

THE MASHA EFFECT

"Worst Instincts"

by

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THE MASHA EFFECT

"WORST INSTINCTS"

FADE IN:

INT. HOTEL ROOM, KIEV - NIGHT

Soft ambient street light slips in from the heavy curtains. High ceilings. High windows. High doors. A stylish European suite.

CAPTION: KIEV, UKRAINE, FEBRUARY 2010

A king size bed. On one side, an open laptop streaming news of the Ukrainian election victory of Viktor Yanukovich. Fireworks, people dancing in the streets. On the other, a man, still dressed in suit and loosened tie, sleeping.

A smartphone vibrates.

The man stirs, peeks over to the nightstand. He is ANTON MILOSEVIC, mid-thirties, straight-laced, ivy-educated.

The clock on the side of the bed reads "03:14"

Half-asleep, he reaches for his glasses, fumbles them to the floor.

MILOSEVIC

Shit..

He finds them. Answers the phone.

MILOSEVIC (CONT'D)

..Mister Baker, sir?

A frantic voice on the other end. He shuts the laptop.

MILOSEVIC (CONT'D)

..What? Where are you?

INT. STAFF STAIRCASE, HOTEL - NIGHT

Deserted. Tie gone, MILOSEVIC hurries down the stairs, slipping into a billowy parka.

EXT. BACK ALLEY, HOTEL - NIGHT

Winter. It's cold. Snow on the ground. MILOSEVIC emerges from the back door and climbs into a waiting car.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

At the wheel, COLIN WAINWRIGHT (50), cool, calm, collected, a veteran of these mid-night emergencies. He draws on a cigarette, tosses the butt out of the window.

WAINWRIGHT

Where to?

MILOSEVIC hands him a note.

WAINWRIGHT (CONT'D)

(unimpressed)

Shit..

MILOSEVIC

You know where it is?

WAINWRIGHT

Yeah.

He drives out of the alley and into the glacial, deserted streets of Kiev.

MILOSEVIC

Doesn't sound good.

WAINWRIGHT's grimace says enough.

EXT. RIVER PALACE - NIGHT

WAINWRIGHT and MILOSEVIC emerge from the car and march towards the large colorful neon sign "River Palace".

A small group of young men smoke and chat, eyeing them.

WAINWRIGHT

Stay close.

MILOSEVIC follows WAINWRIGHT down a covered gangway and across a gangplank to the white and yellow painted riverboat.

INT. ENTRANCE, RIVER PALACE - NIGHT

A handful of prostitutes of all ages, some barely out of their teens, smoke and socialize, trying to stay warm. A couple of them approach MILOSEVIC and WAINWRIGHT provocatively.

WAINWRIGHT pushes past them, pays the entrance fees. MILOSEVIC is ill at ease in the environment.

MILOSEVIC

What is this place?

A cackle of laughs from a nearby room, young men drunk and loud.

INT. HALLWAY, RIVER PALACE - NIGHT

Flickering fluorescent lights. WAINWRIGHT leads MILOSEVIC down this darkened hallway, past girls and men flirting, copulating, coming and going.

MILOSEVIC is repulsed by it all.

WAINWRIGHT finds the door.

WAINWRIGHT
Twenty-one?

MILOSEVIC
Twenty-one.

INT. ROOM, RIVER PALACE - NIGHT

WAINWRIGHT barges in followed by MILOSEVIC. The small room is trashed.

SCOTT BAKER (40), a bull of a man, normally handsome, elegant, but now naked, disheveled, on a bad trip, paces furiously.

BAKER
Anton! You gotta.. You gotta help
me.

There are traces of blood on the floor, sheets, everywhere.

MASHA, a scrawny twelve year old girl, is passed out on the bed, her clothes ripped, her bare legs covered in blood.

MILOSEVIC takes in the shocking scene.

MILOSEVIC
Jesus Christ..

BAKER
It just happened.. She was.. And
that face..

WAINWRIGHT approaches the girl, takes her pulse. Satisfied, he grabs a blanket, hands it to MILOSEVIC.

WAINWRIGHT
Take her to the car. Wait for me.

MILOSEVIC nods, hesitatingly wraps the blanket around the girl and carries her out.

BAKER

What are you doing? Anton! You can't..

WAINWRIGHT looks around the room, then bolts to a corner, rips a fake vent, revealing a camera.

WAINWRIGHT

Shit!

BAKER

What is that? A camera?

He tosses BAKER's pants at him.

BAKER (CONT'D)

Oh fuck! Oh fuck..

WAINWRIGHT

Get dressed. Don't leave this room!

BAKER's head is down, lost in his own despair.

BAKER

I got to get out of here.

WAINWRIGHT

Did you hear me?

BAKER glances up. His eyes fluttering. He tries to nod.

WAINWRIGHT (CONT'D)

I'll be right back. Don't leave this fucking room!

BAKER

Where are you going? Don't leave me!

WAINWRIGHT rushes out, slams the door shut.

IN THE HALLWAY

WAINWRIGHT marches through pros and clients--

IN THE CASINO

A few blackjack and roulette tables, some slot machines. A small but lucrative affair. Men gambling with prostitutes as good luck charms. Many inebriated or high.

WAINWRIGHT enters, eyes the place then heads to the back, to a door marked "EMPLOYEES ONLY" (in Ukrainian).

OFFICES

WAINWRIGHT bursts in, only to be met by three burly heavily tattooed Ukrainian men staring back at him. They're casual and somewhat indifferent, anticipating his arrival.

One, KOVALENKO, sits behind a metal desk, evidently the leader.

It's a small room, cheaply decorated with posters of naked women. A row of phones, a couple of filing cabinets.

KOVALENKO stares at WAINWRIGHT questioningly.

WAINWRIGHT

(in Ukrainian)

My friend, you and I need to have a conversation.

KOVALENKO smirks, then in English.

KOVALENKO

There is nothing to discuss. Your friend.. He's a powerful man in America, yes?

WAINWRIGHT

A low ranking politician.

Not buying it, KOVALENKO rises, approaches WAINWRIGHT.

KOVALENKO

This casino is all I have. A barge. Men come here to gamble. To fuck.

WAINWRIGHT

Then why the cameras? The recording?

KOVALENKO

The video?

KOVALENKO leads WAINWRIGHT to another door. He opens it to reveal a security room filled with video monitors.

He points to a rack of external drives, each drive assigned a room number and slapped with a River Palace logo. The one for room twenty-one is missing, a cable dangling in its place.

KOVALENKO (CONT'D)

Security. I do not record to blackmail. I do to see problems, yes? Everything is digital. Saved to external drives. Each room has a drive. When your friend rape that girl--

WAINWRIGHT
He's not my friend.

KOVALENKO
Okay.. When that man rape the girl,
they came and took my drive.

WAINWRIGHT
Who's they?

KOVALENKO chuckles, shrugs, returns to the office.

WAINWRIGHT (CONT'D)
Give me a name.

KOVALENKO
I don't know these people. I don't
want to know them. But I have to
stay in business, yes?

WAINWRIGHT
How many were they?

KOVALENKO
Two. Two men.

WAINWRIGHT
Give me a name. One name.

KOVALENKO
I don't know names.

WAINWRIGHT
Were they Russian? Ukrainian?

KOVALENKO
Ukrainian, I think. One man.. I
recognize him. A bodyguard. For
Yanukovych.

The revelation stuns WAINWRIGHT.

WAINWRIGHT
President Yanukovych?

KOVALENKO shrugs.

KOVALENKO
Now, you understand?

WAINWRIGHT is reeling at the thought of it.

IN THE HALLWAY

WAINWRIGHT marches past the hookers and clients to--

THE ROOM

only to find the door open and BAKER gone!

WAINWRIGHT

Shit!

FADE OUT:

OPENING CREDITS:

EXT. PLACE D'ARMES, QUEBEC CITY - DAY

Late autumn. Chilly.

At the foot of the towering Chateau Frontenac, a small park.

CAPTION: QUEBEC CITY, CANADA - PRESENT DAY

Colored leaves tumble along the pathway. At a bench, a woman. Bundled in a long dark coat, hands jammed in the pockets, her jaw dug in a muted scarf wrapped round her neck. She's been here for a while. Her eyes scan the area.

Pedestrians come and go. A man hails a cab. City workers empty trash bins.

