

**PATRICIA HIGHSMITH'S FICTION TO CINEMA**  
**MCA**

**By Marc Rosenberg**

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## **CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINAL AUTHORSHIP**

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

Signature of Student: Marc Rosenberg

Date: June 7, 2016

## PATRICIA HIGHSMITH'S FICTION TO CINEMA ABSTRACT

*How does the psychological uncertainty in Patricia Highsmith's fiction benefit the cinematic adaptation of her work?*

Patricia Highsmith died in 1995 and her fiction has grown in popularity not only with readers, but with filmmakers. Since the director Alfred Hitchcock adapted *Strangers on a Train* in 1951, more than thirty of her novels have been made into films. The adaptation from one medium into another is an abstract process, particularly when novels are as psychologically dependent as Highsmith's. In this paper, I examine the cinematic strategies experienced filmmakers have used to adapt Highsmith's psychological content into a visual medium and discuss their level of success.

The creative component of my application is the feature film screenplay, "Friendly Fire", in which I make use of the same 'psychological uncertainty' found in Highsmith's fiction. In "Friendly Fire", Fred Lake, a fifty-year-old American sports journalist, is diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumor and given only months to live. His fear of death is only trumped by his concern for his daughter and grandchildren, who he will leave under crushing debt. It is at this stage he is approached by the CIA, who know of his diagnosis and offer him the chance to earn five million dollars as a suicide bomber. In this work I have used the cinematic strategies discussed in my exegesis to exploit 'psychological uncertainty' for the benefit the story.

**PATRICIA HIGHSMITH'S FICTION TO CINEMA**  
**MCA EXEGESIS**  
**By Marc Rosenberg**

Research Question: How does the 'psychological uncertainty' in Patricia Highsmith's fiction benefit the cinematic adaptation of her work?

**AN OVERVIEW**

The author Patricia Highsmith died in 1995, but her novels have never been more popular with filmmakers. No less than 30 cinematic adaptations have been made of her work and more are on the way. I propose that the popularity of her novels as well as their attraction for filmmakers is substantially based on Highsmith's use of 'psychological uncertainty'. I use 'psychological uncertainty' as a generic term to describe her protagonists' internal moral conflict as well as the readers' uneasy identification with her homicidal 'heroes'. Conflict is a dramatic necessity, and as Flattum underscores, 'Storytelling is based on conflict. Without conflict there's no drama.' (Flattum 2013, para. 1). This is what makes the dark struggles within Highsmith's protagonists, and the audience's empathy for them, particularly attractive to filmmakers.

It can be reasonably argued that Alfred Hitchcock's film adaptation of *Strangers on a Train* (1951) ignited Highsmith's literary career. She was not a conventional mystery or crime writer, relying heavily on psychological motivation and a reader's willingness to think like a killer. While most novelistic heroes exemplify the traits we admire, Highsmith's main characters are self-serving, irrational and cowardly murderers. Fiona Peters, as quoted in Waddell, is one of many scholars who offer insight as to why the author's fiction is appealing:

'The murders evolve and develop as an integral and inevitable element of the domesticity of each situation, and when they happen, the reader barely notices. Her flatness of prose refuses any relief of the stifling anxiety with her texts,

whether set in the seemingly freer Europe or the more rigid United States.’  
(Waddell 2003, p. 5)

It is this familiar ‘domesticity’ combined with Highsmith’s point of view narrative that makes objectivity seem like betrayal. Kellman notes:

‘Good and evil are uncertain in an amoral world, and because the story is told from the murderer’s point of view, the reader is forced to identify and grapple with the social uncertainties driving Highsmith’s protagonists. Highsmith’s work avoids immoral protagonists who murder out of enjoyment because such killers alienate readers and stall discussions about social and psychological politics.’  
(Kellman 2006, para. 2)

L.P. Silet suggests another reason for the popularity of Highsmith’s fiction is the subliminal desire readers have to break the restraints of society:

‘These are unsettling works of fiction, full of macabre humor and devilish insouciance, which play on the reader’s fantasies of individual power and choice. In a universe so full of nasty people and random, uncontrollable events, it is strangely satisfying to watch someone exercise his personal will unfettered by the normal constraints of legality and civilized controls imposed upon the rest of us.’  
(Silet 2012, para. 7)

Gillian Flynn, the author of *Gone Girl* and screenwriter for the newest adaptation of *Strangers on a Train*, is quoted by Alter, describing her own fascination with Highsmith’s dark talent, ‘She kind of takes you by the hand and walks you toward the cliff.’ (Alter 2014, para. 18)

There is no shortage of essays analysing Highsmith’s literary work, or assessing the film adaptations of her novels, but little has been written on the impressive dramatic appeal her work has for filmmakers or the cinematic strategies used to translate her

psychologically based fiction into a visual medium. I define ‘cinematic strategies’ as the varied combinations of specialised skills and equipment employed to promote a visual narrative.

For the purposes of this exegesis, I will focus on three of Highsmith’s novels adapted to cinema: *The Talented Mr. Ripley*, *Ripley’s Game* and *Strangers on a Train*, using my own screenplay (script), “Friendly Fire” (the creative component of my MCA application) to illustrate what I’ve learned from Highsmith’s work and the adaptations. I will also examine several of the cinematic strategies applied for psychological effect and investigate how successfully the filmmakers translated the novels based on box office receipts, film reviews and my own opinion, as a professional screenwriter and feature film producer with over thirty years experience. This paper will concentrate on Highsmith, but the processes used to deliver psychological intent in a visual medium need not be restricted to adaptation.

## **HIGHSMITH’S CINEMATIC APPEAL**

The commercial attraction for adapting ‘best-selling’ novels to cinema is obvious, but there are other factors that make Highsmith’s fiction particularly appealing to filmmakers. Her work contains three key dramatic elements: authenticity, suspense and conflict, each a product of the psychological uncertainty in her fiction.

### Authenticity

In order for fictional drama to have the necessary emotional connection, the story must be believable and relevant. For the purpose of this thesis, I define ‘authenticity’ as the reader or viewer’s identification with a character or situation to the extent that they become absorbed into a fabricated world.

‘As cinema makes manifest, we are moved when affects provide access to knowledge, when they reach into its very fabric, enacting a passage of the

unconscious experiences, a transfer of states of mind, feelings and moods. The moving image is thus not only a language of mental motion, but also a language for emotion – a moody, atmospheric way to fashion affects in transmittable fabrics.’ (Singh 2004, p. 17)

The ‘domesticity’ in Highsmith’s novels welcomes the reader into a familiar atmosphere, opening them to the events that follow. Her novels most often start with ‘everyman’ characters – a picture framer who is sick (*Ripley’s Game*), a young cop who wants to solve a dog-napping (*A Dog’s Ransom*), a conscientious chemist who still loves his childhood sweetheart (*This Sweet Sickness*), before her protagonists are coaxed by an inciting incident or circumstance leading them to murder.

The plot of my screenplay, “Friendly Fire” involves a journalist, Fred Lake, who is manipulated into murdering an old friend for financial reward. In order to have an audience empathize with Lake, I set up his character in an atmosphere of ‘domesticity’:

*An old house needing repair. As Fred comes down the stairs the banister wobbles badly. The sound of cartoons blasts from the TV.*

*Ruben, aged ten, and Pedro, aged eight, are charging around the house swinging plastic swords, wearing superhero costumes.*

*FRED*  
*(to boys)*  
*Take it easy will ya?*

*They pay no attention, and Fred continues into the kitchen.* (Rosenberg 2015, p. 14)

In the same way Highsmith uses domesticity to create an authentic atmosphere, I’ve depicted the ordinariness of Fred’s home life to seduce the reader/viewer into a shared reality. House repairs, TV cartoons, rambunctious kids, all are recognised as typical life. This familiar context reminds the reader/viewer that whatever happens to the protagonist might also happen to them.



Highsmith also establishes a base for which chance encounters, unpredictable challenges or even murder appear as a natural evolution. The author wrote life as she lived it, ‘Hers was a life jammed with encounters, and it is not by chance that her novels obsessively use the unexpected life-changing/life-threatening encounter as the drive into the narrative – think *Strangers on a Train* or any of the Ripley series.’ (Winterson 2009, para. 4) In *Ripley’s Game*, Tom Ripley remembers, ‘...a tall blond Englishman with a certain resentment and dislike...this man had made an unpleasant remark to Tom. The man – Trewbridge, Tewksbury? – had said in an almost sneering way, “Oh yes, I’ve heard of you.”’ (Highsmith 1985, p. 445) Trevanny, the ‘tall blond Englishman’, could not have known his off-hand slight would be the only impetus Ripley needed to set him up for murder. Highsmith’s novels don’t depend on brutality for their emotional power, but on the reader’s recognition that their own life is made up of coincidental, often ignorant encounters, which could lead to consequences just as perilous. It is this identification that creates empathy for the protagonist and a shared apprehension. As the author Graham Greene observes in the forward to *Eleven*, a collection of Highsmith’s short stories, ‘Miss Highsmith is the poet of apprehension rather than fear. Fear after a time, as we all learned in the blitz, is narcotic, it can lull one by fatigue into sleep, but apprehension nags at the nerves gently and inescapably.’ (Highsmith 1970, p. x)

Highsmith uses human irrationality, often motivated by psychological uncertainty, to breath life into her protagonists, giving them an authenticity missing in characters serving a logical plot. As Greene once again points out in his forward to *Eleven*:

‘Her characters are irrational, and they leap to life in their very lack of reason; suddenly we realise how unbelievably rational most fictional characters are as they lead their lives from A to Z, like commuters always taking the same train.’ (Highsmith 1970, p. x)

This sense of believability is further aided by Highsmith’s ‘point of view’ perspective, allowing the reader to understand and rationalise the murderer’s decisions. ‘Good and evil are uncertain in an amoral world, and because the story is told from the murderer’s

point of view, the reader is forced to identify and grapple with the social uncertainties driving Highsmith's protagonists.' (Kellman 2006, para. 2)

Filmmakers are intrigued not only by the authentic context of Highsmith's fiction, but by her 'organic' plots, driven by the protagonists' moral uncertainty. In 1990, Rene Clement made the film adaptation *Purple Noon (Plein Soleil)* out of *The Talented Mr. Ripley* and notes in his interview published by Eyquem & Missiaen, "I was immediately attracted to the novel's ambiguity and feeling of uneasiness, which are constants in Highsmith's work. Those who try to cultivate ambiguity in the thriller genre don't always succeed, but Highsmith achieves something quite deep and genuinely successful." (Eyquem & Missiaen 1981) Her protagonists' anxiety is fueled by the inner conflict between what they know is 'right', what any moral person would do, and what they feel compelled to do. Psychological uncertainty is made more intense by the need to rationalise decisions based on cruel self-interest. Peters observes, in Waddell's collection of essays:

'The intense anxiety that pervades the Ripley novels is not merely due to a concern about getting caught. It is rather the device Highsmith uses to draw the reader in to a non specific layer of unease that permeates every situation described, however peripheral to the main plot.' (Waddell 2003, p. 191)

This 'non specific layer of unease' Peters refers to is symptomatic of the suspense pervading Highsmith's fiction.

### Suspense

Psychological uncertainty fuels suspense, making the outcomes less predictable. Highsmith identified herself as a suspense novelist as opposed to a 'mystery writer'. In her book, *Plotting and Writing Suspense Fiction*, she explains the difference, as noted in Kellman:

‘...mysteries begin with a murder, but suspense relies upon the threat of violence to move the plot; mysteries leave the reader in the dark, but suspense reveals all and invites the reader into the mind of the killer; mysteries ask the readers to produce the killer, but suspense asks readers to understand what psychological and social factors create a killer.’ (Kellman 2006, para. 1)

The reader is always aware of the threat, the likely consequences, but diversions and unexpected incidents ‘suspend’ the outcome. Will Guy Haines give in to Bruno’s badgering, killing Bruno’s father (*Strangers on a Train*)? Can Ripley continue to avoid arrest, when Marge, Freddy and the police suspect him of murdering Dickie Greenleaf (*The Talented Mr. Ripley*)? How can Jonathan Trevanny survive the mob’s revenge and re-claim his family (*Ripley’s Game*)?

Filmmakers adapting Highsmith’s novels are also helped by the point of view perspective used to generate suspense. Gayla Kay examines Alfred Hitchcock’s strategy:

‘Hitchcock employed the tactics of audience identification and point of view both subtly and powerfully – always as a means of utterly involving the audience with the film. The point of view is conventionally a frame of reference one can trust – the protagonist’s point of view is usually the one the audience identifies with in order to understand and follow the story. Hitchcock plays with this basic ‘frame’ of reference to undermine the spectator’s stability and evoke conflicting responses to the ensuing narrative. This is a simple but powerful trick that he used again and again; creating incredible suspense through forcing the audience to share the perspective of the film’s hero, whose own perspective is somehow limited or obscured.’ (Kay 2016, para. 8)

## Conflict

Highsmith created conflict in her novels using psychological uncertainty, a protagonists’ inability to decide between what they should do and what seems expedient. Exterior

conflict, pitting protagonist against antagonist, moves the plot forward, but it is internal conflict that defines and motivates characters. Linda Cowgill offers this advice to screenwriters:

‘You can’t make your story interesting without increasing conflict that grabs the audience’s attention and fuels the action of the story. Nor can you successfully reveal your characters without the difficulties that show them as they are or challenge and forge them into who they will become. A film might be about the selflessness of true love, but unless the characters face a strong conflict, no one’s going to give a damn.’ (Cowgill 2003, para. 4)

In *Strangers on a Train*, Charles Bruno coaxes Guy Haines into a plot where each will murder the other’s nemesis. Without motive, Bruno assures Guy that neither will be caught. While Guy takes the proposal to be hypothetical, the problem becomes apparent when Bruno unexpectedly fulfills his part of the proposed agreement and expects Guy to do the same. Squeezed between Bruno’s insistence that Guy murder Bruno’s father and Guy’s reluctance to murder anyone, the torment and conflict is clear. The novel is told in Guy’s view and it is impossible not to feel his anxiety, or empathize with his predicament even though it’s a situation any rational person would handle differently. ‘One of the principal experiences of reading the novels is frustration: The reader’s terrible sense of entrapment that comes with having to follow the mental processes of a character who consistently refuses to act in his own best interests.’ (Shore 2000, para. 19). While the plot is ingenious, it is the conflict defined by Guy’s psychological uncertainty that intensifies the drama – will he or won’t he murder a stranger instigated by a madman?

### **ADAPTING HIGHSMITH - STAYING ‘TRUE’**

Joseph Conrad wrote in the preface to his novel, *The Nigger of Narcissus*, ‘My task which I am trying to achieve is, by the powers of the written word, to make you hear, to make you feel-it is, before all, to make to see’. (Conrad 1945, p. 5) An author attempts to evoke images with their words, an adaptation in itself, but how those words are interpreted is

based on the individual reader's experience and imagination. In the same way, the filmmaker adapts what *they* 'see' to cinema, but the filmmaker's interpretation is made distinct and public. One might ask, "If the filmmaker likes the novel enough to adapt it, why do they change it?" Inevitably, the reader-audience compares their 'vision' of the original to the movie and the question often becomes one of 'fidelity'.

### A Question of Fidelity

While making a film from a Highsmith novel invites scrutiny from a large audience of protective readers, many modern scholars feel the comparison between a film and source material is beside the point. Mary Snyder, in her book, *Analyzing Literature-to-Film Adaptations, A Novelist's Exploration and Guide*, clarifies the goal of an adaptation from the novelist's point of view:

'...the question of whether the filmmaker should be "faithful" to the novelist's novel or their screenplay suggests that perhaps the filmmaker should simply be faithful to what he or she sees, from an informed and thoughtful perspective, as the author's vision...' (Snyder 2011, p.224)

It is to be expected that the filmmaker, who first came to the project as a reader, with their own influences, will have a different perspective of 'the author's vision' than any individual audience member.

'As to audiences, whatever their complaints about this or that violation of the original, they have continued to want to see what the books 'look like'. Constantly creating their own mental images of the world of a novel and its people, they are interested in comparing their images with those created by the film-maker. But, as Christian Metz says, the reader 'will not always find his film, since what he has before him in the actual film is now somebody else's phantasy!' (McFarlane 1996, p. 7)

Snyder goes on to say that adherence to source material is not an adequate criteria for judging an adaptation:

‘Fidelity as an evaluative criterion for a lit-to-film adaptation is insufficient. However, one argument supporting this claim that seems to be glossed over is: a judgment should never be made that praises a lit-to-film adaptation simply because it is faithful to the source text. Such faithfulness might make for a horrible film and thus adaptation.’ (Snyder 2011, p. 225)

It is for the reasons put forward by Metz and Snyder that this thesis does not analyse fidelity as a criteria for quality or value in an adaptation of Highsmith, but looks instead for renderings of psychological uncertainty even if they are not ‘faithful’ to the plot in the original.

Filmmakers, in addition to realising their vision of Highsmith’s work, must also conform to commercial cinema’s limitations of time and money, while at the same time, fully exploiting a very different medium. A filmmaker might use the same plot, characters and locations as the novel, but the cinematic medium imposes fundamental differences in how a story is told. In filmmaking, anything unseen or unheard doesn’t exist, a camera only records ‘action’ and a character’s internal machinations can only be communicated using cinematic strategies. Intentions, such as ‘starts’, ‘begins’ or ‘could’, for example, which are disclosed through narration in a novel, are not ‘seen’ by a camera. Particularly relevant to an adaption of Highsmith’s work is a character’s anxiety revealed through the author’s voice. In *Strangers on a Train*, Highsmith writes, ‘In the month after Guy returned to New York, his restlessness, his dissatisfaction with himself, with his work, with Anne, had focused gradually on Bruno.’ (Highsmith 1951, p. 105) The skilled filmmaker must find a way of turning this unseen information into visual communication, while remaining faithful to the author’s intent.

In the film adaptation of *Strangers on a Train*, the screenwriters (Whitfield Cook, Raymond Chandler, Czenzi Ormonde) and the director, Alfred Hitchcock, changed Guy’s

occupation from architect to professional tennis player, Guy does not murder Bruno's father as he does in the book, and in consequence, has nothing to confess. Hitchcock also made two versions of the movie, adapting for cultural and commercial concerns. In the British version, closer to Highsmith's intention, it is clear that a homosexual attraction exists between the two men, while in the morally sanitised American version, the sexual attraction is far less obvious. 'Highsmith's original "Strangers on a Train" is a moody and disturbing excavation of guilty paranoia that bears little resemblance to the film beyond its initial premise.' (Cassuto 2008, para. 1)

Anthony Minghella, the writer-director of *The Talented Mr. Ripley* (1999), Highsmith's first of five novels in the Ripley series (the 'Ripliad'), described his view on film adaptation in this way, "You've drunk the drink, and the taste that's left in your mouth is what you go with." (Rich 1999, para. 19) The aim of filmic adaptation is not to mirror the original, but to offer a new personal perspective, which enhances understanding. Tom Webb believes it is the very uniqueness of Highsmith's writing that gives filmmakers permission to explore new ways of capturing the same story. '...when one considers the specificity of her tone and writing style, it becomes clear why the adaptors who have taken the greatest artistic liberties with her stories have achieved the best results.' (Webb 2015, para. 2) At the core of Highsmith's 'tone and writing style' is her own life of deceit.

### Understanding Highsmith

For the filmmaker to fully appreciate the psychological uncertainty or conflict in Highsmith's fictional characters it is worth noting the duplicity and deception in the author's own life. Highsmith's struggle to hide her lesbianism in a time when society thought of homosexuality as a disease shaped her philosophy on humanity and undoubtedly influenced her writing.

'Highsmith was acutely aware that being gay in the fifties meant living a double life, one which made her feel, at times, hypocritical and unreal. At 24, she wrote:

“I am troubled by a sense of being several people (nobody you know). There is an ever more acute difference – and an intolerableness – between my inner self which I know is the real me, and various faces of the outside world.” (Hart 2011, para 13)

Jackson Arn goes further in describing the effect the author’s homosexuality had on her fiction:

‘For Highsmith, there is not love without disgust or betrayal. Her books are full of seductions--sometimes to sex, sometimes to murder, sometimes to sex and murder--and the seducer’s achievement is always the same: to inspire in this victim a blend of attraction and repulsion that’s far stronger than straight attraction can ever be.’ (Arn 2015, para. 3)

Highsmith saw herself as a counterfeit and suspected others were as well. ‘She channeled her perversity and misanthropy into a singular writing voice: creepy, amoral, but with the kind of close observation that makes her warped characters strangely sympathetic, to the extent that you can’t help rooting for them.’ (Shipley 2014, para. 6) It is easy to assume her ‘close observation’ and sympathy came largely from self-analysis. Highsmith believed even seemingly ‘normal’ people hid their true desires and capacity for brutality beneath a veneer of civility. In Landay, Psychologist Robert Simon corroborates the author’s view, explaining the uneasy identification Highsmith’s readers might have with her murderous protagonists:

‘The basic difference between what are socially considered to be bad and good people is not one of a kind, but one of degree, and of the ability of the bad to translate dark impulses into dark actions. Bad men such as serial sexual killers have intense, compulsive, sadistic fantasies that few good men have, but we all have some measure of that hostility, aggression, and sadism. Anyone can become violent, even murderous, under certain circumstances. Our brains are wired for aggression, and can short-circuit into violence.’ (Landay 2011, para. 7)



## **BUILDING A HIGHSMITH MOVIE - THE SCREENPLAY**

The role of the screenwriter and screenplay can vary greatly depending on the style of the writer and the demands of production. For the purposes of this thesis, I will examine the screenplay as a blueprint for the director, incorporating cinematic strategies implied by Highsmith's fiction.

