment scheme to a Sri Lankan man, whom he believes to be
 a prospective client.

ALEXANDER NIX

We'll offer a large amount of money to the candidate--to finance his campaign in exchange for land, for instance. We'll have the whole thing recorded. We'll blank out the face of our guy, and we post it on the Internet.

INT. U.K. PARLIAMENT - DAY

Wyllie, wearing a suit for the first time since we've met him, testifies before a British Parliamentary committee.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

The National Crime Agency in Britain launched an investigation into Cambridge Analytica right away, and so did Parliament.

INT. SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE - DAY

Wyllie testifies before the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

The U.S. Justice Department and FBI investigations came next, and then the Senate got involved. I cooperated fully with each of them and gave them all of the documents they requested. I had nothing more to hide, and I truly wasn't scared.

INT. TV NEWS STUDIO - NIGHT

Wyllie conducts a remote TV interview with CNN anchor DON LEMON.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

I'd finally become somebody important, like I'd always wanted to be. Just not the way I ever thought I would.

INT. HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

In REAL ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE, staring straight ahead, as if he's doing a perp walk, Facebook founder and CEO MARK ZUCKERBERG ignores a crunch of reporters who're shouting questions about his company's conduct.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

People were outraged at Facebook, many of them longtime users who'd finally realized that the social media Goliath, which had always claimed it was "just trying to connect people," wasn't so altruistic after all.

FEMALE REPORTER

Mark, are you putting profits over people?

Zuckerberg ignores her, as he continues his quasi-perp walk, staring straight ahead.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

At first, Facebook was silent, hoping the story would pass. But after the company's shares fell more than 24 percent, losing about \$134 billion in market value, Mark Zuckerberg finally agreed to testify on the Hill.

INT. HOUSE ENERGY AND COMMERCE COMMITTEE ROOM - DAY

REAL FOOTAGE shows Mark Zuckerberg answering questions from California CONGRESSWOMAN ANNA ESHOO

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

Though he did his best to come off as contrite, promising an internal probe on what happened and a new focus on safeguarding user data, Zuckerberg struggled to answer why Facebook hadn't done the right thing when no one was looking. He deflected most of the blame onto Dr. Kogan, Cambridge Analytica, and, well, me.

CONGRESSWOMAN ANNA ESHOO

When did Facebook learn that Cambridge Analytica's "research project" was actually targeted psychographic political campaign work?

MARK ZUCKERBERG

Congresswoman, it might be useful to clarify what actually happened here.

CONGRESSWOMAN ANNA ESHOO
Well, no. I don't have time for a long answer. So in 2015 you learned about it. And did you speak to their CEO immediately?

MARK ZUCKERBERG
(hesitates)
We ... shut down the app.

CONGRESSWOMAN ANNA ESHOO
Did you speak to their CEO immediately?

MARK ZUCKERBERG
(meekly)
We got in touch with them.

INT. SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE ROOM - DAY

Zuckerberg testifies before the Senate Judiciary Committee.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)
Over on the Senate side, some very confused, very old men tried their hardest to get to the bottom of what had happened.

Utah Republican ORRIN HATCH (84) sits on the panel of U.S. Senators who are questioning the beleaguered Facebook CEO.

ORRIN HATCH
(genuinely confused)
How do you sustain a business model, if users don't pay for your service?

Zuckerberg stares back at Hatch for a long, painful three seconds. He's doing everything in his power to come across as non-condescending. But in the end, he can't help himself.

MARK ZUCKERBERG
Senator, we run ads.

ORRIN HATCH
I see.

CHRIS WYLIE (O.C.)
As it turns out, it's not easy to regulate a company you don't understand.

EXT. FACEBOOK HEADQUARTERS - DAY

JOSEPH CHANCELLOR, a Facebook employee, (38, wearing a baseball cap and hoodie) parks his Maserati and walks toward the tech giant's sprawling campus for another day on the job.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

A viral campaign to delete Facebook lasted about a week. The company's stock price recovered completely and continued to soar after that. Facebook's internal probe into what happened hit a roadblock when the company realized it couldn't track where most of its user data went after it left its platform, via the hundreds of apps and developers that had accessed it legally from 2007 to 2015.

Joseph Chancellor greets a couple of colleagues as he approaches the building.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

Oh, and that guy right there. That's Joseph Chancellor. He was Dr. Kogan's business partner when Kogan sold us all that user data.

Chancellor laughs at a joke that one of his colleagues makes.

CHRIS WYLIE

So why is Chancellor heading into Facebook's campus? Well, he works there. That's right. Facebook was so angry about his role in collecting and selling all of that data that it hired him as an in-house psychologist.

Chancellor walks into the building.

INT. FACEBOOK HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Chancellor works at his desk, analyzing psychological data on Facebook's users.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

In 2017, leaked documents revealed that Facebook boasted to advertisers that it had gained the ability to identify when teenage users were feeling "insecure," "worthless," and "needed a confidence boost." Yup. Facebook itself had decided to invest in psychographics, directly profiting off of its own users' fears.