At twenty-seven, MARIE HUNTER is one of those faceless people and that's the way she likes it. She's been trained to be a ghost. She's so good at it even the squirrels ignore her.

Finally, her gaze lands on something across the street.

A man. Mid-sixties, balding. He marches along the sidewalk, smoking, a folded newspaper juts out from a deep coat pocket. It's COLIN WAINWRIGHT, our man in Ukraine, now fifteen years older. Still robust. He walks with purpose until a coughing fit takes hold of him.

He sucks the last bit of his cigarette, tosses it. Retrieves a beanie cap, slides it over his head then resumes his walk.

MARIE follows.

EXT. STREET, OLD QUEBEC - DAY

WAINWRIGHT rounds a corner then disappears inside a coffee shop. Morning routine.

MARIE rounds the same corner, crosses the narrow cobblestone street, turns. A better view of the shop.

She watches WAINWRIGHT at the counter inside. He orders, pays, then steps to a table by the window, readies his paper.

She crosses the street, enters the shop.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

MARIE steps to the counter. WAINWRIGHT is at his table, scanning the headlines. She is warmly greeted by the server. She responds in perfect French.

MARIE

A coffee, please. And a croissant.

She pays then makes her way to WAINWRIGHT's table.

WAINWRIGHT looks up from his crossword puzzle.

WAINWRIGHT

I saw you at Place d'Armes.

MARIE

Your coughing fit made that clear.

WAINWRIGHT

A little theatrics never hurt.

She sits across from him.

MARIE

Did you feel sorry for me? Is that why I'm here?

WAINWRIGHT

I don't care what happened in Copenhagen.

MARIE

It was a shitshow. I had to testify for months.

WAINWRIGHT

It's all noise.

MARIE

Wasn't noise to me.

WAINWRIGHT

Do you want to be here?

MARIE

Are you asking as my mentor-friend?

WAINWRIGHT

I'm asking as your new Chief of Station. If you don't want to be here, I'll ship your ass back to Virginia and your self-inflicted purgatory.

Pause. She sighs heavily.

MARIE

I wish you would've asked..

The waiter brings over their coffees and pastries. WAINWRIGHT admires his pastry.

WAINWRIGHT

Best fucking pastries in town.

MARIE reaches for the sugar.

MARIE

What am I looking at?

He takes a bite of his pastry, grimaces.

WAINWRIGHT

You won't give me time to enjoy this, will you?

MARIE

I had to pack pronto.

WAINWRIGHT savors.

WAINWRIGHT

There's this hint of cinnamon that hits your palate and just lingers there.. This delicious tease.

WAINWRIGHT ignores the question. He sips his coffee.

WAINWRIGHT (CONT'D)

Cappuccino is first rate too.

She watches him enjoy another sip.

WAINWRIGHT (CONT'D)

Bottom line, the newly elected Prime Minister of Quebec wants to revoke the immigration bans.

MARIE

And the White House isn't happy
about that.

WAINWRIGHT

More immigrants in Quebec..

MARIE

National security threat.

WAINWRIGHT

For us..

MARIE

It's bullshit.

WAINWRIGHT

Whatever it is, we need to convince
them to keep the bans.

MARIE

Plan B?

WAINWRIGHT

Here I thought I was going to do my
fucking crossword puzzle, savor my
pastry and coffee--

MARIE

You're the one who volunteered me
here.

WAINWRIGHT

Plan B is what it always is. If you
can't convince 'em..

MARIE

Compromise 'em.. Okay.. Name?

WAINWRIGHT

Christian Tremblay.

MARIE

Tremblay.

WAINWRIGHT

Do you need to write this down?

MARIE

I'll remember.

WAINWRIGHT

He's the new immigration minister..
Now can I eat my fucking pastry?

MARIE
Temptation.

He raises his eyes at her, puzzled.

MARIE (CONT'D)
Fourteen across.

He checks his crossword puzzle.. It fits. She rises, takes her coffee and croissant and to the server--

MARIE (CONT'D)
I'd like these to go.

WAINWRIGHT smirks.

CUT TO:

INT. CHANTAL'S CAR, STREETS, QUEBEC CITY - DAY

Behind the wheel, harried CHANTAL ROBERGE (42), a brilliant clinical physician, divorced, mother of two, but now anxious to make it to work. She curses traffic and the roadwork.

CHANTAL
Come on. Come on..

EXT. PARKING LOT, MONTCALM RETIREMENT HOME - DAY

The Volvo whips into the parking lot and parks in a reserved spot. CHANTAL rushes out with a heavy backpack and toward this exclusive retirement home; a charming, historic stone building.

INT. FOYER, MONTCALM RETIREMENT HOME - DAY

CHANTAL strides through the foyer as both staff and elderly residents greet her warmly. She responds to each with affection as she disappears down a hallway.

INT. CHANTAL'S OFFICE, MONTCALM RETIREMENT HOME - DAY

Small, cluttered with aged furniture. CHANTAL barges into her office, drops the backpack on her desk as her assistant DANIELLE chases after her.

DANIELLE
I had to reschedule your meeting.

CHANTAL grimaces. She retrieves her laptop from the backpack and logs in.

CHANTAL

There's roadwork everywhere.
Streets are jammed.

DANIELLE

There's always roadwork. You have
to wonder whether it's the unions
or the government--

CHANTAL

I didn't even have time for coffee.

DANIELLE

I'll get you one. Cream and sugar?

CHANTAL

You're a sweetheart.

DANIELLE heads out as maintenance man GUY AUDET lumbers in--

GUY

I got some bad news.

CHANTAL

Well, good morning to you..

GUY

Heater's on the fritz.

She stares at him, considers--

INT. BASEMENT HALLWAY, MONTCALM RETIREMENT HOME - DAY

The bowels of the old building. CHANTAL and GUY head for the
mechanical room.

CHANTAL

It's not working at all?

GUY

Barely. It's set for twenty-two,
but it's been going down every day
by a degree or two.

CHANTAL

Since when?

CHANTAL adjusts a flickering fluorescent light. GUY watches her,
surprised.

CHANTAL (CONT'D)

Guy.. Since when?

GUY

Three days ago. Monday.

CHANTAL

You're just telling me now?

INT. MECHANICAL ROOM, MONTCALM RETIREMENT HOME - DAY

CHANTAL and GUY enter. They step up to the HVAC unit.

CHANTAL is dismayed the unit's front panel is loose. She removes it.

GUY

The whole damned thing might have to be replaced.

CHANTAL

Do you know how much these cost?

GUY

Well, it's either that or you got a bunch of freezing old farts.

CHANTAL

Our residents are not "old farts".

GUY

Residents.

CHANTAL gazes at the unit's status screen.

CHANTAL

Nineteen..

She reaches inside, snaps a couple of latches and pulls out a filthy filter. Guy takes it with disgust.

GUY

Holy shit!

CHANTAL

When was the last time you replaced these?

GUY stares back dumbly.

CHANTAL (CONT'D)

Every three months, Guy.

Silently frustrated, she looks around the unit, removes some wooden planks.

CHANTAL (CONT'D)
What are these doing here?

More blank expressions from GUY.

CHANTAL (CONT'D)
These units have to breathe. They
need air. Remove the obstructions.
Replace the filters. Should be
okay.

She leaves under GUY's impressed gaze.

EXT. STREETS, QUEBEC CITY - DAY (MONTAGE)

MARIE explores the beautiful historic city, gets her bearings.

The narrow cobblestone streets, the arched Kent Gate, the quaint cafes, the Tourny Fountain, the historical cannons, the shops, the churches, and mostly the provincial government buildings including the Library of the National Assembly and the majestic Parliament building.

Throughout these sights, she keeps an eye on the people coming and going; government employees dropped off, some socializing, smoking, laughing on their way to work, others on their phones. She notices their badges, briefcases, purses, backpacks. Nothing escapes her.

Inside one government building, a sign at a door in French and English: "Ministry of Immigration" with a picture of "Your Minister - CHRISTIAN TREMBLAY". In his late-forties, handsome with a full head of dark hair and a killer smile.

A pair of jabbering staffers march through. One of them, JOSÉE VIGNEAULT mid-twenties, spectacled, carries a bag in.

JOSÉE
Bagels and cream cheese for
everyone!