### The Filmic Framework – Capturing a Visual Idea

The screenplay creates the framework for a movie story and is the first practical step in realising what the filmmaker sees in their head, it is the 'launching pad' for the artistic and commercial process that follows. While Highsmith's novels are irrationally human, in the sense that the main characters are often motivated by impulse, the stories themselves have strong, action oriented plots, fitting comfortably into a filmic framework.

The film script/screenplay has four basic functions: First, it tells a visual story in two hours or less. Exhibitors' profits are tied to the number of tickets sold, so the shorter the movie, the more screenings that are possible and the more sales made. A script is timed at one minute of screen time per page (this is an average). Secondly, it is a technical blueprint for the cast and crew, breaking down the story in cinematic language. The script answers the questions: 'Who?', 'What?', 'When?', 'Where?' and 'How?'. Thirdly, it is an investment document, implying a budget and readable for an investor not skilled in filmmaking; and finally, the screenplay is bait for actors and director, 'elements' that may determine whether the production can raise finance and promote the movie's ultimate success. The story must be compelling and the characters must be engaging. In the adaptation of Highsmith's novels, as well as any other film, these considerations become the guidelines for not only making the film, but for selling it.

The finished screenplay cannot stand on its own as a novel can, the writer's primary goal being to facilitate the making of a movie. The film writer expects the final draft script to

be a collaborative effort with the director, producer, actors and others each making a valuable contribution. Goldman notes that Ingmar Bergman, the renowned Swedish writer/director/producer, had every reason to see himself as an auteur, but recognised the collaborative nature of filmmaking, “There is a sensual satisfaction in working in close union with strong, independent creative people; actors, assistants, electricians, production staff, props people, makeup staff, costume designers, all those personalities who populate the day and make it possible to get through.” (Goldman 2013, para. 3)

Even while the script is an adaptation of the novel, it too will be adapted by a succession of other creative personnel, including the director, and maybe even the film’s distributor. In a worse case scenario:

‘The original source may be a novel or play the studio has purchased, and the writer is employed to do an adaptation from it. He makes the changes necessary for dramatic effect in another medium, those required to conform to the producer’s personal fantasies and his notions of what the public wants, and to meet the taboos of the Production Code, and tailors it all to the screen personalities of the actors who will play the star roles. Sometimes only the title of the original novel or play is left. This “Adaptation” then becomes the source for the screen play – probably done by another writer.’ (Cartmell, D. & Whelehan 1999, p. 7)

Once the screenplay leaves the writer’s hands, s/he loses control of the project, depending on their relationships with the director and producer. This ‘handing over’ becomes the inspiration for the screenwriter to define a vision that truly captures how they see the finished motion picture, before other personnel embrace, change or discard that vision.

The ‘screenwriter-director’, as Anthony Minghella was on *The Talented Mr. Ripley*, or as Wim Wenders was on *The American Friend (Ripley’s Game)*, has more control over the ‘vision’ than an ‘unhyphenated’ screenwriter would have. Wenders also acted as producer on *The American Friend*. Because the role of film director continues through

production, both Minghella and Wenders were able to write their screenplays knowing what they needed to complement their vision – which actors they wanted to cast, where the most appropriate locations would be and how to best allocate the available funds. As recognised by DeRosa, Alfred Hitchcock, who directed the original adaptation of *Strangers on a Train*, never received a writing credit, but was very involved in the writing process:

‘To Alfred Hitchcock the real creative work of making motion pictures was done in the office with the writer. Having participated in the process, Hitchcock was not only entitled to, but relished being praised an *auteur*. “A lot of people embrace the auteur theory,” said Hitchcock. “But it’s difficult to know what someone means by it. I suppose they mean that the responsibility for the film rests solely on the shoulders of the director. But very often the director is no better than his script.”’ (DeRosa 2015, para. 1)

### Structuring the Problem

Strong dramatic stories will start with a problem and the rest of the tale is about solving or attempting to solve that problem. As Lavrin observes, the Russian novelist Leo Tolstoy knew this:

‘This feature, more over, gives a clue not only to the *raison d’etre*, but also to the general structure of a number of his (Tolstoy’s) works. Their starting-point can usually be reduced to some problem or idea, in most cases a moral problem’ (Lavrin 2015, p. 25)

Within the screenplay’s structure, this ‘problem’ is referred to as the ‘inciting incident’, the impetus for the rest of the film. In *The Talented Mr. Ripley*, Tom Ripley is a small time crook who wants to emulate wealthy Dickie Greenleaf; in *Ripley’s Game*, Jonathan Trevanny must find a way to make his family financially secure before he dies, and in *Strangers on a Train*, Guy Haines has unwittingly and unwillingly agreed to kill a

stranger. This becomes the protagonist's journey, their attempt to find a solution. As with any dramatic journey, the means for achieving their goal must be constructed in an efficient way that feels spontaneous - authentic.

Because budget and scheduling concerns are crucial to the commercial success of a movie, the most common film-writing lecture is about screenplay structure. As quoted by Syd Field, William Goldman, an academy award-winning writer declares, "Screenplays are structure" (Field 2013, para. 1). Field goes further to say, 'Dramatic structure is the foundation of screenwriting. The word itself means "to put together," and understanding how it works is essential to the craft of screenwriting.' (Field 2013, para. 1) In essence, filmic structure is a template insuring movie narratives are told economically and reach a believable conclusion within the allotted time frame. The most common and widely accepted dramatic template was created before the birth of Christ, by Aristotle, and promotes telling a story in three acts – beginning, middle and end. '...your job as a screenwriter is to take that beginning, middle, and end and transform them into...ATTRACTION, ANTICIPATION, SATISFACTION.' (McQuire 1998) 'Attraction' relates to why a story has appeal, 'anticipation' to an audience's need to know more, and 'satisfaction' is achieved when the audience gains a feeling of completion. While the three-act template is the 'gold standard', and the one movie executives are conditioned to approve, some notable filmmakers disagree that it's the best way to tell a story. Moura quotes Steven Spielberg, renowned director of adaptations "*Jaws*", "*Saving Private Ryan*" and "*Schindler's List*", who infers that movies have evolved beyond the three-act structure, "People have forgotten how to tell a story. Stories don't have a middle or end any more. They usually have a beginning that never stops beginning." (Moura 2014).

One of the advantages of adapting Highsmith are that her novels fit comfortably into the three-act paradigm. In the novel, *Strangers on a Train*, Bruno's murder of Miriam, Guy's estranged wife, signals the end of the first act and turns the story in a different direction, with pressure on Guy to kill Bruno's father. The second act ends when Guy finally kills Bruno's father, and the plot once more goes in another direction. Even though Guy might

escape prosecution with Bruno's accidental death, the guilt is too great and Guy confesses to the police. With the three-act structure in place, the screenwriter has the security of knowing the film will reach a reasonable conclusion and they can 'colour within the lines'. As an architect might suggest, 'freedom is a function of form'. Hitchcock made substantial changes to the adaptation of *Strangers on a Train*, but retained the three-act structure: The first act ends with Bruno killing Miriam, the second act finishes with Bruno promising revenge after Guy refuses to kill Bruno's father, and the film ends with the police discovering Guy's cigarette lighter (false evidence implicating Guy in Miriam's murder) in Bruno's hand. While film structure is the template, the primary task of a screenwriter is to build credibility, because if the story doesn't make sense, whether it's a gritty inner-city crime drama or a romantic comedy, the audience will not relate and the emotional connection is lost. 'A good drama, then, is subjectively relevant to each audience member in the sense that he or she can translate the events of the story from action on a personally meaningful psychological plane.' (Mitchell 1993, p.266)

The process of 'reverse engineering' insures that all the 'plot points', or points of action are supported by believable reasons. This is done by working back from the ending, creating a satisfactory conclusion. If one were to picture a Christmas tree, with the ending of the movie at the top and the beginning of the movie at the bottom, the major plot points would be along the trunk and the reasons for justifying those plot points would be along the branches meeting the trunk at these points. As with a traditional Christmas tree, all the branches are slanted upwards toward the ending, pushing the story forward. Here's an example of why structure is essential, given by the screenwriter and editor, Ray Morton:

'...when I was engaged to edit a film made from a script with a thoroughly non-existent structure – it was really just a random collection of scenes and character moments without a narrative throughline. The analogy later I came up with to describe it was that the footage was a collection of Christmas decorations – lots of ornaments (scenes) and lights (the characters) – with no Christmas tree to hang them on.' (Morton 2013, para. 4)

The screenwriter justifies each twist and turn within the movie by continuing to ask ‘Why?’, until all questions are answered and they are satisfied the plot points are supported and reasonable. For example, ‘Why does Tom Ripley murder Dickie Greenleaf?’ ‘Because Dickie is trying to get rid of Tom.’ ‘Why does Dickie want to get rid of Tom?’ ‘Because Tom is in love with Dickie.’, ‘Why is Tom in love with Dickie?’ ‘Because Dickie represents everything Tom wants to be.’ etc. Each reason will be one scene or more. Tom’s murder of Dickie is a major plot point along the trunk of the ‘Christmas tree’ and the reasons that support this action are on the branch attached at this point. Within Highsmith’s fiction, the plot points are clear for filmmakers to see and maintain.

### The Character Arc

Every commercial film story requires a ‘character arc’, the semi-circle trajectory the protagonist must take to reach their goal. ‘Definitely one of the most basic principles in screenwriting is character arc – the notion that characters must evolve, grow, learn, or change as the plot unfolds.’ (Moura 2014, para. 1) Dramatic conflicts that push the protagonist off a straight, short course to accomplishing their goal create the arc and become lessons that teach the hero something about life that changes them. This realisation, or new knowledge, is what the story is about even if the goal changes. The character arc determines where the movie starts and ends – there is the problem and the journey, successful or unsuccessful, toward solving the problem, or reaching a specified goal. The character arcs in Patricia Highsmith’s novels are principally motivated by the protagonist’s psychological uncertainty, their moral trepidation.

In *Ripley’s Game*, Jonathan Trevanny, who suffers from myeloid leukemia, has resigned himself to a slow death until he meets Tom Ripley. Ripley convinces Trevanny (through Reeves Minot) that his disease is much more aggressive than he’s been led to believe and his family will be hard pressed to make ends meet financially when he dies. Using Trevanny’s fear as leverage, Minot persuades this mild-mannered craftsman to murder a mafia agent as a way of securing his family’s future. Trevanny not only murders once,

but is prepared to murder again. By the end of the novel, the hero has learned through a spiraling series of dire decisions that he is no better than the murderers he kills, free from societal conscience but worthless. In *The Talented Mr. Ripley*, Tom Ripley goes from being a petty ‘nobody’, who cons simple immigrants out of their money to murdering Dickie Greenleaf and inheriting his fortune. Ripley’s goal is to be a ‘somebody’, a journey that includes impersonating Greenleaf, misleading the Italian police, evading or killing suspicious friends, and then reassuming his identity as a wealthy ‘somebody’. Ripley’s character arc is full of dramatic and unexpected turns, but in the end, Ripley learns that his lack of conscience or sense of guilt gives him a distinct advantage over other people. Guy Haines, the respected architect in *Strangers on a Train*, finds he has the capacity for heartless murder. In each case, the character arc is clearly defined as a transformational and confronting realisation. The protagonists’ moral journey invites the reader/audience to question themselves; to ask, “Could this be me?”, “Would I be capable of such an act?” Highsmith’s view is apparent, and for a filmmaker, the psychological uncertainty creates internal conflict that is dramatically powerful and drives the plot forward.

### Writing for Cast

It is imperative for the screenwriter to visualise the characters for a script to have ‘life’. While casting actors is a vital element in the success of a movie, both artistically and financially, the screenwriter can only suggest through description the type of performer they see, as the director and producer will have final say. One tactic that helps in writing a movie is for the writer to cast the film in their head. The performer can be anyone, living or dead, but having the perfect actor in mind helps the writer imagine how the character moves and the cadence of their speech. It gives characters on the page ‘flesh’: and they remain consistent. Mary Horowitz, filmmaker and professor at NYU, points out:

‘Remember that even though films are made at least three times – once when they’re written, once when they are filmed and once when they are edited, the screenplay is the place where you, the writer, are in total control. When you allow

your characters to behave in an emotionally consistent way, your plot will become convincing and coherent.’ (Horowitz 2016, para. 11)

In Highsmith’s novels, protagonists are very much a product of their moral indecision, their motivations mostly revealed through the author’s narrative skill. This is the way Tom Ripley is introduced in *The Talented Mr. Ripley*, ‘If there was any sensation he hated, it was that of being followed, by anybody. And lately he had it all the time. He ran up the steps.’ (Highsmith 1985, p. 15) In *Strangers on a Train*, we learn about Guy Haines in this way, ‘Automatically, he reached for a cigarette, remembered for the tenth time that he couldn’t smoke in the Pullman car, then took one anyway.’ (Highsmith 1951), and Jonathan Trevanny in *Ripley’s Game*:

‘In principle, Jonathan liked the nineteenth-century atmosphere, the lack of commercial frou-frou. He wanted his shop to look as if a good craftsman ran it, and in that he had succeeded, he thought. He never overcharged, did his work on time, or if he was going to be late, he notified his clients by postcard or a telephone call.’ (Highsmith 1985, p. 450)

In each case, Highsmith’s novels encapsulate the character in an economical and evocative way that suggests the casting for a film. A passage from the novel, *Strangers on a Train*, illustrates this point:

‘A tall blond young man in a rust-brown suit dropped into the empty seat opposite Guy and, smiling with a vague friendliness, slid over into the corner. Guy glanced at his pallid, undersized face. There was a huge pimple in the exact center of his forehead. Guy looked out the window again.

The young man opposite him seemed to debate whether to start a conversation or take a nap. His elbow kept sliding along the window sill, and whenever the stubby lashes came open, the gray bloodshot eyes were looking at him and the soft smile came back. He might have been slightly drunk.’ (Highsmith 1951, p. 3)



In the screenplay, Czenzi Ormonde and Raymond Chandler introduced the characters Guy and Bruno through wardrobe:

‘...CAMERA PANS DOWN as the passenger gets out of the taxi so that we see only his shoes and the lower part of this trousers. He is wearing dark colored brogues and a conservative suit apparently. The feet move toward the entrance to the station and out of scene. Immediately a chauffeur-driven limousine drives up and an expensive piece of airplane luggage is handed out of this, and the passenger alighting from the back is seen to be wearing black and white sports shoes which, as seen before, are all we see of him. The sport shoes start off in the wake of the brogues.’ (Van Sijll 2005, p. 5)

Hitchcock, well-known for casting against type, chose Farley Granger to play Guy and Robert Walker to play Bruno, a devious, amoral murderer. Walker was best known for his light romantic roles. By casting against type, Hitchcock gave the characters a three-dimensional quality.

In my screenplay “Friendly Fire”, I introduce the main character in this way:

*‘A tall, weathered man in his early fifties with a cynical frown...*

*FRED Lake. Fred, wearing a worn sport’s jacket, watches the game without much interest. He nods to the Journalists who acknowledge him.’* (Rosenberg 2015, p. 3)

Other than the age, I want Fred to exude a journalist’s weary, hard-boiled cynicism. I need the director to understand this from the clues I’ve embedded in the description – ‘weathered’, ‘cynical frown’, ‘worn sport’s jacket’, ‘without much interest’, etc.

In filmmaking, the decision on casting might be based on bankability. In the case of Anthony Minghella’s *The Talented Mr. Ripley*, he chose talented actors, but in my opinion they were miscast. Tom Ripley, famously amoral and asexual, was played by

Matt Damon, who is best known for his romantic action roles, whereas Dickie Greenleaf, the wayward son that Ripley has come to find, is played by the effete-looking British actor, Jude Law. Damon could have easily taken the role of Greenleaf and Law would have been more physically convincing and creepy as Ripley. The casting may have been out of Minghella's hands, but one suspects, given that both actors were equally bankable, that the director made the decision. It is worth noting, that while Highsmith never got involved in the adaptations of her work or visited the filming, she freely voiced her opinions once the films were released. She felt the best actor to play Ripley (based on *The Talented Mr. Ripley*) was Alain Delon, making his major film debut in Rene Clement's "*Plein Soleil*" ("*Purple Noon*"). In Peary's interview, Highsmith found Delon was "excellent" (Peary 1988, p. 105), and the author was later quoted by Wilson as saying Delon was "...very beautiful to the eye and interesting for the intellect." (Wilson 2003, para. 10).

### Writing 'Coverage'

It's important that the director knows the screenwriter's intentions before s/he makes a decision on 'coverage', how the camera captures the scene.

'...crafting a film involves recording a scene from different camera angles using different shot sizes to emphasize important elements of the film, such as a gun in someone's hand or a tear in someone's eye. This use of subsequent camera setups is known as coverage. Coverage is important not only to keep things dynamic and exciting within the scene, but also to ease the editing process of the movie.'

(Moura 1999)

Screenwriters always ask themselves how much information should be revealed – What will be shown and in what order? If the audience's eyes are directed down a killer's body, where the viewer sees a bloody knife in their hand, the question becomes, "Who did they kill?", but if the shot is directed from the dead victim on the floor and moves up the killer's body, the question becomes, "Who is the killer?". Coverage of a scene can tell a

story by asking the right questions.

In Minghella's *The Talented Mr. Ripley*, the camera tells the story of Tom Ripley's transformation. As Dickie Greenleaf pretends to sleep, Ripley moves to merge their reflections in the train carriage's window. Later, after Ripley has replaced Dickie, his own reflection separates when the polished piano lid is raised. Ripley, a personality cannibal, can leave Dickie behind having consumed the most desirable parts. Using cinematic strategies, Minghella has made Ripley's psychological decision-making three-dimensional.

The screenwriter, after an initial draft, generally works closely with the director to craft a script s/he feels confident directing. Many directors dislike screenwriters using technical camera directions in the script, as they feel it undermines their creative decision-making, but the screenwriter will suggest shots and atmosphere in the way they describe a situation or location. To do otherwise would discount the writer's talent to tell the story they see in their head. Once again, in "Friendly Fire":

*'The Companion snaps open a pocket-sized plastic case and fills a SYRINGE with a yellow-ish fluid.'* (Rosenberg 2015, p. 1)

From this description, where we see the colour of the liquid in a syringe, it is obvious my intention is to use a close-up (CU). Or:

*'Ten Ragged Children play an enthusiastic game of baseball on a dirt road between sun-bleached stucco buildings.'* (Rosenberg 2015, p. 3)

There is no doubt the scene requires a wide-shot (WS).

In both cases, the screenwriter suggests the size of the shot and usually the order in which information will be revealed without indicating technical camera directions such as 'close-up' or 'wide-shot'.

In “Friendly Fire”, not unlike Jonathan Trevanny in *Ripley’s Game*, Fred Lake is given an opportunity to financially save his daughter, Audrey, if he is willing to become a suicide bomber. Fred and the audience believe he has an explosive device in his wristwatch, triggered by pushing in the stem at a predetermined time. His mission to assassinate Venezuelan terrorist and former friend, Ricardo Diaz, has been delayed by a crisis of conscience, but when Fred witnesses Diaz sadistically torture a hostage, he is prepared to murder him...

*Diaz sees Fred approaching.*

*DIAZ*  
*Ah, Fred, you must join us!*

*Diaz rises from his seat. He says something to Hugo, sitting beside him, and he gives up his chair.*

*Fred sees his opportunity...*

*DIAZ (CONT’D)*  
*You must eat something, you need your strength.*

*Fred tries to smile back at Diaz, his thumb hovering over the stem of his watch. He moves closer, it seems easy, ready...*

*DIAZ (CONT’D)*  
*Now everyone is here.*

*Diaz looks over Fred’s shoulder.*

*AUDREY (O.S.)*  
*You’re awake.*

*Fred turns, stunned to see Audrey as she moves closer, her face a mixture of pleasure and concern - too close. (Rosenberg 2015, pp. 79, 80)*

Audrey’s ‘surprise’ visit and proximity builds the suspense. The tension continues to mount as Audrey, in an attempt to save her father, has told Diaz that Fred was tricked into being an assassin for the CIA. The plot twists again when Diaz forces Audrey to

detonate the watch and the device doesn't explode. It is worth noting that '(OS)' indicates 'off-screen' – Audrey is in the scene location, but not seen as her dialogue is delivered. While the audience knows Audrey is likely to arrive, I've suggested to the director that Fred's surprise and the scene tension will be heightened if the camera focuses on Fred's face (and watch) before he realises his daughter is nearby. If Fred isn't aware Audrey has entered, he risks killing her by detonating the watch. In the same way that Highsmith uses psychological uncertainty to create a tense atmosphere where anything might happen, I use a cinematic strategy based on the audience's limited knowledge to enhance suspense.

## **CINEMATIC PSYCHOLOGY**

Once the screenplay is set and production begins, the director is responsible for giving the script-blueprint life. There are five major departments, each one with a supervisor or head that reports to the producer or director: Production, Cinematography, Sound, Editing and Production Design. Each of the departments has specific roles, which must overlap with the others. The film creates an auditory and visual symphony, with each element harmoniously building on the screenplay. V Renee uses Martin Scorsese's explanation to make her point:

'Everything on-screen – the lighting, the shadows, the size of the shot, the angle, the composition, the blocking, the colours, everything – is a word spoken to your audience. We, myself included, tend to allow the spectacle to overtake us – we get wrapped up in the story, the visuals and the music. We feel sad when we watch an on-screen break up or fight between two people who had been close, but we may fail to realize, or at least consciously identify, that a lot of the drama that leads to that climax was created by visual queues.' (V Renee 2013, para. 10)

## Space Management as a Psychological Tool

One vital component in any film is the use of space, how the location can be exploited to increase the psychological impact. In Van Sijll's book, *Cinematic Storytelling*, she points out the ways in which space can convey psychological meaning:

‘Like a painting, the static image of the frame presents inherent storytelling opportunities. Because a movie is a motion picture, the composition of the frame continuously changes. This added characteristic affords two important story elements – that of screen direction and comparison. Screen direction can suggest antagonism, individualism, and conflict, for example. A moving frame might be used to represent change, similarity or dissimilarity, or its opposite, stasis.’ (Van Sijll 2005, p. 2)

While the use of space is more closely associated with direction, it is often suggested by the scriptwriter, in the same way shot size might be suggested. In Sidney Lumet's film adaptation of the theatrical play, *Twelve Angry Men*, set in a jury room, he increased tension by subtly bringing the walls in as the film went on, intensifying an emotional ‘pressure cooker’ environment. In the film I wrote and produced, *Elevator*, we had a large cast because I felt that the tension would be intensified with less room to move inside an enclosed space.