INT. CAMBRIDGE ANALYTICA OFFICE - DAY

MOVERS load office furniture and other supplies onto gurneys as they clean the place out.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

With all of its clients abandoning the company, which had promised them anonymity but was now facing relentless public scrutiny, Cambridge Analytica announced that it was shutting down. Its parent company, SCL Group, filed for bankruptcy soon after.

Alexander Nix picks up his briefcase and heads out of the empty office.

EXT. PACIFIC OCEAN - DAY

Nix sits on the deck of a luxury YACHT, drinking a glass of wine with his WIFE and some of their uber-wealthy friends.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

Don't shed too many tears for Alexander Nix though. He ended up landing on his feet.

INT. TRUMP REELECTION CAMPAIGN OFFICE - DAY

The sparsely-furnished office is adorned with photographs of President Trump and wall-mounted bumper stickers with campaign slogans like "Build The Wall" and "Make America Great Again."

Four FORMER CAMBRIDGE ANALYTICA EMPLOYEES confer with senior Trump campaign officials.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

Four of Nix's former underlings at Cambridge Analytica went on to start a new voter targeting company called Data Propria. The new firm scored its first major client when it was quietly hired by Donald Trump's 2020 reelection campaign.

EXT. PRIVATE AIRPORT - DAY

Robert and Rebekah Mercer exit a limo and approach their private jet on foot. He's on his phone, closing another deal.

CHRIS WYLIE (V.O.)

The demise of Cambridge Analytica didn't do much to slow down Robert and Rebekah Mercer either. After buying the presidency, they continued to maintain what they referred to as "a constellation" of over a dozen data analytics, machine learning, and electioneering companies worldwide.

The Mercers board their private jet.

INT. TATE MODERN ART MUSEUM - NIGHT

With PAPARAZZI snapping photos, Chris Wylie--wearing a sharp tuxedo--enters the museum, which is lit in a moody shade of purple. Wylie is being trailed by his PUBLICIST.

A fashion industry gala is in full swing, complete with prominent designers, beautiful models, and powerful executives.

Heads begin to turn, as people notice Wylie, who's become something of a quasi-celebrity for his whistle-blowing.

As Wylie takes a champagne glass from a WAITER, one of the guests faces him and begins to applaud. One by one, the other guests join in the applause, many of them clearly not even aware of who Wylie is. Everyone else is doing it, so why not?

Wylie waves them off and lowers his head humbly.

FASHION EXECUTIVE (O.C.)

Speech!

CHRIS WYLIE

No, no, no.

FASHION DESIGNER (O.C.)
Come on, Chris. You're a hero!

Someone cuts the music. The DJ approaches Wylie and hands him the microphone.

CHRIS WYLIE
First of all, I'm definitely not a hero.

Wylie hands his champagne glass to his publicist and looks out at his adoring fans-for-the-day.

CHRIS WYLIE (CONT'D)
I'll just say this. Companies like Facebook tell us that we can always opt out. That no one forces us to use their services and surrender our data. And it's true, in a way. But how can anyone realistically be expected to live a modern life without using Google, or email, or a map, or a social network?

FASHION MODEL (O.C.)
Sounds awful!

Laughter echoes around the room.

CHRIS WYLIE
It does, doesn't it? So they've got us right where they want us. Online data is like electricity now, and just as we expect the government to make sure we have safe wiring in our building codes, we should expect them to keep us safe from the nefarious forces behind online influence peddling--the people who want to further parse and divide us into warring tribes. The only way that our democratic institutions will survive into the next decade and beyond is if we all finally wake up to the reality that the intersection between business, politics, and technology is not always a force of good. In fact, it's fraught with extreme danger. And if we don't demand action, it's only gonna get worse. Thank you.

Wylie hands the microphone back to the DJ and accepts the crowd's applause.

The music comes back on, and everyone goes back to partying.

Chris Wylie is on top of the world. But then he makes a big mistake: He checks his phone.

ON WYLIE'S PHONE SCREEN

We see Wylie's Twitter feed, in which he has a new mention sent from none other than @RaheemKassam.

@RaheemKassam to @ChrisWylie: Is it true you dyed your hair specifically for your "whistleblow" moment? Also, don't talk about what's British. You haven't a clue.

Instinctively, Wylie runs his hand through his pink hair. He hunches over, looking like he might be about to have a panic attack--like he's back in elementary school.

As his heavy breathing picks up, Wylie looks down again on his phone screen where a Twitter ally has come to his defense by accusing Kassam of having a "man crush" on Wylie.

INT. BREITBART LONDON HEADQUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

Raheem Kassam types on his computer, responding to the "man crush" accusation with a shit-eating grin on his face.

ON KASSAM'S COMPUTER SCREEN

@RaheemKassam: I mean even if I did, it wouldn't be a MAN crush, would it? Chris is a girl, isn't she?

INT. TATE MODERN ART MUSEUM - CONTINUOUS

Wylie reads Kassam's latest Twitter reply. His breathing grows heavier. It looks like Wylie might hyperventilate.

A sympathetic MALE MODEL, who's noticed Wylie's condition, comes over and places a hand on his shoulder.

MALE MODEL

You OK, mate?

Wylie looks up at him, unable to answer, as he begins to wheeze and gasp for breath.

MALE MODEL (CONT'D)

Is everything alright?

Before he can respond, we FADE TO BLACK.