From a distance, MARIE watches as staff warmly greet JOSÉE and help her setup.

CUT TO:

INT. GAME ROOM, MONTCALM RETIREMENT HOME - DAY

Study room quiet. A group plays cards. A few read books or magazines.

At one table, a serious chess match is in progress. On one side, FRANK BAUER, mid-seventies, reserved and analytical. Despite a

weathered face and hands that would imply a working man, he is dressed casually but well.

Facing him, FARZAD SADEGHI, also in his seventies. An intense Persian and former scholar, FARZAD is highly educated and refined.

BAUER makes a move.

FARZAD contemplates, scans the board seriously then makes his.

BAUER calmly, but swiftly pounces.

BAUER
Checkmate!

He gazes at FARZAD for a reaction. Stunned silence. FARZAD swears in Farsi. A Persian woman at a nearby table scolds him as CHANTAL steps up.

CHANTAL
Alright, gentlemen, play nice.

BAUER
Ah, Miss Roberge..

CHANTAL
Mister Bauer.. Mister Sadeghi, was that a swear word?

FARZAD
A small one. He's good. But I'm better.

BAUER
Yet I always win.

FARZAD
You cheat somehow. You cheat. I know you do.

BAUER
I play three strokes ahead and I lead you into a trap. That's not cheating.

FARZAD
No. I just haven't caught you yet.

BAUER
Perhaps backgammon is more your speed?

FARZAD

Are you mocking me? Mocking my culture? You Westerners.. No. No. Again.

BAUER

If you insist..

CHANTAL

Try not to swear. Either of you.

CHANTAL chuckles and walks away as BAUER hustles after her.

BAUER

Miss Roberge.. There wasn't a mall shuttle today.

CHANTAL

It's Wednesday. The mall shuttles are on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

BAUER

Oh yes, of course. Of course.. Uhm, I also wanted to ask you.. the results of the tests..

CHANTAL

The MRI?

BAUER

Yes.

CHANTAL

We discussed the results together about two weeks ago. Would you like to go over them again?

BAUER tries to hide his concern.

BAUER

I must have had other things on my mind.

CHANTAL

Of course. Monday afternoon? I'll have Danielle schedule it.

BAUER nods. He slips a pen and small note from his pocket, writes it down.

BAUER

Monday.. Monday.

CHANTAL smiles and heads out to

THE HALLWAY

Where DANIELLE catches up to her with her cup of coffee. CHANTAL sips the coffee.

CHANTAL
Oh, I needed that.

DANIELLE
Henri is looking for you.
Something about venison, wild
boars, rabbits..

CHANTAL
Please setup a meeting with Mister
Bauer. Monday afternoon.

DANIELLE
Monday afternoon? You have an
optometrist appointment at three.

CHANTAL
Squeeze him in at two. He wants to
go over his MRI results again.

DANIELLE
Again? How many times--

CHANTAL
He's getting worse. We need to
contact the family.

DANIELLE
I've never seen him with family.
Have you?

CHANTAL
No..

DANIELLE
In the ten months he's been here
he's never had a visitor?

CHANTAL
Not that I'm aware of.

DANIELLE
I'll see if I can track somebody.

DANIELLE veers off as CHANTAL continues to

THE KITCHEN

CHANTAL bursts into a large kitchen in the state of hectic activity. A delivery of several boxes of fresh ducks, plucked and headless. She steps over to HENRI, the Chef overlooking the delivery.

HENRI

You know what this is?

CHANTAL

Duck?

HENRI

Not just any duck. It's Moulard.
The best duck in the province.

CHANTAL

The most expensive too I bet.

HENRI

Great food comes at a price.

CHANTAL

Everything comes at a price!

EXT. STREET, HAUTE-VILLE, QUEBEC CITY - DAY

A narrow street, lined with historic buildings. MARIE checks the addresses against her phone. Steps to a non-descript entrance. The door is locked. She presses the intercom, notices a small security camera. The door buzzes open.

INT. AGENCY OFFICES - DAY

MARIE enters. A foyer surrounded by small, cramped rooms. Recently remodeled. A security desk manned by efficient manager JULIA HARTMAN (40s).

MARIE passes by an open door. She glances inside, WAINWRIGHT's at his desk, on the phone.

JULIA

Marie.

She rises to meet her.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Mister Wainwright said you'd be getting a feel for the city. Julia Hartman. I'm the office manager and welcoming committee.

JULIA grabs a small brown envelope from her desk.

JULIA (CONT'D)

This is it. Our offices. It's a small team. We share the building with various other agencies. Right now, the secret service has taken over the top floors in advance of the--

MARIE

G7.

JULIA

Right.. There's a shared bathroom in the back and a small kitchen. And over here..

JULIA leads her to

A SMALL OFFICE

Three desks. Cramped. Lived-in.

JULIA (CONT'D)

You share the space with two case officers. They're out right now. Your desk is this one.

She escorts MARIE to an empty desk.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Your laptop. Dual monitors. All connections are hot. You're ready to go.

MARIE checks the space out.

JULIA (CONT'D)

We're a small team, but we're like family. No judgments here.

MARIE isn't sure how to take that. JULIA hands her the envelope.

JULIA (CONT'D)

I'll let you settle in. If you need anything, don't be shy.

MARIE removes her coat, scrutinizes the room. The other desks with their various baubles and small plants.

She sits. While the laptop powers up, she glances around the room; in a corner of the ceiling, a large stain, evidence of an old leak.

On the monitor, the CIA logo and login screen. She logs in.

She loads a browser. In the search bar, types "Christian Tremblay".

She clicks on a link, Tremblay's official government page. She then plays a short profile video.

As the video relates his experience and accomplishments, she empties the contents of the envelope. A Canadian passport, a Quebec driver's license both with her picture, issued to Marie Charpentier. Also, a hockey stick key chain with a fob and a key, and a separate note with an address.

She twirls the keychain as Tremblay wraps up the video with his sincere desire to live up to his constituents expectations.

CUT TO:

INT. ICE RINK - DAY

Typical high school rink with bleachers. An intramural hockey game is in play with ten year olds doing their best. Full gear with caged helmets, lots of awkward bumping and errant sticks.

In the scrum, NICOLAS TREMBLAY (10), struggles, sucking air. Soft-spoken, a little shy, a kid with a big heart. As the players separate, NICOLAS skates towards the bench, raises his stick for a change.

He settles on the bench, trying to regain his breath. He glances towards the bleachers and the few parents in the stands. He makes eye contact with his mother--

CHANTAL

She smiles. Cautiously.

Then FRED, a loud and vociferous parent, yells at the action on the ice, pacing the top of the stands, egging his son "VIC" on.

ON THE ICE

FRED's son VICTOR, a hockey prodigy on NICOLAS' team, makes a few slick moves and scores a goal.

FRED claps enthusiastically and wants more.

THE PLAYER'S BENCH

Head down, NICOLAS slowly regains his breath.

VICTOR skates up, fist bumps with teammates. He sits by NICOLAS.

VICTOR
You okay?

NICOLAS nods.

CHANTAL

watches, concerned. FRED paces behind her, muttering and yelling encouragement to the team.

She glares at him. He glares back with a smirk.

EXT. LOFTS - NIGHT

MARIE makes her way down the cobblestone street to the entrance of the ST-LOUIS LOFTS, wheeling a carry-on.

She retrieves the key ring and uses the fob to gain entrance.

INT. ELEVATOR, LOFTS - NIGHT

MARIE rides the narrow elevator which opens up to the top floor and to the door of her apartment.

INT. MARIE'S APARTMENT, LOFTS - NIGHT

MARIE enters, impressed by the stylish modernistic décor. She glances inside the bedroom. The bathroom. Then returns to the kitchen. All is exquisitely decorated and up-to-date.

She steps up to the large windows giving out on the "basse-ville" and the river. The street below is animated with people, bars and restaurants. She takes it all in, pleased with the place.

IN THE BEDROOM

MARIE empties her carry-on; sweaters, underwear, socks in the dresser drawer. Pants, shirts, jackets in the closet.

EXT. CHANTAL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A beautiful four bedroom suburban home with an expansive lawn and well lit trees and bushes.

CHANTAL pulls up. She and NICOLAS lug their bags to the house.