A film takes advantage of space and movement to create visual metaphor or subtle emphasis by connecting with an audience's subconscious. If a character walks away from camera, they become smaller, less important, but when a character approaches the camera they grow in importance and what they say becomes more profound. Because in the western world we read left to right, seeing a character enter from the left has a positive connotation, while when a character enters frame from the right moving left, it appears they are moving against what is ‘natural’ and most likely have a negative impact. This is how Alfred Hitchcock used choreography in his adaptation of Highsmith's *Strangers on a Train*. In the opening sequence, Guy Haines, the protagonist, enters the train station

from the left of frame, while Charles Bruno enters from the right, preparing the audience for an eventual conflict. The train that carries them is seen to veer off the straight track and onto a branch, subtly planting in the audience's mind that the story will take an unconventional route. The introductory sequence ends with Haines and Bruno meeting, their shoes accidentally colliding under a table. The writers and director invented this opening, the only 'physical' element from the book remaining is the bumping of shoes.

'By using screen direction to graphically suggest a pending collision, the film has set up conflict and character, and peaked our fears – all in under sixty seconds...Director Alfred Hitchcock lengthened the scene written by Czensi Ormonde and Raymond Chandler by extending the intercutting.' (Van Sijll 2005, p. 4).

The opening in the novel is four pages and full of exposition, whereas the film through clever use of space, casting and wardrobe sets up the same story and characters in less time, staying true to the psychological underpinning.

### Visual Economy and Psychological Metaphor

The filmmaker must adapt an approximately 200 page book into a 90 – 120 minute movie. To make this possible, the skilled filmmaker finds ways to tell the same story visually using psychological metaphor. In this way narrative passages may be communicated with a physical gesture, an adjustment of lighting, wardrobe or any number of 'hints' that trigger an emotional response. Hitchcock is considered a master at adapting a story economically, while at the same time enhancing the psychological intrigue. 'His genius was not simply his ability to create suspense, but his ability to allow the viewer to share suspense with a character.' (Kay 2016, para. 5) Using Highsmith's protagonist's point of view perspective, Hitchcock was able to solicit the empathy necessary to keep an audience emotionally involved.

The drastic change in profession for Guy Haines from architect to tennis player/aspiring politician in the film version could very possibly be because Hitchcock had a strong visual idea. The movie has a tennis tournament, where Guy plays a difficult match. The spectators' heads swivel back and forth with the movement of the ball, but at the center of the spectators, one man stands out because his head remains perfectly still, his eyes concentrated on Guy – Bruno. It is a striking visual device, which accentuates Bruno's obsession, increases Guy's tension and justifies changing an architect into a tennis player. 'He commissioned Raymond Chandler to write the screenplay, but the two clashed because, as Chandler recounted it, he tried to focus on story and character, while Hitchcock thought in terms of "the shots he wants to make."' (Cassuto 2008, para. 9) Chandler left the project, the collaboration being unproductive. In her interview with Peary, Highsmith reveals her displeasure with the changes:

'...she regrets Hitchcock's decision to turn Guy (Farley Granger), an architect in her novel, into a championship-winning tennis player. Highsmith: "I thought it was ludicrous that he's aspiring to be a politician, and that he's supposed to be in love with that stone angel."' (Peary 1988, p. 104)

Related to Hitchcock's changes to suit his visual and dramatic sensibilities, Gayla Kay notes:

'This very much relates to how his films fundamentally function; we are made to relate to characters, identify with them in order to experience suspense on their behalf. At the same time, we are often privileged with knowledge that the character is not privy to; thereby creating a sense of self-consciousness that positions us (as audience) outside that narrative world.' (Kay 2016, para. 5)

I've personally witnessed more than once how a director's visual inspiration can shape a script beyond the relevant scene itself. The conversation will usually start, "I've just had this terrific idea, let's see if we can make it work." and it will be the writer's job to support the 'idea' so that it becomes plausible within the story.



In Highsmith's novel, she described Bruno's murder of Miriam, Guy's wife, in this way:

'His hands captured her throat on the last word, stifling its abortive uplift of surprise. He shook her. His body seemed to harden like a rock, and he heard his teeth crack. She made a grating sound in her throat, but he had her too tight for a scream. With a leg behind her, he wrenched her backward, and they fell to the ground together with no sound but a brush of leaves. He sunk his fingers deeper, enduring the distasteful pressure of her body under his so her writing would not get them both up. Her throat felt hotter and fatter. Stop, stop, stop! He willed it! And the head stopped turning. He was sure he had held her long enough...'

(Highsmith 1951, p. 74).

In the movie, Hitchcock decided to cover the murder in a way that was visually unique. He established Miriam wore thick glasses and when Bruno attacks her, they fall to the ground. The audience sees the murder as a reflection in the lens of her glasses. In order to make this work, Hitchcock had extra large lenses made, but shot them close enough that the audience has no reference and is unaware of their size. The glasses don't appear in the novel. My sense is that the director had this idea and it grew into a prominent part of the story. When Bruno sees Guy's fiancée's sister wearing similar glasses to Miriam's he faints. It is certainly possible that once Hitchcock, a prominent director, became fixated on this visual idea, the writers worked to support it throughout the script. In this case, the thick glasses are used to play against type, allowing Miriam to have an unsympathetic attitude while still soliciting sympathy as someone disabled. It was a clever way to create an authentic, three-dimensional character, a character that suggests to an audience that they have a life outside the movie.

Wim Wenders wrote and directed *The American Friend* ("Der Amerikanische Freund", 1977), significantly changing the plot. It is considered an adaptation of *Ripley's Game*, but he also incorporated elements from Highsmith's second novel in the series, *Ripley Under Ground*, about an art forger. The movie is set in Hamburg, Germany rather than France, where Highsmith has Ripley stationed in her novel, and Wenders has made a

significant change to the ending. In Wenders' adaptation, Jonathan and Ripley drive to a deserted beach, where Ripley sets fire to an ambulance carrying their victims. Jonathan and his wife abandon Ripley, and while driving home, Jonathan dies from his disease. In the novel, Jonathan sacrifices himself to save Ripley from the mafia hitmen, dying in the process. *The American Friend* makes great use of cinematic tools to convey the psychological uncertainty Highsmith creates in her novel, even though, like Hitchcock, Wenders deviates considerably from the source material. Once Jonathan agrees to murder his victim, a green 'poisonous' light appears in the background - in Ripley's house, under the metro, and for several scenes after Jonathan murders his first target. Jonathan has been pushed off his moral center, doing something no 'decent' human being would do. His murder of a stranger for money is sickening and all consuming, the nauseating green light allowing the audience to see into Jonathan's corrupted soul. The director also effectively employs physical symbolism, showing Jonathan putting his head inside one of the picture frames he manufactures. In fact, Wenders confides in the DVD commentary that his original title for the film was "Framed" (*The American Friend* 2002). In another use of physical symbolism, before Jonathan calls Minot to accept the offer to kill for money, he plays with a gossamer gold leaf, allowing it to mold to his hand as he picks up the phone. Filmic symbolism may foreshadow a future action, subconsciously laying the foundation for Jonathan's decision, or it is also an effective way to 'underline' a message, as it does when Jonathan is being 'framed'. After the first murder, and asked to perform a second, Jonathan angrily smashes a frame, indicating his frustration with himself for being manipulated. As mentioned earlier, the screenplay is a blueprint for cast and crew, and the more visually evocative the screenplay is, the easier it is for the director to 'see' how the scene plays out, even if in the end the visual interpretation deviates from the screenwriter's.

As Jonathan Zimmerman (Trevanny) stalks his intended victim through Hamburg's subway system, Wenders correlates the circuitous route to his protagonist's state of mind. The audience is in doubt whether Jonathan has the resolve or the competence to complete the murder, eventually, almost impulsively, shooting his victim in the back while riding the up escalator. Jonathan's difficulty in overcoming his moral repugnance is visually

reflected in his 'climbing' to murder, and escaping both physically and morally is made more difficult when he must run down the 'up' escalator. It is also worth noting how often Wenders adds conflict to his protagonist's journey, whether it is Jonathan's inability to keep his pistol hidden, risking detection, or using a sterling new train station to commit a dirty crime.

### Music as Theme and Narrator

'The lyrics of a song can act as the voice of a character. They can reveal the inner thoughts in a way that can be more interesting than a simple "talking heads" scene. Lyrics can also be used as the voice of the narrator. Lyrics add another delivery system with which to parcel out character and thematic information.'

(Van Sijll 2005, p. 102)

In all of Wenders' films (*Paris Texas*, *Wings Of Desire*, *State of Siege*, etc.) he goes to great trouble to introduce music as a way to advance a story, either by referencing period or building a character's psychology. At one stage in *The American Friend*, Ripley tells Jonathan he wants to bring The Beatles back to Hamburg. This reference brings the men closer together, each feeling comfortable with the other's cultural tastes. In another scene, Wenders uses a song's lyrics to give the audience an insight into Jonathan's (played by Bruno Ganz) mind.

'What really works in the film is the Bruno Ganz character who is coerced into becoming an assassin, and the moment where he stands lost listening to the Kinks' 'Too Much On My Mind' is unbelievably poignant. It's one of the best ever examples of how songs can be used in a film to say what words never could.'

(Carney 2006, para. 7)

Highsmith generally liked the film, but wasn't pleased with the casting choice for Ripley.

'*The American Friend*, she concedes, has a certain "stylishness" and she thinks

the scenes on the train are terrific. Also, she liked Wenders' *Paris, Texas*. But, back in *The American Friend*, she is confused by Dennis Hopper's highway cowboy rendition of Ripley. "Those aren't my words," she says of his philosophical soliloquies.' (Peary 1988, pp. 104 – 105)

Minghella also skillfully used music to tell his story. As Ripley sings the jazz classic, "My Funny Valentine", he covertly announces his love for Dickie, the song's lyrics a pretense. Minghella also uses thematic music as counterpoint to events, as he does when Ripley carries Freddy's dead body out to his car. The music during this scene could have been used in a light comedy. This musical counterpoint is another way of creating conflict and drama, accentuating the visual, psychological uncertainty.

### Location and Counterpoint

For the screenwriter, location is one of the first elements one must decide, not only for context and practicality, but for what it brings out in the characters that inhabit it – the characters 'stand' in relief. In the film, *The Talented Mr. Ripley*, Tom Ripley's dreadful deeds are in contrast to Italy's sumptuous landscape. The buildings are picture postcards and the Mediterranean sparkles even as Ripley bashes Dickie Greenleaf's head in with an oar. This counterpoint creates conflict – conflict between what one imagines should be happening in paradise and a horrible murder. The screenwriter/director also uses location to create a rhythm, each scene changing size, from a wide shot of the train station to an intimate shot in a train carriage to a large public square, etc. In this way the rhythm of location or counterpoint keeps us moving, like listening to music, until it changes. A change in the flow can create discomfort and prepare the audience for a new dramatic event, once again creating psychological uncertainty. Minghella also cleverly uses windows in all the interior scenes, creating a visual colander, informing the audience that the character's problems influence and are influenced by events outside the walls.

## Wardrobe

‘For most writers and directors externalizing a character’s change is a problem, especially if they don’t want to rely on dialog. The use of an iconic wardrobe element can be very useful in showing change over time.’ (Van Sijll p. 226) Screenwriters specify wardrobe to create character and to help with the evolution of a personality born out of the film’s events. When Ripley first meets Dickie Greenleaf and Marge Sherwood on the beach, he is dressed in lime green swimming trunks and carrying his dress shoes. He couldn’t be more out of place, awkward and vulnerable, but as the movie progresses, we see him assuming sophistication, wearing cashmere sweaters, embroidered slippers and tailored suits. He has come out of his cocoon to become a butterfly. Marge Sherwood at the beginning of the film appears girlish, wearing pajama bottoms and casual attire, she’s happily in love, but after Dickie’s disappearance, she takes on a more mature look, a tailored almost matronly appearance, reflecting a harsh reality, the end of blissful trust.

## **THE DIRECTOR’S VISION**

As stated earlier, the screenwriter works closely with the director before production to create a compelling visual story, but once a film moves into production, it is the director’s vision that takes over.

Of the three Highsmith adaptations analysed, Hitchcock was probably the least successful in re-telling the author’s story. Through a change of narrative, Guy Haines never suffers the guilt of murder as he does in the novel. Minghella softens Ripley, giving him the trace of a conscience, while throughout Highsmith’s Ripley series conscience is bridged by expedience. Wenders was the most successful, finding nobility in a character that kills for money. In each case, the stories revolved around a protagonist’s psychological uncertainty, the conflict between what they knew was ‘right’ and what they felt compelled to do.

## Taking on Ripley

Tom Ripley is Patricia Highsmith's most famous and ingenious character, because he defied the common novelistic idea that criminals, especially murders, need to be caught. Shore quotes Highsmith, "I find the public passion for justice quite boring and artificial, for neither life nor nature cares if justice is ever done or not." (Shore 2000, para. 6) The Ripley character was further defined by Jeanette Winterson, who wrote a Highsmith biography, 'With Ripley, she created a new kind of criminal, not seen before in crime/murder/detective fiction – his nearest relative being out of DeSade...' (Winterson 2009, para. 16) Highsmith wrote five anxiously awaited Ripley novels in the series, but *The Talented Mr. Ripley* was the introduction to Tom Ripley. Apart from the pressure of adapting a very popular book, Minghella also was given the task of re-creating this unique protagonist. Anthony Minghella had written and directed the critically and commercially successful *The English Patient*, allowing him considerable influence when it came time to make Ripley. In his review of the movie for Salon.com, Charles Taylor was scathing:

'It must be hard to misread the tone of a book as single-minded as Patricia Highsmith's *The Talented Mr. Ripley*, but Anthony Minghella manages somehow. Minghella has filmed Highsmith's nasty classic of homicidal paranoia in the deluxe style he used on *The English Patient* – all tasteful creaminess, like an expensive dessert cart presented by a discreet waiter. The characters can't get into a boat without Minghella's first giving us an eyeful of postcard-pretty Mediterranean coastline. No one can pass through customs without a wide-angle view of the period-perfect customs hall. (The movie is set in the late 50's.) Hotel rooms are as pristine as in a travel brochure. After a while, you get the message – Anthony Minghella doesn't want to get his hands dirty.' (Taylor 1999, para. 1).

Taylor wasn't alone in his distaste for the adaptation, Zizek Slavoj writes:

‘Therein resides the ultimate failure of the movie with regard to the novel: the film “gatsbyizes” Ripley into a new version of the American hero who recreates his identity in a murky way. What gets lost here is best exemplified by the crucial difference between the novel and film: in the film, Ripley has the stirrings of a conscience, while in the novel, the qualms of conscience are simply beyond his grasp.’ (Zizek 2015, para. 7).

Diane Shipley is less brutal, but just as disappointed, ‘Because while it’s a respectable film, it fails to replicate the tension and creeping menace of the novel...’. (Shipley 2014, para. 2) Not all the reviews were bad, ‘The movie is as intelligent a thriller as you’ll see this year. It is also insidious in the way it leads us to identify with Tom Ripley.’ (Ebert 1999, para. 12). Minghella certainly had the last laugh, as the film was a substantial commercial success. With a budget of approximately USD 40 million, ‘Ripley’ took in almost USD 129 million worldwide (Box Office Mojo 2015). In addition to the films profits, it was nominated for five Academy Awards. What makes the film’s success particularly fascinating is that the protagonist gets away with several murders and Minghella does not shy away from portraying Ripley’s homosexuality.

Whether an adaptation or not, the general audience wants a good story, and in the case of cinema, a good visual story. As noted earlier, the 1999 adaptation of *The Talented Mr. Ripley* was an unmitigated commercial success, even though it suffered the ‘slings and arrows’ of several critics loyal to Highsmith’s original novel. *The American Friend* received this lukewarm endorsement, ‘There’s something cheerfully perverse about filming a thriller and then tossing out the parts that would help it make sense, but Wim Wenders has a certain success with the method in *The American Friend*. (Ebert 1977, para. 1). Pauline Kael gave her opinion, ‘Wenders’ unsettling compositions are neurotically beautiful visions of a disordered world, but the film doesn’t have the nasty, pleasurable cleverness of a good thriller; dramatically, it’s stagnant-inverted

Wagnerianism.’ (Kael 1977, para. 1). The budget was DEM 3 million, but the box office results are unavailable.

The reviews for *Strangers on a Train* improved from this initial observation:

‘Mr. Hitchcock again is tossing a crazy murder story in the air and trying to con us into thinking that it will stand up without support...the basic premise of fear fired by menace is so thin and so utterly unconvincing that the story just does not stand.’ (Crowther 1951, para. 1).

Walker quotes Leslie Halliwell (*Halliwell’s Film Guide*), who was more impressed years later, ‘Hitchcock was “at his best” and that the film “makes superior suspense entertainment,” but called the story “unsatisfactory’ . (Walker 1994, p. 1139). The film’s budget was USD 1.2 million, bringing in USD 7 million. (IMDb 2015). While no current figures are available for accumulated profit, the film is a cult classic and continues to be released on DVD.

## CONCLUSION

Robert Stam explains the translation from literature to film in this way, ‘Adaptations redistribute energies and intensities, provoke flows and displacements; the linguistic energy of literary writing turns into the audio-visual-kinetic-performance energy of the adaptation, in an amorous exchange of textual fluids.’ (Stam 2005, p. 46). Stam makes adaptation sound like making love, and perhaps it is, where a filmmaker sees something in the original that captivates and seduces them into a negotiation.

The psychological uncertainty in Highsmith’s work is particularly appealing to filmmakers, because it promotes conflict, a necessity for drama. Filmmakers are drawn to the ‘story arc’ of Highsmith’s protagonists, from relatable ‘normalcy’ to indefensible murder, where the audience identifies so strongly with a character’s dilemma they ‘share’ responsibility. Like any reader of Highsmith’s work, the filmmaker ‘sees’ a movie in



their head with perfect casting, locations, camera work, editing, etc., and yet already this is an adaptation. The screenplay will be honed to create a filmic story that embodies the essence of Highsmith's novel, while inevitably tailoring it to fit the filmmaker's vision and the practical demands of commercial cinema. Anthony Minghella's *The Talented Mr. Ripley*, Wim Wenders' *The American Friend* and Alfred Hitchcock's *Strangers on a Train*, became cinematic stories that stand alone, attempting to please the nonreader as well as those fans loyal to the original. To judge the success of an adaptation by how closely it resembles the original is to deny another medium's power and purpose. Through the effective use of cinematic strategies, a filmmaker has the opportunity of not only reflecting Highsmith's psychological premise, but enhancing it. This intimate transmission of unease and suspense is unique to Highsmith and so appealing to filmmakers that adaptations of her work have never been more popular.

This paper attempts to illustrate how psychology has and can be effectively translated from novelistic prose to a visual medium. Through the use of cinematic strategies, as demonstrated by the adaptations of Highsmith's work, a filmmaker can meet the restrictions of commercial cinema, while remaining loyal to the novel's psychological heart.

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# **FRIENDLY FIRE**

Written by

Marc Rosenberg

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marc@quitenicepictures.com  
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FADE IN:

INT. VAN, CITY (CARACAS, VENEZUELA) -- DAY

Seen from behind and between two quiet men...

A busy, congested city glimmers through the windshield.

**COUSIN** (28), driving, and his Companion (40) both wear hotel uniforms.

The van manoeuvres in expressway traffic...

The dialogue is overlaid...

MORRIS' WIFE (V.O.)  
(thin through cell phone)  
...Laurie's having trouble with her  
math. We'll have to get her a  
tutor.

Still from behind, the Companion examines a PISTOL to make sure it's loaded and ready, while...

The van exits the expressway into an upmarket area.

MORRIS (V.O.)  
What's wrong with a calculator? I  
haven't done long division since  
fourth grade.

The Companion, satisfied, lays the pistol on the console between him and Cousin.

MORRIS' WIFE (V.O.)  
She's in third grade. You're not  
going to change the system, Howard.

The Companion snaps open a pocket-sized plastic case and fills a SYRINGE with a yellow-ish fluid.

MORRIS (V.O.)  
See if the school can recommend  
someone. If she doesn't pass, it'll  
be their fault.

The Companion closes the case and puts it beside the pistol.

MORRIS' WIFE (V.O.)  
When's your flight get in?

MORRIS (V.O.)  
 Tomorrow afternoon. Margaret's got  
 the details.

EXT. LUXURY HOTEL, CARACAS -- DAY

The WHITE VAN stops at the security gate of an underground parking garage. Cousin uses a plastic key card and the gate rises.

MORRIS' WIFE (V.O.)  
 I'm shopping for a dress.

MORRIS (V.O.)  
 Uh oh.

The van disappears beneath the hotel.

INT. BATHROOM, LUXURY HOTEL -- DAY

Howard **MORRIS** (52), freshly showered and wearing a white, hotel bathrobe, shaves in front of a foggy mirror.

A cell phone on speaker lies near the basin...

MORRIS' WIFE (V.O.)  
 (cell)  
 I need something for the dinner.

MORRIS  
 Is that Thursday?

MORRIS' WIFE (V.O.)  
 (cell)  
 Of course, Thursday. Hey, if I look good, you look good.

MORRIS  
 You know, that almost makes sense.

MORRIS' WIFE (V.O.)  
 (cell)  
 We're having dinner with the President, Howard.

MORRIS  
 I'm going to talk to him about the math program.

Laughter from cell.



MORRIS (CONT'D)  
Get something red and sexy.

MORRIS' WIFE (V.O.)  
(cell)  
Love you.

MORRIS  
See you tomorrow.

Morris taps the phone off and finishes shaving. He rinses his face, then raises his eyes to the mirror, seeing...

Two Men, black hoods over their heads. One has a pistol, the other a syringe...

They come at him quickly.

EXT. SMALL TOWN, VENEZUELA -- DAY

Ten Ragged Children play an enthusiastic game of baseball on a dirt road between sun-bleached stucco buildings. They have a home-made bat, ball and gloves.

The Batter hits the ball hard, kids chase, and the Batter rounds the bases, as...

The WHITE VAN speeds towards them, forcing the Children to scatter. The van barely slows, as something soft and heavy is pushed out the side door.

The van speeds off, and the Children move through the dust cloud to investigate...

A dead man, throat cut, with a few days' beard...

HOWARD MORRIS.

INT. PRESS BOX, DODGER STADIUM -- DAY

Journalists sit behind a long desk overlooking a major league baseball game in progress. TV monitors broadcast the game with an ongoing commentary.

Standing behind the seated Journalists...

A tall, weathered man in his early fifties with a cynical frown...

**FRED** Lake. Fred, wearing a worn sports jacket, watches the game without much interest. He nods to the Journalists who acknowledge him.

A Waiter, carrying a TRAY OF BEERS in plastic cups, hands out ALL BUT ONE, keeping an eye on Fred...

Bill **BARNES**, thirty-ish, bushy hair and beard, leaves talking to another Journalist to meet Fred.

BARNES  
Hey Fred, you doing post-game?

FRED  
Wouldn't miss it.

The Waiter targets Fred, holding out a beer.

WAITER  
Mr. Lake.

FRED  
What's this?

WAITER  
A new lager, it's a promotion.

Fred takes the offered cup and sips it.

BARNES  
Where's mine?

WAITER  
There's more coming.

The Waiter walks away with the empty tray.

FRED  
(toasting Barnes)  
God bless advertising.

A foul ball flies into the press box and while the Journalists at the desk jerk away and duck...

Fred puts out a casual hand and catches it without spilling his beer. There is mild applause from his comrades, and he lifts his cup in acknowledgement.

INT. PROFESSIONAL BASEBALL CLUBHOUSE -- DAY

The losing PITCHER, still in his sweat stained uniform, stands in front of his locker, confronting a Crowd Of Journalists all with recording devices.

JOURNALIST  
If you could take it back, would you still throw an oh-two fastball?

PITCHER

There was nothing wrong with the pitch, he just hit it.

ANOTHER JOURNALIST

You closed five of the last seven games, do you think fatigue was a factor?

PITCHER

If I was tired, I wouldn't go out there.

FRED (O.S.)

So, you choked?

All eyes turn to the back of the Group, to see Fred, holding a note pad.

PITCHER

I didn't choke. If it wasn't for me we wouldn't have got this far.

FRED

(checking notes)

Did I miss the line where you thank the fans for their support?

The Group of Journalists part as...

The Pitcher angrily advances on Fred, but Fred stands his ground, looking amused.

PITCHER

(finger in Fred's face)

Listen Lake, I don't need shit from you. You were a hack player and now you're a hack reporter...

Fred looks set to answer, but something stops him, mouth open...

HIS EYES ROLL UP AND HE FALLS TO THE FLOOR, HAVING A SEIZURE.

The Pitcher and Journalists, surprised, don't know what to do.

INT. NEUROLOGIST'S OFFICE -- DAY

A Young Neurologist in white lab coat, barely hiding a Hawaiian shirt, stands in front of brain x-rays mounted on lighted glass. Fred stands back, trying to make sense of what he's been told.

FRED

But that can't be right, I would  
have known, I would have felt  
something before.

The Neurologist has a nervous, detached manner.

NEUROLOGIST

There could have been signs you  
missed, or the symptoms were too  
subtle to notice.

Fred stares at the white glob on the x-ray.

FRED

What are my options?

NEUROLOGIST

(indicating on x-ray)  
Unfortunately, the location of the  
tumour makes it inoperable and  
chemotherapy would only diminish  
your enjoyment.

FRED

(facing him)  
My enjoyment?

NEUROLOGIST

You should be able to function  
normally until the final stages.  
I'll prescribe medication that will  
relieve the seizures and reduce  
nausea. You'll have time to  
prepare.

Somewhere, an unseen air-conditioner kicks in, making the  
silence tangible.

FRED

(looking at the silent  
doctor)  
Are you saying I'm dying?

NEUROLOGIST

I'm sorry.

FRED

What's the...How long...?

NEUROLOGIST

A few months, maybe less.

FRED  
Like what, 3, 6, 12?

NEUROLOGIST  
It's hard to say, but maybe six or less.

Fred tries to absorb this...

NEUROLOGIST (CONT'D)  
Are you married, Mr. Lake?

Fred doesn't reply, the realization catching up to him.

NEUROLOGIST (CONT'D)  
Is there someone who can help you?

Fred slowly walks to the door, wanting to escape, but with nowhere to go.

FRED  
I don't want anyone calling my house. If you need me, call me at work.

Fred exits.

EXT. OLD EXECUTIVE OFFICE BUILDING (OEOB), D.C. -- DAY

A massive, ornate, 19th century stone building, five stories high, with the White House and Washington Monument easily visible in the background.

INT. OFFICE BOARDROOM, OEOB -- DAY

Ornate as the outside, with lush carpeting and dark wood furniture. A framed picture of the President hangs on the wall and a U.S. Flag stands in the corner.

Three suited men sit at one end of a boardroom table, with the head seat vacant...

Greg **PARSONS**, 50's, over-weight, James **MULAY**, 60's, stylishly dressed, and Mike **REYNOLDS**, 40'S, military efficient.

MULAY  
(to Parsons)  
How optimistic are you?

PARSONS  
(smiling)  
I'm optimistic...

A trim, pre-occupied man in his sixties, suited, with stiff parted hair and black-rimmed glasses bustles through the door, carrying a file...

Robert **WEINSTOCK**. He stands behind the head seat, putting down his file.

WEINSTOCK

Jim, Greg...  
(looking at Reynolds)  
...and who's this?

Reynolds, impressed, stands quickly and moves to shake hands.

REYNOLDS

Agent Mike Reynolds, CIA.

WEINSTOCK

(introducing himself)  
Bob Weinstock.

PARSONS

Mike will be leading operations on this one.

Everyone sits, Weinstock takes the seat at the head of the table, opening his file.

WEINSTOCK

Okay, Howard Morris. Are we even sure this is him? We can't go just on the video. You can do anything with video.

PARSONS

Our guys identified him through dental records. It's Morris.

WEINSTOCK

Shit. I have to brief the President, but when I do, I want to add something's being done about Diaz and his little group. This is the third American businessman he's murdered this year. I think that's enough.

PARSONS

I totally agree.

Weinstock turns to Mulay on his left, who meditatively turns a pencil in his hands.

WEINSTOCK

Jim?

MULAY

He's a lone wolf. While he spouts political slogans, he's making a fortune. Between ransoms and drugs, we figure he's raked in close to 20 million. He buys protection.

WEINSTOCK

So he's a crook?

MULAY

He's a crook.

WEINSTOCK

The President knew Morris personally, he was a large contributor. The First Lady and his wife are friends.

(focusing on Parsons)

What are we going to do about this guy?

PARSONS

Mike, why don't you fill in Secretary Weinstock?

Reynolds has a country 'good ole boy' demeanor, which almost hides his quick intelligence.

REYNOLDS

(to Weinstock)

Yes, Sir. You probably already know we haven't had much luck chasing him. The terrain's pretty rough and he never stops moving. The government of Venezuelan has been less than sympathetic, and even if they were, they'd probably be too scared to help. As Mr. Mulay mentioned, Diaz's got strong connections to the cartels.

WEINSTOCK

So you don't know where he is?

REYNOLDS

I believe we've found someone who can get close to him.

WEINSTOCK

From the Agency?

REYNOLDS

No Sir, he and Diaz were friends,  
they used to play baseball together  
in Venezuela.

Reynolds passes a photo across the table to Weinstock.

PHOTOGRAPH: Two smiling, fresh-faced young men in their twenties (Lake and **DIAZ**) dressed in baseball uniforms. Lake has his arm around a young woman (**ELENA**).

REYNOLDS (O.S.) (CONT'D)

(pointing)

The man on the left is Ricardo Diaz, and on the right is Fred Lake. The woman is Elena Montego. She later became Diaz's wife. Lake's now a sportswriter in Los Angeles.

Weinstock looks skeptical.

WEINSTOCK

How old is Lake now?

REYNOLDS

He's fifty-three.

Weinstock looks around the table, incredulous.

WEINSTOCK

This is it, this is our best shot,  
a fifty-three year old sports  
journalist?

PARSONS

Yes Sir, short of a major  
commitment, I think he is.

WEINSTOCK

And Mr. Lake has agreed to  
eliminate Diaz, his old friend?

MULAY

We have confidence he will.

Weinstock turns his attention to Mulay, knowing there's more.

WEINSTOCK

Confidence is one thing, results  
are something else.

MULAY

I understand.



WEINSTOCK  
 (gathering papers)  
 So, I can tell the President you're  
 on top of this?

MULAY  
 Absolutely.

WEINSTOCK  
 (standing)  
 Keep me informed.

Weinstock leaves the room and the others stand collecting  
 their paperwork.

PARSONS  
 (to Reynolds)  
 You only report to me, no one else.

REYNOLDS  
 Yes, Sir.

Reynolds leaves the room.

MULAY  
 (smiling)  
 Fingers crossed.

Parsons crosses his fingers.

INT. JOURNALIST'S BAR -- NIGHT

Fred, Barnes and another Journalist sit at the bar, each with  
 a beer. Neon advertising furnishes most of the light, with...

A TV mounted above the bar.

ON TV: The Dodger Pitcher seen earlier is interviewed by a  
 Perky Blond Reporter.

PITCHER  
 (on TV)  
 ...I just want to thank our fans  
 for all their support. We've got  
 the best fans in the world...

BARNES  
 (quietly to Fred)  
 I heard you had a problem during  
 the 'post game'?

Fred drains the remainder of his glass in a gulp and holds it  
 up for the Bartender to see.

FRED  
 (to Barnes)  
 I tripped, no big deal.

The Bartender takes his empty glass, Barnes and the other Journalist only half-way through the ones they've got.

FRED (CONT'D)  
 (to Bartender)  
 Another round.

JOURNALIST  
 Not for me.

Bartender goes away.

BARNES  
 (skeptical to Fred)  
 Then you're okay?

FRED  
 I don't want you saying anything to Audrey, she's got enough on her plate.

The TV News Anchor appears.

TV ANCHOR  
 ...This just in, the body of Howard Morris, an American Petroleum executive, has been found in Venezuela on the border of Colombia.

The Journalists watch the TV...

JOURNALIST  
 Fuck, again? You'd think they would have learned by now.

A picture of a smiling Morris, the middle-aged executive, appears on screen behind the Anchor.

TV ANCHOR  
 Ricardo Diaz, leader of the group '*Soldados de la Libertad*, "Soldiers for Liberty", has accepted responsibility for the murder, calling it 'self-defense'...

BARNES  
 (to Journalist)  
 He's your old buddy, isn't he Fred?

JOURNALIST  
Who, Morris?

BARNES  
(to Journalist)  
Diaz. They played ball together in  
the Venezuelan Winter League.

The Bartender returns with the new round of beers and Fred  
takes a long drink.

JOURNALIST  
(to Fred)  
What was he like?

FRED  
Good curve ball.

Fred does his best to finish off the rest of his beer in  
another swallow.

FRED (CONT'D)  
Am I the only one drinking? You're  
meant to be journalists.

BARNES  
Hey Man, maybe you should take it  
easy.

FRED  
Maybe you should mind your own  
business.

This time Fred does finish his beer.

INT. FRED'S BEDROOM -- MORNING

Fred, still wearing the clothes from the night before, sleeps  
on the made bed. The drapes, wallpaper, furniture, show a  
woman's influence.

His eyes open and he stumbles into the bathroom, where he's  
heard retching.

INT. FRED'S BATHROOM -- MORNING

Fred flushes the toilet, looking like death warmed up, and...

Pulls an ORANGE-COLORED VIAL from his coat pocket.

Banging on his bedroom door seems inside his head...

RUBEN (V.O.)  
(boy)  
Mom says you gotta get up. You're  
gonna be late.

More banging.

FRED  
I'm up, I'm up. Christ.

Fred pours a pill from the vial into his hand and pops it in his mouth.

INT. STAIRS/LIVING ROOM, FRED'S HOUSE -- DAY

An old house needing repair. As Fred comes down the stairs the bannister wobbles badly. The sound of cartoons blasts from the TV.

**RUBEN**, aged ten, and **PEDRO**, aged eight, are charging around the house swinging plastic swords, wearing superhero costumes.

FRED  
(to boys)  
Take it easy, will ya?

They pay no attention, and Fred continues into the kitchen.

INT. FRED'S KITCHEN -- DAY

An intense thirty-year-old blond woman, in sweats with wild hair, battles a pile of dirty dishes at the sink...

**AUDREY** Lake. She glances at Fred.

Fred goes to the coffee pot and pours what little's left in a Dodger's mug.

AUDREY  
You know, we could get a decent price for this place if we fixed it up. They just sold the house down the road above market, and it's not as big as ours.

Fred leans back against the counter, trying to ignore her. Audrey takes a better look at him.

AUDREY (CONT'D)  
What happened to you? Hiding in a bottle isn't solving anything.

FRED  
I'm not selling.

AUDREY  
I sure don't know what ideas you've got, but we're 25,000 in debt, and the sharks are circling. I saw someone checking out the house twice this week.

FRED  
(exhausted)  
Nobody's 'checking out the house'.

AUDREY  
I saw them, Fred. Saying they're not there doesn't make them go away.

Fred is trying not to hear.

AUDREY (CONT'D)  
You still don't get it, do you? Banks run the world. If they want something, they're going to get it. They're like vultures.

FRED  
You've been seeing monsters under the bed since you were four.

AUDREY  
Hey, at least I'm not counting on the bank manager being Santa Claus.

Fred turns his head towards her, cautious that he doesn't strain his neck.

FRED  
(angry)  
Audrey, you're not my mother or my wife, you're my daughter. This is my house, and I'm not selling. I've got it covered.

A whirlwind of action hero noise rushes into the kitchen, the boys fighting on either side of Fred. Fred heads for the exit.

AUDREY  
(after him)  
We need to talk about this. It's time to get practical.

He's gone.

EXT. FRED'S HOUSE -- DAY

Seen from a distance, the house stands out from the well-kept ones around it. The grass needs to be mowed, the walls painted and fence repaired.

Audrey, in TELEPHONE COMPANY UNIFORM, comes out the front door with Rubin and Pedro in tow. Both boys wear school backpacks. She walks them to a telephone company pick-up truck, and stuffs them inside. Then, as if by sixth sense...

She looks toward the point of view...

REYNOLDS, seated behind the wheel of his car, looks back at her. She flips him off, as he smiles and slowly drives away.

When Audrey turns back to her truck, she sees her boys practising the same gesture.

AUDREY

Hey, don't do that, it's rude.

She closes the door.

EXT. BANK MANAGER'S OFFICE -- DAY

A busy reception area.

Through a glass wall, Fred shakes hands with the bank MANAGER, a woman in her thirties, wearing a beige business suit and a plastic smile.

They sit on opposite side of her desk.

FRED (V.O.)

What happened to Glenn?

INT. BANK MANAGER'S OFFICE -- DAY

Fred looks uncomfortable.

MANAGER

Mr. Houton's been transferred.

FRED

Transferred? He's been here like what, 20 years? I got him tickets to a game last week.

MANAGER  
(opening folder)  
I have everything I need right here.

FRED  
No offense, but Glenn said it was just a matter of signing some papers. Maybe you could talk to him.

MANAGER  
Mr. Houton may not have been aware of our new policies...

FRED  
We're just after an extension. When my wife passed, the insurance fell short. We can catch up.

Fred can't meet the Manager's eyes.

FRED (CONT'D)  
We're asking you to work with us a little bit. We can't lose our house, I've had it thirty years...

MANAGER  
I see you've re-financed three times...

FRED  
Like I said, we went through a bad stretch. We'll make it up, whatever it takes. We just need some time.

She taps her finger on the paperwork.

MANAGER  
(looking at a spreadsheet)  
I wish we could help, but with these new policies, my hands are tied.

Fred realizes the decision's been made.

FRED  
(standing)  
You're hands aren't so tied when you're sticking them in people's pockets.  
(turning at door)  
Stay away from my house.

Fred storms out.

INT. STAIRS/LIVING ROOM, FRED'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Fred works with his tools to tighten and fix the bannister. He hears creaking at the top of the stairs and glances up to see...

Audrey with a baseball bat. He continues to work.

FRED  
Looking for a game?

AUDREY  
Thought you were a burglar.  
(coming down)  
Whatcha doin', Fred?

FRED  
Pretty obvious, isn't it?

AUDREY  
It's 2 am.

She sits on the bottom step watching him work.

FRED  
I need to fix up a few things.

AUDREY  
Bank said, 'No', huh?

Fred tightens a bolt.

AUDREY (CONT'D)  
Mom once told me the reason she  
fell in love with you was the way  
you swung the bat. She said you  
always swung for the fences.

FRED  
Lot of good it did me.

AUDREY  
You won her heart.

FRED  
And as Mr. Frost would say,  
'...that has made all the  
difference.'

AUDREY  
You okay, Fred?



FRED  
Why wouldn't I be?

AUDREY  
You're reciting poetry.

Fred tests the bannister, it's fixed.

FRED  
Let's get some sleep.

He gathers his tools.

EXT. FRED'S HOUSE -- DAY

The yard has been mowed and the hedges trimmed. Fred paints white primer on exposed woodwork, when...

The sound of a car door shutting gets his attention...

Reynolds approaches.

REYNOLDS  
You going to do the whole house  
yourself?

Fred looks him over - suit, tie, goes back to painting.

FRED  
If you're from the bank, you can  
fuck off. This is still my  
property.

Nothing can dull Reynolds' smile.

REYNOLDS  
It's quite a job. I would've  
thought someone in your condition  
might want to take it easy, you  
know, make the most of the time  
you've got left.

Fred stops painting, Reynolds' words catching up to him.

FRED  
Am I supposed to know what you're  
talking about?

Reynolds takes Fred's brush, laying on a brush stroke.

REYNOLDS

Mr. Lake, there's no point in me beating around the bush, your time's much too valuable. And for what it's worth, I'm sorry life's treating you this way.

(handing back the brush)

You have an inoperable brain tumor, and while your doctor says you could live months, the likelihood of you making it past three is...let's say, hopeful.

FRED

I don't know where you got your information...

REYNOLDS

I know all about you, and your situation, Mr. Lake. I know you're on the verge of losing your house. I know your daughter's ex-husband, Adrian Ramirez, maxed out her credit cards then split. He's hiding out in Guanajuato, Mexico, shacked up with a German student. I know when you were in the Venezuelan league you batted .275, and I know you're basically a good and decent man who wants to do what's best for his family before it's too late.

FRED

Who are you?

Reynolds hands Fred a BUSINESS CARD.

REYNOLDS

I'm someone who can help. Come see me tomorrow at 11 am.

Audrey pulls her truck into the driveway, recognizing Reynolds. He smiles at her as he walks back to his car and she meets her father on the porch.

AUDREY

(to Fred)

I told you they're vultures.

Audrey continues inside and Fred takes another look at the card...

'AGENT REYNOLDS, AMERICAN PATRIOTS FOR FREEDOM'. There's an official insignia at the top.

EXT. STRIP MALL -- DAY

A two-story structure of stucco and glass, shaped like an 'L'. The building houses fast food restaurants, healing centers, Korean education classes, etc.

Fred emerges from the stairwell upstairs, checking the addresses against Reynolds' card, suspicious.

EXT. OUTSIDE AGENCY, STRIP MALL LANDING -- DAY

Fred finds a dark glass door with a security camera above.

Fred hesitates before pushing the button.

The door opens and Fred feels a cold blast of air. A woman, 30, greets him...

AGENT **REDDING**. Dressed 'up casual' she looks like a greyhound.

REDDING

I'm Agent Redding.  
(shaking hands)  
Mr. Lake, I presume?

She moves aside and gestures for Fred to enter.

INT. AGENCY OFFICE, L.A. - CONTINUOUS -- DAY

When Fred enters, the heavy click of the security lock seals the door behind him.

REDDING

Follow me, Agent Reynolds is waiting for you.

FRED

Suppose when your first name is 'Agent', it doesn't give you a lot of career choices.

Redding ignores him, leading Fred across a carpeted floor, where he sees Two Assistants working on computers. Everything looks new.

FRED (CONT'D)  
 What are you anyway, CIA, FBI, I  
 hope you're not insurance?

Redding turns down a corridor, walking at a steady pace.  
 They reach an open doorway, and see Reynolds inside, fiddling  
 with a laptop computer hooked to a TV screen.