INT. LIVING ROOM, CHANTAL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A warm and inviting home, beautifully designed and decorated.

CHANTAL and NICOLAS enter. He drops his hockey bag at the entrance and pops off his boots.

CHANTAL
Hey, hey. Put your jersey and socks
in the wash.

NICOLAS
Now?

CHANTAL
Yeah, now.

NICOLAS
But I'm hungry.

CHANTAL
You have a few minutes. Go.

He begrudgingly does as he's told.

In the living room, the big screen is on and a sixteen year old girl is lounging, texting furiously. She is EMILIE TREMBLAY, daughter extraordinaire, at least in her mind.

EMILIE
Where were you? It's like seven.

CHANTAL
Nick had a hockey game.

Arms full, he heads to the laundry room. EMILIE glances at her mom.

EMILIE
Mom, is it really safe? You know
with like the breathing and shit.

CHANTAL
He enjoys it. You enjoy horseback
riding. And stop swearing.

EMILIE
Shit is hardly a swear word.

CHANTAL is not amused.

EMILIE (CONT'D)
What's for dinner? Don't say
chicken.

CHANTAL shows her the Fast Food bag with the chicken logo.

CHANTAL

Why don't you surprise me one day
and whip something up? ..Set the
table. You could've done that at
least.

EMILIE

Mom, I need a costume. For history
class.

IN THE KITCHEN

CHANTAL and EMILIE prep the food, plates and mats for dinner.

EMILIE (CONT'D)

We're like doing a play on Henry
the eighth. I'm playing Anne
Bowling. The Queen..

She dances and bows excitedly.

CHANTAL

Bo-leyn.

CHANTAL's phone rings.

EMILIE

Yeah. Bowlen. D'you know she was
committed for like having sex with
like her brother? Ewww.

CHANTAL

Then they chopped her head off.

EMILIE

Yeah, well, that's what you get.

MARIE reaches for her phone.

CHANTAL

Danielle.?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. MEDICAL ROOM, MONTCALM RETIREMENT HOME - NIGHT

DANIELLE is on the phone. She paces as she eyes a nurse tending
to BAUER's bloodied head.

DANIELLE

Sorry for calling at dinner time,
but it's Mister Bauer. He fell--

CHANTAL

Is he alright?

DANIELLE

He split the back of his head.
Linda is taking care of the
bleeding, but he needs stitches.
I'll take him to the hospital. I
already called for an ambulance.

BAUER

No. No hospital..

DANIELLE

It's alright, Mister Bauer. We need
to get a CT-scan, check for any
head trauma.

DANIELLE faces him directly. He's not happy, but remains calm.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)

We want to make sure your head and
your brain are okay.

BAUER stares then suddenly his eyes roll back and he drops.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)

Jesus!

DANIELLE and the nurse catch him.

CHANTAL

What happened?

DANIELLE

He passed out. The ambulance should
be here any minute.

CHANTAL

I'll meet you at the hospital.

CHANTAL grabs her things, hurries to leave.

CHANTAL (CONT'D)

I have to go to the hospital. Eat.
Clean up. Watch your brother. Do
your homework.

EMILIE

How long will you be?

CHANTAL

I don't know. A few hours..

EMILIE

I need to get that costume. I saw some online for eighty dollars.

CHANTAL

We'll discuss it later.

CHANTAL waves and rushes out.

INT. CHRISTIAN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Clean, bright, modern, functional. A large office with an area for staff meetings. At his desk, CHRISTIAN TREMBLAY, tie loosened, he's going over some documents.

One of the three cell phones on CHRISTIAN's desk rings. He hesitatingly picks it up.

CHRISTIAN

Hey..

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. CHANTAL'S CAR, STREETS - NIGHT

CHANTAL drives. It's always an awkward conversation.

CHANTAL

Hey.. I'm calling to let you know I have to go to the hospital--

CHRISTIAN

You okay? The kids.?

He listens concerned.

CHANTAL

No. It's.. I have a resident who had an emergency.

CHRISTIAN

What happened?

CHANTAL

Fell and hit his head. Then he passed out. Reminded me of when your mom fell..

CHRISTIAN

..yeah..

Silence. A painful memory.

CHRISTIAN (CONT'D)

How bad is it?

CHANTAL

I don't know. I wasn't there when it happened. Could be the dementia.

CHRISTIAN

Dementia?

CHANTAL

He's showing signs. Forgetting names, dates. He writes things down to remember. Anyway, I had to leave the kids at home.

CHRISTIAN

Okay. Emilie has it under control?

CHANTAL

Yeah.. She's excited about playing Anne Boleyn in a school play.

CHRISTIAN

That should distract her from that..boy.

They chuckle. CHANTAL hesitates.

CHANTAL

Nicolas had hockey--

CHRISTIAN

Oh shit! Completely forgot. Oh my God!

CHANTAL

I know you're busy. Running our government.

CHRISTIAN

And I have here on my calendar. I saw it this morning.. Argh.. I'll give him a call.

CHANTAL

Still at work?

He rises and paces.

CHRISTIAN

Yeah, going over some legislation.

CHANTAL

Right..

There's an implied meaning here.

CHRISTIAN

No, no. I've surrounded myself with men, mostly men. Fewer temptations.

He listens for a reaction. They both struggle to say something relevant.

CHANTAL

Could be seen as discriminatory.

He laughs.

CHRISTIAN

Always a catch, eh?

She sighs. More silence. He steps to the windows, looks out.

CHRISTIAN (CONT'D)

You're tired..

CHANTAL

Just a little overwhelmed.

CHRISTIAN

Can I help?

She chuckles.

CHRISTIAN (CONT'D)

I'm serious. I know I haven't been the most reliable. But I.. Tell me what you want.

CHANTAL

I don't know what I want..

He listens. She doesn't elaborate.

In the street below, he catches a figure standing at a corner looking up at him.

CHRISTIAN

So, you called to tell me about the kids.. Or to hear my voice?

She considers.

CHANTAL

Goodnight, Christian.

He regrets the comment.

CHRISTIAN
Goodnight.

He stares at the figure below. A woman, bundled up. Puzzled by her presence, he steps away, his mind reeling.

JOSÉE walks in, slipping into a heavy overcoat and scarf.

JOSÉE
I updated the numbers for Q3.

CHRISTIAN
Good. How do they look?

JOSÉE
About the same. They're struggling with the language adoption. What if we offered incentives?

CHRISTIAN
Let's talk about that tomorrow.

JOSÉE
Sure thing.

She notices CHRISTIAN's mood.

JOSÉE (CONT'D)
Everything okay?

CHRISTIAN
Thinking about my kids..

JOSÉE
My parents divorced when I was a kid and I turned out okay.

Awkward pause.

CHRISTIAN
Thanks for the update. I'm sure you have things to do.

JOSÉE
Meeting friends for drinks.
Goodnight.

CHRISTIAN smiles. JOSÉE hesitates, leaves.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Curbside, the bundled woman is MARIE. She watches the building when a guard unlocks the door allowing JOSÉE to slip out. They exchange goodnights as the civil servant hurries down the street.

MARIE follows.

CUT TO:

INT. WAITING ROOM, HOSPITAL - NIGHT

CHANTAL enters with two cups of vending machine coffee. She hands one to DANIELLE.

DANIELLE

Thanks.

CHANTAL

What happened?

DANIELLE

They said he came down to eat dinner and tried to sit down, missed the chair, stammered back and fell. Hit his head on a table. There was blood everywhere. They called me. Then he collapsed. And.. Here we are.

CHANTAL

You don't have to stay. I know you have your own family.

DANIELLE

They'll be fine. Besides, you just brought me coffee.

They chuckle as an ER DOCTOR steps in.

ER DOCTOR

For Mister Bauer.?

CHANTAL and DANIELLE rise to meet him.

CHANTAL

Yes.?

ER DOCTOR

Please, stay seated.

He sits close by to face them, chart and notes in hand.

ER DOCTOR (CONT'D)
You're from the retirement home.?

CHANTAL
Chantal Roberge. I'm the director
and Mister Bauer's primary
physician. And this is Danielle,
the manager.

ER DOCTOR
Alright. Well, he's still a little
hazy. The good news is that there's
no evidence of any fractures or
subdural hematomas.

CHANTAL
Okay..