INT. SCREENING ROOM -- DAY.

Fred follows Redding inside.

REYNOLDS  
 Veronica, can you make this damn  
 thing work?  
 (to Fred)  
 I'm the definition of technophobe.

Redding goes to the computer, while Reynolds moves to Fred.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)  
 (to Fred in Spanish)  
 Hope you didn't have any trouble  
 finding us.

FRED  
 (in Spanish)  
 Why am I here?

REYNOLDS  
 (pleased)  
 Good, you haven't lost it. That's  
 going to be useful.

FRED  
 Useful for what? Why am I here?

REDDING  
 All set.

REYNOLDS  
 (to Redding)  
 We'll be okay now. Thanks.

Redding hands Reynolds a remote control and closes the door  
 behind her. Reynolds sets up two folding chairs.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)  
 Sorry it's kind of basic, but we  
 just moved in.

Fred's looking around at the bare room.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)  
Why don't you sit down and I'll  
explain everything.

Fred can't decide, continuing to evaluate Reynolds.

FRED  
I'll stand.

REYNOLDS  
(in Spanish)  
As you wish.

Reynolds uses the remote. No sound, but a riot in a South American town appears on the screen. Reynolds freezes frame on a (fuzzy) face...

Ricardo Diaz.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)  
This is ten years old, but I think  
you recognize him.

FRED  
This is it?

REYNOLDS  
Stay with me...

FRED  
You're wasting your time...

Reynolds holds up his hand, and the images play. From the riot to a village street, where...

The bodies of THREE HEADLESS CHILDREN are displayed side by side.

REYNOLDS  
Your *amigo* Diaz wanted to make a  
statement. Their mother tried to  
help a hostage.

FRED  
(impatient)  
Yeh okay, I get it...

REYNOLDS  
Now this...

ON SCREEN (amateur video):

Hand-held and unsure, images are dark and grainy...

A naked Howard Morris sits tied to a straight-backed chair. His head sags forward, dried blood cakes his swollen face.

On the opposite wall a LARGE WOODEN CROSS. A DOG HOWLS in the background.

DIAZ (V.O.)  
(English, Spanish accent)  
What is your name?

A Hooded Executioner steps behind the prisoner, pulling his head up by the hair.

DIAZ (V.O.)  
Tell us your name.

The prisoner speaks like a drunk.

MORRIS  
Howard Morris.

Ricardo **DIAZ**, a dark ghost on the periphery.

DIAZ  
You are a spy for the American government?

MORRIS  
Yes.

DIAZ  
Are you ready to go home?

Morris straightens.

MORRIS  
Yes, I want to go home.

Something glints in the Executioner's hand - HE SLICES MORRIS' THROAT.

DIAZ  
Adios.

The video transmission goes to static, and Reynolds pauses the image.

REYNOLDS  
That's Howard Morris. Diaz released the tape on his website. His family paid two million dollars ransom, but Diaz tortured and killed him anyway. He's a monster, Fred.

FRED

If your investigative powers are so great, you'd know I haven't had anything to do with him in thirty years.

REYNOLDS

But what about Elena?

Fred stares at Reynolds, speechless.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

We've been tracking her e-mails and that led us to you. It seems like you've remained friendly.

FRED

She's not a terrorist. She doesn't even live with him.

REYNOLDS

Maybe, but I bet she could get you an interview.

FRED

An interview? Why would I do that?

Reynolds turns off the screen.

REYNOLDS

(casually)

We want you to kill him.

Fred stares at Reynolds, dumbfounded.

FRED

What did you say?

REYNOLDS

Here's the thing, we can't get near him, but we think you can. People like Diaz always have something to say. He'd trust you.

FRED

Me? You want me to kill Ricardo? I don't know where you got the idea I'm some kind of killer. This must be a joke?

REYNOLDS

All you'd have to do is get close. We'll fit you with a small explosive device that will kill anyone within five feet. We'll make it very easy for you.

Reynolds waits for Fred to comprehend.

FRED

You want me to be a suicide bomber because I'm dying anyway, is that it?

Fred laughs sarcastically.

REYNOLDS

If you do this for us, we're prepared to give your daughter five million dollars.

Fred stares at Reynolds, still not believing it.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

You're dying Fred, and that's a fact. Three months, six months, a year and it's over. You could go on vacation, fix up your house, spend quality time with the family. Hell, I'm sure there's a ton of things you could do, but in the end you're still going to be dead, leaving a daughter with two young children drowning in your wake. What if you go down like your wife, the expense would be devastating. Where's your family going to live when the bank takes your house away?

Reynolds waits for Fred to react, but he doesn't.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

You're in a unique situation, this is not only a chance to secure the future of your family, but a way to make the world they live in a safer place. It's not a choice of whether you live or die, but what you leave behind. This is your chance to hit a walk-off home run.

Fred stares at Reynolds a moment still trying to figure out if he's serious.



FRED  
I'm leaving.

Fred walks to the door.

REYNOLDS  
I need your answer by tomorrow.

Fred leaves without answering.

INT. NEWSROOM, L.A. TRIBUNE - DAY

Fred sits at one of many desks, staring at the computer screen...

The photo (that Reynolds showed him) of the three headless children are on the screen.

He takes a pill from his vial, and as Barnes approaches...

Fred deletes the photo.

BARNES  
(smiling)  
Who you playing tonight?

FRED  
What?

BARNES  
You know who you're playing tonight?

FRED  
Boyle Heights.

BARNES  
(sitting)  
Audrey going?

Fred stands and puts his jacket on, hovering over Barnes' desk.

FRED  
About Audrey...

Barnes waits while Fred, unsure, considers...

FRED (CONT'D)  
I know she's a handful, but I need you to be good to her. Understand?

Barnes nods uncertainly and watches Fred walk away, trying to fill in the blanks.

EXT. LITTLE LEAGUE FIELD -- EVENING

Audrey, with Barnes beside her, sits with a Group Of Parents in the stands.

Two Little League Teams are playing. Fred, wearing a team hat, stands outside the dugout, watching...

Pedro standing on the pitcher's mound.

AUDREY  
(shouting)  
Come on, Pedro!

Her cell phone rings.

FRED  
(yelling to Pedro)  
Focus on the mitt, for Christ's  
Sake!

Several Parents look at him disdainfully.

Pedro throws the ball and it bounces a couple feet in front of the batter.

FRED (CONT'D)  
Time.

Fred walks to the mound, joined by the catcher, Ruben.

RUBEN  
He can't pitch.

FRED  
(to Pedro)  
You can throw harder than that. Aim  
at your brother's head...

Before he can say more...

Audrey, overjoyed, runs to the mound, still holding her phone.

AUDREY  
We got it!

FRED  
What?

AUDREY  
The loan, we got the loan. You did  
it, Fred. 50k!

Fred is dazed.

UMPIRE  
Play ball!

Audrey dances with joy.

INT. BOYS' BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Fred, a long silhouette, stands in the open doorway, looking inside. There are enough toys to fill a small store.

The boys sleep peacefully in twin beds. Pedro hugs his baseball glove like a teddy bear.

Audrey comes behind Fred.

AUDREY  
Aren't we the luckiest people you  
know?

FRED  
We are.

AUDREY  
Thanks, Fred.

FRED  
For what?

AUDREY  
For making a difference.

Audrey kisses her dad on the cheek and walks away.

INT. DENNY'S RESTAURANT -- MORNING

Fred spies Reynolds sitting at a booth. Fred sits opposite.

REYNOLDS  
Got your loan?

FRED  
It was you.

Reynolds leans back.

REYNOLDS

(smiling)

Look at it as a show of good faith  
from the U.S. Government.

A Waitress delivers breakfast to both of them.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

Hope you like eggs and bacon. You  
hear all kinds of things about  
what's healthy, but for me, it's  
not breakfast without eggs and  
bacon.

The Waitress pours coffee before leaving.

FRED

(whispering)

What if I agreed to everything you  
want and Diaz still won't see me?

Reynolds eats.

REYNOLDS

For a sincere effort we'll let you  
keep the loan, bank interest rates.  
On the other hand, if you decide  
not to try, I'm afraid the bank  
will have to withdraw the money.  
Unresolved credit issues or some  
bullshit like that.

(taking a bite of toast )

Your daughter would be pretty  
disappointed.

FRED

You're an complete asshole.

REYNOLDS

(undisturbed)

I'm a patriotic asshole. Your  
country needs your help, Fred.

FRED

I don't know how to kill someone.

REYNOLDS

We'll make it fast and easy. All  
you have to do is get close. You  
won't even have time to think about  
it.

Fred looks away, taking his time, thinking it through.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

Your grandkids could go to college, Audrey could choose to stay at home if she wanted. The money will give them choices.

FRED

How do I know you'll follow through?

Reynolds pulls some paperwork from his pocket and shows it to Fred.

REYNOLDS

We've already opened a Swiss bank account in Audrey's name.

(pointing at a total)

Look, 5 million dollars. She'll get the password when you're successful.

FRED

I'll need something in writing, too. More than your word.

REYNOLDS

(tight smile)

You're hurting my feelings, but okay, we'll work something up.

FRED

If I was going to do this, I want to see a plan. I can't just go into another country and kill someone without a plan.

REYNOLDS

If you want a plan, we'll give you a plan, but we have to move quick on this, time is limited.

Reynolds takes another bite, while Fred considers.

INT. LAUNDRY, FRED'S HOUSE -- DAY

A small hut with painted concrete walls, housing a washer and drier.

Audrey puts clothes from a basket into the wash machine, singing a SPANISH FOLK SONG. She checks the pockets for anything left behind. Audrey finds a pen in her son's pants, then pulls something from Fred's shirt pocket...

REYNOLD'S CARD. She shelves her 'finds' beside the drier.

Fred watches Audrey a moment or two, before a shift in light alerts her to his presence. She closes the lid to the washer, muffling the sound.

FRED

Sometimes you look just like your mother.

This pleases Audrey, and she puts a loose strand of hair behind her ear.

FRED (CONT'D)

I guess I never told you this, but I'm sorry I wasn't around more when you were growing up. I know it wasn't easy.

Audrey, unused to Fred's introspection, seems embarrassed.

AUDREY

We were proud of you.

(smiling)

And being the daughter of a big leaguer helped me get dates with the jocks.

Fred works around the edges of what he wants to say.

FRED

Listen, I was thinking even when we pay off the debts, there should be enough left to hire a painter, so why don't you get one.

AUDREY

I already did. I also got a carpenter, plumber and electrician.

She picks up a basket of dry clean clothes and Fred takes it from her.

FRED

That's good, because it doesn't look like I'm going to be around for a couple weeks or so.

Audrey, surprised, follows him out.

EXT. BACKYARD, FRED'S HOUSE -- DAY

Audrey follows Fred, carrying the clothes, from the hut to the back door.

AUDREY  
When was this decided?

FRED  
The paper's sending me to  
Venezuela.

AUDREY  
What for?

FRED  
We're doing a story on 'World  
Ball'. Auntie said she'd help you  
out with the boys.

AUDREY  
When are you leaving?

FRED  
(pausing)  
Yeh, here's the thing, I have to  
fly out tonight. The guy who was  
supposed to go got sick. I'm taking  
his place and everything was  
already set up.

AUDREY  
Tonight?

FRED  
I know it's short notice, but  
that's the way it worked out. We  
could use the money.

AUDREY  
I know, but...

Fred disappears into the house, Audrey following.

EXT. LAX, DEPARTURE PARKING -- NIGHT

Drivers from several cars off-load Travellers. Fred and Audrey stand behind her phone company truck, as he pulls his bag out of the back. The boys stand beside them.

AUDREY  
Sure you've got enough clean  
underwear?

FRED  
Underwear is overrated.

Fred catches her eye and the smile vanishes.

FRED (CONT'D)  
There's a safety deposit key in my  
night stand. If something comes up,  
it's all in there.

AUDREY  
What something?

Fred really looks at her.

FRED  
I love you, Aud.

This is so uncharacteristic that Audrey is stunned.

AUDREY  
Okay.

FRED  
You boys look after your mom, and  
don't throw junk, it's bad for your  
arm.

Fred quickly heads for the airport entrance.

AUDREY  
Dad!

He doesn't turn around.

AUDREY (CONT'D)  
(to herself)  
What just happened?

INT. ECONOMY CABIN, 747 -- NIGHT

Many Passengers sleep, while others watch the on-board movie.  
Fred, window seat, examines them, recognizing the distance  
between their lives and his.

A Stewardess hands him a cup of water, and he shakes a pill  
from his orange-colored vial, popping it in his mouth.



INT. ARRIVAL'S LOBBY, SIMON BOLIVAR AIRPORT (CARACAS) -- DAY

Fred, exhausted, carries his one bag, emerging with the other Passengers. An Eager Boisterous Crowd of relatives and Taxi Drivers waits for them.

A man in his thirties with a scar that tries to widen a non-existent smile, approaches Fred...

**JOSE.**

JOSE

You Lake?

FRED

I'm Lake.

JOSE

Jose.

Jose grabs Fred's bag, spearheading their way through the crowded lobby.

Jose's English is basic.

JOSE (CONT'D)

(Spanish accent)

How you feel?

FRED

I'll try not to drop dead before we leave the airport.

They make their way into the bright sunshine.

INT./EXT. JOSE'S CAR/CARACAS -- DAY

Fred sits in the front seat, while Jose expertly negotiates the traffic.

A modern city with glass skyscrapers and ribbons of concrete freeway. The glare, noise and pollution put Fred in a trance.

JOSE

Elena live alone in Alta Mira. Diaz keep their son with him. This is his control on her.

FRED

She has children? Are you sure?

JOSE

His name is Hugo. He has eight years, but not so well. Diabetes. She must be careful for sake of her son.

Jose pulls the car into the circular driveway of a modern hotel.

JOSE (CONT'D)

(handing him a slip of paper)

Call her now.

(Fred takes it)

In your condition, sooner is better, no?

The Doorman opens Fred's door and he gets out.

EXT. FRED'S HOTEL -- DAY

Fred takes a few steps then turns to watch Jose drive away.

He walks toward the hotel's entrance.

INT. FRED'S HOTEL ROOM -- DAY

A generic room with a view of the city.

Fred puts his bag on the bed and goes to the balcony. He sings the same folk song his daughter sang in the laundry. Then, unexpectedly...

He staggers, as if his legs had turned to jelly. He just manages to sit on the bed.

INT. LIVING ROOM, FRED'S HOUSE -- DAY

The mail, pushed through the door slot falls to the floor, and a plump, dark-complected older woman, AUNTIE, arrives to pick it up.

Carpenters and Painters are busy at work in the background.

AUDREY (O.S.)

(in Spanish)

Have some lunch, Auntie.

Auntie hands over the letters.

Auntie wanders off, as Audrey flips through the mail, her eyes snag on a windowed letter addressed to Fred.

The windowed letter comes from a medical lab. She weighs it in her hand and holds it up to the light, before opening it.

Unfolding the bill inside, her hand trembles.

Audrey takes out her cell phone and punches in a number.

AUDREY (CONT'D)

(on cell)

Hey Fred, you just got a bill from a neurologist and I'm kind of worried. Call me.

She hangs up, staring at the bill.

INT. DOCTOR'S RECEPTION -- DAY

A Few Patients wait, one of them has a bald head with a red diagram.

Audrey stands at the front desk, and calls out to the Receptionist busy on a computer.

AUDREY

I need to see Dr. Marion.

The Receptionist looks her way.

AUDREY (CONT'D)

I'm not a patient...

RECEPTIONIST

He's on vacation. Is it about the phone?

Audrey, temporarily taken off-guard, realizes she's wearing her telephone company uniform.

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

Follow me.

The Receptionist opens the inner office door.

INT. NEUROLOGIST'S OFFICE -- DAY

Recognized as the same office where Fred learned of his tumor, the Receptionist shows Audrey inside.

RECEPTIONIST  
 (pointing at phone)  
 Just there.

Audrey sees the filing cabinet.

AUDREY  
 Thanks.

Audrey goes to the desk.

AUDREY (CONT'D)  
 I won't be long.

When the Receptionist has left, Audrey closes the door and moves to the filing cabinet, opening a drawer marked 'L - M'. Quickly looking through the cabinet, she finds her father's folder, 'FRED LAKE'.

Inside are three X-rays. Audrey holds the X-rays up to the window light, but can't decipher their meaning. Returning them to Fred's folder, she pulls out the medical summary.

Reading the summary...

AUDREY (CONT'D)  
 (to herself)  
 'Glioblastoma'...

Hearing a male voice approaching, she replaces the summary, but finds something else at the bottom of the folder...

REYNOLD'S BUSINESS CARD.

INT. JOURNALIST'S BAR -- NIGHT

The bar as before, with Barnes and Two Other Journalists watching a baseball game on the TV above the bar.

JOURNALIST  
 Idiot. Why's he swinging? The guy's  
 thrown six straight balls.

JOURNALIST 2  
 Audrey.

Barnes turns to see Audrey approaching like a heat-seeking missile.

BARNES  
 Hey Aud...

AUDREY  
I need to see you outside.

She turns for the door before Barnes responds.

BARNES  
(getting up)  
Sure.

Barnes follows her, and...

One of his friends fanes pregnancy.

EXT. OUTSIDE JOURNALIST'S BAR, DOWNTOWN STREET -- NIGHT

Audrey waits as Barnes comes out. He can see she's distressed.

BARNES  
What's up?

AUDREY  
Did Fred go to Venezuela for the paper?

BARNES  
Not that I know about.

AUDREY  
(tears in her eyes)  
He's got a 'glioblastoma', a malignant brain tumor.

BARNES  
(shocked)  
Are you sure?

AUDREY  
I saw his medical file, I googled it.

BARNES  
Shit.  
(still trying to comprehend)  
Why would he go to Venezuela if he's dying?

AUDREY  
Something's very fucked up here. I have to go.

Audrey heads to her truck.

BARNES

Let me know if you hear from him...

Barnes watches Audrey go.

INT. LAUNDRY, FRED'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Audrey enters, phone to her ear, turning on the light.

AUDREY

(on cell)

It's me again, your freaked out  
daughter. I need to know what's  
going on and why you're in fucking  
Venezuela. Call me back.

(adding)

Please!

(hangs up)

Audrey searches through 'the finds' she pulled from the  
laundry and...

Retrieves REYNOLD'S CARD, then...

From her pocket, she gets out the card from Fred's file,  
comparing the two...

They're identical.

INT. TAXI, ALTA MIRA -- NIGHT

Fred, freshly dressed, sits nervously in the back and adjusts  
his tie.

Out the window, an up-market neighborhood with cinemas,  
restaurants and designer boutiques.

Fred takes out his pills and pops one with a swallow from a  
water bottle.

EXT. OUTSIDE ELENA'S APARTMENT BLDG -- NIGHT

Fred emerges from the taxi on a busy, up-market street.

His eyes track up a sleek modern building as the taxi drives  
away.

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE ELENA'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

It takes Fred a moment to compose himself, as...

The music switches inside and makes him smile. Fred finally raps on the door.

The door opens to reveal a young grinning MAID with gold tooth.

ELENA (O.S.)  
You can go now, Christina.

The Maid moves past Fred, walking down the corridor and Fred looks back inside the apartment to see...

A woman in her early forties, with lustrous black hair pulled up, revealing an elegant neck. She wears a stylish dress showing off a slender figure...

**ELENA.** She resembles the girl from the earlier photo. They look at their older selves, nervous smiles.

ELENA (CONT'D)  
She slowed down her work so she could meet my mystery man. Now she can tell everyone in the building.

They appraise one another.

ELENA (CONT'D)  
Don't you want to come in?

FRED  
As long as I'm in the neighborhood.

Elena steps aside for Fred to enter, they avoid touching.

INT. ELENA'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

The small stylish apartment has modern paintings on the walls. The sliding glass balcony doors give a panoramic view of the city, and outside...

A table set for dinner with lit candles.

Fred, standing in the center on a Persian carpet, takes it all in.

ELENA  
So, this is where I live. A little small but adequate.

FRED  
It's very you.  
(looking at a painting)  
You were always sophisticated.

ELENA  
Sophisticated? I was nineteen when  
you left.

Elena goes to the kitchen counter and pours two glasses of  
red wine.

FRED  
(smiling)  
I like your music.

ELENA  
I wore out the CD you gave me.  
Everything is on ipod now, anyway.

Fred watches her and she returns with the wine. She studies  
his face.

ELENA (CONT'D)  
(half smile)  
You're older and sadder.

FRED  
Maybe the two go together.

ELENA  
Not tonight.

FRED  
Not tonight.

Fred clinks her glass.

FRED (CONT'D)  
To old times.

ELENA  
To another world.

Fred hesitates looking into her smiling eyes as she drinks.

ELENA (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry, would you prefer beer?

FRED  
This is fine.

Fred drinks.

ELENA  
You must be tired.

FRED  
Hungry.



ELENA

Good, I made something.

INT. JOSE'S CAR, OUTSIDE ELENA'S BUILDING -- NIGHT

Jose sits in his car, with headphones. There's a constant stream of traffic and Pedestrians moving past.

He listens to the conversation upstairs, the same music in the background.

FRED (V.O.)

This is nice, Elena. I was going to take you out.

Jose smiles and crudely flirts with a Female Pedestrian.

ELENA (V.O.)

You don't trust my cooking?

Jose raises his eyes to a balcony high above, where Fred and Elena should be.

FRED (V.O.)

I have health insurance.

EXT. ELENA'S BALCONY -- NIGHT

With the sparkling city as a backdrop, Fred and Elena sit across from one another at a small table. Each has a glass of wine with hors d'oeuvres between them.

The same music Jose hears filters from the living room and Fred gazes at the view.

ELENA

So no warning, you just arrive?