ER DOCTOR
However, there is a slight
contusion and some swelling in the
area. I want to keep him overnight
to monitor his condition.

CHANTAL
Yes, of course.

ER DOCTOR
Also, I had a chance to examine him
more fully. And.. as you know, his
body has multiple sequelae of
remote trauma--

CHANTAL
He suffered a terrible injury while
working at a lumber mill.

ER DOCTOR
Is that what he told you?

CHANTAL
Yes, why.?

The ER DOCTOR grunts, shakes his head.

ER DOCTOR
His wounds are more in line with
battle scars and more specifically
torture.

CHANTAL & DANIELLE
Torture?

CHANTAL and DANIELLE exchange concerned glances.

ER DOCTOR

I was with Doctors without Borders for four years, served in several war zones.

CHANTAL

Are you saying he was a soldier?

ER DOCTOR

I don't know if he was a soldier, but--

DANIELLE

A prisoner?

ER DOCTOR

I don't know, but I've seen these types of scars before. His are deep and old. At least ten or more years.

CHANTAL

So the marks on his wrists and ankles.?

ER DOCTOR

Most likely from restraints, shackles.

CHANTAL

The keloid scars.?

ER DOCTOR

Yeah. Linear cicatrices. Irregular areas of dermal hypopigmentation. These are all signs of severe torture; beatings, lashings, electrocution, cigarette burns--

CHANTAL

Oh my God..

She rises, paces anxiously.

CHANTAL (CONT'D)

How could I have missed--

ER DOCTOR

It's easy to misread the injuries. Especially when the patient is not honest.

CHANTAL is shell-shocked by the revelation.

ER DOCTOR (CONT'D)
We'll take a look at him in the morning. Chances are you'll be able to take him home tomorrow.

He rises, on his way out when

CHANTAL
He must have suffered multiple concussions during his torture..

ER DOCTOR
Most probably..

CHANTAL
Which over time, could have led to dizzy spells, confusion.

ER DOCTOR
It may have contributed to his fall. His family might bring him comfort.

CHANTAL
We're not sure he has any.

The ER DOCTOR considers.

ER DOCTOR
I'll give him a mild sedative and we'll move him to a quieter room upstairs. Let him rest.

CHANTAL
It won't get any better.

ER DOCTOR
Instead of waiting here, you can go home if you'd like. We'll call you when we have an update.

CHANTAL
Thank you.

He leaves. CHANTAL and DANIELLE reel at this turn of events.

DANIELLE
A soldier? Torture?

CHANTAL
Why wouldn't he tell us that?

DANIELLE
He seems so normal.

CUT TO:

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM, HALLWAYS, HOSPITAL - NIGHT

BAUER in an emergency stretcher, covered by blankets. Groggy, his eyes struggling to stay open.

Amid the chaos of the emergency room, a Patient Transporter pulls him out of the triage area, rolls him down a hallway to elevators.

Distorted sounds and voices.

A nurse accosts him, notifies him of his transfer and tries to comfort him, but she is hazy and her words don't register.

The elevator doors open and he is whisked and spun inside. Doors close.

Next floor. The elevator doors open. Two nurses enter, chatting in a foreign language. One is laughing, smiling. In her thirties, ZILYA GAREEV glances at BAUER and immediately loses her smile. A chill runs down her back. She stares at him as if she's seen a ghost.

BAUER stares back. His eyes deep, cold, questioning. He captures everything about her; her face, hair, hands, and her badge - the name clearly visible: ZILYA GAREEV.

Next floor. Doors open. BAUER is wheeled out.

ZILYA is left reeling, confused, breathing hard. The other NURSE notices her sudden change.

NURSE
Zilya, what's wrong? You look flushed.

ZILYA
I'm all right..

NURSE
Are you sure? Maybe you should sit down.

ZILYA
I'm fine.

NURSE
You worry me.

ZILYA

It's nothing. Really.. My floor.

Under the watchful eyes of NURSE, ZILYA steps out and once the elevator doors shut, she reaches for her phone. Shaking, on the verge of tears, she sits for a moment, gathers her thoughts and retrieves her phone.

CUT TO:

INT. BAR - NIGHT

An upscale bar. Packed with a younger crowd, the place is loud and boisterous.

In a darkened corner, MARIE with a drink. She eyes JOSÉE at the bar, sitting alone, looking tentative, lonely, mouse like. She sips a cocktail.

A couple of YOUNG MEN step up by her to order drinks. They're in a good mood, joking and laughing.

From her vantage point, MARIE observes YOUNG MAN #1 order from the bartender and begin to interact with JOSÉE who is open to his easygoing charms.

The Bartender serves the YOUNG MEN a couple of tequila shots, with salt and lime. They lick, down, suck and slam the glass back on the bar. Fun. Fun.

YOUNG MAN #1 quickly orders two more. As an afterthought, asks JOSÉE if she'd like one. She smiles, shrugs, sure.

MARIE's gaze intensifies as the Bartender pours three shots.

CUT TO:

INT. CHANTAL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

In the living room, EMILIE is in her pajamas, on her phone texting. CHANTAL enters, sighs tiredly.

CHANTAL

Everything okay?

EMILIE

Yeah, we managed not to burn the house down..

CHANTAL is not amused.

CHANTAL

Don't you ever get tired of that thing?

EMILIE

I'm looking at costumes for my class project. I think I found the perfect one..

CHANTAL

Nicolas?

EMILIE

He went to his room. I made you a plate. It's in the fridge.

CHANTAL

Thank you..

EMILIE

Mom, can I show you--

CHANTAL

Give me a minute?

CHANTAL grabs her backpack and heads to

THE KITCHEN

She grabs her plate and a bottle of wine from the fridge, pours herself a glass, then pours more. Drinks. Relief..

She considers heating up the plate in the microwave--

CHANTAL (CONT'D)

Fuck it..

She sits at the counter, eats her cold meal. She reaches for her laptop, opens it.

She navigates to her work portal, clicks on the "list of residents" link.

She scrolls through the profiles until she holds on Frank Bauer. His picture. A slight sad smile.

His profile. DOB: June 2, 1950. Parents: Unknown. Marital Status: Single. Children: Unknown. Beneficiaries: Unknown.

CHANTAL reads, disappointed by the lack of information. Some knocks on the floor above. CHANTAL sighs, drops her head. No rest for the wicked.

INT. NICOLAS ROOM - NIGHT

A ten year old boy's room. Posters of hockey and soccer players. A shelf with small trophies.

NICOLAS sits in bed, careening a baseball on the floor to the wall and back.

A knock at the door. CHANTAL enters.

CHANTAL
Hey, what did we say about throwing
baseballs in the house?

He stops. The kid's in a bit of a funk.

CHANTAL (CONT'D)
You should be in bed by now.

NICOLAS
I am in bed.

CHANTAL
Sleeping.

NICOLAS
I'm not sleepy.

She motions him to slip under the sheets. He obeys. She moves to tuck him in.

CHANTAL
Did you do your homework?

NICOLAS
..yeah.

She senses his mood.

CHANTAL
What's up?

NICOLAS
Why do I have to have asthma? None
of the other kids have it.

She sits by him.

CHANTAL
Your lungs detect the bad things in
the air that most of us don't.

NICOLAS

I don't want to be different. They make fun of me at school when I use my inhaler.

CHANTAL

People can be mean. Especially when something scares them.

NICOLAS mulls it over.

NICOLAS

Dad called. He said he was sorry he didn't make the game.

CHANTAL

I'm sure he'll be at the next one.

NICOLAS

Why does he always have to work late?

CHANTAL

What he does is very important. We have to support him. Get some sleep. Love you.

NICOLAS

Love you too.

She kisses him and leaves.

IN THE KITCHEN

EMILIE steps to the sink, rinses her glass, turns to leave when she notices CHANTAL's open laptop and BAUER's picture.

CHANTAL returns.

EMILIE

What a sad face.

CHANTAL

He's been through a lot.

EMILIE

I could never do what you do.

CHANTAL resumes her wine and work.

CHANTAL

I never thought I'd be doing this either.

EMILIE

What do you mean? What'd you think you were going to do?

CHANTAL

Research..

EMILIE

What happened?

CHANTAL

I met your father.

INT. LOUNGE - NIGHT

Dark woods. Subdued. Casual, almost rustic.