FRED

I thought you might run for the hills.

ELENA

Why would I do that?

FRED

Everything happened kind of quick, there was no time.

Fred takes a drink of wine, as Elena waits.

FRED (CONT'D)

I don't want this to ruin our time together, because I really wanted to see you. If you can't help, you can't help.

ELENA

What kind of help?

FRED

(uneasy)

It's like this, my editor found out I knew Ricardo. He asked me if I could get an interview.

Elena turns degrees colder, aggressive and hurt.

ELENA

(Spanish)

You want me to get you an interview with Ricardo, this is why you're here.

FRED

Like I said, If you can help, that would be fine, but if not, that's fine, too. It's just a proposal. Something that could happen if everyone agreed.

She takes her time.

ELENA

I don't know where he is. Ricardo and I don't speak, we haven't for a long time. I can't help you.

FRED

Okay, fine, that's out of the way. It was just an idea. It's not important.

Fred puts his hand on hers, and their eyes meet.

ELENA

(standing)

I'll check on dinner.

Fred alone, breathes a sigh of relief.

INT. FRED'S HOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT

When Fred enters the lights are on. Jose sits facing him, looking up with the grin of a killer.

JOSE  
He's still alive.

FRED  
Make yourself at home.

REYNOLDS (O.S.)  
Must have been nice catching up.

Fred walks further into the room to see Reynolds seated, drinking a cup of coffee.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)  
There's more coffee if you want some.

Fred tosses his coat on the bed.

FRED  
It's over. She doesn't know where he is or how to reach him. I made 'a sincere effort', that's all I can do.

REYNOLDS  
Well, I don't think she's being completely honest with you.

FRED  
I trust her a hell of a lot more than I do you.

Reynolds takes a small tape recorder from his pocket and presses play.

RICARDO (V.O.)  
(in Spanish)  
When are you meeting Fred?

ELENA (V.O.)  
(in Spanish)  
Tonight.

RICARDO (V.O.)  
(in Spanish)  
Why is he here?

ELENA (V.O.)  
 (in Spanish)  
 He wants to see me.

RICARDO (V.O.)  
 (in Spanish)  
 Ah, Elena, my dear sweet wife.  
 After all these years, the flame  
 still burns.

ELENA (V.O.)  
 (in Spanish)  
 Let me speak to Hugo.

DIAZ (V.O.)  
 Your mother...

HUGO (V.O.)  
 (boy's voice in Spanish)  
 Hello, Mama.

ELENA (V.O.)  
 (in Spanish)  
 How are you feeling? Do you need  
 anything?

RICARDO (V.O.)  
 (in Spanish)  
 Be careful, my Elena.

The line goes dead, and Reynolds stops the tape. Jose leans  
 back in his chair, still grinning.

REYNOLDS  
 Did you make any plans to meet  
 again?

FRED  
 Tomorrow.

REYNOLDS  
 Good. Why not tell her you're dying  
 and you need the money? Maybe  
 she'll be sympathetic.

Reynolds moves to the door with Jose following, then turns to  
 Fred.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)  
 I sure hope this works out,  
 Audrey's pretty much run through  
 the loan money.

Fred watches as Reynolds and Jose leave, then looks back out the window.

INT./EXT. OFFICE/STRIP MALL CORRIDOR -- DAY.

VIDEO MONITOR: Audrey's face appears, she's buzzing the door. She looks directly into the monitor.

AUDREY  
(on monitor)  
I'm not leaving until you open this door.

The door opens and Audrey faces Agent Redding.

REDDING  
What can I do for you?

AUDREY  
I'm Fred Lake's daughter, and I want to know what you're doing with him?

REDDING  
Sorry, but I don't know what you're talking about.

Audrey pulls Reynolds' card from her pocket and hands it to Redding.

AUDREY  
I found this in Fred's medical file. It has your address on it. I also found another one in his shirt pocket also with this address.

Redding hands the card back, and Audrey tries to see around her.

REDDING  
Agent Reynolds isn't in the office, but if you'd like to leave a message, I'll make sure he gets it.

AUDREY  
All right, here's my message: I don't know what you're playing at, but my father's dying and I want to find out where he is and what he's doing.

(MORE)

AUDREY (CONT'D)

Tell Agent Reynolds if he doesn't contact me with some information, I'm going to the police, and if that doesn't work I know people at the newspaper.

REDDING

I'll pass that on.

Redding closes the door.

VIDEO MONITOR: Audrey waits for a moment glaring, unsatisfied, then leaves.

INT. CANTINA/RESTAURANT -- DAY

It's a popular place with Families and Businessmen seated at wooden tables.

Fred stands at the railing of the veranda, overlooking the Caribbean Sea. Container ships and oil tankers line up, waiting their turn to enter the basin.

Fred turns to see Elena talking to a Man behind the bar...

COUSIN (one of the men who abducted Morris) - the men make eye contact. Cousin and Elena finish their conversation and Elena carries two beers back to Fred.

ELENA

In a minute you will taste the best empanadas you ever ate.

Fred takes one of the offered beers.

FRED

(looking towards Cousin)  
Friend of yours?

ELENA

My cousin. Why, are you jealous?

Cousin continues to look at Fred.

FRED

I thought he might be.

Fred turns his attention back to the ships at sea, and Elena tries to read him.

ELENA

A penny for your thoughts.

FRED  
(smiling)  
You wouldn't be getting your  
money's worth.

ELENA  
No?  
(looking out at the sea)  
You know, it was very hard for me  
after you left. You broke my heart,  
Fred.

FRED  
I was a kid. All I could think  
about was baseball.

ELENA  
Then when your wife died you  
emailed me. Why did you do that?

Fred turns his full attention to her.

FRED  
Because you were part of the  
happiest days of my life. I needed  
to be reminded.

Elena takes his hand.

ELENA  
(taking her time)  
How long will you stay?

Fred looks back to the bar and sees Cousin watching them.

FRED  
There's something I need to tell  
you.

ELENA  
(hopeful)  
Tell me.

FRED  
I'm dying. I've got a brain tumor.  
They've given me three to six  
months.

ELENA  
You're telling a joke.

FRED

I wish it was. I didn't want to mislead you. The money from this interview would help my family.

It takes her a moment to register the information, and she pulls away.

ELENA

(upset, loud)

You just wanted to use me for your interview and money.

People at the other tables turn toward Fred and Elena.

FRED

It's not like I wanted this.

She takes a few steps towards the exit then faces Fred again, full of rage.

ELENA

(angry, in Spanish)

You made me think about the future.

Fred watches her storm out.

EXT. CANTINA/RESTAURANT -- AFTERNOON

As Fred comes out, Elena is closing the door to her car.

FRED

Elena, stop!

She drives away without looking back.

FRED (CONT'D)

Shit!

Fred then sees...

Jose, grinning like a jackass, sitting in his own car across the road.

INT. FRED'S BEDROOM -- DAY

The end table drawer opens, empty but for a key...

A SAFETY DEPOSIT KEY. Audrey pulls it out.



INT. SAFETY DEPOSIT VAULT, BANK -- DAY

The Teller, safety deposit box in hand, leads Audrey down an aisle between walls of safety deposit boxes.

INT. BANK CUBICLE -- DAY

The Teller sets the safety deposit box down on a bench, then leaves, closing the curtain.

Audrey lifts the lid, to find the box's meager contents: Fred's will, some of her mom's jewelry, Fred's Dodgers' baseball card, and...

The original photograph of the one shown to Weinstein (Fred, Diaz and Elena). She turns the photo over, which reads (in Spanish):

*'To Fred, my one true love. I wait for you. Elena.'*

Audrey turns the photo over and looks at Elena closer, then puts it to the side.

Beneath everything else, a new BROWN ENVELOPE.

Audrey opens the envelope, and finds several pages stapled together...

It's a LIFE INSURANCE POLICY. She flips through pages, growing increasingly interested, until her eyes are snagged by something on the third page.

AUDREY  
(to herself)  
What the...

She flips to a page back, then forward again.

EXT. L.A. ZOO PARKING LOT -- DAY

Audrey waits anxiously next to her car. She has parked far enough away from the entrance that nothing is within 100 meters.

She soon sees another car wandering, and waves it over. It parks beside her, and Barnes steps out, wearing a Hawaiian shirt and shorts.

BARNES  
Couldn't you find anywhere less  
convenient?

AUDREY

(furtive)

I wanted to make sure you weren't  
being followed.

BARNES

(looking around)

Who by?

AUDREY

Just listen and tell me if I'm  
crazy.

(gathering herself)

If you needed someone to do  
something dangerous, even suicidal,  
how could you get them to do it?

BARNES

I don't know, how?

AUDREY

I couldn't sleep last night putting  
it together. I know why Fred's gone  
to Venezuela.

BARNES

Why?

AUDREY

To kill Ricardo Diaz.

BARNES

(baffled)

You are crazy.

She hands him the BROWN ENVELOPE.

AUDREY

Read it. It was in Fred's safety  
deposit box. He told me to look if  
something happened.

BARNES

What is it?

Barnes opens the envelope and takes out the document.

AUDREY

It's a five million dollar life  
insurance policy on Ricardo Diaz.

BARNES

What's Fred doing with it?

AUDREY

Turn the page.

Barnes flips the page and his jaw drops.

BARNES

You're the beneficiary.

AUDREY

We get a loan we don't deserve,  
Fred's doctor can't be reached and  
then Fred has to make a last minute  
trip to Venezuela that nobody knows  
about. Who can do all this stuff  
and make me the beneficiary of five  
million dollars? Here...

(handing him Reynolds  
card)

'American Patriots for Freedom'.  
Only the CIA would have a stupid  
name like that. I found it in  
Fred's medical file, then when I  
went to the address, some bitch in  
a suit pretended she didn't know  
anything about it.

Barnes looks at her, but doesn't get it.

BARNES

I think you need to slow down.

AUDREY

I can't slow down, there's no time,  
Fred's going to get himself killed.

Barnes starts to say something, but Audrey keeps going.

AUDREY (CONT'D)

It's obvious, they want Fred to  
kill Diaz so they convince him he's  
got nothing to lose.

Barnes is having trouble putting it together.

AUDREY (CONT'D)

Fred doesn't have a brain tumor,  
it's all been a set-up. They're  
using him. That's how they'll get  
him to kill Diaz.

BARNES

Your dad's not a killer...

AUDREY

He'd do it for us, for his family.  
Come on! And what about the  
insurance policy, it's a reward.

BARNES

I don't know, it's kind of out  
there...

AUDREY

Fuck!

Barnes sees Audrey looking over his shoulder and turns to  
see...

An anonymous car stopping to face them. When he turns back  
around...

Audrey jumps in her car and drives off quickly.

INT. FRED'S HOTEL ROOM -- DAY

Fred looks out the balcony window, while Reynolds sits  
reading a paper.

FRED

Do you ever think you could be  
wrong?

(turning to Reynolds)

Don't you have any doubts?

REYNOLDS

(puts paper aside)

About Diaz?

FRED

Any of it, all of it? What makes us  
so smart we know what's best for  
the rest of the world?

REYNOLDS

You're on the wrong track, Fred. We  
don't waste time worrying about  
what pleases other people, can't  
afford to. We dropped the ball on  
9/11, and we won't let it happen  
again. The world's a small place, a  
sparrow fart in Beijing means  
something in St. Louis. Don't look  
too deep, it's all about self-  
preservation, protecting our way of  
life.

(MORE)

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)  
Make no mistake, the world will be  
a better place without Diaz.

FRED  
How long are we going to give  
her...

The phone rings.

REYNOLDS  
(smiling)  
Ah, saved by the bell...

FRED  
(on phone)  
Hello...  
(grabbing a pen and taking  
notes)  
I understand...Elena...

He puts the phone down.

FRED (CONT'D)  
She's arranged the meeting.  
They're picking me up tonight.

Reynolds stands and punches a number into his cell phone.

REYNOLDS  
(on phone)  
We're on.

He puts his phone away.

EXT. CARACAS CITY STREET -- DAY

Reynolds drives with Fred beside him. The car negotiates an area full of shanties, Human Scavengers and factories. A cloud of dust engulfs the car.

They stop outside an abandoned office building.

Reynolds leads Fred inside.

INT. CORRIDOR, ABANDONED OFFICE BUILDING -- DAY

A sun-drenched building with missing flooring, rat droppings and holes in the walls.

Fred follows Reynolds. As they pass an open door...

Fred sees that Squatters have taken over - clothes hang and Kids run.

FRED  
Nice place.

REYNOLDS  
The rent's not so bad.

Reynolds stops at an anonymous looking door, knocks twice and it is opened by Jose.

INT. ABANDONED OFFICE -- DAY

The sun shines in, they're several stories above the street. Disused for months, desks have been broken up for firewood and papers are scattered on burnt, mildewed carpet.

REYNOLDS  
(to Jose)  
Give us a look.

Jose hands Reynolds two identical wristwatches.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)  
(showing Fred)  
They're exactly the same, except...  
(turning the watches over)  
One has an inscription. 'To Dad my  
best friend, love Audrey'.

FRED  
That's not what she calls me.

Reynolds doesn't understand.

FRED (CONT'D)  
She calls me, 'Fred'.

REYNOLDS  
Doesn't matter. The inscription  
gives it sentimental value, adds  
authenticity. Doesn't look so much  
like a bomb.

Reynolds hands the watch to Fred, and Fred cautiously weighs it in his hand.

FRED  
The bomb's inside here?

REYNOLDS

Pretty amazing, huh? You don't have to worry, it's safe unless it's activated.

FRED

If all I do is blow off an arm it's not going to be much use.

REYNOLDS

We set up a demonstration so you can see how it works.

Reynolds gives the other watch to Jose, who they follow to the doorway of an inside office. There are mattresses stacked against the wall, and...

In the middle of the room two manikins stand about five feet apart. Jose straps the watch to the wrist of a manikin, then moves back outside the doorway.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

(to Fred)

Put your hands over your ears.

Fred does, and Reynolds nods to Jose, who activates a remote control.

There is an explosion and a cloud of dust. Both manikins have been blown apart.

Fred, shocked, is slow to uncover his ears and Reynolds pulls his arm down.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

The explosive is probably a little more powerful than we predicted, but the important thing is to get close. The closer the better. Understand?

FRED

Am I suppose to use a remote control?

REYNOLDS

That was just for the demonstration.

Reynolds points to the watch that Fred is still holding (with the inscription).

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

You pull out the stem and set the hands to...

(looking to Jose)

What time?

JOSE

(in Spanish)

Three thirty-six.

REYNOLDS

(to Fred)

Three thirty-six. When you push it back in the watch will detonate.

FRED

Three thirty-six.

REYNOLDS

Any questions?

Fred realizes he's broken into a cold sweat, his mouth dry.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

You okay?

FRED

Yeah.

REYNOLDS

Piece of cake. You pull the stem, set the watch, get close and push it in. That's all there is to it. You think you can do that?

JOSE

(smiling)

You won't feel a thing.

Fred glances towards the destroyed manikins.

REYNOLDS

Why don't you put it on, get used to it.

Fred carefully straps on the watch.

Reynolds and Jose exchange a quick glance.

INT. FRED'S HOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT

Fred sits on the bed with the phone to his ear, a recorded message on the other end.



AUDREY (V.O.)  
You've reached the Lake/Ramirez  
residence. Leave a message.

The 'beep' sounds...

FRED  
Audrey, it's me...

He runs out of things to say.

A knock at the door, and Fred hangs up.

INT. JOSE'S CAR/CARACAS CITY STREET -- NIGHT

Jose drives, with Reynolds and Fred in the back seat. The streets are crowded and Fred unconsciously clutches his stomach. Reynolds notices.

REYNOLDS  
You remember your pills? No good  
getting sick now. We need you to  
stay healthy for a few days more.

FRED  
Thanks for your concern.

Jose pulls the car to the curb. A steady stream of  
Pedestrians walks by.

REYNOLDS  
This is as close as we can get.  
(pointing)  
The meeting is three blocks ahead  
on the right. You'll see a pharmacy  
on the corner. Don't complain,  
don't argue, do everything they say  
and you'll be fine.

Fred grabs his bag and opens his door.

FRED  
I'll do my part, make sure you do  
yours.

REYNOLDS  
You have your country's word. Good  
luck, Fred.

Fred shuts the door and walks away.

JOSE  
Did he really play for the Dodgers?

REYNOLDS  
Thirty-four games.

They watch Fred walk toward the corner, then...

Reynolds opens his door.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)  
Go around the block.

Reynolds dodges traffic as he quickly crosses the street.

EXT. CITY STREET, PHARMACY -- NIGHT

INTERCUT WITH REYNOLD'S POV...

As Fred walks, he's tense, watchful - everything intensified. He breaks into a sweat.

He sees the neon sign for the pharmacy and stops on the corner, attempting to step out of the pedestrian flow. He checks the time on his watch, then remembering, covers it carefully with his sleeve.

Fred looks around for anyone who might be watching him, and...

He just glimpses Reynolds across the street.

His stomach cramps, and he takes his vial of pills from his pocket, when...

His elbow is knocked by a passing Businessman, the vial flying into the gutter. Fred squats down to pick it up, before it disappears into a storm drain, and...

TWO HANDS GRAB HIM FROM ABOVE, PULLING HIM INTO THE WHITE VAN (seen before), the sliding door slamming shut.

From across the street, Reynolds watches the van pull away.

INT. BACK OF VAN -- NIGHT

Fred braces himself against the inside wall of the van as it makes a sharp turn. He faces...

TWO ARMED MEN with gold teeth. His hand touches a dark stain dried on the floor and he pulls away.

COUSIN  
 (heavy Spanish accent)  
 Take it easy, *Amigo*, the journey is  
 long.

Fred recognizes the driver as Cousin.

INT. JOSE'S CAR, CARACAS CITY STREET -- NIGHT

Reynolds gets in the car and Jose drives away...

REYNOLDS  
 (on cell)  
 They got him.

He hangs up.

EXT. MOUNTAINS, VENEZUELA -- MORNING

The van negotiates a rugged mountain switchback, the sun's rays illuminating a barren landscape.

EXT. ROADSIDE VILLAGE -- DAY

The van approaches a small dusty village and stops in front of a crumbling stone store.

Cousin gets out and opens the sliding door of the van, allowing the Two Armed Men and Fred to stagger out. Fred shields his eyes from the glaring sunlight.

COUSIN  
 (to Fred)  
 Take your bag. Wait here.

FRED  
 (in Spanish)  
 Is this where I meet Diaz?

COUSIN  
 (to Armed Man, in Spanish)  
 Get his bag.

An Armed Man pulls Fred's bag from the van and tosses it hard into Fred's chest.

COUSIN (CONT'D)  
 (to Fred)  
 Wait.

The Men get back inside the van, and Fred watches as it continues up the mountain road.

EXT. SIMON BOLIVAR AIRPORT (CARACAS) -- DAY

Passengers spill out the doors, as...

Audrey separates from the Crowd and hails a taxi.

INT. TAXI -- DAY

Audrey, sitting in the back as the taxi, talks on her cell.

AUDREY

(on phone)

...Hey Mark, it's me, Audrey... I'm in Caracas...Venezuela...Yeah, I know, crazy, huh?...Family business... Listen, I need a big favor. Can you get me a number and address for Elena Diaz or it might be Elena Montego...In Caracas, it could be unlisted...That's right...It's kind of an emergency...Thanks.

Audrey closes her cell and looks out the window.

EXT. VILLAGE STORE -- EVENING

Sundown comes early in the valley. Fred, sitting on the ground, back against a wall, hugs himself to keep warm.

He watches two boys toss a baseball back and forth, when...

The sound of an approaching vehicle causes Fred to turn. A pick-up truck, with Two Armed Men standing in the back pulls within meters of Fred, followed by a cloud of dust.

One of the Armed Men climbs down and casually stands in front of Fred who slowly gets up.

FRED

(in Spanish)

Did Ricardo Diaz send you?

Armed Man 1 grabs Fred's bag and throws it to Armed Man 2, who dumps Fred's things in the bed of the truck, searching/stirring the contents with his boot.

FRED (CONT'D)  
 (in Spanish)  
 I'm Fred Lake, a friend of  
 Ricardo's.

Armed Man 1 roughly frisks Fred. He finds Fred's pills and shakes the vial...

FRED (CONT'D)  
 (in Spanish)  
 It's medicine, I need those.

The Armed Man drops pills on the ground and finds his wallet. He pulls out his driver's licence, money and credit cards, while...

Fred picks up the vial of pills.

ARMED MAN 1  
 (reading licence, smiling)  
 Los Angeles.

Armed Man 1 shoves Fred's cards and money into his pocket and throws the empty wallet away.

FRED  
 (in Spanish)  
 You're making a mistake...

Armed Man 1 pulls at Fred's watch, and when Fred resists, he is punched in the stomach. Fred crumples.

The Man takes Fred's watch and throws it to Armed Man 2 in the bed of the truck, but misses. The watch hits hard.

ARMED MAN 1  
 (in English)  
 Get in.

Fred is forced to climb in the truck.

FRED  
 Diaz is waiting for me...

One of the Guerillas puts a HESSIAN SACK OVER FRED'S HEAD, then knocks on the roof of the cab. The truck takes off as...

The Man in the back listens to see if Fred's watch works...

Using his own watch, HE SETS IT to the correct time, pushing in the stem without incident.

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE ELENA'S APARTMENT -- DAY

Audrey stands outside Elena's apartment and knocks on the door. She waits and knocks again. There's no answer.

EXT. OUTDOOR CAFE/ELENA'S APARTMENT BLDG -- DAY

Audrey sits with a view of the entrance to Elena's apartment building. The photograph she got from Fred's safe deposit box lies on the table.

She has a cell phone to her ear.