At the bar, the BARTENDER serves WAINWRIGHT another drink. The large screen TV plays a news report showing the president of the United States SCOTT BAKER, the same Scott Baker from the opening scene in Kiev, now fifteen years older.

REPORTER

..on the South Lawn at the White House, President Baker spoke to reporters about the upcoming G7 meeting taking place in two months in Quebec.

BAKER

There's a lot to talk about. We share many of the same concerns, peace in the world and particularly the state of Ukraine right now--

VALOIS

Change the channel, please!

RENE VALOIS sidles up at the bar next to WAINWRIGHT. In his late-fifties, a little pudgy and sharp as a whip.

VALOIS (CONT'D)

How can you work for this asshole?

WAINWRIGHT

Ours. Yours. They're all assholes.

VALOIS

Well, I can't debate that.

(to Bartender)

I'll have whatever he's having. And put it on his tab.

(to Wainwright)

How are you?

WAINWRIGHT

Like my Scotch; smooth, complex and mellow.

VALOIS

You forgot aged.

WAINWRIGHT

Purposefully. You?

VALOIS

Like Parmesan cheese; hard, sharp and a little nutty.

WAINWRIGHT

You forgot aged.

VALOIS chuckles. Got me.

The bartender serves VALOIS his drink. The men clink glasses. Drink. VALOIS approves.

VALOIS

So, when are you going to come fishing with me?

WAINWRIGHT

When I retire..

VALOIS

So never. You know, fishing's not just about catching fish. Though there's something about reeling in those fuckers that's kind of gratifying. No. Fishing's about finding your inner peace.

WAINWRIGHT

Are you going new-agey on me?

VALOIS

I was at a cabin up north. Friend of mine. Off a river. In the middle of nowhere. Pure bliss. If Heaven's anything like that, count me in.

WAINWRIGHT

I don't have much sway with the big guy, but if I get there first, I'll be sure to mention you.

VALOIS lifts his glass. Cheers. Drinks.

VALOIS

You didn't invite me here to wax poetic on sturgeon.

WAINWRIGHT

A different kind of bottom feeder.

VALOIS

The G7.

WAINWRIGHT

Next month..

VALOIS

Let me assure you that the Surete is doing everything to ensure your man is safe.

WAINWRIGHT

I have to protect him.

VALOIS

It's the secret service's job to protect him. They're already all over the fucking place. Locking things down.

VALOIS glances at WAINWRIGHT. Something else on his mind.

VALOIS (CONT'D)

What's this about, Colin? We share the same fucking intel. Aside from the same sneery chatter from the extremist groups, there are no real red flags. So, what's really on your mind?

WAINWRIGHT

A backroom deal with the French to resettle defectors here.

VALOIS chuckles at the absurdity.

VALOIS

What the hell? Defectors secretly relocated to Quebec? From France?

WAINWRIGHT

Any truth to it?

VALOIS

That would have to be approved at the federal level.

WAINWRIGHT

It couldn't be done without your knowledge or consent.

VALOIS

My knowledge?

WAINWRIGHT

The Sûreté's knowledge.

VALOIS can't conceive of it, but yet..

WAINWRIGHT (CONT'D)

Iranians, Syrians, Algerians, Tun--

VALOIS

Muslims..

WAINWRIGHT

They don't have to be Muslim, Rene. Chinese. Russian. Ukrainian. If you bring 'em here--

VALOIS

We're not "bringing" anyone here, Colin. Those people are immigrants. Are there agents among them? Maybe. Possibly. Probably. But most of them are fleeing war and gangs and shitty economies.

WAINWRIGHT

That's the excuse. The reality is you allow them in and then they're right on our border--

VALOIS

We have the same immigration policies. Well.. used to. What? You want to build a wall across the Canadian border?

WAINWRIGHT

You have a special relationship with France.

VALOIS

Yeah, we love their fucking wine.. Listen, I haven't heard of any backroom deals. With the French or anyone. Where's this coming from anyway?

WAINWRIGHT

I have my sources.

VALOIS is stricken by the request.

VALOIS
You're looking for someone.. A
defector.

WAINWRIGHT
Dmitri Yevgenev Volkov.

VALOIS
Volkov. Russian.?

WAINWRIGHT
Former FSB.

VALOIS
And he defected to the French.

WAINWRIGHT
Gave up his network in Crimea.
Russian agents. Plans. Everything.

VALOIS
You think the French sent him here?

WAINWRIGHT
I have a source who confirmed it. I
just don't know where. Or under
what name.

VALOIS
For all you know, this guy's dead.
Tossed in the St-Lawrence with a
bullet in his head.

WAINWRIGHT
I won't give up until I know for
sure.

VALOIS
What the fuck does this guy have
that's so precious to you?

WAINWRIGHT
A hard drive.

VALOIS laughs.

VALOIS
Jesus, whatever's on it is probably
all over the internet.

WAINWRIGHT
No. It's the one and only copy.

VALOIS

How do you know he didn't destroy
it? Or give it to the French?

WAINWRIGHT

He wouldn't.

VALOIS

You're chasing a fucking ghost.

WAINWRIGHT

Maybe.. Cause it fucking haunts me.

WAINWRIGHT rises, tosses some cash on the bar, downs his drink.

WAINWRIGHT (CONT'D)

Thanks for coming, Rene. Enjoy the
Scotch.

VALOIS

Yeah..

WAINWRIGHT leaves. VALOIS reflects on the conversation--

CUT TO:

INT. CHRISTIAN'S CONDO - NIGHT

CHRISTIAN retrieves some take out from the microwave. He sits to
eat. It's hot. His phone rings.

CHRISTIAN

Rene.. How are you? Been awhile.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. RENE'S CAR, STREETS - NIGHT

VALOIS drives, concerned, his mind racing.

VALOIS

I just met with our American
friends.. They're on to your
scheme.

CHRISTIAN

My scheme.?

VALOIS

With the French.

Silence. CHRISTIAN absorbs.

CHRISTIAN
How could they possibly--

VALOIS
Dunno. But it was more than a
fishing expedition.

CHRISTIAN rises, paces. His eyes darting, his mind reeling.

VALOIS (CONT'D)
They're looking for that Russian
guy..

CHRISTIAN
The Russian..

VALOIS
What the hell did you do with him?

Finally, it hits CHRISTIAN.

CHRISTIAN
Oh, shit.. He's safe. He's in a
safe place.

VALOIS laughs.

VALOIS
Yeah, well, you need to disappear
him. Cause shit's about to go down.

VALOIS hangs up, leaving CHRISTIAN pondering his next steps.

CUT TO:

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Still bustling with people at this time. Folks are now more
drunk and boisterous.

Another round of shots.

From her corner, MARIE keeps watch on JOSÉE and the YOUNG MEN at
the bar, laughing. In her seat, JOSÉE is surrounded on both
sides. The men crowd and tower over her like buzzards. She is
trying hard to keep up.

MARIE then spots YOUNG MAN #2 drop a roofig in JOSÉE's drink.
She reacts, but hesitates.

Concerned about her condition, the YOUNG MEN help her out of her
seat and escort her out.

MARIE goes to the bar, grabs JOSÉE's purse and coat and follows them.

EXT. BAR, STREET - NIGHT

MARIE emerges from the bar. She marches towards the YOUNG MEN now giddily stuffing JOSÉE in the back seat of a parked SUV.

MARIE

Hey!

The YOUNG MEN see MARIE charging towards them. They shove JOSÉE inside, close the back door.

YOUNG MAN #1

What?

MARIE

You know her?

He snorts dismissively, then chest out, leaning forward on the balls of his feet, approaches her intimidatingly.

YOUNG MAN #1

Yeah. She's my girlfriend. Who are you?

MARIE slows, eyes the men, gauging them. Then YOUNG MAN #1 grabs her by the neck, slams her up against the wall, choking her.

YOUNG MAN #1 (CONT'D)

You got something to say? Hmm?

Grasping for air, she grabs his wrist. He squeezes tighter.

YOUNG MAN #2

Dude..

Moaning in pain and slowly losing energy, MARIE finally knees him in the groin. They both drop to the ground.

She slowly regains her senses as he grabs his groin.

YOUNG MAN #1

Fuck. You cunt!

A deep breath and a violent swing. A direct, heavy kick sends him sprawling across the pavement.