AUDREY

(on phone)

...No, Sweetie, Auntie is in charge...Why not?...In a few days...a few days...

Elena makes her way to the entrance of her building, and Audrey quickly checks the photo.

AUDREY (CONT'D)

(on phone)

...I have to go, I'll call you later.

Audrey puts her phone away and jogs to catch Elena before she goes inside.

AUDREY (CONT'D)

Elena!

Elena stops and scrutinizes Audrey, trying to recognize her, ready to bolt.

AUDREY (CONT'D)

(out of breath, in Spanish)

Are you Elena Diaz?

Elena moves halfway inside the lobby door.

ELENA

(Spanish)

Do I know you?

Audrey holds up the photo for Elena to see.

AUDREY  
 (Spanish, fast)  
 I'm Audrey Lake, you know my  
 father. Something bad's going to  
 happen, and I need your help.

Elena looks her over, unsure.

CUT TO BLACK:

Close, heavy breathing stumbling feet...

FRED (V.O.)  
 (in Spanish)  
 I want to see Ricardo.

The sound of a door closed.

FRED (V.O.)  
 (in Spanish)  
 Can I take this off?

INT. TRANSFER ROOM -- NIGHT

A small room with a single lit candle next to a shabby  
 mattress on the floor.

Fred takes the hood off to look around and find himself  
 alone.

He checks the door to find it locked.

Fred takes a pill from his vial and puts it in his mouth.

INT. TRANSFER ROOM -- DAY

Daylight comes through a slatted window...

Curled up in a ball on the mattress, Fred is awakened by a  
 boot in his side.

COUSIN  
 Time to fucking go, Amigo.

FRED  
 They took my stuff.

Cousin leaves and Fred, groggy, sits up.

EXT. WHITE VAN/MOUNTAIN ROAD/VILLAGE -- EVENING

The van makes its way through thick vegetation into a small village. The buildings are stone and stucco.

Stopping outside a continuous wall with the occasional door...

Cousin walks around to open the back of the van. Fred, coaxed by an Armed Guerilla, climbs out. He hides his eyes from the bright sun.

Cousin pounds on the wall's door, which opens and Fred is pushed through the entrance by the Armed Guerilla.

EXT. COURTYARD, DIAZ COMPOUND -- DAY

Fred finds himself in an open courtyard, a compound with paths leading to other buildings.

Several Armed Guerillas sit drinking and eating, watching a movie about terrorists on a wide-screen TV. Women cook in an open kitchen, while others comfort Small Children.

Fred is pretty much ignored.

COUSIN

This way. Walk!

Cousin shoves him forward, forcing him down a winding path towards a hut near the back of the compound.

COUSIN (CONT'D)

In here.

FRED

I want to see Ricardo.

COUSIN

(smiling)

Who is this fucking Ricardo? I don't know no fucking Ricardo.

Cousin pushes Fred into the room.

INT. FRED'S ROOM, DIAZ COMPOUND -- NIGHT

Inside, the door behind Fred closes and locks.

The room has a straight-backed chair and a small table with small lamp and pitcher of water.



Dropping his bag, Fred takes a pill from his vial, drinking it down.

EXT. HILL TOP OVER LOOKING VILLAGE -- NIGHT.

Through NIGHT VISION GLASSES, the Village appears an eerie green. A couple Armed Guerillas enter Diaz's compound.

INT. MULAY'S OFFICE -- NIGHT

Parsons finishes his phone call.

PARSONS  
Lake's inside.

MULAY  
Is Diaz there?

PARSONS  
We don't know yet, we haven't seen him. If Lake activates the watch we'll know.

MULAY  
(ironic)  
Now we're depending on 'if'.

PARSONS  
What do you want to tell Weinstock, he's asking for an update?

MULAY  
(flat)  
Tell him everything's going according to plan. He'll find out when we're done.

PARSONS  
Lake's daughter showed up at the L.A. office looking for her father. She matched the card Reynold's gave Lake with the card in his medical file.

MULAY  
Shit, hire her.

INT. FRED'S CELL -- NIGHT

Fred sleeps restlessly, when a shadow passes between the slatted light and his bunk.

DIAZ

Fred?

Fred opens his eyes, looking up at a soft balding man with glasses. He bears no resemblance to the 'monster' Fred pictured.

Fred struggles to sit up, but Diaz holds him down.

DIAZ (CONT'D)

Rest my friend.

FRED

(relaxing)

Ricardo?

DIAZ

Who else?

Diaz lays the things taken from Fred on the small table.

DIAZ (CONT'D)

Sometimes my men exaggerate their powers.

Fred sees his watch among the cash and credit cards.

DIAZ (CONT'D)

Elena told me your condition. Are you in pain?

FRED

Tired.

DIAZ

Rest, and when you are ready we will talk. If you need something, ask.

FRED

Thanks.

Diaz turns at the door.

DIAZ

I was proud when you made the Dodgers.

Diaz closes the door behind him, and Fred now sees...

The distinctive WOODEN CROSS from Morris' death video. A DOG'S MOURNFUL HOWL is heard in the distance...

FADE TO BLACK.

...A TORTURED SCREAM

Fred sits bolt upright in his bunk, and realizes the sun is shining in. His face has a feverish sheen.

INT. BATHROOM, DIAZ COMPOUND -- DAY

Fred leans against the tile wall, letting the shower pound over him.

INT. FRED'S CELL -- DAY

Fred, freshly dressed, straps on his watch...

He pulls out the stem, has second thoughts, then puts it back in without setting it.

EXT. UNCOVERED WALKWAY/DINING COURTYARD -- DAY

Fred walks towards the courtyard.

HUGO (O.S.)  
(heavy accent)  
You played for the Dodgers?

Fred, startled, sees an eight year old behind him...

**HUGO**, pale and plump, has dark circles beneath his eyes. A box is attached to his belt.

FRED  
I'm Fred Lake.

Hugo and Fred shake hands.

HUGO  
I am Hugo Diaz. Do you think my English is proficient?

FRED  
Very proficient.

HUGO  
You're my father's friend.

FRED  
Yes.

HUGO

My father is more famous than you,  
and I will be more famous than my  
father.

DIAZ

Fred, come!

Diaz sits at a long bench table, having finished breakfast.  
Hugo runs to his father.

DIAZ (CONT'D)

Ah, you met Hugo?

Diaz hugs Hugo to him with affection.

FRED

Fame seems to run in the family.

DIAZ

Arrogance, maybe. Sit down, my  
friend.

Fred sits. Hugo hovers, watching Fred as though he were an  
exotic animal.

DIAZ (CONT'D)

(to Fred)

You want some breakfast?

FRED

I'm okay.

DIAZ

(Spanish)

You haven't eaten, you must eat.  
Maria?

A pretty woman in her twenties sticks her head out of the  
kitchen.

DIAZ (CONT'D)

Breakfast for Fred.

She disappears into the kitchen.

DIAZ (CONT'D)

You have children, no?

FRED

Two grandchildren.

DIAZ

(nodding)

You beat me in everything. Elena and me we started late. Hugo has diabetes, this is the reason for the box.

(indicating)

An insulin pump. He's my joy and pride.

FRED

Does he see his mother often?

Diaz stiffens slightly.

DIAZ

When it is possible. Safety is important and he's comfortable here.

(smiling)

You still like her.

FRED

We're friends.

DIAZ

Yes, good friends.

Diaz's stare makes Fred uncomfortable.

DIAZ (CONT'D)

I don't mind.

Maria puts a plate of rice and eggs in front of Fred and Diaz pulls her close, squeezing her bottom before she giggles and leaves.

DIAZ (CONT'D)

So, you have questions for me?

HUGO

My father is too smart.

FRED

The paper asked me to do an interview. They feel people will be interested in what you have to say.

DIAZ

Yes, of course. We terrorists always have something to say...

COUSIN comes to the outside door.

COUSIN  
(in Spanish)  
Ready?

DIAZ  
(to Fred)  
Ah, business. Finish your  
breakfast, then I will take you on  
a tour. You'll be able to see what  
the monster has done.  
(standing)  
Hugo will keep you company.

Diaz follows Cousin out the door.

Fred picks at his food.

HUGO  
You must eat, my father says so.

FRED  
(smiles)  
If your father says so.

Fred tries a bite.

INT. FLIGHT TOWER, AIRFORCE BASE - DAY

Out the large tinted window, on the runway...

A MQ9 (Reaper) drone fitted with four missiles rolls away  
from the tower, then turning at the end of the runway...

Approaches, gaining speed, until...

It takes off spearing a blue sky and disappearing into the  
distance.

The COLONEL on the phone...

COLONEL  
She's away...

INT. MULAY'S OFFICE -- DAY

Mulay, behind his desk and on the phone...

MULAY  
Let me know when it's in striking  
range.

Mulay puts the phone back in the cradle and looks at Parsons standing a few feet away.

MULAY (CONT'D)

I want 100% positive recognition.

PARSONS

We've lost contact with our field agent. Reynolds is trying to find out what happened.

MULAY

Killed, captured?

PARSONS

Don't know.

Mulay stands and walks around his desk, looking at Parsons.

MULAY

So we've got Lake, a 53 year old sports journalist.

PARSONS

He had to be invited by someone.

MULAY

You know we're fucked if Diaz turns up somewhere else. It would be hard to justify breaking international law.

PARSONS

Your call.

MULAY

He's got 6 hours.

Mulay looks out the window at the Capitol Building.

EXT. VILLAGE STREET -- DAY

Diaz and Fred walk down a village street, drenched in blinding sunshine. Children approach Diaz in small groups, as he distributes coins.

DIAZ

(to Fred)

'I am a river to my people.'

FRED

'Lawrence of Arabia'.

DIAZ  
Diaz of Venezuela.

Diaz points to a modest building under construction. The Workers notice Diaz and become more industrious.

DIAZ (CONT'D)  
I'm building a clinic. It will be the only one for a hundred kilometers, and the best one for a thousand.

Fred wants to ask a question, but hesitates.

DIAZ (CONT'D)  
Go ahead, ask.

FRED  
Is this money from the ransoms?

Diaz gives Fred a hard look, but continues walking.

DIAZ  
How do you think Morris or the others make this money? You think it floats from the sky? No. It is our money, they took it from our people. The ransom we ask is from our ground, from our labor, it was stolen from my country.

They round a corner and walk down another dusty road.

FRED  
And the murders, how do you justify the murders?

Diaz points to another new building, a school, where children are playing and laughing outside.

DIAZ  
You want to know about murder? What about the murder of these children? The Gringos come here like vampires to suck our country dry. They take our wealth, our pride, our dignity. They treat us like slaves in our own country. They don't care if our children have to beg or die in poverty. We are in a war, and sometimes people die. Would you not kill to protect the future of your children?



Fred turns away to watch the Children who are being called inside, and Diaz slaps him on the back.

DIAZ (CONT'D)

Come, I want to show you something special.

EXT. VILLAGE BASEBALL FIELD -- DAY

The grass is manicured and watered, there are dugouts and the field has electric lighting and scoreboard. An oasis in an otherwise dry, ramshackle town.

Diaz smiles at Fred's reaction.

DIAZ

What do you think, Amigo?

FRED

Where do you get the water?

Diaz is genuinely pleased.

DIAZ

We drill special wells for the sprinklers, and the field has it's own generator. It is my "Field of Dreams". I will invite FARC and the ELN to play us here, it can be the terrorist world series.

FRED

You're not kidding, are you?

DIAZ

We have a very good pitcher.

Diaz's attention is taken by Cousin, standing outside home plate.

DIAZ (CONT'D)

I have to go. Can you find your way back?

Fred nods uncertain.

DIAZ (CONT'D)

Ask anyone. You look tired, get some rest then we will continue your interview.

Diaz meets Cousin, and they walk away together.

EXT. VILLAGE STREETS -- DAY

Fred looks worn out, as he makes his way down one dusty street and then another - they all look the same, blank walls with doors.

Fred, exhausted, pauses at a crossroads, where he sees an Old Woman sitting outside her house.

FRED  
(in Spanish)  
Good afternoon, Senora. I'm lost,  
how do I get to the home of Ricardo  
Diaz?

The Old Woman doesn't seem to hear him.

FRED (CONT'D)  
(in Spanish)  
Where does Ricardo Diaz live?

OLD WOMAN  
(in Spanish)  
The screams won't let me sleep.  
I'm old, I need my sleep. What can  
I do?

Fred ambles on, tired and weak. The streets are deserted, shimmering heat waves rising from the ground and buildings.

A Boy On A Bike (could be Hugo) passes in the distance, and Fred tries to get his attention.

FRED  
(in Spanish)  
Help me...Boy!...

The Boy sees Fred, but won't stop. Fred leans against a shaded wall to catch his breath. He has reached the outskirts of town.

Fred sits in the shade of a tree, trying to regain his stamina, when...

He hears a man's painful scream. Fred rises and tries to find the source...

He turns a corner and sees Armed Guards outside a ruined stone house. Fred approaches so he is not seen, and finds a gap in the side of the ruined building.

INT. RUBBLE HOUSE -- DAY

Rubble crowds the interior. Bullet holes and blood stains decorate the partial walls that remain. It has the atmosphere of a disused abattoir.

Fred looks inside at the spectacle in front of him. Cousin and a Guerilla stand to the side of...

A man hanging upsidedown by his feet. The head, waist high, resembles a bruised pumpkin. Blood dribbles from the man's nose and ears, some of his fingers have been cut off.

DIAZ  
(to Guerilla)  
Wake him up.

A bucket of water is thrown over the hanging man. Fred finally recognizes the torture victim as...

JOSE.

Diaz has a pair of binoculars, and puts them on, clowning.

The others laugh.

DIAZ (CONT'D)  
(to Jose)  
These are night-vision binoculars.  
Very expensive. Who can afford  
glasses like these?

Jose doesn't answer, and Diaz takes off the glasses.

DIAZ (CONT'D)  
Maybe he's a scout for the New York  
Yankees.

Diaz's Men laugh.

DIAZ (CONT'D)  
Who is your boss, Amigo?  
(no response)  
You are a brave, loyal man. I wish  
my men were so loyal.  
(to his men)  
He is brave, no?

Jose's eyes are slits, but he looks past Diaz to see Fred's head in the window. Jose's lips move, but there is no sound.

Diaz goes to Cousin and is handed a machete.

DIAZ (CONT'D)

(to Jose)

Do you like magic, Amigo?

(no response)

Everyone likes magic. I will now show you something you've never seen before and you will never see again.

Diaz smiles before...

He punctures Jose's abdomen, gutting him so that Jose's intestines fall out for the victim to see. It takes a moment for Jose to realize what's happened, his body spasms, jerks, then goes limp.

Fred gasps, and Diaz turns to see him collapse.

INT. FRED'S CELL (DREAM) -- NIGHT

(As in the Morris video)

Fred, naked, sits tied to a straight-backed chair. His head sags forward, dried blood cakes his swollen face.

On the opposite wall a LARGE WOODEN CROSS. A DOG HOWLS in the background.

DIAZ (V.O.)

(English, Spanish accent)

What is your name?

A Hooded Executioner steps behind Fred, pulling his head up by the hair.

DIAZ (V.O.)

Tell us your name.

Fred speaks like a drunk.

FRED

Fred Lake.

Ricardo **DIAZ**, a dark ghost on the periphery.

DIAZ

You are a spy for the American government?

FRED

Yes.

DIAZ  
Are you ready to go home?

Fred straightens.

FRED  
I want to go home.

Something glints in the Executioner's hand - A KNIFE...

AUDREY (V.O.)  
Fred, wake up!

INT. FRED'S CELL, DIAZ COMPOUND -- NIGHT

Fred in a feverish state, between nightmare and reality wakes with start to loud voices and wild laughter outside...

Fred finds the pitcher of water and drinks some while pouring the rest over his head.

Noticing the LARGE CROSS in the Morris video...

He SETS HIS WATCH TO 3:36, leaving the stem pulled out.

EXT. COURTYARD, DIAZ COMPOUND -- NIGHT

Fred walks through the courtyard as if by remote control, approaching...

A large wooden table headed by Diaz, and filled out by Several Guerillas. There's the 'blood-drunk' atmosphere of predators sharing a kill. Everyone drinks.

Cousin preens comically and grins at Diaz.

COUSIN  
(Spanish)  
She likes Latino men. It will be like breaking a bronco...

Diaz sees Fred approaching.

DIAZ  
Ah, Fred, you must join us!

Diaz rises from his seat. He says something to Hugo, sitting beside him, and he gives up his chair.

Fred sees his opportunity...

DIAZ (CONT'D)  
You must eat something, you need  
your strength.

Fred tries to smile back at Diaz, his thumb hovering over the stem of his watch. He moves closer, it seems easy, ready...

DIAZ (CONT'D)  
Now everyone is here.

Diaz looks over Fred's shoulder.

AUDREY (O.S.)  
You're awake.

Fred turns, stunned to see Audrey as she moves closer, her face a mixture of pleasure and concern - too close. Elena follows a tentative few steps behind, nervous.

AUDREY (CONT'D)  
I looked in your room earlier, but  
you seemed pretty out of it...

FRED  
Why...What are you doing here?

DIAZ  
A surprise, no? She wants to help  
her daddy.

Feigning happiness, Fred surprises her with a desperate embrace, putting his mouth close to her ear...

FRED  
(whisper)  
There's going to be an explosion, I  
want you to run. Run now.

He frees her, but she refuses to move, looking at him as if he were a lost child.

AUDREY  
It's all okay now, I explained  
everything to Ricardo.

DIAZ  
She's sympathetic to our cause,  
Amigo, you raised a revolutionary.

AUDREY  
Ricardo told me about the school  
and the clinic he's building.

DIAZ  
Come Fred, you and Audrey sit next  
to me.

Fred has no choice but to follow his daughter, as she sits  
next to Diaz. Fred's hand protects his watch.

A PISTOL lays on the table next to Diaz.

FRED  
(to Diaz)  
Can I talk to you alone for a  
minute?

DIAZ  
Alone?

FRED  
Just for a minute.

Diaz scrutinizes him.

DIAZ  
But we are all friends here. Sit.

Fred sits.

Diaz scoops food on their plates from large bowls.

Elena takes a seat at the other end of the table, next to  
Hugo. When Fred tries to make eye-contact she looks away.

DIAZ (CONT'D)  
(to Fred)  
You never told me you had such a  
beautiful daughter. She gets my men  
excited.

Audrey's awkward smile becomes tight when she catches  
Cousin's lecherous grin - he makes a kissing gesture.

Fred's face beads with sweat.

DIAZ (CONT'D)  
(to Fred, good-natured)  
So Fred, I'm told you have a  
secret. Friends should not keep  
secrets from one another.

FRED  
(trying to smile)  
I don't know what Audrey told  
you...

DIAZ

She says you're here to kill me. Is this true?

Fred turns to Audrey, he's stunned speechless.

AUDREY

You don't have a brain tumor. The CIA made it up so you'd do what they wanted.

Fred pours a last pill from his vial and swallows, watched by Audrey.

AUDREY (CONT'D)

Who gave you those pills? Do you even know what they do?

FRED

You shouldn't be here.

AUDREY

The doctor, the bank manager, they were all in on it.

FRED

Why don't you ever listen to me?

AUDREY

I'm saving your life, Fred. You're not dying.

DIAZ

You see, everything is good, nothing to worry about. Eat, your food gets cold.

Diaz eats, and with some effort, Fred takes a bite.

DIAZ (CONT'D)

I'm just curious to know how you would kill me? I want to know what I'm up against.

(in Spanish)

He's a tiger, no?

Some laughter around the table.

DIAZ (CONT'D)

What do you think, my Elena? He's a tiger?

She nods almost imperceptibly.



AUDREY  
(to Fred)  
Just tell him the truth.

DIAZ  
Yes, the truth will set you free.

Diaz's hand moves to caress the back of Audrey's neck and she attempts to move away, but can't escape his grip.

DIAZ (CONT'D)  
Come now, Fred, I am interested to know your plan.

FRED  
I only wanted an interview.

DIAZ  
So your daughter lies?

FRED  
She gets carried away sometimes and makes things up...

AUDREY  
I'm saving your life.

Diaz lifts his chin, exposing his neck.

DIAZ  
Perhaps you want to strangle me in my sleep.

Fred manages a smile and the others chuckle.

DIAZ (CONT'D)  
How does the CIA instruct you in this most difficult task?

FRED  
The paper sent me for an interview, that's all...

Diaz grabs a fist-full of Audrey's hair, picking up his pistol and pointing it at her head.

ELENA  
Let them go, Ricardo, they can't hurt you.

Diaz silences her with a deadly look.

AUDREY

He said there was going to be an explosion.

DIAZ

(to Fred)

An explosion? You have a bomb?

There is rapid Spanish around the table.

Fred hesitates and Diaz cocks his pistol.

FRED

It's in my watch, you can throw it away. Let her go.

DIAZ

Your watch? Let's see, put it on the table.

Fred carefully does as instructed, and Diaz looks it over, curious.

FRED

Just throw it somewhere safe.

DIAZ

How does it work?

Fred is reluctant to say, until Diaz fires his gun above Audrey's head. Audrey shrieks.

DIAZ (CONT'D)

How does it work?

FRED

When it's set for 3:36 the stem's pushed in.

The diners move away quickly.

Diaz sees that the watch has been set and the stem pulled out.

DIAZ

(to Audrey)

You love your padre, no?

Audrey stares at Diaz, confused, nods.

DIAZ (CONT'D)

Of course, you come here to save him.

Diaz stands moving behind Fred and Audrey.

DIAZ (CONT'D)  
You will do anything for him, no?

Diaz puts the barrel of his pistol against Fred's head.

DIAZ (CONT'D)  
(to Fred)  
Stand up.

Diaz pulls Fred up by the collar, and pulls him a safe distance away.

FRED  
I'll do it.

DIAZ  
(to Men, Spanish)  
Come hold him.

Cousin and another Guerilla come to take Fred's arms.

DIAZ (CONT'D)  
(calmly to Audrey)  
Push the button or I kill him.

FRED  
Don't do this, Ricardo. She's done nothing to you...

Diaz cocks his pistol.

DIAZ  
I count to three just like in the movies.

ELENA  
The girl is innocent.

FRED  
(pleading to Audrey)  
Audrey, don't...

Diaz hits Fred with his pistol above the eye, blood dripping down.

DIAZ  
One...

Everyone but Audrey takes a step back. Her hands shake as...

She picks up the watch and sees the inscription...

*'To Dad my best friend, love Audrey'.*

AUDREY  
(to Fred)  
Look after my babies.

Fred struggles to get away, but he is held fast.

Elena tries to cover Hugo's eyes, but he pushes her hand away.

FRED  
(to Audrey)  
Don't do it...

Diaz cocks his pistol and puts it to Fred's temple...

DIAZ  
Two...Better than TV, no?...

AUDREY TAKES A DEEP BREATH, CLOSES HER EYES AND PUSHES IN THE STEM...

A deafening silence fills the room. NOTHING HAS HAPPENED.

Diaz moves to take the watch, annoyed, and re-sets it. He gives it back to Audrey.

DIAZ (CONT'D)  
(moving back, Spanish)  
Again!

AUDREY PUSHES THE STEM IN...

NOTHING.

Diaz, angry, hits Fred again with the side of his pistol, then again. Fred collapses, blood streaming down his face.

DIAZ (CONT'D)  
(Spanish to Guerrillas)  
Lock him in the room.

Diaz' Men grab Fred and drag him towards Fred's cell, while...

Cousin grabs Audrey before she can follow.

COUSIN  
(to Audrey)  
Time to party.

The Other Guerilla helps Cousin carry Audrey, kicking and screaming, outside.

AUDREY  
 (yelling)  
 No! Let me go!...  
 (to Diaz)  
 Help me!

Diaz offers a cute wave as Audrey is carried out.

ELENA  
 (to Diaz)  
 What's become of you?

He hits her in the face hard enough to knock her to the ground. Hugo looks down on his mother.

HUGO  
 (in Spanish)  
 Traitor!

Diaz hugs his son to his side.

DIAZ  
 You see, my son, no one can be  
 trusted.

Diaz and Hugo leave Elena on the ground.

INT. FRED'S CELL -- NIGHT

Fred hears Audrey's fading screams and is frantic to find a way out...

He tries to force the door open without success, then pulls the large wooden Cross off the wall, using it as a hammer until it falls apart...

FRED  
 (screaming)  
 Ricardo!

Fred uses the small table to bash at the shuttered window, but discovers steel bars...

FRED (CONT'D)  
 (in Spanish)  
 Ricardo! You can't do this!

There is no reply.

EXT. DIAZ COMPOUND (CONTINUOUS) -- NIGHT

Several of the Guerrilla's, including Diaz, drink and watch a loud action movie on video.

Elena, her face swollen from Diaz's blow, slips behind them unseen, retrieving a ring of keys from the table.

Elena stealthily moves to Fred's cell door, slowly inserting the key...

HUGO WATCHES HER.

INT. FRED'S CELL, DIAZ COMPOUND -- NIGHT

Fred, blood on his face, picks up the table, ready to bash whoever comes in, but...

Elena enters and closes the door behind her.

When her face catches the light, the dark bruise from Diaz's punch is obvious.

Fred grabs her by the shoulders.

FRED  
(harsh whisper)  
Where's Audrey?

ELENA  
I will only help you if you help me. Hugo is my son, he's sick. I need to get him out of here, to America.

FRED  
Where is she?

ELENA  
You must promise me.

FRED  
I promise. Where is she?

ELENA  
The men took her to Cousin's house.

FRED  
Show me.

ELENA  
You will need this.

Elena pulls an automatic pistol from under her skirt and hands it to Fred. Fred handles the weapon awkwardly.

ELENA (CONT'D)

Be quiet.

Fred follows her out.

EXT. DIAZ COMPOUND (CONTINUOUS) -- NIGHT

Elena leads Fred down the dark pathways, as they hear chatter and the movie in the background.

They duck into a dark recess as One Guerrilla comes out of the bathroom.

Finally, they make it to a back gate and exit.

EXT. VILLAGE STREET/HOSTAGE HOUSE -- NIGHT

Only a few scattered lights break the darkness. Fred follows Elena over a narrow dirt road and around a corner. They see...

A Guard standing in front of a lighted house, smoking.

FRED

Is she inside?

ELENA

I think so.

FRED

(whispering)

Turn him around. Tell him Ricardo wants him. I'll come from behind.

Elena takes Fred's pistol, switching off the 'safety', then gives it back.

ELENA

You must shoot to kill...

(pointing at her head)

...there are no other choices.

Fred nods understanding and Elena walks towards the Guard.

The Guard looks towards Elena as she approaches. She walks around so that his back is to Fred.

Fred runs to the house, using shadow as cover.

Fred looks into the window and sees...

Audrey, mostly unclothed, with Cousin on top, raping her.

Audrey appears in a trance, her arms and legs tied to the bed posts, her face bruised.

Fred wastes no time, coming up behind the Guard...

FRED SHOOTS HIM IN THE HEAD. The Guard goes down.

Fred kicks in the door...

Cousin, inside, scrambles for his gun when Fred rushes inside...

INT. HOSTAGE HOUSE -- NIGHT

Cousin finds his pistol on the floor...

ELENA

Shoot!

FRED SHOOTS COUSIN in the face and he falls.

Fred hands the pistol to Elena and quickly unties Audrey, while Elena gathers her clothes from the floor.

ELENA (CONT'D)

Hurry, they'll come now.

FRED

(to Audrey)

I've got you...

Fred wraps his daughter in a blanket and carries her out, following Elena.

EXT. VILLAGE STREET/ELENA'S CAR -- NIGHT

As Fred, carrying Audrey, follows Elena from the house, down a dark lane...

They turn to see the commotion of the bodies being discovered and break into a jog.

The Guerrillas scatter, shouting directions to each other.

FRED

Where's your car?



ELENA  
We must get Hugo.

Fred hesitates...

FRED  
We'll put Audrey in the car.

ELENA  
This way.

Fred follows Elena down an alley, until...

She approaches a car and unlocks the door. Fred lays Audrey in the back seat, Elena handing Audrey her clothes.

FRED  
(to Audrey)  
Stay here.  
(gives her pistol)  
Shoot anyone who gets close. Do you hear?

AUDREY  
(to Fred)  
Kill him.

Fred and Elena leave Audrey clutching the pistol.

EXT. DIAZ COMPOUND -- NIGHT

Fred and Elena enter, Elena moving through the house in a panic, as...

Fred picks up a machete from a table.

Fred continues down the pathway, past his open cell door, having lost sight of Elena. He runs around a corner, sees Elena standing in front of an open doorway, then...

FRED HEARS A GUNSHOT. ELENA FALLS TO HER KNEES as Fred approaches. Elena looks at...

Hugo, a gun drops from his hand, as he stares at his mother dying. She topples and...

Hugo looks up to see Fred. Fred checks Elena, then looks at Hugo, who looks past him...

HUGO  
(Spanish)  
She's dead, Papa.

Fred turns to see Diaz, standing behind him, a pistol in his hand.

DIAZ  
(in Spanish)  
She could never be trusted.

FRED  
Look what you've done.

DIAZ  
(pointing his gun at Fred)  
You should have stuck with  
baseball.

Diaz grins, as...

A FAINT WHISTLING SOUND FOLLOWED BY AN EXPLOSION, knocking both men off their feet. Fred looks back...

The Diaz bedroom is engulfed in flames, Hugo's limp body lying next to Elena's.

Diaz crawls to Hugo, lifeless, pulling him into his arms...

DIAZ (CONT'D)  
My son!

Fred escapes as the building explodes...

EXT. DIAZ COMPOUND/VILLAGE STREET -- NIGHT

Behind Fred...

OTHER EXPLOSIONS DESTROY THE VILLAGE as it bursts into a balls of flame.

Fred comes onto the street in a daze...

THE VILLAGE IS ABLAZE...

Excited shouts in Spanish, then...

A GUERRILLA COVERED IN FLAMES runs towards Fred, screaming...

A CAR SMASHES INTO THE FLAMING MAN, Elena's car, knocking him over in front of Fred. Audrey is behind the wheel, as...

Another FIREBALL EXPLOSION lights up the village...

Fred gets in and Audrey speeds away...

INT./EXT. ELENA'S CAR/ROCKY MOUNTAIN ROAD -- PRE-DAWN

Audrey continues to drive, while Fred leaning against the door, appears in a coma.

AUDREY  
(to herself)  
I don't know where I'm going.

Suddenly the bright lights of an oncoming truck comes over a rise and forces Audrey off the narrow road, and nearly off the embankment...

She just manages to stop before plunging into a ravine.

Fred spies...

REYNOLDS IN THE TRUCK'S PASSENGER SEAT with Men In Camouflage uniforms - U.S. Special Forces. The truck moves past.

FRED  
Keep going.

Audrey manages to reverse back onto the road and continue driving.

INT. WEINSTOCK'S OFFICE -- DAY

CLOSE ON: Weinstein, furious...

WEINSTOCK  
...You understand that you  
compromised the sovereignty of  
another country? What you did was  
illegal.

Mulay and Parsons are standing in front of Weinstock, expressionless.

Weinstock's office is larger and better furnished than Mulay's.

WEINSTOCK (CONT'D)  
Latin America is not Yemen or  
Pakistan, we can't send in a drone  
and blow up a village. Have you any  
idea what this will mean if they  
find out?

MULAY  
The mission was a success.

WEINSTOCK

What about the journalist?

PARSONS

He was in the village with Diaz.

Weinstock considers...

WEINSTOCK

I'll have to advise the President.

MULAY

(thin smile)

I think you'll find him less than surprised.

Weinstock stares at Mulay, slowly understanding the implication.

EXT. PARKING LOT, FEDERAL BLDG, L.A. -- DAY

Reynolds waves goodbye to a Friend and gets into his car when...

His cell rings...

REYNOLDS

(on cell)

Reynolds...

(his face sobers)

You made it. When?...

Reynolds hangs up, thinks for a few seconds, then dials another number.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

This is Agent Reynolds, put me through to Parsons...

INT. ENCOUNTER RESTAURANT, LAX -- DAY

The inside has a 'Jetson's' decor with a few scattered Groups Of Patrons. A round bar with colorful craters under glass is the centerpiece. Large windows look out onto LAX, with constant air traffic.

Fred sits at the bar sipping a beer, his face still showing the beating he took from Diaz's pistol.

Reynolds slides onto the stool beside Fred, noticing Fred has changed, become dangerous.

REYNOLDS

Well, well, well, I have to say  
this is an unexpected pleasure.

Reynolds signals to the Bartender that he wants the same as  
Fred.

FRED

(flat)

What did you expect? There was  
never a bomb, was there?

REYNOLDS

Shit, we knew you weren't an  
assassin, Fred. We didn't know what  
you'd do. We just hoped you'd get  
us to the compound. Jose was meant  
to do the rest.

FRED

Why the watch?

Reynolds takes a moment to decide, then...

REYNOLDS

The watch contained a 'homing'  
mechanism. When you pushed in the  
stem it told us Diaz was with you  
and sent a signal to the drone.  
There shouldn't have been anything  
left, but here you are.

FRED

You murdered a village full of  
people.

REYNOLDS

Considering what we projected Diaz  
to do in the future, it had to be  
done. Terrible, but necessary.

The Bartender delivers Reynold's beer.

FRED

When does my daughter get the  
money?

REYNOLDS

Here's the thing, Fred, we didn't  
find Diaz's body. We found his son,  
but not him.

FRED

He was in a building that was blown up.

REYNOLDS

But so were you. Go figure.

FRED

We had an agreement. I didn't go through all this for nothing.

REYNOLDS

You got a loan you didn't deserve. We won't charge interest...

Reynolds is about to take a drink, when...

Fred grabs him by the collar and pulls Reynold's face close to his.

FRED

That wasn't the deal.

REYNOLDS

When you prove he's dead you'll get your money.

Patrons watch the exchange and Reynolds pulls out of Fred's grip, smiling for all to see nothing's wrong.

Fred stands, looking out the window at a plane taking off, then back to Reynolds.

FRED

Who else knows you sent a drone into Venezuela?

Reynolds' smile turns sour.

REYNOLDS

I'm not sure threatening the United States Government is the way you want to go.

FRED

You've got a week to honor your agreement.

Fred walks off before Reynolds can reply.

INT. AMERICAN CUSTOMS, AIRPORT -- DAY

CLOSE-UP: Bearded man's passport photo with glasses.

CUSTOM'S OFFICER (O.S.)  
What is the purpose of your visit?

Looking up from the passport, the U.S. Custom's Officer sees...

Diaz, full beard, smiling. His passport is returned.

DIAZ  
Holiday.

CUSTOM'S OFFICER  
Have a nice visit.

Diaz passes through.

INT. AGENCY OFFICE, L.A. -- DAY

ON SCREEN: A security camera (from a high angle) captures the exchange between Diaz and the Custom's Officer. Freeze on Diaz' face.

REDDING (O.S.)  
He's come here for Lake. What do you want to do?

Reynolds and Redding stand in front of the computer monitor looking at Diaz's bearded face.

REYNOLDS  
All I see was a bearded tourist.  
Let's hope he finds what he's looking for.

Reynolds walks away.

INT. PRESS BOX, DODGER STADIUM -- DAY

Barnes stands at the back, a game in progress, Journalists sitting at the bench desk watching.

His cell rings...

BARNES  
Barnes...  
(serious)  
...Who is this?...

The phone has gone dead and Barnes, disturbed, hurries out the exit.

EXT. DODGER PARKING LOT -- DAY

From a distant POV, seen through a car's windshield, Barnes hurriedly finds his car, gets in and takes off...

The POV's car follows...

INT. FRED'S KITCHEN -- DAY

The boys are at the breakfast table as Audrey hands each a plate with a sandwich.

Fred leans against the counter, lost in thought.

PEDRO  
(upset)  
I don't like the crust.

RUBEN  
(to Fred)  
Who we playing this week?

Fred takes Pedro's sandwich to the kitchen counter and cuts off the crust.

FRED  
I have to check the schedule.

AUDREY  
(looking at Fred)  
I set up an appointment for you.

FRED  
For what?

AUDREY  
A second opinion.

The doorbell rings.

Fred gives Pedro his sandwich on the way out.

INT. FRED'S LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Fred opens the door to see...

Barnes.

BARNES  
(surprised)  
You're okay?



FRED  
Yeah, why?

BARNES  
This guy called me, said you  
collapsed. He said it was urgent. I  
figured...

FRED  
What guy?

BARNES  
I don't know, he had a Spanish  
accent.

It takes Fred a few seconds to understand, then he pushes  
past Barnes and looks out to the road in both directions. Not  
seeing anyone, Fred comes back inside.

BARNES (CONT'D)  
So, you're okay?

AUDREY (O.S.)  
What's going on?

Fred turns to see Audrey a few metres behind him.

FRED  
(to Audrey)  
I need you to do something and I  
don't want you to ask any  
questions. Can you do that?

AUDREY  
Why?

FRED  
(shouting)  
For fuck sake Audrey, because I'm  
your father and I'm asking you to!

She's taken back.

AUDREY  
What do you want me to do?

FRED  
Take the boys and go to Auntie's.  
Go now.

Fred expects her to argue or ask more questions, but instead  
she goes back into the kitchen.

AUDREY (V.O.)  
Bring your sandwiches, we're going  
on a little holiday.

BARNES  
Do you want me to stay?

FRED  
Go with Audrey, make sure she's  
alright.

BARNES  
Anything else?

FRED  
Just keep her away.

Audrey and the boys come back through with Barnes following  
them out.

AUDREY  
Call me.

When they've left, Fred closes the door.

INT. LIVING ROOM, FRED'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Fred sits in a lounge chair with dim light coming from a  
corner lamp. A bottle of whiskey and an empty glass waits on  
the coffee table, while he sips from a glass in his hand.  
Music plays in the background.

A BASEBALL BAT leans beside the chair.

The sound of the door slowly opening...

FRED  
Come in.

Diaz's silhouette enters, hesitates, then approaches Fred.  
His face is dimly lit, he has a pistol in his hand.

DIAZ  
(looking around)  
Your house needs work. Maybe some  
paint would help. Lighter colors  
are best, they lift the mood.

Fred pours Diaz a drink and Diaz sits opposite.

FRED  
You want to kill me, be my guest,  
but then that's the end of it.

DIAZ  
You think you can make rules? That  
would be too easy.

As Diaz takes a sip of his drink...

He raises his gun and SHOOTS FRED IN THE SHOULDER.

FRED RECOILS IN PAIN.

FRED  
You shoot like you pitched. Move  
closer if you need to.

DIAZ  
You murdered my son. You betrayed  
our friendship.

FRED  
You're an asshole.

Diaz shoots again...

THE BULLET HITS FRED'S LEG, Fred screaming in pain.

When Fred raises his head, he sees...

A FIGURE COMING THROUGH THE DOOR, BEHIND DIAZ - AUDREY...

FRED (CONT'D)  
Fuck!

Fred is bent over and his hand is near the bat.

AUDREY APPROACHES DIAZ FROM BEHIND...

FRED (CONT'D)  
It wasn't the talent you lacked, it  
was the balls...

Diaz raises his gun and prepares to shoot Fred again, when...

AUDREY RUSHES DIAZ, Diaz turning quickly and shoots...

The shot going wild...

DIAZ FIGHTS AUDREY TO THE GROUND, TRYING TO GET ANOTHER SHOT  
AT HER, WHEN...

FRED TAKING A FULL SWING WITH THE BAT, HITS DIAZ'S HEAD. DIAZ  
SLUMPS, BUT FRED HITS HIM TWO, THREE MORE TIMES, until...

AUDREY  
Fred, that's enough!

Fred, in a daze looks up at her, blood splattered on her face.

FRED  
(flat)  
I asked you to stay away.

Audrey escapes Diaz and stands.

AUDREY  
You need a doctor.

FRED  
I have to do something first.

AUDREY  
What?

Fred grabs Diaz's feet, but with his injuries, has trouble dragging his body out the door.

Audrey starts to say something, but grabs his arms. She and Fred take opposite ends of Diaz's body and carry him outside.

EXT. STRIP MALL -- DAY

Fred, with great difficulty, in jerking movements, drags Diaz's battered corpse up the stairs to Reynold's office, while...

Several Pedestrians/Vendors watch his progress and gasp at Diaz's smashed head.

EXT. OUTSIDE AGENCY, STRIP MALL LANDING -- DAY

Fred finally makes it to the agency door, exhausted and out of breath, and drops Diaz's legs.

Fred pushes the intercom button.

INT. AGENCY OFFICE, L.A. -- DAY

SECURITY MONITOR: Fred is looking up into the screen.

FRED  
(on monitor)  
I have something for Agent Reynolds.

He looks over the railing to see the Small Crowd growing, some on their cell phones, a police siren approaching.

The door opens, Reynolds and Redding behind him.

Fred points to Diaz's body.

FRED (CONT'D)  
He dead enough for you?

Reynolds takes in Fred's bleeding shoulder and leg.

REYNOLDS  
(to Fred)  
You need a doctor.

Fred limps off leaving Reynolds to watch him go.

INT./EXT. FREEWAY -- DAY

Fred drives, looking somewhat serene, before...

His car careens through two lanes of traffic and smashes into the guard rail.

Several Motorists stop and run to his aid, only to find...

Fred slumped over the steering wheel - DEAD.

EXT. LITTLE LEAGUE FIELD -- EVENING

Audrey sits in the stands with the Other Parents, watching her boys play. She cheers as Ruben gets an out.

Barnes has taken Fred's place as coach and stands in front of the dugout and smiles back at Audrey. Then Audrey sees...

Agent Redding, dressed in a business suit and carrying a briefcase, standing at the edge of the bleachers, looking up at her.

Audrey makes her way down, meeting Redding further behind the Spectators.

REDDING  
I'm Agent Redding...

AUDREY  
We've met. You killed my father.

REDDING  
You must know you're father had a malignant brain tumor.

AUDREY  
What do you want?

Redding opens her briefcase, pulling out a large brown envelope.

REDDING  
I have the passcode to a Swiss bank account with five million dollars. It's yours.

AUDREY  
It doesn't replace my father.

REDDING  
He wanted you to have it.

Pulling out a contract.

REDDING (CONT'D)  
Before I can give it to you, you'll have to sign an agreement that everything you know about your father's involvement in the Venezuelan operation or with the Agency is secret. If you disclose any information regarding Diaz's death, you will be prosecuted by the U.S. Government as a traitor.

Redding hands Audrey the agreement and a pen and Audrey signs the agreement handing it back. Redding gives her a white envelope she puts in her back pocket.

REDDING (CONT'D)  
If you have any problems, let us know.

Audrey is about to turn away, when...

REDDING (CONT'D)  
(hesitant, lowered voice)  
There's one more thing, something I thought you might like to have.

From her pocket, Redding pulls something out, opening her hand to show Audrey...

REDDING (CONT'D)  
It was found at the site.

Audrey sees it's the burnt body of a watch. Turning it over, she reads the inscription...

*'To Dad my best friend, love Audrey'.*

Clutching the watch, Audrey climbs the stands and sits where she was. Redding has gone.

She looks down at Barnes who looks back concerned.

Pedro gets a hit and his teammates mob him. Audrey stands and cheers.