YOUNG MAN #2

What the fuck.?

MARIE

Step the fuck back.

She glares at him. He lifts his arms, steps back.

MARIE then searches YOUNG MAN #1's pockets for the car key. She takes his wallet, then turns to YOUNG MAN #2.

MARIE (CONT'D)
Your wallet.

YOUNG MAN #2
What? No..

MARIE
Give me your fucking wallet!

He reaches for his wallet and tosses it to her.

YOUNG MAN #2
There's not a lot of cash.

She draws the men's IDs and tosses the wallets to the ground.

YOUNG MAN #2 (CONT'D)
What are doing? That's private..

She ignores him and climbs into the SUV and drives off.

YOUNG MAN #2 (CONT'D)
Hey! Hey..

IN THE SUV

Shaken, MARIE drives away fast, turning down a series of one way streets until she finally pulls over.

Breathing hard, her hands trembling. She takes a moment to collect herself.

She glances in the back. JOSÉE is sprawled across the seat out.

MARIE digs through JOSÉE's purse, withdraws her driver's license and address, enters it in her phone.

EXT. JOSÉE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Behind the wheel of the SUV, MARIE finds the address. She parks on the street then helps a drowsy JOSÉE out of the car and into her building.

INT. JOSÉE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Generic apartment. A lived-in IKEA catalog. MARIE opens the door and supporting JOSÉE, enters.

She escorts her to the couch and sets her down.

MARIE

Josée? Can you hear me?

A murmur. MARIE goes to the kitchen.

She fills a tall glass with bottled water. On the refrigerator door, MARIE briefly examines pictures of JOSÉE and girlfriends on vacation, laughing, having fun.

MARIE's eyes scan the entire apartment, she doesn't miss anything. Landscape paintings on the walls, romance novels, a guitar.

MARIE (CONT'D)

You're going to be sleepy, but you need to force yourself to drink.

Her head pounding, JOSÉE moves with difficulty. MARIE hands her the glass, makes sure it's secure in her hands.

JOSÉE

Who are you?

MARIE

It's water. You need to flush that shit out of your system.

JOSÉE

(mutters)

You my guardian angel.?

MARIE tries to get her to drink. JOSÉE struggles to put the glass to her lips, finally manages to sip some water.

MARIE

Good. Keep drinking.

MARIE retrieves the YOUNG MEN's IDs, tosses them on the table.

MARIE (CONT'D)

Don't trust anyone.

JOSÉE tries to repeat, but the words are garbled.

MARIE's eyes land on a set of framed pictures, JOSÉE and family. And among them, a framed picture of JOSÉE and CHRISTIAN at some political event. They're smiling at the camera.

MARIE (CONT'D)

How long have you worked for the minister?

JOSÉE smiles, but it soon turns serious. Her eyes flutter. She sinks into the couch.

MARIE glances at her. The woman's in no state to talk.

MARIE gets ready to leave. She heads for the door, when--

JOSÉE
Don't leave me.

It stops MARIE dead in her tracks. She considers the request. Sighs.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY, HOSPITAL - NIGHT

A man emerges from the elevators. Early forties, tall, fit, muscular. A serious man. Dressed in a heavy leather coat, ARSLAN GAREEV makes his way to the nurse's station where ZILYA anxiously awaits. She's relieved to see him. They speak confidentially in Tatar.

ARSLAN
Where is he?

ZILYA
Room three-fifteen..

ARSLAN
You're sure it's him?

She shrugs, unsure.

ARSLAN (CONT'D)
How could it be?

He hesitatingly heads for

BAUER'S ROOM

The room is dark, except for the dimmed lights directly over BAUER's bed.

ARSLAN enters, followed by a nervous ZILYA. They approach the bed. BAUER rests. Eyes closed.

ARSLAN observes the patient carefully. He can't believe it.

Sensing a presence, BAUER opens his eyes. Startled, ARSLAN steps back, clumsily retrieving a handgun.

ZILYA
Arslan! No!

He points it at BAUER who eyes the weapon, remains calm. The men stare at each other.

ARSLAN approaches carefully.

ARSLAN
He's an old man now.. What is he doing here?

BAUER doesn't react.

ZILYA approaches, she pushes the gun down.

ZILYA
Those eyes. I'll never forget them.

She spits at him. Rage seething through her.

ARSLAN raises the gun again.

ZILYA (CONT'D)
Arslan, no.

ARSLAN
He killed your parents. Your brothers.

ZILYA
I want him to suffer..

Emotions rising, she spits at him again. No reaction.

ZILYA (CONT'D)
We came here to get away from you Russian fucks!

BAUER simply watches, expressionless.

ARSLAN
It's a sign from God.

ZILYA
God is not so cruel.

ARSLAN
He's giving him to us. For retribution.

ZILYA considers. Could it be?

Just then, a JANITOR steps in with his cart, surprised to find them. He removes his headset.

JANITOR

Hey.. Visiting hours are over.

ARSLAN surreptitiously stows the gun back in his pocket.

ARSLAN

Yeah.. We are going.

(to Bauer, in Russian)

See you soon, eh, old man.

There's an underlying threat to his tone. ARSLAN and ZILYA leave. BAUER watches them, disturbed by the visit.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN, WAINWRIGHT'S HOME - NIGHT

A comfortable city townhouse. At the expansive island, apron on, WAINWRIGHT is in the midst of savoring a gourmet meal. A mountain of pots, pans, dishes, knives clutter the sink.

This is more than a serious hobby. While eating his Osso Bucco and drinking a sturdy red wine, he is actively editing a fast paced video for his "CovertFoodie" Substack page.

In comes JULIA. Sleepy. Dressed in a robe. She wraps an arm round him, takes a bite of his food, savors it.

He turns to her, opens her robe, pulls her closer.

WAINWRIGHT

Glad you like it.

She drinks some wine from his glass.

JULIA

I'm no gourmet chef, but I know what I like.

He kisses her neck, her chest. The laptop beeps.

As WAINWRIGHT continues the kissing, JULIA glances at the laptop, reads the comment, clicks a link. A vertical video of a middle-aged FOODIE with a glass of wine. He's hammered.

FOODIE

Dude, loved your Beef Wellington. And the wine pairing? That 2010 Chateau Léoville Barton was fucking amazing. Pricey, but man, worth every penny. I just wanna know when you're going to show your face? Prove your chops, dude, make a chocolate soufflé! Cheers!

They chuckle.

JULIA

He wants a chocolate soufflé.

He resumes the kissing.

CUT TO:

INT. JOSÉE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

JOSÉE is passed out on her couch, sleeping soundly. MARIE has placed a blanket over her.

MARIE has been on her phone. She glances over. It's time.

She slips into her overcoat, looks around, finds a pen and paper and scribbles a note, places it on the table with the men's IDs.

EXT. JOSÉE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

MARIE emerges, climbs into the SUV and drives off.

IN THE SUV

She drives. A sadness to her every move.

EXT. PARKING LOT, RIVER - NIGHT

Deserted parking lot on the river shore. A massive cargo ship slips through the waters.

MARIE parks the SUV, tosses the key inside and walks away.

EXT. MARIE RETURNS (MONTAGE) - NIGHT

MARIE walks along the quiet thoroughfare, crosses it.

She launches into the Cap-Blanc staircase, a long wooden sturdy structure that takes her back up to the Plains of Abraham.

It's a long steady march up. He crosses a determined athlete doing a midnight run down the stairs.

Finally, she emerges on the expansive Plains of Abraham towards the iconic Chateau lit up in its winter splendor.

Past the walled ramparts of the Citadel as it overlooks the river

EXT. DUFFERIN TERRACE - DAWN

The sky lightens on the horizon.

Below the commanding Chateau Frontenac, MARIE strolls along the expansive terrace and its panoramic view of the St-Lawrence River and its grayish winter environs.

A cold wind sweeps through. She slips part of the scarf over her head and ears, gazing at the scenery. In this peaceful and serene setting, emotions bubble up and tears flow.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHANTAL'S HOUSE - DAY

Morning. Chilly. CHANTAL emerges from the front door with NICOLAS in tow, weighed down by his heavy backpack.

CHANTAL
Emilie.. Come on!

EMILIE finally rushes out, phone in hand, trying to slide into a coat. Both kids are dressed in private school uniforms.

EMILIE
I forgot my lunch.

CHANTAL
You'll have to eat at the cafeteria.

EMILIE
Ugh..

CHANTAL waves her out. Shuts the door. Beep.

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

CHANTAL drops off EMILIE and NICOLAS at their school, a proud if haughty, historic institution.

CHANTAL
Hey, be good. Take care of each other.

She watches them catch up with their friends.

EXT. PARKING LOT, MONTCALM RETIREMENT HOME - DAY

CHANTAL parks, marches to the main building.

INT. CHANTAL'S OFFICE, MONTCALM RETIREMENT HOME - DAY

CHANTAL enters, dumps her backpack on her desk. A thought!

IN THE ACCOUNTING OFFICE

Montcalm's CFO SUZANNE (30s) sits behind her computer, surrounded by stuffed animals. CHANTAL enters, steaming cup of coffee in hand.

CHANTAL
Good morning.

SUZANNE
Morning.

CHANTAL
I was looking up Mister Bauer's account last night. We don't have emergency contact information for him. No family. No dependents. No beneficiaries.

SUZANNE straightens, taps the keyboard.

SUZANNE
Frank Bauer..

CHANTAL
We've never seen any visitors come for him. He goes to the mall every Tuesdays and Thursdays. He's gone all day.

SUZANNE
He likes to shop.

CHANTAL
He never comes back with anything.

SUZANNE scans the screen--

SUZANNE
His account is always paid on time..

CHANTAL
He pays?

Suzanne spins the monitor to CHANTAL.

SUZANNE
His bank pays.

CHANTAL

His bank.. A trust. Little Rabbit
Trust Ltd.. Do we know who the
administrator is?

She swings the monitor back. A few mouse clicks.

SUZANNE

I don't have that information. We'd
have to ask the bank.

CHANTAL paces, thinks about her options.

IN CHANTAL'S OFFICE

CHANTAL enters, moves to her desk and retrieves a set of keys
from a locked drawer.

INT. HALLWAY, BAUER'S APARTMENT - DAY

CHANTAL makes her way down the hallway, warmly greeting one or
two of the residents, until she steps to BAUER'S door. She
glances up and down. No one. She unlocks the door with the
master key.

IN BAUER'S APARTMENT - DAY

CHANTAL steps inside. It's clean, organized. She glances around.
Nothing out of the ordinary. Clearly, she's not comfortable
snooping around.

She opens a laptop on the desk. But the screen is locked.

A nearby folder, old, weathered. She glances inside.

A collection of clippings, articles in Cyrillic text from
Russian and Ukrainian newspapers and magazines over the past
fifteen years. She comes across some in English regarding
Ukrainian immigration to Canada in 2022.

Among the clippings, a twenty-year old picture of BORYS KOZAK, a
twenty-four year-old in Ukrainian Army uniform smiling smugly.

She's puzzled by what she sees. An emphasis on immigration and
the populations of migrant groups. And this old picture. Was
that him?

Underneath the folder, a handwritten list of names of Ukrainian
men with local addresses, dates and ages.

Floored by what she sees, CHANTAL is at a loss on what to do
next when her phone rings, startling her. She answers.

CHANTAL
..Danielle.?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

DANIELLE on the phone. With the help of a nurse, BAUER, now dressed, sits into a wheelchair.

DANIELLE
Hi. I'm at the hospital. I got a call saying Mister Bauer was ready to be released, so I came to pick him up.

CHANTAL
Everything okay?

DANIELLE
Yeah, the doctor's not seeing any residual effect of a concussion.

CHANTAL
That's a relief. Do you want me to come?

DANIELLE
No. We should be back in about twenty minutes.

CHANTAL
Great! Thanks.

CHANTAL quickly closes the apps, shuts the laptop and leaves.

CUT TO:

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

WAINWRIGHT at his regular table, working on his daily crossword puzzle. The waiter serves him his morning pastry and coffee.

As he looks up, he finds MARIE standing there facing him.

WAINWRIGHT
Is this going to be a morning ritual?

MARIE
I did something last night..

The ominous tone disturbs him. He looks down at his delicious pastry, knowing he won't be able to enjoy it, sighs heavily.

CUT TO:

EXT. MONTCALM RETIREMENT HOME - DAY

DANIELLE helps BAUER climb out of the car.

BAUER
Thank you. I'm alright.

She escorts him inside.

INT. FOYER, MONTCALM RETIREMENT HOME - DAY

CHANTAL greets BAUER and DANIELLE.

CHANTAL
Mister Bauer, so glad to see you on your feet again.

BAUER
No need to make a fuss. The shuttle?

CHANTAL
To the mall? It left already.

BAUER
I need to go to the bank.

CHANTAL
The bank?

BAUER
It's urgent.

CHANTAL considers the request.

CHANTAL
I can take you.

BAUER
I need to change out of these clothes.

CHANTAL
Of course.

INT. BAUER'S ROOM - DAY

BAUER enters. He begins to undress when he notices the laptop. Something's off. He glances around then reaches for his head, closes his eyes for a moment, breathes deep.

He then reaches inside a pocket, retrieves a scribbled note: "BANK - Nurse: Zilya Gareev". It comes back to him.

INT. BANK - DAY

Modern. Large bay windows. Clean. Generic. Quiet. CHANTAL and BAUER enter. A SECURITY GUARD nods at them.

The BANK MANAGER, a middle-aged corporate lackey, emerges from his office.

BANK MANAGER
Mister Bauer, good afternoon.

CHANTAL is surprised to hear the familiarity.

BAUER
I need to access my box.

BANK MANAGER
Of course.
(to Guard)
Stephane.. Mister Bauer needs to go
to the vault.

The SECURITY GUARD escorts BAUER away. As they go down stairs, CHANTAL turns to the BANK MANAGER.

CHANTAL
You know Mister Bauer well?

BANK MANAGER
Comes here maybe once a month.

CHANTAL
He comes alone?

BANK MANAGER
Yeah. Never seen him with anyone.

She extends her hand.

CHANTAL
Chantal Roberge. I'm the director
of the Montcalm Retirement Home
where Mister Bauer resides. He had
a fall yesterday.

BANK MANAGER

Oh. I'm sorry to hear. Was it.?

CHANTAL

It was pretty bad.. Actually, maybe you can help me. We haven't got any emergency contacts for him. No family. No beneficiaries. I know the bank pays his rent through a trust.

BANK MANAGER

Yes.

CHANTAL

Can you tell me who the trustee is? Maybe they have information on the family.

BANK MANAGER

Unfortunately, the privacy laws forbid us from divulging--

CHANTAL

Can you have them contact me?

BANK MANAGER

That's not possible. If Mister Bauer or the trustee didn't provide the information willingly, there's not much I can do.

CHANTAL

But his faculties are beginning to fail him and--

BANK MANAGER

In the case of indisposition or death, the law forces me to contact the Public Curator of Quebec. But honestly, that's a long, drawn out process. The government takes over the trust which could lead to lawsuits and all kinds of legal issues.

CHANTAL

So, there's nothing you can do?

BANK MANAGER

My hands are tied. Banking regulations. Have you asked him directly?

CHANTAL

Well, all this happened suddenly.

BANK MANAGER

I'm sorry.

Food for thought. Just then customers walk in. The BANK MANAGER excuses himself to greet them.

IN THE VAULT

The SECURITY GUARD escorts BAUER to the safety deposit boxes, inserts his master key as BAUER turns the key to his box. BAUER opens the box, pulls out the liner and steps to a--

PRIVATE VIEWING ROOM

A table with a couple of simple wire framed chairs.

BAUER deposits the liner on the table as the SECURITY GUARD closes the door and leaves him alone.

BAUER flips the lid of his liner. Inside, bundles of cash, a keyring with three keys, a tattered notebook, Canadian and French passports, a handgun and box of ammo.

He stashes the notebook and some of the cash in his leather satchel.

He hesitatingly removes the gun, his hand shaking a little. He then expertly inspects the weapon, ejects the mag, racks the slide. He sighs then stows it and the ammo in his satchel.

Finally, he reaches inside the liner to retrieve an external hard drive. It has the number "21" and the River Palace logo stamped on it. It's the missing hard drive from fifteen years ago in Kiev.

FADE OUT.

END OF EPISODE